



On Call

SPRING/SUMMER 2007

**Doctors
Medical Center**

Tenet California

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DOCTORS MEDICAL CENTER

A Cardiac Care Program FOR THE CENTRAL VALLEY

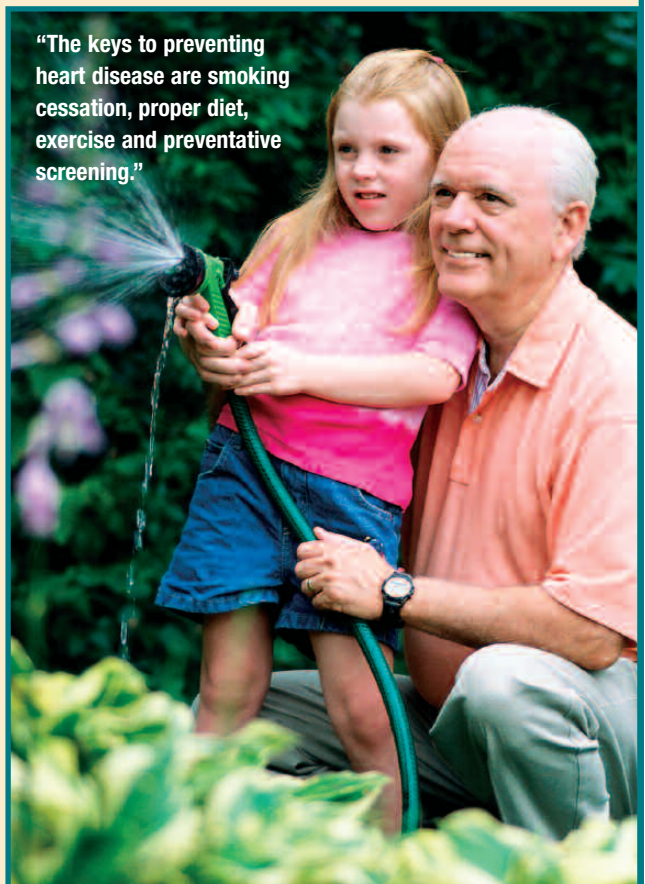


When a leading health care rating service identifies your cardiac program as one of the ten best in California, you want the community you serve to know what that means. “The most important thing for the community to know is that we don’t just treat heart emergencies, although that is an important part of what we do,” says Director of Cardiology Services Terry Shanahan, R.N., B.S., R.C.I.S., a Registered Cardiovascular Interventional Specialist with over 25 years experience. “We offer diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease for adult patients.”

In the 20,000-square-foot cardiology unit that Shanahan oversees, with four procedure rooms and an 18-bed observation room, more than a dozen cardiologists assisted by specialized support staff focus on non-surgical diagnosis, treatment and prevention of heart disease. In the cardiac catheterization laboratory, heart specialists diagnose cardiovascular disease by injecting dyes into the circulatory system that can be “read” on imaging systems. If a blockage is found, tiny balloons can be used to open the blockage and spring-like stents can be inserted to keep them open. A recent addition to the diagnostic repertoire at DMC is the advanced 64-slice CT-scanner, which can take pictures of the heart and reconstruct a 3-D image in less than 10 minutes with only an I.V. in place.

Under the overall aegis of the Central California Heart Center, Doctors Medical Center’s cardiologists work with cardiac surgeons as needed for follow-up on diagnostic and interventional procedures. Shanahan describes what that can mean when someone who is having a heart attack comes to the Emergency Room:

► **Fast treatment:** “Time Is Muscle,” says the American Heart Association, because any delay in restoring blood flow can cause irreversible damage to the heart muscles. When every minute counts, it is comforting to know that Doctors Medical Center has a cardiologist and a full



“The keys to preventing heart disease are smoking cessation, proper diet, exercise and preventative screening.”

cath lab team available round-the-clock.

► **Surgery:** When surgical intervention becomes necessary, there is no need to move the patient to another facility. Our cardiac, cardiovascular and cardiothoracic surgeons perform life-saving procedures, including open-heart surgery.

► **Monitored Recovery:** Patients recovering from a heart attack benefit from care delivered in the hospital’s 12-bed Cardiac Care Unit. They then move to a 35-bed step-down telemetry unit where vital signs can still be monitored. Doctors Medical Center also has a separate Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit for post-operative care of patients who have had open-heart surgery.

The cardiology unit boasts an Electrophysiology Department that has been in operation since 1989. Electrophysiologists have a number of tools at their disposal for regulating heart rhythms:

- Pacemakers
- Internal defibrillators to treat ventricular fibrillation— malfunction of the heart’s built-in “pace-

maker” — with periodic electric impulses

- Bi-ventricular pacing to synchronize the rhythms of the heart’s two sides
- Radiofrequency ablation, a non-surgical procedure for locating and eliminating malfunctioning tissues that cause “short circuits” in the heart’s electrical system

Pace-setting devices can be periodically checked and regulated during a visit to the doctor’s office.

Electrophysiology has become an important option for treating congestive heart failure, a tragically debilitating condition that occurs when the heart cannot pump enough blood to meet the body’s needs. Congestive heart failure patients are typically treated with a variety of medications.

Shanahan stresses that the same principles her staff teaches to recovering heart patients are key to preventing heart disease in the first place: smoking cessation, proper diet, exercise and preventative screening.

For a referral to a doctor who can help you assess your cardiac risk factors and create a program to help you keep heart-healthy, just call our Physician Referral Line at (888) 284-6641.

FIVE STARS



Doctors Medical Center Among Nation’s Best For Cardiac Interventions

HealthGrades, a leading health care ratings company, has once again given Doctors Medical Center’s Cardiology Services five stars for clinical outcomes of coronary interventional procedures:

- For the fourth year in a row, Doctors Medical Center received HealthGrades’ top rating for its cardiac interventional procedures, including angioplasties and stents.
- For the fourth year in a row, clinical outcomes for cardiac interventional procedures have placed Doctors Medical Center among the top 10 hospitals in California for these procedures.
- Receiving HealthGrades’ top rating means that DMC’s cardiac program ranks among the best in the country.
- The hospital continues to be the only hospital in the area to receive HealthGrades’ five-star rating for these procedures.

“The fact that cardiac services at the hospital have once again received HealthGrades’ top rating means that residents of our community can receive local care from a five-star cardiac program without having to leave Modesto,” says Denny Litos, Chief Executive Officer of Doctors Medical Center. “We are pleased to be recognized four years in a row. Quality patient care will always be our top priority.”

The HealthGrades rating applies not only to treatment of cardiac emergencies, but to a variety of other procedures performed in the hospital’s cardiac catheterization lab for diagnosing, treating and preventing cardiovascular disease. (See story on this page.)

As part of its ninth annual Hospital Quality in America Study, HealthGrades independently analyzed more than 5,000 hospitals in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, objectively assessing their clinical outcomes and quality.

The HealthGrades ratings take into account varying degrees of patient severity from hospital to hospital and measure whether patient

outcomes for more than two dozen procedures and diagnoses are better than expected (five-star), as expected (three-star) or worse than expected (one-star).

“Consumers continue to ask for more and better information to help them in their health care decision making,” said Samantha Collier, M.D., HealthGrades’ vice president of medical affairs. “Our analysis provides an apples-to-apples comparison of hospital performance by procedure or diagnosis, and it is evident there is significant variance between individual hospitals. Doctors Medical Center continues to rate among the nation’s best for cardiac interventional procedures. This reflects the efforts of everybody in the organization, and should be very comforting to area residents.”

The 2007 HealthGrades ratings for all hospitals nationwide are available, free of charge, on HealthGrades’ consumer web site, located at www.healthgrades.com.

Forecast: SUNNY

Summer Sun Safety Tips For the Whole Family

Long summer days of fun in the sun are just around the corner. To help you get ready for all your favorite outdoor activities, we have a few tips to help you and your family stay safe in the sun.

Infants: Children under six months should be kept out of the sun entirely. Due to thinner skin that has underdeveloped melanin, they can burn faster. They also have an increased chance of side effects from sunscreen. Instead, baby should be kept in the shade, covered with long clothing, a hat and ultraviolet-protected sunglasses.

Children: Most kids get up to 50-80 percent of their sun exposure before age 18! Help them start good sun habits early. Use sunscreen that protects against both UVA (ultraviolet-a) and UVB (ultraviolet-b) sun rays and has an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or higher.

Teenagers: Tanning may be appealing to your teenager, but leathery, wrinkled, spotted or even cancerous skin won't be. Teach your teens about skin safety, like wearing sunscreen, and set a good example yourself.

Adults: Just because you are grown doesn't make skin protection any less vital, particularly for those with fair skin, freckles or moles. Be sure to put on sunscreen for any outdoor activity, whether it be the kids' soccer game, gardening, mowing the lawn or playing a round of golf. As a general rule, the fairer your skin, the higher the SPF you need.

Older adults: Because older adults don't tend to be in the sun as often, they are more at risk for vitamin D deficiency than sunburn. To help prevent this problem, seniors should talk to their doctors about supplements and dietary adjustments that can increase vitamin D.

Taking time to protect against the sun as a matter of routine is extremely important. Malignant melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, was found to affect only 1 in 500,000 in the 1940s and '50s. Today the incidence is 1 in 62. Sunburns — their frequency and severity — correlate closely with the risk of developing melanoma.

For a referral to a dermatologist affiliated with Doctors Medical Center who can schedule regular check-ups, please call (888) 284-6641.



"Traffic accidents caused by kids text messaging have been going through the ceiling."

Our ER Teaches Teens About Choices and Consequences

National Emergency Medical Services Week is celebrated every year in May, a chance to honor the men and women who save lives when accidents and sudden illnesses happen. During that week, educational events all over the country teach how to avoid medical emergencies — something the Trauma Services Department at Doctors Medical Center does year-round.

Doctors Medical Center is designated a Level II Trauma Center by the Mountain Valley Regional Emergency Medical Services. Trauma Program Manager, Anita Schlenker, R.N., says that her staff treats trauma cases caused by everything from water-skiing accidents to text-messaging teens.

"Our experience in the trauma program enables us to update our message to kids and parents to reflect the problems we see day to day," she says. "Traffic accidents caused by kids text-messaging have been going through the ceiling."

The outreach program started because the Trauma Services staff was seeing "lots of teens who'd been in car crashes, and there were no programs for educating this age group about safety issues," Schlenker recalls. Doctors Medical Center Trauma Services Department teamed up with local police agencies and the Stanislaus County Board of Education to bring programs to our community.

Teens and Trauma was the result. Participants in the program see life pictures from the Trauma Room, study X-rays and hear trauma nurses talking about what they experience in their work. "We emphasize choices and consequences," says Leslie Antonis, R.N., who is the Injury Prevention Educator. "We tell them, 'You can control your choices, but you can't control the consequences they may have.'"

Trauma Team personnel also participate in the CHP's "Every 15 Minutes Program," which removes one student every 15 minutes from the classroom, sequesters them overnight, and educates them on the dangers of driving under the influence. And they work in the Modesto Police Department's diversion program, where teens are sent after infractions like running a red light or driving without seatbelts.

"Parents participate in all these programs," says Schlenker. Many parents don't know, for example, that a California law makes it illegal for new drivers to drive with passengers in the car during the first year after getting their drivers license.

"Lots of parents simply have never heard about the provisional license," says Schlenker. "A new driver has basic driving skills, but he's still a learner — he's like a toddler who can walk, but not well." Studies have shown, in fact, that the risk of new drivers being involved in a crash increases for every extra passenger in the car.

Parents may also not be aware of the legal penalties they could face if their children are arrested for driving under the influence. "Parents are financially responsible for their young drivers," says Schlenker. "The California DMV requires parents or other guardians to sign a statement to that effect when a minor gets a license."

FACTS About Teen Drivers

- ▶ The risk of motor vehicle crashes is four times higher among 16- to 19-year-olds.
- ▶ The presence of teen passengers increases the crash risk of unsupervised teen drivers; the risk increases with the number of teen passengers.
- ▶ Crash risk is particularly high during the first year that teenagers are eligible to drive.
- ▶ Compared with other age groups, teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use.
- ▶ Motorists who use cell phones while driving are four times as likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves as those who do not.
- ▶ Text messaging by teens, a driving distraction related to cell phone use, was the subject of an August 2006 Teens Today survey conducted by the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). The survey showed that teens considered sending text messages via cell phones to be their biggest distraction.

2007 Hospital Week Employee Donation Award

Helps Families of Critically Ill Children

Trauma Program Manager Anita Schlenker, R.N., has been recognized with the Tenet Healthcare Foundation Employee Donation Award for her outstanding work in patient care and community service. To mark this distinction, the Foundation will make a \$500 donation to the charity of Schlenker's choice.

Schlenker, who has worked in Trauma Services at Doctors Medical Center since 1999, plans to designate the Kelsi Austin Lowe Foundation as the recipient of the donation. "I wanted to keep the donation in the community," she says. "We looked into many groups, and settled on this one. The Kelsi Austin Lowe Foundation helps families of children who are critically ill or injured."

The award coincides with National Hospital and Healthcare Week, which recognizes the hard work and dedication put forth by all of the members of the health care community. Doctors Medical Center CEO Dennis M. Litos explained why Schlenker was selected for the honor in a personal letter: "You have set an example for your co-workers through all you do to educate children and adults about trauma prevention," he wrote, "and have raised awareness about the trauma services DMC provides to our community, to both students and adults."

When asked how she felt about the award, Schlenker said: "I wasn't expecting it — I was quite shocked. It's nice to be recognized for the community services the trauma unit performs." Congratulations to Anita Schlenker and to her great team in the trauma department at Doctors Medical Center on this honor.





A Message from the CEO

It may not seem like much, but to someone in the hospital or to the family member of a critically ill patient, a soft touch, a listening ear or a gentle smile can mean so much. At Doctors Medical Center and other hospitals across the country, we'd like to thank the men and women who provide quality care for our patients and their families for the important work they do. Together they are making a difference in thousands of lives every day.

May 6-12 was National Nurses Week and National Hospital and Healthcare Week — a time for us to thank the health care workers who have touched our lives. They have dedicated themselves to providing quality care for our community.

To quote Sir Winston Churchill, "We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." These men and women give of themselves every day as they care for their patients. Please join me in thanking them for all that they do.

On behalf of the employees of Doctors Medical Center, thank you for allowing us to serve your health care needs and be an integral part of this community.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Litos
Chief Executive Officer



Volunteers contributed over 36,000 hours to the hospital last year.

Doctors Medical Center Volunteer Week 2007 Annual Luncheon Salutes Service League

Doctors Medical Center celebrated National Healthcare Volunteer Week from April 15-21, culminating in the annual volunteer luncheon honoring the hospital's hard-working volunteers. Volunteers were treated to flowers, gifts of appreciation and delicious homemade desserts provided by the appreciative hospital staff.

The DMC Service League has 228 members, 205 of whom are active volunteers, giving at least 50 hours of their time every year. Their efforts make a significant impact at Doctors Medical Center. "Our junior volunteer members clocked over 11,000 hours last year," notes Director of Administrative Services/Volunteer Services Sandi O'Neill. "And our adult volunteers logged 25,000."

For some, volunteering offers a way to stay involved. "I personally have been with the hospital since it opened," says retired Modesto R.N. Elaine Hansen, who worked at the hospital for 27 years. She has been with the Service League since 1992, volunteering about once a week. "I feel like I'm helping and being a part of the overall picture."

Volunteers can help in many ways, from directing visitors at reception to working in the gift shop to helping out in the emergency or maternity departments. For more information on how you can participate in this enriching experience, please contact Sandi O'Neill at (209) 576-3752.

Alternative:

Advanced Equipment for Ailing Hearts

'External Heart' Works When a Patient's Can't



The Central California Heart Center at Doctors Medical Center recently acquired a new piece of equipment which can temporarily support the heart when it is severely weakened by heart attack or surgery. Blood flows from the left, right or both ventricles of the heart into the VAD (Vascular Assist Device), allowing blood to reach vital organs when the heart is too frail to function on its own.

"This equipment can give the heart an opportunity to rest and potentially recover," says Lani Dickinson, R.N., Director of Patient Care Services at Doctors Medical Center. "It can also be used as a 'bridge to transplant' — sustaining a patient until they are ready to be transported for heart transplantation."

Dickinson says the need for this equipment generally occurs only about once per year. Nevertheless, it was a priority for the Central California Heart Center. "When you have a comprehensive heart program, and you want to maximize the chances for survival of every patient, you have to have this available," she says.

The Central California Heart Center offers an array of heart services ranging from managing the early stages of heart disease with minimally invasive treatment options to providing advanced open heart surgery. Staffed by experienced professionals, our facilities include our Emergency Room, a 24-hour Cardiac Cath Lab, Specialty Operating Rooms, and a Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit.

To find out more about our cardiac program, call (888) 284-6641.

"When you have a comprehensive heart program, and you want to maximize every patient's chances for survival, the Vascular Assist Device is essential."

The O-Arm: Precision Imaging

Chronic back and leg pain can erode your quality of life, keeping you from doing the simplest things. When more conservative treatments fail, spine surgery may bring relief and restore the life you thought you had lost.

It is a delicate operation, one that requires the surgeon to have an extra pair of "eyes." Benjamin J. Remington, M.D., a neurosurgeon at Doctors Medical Center, is proud that his hospital is only the second facility west of the Rocky Mountains to have the O-Arm™, a new imaging system that provides high-quality X-rays and three-dimensional CT-scans (Computed Tomography) during spine surgery, right in the operating room.

The O-Arm™ permits the surgeon to monitor procedures while they are being performed and verify surgical changes by viewing three-dimensional images before the patient leaves the operating room.

"With the O-Arm, I get immediate feedback enabling me to see high-quality images of what I'm doing as I am doing it. It is a tremendous benefit to the community to have such an advanced piece of equipment at this hospital," says Dr. Remington, who predicts that most high-end neurosurgery centers will be acquiring this new technology.

Meanwhile, Doctors Medical Center already has the O-Arm™. It is one more example of DMC's commitment to providing surgeons with access to emerging medical technologies, and providing patients with access to high-quality specialized medical care.

To see a neurosurgeon at Doctors Medical Center, just call (888) 284-6641, or log on to www.dmc-modesto.com.

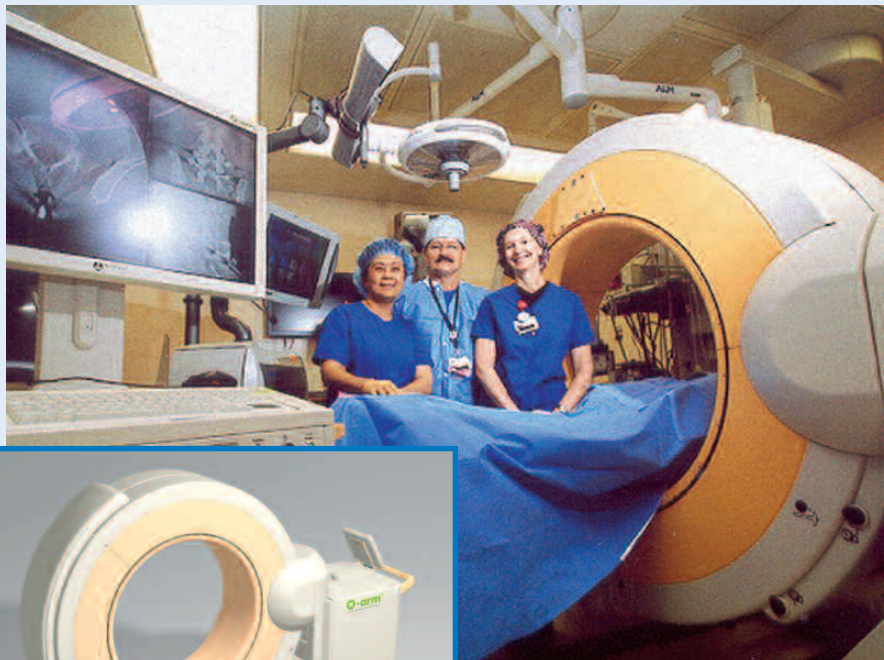
"With the O-Arm, I get immediate feedback enabling me to see high-quality images of what I'm doing as I am doing it. It is a tremendous benefit to the community to have such an advanced piece of equipment at this hospital."

Back Pain What Are Your Options?

Back pain is a common complaint for which there are many remedies:

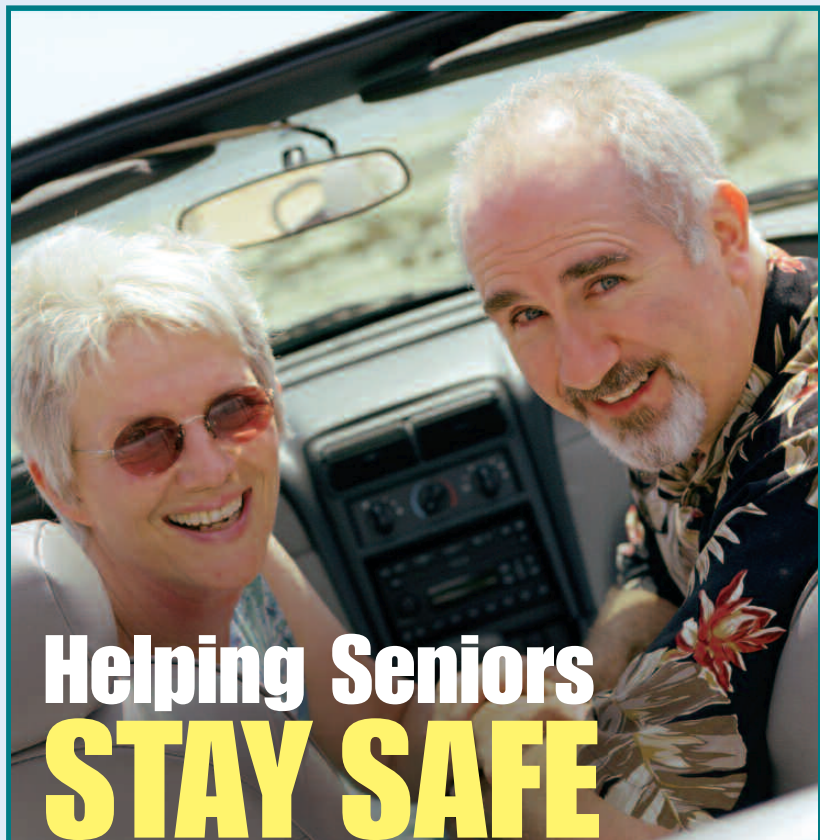
- ▶ Two or three days of bed rest
- ▶ Hot and cold treatments to the affected area
- ▶ Over-the-counter and prescription medications
- ▶ Physical therapy
- ▶ Injection of anesthetic or steroid drugs

Spine surgery should be considered after more conservative methods fail. If pain is interfering with your life and work, discuss your options with your doctor. To see an orthopedic specialist at Doctors Medical Center, call (888) 284-6641.



The O-Arm: An advanced imaging system that gives surgeons performing spine surgery vital information right in the operating room.

The Doctors Medical Center neuroservice surgical team members with the O-Arm: (left to right) Lilly Radovan, R.N., Clinical Resource Specialist, David Crawford, Certified Radiologic Technologist and Genise Hardman, R.N.



Helping Seniors **STAY SAFE** Behind the Wheel

Doctors Medical Center offers seniors the AARP Safe Driver Program. This program is designed to make participants aware of the physical changes that are a natural part of aging, which can have a negative impact on driving safety, and to show them how to compensate for these changes. The Safe Driver Program is a two-day class, held for four hours each day. Each attendee receives a workbook, views a video, takes part in group discussions and is given updates on driving laws.

Classes are held every other month. All classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and end by 1:00 p.m. There is a \$10.00 charge for each two-day class.

Classes will be offered in July (Monday, July 30 and Tuesday, July 31), September and November (dates to be announced). To register, please call (888) 284-6641 or register online by going to the Doctors Medical Center web site at www.dmc-modesto.com and clicking on the "Find an Event" box at the top of the page.

Doctors Medical Center Community Newsletter Wins National Recognition

On Call, the community newsletter of Doctors Medical Center, has earned a Gold Medal in the Twenty-Fourth Annual Healthcare Advertising Awards for hospital community newsletters.

The newsletter is edited by Public Relations Coordinator Alissa Lehman. "We are proud of *On Call*, which informs our community about the services of the hospital, our community outreach programs, and current issues in medicine that affect the readers' lives," says Lehman. "We are very pleased that the newsletter has received this honor."

The Healthcare Advertising Awards is the oldest, largest and most widely respected health care advertising awards competition. A record number of 4,300 entries were received in this year's competition.



DOCTORS MEDICAL CENTER STAFF Bring Medical Assistance to Guatemala

By Elise Palitz, R.N.

On March 18, 2007, our team of 21 arrived at a small mountain clinic in the town of Camanchac near the center of the municipality of Chichicanstenango, Guatemala. We carried 42 suitcases, most of which were filled with a variety of medicines and medical/surgical supplies. Our Volunteers in Mission Team from Pastor Debra Brady's First Methodist Church consisted of two surgeons, an anesthesiologist, three family practice physicians, one dentist, several R.N.'s, medical assistants and translators. We came with the goal of working together to fulfill a desperate medical and surgical need.

We were welcomed not only by the full-time workers at the clinic, but by the people from the surrounding villages, who had traveled for miles on foot in hopes of being treated that day. Their colorful clothing, warm smiles and greetings of "buenos dias" made us feel right at home. Many of us had been here before.

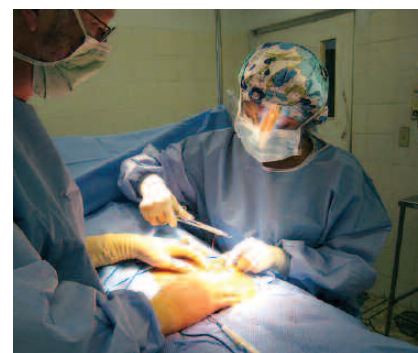
When we entered the clinic, the dust-covered medicine bottles and other supplies on the shelves reminded us that there was much work to be done. It took us all afternoon to get organized for our first clinic and surgery day. After cleaning, organizing supplies, tuning up

of the anesthesia machines and sterilizers, and fashioning a sterile processing area out of a storeroom, we had an operating room: small and rustic, but clean.

Our five days at the clinic were full: set-up, surgery, clean-up, sterilize, set-up again and more surgery. Our hard work was rewarded by the smiling and appreciative faces of the patients and their families.

Our work would not have been successful if it had not been for all of us working together as a team. No one person was more important than any other. We all took turns mopping the floors and washing and sterilizing the instruments — no one was exempt from any duty. One lesson we learned was resourcefulness — duct tape was our best friend! We met each challenge with a smile, because we were all problem-solvers at heart.

In the early morning hour before surgery each day, we could go out for a walk to mingle quietly with the native people. You would be greeted with a mixture of color, dialects, costumes, smoke and smells. If



you were lucky, you might get to try your hand at making a tortilla over a hot stone, and if you were really lucky, your creation might actually look like a tortilla... Sometimes you could just sit and watch the people.

The vendors would carry heavy carts with a harness-type strap across their foreheads — it was then easy to understand why we had so many hernias to repair!

If not for the donations from the members of the United Methodist Church, as well as several local companies, including Doctors Medical Center, this mission would not have been possible. The instruments lent by DMC's main Operating Room, L&D and the Sterile Processing department were also very important. Thank you to all who helped. This was a life-changing experience for all of us. Many of us will return next year to be greeted by our new Guatemalan friends, and to once again receive so much more than we actually gave.



Doctors Medical Center is proud to be
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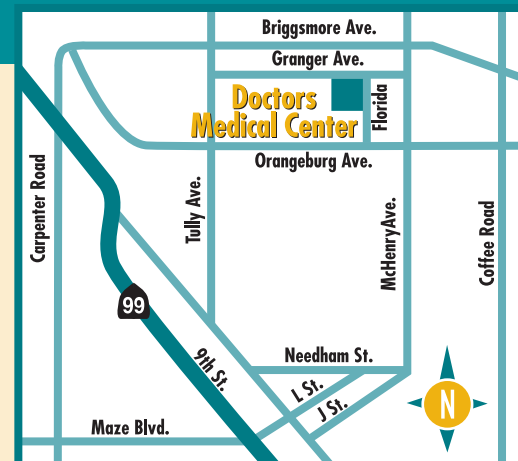
Looking for a physician?

The hospital neighbor you know and trust...

Doctors Medical Center

If you need assistance finding a doctor in your area, call the Doctors Medical Center Physician Referral Service: (888) 284-6641. We can help you choose a primary care or specialty physician for your needs. And our informed personnel can identify physicians who may participate in your health plan.

www.dmc-modesto.com (888) 284-6641



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