



Verde Valley Medical Center
Northern Arizona Healthcare

Summer | 08

Wellness

THE HEALTHCARE MAGAZINE FOR VERDE VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER **TODAY**



Happy, Healthy and Active:

Meet Katherine Thornbury,
Cancer Survivor

Award-Winning
Customer Service
in the Sedona
Emergency
Department

More About the
Area's Only
Hand Therapy
Program

Talking Quality



New Medical Staff Members

Eric D. Cohen, M.D.
F.A.C.C., F.S.C.A.I.

Interventional Cardiologist

Board certified by the National Board of Medical Examiners, American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM), ABIM Subspecialty Board in Interventional Cardiology, ABIM Subspecialty Board in Cardiovascular Disease

Medical School: Albany Medical College, Albany, N.Y.

Internship and Residency: Albany Medical Center, Albany

Fellowships: Invasive and Laboratory Cardiology, Clinical and Laboratory Cardiology

Professional Associations include: Fellow of the American College of Cardiology; Fellow of the Society of Cardiac Angiography and Interventions; and member of the American College of Physicians, Medical Association of the State of Alabama, Jefferson County Medical Society and the Arizona Medical Society. He also is a charter member of the Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography

269 S. Candy Lane
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
928 649-7910

Blair Faulkner, M.D.

General Surgeon

Board certified by the American Board of Surgery

Medical School: University of Toronto

Internship: University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

Residency: General Surgery, University of British Columbia

Fellowship: Hepatobiliary (liver, bile ducts and gall bladder)

Professional Associations include: Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, member of the society of Gastrointestinal and Laparoscopic Surgeons, Society of Laparoendoscopic Surgeons, American Society of General Surgeons

450 S. Willard St., Suite 107
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
928 649-7920

Steven J. Kurzweil, M.D.

Urologist

Board certified by the American Board of Urology

Medical School: Far Eastern University, Manila, Philippines

Internship: General Surgery, Harlem Hospital Center

Residency: Urology, University of Maryland Hospital

Fellowship: Stones/Endourology

Professional Associations include: Luzerne County Medical Society, American Urology Association

294 W. Highway 89A, Ste. 208
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Verde Valley Medical Center
Northern Arizona Healthcare

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Small Surgery, Big Benefits

Laparoscopic, or minimally invasive, surgery is a technique in which operations are performed through small incisions (usually less than a half-inch wide) as compared to larger incisions needed in traditional surgical procedures. A key element in laparoscopic surgery is the use of a laparoscope, a telescopic rod lens system connected to a small video camera. Also attached is a fiber optic cable system connected to a light source used to illuminate the operative field. The camera is connected to a monitor, enabling the surgeon to clearly view the operating area.

Depending on the surgery, many patients return home within hours after laparoscopy. Although it can be utilized in other areas of the body, laparoscopy is most commonly used for abdominal procedures such as:

- appendectomy
- colon surgery
- endometrial cancer
- gallbladder surgery
- hernia repair

Benefits of Laparoscopic Surgery

Because laparoscopic procedures are minimally invasive, patients experience much less pain after surgery, reduced risk of complication, smaller scars, shorter hospital stays and faster recovery times. This allows them to resume



Hu Blake, M.D., prepares to begin a laparoscopic procedure.

normal activities much more quickly.

“Our team is very dedicated to patient safety and quality of care, and our surgeons have developed advanced techniques for performing laparoscopic procedures,” said Hu Blake, M.D., F.A.C.S., board certified general surgeon on the Medical Staff and chairman of the department of Surgery at VVMC. “We are focused on returning patients to their lives and offer minimally invasive options to help them accomplish this faster and with less pain.”

Sedona Campus Exceeds Expectations for Customer Service Excellence

The Verde Valley Medical Center-Sedona Campus Emergency department has received 11 national Top Performer customer satisfaction awards in the past five years.

From unexpected injuries and illnesses of visitors to life-threatening conditions of the local community, the VVMC-Sedona Campus Emergency department provides the highest quality care available.

The department has repeatedly received top honors in patient satisfaction, including Top Performer in Overall Quality of Doctor’s Care, Top Performer in Quality Discharge Instructions, Top Performer in Patient’s Total Time in the Emergency department and a 5-star award for Overall Quality of Care from Professional Research Consultants (PRC) of Omaha, Neb.

“About 60 percent of our patients come from Central Arizona, which means we are able to offer exceptional care to our neighbors,” said Madelyn Szep, R.N., charge nurse at VVMC-Sedona Campus

Emergency department. “We offer efficient care coupled with an emphasis on patient satisfaction.”

Caring for the Community

The VVMC-Sedona Campus Emergency department is staffed by experienced, board certified physicians supported by a professional nursing staff. Guardian Air medical helicopter is available for rapid transport in emergent situations, and the VVMC Cottonwood campus full-service inpatient hospital is just 17 miles south of Sedona. The Sedona Campus ED cares for more than 6,000 patients each year—one-third of those being visitors to the area.

“We understand a medical emergency is a frightening experience,” said Szep. “Our dedicated staff of professionals will do everything we can to provide the treatment you need as quickly as possible.”



Forrest Dean, M.D., Emergency physician, reviews an X-ray for a possible fracture.



A Nurse's Journey

to Becoming a Breast Cancer Survivor

When Katherine Thornbury felt a lump in her breast, she knew all too well what that could mean. A hospital nurse for 40 years, who had also given chemotherapy treatments, she was no stranger to cancer.

After taking early retirement from nursing, Katherine and her husband moved from Rhode Island to Northern Arizona. On a visit home to see her family at Christmas, Katherine discovered a lump in her breast.

“When I returned to Arizona, I had a follow-up mammogram at the VVMC Cottonwood campus, and was diagnosed with cancer,” Katherine said. “Soon after, I had surgery to remove the lump, and was told I would need chemotherapy. I knew I wanted to stay close to home to receive treatment. That’s when I turned to Verde Valley Medical Center.”

Katherine was referred to Robert Gagliano, M.D., oncology specialist and a member of the VVMC Medical Staff. He reviewed her diagnostic tests and recommended chemotherapy during a physician-patient consultation.

“Katherine’s cancer had not spread when I began providing her chemotherapy treatment,” Dr. Gagliano said. “As a nurse, she was aware of the need for the early detection. Catching the cancer early was the key to her successful treatment.”

A physician team recommended Katherine begin with chemotherapy and then follow up with radiation therapy. Dr. Gagliano recommended she undergo her radiation treatments at VVMC’s Cancer Center located on the Sedona campus.

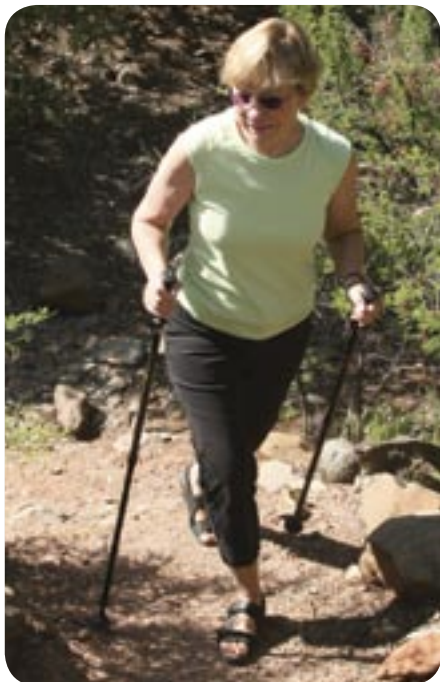
A Changing Role

Being the patient instead of the caregiver was a new experience for Katherine, and one that took a little adjustment.

“I think as a nurse, I’m more likely to overanalyze every aspect of my care,” Katherine said. “I was very pleased with the treatment I received at Cottonwood. I appreciated that the facility provided individual patient rooms where I could have my chemotherapy treatments in privacy. Also, the staff was very caring and positive.”

“Early detection is the single most important factor in successfully treating breast cancer. Performing regular breast self-exams in addition to yearly mammograms helps detect abnormalities sooner.”

—Robert Gagliano, M.D.,
oncology specialist on the
Medical Staff at VVMC



Katherine enjoys hiking one of the area's many nature trails.

Committed to Cancer Care

As Verde Valley Medical Center patient Katherine Thornbury discovered, you don't have to leave Northern Arizona to receive quality cancer care. At the VVMC Cancer Center Sedona Campus, a multidisciplinary team—including radiation oncologists, physicist, dosimetrist, registered nurse, social worker, dietitian and radiation therapists—is on hand to offer comprehensive care.

The Cancer Center Sedona campus provides radiation and medical oncology services with board certified physicians who utilize some of the most current technologies and equipment for treating cancer patients. Superior support services also are offered to patients, including transportation to and from treatments.

Cutting-edge Radiation Therapy

Provides Greater Accuracy and Less Risk to Healthy Tissue

Having given many patients chemotherapy medications in the past, Katherine was somewhat apprehensive about the side effects.

"I had seen my patients get sick from their treatments, and I wondered what I would feel like," Katherine said. "I was surprised though, because the effects of the treatments really were not that bad. The worst part was losing my hair, but it did grow back."

Living Life to the Fullest

Since completing chemotherapy and then radiation, Katherine has stayed busy. She and her husband went on vacation to Hawaii before her mammogram earlier this year.

"I wanted to go before my mammogram because I thought if my cancer had returned and I needed treatment again, I would enjoy myself first," Katherine said.

The mammogram showed the cancer had not returned.

"I am thankful that everything is going well. It's great not to have the word 'cancer' weighing me down," Katherine said. "My health is something I will always have to be cautious about, but I just keep a positive outlook, live each day fully and enjoy being healthy."

The VVMC Cancer Center Sedona Campus offers Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) to patients, the latest technology allowing for increased accuracy in the treatment of cancerous tumors with better results and fewer side effects.

"We are excited to offer this treatment to our cancer patients," said Jeff Axtell, Oncology Services director at the Cancer Center on Verde Valley Medical Center's Sedona Campus. "We are able to treat the patient with a significantly reduced risk of radiation exposure to surrounding healthy tissue while maximizing the dose to the tumor."

IGRT uses high-resolution X-rays and small gold pieces called "markers," which are implanted around a cancerous tumor. The markers provide pinpoint accuracy for radiation to hit the tumor in the exact same spot every time the patient receives radiation therapy. This greatly reduces the risk of damaging surrounding healthy tissue.

Before the development of IGRT, radiation therapy required that small "tattoos" be inked on the skin to assist with setting up the patient for treatment. However, if the patient gained or lost weight during the weeks of radiation therapy, the tattoo could shift in relation to the tumor, which remained in the same place inside the body. Additionally, if a patient moved after being carefully positioned on the table, the beam may not have hit the exact spot it was intended to target, and healthy tissue may have received radiation as well.

The enhanced accuracy of this new technology is clinically proven in treating a wide range of cancers, including prostate, lung, abdominal, pelvic, head and neck cancers.

For more information on IGRT or services available through the Cancer Center at the VVMC Sedona Campus, call 928 204-4160.

Hand Therapy Offers Specialized Solution



▲ Susan Grace, hand therapist, teaches hand-strengthening exercises to patient Jessica Krame.

In summer 2007, Jessica Krame was a healthy, active teenager who had just graduated high school and was enjoying working outdoors at her summer job. That changed one day when she was using a chainsaw to cut wood. Her hands slipped, and to her horror, she felt the chainsaw grind into her left hand. All the tendons in that hand were damaged except for those in her pinky finger.

Jessica was rushed to the Emergency department where she was told she would need surgery and extensive therapy to regain the use of her hand.

Concentrated Care

Hand therapy focuses on rehabilitation of the upper extremities, including the arms and hands. This type of therapy can be used for injuries related to strain

and overuse, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, arthritis or, in instances like Jessica's, where an injury has affected the use of one hand.

"I work with patients to manage open or closed wounds, infections, scar tissue and pain," said Susan Grace, O.T.D., O.T.R./L., C.H.T., doctor of occupational therapy, registered and licensed occupational therapist and certified hand therapist in the Rehabilitation Services department at VVMC. "Hand therapy techniques help patients increase their range of motion, dexterity and strength to restore optimum function."

After consulting with Jessica's physician and assessing her condition, Susan determined Jessica would require wound care, protective splinting and exercises to regain motion.

The various exercises and treatments helped manage her scar tissue to prevent it from adhering to her tendons, and she also went through a program at home.

"Susan always had a very positive attitude and was patient in showing me a number of exercises, including ones I could do at home," said Jessica. "We always laughed and had fun, and I felt like I was getting the specialized care I needed to make a recovery."

Healing Hands

After hour-long therapy sessions three times per week over the course of nearly two months, Jessica's hand therapy—and her commitment to getting better—paid off.

"There were tough moments when I went through a lot of pain," said Jessica, "but Susan always was there, encouraging me and making me more determined."

One year later, Jessica has experienced a full recovery. With the exception of her surgical scar, she said no one would ever know she had been injured.

"I couldn't do anything with my hand before therapy," she said. "I am so grateful to Susan for helping me become a healthy teenager again."

For more information about Rehabilitation Services at VVMC, visit www.VerdeValleyMedicalCenter.com.



Talking Quality:

Prevention of Surgical Site Infection

Verde Valley Medical Center actively participates in the Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA), a reporting initiative that provides information on the quality of care in hospitals that voluntarily report data for selected clinical topics. HQA looks at outcome measures for a number of healthcare topics, one of which is the prevention of surgical site infection (SSI).

The Surgical Care Improvement Project (SCIP) is a national quality partnership of organizations focused on improving surgical care with the goal of eliminating surgical complications.

Some of the indicators monitored and documented through SCIP include:

- correct antibiotic given as determined by published guidelines
- antibiotic administered up to 60 minutes prior to surgical incision
- antibiotic discontinued within 24 hours of surgical end time
- thermoregulation (appropriate body temperature) while in post anesthesia care/recovery
- hair removal using clippers instead of razors (reduces risk of nicks, which create a portal of entry for bacteria)

The Right Team for the Job

At VVMC, the SCIP team includes the vice president of Medical Affairs (M.D.), chief of Surgery (M.D.), medical director of Anesthesia (M.D.), director of Quality (R.N.), director of Surgical Services (R.N.), director of Pharmacy (R.Ph.), assistant director of Surgical Services (R.N.), Quality analyst (R.N.),

Infection Control practitioner (R.N.), Quality abstractor and an additional registered nurse. This group meets monthly to review current initiatives, VVMC compliance with initiatives, discrepancies and any new initiatives that are scheduled to be added. SCIP reports are forwarded to the departments of Surgery and Quality Council as well as the Infection Control Committee and the Board of Directors.

“VVMC’s Quality department checks adherence to our indicators by auditing charts upon patient discharge to be sure best practices have been followed,” James Bleicher, vice president for Medical Affairs, said. “The state also periodically audits our data to confirm we are correctly reporting information. There is a predetermined level at which validation must agree for VVMC to be reimbursed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). At VVMC, we measure our data because improving outcomes and providing the best care possible is our ultimate goal.”

Save the Dates

Attend a Free Seminar

“Setting the New Standard for Joint Replacement Surgery”

Friday, June 27
Los Abrigados Resort
Highway 179
Sedona
Walk-ins welcome.

Revolutionizing Orthopedics: VVMC Joint Replacement Program

Less pain. Faster recovery. Better range of motion. Join Jon Cook, D.P.T., coordinator of the VVMC Total Joint Program, and special guest speaker Jack Wylie, M.D., board certified orthopaedic surgeon, for a free seminar explaining the methods and excellent results of VVMC's scientifically based joint replacement program.

Additional joint replacement program participants include board certified orthopaedic surgeons Geoffrey Cook, M.D., and Bradley Williams, M.D., Ph.D.

Call 928 639-6551 today to reserve your seat.

Community Open House

*EntireCare
Rehab & Sports Medicine Experts*

Saturday, June 28
10 a.m.–2 p.m.

VVMC's new expanded Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine department includes physical therapy, occupational therapy, hand therapy and speech therapy.

Join us for a live radio broadcast, lectures, demonstrations, screenings, educational information, healthy cooking demonstration, giveaways and light refreshments.

Call 928 639-6551 for more information.



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