

# doctors hospital OF LAREDO



## *Breaking ground on Saunders*

**A NEW EMERGENCY ROOM IS COMING TO LAREDO**

### *Inside:*

#### **ASK THE DOCTOR**

Need-to-know info for seniors

#### **LEVEL III NICU**

Caring for Laredo's most vulnerable babies



*Compliments of*  
**DOCTORS  
HOSPITAL**



At Doctors Hospital of Laredo, part of our mission is to bring innovative treatment options to our community. In this issue, you'll meet Graciela Urdiales, whose quality of life has improved thanks to pulmonary rehabilitation, a service new to our area. Ms. Urdiales' breathing problems limited her ability to be part of her family's life, but after pulmonary rehab, she credits

Respiratory Therapist Maria Garcia, BSRC, RRT, for helping her regain breathing function and cardiovascular fitness.

Scheduled to open in 2019, we recently broke ground on another freestanding Emergency Department (ED) on Saunders Street. This new ED will bring care for time-sensitive injuries and illnesses right to the community without a drive to the main hospital. This new facility features six exam rooms, three rapid medical exam spaces, and on-site lab and imaging services including X-ray, CT and ultrasound. This new location will also accept most insurance plans.

Finally, Doctors Hospital is proud to have earned Level III designation for our neonatal intensive care unit. This means more critically ill newborns will be able to be cared for right in their communities, preventing a long drive to another facility for treatment and easing the minds of their families.

It's thanks to the tireless efforts of the nurses, physicians, health professionals, and support staff of Doctors Hospital that we're able to achieve positive patient outcomes for the Laredo community.

**James Resendez, FACHE**  
Chief Executive Officer

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*On the cover: Doctors Hospital administrators and local leaders ceremonially break ground on the new freestanding emergency department on Saunders Street.*

## We thank our 2019 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Boards like these play a vital role in a hospital's success, and Doctors Hospital of Laredo gratefully thanks our Board of Governors for their commitment and dedication to improving the lives of the citizens of the Laredo area.

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# *Doctors Hospital breaks ground on NEW freestanding emergency department*

Soon, Laredo residents will have another location to receive emergency care like the care they have come to expect from Doctors Hospital of Laredo. Scheduled to open in summer of 2019, Doctors Hospital Emergency Room Saunders will deliver 24-hour a day emergency care at 1300 Saunders Street (1301 E. Olive Street).

“As Laredo grows, we need to grow along with it,” says James Resendez, CEO of Doctors Hospital. “We want to be there for the Laredo community by offering emergency services in the neighborhoods where our patients live.”

Joining the ED at Doctors Hospital of Laredo and Doctors Hospital Emergency Room South, the Doctors Hospital Emergency Room Saunders will operate under the hospital’s license. This commitment to the Laredo community runs deep with a \$9 million investment in the new facility, which will feature six exam rooms, three rapid medical exam spaces and three internal waiting spaces along with on-site imaging services including computed tomography (CT), ultrasound, X-ray and laboratory services.

“By opening a second location in central Laredo, we’re giving the community another alternative for emergency care in that region,” says Associate Administrator Andrew Wilson, MHA.

The goal of the design and layout of the new freestanding emergency department (FED) is to deliver an ideal patient experience. An open-concept space will help improve communication between caregivers to provide patient-centered care quickly and efficiently. If patients need a higher level of care than the FED can provide, they’ll be transferred to Doctors Hospital or the hospital of their choice.

Along with providing on-site radiology and lab testing for emergency patients, the lab and radiology facilities will be open to the public: Just walk in with a doctor’s order to complete the test.

Though the new FED is separate from the main hospital, patients receive the same heartfelt, thoughtful care they’d receive at the main ED at Doctors Hospital. Wilson singles out the nurses in particular: “The compassion with which care is delivered by the nursing staff is second to none. They just exude compassion—I’ve never seen anything like it in my career.” ■



**DOCTORS HOSPITAL**  
**Emergency Room Saunders**  
A Service of Doctors Hospital of Laredo



*In an emergency call 9-1-1 immediately.*



# BREATHING *again*

*Pulmonary rehab patient Graciela Urdiales doesn't take a single breath for granted*

After a lengthy career as a postal worker, Graciela Urdiales looked forward to retirement and spending time with her family, especially her 11 grandchildren. But more than 30 years of breathing difficulties were making it difficult to keep up with her loved ones. >



*Graciela Urdiales enjoys spending time with her family.*

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*“They never gave up on me. You can trust them with your life.”* – Graciela Urdiales

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“I was not physically active,” Urdiales said. “I used to use oxygen while dressing myself, and I’d have to sit down and recover.” Thanks to pulmonary rehabilitation at Doctors Hospital of Laredo, she can now be a part of her family’s life again.

Years ago, Urdiales was diagnosed with dermatomyositis, which initially develops as a skin rash and for some patients, can progress into problems with the lungs. Eventually, Urdiales developed pulmonary fibrosis as part of her dermatomyositis’ progression. Other members of her treatment team suggested physical therapy at first, but during the course of her treatment, Pulmonologist Rafael Deliz Velez, MD, invited her to be one of the first patients in the new pulmonary rehab program.

At first, Urdiales was skeptical about the program. “I was scared to go to therapy because I didn’t know what they were going to do to me!” However, she learned the rehab team would work with the limits of her breathing and fitness. Thanks to the encouragement of her respiratory therapist, Mariti Garcia, BSRC, RRT, Urdiales discovered she could succeed at pulmonary rehab. “Mariti would always say, ‘Don’t say you

can’t do it. You think you can’t but you can,’” Urdiales said.

Garcia customized a therapy program for Urdiales. “It took over half of the program for her just to accept getting on the treadmill,” Garcia said, “but by the end of the program we were able to get her comfortable there and she could do 30 minutes at a time.”

Starting with stretch bands and short walks around the track, Urdiales built cardiovascular fitness—and confidence in herself. Eventually, she worked up to greater and greater distances on the treadmill. “Would you believe I could do a quarter mile?” she told her husband. “Then I’d tell him, ‘Would you believe I did a half mile today?’”

Before she started her three-sessions-per-week pulmonary rehab routine, Urdiales lamented that her ability to be part of her family’s life was limited. “Before I started the exercise routine, my husband took over the kitchen. But I wanted my family to eat my cooking,” she said with a laugh. Now, she’s able to cook for and engage with her grandchildren and visit with her family every Sunday. She credits God, and her

family, for giving her the moral support that she needs to continue her fitness routine at home and stay accountable for her goals.

“They push me!” she says. “They ask me if I’ve been walking or exercising. If I say ‘I cooked today!’ they say, ‘That’s not exercise!’”

Urdiales also credits her team at Doctors Hospital of Laredo for their tireless work and professionalism. She found their encouragement during challenging workouts inspiring, and their devotion to her care stayed with her. ■

## *The Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program*

If you have been diagnosed with a chronic lung disease or condition, Doctors Hospital of Laredo offers an individualized Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program designed to help you live a better quality of life and decrease the symptoms of your disease. We help people with lung diseases and conditions including:

- Asthma
- Bronchiectasis
- Chronic bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Emphysema
- Lung cancer and lung cancer surgery
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Pulmonary fibrosis

**To find a lung specialist, visit [doctorshospitalaredo.com/pulmonary](http://doctorshospitalaredo.com/pulmonary).**

# Preventive medicine for seniors

## Annual checkups can help prevent major issues



An annual checkup isn't just for kids—seniors can benefit

from regular preventive care. Addressing minor ailments can prevent major issues later. Here, family medicine doctor **Mariela Bernal-Irizarry, MD** shares why senior preventive services are crucial for keeping small problems from becoming big ones.

### **Q: Why is it important for seniors to stay current on their physicals?**

When seniors come in regularly for physical exams, we can find problems early and treat more effectively with simpler interventions. Even if you feel healthy, it's important to catch things early. If you're concerned about costs, insurance often covers the office visit and preventive exam for senior patients.

### **Q: What vaccines should seniors get annually or every few years?**

Annually, everyone should get a flu shot, and a high dose flu shot is recommended for all patients over 65. A tetanus booster is also appropriate every 10 years. To prevent pneumonia and pneumococcal diseases after age 65, patients should receive pneumonia vaccines one year apart. And patients should get a shingles vaccine any time after age 50.

### **Q: How often does a patient need to come in for a physical?**

Each patient should receive a complete physical annually. For healthy patients, once a year is enough. But for other comorbidities like diabetes or high blood pressure, patients should be monitored every two to three months.

### **Q: What annual tests are appropriate for seniors?**

Every patient should be checked annually for blood pressure, height, weight and cholesterol. For women ages 50 to 74, schedule a mammogram every one to two years. Women should also receive a Pap test every three years until age 65, and should receive a bone density screen every two years over 65. Men should be checked annually for a prostate specific antigen blood test between ages 55 and 69. Finally, to screen for colon cancer, every patient should receive a colonoscopy every ten years or have an occult blood test performed annually. ■

Consult with your healthcare provider on the recommendations discussed in this article.

**To find a primary care physician at Doctors Hospital of Laredo, visit [doctorshospitalaredo.com/familymed](http://doctorshospitalaredo.com/familymed).**



# CARE FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

NICU Level III designation means advanced care is available in your community



At Doctors Hospital, we hope no baby or parent ever has to visit our neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). But for those infants who need critical care, we're proud to have earned Level III designation. What does Level III certification mean for you and the Laredo community? It means the facility has the expertise and resources available on-site to care for critically ill babies around the clock.

The NICU at Doctors Hospital is equipped to offer comprehensive care for babies in critical condition, infants born early and those with congenital, respiratory and infectious conditions. "Any time a baby isn't stable enough to go to the nursery, they will go to the NICU for observation," says Chief Nursing Officer Selvan Murugan, RN, MSN, MBA, MHA, FACHE. "We'll look at heart and neurological function, to make sure everything is OK." Other serious conditions that would mean a visit to the NICU include underweight or not fully developed babies, abnormal lab results, a heart defect or other abnormalities.

The advanced treatment available right in Laredo means that families are able to stay together, preventing a long drive to another city for care and removing a source of stress during a challenging time. The NICU even features "Twenty-four-seven visitation—this helps moms and dads create a bond with their lovely babies around the clock," Murugan said.

In addition to the Level III certification for the NICU, Doctors Hospital is also designated as a Texas Ten Step Program for encouraging breastfeeding among all mothers, including those whose babies are in the NICU. Murugan says, "We brought in a lactation consultant to round the NICU, educating and training mothers to breastfeed when possible." ■

**Visit [doctorshospitalaredo.com/new](http://doctorshospitalaredo.com/new) to learn more about our maternity and newborn care.**



Ronald  
McDonald  
House®  
San Antonio

## Ronald McDonald House provides comfort for our NICU families

For many babies, their stay in the NICU will only be a few days. But for those families facing weeks-long stays, the Ronald McDonald House Family room at Doctors Hospital is a welcome respite from the hectic and sometimes scary world of the NICU. The respite suite at Doctors Hospital features a quiet area for parents and family members to unwind and recharge. "It's really helpful for the parent or the mother," Murugan says.



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.

- March 5
- April 2

**WHO:** Instructors are Kris Lugo, RN, BSN, and Maria Noela Avila, RN, IBCLC, Lactation Consultant.

Register at [doctorshospalaredo.com/edu](http://doctorshospalaredo.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.

- February 27
- March 27

Be sure to check the Event Calendar on our website for the 2019 support group schedule.

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



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956-523-2000

**HEALTH NEWS FROM  
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