

LIVING WELL *from*

WINTER 2017

# northern nevada

## MEDICAL CENTER

*Love  
your  
heart!*

**Commit  
to healthy  
habits today**

***INSIDE:***

***Suffering from  
chronic back pain?***

This minimally invasive  
procedure may help

***Getting a leg up  
on varicose veins***

Treatment options  
to consider



**Quality counts.** NNMC is the first hospital in the nation to receive a certification from The Joint Commission for Back Pain! We are also the only hospital in Nevada to receive certifications from The Joint Commission in all of the following: Stroke (Primary Stroke Center), Spine Surgery, Joint Replacement – Hip and Joint Replacement – Knee. NNMC's Chest Pain Center is accredited by the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care (SCPC).

Compliments of



**Northern Nevada**  
M E D I C A L C E N T E R

## FROM THE CEO



Welcome to a new year and new resolutions! One of our resolutions is to continue offering a wide variety of programs and services for you and your family to stay healthy. We pride ourselves in putting our patients first, and it is through a team effort and collaboration with physicians, nurses and staff that we can provide high-quality care.

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERY  
Are you a candidate?
- 6 NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE  
Gary Jaco's story of freedom from pain
- 10 ASK THE DOCTOR  
Solutions for varicose veins

In this issue of *Living Well*, we honor the journey of NNMC patient Gary Jaco, who had experienced debilitating back pain for years. Board-certified Pain Specialist Dr. Ali Nairizi treated him with an innovative procedure at NNMC's Pain Management Center with wonderful results. And Northern Nevada Medical Group Advance Practice Nurse, Leslie Peek, offers simple tips for a healthy New Year.

This issue also features stories about advanced treatments for gastroesophageal reflux disease, as well as solutions for chronic venous insufficiency and varicose veins. We also offer pointers on heart health so you can put your best foot forward in the new year.

We hope you enjoy this publication and we look forward to helping you keep your healthy resolutions in 2017!

**Alan Olive**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Two physicians honored by *Healthcare Heroes*



Cardiologist **Colin M. Fuller, MD, FACC, FACP, FSCAI**, recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award by Healthcare Heroes. During his 35-year career, he has become a leading national researcher in sudden death among

high school and college athletes, and initiated the concept in the U.S. of pre-participation EKGs to help reduce playing field cardiac deaths.



**Sven Inda, MD**, was named Physician of the Year. Board certified in emergency medicine, he is the Chair of Emergency Medicine at Northern Nevada Medical Center and has been Medical Director for the Emergency Room since January 2015.



# NEW YEAR'S resolutions for anyone

Keeping it real and simple is the key



Leslie Peek,  
MSN, APRN,  
NP-C

A new year has begun, and with it, the pressure to make and keep resolutions. Board-certified Nurse Practitioner

Leslie Peek, MSN, APRN, NP-C, says by keeping your goals simple and realistic, you can set yourself up for a successful year. "Sometimes people make a long list, and after a few weeks, they are overwhelmed and feel defeated," she says. "Focus on what matters to you, and choose no more than two or three resolutions." Check out Leslie's suggestions to keep you motivated for the whole year.

- **Mix it up.** Try a new fitness routine, like yoga or tai chi. It not only improves your strength, flexibility and posture, but lowers your blood pressure and pulse rate. However, check with your healthcare provider before beginning any new routine.
- **Get more sleep.** Aim for about six to eight hours of sleep each night. Don't forget to turn off electronics at least an hour before bed.
- **Just say "No."** We live in a culture of being over-committed, and many people have a hard time saying "no" to all kinds of requests. "Saying 'yes' when you really want to say 'no' only causes you more stress," says Leslie. "It's okay to say no."
- **Learn to meditate.** It is great for relieving stress, increasing self-awareness and reducing negative emotions. It also teaches you mindfulness, which is being attentive to what is happening at the present moment. And, there are many free online resources to learn meditation.
- **Cut the sugary drinks – drink more water.** Staying properly hydrated is crucial to the body and the brain. Drinking at least 64 ounces of water daily helps reduce inflammation, aids in kidney function, and promotes cognitive processes. ■

Leslie Peek is accepting new patients and is on most of the area's health insurance plans, including Medicare. To schedule an appointment, please call 775-355-5120.

# Surgeons get a helping hand from da Vinci®

*Return to normal activities sooner with robotic-assisted surgery*

Robotic-assisted surgery may be an option for patients who require certain surgical procedures, and at Northern Nevada Medical Center, surgeons use the da Vinci® Si HD™ Surgical System.

Benefits of minimally invasive procedures compared to open surgery can include a shorter hospital stay; less blood loss; fewer complications; less need for narcotic pain medicine; smaller incisions and minimal scarring. Additionally, the increased precision possible with robotic-assisted surgery can help patients return to normal activities sooner.

There are a variety of specialty surgeons using the da Vinci at NNMC. For more information or to make an appointment, contact one of the surgeons listed in the sidebar.

**Robotic procedures now available at NNMC include the following:**

## **GYNECOLOGY**

- Hysterectomy (removal of uterus, including Single-Site®)\*

## **GENERAL SURGERY**

- Cholecystectomy (removal of gallbladder, including Single-Site®)\*
- Hernia repair
- Colorectal

## **UROLOGY**

- Prostatectomy (removal of prostate gland)
- Nephrectomy (removal of part, one or both kidneys)

\*Single-Site® surgery is performed only for certain operations with one small incision in the belly button. Check with your surgeon to see if you may be a candidate for Single-Site® surgery.

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if robotic surgery is right for you.

## **GENERAL SURGERY**

**Michael Murray, MD, FACS**  
**Wynter Phoenix, MD**

Northern Nevada Medical Group  
2385 E. Prater Way,  
Suite 205  
Sparks, NV 89434  
775-356-4888

**Robert Nachtsheim, MD**  
**Amanda Vanderclay, MD**

General Vascular Associates  
1500 East 2nd St.,  
Suite 206  
Reno, NV 89502  
775-789-7000

**Brian Juell, MD, FACS**  
**James Nunley, MD, FACS**  
**Thomas Rembetski, MD**

Premiere Surgical Specialists  
6554 S. McCarran Blvd.  
Reno, NV 89509  
775-324-0288

## **GYNECOLOGIC SURGERY**

**Elizabeth Hutson, MD**

Gynecologists of Reno  
6580 S. McCarran Blvd.  
Suite A  
Reno, NV 89509  
775-432-1343

## **UROLOGIC SURGERY**

**John Freeman, MD**  
**Angelo Kanellos, MD**

Urology Nevada  
10745 Double R Blvd.  
Reno, NV 89521  
775-850-6500

**Matthew McCormack, MD**  
**Timothy Redden, MD**

Urology Nevada  
699 A. Sierra Rose Dr.  
Reno, NV 89511  
775-689-3737



# Frequent heartburn?

*Don't ignore your pain – the Heartburn and Reflux Center can help!*



**If you are one of the millions of Americans who suffer from acid reflux, also known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), you know how painful it can be. Heartburn is the most common symptom, but others can include belching, sore throat from regurgitation of stomach acid, hoarseness and chest pain.**

GERD occurs when the one-way valve between the esophagus and stomach loosens and stops functioning properly, allowing stomach contents back into the esophagus. Over time, GERD can damage the esophagus lining which can lead to esophageal cancer. If you have GERD, there are treatments that can help relieve the discomfort and possibly reverse this condition.

## **Treating GERD**



**Michael Murray, MD**

“Medication and lifestyle changes can help relieve GERD symptoms. However, if you have moderate to severe GERD, there is an advanced surgical treatment that does not require incisions,” says Michael Murray, MD, a surgeon at NNMC trained to perform a procedure known as Transoral Incisionless Fundoplication (TIF). It is a minimally invasive procedure that takes less than an hour and typically requires a one-night hospital stay.

A device equipped with a tiny camera is lowered toward the stomach through the mouth, and a new valve is created by folding and suturing tissue where the stomach meets the esophagus. Dr. Murray says many patients return to normal activities in a few days and stop experiencing heartburn completely in about four weeks. Most patients may no longer have to take medication and can return to eating foods they couldn't previously tolerate. ■

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive surgery is right for you.

**Assess your GERD risk online! Just visit [www.nnmc.com/gerd](http://www.nnmc.com/gerd) and bring your results to your next doctor's visit. To make an appointment with Dr. Murray at the Heartburn and Reflux Center, call 775-352-5384. Come to a free lecture on GERD treatment – see the Calendar of Events on page 11.**



New technology resolves  
one local resident's

# CHRONIC BACK PAIN

*“This solution is nothing  
short of a miracle!”* — Gary Jaco

**G**ary Jaco suffered from chronic, debilitating back pain for about five years. He could barely walk to the mailbox and back, and spent most of the time lying down to minimize pain.

In December 2015, Gary moved from Las Vegas to Fallon and began searching for a pain specialist. He tried various pain relief techniques, including physical therapy, plasma replacement therapy, and epidural injections. Only one of the injections worked for a short while, but the pain returned.



Ali Nairizi,  
MD

Gary's wife found Ali Nairizi, MD, of Nevada Advanced Pain Specialists. “He has been amazing,” Gary says. “The first thing he told me was that he would make me better.” Dr. Nairizi informed Gary of an FDA-approved spinal cord stimulation therapy called HF10™ therapy. “This therapy delivers significant pain relief without any uncomfortable tingling or buzzing, known as paresthesia,” says Dr. Nairizi. The stimulator was placed for only a week, and within a day or two Gary's pain was nearly gone. Then the trial phase was over and the unit was removed. ►

Because the trial was so successful, Gary worked with his insurance company and was able to have the spinal cord stimulator permanently implanted. The surgery involved only two small incisions on his back, one for the pulse generator and one for the leads. After a short recovery, he is able to do all the things he could not do before because of the pain, including travel.

"Now I can function as a human being again. It is like getting my entire life back," Gary says.

Dr. Nairizi is the first physician to perform the procedure at Northern Nevada Medical Center. "This implant is very simple to maintain. It only takes 30 minutes to charge the battery. The battery will last approximately 10 years and requires only a small incision if a replacement is needed," says Dr. Nairizi.

Gary now sees Dr. Nairizi once a month for follow-up care. His goal was to stop taking pain medications, and he is slowly reaching that point. "Dr. Nairizi and his staff have been amazing. Any time we have a question, they are very helpful and supportive," says Gary. "Even while on vacation, Dr. Nairizi called me to see how I was doing. He is very responsive."



*Dr. Nairizi discusses with Gary Jaco and his wife, Carol, the source and location of Gary's chronic pain and how the spinal cord stimulator will improve it.*

Regarding his experience at Northern Nevada Medical Center, Gary states it was positive from beginning to end. "Everyone was so well-informed and they took great care of me. My wife has worked in healthcare and even she was impressed," he says.

"I can't say enough about the care I received from both Dr. Nairizi and Northern Nevada Medical Center. I will recommend others to him because I know he can help them conquer their pain as he helped me defeat mine." ■

**The Pain Management Center at NNMC offers a multidisciplinary approach to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of acute or chronic pain. For more information, call 775-356-4944, or visit [www.nnmc.com/painmanagement](http://www.nnmc.com/painmanagement).**

## WHAT IS SPINAL CORD STIMULATION?

Spinal cord stimulation is a treatment for chronic pain that may be recommended when other alternatives fail. A small device implanted near the lower back generates an electrical frequency that interferes with pain signals. There are several different types of systems available, so check with your doctor to see if you are a candidate and which one is best for you. **Learn more about this treatment at a free community lecture on February 8. See more on page 11.**



**Northern Nevada Medical Center's pain management program is the first in the nation to receive The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™ in back pain. This recognizes NNMC's dedication to continuous compliance with The Joint Commission's state-of-the-art standards.**

# QUALITY, CONVENIENT CARE, *Right in Your Backyard*

Introducing our two newest providers, accepting most of the area's health plans, including Medicare. Northern Nevada Medical Group (NNMG) has family medicine practitioners available at **two convenient locations in Sparks.**

## ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

*The practitioners below are ready to serve you and your family in Sparks:*

### NNMG SPANISH SPRINGS

5070 Ion Drive, Suite 200



**Danielle Barisone, APRN**

*Specializing in adult and geriatric medicine*

**Education:** University of Cincinnati

**Credentials:** MSN, APRN, CNOR

To schedule an appointment at the Ion Drive location, please call **775-355-5122.**

### NNMG SPARKS

5975 S. Los Altos Parkway, Suite 100



**Jennifer Harrington, APRN**

*Specialty: Family Medicine*

**Education:** University of Nevada, Reno

**Credentials:** MSN, APRN


To schedule an appointment at the Los Altos Parkway location, please call **775-355-5121.**

*Quality, convenient care – right in your backyard.*



NORTHERN NEVADA  
*Medical Group*





# February is American Heart Month



Show your heart some love by committing to healthy habits. Amr Mohsen, MD, FACC, RPVI, a board-certified Interventional Cardiologist with the Northern Nevada Medical Group, recommends the following six things to help control the risk factors associated with heart disease.

- 1. Don't smoke.** Quitting smoking is the number one thing you can do to prevent heart disease.
- 2. Eat heart-healthy.** Say yes to more fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and no to processed foods. Also, reduce your intake of red meat, salt, sugar and high-fat foods.
- 3. Get moving.** Aim for at least 30 to 60 minutes of exercise most days of the week.\* This can help with your weight and benefit your heart at the same time, a win-win!
- 4. Manage stress.** Take a deep breath ... and look for healthy ways to manage stress in your life, such as exercise,\* meditation and hobbies.
- 5. Get annual checkups.** Make sure your yearly visits with your doctor include lab work that screens for blood glucose and cholesterol levels. (see sidebar).

- 6. Know your numbers.** Your doctor can tell you what your blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides and any other pertinent numbers should be (see sidebar). Triglycerides are a form of fat in the blood that is a marker for increased risk of plaque in the arteries. Very high triglycerides (400 or 500+) put you at risk for pancreatitis. ■



Offices are located at 2385 E. Prater Way, Suite 302, Sparks, NV 89434, and 5575 Kietzke Lane, Reno, NV 89511. To schedule an appointment with Dr. Mohsen, please call 775-356-4514.

## MOST HEALTHY ADULTS HAVE:

- Blood pressure less than 120/80
- Total cholesterol less than 200 mg/dL
- HDL, the "good" cholesterol, higher than 40 mg/dL in males and higher than 50 mg/dL in females
- LDL, the "bad" cholesterol that clogs arteries, lower than 100 mg/dL

\*Consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

# Get a leg up on your **VARICOSE VEINS**



“Dealing with varicose veins can be tough,” says **Wynter Phoenix, MD**, a board-

certified General Surgeon with Northern Nevada Medical Group. “Even though you may worry less about their appearance in the winter, the discomfort of this condition can affect you all year long.” If you have questions or concerns about your veins, now can be a good time to talk with your doctor about treatment options.

## **Q: What is chronic venous insufficiency?**

This condition occurs when the valves inside your veins—which support blood flow back to the heart—become weakened or damaged. As a result, blood can leak backward and pool in the veins. Along with varicose veins, symptoms may include: burning or itching of the skin; color and texture changes to the skin; swollen ankles and/or legs; and poorly healing wounds.

## **Q: Is it just a cosmetic issue?**

The visual appearance of blue or bulging varicose veins can be troubling for many people who suffer with them, but there can be other health aspects, including pain, achiness and a heavy feeling in your legs. For some patients, varicose veins can be a symptom of certain venous diseases, such as chronic venous insufficiency (CVI).

## **Q: What treatments are available for varicose veins?**

Conservative treatments like elevating your legs and wearing compression stockings can provide temporary relief, but they do not address the underlying problem of venous insufficiency. For more lasting relief, an outpatient procedure using radiofrequency ablation may help.

## **Q: What is minimally invasive segmental radiofrequency (RF) ablation?**

With this procedure, the doctor inserts a catheter through a small opening in the skin and uses radio frequency energy to heat the vein wall, causing the damaged vein to close and your body to reroute the blood through other healthy veins. Patients tend to experience less pain, bruising and scarring, and quicker recoveries than with traditional treatments. Talk with your doctor about what treatment options would be best for you. ■

## Clinical Classifications



Varicose Veins



Swelling



Skin Changes



Ulcer

**Dr. Phoenix is specially trained in the diagnosis and treatment of CVI. To schedule an appointment with him, please call 775-356-4888.**



## Winter 2017

### FEBRUARY



#### New options for back and leg pain relief

Wednesday, February 8  
6 – 7 p.m.

Presenters:



Denis Patterson, DO,  
and Ali Nairizi, MD,  
Board-certified Pain  
Medicine Specialists,  
Nevada Advanced Pain  
Specialists.

Learn more about some of the most remarkable improvements in relieving chronic back pain using spinal cord stimulation and dorsal root ganglion implants.

### MARCH



#### Gastroesophageal reflux disease? When is it time to consider treatments beyond medications?

Thursday, March 9  
6 – 7 p.m.

Presenter: Michael Murray, MD,  
General Surgery, Northern Nevada  
Medical Group.

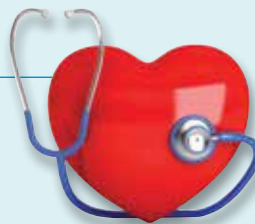
Chronic heartburn or acid reflux can be the sign of gastroesophageal reflux disease. Learn about a new, innovative treatment that is an alternative to prolonged medication.

All events, except for health fairs, are held in Suite 201 of the Sparks Medical Building at 2385 East Prater Way in Sparks. Healthy snacks will be provided. **Registration is required for all events except health fairs.** Call **775-356-NNMC (6662)** to register. Events are **FREE** of charge!

## HEALTH FAIRS AT NNMC

First Thursday of the month  
March 2, April 6  
7 – 10 a.m., NNMC Lobby

For a full list of screenings and pricing, visit [www.nnmc.com](http://www.nnmc.com) and click on Community Events.



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