



## PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT TOTALLY HIP . . .

St. Mary's Total Joint Center is renowned for its innovative approach to orthopedic services, which makes it a perfect fit for the talents of Dr. Jennifer van Warmerdam.

The orthopedic surgeon is medical director of the center, the first hospital in California to perform a total hip replacement.

Van Warmerdam specializes in knee, shoulder and hip replacement, and one of the most current procedures she excels at is anterior hip replacement surgery. This technique involves making a small incision in the front of the hip,

rather than in back near the buttocks. Mobility is generally restored sooner and recovery time shorter than with traditional hip replacement techniques.

Van Warmerdam has two boys ages 5 and 1. Thanks to her mother, who helps tend to her sons, she is able to commute from Marin County during the week. On weekends, the busy surgeon travels to Nicolaus, north of Sacramento, where her husband operates a dairy farm, just as her family did. There she gets to unwind.

"It's a good place for our sons, with the outdoors," says van Warmerdam. "I'm very close with my family, and we get to get away and recharge our batteries every week."

Van Warmerdam has been with St. Mary's for 10

years, completing her five-year orthopedic residency at the hospital, followed by a one-year adult reconstructive fellowship program at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

She did her undergraduate studies at the University of California at Davis, where she originally

planned to be a veterinarian. Ultimately, however, "I was convinced I had the ability to help people instead of animals. I made the right choice," she says.

Van Warmerdam focused on geriatrics before settling on a career in orthopedic medi-

cine. Women are still in the minority among orthopedic surgeons, representing only 8 percent. "But I'm seeing a lot more women apply (to become surgeons) and that's wonderful," says van Warmerdam, who was undaunted by the male-dominated field.

"People saw me as a serious and dedicated student," she says. "I worked hard the whole way through my medical career. Growing up with a ranching background, I have a strong work ethic."

Van Warmerdam sees her youth as an advantage. "I am three years out of fellowship, so I am up to date on current practice and recent technologies to offer my patients," says the surgeon.

She also loves where she works. "When I came to St. Mary's, it was home for me." ■

## Dr. Jennifer van Warmerdam focuses on the latest techniques in her role as Medical Director of the St. Mary's Joint Center

By Linda Davis

# KNEE AND SHOULDER