

Fall 2016

health+care

A PUBLICATION FROM MERCY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Traveling to Give: Care crosses borders to Tanzania

page 6

Keep the Wheels Turning:
Class helps those with Parkinson's

page 4

Diabetes:
Avoid being a statistic

page 8

Mercy Regional Medical Center

 Centura Health.

INSPIRE HEALTH

A warm welcome

DR. PAIGE MALLETTE JOINS MERCY'S AWARD WINNING ORTHOPEDIC TEAM

Mercy is excited to welcome fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon Paige Mallette, M.D., back to Colorado's Rocky Mountains.

Dr. Mallette, who is specially trained in adult joint reconstruction surgery and total joint replacement, joins Mercy Orthopedic Associates.

Originally from the former mining town of Telluride, Dr. Mallette is excited to return to the mountain lifestyle she enjoys. In addition to the similarities that the Durango area shares with her hometown, Dr. Mallette was drawn to Mercy by its outstanding reputation.

"It's difficult to find this level of subspecialized care in a town of this size," she explained. "I couldn't do what I do in very many small towns. Mercy is pretty unique."

Mercy's reputation in orthopedic surgery can be proven by the many recognitions and awards it receives. Most

recently, Mercy was again recognized as one of Healthgrades America's 100 Best Hospitals for Orthopedic Surgery™. Mercy is the only hospital in Colorado to be recognized as one of America's 100 Best for Orthopedic Surgery for five years in a row (2013-2017). The award places Mercy among the top 5 percent of hospitals in the nation for performance in this area.

From 2013-2015, patients treated at hospitals achieving the Healthgrades America's 100 Best Hospitals for Orthopedic Surgery™ award have, on average, a 38.9 percent lower risk of experiencing a complication while in the hospital than if they were treated in hospitals which did not achieve the award.*

Dr. Mallette adds her specialized skills to the talented care team at Mercy's Orthopedic Center of Excellence.

She earned her medical degree from the University of Colorado and



Dr. Paige Mallette.

completed her residency at the University of Washington. She completed her fellowship in adult joint reconstruction at Hoag Orthopedic Institute in Orange County, California.

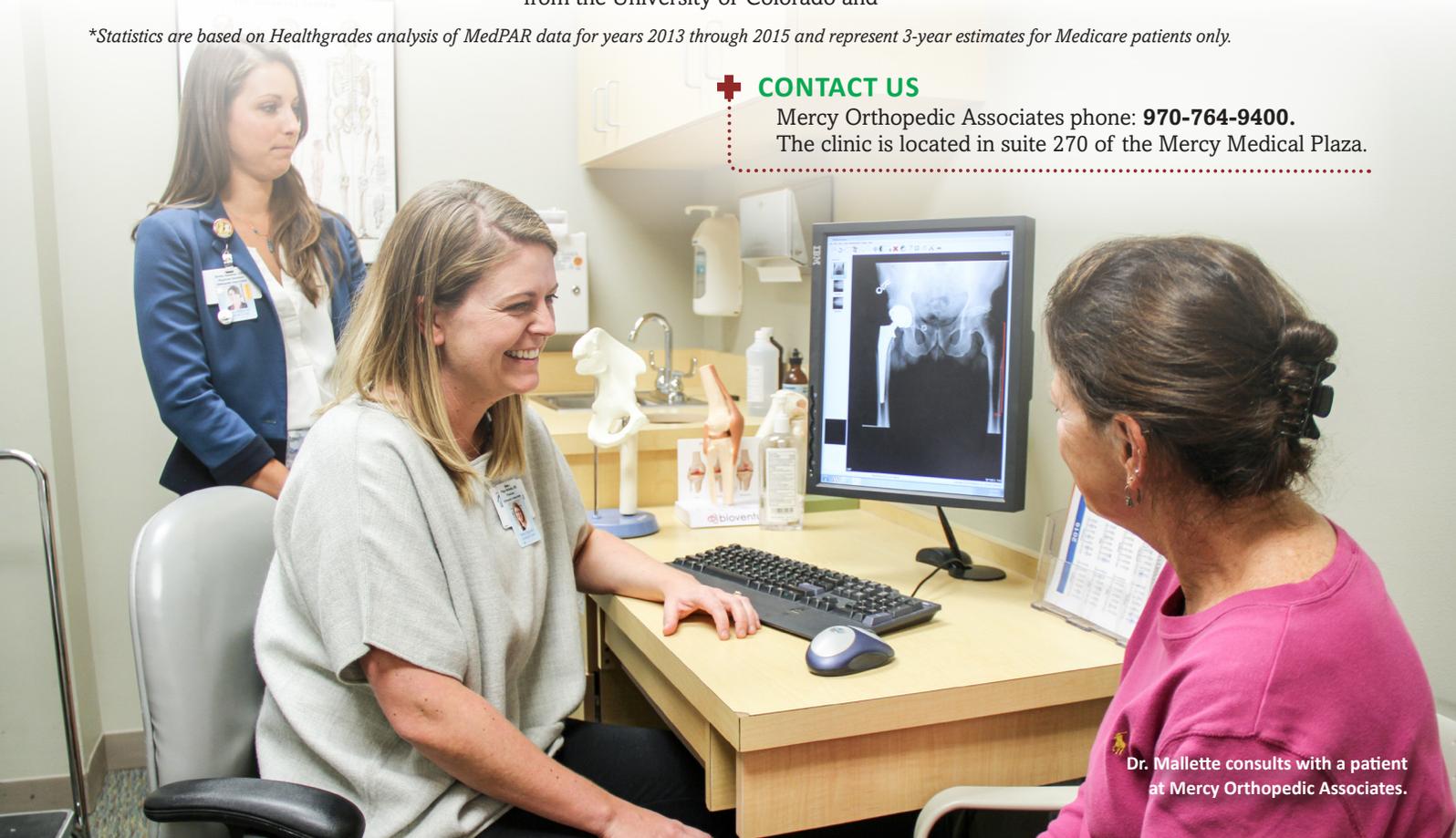
She specializes in anterior hip replacement, a surgery she says she enjoys because of the promising outcomes she sees.

"Many times with hip replacement surgery, patients can feel an improvement immediately following surgery," Dr. Mallette said. "It's rewarding to be able to provide that relief to people. I find it gratifying to provide that sort of life-changing operation to patients."

**Statistics are based on Healthgrades analysis of MedPAR data for years 2013 through 2015 and represent 3-year estimates for Medicare patients only.*

CONTACT US

Mercy Orthopedic Associates phone: **970-764-9400**.
The clinic is located in suite 270 of the Mercy Medical Plaza.



Dr. Mallette consults with a patient at Mercy Orthopedic Associates.



On the Cover:
A Masai woman at Dareda Hospital in Mbulu District, Tanzania.

Read more on page 6.

What's Inside

- 2 Welcome Dr. Mallette
- 3 Hospice House Update
- 4 Parkinson's Class
- 6 Tanzania Mission
- 8 Diabetes
- 10 Five Star Quality
- 11 Bite Size News
- 12 Legacy of Care

John Peel is a contributing writer for *Health+Care*.



Mercy Hospice House construction site on the southwest side of the hospital campus.

MERCY HOSPICE HOUSE TAKES SHAPE

Excitement builds as progress on the Mercy Hospice House continues, both on the construction site and on paper.

Construction began with an April groundbreaking. Choices of equipment and furnishings were recently finalized, and in October they were ordered, said Karen Midkiff, chief development officer for Mercy Health Foundation. The construction timeline shows May/June 2017 as the occupancy date, barring weather delays.

The Foundation's HOME (Hospice of Mercy Experience) fundraising campaign is now in the "HOME Stretch." In all, the campaign has raised more than \$5 million for the eight-bed hospice house, which will provide 24-hour-a-day professional care.

Of note, a recent grant of \$300,000 came from the Denver-based Daniels Fund.

A majority of the hospice house's medical equipment is being purchased through a \$499,000 grant from the state's Department of Local Affairs. Mercy Health Foundation partnered with La Plata County and was aided by DOLA Regional Manager Ken Charles in procuring the grant.

TO CONTRIBUTE OR TO TOUR

To help with fundraising for "The HOME Stretch," contact Joy Hess at **970-764-2802** or JoyHess@Centura.org

To take a tour of the site, contact Karen Midkiff at **970-764-2800**.

✚ For more information, visit www.mhffnd.org. Click on the "HOME" newsletter.



Joe Williams and Luke Angel work together during first Parkinson's Class session.

Keep the Wheels Turning

CLASS HELPS THOSE WITH PARKINSON'S

Joe Williams' enthusiasm is contagious. It's his way of giving, all year around. Just try to be around him and not feed off the energy.

He rides his bike regularly, he runs a business, and he's deeply involved with his Rotary Club. Sometimes it's hard to remember the 63-year-old Durangoan is battling Parkinson's disease.

Those with Parkinson's and similar neurological conditions (multiple sclerosis, for example) are welcome to join a new class being given through Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy. It's designed to help your body stay in motion.

Williams has worked for several years to make this class a reality. Through a partnership between the Davis Phinney Foundation and the Iron Horse Bicycle Classic, \$38,000 has been raised for those with Parkinson's in the Four Corners. That money is now providing scholarships for the class.

Those with Parkinson's are often homebound. The class is designed to change that, Williams says. "The best part of the class is getting people out of their homes and out into the world."

The first class started in early October, and others will follow. It's once a week for four weeks and is being held at Mercy's Wellness Center.

THREE OBJECTIVES

Physical therapist Luke Angel, DPT, who leads the class, says there are three aspects that are addressed:

- **Balance and stability.** Falls among Parkinson's sufferers are common.
- **Posture.** "The worst thing that happens," Williams says, "is we lose our posture and become hunched over."
- **Movement patterns.** The emphasis here is bigger movements, Angel says. Those with Parkinson's tend to regress into smaller and smaller movement patterns.

56-MINUTE IMPROVEMENT

If you're looking for inspiration, take a gander at what Williams has done since his diagnosis at age 57, partly with the help of Angel, his physical therapist, who used electronic measuring devices to understand Williams' brain-body connection. Williams says Angel was a "genius" who was able to help him make new neurological pathways to engage his left side and help him in his daily life.

The physical therapy also helped Williams' cycling, a sport that those with Parkinson's can sometimes do even if they can barely walk. Williams gently coerced friends, including Angel, to join his "Go Joe Go" cycling team and raise money for Parkinson's through charitable cycling events.

They started with the Copper Triangle, one of the Davis Phinney Foundation's main fundraisers, and then took on the 50-mile Iron Horse Bicycle Classic Citizen's Tour from Durango to Silverton.

Generous Giving is Nothing New at Mercy

The original Mercy – Mercy Hospital of the San Juans – was created by the Sisters of Mercy with the idea of giving. More than 130 years later, that concept has not been lost.

“It’s why we exist,” said Cathy Roberts, Mercy’s vice president of mission integration. “It’s part of our mission, and part of who we are.”

For Mercy, giving is not something done only during the holidays, but is a year-round priority. Mercy gives in ways large and small—including everything from small cash and in-kind contributions to other non-profits that share its mission of promoting health and wellness, to providing charity care.

By far, Mercy’s greatest contribution is through the services it provides: during the last fiscal year alone, Mercy’s cost of providing care for which it was not fully compensated by Medicaid and Medicare totaled more than \$40 million.

Mercy’s approach to helping the community is directed by its Community Benefits Advisory Council, which sets priorities for where the hospital focuses its community support. The council

considers the common good, and where its support is most beneficial in meeting the greatest needs, Roberts explained. It also supports others who are already doing great work.

One priority is helping vulnerable persons. To that extent, Mercy donated \$11,803 and 97.5 staff hours to serve the homeless at local soup kitchens.

Health care, of course, is a huge concern. Mercy donated the equivalent of \$23,866 to the Silverton Community Health Clinic, providing at no charge a nurse practitioner who provides preventive and primary care in this underserved area.

Mercy pays for staff members to provide their skills at health fairs, and to serve on local committees working on health issues.

When considering whom to support, the council asks: Is this organization also a nonprofit, and does it share our mission of promoting health and wellness?



Maya Zarlingo races for DEVO in 2015.

To this end, Mercy supports a variety of community activities including Trails 2000, the annual Durango Turkey Trot, Alternative Horizons, Durango DEVO, and more.

DEVO’s mission is to develop healthy lifestyles by turning youths into life-long cyclists. Mercy’s support of the nonprofit benefits a scholarship program so more La Plata County youths can participate, said DEVO administrative director Jamie Wienk. DEVO, created in 2006, this year has 900 riders ages 2-19.

In 2015, Williams actually bettered his 2014 Iron Horse time by a whopping 56 minutes.

Getting all the funding in place and the program underway is a dream come true for Williams.

He sees people with Parkinson’s, who believe they’re confined to a wheelchair, coming to the class. The first class they may sit, but the second class they stand.

“It may look herky-jerky,” Williams says, “but by golly, the light in their eyes makes it all worthwhile.”



Joe Williams competes in the 2016 Iron Horse Bicycle Classic.

✚ For more about the class or to sign up, call Mercy Integrated Physical Therapy at 970-385-0644.

Traveling to Give

MERCY VOLUNTEERS CROSS CONTINENTS TO PROVIDE CARE



Dr. McKinnis consults with a local doctor on a new mother in Dareda Hospital's maternity ward.

Through the Mercy Tanzania Mission Project, an outreach program of Mercy Health Foundation and Mercy Regional Medical Center, lives are being transformed.

Mercy's doctors and nurses volunteer their time to bring supplies, skills, and ideas to better the lives of people in a remote region of the East African country. But the transformation also works the other way around when "first world" citizens visit the "third world."

"We come back to the U.S. and practice differently," said Dr. Valerie McKinnis, a hospitalist at Mercy who led the mission's July trip to Mbulu District in northern Tanzania. The doctors and nurses return to the Four Corners and often become leaders in this community, she said. "They have compassion and have seen things in a different light."

Since 2004, Mercy has partnered with the Catholic Diocese of Mbulu to help women get their education and become business entrepreneurs. The latest mission widened the scope, bringing Mercy nurses to visit and teach at a nursing school, and Dr. McKinnis to consult with physicians.

Mercy nurses Cassidy Nee and Elizabeth Peltz, and Communication Specialist Kate Dorrell, joined McKinnis. They focused on the 200-bed Dareda Hospital, a Mbulu Diocese-operated unit filled with patients but lacking in procedures and supplies standard in the United States.

"They do a lot for their patients with very little," Nee said.

Nee and Peltz spent time not only at the hospital, caring for wounds and helping in pediatrics, but at the nursing

school, where they briefly taught. Nee was struck by how attentive the mostly male nursing students were, and how they were grateful for the Americans' knowledge. She contrasted that to a U.S. class where some students can be less connected.

At Dareda, common ailments seen are tuberculosis, typhoid and HIV/AIDS. If that doesn't provide a contrast to the U.S., perhaps this will: One patient, an 8-year-old Masai boy, had scratch marks on his back from a hyena attack. His older brother had fought it off with a knife. "We are not in Durango at this point," Nee realized.

Other stark differences in Mbulu: There's no ambulance service, families (not the hospital) provide meals and basic comfort in the hospital, and patients must pay at least a portion of their bill when



Masai woman looks on as her son is treated for a hyena attack.



The Mercy team with its in country partners.



Cassidy Nee, RN, with children in Dareda village.

being admitted. In the busy maternity ward, mothers slept two to a twin sized bed, head-to-feet, with babies in between.

McKinnis, whose Jesuit background includes a medical degree from Loyola University Chicago, has made several trips to Tanzania; this was her second visit to Mbulu. She has also been to the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is where she and her husband Darren, adopted their two daughters.

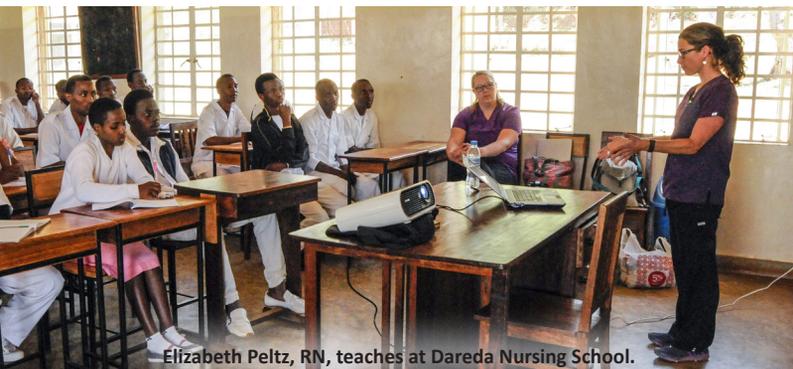
On this trip she spent most of her time at Dareda Hospital. She made rounds with the physicians there, consulting on complex cases. "They're very good at the things that they know," she said. "If it's an unusual presentation of a disease it often isn't even on their radar."

She evaluated the hospital's needs with an eye on what Mercy can provide in the future, both in supplies and needed training. Dr. McKinnis plans on returning in the spring.

Mercy Health Foundation started the Tanzania Mission Project through a grant from Catholic Health Initiatives, with a goal of increasing educational and economic opportunities for women, who are often cast in a subservient role in Tanzania. The Mission funds small-business loans and scholarships for women. Mercy's two main contacts in Mbulu are Sister Basilisa Panga and Ansila Tembo, who are extremely dedicated community leaders ("powerful forces," as Dr. McKinnis framed it) and have visited Durango several times. Mercy Health Foundation raises all funding for the Mission, often through an annual fundraiser and Mercy employee donations, said Karen Midkiff, chief development officer of the Foundation. Mercy Health Foundation's support makes the mission possible not only through in country support, but also by making trips possible by funding travel and in country expenses.

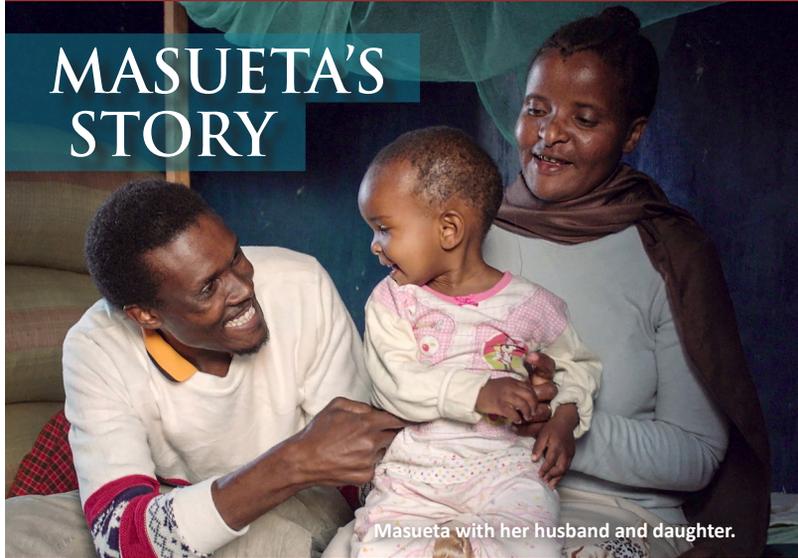
As of this fall, the Mission is funding school tuition and board for eight girls at a cost of \$9,000 every six months, Midkiff said. Also, the Mission provides \$8,000-\$10,000 annually to support small businesses run by women. Mercy and Mercy Health Foundation have expanded Tanzania Mission Project capabilities through a partnership with Centura Health's Global Health Initiatives program.

+ **To donate:** To support the Mercy Tanzania Mission Project, contact Karen Midkiff at **764-2804**.



Elizabeth Peltz, RN, teaches at Dareda Nursing School.

MASUETA'S STORY



Masueta with her husband and daughter.

Masueta Cosmas grew up poor in rural Tanzania. Her mother was blind and her father died when she was young. In 2005, at age 15, she finished primary education.

At this point she had few options: Secondary school is costly for a young woman with no means. Government loans for school are basically nonexistent. Servitude or even prostitution were more typical paths.

Yet, through a good break and a lot of determination, Masueta persevered. With the help of donations to Mercy Health Foundation, benefiting the Mercy Tanzania Mission Project, a decade later she is teaching auto mechanics at the Tango Flock Development College. She is married, with one child, and owns a small stationery business in the Mbulu District in northern Tanzania.

"Masueta is now quite different in aspects of thinking and decision-making," Sister Basilisa Panga, the Health Secretary of the Catholic Diocese of Mbulu, wrote in an email. "So the program is molding the young girls' ability to think in their own ways."

The program Sister Panga is referring to is a scholarship fund started by the Mercy Mission. At present, the program is funding eight girls.

After beginning her secondary education, Masueta's benefactor – a woman she was house maid for – could no longer pay. But the woman learned of the Mercy scholarship, and convinced Sister Panga and Ansila Tembo, who supervise the program, to accept Masueta.

Masueta graduated from secondary school in 2011, then continued her path in technical schools, finally graduating as a teacher in auto mechanics in 2014. Her students are mostly men.

"If you don't have education you don't understand how the world functions," she said while filming a video being produced by the Mercy Mission. Her Swahili was translated to English. "I am very grateful to see you today because I was hoping to say thank you. My life is now good because of my education."

To learn more about Masueta and the Tanzania Mission, visit mercydurango.org/Tanzania

DIABETES: How to Avoid Being a Statistic

The statistics are sobering:

In the United States, more than 29 million adults (10 percent) have diabetes, and about 86 million adults have prediabetes (although 90 percent don't know it), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In La Plata and Archuleta counties combined, 2,550 adults (5 percent) have diabetes, according to CDC figures from 2013.

After a blood test in January, Niki Wineholt was stunned to find out that's where she was headed. The Licensed Practical Nurse at Mercy Family Medicine in Durango had a hemoglobin A1C level of 10.8, with the normal range under 5.7. (The hemoglobin A1C test can diagnose diabetes and prediabetes.)

"Oh my gosh, this is ridiculous," Wineholt told herself, and vowed: "I'm not going to be one of those statistics."

November is Diabetes Awareness Month. It's an especially poignant month to consider our own health habits, as the onset of winter and the potential gluttony of the holidays stares us in the face.

Health complications from diabetes are enormous, both on an individual level and on the health care system. It can lead to heart disease and stroke, blindness and other eye problems, kidney disease and even amputations, often of the feet. The CDC says that more than 20 percent of health care costs are for people with diagnosed diabetes.

Wineholt, age 38 with a husband and children, took steps to turn her health around. She began a 21-day sugar detox program, which at first made her "shaky, crabby and insatiably hungry." When hunger hit, she grabbed a celery stick or tomato and stuck with the program. By the third week she felt great.

She also began doing daily brisk walks or elliptical machine workouts. By March she'd decreased her A1C level to 6.2. By September it was down to 5.4, into the normal range, and she'd lost 25 pounds – at least for now, no danger of becoming a statistic.

She shares her success story with patients, and was recently informed that she'd inspired one to lose 50 pounds. "It was really rewarding for me," she said.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Wellness/Exercise: Have a plan. Schedule your week, said Jolie Ensign, wellness coordinator at Mercy Regional Medical Center. Figure out when you're going to plug in exercise, and pack your gear the night before so you'll follow through.

"The more scheduled and planned you are, the more successful you're going to be," Ensign said.

HOLIDAY SURVIVAL GUIDE

Don't Get Stuffed this Thanksgiving





Niki Wineholt joins the Mercy Family Medicine team for the 2016 Journey of Hope 5K race.

Some people simply need that idea in their head. Others need sticky notes or phone reminders. Others keep a daily log of factors such as mental clarity, digestion and sleep quality. “If you see improvement, you’re more likely to stick with it,” she said.

Perhaps most important, dabble in various forms of exercise to find what you enjoy or tolerate so you’ll stick with it.

And lastly, be committed. “It takes a good solid year to develop a healthy lifestyle,” Ensign said.

Diet: Most people know what’s healthy and what isn’t. The real difficulty is making behavioral changes that stick, said Marge Morris, RD, CDE, diabetes program coordinator at Mercy. A few suggestions on how to do this:

- Keep reminders nearby – notes on index cards or your smart phone – that

focus on your goal of eating healthy. *Why does this matter to me? What’s my internal motivation?*

- When you attend a holiday party, take food you know you like but won’t sabotage your efforts to eat healthy.
- If you do indulge, make it a conscious decision and recognize it. It’s OK to indulge periodically, Morris said. “Enjoy it and move on.”

It can be challenging to avoid overeating during the Thanksgiving holiday. Here is your guide to avoid overeating while still enjoying time with family and friends.

DON'T SKIP BREAKFAST

You're more likely to overindulge if you come to the Thanksgiving table starving.

START SMALL

It's not just what you eat but how much. Try smaller portions of the sides you love.

SAVOR EVERY BITE

Eat slowly and really enjoy every mouthful rather than packing it in. This will help you recognize when you are full.

WATCH OUT FOR LIQUID CALORIES

Calories from alcohol and sugary drinks can sneak up on you.

VEG OUT

Try to fill up on the healthier vegetable dishes like green beans, asparagus, and sweet potatoes.

HYDRATE BEFORE AND DURING YOUR MEAL

This will help your stomach stay full and keep you from overeating.

MAKE FOOD THE SIDE-SHOW

Make socializing with friends and family the main event.

LIMIT SWEETS

Don't avoid them altogether, but maybe only have one slice of pie or a teaspoon of cranberry sauce.

ONLY EAT WHAT YOU REALLY LIKE

Instead of trying a little bit of everything, pick only the dishes you really like.

WALK IT OFF

After your big meal take a walk rather than indulging in a turkey coma.

THE STARS BEHIND THE RATING

Mercy Regional Medical Center recently earned a five-star rating for overall quality from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Great, but what does it mean?

You can look at the numbers: Among 3,662 rated medical facilities in the country, Mercy was one of just 102 to get the top rating, and the only one of 51 hospitals in Colorado to do so. The survey measured seven categories of care with up to 64 indicators of quality.

But those are just statistics.

“The real stars,” said Mercy CEO Tom Gessel, “are the doctors, nurses, and other staff at Mercy who provide exceptional care every day.”

It’s constant awareness and vigilance. It’s a culture ingrained in the 134-year-old hospital. Here’s a look at three of the many departments that make Mercy shine:

INFECTION PREVENTION

“Mercy’s infection rate is extremely low, but when we have just one case of something, everyone comes together to figure out how we can prevent it again,” said Infection Preventionist Kelly MacLaurin. At other places she’s worked, one infection would be dismissed as par for the course. “Here, they’re ready to respond.”

MacLaurin took the job in June, and has been impressed with this culture. If an infection results, say, from the placement of a central line or catheter during a procedure, there’s a swift reaction: “It’s an opportunity to learn: How did this happen?”

MacLaurin said the most important piece of infection prevention advice, what she calls her “soapbox,” is simple hand washing.

“When you do it right, it’s incredibly effective,” she said.

TOUCH, LOVE, COMPASSION

Aromatherapy, massage, conscious breathing, music therapy. These may sound superficial to some, but most people come to understand how important they are, said Margo Philpott, a registered nurse in Mercy’s Integrative Care Services.

Philpott is part of the TLC – Touch, Love and Compassion – team that pays close attention to the needs of each patient. It’s all about the sometimes-ignored healing processes. Studies show TLC benefits include lower blood pressure, a reduced need for pain medications, and shorter hospital stays.

“*The real stars are the doctors, nurses, and other staff...*”

Mercy’s TLC program began 12 years ago. Now there are eight enthusiastic and caring team members and volunteers. TLC care begins with a one-hour pre-surgery session, and extends to post-surgical care and recovery in the hospital.

What’s perhaps most affirming for the TLC team is to see the care working for a variety of people. Sometimes it’s an elderly woman, and sometimes it’s a tough-as-nails rancher wearing lavender-scented eye pillows, listening to gentle music, and breathing quietly.

“That man probably has never known how delightful it is to relax,” Philpott said. A typical piece of feedback the TLC team receives: “I never knew this kind of thing could help me so much.”

CARDIOLOGY

It may look easy, but it’s not. Providing life-saving care to patients with delicate heart issues takes hard work and collaboration.

It starts with emergency medical services and rolls on through to the hospital’s discharge planners, said Alexander Fraley, M.D., interventional cardiologist and medical director of the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory.

A multi-disciplinary team that includes the Emergency Department, communications, nursing supervisors, hospital nursing, the hospital Quality Department and the Catheterization Lab strives in coordination to improve cardiac patient outcomes.

“It’s important to emphasize the work of the staff and nursing, because they’re the ones who make it all possible for the doctors to do what they do,” Fraley said.

The five-star rating supports the fact that everyone involved is doing a good job, said Susie Kim, M.D., one of Mercy’s three interventional cardiologists. “It is truly a team effort.”

For more information, visit www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare



Margo Philpott, RN, provides a lavender eye pillow to a patient.

Bite Size NEWS

IMPORTANT HAPPENINGS AT MERCY

MERCY CHANGES ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS

In early November Mercy switched to Epic, a new electronic medical record. Epic is a state-of-the-art system used by such facilities as Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore and UCLA Health in Los Angeles. Epic will offer patients a new standard of coordinated care. To register with MyCenturaHealth, Mercy's new Epic patient portal, visit: epic.mycenturahealth.org.



MERCY WELCOMES SPINE SURGEON AMIR ABTAHI, M.D.

In August, board eligible spine surgeon Dr. Amir M. Abtahi joined Mercy's Spine Center of Excellence. Dr. Abtahi specializes in treating cervical, thoracic and lumbar degenerative diseases, scoliosis, spine trauma, tumors, and infections of the spine. For more information about Mercy's Spine Center of Excellence, please visit mercydurango.org.

MERCY RECOGNIZED FOR CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

Mercy has again been recognized by Healthgrades, an independent ratings company that compares hospitals across the nation, for achieving clinical excellence. Most notably, Mercy was once again recognized by Healthgrades as one of **America's 100 Best™ Hospitals for Orthopedic Surgery** and **America's 100 Best™ Hospitals for Spine Surgery** in 2017, distinguishing Mercy as the only hospital in the state to be named as "100 Best" in this specialty for five years in a row (2013-2017).



JOURNEY OF HOPE AN UPLIFTING SUCCESS

Mercy's 22nd annual Journey of Hope 5K Family Run/Walk took place on Saturday, October 1. The event was attended by over 280 runners and walkers. The

heartwarming annual event benefits Mercy Health Foundation's Journey of Hope Fund, which provides free mammograms to women in the Four Corners region who otherwise can't afford them. To make a donation to the Mercy Health Foundation Journey of Hope Fund, please call **970-764-2800**.

Earn Your Turkey at the Annual Turkey Trot

JOIN MERCY AND THE DURANGO RUNNING CLUB ON THANKSGIVING DAY

One of Durango's most popular running races for over 25 years, the Turkey Trot, sponsored by Mercy Regional Medical Center, is a holiday tradition for the whole family. Come join us for a healthy activity before your big meal!

The Turkey Trot features a five-mile race beginning at 10:00 a.m. and a one-mile fun run for the kids beginning at 11:00 a.m. All of the proceeds go to Annie's Orphans, Manna Soup Kitchen, and other great local charities.



The race begins at the clock tower on the Fort Lewis College campus on Thursday, November 24.

To register, visit durangorunningclub.org/events/turkey-trot/

health+care is published quarterly as a service of Mercy Regional Medical Center and is not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained directly from a physician. If you have a health issue or concern, please contact your health care provider.

If you have an address change or would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call 970-764-3995.

mercydurango.org

Legacy of Care

Near Mercy Regional Medical Center's cafeteria stands an unassuming stone cross perched atop a stone pedestal etched with the year 1884. It is a silent reminder of the humble beginnings of today's state-of-the-art hospital. Though a bit weathered and cracked, the cross probably looks much as it did over 100 years ago, when it graced the front entrance of the hospital built along Durango's Animas River.

In 1882, four Sisters of Mercy and their leader, Mother Mary John Baptist Meyers, arrived in Durango by train. The Sisters stepped off their train car into a stereotypical old west town. It had 20 saloons, prostitution was a lucrative business, and gunfights were not uncommon. Within a year, they opened Durango's first hospital and an orphanage, which were in the same building.

In 1884, with the volunteer labor of the community and a \$6,000 construction loan, the sisters opened the new Mercy Hospital, also known as "the stone hospital," which was topped with a sandstone cross.

"The Sisters of Mercy made incredible sacrifices," said Cathy Roberts, Mercy's vice president of mission integration. "They were very brave women. We try to emulate them today in the care that we provide."

The Sisters of Mercy denied care to no one. They allowed patients to stay as long as they needed, regardless of their ability

to pay. Today, this spirit of giving continues at Mercy and throughout the Centura Health system.

“The Sisters of Mercy made incredible sacrifices.”

"We carry on the Sisters' legacy of providing care to those who need it, regardless of their ability to pay," Cathy said. "The Sisters also believed in caring for the whole person. Mercy still does that today. In addition to a patient's physical needs, their spiritual, mental and emotional needs are integrated into the care we provide."



Sisters of Mercy in front of Mercy Hospital.

Though the walls of Mercy have seen many changes, the mission of the people who work there remains the same, as they carry on the Sisters' legacy of care.



Mercy Hospital was built where the Durango Public Library now stands.