

hello **Healthy**

CELEBRATING THE HEALING POWER OF HUMANKINDNESS • WINTER 2019

Meet the docs

Merced has two new specialists to care for you

The need for speed

Stroke Center provides rapid assessment and treatment



Dedicated to women's health



"Growing up in an underserved area allowed me to experience firsthand how limited access to health care can affect the community. Thus, being part of the community that I practice in, as well as being able to relate to the people that I serve, is very important to me."

—Diane R. Thomas, MD

Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center welcomes Diane R. Thomas, MD, to our community. Dr. Thomas is a female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgeon—also known as a urogynecologist—and a certified robotic surgery specialist.

Urogynecology is a subspecialty that focuses on the evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of women with conditions concerning the female pelvic organs and their supporting muscles and tissues. Women who previously had to see multiple physicians for urinary, reproductive, and gastrointestinal problems can now see one specialist. Some of the common problems urogynecologists treat include urinary incontinence or leakage, overactive bladder, and pelvic organ prolapse.

Dr. Thomas is looking forward to being part of the new da Vinci surgical robotic

program at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center.

She earned her medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville and completed her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at LAC+USC Medical Center in Los Angeles. She completed a fellowship in female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery at Louisiana State University in New Orleans.

Originally from San Francisco, Dr. Thomas and her fiancé, Ronnie, are excited to move back to California and raise their daughter in Merced. She enjoys spending time with family and friends and live music, laughter, and food. Dr. Thomas strives to educate her patients on their individual medical conditions so that they, too, are actively involved in their personal health care. She is committed to helping the women of Merced be healthy.

Back to work, sports, and life

Naseem Beauchman, MD, is bringing his passion for athletics and excellent surgical skills in orthopedics and sports medicine to Merced, where he will offer individualized care for a wide range of patients—from high school and college athletes to patients considering joint replacement.

Dr. Beauchman will be practicing the latest techniques in arthroscopic surgery for joint preservation, cartilage restoration, ligament reconstruction, instability repairs, and joint reconstruction of the shoulders, hips, and knees.

Dr. Beauchman understands how important an active lifestyle is and plans to incorporate his extensive training into the treatment of his patients so that they can "get back to work, sports, and life."



He completed medical school at Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut, and continued his education by completing his orthopedic surgical residency at Howard University in Washington, D.C. He furthered his training by completing his sports medicine fellowship at Houston Methodist Hospital. While in Texas, he was the assistant team physician for three professional sports teams: the Texans, the Rockets, and the Astros.

"I believe in the importance of returning my patients to an active lifestyle and in its effect on both their physical and mental health. I strive to involve my patients in every level of their care, empowering them to make informed and meaningful medical decisions. I strive to provide the best possible quality and compassionate care to all of my patients." —Naseem Beauchman, MD



Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center’s goal of providing great customer service and excellent patient care now begins before patients and visitors walk in the door.

Visitors and patients seeking care at the Mercy Medical Center main campus now have the option of complimentary valet service from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays at the entrance to Mercy Medical Center and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays at the entrance to the Mercy UC Davis Cancer Center.

While the medical center always has been quick to help patients once inside, with valets, care begins curbside. Valet attendants are available to support patients and visitors in various ways, including

parking vehicles, getting a walker out of the back seat, obtaining a wheelchair, and providing directions.

For patients, “Valet parking will help alleviate any anxiety associated with parking and delays getting to appointments,” says Rick Moreland, Senior Director.

Though the added service comes at a cost, Mercy Medical Center believes the investment is an appropriate use of the ministry’s resources to help ensure safety, improve accessibility, and enhance the overall patient experience.

As always, we strive to ensure that our patients’ and visitors’ experiences reflect Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center’s mission of caring for all patients.

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

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Don't delay: Get help for stroke



Our Stroke Center offers rapid treatments that may help you avoid devastating side effects of stroke

Imagine this: One moment you're talking with a loved one about your favorite TV show. The next moment, you're slurring your words, your vision is blurred, and it's hard to move.

Chances are you're having a stroke—a leading cause of disability. But if you or your loved one can recognize that fact and seek medical help quickly, you'll improve your chances of making a full recovery.

The need for speed

Strokes happen when the brain's blood supply is disrupted by a clot that blocks a blood vessel (ischemic strokes) or a blood vessel that bursts and bleeds (hemorrhagic stroke). When this happens, brain cells immediately start to die.

At the Stroke Center at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center, a dedicated stroke team provides treatments that may minimize the damage from a stroke.

For instance, if you're having an ischemic stroke, they may give you a clot-busting drug called tPA. But there's a small window of opportunity—often just a few hours—to administer this or other stroke treatments.

"It all comes down to time," says Melanie Morris, RN, Stroke Coordinator at Mercy Medical Center. "You need to get here as soon as possible."

The best way to do that? Call 911 at the first signs of a stroke. The acronym F.A.S.T. can help you remember how to recognize a stroke and take action.



Stronger with support

At Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center, stroke survivors and their loved ones are encouraged to attend a support group in which helpful tips about stroke recovery are discussed and shared.

“Stroke affects so many people in the community,” says Melanie Morris, RN, Stroke Coordinator. “We want people to come and build support for each other, which is why we offer a stroke survivors group.”

There is no cost to attend the group, which meets the second and fourth Wednesday of every month at 11 a.m. The location is classroom B in the pavilion.

Join us To sign up for the stroke survivors group or learn more, call **209.564.5181**.



F.A.S.T.

F—face drooping. Does one side of the person’s smile look uneven?

A—arm weakness. Have the person extend both arms. Does one drift downward?

S—speech difficulty. Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like “The sky is blue.”

T—time to call 911 if you notice any of these signs.

Prevention is still the best medicine

Mercy Medical Center’s Stroke Center is accredited through The Joint Commission. The center’s stroke team—which includes dedicated stroke nurses at the hospital and neurologists available by telemedicine—is specially trained to provide rapid assessment and treatment.

“We have the ability to treat you quickly and get you the best possible treatment,” says Mary Cox, BSN, RN, Accreditation and Regulatory Compliance Manager at Mercy Medical Center.

Even so, the stroke team hopes you never need their help.

That’s why they also work to spread the word about stroke prevention.

Everyone should see their primary care doctor for checkups and control any stroke risk factors, Morris says. Risks include high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, and atrial fibrillation (an abnormal heart rhythm condition). As Morris points out, even if your stroke risk is elevated, you can help lower it with healthy lifestyle changes.

And should you ever need timely stroke treatment, it’s good to know that the experts at Mercy Medical Center are always at the ready. “Just remember: Time is of the essence, so get here quickly,” Morris says.

A nursing career advances

The nursing staff recognizes that their patients are the families, friends, and neighbors of our community members. Warm welcomes and caring support are part of our *Hello humankindness* promise to our community.

Nursing has always been a perfect fit for Janet Ruscoe, MSN, RN.

“From the moment I entered nursing school, it felt very natural to me,” she says.

Growing up in a family of health care professionals, Ruscoe had early exposure to discussions on health care, health habits, and what it means when people trust you to take care of them.

“I remember listening in on my father and grandfather talking about their work in health care,” she recalls. “I had endless questions, but they always took time to answer them.”



Embracing leadership

Ruscoe has 30-plus years of nursing experience, gaining leadership experience and advancing her nursing education along the way. Until recently, she

was the senior director of perioperative and cath lab services at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center in Merced. In September, she was named the hospital's vice president/chief nurse executive officer, putting her in charge of nearly 600 nurses.

“Nursing leadership is something I've progressively embraced,” she says. “I've been drawn to positions where I have the ability to influence quality of care and create a healthy healing environment for patients and a healthy work environment for staff.”

Ruscoe loves what she sees as the twin aspects of nursing: health care science and caring for her community.

“I feel we have a duty to take care of our community,” she says.

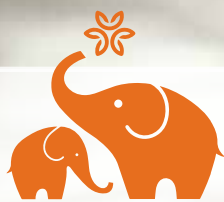
The nursing staff recognizes that their patients are the families, friends, and neighbors of our community members. Warm welcomes and caring support are part of our *Hello humankindness* promise to our community.

A Pathway to Excellence

As for the science aspect, one of Ruscoe's goals in her new position is to work toward designating Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center as a Pathway to Excellence facility. It requires meeting specific standards set by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

“It is a very achievable goal in the near future,” Ruscoe says. “We have a huge potential for growth here at Mercy Medical Center, and starting us on the Pathway to Excellence journey is an ideal way to advance our nursing practice.”





Happy and healthy beginnings

Read more about the benefits of having a baby at the Family Birth Center. Go to dignityhealth.org/Merced/FBC.



The best for babies and moms

What's new and happening at the Family Birth Center

Jennifer Holt is fairly new to the job of director of the Family Birth Center at Dignity Health – Mercy Medical Center, but she has some definite ideas about what she'd like to accomplish in her position.

"We need to continue with the excellent standards of care that we do have," says Holt, who has a master's degree in nursing. "And we want to make sure that our families have the best possible birth experience. When these babies of today grow up and their parents tell them about their birth story, it should always be good memories."



My Baby pregnancy app

The good memories can start when moms-to-be first find out they're pregnant. From their smartphone, pregnant women can download Dignity Health's free My Baby pregnancy app. "It can be used throughout pregnancy and into the newborn's life," Holt says.

Some of the app's functions include:

- Answering common questions about physical and emotional changes during pregnancy.
- Tracking doctor's appointments.

- Creating a birth plan.
- Signing up for childbirth classes and tours of the Birth Center.

"Every week, moms can watch a little video of how big their baby is, what it can do, and what systems are developing," Holt says. "And after delivery, the app allows you to track how many feedings your newborn has had each day and the number of diapers used—to help make sure your baby's growing and eating appropriately."

More memories and support

Another way Holt and her team of pregnancy experts at the Family Birth Center are working to make childbirth a great experience:

Baby-Friendly designation. The Family Birth Center is working with the World Health Organization to be named a Baby-Friendly hospital, which means a hospital strongly supports and encourages moms to breastfeed.

"I'm excited to be part of the next steps and the next phase of our journey to be Baby-Friendly and our ongoing mission to provide excellent care to the moms and babies in our community," Holt says.

**Get in
 quickly
 and easily**



Complimentary valet parking
 is here! For details, turn to
page 3.

For your health

Classes and events coming up



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



Breastfeeding Support

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

CHILDBIRTH Stork Tour

Tuesday, Feb. 12
 6 p.m.
 Mercy Pavilion, third floor
 classrooms C and D
 Tour hospital before
 delivering.

Childbirth Education

Wednesdays, Feb. 6, 13,
 20, 27
 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

Diabetes Support Group

Tuesday, Feb. 5,
 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
 Mercy Outpatient Center,
 first floor

Diabetes Support Group (en español)

Tuesday, Feb. 5,
 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
 Mercy Outpatient Center,
 first floor

COPD Support Group

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

Stroke Support Group

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



Cancer Support Group (English & Spanish)

Second and fourth
 Thursday of every month
 4 to 5:30 p.m.
 Mercy UC Davis Cancer
 Center

Hello humankindness. *"Remember that children, marriages, and flower gardens
 reflect the kind of care they get."* —H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Follow **@humankindness** on Twitter for more kindness inspiration from Dignity Health.