

HEALTH NEWS from

FALL/WINTER 2017

south texas

HEALTH SYSTEM

HEALTHGRADES™ RECOGNITION FOR
excellence in quality



McAllen
Heart Hospital,
McAllen Medical
Center and
Edinburg Regional
Medical Center
receive awards

New technology for neurosurgeons

Navigation and imaging
system aids in spinal surgery

Breaking ground on more freestanding ERs

Growing to meet the needs
of the community

 SOUTH TEXAS
HEALTH SYSTEM
DEFINING Healthcare®

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As our region continues its rapid growth, South Texas Health System is keeping up and expanding its care for the community. We are working harder than ever to increase our services and add more facilities so that all of our residents have access to the quality care they need, when they need it. We are also excited to announce that our website is now available in Spanish at es.southtexashealthsystem.com.

Within the next year, four freestanding emergency departments will be opening in the region. One in Edinburg on Monte Cristo Road (opening January 2018), one on McColl Road in southwest Edinburg, another on Ware Road in McAllen, and one off the interstate in Alamo. Learn more by reading the story on page 4. We continually strive to provide a great patient experience and surpass expectations, as well as excel in quality. We are proud of the recent recognition several of our hospitals have earned from Healthgrades, the leading online resource for comprehensive information about physicians and hospitals. Read more about the awards and the hospitals that received them on page 6.

In this issue, we also showcase many of the different types of care we are providing for both children and adults. McAllen Medical Center recently became the first hospital in the Valley to equip neurosurgeons with an intraoperative surgical navigation and imaging system. Ines Carrasquillo, MD, FACS, the only female board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon at South Texas Health System, tells how she makes her patients feel whole again. Brenda Salinas, MD, educates us on how diabetes affects women. Pediatric Neurologist Fares Kokash, MD, shares insight on pediatric epilepsy. Raul Marquez, MD, explains robotic technology he is using for total knee replacements. And Greg Martin shares his story of recovery, thanks to inpatient rehabilitation at Edinburg Regional Rehab Center.

We thank you for entrusting us with your care, and we look forward to exceeding your expectations as we continue to develop more ways to serve our community.

JENNIFER C. GARZA
CEO, Edinburg Regional Medical Center/
Edinburg Children's Hospital

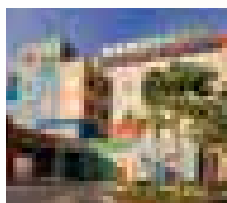
TODD MANN
CEO, McAllen Medical Center

DANIEL CALDWELL
CEO, McAllen Heart Hospital

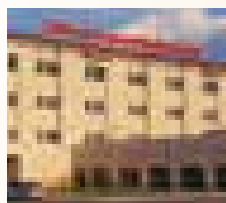
JOE RODRIGUEZ
CEO, South Texas Behavioral Health Center

ROXANNA GODINEZ
CEO, Cornerstone Regional Hospital

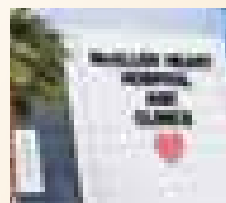
We are South Texas Health System



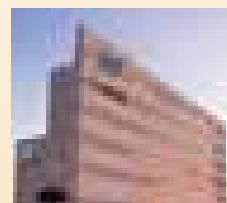
**EDINBURG
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**



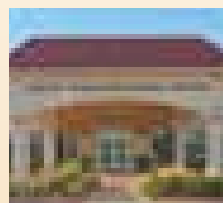
**EDINBURG REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER
EDINBURG REGIONAL
REHAB CENTER**



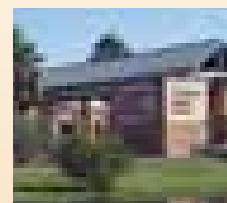
**McALLEN HEART
HOSPITAL**



**McALLEN
MEDICAL CENTER**



**SOUTH TEXAS
BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH CENTER**

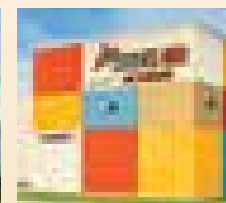


**CORNERSTONE
REGIONAL HOSPITAL**

This hospital is directly or indirectly owned by a partnership that includes physician owners, including certain members of the hospital medical staff.



STHS ER WESLACO



STHS ER MISSION



Left inset: Neurosurgeon Alejandro Betancourt, MD. Above: Neurosurgeon Syed Hussain, MD, and Neurosurgeon and Chief of Surgery Jaime Gasco, MD, test out the StealthStation® S7®.

Advanced navigation and imaging system at McAllen Medical Center *guides neurosurgeons using a “virtual map”*

McAllen Medical Center is the first hospital in the Rio Grande Valley to equip neurosurgeons with an intraoperative surgical navigation and imaging system.

The devices work together to help neurosurgeons maintain seamless visualization of the spine during surgery. This is accomplished by combining multiple modes of imaging data into virtual maps that help guide the neurosurgeons.

A patient's anatomy can be viewed right from the operating table, and surgical changes can be verified prior to the patient leaving the surgical suite. As a result, patients undergoing elective or emergent spinal procedures may experience less invasive surgeries, faster recovery times, and improved outcomes. If needed, the equipment can also be moved to the trauma bay or the operating room, so the patient can stay in one place.

As a designated advanced Level III trauma center for Hidalgo County, having this equipment can save precious time for patients with critical injuries. In some instances, patients do not have to get imaging done in the radiology department prior to surgery because the O-arm® 1000 and StealthStation® S7® can provide doctors the images they need.

“Time is critical in the operating room, especially in instances of trauma,” says Jaime Gasco, MD, neurosurgeon with Valley Care Clinics and Chief of Surgery at STHS, who was the first physician to use the system at McAllen Medical Center. “Neurosurgeons can plan their approach and precisely track the location of surgical instruments. Having the most sophisticated intraoperative navigation and imaging equipment help us do a better job.”

Other neurosurgeons Syed Hussain, MD, and Alejandro Betancourt, MD, regularly use the system and believe it is a great addition to the already robust and comprehensive trauma and neurosurgery programs at McAllen Medical Center.

Dr. Betancourt says the O-arm offers multidimensional images in about 30 seconds, and provides surgeons with real time 2-D and 3-D imaging not offered by other available technologies. “Experience still matters, though. The neurosurgeon chooses the approach, the tools, the positioning of the tools and is in complete control. But now we have a better map,” he says. Dr. Hussain says, “This new equipment will have a tremendous impact for patient care here at McAllen Medical Center.” ■

To learn more about neurosurgery, visit mcallenmedicalcenter.com/neurosurgery.

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive surgery is right for you.



Breaking ground on more ERs

Within the next year, South Texas Health System will be adding four new freestanding emergency departments in the cities of **EDINBURG, ALAMO AND MCALLEN**, all with the goal to give residents quicker access to appropriate care when they need it. ➤



Left: STHS administration and local dignitaries participate in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new freestanding emergency department in north Edinburg, STHS ER Monte Cristo. Below: Demolition ceremony at what will be the new freestanding emergency department on McColl Road in Edinburg, STHS ER McColl. Opposite page, left: Edinburg Mayor Richard Garcia speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony. Right: McAllen Medical Center CEO Todd Mann, second from left, and McAllen Heart Hospital CEO Dan Caldwell, second from right, mingle with guests at the McColl demolition ceremony.



to serve the community

Lance Ames, Chief Operating Officer for Edinburg Children's Hospital and Edinburg Regional Medical Center, says the new freestanding emergency departments will bring healthcare to the community, instead of having people drive long distances. "These new locations will make it easier for people to get care, and will also lessen the burden on the hospital emergency rooms," he says.



The STHS ER Monte Cristo is scheduled to open in January 2018, and a demolition day was recently held for the new STHS ER McColl, to be open in summer 2018, explains

Ames. "We also are looking to have one on Ware Road in McAllen and one in Alamo. We have been planning these facilities for over a year. It's nice to see the progress we are making - it's becoming real," he says. "The new facilities will have a better layout so patient flow will be much more streamlined."

"This project is near and dear to my heart. I truly understand the need for these services as a former Army medic," says Pct. 4 Hidalgo County Commissioner Joseph Palacios. "These are strategically located and provide exceptional access."

Edinburg Mayor Richard Garcia says that Edinburg's population is predicted to catch up to McAllen's within five years, and that in 20 years, the population of Hidalgo County will be equally divided by State Highway 107. "We are at the cusp of growth here in Edinburg and this new facility is important for us to have. A few minutes can be the difference between life and death," he says.

Ames states EMS providers have realized the importance of the freestanding ERs. "Our facility may be the closest one for the patient to receive emergency care. We welcome them and are happy to care for those patients," he says. ■



The new STHS ER Monte Cristo

This facility will feature nine treatment spaces, including six examination rooms, three triage bays, an internal waiting area, advanced imaging services such as CT scan, ultrasound, X-ray, and digital radiography, as well as an onsite laboratory. The STHS ER will use the Cerner® FirstNet electronic medical record system that is compatible with all other South Texas Health System facilities. This system also allows patients to access their private health information through our patient portal, Health Records Online.

The STHS ER Monte Cristo will be capable of treating general emergency cases on an outpatient basis, as well as trauma and observation care up to 24 hours. Patients requiring surgical intervention, a higher level of care, or an overnight hospital stay will be stabilized and transferred to a local hospital.

STHS ER Monte Cristo, 3615 N. Interstate 69C, Edinburg, TX 78541
To learn more, visit southtexashealthsystem.com/MontecristoFED.



South Texas Health System hospitals receive national recognition for **EXCELLENCE IN QUALITY**

MCALLEN HEART HOSPITAL



Healthgrades™, the leading online resource for comprehensive information about physicians and hospitals, recently presented McAllen Heart Hospital, McAllen Medical Center and Edinburg Regional Medical Center with national awards highlighting outstanding quality achievements in cardiology and womens' services.

McAllen Heart Hospital was recognized for excellence in quality in several categories by Healthgrades. The hospital was named among the **top 10 percent in the nation for overall cardiac services and coronary interventional procedures and the top five percent for cardiac surgery.** Other awards include:

- One of America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery
- One of America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care
- One of America's 100 Best Hospitals for Coronary Intervention
- Cardiac Care Excellence Award
- Cardiac Surgery Excellence Award
- Coronary Intervention Excellence Award
- Five-Star Recipient for Coronary Bypass Surgery
- Five-Star Recipient for Valve Surgery
- Five-Star Recipient for Coronary Interventional Procedures
- Five-Star Recipient for Treatment of Heart Attack

"McAllen Heart Hospital is dedicated to improving the quality of care for our patients suffering with cardiac conditions," says Daniel Caldwell, Chief Executive Officer of McAllen Heart Hospital. "We are pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in cardiac care, and I am very proud of our team." ►



McAllen Heart Hospital celebrates its awards. From L to R, Martha Quiroz, Clinical Supervisor PCCU/MT; McAllen Heart Hospital CEO Daniel Caldwell; Luis Padula, MD; Carlos Giraldo, MD; Sara Ostrem, Nurse Practitioner; Carol Mejia, MCS Coordinator; and Sandro Braga, OR Director.

TOP HONORS INCLUDE AWARDS FOR CARDIAC SURGERY, CORONARY INTERVENTION AND GYNECOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

MCALLEN MEDICAL CENTER AND EDINBURG REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER EARN RECOGNITION THREE YEARS IN A ROW!



McAllen Medical Center and Edinburg Regional Medical Center were recognized for **superior performance in the categories of vaginal delivery and C-section delivery, in addition to being named five-star recipients for gynecologic procedures.** These five-star ratings indicate that the hospitals' clinical outcomes are statistically significantly better than expected when treating the condition or performing the procedure being evaluated. This is the third year in a row that both hospitals have received the five-star rating for both types of obstetrical delivery.

Jennifer Garza, Chief Executive Officer for Edinburg Regional Medical Center and Edinburg Children's Hospital, says Edinburg Regional Medical Center introduced its robotics program approximately two years ago. "Many of our young physicians were trained on these devices in medical school or in other markets, and minimally-invasive surgery is quickly becoming

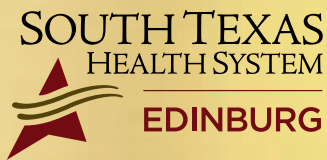


the standard of care. We've invested in our surgery department with better tools and training. The outstanding patient care, clinical competence and dedication to quality by surgical teams and physicians, coupled with better tools, have enabled this facility to produce top-notch outcomes in the field of gynecological surgery. For the patient, that means fewer complications and a quicker recovery time."

Todd Mann, Chief Executive Officer for McAllen Medical Center, says the birth of a baby is often the first time a woman comes into contact with

a hospital. Her experience and outcomes can impact where she chooses to receive her care going forward. "We are honored to have not only met, but to have exceeded national quality measures at our birthing centers," Mann says. "Women are the most influential consumers of healthcare and typically advocate and arrange preventative, acute and long-term care for their loved ones. Here's solid quantitative data showing that McAllen Medical Center and Edinburg Regional Medical Center are dedicated to the health of mothers and babies in our community." ■

To learn more about the nationally recognized hospitals, visit mcallenhearthospital.com, mcallenmedicalcenter.com or edinburgregional.com.



McAllen Medical Center and Edinburg Regional Medical Center proudly display their Healthgrades awards. Shown above, from L to R: Esther Aguilar, RN, L&D Clinical Supervisor, McAllen Medical Center; Graciela Moreno-Chavana, Director, Birthing Center, McAllen Medical Center; McAllen Medical Center CEO Todd Mann; Adriana Cantu, RN, NICU Clinical Supervisor, McAllen Medical Center; Thiendella Diagne, MD; Edinburg Regional Medical Center CEO Jennifer Garza; and Yvonne Garza, Director, Women's Corner.

2018 Healthgrades™ Awards ...

JUST ANNOUNCED!

For two years in a row, McAllen Heart Hospital has been honored for OUTSTANDING QUALITY ACHIEVEMENTS IN CARDIAC SERVICES.

MCALLEN HEART HOSPITAL



For the 2018 Healthgrades awards, the hospital was named among the **top 10 percent in the nation for overall cardiac care, as well as among the top five percent for coronary interventional procedures for 2018.** Additional awards include:

- One America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care
- One America's 100 Best Hospitals for Coronary Intervention
- Cardiac Care Excellence Award
- Cardiac Surgery Excellence Award
- Coronary Intervention Excellence Award
- Five-Star Recipient for Coronary Bypass Surgery
- Five-Star Recipient for Coronary Interventional Procedures
- Five-Star Recipient for Treatment of Heart Attack for 5 Years in a row (2014-2018)
- Five-Star Recipient for Valve Surgery for 9 Years in a row (2010-2018)

To learn more, visit mcallenhearthospital.com.



MCALLEN HEART
HOSPITAL
AND
CLINIC

Comprehensive *plastic and reconstructive surgery*



"The ability to treat traumatic wounds, restore functionality or enhance someone's appearance is something I am passionate about." – INES CARRASQUILLO, MD, FACS



INES CARRASQUILLO, MD, FACS
Board-certified Plastic and
Reconstructive Surgeon

As the only female board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon at South Texas Health System, Ines Carrasquillo, MD, FACS, is all about making her patients feel whole again. "I specialize in all types of plastic, reconstructive and trauma surgery," says Dr. Carrasquillo. "My patients need to be able to function and I am able to address that for them."

Traumatic injuries often require reconstructive and plastic surgery, and Dr. Carrasquillo can reconstruct faces, hands, the head and neck

after major trauma. "Every case is different. Once the trauma surgeon evaluates the patient, they can determine if I am needed," says Dr. Carrasquillo. Examples of trauma injuries include gunshot wounds, vascular injuries, burns, open fractures and those as a result of motor vehicle accidents. "Many times, an area needs to be reconstructed to cover bones or organs, and that is where I come in," she says.

Each day, a different experience

When she is not working with the trauma team at McAllen Medical Center, Dr. Carrasquillo meets with patients about cosmetic and other elective procedures. "I do quite a few cosmetic and elective procedures, such as breast augmentation or reduction; cosmetic and medical botox; facial rejuvenation; hand surgery; removal of skin cancers and melanoma; wound closures; and post-bariatric surgery to remove excess skin on the abdomen, arms or legs," says Dr. Carrasquillo. "I build a rapport with them so I can fully understand their needs."

Hand surgery is another specialty, including carpal tunnel and cubital tunnel release; hand tumors; fractures; webbed fingers; tendon and nerve injuries; Dupuytren's contracture; and removal of ganglia and soft tissue tumors. "There is a new enzyme treatment now available to treat Dupuytren's contracture, so patients may not need surgery," says Dr. Carrasquillo. "The enzyme is injected and in a few days, the patient regains use of their hand. It's quite remarkable, and much less invasive than surgery."

Dr. Carrasquillo takes a very holistic approach with her patients. "I am very compassionate and always available for my patients. Improving their quality of life and helping them obtain the results they desire is very important to me, and I work hard to make sure they are satisfied," she says. ■

**Dr. Carrasquillo's office is located at Valley Care Clinics,
1801 S. 5th St. #207, McAllen, TX 78503.**

**To schedule an appointment, please call 956-631-0393.
For more information about Dr. Carrasquillo, visit
valleycareclinics.com/plastic.**



Two McAllen residency program graduates start their careers in the ER

After completing three years of academic study, clinical hours, and rotations with different specialists at McAllen Medical Center, Jose Rodriguez, MD, and Alejandro Hernandez, MD, are two of the newly minted physicians who are beginning their careers at the STHS ER Mission and STHS ER Weslaco.

"Our training included hands-on experience rotating through cardiology, nephrology, orthopedics, the ER and ICU," says Jose Rodriguez, MD, the chief resident for the last year of the residency program. "We went through the program here, and this area needs more doctors, so we are here to stay."

He explains that patients are the priority. "We look forward to taking care of all patients who come to the STHS ERs. We have been training for three years and we can treat adults and children. We also gained surgical experience and can perform C-sections, vasectomies and other surgical procedures," says Dr. Rodriguez. ■



Class of 2017 residents: From L-R: Feng Wang, MD; Helmut Rauch, MD; Oksana Marroquin, MD; Alejandro Hernandez, MD; Jose M. Rodriguez, MD; Not pictured: Mayada Ali, MD.



330 W. Expressway 83
Weslaco, TX 78599
Phone: 956-975-2300
www.sthserweslaco.com



900 E. Expressway 83
Mission, TX 78572
Phone: 956-271-1200
www.sthsermission.com

The South Texas Health System's freestanding ERs located in Weslaco and Mission are open around the clock. They are staffed with the same medical personnel and equipped with the same diagnostic technology available in South Texas Health System's hospital-based emergency rooms.



RUBÉN PIÑERO, MD
Psychiatrist,
South Texas Behavioral
Health Center

SOUTH TEXAS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER *welcomes Dr. Rubén Piñero*

Rubén Piñero, MD, recently joined the staff at South Texas Behavioral Health Center. Dr. Piñero speaks English and Spanish, and practices adult psychiatry. He holds his medical licensure in Texas.

Dr. Piñero received his B.S. in General Sciences with a minor in Biology from the University of Puerto Rico in 2009. He earned his medical degree from the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine in 2013, and completed his residency in Psychiatry as the co-chief resident in June 2017. He is a member of the American Psychiatry Association and is currently conducting research on video game use among Puerto Rican adolescents receiving outpatient mental health care services. ■

To learn more or make an appointment, visit
southtexasbehavioralhealthcenter.com.



An inside look at **PEDIATRIC EPILEPSY**

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



FARES KOKASH, MD
Pediatric Neurologist,
Edinburg Children's Hospital

Epilepsy is commonly characterized by seizures, which can involve convulsions or involuntary jerking motions of a body part, such as a leg or arm, or dizziness, tingling or even loss of consciousness or awareness. But did you know that seizures in children manifest differently than in adults? Pediatric Neurologist Fares Kokash, MD, says children's symptoms can be silent. "In children, the seizure is not always obvious," he says. "One example is staring. If you notice your child staring a lot, you might want to have them evaluated." Other symptoms that would warrant investigation include lip smacking or episodes of laughing for no reason.

Diagnosing pediatric epilepsy

Dr. Kokash states several tests are completed to determine if the child has epilepsy, and if so, what type. The first is an electroencephalogram (EEG) that checks the brain waves and electricity. Then an MRI of the brain can determine if there are brain lesions. "Sometimes we find a tumor that is causing the seizures," says Dr. Kokash. "But epilepsy can also be caused by a brain injury at birth, an infection that left a scar, exposure to toxic environments or certain medications. In approximately 60 percent of our cases, we can't find evidence of an underlying reason for the seizures."

Treatment options

There are several types of treatment options available, but not everyone responds the same. "There are medications available, as well as a ketogenic diet, which is very rigid and requires dietitian supervision. Surgery may also be an option if there is a brain lesion involved that does not respond to medication," says Dr. Kokash. He explains there is also a new technology that he would like to implement in the area. "It is a pacemaker-type device that is implanted and wraps around the vagus nerve to suppress seizures."

When the seizure isn't epilepsy

One of the most common types of seizures is known as a febrile seizure. This is caused by a quick rise of body temperature when the child has a fever. It typically occurs between the ages of six months and five years. "A febrile seizure can be alarming, but is not considered epilepsy, nor does it raise the risk of epilepsy," says Dr. Kokash. "If your child has one febrile seizure, the chances are they will have another. In this case, the best way to prevent a seizure is to treat the fever with acetaminophen or ibuprofen before the temperature starts to rise too quickly." ■

PRECAUTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH EPILEPSY

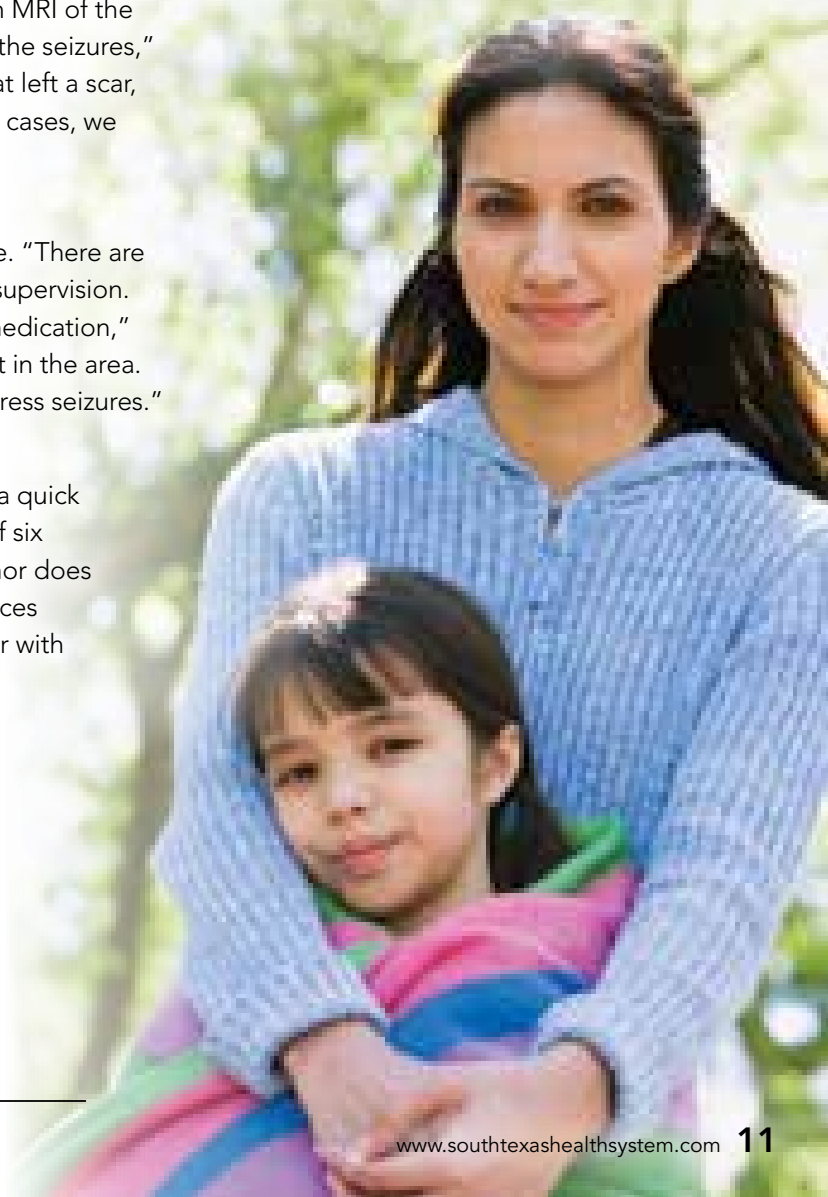
- Never swim alone
- Do not take a bath – only a shower
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bike
- Do not climb – they could fall if they have a seizure

IF YOUR CHILD HAS A SEIZURE:

- Keep them on their side to avoid aspiration
- Remove tight clothes
- Push furniture away and remove obstructions
- If you have rescue medications, use them if seizure goes beyond four minutes. If you do not have rescue medications, call 9-1-1.
- Seizures should not be permitted to last more than five minutes. The longer the seizure, the higher the risk of brain damage.



**To learn more about
Edinburg Children's Hospital, visit
edinburgchildrenshospital.com.**



THIS IS MY STORY:

Greg Martin

Greg Martin, 32, was enjoying his ski vacation with his uncle and cousins in Colorado on March 25, 2017. He started down the mountain, but the wet and heavy snow threw him off balance. As he tried to regain his balance, he spun around backward down the hill and plowed into a tree.

"I remember the sudden thud and being on the ground. But I didn't have any pain and didn't yet realize that I had broken my right arm, my right lower leg, and had a hairline fracture in my neck. My uncle is an anesthesiologist and my cousin is a resident in orthopedics, so I felt relieved they were there. They immediately called the ski patrol, and I was taken to the base of the mountain, loaded into a helicopter and flown to a local trauma center. I was in surgery for six hours."

"The doctors informed me that the breaks in my arm and shin were not clean breaks – the bones were shattered – and that I would have a long road of rehabilitation ahead of me. I was released from the hospital in Denver on April 3 and flew home to Edinburg. The next day, I started inpatient occupational and physical therapy at the Edinburg Regional Rehab Center."

"Joe, my occupational therapist, and Renee, my physical therapist, made me feel like I was part of their family and they were there for me every step of the way. I felt fully ready for the outpatient rehab when the time came, and it was thanks to them for their constant support."

"I no longer walk with a cane, but I do have a residual limp that will just take time to work through. I suffered nerve damage in my arm, but with all the exercises I learned, more muscle tone is coming back and I am getting stronger. I plan on making a full recovery, and thanks to the Edinburg Regional Rehab Center, I know I can do it." ■

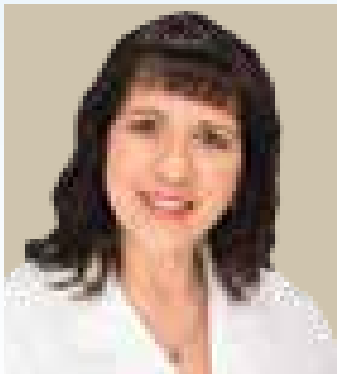
To learn more, visit edinburgregional.com/ERRC.



**EDINBURG REGIONAL
REHAB CENTER**

A South Texas Health System Facility

Left: Greg can now walk without the aid of a cane or walker. Left inset: Greg goes through his routine with the help of Occupational Therapist Joe Chapra.



BRENDA SALINAS, MD
Family Medicine Physician

How diabetes AFFECTS WOMEN

If you are a woman living with diabetes, managing it and taking proactive care of your health are very important. "Women bear a unique burden because having diabetes can affect them before, during and after pregnancy, as well as have an impact on their unborn child," says Family Medicine Physician Brenda Salinas, MD. Here, she shares information to help you better manage your symptoms.

Q

What are the symptoms of diabetes?

A: Symptoms that are common for both men and women include increased hunger, thirst and urination; weight loss or gain for no reason; blurred vision; fatigue; slow-healing wounds; irritability; nausea; darker skin in body creases; numbing, tingling or reduced feeling in the hands or feet; a sweet, fruity, or acetone odor on your breath; and skin infections. If you are having any of these symptoms, it is important to see your doctor for evaluation and tests to rule out or diagnose diabetes.

Q

Are there symptoms of diabetes that are unique to women?

A: Yes, there are. They include vaginal and oral yeast infections, caused by high levels of blood sugar which triggers an overgrowth of yeast; urinary tract infections, caused by poor circulation and lower white blood cell count; polycystic ovary syndrome, known as PCOS, which occurs when hormones are out of balance; and female sexual dysfunction. When blood sugar is high, it can sometimes result in nerve damage, causing loss of feeling in different areas of the body, including the vaginal area. This can also affect a woman's sex drive.

Q

What is gestational diabetes, and if I have it, does that mean I will get diabetes?

A: Gestational diabetes is most common during the later stages of pregnancy, and occurs in almost 10 percent* of pregnancies. Hormones affect insulin production, causing insulin resistance. When this happens, glucose can't be converted to energy, resulting in gestational diabetes. For most women, it resolves itself after the baby is born, but it also puts the mother and baby at risk for developing diabetes in the future. As a precaution, your doctor may want to order blood tests periodically to monitor your glucose levels.

Q

What are the best practices in preventing diabetes if I think I am at risk?

A: There are several things you can do. Learn more about your risk factors for diabetes. For example, having PCOS, excess abdominal fat, darkened skin around the neck or other body creases, or having a family history can increase your chance of getting diabetes. Your doctor may also want to do screening blood tests, including an A1C, kidney panel, cholesterol and urine test and follow up every three months. Meeting with a diabetic educator can also be beneficial. ■

**DR. SALINAS' OFFICE IS LOCATED AT 2521 E. GRIFFIN PKWY, STE. A,
MISSION, TX 78572 • PHONE: 956-583-0300**
Schedule your appointment online at valleycareclinics.com.

*cdc.gov

More precision and accuracy *with* robotic-assisted total knee surgery

**FIRST PROCEDURE PERFORMED IN TEXAS WITHOUT
THE NEED FOR A CT SCAN**



RAUL MARQUEZ, MD
Orthopedic Surgeon,
Cornerstone Regional Hospital

A new robotic-assisted tool that uses patient-specific data to plan the surgery is now available for people who need a total knee replacement. Orthopedic Surgeon Raul Marquez, MD, recently performed the first procedure in Texas at Cornerstone Regional Hospital. "When doing knee replacements, CT scans are usually required before surgery. But using this new system, we can digitally collect patient-specific data to build a 3-D model of a patient's knee during the actual procedure," says Dr. Marquez.

The robotic-assisted tool is a handheld device that captures the precise positioning of the knee implant. It allows the doctor to see where the damaged parts of the joint are located and remove

them so the new joint fits perfectly. This can contribute to better function and longevity of the implant. Dr. Marquez says using the new tool fits right into the surgical workflow and can lead to better outcomes. "The human eye cannot detect a three or four degree difference, but this tool can. Patients are more comfortable when we use this because they know their implant is custom measured just for them, which greatly reduces the chance of improper fit," he says.

Dr. Marquez has been using this system on partial knee replacements since 2014, but did the first full knee replacement in June. "This system allows me to easily convert a partial knee replacement to a full knee replacement, depending on the patient's needs."

Dr. Marquez explains that the incision to insert the implant is smaller than traditional knee replacement surgery. "Recovery can take one-third less time because there is less soft tissue dissection, and patients get up the same day and walk. They are usually out of the hospital after two days, with no need for inpatient rehabilitation. Patients go directly to outpatient physical therapy for four to six weeks," he says. ■



Cornerstone Regional Hospital is a boutique hospital offering an experienced surgical team and a personalized, intimate experience for patients. Head to toe, we've got you covered.

cornerstoneregional.com

For more information about robotic orthopedic technology or to register for a free educational seminar, contact Marla Sandoval at 956-618-4444. Seminars are held at Dr. Marquez's office right next to Cornerstone Regional Hospital. For a complete listing of dates and times go to cornerstoneregional.com/robotic.

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive surgery is right for you.

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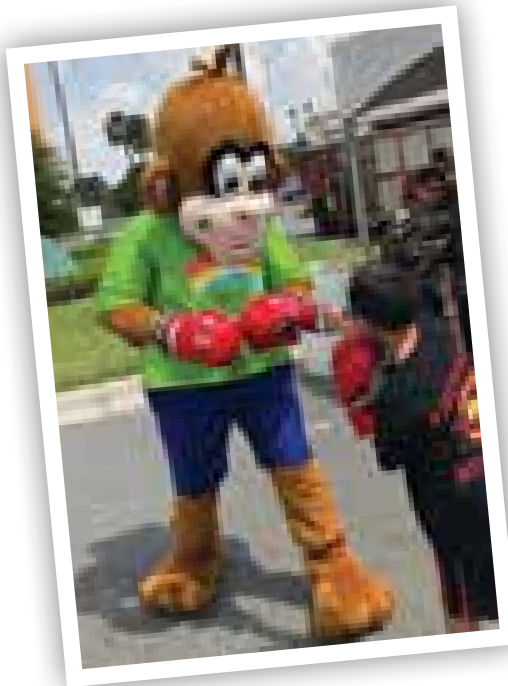
Hurricane Harvey heroes

Six nurses from South Texas Health System were honored at a reception for their volunteer efforts after Hurricane Harvey struck the Coastal Bend Region of Texas in August. The nurses were stationed in a mobile medical unit near a hospital in Orange, Texas. One patient, who was in cardiac arrest, now credits them for saving his life. Front row, L-R: Todd Mann, CEO, McAllen Medical Center; Jennifer Garza, CEO, Edinburg Regional Medical Center/Edinburg Children's Hospital; Brian Skar, RN, McAllen Medical Center; Deborah Folsom, RN, STHS ER Weslaco; Courtney Flores, RN, Edinburg Regional Medical Center; J.D. Leal, RN, McAllen Medical Center; Conrad Brown, STHS System Director for Ambulatory Services; Lance Ames, COO, Edinburg Regional Medical Center/Edinburg Children's Hospital. Back row, L-R: Candi Constantine, STHS System CNO, McAllen Medical Center; Cat Domian, CNO, Edinburg Regional Medical Center/Edinburg Children's Hospital; Patty Rodriguez, RN, McAllen Medical Center; and Jamaila Saenz, RN, McAllen Medical Center.



Medical supplies donated to Mexico City

South Texas Health System stepped up to help one of our fellow physicians in his efforts to transfer medical supplies to Mexico City after an earthquake totaled buildings and killed several people. The Rio Grande Valley's close proximity to Mexico puts us in a prime position to assist our neighbors to the south when possible and we were glad to answer the call with more than \$50,000 worth of donated supplies.



Kids in the Kitchen

Children from across the Rio Grande Valley attended the Kids in the Kitchen event at the Edinburg Children's Hospital in September, hosted by the Junior League of McAllen. Hundreds of youth filled the lobby and hospital parking lot to visit booths manned by local organizations promoting health and nutrition.



Trauma and Injury Prevention Expo

Hundreds of families enjoyed the annual Trauma & Injury Prevention Expo at McAllen Medical Center and nearby DoubleTree Inn and Suites this October. The event promotes safety by giving families important information provided by South Texas Health System and Valley Care Clinics physicians, as well as inviting local law enforcement and rescue teams who put on exciting mock displays for the public.



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