

SUMMER 2007

YAKIMA
REGIONAL
MEDICAL
& CARDIAC
CENTER

House Call

**Cardiac
Care**
to Count On

**Abdominal
Aortic Aneurysm**
A Name You Should Know

5 MINUTES
to save a life
One Patient's Story

**YAKIMA
REGIONAL**
The Valley's Regional Medical & Cardiac Center

15-minute ER Guarantee!

See page 2 for information about our emergency room bedside registration.

Welcome, New Physicians

A neurosurgeon and a hospitalist recently joined the Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center staff.

Eduardo Meirelles, MD, joined the neurosurgery team at Central Washington Neurosciences Clinic where he specializes in the treatment of brain and spine disorders. Board certified in neurosurgery, he completed his doctorate at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana, Illinois, and residencies at Yale University and Yale-New Haven Hospital in New Haven, Connecticut, and the University of Toronto in Toronto, Ontario.

New Hospitalist

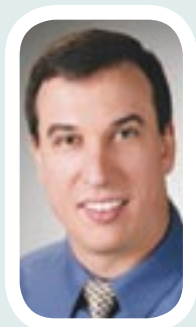
A board-certified physician from Central Washington Medical Group has joined the Yakima Regional team as a hospitalist, a physician who specializes in inpatient care in a hospital setting.

Mark Maiocco, MD, comes to Yakima Regional from Terrace Heights Family Physicians. He received his doctorate from the University of Washington and completed his residency at Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Oregon.

To find a physician on staff at Yakima Regional, please visit www.yakimaregional.org.

Eduardo Meirelles, MD

Mark Maiocco, MD



Easing Your Emergency Room Experience



Every time you step into the Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center emergency room (ER), you will see a nurse in 15 minutes or less—that's our guarantee. In order to make the ER process even better, Yakima Regional recently introduced bedside registration.

Bedside registration in the ER allows patients to rest in the comfort of a hospital bed while staff members walk them through the simple registration process, including obtaining insurance information and medical history.

"When you're sick, the last place you want to be is a waiting room," says Amanda Sears, admitting supervisor for Yakima Regional. "Bedside registration is one more way we can achieve our goal of caring for our patients in a friendly and efficient manner."

Visit www.yakimaregional.org to find out more about how Yakima Regional cares for you.

Hospital Named Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care

Blue Distinction is a nationwide program designed by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association to achieve two primary goals: engage consumers to make more informed healthcare decisions and collaborate with physicians and hospitals to improve quality outcomes and affordability.

"Yakima Regional's achievement reflects our commitment to working with doctors and hospitals that meet clinically validated quality standards and deliver better

outcomes in patient care," says Bill Akers, vice president, Health Care Delivery Systems

Premera Blue Cross recently named Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care™.

for Premera Blue Cross.

Each Center is selected based on rigorous evaluation of clinical data that provides insight into each facility's structure, processes, and outcomes.

"We are proud and honored to be selected as a Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care," says Jay Finnegan, Yakima Regional CEO. "We strive to provide the best quality cardiac care to the community, and our physicians, nurses, and other clinicians work hard every day to provide compassionate care while using research-based practices and state-of-the-art technology."

For more information on Yakima Regional's award-winning cardiac services, visit www.yakimaregional.org.





Cardiac Rehabilitation's Next Phase

Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center is pleased to introduce phase III of our cardiac rehabilitation program.

Whether you're recovering from a cardiac event or you want to establish heart-healthy habits, phase III cardiac rehabilitation may be just what the doctor ordered.

"We've had great success with phases I and II cardiac rehabilitation over the years," says Corinne Murphy-Hines, executive director of cardiovascular services at Yakima Regional. "Offering phase III rehabilitation is the next natural step, and it will play an incredibly important role in the health and well-being of our community."

THE NEXT LEVEL

Phases I and II cardiac rehabilitation involve education and monitored exercise for individuals who have suffered a cardiac event. Phase III, on the other hand, is for practically anyone concerned about heart health.

Offered at YAC Fitness, phase III rehabilitation provides a safe environment for past patients to continue improving their cardiac function under the supervision of knowledgeable exercise physiologists from Yakima Regional. In addition, individuals at risk for potential heart conditions or who simply want to improve their physical health can join phase III to prevent future heart events.

"Lack of activity, high cholesterol, obesity, and high blood pressure are modifiable risks for heart disease," Murphy-Hines says. "With phase III cardiac rehabilitation, you can control these issues before it's too late."

Phase III cardiac rehabilitation is available from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. To learn more, call (509) 575-3592.

Choosing Yakima Regional for Cardiac Care

How does Yakima Regional stack up against the rest for cardiac care? Our services and results speak for themselves.

Does the hospital offer emergency and elective angioplasty services?

Yakima Regional is the only hospital in Yakima County offering elective angioplasty and open-heart surgery. The hospital has a specially trained emergency team of catheterization lab physicians, critical care nurses, and technologists available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Does the hospital have a cardiac surgery program?

Choosing Yakima Regional, with a well-trained staff who performs

large volumes of similar procedures, improves your chances for a successful outcome. Our staff has an average of 16 years of experience and is able to perform elective angioplasty and other complicated endovascular procedures in our lab.

Does the hospital have a stroke program?

Yakima Regional offers a complete array of services for the prevention and treatment of stroke, including risk factor management, administration of clot-busting medications, and advanced neurosurgical procedures.

"Not only does our staff treat cardiac issues, they perform complicated procedures that include the peripheral and the cerebral areas," says Corinne

When you or those you care about need cardiac care, you look for the best. At Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center, you do not have to look far.

Murphy-Hines, executive director of cardiovascular services at Yakima Regional.

How do patients rate the hospital?

Yakima Regional's recent survey of catheterization lab patients revealed that 99 percent would return to the hospital should they need another procedure. In addition, 72 percent rated the care received as "excellent," and 24 percent rated it "very good."

For more information on Yakima Regional's award-winning cardiac services, please visit www.yakimaregional.org.

Soren Singel, MD, neurosurgeon on staff at Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center, saved the life of 11-year-old Billie Tweten after she suffered from a life-threatening brain bleed.



5 Minutes to Save a Life

When a brain bleed nearly claimed the life of an 11-year-old girl in central Washington, medical professionals at Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center used quick thinking and specialized expertise to save her life.

"I'm so grateful for the kindness and fast action of the medical professionals at Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center when my daughter, Billie Tweten, experienced a life-threatening brain bleed.

They communicated in terms we could understand and never seemed frustrated with our many calls to check on our daughter. Most of all, I'm thankful for the medical expertise that saved my daughter's life."

*—Amanda Beckner,
Billie's stepmother*

On December 21, 2006, 11-year-old Billie Tweten woke with a terrible headache. Her father and stepmother, Brett and Amanda Beckner, suspected their daughter was suffering from a migraine until Billie began to slip into unconsciousness.

"We were scared," says Amanda. "As an employee at a local hospital, I understand the seriousness of being unconscious. My husband and I rushed her to a nearby emergency department where a computed tomography (CT) scan showed Billie had a bleed in her brain. We were quickly transferred to Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center because of its excellent neurosurgery department and experience in treating this life-threatening condition."

READY AND WAITING

Within 15 minutes of receiving the call that Billie was on her way to Yakima Regional, Soren Singel, MD, neurosurgeon on staff at Yakima Regional, assembled his medical team

and prepared for her arrival. As soon as Billie came through the emergency department doors, Dr. Singel began assessing her condition. He found she was bleeding into her cerebellum (the part of the brain that controls motor coordination) and knew immediate action had to be taken.

To relieve the excess pressure caused by the bleed and build-up of spinal fluid in the brain, Dr. Singel drilled a hole in Billie's skull and inserted a drain (about the size of a cooked spaghetti noodle). The drain was enough to ease the pressure on Billie's brain stem and keep her alive until she could be moved to the operating room.

As Billie was prepared for surgery, Dr. Singel explained to the Beckners what was happening to their daughter.

"Billie had an arterio-venous malformation (AVM), which is an abnormal collection of blood vessels in the brain that can weaken and rupture over time," says Dr. Singel. "AVMs do not appear to be hereditary, but many

A New Weapon Against Brain Tumors

Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center offers BrainLab, one of the most advanced options available to navigate the brain and precisely locate tumors.

“BrainLab significantly reduces the risk of damaging delicate areas of the brain, such as those responsible for speech, limb movement, and memory, by allowing us to precisely target and remove tumors—even those too small for the naked eye to see,” says Michael Thomas, DO, neurosurgeon on staff at Yakima Regional. “This advanced technology also allows us to remove tumors more completely, which often contributes to better patient outcomes.”

HOW DOES BRAINLAB WORK?

The process begins with a patient undergoing a computed tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance image (MRI) scan. These images are then sent to

BrainLab’s state-of-the-art, computer-driven neuronavigation system, which constructs an image of the brain and tumor.

BrainLab often is used during surgery to guide surgeons in removing brain tumors with greater accuracy, which minimizes damage to surrounding healthy tissue. While most commonly used to increase precision during brain surgery to remove tumors, BrainLab also can be helpful in treating stroke or conditions that affect the ears, nose, and throat.

“It’s exciting to offer this level of technology to local residents,” says Dr. Thomas. “Many are comforted to know they can receive leading-edge care without leaving their community.”

For more information about the BrainLab technology at Yakima Regional, call (509) 248-3954.



Michael Thomas, DO, neurosurgeon on staff at Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center

people diagnosed with an AVM are born with it. Yet, many do not realize or know there is a problem until a vessel suddenly bursts and begins bleeding into the brain.”

LIFESAVING PROCEDURE

To repair the bleed and save Billie’s life, Dr. Singel performed a craniectomy to remove part of Billie’s skull. This relieved the pressure on her brain and allowed Dr. Singel to repair the damaged vessels. This procedure is extremely difficult to perform and few hospitals and surgeons are equipped for this surgery.

“Billie’s condition was serious,” says Dr. Singel. “The part of her brain that was bleeding was pushing against her brain stem, which controls life-giving functions such as breathing, wakefulness, and heart rate. When she arrived at the hospital, she had only about five minutes to live if we didn’t act quickly.”

Thankfully, the six-hour procedure was successful and Billie spent one

week in the intensive care unit before being transferred to a pediatric rehabilitation program to continue her recovery.

AN AMAZING RECOVERY

While Billie still has a few restrictions, including not being able to jump or ride a bicycle for a while, she’s back to being a normal kid and will likely not experience any negative effects of her brain bleed in the future.

“We’re excited to see how well Billie has recovered—she even went back to school in April,” says Amanda. “With just a little extra attention, Billie is doing great and is back to enjoying hobbies such as reading and playing clarinet in her school band. We are so thankful for Dr. Singel and the entire Yakima Regional staff who saved our daughter’s life.”

For more information about neurology services at Yakima Regional, call (509) 248-3954.



Soren Singel, MD, neurosurgeon on staff at Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center



Repairing a Ticking Time Bomb

An abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) can be a deadly condition with very few symptoms. At Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center, we offer a new procedure that makes treating AAA safer than ever before.

The long blood vessel that reaches from your chest into your abdomen is known as the abdominal aorta—an important vessel that carries blood to your abdomen, pelvis, and legs. Over time, this vessel can weaken and burst before you realize you have a problem, which can be fatal.

“When I perform a traditional open repair of an aneurysm, I typically make an incision in the abdomen or the side, locate the aneurysm, and then replace the weakened portion of the aorta with a bypass graft,” explains Justin A. Robinson, MD, FACS, vascular surgeon on staff at Yakima Regional. While the surgery is extremely effective—the graft remains in place without problems for more than 98 percent of patients—the risky surgery has a mortality rate of between 1 and 3 percent of patients.

However, thanks to endovascular stent grafting offered at Yakima Regional, surgeons are able to use minimally invasive techniques to help patients.

“Two years ago, we began offering an alternative, minimally invasive endovascular procedure known as endografting,” says Dr. Robinson. “We now can perform the procedure in the operating room as well as in the cath lab.”

IS THE CATH LAB SAFE?

The cardiac catheterization lab is traditionally used to perform minimally invasive procedures such as angioplasty and is equipped with some of the most advanced imaging equipment in the hospital. As a result, vascular surgeons and interventionalists are able to use state-of-the-art angiography, 64-slice computed tomography, and ultrasound to ensure the patient is a good candidate for endografting before the first tiny incision is made.

WHAT TO EXPECT

During a minimally invasive endograft procedure, the surgeon or interventional cardiologist makes tiny incisions in both of the upper legs and inserts catheter-like delivery devices through the incisions. The catheters are woven through the femoral artery to the site of the aneurysm, and the endograft is deployed in two parts. Once the two parts of the graft are attached together, the graft resembles a pair of pants with the “top” of the pants resting in the aorta, and the two “legs” of the pants remaining in the descending arteries to prevent blood leakage and to reduce pressure on the aneurysm.

“Because the procedure is performed in a hospital setting, we can easily take the patient straight to the operating room and change to an open procedure if complications occur,” says Tom McLaughlin, MD, FACC, interventional cardiologist at Yakima Regional. “Thanks to the advanced technology in the catheterization lab, patients have an option that offers a less-invasive procedure with less pain.”

To find a physician who can treat AAA, visit www.yakimaregional.org and click on “Physicians.”

A Silent Killer

Many patients with an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) will never experience symptoms. In fact, according to the Society of Interventional Radiologists, only 25 percent of AAA patients experience one or more of these symptoms when they’re diagnosed:

- persistent or irregular abdominal pain
- lower back pain that can radiate to the legs, groin, or buttocks
- pulse-like feelings in the abdomen

If the aneurysm does burst, you’ll probably begin experiencing these symptoms:

- sudden onset of abdominal or back pain
- excessive thirst with dry mouth and skin
- vomiting and nausea
- shock symptoms, which can include weakness, rapid heartbeat, shaking, and sweating

Should you experience these symptoms, go immediately to Yakima Regional’s Emergency Room for an accurate and timely diagnosis.

Blood Donation Comes Full Circle



As a territory representative and a partner with Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center in last winter's "Ultimate Gift" blood drive for the American Red Cross, JayAnn Merkle knew the importance of giving blood. She never imagined she would one day be on the receiving end of lifesaving blood products.

On the night of December 30, 2006, JayAnn was in a serious car accident while driving home from work. After being rushed to Yakima Regional, physicians discovered her spleen was badly damaged and was causing severe blood loss. Doctors considered removing her spleen, but instead decided to attempt a blood transfusion.

As a result, JayAnn received blood products that saved her spleen and possibly her life.

"I have donated blood for years and have given countless lectures on the importance of blood donation," says JayAnn. "Never in a million years did I

think I would need blood products for my own health."

SAVE LIVES TODAY

For JayAnn, her experience serves as a reminder of the importance of giving blood. According to the American Red Cross, a single blood donation can help save the lives of three people, yet many remain reluctant to give.

"Some people are fearful of blood donation, but I encourage everyone to look into donating," says JayAnn. "You never know when you or a loved one may need blood products."

For more information about blood donation, call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE.

Don't Be a **Stroke Statistic**

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the United States, yet many are unaware of their stroke risk. That is why the Central Washington Neurosciences Clinic in the Yakima Regional Medical Office Building is offering a comprehensive stroke clinic every second and fourth Wednesday from 8 to 11 a.m.

"Stroke symptoms are often mistaken for something else and many people are unaware of their risk for stroke," says Ann Acob, office manager for the Central Washington Neurosciences Clinic. "Sufferers sometimes don't recognize the symptoms, and by the time they seek medical attention, it's often too late for optimal medical therapy—that is why we are offering these important screenings."

AN HOUR TO BETTER HEALTH

The total screening time takes about an hour and includes filling out a risk assessment questionnaire and testing blood pressure, fasting blood glucose, and cholesterol levels.

A bilateral carotid duplex ultrasound is also used to detect blockages that lead to the brain. This scan is read by a Central Washington Neurosciences Clinic neurosurgeon who sends an ultrasound report to the patient, as well as recommendations on reducing risk.

"Our goal is to try to detect stroke risk in patients and educate them concerning how to recognize stroke symptoms," says Acob. "People find the clinic offers them peace of mind."

For more information or to schedule a screening, please call (509) 248-3954.



Cardiac Rehabilitation Classes

Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center offers the following free classes in the ICCU Conference Room. Call (509) 573-3592 to find out more about dates and times and to register.

Behavioral Health 101: Living Well

This class provides an orientation to the cardiac rehabilitation program. You will learn ways to work with emotions commonly experienced after a cardiac problem, complete a risk assessment, clarify values, and decide which classes to attend in the program. You will learn skills for monitoring your mood and week-to-week success in living an intentional life designed to improve your health and longevity.

Behavioral Health 102: Life Effectiveness Training

This class provides an opportunity for you to identify barriers to living an effective and enjoyable life, as well as how you deal with the barriers. You will learn new strategies for working with internal struggles (e.g., worry and negative thinking) that may block your progress. Mindfulness exercises and a review of problem solving strategies are two methods that support long-term behavior change.

Behavioral Health 103: Putting It All Together

This class helps you make a plan based on your experience in the cardiac rehabilitation program. You will develop a lifestyle plan and write a letter to your primary care provider concerning your plan for maintaining changes you have made in your life while in the program. This class includes a graduation ceremony to which your whole family is invited. Once graduated, consider attending this class when you need a booster or you want to support a new graduate.

Heart Basics

This class is designed to give you an understanding of how your heart works, as well as diagnosis and treatment options for heart disease. Risk factors, signs and symptoms of heart attack, and skills to assist you in living with your cardiac disease will be covered.

Heart-Healthy Eating

Changing what you eat is one of the most effective ways to reduce cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and weight. Today's foods and recipes offer many good-tasting choices. Topics to be discussed and information may include: nutrition guidelines, label facts, restaurant dining, and "good" versus "bad" fats. Also included are clarification of terms such as cholesterol, fat, unsaturated fat, etc. Learn how food and exercise work together to improve your numbers. (Please attend Heart-Healthy Eating before attending Label Reading.)

Label Reading

Learn what facts on food labels are important and how to apply this information to your individual needs.

One-on-One Nutritional Counseling

A registered dietitian is a reliable source of food and nutrition advice, can separate fact from fad, and can translate scientific findings into easy-to-understand information. One-on-one nutritional counseling with a registered dietitian can help you create an eating pattern and nutrition program designed especially for you.

Principles of Exercise

This class will highlight aerobic exercise, strength, and flexibility. Answers to the following questions will be addressed:

- How often should I exercise?
- How long should I exercise?
- How do I know how hard to exercise?
- What if I don't even like to exercise?

Stretch, Flex, and Relax!

This class discusses the importance of maintaining flexibility through stretching. In addition, the class covers ways to use stretching exercises as a form of relaxation when dealing with stress.

Understanding Your Medications

This class offers expert advice concerning problems frequently encountered with medications, how to make your prescription dollar count, medication rules to save your life, and what to do when medication becomes your worst enemy.

Tobacco 101

This class is designed to help you understand nicotine addiction and why it is so hard to quit. You will learn about the benefits of quitting tobacco use and tips on how to develop a successful quit plan.

Want more information? Call (509) 573-3592.

Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center

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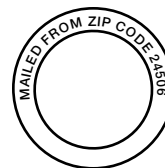
For health information, physician referral, employment opportunities, and more, please visit our Web site at www.yakimaregional.org.

House Call is published by Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center as a public service to the people of Central Washington. This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

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