

Glendale Memorial Hospital

The Well Street Journal

SUMMER 2009



Back On Track

Glendale Memorial offers state-of-the-art care for patients with lower back pain

Going Above and Beyond

I have been president at Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center for several months now, and I am extremely impressed by the quality of care provided, and the dedication of our employees and physicians. Glendale is fortunate to have such a high-caliber hospital within our community.

Not only does Glendale Memorial provide a full range of services that are integral to the community, but we go above and beyond, continually developing and improving the programs we provide. For example, this spring, we added digital mammography and breast MRI technology to better detect breast cancer. And if you are having a heart attack, Glendale Memorial is a designated STEMI site, which means we are equipped to provide fast, potentially life-saving critical heart care. In addition, our Women's Center provides patients with features such as Welcome Newborn, a way to post and print their newborn's photo in a free and secure manner. It is these special touches and more that help make Glendale Memorial excel.



Mark Meyers

Mark Meyers

President

Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center

Baby's First Web Page

Glendale Memorial's new parents can announce the birth of their baby and share photos with loved ones, right from the hospital. The free and confidential Welcome Newborn service, available on our Web site, glendalememorial.com, allows parents to take photos of their baby in the privacy of their hospital room and create a personalized Web page. Families can even begin creating the page before they go to the hospital.

"We want to make sure our families have a special birthing experience at Glendale Memorial, and Welcome Newborn helps," says Cathy Ragasa, director of Women's Services. "This gives them the convenience and excitement of introducing their new family member before they leave the hospital."



Art Show Honors Cancer Patients

Glendale Memorial Hospital and Pacific Shores Oncology-Hematology Foundation hosted an international art exhibit on June 14, inspiring cancer patients and the community. The Lilly Oncology on Canvas art exhibition honored the physical and emotional journeys people face when confronted by a cancer diagnosis. The featured artists were cancer patients, their families and friends, caregivers, and healthcare providers. We thank the community for its participation in this special event.

Expert Cardiac Care at Glendale Memorial

The first hour of a heart attack is the most critical. In serious cases, immediate treatment can mean the difference between life and death. If you think you're having a heart attack, getting immediate care may help minimize the amount of damage to the heart muscle, allowing for a faster and more complete recovery.

When it comes to cardiac care, you want nothing but the best—your heart depends on it. Glendale Memorial Heart Center is one of the leading centers in Los Angeles County and is designated an ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) Receiving Site for the fast treatment of heart attack patients. A STEMI Receiving Site ever since the inception of the program, Glendale Memorial is notified by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers when they have a heart attack patient on the way. This allows the Heart Center's team to activate the catheterization laboratories, ensuring immediate care upon the patient's arrival.

"This coordination is best for the patients. It can save lives," says Santo S. Polito, M.D., Heart Center medical director. "The quality and results of our prompt and efficient treatment of heart attack patients are among the best in the nation."

Find the Right Doctor for Your Heart

For an appointment or second opinion with one of our cardiologists, call Doctor Finder today at **(818) 502-BEST**.

Glendale Memorial's emergency department is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is conveniently located on the corner of Los Feliz Boulevard and Central Avenue.

Would You Know If You Were Having a Heart Attack?

Glendale Memorial Heart Center wants to help you recognize the warning signs of a heart attack. If you notice any of the following symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately.

- * Chest discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes; uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- * Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- * Shortness of breath.
- * Nausea, light-headedness, cold sweats.

In addition, women may also experience the following symptoms:

- * Pain or discomfort in the upper back, shoulders, neck, jaw or stomach.
- * Shortness of breath, often without chest pain.
- * Nausea or indigestion-like symptoms.
- * Unexplained fatigue, weakness or dizziness.
- * Palpitations, cold sweats or paleness.



AMBULANCE

Oh, Your Aching Back

Glendale Memorial offers a range of leading-edge treatments for patients with lower back pain

WITHOUT EVEN THINKING, WE HOIST HEAVY OBJECTS. Twist and bend. Slump at our desks. These might seem like harmless moves, but over time, wear and tear on the spine can lead to serious problems. In fact, 80 percent of us will suffer from back pain eventually.

Lumbar spinal pain, or lower back pain, can be excruciating, and if left untreated, symptoms sometimes can affect other areas. The lumbar spine is a complex interconnection of bone, muscles, ligaments and nerve roots. So, while most people feel the first pangs of discomfort in their lower back, problems in this area ultimately can affect the legs and/or feet, bladder, and bowel. The good news is there is likely an effective treatment for your pain.

ABOUT LOWER BACK PAIN

There are many causes of lower back pain. “Daily activities can strain the discs, which are like cushions between the vertebrae, wearing them down,” says Kyoo Ro, M.D., a neurosurgeon at Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center. “Bending forward, especially when lifting, causes the discs to bulge backward. Eventually, a disc can herniate out and put permanent pressure against the nerves, and that’s when you get sciatica [pain, tingling or numbness down the buttock and leg].” Lumbar arthritis

and joint problems also can cause or exacerbate lower back problems.

If lower back pain lingers for several weeks, you should make a doctor’s appointment, especially if the pain is coupled with bladder dysfunction, numbness or tingling, or radiating pain in the lower extremities, which are your legs and feet.

“Many patients with chronic low back pain are hoping to find successful treatment—nonoperative, and if need be, operative—that will allow them to get their life back,” says David Rogers, M.D., orthopedic spine surgeon.

At Glendale Memorial, a skilled team of physical therapists, pain management specialists, and spine and neurosurgeons offers an array of treatments to help ease the pain, improve function and get you back into action.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

There are a number of treatments for lower back pain that do not involve surgery. In many cases, physiotherapy, or physical therapy, can offer relief for back pain.

“We might use heat, ice, electrical stimulation, ultrasound or other modalities to break the pain cycle, relax muscle spasms and decrease inflammation,” says Lauren McVicker, a physical therapist who works in the Glendale Memorial Outpatient Physical Therapy Department. “Strengthening and stretching exercises are also a very important component of low back pain rehabilitation. For patients in severe pain who cannot tolerate land-based therapy, our heated pool is utilized. We also educate the patient about how to perform daily activities,” McVicker adds. “We individualize each program to eliminate the habits that may have caused the problem.”

PAIN MANAGEMENT TREATMENT OPTIONS

Physicians specializing in pain management also can provide a wide spectrum of treatments for neck and lower back pain, from conservative treatments, such as pain-relieving medication, to more invasive modalities, such as image-guided injections to the spine. They also help determine the best treatment plan for patients who do not want or are not able to have surgery. Treatment often depends on the cause of the pain.

While some neck or lower back pain is in the muscle, other causes can be from disc problems or widespread arthritis of the spinal joints. These issues can lead to spinal stenosis, which is a common issue among the elderly. Sciatica is usually caused by disc problems, such as herniation.

“Patients who have disc herniation with sciatic pain and/or arthritic spinal joints respond well to epidural injections,” says Christopher Kaypekian, M.D., an interventional pain management specialist at Glendale Memorial. “These injections to the spine utilize steroid medication, which can soothe the back and sciatic pain. Their effects can vary by individual and may last from weeks to months, or even years.”

If back pain is caused by arthritis of the spinal joints, there are alternatives to steroid injections. A technology called radiofrequency ablation (RFA) can target and remove certain spinal nerves. This modality may provide several months of relief.

Spinal cord stimulation (SCS) is another innovative interventional procedure that has proven effective for intractable sciatic or other nerve pain that is not responsive to other modalities, such as injections or surgery. Dr. Kaypekian is one of the few doctors in Southern California who offer this treatment, in which a device is implanted inside the vertebrae to stimulate the spinal cord electrically.

“SCS is like an internal TENS unit and creates tingling sensations that replace the pain sensations felt in the upper or lower extremities. The SCS device can make the brain think that there is no pain,” Dr. Kaypekian says. “One patient, a woman in her eighties, wasn’t able to walk more than a block, but with the stimulator, she was back on her feet and walking everywhere.”

SURGICAL AND MINIMALLY INVASIVE TREATMENT OPTIONS

While doctors use less invasive treatments when possible, patients with advanced back problems may need surgery.

For severe disc herniation, a microdiscectomy (disc removal) can relieve irritated nerves and quell the pain. “Patient satisfaction for this procedure is 90 to 95 per-



Christopher Kaypekian, M.D.



David Rogers, M.D.



Kyoo Ro, M.D.

SPINE PAIN SEMINARS

Please see the calendar on page 7 to learn about our seminars with these specialists.

cent,” Dr. Ro says. “The patient is in the hospital for a day or two, and is fully recovered in four to eight weeks.”

If an unstable spine is causing pain, lumbar instrumented fusion surgery can often remedy the problem. This involves titanium screws, rods and bone grafts being implanted into the lower back. The recovery time for this procedure is at least 12 weeks. “Lumbar instrumented fusion surgery has a very good chance of substantially improving chronic low back pain in a patient with lumbar instability who has not had adequate pain relief from non-operative therapy,” says Dr. Rogers.

Patients who have stenosis, a narrowing of the spine that leads to pinched nerves or a pinched spinal cord, can benefit from surgery to widen the spinal canal; in this procedure, the surgeon shaves off some of the bone and thick yellow ligament. And for patients with minor stenosis, Glendale Memorial now offers a new minimally invasive surgery called the Interspinous Process Decompression System (X STOP). A titanium spacer is placed between the two bones in the back of the spine, opening up a bit more space for the nerves. The patient usually spends just one night in the hospital, with about 90 percent of patients experiencing pain relief.

“Unfortunately, people often suffer in silence,” Dr. Kaypekian says. “But if your pain is chronic, there are better options than just taking another pain pill.”



The team at Glendale Memorial's Wound Care Center, which was recognized as a Center of Distinction

First-Rate Wound Treatment

Glendale Memorial's Wound Care Center receives national recognition for its superior care and high success rate

A barefoot walk on the beach can be one of life's great pleasures. But for some people, especially those with diabetes and compromised circulatory systems, it can be a risky proposition. For them, even a minor cut on the foot could develop into a serious wound that may require specialized medical attention in order to heal properly.

"A non-healing or chronic wound is one that has not healed in four weeks," explains Veronica Lau, program director of Glendale Memorial Hospital's Wound Care Center. "A non-healing wound carries an increased risk for infection, which can lead to more serious complications for these patients, possibly resulting in the loss of a limb."

But with the expert care offered at Glendale Memorial's nationally recognized Wound Care Center, patients who suffer from chronic wounds can rest assured they are receiving the best treatment possible.

In addition to caring for diabetic patients with chronic wounds, the Wound Care Center also treats patients with hard-to-heal wounds that result from pressure ulcers, venous disease and arterial disease. Glendale Memorial's emergency department often sees patients with traumatic injuries first, and then, if needed, refers them for follow-up care to the Wound Care Center, which is an outpatient facility.

"Patients with wounds need to know we are there for them," says Lau. "Of course, there's an element of common sense involved. Patients should never wait to come in if they have a wound that is swollen, bleeding profusely or accompanied by fever."

The Wound Care Center sees patients with non-healing wounds on a weekly basis. Patients' treatment typically begins with a full physical, a nutritional assessment and an initial debridement (cleaning of the wound

and removal of dead tissue). The center's medical experts, overseen by Medical Director and plastic surgeon Nayiri Doudikian-Scaff, M.D., FACS, measure and evaluate the wound to determine the best course of treatment, which may include using medications to speed up healing or performing surgery on the affected area.

The highly trained team, which includes six surgeons and four nurses, emphasizes the importance of patient education at each stage of treatment. "We see between 30 and 35 new patients a month," says Dr. Doudikian-Scaff, "and each one receives an individualized treatment plan, and education about the symptoms, care and management of wounds."

With an outstanding healing rate of 97 percent, Glendale Memorial's Wound Care Center has helped many patients recover, and in some cases, successfully avoid amputation. "Our physicians and nursing staff are on the cutting edge of finding alternatives to heal wounds quickly," says Lau. "And they are dedicated to improving our patients' quality of life."

Top Honors for Glendale Memorial's Wound Care Center

On March 10, Glendale Memorial's wound care partner, Diversified Clinical Services, presented Glendale Memorial's Wound Care Center with the Center of Distinction Award. One of only five centers out of 300 centers across the nation to receive the award—and the only on the West Coast—Glendale Memorial's Wound Care Center was cited for high patient satisfaction, exceptional healing rates and outstanding clinical outcomes.

Classes and Programs at Glendale Memorial

Health Seminars

For more information about any of these programs or to register, call (818) 502-2378. Confirmed reservations are required and must be made five days in advance. Please note: You are not fully registered until you have received formal confirmation from our staff. Please bring your confirmation letter with you. All classes and programs are free of charge unless otherwise noted.

Lumbar Spinal Stenosis

Each year, 1.4 million Americans are diagnosed with lumbar spinal stenosis (LSS). Kyoo Ro, M.D., neurosurgeon at Glendale Memorial, will present information about a new technology for treating it.

*Tuesday, July 14, noon–1 p.m.
Glendale Memorial Main Auditorium*

Diabetes Prevention and Treatment

Nearly 24 million people in the United States have diabetes, but 5.7 percent do not even know they have the disease. Join Hrachya Paruryan, M.D., family practice physician, to learn more about diabetes prevention and treatment.

*Friday, July 17, noon–1 p.m.
Glendale Memorial Main Auditorium*

Age-Related Vision Problems

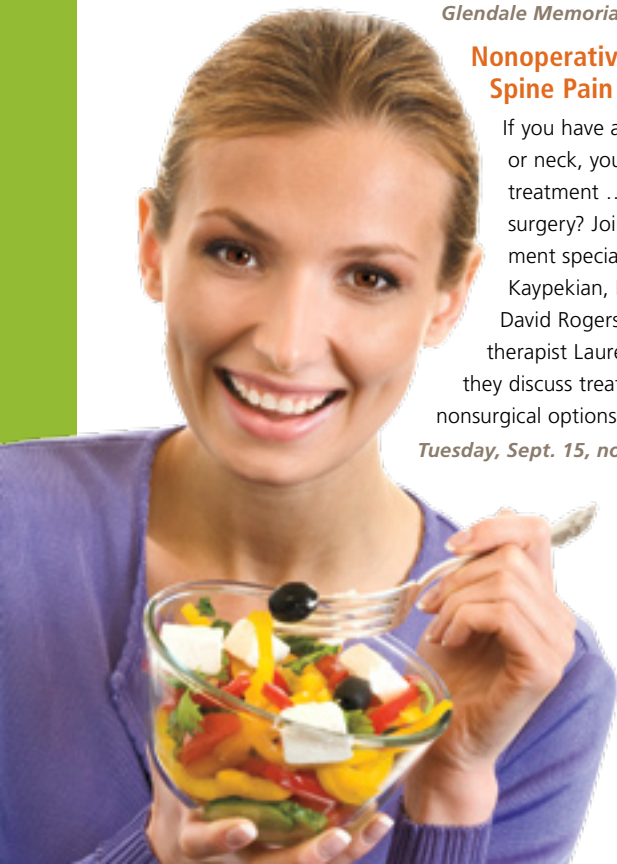
As we age, we may start having difficulty seeing objects clearly and doing common daily tasks such as reading and driving. This is called age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Marta Recasens, M.D., ophthalmologist, will discuss AMD and what we can do to treat it.

*Wednesday, Aug. 12, noon–1 p.m.
Glendale Memorial Main Auditorium*

Nonoperative Treatments for Spine Pain

If you have a pain in your back or neck, you may need medical treatment ... but do you need surgery? Join pain management specialist Christopher Kaypekian, M.D.; spine surgeon David Rogers, M.D.; and physical therapist Lauren McVicker, as they discuss treating your pain with nonsurgical options.

*Tuesday, Sept. 15, noon–1 p.m.
Glendale Memorial Main Auditorium*



Exercise and Wellness Classes & Activities

- Blood Pressure Screenings (818) 502-2378
*First Friday of the month, 8:30–10 a.m.
Eagle Rock Plaza*
- Cardiac Fitness Center Tours (818) 502-2303
Learn how to achieve and maintain a healthier lifestyle.
- Diabetes Management Series (818) 507-4616
Four-class series; minimal fee
- Exercise to the Big Bands (818) 502-2303
*Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8–9 a.m.
Glendale Memorial Heart Center; minimal fee*
- Nutrition Counseling (818) 507-4616
Minimal fee
- Walk-a-Dile Walking Program (818) 502-2378
*Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 8–10 a.m.
Eagle Rock Plaza*

50plus Programs

- AARP Mature Driving Class (818) 502-2378
Minimal fee
- AARP Refresher Course (818) 502-2378
Last Wednesday of each month; minimal fee
- Explore Yourself Through Writing (818) 638-5499
This seven-week program is designed to improve writing, self-awareness and communication.

Classes for Mothers-to-Be

- Maternity Tours (818) 409-7716
- Preparation for Successful Breastfeeding (818) 409-7716

Support Groups

- Armenian Bone Marrow Registry (818) 502-2378
- Armenian Breast Cancer Support Group (818) 502-2323
First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m.
- Breast Cancer Support Group (818) 502-2323
Second Thursday of the month, 5:30 p.m.
- Nursing Mother's Circle (818) 507-4191
- Prostate Cancer Support Group (818) 502-2323
First Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m.
- Senior Peer Counseling (818) 638-5499

DOCTOR FINDER is the FREE physician referral service of Glendale Memorial. Just call **(818) 502-2378.**

glendalememorial.com

The best of Glendale Memorial is at your fingertips.



**Glendale Memorial
Hospital and Health Center**

A member of CHW

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It's What's Inside That Makes Us Extraordinary.

Glendale Memorial
One of America's 50 Best Hospitals
2007 • 2008 • 2009

One hospital stands above the rest in the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys. Glendale Memorial Hospital is the only hospital in these areas to be recognized as one of America's 50 Best Hospitals for three years in a row. Our team of physicians, employees and volunteers delivers care with the expertise and compassion you and your family deserve. Come see what makes Glendale Memorial so extraordinary.



**Glendale Memorial
Hospital and Health Center**

A member of CHW



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Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1978 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap or age. For further information or to file a complaint, contact the Director of Rehabilitation Services.