

Health Connect



ANTELOPE VALLEY
HOSPITAL
A facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District

A community newsletter from Antelope Valley Hospital

September/October 2017



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Serving Our Community

There is nothing more fundamental to the core of a district hospital than to know and serve the healthcare needs of its community.

As a district hospital we have no shareholders but instead are accountable only to you, our community. We make sure we understand your needs and are there to serve as your trusted healthcare partner.

Toward that end we constantly monitor the health status of our community, and the most recent monitoring has resulted in some interesting findings. For example, we know:

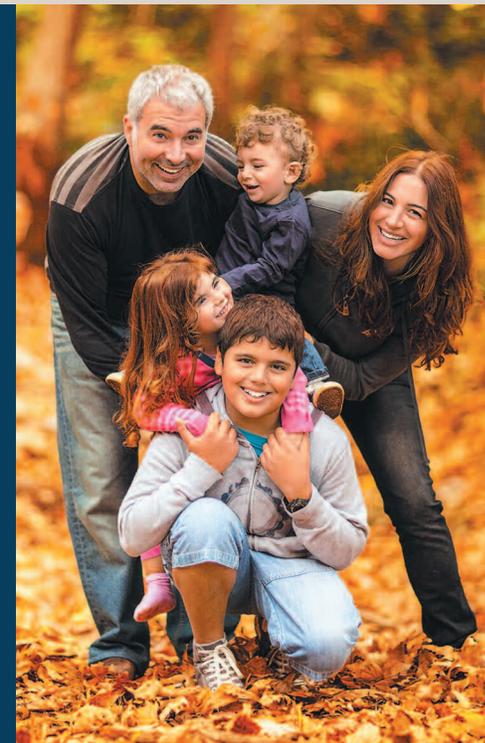
- Nearly 25 percent of children below the age of 17 have special healthcare needs, making our community the highest in all of Los Angeles County.
- Two out of three people in the Antelope Valley are either obese or overweight.
- Almost 15 percent of our population has diabetes and another 30 percent has hypertension.

Knowing this, we are continually responding to the community's needs by bringing high quality healthcare to you and your family. As the area's healthcare leader, Antelope Valley Hospital offers the only local:

- Advanced Primary Stroke Center.
- Certified Chest Pain Receiving Center.
- Comprehensive Community Cancer Center.
- Pediatric unit, provided in partnership with physicians from Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA (see page 6).
- Institute for Heart & Vascular Care, featuring two modern cardiac catheterization labs.
- Labor and delivery unit through our Women & Infants Pavilion.
- Neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for babies with special medical needs.
- Level II trauma center.

We will continue to monitor the healthcare status of our community and respond by introducing and enhancing programs that reflect what is needed most in the Antelope Valley. That is what we are here for today, tomorrow and always.

Michael L. Wall
Chief Executive Officer



GI Lab Keeps Your Tract on Track

The food we eat undergoes a radical transformation as it passes through a complex series of organs, releasing life-giving energy and nutrients along its journey. While most people don't give much thought to the digestive system, an injury or illness that affects your body's ability to break down food can put it in the spotlight. Here at Antelope Valley Hospital we have a team of professionals who not only think about your digestive system, they specialize in it. They are members of our comprehensive Gastroenterology Laboratory – better known as the GI Lab.

Physicians, nurses and other GI Lab staff are specially trained and certified to perform a full range of inpatient and outpatient diagnostic procedures and treatments. AV Hospital's GI Lab has the most advanced technology in the Antelope Valley, which means our gastroenterologists are equipped to handle routine procedures, such as preventive colonoscopies, as well as more complicated procedures like removing foreign items from the intestine, controlling gastrointestinal bleeding, managing advanced liver cirrhosis and more.

The GI Lab team also works in close association with local oncologists to diagnose and manage cancerous tumors. They also are able to remove large precancerous tumors using the endoscope and endoscopic ultrasound rather than turning to surgery.



Vivaik Tyagi, M.D.

“Many of the specialized procedures we perform here at AV Hospital are typically only available at large metropolitan medical centers, which makes our GI Lab particularly unique,” noted Dr. Vivaik Tyagi, a gastroenterologist at AVH. “The breadth of our services means that we are not only available around the clock to tend to emergencies, but we make it possible for local residents to receive a full spectrum of care right here in our community.”

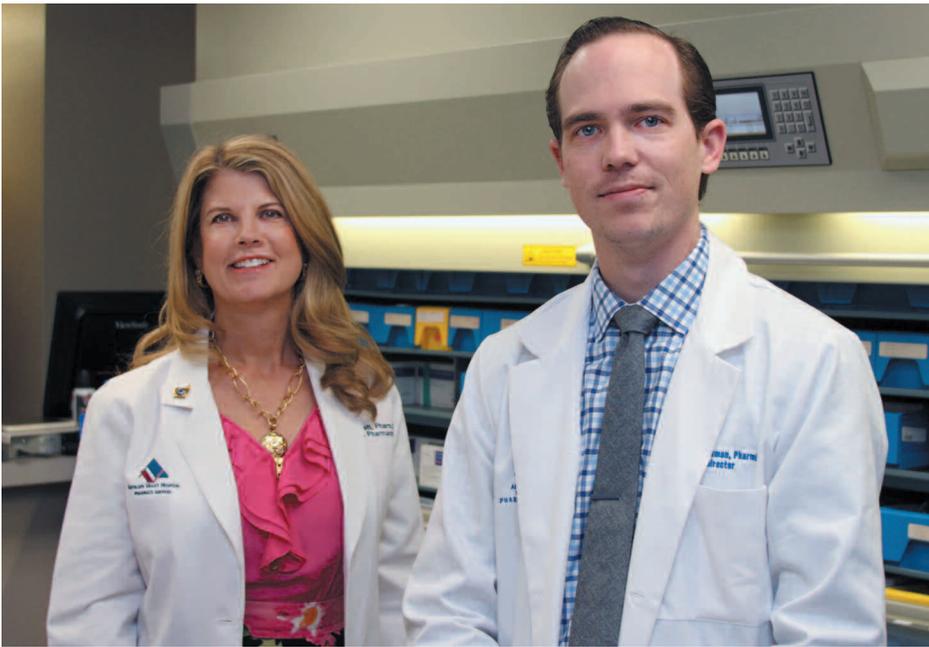
Recently AV Hospital became one of the only community hospitals to add the transoral incisionless fundoplication (TIF) procedure to its suite of services. TIF allows doctors to treat gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) without any abdominal incisions, which means quicker recovery time and better outcomes for patients. Also known as chronic acid reflux, GERD is a condition where food or liquid leaks backward from the stomach into the esophagus. Heartburn is the most common symptom of acid reflux.

By bringing state-of-the-art GI equipment and services to the Antelope Valley, AV Hospital can deliver the highest level of care and continue to fulfill its mission of improving the health of the community.



AV Hospital's GI Lab can diagnose and treat many digestive disorders, including:

- Anal fissures, abscesses and fistulas
- Barrett's esophagus
- Cancers of the digestive tract (colon, stomach, pancreas)
- Constipation and diarrhea
- Diverticulitis
- Gallstones and other biliary disorders
- Gastroenteritis
- Inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis)
- Liver disorders (cirrhosis, hepatitis B and C, fatty liver disease)
- Pancreatitis
- Peptic ulcer disease



Jill Bennett, clinical pharmacy coordinator/residency program director, and Ross Bauman, director of pharmacy

Rx for Better Care

Pharmacists at the Bedside

For most people their primary contact with a pharmacist takes place at their local drugstore where they pick up prescription medication and maybe have a few questions answered. But the pharmacy team within a hospital does much more than dispense medication.

Right place, right time

“Pharmacists play a big role in a hospital patient’s overall care,” says Director of Pharmacy Ross Bauman, Pharm.D. “At our hospital pharmacists are not in the background simply filling prescriptions; they are out on patient floors interacting with doctors, nurses and patients.”

In accordance with industry “best practices,” AVH pharmacists are assigned to every patient floor as well as the emergency department. They work to ensure patients are getting the right medication at the right stage of their treatment and

that a patient’s body is responding appropriately to the medication. Pharmacists are also part of the multi-disciplinary team that rushes to the bedside when a patient is in immediate life-threatening distress.

The pharmacy team includes 26 full-time professionals who hold doctorate degrees in pharmacy. They are supported by an equal number of pharmacy technicians, many of whom have national certification.

“Approximately a quarter of our pharmacists hold additional, specialty certifications in areas such as critical care, pharmacotherapy, geriatrics and infectious disease,” says Ross. “It’s unique for a community hospital pharmacy department to have so many specialists, just as it is unique for a hospital of our size to have pharmacists assigned to cover each patient unit.”

Best in class

The pharmacy team’s commitment to best practices has earned accolades from healthcare accrediting organizations. “Pharmacy was noted as a standout in evidence-based medicine during our last Joint Commission survey,” says Ross.

That commitment to quality and excellence makes AVH an ideal place for a pharmacy residency program, which serves as a bridge between education and practice. The hospital offers a residency program that is accredited by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

“The quality of our pharmacy program has a reputation for being best in class,” says Jill Bennett, Pharm.D., APh, BCPS, clinical pharmacy coordinator/residency program director. “Our community can have great confidence in the pharmacy services that are offered here.”



Melanie Lam, Pharm.D. (resident pharmacist) and Dr. Tommy Wan



When You Don't Know What To Do, A Clinical Ethicist Can Help

What can we do if my siblings and I don't agree on our father's care? Is being on a breathing tube what my mom would have wanted? What should I do if my doctor is recommending a procedure that goes against my beliefs?

With every new technology or treatment comes complex questions about who should receive the treatment, when it is appropriate and whether it is what the patient wants. Because healthcare is always changing, new ethical concerns continue to emerge that reflect current thinking about patient rights, quality of life, privacy and end-of-life care.

A consultation with a clinical ethicist may help whenever the healthcare team, the patient or the patient's family has unresolved ethical concerns. A clinical ethicist **facilitates the conversation**, offering guidance to aid in decision making on ethical, legal and healthcare policy issues.



Miriam Cotler, Ph.D.

"Healthcare can raise complex and troubling issues for people," said Miriam Piven Cotler, Ph.D., clinical ethicist at Antelope Valley Hospital and a renowned professional in this field. "Medical care can be confusing, especially at those times when there is no certain right or wrong answer. Clinical ethicists can help people explore their values and commitments and guide them in their decision making."

Dr. Cotler brings a wealth of understanding to her role. She is a member of the steering committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; a consultant to the California Medical Association Ethics

Advisory Council; and a professor emeritus at California State University, Northridge. A recent addition to the AVH team, Dr. Cotler is available 24/7 to help patients, families and staff work through difficult decisions, such as:

- Uncertainty as to who should make healthcare decisions or how to make those decisions for patients too sick to speak for themselves.
- Conflict between a person's core beliefs and a recommended course of treatment.
- Disagreement over whether starting, continuing, or ending treatment is the right thing to do.
- Moral distress about a healthcare decision.

"Talking things through with an ethicist can help you make the best decision for you and your loved ones," added Dr. Cotler. "We are here to assist you in not only making decisions but in coming to peace with the decisions you make."

Do you have an advance directive?

Advance directives are legal documents that spell out your healthcare preferences. Such a document allows you to tell your wishes to family, friends and healthcare professionals and to avoid confusion later on. "One of the best gifts you can give yourself and your family is to discuss your healthcare wishes, and put them in writing," says Dr. Cotler. More information on advance directives is available online at caringinfo.org or aarp.org.



Caring for Kids

Excellent Pediatric Care Close to Home

“We are the only pediatric department in the AV, but being ‘the only one’ isn’t good enough when it comes to your child’s health,” said Angela Teague, RN, director of pediatrics at AVH. “We offer much more than that uniqueness. The pediatric department at AVH is home to a highly skilled team that uses best practices in pediatric medicine to ensure our patients are receiving the best care available anywhere. The fact that we’re close to home is truly an added bonus, not just for the child but for the entire family, especially when there are other children at home and working parents.”

It is a situation no parent wants to face – having a child in the hospital. But should the need arise, local residents can take comfort in knowing there is no reason to travel out of the Antelope Valley for high-quality pediatric care. That’s because Antelope Valley Hospital houses a highly acclaimed pediatric department – the only such department in the area – staffed by a team of physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals specially trained in caring for children.

Excellence in Pediatrics

Caring for children in our community begins at birth. For newborns with special medical needs, the AVH Women & Infants Pavilion has a neonatal intensive care unit, which provides the most advanced evidence-based care for our tiniest population. For infants, children and adolescents who require hospitalization, we have a 22-bed pediatric department, which offers specialized, compassionate family-centered care for every child who comes through its doors.

One of the ways we do this is through a contract with physicians from Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA. These physicians provide inpatient services at AVH 24/7, bringing UCLA’s world-class care to our hospital’s youngest patients. The pediatric department also has a playroom, parent lounge and child life assistant who is trained to help ease children’s fears during their hospitalization. And, of course, pediatricians and nurses are available 24 hours a day to tend to the unique medical needs of each child.

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Debra Ogan, RN, BSN, MN, pediatric charge nurse



Pediatrics continued

Emergency Services

In addition to our pediatric department, AVH has the only emergency department (ED) in the Antelope Valley that is certified for pediatric patients where we care for more than 26,000 children each year. When a decision is made to admit the child to the hospital, a pediatric nurse is on hand to support the child and the family by answering their questions, and providing comfort during the transition.

“We work very hard to fast track kids who come in through the ED,” says Angela. “We try to get them out of the ED and up to pediatrics as soon as possible. Our nurse will visit with the family, find out if they have any questions and help allay their concerns. Compassionate, quality care is always our priority.”

Excellence in Nursing

The pediatric nursing team at AV Hospital has been working together for decades. There are approximately 30 registered nurses in the department, and more than half of them have been in the department for more than 10 years. (Three have been here 25 years, three have been here 35 years, and one has been here 40 years!) These nurses are highly credentialed, some have bachelor's or master's degrees or are certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center in Pediatric Care. An education specialist ensures that the team keeps up to date on nursing best practices.

For more information, visit avhospital.org/services/pediatrics, or call 661-949-5000.

Pediatrics Visiting Hours

Parents and guardians may visit at any time.
All other visitors: Daily 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Committed to Excellence

AV's Only Emergency Department Approved for Pediatrics

Antelope Valley Hospital is the only hospital in the area to be approved by the county of Los Angeles as an Emergency Department Approved for Pediatrics (EDAP). To qualify as an EDAP, a hospital emergency department must meet specific criteria, including requirements for pediatric equipment, physician coverage and ongoing pediatric education.

California Children's Services Approved Hospital

Our Pediatric Department is a California Children's Services Approved Hospital, which means the department meets the standards and requirements for the state program. AV Hospital is the only hospital in the area with this designation.

Baby-Friendly Designated Hospital

Baby-Friendly USA Inc. has designated AVH as a Baby-Friendly Hospital. This prestigious designation means that our maternity and pediatric services meet the gold standard for mother/baby care practices related to breastfeeding. As a Baby-Friendly Hospital, AVH makes sure breastfeeding moms receive the support they need to continue breastfeeding when their infant is hospitalized. This includes offering breastfeeding moms three meals a day.





Bridgett Amis, RN, Brings Compassion and Experience to Her Role in **Working With Victims of Violence**

Bridgett is the forensic services unit (FSU) manager at Antelope Valley Hospital. In this role Bridgett and her team work with and provide support to some of the most vulnerable patients to come through our doors.

The FSU is comprised of a specially trained team of registered nurses who compassionately and expertly assess, document, photograph, and collect evidence on all suspected victims of violence. The unit also coordinates the medical and legal needs of victims and provides support for those who have experienced life-changing events.

“I didn’t realize, until I started doing the work, what a difference we are able to make in this department,” says Bridgett. “Having grown up in an abusive household, this work touches my heart.”

After graduating from college with a bachelor’s degree in nursing, Bridgett enlisted in the Air Force and served as an active duty nurse for four years. She joined the AVH team 16 years ago as a full-time nurse.

For the past eight years, Bridgett has been an instrumental member of the FSU, which previously only served sexual assault victims. She played a key role in expanding the

department to also serve victims of domestic violence and child abuse.

Bridgett is now the manager of the department, a position for which she is well qualified. She is a certified sexual assault nurse examiner and has completed the forensic nurse examiner program.

Most recently she was appointed to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Commission for Women, advocating for women’s health, education and awareness of community violence. Bridgett is proud to be the sole member representing the Antelope Valley.

The commission couldn’t have asked for a more community-minded member. Bridgett also serves as president of the Antelope Valley Children’s Choir and leads a high school church group. Her husband, John, is a detective with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

Of her role at AVH, she says, “It’s unfortunate that there is a need for this kind of job, but there is. Violence is happening. We treat each individual with dignity and respect and ultimately work to ensure they have a safe place to go when they leave the hospital.”

HOSPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Auxiliary Presents \$70,000 to AVH

The Antelope Valley Hospital Auxiliary, a group of volunteers who fundraise for the hospital, recently presented a check for \$70,000 to the Antelope Valley Healthcare District board of directors. This donation brings the Auxiliary's total contribution to the hospital to \$1,729,709 in financial gifts and volunteer hours over the last year. "Having been involved with Antelope Valley Hospital since 1968, I know firsthand how much our hospital means to the community," said Auxiliary President Judy Hutton. "Every member of the Auxiliary is honored to be able to support such an important organization, which makes a difference in the lives of our friends, neighbors and loved ones every day."



Auxiliary Board Members from left: Bobbie Patton, Millie McMillan, Marsha Pedersen, Judy Hutton, Margaret Capell, Mary Overton, Charyl Gorman and Pearl Bogard



New Outpatient Surgery Center

The outpatient surgery center re-opened this summer through a joint partnership between the hospital and a private local surgery center. At the newly opened 13,500-square-foot center, physicians perform procedures that do not necessarily require lengthy surgery times or overnight hospital stays. The outpatient surgery center is located on the AVH campus at Avenue J and 17th Street West.

Organ Donation Silver Award

OneLegacy, an organ and tissue recovery organization, presented a Health & Human Services Silver Recognition Award to AVH for raising awareness about organ donation. The award recognizes the hospital's efforts in encouraging staff and community members to enroll in the state registry as organ, eye and tissue donors.



Front row from left: Amy Villaroya, RN; Angela Bolaris, OneLegacy; Denise Scott, RN; CNO Aya Smith, RN
Back row from left: Susan Mendiola, RN; Miranda Jennings, RN; John Whalen, OneLegacy; Amy Wilson, RN; Michelle Schaefer; CEO Mike Wall

AVH Named a Designated Breast Milk Depot

BreastfeedLA, a nonprofit breastfeeding advocacy organization, has named Antelope Valley Hospital a designated Breast Milk Depot. AVH is one of only two designated milk collection sites in the county. The designation means breastfeeding moms can now drop off breast milk at AVH; it will then be processed, pasteurized and distributed to infants in need of this vital resource. "Breast milk can be the difference between life and death for some premature or medically fragile infants," said Andrea Randenberg, RN, executive director of Women & Infants Pavilion services at AVH. "We want every child who needs it to have access to mothers' milk and get the appropriate care they need to start life as healthy as possible." To become a donor, call 877-375-6645.



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

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Mukund G. Shah, M.D.
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Mateo Olivarez, RN

Chief Executive Officer

Michael L. Wall

Antelope Valley Hospital Contact Numbers

Main Number

661-949-5000

Admitting | Registration

661-949-5411

Emergency Department

661-949-5115

Outpatient Surgery

661-952-1100

Blood Donor Center

661-949-5622

Mental Health Services

661-949-5250

OB Clinics

Lancaster

661-726-6180

Palmdale

661-726-6325



Fun at the Fair

For ten days each August, the Antelope Valley welcomes more than 250,000 visitors to celebrate the end of summer with tasty food, carnival rides, headline performers, exciting auto events and more. Antelope Valley Hospital was a proud sponsor of the 79th annual Antelope Valley Fair & Alfalfa Festival, held August 18-27.

Stay in touch with the latest happenings at Antelope Valley Hospital

Follow us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/AntelopeValleyHospital](https://www.facebook.com/AntelopeValleyHospital)

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





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WALK A MILE *in her Shoes*

A walk for wellness



5 – 8 p.m. | SATURDAY 10.14.2017

Join us for the 4th Annual **Walk a Mile in Her Shoes** at Antelope Valley College. Do it alone or as a team! Strut your stuff (or teeter) in red heels to raise awareness about the impact of violence in our community. This event joins BIG feet with BIG hearts and brings the community together for a great cause. Elected officials, students, athletic teams, law enforcement, other first responders, businesses, social service agencies ... everyone is welcome.

Register online at walkamileAV.eventbrite.com.

Dedicated to the memory of Katrina Barragan.

A \$65 registration fee includes men's red high-heeled shoes, a T-shirt, an unforgettable experience and a lasting impact on our community.

For more information:
WalkamileAV2017@gmail.com
or 661-949-5572