



Verde Valley
Medical Center
Northern Arizona Healthcare

wellness

TODAY



With her determined spirit,
Valerie became a star athlete again.

» FALL 2007

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to Lung Cancer Surgery 3**

**Cover Story:
Recovery through Rehabilitation 4 & 5**

After a serious injury sidelined Mingus High School athlete Valerie Parmarter, she turned to the Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine staff at Verde Valley Medical Center.

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2007

SILVER

CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE



VVMC recently was presented a 2007 Silver Award by the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association in recognition of quality and achievement for cardiac care.

The mission of Verde Valley Medical Center and Northern Arizona Healthcare is to improve the health of the people and communities we serve. Here at VVMC, our commitment to providing quality health care reaches across the Verde Valley. We have four locations that are expanding to meet your needs and exceed your expectations.



▲ The Cottonwood Campus construction project will add 100,000 square feet to the current facility.

At the Cottonwood Campus, our \$35 million construction project is well under way. Through this project, approximately 100,000 square feet are being added to VVMC's existing 225,000 square feet, and 45,000 square feet are being remodeled and renovated. This 32-month project is in response to a master campus and facility plan that identified the need for expanded existing services and the addition of new services for our community.

The VVMC Sedona Campus is developing a master campus and facility plan with

the assistance of Hospital Building and Equipment, Inc. (HBE), the largest hospital design and building company in the country. HBE is the same company being utilized in the Cottonwood Campus expansion project. The Sedona Campus plan will identify the need for expansion and development of services, and also will pinpoint required facilities to accommodate those services.

Additionally, VVMC is excited and pleased to welcome to its healthcare team two nurse practitioners. Terrence (Ty) Montgomery, F.N.P., will be located at the Village of Oak Creek Health Center and Delyte Nasch, F.N.P., will be located at the Camp Verde Health Center. Nurse practitioners are nationally certified in their specialty area and are recognized as independent healthcare providers. They offer primary clinical care, health promotion, disease prevention, health education and counseling.



▲ Verde Valley Medical Center President James J. Sinek welcomes Terrence (Ty) Montgomery, F.N.P., to the healthcare team.



▲ Orthopaedic surgeon Jack Wylie, M.D., leads a seminar series installment entitled "Revolutionizing Orthopaedics."

Finally, our physician seminar series has been a great success! Since Jan. 11, seminars on a variety of healthcare topics have been held in Camp Verde, Cottonwood, Mayer, Prescott Valley and Sedona. Hundreds of community members have attended, asked questions and interacted with our physicians and staff members. Watch for more exciting topics as we continue this educational series to introduce you to more of our outstanding physicians, staff and services.

The VVMC family looks forward to growing right along with our expanding communities. We thank you for your support and for choosing VVMC for your healthcare needs.

James J. Sinek, President
Verde Valley Medical Center



Verde Valley Medical Center
Northern Arizona Healthcare

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Wellness Today is published by Verde Valley Medical Center to provide general health information. It is not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained directly from a healthcare provider.

Minimally Invasive Lung Cancer Surgery Benefits Patients

Verde Valley Medical Center now offers lung cancer patients a minimally invasive surgery option that decreases postoperative pain and recovery time.

When lung cancer is diagnosed, surgery often is part of the prescribed course of treatment, particularly when the disease is detected at an early stage. The traditional surgical approach involves making a large, crescent-shaped incision that spans from under one arm to the back and spreading the patient's ribs. At VVMC, the thoracoscopic technique—a minimally invasive approach using tiny instruments and video equipment—now is available to patients. Only three to four small incisions (the largest of which is 1.5 to 2 inches in length) are made, and the patient's ribs are left alone.

Benefits Abound

“The traditional approach to lung cancer surgery leaves patients in substantial pain for weeks after their procedures,” said John Schor, M.D., thoracic and cardiovascular surgeon at VVMC, who has 15 years experience operating on the lungs. “Following a week in the hospital, it takes people two to three months to fully recover. Fortunately, with the new thoracoscopic technique, patients generally have substantially less pain, spend only a few days in the hospital and are back to their normal routines in about two weeks.”

While the thoracoscopic approach spares patients pain and quickens recovery times, it doesn't diminish the surgery's effectiveness.

“Performing the surgery with minimal invasion doesn't compromise patient outcomes,” said Dr. Schor. “We don't change the amount of cancer we remove. We simply improve the patient's quality of life.”

For more information or to set up a consultation with Dr. Schor, please contact Allyson at 928 649-2584.

Lung Cancer Signs and Symptoms

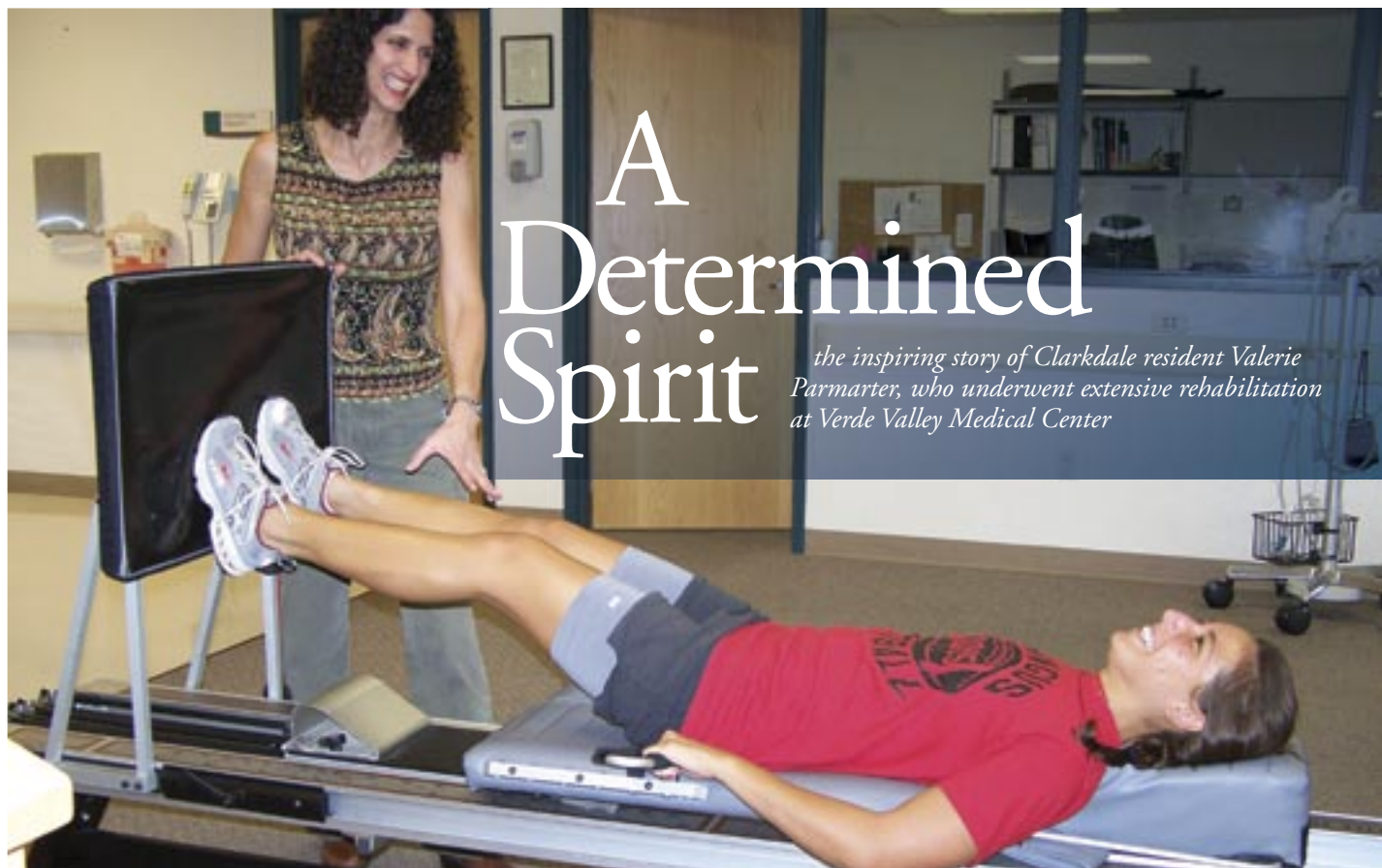
According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer will claim an estimated 170,000 lives in the United States in 2007. Symptoms of lung cancer often don't appear until the disease is in later, more advanced stages. However, many lung cancers are detected early, making prompt response to symptoms vital. Common signs and symptoms of lung cancer include:

- for smokers: a cough that becomes persistent or more intense
- for nonsmokers: a cough that lasts longer than two weeks
- pain that persists in the chest, back or shoulders
- wheezing and/or labored breathing
- changes in the color or amount of mucus/saliva
- recurring bronchitis or pneumonia

Please schedule an appointment with your primary care physician if you believe you may be at risk for lung cancer.



▲ John Schor, M.D., exhibits an innovative surgical tool used in thoracoscopic lung cancer surgery.



A Determined Spirit

the inspiring story of Clarkdale resident Valerie Parmarter, who underwent extensive rehabilitation at Verde Valley Medical Center



▲ “I love competing in sports, so regaining my athletic ability makes me extremely happy,” said Valerie Parmarter, Verde Valley Medical Center patient.

Valerie seemed to have it all—she was an attractive, outgoing high school sophomore, star athlete and honor student with lots of friends. Until one day, during a soccer game on Jan. 18, 2007, when Valerie jumped into the air to head the ball. What she hit wasn't the soccer ball—it was an opponent's shoulder. The collision temporarily knocked Valerie unconscious. It was an event that soon would change her life.

“I don't remember anything about the accident and very little about the next few days,” Valerie said.

“When the collision occurred, I immediately went out on the field to examine Valerie,” said Randy Boardman, physical therapist and athletic trainer with Verde Valley Medical Center, who was covering the game. “She awoke quickly and said she was sore and achy. Besides that, her only symptom was affected balance.”

Keeping an eye on her, Boardman allowed Valerie to watch the game with her grandparents from the sidelines—until her arm began twitching.

From Waiting to Working

Boardman immediately performed a concussion check and instructed the family

to transport Valerie to VVMC's Emergency department. After a CT scan, physicians determined she had suffered a concussion and needed neurological attention. She was rushed by ambulance to Flagstaff Medical Center. Because Valerie also had suffered a traumatic brain injury, her body now was reacting with seizures. Physicians at FMC made a decision to induce Valerie's body into a state of coma to stop the seizures. For the next 11 days, physicians kept close watch over Valerie's condition, gradually bringing her out of the coma, until it was determined she was no longer at risk for seizures and could be released to home.

The Road to Recovery

Head injuries can affect the whole person—motor skills, speech, facial expressions, memory, thought process and emotions. Valerie was referred to VVMC's Outpatient Therapy Program, and on Jan. 30, the day after returning home, she went in for her first day of therapy.

“When I first saw how much Valerie's injury had affected her, I didn't know how long it was going to take her to return to her previous level of functioning,” said Lisa Zublionis, physical therapist with VVMC,

who spent more than two months helping Valerie recover. “When she arrived, she was brought in a wheelchair as she was unsteady on her feet and it was unsafe for her to walk alone. However, she had two essential things going for her: she was a young athlete in incredibly good shape, and she wanted to get back to who she was before the accident. Valerie refused to accept anything less.”

Following the Plan

With this determination, Valerie began physical and speech therapy. Her physical therapy sessions worked on strengthening her legs, improving her flexibility and regaining her balance. Although she wanted to go running during the first few sessions, she reluctantly took her therapists’ advice and waited a few weeks until her balance

“The Verde Valley Medical Center rehabilitation staff were not only the people who helped me regain my speech and physical function—they were my cheerleaders and friends throughout my recovery. Through their knowledge and motivation, I am able to be a normal high school student again.”

—Valerie Parmarter, VVMC patient

The Rehab Three

At Verde Valley Medical Center, services are available to meet almost all your rehabilitation needs. Whether you’re recovering from a neurological event such as a stroke, bouncing back after orthopaedic surgery or have a sports injury, our professional staff can help.

Rehabilitation services provided through VVMC include the following:

Occupational Therapy—Following stroke or another dangerous event, occupational therapy helps individuals relearn activities of daily living, such as tying shoes, cooking and cleaning. The Hand Therapy Program provides evaluation and treatment to patients who have been affected by accidents, disease or trauma to the hand, fingers or arm.

Physical Therapy—The patient works through a range of exercises and stretches to regain strength, stamina, balance and flexibility. Specialized wound therapy services also are provided.

Speech Therapy—Speech therapy helps people overcome pronunciation difficulties, swallowing disorders, voice issues and memory problems caused by neurological damage.

improved. Soon, she was sprinting on the treadmill and performing rigorous exercises that mimicked what she would be doing on the soccer field.

During the same time period, Valerie also was undergoing intensive speech therapy.

“When I first saw her, Valerie almost reminded me of a robot. She had no facial expression, she didn’t smile, her eyes were distant and she spoke in a monotone voice. It was obvious she had experienced significant memory loss,” said Kim Mills, M.A.E.D., M.S., C.C.C.-S.L.P., speech therapist at VVMC. “Her injuries had slowed her thought processes, and she had trouble thinking and recalling clearly.”

To help Valerie return to clarity of thought and verbal expression, Mills and other speech therapists worked on basic memory tasks, language issues, reasoning skills and more. A major motivator and turning point in therapy for Valerie was the thought of missing her junior/senior prom—that simply was not going to happen. That spirit of determination once again took over and Valerie regained enough speech and memory to return to school part time. While she attended summer school to catch up to her peers, and would be entering her junior year, she opted to challenge herself by taking senior level classes and received some of the highest scores in the class.

Finding Success

Following two months of physical therapy and five months of speech therapy at VVMC, Valerie was not only back to life—she was thriving. At the end of her sophomore year, she had met her rehabilitation goals and was able to attend her prom. This past summer, Valerie swam competitively and is the new record holder for the mile swim in her age group. Her progress was remarkable, and according to Zublionis, “Valerie went from just barely being able to walk to being a star athlete again.”

“Everyone on the rehabilitation team really helped me get back to my normal life,” Valerie said. “They were great motivators, like my own personal cheerleaders, and I looked forward to going to therapy every day. In the end, I made a lot of friends in the Rehabilitation department, and I’m forever grateful for what they did for me.”

To learn more about how the Rehabilitation department at VVMC can help you or your loved ones, call 928 639-6383.



You Have Questions About Nutrition . . .

...we have answers. At Verde Valley Medical Center, our dietitians are helping the community eat and live healthier.

With such a variety of information available about healthy eating—much of it conflicting—how can you know what's best for you?

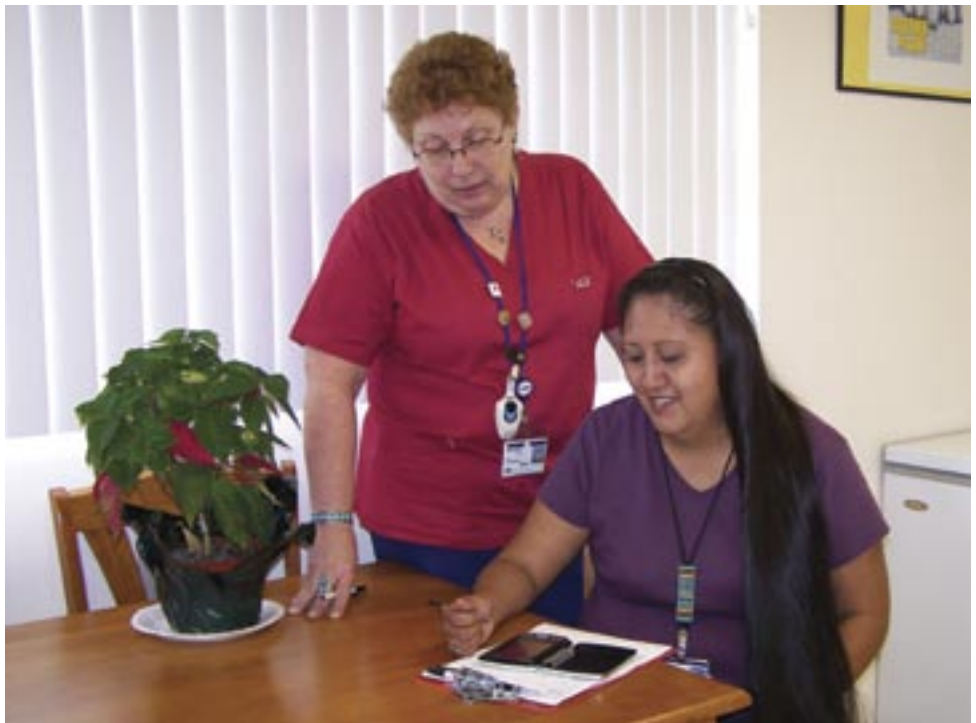
"Dietitians at VVMC are here to separate fact from fiction when it comes to healthful eating," said Martha Brown, M.S., R.D., C.D.E., dietitian and certified diabetes educator at Verde Valley Medical Center. "We are a resource for anyone who has a question about the best way to eat."

Other members of the Clinical Dietitian's office are Pamela Ing-Dobrota, M.P.H., R.D., and Stewart Weinstein, dietetic intern. In addition to their duties helping VVMC patients, they assist in the VVMC diabetes classes, and are involved in the community at health fairs and serving as guest speakers, teachers and consultants at community organizations.

For more information about healthy eating, contact a VVMC dietitian at 928 639-6531.

"Whether your question is about heart-healthy foods, the benefit of consuming fiber or how to incorporate enough vitamins and minerals into your diet, our goal is to be just a phone call away. A healthful diet is something everyone can control, and we're here to help."

—Martha Brown, M.S., R.D., C.D.E., dietitian and certified diabetes educator at Verde Valley Medical Center



▲ Celena Peyketewa, nutrition assistant at Verde Valley Medical Center, explains to Kathryn Jessop, R.N., how she utilizes a personal digital assistant (PDA) to help patients make meal selections.

Personalized Meal Selection

With the implementation of a new, automated diet office software program, the Verde Valley Medical Center Nutritional Services department now offers patients personal one-on-one meal selection sessions at the bedside.

This program, which was introduced in May 2006, virtually eliminates the paper menus used within the hospital for decades. At VVMC, the diet office staff of four nutrition assistants records patient orders in-person with the aid of a personal digital assistant (PDA). The order is then downloaded to the diet office management system, production tallies and tray tickets are created, and the selections are later delivered to the room.

"We go to patient rooms in the morning to take lunch selections, and then return later in the day to discuss options for dinner that evening and breakfast the next morning," said Celena Peyketewa, nutrition assistant at VVMC. "It makes the process more personal for patients and allows them to have a say in their diets."

Patients are encouraged to ask Nutritional Services department staff questions related to dietary needs and food preferences, putting choices and information in each patient's hands. The new system records each patient's dietary restrictions, resulting in greater accuracy of available diet and allergy information.

"The food selection program is extremely popular with patients," said Rich Crowell, C.C.A., C.E.C., C.D.M., director of the Nutritional Services department at VVMC. "Our patient satisfaction scores are at their highest since the program was introduced."

Kidney Disease 101

According to the National Kidney Foundation, kidney disease affects more than 20 million Americans; yet many people are still in the dark about the chronic disease.

Kidneys, which are located in the upper back on the right and left sides of the abdomen, may be some of the smaller organs (about the size of a fist), but they serve a very important purpose—they filter wastes and excess water out of the body.

When kidneys fail, patients have two options: they can either have their blood artificially filtered through a process known as dialysis, or receive a kidney transplant.

While dialysis is an effective method of purifying the blood, most patients opt to enroll on a donor registry for a kidney transplant. However, unless patients find someone willing to donate one of his or her kidneys, they could spend years on dialysis while waiting for these lifesaving organs. Individuals desiring transplant must undergo a full medical evaluation and pass all portions of the test to be eligible.

A Silent Stalker

Known as a “silent disease” because sufferers have no obvious symptoms in its early stages, chronic kidney disease develops so slowly that many people don’t even realize they are affected with the condition until they are rushed to the hospital for treatment.

Several common risk factors for kidney disease include:

- low birth weight as a child
- diabetes
- long-term use of nonsteroidal

anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), including aspirin, acetaminophen and ibuprofen

- family history of chronic kidney disease
- prior episode of acute renal failure
- hepatitis B or C
- high blood pressure
- lupus and other autoimmune diseases
- African-American, American Indian or Hispanic descent
- previous history of malignancy with chemotherapy treatment

Treatment Options

Once kidney disease has progressed from its initial silent phase, many people begin experiencing uncomfortable symptoms, such as swelling and fluid retention, decreased urination and fatigue. Some individuals also experience nausea and vomiting, an altered mental state or severe itching and cramping.

Unfortunately, the greatest concern for those facing chronic kidney disease is failure to detect early stage symptoms and disease progression. However, if patients are aware of risk factors and are screened for the condition during an annual physical, kidney disease can be diagnosed. Early stage kidney disease can be treated by a specialist called a nephrologist, and the treatment plan might prevent further decline in kidney function or other related complications such as heart attack or stroke.

Treatment Options at Verde Valley Medical Center

At times, critically ill patients have temporary failure of their kidneys and require the support of dialysis until their underlying illness and kidney failure recover. Thomas Neumann, M.D., nephrologist, and the nursing staff on the Intensive Care Unit at VVMC are fully trained in the care and treatment of all types of critically ill patients and can support them with the latest types of dialysis necessary in these situations.

For the patient who develops permanent kidney failure, there is full inpatient support during any hospitalization. There also is a full-service outpatient dialysis unit available at the Cottonwood campus.

Peritoneal dialysis, a form of home dialysis, is available as a shared program with clinics and training currently being performed in the nearby town of Dewey. Dr. Neumann works closely with two home hemodialysis programs in Phoenix to train patients and their families to perform dialysis in their own homes. This is an exciting new area of kidney failure treatment that has significantly improved the independence, motivation and health of dialysis patients involved in these programs.

Dr. Neumann completed a residency program in internal medicine and passed the American Board of Internal Medicine Certification Exam to become a board certified internal medicine specialist. He then completed a two-year nephrology fellowship and passed the American Board of Internal Medicine Subspecialty Board Exam in nephrology to become a board certified subspecialist in nephrology.



▲ Thomas Neumann, M.D., nephrologist (left), and Jim Sesnak, dialysis R.N.



Save the Date!

VVMC Sedona Campus Health Fair

Saturday, Nov. 3 • 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Free event
- Open to the public
- Medical information
- Children's activities
- Identity theft information
- Refreshments
- Glaucoma and vision screenings
- Depression screening
- Hearing screening
- Body fat analysis
- Child photo and fingerprints on digital CD
- Giveaways

VVMC's *Angel 3* helicopter will be onsite as will local emergency, fire, police and medical personnel. Watch your local newspapers for details. The VVMC Sedona Campus is located at 3700 West Highway 89A in West Sedona.

Photos courtesy of: Verde Valley Medical Center



Verde Valley Medical Center
Northern Arizona Healthcare
269 South Candy Lane
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