

HEALTH NEWS *from*

FALL 2019

# doctors hospital

OF LAREDO

## Emergency care *close to home*

When her young son  
was sick, worried mom  
Carla Moreno wanted  
answers fast

### STEPPING IT UP

Unique support system gives  
rehab patients a boost

### ASK THE DOCTOR

What do you need to  
know about sepsis?

*Compliments of*



DOCTORS  
HOSPITAL

**IN THIS ISSUE****4 EASY ACCESS TO  
EMERGENCY CARE**

For this busy mom, location  
was everything

**6 ASK THE DOCTOR**

Your sepsis questions  
answered

**7 SPOTLIGHT ON  
STROKE TREATMENT**

Doctors Hospital recognized  
for quality care



As 2019 draws to a close, it's the ideal time to take stock of the year that has been – to look back on our accomplishments and, at the same time, evaluate our goals for the future.

As CEO of Doctors Hospital of Laredo, I can say with certainty that our exceptional team can reflect on this year's milestones with a sense of pride, knowing that as Laredo grows we continue to

grow right there alongside of our great city — providing patients with the healthcare they need when and where they need it most.

Just recently, we had the privilege of opening ER Saunders, a second freestanding Emergency Department. This location allows us to offer around-the-clock emergency care to the residents of central Laredo in an ER that features six exam rooms, three rapid medical exam spaces, and on-site lab and imaging services. Milestones like this one reflect our mission to bring compassionate, quality care to the communities we serve.

As we plan for the future, know that you can count on Doctors Hospital to continue to play a pivotal role in keeping Laredo healthy and thriving. We do so with a steadfast commitment to investing in our infrastructure and enhancing our services.

Of course, none of these accomplishments would be possible without the concerted efforts of our medical staff, employees, patients and community. We look back in thanks for all they have done and we look forward with optimism for what is yet to come.

**James Resendez, FACHE**  
*Chief Executive Officer*



## Spreading awareness and celebrating survivors – *with style!*

Doctors Hospital of Laredo recently hosted the 19th Annual Breast Cancer Public Forum and Fashion Show at the UT Health Science Center – Laredo Regional Campus. Seventeen beautiful breast cancer survivors walked the runway sporting the latest fashions, courtesy of Stein Mart® stores. Friends, family and supporters cheered them on, and were also treated to a performance by Mariachi de Oro during the intermission.



# *A step in the* **RIGHT DIRECTION**

*Unique harness system provides needed support to patients undergoing outpatient rehab*

Ask Director of Therapy Daniel Serna, OTR, about his job at North Laredo Diagnostic and Therapy Center and you're sure to get a response brimming with enthusiasm. "I love Laredo and I love this community," he says. "And when you add in a supportive organization like this, it's the perfect trifecta."

Serna is especially enthusiastic about the one-stop-shop nature of the rehab services they provide "One way we distinguish our services is by offering all three types of rehab in one place," he says. "Physical therapy focuses on mobility and pain management, occupational therapy retrains for activities of daily living, and speech therapy handles swallowing functions and cognition issues." He adds that it's not unusual for patients to have overlapping needs, which is why it's especially helpful to offer them all in one place.

Another thing Serna is excited about? The unique Solo-Step® Overhead System that was recently added to the facility. This ceiling-mounted device is a ten-foot-long linear track and harness system that allows the therapist to work with patients on things like gait, balance and mobility.

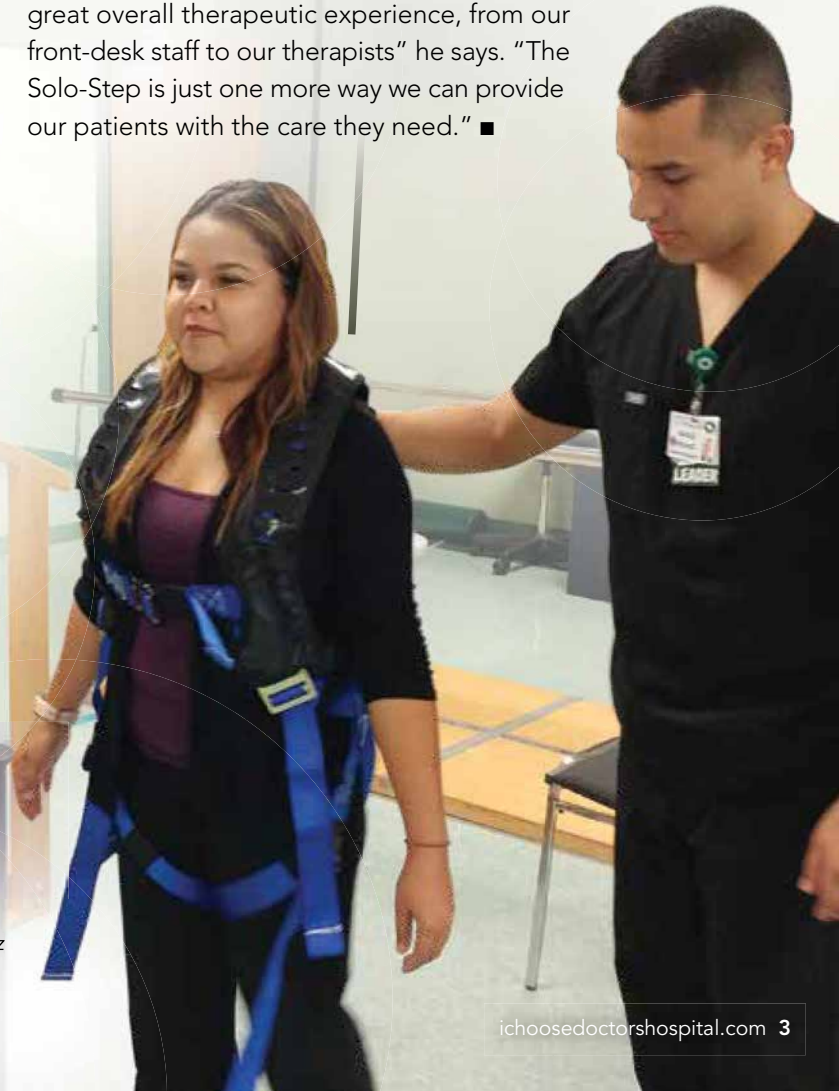
"The overall objective of the system is to reduce the fear of falling," says Serna. "You put the harness on the patient and, once they're comfortable, you can remove any durable medical equipment they might be using like a walker or a cane."

Serna describes it as like having an extra set of hands. "Without the harness system, you might need to have one hand on the patient and another hand on whatever equipment you are using." But now, he explains, the harness system acts as your hands by holding the patient upright. "Now I'm able to provide more cueing and I can challenge the patient more," he says. "I can up the ante by providing more challenging activities."

Serna ends his explanation of the Center as enthusiastically as he began. "My goal is to ensure a great overall therapeutic experience, from our front-desk staff to our therapists" he says. "The Solo-Step is just one more way we can provide our patients with the care they need." ■

**To learn more about rehabilitation services at Doctors Hospital, visit [doctorshosplaredo.com/rehab](http://doctorshosplaredo.com/rehab).**

*Front Office Coordinator Dalia Vasquez helps Director of Therapy Daniel Serna demonstrate the Solo-Step system.*



# *Expanding access to* **EMERGENCY CARE**

**When Carla Moreno's young son was sick, ER South helped them both feel better fast**

**T**hree-year-old Roel Villarreal wasn't feeling well. He had been complaining of a stomachache for much of the night but his mother, Carla Moreno, thought it would pass. The next morning, however, her young son was still not acting like himself and Moreno's motherly instincts were telling her something wasn't right. "He was complaining all night," Moreno says. "When he didn't want to go to preschool the next day I knew something was wrong." ➤



For busy moms like Moreno, having convenient access to a freestanding emergency department like Doctors Hospital Emergency Room South is a real asset. "Before ER South opened, I had to travel all the way to Doctors Hospital of Laredo for emergency care," Moreno says. "From my house to the hospital takes about 45 minutes," she adds. "Now it only takes me about 10 minutes to get to ER South."

While most incidents of abdominal pain in children aren't typically cause for major concern, the worried mother wanted to make sure her young son's discomfort wasn't due to something more serious. "They checked him out for everything," Moreno says. "They examined him, took X-rays, drew blood and did even more to help diagnose him."

While her sick toddler was being examined, Moreno knew they were in the right place. On previous visits, whether she was there for herself, for her 12-year-old daughter, Alessandra, or for other sick family members, Moreno always had confidence in the care she received. "I always recommend ER South to my friends and family if they are having a medical emergency," Moreno says. "The location is super convenient, I never have to wait long and I've always been satisfied with the outcome."

Almost as important to Moreno as the care she receives at the freestanding emergency department is the way she is treated while there. "All of the physicians and nurses take good care of you and they always have a smile on their face while they're doing it," Moreno says. "They really helped Roel feel comfortable while he was there. As a result, he was very patient during all the tests they were doing and it wasn't hard for the staff to work with him at all." She adds jokingly that the stickers they gave the 3-year-old helped keep him content.

For this visit, the news was good. The symptoms of the young patient's stomachache had likely led to dehydration, which was making him feel even worse. The care team helped get him back on his feet with the help of intravenous therapy (I.V.) to rehydrate him and they provided the relieved mom with instructions for at-home care.

"Taking good care of my child is the most important thing to me and I can say that ER South did that exceptionally well," Moreno says. "This place really stands out to me." ■



*A fully recovered Roel Villarreal enjoying family time with dad, Rogelio Villarreal Jr., and mom, Carla Moreno.*

## **NOW OPEN** **ER Saunders:** **Our newest** **freestanding ER**

Central Laredo's resource for high quality, around-the-clock emergency care is ready to serve you and your family.

### **The new facility features:**

- 24-hour emergency medical services
- Diagnostic laboratory services
- Radiology services including X-ray, CT and ultrasound
- 6 exam rooms
- 3 rapid medical exam spaces
- 3 internal waiting spaces

***Get the care you need – when and where you need it most.***



**DOCTORS HOSPITAL**

Emergency Room Saunders

A Service of Doctors Hospital of Laredo

**To learn more about emergency services, visit**  
**[doctorshosplaredo.com/emergency](http://doctorshosplaredo.com/emergency).**



# Answers to your questions

## ABOUT SEPSIS



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

more than 1.7 million adults in the United States develop sepsis each year. Infectious Disease Specialist

**Fernando Sanchez, MD,**

provides need-to-know information about this life-threatening condition, including symptoms to be on the lookout for and potential treatments.



### **Q: What is sepsis?**

Sepsis occurs when your body has an extreme reaction to an existing infection, triggering a potentially deadly chain reaction. Without timely treatment, sepsis can lead to organ failure, tissue damage and even death. While anyone can be affected, certain individuals are at increased risk for sepsis, including adults 65 or older and children younger than 1, people with weakened immune systems, and people with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, lung disease, cancer and kidney disease.

### **Q: What are the symptoms?**

The symptoms of sepsis are like those of any infection, but can also include things like confusion, shortness of breath, increased heart rate, extreme discomfort, and clammy or sweaty skin. People sometimes wait or mistake the symptoms of sepsis for something else, and by the time they get to the emergency room they are in septic shock. This is a severe condition where the body's blood pressure drops to a dangerously low level.

### **Q: How is sepsis diagnosed?**

It can be challenging to diagnose sepsis in its early stages because the signs can be varied, subtle and confusing. We start with vital signs (heart rate and blood pressure), blood tests, and possibly an X-ray or CT scan. There is no one test for sepsis, so we are looking for an infection and seeing how the body is responding to it. Common conditions that can lead to sepsis include pneumonia, urinary tract infections, gallbladder infections and appendicitis.

### **Q: How is sepsis treated?**

Antibiotics are given for the infection, and IV fluids are administered to support blood pressure and major organ systems. We also look for the source of the infection and attempt to resolve it through draining or surgery, if needed. To help avoid sepsis, it's important to take good care of any chronic conditions you may have and take steps to prevent infections, including practicing good hygiene and keeping cuts clean and covered until they heal. ■

**ACT FAST. If you think you may have an infection or sepsis, call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency room immediately and say you are concerned about sepsis.**

*If you or someone else needs emergency help, call 9-1-1 immediately*

# Kudos for quality stroke care

*American Heart Association®  
recognizes Doctors Hospital  
of Laredo's commitment to  
quality stroke care*



## **BY THE TIME YOU FINISH READING THIS ARTICLE, ANOTHER PERSON IN THE UNITED STATES WILL LIKELY HAVE SUFFERED A STROKE.**

In fact, on average, someone has a stroke every 40 seconds in the U.S., which means nearly 795,000 individuals suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year\*. Consequently, stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the country and a leading cause of adult disability.

When a stroke does occur, fast medical intervention is essential. That's because blood flow to the brain is blocked or stopped and brain cells begin to die almost immediately. Doctors Hospital has a specially trained stroke team and emergency department personnel ready to rapidly respond to strokes around the clock.

DHL is also committed to making sure stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines. In recognition of this commitment, the hospital recently received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines® Target: Stroke Honor Roll Silver Plus Quality Achievement Award.

Get with the Guidelines is a program dedicated to improving stroke care by promoting consistent adherence to the most up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines.

Doctors Hospital also received the association's Target: Stroke<sup>SM</sup> Honor Roll award. To qualify for this recognition, hospitals must meet quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster tissue plasminogen activator, or tPA, the only drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat ischemic stroke.

"Doctors Hospital of Laredo is dedicated to improving the quality of care for our stroke patients by implementing the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines-Stroke initiative," says Stroke Program Coordinator Angelica M. Alvarez, RN. "The tools and resources provided help us track and measure our success in meeting evidence-based clinical guidelines developed to improve patient outcomes." ■



**To learn more about the Stroke Center at Doctors Hospital,  
visit [doctorshosplaredo.com/strokecenter](http://doctorshosplaredo.com/strokecenter).**

\*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## CALENDAR OF *events*



**FREE**

### CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

The prepared childbirth class covers information for your entire pregnancy, including labor, pain management, breastfeeding and newborn care. A tour will be included.

**WHERE:** Doctors Hospital Community Center

**WHEN:** Sessions are held from 6 – 8 p.m.

- January 7
- February 4
- March 3

**WHO:** Instructor is Maria Noela Avila, RN, IBCLC, Lactation Consultant.

Register at [doctorshospitalaredo.com/edu](http://doctorshospitalaredo.com/edu).

*We recommend that a mom and her support person register and attend during the third trimester of pregnancy. Class size is limited; please register early. Children are not permitted.*

### BREASTFEEDING CLASSES

Open to all moms, even if it is not your first baby. All mothers are encouraged to attend before and/or after they deliver. Our Lactation Consultant is ready to offer support and guidance.

**WHERE:** Postpartum Conference Room

**WHEN:** Last Thursday of every month, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

To register call 956-523-2530; if there is no answer, please leave a message.

### WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY ONLINE SEMINARS

If you want to learn more about weight-loss surgery, you can now get the information you need in the comfort of your home. Find out more by watching a series of videos about weight-loss surgery at Doctors Hospital of Laredo. Go to [ichoosedoctorshospital.com/videoseminar](http://ichoosedoctorshospital.com/videoseminar).

### BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

**Wednesdays at 6 p.m.**

Open to anyone who has had bariatric surgery or is considering it.

- December 11

Be sure to check the Event Calendar on our website for the 2020 support group schedule.

For support group location and information call 956-523-2573 or check our Facebook page at [facebook.com/DHLWeightLossandWellness](https://facebook.com/DHLWeightLossandWellness).



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956-523-2000

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