

hello **Healthy**

CELEBRATING THE HEALING POWER OF HUMANKINDNESS • SPRING 2019

Cancer care and support

Mercy UC Davis Cancer Center offers
the gold standard of comprehensive care

Eat your medicine

How to improve your health by improving your diet



Eat well! Eat local!

Building blocks of a better diet can be found here in the San Joaquin Valley



Focus on food in its natural form

I work hand in hand with my patients to help them understand the importance of eating well. If you are unsure of where to start, I recommend a visit to your local farmers market, where you will find locally grown, fresh-picked produce.

Try to buy a variety of colors. Produce that is colorful is typically more nutrient-rich. Talk to the local growers selling the food and ask if they have tips for preparing their produce.

Avoid frying or sautéing foods. Instead, focus on steaming or roasting them using healthy oils, such as olive, flaxseed, or avocado.

At mealtimes, a healthy plate should be made up of at least half fruits and vegetables, a quarter protein, and a quarter carbohydrates.

Focus on eating food that is in its natural form—or as close to it as possible. The closer a food is to its natural state (fresh-picked, not processed, and not overcooked or over-sauced), the more nutrients it will provide.



By Natasha Kyte, MD
Dignity Health Medical Group – Merced

Springtime is upon us, and that means longer days, warmer air—and an abundance of fresh, local produce! Here in the San Joaquin Valley, we are fortunate to have access to locally grown produce for much of the year. This region is known as the “Food Basket of the World” for good reason. The diverse agricultural offerings include walnuts, oranges, peaches, garlic, tomatoes, kiwis, broccoli, asparagus—the list goes on and on!



More flavor, less salt

Once you have that fresh produce at home, avoid falling into the trap of using salt to add flavor.

Instead, try using spices like turmeric, cinnamon, and ginger, or the juice or zest of a lemon. All have been found to reduce inflammation and can provide some antimicrobial benefits as well.

If your dish still needs salt, consider using sea salt or Himalayan salt. Their bigger crystals don't get lost in food and add more flavor while allowing you to use less.

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate

Finally, don't forget to hydrate. Almost all of us could benefit from drinking more water every day. The recommended amount is a minimum of eight glasses, or 64 ounces, every day. And that needs to be water—not coffee, juice, or soda.

Often when people think they are hungry, they are actually thirsty. Next time you want a snack, have a glass of water first—you may not need that snack after all.

Research has shown that a healthy diet, when done right, is one of the most important preventive health tools we have. When you are eating a nutritious diet, you feel better, sleep better, and have more energy. A healthy diet decreases your risk for many chronic health conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and some cancers.

This season, take advantage of the beautiful bounty our region produces and improve your health by improving your diet!



Better than an apple a day Stay in good health by seeing a primary care provider for regular checkups. Find a full list of experts at dignityhealth.org/ourdoctors.

Grants recognize exceptional local community groups

Several local nonprofit groups were recently the beneficiaries of some well-deserved funds, courtesy of the Community Grants Program at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center.

In January, Mercy Medical Center distributed more than \$145,000 to four organizations that strive to help vulnerable and underserved people in Merced County. It represents a commitment to the community that the medical center has made every year since 1991.

“Over the years it’s been really inspiring to see all the work that’s being done in the community by nonprofits that rely on volunteers to carry out the work,” says Janice Wilkerson, Director of Mission Integration at Mercy Medical Center. “I think all four of this year’s grantees do exceptional work in our community.”

Grants were awarded to:

Merced Rescue Mission’s HOPE Respite Care. They work with Mercy Medical Center to deliver an array of care to homeless people in the area and people in unstable living situations after they are discharged from the hospital.

JMJ Maternity Homes. Their Mary’s Mantel Maternity Home Shelter program provides food, shelter, clothing, and support services to pregnant homeless women.

The Girl Scouts of Central California. Their Live Healthy, Lead Healthy project offers health and wellness education to low-income girls.

LifeLine CDC (Community Development Corporation) “Health for Our Neighbors” project. This program promotes healthy activities for children and adults living in the Winton and Loughborough areas.

The Community Grants Program represents a vital part of Mercy Medical Center’s mission to support the community.

“Dignity Health believes it’s very important to form community partnerships,” Wilkerson says. “We all live here, and we all need to help each other improve the health of our community.”



How the grants were distributed

Here’s what this year’s grantees received from Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center:

- Merced Rescue Mission: \$90,000.
- JMJ Maternity Homes: \$25,000.
- Girl Scouts of Central California: \$15,455.
- LifeLine CDC (Community Development Corporation): \$15,455.

The Dignity Health Community Grants Program has awarded **\$70 million** to nearly 3,400 projects since its inception.

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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Our cancer experts LIVE for your LIFE

Mercy UC Davis Cancer Center is recognized for high-quality, compassionate cancer care

When you're diagnosed with cancer, you're looking for the best expert you can find. And that cancer expertise is exactly what you'll find at the Mercy UC Davis Cancer Center.

The experts at the cancer center provide more than excellent medical care—they offer all the support that people with cancer and their families so often need. For some people, that might mean access to nutritional services to help them better manage their chemo treatments. For others, it might mean helping them understand and follow through on their treatments.

"Our cancer program is comprehensive, it's high-quality, and the patient is at the center of it all," says Kanwar Singh, Director of the cancer center.

"They're the ones who drive our care," adds Minerva Silveira, BSN, RN, Nurse Manager of the cancer center.

Best possible cancer care

Mercy's cancer program recently earned accreditation by the Commission on Cancer, a program of the American College of Surgeons.

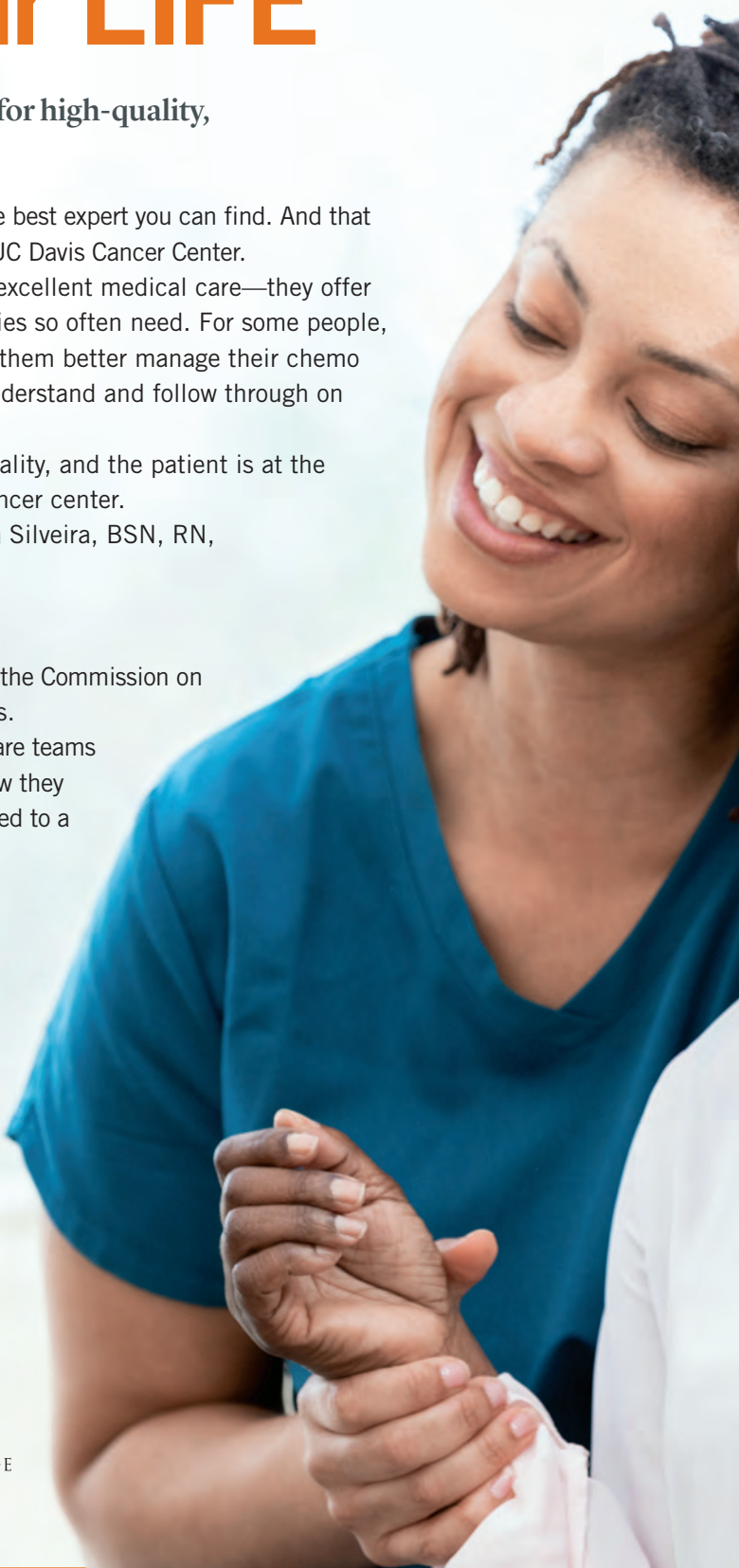
To earn the distinction (considered a gold standard), care teams at Mercy had to meet several national standards that show they provide the best possible cancer care. They also committed to a team approach of cancer care, which includes providing patients with:

- **Support services.** For instance, a social worker is available who can help people with cancer solve practical issues related to their care, such as finding rides to medical appointments or locating possible financial resources. "We help people navigate barriers to cancer care," Silveira says.
- **Access to clinical trials** and new treatment options.
- **Follow-up care** after treatment ends.
- **A free stop-smoking program.**

"We don't just address the cancer diagnosis," Singh says. "We address the anxiety and distress on the family that comes with it."



A **QUALITY PROGRAM**
of the AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF SURGEONS



LUNG CANCER SCREENING

Is this test right for you?

If you smoke now or used to smoke a lot in the past, you might want to ask your doctor about getting screened for lung cancer at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center.

Having a history of smoking puts you at higher risk for lung cancer, which usually doesn't cause symptoms until it has reached a stage that is difficult to treat. But screening with a low-dose CT scan can help find lung cancer early—when your chances of surviving the disease are best.

"There are better treatment options when lung cancer is found early," says Minerva Silveira, BSN, RN, Nurse Manager, Mercy UC Davis Cancer Center.

Who is eligible?

You might be a candidate for lung cancer screening if you:

- Are age 55 to 80 and in fairly good health.
- Are a current smoker.
- Are a former smoker who has quit within the past 15 years.
- Have smoked the equivalent of a pack of cigarettes a day for 30 years or two packs a day for 15 years.

Talk to your primary care doctor to find out if lung cancer screening is right for you. If you are a candidate, your doctor will first talk to you about ways to quit smoking (if you still smoke) and about the possible risks of lung cancer screening.

A breath of fresh air: A lung cancer screening could save your life, or the life of someone you love. And now, it's covered by most insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Get started at dignityhealth.org/lungscreening.



Make a fresh start

Are you ready to stop smoking? We can help you succeed with our Fresh Start smoking cessation program. Classes in this free, four-week program meet one hour each week. You'll receive free smoking cessation patches, along with other helpful resources for quitting. For more information, or to enroll in one of our 2019 sessions, call **209.564.3669**.

Special support for nursing moms



EXPERTS AGREE: Breast milk is the perfect first food for babies. It gives them a healthy start in life, and the benefits can last a lifetime. Still, many moms struggle to breastfeed their babies and may stop nursing as a result.

“While it may seem entirely natural, breastfeeding is actually a skill that takes know-how and encouragement,” says Dawn Arnsberg, RN, BSN, IBCLC, a lactation consultant and clinical manager at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center.

Especially in the early weeks after having a baby—and later when work or other responsibilities resume—nursing moms often face challenges, from sore nipples to concerns about their milk supply.

This helps explain why only about 1 in 4 babies is still exclusively breastfed at 6 months old as recommended.

To encourage women to continue with breastfeeding, Mercy Medical Center launched the Breastfeeding Café last fall.

“It’s a welcoming place designed to give moms in our area the support they need to succeed at breastfeeding,” Arnsberg says.

You’re invited

Every Wednesday morning—from 10 a.m. to noon at the Breastfeeding Education Center,

which is located in the Mercy Outpatient Center—moms who’ve successfully nursed are available to help other nursing moms who are just getting started. These peer counselors have all received training in breastfeeding issues from Merced County’s Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program.

If you’re a nursing mom, they can give you how-to suggestions on these and other topics:

- How to help your baby latch correctly.
- How to be sure your baby is getting plenty of milk.
- How to pump milk exclusively.
- How to feel comfortable nursing, even in public.

Arnsberg and fellow Dignity Health lactation consultant Pat Sawyers, RN, CLC, are also available to provide one-on-one nursing guidance.

Good things happen outside the café too. Many of the moms—counselors included—get together for walks and talks in their neighborhoods.

“It wasn’t our original intent, but this has evolved into a mothers group,” Arnsberg says. “Moms are supporting each other in all aspects of mothering, not just nursing, which is wonderful.”



**Come
join us!**

There’s no charge for the Breastfeeding Café, and you are welcome to bring your other children. Just show up! For more information, call **209.564.5285**.

Good for babies, good for moms

Breastfeeding helps protect babies from many health problems, including ear infections, asthma, diabetes, and sudden infant death syndrome. At the same time, it reduces a mom’s risk of high blood pressure and breast and ovarian cancers.

Mercy Medical Center's 8th Annual

5K Stroke Awareness Run

May 4, 2019

Mercy Medical Center
333 Mercy Avenue
Merced, CA 95340

Race starts at 8 a.m.



All proceeds go towards Mercy's Stroke Program
Register at **SupportMercyMerced.org**





**Make a
fresh start!**

Ready to stop smoking?
See page 5 for details.

For your health

Classes and events coming up



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

CHILDBIRTH **Stork Tour**

Tuesday, May 14
6 p.m.

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

Childbirth Education

Wednesdays, May 1, 8, 15, 22
6 to 9 p.m.

Mercy Pavilion, third floor
classrooms C and D

FITNESS **Zumba**

Every Monday, Wednesday,
and Thursday
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Merced Senior Center

Yoga

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

Mercy Outpatient Center,
garden level, multipurpose
room

SUPPORT **GROUPS**

Cancer Support Group (English & Spanish)

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

Mercy UC Davis Cancer
Center

Diabetes Support Group (English & Spanish)

Tuesdays, May 7, 21
Mercy Outpatient Center,
first floor

COPD Support Group

Every Thursday
2:30 to 4 p.m.
Cardiac Pulmonary Center,
Mercy Outpatient Center



Total Joint Replacement Class

Every Monday
10 to 11:30 a.m.

Mercy Pavilion, third floor
classroom B

Breastfeeding Support



Every Wednesday
10 a.m. to noon
Breastfeeding Education
Center, Mercy Outpatient
Center, first floor

Stroke Support Group

Every second and fourth
Wednesday
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Mercy Pavilion, third floor
classroom B



Join us for our annual Family
Festival on May 4, 2019! Run our 5K,
get a free health screening, and enjoy
tons of family-friendly activities!

Hello humankindness™ “What do we live for, if it is
not to make life less difficult for each other?” —George Eliot
Follow **@humankindness** on Twitter for more kindness inspiration.