Fall 2014 CONTROL A PUBLICATION FROM MERCY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER D MERCY HEALTH FOUNDATION

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photo credit: Matthew Gomez

INSPIRE HEALTH

Mercy Regional Medical Center

Affordable Health Care in the Four Corners Region

t's clear from discussions in our community that a major concern of individuals and small business owners alike is the cost of health insurance. A major component of the Affordable Care Act was an attempt to rein in the double-digit growth in health insurance premiums and the overall cost of health care (thus, the name of the act). Here in the Four Corners

region, efforts to reduce these costs while delivering better care to the communities we serve — are at the heart of two Mercy initiatives.

First, Mercy and Centura Health have been working in partnership with physicians throughout Colorado to form an organization called Colorado Health Neighborhoods (CHN). CHN's goals are to provide health care services at a lower cost to consumers while increasing communication and collaboration between providers and insurers. CHN was designed to reach beyond the walls of the hospital to help consumers receive the services they need — when they need them — to stay healthy. Access to preventive care, care coordination, and information sharing are all aspects of CHN.

By collaborating with other physicians to improve quality and enhance care coordination, CHN members are helping to improve patient safety and outcomes, reducing patients' out-of-pocket health care expenses. For example, one key indicator that CHN has been working on is emergency room visit frequency. Patients who regularly seek care at an emergency room rather than a primary care provider's office are receiving more costly care that may not prevent medical emergencies. CHN works with primary care providers to help patients gain access to preventive



care outside of the hospital at a lower cost to the patient. The goal is for patients to get the right care, at the right time, and at the right place.

There are currently several health plans on Colorado's health insurance marketplace, Connect for Health Colorado

(connectforhealthco.com), that offer consumers access to CHN participating providers. With nearly 100 providers

in southwestern Colorado already participating with CHN, and more joining every day, a collaborative, patient-centered care network is rapidly forming in our part of the state.

In addition to these efforts, we have also been working closely with Colorado's health information exchange, Colorado Regional Health Information Organization (CORHIO) to expand data sharing between area hospitals and physician offices. Health information exchanges like CORHIO allow providers access to information, such as lab test results and diagnostic images, from other clinics and hospitals. This information sharing allows providers to share patient information, helping eliminate duplicative tests, improve patient safety, and reduce costs to patients.

These are just two of the initiatives that we are pursuing in an effort to improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of health care in our region. By working in partnership with other health care providers, we're confident we can continue improving the health of the communities we serve.

Tom Gessel

CEO Mercy Regional Medical Center



On the Cover: Beka Jacobs is elated as she crosses the finish line of her first 5K run.

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Mercy Launches Region's First Robotic-Assisted Surgery Program Gifts to the Mercy Health Foundation helped bring this new technology to Durango

ercy Regional Medical Center has long been known for bringing state-of-the-art medical technology to the region: it was the first hospital with a fully electronic medical record, the first to transition from X-ray films to an all-digital diagnostic imaging system, and the first to offer highdefinition, low-dose CT scans.

Once again, Mercy has achieved a technology first in the region with the introduction of minimally invasive, robotic-assisted surgery using the da Vinci Surgical System. "This is one way we're working to keep care close to home," says Mercy CEO Tom Gessel. Until now, the nearest locations for robotic-assisted surgery were Albuquerque and Montrose. Procedures at Mercy are currently limited to urologic surgeries related to the kidneys, prostate, bladder, ureter, and other pelvic structures.

Robotic-assisted surgery is similar to laparoscopic surgery in that it is a "closed" surgical procedure. Surgical instruments and a tiny camera are inserted by the surgeon into the patient's body through several small keyhole incisions. The surgeon, guided by images from the camera, then manipulates the tools inside the body to remove or reconstruct tissue. Closed procedures can be advantageous compared to open surgery because smaller incisions reduce trauma to the body, resulting in less blood loss, less pain, less scarring, and faster recovery.

While laparoscopic procedures have for decades proven to be effective and are widely used for a variety of procedures, minimally invasive, robotic-assisted surgery can add additional benefits to both patients and surgeons.

CONTROL

The da Vinci Surgical System's three arms and the instruments they hold are not autonomous. They can only move if a surgeon is sitting at the console, looking through the viewfinder, and manipulating the unit's controls. The system's arm and instrument movements are thus an extension of the surgeon's movements.

PRECISION

The da Vinci Surgical System's "wristed" instruments can move on seven planes of motion while the human hand only moves on six planes of motion. The dexterity of the instruments and precision of movement they enable are extraordinary. Different instruments that can

grasp, clamp, cut, and cauterize can be attached to the device's arms.

VISUAL DETAIL

The da Vinci's video monitoring system uses two high-definition cameras, giving the surgeon a threedimensional, "stereoscopic" view that includes the depth of the operative field. Because the camera can magnify up to 40 times what can be seen by the naked eye, surgeons can see the tiniest structures, such as nerves and small blood vessels. Cameras with lenses that give different angles of view can be swapped out during surgery, allowing the surgeon the ability to see around body structures that might otherwise block their view.

At Mercy

Urologists **David Sisul, MD**, and **Sejal Quayle, MD, MPH**, of Mercy Urology Associates, have both been specialty trained to use the da Vinci surgical system and are performing urologic surgeries at Mercy with the technology. "I'm very excited about the expansion of urological services with this new technology," says Dr. Quayle. "There's growing demand for robotic-assisted surgery — especially for delicate procedures such as prostatectomy," says Dr. Sisul, who has performed more than 100 surgeries using the da Vinci system.





Dr. Sisul's primary focus is in minimallyinvasive surgery, most notably, robotic surgery. Other interests include: medical and surgical management of erectile dysfunction and benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), as well as the treatment of testosterone deficiency. In addition, he is trained in the full scope of general urology. Dr. Sisul received his medical

degree from the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine and completed his residency at the University of California San Diego.



Dr. Quayle is a board-certified urologist who provides a broad range of urological care and specializes in minimally invasive surgical procedures. She completed her residency in urology at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo. Dr. Quayle received her medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine and her master's degree in public health from the

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

To contact Mercy Urology Services, call **970-764-3845**.

Annual Report



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Chairman's Letter Looking to the Future

The pace of change in health care today continues to accelerate, and Mercy Regional Medical Center continues to embrace the transformation that is underway. Looking back on the past year, I am particularly proud of Mercy's quality metrics and ongoing improvement strategies in our pursuit to get even better. As we move from "sick care," a health care model based primarily on treatment of illness and injury, to true "health care," which is based upon prevention and health, it's critical Mercy is able to align with strong partners.

One of our partners is Centura Health, the largest health care system in Colorado and western Kansas. This system is critical to our success, as it supports our human and physical infrastructure needs. We must work toward true alignment of patients, providers, and payers, which requires significant resources that Centura can help Mercy develop and support. An example of this is the recent announcement of the Mountain Enhanced HMO Plan. This health insurance plan will be an arrangement between Anthem and Centura Health designed to create better access at a better price for patients in La Plata and Montezuma counties. More details about the plan will be shared soon.

Another proud partnership finalized this year involved the launch of the Mercy Family Medicine primary care clinic at the Horse Gulch Medical Campus. This initiative was a result of the community's lack of access to primary care services. While the recruitment of providers is still underway, the vision is to create an open access environment —meaning same-day appointments and extended hours — for all who need primary care services.

Other partnerships include opening a Mercy Family Medicine Primary Care Clinic in Bayfield last May.

These partnerships are just the beginning of the efforts needed to provide coordinated "health care" within the communities Mercy serves. As we embark on this journey of transformation, it is critical that Mercy take the lead in constructing a framework whereby different health care providers can work together to orchestrate the delivery of care in the continuum of one's health care needs. Mercy is uniquely positioned to develop these partnerships in order to achieve our vision of having the right access point for the right patient at the right time.

In closing, I am particularly proud of the 1,200-plus Mercy employees that provide health care to the four corners region — each of them deserves thanks for what they do. I want you to know that Mercy is financially stable, has strong leadership in place, and is well-positioned to thrive in the new health care framework.

Mike Burns, Board Chair President, Alpine Bank



By the Numbers

The following statistics show how many individuals turned to Mercy Regional Medical Center for care in fiscal year 2014 and how many dedicated employees and health care professionals worked to provide that care.



Community Involvement and Giving

for the 12-month period ending June 30, 2014

Caring for the community has been an integral part of Mercy Regional Medical Center since it was founded in 1882. Much of the cost of care provided at Mercy is not reimbursed. In fiscal year 2014, Mercy Regional Medical Center provided community benefits at a total value of more than \$12 million. Much of this involved providing care to patients with no insurance or to patients with insurance that did not fully reimburse Mercy's costs.



Break the Ice

White weather just around the corner, it's time to get geared up for cold-weather sports like skiing, snowboarding, snow shoeing, and skating. But if you think waxing skis and sharpening skates is all you have to do before the snow starts to fall, think again. Our bodies also need to be tuned for optimal winter performance and injury prevention. Randy Junttonen, physical therapist at Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy, explains exercises that can help achieve optimal balance, strength, and performance this winter.

IT'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE

Because many winter sports require good balance, focus on exercises that force you to strengthen the parts of your body that are going to work hard on the snow and ice. Doing so will help protect ligaments and joints and prevent injury.

Exercises that incorporate BOSU balls, lunges, reverse lunges, squats and single-leg techniques can help increase balance and stability by strengthening smaller muscles around the feet, ankles, knees, and hips. Junttonen recommends step-up exercises using a platform, such as a sturdy stool or a balance board, and lunges to work on balance and coordination. "Lunging and stepping exercises involve shifting weight from one leg to another and force you to fire the smaller muscles involved in maintaining balance during winter sports," he says.

"CORE" DOESN'T MEAN JUST ABS

"Balance isn't only about small muscles — it also comes from your core," said Junttonen. But, when people say 'core,' they often think of their abdominal muscles. "You can't just do sit-ups and think your core is strong," he says. "The front and the back of the trunk and hips have to be equally strong. If you focus on abdominal exercises, you should complement this with back and side stabilizing exercises. To achieve balance from your core, you need to have well-balanced core strength."

HEALTHY KNEES ARE HAPPY KNEES

Two of the most common winter sports injuries involve the medial collateral ligament (MCL) and anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). A MCL injury often results from catching an edge or having skis diverge so that the foot is forced away from the body. This creates a distraction force on the inside of the knee. ACL injuries are thought to occur from the forces created by the long lever arm of the ski that are transmitted to the knee ligaments. Commonly, the ACL is injuried by a hyperextension or hyperflexion of the knee, with a rotation of the lower leg. In expert skiers, ACL injuries often occur when saving a backward fall through a strong quadriceps contraction, which pulls the tibia (lower leg) forward with enough force to rupture the ACL.

Junttonen suggests single-leg, side-to-side jumps to help build the inside and outside thigh muscles, which create lateral strength in the knee and improve overall coordination. Lunges with torso rotation provide a great combination for building leg strength and balance. "This works not only the large muscles that supply most of your power, but also the smaller supporting muscles that help guide and control the power."

OVERALL FITNESS IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Plyometric exercises, which involve explosive, quick movements to generate muscle power and speed, may help improve overall performance. Box jumps from a squat position get your heart rate up and increase aerobic fitness. Hill bounding with poles is another fun way to build power outside. Bound up a moderate hill for 30 to 60 seconds and walk down. Start slowly and track the number of contacts when starting a plyometric program. Try starting with 20-30 contacts and progress up to 100 or more depending on your goals and fitness level. Because plyometrics are so intense, they should be done only once or twice a week so the body has time to recover.

"Most importantly," he says, "eat well, stay hydrated and ski, skate, or ride with a big grin."

Randy Junttonen, PT, is a graduate from the University of Michigan. He has worked with the US Nordic Ski Team, Chicago City Ballet, and the Hubbard Street Dance Company. Randy's focus is on spine, sports, orthopedic, and ergonomics, and he has advanced training and experience with manual therapy, ergonomics, and functional exercise.

If you'd like help optimizing strength, balance, and performance in your favorite sport, contact a physical therapist at Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy by calling **970-385-0644**.

The Healthy Spice of Life

ith fall comes cravings for foods that provide comfort and warmth. Hearty, rich dishes, full of flavor and made with spices and seasonings reminiscent of the season, can help imbue a sense of warmth from the inside out. Cinnamon, ginger, and cloves are among the most common autumn spices and appear in many holiday dishes. In addition to filling the kitchen with holiday fragrance and adding flavor to cold weather classics, many herbs and spices may actually have health benefits and even help protect against certain chronic conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Below are just a few healthy spices that have been linked to good health:

CINNAMON

Cinnamon may lower the risk of developing diabetes. By triggering enzymes that stimulate insulin receptors and inhibiting enzymes that deactivate them, it can improve cells' ability to absorb glucose from the blood. Taking less than a half teaspoon daily for 40 days can decrease blood sugar by 25 percent. Cinnamon has also been found to reduce triglycerides and harmful cholesterol.

TURMERIC

Turmeric is thought to have cancerfighting properties. Researchers at UCLA have found that curcumin, an antioxidant in the spice, can help prevent and treat head and neck cancers by blocking a protein that promotes tumor growth. That same protein causes joint inflammation, so curcumin may also reduce arthritis risk.

Butternut Squash Soup

INGREDIENTS

¹/₂ large onion-chopped ¼ cup butter-whole 1 quart chicken stock 2 lbs. butternut squash 1 fresh pear, peeled, cored, and quartered ½ tsp. thyme ½ tsp. salt ¼ tsp. nutmeg ¼ tsp. cinnamon ¼ tsp. ground coriander 1 cup heavy cream 1/8 tsp. white pepper 1 tbsp. honey 1 tbsp. brown sugar 1 tbsp. flour

DIRECTIONS

Cut squash lengthwise, remove all seeds, and place upside down in a baking pan filled with ¼ inch of water. Cover with foil and bake at 375 degrees for one hour. Once soft, remove from oven and let cool. Scoop out the flesh of the squash, leaving skins and set aside.

In saucepan, sauté chopped onions in butter until translucent, then add flour and cooked squash. Add remaining ingredients except heavy cream. Cook for 30 minutes on medium heat, stirring occasionally. Transfer all ingredients to a blender or food processor. Slowly blend with heavy cream until smooth.

Fall soup recipe supplied by Mercy Regional Medical Center's Garden Terrace Café

SAVE THE DATE!

Please join us for Mercy Health Foundation's Soup for the Soul event benefiting Hospice of Mercy on Wednesday, March 18, at La Plata County Fairgrounds.

CORIANDER

Coriander, the seed of the cilantro plant, is a powerful bacteria fighter. A recent study found that oil from coriander seeds — which destroys dangerous cells by damaging their membranes and interfering with cellular respiration — is effective in wiping out many strains of bacteria from E. coli and salmonella.

GARLIC

Garlic helps protect your immune system by boosting production of infectionfighting white blood cells. In a British study, 70 people who took daily garlic supplements for 12 weeks came down with 24 colds, versus 65 colds in a placebo group of 72 people. Allicin, garlic's main active component, is thought to block enzymes that lead to viral infections.

OREGANO

A USDA study found that, gram for gram, oregano has the highest antioxidant levels of 27 fresh culinary herbs. When you shake extra oregano onto your slice at the local pizza joint, you aren't just adding extra pizazz to your pepperoniand-mushroom: Oregano is a major source of thymol and carvacol — two antibacterial agents that fight off infection — and have four times the antioxidants of blueberries. Like thyme, it's easy to grow at home and adds traditional flavor to any dish, whether used fresh or dried.

The Impact Journey of Hope 5k Walk/Run and PROUDLY SPONSORED BY KRCEGERS

The Journey of Hope race is a heartwarming family event that honors those women and their families whose lives have been touched by breast cancer. All proceeds from the event go toward the **Journey of Hope Fund**, which is administered by Mercy Health Foundaton, to provide free mammograms to women in our area who otherwise cannot afford them. In 2013, more than \$19,000 was provided by the Journey of Hope fund for women in need to get a mammogram. Forty-three lives were touched by this service.



Joy Short, Lauren Lind, and children



Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient Eric Pierson and cofounder of JOH, Joanne Spina

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 For more information on Mercy Health Foundation or to make a contribution, please call 970-764-2802 or visit www.mhffnd.org.

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... Colors for Cancer 10k Trail Run Makes

The 10K Trail Run, Colors for Cancer, supports Mercy Regional Cancer Center for all cancers that affect our community. In 2013, Mercy Cancer Center cared for 668 new radiation and oncology patients and provide more than 6,600 treatments. Through money raised, Mercy Health Foundation was able to fund an oncology satellite pharmacy at the cancer center for \$116,310. This completion will significantly improve efficiency in the preparation and dispensing of important drugs for cancer patients.

Mercy Is Here for You

Whether recently diagnosed, undergoing treatment, or receiving follow-up care, Mercy provides cancer patients with comprehensive, compassionate care. With a broad spectrum of services, including hematology/oncology, nurse navigation and genetic counseling, Mercy's Cancer Program allows for patients to help keep care close to home.

Earlier this year, Mercy welcomed fellowship-trained hematologist and oncologist Kim Green, DO, who joined Cynthia Cathcart, MD, at Southwest Oncology, a Centura Health Physician Group (CHPG) clinic, to provide care to patients with cancer and blood disorders.

Hematology and medical oncology physicians partner closely with radiation

oncologists, surgeons and other specialists to provide a broad, multispecialty approach to cancer care, including diagnosis, medical and surgical treatments, radiation therapy, and more.

"Cancer is not a one-person job, and we want to provide patients and families with the best possible resources and support to empower them to make informed decisions about their care," says Steven Bush, MD, radiation oncologist at Durango Cancer Center.

Mercy's Cancer Program also recently added nurse navigator services to offer personalized cancer consultation. Nurse navigators help guide patients through the various steps of their care and connect them with the appropriate specialists, resources, and support to ensure timely, effective care.

Mercy's integrated approach to cancer care is further complemented by leading-edge technology, including advanced diagnostic services and surgical treatment, nutritional support, mind-body therapies, palliative and hospice care, and spiritual care. Thanks to a telemedicine technology, genetic counseling services are also now available for Cancer Center patients.

Mercy's Cancer Program is an integral part of the Centura Health's Cancer Network and is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer.

Southwest Oncology holds the prestigious Quality Oncology Practice Initiative certification from the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

For more information about Mercy's Cancer Program, please call 970-385-7977.



Providers and staff from Four Corners OB/GYN supporting the Journey of Hope.



www.mercydurango.org 9

Be Grateful Every Day

There's nothing like gathering with loved ones during the holidays to make us feel grateful. But gratitude shouldn't be something we practice a few times a year; it should be a vital part of everyday life. Studies show that gratitude can actually improve your health by strengthening your immune system and making you more resilient in the face of crisis.

Researchers at the University of California, Davis, found that adults who have a grateful disposition are less stressed and more energetic and optimistic than those who do not. Surprisingly, they also exercised more and had fewer visits to physicians than those who focused on sources of aggravation.

Gratitude can also be strongly linked with both mental and physical health — and can help relieve stress, depression, and addictions, among other conditions.

What is gratitude? Gratitude is the affirmation that there are good things in the world, that gifts and benefits have been received, and that there are sources of good outside of ourselves. It allows acknowledgement that other people — or even a higher power — have contributed in ways large or small to what is good in life. Below are five simple ways to show gratitude every day:

- 1. **Keep a journal -** Purchase a small notebook and take a few minutes each day to jot down one or two positive experiences. Or, alternatively, write down what you're grateful for at the end of each week, including small acts of kindness. If you don't write down these small moments of happiness, they may be easily forgotten. When you keep a journal, you can look back and remember how much you have to be thankful for especially in times when life doesn't seem to be going your way.
- **2. Express your gratitude in person.** Say "thank you" more often. Everyone likes to be thanked, and you will feel more joy just for saying it. When you make time to show others gratitude, the lasting impression left behind can be endlessly rewarding.
- **3. Show respect for those around you.** Treat others with the same level of courtesy you expect to receive: smile, show kindness, exhibit patience, and listen. If you see someone running toward the elevator, hold the door. You know how nice it feels when someone takes a few moments to show kindness. Make someone else's day.
- **4. Don't complain.** When something terrible happens, it's natural to want to complain about it. You may become impatient with someone in line who takes too long to pay or gripe about a coworker or difficult client. You may even complain to yourself when a driver cuts you off in traffic. But every time you complain, you reinforce a negative state of mind without offering a solution to the problem at hand. Instead, next time you feel frustrated, take a few deep breaths and try focusing on something positive.
- 5. Volunteer in your community. There's a well-known secret among longtime volunteers: An act of kindness does more good for you than those you're serving. Volunteering gives you something positive to focus on and is a great way to give back to the community.

LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY? Mercy offers many ways to make a difference. If you are interested in finding out more, contact Erica Kelly, Mercy volunteer coordinator, at **970-764-3536**.

A HOME PARTY for

The H.O.M.E. Campaign



It all started with two donated tickets for the four-day PGA Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Georgia. The tickets were given to Mercy Health Foundation by Kim Priebe, M.D., of Four Corners OB/GYN, to use in a creative way to raise money for the H.O.M.E. (Hospice of Mercy Experience) campaign, which is helping fund construction of the new Mercy hospice residence.



After much brainstorming, friends of the foundation, Mary and Bill Poillion, graciously offered their home for a private dinner party — featuring Bill's famous gumbo — for many of their golfing friends at Glacier Club to auction the two badges for the four-day tournament.

Entry to the party was a bottle of wine, which would also be auctioned as a lot. The evening was nothing short of a smashing success. After a brief welcome by Mercy CEO Tom Gessel, the Poillions' 100 guests enjoyed the delicious food and beverages while bidding on the Masters tickets and other items, including naming opportunities for two pieces of art to be displayed in the new hospice residence and the very popular wine collection, which was auctioned to a lucky bidder.

The evening was memorable not only because of the beautiful setting, perfect weather, great food, and fun that was had, but also because it raised \$35,000 to help bring the dream of a new hospice residence for the community one step closer to reality. Special thanks to Dr. Priebe, Mary, Bill, and all the guests for supporting the H.O.M.E. campaign.



PALOMINO LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPH Jenny Gummersall



CACTUS FLOWER GICLÉE Tom Palmore



DESERT BUILDUP OIL ON LINEN PANEL Peggy Immel



Mercy Health Foundation has raised \$3.8 million of the \$4.3 million for the Hospice Residence H.O.M.E. campaign. The million dollar club is

helping reach our goal. Please join the Million Dollar Club by being one of the 1,000 donors who give \$1,000 to reach the final million. In return, each donor will receive a unique pin (pictured left) to proudly show his or her support.

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A Warm Welcome

ercy is pleased to welcome fellowshiptrained orthopedic surgeon, Tony Anderson, M.D., who recently joined the team of experts at Mercy's Orthopedic Center of Excellence. Dr. Anderson specializes in a minimally-invasive option for total hip replacement surgery known as the anterior approach.

In the anterior approach, the surgeon accesses the hip joint from the front of the hip rather than lateral (side) or posterior (back) access methods. This approach allows the surgeon to avoid cutting key muscles during the operation; instead the surgeon works between the muscle and tissue.

"By reducing the trauma to the surrounding muscles during hip replacement surgery, the anterior approach results in faster recovery, lower dislocation rate, and a quicker return to daily activities," says Dr. Anderson.

The anterior hip replacement procedure would not be possible without Mercy's state-ofthe-art surgical equipment, which allows for better maneuverability and improved imaging during surgery. Surgeons benefit from greater surgical access and more precise reconstruction. Your gifts to Mercy Health Foundation help to fund the latest in technology and equipment for our hospital. To learn more, visit www.mhffnd.org

In addition to hip replacement surgery, Dr. Anderson specializes in hip revision surgery, hip preservation surgery, total knee replacement, and ACL-sparing total knee replacement.

For more information about Mercy's Orthopedic Center of Excellence, please call **970-764-3049**.

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