

# Health Connection



FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT MIMBRES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

## New services—better care

Since this is the last newsletter for 2006, I would like to provide you with a recap of the highlights at Mimbres Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home (MMH). To be innovative and to improve the quality and access to healthcare services for our community, we continue to acquire new physicians, services and better equipment because we know it is important for our friends, neighbors and families. Good medical care close to home is vital to maintaining a growing community.

In 2006, six new physicians started practice in Deming. They are:

- Thomas Byrne, M.D., obstetrics and gynecology
- Tom-Oliver Klein, M.D., internal medicine
- Ala Alosman, M.D., pain management
- Valentin Antoci, M.D., orthopedic surgery
- Ruel Taylor, D.O., urology
- Francisco Miranda, M.D., pediatrics

These physicians bring considerable talent to the excellent physician community we have in Deming. I hope you have had a chance to meet all of them and make them feel welcome.

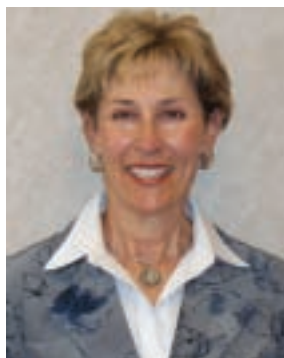
Our investment in new equipment includes a new 3-D ultrasound and portable X-ray unit, and more than \$500,000 in new orthopedic, anesthesiology and gynecology equipment for the Operating Room. New equipment helps physicians provide better service and helps staff provide safer care for you.

New services include the Outpatient Rehabilitation Center, The Pain Management Clinic run by Dr. Alosman and orthopedic services offered by Dr. Antoci that



include shoulder arthroscopy, rotator cuff repair and fracture care.

As the holiday season and end of year approaches, I would like to thank all the staff members, physicians and volunteers in the hospital, nursing home, home health and hospice for another successful year of service to our stakeholders. Every single member of our healthcare team is important to us, just as you are important to us. We have appreciated the opportunity to serve you this year and look forward to a safe and happy 2007.



Claudia Jeffreys  
Chairperson Board of Trustees

CLAUDIA JEFFREYS  
Chairperson, Board of Trustees  
Mimbres Memorial Hospital  
and Nursing Home

## SURGERY 101:

# A manual for peace of mind

**D**id you take your Girl Scout or Boy Scout oath seriously as a child? If so, to this day you're probably sure to pack what you need before a hike: a map, compass, first-aid kit, water and healthy snacks. You ask what the terrain is and where the trail ends so you can get home on schedule.

When it comes to surgery, studies have shown that this same "be prepared" principle can ease pre-op anxiety, reduce your hospital stay and speed recovery.

If you're about to undergo surgery, ask your doctor to describe the procedure completely. Knowing what to expect can defuse stress and help you approach surgery day with a calm head.

Here are some other ways you can make the time before, during and after surgery run more smoothly:

### BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE

- Follow your physician's instructions about refraining from smoking, eating and drinking before the procedure.
- Ask your physician about taking aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs before surgery. Because they're blood thinners, these medications may cause excessive blood loss.
- Tell your doctor which prescription and over-the-counter drugs you take. This goes for vitamins and herbs, too, as certain herbal remedies, such as St. John's wort and kava, may extend the effects of anesthesia or create other complications.
- You won't be allowed to drive after the procedure, so make reliable transportation arrangements.
- Organize your home. Make sure you have groceries or frozen meals on hand. If climbing stairs will be a problem, make sleeping arrangements downstairs.

- Practice relaxation techniques such as meditation or yoga. These will help calm you and speed post-op healing.

### DURING YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

Your cozy robe or a favorite photo will warm your surroundings and soothe you. Having family and friends visit will bolster you, but don't be afraid to set limits: You'll need some time to rest and recuperate without interruptions.

### HOME AGAIN

A little help from friends can be useful. If worries about housework or bills are nagging at you, ask someone to take care of these chores. In the meantime, the relaxation methods you used before surgery can help you feel better now, too. Imagine yourself in the near future doing something you enjoy, such as taking an invigorating hike.



## PROTECTING AGAINST FEMALE CANCERS

# What every woman should know

**G**ynecologic cancer is the fourth most common type of cancer in women. Here's a rundown of the gynecologic cancers and facts that can help reduce your risk:

### UTERINE CANCER

Uterine cancer—also known as endometrial cancer—is the most common type of reproductive cancer that strikes American women and occurs most often after menopause. Symptoms include unusual vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, pain during intercourse, unexplained weight change and difficult or painful urination.

Obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and tamoxifen or hormone replacement therapy use may increase risk.

### OVARIAN CANCER

Ovarian cancer is the deadliest cancer and often shows no obvious signs until late in its development. But when caught early, most cases can be successfully treated.

Symptoms include abdominal discomfort or pain, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, frequent urination, appetite loss, feelings of fullness, weight change with no known reason and abnormal vaginal bleeding.

An important risk factor is a family history of ovarian cancer. Fertility drugs, hormone replacement therapy, increasing age, infertility, having had no children and a family history of breast cancer may also increase risk.

### CERVICAL CANCER

Thanks to Pap tests, deaths from cervical cancer are decreasing. Common symptoms are abnormal bleeding and bloody or discolored vaginal discharge.

The sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV) causes most cervical cancers. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved a vaccine that protects against HPV. A federal panel recommends females ages 11 to 26 receive the vaccine.

Other risk factors linked to cervical cancer can be avoided, such as smoking and poor diet.

### CANCERS OF THE VAGINA, VULVA AND FALLOPIAN TUBES

These cancers tend to be rare. Women should alert their

doctors to symptoms that include unusual bleeding or discharge, persistent itching of the vulva, pain in the pelvic region, difficult or painful urination, unusual pain or pressure in the abdomen, pain during intercourse and a lump or sore on the vulva that won't heal.

Women may be at risk for vaginal and vulvar cancers if they've had genital warts, chronic vulvar irritations, abnormal Pap tests or intercourse at an early age or with many partners. Women who smoke or whose mothers took DES (diethylstilbestrol) when they were pregnant may also be at risk. Risk factors for tubal cancer are unknown, but it tends to strike women after menopause.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Regular screenings and an annual pelvic exam can detect and even prevent some gynecologic cancers. Keep your doctor informed of any risk factors, especially family history, that you may have.



# Quality surgical care, close to home

**S**urgery isn't something any of us look forward to, but sometimes it's necessary in order to maintain good health.

The Surgical Services Department at Mimbres Memorial Hospital (MMH) is here to make your surgical experience a little easier and as pleasant as possible.

The Surgical Services Department offers a preadmission testing clinic, preoperative clinic, operative suites, GI/endoscopy suite and a post-anesthesia care unit staffed by surgeons, a gastroenterologist, anesthesiologists, nurses and surgical technicians trained to monitor your well-being throughout your stay. Traveling to another town is not necessary for most services. Deming physicians are able to perform a wide range of surgeries and endoscopic procedures right here at home.

Once you're scheduled for a procedure or surgery, preadmissions tests are done so your surgeon and anesthesiologist have correct information on your current physical condition. Nurses make sure your tests are completed and available for your doctor's review. In the preoperative clinic, you're asked what medications you're taking, your nurse reviews your medical history and you're provided with preoperative instructions. Your anesthesiologist speaks with you as well. Your procedure, your physician and which body part will undergo surgery are confirmed at this time. Throughout this process, you always have the opportunity to ask questions.

Thank you in advance for making MMH your choice for both inpatient and outpatient surgical services and procedures. See the sidebar for a list of providers who are on the medical staff and available for your needs.

## Learn more!

**F**or more information about Mimbres Memorial Hospital's Surgical Services Department, call (505) 546-5852.

## THE RIGHT SURGEONS FOR YOU



**NIKHIL MEHTA, M.D., FACS**

**Vascular Surgery & Board Certified in General Surgery**

**Specialties include:** Carotid endarterectomy, aneurysm repair, femoral iliac bypass, femoral popliteal bypass (repair of vascular blockages), peripheral vascular procedures, atherectomy, laparoscopic removal of gallbladder, hernia repair, breast biopsies, bowel surgery, removal of lung mass and bronchoscopy.



**VALENTIN ANTOCI, M.D.**

**Orthopedic Surgery**

**Specialties include:** All major and minor procedures including fracture repair, rotator cuff repair and joint replacement, as well as treatment for sports injuries and carpal tunnel.



**CLIFFORD GARY, D.O.**

**Obstetrics and Gynecology**

**Specialties include:** Dilation and curettage (D&C); hysterectomy, including laparoscopic assisted (LAVH); bladder suspension; tubal ligations; removal of ovarian cysts and Caesarean section.



**RUEL TAYLOR, D.O., FAOS**

**Board Certified in Urology**

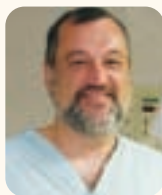
**Specialties include:** Kidney and bladder procedures, bladder suspensions, vesicle vaginal sling, lithotripsy, kidney stone and prostate surgery, laser prostate surgery, erectile dysfunction treatment (medical and surgical), vasectomy, circumcisions and scrotal procedures.



**THOMAS J. BYRNE, M.D.**

**Board Certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology**

**Specialties include:** Dilation and curettage (D&C); hysterectomy, including laparoscopic assisted (LAVH); bladder suspension; tubal ligations; removal of ovarian cysts and Caesarean section.



**BORIS REZNIK, M.D.**

**Gastroenterology**

**Specialties include:** EGD (scope of upper GI tract), colonoscopy (scope of lower GI tract) and ERCP (treatment for common duct stones).

# Back pain

## Don't take it lying down

By **Ala Alosman, M.D.**  
**Board-Certified Anesthesiologist  
and Interventional Pain Specialist**



Ala Alosman, M.D.

**L**ow back pain is one of the most common medical problems in the United States and is the No. 1 reason people miss work. Both men and women are affected equally, although younger patients tend to be

disproportionately male. Some investigators have suggested a genetic role in certain kinds of low back pain. In addition, many studies have shown an association between low back pain and poor general health. Obesity, smoking, inactivity and poor strength and flexibility make you vulnerable to low back pain.

Low back pain is a symptom, not a disease. In the large majority of cases no definitive diagnosis is ever found. Fortunately, most cases resolve within six weeks with or without treatment.

### TYPES OF BACK PAIN

Chronic low back pain is usually defined as pain that persists longer than seven to 12 weeks. Acute low back pain is a result of injury. Nociceptors (pain receptors) pervade all structures in the spine, so that injury to any of these will be perceived as pain.

### BACK PAIN TREATMENT

The first step in treating low back pain is ruling out the possibility of serious disease. If you experience any of these symptoms in addition to your back pain, seek help immediately:

- Unexplained weight loss or malaise accompanied by low back pain that is worse at night requires diagnostic studies to rule out malignancy.
- Unexplained fever, chills, night sweats and a history of drug abuse or spinal procedures may mean an infection of the meninges (membrane that envelops the brain and spinal cord) or the vertebral column.



- Severe back pain with nerve damage, sensory loss, diminished anal sphincter tone and urinary retention or incontinence may be caused by an epidural abscess or hematoma, a spinal tumor or herniated disc, and needs emergent surgery.

Mimbres Memorial Hospital's Pain Management Clinic performs procedures to diagnose, reduce and manage pain, such as epidural steroid injection, facet injection, sacroiliac joint injection, lumbar discography and selective lumbar nerve root blocks. We also perform piriformis muscle injection, trigger point injections, lumbar sympathetic chain block and celiac and hypogastric plexuses block. In the near future we will be able to provide spinal cord stimulator and intrathecal morphine pumps. Most procedures are done under X-ray guidance for accuracy.

## Get help today!

**If you suffer from acute or chronic lower back pain, consult your physician or call the Pain Management Clinic, open Tuesday and Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., for an appointment at (505) 546-5892.**

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about arthritis?

Test your knowledge and learn more about arthritis.

1

**What does the word arthritis mean?**

- a. Sore joint
- b. Joint irritation
- c. Joint inflammation
- d. Rigid joint

2

**Which of the following statements about arthritis is true?**

- a. Using artificial sweeteners like Equal and Nutrasweet that contain aspartame increases your risk of developing arthritis.
- b. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in Americans over age 15.
- c. Arthritis is more prevalent in women than in men.
- d. Most people with arthritis will need minor surgery to lessen the pain.

3

**Osteoarthritis is caused by the breakdown/loss of \_\_\_\_\_ in the joints.**

- a. bursa
- b. cartilage
- c. air
- d. synovial fluid

4

**How is rheumatoid arthritis different from other forms of arthritis?**

- a. It occurs in joints on both sides of the body.
- b. Doctors recommend people with it sleep on a waterbed to alleviate pressure on joints.
- c. Pain is felt only early in the morning or late at night.
- d. It occurs when crystals build up in the joints.

5

**Older adults aren't the only ones affected by arthritis; it can affect any age group. How many children are estimated to have arthritis?**

- a. 35,000
- b. 150,000
- c. 300,000
- d. 500,000

ANSWERS: 1. C, 2. B, 3. B, 4. A, 5. C

8

## easy ways to get more exercise

**F**itting exercise into your schedule doesn't have

to involve a large bank account or even a lot of time.

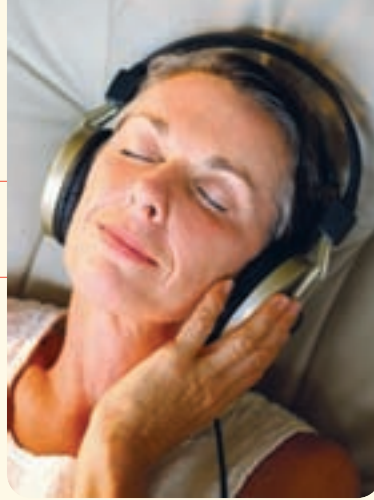
The following list of ways to make

physical activity a habit was created for even the busiest people.

- 1 **Take the stairs instead of the elevator.** This alternative burns calories and tones muscles.
- 2 **Avoid the phone.** At work, walk down the hallway instead of using the telephone or e-mail to communicate with a co-worker.
- 3 **Walk instead of drive.** It may not be the speediest mode of transportation, but it's effective when you want to visit a neighbor down the street, take your child to a nearby park or pick up a few items at the corner market.
- 4 **Walk during lunch.** Take a friend for company or listen to a book on tape to make your walk mentally as well as physically productive.
- 5 **Clean the house.** You'll have to do more than load the dishwasher to get your heart pumping, but a vigorous cleaning that takes two to three hours may be just what the doctor ordered.
- 6 **Ride your bike.** It's quicker than walking, cheaper than driving and it burns calories.
- 7 **Break activity down into small time increments.** If you don't have the time or energy for 30 minutes of continuous exercise, spread it out. Start with 10 minutes of activity, then do it again and again—for a total of 30 minutes.
- 8 **Vary your activities.** Boredom is one of the biggest commitment killers, so find several activities you enjoy and pick and choose depending on the weather and your mood.



# Banish caregiver burnout



If you're caring for someone who depends on you, you need to be healthy and energetic. Yet the sheer amount of time and thought involved in providing care may mean you've put yourself at the bottom of your priority list—making you ripe for stress and burnout. Try these steps to protect your health:

**1 Get regular medical checkups.** Tell your doctor about your caregiving commitment—he or she may suggest resources to make your life easier.

**2 Get plenty of rest.** Sleep deprivation contributes to depression. Have a family member pinch-hit (or hire a respite worker) so you can get to bed at a reasonable hour or sneak in a nap.

**3 Eat a nutritious diet.** A poor diet can lead to malnutrition and fatigue. Regular, well-balanced meals boost energy. Ask family members to help with shopping and meal preparation.

**4 Get regular exercise.** Moderate exercise combats stress, increases energy and provides a mental-health break.

**5 Manage stress.** Meditate or learn relaxation techniques. Share your feelings with friends and family members. Ask your doctor for advice or referral to a counselor.

**6 Ask for help.** Don't try to be a superhero! Ask family

members to help pick up prescriptions, do laundry or drive to doctors' appointments. Ask your doctor about local resources like transportation to medical checkups, home-delivered meals, respite care or adult day-care services.

**7 Schedule time for yourself.** Schedule time to enjoy your hobbies. Spend time with friends. Try a change of scenery—take a short drive or see a play or concert.

**8 Be realistic and flexible.** Accept that your loved one's illness may change from week to week. Be flexible as you plan for the future. Acknowledge the many good things you've done and don't be hard on yourself for not being able to do everything on your own.

# Real-world strategies to control your weight



Visit the diet and nutrition section of any bookstore and you'll be amazed by the number of books offering the latest miracle diet. Low carb, no carb, high protein, low calorie—but do any work?

Fad diets tend to be tough to stick with. Even worse, people often feel deprived and pile unwanted pounds back on once they're off the diets.

The best way to take off fat is slowly and steadily. That means a weight loss of no more than one to two

pounds a week. Many fad diets drastically reduce your food intake and put your body into "starvation" mode, slowing your metabolism to conserve calories. That's the

exact opposite of what you want. Similarly, restricting certain foods—such as carbohydrates—can lead to cravings that will derail your efforts.

## THE TRIED AND TRUE

The following are real-life tips to help you look and feel your best:

- **Rebalance your diet.** If your diet is heavy on foods like crackers, bagels, white rice, low-fiber cereal and pasta, substitute them with whole grains like brown rice, multi-grain breads and pasta enriched with soy. To feel satisfied longer, combine carbs with protein.

- **Count calories.** Simply put, to lose weight you have to ingest fewer calories than you expend.

- **Spread out meals.** Eating small amounts throughout the day boosts your metabolism. Aim for three equal-sized meals, plus nutritious snacks in between.

- **Ditch self-denial.** Instead of avoiding any one food group, make wise choices. Whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter are a smarter snack than a bag of chips.

- **Emphasize weight training.** Add strength training to your exercise program. Resistance exercises build muscle, which burns more calories by increasing your metabolism.

# A practical plan to attack-proof your heart

**A**bout half a million Americans die every year from coronary heart disease, which is caused by a narrowing of the coronary arteries that feed the heart. The good news: You can improve your heart health by identifying your risks for coronary disease and reducing them with lifestyle changes like these:

- **Eat better.** Choose a balanced diet with foods from all major food groups, emphasizing fruits, vegetables and grains. Include fat-free and low-fat dairy products, beans, poultry and lean meats. Fish is a must, since it contains omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to significantly reduce the risk of heart disease.
- **Choose to lose.** Make the commitment to lose excess weight with a good diet and exercise. Steer clear of foods high in calories and/or low in nutritional quality, including those with lots of sugar, additives and preservatives.
- **Lower cholesterol levels.** Avoid foods with a high content of saturated fat, cholesterol and trans fatty acids (foods

containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils such as some margarines).

- **Watch your blood pressure.** Have your blood pressure checked frequently and limit salt to one teaspoon a day.
- **Sample soy.** Eating soy protein instead of animal products reduces total cholesterol levels, the “bad” cholesterol and triglycerides. Also try soy as a milk alternative with cereal.
- **Enjoy yourself.** Take up a sport or relax with meditation to help lower blood pressure and high cholesterol levels.
- **Quit smoking.** It’s not easy, but try gums, patches and smoking-cessation classes.

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## Health Connection

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