

Health Connect



ANTELOPE VALLEY
HOSPITAL

A facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District

A community newsletter from Antelope Valley Hospital

Spring 2018



**Mission, Vision
and Values**

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New Mission, Vision and Values are Guiding Principles



Late last year when local voters approved Measure H, I wrote in this column that the measure’s passage marked a new chapter for Antelope Valley Hospital. I am thrilled to report to you that things continue to look bright for the hospital and the future of healthcare in our community.

You may recall that Measure H was designed to bring leadership stability to the hospital, by establishing a separate nonprofit entity and increasing the hospital’s board from five to nine members. Shortly after the measure’s passage, Moody’s Investors Services upgraded Antelope Valley Healthcare District’s outlook from negative to stable. (The ratings represent an organization’s credit-worthiness.)

In announcing the upgrade, Moody’s noted the increased stability of the hospital’s board and the positive working relationship among management, the board and the medical staff. This really is validation that we are on the right path.

As we look toward the future, we are mindful of the present and ensuring our patients are at the center of everything we do. That is why we have introduced new mission, vision and values statements to ensure that every physician, employee and volunteer at Antelope Valley Hospital is guided by the same patient-first principles. It is our vision to be recognized by our community for heartfelt, compassionate care and medical excellence. (See facing page.)

And speaking of medical excellence, we are incredibly proud of our newly expanded orthopedic surgery program as well as the intensivist program we just added. These programs are covered in more detail on pages 4 and 5, respectively. After you read them I think you’ll agree, there are indeed many excellent reasons why Antelope Valley Hospital is the local healthcare leader.

Michael L. Wall
Chief Executive Officer



**ANTELOPE VALLEY
HOSPITAL**
A facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District

MISSION

To be the provider of choice for all essential healthcare services while partnering with others to improve the health of the Antelope Valley.

VISION

To be recognized by our community for heartfelt, compassionate care and medical excellence.

VALUES

P PATIENTS COME FIRST
We listen actively and communicate with our patients and families, placing safety as a top priority.

A ACCOUNTABILITY & OWNERSHIP
We fully complete tasks, are transparent, effectively communicate, and recognize that what we do reflects on us.

T TEAMWORK
We build trusting relationships, promote a sense of community, and are respectful of everyone. Success is about the whole team.

I INTEGRITY & HONESTY
We tell the truth at all times, speak up when something is wrong, and do the right thing when no one is looking.

E EXCELLENCE
We take pride in our work, are goal-oriented, and are on a never-ending quest for top-tier quality.

N INITIATIVE & INNOVATION
Our can-do attitudes, creativity, and resourcefulness empower us to improve the patient's experience, solve our own problems, make timely decisions, and look for opportunities to add value.

T TENDERNESS & COMPASSION
We have genuine empathy, show kindness, and encourage and advocate for each other.

Mission | Vision | Values

Hospital Steps-up Orthopedic Program

Chronic joint pain can be debilitating, which is why joint-replacement procedures are among the most common elective surgeries in the country. To meet growing demand in our community, we have recently expanded our orthopedic capabilities. Renowned orthopedic surgeon **Alon Antebi, D.O.**, is now medical director of the orthopedic and total joint replacement program for the hospital.

Antelope Valley Hospital is the only facility in the region to offer full-time coverage for traumatic injuries requiring emergency orthopedic surgery as well as a complete joint replacement program. Our orthopedic team of doctors is able to expertly handle any orthopedic injury or condition.

Along with his business partner, Justin Sherfey, D.O., Dr. Antebi is a pioneer in total joint replacements who specializes in pelvis and acetabulum fractures, which can occur during a traumatic injury to the ball-and-socket hip joint.

Dr. Antebi aims to get patients back on their feet as quickly as possible. He was the first to bring certain specialty procedures to the area, including a minimally invasive approach to anterior hip-replacement surgeries that allows many patients to go home the same day.

"In order to do the procedure, you have to have a special table that is able to maneuver the patient's leg in ways that make the procedure possible. We have that here," he said.

These expanded capabilities mean local residents have access to the highest level of care right here in the Antelope Valley.

"I am thrilled to be able to provide exceptional care and serve the healthcare needs of this community," he added.



Alon Antebi, D.O.

Intensivists Deliver Critical Care

Here at Antelope Valley Hospital, you have access to physicians who are uniquely trained in more than five dozen different specialties. Because our most critical patients have specific and often urgent needs, we have now added a new specialty: intensivists.

Just like surgeons specialize in surgery, cardiologists specialize in heart care and obstetricians specialize in delivering babies, intensivists specialize in intensive care. Patients in our critical care unit or CCU generally have life-threatening illnesses or injuries that require constant monitoring. Through the newly added intensivist program, one of these specialized physicians will be available for these patients 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“An intensivist program is beneficial to patient care in that it improves survival rates and patient satisfaction,” said Ravi Shankar, M.D. “Intensivists train for an extra three years to acquire the skills necessary to take care of the unique needs of critical patients.”

Dr. Shankar said studies have shown that intensivist programs:

- Reduce hospital-acquired infections.
- Decrease patient length-of-stay in the intensive care unit and the hospital in general.
- Improve retention and recruitment of medical and nursing staff.
- Promote medication safety.

Working with the entire care team – including the patient’s personal physician – our intensivists rely on industry best practices and are available to react to changes in a patient’s medical status, which is reassuring for patients and their families receiving care here.



Ravi Shankar, M.D.

Critical Care Insight

1. Patients in the CCU receive continuous monitoring and care due to the critical nature of their illness or injury.
2. Highly specialized CCU nurses care for no more than two patients at a time.
3. Family members looking to be with their loved ones while in the CCU are encouraged to visit and bring cards, letters and photographs, but not food, flowers, potted plants or balloons.

Welcoming Dr. Tusso to the AVHD Board of Directors



Phil Tusso, M.D., a board-certified internist and nephrologist, has been appointed to the Antelope Valley Healthcare District Board of Directors. Dr. Tusso brings to the board an in-depth understanding of the complexities of healthcare and an enthusiasm for keeping Antelope Valley Hospital on a path of stability and growth.

"I am honored to be elected to a board of directors that will help us build a new hospital – a new hospital built by the people of our community and for the people of our community," he said.

Attaining a medical degree fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a physician, and Dr. Tusso is passionate about connecting with his patients. He and his wife, Donna, are long-time Antelope Valley residents. They have been involved in several community projects aimed at helping uninsured and underinsured local residents.

Dr. Tusso will serve as 2nd vice chair, filling the board seat left vacant by the resignation of Mukund Shah, M.D. He will complete the remainder of Dr. Shah's term, which is up for re-election this November.



Nurse Named Board Chair

Earlier this year Kristina Hong, RN, was selected to serve as AVHD board chair. Prior to being publicly elected to the board in 2016, she worked as a nurse in the Antelope Valley Hospital emergency department for a decade. During her first year on the board, she served as 1st vice chair. She recently began practicing as an emergency department nurse practitioner and continues to work as a registered nurse, UCLA emergency medical system faculty member and EMT/paramedic educator for the Downey Fire Department.



Olivia Bella Perez was the Antelope Valley's first baby of 2018. Born at 3:13 a.m. on January 1, she is the first child of Daisy Zamora and Nathan Perez.

Maternity Care Earns Distinction

Antelope Valley Hospital is proud to be recognized by Blue Shield of California and Anthem Blue Cross as a Blue Distinction® Center for Maternity Care.

Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated hospitals that show expertise in delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes, based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical community.

"The selection criteria for the Blue Distinction program is incredibly rigorous," said **Andrea Randenberg, RN**, executive director of AVH's Women & Infants Pavilion. "This designation really underscores our commitment to providing top-notch care to every mother and baby who come to our hospital."

We deliver well over 5,000 babies each year. Being chosen as a Blue Distinction Center is the latest recognition for our Women & Infants Pavilion. Other achievements include:

- In 2015 the hospital was designated a Baby-Friendly facility in recognition of our support of breastfeeding and mother-baby bonding.
- Last year we were chosen to be a Breast Milk Depot where nursing mothers could drop-off breast milk to be used by fragile newborns in the neonatal intensive care unit.
- We have repeatedly received the HealthGrades Maternity Excellence Award.

HIGHLIGHTS

The hospital has been recognized as a Blue Distinction® Center for Maternity Care.

Blue Distinction Centers are hospitals that show expertise in delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes.

The designation underscores our commitment to providing top-notch care to every mother and baby who come here.

Our Women & Infants Pavilion is also a designated Baby-Friendly facility and has repeatedly earned HealthGrades' Maternity Excellence Award.

Matters of the Heart

At just 52 years old, Palmdale resident Alyse Dunlap, was not a prime candidate for heart disease. Her cholesterol was just slightly above normal. Her blood pressure was low. There was no family history of heart disease. She was mindful about diet and exercise. And yet, there she was, in a hospital bed recovering from a heart attack.

Initially, she felt like she had swallowed a golf ball. A series of tests over several months ruled out stomach issues, but the pain in the middle of her chest continued to worsen. Alyse woke her husband early one morning, asking him to drive her to the hospital.

Even in the emergency department, the source of her problem wasn't immediately apparent. After a blood test showed an increase in troponin – an enzyme that indicates heart distress, cardiologist and medical director of the Institute for Heart & Vascular Care **Sameh Gadallah, M.D.**, suspected Alyse was having a heart attack. An angiogram confirmed the diagnosis, and he quickly resolved her problem by inserting a stent in her heart.

A few years and countless cardiology checkups later, Alyse is grateful to her entire care team for giving her a second chance. She also has become a vocal advocate among her friends and family for healthy living,

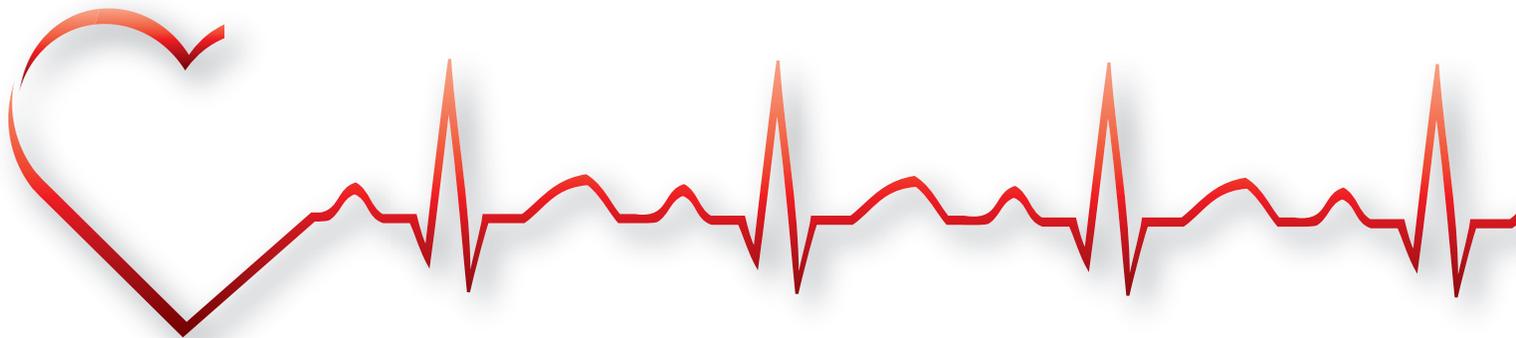


Dr. Sameh Gadallah and Alyse Dunlap.

especially encouraging other women to know the risks and warning signs of heart disease.

"My closest girlfriends became proactive and got heart checkups," she said. "No one could believe that this had happened to me. They didn't want it to happen to them either."

As Alyse and her husband recently celebrated their 36th wedding anniversary, she reflected on the many blessings and memories of all those years. "I did not expect that one of the countless events we've been through together would include a heart attack, but now I am looking forward to many more anniversaries, many more memories, and a heart that is bursting with gratitude."





**American
Heart
Association®**



An Event for the Heart

Dozens of women attended our fourth annual Women's Heart Health Affair in February during American Heart Month. The free event featured stand-up yoga, health screenings, beauty services, chair massages, health presentations, hands-only CPR training, prizes and refreshments. This event draws attention to the risks and symptoms of heart disease, the number one killer of women.



Little Hats, Big Hearts

Proud fathers **Jose Gutierrez** (left) and **Jason Wilk** hold their daughters during a Little Hats, Big Hearts presentation ceremony. The babies were among 400 born at AV Hospital who received the hats during American Heart Month through a collaboration with the American Heart Association and Union Bank. The hats were handmade by the Antelope Valley Blanketeers as part of Little Hats, Big Hearts. The program is designed to bring attention to heart disease, the number one killer of Americans, and congenital heart defects, the most common type of birth defect in the country.



Stop the Bleed: Learn How to Save Lives



AVH taught "Stop the Bleed" to airmen assigned to the 412th Medical Group from Edwards Air Force Base.

In a crisis situation, would you know how to stop serious bleeding? A victim who is bleeding from an artery can die in as little as three minutes. Learning how to "stop the bleed" could help you save someone's life.

In response to recent mass-casualty events around the country, our trauma team is teaching community members how to recognize life-threatening bleeding and administer appropriate medical treatment until emergency personnel arrive.

"We want to empower bystanders to help in a bleeding emergency, which can happen anywhere at any time," said Jeremiah Johns, RN, AVH's trauma clinical coordinator. "Effectively controlling bleeding immediately after a serious injury may mean the difference between life and death."

"Stop the Bleed" is a free, 90-minute course that teaches participants how to:

- Recognize life-threatening bleeding.
- Apply direct pressure to a bleeding wound.
- Properly use a tourniquet.
- Pack a wound.
- Create a "Stop the Bleed" kit for the car, home or workplace.

"Stop the Bleed" was developed by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma to teach the civilian population to provide vital initial response to stop uncontrolled bleeding in an emergency situation.

Stop the Bleed

Courses are offered monthly on the hospital campus. For a calendar of upcoming dates, visit avhospital.org or follow Antelope Valley Hospital on Facebook.

Businesses, churches, schools and other groups can arrange to have the class taught at their location with a minimum of eight participants. To schedule a customized class within the community, contact Jeremiah at 661-949-5677 or jeremiah.johns@avhospital.org.



Hospital Partners with Nonprofit to Support the Newly Paralyzed

Patients who are newly diagnosed with paralysis or loss of mobility due to a spinal cord injury need information, encouragement and access to resources. To ensure these patients get the help they need, we have partnered with the Triumph Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps individuals triumph over their disabilities and inspires them to keep moving forward.

Through this partnership, hospital case managers notify the Triumph Foundation when a hospitalized patient is diagnosed with a paralyzing injury. A Triumph Foundation ambassador then comes to the hospital with a care basket filled with information and encouraging gifts. The ambassador meets with the patient and their family to assist them in understanding the diagnosis and identifying resources to help them transition to a safe home environment.

"The cornerstone of what we do is provide support to those who are newly paralyzed," said Triumph Foundation Founder **Andrew Skinner**. "This new partnership not only allows our ambassadors to help

people immediately after their injury, but also gets them connected with all of Triumph Foundation's many programs, support groups and fellow members who understand what they're experiencing."

Our team cares for more than 1,200 trauma patients each year. The most common traumatic injuries include blunt trauma, motor vehicle collisions and falls, any of which can result in a spinal cord injury and loss of mobility.

"Connecting our patients with the Triumph Foundation is an important step toward physical and emotional healing," said **Michelle Schaefer**, the hospital's trauma program manager. "We are fortunate to have a resource like this right here in the Antelope Valley."

TRIUMPH
FOUNDATION

Helping people triumph over paralysis

WWW.TRIUMPH-FOUNDATION.ORG

New Wig Bank Renews Cancer Patient's Confidence

Facing a diagnosis of cancer is hard enough, but dealing with hair loss caused by chemotherapy treatments can be especially unsettling for patients. That undesirable side effect hit Lancaster resident Mary Timmons particularly hard after she started chemo treatments in October for breast cancer.

After cutting off her hair and donating it to Locks of Love, Mary donned beanie hats for the winter months. At that time there was no service in the Antelope Valley offering wigs to cancer patients.

"Hair loss can be really distressing for patients undergoing cancer treatments, especially for women," said AVH Cancer Program Coordinator Patricia Karnstedt, RN, MSN, OCN. "We established the wig bank at the hospital to provide women with the support they need to look and feel their best while fighting this disease."

In early March Mary was thrilled to learn the hospital had partnered with the American Cancer Society to open a wig bank just for women like her. She met with Patricia at the new wig bank, located on the hospital's campus. Together, they considered which of the bank's 150 wigs would work best for Mary, working through a handful of them until landing on just the right one.



From left: AVH cancer care team members Deborah Lorick, RN; Patricia Karnstedt, RN; and Vanessa Labra, RN; with Mary Timmons (front).

"I'm very happy it's here in town and have been spreading the word to my support groups," Mary said. "My new wig makes me feel human again."

Trained wig bank volunteers are available for one-on-one consultations that include one free wig per patient. These volunteers help patients find a wig that fits her lifestyle as well as offer suggestions for using wigs, turbans and scarves. The wig bank is open every other Monday from 1 - 5 p.m. Appointments are required and can be made by calling 1-800-227-2345.



Look Good Feel Better

Brought to you by Antelope Valley Hospital and the American Cancer Society, "Look Good Feel Better" is a beauty-makeover workshop for women fighting cancer. The program is offered on the hospital campus on the third Monday of even months.

To register call **1-800-227-2345**.

Volunteer Wig-Fitters Wanted

If you are interested in assisting women who are experiencing hair loss related to cancer treatment, please contact Patricia Karnstedt at **661-949-5145** or Patricia.Karnstedt@avhospital.org.

Training provided.



Fun in the Sun: Tips for a Safe Summer

Summer is just around the corner. Amid swims in the pool, outdoor recreation, fireworks and other fun activities, summer can also bring dangers. Pediatrician **Kristine Thomas, M.D.**, offers four tips to keep your children safe this summer.

1 **Be pool wise.** According to Dr. Thomas, most children drown in non-swimming attire. “Anytime a child is missing, the first place you should look is in the pool area. Also, remove all toys from the pool area when people aren’t swimming, including items that may be piled up against a pool fence.” Gates around the pool should be kept locked when the pool is not in use.

2 **Be street smart.** Bicycle safety not only includes ensuring helmets fit properly and are always worn, but also make sure the mechanisms of your child’s bike, such as the chains, gears, tires and reflectors, are working correctly.

3 **Watch for snakes.** Snakes are common in desert areas like the Antelope Valley. To avoid

being bitten, Dr. Thomas urges parents to teach their children to avoid playing in wood piles and grassy areas where snakes nest.

4 **Never leave children in a car unattended.** “It doesn’t matter if you’re going to be gone for one minute or ten, never leave a child or pet in an unattended car,” the pediatrician cautioned.

While safety measures can help keep children safe, accidents still happen. Here at Antelope Valley Hospital we offer the area’s only Emergency Department Approved for Pediatrics, which means we have providers on-site at all times who are specially trained in caring for the unique needs of young patients. Now, that’s a good reason to relax and enjoy the summer!

Patient Rejoices After Hospital Care



To say Lone Pine resident **Joyce Spearman** has a lot of energy is an understatement. Whether cross-country running, horseback riding, hiking, fishing or walking her border collie, she loves being outdoors and on the go. That was until a few years ago when she was forced to reduce her activities due to the effects of abdominal pain and anemia caused by internal bleeding.



After years of treating her symptoms with iron supplements, antacids and sometimes even blood transfusions, gastroenterologist **Vivaik Tyagi, M.D.**, finally identified the sources of the problem: a hernia, an ulcer and acid gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

Fortunately Joyce was a perfect candidate for the new TIF (transoral incisionless fundoplication) procedure to resolve the GERD. Antelope Valley Hospital is one of the only community hospitals to offer this non-invasive treatment option. Dr. Tyagi used the TIF procedure on Joyce at the same time Walid Arnaut, M.D., performed surgery to correct the hernia. So, all her conditions were addressed at the same time.

During the TIF procedure, a small camera (endoscope) is inserted into a surgical device, which goes through the patient's mouth to the valve where the esophagus

and stomach meet. Dr. Tyagi then uses plastic sutures to rebuild, lengthen and strengthen this valve to prevent acid from leaking into the esophagus. Because TIF does not require incisions, patients experience quicker recovery times and better outcomes.

"I feel amazing," Joyce exclaimed. "I received the best care at Antelope Valley Hospital, and feel like these doctors gave me my life back."

"The TIF procedure can be a life-changing option for people suffering with GERD because it treats the cause of the problem," said Dr. Tyagi. "It is rewarding for me to see what a difference it has made in her quality of life."

