

GRMC welcomes Dr. Norman Ratliff

THIS PAST MARCH, Gila Regional Medical Center welcomed a new member to its cardiology team, Norman Ratliff, M.D. Dr. Ratliff is a noninvasive Clinical Cardiologist and is board certified in cardiology and nuclear cardiology.

SEVERAL STRATEGIES TO MANAGE HEART CONDITIONS

Dr. Ratliff provides services that help diagnose heart problems, such as echocardiography, stress testing, and nuclear cardiology. “Not only do I diagnose, treat, and help patients manage heart conditions, I also put a lot of emphasis on preventing those problems from occurring or recurring,” Dr. Ratliff says. “I work with patients to make lifestyle changes, such as improving their diet, controlling their weight, exercising, quitting smoking, managing their medications, and more to prevent serious heart issues.”

In certain instances, Dr. Ratliff uses preventive medicine to treat heart problems. “Rather than sending patients for an angiogram to open a blocked artery, there’s a lot of data showing that using medical therapy, lifestyle adjustments, and working to control blood pressure works just as well as an invasive surgical procedure,” he says.

TAKING A PATIENT-CENTERED APPROACH

Dr. Ratliff comes to Gila Regional Medical Center after spending more than a decade practicing cardiology in Minnesota. “For most of my career, I’ve worked in a very large medical group with dozens of cardiologists,” he says. “I’m a very patient-centered physician, so I’m grateful for the opportunity to spend more time with each individual patient and really get to know them here at Gila Regional Medical Center.” Rather than writing a prescription or scheduling patients for a test, Dr. Ratliff listens to each patient and takes an entirely personalized approach to managing their medical conditions.

“Coming to Gila Regional Medical Center has allowed me to establish relationships with my patients,” Dr. Ratliff says. For many people, heart



Dr. Ratliff’s family: Wife, Heidi Schroeder, with son, Alex, and Labradors Bear and Scooter at home

problems and risk factors, such as high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes, are chronic health conditions that require ongoing treatment and care. “I get to know all of my patients and provide a continuity of care that really makes a difference in their health,” he says.

Save the Date! August 22, 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Join us for the Gila Cardiology Open House! Visit the event calendar at www.grmc.org for a map.

GRMC Summer Concert Series 2013

Come to the Courtyard at Gila Regional Fridays at noon until 1 p.m. GRMC’s Holistic Care Committee is excited to bring uplifting local musicians to perform for caregivers and the community during the lunch hour every Friday from June through August.

FREE
LUNCHTIME
CONCERT
SERIES



Senior care: the challenges and options

Caring for older loved ones can be challenging, yet it is an important part of life.

Join Jennifer Agosta, M.D., Gila Regional Hospice Medical Director, and Siri Khalsa, Gila Regional Hospice Volunteer Coordinator, in a discussion that explores the stages of aging and what that behavior looks like.

Also discussed will be ranges of care possibilities pertinent to each stage, along with strategies for creating supportive and family-focused senior care that strengthens family bonds and promotes comforting memories of their time together as a family.



Jennifer Agosta,
M.D., Hospice
Medical Director



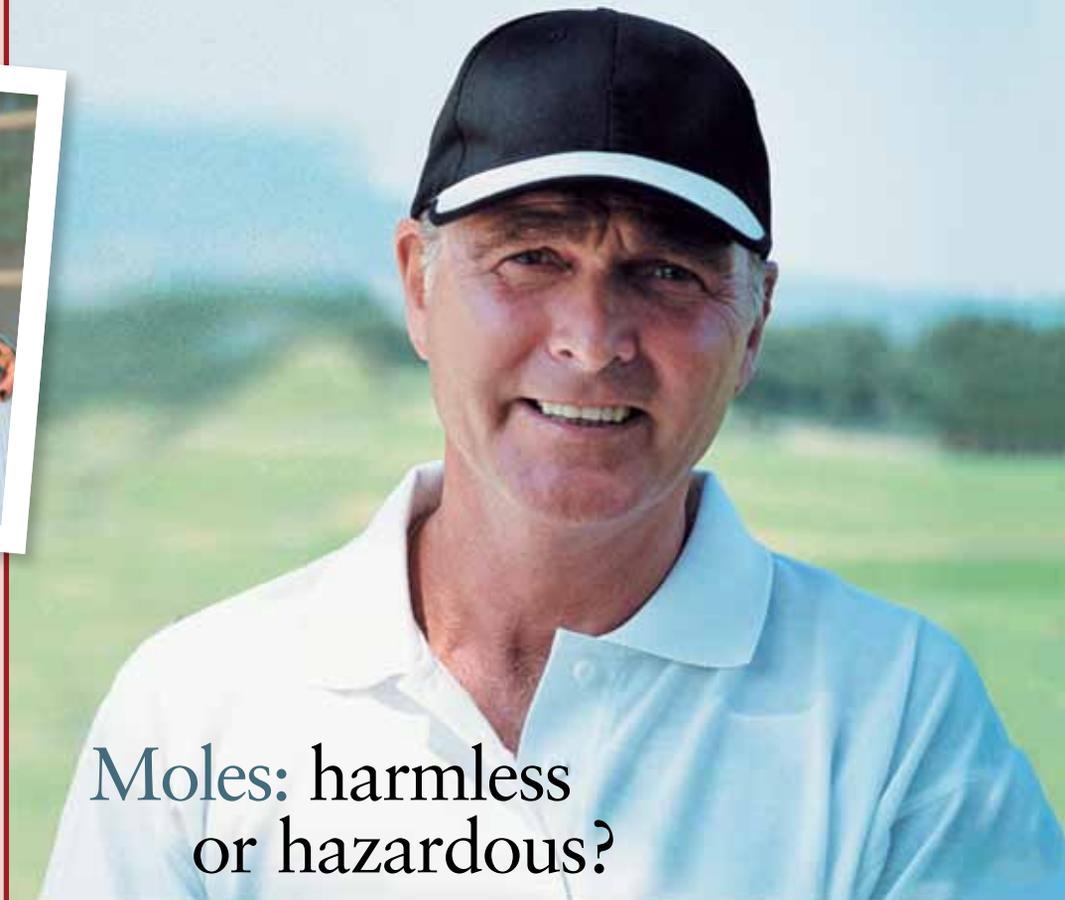
Siri Khalsa,
Volunteer
Coordinator

👉 Lunch and Learn

Where: Western Institute of Life Long Learning, WNMU Global Resource Center, ABC Room

When: September 25,
noon to 1 p.m.

Cost: Free



Moles: harmless or hazardous?

WHETHER IT'S A MOLE YOU'VE HAD since childhood or an age spot that recently appeared, most “skin things” are harmless. Still, it’s important to keep an eye on skin spots and growths. The effects of sun exposure on skin are cumulative, which means the risk of developing skin cancer increases with age.

WHO IS AT RISK?

No one is exempt from the risk for skin cancer. But a person who has any of the following should be extra cautious:

- A fair complexion, red or blond hair, freckles, or a tendency to burn easily
- A family history of skin cancer
- A personal history of three or more blistering sunburns as a child or teenager

PROTECT THE SKIN YOU'RE IN

If detected early, most skin cancers—even melanoma, the most serious form—are curable. That’s why it’s important to make regular skin self-exams a habit. A monthly self-exam should include every area of the skin, including the face, neck, hands, back, scalp, soles of the feet, and backs of the ears. A handheld mirror can help to check areas that are hard to see.

Specifically, any of the following warrants suspicion and a doctor’s attention:

- A mole that is bleeding or has changed color, become enlarged, or thickened
- A mole with an irregular pattern or multiple shades of color
- A sore that takes more than three weeks to heal
- A reddish patch that won’t go away, which may be painful or itchy
- A smooth bump that is indented in the middle
- A shiny, waxy, scarlike spot—it may be yellow or white with irregular borders

Those who are at high risk for skin cancer also may want to ask their doctor about scheduling periodic professional skin exams.

👉 **Make an appointment with a Dermatologist.** Visit www.grmc.org and click on the “Find a Physician” directory.

Hip or knee repair? protect your new joints

More and more Americans are getting artificial hips and knees when arthritis causes pain and prevents daily activities. The surgery is generally successful in relieving arthritis pain and restoring mobility. But patients need to take steps to protect new joints.

Protecting replaced knees and hips is particularly important for younger patients, generally those in their 60s. Most joint replacements last 15 to 20 years or more. But many younger patients want to be more active, which can cause greater wear and tear.

TAKE CARE AFTER SURGERY

Following an initial three- to six-week recovery period, patients usually return to most daily activities. While recovering, you'll need to take any extra precautions your surgeon has advised. Also follow any specific instructions, including rehabilitation exercises, prescribed by your doctor or physical therapist.

Most people reduce athletic activity after a joint replacement, but we all need exercise to stay healthy. "I recommend that my patients return to the activities that they love to do, within reason," says orthopedic surgeon Brian Robinson, M.D., of Southwest Bone and Joint Institute. Once you've gotten your doctor's OK to exercise again, keep these tips in mind:

- Walk as much as you like. For a more strenuous workout, add trekking poles to exercise your upper body, too.
- Water exercise and swimming are extra-easy on joints.
- Low-impact aerobics, dancing, bicycling and golfing can help keep you in shape without overstressing joints.

AVOID HIGH-IMPACT ACTIVITIES

Doctors usually tell joint replacement patients to avoid higher-impact activities, such as running, tennis, and racquetball. Also avoid jogging, skiing, and sports that involve jumping, like volleyball. Talk with your doctor about whether lifting weights is an option for you after surgery.

➔ **For more information, go online to www.grmc.org and download "The Joint Replacement Patient Education Booklet."**



Brian Robinson, M.D.



"This is a great swap for potato chips. Kale has many benefits, including cancer prevention and the ability to lower cholesterol. It's rich in antioxidants and full of fiber," states Liana Ryan, Billy Casper Wellness Center Personal Trainer.

Fat-Burning Chips

- 1 bunch fresh kale or
1 bag pre-chopped kale
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 275 F. Remove ribs from the kale and cut into 1-½-inch pieces. Or you can also purchase pre-chopped kale. Wash kale thoroughly. Dry the washed kale between two large towels.
2. After it has dried, place in a large bowl and toss with olive oil. Lay kale on baking sheet lined with parchment paper and sprinkle with sea salt.
3. Bake 10 to 20 minutes until crisp. Turn leaves halfway through. Watch closely.





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Women's Cancer Support Group

Facilitated by Kathleen Froese, M.D., this support group is open to all cancer patients, survivors, and family members. Sponsored by GCC Health Council, Gila Regional Medical Center, and New Mexico Department of Health.

For more information, call Grant County Community Health Council at **575-388-1198, extension 10** or email healthcouncil@grmc.org.

When: *First Thursday of each month, 6 to 7 p.m.*

Where: *Gila Regional Medical Center's Board Room, 1313 E. 32nd St., Silver City*

Cost: *Free*



Guardian Angels are among us

GRMC FOUNDATION has Guardian Angels assisting our Cancer Center patients. The Foundation collects funds that are restricted for use with the Guardian Angel Program (GAP). The GAP works in cooperation with the GRMC Cancer Center to help provide financial assistance to their patients who are enduring so much already.

The GAP funds help with the purchase of \$25 and \$50 Western Bank debit cards, which are given to GRMC Cancer Center patients experiencing financial stress caused by their medical treatments. The cards are used however the patient deems necessary, whether it be fuel for travel to appointments, cost

of medications, or even to keep food on the table at home.

“Being diagnosed with this disease can be a very difficult time for many of our patients, not only medically and emotionally, but also financially,” says Mike Torres, Gila Regional Cancer Center Director. “These generous debit cards from the Foundation enable us to help cancer patients in our community to buy the things they need most.”

➡ **To learn more about the GAP and the Foundation's projects, visit www.grmc.org/The-Foundation/Projects-and-Special-Events.**

Welcome Back, Dr. Wendler!

Gila Regional Medical Center welcomes Fred Wendler, M.D., back home. Dr. Wendler, a board certified general surgeon, practices at the Surgical Associates of Silver City. Call **575-388-3175** for an appointment.

GoodHealth

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Foundation President Jean Fortenberry, Gila Regional Cancer Center Director Mike Torres and GRMC Foundation Coordinator Ashleigh Garcia.