

HEALTH NEWS *from*

SPRING 2018

doctors hospital OF LAREDO

PROVIDING THE NURTURING TOUCH *a baby needs*

A cuddler program helps
NICU babies

*Gilda Villarreal, RN,
cuddler program
coordinator, oversees
volunteer training
in the NICU.*

Also Inside:

New imaging
equipment is here!

RSV – a virus like
the common cold



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Welcome to the spring edition of *Health News*! As we continue to progress through the new year, we're eager to share all that's happening at Doctors Hospital of Laredo, notably the radiology equipment upgrades that make getting an X-ray, MRI, mammogram or ultrasound a better experience for patients and more accurate for radiologists. Learn more about the new technology on page 4.

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Volunteers provide the nurturing touch babies need

Our team of heart attack and stroke specialists explain what it takes to be an accredited Chest Pain Center and a certified Primary Stroke Center and how they promote the long-term health of their patients with lifesaving interventions.

Also in this issue, Neonatologist Jose Berlioz, MD, offers helpful information and prevention tips about a virus called RSV that often affects infants and young children, and we introduce the cuddler program that trains volunteers to provide the nurturing touch babies in the neonatal intensive care unit need during their stay.

When we upgrade technology and add programs at the hospital, it is to better serve the health needs of the community. We'd like to recognize our Board of Governors and Medical Executive Committee for their support and dedication to continually improve our hospital for the good of our patients.

Have a healthy and safe spring and summer season!

James Resendez, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer



WELCOME to the community!

Laredo Physicians Group and Doctors Hospital of Laredo recently welcomed Gastroenterologist **Sohrab Rahimi Naini, MD**, to the Laredo Physicians Group and the hospital's medical staff. Dr. Rahimi Naini is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Gastroenterology. He is also a member of the American College of Physicians, the American Gastroenterological Association, the American College of Gastroenterology, the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy and the American Medical Association. **For appointments, please call 956-307-3377.**

High-quality HEART ATTACK AND STROKE CARE *close to home*

To become an accredited Chest Pain Center, the staff passed a rigorous evaluation by the American College of Cardiology Accreditation Services, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving cardiovascular care at hospitals.

According to Chief Nursing Officer at Doctors Hospital of Laredo, Selvan Murugan, RN, MSN, MBA, MHA, CMSRN, FACHE, "We want to make sure we are providing consistent care and reaching the desired outcome every time. There is a process to measure how well we reach every benchmark."

One benchmark is door-to-balloon time, which is how long it takes from patient arrival at the hospital to the completion of a revascularization intervention, such as balloon angioplasty. Chest Pain Coordinator Jessica Martinez, RN, says, "Our benchmark is 90 minutes but most of the time we are meeting that in 60 minutes. We are able to diagnose and treat patients faster, which means less damage to their heart and a better outcome."

In addition to being a Chest Pain Center, Doctors Hospital of Laredo is the first Primary Stroke Center in Laredo and is certified by The Joint Commission, which is considered the gold standard for stroke care. A specially trained team is available 24/7 for stroke emergencies with access to a neurologist to assess patients through teleconferencing. Time is critical during a stroke, and the sooner staff can diagnose and treat a patient, the lower the risk of residual effects.

Stroke Program Coordinator Angie Salinas, RN, adds that a key initiative is community outreach, "Our focus is the prevention of stroke and heart attack. We educate the public and the schools, as well as the EMS System to teach first responders to alert us when a patient is coming with symptoms of a possible stroke." ■

Join the Laredo Cardiac Support Group at their next monthly meeting to learn about heart health and cardiac care. Register online at doctorshosplaredo.com/heartgroup.



Intensive care unit and cardiac rehab expansion

Earlier this year Doctors Hospital of Laredo finished an expansion project, adding eight new beds at the ICU and constructing 4,000 square feet for a cardiac rehabilitation unit to better serve patients in the community. The cardiac rehab unit has special amenities like a walking track and exercise equipment, showers and lockers for men and women, a private conference room and increased cardiac rehab monitoring for patients recovering from a cardiac-related procedure.



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American Heart Association
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CERTIFICATION
Meets standards for
Primary Stroke Center

In collaboration with
American Heart Association
Hospital Accreditation

RADIOLOGY UPGRADE:

Better imaging, better patient experience



“I’ve had MRIs done at other facilities, but this was the most comfortable.”

When Miguel Torres fractured his right talus, the bone that connects the foot and ankle, he went to Doctors Hospital of Laredo for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to check the surrounding ligaments and tendons for possible damage. He left pleased with his radiology visit. ►



"They took me in at the time they said my appointment was going to be. The gentleman, Eloy Ramirez, who did the scan was very professional. I was in there for about 30 to 40 minutes. I actually fell asleep it was so comfortable," shares Torres.

Torres had his scan done with the brand new Philips MRI 3T scanner, the latest in MRI technology now available at Doctors Hospital as part of the radiology equipment upgrade. Director of Radiology Carlos Farias, RT(R) (CT), explains that overall the new imaging technology means safer and faster scans for patients and enhanced image quality for more accurate readings and improved diagnoses. Each type of scan is different and depends on patient needs. The newest radiology equipment upgrades include:

MRI - Philips MRI 3T

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) uses radio waves and a strong magnetic field to create clear pictures of internal organs and tissues to diagnose diseases in all parts of the body, such as cancer, heart disease, neurological diseases and joint and musculoskeletal disorders. The Philips MRI 3T has a magnet double the strength of standard machines on the market, meaning that it produces optimal quality images and has the latest technologies available for brain profusions, as well as breast and prostate imaging.

X-rays - Portable Samsung GM85

An X-ray is an image made by passing a small amount of radiation through a body part to expose structure like bones or internal organs to check for possible fractures or abnormalities.

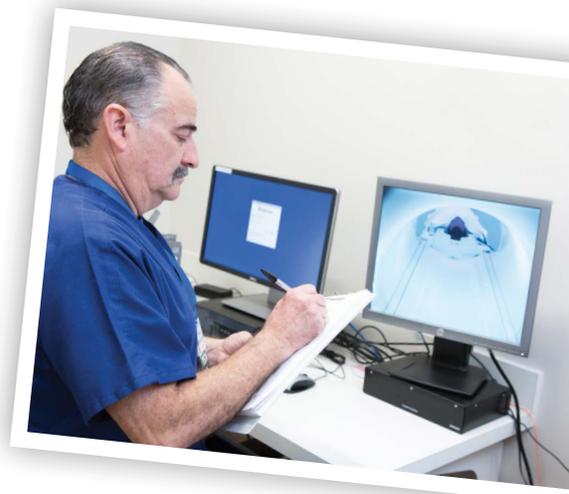
The new machine is lighter and has a longer battery life, which reduces down time between scans. It also produces higher quality images and can be adjusted according to patient size for minimal radiation exposure.

Ultrasound (Sonography) - Philips Ultrasound Epic 7 models

An ultrasound utilizes high frequency sound waves to produce and read echoes to create images of a structure in the body. Ultrasounds are often used to see babies in utero but are also used to see the liver, pancreas, spleen, blood vessels, breast, kidney, gallbladder and heart. The two brand new Philips Ultrasound Epic 7 models provide better penetration with better image quality and automated guiding systems to help radiologists target biopsies faster.

Digital Mammography - Low Dose Genius™ 3D Mammography™ exams from Hologic

A digital mammogram uses a small amount of radiation and tomosynthesis technology to produce 3D electronic pictures of the breast tissue. Mammograms are used to detect breast cancer and other abnormalities. 3D imaging of the breast makes for more accurate diagnoses and reduces unnecessary screening callbacks without adding any discomfort for the patient. ■



The new equipment benefits radiology staff like Eloy Ramirez by producing better quality images.

Visit doctorshospitaldo.com/imaging to learn more about radiology services at Doctors Hospital. To schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-465-5585.



What is RSV and how can you prevent it?



Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common sickness

with symptoms similar to the common cold. It often affects babies and young children, but most of the time it can be treated with over-the-counter medications. Neonatologist **Jose Berlioz, MD**, gives details about what RSV is, who may be susceptible and tips to prevent infection.

Q: What is RSV?

RSV affects the respiratory system. Most children will have had a case of RSV by the age of two*. While it can also affect adults and older children, for them it may look and feel like a cold with mild symptoms. For infants six months or younger or any person with a weakened immune system, RSV could lead to complications like dehydration or the development of more serious conditions like bronchiolitis or pneumonia. You typically see RSV cases from late fall to early spring.

*cdc.gov

Q: What are common symptoms of RSV?

Runny nose, sneezing, coughing, wheezing, diminished appetite and fever are common symptoms of RSV that may appear gradually over the course of several days. In small infants, parents may notice that the baby is irritable or lethargic and having trouble breathing. Symptoms may not present for four to six days after infection and may last a week or two.

Q: How is RSV treated?

For healthy children and adults, RSV will typically go away on its own. As with any illness, it is recommendable to consult your doctor if you are concerned. Symptoms like fever and congestion can usually be managed with over-the-counter medications. It is important to get enough fluids during an RSV infection to prevent dehydration. Hospitalization for RSV is rare but could be necessary for young infants, elderly adults or people with weakened immune systems, especially if there are signs of dehydration or more serious illness.

Q: Are there ways to prevent the spread of RSV?

Be observant of people around you who may look ill, and bypass the "abrazo" and the kiss in that case. Discreet use of waterless hand sanitizer can be helpful. Also, get plenty of rest, eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly and get a yearly flu vaccine. If you're over age 50, get the new shingles vaccine, Shingrix; if over age 65, take the pneumonia vaccine series. Talk to your doctor for specific recommendations. ■

To find a doctor or specialist please call our **FREE Direct Doctors Plus®** physician referral service at 877-992-1711.

Cuddler program for NICU babies at Doctors Hospital

Doctors Hospital of Laredo launched a Cuddler Program at its 12-bed neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) to offer a nurturing touch for babies in treatment there.

Through the Cuddler Program, trained volunteers comfort babies during their hospital stay when their families can't be there. NICU Manager, Gilda Villarreal, RN, explains, "A lot of parents work, live outside of the city or have no way to get to the hospital. Mom could be sick or home with other children. Some of the babies are born dependent on substances, are in custody of the state or are pending adoption and may be there for two or three months."

A neonate, preemie or baby who is sick and has to stay in the NICU benefits from being held or cuddled during that time. The Touch Research Institute of the University of Miami has found that touch therapy can promote weight gain in preterm infants, reduce stress and increase immune function.

Cuddler programs are growing at hospitals around the U.S. because they help everyone involved: the NICU staff, the babies and their families and the volunteers who often find it to be soothing for them as well!

Volunteers must have the same screening, background checks and immunizations as hospital employees, and they receive training and education on safety, risk management and confidentiality at the hospital. Volunteers spend at least an hour with babies at the NICU once or twice a week.

The importance of this additional human touch for babies in the NICU cannot be emphasized enough. As Villarreal says, "When we are sick, we want someone to care for us. The nurses are busy, and these babies really need someone to cuddle them to feel that they are being cared for and being loved." ■

Interested in volunteering for the Cuddler Program? Call 956-523-2113 for information or stop by to pick up an application!



Volunteer cuddlers say they find holding the babies, to be soothing for them, too!

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: Community Center

WHEN: Sessions are held the first Tuesday of the month, from 6 – 8 p.m.

- June 5
- July 3
- August 7

WHO: Instructors are Sharon Priest, RN, and Maria Noela Avila, RN, IBCLC, Lactation Consultant.

HOW: Call 1-877-992-1711 to sign up and confirm class dates.*

**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.

HOW: Register at 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.

BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Providence Health Center (main lobby)
Open to anyone who has had bariatric surgery or is considering it.

- May 30: Standing yoga session
- June 27: Restaurant menu reviews
- July 25: Heart rate and fat loss
- August 29: 5th Annual Bake Off



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