



Washington Hospital Healthcare System

# HealthSigns



Spring 2019



## Caring for Young Athletes on Campus

Our Sports Medicine Team helps keep local high school students in the game



## 5 Community Connection

We offer many health and wellness programs, classes and services to local residents.



## 6 High School Athlete Safety

Sports Medicine experts provide on-site support to high school students.



## 8 Vein and Vascular Care

Board-certified surgeons treat a variety of vascular conditions.



## 10 Heartburn Help

Thoracic specialists use advanced procedures for reflux and ailments in the chest.

## Mission

**A**s the local Health Care District, our mission is to meet the health care needs of the 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 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

**T**o 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.

Resolved by the Board of Directors  
Washington Township Health Care District  
October 12, 2016



Washington Township Health Care District

# Awards and Recognition



## Joint Commission Accreditation

Washington Hospital has earned the prestigious Joint Commission seal of approval. The full three-year accreditation is the Gold Seal of Approval from the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care.



## Magnet® Status

The American Nurses Credentialing Center has recognized the high level of care that Washington Hospital's nurses provide to patients and families. The Magnet status designation is for a four-year period. Magnet designation for another four years was again earned in 2016, with the first one in 2011.



## Outstanding Achievement Award for Cancer Care

Washington Hospital is the recipient of the 2018 Outstanding Achievement Award from the Commission on Cancer for cancer care. Washington Hospital is 1 of only 24 hospitals nationwide to receive the award and only 1 of 5 hospitals to receive it 3 or more award years in a row.



## America's 100 Best Hospitals for Orthopedic Surgery

Washington Hospital is one of 4 hospitals in the Bay Area to be named one of Healthgrades America's 100 Best Hospitals for Orthopedic Surgery. Washington Hospital is the ONLY hospital in the Bay Area to be named one of Healthgrades America's 100 Best Hospitals for Joint Replacement for 8 years in a row.



## Gold Plus Achievement Award for Stroke

The American Heart Association and American Stroke Association acknowledges Washington Hospital's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of stroke care by ensuring that stroke patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted standards and recommendations.



## Five-Star Recipient for Treatment of Sepsis

Washington Hospital is the recipient of Healthgrades five-star rating for sepsis treatment five years in a row.



## Quest for Zero Award for Emergency Care

Washington Hospital has been recognized by Beta Healthcare Group for its Quest for Zero quality initiative in the Emergency Department since 2012. Quest for Zero is a risk reduction program to improve patient safety.



## Quest for Zero Award in Obstetrics

Washington Hospital has been recognized by Beta Healthcare Group for its Quest for Zero quality initiative in Obstetrics for every year since 2013. Quest for Zero is a risk reduction program to improve patient safety.



## Practice Greenhealth Partner for Change

Washington Hospital has received the Practice Greenhealth Partner for Change Award in recognition of its achievements in developing programs to prevent pollution, reduce and recycle solid waste, eliminate mercury, reduce water and energy consumption, and establish "green" purchasing policies.

# From the Chief Executive Officer



Nancy Farber  
Chief Executive Officer  
Washington Hospital  
Healthcare System

**F**or 60 years, Washington Hospital has been a community-based and community-supported hospital serving the health care needs of residents in the Tri-City Area. When many other local hospitals have been taken over and absorbed into larger regional hospital systems, Washington Hospital remains a community-owned and operated medical center. The success that we have had is in large part a result of the relationship with you, our community. As a resident of this area, you are an owner of Washington Hospital.

Why is this important? Being community owned and focused means we constantly strive to meet the various and wide-ranging health needs of our own community, not the needs of a distant parent company. Our doctors are independent community physicians, or part of the Washington Township Medical Foundation, or practice locally as a result of our affiliation with UCSF Health.

Every three years, we conduct an in-depth survey of the communities we serve to ascertain what residents need and want in the way of health care. This is more than the medicine practiced at the Hospital; it is the free health education programs and health fairs we offer, the community and mobile clinics, and our work with local public officials on issues such as violence and drugs. Those programs are your Hospital at work, meeting residents' health needs in the community and benefiting all residents of the district — which includes people who do not receive care at our facility.

In the process, we continue to remain profitable and we use that profit to expand and upgrade so that the best in medical care is available here in the Tri-City Area. This means that our profits are not going to shareholders, but instead to our community in the form of expanded services. Our special relationship with UCSF means that the specialists and cutting-edge programs are here locally at Washington Hospital. Patients can have the very best care available, while staying in their community.

Furthermore, Washington Hospital's future and services are not decided by a corporation based hundreds of miles away. Decisions are made locally where the leadership is accountable to the community. As a community hospital, we are focused on your needs and not those of a remote corporate imperative. For example, we continue to work to meet the state's earthquake upgrade requirements. The Morris Hyman Critical Care Pavilion, which opened this last fall, is a major step toward compliance. This new state-of-the-art facility should give you and your loved ones peace of mind in the event of an earthquake, as we expect to remain open to care for your emergency needs.

As we move ahead to bring the balance of our medical campus into state earthquake compliance, keeping Washington Hospital among the top hospitals in California and the nation will remain our top priority.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Farber". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Nancy Farber  
Chief Executive Officer

# Healthy Community Outreach

Free seminars educate on hot health topics

In keeping with our mission, Washington Hospital is always reaching out to the community with educational programs to help keep people safe and healthy. Our biannual *Health & Wellness* catalog outlines many health seminars, health screenings, support groups and wellness classes offered for free or at a nominal cost.

Washington Hospital hosts complimentary community health seminars each month. Physicians and other mental and physical health experts present in an easy-to-understand format. Everyone is welcome, regardless of where they live or what hospital they go to. For those who can't attend, the seminars are shown on Washington Hospital's InHealth Channel 78.

"We develop seminar topics based on our Community Health Needs Assessment Report and timely health trends we see during the year, as well as through direct feedback from seminar attendees," says Lucy Hernandez, community outreach manager for Washington Hospital.

Many topics appeal to everyone, while others target a specific population.

One such seminar, "Endometriosis: Causes, Symptoms, Diagnosis and Treatment," will be held May 2 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Conrad E. Anderson, MD, Auditorium at Washington West. Endometriosis is a painful disorder found in women between the ages of 24 and 40, which can lead to fertility issues.



"Women are oftentimes champions of their families' health, and that major responsibility can cause them to neglect their own wellness," says Hernandez.

"For this reason, we offer many programs specifically designed to keep women strong and healthy so they can care for those around them."

Other women-centered community programs:

- The Washington Women's Center provides wellness programs like yoga, pilates, meditation and a free monthly "Women Empowering Women" lecture series
- Childbirth and parenting programs and services are available through the Washington Maternal Child Education Center
- Our annual Think Pink health fair is for breast cancer patients, survivors and their families
- A Women's Health Conference is held every odd year

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### WASHINGTON HOSPITAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

*Health & Wellness* catalogs are sent to district residents biannually and are available online at [whhs.com/HealthWellness](http://whhs.com/HealthWellness)

### FREE COMMUNITY SEMINARS

Visit [whhs.com/seminars](http://whhs.com/seminars) or call (800) 963-7070

### WASHINGTON HOSPITAL'S INHEALTH CHANNEL

Can be viewed throughout Fremont, Newark and Union City on Comcast channel 78 or online at [whhs.com/InHealthTV](http://whhs.com/InHealthTV)

### BAY AREA HEALTHIER TOGETHER

Washington Hospital's partnership with ABC7 continues to provide health-related information and education through on-air programming and on [BayAreaHealthierTogether.com](http://BayAreaHealthierTogether.com)

# Keeping Young Athletes Safe



Certified Athletic Trainer Gabrielle Calabretta works on-site at Washington High School with athletes like Andrew Yanez to prevent, treat and rehabilitate sports-related injuries.

Washington Sports Medicine and local school districts partner to support high school athletes

The number of California students participating in high school sports hit a record high of 800,000 last year. While student athletes benefit from physical training and competition, they also risk getting injured. That's why Washington Sports Medicine partners with Fremont Unified and Newark Unified School Districts to prevent, identify, and rehabilitate injuries sustained by student athletes on the courts and fields of our local high schools.

## **CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS ARE ESSENTIAL AT SCHOOLS**

Washington Hospital has a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) working on-site at American, Irvington, John F. Kennedy, Mission San Jose, Newark Memorial and Washington High Schools. These health care professionals work in training rooms equipped with all the tools needed to provide immediate medical care for injuries and implement rehabilitation plans for student athletes.

Our dedicated ATCs are available after school when students attend practice for their various sports, as well as at evening and weekend games. Since they are on-site at schools, ATCs can do rehabilitation with student athletes as frequently as every weekday. Students with more acute injuries are often treated at the Washington Outpatient Rehabilitation Center (WORC) or referred to a physician.

The trainers have access to students' X-ray and test results, and communicate directly with Washington Township Medical Foundation (WTMF) physicians about therapy plans through the confidential Epic electronic medical record. Half of the students receive care at another local hospital. When those students need further medical attention, our ATC contacts their sports medicine provider and advocates for the athlete to be fast tracked for an MRI, surgery or whatever they may require.

“The overwhelming need for our ATCs to be on-site at the high schools is shown by the numbers,” says Russell Nord, MD, board-certified orthopedic surgeon, sports medicine physician and medical director of Washington Sports Medicine. “Our trainers at the six schools conducted 11,937 medical visits with student athletes in fiscal year 2018 alone, and that number is on track to rise in 2019.”

## **ON THE BALL WITH CONCUSSION PROTOCOL**

Along with the ATCs, WTMF physicians are on the sidelines at Friday night varsity football games to provide immediate medical attention when players get hurt.

Our doctors come equipped with EYE-SYNC, a portable device that quickly helps identify and assess concussions. When a player experiences a substantial force to the head during a game, the doctor conducts a test right on the sideline to help determine if the player has suffered a concussion. If so, the player goes on to have a more thorough medical assessment and many undergo a recovery treatment plan at WORC, where physical therapists also use EYE-SYNC technology to track their recovery.

Washington Sports Medicine's team of physicians includes concussion expert, Steven Zonner, DO. Dr. Zonner co-authored an article about concussions among high school football players that was recently published in the highly respected *JAMA Ophthalmology* medical journal.

## **PROVIDING PRE-PARTICIPATION PHYSICALS**

Students are required to have a physical examination before they can be approved to play a high school sport. Washington Sports Medicine provides low-cost physicals at the six high schools three times a year — before spring, fall and winter sports kickoff.

Students pay a \$20 fee for their exam. The money collected is divided among the six participating high schools to be used for their individual sports medicine programs.

“Our high school sports program is an extraordinary model of a community banding together for the safety and wellness of its young athletes,” says Dr. Nord. “Everyone should be proud of their indispensable role. This includes Washington Hospital for identifying this need, the school districts who fully support our partnership, our dedicated ATCs, the WTMF physicians who generously volunteer their time at football games and for student physical exams, and our fellow sports medicine physicians at participating local hospitals.”

# Blood Flow Experts



Our vascular care specialists treat simple and severe circulation conditions

**M**ost people are familiar with varicose or spider veins because they are common conditions that are visible on the skin. Less is known about other vascular disorders within our bodies, many of which can be life-threatening. Washington Hospital's vascular surgeons use advanced techniques and a comprehensive approach to diagnose and treat vascular disorders.

## WHAT IS VASCULAR DISEASE?

Vascular diseases are abnormalities that affect the body's veins and arteries. Arteries transport oxygen-rich blood from the heart to the rest of the body. Veins transport blood back to the heart. When something happens to disrupt this smooth flow of blood, it is often a case for a vascular expert.

Here are some examples of disorders treated by our vascular specialists:

- **Abdominal aortic aneurysm** — An enlarged, weakened area in the lower section of the aorta. Aneurysms are at risk for rupture (bursting), which can be fatal. Treatments may include medication, regular monitoring, and surgery — where a stent is inserted into the artery.
- **Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)** — A serious condition involving a blood clot in a deep vein that returns blood to the heart, usually in the legs. A DVT can break loose and travel to the lungs causing a pulmonary embolism.
- **Peripheral vascular disease (PVD)** — Also called peripheral arterial disease, plaque builds up in the vessels that supply blood to the limbs which can slow or stop blood flow. In severe cases, it can lead to foot or leg amputation.
- **Varicose veins** — A common condition where veins become enlarged or twisted. Treatments include wearing compression socks, exercising, and surgical procedures to close or remove the veins.





Vascular surgeon Sarah Michelle Wartman, MD, performs complex surgeries and less invasive endovascular procedures in Washington Hospital's operating room. Dr. Wartman and her colleagues pride themselves on developing strong relationships with their patients, many of whom live with lifelong vascular disease.

- **Venous insufficiency** — A common condition where blood flow from veins in the legs up to the heart is decreased. One-way valves in the veins fail to keep blood moving forward, so it pools in the veins. This can cause pain, swelling and chronic leg sores.

### WHEN TO VISIT A VASCULAR SPECIALIST

Patients are often referred to a vascular surgeon by their primary care physician after a visit for symptoms like leg pain or swelling. Sometimes asymptomatic vascular conditions are found incidentally, like when an aneurysm shows up on a scan that was done for another reason.

People at a higher risk for vascular conditions are encouraged to be screened. This includes those with a family history of vascular disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, diabetes, and current or former smokers. Washington Hospital offers free aortic aneurysm screenings and peripheral vascular disease screenings at annual events. Talk to your doctor about your level of risk and when vascular screenings should become part of your preventive health plan.

### VASCULAR CARE AT WASHINGTON HOSPITAL

“We offer a comprehensive range of more common vascular treatments as well as complex surgeries, which is rare for a community hospital,” says Sarah Michelle Wartman, MD, vascular surgeon. “These include outpatient procedures in our clinic to treat common venous conditions, and more complex surgeries performed in the operating room at the hospital.”

Dr. Wartman and her colleague, Gabriel Herscu, MD, are board certified in general and vascular surgery. They perform traditional open vascular surgery as well as endovascular surgery — a less invasive procedure that uses small incisions, and results in less pain and shorter hospital stays.

Our vascular surgeons also treat patients who don't require surgery, as many vascular problems can be treated with medication or changes in lifestyle. These doctors build strong relationships with their patients because vascular disease is often a long-term condition.

“We manage limb preservation services with a multispecialty team of doctors from other departments like Internal Medicine, Infectious Disease, Endocrinology, Physical Therapy, Orthopedics and Podiatry,” adds Dr. Wartman. “We do weekly rounds focused on managing patients with severe diabetes or peripheral artery disease. Together, we are preventing limb loss and improving quality of life for our patients.”



# Top Treatments Close to the Chest

Thoracic surgeon Jennifer Chan, MD, is an expert in surgical procedures to treat GERD as well as other conditions affecting organs within the chest and foregut.

## Our thoracic surgeons treat everything from heartburn to lung cancer

One in five people experiences heartburn or acid reflux on a weekly basis and 40 percent deal with it at least once a month. Many people take a pill to reduce stomach acid and hope it goes away. What they may not know is heartburn can be a warning sign of bigger issues, and there are medical options to treat the source of the problem and find relief.

Washington Hospital's Thoracic Surgery Department provides comprehensive services for the diagnosis and treatment of patients with conditions of the chest and foregut. This includes the thoracic region, made up of the chest wall and organs in the chest cavity, and the foregut, made up of the proximal small intestine, esophagus and stomach.

## TREATING ACID REFLUX AND GERD

Reflux occurs when the sphincter muscle at the lower end of a person's esophagus relaxes at the wrong time, allowing stomach acid to back up into their esophagus. This can cause symptoms like uncomfortable heartburn, bloating, sore throat and cough. Constant reflux is often a precursor to gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

GERD is increasingly common and has been linked to fatty foods, caffeine, nicotine, anxiety, hernias and obesity. Over-the-counter and prescription drugs that reduce stomach acid are popular remedies, but they can become addictive and have side effects. If untreated, serious disorders can come from GERD, including Barrett's esophagus and esophageal cancer.

"I work with a multidisciplinary team of outstanding physicians specializing in cardiology, pulmonology, radiology, and oncology to streamline testing and treatment for GERD," says Jennifer Chan, MD, a Washington Township Medical Foundation thoracic surgeon. "We have a full-service 'heartburn center' approach that's normally only found in academic settings."

Dr. Chan is specially trained in minimally invasive thoracic and foregut surgery, which means less pain and shorter hospital stays for her patients. People suffering from GERD come from all over Northern California to consult with her about surgical options including the newer LINX Reflux Management System. In this procedure, a flexible band of magnetic titanium beads are placed around the esophageal sphincter to prevent food and acid from backing up into the esophagus. LINX offers benefits over the similar laparoscopic surgery called Nissen fundoplication, because LINX is done on an outpatient basis and there are no food restrictions afterwards.

## LUNG CANCER DETECTION PROGRAMS

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S. and worldwide. The reason survival rates are lower is because symptoms usually don't show up until after the cancer has become too advanced to cure.

Our board-certified thoracic physicians are experts in diagnosing and treating these and other conditions associated with the chest and foregut:

- Heartburn, reflux and GERD
- Hiatal hernias
- Hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating)
- Lung cancer and cancer of the esophagus
- Lung nodules
- Malignant and benign tumors of the lung, esophagus, chest wall and ribs
- Mediastinal tumors including thymoma, lymphoma and germ cell tumors
- Chest wall abnormalities like pectus excavatum and pectus carinatum

The Hospital's Cancer Committee introduced a Lung Screening Program for high-risk patients. People aged 55-73 with a certain smoking history are eligible for a low-dose computerized tomography (CT) scan, usually covered by Medicare and insurance providers. Lung screening programs have been proven to detect early-stage lung cancer and decrease deaths by 20 percent.

Also coming soon is the Lung Nodule Program, designed to flag potential lung cancer cases. All X-rays and CT scans done at Washington Hospital that unexpectedly show a lung nodule — a small mass of tissue in the lung — will be flagged for further investigation. While lung nodules are common, and are often benign, they can turn out to be dangerous malignancies.

POSTAL CUSTOMER

# Urgent Care is Always There

Nonemergency care available every day of the year



Washington Urgent Care physician Sarkis Banipalsin, MD, and Rosalie Naguiat, LVN, treat patients of all ages with nonemergency illnesses and injuries.

**W**e never know when we're going to come down with a cold or the flu, or cut a finger chopping vegetables. And we can't plan when a child will suffer a sprain or broken bone. Washington Urgent Care is a convenient, cost-effective alternative to the Emergency Department (ED).

Urgent Care is available on a walk-in basis, or you can call ahead for an appointment. It's a great option when you can't get in to see your regular doctor, need immediate treatment or need medical help in the evening or on weekends.

Our friendly, expert medical team welcomes patients on a walk-in basis for illness and minor emergencies like:

- Cuts, sprains, fractures and other injuries
- Asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory illnesses
- Colds, cough, flu, earaches and persistent fever
- Stomach pain and vomiting
- Headaches and back pain

Average wait times in Urgent Care are generally less than 30 minutes and co-payments and treatment costs are usually lower than the ED. And if emergency care is necessary, patients can transfer seamlessly to Washington Hospital's ED without waiting.

## Washington Urgent Care

**Location:** Washington West, suite 212,  
2500 Mowry Ave., Fremont.

**Hours:** 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day of the year

**Phone:** (510) 791-CARE (791-2273)

In case of a true emergency, always call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.