

Spring 2023



Washington Hospital Healthcare System

Health Signs



Good Health Starts in the Kitchen

Outpatient diabetes education program offers personalized plan development.

See page 10.



HealthSigns

Spring 2023



5 Strong STEMI Team

Patients experiencing a heart attack are tested, diagnosed, and treated within minutes of arrival.



8 Experienced Oncologists

HealthSigns sat down with two of our UCSF Health cancer doctors who are also cancer survivors.



6 A Leader in Pituitary Surgery

A UCSF neurosurgeon at Washington Hospital is world renowned for pituitary tumor removal surgery.



10 Diabetes Epidemic

Comprehensive services for patients with diabetes — hospitalized as well as those in our community.



7 Vascular Disorders

Vein and artery expert keeps blood flowing when aneurysms, clots or narrowing occurs.

Visit us Online



Stay connected to Washington Hospital at www.whhs.com and on Facebook and YouTube. Visit [YouTube.com/whhsInHealth](https://www.youtube.com/whhsInHealth) to view interesting and informative videos.



Browse our calendar of upcoming events.



Mission

As the local Health Care District, our mission is to meet the health care needs of District residents through medical services, education and research.

Within this scope, Washington Township Health Care District is committed to assuming the leadership role in improving and maintaining the health status of the residents by:

- Identifying and assessing community health care needs
- Developing mechanisms to respond to the identified need within the financial capabilities of the District
- Committing to a culture of patient safety and accountability
- Adopting identified best practices
- Providing access to high-quality, cost-effective health services through an integrated delivery system
- Partnering with a diverse medical staff, academic medical centers and other providers to meet the health care needs of District residents
- Providing appropriate employee, professional and community educational resources to enhance patient care and health promotion throughout the District

Vision

To support the fulfillment of the mission, the District's strategic vision is to be the regional medical center of choice in Southern Alameda County offering quality services that span the full range of care within the available financial resources.



Washington Township Health Care District

Resolved by the Board of Directors
Washington Township Health Care District
April 22, 2020

From the Chief Executive Officer



Kimberly Hartz
Chief Executive Officer
Washington Hospital
Healthcare System

This year Washington Hospital celebrates its 65th anniversary as a community-based Hospital. One thing that has never wavered is the Hospital's commitment to meeting the specific health care needs of its District residents who continue to show their steadfast support; in fact, it is part of our mission. We do this by engaging with the community in many different ways.

Every three years, the Healthcare System conducts a comprehensive health needs assessment. Part of the study entails focus groups with community members to identify critical health issues. The data is used to tailor our services and education programs to meet local needs and help improve the health of the community. We also hear from participants of our various health care support groups that take place online and at the Hospital each month.

Another avenue to connect with patients and community members is the Hospital's sponsorship of community events such as Fremont's Summer Concert Series and our Trees of Angels holiday celebrations. We also hold annual events on our campus like a Celebration of Life for cancer survivors and their loved ones in May, and the Think Pink breast cancer awareness event in the fall. New this year, we are hosting the Road to Wellness Family Health Fair in July. In addition to interactive health and fitness challenges, there will be giveaways, entertainment and fun activities for all ages.

The public is also invited to free health screenings and can attend online seminars on health topics at our [YouTube.com/WHHSInHealth](https://www.youtube.com/WHHSInHealth) channel. Timely topics range from how to recognize a stroke or heart attack and effective diabetes management. Information on these events can be found in our Health & Wellness catalog sent to Tri-City residents biannually and posted on our website.

The Hospital provides a free, confidential Health Insurance Information Service to help local people make informed decisions, regardless of where they go for health care. We are also proud to partner with numerous community programs that provide services on-site including HERS Breast Cancer Foundation; SAVE, a local grassroots organization providing support to survivors of domestic violence; and Mended Hearts, a support group for people with cardiac conditions.

Washington Hospital values its partnership with the community and strives to continually strengthen this mutually beneficial relationship. It enables us to provide relevant health care services and programs that truly meet the needs of our diverse and growing community.

On behalf of everyone within the Washington Hospital Healthcare System, we are grateful for the ongoing support of this community, both through the good times and those that challenge all of us. In return, we will continue finding ways to engage with you to provide high-quality health care customized to your needs and delivered with our Patient First Ethic.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Hartz".



After receiving treatment in the Emergency Department, this patient is happy to receive follow-up care from Nowwar Mustafa, MD.

When Time is Muscle

Lifesaving Cardiac Event Team is Ready 24-7-365

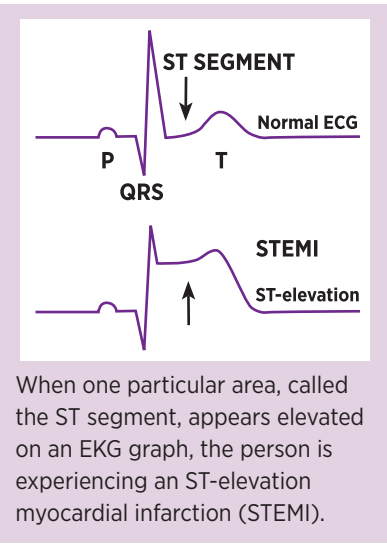
Also known as a massive heart attack or widow maker, a ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) occurs when one of the heart’s major arteries is blocked. As with a stroke, STEMI is a life-threatening medical emergency and it is critical to call 911 if it happens to you or a loved one. When Washington Hospital receives a “Code STEMI” from paramedics in the field, our award-winning STEMI team forms and is ready to treat the patient immediately upon arrival.

“Diagnosing a STEMI begins before a patient arrives in the Emergency Department. It starts when paramedics run an electrocardiogram (EKG) and call ahead to alert us at the Hospital,” says Nowwar Mustafa, MD, an interventional cardiologist with Washington Township Medical Foundation. “We have an exceptional “door-to-balloon” time, which means the patient is in the cardiac catheterization lab (Cath Lab) for an angioplasty to open the blocked artery as soon as possible after they come in our doors.”

Washington Hospital is an early adopter of the standard to get heart attack patients into the Cath Lab to restore blood flow to the heart within 90 minutes or less.

In 2022, we achieved this 90% of the time. As a designated STEMI Receiving Center for Alameda County, we are recognized annually by the American Heart Association for consistently meeting and exceeding national guidelines.

Classic signs of a STEMI include chest pain or pressure; discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach; shortness of breath; and cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness. If you or anyone around you experiences these symptoms, call 911 right away. You could be saving a life.



When one particular area, called the ST segment, appears elevated on an EKG graph, the person is experiencing an ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI).



Washington Hospital Neurosurgeon is a Pioneer of Pituitary Surgery

Washington Hospital patients with pituitary tumors are in very good hands with neurosurgeon Sandeep Kunwar, MD, FAANS, FACS, referred to by *Pituitary World News* as, “One of the most, if not the most, successful pituitary surgeon today.”

Local Woman Shares Her Brain Tumor Story

rear of her head. After visits to an ophthalmologist and her primary physician did not uncover the problem, an MRI revealed a 2.5-centimeter pituitary tumor. While the diagnosis was scary, she was pleased to learn her Milpitas home was a few minutes away from one of the world’s preeminent experts on pituitary tumors.

UCSF neurosurgeon and Medical Director of Washington Hospital’s Taylor McAdam Bell Neuroscience Institute, Sandeep Kunwar, MD, removed her tumor in March. “I expected to be in the hospital for several days, but was discharged the next day with just a runny nose and minor sinus pain,” said the woman. After four weeks she began working again, walking for exercise, and doing most of the yoga poses she enjoys.

The pituitary gland lives in the center of the skull surrounded by the optic nerve, carotid arteries, and brainstem, so surgical access is challenging. Dr. Kunwar pioneered the transsphenoidal endonasal approach to pituitary tumors in the early 2000s. During this minimally invasive procedure, the tumor is accessed and dissected endoscopically through the nostril, with no incisions to the face or scalp. While post-op patients used to be hospitalized for a week, 85% now go home the next day. Dr. Kunwar has performed nearly 3,000 of these procedures. In fact, he does more in one week than most neurosurgeons do in a year, and data proves his track record of safe, successful procedures is among the best in the nation.

The pituitary is a bean-sized gland in the brain that controls all five hormones in the body. Pituitary adenomas are usually benign, slow-growing tumors that occur in one in five people. Small adenomas are generally not harmful, but larger ones can be serious, causing hormonal overproduction or deficiencies. Treatment options include controlling the tumor’s growth and hormone levels with medications or surgical removal.

Valuable Vascular Services

Restoring Blood Flow from Head to Toe



Vascular surgeon Stella Asuquo, MD, joined our vascular team in August 2022. Dr. Asuquo earned her medical degree at Indiana University School of Medicine and completed a fellowship in vascular and endovascular surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Jersey. She is board-certified in both general and vascular surgery. She was attracted to our Patient First Ethic as well as the Hospital's desire to deliver a comprehensive range of quality vascular care to patients in their own community.

According to the Society for Vascular Surgery, there is a shortage of vascular surgeons to meet the increased demand presented by the nation's aging population. In some areas, people have to travel long distances for the valuable services performed by these essential experts of narrowed or blocked veins and arteries.

Washington Hospital is fortunate to have a top-notch vascular physician to diagnose, treat and help patients manage their vascular conditions. "We are seeing an increase in systemic atherosclerotic disease (buildup of plaque) with resultant increase in cardiovascular disease," says Stella Asuquo, MD, a Washington Township Medical Foundation vascular surgeon.

Washington Hospital offers a comprehensive range of vascular treatments in the clinic as well as more complex traditional open and endovascular surgeries in the Hospital. They regularly collaborate with physicians across other medical specialties (see sidebar for examples), working hand-in-hand with cardiologists, neurosurgeons, endocrinologists, podiatrists and others to address vascular issues.

Common Vascular Disorders and Treatments

Aneurysms – A bulge or ballooning in the wall of a blood vessel which can rupture, causing internal bleeding or death. Vascular surgeons insert a stent into the weakened area to fortify it.

Ischemia – A blocked vessel or blood clot prevents oxygen from getting through which can lead to stroke, heart attack or limb loss. Blood flow is restored with balloon angioplasty and stenting.

Hemodialysis Access – Dialysis patients require an access point in the form of a fistula, graft, or catheter so the dialysis machine can access and clean their blood.

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) – Plaque builds up in the vessels that supply blood to the limbs which can slow or stop blood flow. Once diagnosed through advanced imaging, vascular intervention can avoid amputation of a toe, foot or leg.

Cancer Care in our Community



Patient Rod West is grateful to receive care from Dr. Carlton Scharman.

Local Oncologists Share their Perspectives

The UCSF – Washington Cancer Center has seen a rise in the number of patients with advanced cancer. The center continues to grow to meet the community's needs. Two UCSF Health hematologist-oncologists, Carlton Scharman, MD, and Matthew Tenold, MD, joined our team in 2021 bringing a valuable perspective. Both of these physicians had cancer at a young age and were so inspired by their oncologists that they went to medical school. They are now treating Tri-City cancer patients with the same compassionate care that they received. HealthSigns sat down with them to discuss cancer care in our community.

HealthSigns: Tell us about your cancer experience and how it led you to become an oncologist.

Dr. Scharman: I was diagnosed with leukemia at age 16. When you become very sick and go through something so scary for you and your family, you find inspiration in the people around you. I was inspired by the warmth and loving care I received from my own oncologist and the staff who saved my life. It put me on the path toward medicine and oncology and I never looked back.

Dr. Tenold: I had a great deal of pain for a year before being diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma after graduating high school. Two tumors in my chest were damaging my ribs, but my case was unusual and hard to diagnose. My oncologist was so supportive, diligent, and reassuring, that I stopped worrying. And while the treatment was grueling, he helped me get through it. I decided at that time it was worth dedicating my life if I could help just one other person, as he did for me.

HealthSigns: What did you take from that experience that affects the way you care for patients today?

Dr. Scharman: I know every one of my patients has their own life circumstances which makes their cancer experience unique. While I cannot always put myself in my patient's shoes due to those unique circumstances, it is the knowing firsthand that we have a commonality through our mutual shared experience with cancer that I think naturally allows me to bring empathy, compassion and a sense of connection to my patients.

Dr. Tenold: My oncologist was able to explain things so I could understand exactly what was going on. When dealing with a difficult diagnosis, I explain everything to my patients and assure them we will do everything possible to find the solution. I care for them the way I was cared for, with confidence and dedication.

HealthSigns: As UCSF Health physicians, how does access to UCSF faculty and resources help you provide better care to Washington Hospital patients?

Dr. Scharman: The affiliation with UCSF Health brings world-class resources to the doorsteps of cancer patients in our community. One example is "tumor boards," which are collaborative conferences held with our UCSF Health physician colleagues across various specialties, including oncology, radiation oncology, surgery and radiology. Here, we can thoroughly discuss our more complex patient cases with these experts in real time, allowing us to come to decisions regarding the best management and treatments based on expert consensus.

Dr. Tenold: When we need assistance from a top specialist who focuses on one type of cancer, they are an email or a phone call away. And when patients would benefit from a clinical trial or an advanced level of care that we may not have access to in Fremont, there is a streamlined process in place to set that up.

HealthSigns: What new advancements in oncology are changing the game right now?

Dr. Scharman: Oncology is an innovative and rapidly evolving field. Chemotherapy, while effective, can have unpleasant side effects because it can affect both cancer cells and normal healthy cells in the body. Targeted therapies are novel medicines that attack a specific "target" that is seen preferentially in cancer cells, and seen less often in normal

healthy cells, which can make them very effective and typically with fewer side effects. Also, immunotherapy is an innovative form of treatment that harnesses and elevates the immune system's ability to seek out and kill cancer cells. These treatments are revolutionizing the way many kinds of cancers are being treated.

HealthSigns: What is your message to the community about UCSF – Washington Cancer Center?

Dr. Tenold: We provide the same level of expertise and access to treatment in Fremont that cancer patients would get at UCSF Health, a top-tier academic medical center. Being here in the community is critical, since many cancer treatments require daily or weekly visits. But when a specialized surgery, radiation, clinical trial or other advanced treatment is needed, we can refer our patients to be seen right away in San Francisco.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, we're seeing patients with advanced cancers that potentially could have been prevented or treated much earlier. We urge everyone to get back on schedule with their checkups and routine cancer screenings.



Dr. Matthew Tenold comforts patient Jaya Achanta.

Addressing the Diabetes Epidemic



After raising two daughters, Lisa Williams has made the decision to focus on her health. She met with Certified Diabetes Educator, Nancy Liu, and together, they have created a plan for Lisa to lose weight and better understand the connection between good nutrition and good health. Lisa is excited about this new season of her life and journey ahead!

Partnering with Patients on Self-Management Strategies

Whether or not you or someone you care about has been impacted by it, diabetes is something everyone should know about. It's called the silent killer, because millions of people unknowingly have prediabetes or have undiagnosed diabetes since early symptoms can be hard to spot. The statistics on this page show diabetes is a primary health concern increasing at epidemic rates. Consistent

with Washington Hospital's mission, our robust diabetes program offers comprehensive inpatient and outpatient diabetes care, including education and support services to all local residents.

Diabetes is a chronic condition that causes higher than normal blood sugar (glucose) levels. It occurs when the body cannot make or effectively use its own insulin. About 5% of people with diabetes have type 1, also called insulin-dependent diabetes, and 90% have type 2 diabetes which can often be managed with diet and exercise. The third type, gestational diabetes, is diagnosed during pregnancy. Diabetes is associated with increased risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and neuropathy.

“Diabetes is a complex disease that can result in serious health conditions when not properly managed, but the bigger problem is, it’s only getting worse,” explains Washington Township Medical Foundation endocrinologist and the Hospital’s Medical Director of the Diabetes Program, Prasad Katta, MD, “Along with increased obesity, we are seeing soaring cases of type 2 diabetes not only in adults, but also adolescents engaged in a more sedentary lifestyle.”

INPATIENT DIABETES CARE

People with diabetes regularly arrive at Washington Hospital’s Emergency Department with either very high glucose levels (hyperglycemia); lack

of insulin and low glucose levels (hypoglycemia); or diabetic ketoacidosis which causes toxic levels of acidity in the blood, and other conditions, exacerbated by inadequate blood sugar management. Because diabetes impacts the healing process, infections, post-surgery wounds and other conditions are affected.

Patients in the Hospital with diabetes receive care from a multidisciplinary diabetes team. Depending on their condition, this may include endocrinologists, pharmacists, specialized nurses, nutritionists, diabetes educators and case managers who work with each diabetes inpatient. The goal of the program is to provide diabetes care to inpatients across all areas of patient care, from the day they arrive until the day they are discharged.

Washington Hospital is on the path to achieve Joint Commission Advanced Certification in Inpatient Diabetes Care — a distinction held by fewer than 2% of U.S. hospitals. “While we already have a strong diabetes program in place, Joint Commission certification will take it to the highest

level, assuring we are consistently in compliance with national standards and using the latest evidence-based clinical guidelines to optimize care for our patients with diabetes,” says Dr. Katta.

OUTPATIENT DIABETES SERVICES

Education and support empower patients to better manage diabetes, avoid complications, and achieve optimal health — physically and emotionally. Diabetes education can help people

prevent, delay or reverse complications through effective self-management. With a physician referral, community members can benefit from person-based education to develop individualized goals and a plan to achieve those goals. This

program is certified by the American Diabetes Association and includes one-on-one counseling, education classes, a support group, meeting with a registered dietitian, and lots of emotional support. Call the Washington Outpatient Diabetes Center at 510.818.6556 or go to whhs.com/diabetes to learn more.

My message to the community about diabetes is take advantage of our diabetes education and support programs so you can prevent diabetes, or safely and effectively self-manage the condition. Also know that in time of crisis, you can be confident you will receive the best possible care at Washington Hospital.

— Prasad Katta, MD

Diabetes Facts

More than 11% of people in the U.S. (37.3 million) have diabetes, 8.5 million of whom are undiagnosed.

96 million adults in the U.S. have prediabetes (38% of the population). Nearly one in five adolescents has prediabetes.

Rates of diabetes hospitalizations are significantly higher in Newark and Union City than the overall Alameda County rate.

Diabetes health complications include heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, vision loss and lower extremity amputations. Diabetes is the country’s seventh leading cause of death.

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Road to Wellness: Washington Hospital Family Health Fair



Where can you sit in a fire truck, listen to great music and get health information — all in one afternoon?

The Road to Wellness Family Health Fair!

This family-friendly day is sponsored by Washington Hospital and Washington Township Medical Foundation.

- Interactive health and fitness challenges
- First aid demonstrations
- Giveaways
- Touch-A-Truck where kids of all ages can explore utility trucks of all kinds
- Music and dance performances
- And more!



Saturday, July 29 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Washington West parking lot,
2500 Mowry Ave., Fremont