COMMUNITY MATTERS

HOLISTIC HEALTHCARE
By Mary Sterhan

In such a diverse world of beliefs and needs, it's important to offer health care solutions that incorporate options. Combining world-class physicians, leading-edge technology and an award-winning facility with a patient-centered approach provides the environment for optimal healing.

Holistic care providers work with the "whole" person, taking into consideration his or her mental, physical and social conditions prior to developing a care plan focused on returning the patient to wellness. North Valley Hospital takes holistic care a step further by incorporating integrative medicine that complements the high caliber physicians and technology found at our hospital. By taking proactive measures to facilitate this kind of care, our providers are able to best serve our patients' needs. Even before North Valley Hospital was a Planetree affiliate, the staff worked collaboratively to provide a holistic approach to medical care. Becoming an affiliate has allowed us to network with like-minded medical facilities around the world to grow and develop richer ways to focus on healing the mind, body and spirit.

Therapeutic massage is one of the tools available to provide relaxation and enhance healing. The North Valley Hospital massage program has grown leaps and bounds since its inception in 2005. Massage therapy has been shown to reduce anxiety, reduce mental and physical fatigue, improve circulation for faster healing and relieve stress. We offer free 15-minute massages to our patients throughout the hospital. Massages are offered prior to surgical procedures and after births. Also, patients who stay overnight in our medical-surgical-pediatrics rooms may take advantage of a massage with a doctor's approval. Family members of patients may also partake for a nominal fee.

In 2008, acupuncture and acupressure were approved as treatments for pain and nausea at North Valley Hospital. With a physician's order, patients can receive acupuncture for post-operative pain (including C-Section), fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, chronic menstrual cramps, chemotherapy-induced nausea/vomiting, headache, migraines, tennis elbow, lower back pain and post-operative dental pain. After receiving requests and input from our patients, we recently added acupuncture for labor pain.

With an increase of individuals experiencing allergic or intolerant reactions to pain medication, acupuncture offers a gentle solution to boost the body's natural painkillers and nausea suppressant. The applications allowed at North Valley Hospital are scientifically measured with supported results. Combining integrative therapies for pain and nausea has truly benefited our patients.

Additional complementary therapies are offered at North Valley Hospital to accentuate our holistic approach. These include the certified dog visitation program; staff chaplain and clergy on call network; Community Health Library, music therapy and much more.

Sometimes, it's just not possible to leave a bedside. That's why North Valley Hospital offers family nourishment stations in the Birth Center and Medical-Surgical-Pediatrics units to provide quick food for those supporting their loved ones. And when it's time to go home, we help patients and caregivers spend time focusing on healing rather than cooking by offering to-go meals for outpatient surgery patients and new parents.

At North Valley Hospital our commitment to patient-centered care means caring for the "whole" patient - mind, body and spirit. So, when you think of healthcare, keep in mind your mental well-being too.

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