

Health Connect



ANTELOPE VALLEY
HOSPITAL
A facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District

A community newsletter from Antelope Valley Hospital

Summer 2016

Institute for Heart & Vascular Care

We take our patients' care to heart

Take a Walk Down
Medical Main Street

FUN in the **SUN**

Tips to keep your family safe



Healthcare is Changing and so is AVH

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As you read in the paper and see on the news, changes in healthcare are occurring all across our country. Antelope Valley Hospital is changing as well, just as we must, to keep up with the growing needs of our community. Our recent pledge of \$200,000 toward the creation of a Medical Main Street will help make healthcare more accessible not just for this generation but for the next. The refinancing of our debt provides us the resources necessary to fund select capital projects and introduce new programs. And, new initiatives we are launching to enhance our operational efficiencies, modernize our operations, and ensure clinical excellence will help us attract the kind of doctors, nurses and other clinical staff that will protect the health and welfare of our community, now and in the future.

As a district hospital we are accountable to you – our community – and that is a commitment we take very seriously. Unlike our publicly held counterparts, we have no shareholders receiving dividends. Our sole goal is to continue to serve our community just as we have for 60 years. And that is perhaps the most important message of all. For while healthcare is changing, one thing that will never change is our commitment to be the best and to set a standard of healthcare excellence that makes our community and employees proud.

On behalf of our more than 2,500 employees, the 450 physicians on our medical staff, and our 550 incredibly valuable volunteers, we thank you for your ongoing support and confidence. We look forward to doing many great things together today, tomorrow and for years to come.

Doddanna Krishna, M.D.
Chairman of the Board

Introducing *HealthConnect*

Welcome to *HealthConnect*, a new community newsletter from Antelope Valley Hospital. As this region's only full-service acute-care hospital, we are committed to communicating with you important matters pertaining to the hospital and to your health. *HealthConnect* will be delivered to your home four times a year and will also be available in electronic format on our website at avhospital.org. You may request to receive the newsletter electronically by sending an email to marketing@avhospital.org.



Take a Walk Down Medical Main Street

Imagine a street where healthcare services, dining and shopping are all accessible on foot, with no need to get in the car to take care of your errands and appointments. And imagine all of that within walking distance of Antelope Valley Hospital. That vision may soon become a reality when a “Medical Main Street” is built in Lancaster.

The proposed development, inspired by “The BLVD” in downtown Lancaster, is expected to cover a 361-acre district surrounding the hospital and extend from 20th Street West to east of 12th Street West at Avenue J, and from north of Avenue J to the shopping center on 15th Street West north of Avenue K.

As currently envisioned Medical Main Street will be complete in three to five years and will include doctors’ offices, restaurants and stores, all in a walkable area with easy access to the hospital. Multimodal forms of transportation, such as bike lanes and sidewalks will be included and encouraged within this mixed-use commercial and residential district. Antelope Valley Healthcare District and the city of Lancaster have each contributed \$200,000 to kick-start the project, which is expected to create jobs, encourage healthy habits, and serve as an economic engine for the community.

“This was an opportunity to invest in the health of the community as well as the local economy, bringing jobs and more accessible healthcare to local residents,” said Doddanna Krishna, M.D., chairman of the board of Antelope Valley Healthcare District. “We are pleased to play a role in making Medical Main Street a reality and look forward to this impressive dream coming true.”

We take our patients' care to heart



AVH Delivers Nationally Accredited Heart Care Close to Home

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. It is often “silent,” only revealing itself in a catastrophic event, such as a heart attack. But some heart conditions, like atrial fibrillation (an irregular and rapid heartbeat), can be detected by a physician and without proper treatment can lead to stroke. In either situation immediate access to quality care can make a lifesaving difference.

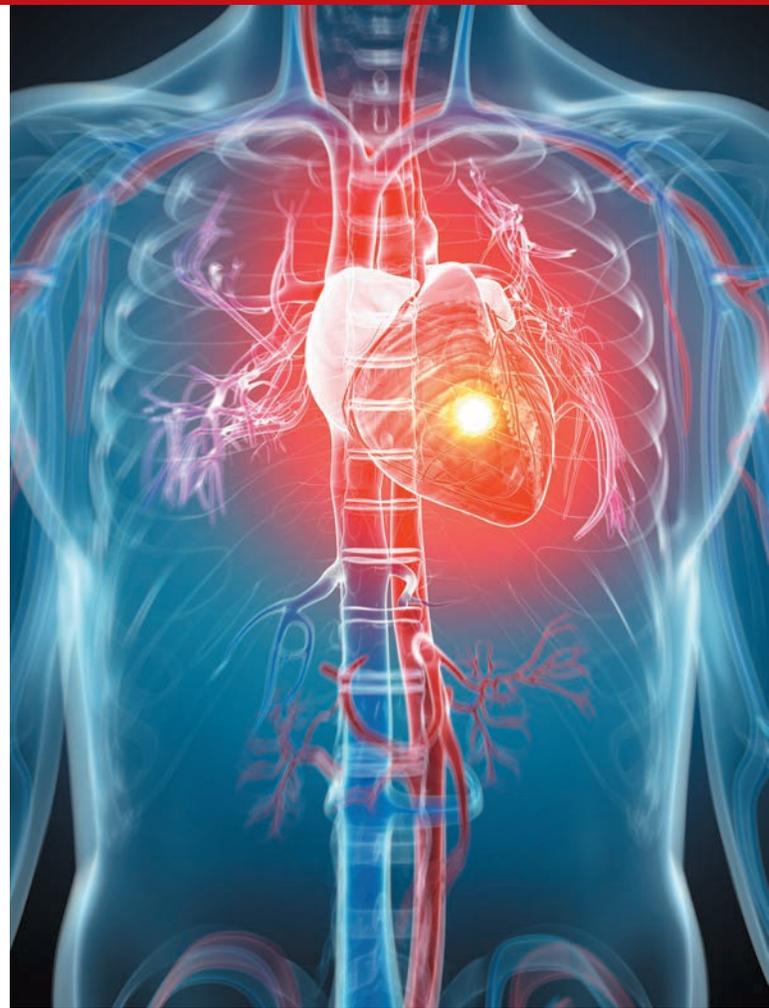
Fortunately, high-quality, nationally accredited heart care can be found right here in the Antelope Valley. The Institute for Heart & Vascular Care (IHVC) at Antelope Valley Hospital offers complete care for the detection, prevention and treatment of heart and vascular conditions. The center combines the most advanced technological services with a team of adult and pediatric cardiologists, cardiac surgeons and nurses, each of whom are specially trained and highly experienced in all aspects of cardiovascular care. Together we are able to offer patients a full range of diagnostic and treatment options to take care of their heart and vascular needs.

In 2015 AVH became the first facility in the Antelope Valley to receive full Chest Pain Center Accreditation from the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care. AVH is also a STEMI (ST-elevation myocardial infarction) Receiving Center, which means that the hospital and its clinical staff have the training, equipment and processes in place to immediately treat patients

“The AVH team is proud of its unique and extensive expertise in caring for heart attacks and related conditions,” said Sameh Gadallah, M.D., a cardiologist and medical director of the IHVC. “We offer the most sophisticated technology and hands-on team available anywhere, which means local residents don’t need to leave their family and comfort of their community to receive top-notch care.”

Signs of a Heart Attack

Heart attacks can come on suddenly and intensely, but did you know that a heart attack can also start slowly with just mild pain or discomfort? The early signs are often dismissed because people don't realize what is happening to them. If you experience any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1.



- 1** Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- 2** Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- 3** Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.

Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness. Women may also experience symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Even if you're not sure, have it checked out. Fast treatment can make a lifesaving difference.

experiencing a heart attack. In addition AVH is an Advanced Primary Stroke Center, which signifies that we have the tools, infrastructure, staff and training programs needed to provide care and foster better outcomes based on the most current clinical standards.

The Institute for Heart & Vascular Care at Antelope Valley Hospital features convenient drop-off and pick-up access right outside the main entrance, an expanded waiting area, and centralized treatment rooms. It is all part of our commitment to the community and our ongoing mission of providing quality service with care, compassion and respect, just as we have been doing for more than 60 years. To learn more visit avhospital.org/Services/HeartCare.



Sameh Gadallah, M.D. (right), cardiologist and medical director, AVH's Institute for Heart & Vascular Care, and Serap Sobnosky, M.D., interventional cardiologist.



Fun in the Sun: Follow these tips to keep your family safe

One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in the course of a lifetime.

Each summer millions of Californians are faced with the challenge of enjoying our wonderful, warm weather, while at the same time protecting ourselves from the sun's damaging rays. The key to getting the best out of the Southland's sunshine is protection, so let's look at a few of the strongest defenses against harmful sun exposure:

Sunscreen. Sunscreen is to sun exposure as helmets are to football. A guy would have to be crazy to line up on the 50-yard line without a helmet, right? Well the same can be said for being outdoors without your sunscreen. Sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or greater is one of your very best defenses against the sun.



Make sure your sunscreen is water-resistant, and remember to reapply after going in the water or excessively perspiring. Sunscreen should be applied 15 minutes before going out in the sun.

Watch the time of day. Remember that the sun's rays are most harmful between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Schedule outdoor visits for early morning and late afternoon. If you are enjoying a day at the lake, beach or pool, have the kids come rest under the umbrella midday.

Cover up. Keep loose-fitting, long-sleeve clothing readily available during your excursions in the sun. Loosely woven clothing that breathes works best. Don't forget hats; hoods; and, of course, sunglasses. Remember sun umbrellas, and try to create plenty of shade when spending the day outdoors.

Check all medicines for photosensitivity. Consult your physician or pharmacist as to whether a particular medicine is likely to produce a harmful reaction.

Avoid artificial tanning sources. Tanning beds, booths and sun lamps can emit dangerous rays, despite the fact that they might claim otherwise. Make a statement by choosing good health over a trendy tan!

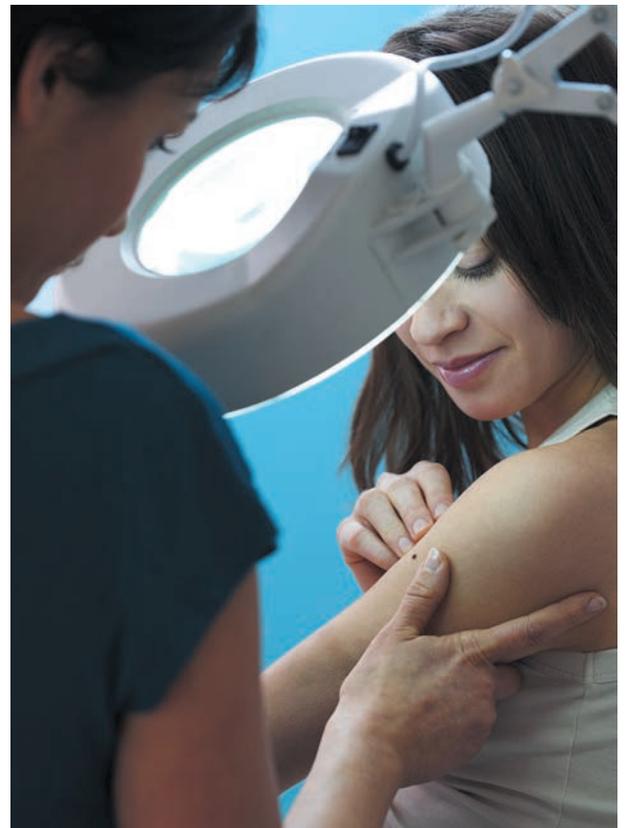
Examine your skin regularly. Watch for any raised growths, itchy patches, non-healing sores, or changes in moles and freckles. Yearly check-ups by a dermatologist are recommended to keep on top of these types of skin changes. Your doctor will keep records of your skin conditions and note changes accordingly. What may look like an innocent freckle could easily be a form of skin cancer.

Sun exposure is cumulative throughout your lifetime, that's why it is imperative to start healthy sun habits as early as possible. We have the tools and information to be able to enjoy the sun *and* protect ourselves from ultimately developing skin cancer or other serious sun-related conditions. Follow these simple steps above for a lifetime of enjoyment and protection.

Why You Need a Skin Cancer Check – and Where You Can Get One for Free

Skin cancer is the most common cancer, with one in five Americans developing it over the course of their lifetime. The good news is that many skin cancers can be cured if they are detected and treated early. That's why Antelope Valley Hospital and City of Hope have teamed up to offer free skin cancer screenings to the community.

Come out and get your skin checked on **Saturday, July 16, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at City of Hope Community Resource Center, 44151 15th Street West, Lancaster. The screening is painless and takes only a few minutes. Doctors may examine arms, legs and above the chest or other areas that are of concern to participants. Participants should wear short-sleeved shirts and shorts to have their arms and legs examined.





Trust and Confidence are at the Center of Healthcare

The mission of Antelope Valley Hospital is simple: We want to be “the leading resource for improving health by engaging and educating our community and safely caring for our patients.” Achieving that mission is what we work toward every day.

Each year Antelope Valley Hospital serves nearly 220,000 patients, sees 113,000 emergency room visits, and welcomes more than 5,400 babies into the world. But as impressive as these numbers are, I am well aware that healthcare is personal, and grand numbers don't mean anything if we're not there for you and your family when the need arises. That is why Antelope Valley Hospital is concerned not only with providing exceptional care today but is actively engaged in a number of exciting initiatives that will make us even stronger tomorrow. Many of these are discussed in this premier issue of *HealthConnect*.

We know that nobody really likes to come to a hospital (except maybe expectant moms!), but our job is to make your visit with us the best it can be. That means a team of doctors and nurses passionately focused on your well-being. It means volunteers who smile and lend a helping hand. It means having the best technology available to diagnose and treat what ails you. And it means providing a patient experience second to none. This is our goal and our pledge to you.

For more than 60 years Antelope Valley Hospital has been the center of healthcare in our community. That may sound like a long time to you, but to us we're only getting started. We are proud to be a member of this community and will never take for granted the trust and confidence the community places in us.

John Rossfeld
Chief Executive Officer

Debt Refinance Paves Way for Bright Future

Antelope Valley Hospital is now better positioned than ever to respond to the health-care needs of the community thanks to the hospital's successful efforts earlier this year to refinance the district's debt through a **fixed-rate, long-term public bond**. This action greatly strengthens Antelope Valley Hospital's financial flexibility by eliminating the balloon payment on its existing debt that would have been due in September 2017.

The \$140 million Series 2016A bonds will reach final maturity in 2046. Net interest cost on the bonds is just below 5 percent, which is slightly lower than current market rates of the HUD-insured loan previously considered. As part of the refinancing, the “cash-on-hand” covenant has been reduced from 90 to 55 days; and the mortgages on the medical office buildings owned by the district have been removed. The new indenture also allows the district to close a line of credit that will help with cash management and supplemental payment variability.

“These market transactions, combined with our current strong financial performance, speak to a bright future for our hospital and for the healthcare of our entire community,” said hospital CEO John Rossfeld. “We are now better positioned than ever to fund the kind of ongoing operations, select capital projects, and new programmatic needs that will allow our hospital to keep up with the demands of our growing population.”



Find a Doctor
If you are looking for a physician, use our online doctor finder on our website at avhospital.org.

The Fight for Fair Funding:

AVH Seeks to Ensure Our Community Gets Fair Share of Trauma Funds



AVH is home to the only Level II Trauma Center in the Antelope Valley and is the second largest emergency department in Los Angeles County.

After the 9/11 attacks on our country, people were understandably concerned about whether their own local emergency and trauma centers would be prepared should disaster strike. That's when voters in Los Angeles County approved Measure B, a tax assessment to provide funding for the expansion of the county's trauma centers and emergency medical services.

Unfortunately things haven't worked out as planned for Antelope Valley Hospital, which has received less than *one-half of 1 percent* of Measure B funds annually, despite serving 5 percent of Los Angeles County's population and having the second highest volume of emergency patients in the county.

"Despite repeated reassurances from the county that AVH would receive its fair share of funding, our hospital has been all but forgotten by the county," said Pavel Petrik, M.D., chair of the department of surgery and trauma medical director at AVH.

Having exhausted all other alternatives, in September of last year Antelope Valley Hospital filed a lawsuit against

Los Angeles County and its board of supervisors for failing to properly administer and allocate billions of dollars of property tax revenue per Measure B to L.A. County trauma centers, particularly AVH. The lawsuit, currently under adjudication, seeks equitable relief, economic damages, and other appropriate relief on behalf of AVH.

"As a not-for-profit district hospital, Antelope Valley Hospital is doing what we must to assure that we can continue to provide critically needed healthcare services to the thousands of L.A. County residents who rely on us daily," said Dr. Petrik.

More than 113,000 patients seek emergency care here every year. You can help by contacting the L.A. County Board of Supervisors and letting them know that AVH should get the fair share of funding to which it is entitled.

Improving the Patient Experience

Antelope Valley Hospital is committed to making ongoing improvements that enhance the healthcare experience for our patients and their families. We've recently embarked on a variety of projects that will do just that.

One significant investment we are making is the transition to electronic medical records (EMR). When fully implemented the new system will allow patient charting to be done online and allow doctors to look at test results and initiate treatment orders from their offices. EMRs can even help improve patient safety. For example, healthcare providers can be alerted if a patient is allergic to a medication or when a prescribed medication may harmfully interact with another drug the patient is taking.

Equipment upgrades within the hospital include new monitors for the Intensive Care Unit and Emergency department, new operating room lights for our Surgery department and Outpatient Surgery Center, and a new mobile imaging device known as a C-arm. C-arms provide high-resolution X-ray images in real time and allow physicians to monitor progress at any point during an operation.

Because AVH offers the only Pediatric and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in the area, we are also purchasing additional isolettes (pictured below) to care for our tiniest patients.



Foundation Events Help Fund Care in Our Community

The Antelope Valley Hospital Foundation plays a critical role in raising funds to help the hospital meet the needs of our growing community. Since 2010 the AVH Foundation has raised more than \$3.5 million to support hospital programs and services.

Annual fundraising events include the Invitational Golf Tournament held each spring, a gala event held each September, and a year-end giving campaign. However, there are many other ways to give to the foundation, including one-time or annual donations, real estate, life insurance, stocks and mutual funds, endowments, or through a will or living trust. Through the combination of all of these actions and the generosity of our donors, the foundation not only helps meet our community's current needs, but also enables the hospital to invest in innovative medical technology, facility upgrades, community outreach initiatives, and other programs to help those who turn to us for care.

The Antelope Valley Hospital Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. All contributions are tax deductible. For more information, call 661-949-5810 or visit avhospital.org.



HealthConnect is published by the Antelope Valley Hospital marketing department four times a year as a service to the community. For inquiries email: marketing@avhospital.org.

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John Rossfeld

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Don Parazo, M.D.

Mukund Shah, M.D.

Exceptional Care That's Close to Home

Antelope Valley Hospital is proud of the national recognition we've achieved. These high honors mean that local residents can be assured that the care they receive at AVH is among the best anywhere:

Patient Safety Recognition

The Health Services Advisory Group, a Quality Improvement Organization for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, recognized AVH for its dedication to patient safety. The recognition highlights the hospital's success in reducing healthcare-associated infections.

Advanced Primary Stroke Center

AVH received Advanced Primary Stroke Center Certification from The Joint Commission and the Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services Agency. This designation signifies that AVH has the equipment, infrastructure, staff, and training programs needed to quickly diagnose and treat patients presenting with acute stroke.

Recognized by The Joint Commission as a "Top Performer"

The Joint Commission is the leading accreditor of healthcare organizations in the United States. AVH was commended for outstanding performance in five of the Joint Commission's Key Quality Measures: heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care and perinatal care.

National Comprehensive Community Cancer Center Accreditation

The AVH cancer program earned a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Cancer, a multidisciplinary program of the American College of Surgeons. AVH is the only hospital in the area to receive this accreditation.

Certified Chest Pain Center

AVH received full Chest Pain Center accreditation from the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care, making it the first facility in the Antelope Valley to achieve this designation. This comes just one year after the opening of the AVH Institute for Heart & Vascular Care.

Antelope Valley Hospital Contact Numbers

Main Number

661-949-5000

Admitting | Registration

661-949-5411

Emergency Department

661-949-5115

Outpatient Surgery

661-952-1100

Blood Donor Center

661-949-5622

Mental Health Services

661-949-5250

OB Clinics

Lancaster

661-726-6180

Palmdale

661-726-6325

Information in this publication is intended to educate readers about subjects pertinent to their health. Information should not be considered medical advice or treatment, nor should it be used as a substitute for a physician consultation.

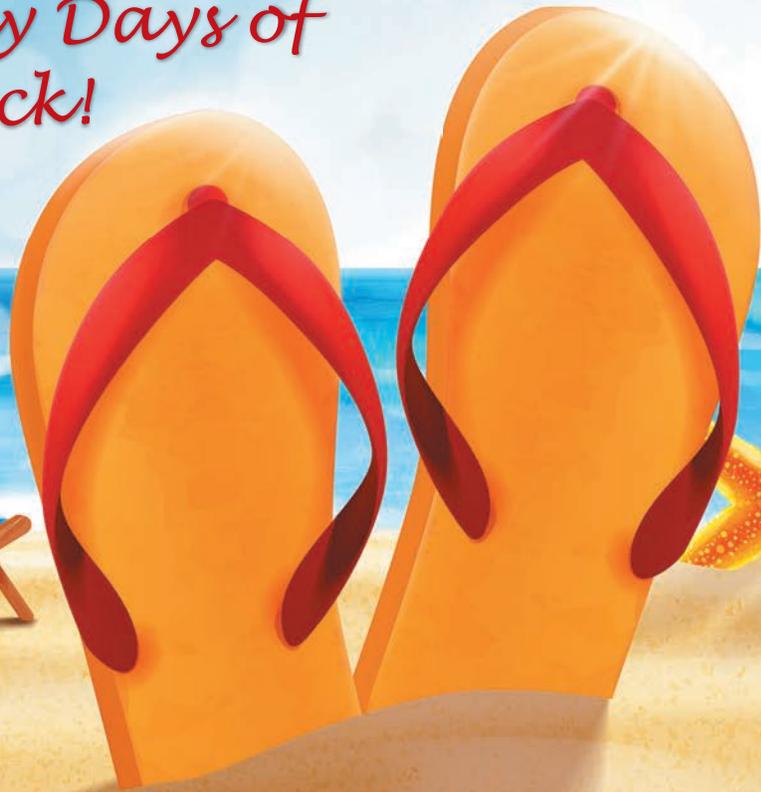


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A facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District

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The Lucky Ducky Days of Summer are back!



Your pint-sized contribution makes a big difference. Donate blood during “Lucky Ducky Days” at the AVH Blood Donor Center.

JUNE 20 thru SEPTEMBER 21

When you give blood at AVH this summer, you’ll become a member of the Lucky Ducky crowd, a select group of blood donors who we count on to donate when our need is great. **Each time you donate you will receive a free Lucky Ducky, and your name will be entered into our monthly prize drawing.** Bring in this ad for an extra raffle ticket. Remember, all blood stays right here in the Antelope Valley and supports our hospital’s lifesaving role. The need continues to be great for patients at the AVH Trauma Center. All donors receive a free cholesterol test.

Blood Donor Center Hours:

Tuesday and Thursday: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Wednesday: 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Saturday (1st and 3rd of each month): 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Walk-ins welcome or call **661-949-5622** to make an appointment.

16-year-old donors are welcome with a signed parent consent form. Download the form at www.avhospital.org.