

Health Connection



MIMBRES
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
AND NURSING HOME

mimbresmemorial.com

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT MIMBRES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Spotlight on outpatient services

The skilled and caring staff of Mimbres Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home (MMH) offers a wide range of outpatient services in medical imaging, laboratory testing, respiratory therapy and cardiac testing and rehabilitation.

MEDICAL IMAGING

Well-trained, licensed technologists in our medical imaging department provide comprehensive services, including:

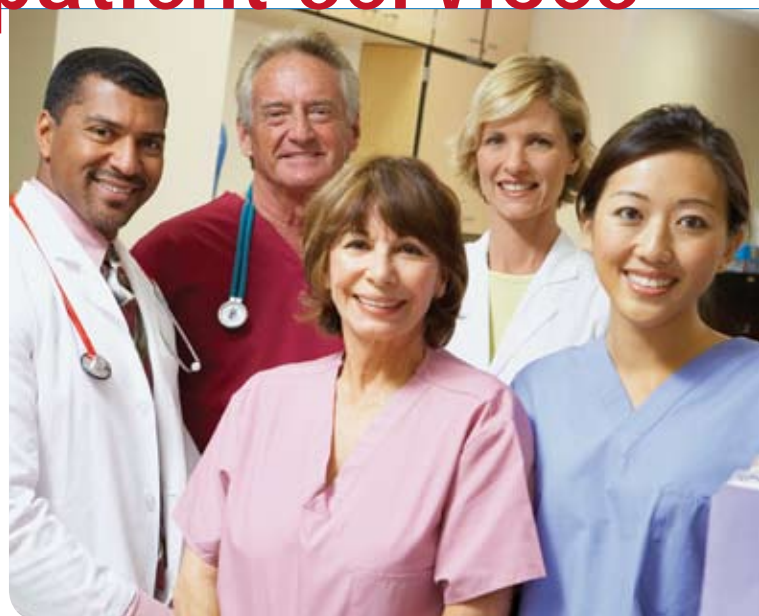
- routine diagnostic radiography, such as fluoroscopy and tomography
- special procedures like fine-needle aspirations, biopsies and drainages
- computed tomography (CT) scans
- ultrasonography
- nuclear medicine
- mammography
- stereotactic breast biopsy
- echo/vascular ultrasound
- magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

Some studies may require lab results, fasting or a full bladder before the study. If the study requires contrast material, the technologist will ask for a list of medications you're taking. A board-certified radiologist directly supervises all imaging studies. Ask your physician or Central Scheduling about pre-procedure requirements and instructions.

» To make your imaging appointment, call Central Scheduling at (575) 546-5892. We provide outpatient diagnostic imaging services for patients of all ages, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FULL-SERVICE LABORATORY

Our laboratory offers general clinical testing for chemistry, special chemistry, hematology, coagulation and urinalysis 24 hours a day. We maintain specimen integrity and accuracy of results throughout testing. STAT testing such



as glucose exams and urinalysis is available, and routine testing is normally completed within two hours of specimen receipt. Next-day turnaround service is available for physician office patients and clinics.

MMH also has the only full-service microbiology section within 75 miles. This section offers routine bacterial cultures from any source as well as specialized cultures for tuberculosis, yeast and fungi. Microbiology also performs sensitivity testing against a variety of antibiotics.

Blood bank and transfusion services provide blood products and services for inpatients and outpatients. It's the only transfusion service in Deming that can identify several antibodies, which can greatly benefit obstetrics patients and those who

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Gut check

Could it be appendicitis?

What's tiny and useless but can cause a whole lot of pain if it's unhappy? Your appendix, a finger-shaped pouch attached to your lower intestine. And if your appendix ever becomes inflamed and fills with pus, you'll have a raging case of appendicitis, a potentially life-threatening illness.

WHO'S AT RISK?

Though anyone can get appendicitis, it often strikes between ages 10 and 30. It usually happens when the appendix is blocked by fecal matter or a swollen lymph node following a digestive tract infection. A small number of people are diagnosed following traumatic abdominal injury, while others are genetically predisposed. In all, about 280,000 appendectomies are performed each year in the United States, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

NOT JUST A BELLYACHE

A hundred different ailments can cause stomach pain, but your appendix might be the culprit if you have:

- pain that starts around the belly button and moves to the lower right of the abdomen and gets worse when you move, take deep breaths, sneeze or cough
- abdominal swelling
- loss of appetite
- nausea and vomiting
- constipation or diarrhea
- an inability to pass gas
- a low-grade fever

TIME TO TAKE IT OUT?

This isn't a wait-and-see kind of problem. Removal is the only effective treatment for appendicitis, so if you're having symptoms, head to the emergency room, stat. Once there, a physician will check for pain location and ten-



derness, run a blood test for infection and send you for a computed tomography (CT) scan to confirm the diagnosis. He or she will also look to rule out other possibilities for your symptoms, including ectopic pregnancy, ovarian cysts, kidney stones and Crohn's disease. If you *do* have appendicitis, your appendix will be surgically removed before it can rupture. It may be done laparoscopically (the surgeon makes a few small incisions in your abdomen) or with traditional open surgery (the surgeon makes one large incision). Since experts have been unable to pinpoint the appendix's function, it's unlikely that you'll suffer any long-term effects.

Delay treatment and your appendix will likely rupture. If that happens, chances are good that you'll develop an infection of the abdominal cavity called peritonitis and then pain will take over and your entire abdomen will swell. Fever, thirst and low urine output will likely follow. This infection can cause organ failure, infertility and even death if not adequately contained with an abdominal cavity cleaning and intravenous (IV) antibiotics.

Where does it hurt?

After migrating from your navel, pain from appendicitis nearly always settles at a place on your abdomen called McBurney's Point, named after the 19th century surgeon Charles McBurney, an authority on appendicitis. Find it by drawing an imaginary line from your belly button to your right hip bone; you'll feel tenderness about halfway between the two points.

Spotlight on outpatient services

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receive regular transfusions. This section also performs testing and provides care for Rh-negative mothers and their newborns.

Pathology is a one-stop service for cytology (study of cells) and histology (study of tissues) needs. Staining and testing is performed under the guidance of an experienced and knowledgeable pathologist. Advanced testing using immunohistochemical tests (which includes using the immune system to study cells and tissues) is available to help make advanced diagnoses. Specialized reporting is also available for some tissue testing.

- » Our laboratory sees scheduled outpatients Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and walk-ins are accepted. Call (575) 546-5892 to schedule your appointment.

REHABILITATION: PHYSICAL AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

From initial evaluation until discharge, patients receive one-on-one care from therapists at MMH outpatient rehabilitation. Our skilled group of licensed physical therapists, physical therapy assistants, occupational therapists and certified occupational therapy assistants cares for you throughout your treatment. In most cases, the same therapist provides patient care for the treatment duration, ensuring continuity of care and improved communication with the referring physician.

Physical and occupational therapy services require a referral or prescription from your physician or podiatrist. Insurance carriers may require authorization before treatment begins. We treat conditions like neck and back pain, arthritis and carpal tunnel syndrome. Our therapies include:

- outpatient orthopedics (joint replacement recovery)
- pediatrics, including developmental delay therapy and sensory integration
- hand therapy
- shoulder rehabilitation
- stroke rehabilitation
- work and sports injuries rehabilitation

- » To schedule outpatient therapy with a physician's order, call (575) 544-8669.

CARDIOPULMONARY SERVICES

Cardiopulmonary testing is performed by personnel trained, credentialed and licensed in New Mexico.

We focus on providing treatment solutions by using noninvasive procedures to examine and evaluate heart and lung function. These include:

- **Electroencephalogram (EEG).** An EEG detects problems in the brain's electrical activity. With an EEG, the brain's faint electrical activity is measured by attaching electrodes to the scalp. An EEG technician performs this test.

An EEG helps diagnose seizures, find reasons for confusion and evaluate head injuries, tumors and degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's disease. It also evaluates sleep problems and periods of unconsciousness and shows whether the brain has no activity (deep coma) or is dead.

- **Pulmonary function test (PFT).** Also called a lung function test, a PFT evaluates your lung functioning, such as how much air the organs can hold and how quickly you can move air in and out of them. A PFT can diagnose lung diseases, measure how severe lung problems are and evaluate the effectiveness of treatment.

Other tests that help assess lung function include gas diffusion tests, inhalation challenge tests and exercise stress tests.

- **Cardiac stress testing.** This test can identify partial coronary artery blockages. If you're at rest, the presence of coronary artery disease is easily missed during a physical exam or on an electrocardiogram. When this happens, cardiac abnormalities may be diagnosed only when the heart works at higher levels. The stress test evaluates the heart and vascular system during exercise and helps determine whether CAD becomes apparent when the heart is stressed by exercise as well as how severe underlying heart disease will be.
- **Holter monitor.** A Holter monitor records your heart's rhythms. Small conducting patches called electrodes





are stuck onto your chest and attached to a battery-operated recording monitor. You carry the Holter monitor in a pocket or small pouch worn around your neck or waist and keep an accurate diary of your symptoms and activities for 24 to 48 hours. After this time period, you return the monitor to the hospital. The recordings are reviewed for irregular rhythms.

» Outpatients are scheduled Tuesday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. To make an appointment for these tests, call (575) 546-5892. A physician's order is required.

! The resources for you!

To find a dedicated physician or learn about comprehensive, advanced services offered at MMH, visit mimbresmemorial.com.

Dear neighbors,

One of my most challenging and rewarding jobs is physician recruitment. This process starts with an analysis of community needs and ends when the physician's office is set up and ready for patients, a lengthy process that sometimes takes up to a year to complete.



Bill Quitmeyer
Chief Executive Officer

MEET OUR NEW OB/GYN

We're pleased to welcome Jaime Solis, M.D., to our obstetrics and gynecology staff. Having grown up in El Paso, Texas, Dr. Solis attended medical school at Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara in Mexico and completed his obstetrics and gynecology residency at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Amarillo, Texas.



Jaime Solis, M.D.

His practice is at Deming Women's Center at 850 W. Florida. Dr. Solis and his wife, Martha, have a 3-year-old daughter. Please welcome them to our community. To make an appointment with Dr. Solis, call (575) 546-6548.

If you ever need a physician, please visit mimbresmemorial.com and click on "Find a Physician." You'll find that our Web site has a wealth of useful information.

Best regards,

Bill Quitmeyer
Chief Executive Officer
Mimbres Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **allergies**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1 Approximately how many people suffer from allergies?

- a. 50 million
- b. 35 million
- c. 27 million
- d. 18 million

2 You're more likely to develop allergies if you:

- a. eat shellfish
- b. have a family member who has allergies
- c. had pets as a child
- d. regularly garden

3 Which does *not* aggravate allergies?

- a. cigarette smoke
- b. cockroach droppings
- c. pet saliva
- d. they all can trigger allergies

4 Where does pollen first appear in the spring?

- a. weeds
- b. trees
- c. grass
- d. mold

5 What reduces pollen allergies in the spring?

- a. not drying laundry outside on a clothesline
- b. removing your shoes before coming indoors
- c. not going outside before 10 a.m.
- d. all of the above

ANSWERS: 1. A; 2. B; 3. D; 4. B; 5. D

Get your blood pressure under control

High blood pressure truly is sinister: You can have it but not know it until you suffer a heart attack, stroke or another serious health complication. Hence, its nickname: the silent killer. Seeing your physician regularly is the best way to determine whether you have high blood pressure—or hypertension. He or she will measure the force of blood in your arteries by looking at your systolic (the higher number) and diastolic (lower number) pressure. Elevated levels (140/90 mm Hg or more) indicate hypertension,



while numbers ranging from 120/80 to 139/89 point to prehypertension, a condition that puts you at risk for high blood pressure in the future. Normal blood pressure is under 120/80. Although hypertension has no cure, you can take steps to control it and protect your health:

- **Eat a healthy diet.** High-fat and sugary foods contribute to high blood pressure,

so reach for foods from the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. They include whole grains, fish and poultry, nuts, fruits and vegetables and low-fat and low-sodium foods.

- **Get moving.** Aim for 30 minutes of cardiovascular activity most days of the week. If you're short on time, break up your workout into three 10-minute segments over the course of the day. Take a walk around the block, dance to your favorite CD or work out to an exercise DVD.

- **Take your meds.** Sometimes medication is the only way to lower your blood pressure. Because hypertension drugs work only when they're regularly in your system, you should never miss a dose or stop taking them.



HOW DOES WATER GET CONTAMINATED?

When it comes to swimming pools, water parks and play fountains, most disease comes from fecal matter on the bodies of sick splashers. If chlorine and pH levels aren't carefully calibrated, other swimmers could swallow live bacteria. In hot tubs, naturally occurring germs can cause rashes and respiratory problems, ranging from the common cold to pneumonia. Large bodies of water—from rivers to the ocean—can be contaminated by sewage, animal waste, swimmers' feces and even parasites.

HOW CAN I AVOID CONTRACTING RWI?

Take these precautions to stay healthy when you swim, dive or just splash around:

- Avoid pools with murky or chemical-smelling water (properly chlorinated pools don't have an odor).
- Don't share towels, kickboards or toys.
- Keep water out of your mouth and never swallow it.
- Stay on dry land if you have open sores.
- Skip bodies of freshwater on very hot days, since bacteria flourish in warm water.
- Plug your nose when swimming in freshwater to keep parasites out.
- Shower before and after swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Take children on frequent bathroom breaks and change diapers in the bathroom, not poolside.

Warding off water illness

As the weather warms up, we all look forward to swimming laps in the pool; splashing in the ocean, stream or river; or lounging in a hot tub. But those waters may mask something ominous: Contaminated water can lead to recreational water illness (RWI). Touching or swallowing water in pools, lakes, spas, rivers and oceans can lead to gastrointestinal, outer ear, eye, skin, respiratory and neurologic infections—and children, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk.

Be a fruit-and-veggie role model

Whether you're driving the car or stepping into high heels, your little ones want to be just like you. So why not use your power for good? Follow these tips, and the eating habits your children copy will positively influence their health—and yours—for years to come:

- 1 Restock the pantry.** Keep healthy snacks around. Say goodbye to cookies loaded with high-fructose corn syrup and bright orange cheese puffs and hello to baked veggie chips and sugar-free applesauce.
- 2 Drink right.** Switch out your super-acidic, high-sugar soda for water and 100 percent juice—little teeth and waistlines will thank you.
- 3 Start the day right.** No time to sit down to breakfast? Send your kids off with a banana and a baggie filled with dry whole-grain cereal. Studies show that breakfast eaters boast improved math grades, less incidence of hyperactivity and better school attendance. And teen-

agers who eat first thing tend to weigh less, exercise more and generally have a healthier diet than their breakfast-skipping pals.

4 Turn off the tube. People who eat in front of the television are more likely to eat unhealthy foods.

5 Eat together. Children who dine with their parents tend to consume more fruits and veggies and fewer unhealthy snacks.

6 Pack a lunch for everyone. You'll save cash while making sure the whole family is eating well. Be sure to include a lean protein, low-fat dairy, grains, a vegetable and a piece of fruit (try sliced turkey and low-fat cheese on whole-wheat bread with carrot sticks and an apple).



Health Connection is published as a community service of Mimbres Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home. There is no fee to subscribe.

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The danger of snakebites

Each year in the United States, nearly 8,000 people are bitten with poisonous snakebites. In Southwestern New Mexico, there are eight poisonous and potentially dangerous snakes, including seven rattlesnake and coral snake species. Snakes come out of hibernation as the weather warms, and people begin spending more time outdoors, increasing the likelihood of a human-snake encounter.

SMART TIPS

To reduce your chances of being bitten, use these precautions:

- Don't try to catch or kill a snake if you come across one. Leave it alone.
- Wear leather boots.
- Avoid tall grass in wilderness areas and stay on paths.
- Be alert and cautious when climbing rocks or reaching into or stepping into areas where snakes may be sunning or cooling.

If a snake has bitten you or a loved one, call 911 immediately. Response time in this type of emergency is critical. While waiting for emergency assistance:

- Wash the bite with soap and water.
- Immobilize the bitten area and keep it lower than the heart.
- Cover the area with a clean, cool compress or a moist dressing to minimize swelling and discomfort.



Stay aware!

If you encounter a snake or have been bitten, remember:

- Don't handle snakes since even bites from non-poisonous snakes can cause unpleasant reactions.
- Call 911 or Poison Control at (800) 222-1222 immediately for emergency assistance.

! Check us out online!

Visit mimbresmemorial.com to find more health resources.