

# be well

A DIGNITY HEALTH PUBLICATION | SPRING 2020

Fuel Better With  
Meal Planning  
Time to Get Moving

Our New ER:

**Bigger and  
Better**



**Dignity Health®**  
Mercy Medical Center  
Mt. Shasta

# Leadership Letter

HELPING YOU

# BE WELL

DEAR NORTH STATE  
COMMUNITY MEMBERS,



We will remember this spring as a time of unprecedented change in the way we accessed healthcare and worked together to help each other stay well. To protect our patients and our community, we

are offering FREE virtual health visits for anyone experiencing mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19, the illness caused by the new coronavirus. Symptoms include low-grade fever, cough or respiratory problems. To redeem this offer, use the code COVID19 on the payment portion of the registration process.

We have also made changes to our visitor policy at our hospitals to further limit the spread of COVID-19. Visit [dignityhealth.org](https://dignityhealth.org) for the latest policy changes.

Although we honor our physicians and nurses each year for the outstanding care and compassion they provide, we offer special thanks for those going above and beyond during this health crisis. Whatever the future holds in the coming months, know we are here for you and your family. Be well!

Sincerely,

Todd Strumwasser, MD

President

Northern California Division, Dignity Health

At Dignity Health, we believe the two pillars of humanity and kindness are the yin and yang of healing: powerful alone, but **better together**.

## North State News

### Mercy Medical Center Redding



Recovery from complex heart procedures can require hospital stays of one to two weeks. At Mercy Medical Center Redding, we are able to do some of the more advanced heart surgery procedures, such as mitral valve repair and the maze procedure, here in Redding, allowing patients to recover with their family and support system close by. From imaging before surgery to physiotherapy and occupational therapy after surgery, we help you and your loved ones get back to the lives you love, feeling stronger and ready for new challenges.

—G. Todd Smith, President, Mercy Medical Center Redding

### St. Elizabeth Community Hospital



Our philosophy of putting patients first has expanded to cancer care, allowing our community members access to targeted therapy without long drive times. In October, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital opened the Oncology and Infusion Center and broadened our services to include chemotherapy and immunotherapy. Both types of treatment are available in the newly renovated Outpatient Services Center. We look forward to ongoing growth as we continue to bring the latest in cancer care to you, close to home.

### Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta

Our long-term investment in our community's health is evident in the \$8 million Emergency Room expansion project, which has just passed the midway point of completion. Patients in crisis will benefit from the healing environment and the technology critical to their care as they are stabilized or admitted for treatment through our ER. Thank you for your patience as we complete the high-tech renovations that will ensure our ability to care for you in the coming decades.

—Rodger Page, President, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital and Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta

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# In-Season Strategy

PLAN YOUR MENUS AROUND SEASONAL PRODUCE TO HARVEST A BUMPER CROP OF NUTRITION, FLAVOR AND FUN.

**Would you like to make** mealtime more pleasant? Creating a meal plan each week can free you from the stress of making last-minute decisions about what to eat, rushing through preparation, running by the store for missing ingredients, or giving up and ordering takeout.

“Meal planning allows you to consider nutrition needs and palate preferences apart from the moment you need to make a fast meal,” said Jenna Henson Marshall, Clinical Dietitian at Dignity Health North State. “Following your plan makes for a lower stress cooking and eating experience.”



## ◀ Savor the Rainbow

Colorful fruits and vegetables do more than please the eye—produce packed with plant pigments such as carotenoids (yellow and orange), lycopene (red) and anthocyanins (blue and purple) also contain powerful disease-preventing properties.

“A diet that is varied and rich in vibrantly colored fruits and vegetables, is high in antioxidants,” said Marshall. “The brighter and more vividly colored produce packs high levels of plant chemicals called phytochemicals that help fight disease.”



## ▶ Homegrown Harvest

Looking to add a fresh, flavorful kick to your recipes without emptying your wallet? A great option is to grow some of your herbs, such as mint, cilantro and basil, at home. To learn more, visit [eatfresh.org](http://eatfresh.org) and search for “herbs.”



## ▶ Shop Smart and Save

Meal planning also benefits your budget. Buying just enough for one meal—or, buying in bulk so you can cook extra portions to freeze for later—prevents food waste. In addition, buying produce when it is plentiful may save you money.




## Divide and Conquer

If you are like many Americans, you could benefit from eating more fruits and vegetables but find recommendations about proper serving sizes and qualities confusing. The fact is, adding the right amount to your diet is simple.

“Just fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables,” said Jenna Henson Marshall, Clinical Dietitian at Dignity Health North State. “While fresh and in-season produce is fantastic, if unavailable, there are plenty of health benefits in frozen, dried, and even canned fruits and vegetables.”

A PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN CAN OFFER WELLNESS AND NUTRITION TIPS FOR EVERY SEASON OF YOUR LIFE. TO FIND ONE, VISIT [DIGNITYHEALTH.ORG/OURDOCTORS](http://DIGNITYHEALTH.ORG/OURDOCTORS).



ON AVERAGE,  
**27 PATIENTS SEEK  
CARE IN THE  
MERCY MEDICAL  
CENTER MT. SHASTA  
EMERGENCY ROOM  
EVERY DAY.**

Emergency Room Expansion Update:

## Inside Our New Addition

PHASE 1 OF THE MERCY MEDICAL CENTER MT. SHASTA EMERGENCY ROOM (ER) EXPANSION PROJECT CONTINUES. HERE IS A FIRST LOOK AT THE NEW ADDITION.

**In June**, Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta will increase the size of the ER by 50% with a 3,000-square-foot addition. The debut of the new space will mark the halfway point of an \$8 million ER expansion project, which will be followed by the renovation of the original, 2,000-square-foot department. Last renovated approximately 30 years ago, the original ER had become too small to comfortably accommodate the growing volume of patients we treat, especially given our status as a Level III Trauma Center serving the large geographic area between Redding and the Oregon border. The entire project is slated to be complete in spring 2021.

“In the new addition, we have added five treatment bays, including three private rooms, a dedicated ER waiting room, a centralized nurse station, and six bathrooms,” said Rodger Page, President of Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta. “The new space also incorporates a dedicated trauma room. Ours is one of a small number of Critical Access Hospitals in California that are designated as a Level III Trauma Center. The trauma room enhances our ability to handle mass casualty incidents and critical patient care.”

Complementing the addition has been the on-going upgrades to Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta’s imaging services, which are vital to both trauma and nontrauma cases. Over the last two years we have installed a 64-slice CT scanner, a new MRI machine, added digital mammography, new ultrasound equipment, a state-of-the-art nuclear medicine camera and two new X-ray rooms, including fluoroscopy.

“This expansion project helps to ensure we continue to have a high-functioning ER with the technology necessary to stabilize and treat trauma patients, and when necessary, transfer them for a higher level of care,” Page said. “We already have outstanding physicians available to treat these patients, including orthopedic surgeons on call, general surgeons, and full obstetrics and hospital medicine services.”

## Focused on Privacy and Comfort

One of our most important goals with the ER expansion project was to increase patient privacy, and we've delivered in a number of ways. We now have dedicated entrances for patients arriving by foot and ambulance. The ambulance entrance features a covered drop-off area that can accommodate two ambulances at once.

In the old ER, patients and families shared a waiting room with individuals who needed to have imaging exams or lab work. In the new addition, ER patients and visitors enjoy a dedicated, 420-square-foot waiting room with vending machines, bathrooms and an adjacent outdoor patio. The waiting room is filled with natural light, which helps create a soothing environment. The new addition also includes a private admitting area and several private and semi-private rooms, the latter features solid walls and an entry curtain for enhanced privacy. When complete, the ER expansion will include an isolation room to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

## Enhancing Efficiency

Having separate entrances for walk-ins and ambulance arrivals makes for a more efficient ER. Individuals in critical condition who arrive by ambulance go straight to the trauma room, but patients who need noncritical care and arrive via the walk-in entrance follow a different procedure.

"We have a triage room where a provider can assess walk-in patients quickly so they don't have to wait for patients with critical needs to be seen first," Page said. "After a provider triages walk-in patients, they may go directly to an ER bay or to imaging, as necessary."

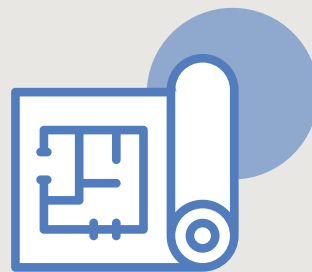
For Page, making ER care more private, comfortable and efficient is all about realizing a single, overarching goal: creating a healing environment for patients and providers alike.

"The ER expansion project is key to caring for patients here in Siskiyou County," he says. "It's one more way we're continuing to provide the excellent quality and experience they've come to expect."

**CALL 911 IF YOU EXPERIENCE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY. FOR NON-LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES, SCHEDULE AN ER ARRIVAL TIME USING THE INQUICKER ONLINE WAITING SERVICE AT [DIGNITYHEALTH.ORG](https://dignityhealth.org).**

## Expertly Designed

Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta leaders knew just who to turn to when drawing up plans for the Emergency Room (ER) expansion and renovation: the people who work there every day. Working with a local architecture firm, emergency medicine physicians, nurses and other staff members shared their input on the design of the ER to create a more patient- and provider-friendly department. Our ER team weighed in on details big and small, including the size and design of the rooms, the location of the centralized nursing station, and the placement of power outlets, light switches, medical gas systems and computers.





A woman with blonde hair in a ponytail, wearing a light blue hoodie and dark leggings, is running on a paved path. The background is a park with trees and a wooden fence, bathed in the warm, golden light of a setting or rising sun. The overall mood is peaceful and encouraging.

# Safely Spring Into Exercise

WELCOME WARMER  
WEATHER WITH  
AN EXERCISE ROUTINE  
TAILORED TO MEET  
YOUR PHYSICAL NEEDS.

**The sun is shining**, the breezes are warm, and swimsuit season is on the horizon, making spring the perfect time to embrace exercise. If you have taken a break during the cold winter months, you may be eager to jump back into your fitness routine with vigor. But going too hard too fast can result in injury and pain, sidelining you once again.

“As people return to activities they have previously done, it is important to remember to start slowly and work your way back up to previous levels,” said Molly Hartzler, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon at Dignity Health Medical Foundation. “When we take time away from exercise, we tend to become deconditioned. Allow yourself time to build your strength and stamina back up.”

## Options for Everyone

If you experience joint sensitivity caused by arthritis, joint replacement or a previous injury, exercise is not off the table. Dr. Hartzler recommends low-impact options, such as cycling and water-based exercises.

“The water relieves joint pressure but also provides resistance, which helps get the heart rate up in a safe and comfortable way,” Dr. Hartzler said. “Swimming, pool walking or running, and water aerobics are fantastic choices if you have access to a pool.”

“Engaging in exercise is extremely beneficial, and it does not have to be scary or intimidating.”

—Molly Hartzler, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon at Dignity Health Medical Foundation

If you do not have issues with your joints, a simple walk or hike is a great way to ease back into exercise. Plus, you do not have to purchase any special equipment or membership to participate.

Take time to find an activity that you like and can commit to doing regularly. The rewards you will reap are cumulative.

“In addition to improving cardiovascular health, exercise helps you regulate your blood sugar, improve your mood, manage your weight, and keep your bones and muscles strong,” Dr. Hartzler said. “In addition, exercise has been shown to decrease acute back and joint pain, as well as chronic pain issues. I have also noticed that exercise helps speed up recovery for my patients who are undergoing joint replacement surgery.”

### When to Slow Down

It might be overexertion, if you experience soreness or weakness that persists after several days of rest. If you notice shortness of breath that does not improve with rest, arm heaviness, chest pain or pressure, dizziness, nausea, or vomiting, call 911. Even when you pace yourself, exercise can sometimes bring on or exacerbate physical complications that should be addressed.

Speak with your primary care provider (PCP) about a referral to an orthopedic specialist. He or she can help you identify any orthopedic issues and redesign your exercise routine to better align with your individual needs and abilities. Your PCP or orthopedic specialist can also help you connect with physical therapists, trainers or other local programs to help you get in shape.

“Engaging in exercise is extremely beneficial but doesn’t have to be scary or intimidating,” Dr. Hartzler said. “Many patients would like to increase their activity level but aren’t sure how. People feel like they need to join a fancy gym or buy some special equipment. Start by doing something small like taking a short walk and then go from there. The key is to do a little each day, and the consistency can add up to big benefits.”

TO FIND A PHYSICIAN WITH DIGNITY HEALTH NORTH STATE, VISIT [DIGNITYHEALTH.ORG/OURDOCTORS](https://dignityhealth.org/ourdoctors) OR CALL 866.914.3627.



### Quick Tips for Joint Relief

Finding relief from arthritis pain may take less than two minutes, according to the Arthritis Foundation. Ideas to try include:

#### Leg Strengthening for Knee Support

- + Squeeze a ball between your knees for five seconds, then rest for five. Repeat six times.
- + Sit in a chair, extend one leg in front of you and pulse it upward toward the ceiling for 30 seconds on one leg. Then repeat on the other side.

#### Move to Improve Hip and Thigh Discomfort

- + March in place for one minute.
- + Take 10 steps forward and 10 steps back for one minute.

#### Upper Body Boost

- + Move your arms in a backward circular motion for 30 seconds.
- + Position your torso close to a table and make breaststroke motions with your arms on the tabletop for one minute.



### Three Cheers for Our Doctors and Nurses!

Celebrating our doctors and nurses has been an annual tradition at Dignity Health North State. We appreciate our doctors and nurses now more than ever as they have cared for us on the front lines of the COVID-19 health crisis.

In past years, we celebrated Doctors Week and National Doctors’ Day by displaying banners in their honor and hosting meals to say thank you. Nurses are recognized with the 2020 Heroes in Nursing Awards.

We look forward to honoring our doctors and nurses at a future date. For all the small and big things, thank you for all you do.



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# Scheduling your online mammogram is as easy as 1, 2, 3.

- 1 Go to **[dignityhealth.org/MtShastaMammo](http://dignityhealth.org/MtShastaMammo)**
- 2 Pick an appointment time that works with your busy schedule.
- 3 Call a friend and remind them to schedule their mammogram today!



**Hello humankindness®**