

# GOOD *Medicine* SPOTLIGHT



Far left: Dan Dolan, Interventional Technician. Middle left: Dr. Kent Hootman, Interventional Radiologist  
Right: Debra Hupp, RN, Radiology Nurse

## Interventional Radiology

Did you know that a new wave of technological advances and highly trained specialists are at work at St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center?

One of the latest and most promising trends in healthcare is the field of **interventional radiology**. This practice often takes the place of traditional surgery, calling upon the latest, most powerful imaging equipment and a variety of miniature-sized tools in the hands of qualified experts. Interventional radiologists, who complete an additional four or five years of specialized study beyond medical school, insert thin tubes called catheters and other tiny instruments through the body's blood vessels and other pathways to treat a variety of conditions that previously required surgery.

Amazingly, a small nick in the skin — an incision generally no larger than the lead tip of a pencil — is the only reminder of a procedure. There are no stitches, and no significant scarring.

Other advantages of interventional radiology include a reduction in risk, pain and recovery time; the ability to perform procedures on an outpatient basis without general anesthesia; and less cost.

Balloon angioplasty is perhaps the most well-known and earliest interventional radiology procedure. But this new medical approach can also be used to successfully embolize blood vessels that are bleeding or "feeding" a tumor, to unblock clogged arteries anywhere in the body, or to foil a stroke or heart attack. It can also assist in the treatment of fibroid uterine tumors, diabetes, cancer, liver disease, infertility and other conditions.

Interventional Radiologist Kent Hootman, M.D. says, "It's exciting. St. Mary-Corwin provides an excellent spectrum of interventional radiology procedures and southern Colorado is reaping the many benefits."

If you are curious whether one of the newer procedures might be effective for you, talk to your doctor.

## HELP for Stroke

It used to be that a stroke could hand out either a death sentence or a life sentence — that is, a devastatingly altered life.

Today, new procedures for and immediate treatment of stroke can mean reversal or reduction of serious disabilities. If treatment is obtained within the first three hours, stroke victims may be able to avoid speech, weakness or paralysis, confusion or memory loss and other impairments.

St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center (SMC) is the only Colorado hospital to earn a certificate of completion from the National Stroke Association. The Stroke Center at St. Mary-Corwin is here to help you and your loved ones survive the after-effects of stroke.

According to Dr. Phillip Rajadas, Medical Director of Rehabilitation Services, the battle against stroke is waged on two fronts: prevention and treatment. "People need to know the warning signs and act quickly," Dr. Rajadas says.

To help our community better understand the signs of stroke, St. Mary-Corwin employs a **HELP** acronym:

- H** — **Headache** — sudden, severe and unexplained
- E** — **Eyesight** — blurred vision in one or both eyes
- L** — **Loss of control** — problems with walking and/or talking
- P** — **Paralysis** — sudden numbness on one or both sides

Smokers, diabetics, men, the sedentary and obese, seniors, people with high blood pressure or a family history of stroke as well as previous stroke victims are all at increased risk for stroke. When any of the above symptoms appear, seek **HELP** fast. Call 911 or obtain immediate transport to the Emergency Room.

In the ER, potential stroke victims are diagnosed within a matter of minutes, says Clinical Nurse Specialist Janna Deason. If a stroke has occurred, treatment will vary depending on severity and the amount of time that has passed since the onset. Rehabilitation can be implemented on an outpatient basis or, at the other extreme, as a longer-term patient in the hospital's rehabilitation unit.

St. Mary-Corwin's Stroke Center is here to **HELP**. To learn more about strokes, attend our stroke clinic on Sat., Nov. 17 in the SMC Weaver Auditorium. Please call **560-HELP (4357) RSVP** or for more information.



Phillip Rajadas, M.D.



**St. Mary-Corwin  
Medical Center**

*Good medicine for everyone*