

MERCY GENERAL OFFERS PATIENTS REVOLUTIONARY VALVE REPAIR WITH *DAVINCI*® SURGICAL ROBOT

Cardiac surgeons at Mercy General Hospital are revolutionizing valve repair surgery for patients in the Sacramento region. For the past several months, surgeons Frank Slachman, MD, and Allen Morris, MD, have been using the *daVinci*® *Si HD*™ Surgical System to perform minimally invasive valve repairs, providing patients with quicker, easier recoveries. “The *daVinci* is incredible technology – and I don’t say that lightly,” says Dr. Slachman. “The more I use it and the more I see what it can do, the more impressed I am.”

While Mercy cardiac surgeons have been using minimally invasive methods to repair valves for several years, both Drs. Morris and Slachman believe the *daVinci* system offers levels of visual clarity and access that were previously unattainable. Using the *daVinci*, surgeons are at the controls of a state-of-the-art robotic system involving several arms, one of which provides a 3-D, high definition camera view into the surgical area. “The visualization that the system provides is unbelievable,”



The *daVinci*® surgical robot gives surgeons a 3-D, high definition visual while providing patients with quicker and easier recoveries.

explains Dr. Morris. “We are seeing the heart in 3-D, high definition. We see the valves and their pathology better and we also have better access. I’m using the same techniques that I’ve been using for years, but this technology makes it that much easier.” The *daVinci* enables surgeons to perform the most complex and delicate procedures, like mitral valve repair, through very small incisions with unmatched precision. “We are not trying anything new, we’re simply using a new tool to accomplish the same technique. And we’re having great success.”

For patients, the benefits of the *daVinci* are clear. Traditional open heart surgery involves splitting the sternum and spreading the ribs to provide access to the chest cavity (creating an 8-10” scar down the middle of the chest), however the *daVinci* allows surgeons remarkable access and visualization through several small “ports” or incisions. The *daVinci* not only cuts the recovery time down to a few weeks, it also offers a reduced risk of infection, less blood loss, shorter hospital stay, and less pain and scarring.

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See the difference the
daVinci® made for one
patient on page 2

MERCY FACILITIES UNVEIL NEW CATH LABS

Two Mercy Heart & Vascular Institute Facilities recently opened the doors to new cardiac catheterization (cath) labs this past November...

At Mercy General Hospital, the new “hybrid” cardiac cath lab was a \$2.5 million upgrade to one of the hospital’s three existing cath lab rooms. The newly renovated room features upgraded imaging equipment, including CT scan capabilities, as well as boom-mounted equipment. It has the capabilities of a traditional cath lab, while also

following the strict standards of sterility for an operating room. This allows physicians to use the room for both “closed” (traditional, minimally invasive catheterization) procedures and “open” procedures (those involving higher levels of anesthesia and invasiveness). For now, physicians at Mercy General are using the hybrid room to perform certain types of thoracic stent placements, as well as for the removal of pacemakers. In the future, the room may be used for subcutaneous valve replacement and other more complex cases.



Mercy San Juan’s new \$3.6 million cardiac cath lab saw its first patient in November.

Mercy San Juan Medical Center unveiled a new \$3.6 million cath lab featuring state-of-the-art imaging technology and equipment. The new lab is the hospital’s third cath lab and offers remarkable clarity and more efficient diagnosis and treatment. One of the primary focuses within the new lab is to diagnose peripheral vascular disease and to treat blockages in the peripheral blood vessels – those outside the heart and brain. The cutting edge technology in the room allows physicians to visualize the blood flow thru the patients’ legs using significantly less contrast dye, which means less radiation for the patient.

Mercy San Juan’s new lab is designed with the potential to be a “hybrid” room – meaning it has the proper airflow, sterility and lighting to be used for open surgical procedures in the future. ♥

PATIENT: “LUCKY” TO HAVE *DAVINCI*®

Although Noreen Goff’s family doctor had monitored her mitral valve prolapse for years, she never envisioned it becoming a problem. But after experiencing shortness of breath while on vacation, her doctor ordered an echocardiogram. “I was told that my valve needed to be repaired – maybe even replaced,” Noreen remembers. “I was in shock. I needed open heart surgery.” Noreen’s cardiac surgeon, Frank Slachman, MD, offered her a ray of hope. “He told me that I may be a good candidate for robotic-assisted surgery, using the *daVinci*. That meant he wouldn’t have to crack my sternum and open my chest – I immediately started praying he’d be able to use the *daVinci*!”

Noreen’s prayers were answered and in late September, Dr. Slachman repaired her mitral valve using the *daVinci* system. Dr. Slachman says the *daVinci* actually prevented Noreen’s surgery from becoming very complicated. “Mrs. Goff’s heart was actually very displaced due to scoliosis,” explains Dr. Slachman. “Had we gone in the usual route by opening her chest through the sternum, it would have been quite difficult to get a good view. The *daVinci* provided a remarkable visual.”

Noreen returned home several days later, where she was able to gradually resume her normal activities, including pursuing her passion for gardening. “Even though I was in shock to find out I needed heart surgery, I told my husband that if it had to be done, this was the way I want to do it,” she says. “I would highly recommend to anyone facing heart surgery to ask if the *daVinci* may be a possibility for them. I feel very lucky that it was for me.” ♥

MERCY HEART & VASCULAR INSTITUTE

Cardiac Surgeons

John R. Dein, MD
Michael Ingram, MD
Richard K Kaplon, MD
Robert Kincade, MD
James Longoria, MD
Allen S. Morris, MD,
Medical Director
Kapil Sharma, MD
Henry L. Zhu, MD

Cardiac Electrophysiologists

Arash Aryana, MD
Peter Jurisich, DO

Padraig G. O’Neill, MD
Medical Director
Stephen I. Stark, MD
Larry J. Wolff, MD

Cardiologists

Arvin Arthur, MD
Richard Axelrod, MD
Philip M. Bach, MD
Scott B. Baron, MD
David A. Bayne, MD
Raye L. Bellinger, MD
Larry E. Berte, MD
Rohit Bhaskar, MD

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Kenny K. Charn, MD
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Mercy Cardiovascular
Services
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Vice President

MERCY WELCOMES NEW CARDIOLOGISTS

Mercy Medical Group and the Mercy hospitals welcome three new interventional cardiologists to its team.

R. Michael Kirchner, MD, joins Mercy following a fellowship in Cardiovascular Diseases and Interventional Cardiology. Dr. Kirchner served as a Major in the United States Air Force and was deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He received his medical degree from Drexel University College of Medicine, and completed his internship and residency at David Grant USAF Medical Center, Travis AFB, CA, in affiliation with University of California at Davis Medical Center.

David Lao, MD, completed a fellowship in Interventional Cardiology at University of California, San Francisco, where he also completed his residency. Dr. Lao earned his medical degree from Yale University, and his undergraduate from



R. Michael Kirchner, MD; David Lao, MD; Inder Singh, MD,

Stanford University. Dr. Lao is fluent in Mandarin and Spanish.

Inder Singh, MD, completed his fellowship in Interventional Cardiology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Dr. Singh completed his residency in Internal Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, OH, and earned a Doctor of Medicine degree from Ovidius University in Constanta, Romania.

Drs. Kirchner, Lao and Singh are all practicing at Mercy Medical Group's Midtown location. They can be reached at 916.733.3333. ♥



In September, Mercy's Kapil Sharma, MD, presented "Cardiology Update: Expansion of Complex Aortic Arch Reconstruction Procedures" to physicians in Redding as part of Mercy's ongoing Cardiology Update series. Pictured left to right are Andrew Schepps, MD, Bruce Miller, MD, Ed Pottmeyer, MD, Steve Mendelsohn, MD, and Dr. Sharma. ♥

DAVINCI

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For Drs. Morris and Slachman, bringing the benefits of the *daVinci* system to life for their patients has been a process that was literally years in the making. "We've undergone hundreds of hours of training and continue to train and study to learn about future applications of this technology," explains Dr. Slachman.

Currently Mercy is using its *daVinci* for repairs and replacement of the mitral

valve and the tricuspid valve, as well as closure of holes in the valves. The surgeons are hopeful that in the future the *daVinci* may be used for procedures to repair atrial fibrillation as well as for heart bypass surgery on certain types of patients. "I firmly believe this is a very viable method for doing heart surgery," explains Dr. Slachman. "The *daVinci* will continue to add to and extend our surgical techniques and capabilities." ♥

MERCY HOSPITALS GO SMOKE-FREE

On Jan. 1 of this year, Mercy General Hospital joined Mercy San Juan Medical Center and all other Catholic Healthcare West (CHW) facilities by becoming a smoke-free and tobacco-free facility. This new policy means that everyone, including employees, physicians, patients and visitors will be prohibited from smoking or using tobacco products at any time while on the hospital campus. More than 2,000 hospitals nationwide have enacted similar policies. Mercy and CHW believe that because of the well-known and scientifically proven health risks associated with tobacco use, enacting a tobacco-free policy is a responsible step that fits with the mission of improving the quality of life in the community. ♥

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROTON PUMP INHIBITORS AND PLAVIX®

Over the past two years there has been considerable debate over the drug interaction between proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) and clopidogrel. The meta-analysis by Kwok and Loke (Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics, 2010), the largest study on this subject to date, still cannot put this debate to rest. While it is certain that a pharmacodynamic interaction via CYP2C19 metabolism exists, the clinical significance remains unknown.

Future studies will need to examine individual PPIs and various patient subgroups. Specifically, omeprazole has the strongest data against its use, while pantoprazole may prove to be the PPI of choice. However, while there were not enough data in this meta-analysis to examine each PPI separately, Loke believes there will be no difference in risk between each PPI. Poor CYP2C19 metabolizers may be at higher risk for a clinically significant interaction.

As answers unfold, ethnicity, patient age, and genetic mutations may all come in to play, as well as PPI selection. For now, it seems wise to restrict PPIs to patients at highest risk of GI bleeds if they are also on clopidogrel, but specific guidelines or recommendations remain to be seen. ♥

2010 SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS

The 20th Annual Cardiology & Electrophysiology Symposium: Concepts & Controversies was held in Sacramento on Oct. 23. This year's Symposium was attended by over 150 medical professionals from around the Sacramento region. Symposium faculty included physicians from all over the country. Mercy physicians Dr. Scott Baron and Dr. Gearoid O'Neill hosted the event.



Michael Mangrum, MD, Gearoid O'Neill, MD, Shephal Doshi, MD, Arash Aryana, MD, (above), Scott Baron, MD, and Timothy Icenogle, MD, (below), at the 20th Annual Cardiology & Electrophysiology Symposium in Sacramento

SAVE THE DATE: 2011 CARDIOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

The 21st Annual Symposium "Cardiology & Electrophysiology: Concepts & Controversies" will be presented by the Mercy Heart & Vascular Institute at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento on Saturday, Oct. 8, 2011. Mark your calendars now – we hope to see you there. ♥

REFERRAL RESOURCES

The following Mercy programs are available for physicians to refer their patients for help managing heart disease.

Heart Smart and CHAMP®: 916.564.2880

Cardiac Conditioning:

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| Mercy General Hospital | 916.453.4521 |
| Mercy San Juan Medical Center | 916.537.5296 |

Pulmonary Rehabilitation:

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| Mercy General Hospital | 916.453.4268 |
| Smoking Cessation | 916.453.4927 |
| Mercy San Juan Pulmonary Rehab | 916.537.5299 |

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| ICD Support Group | 916.733.6966 |
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| Vascular HealthScreen | 916.733.6245 |
| Cardiac HealthScreen | 916.733.6245 |

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1.877.9HEART9

MERCY HEART & VASCULAR INSTITUTE

MERCY HEART & VASCULAR INSTITUTE
3939 J Street, Suite 220
Sacramento, CA 95819-3633

A member of CHW

