

hello **Healthy**

CELEBRATING THE HEALING POWER OF HUMANKINDNESS • FALL 2019



**Dignity
Health:
Doggone
happy to help**
Meet the Mercy
Hospital Pet
Therapy Program
team

**More accurate
mammograms**
3-D
mammograms
mean fewer
callbacks



Expanding our women's health services

Dignity Health is excited to welcome Kenia Edwards, MD, an OB-GYN now serving patients at Dignity Health Medical Group – Merced, located at 315 Mercy Ave.

Dr. Edwards is passionate about general obstetrics and gynecology, as well as advanced, minimally invasive surgery and adolescent gynecology.

Dr. Edwards has expertise in female reproductive health, pregnancy, and childbirth. She is currently accepting new patients looking for care related to menstruation, childbirth, menopause, and more.

Personalized medicine

"I believe that medicine is about teamwork," Dr. Edwards says. "I partner with my patients to help them make the best decisions about their medical care, and I strive to do my due diligence to ensure my patients have adequate education and appropriate counsel. This way, we can land on the best decision or solution that's right for each patient."

Get to know Dr. Edwards

Dr. Edwards obtained her medical degree from New York Medical College and completed her residency at Nassau

University Medical Center in East Meadow, New York.

Dr. Edwards shares that she became a medical provider because she finds immense joy in giving back: "Contributing to my community was a huge part of my upbringing, so serving others and knowing that I am a part of their well-being and improving their circumstances is truly an honor."

In her free time, Dr. Edwards loves to be active—participating in dance, hiking, and running. One day, she would like to obtain her pilot's license!

Now, Dr. Edwards is looking forward to establishing her practice in Merced. "I can't wait to become an active member in this community!" she says. "I am passionate about learning, developing new skills, providing the best possible care to the Merced area, and building long-term relationships with my patients."

Dignity Health Medical Group – Merced offers many services, including family medicine, pediatrics, neurology, urology, ENT (ear, nose, and throat medicine), general surgery, and women's health. Dr. Edwards joins a team of physicians and advanced practice providers that are dedicated to delivering high-quality, compassionate care with humankindness.



Call today To make your appointment with Kenia Edwards, MD, call **209.564.3700**.

Hello humankindness®

We hope you enjoy this issue of *HelloHealthy*. Comments about the publication can be directed to the Marketing and Communications Department: DIGNITY HEALTH – MERCY MEDICAL CENTER 333 Mercy Ave., Merced, CA 95340

HelloHealthy is published by Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center to provide general health information. It is not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained directly from a health care provider. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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Try it for free

For more information on this free accessible yoga class, call **209.564.3669**. Bring a yoga mat and an optional twin blanket, and wear comfy clothing.



Photo by Shawn Overton, Blue Road Photography

YES, even you can do yoga!

Accessible yoga classes welcome everyone, regardless of physical abilities

Yoga has helped Clarissa Hidalgo manage many of life's ups and downs. And she wants to share the mind and body benefits of yoga with you.

It doesn't matter if you're new to yoga. It doesn't matter if you have a disability or a possibly debilitating medical condition. It doesn't matter if you use a mobility aid, like a wheelchair. Everyone can do yoga in one way or another, Hidalgo says.

Hidalgo, who teaches a weekly accessible yoga class at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center, is part of a growing accessible yoga movement.

"We want to tell the world that yoga is for everyone," she says. "Every single body type and ability is welcome in every way."

Something for everyone

In the accessible yoga class, stretches and poses can be modified to fit each person's needs. Hidalgo uses foam blocks and other supports to help people comfortably get into yoga stretches, if they want.

"It is totally up to the individual," she says.

In this gentle environment, participants listen to their bodies and go at their own pace. In fact, practicing yoga can be as simple as focusing on your own breathing.

"Breathing is the core essence of yoga," Hidalgo explains.

Yoga can have a number of health benefits, Hidalgo says. It can help lower blood pressure and heart rate. It may help with stress and depression. And yoga helps people to relax and unwind.

"We often don't take any time out for ourselves," Hidalgo says. "Yoga allows us to do that."

It's personal

Clarissa Hidalgo has a personal connection to accessible yoga that goes beyond just teaching the classes.

She was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) when she was 19, in college, and struggling mentally and physically. After three years and a BA from UC Merced, she discovered yoga. She taught herself how to adapt a lot of the yoga poses to better accommodate her MS symptoms.

"So when I found the accessible yoga movement, it was really great to see people who were already doing this," she says. "I had been doing this by myself for so long."

When therapy is a four-legged creature



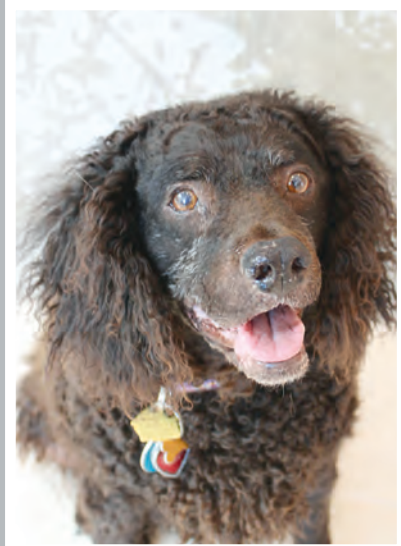
Casper



Luke



Libby



They come in all different sizes, shapes, and colors. Some are male; some are female. But they all have one thing in common: They make the patients and staff at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center doggone happy.

When one of the dogs in the Pet Therapy Program arrives at the hospital, everything seems to change. Faces light up. Smiles become contagious. Patients anxiously await their turn with the animal.

“I see the patients and how their faces brighten,” says Eva Miranda, Patient Advocate who oversees the Pet Therapy Program at Mercy Medical Center. “They start talking about their pets at home and their family life. All of a sudden they feel like, ‘I’m not sick; I have a dog here.’”

A change for the good

Mercy Medical Center began its Pet Therapy Program back in 2002. The previous patient advocate had seen the benefits of pet therapy at another hospital and decided to bring it here.

The dogs have to go through a thorough assessment before being accepted into the therapy program. In addition to a physical checkup, they need to complete an obedience class and screening.

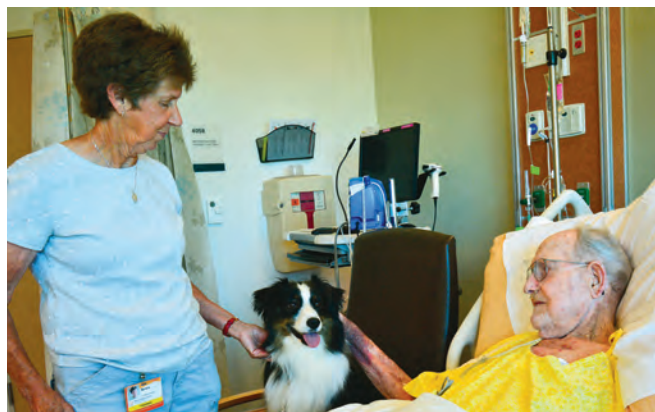
“The dog owners also have to go through our volunteer program, undergo a background screening, and get cleared medically,” Miranda says.


At least one dog visits patients almost every day at

Mercy Medical Center. Sometimes a visit with a patient lasts only a few minutes; sometimes it can go on for a half hour or more.

“I’ll hear from staff that a particular patient really enjoyed their visit and wants to know when the dog will be coming back,” Miranda says. “They’re really looking forward to seeing another dog. Nurses tell me, ‘I don’t know what you and that dog did yesterday, but that patient was just a completely different person after you left their room.’”

The medical staff enjoy pet therapy days too!



 “A dog can change a person’s attitude and mental state. I see it every day.” — Eva Miranda

Holly



Rusty



Lacey



Gus



COLORECTAL CANCER

The best treatment is prevention

Colorectal cancer is all too common: In the U.S., it's the second leading cause of cancer death among men and women combined. But there's good news. According to Nadir Edmond Adam, MD, dual board-certified general surgeon and colorectal surgeon at Dignity Health, the best treatment option is actually prevention—in the form of regular screenings.

"Screening for colorectal cancer is highly recommended. It's a common tumor, and if caught early, the five-year survival rate is more than 90%," he notes.



Hear from the expert!

Go to dignityhealth.org/merced/podcasts to hear Dr. Adam explain more about colorectal cancer—including the symptoms, diagnosis and treatment.



Start your screening

Talk to your doctor about getting screened. Don't have a doctor? We can help you find one at dignityhealth.org/ourdoctors.



Screening options

Most people should begin screening for colorectal cancer at age 50. Earlier screening is recommended based on risk factors such as a family history of colorectal cancer or if you have conditions like ulcerative colitis or have previously had colon polyps.

Dr. Adam describes the varying levels of colorectal cancer screening:

- **Stool test.** This includes both a fecal occult blood test, recommended yearly, and Cologuard, recommended every three years. If positive, patients should undergo a colonoscopy.
- **Sigmoidoscopy.** This is a colonoscopy that is limited to just the left side of the colon—which is where cancer is detected in more than 50% of cases. A barium enema is combined with this screening method to allow doctors to see the whole colon.
- **Colonoscopy.** Considered the "gold standard" in colorectal cancer screening, this exam lets doctors see the entire colon and identify any polyps needing removal for biopsy. It requires bowel prep and is typically done under conscious sedation.
- **CT colonography:** If the patient cannot tolerate traditional colonoscopy, this screening technique examines the colon by visualizing it through the CT scan.

"With any of the nontraditional colonoscopy techniques, if cancer is suspected, colonoscopy is the next step," Dr. Adam says.

And the best part? Removing polyps during a colonoscopy can prevent colon cancer entirely—a perfect example of prevention as medicine.

VIEW

3-D MAMMOGRAMS

An updated of breast cancer

Mammograms give women a crucial head start on finding breast cancer early, when treatment is often most effective. They can detect tumors that are still too tiny to feel and identify cancers before symptoms start.

Still, although they've saved countless lives, these breast x-rays aren't perfect.

Mammograms may miss about 20% of all breast cancers, the National Cancer Institute reports. They can also cause false alarms by indicating abnormalities that turn out not to be cancer. As a result, women may undergo unnecessary—and often anxiety-producing—additional testing, including biopsies.

A different dimension in breast x-rays

A newer type of mammogram, however, may help overcome these flaws and improve the accuracy of breast cancer screening. It's called three-dimensional, or 3-D, mammography. (Breast tomosynthesis is another name for it.) Here's how it works:

During a 3-D mammogram, a woman's breast is compressed, just as it is for a standard mammogram. An x-ray machine moves over the breast, taking multiple, slicelike pictures. Special computer software then creates a detailed 3-D image of the breast.

Research suggests that 3-D mammograms have the potential to:

- Improve the ability of doctors to accurately diagnose breast cancer.
- Find small tumors that may have remained hidden on a conventional mammogram.
- Provide clearer images of abnormalities in dense breasts. Women who have dense breasts—defined as breasts that have a lot of fibrous or glandular tissue and not much fat—are at a slightly higher risk of developing breast cancer.
- Greatly reduce the number of women called back for further testing because of false alarms.

Get tested

The American Cancer Society recommends that women at average risk of breast cancer have yearly mammograms starting at age 45. (Women between 40 and 44 have the option to start screening with a mammogram every year.)

Additional source: Radiological Society of North America

Scheduling is easy!

Mercy Medical Center offers 3-D mammography at the same price as a standard mammography screening. Schedule your 3-D mammogram at Mercy Imaging by calling **209.564.3161**.



Stretch yourself

Try our free accessible yoga class!
Register today.

See page 3



For your health

Classes and events coming up



Register today! For questions about registration and other details, call **209.564.4384**.

CHILDBIRTH Stork Tour

Tuesdays, Nov. 12, Dec. 10
6 p.m.

Mercy Pavilion, third floor
classrooms C and D
Tour hospital before
delivering.

Childbirth Education

Nov. 4, 13, 18, 25,
Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27
6 to 9 p.m.

Mercy Pavilion, third floor
classrooms C and D

Breastfeeding Support

Every Wednesday
10 a.m. to noon

Breastfeeding Education
Center, Mercy Outpatient
Center, first floor

FITNESS Zumba

Every Monday and
Wednesday

5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Merced Senior Center

Total Joint Replacement Class

Every Monday
10 to 11:30 a.m.

Mercy Pavilion, third floor classroom B



Yoga

Every Tuesday and Thursday
5:30 to 7 p.m.

Mercy Outpatient Center,
garden level, multipurpose
room

SUPPORT GROUPS

Cancer Support Group (English and Spanish)

Second and fourth
Thursday of every month
4 to 5:30 p.m.

Mercy UC Davis Cancer
Center

COPD Support Group

Every Thursday
2:30 to 4 p.m.

Cardiac Pulmonary Center,
Mercy Outpatient Center

Stroke Support Group

Every second Wednesday,
Nov. 13, Dec. 11
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mercy Pavilion, third floor
classroom B

Diabetes Support Group (English and Spanish)



Tuesdays, Nov. 5,
Dec. 3, and
Dec. 17

Mercy Outpatient
Center,
first floor

Hello humankindness™ "Anyone who does anything
to help a child in his life is a hero to me." —Fred Rogers
Follow **@humankindness** on Twitter for more kindness inspiration.