A New Standard of Care

Full Range Gastrointestinal Laboratory Opens

Eisenhower Medical Center's new onsite, 10,000-square-foot gastrointestinal (GI) laboratory focuses on safety, quality, high standards of care, privacy and convenience, all in a quiet, private atmosphere on the lower level of Dolores Hope Outpatient Care Center. "We are pleased to better serve the needs of our community through state-of-the-art technology and leading edge diagnostic interventions in our new facility," states Anh Duong, MD, Gastroenterology Section Chief, Eisenhower Medical Center. Dedicated to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and management of digestive diseases, the laboratory provides support to Eisenhower's gastroenterologists.

Patient comfort and safety are key components of care. Individual pre-procedure and recovery rooms add to patient privacy and alleviate much of the apprehension typical to many gastrointestinal procedures. "Our new GI laboratory is not only beautiful, it is well designed," says Sharon Dukovan, RN, GI Clinical Coordinator. "The colors and décor provide a warm, calming environment for our patients. Our greatest asset is the experienced and caring staff — we have the latest technology in the hands of people who care."

In its opening month of March, the GI laboratory screened 150 cases. The laboratory houses four procedure rooms, three of which provide high-definition endoscopies, colonoscopies, and therapeutic treatment of gastrointestinal conditions. The fourth procedure room is dedicated to ERCP (endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography), a specialized technique used to study the ducts (drainage routes) of the gallbladder, pancreas, and liver (the drainage channels from the liver are called bile ducts or biliary ducts), including the presence of any type of abnormalities in the upper and lower gastrointestinal tract. In the past, the information gathered during an endoscopic procedure would have only been available by using a highly invasive procedure. Using an endoscope (flexible thin tube) allows the physician to see inside the GI tract, viewed on a color TV monitor. Through minimally invasive advances, recovery time for patients is minimal and it is possible to access and utilize the collected data immediately.

Eisenhower Medical Center is the first hospital in the Coachella Valley to offer HALO ablation, a preventive option for Barrett's Esophagus, a known precursor to esophageal cancer. Individuals suffering from heartburn (acid reflux, gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD) are at risk for developing Barrett's Esophagus. As no warning signs are exhibited, it is only through an upper endoscopy procedure Barrett's Esophagus can be found and a physician can determine the diagnosis. Clinical studies show that the Barrett's tissue can be completely eliminated using HALO in nearly 100 percent of patients. Previously, there were not many viable treatment options for Barrett's Esophagus.

"This dedicated gastrointestinal laboratory will help Eisenhower provide the most efficient and complete services to our Eisenhower community for years to come," says Dana Folstrom, Director, GI Services

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