Isn’t It Grand?

Renovation and Expansion of Emergency Center Completed

Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital’s Emergency Center was originally designed to accommodate 25,000 patients annually, but over the past decade, nearly double that number were seen each year.

“As the demand for care grew, we expanded the department, but it was still cramped and didn’t provide a seamless flow for patients, so it was time for an upgrade,” says Harparminder Chadha, M.D., medical director of Memorial Hermann Northwest’s Emergency Center.

Collaborating with a design firm that has worked with more than 200 emergency departments across the country, Memorial Hermann Northwest created a state-of-the-art Emergency Center that offers efficient admission, treatment and discharge for patients and their families.

Oh, Happy Day!

On April 8, the Emergency Center’s grand opening was celebrated by administrators, community representatives and staff members as a new era for emergency services.

“I never saw so many smiles in my life as I did at that ceremony,” says Susan Jadlowski, Memorial Hermann Northwest CEO. “It was exciting to be with emergency medicine professionals who now have beautiful and spacious surroundings to support the excellent care they provide.”

High-Tech Emergency Care

As the service area’s only state-designated trauma center, the Emergency Center is equipped with advanced technologies and services, including:

- Two triage areas to assess patients quickly, even at peak hours
- Three trauma rooms with advanced monitoring equipment, including a flexible utility boom system that allows 360-degree access to trauma patients
- A five-bay ambulance area to accommodate simultaneous arrivals
- Online check-in called ScheduleNow for arriving emergency patients: memorialhermann.org/schedulenow

Staffed by a team of affiliated, board-certified emergency medicine physicians and experienced nurses, the Emergency Center reflects Memorial Hermann’s ongoing commitment to the health of the community.

“We are very proud that our environment now matches our outstanding emergency care,” says Dr. Chadha. “Anyone who came here for emergency services before will be overwhelmed by the transformation!”

COMFORTING CARE

The Emergency Center renovation added 12,000 square feet of extra space and includes patient-friendly amenities, such as a convenient drop off area, private patient rooms, and updated reception and results waiting areas. Learn more about what sets us apart by visiting memorialhermann.org/northwest and clicking “ER” in the menu on the left.

Above: One of the new 200-square-foot trauma bays with state-of-the-art monitoring equipment in which affiliated EC physicians and trauma surgeons can provide highly advanced care for even the most critical patients. Nurses have access to some of the most advanced monitoring systems available on the market, including telemicine capabilities for rapid neurology consultations with remote specialists.
How to Control Pollens and Molds – and Manage Your Asthma

When you have asthma, your airways may be sensitive to tiny, lightweight particles in the air, such as pollens and molds. In fact, these airborne allergens can leave you struggling to catch your breath.

The wind carries pollen that comes from weeds, grasses and trees. Plants can release pollen from early spring to late fall – and year round in warm climates. Like pollen, mold spores are in the air during the growing season and year round in warm climates. But mold also can grow indoors in damp, moist areas of your home year round.

“People who are allergic to pollen or molds can have a variety of symptoms, including sneezing, congestion or a runny nose, watery eyes, and itchy eyes, nose and throat,” says Saffana Hassan, M.D., a physician affiliated with Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital. “If you also have asthma, these allergens can cause your airways to swell and trigger an asthma attack.

What Can You Do to Control Your Allergies?

With a little planning, you can take control of your allergies. The best way to prevent an allergic reaction – and an asthma attack – is to avoid or reduce your exposure to triggers such as pollen and mold.

Here are some tips to keep you breathing easy:

• Check your daily weather reports to find out local pollen and mold counts. When counts are high, stay indoors or reduce your outdoor activity.
• Even when pollen and mold counts are low, it’s a good idea to avoid yard work, such as mowing the grass or handling gardening material like compost and mulch.
• When you come in from outside, wash your skin and hair, if possible.
• Turn on the air conditioner at home and in your car. And close windows and doors when pollen and mold counts are high.
• Use an exhaust fan in damp household areas that may contain mold, such as the kitchen, bathroom, basement or other moist areas. Don’t use a fan that draws in outdoor air.
• Be proactive: See your allergist and start allergy prevention early. Don’t let the allergy season get you down.

Don’t Suffer This Summer

An affiliated physician can help you tame your allergies and keep your asthma under control. To schedule an appointment, call 713.222.CARE (2273).

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Doctors write five times more prescriptions for testosterone today than they did in 2000. About 3 percent of U.S. men age 40 and older now take the hormone. Yet relatively little is known about the possible health effects of long-term use. A recent study suggests that there might be heart health risks, at least for certain men.

The study, published in *JAMA*, included more than 8,700 men treated by the VA healthcare system. All had previously undergone a heart procedure called an angiography. Many also had a prior history of heart disease or diabetes. Their average age was early 60s.

In this high-risk group, men who started taking testosterone were more likely to die or have a heart attack or stroke than those who didn't take testosterone. It's not the first time an alarm has been sounded. Another recent study of testosterone therapy in older men was stopped early due to a jump in heart problems.

### What It Means for You

Testosterone therapy is prescribed to treat low testosterone. “It’s common for testosterone levels to drop with age,” says Van Tran, D.O., a physician affiliated with Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital. “Low T” can also have other causes, including testicular injury, obesity, diabetes, liver or kidney disease, cancer treatment and medication side effects. Symptoms of low testosterone include:
- Loss of sex drive
- Weak erections
- Drop in energy
- Reduced muscle
- Increased body fat
- Weak bones
- Depression

“These symptoms can have other causes,” says Dr. Tran. “A blood test is needed to tell whether low testosterone is to blame. If it is, discuss your options with your doctor.” More research is needed to study how taking testosterone affects heart health in older, high-risk men. If you’re considering testosterone therapy, weigh the pros and cons carefully with your doctor.

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### New CEO at Memorial Hermann Northwest

In February, Susan Jadlowski became the new CEO of Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital. She replaces Gary Kerr, who was recently appointed CEO at the Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital. Jadlowski worked closely with Kerr as the hospital’s chief operating officer and chief nursing officer for the hospital. With more than seven years experience at Memorial Hermann Northwest, she is ready to lead the team of one of the area’s largest hospitals.
Migraines: How to Stop Them Before They Start

Many experts think migraines are caused by an abnormal release of serotonin and other brain chemicals. Others contend that these intense headaches occur when blood vessels in the head or neck tighten. A super-sensitive nervous system also plays a major role.

“Migraines tend to run in families. While sufferers have no say about their relatives, they can take steps to prevent attacks,” says Pamela Blake, M.D., a neurologist affiliated with Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital.

Recognize Triggers
One of the first steps in preventing migraines is to identify – and then avoid – headache triggers. For example, some people are affected by:

- Certain foods, including chocolate, dairy products, citrus fruits, onions and nuts
- Too much caffeine, or too little, in the case of withdrawal
- Stress
- Certain medicines for high blood pressure and other conditions
- Bright lights or loud noises
- Strong smells, such as perfume

In women, hormonal changes often cause headaches. “This helps explain why women are more likely than men to get migraines. Medications are available that can adjust hormone levels and help prevent migraines,” says Dr. Blake.

More Prevention Strategies
If migraines are frequent, especially severe or long lasting, a doctor may prescribe medicines to prevent them. The following prevention tips also might help:

- Set aside time each day to relax and relieve stress.
- Exercise regularly, but don’t overdo it. Too much exercise may trigger migraines.
- Avoid too much or too little sleep.
- Eat a low-fat diet. Some fatty foods, such as fried foods and chocolate, may set off a chemical process in the body that leads to migraines.
- Don’t skip meals. This can affect blood sugar levels, which can cause migraines.

Dr. Blake specializes in neurology.

The word headache does not begin to describe the knife-like, throbbing pain that many migraine sufferers experience. Sunlight and ordinary noises suddenly become unbearable. And nausea often follows. The attacks can take over a person’s life for hours – or even days.