

Eisenhower's Same Day Surgery Center

VIP Care for Patients and Families



Dr. Peter Schultz and Dr. Karl Schulz, brothers, are two of many Eisenhower surgeons available at the Same Day Surgery Center.

Remember the days when surgery usually meant a lengthy hospital stay and an even longer recovery? Thankfully, times — and technology — have changed. As a result, it is now more common to have surgery in an outpatient facility, go home the same day, and be back to your regular activities in a matter of days instead of weeks, thanks largely to advances in minimally invasive surgical techniques and anesthesia. In fact, nearly 58 percent of all surgeries performed in community hospitals in 2007 (the most recent year for which data are available) were outpatient procedures, according to a report published last year by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Here at Eisenhower Medical Center, the Same Day Surgery (SDS) Center offers a welcoming facility specifically for outpatient surgery. Occupying the entire second floor of the Dolores Hope Outpatient Care Center on the Eisenhower campus, the Center has four fully-equipped operating rooms as well as a small treatment room just for laser eye surgeries. Last year, 3,245 same-day surgical procedures were performed here, likely making it one of the busiest outpatient centers in the Coachella Valley. But it is the attentive care that truly sets Same Day Surgery apart.

"We treat every patient and family member like a VIP," says Katy Hentz, RN, BSN, Director, Outpatient Surgical Services. "We realize it is hard for the family member who has to sit in the waiting room, unsure of what is going on, so we make sure they're kept informed and comfortable."

Hentz explains that the waiting room is equipped with six reclining chairs, and that she and her staff will bring out warm blankets or pillows if it helps someone feel more comfortable. "I personally go into the waiting room several times a day to see if family members need anything, and to keep them updated about their loved one's condition," she says.

The SDS Center is staffed by 30 employees, including 19 registered nurses, many of whom have worked there for a decade or longer. "We have low turnover because the nurses are dedicated to the patients, physicians, and each other," notes Hentz.

"We also have a wonderful group of volunteers," she continues. "One volunteer makes little quilts for all of our pediatric patients using material donated by our nursing staff. One of our nurses, a breast cancer survivor who lost her hair during treatment, makes little surgical caps for pediatric patients. She also makes caps for some of our adult patients, and our staff donates the material. Everyone really goes out of their way to make patients feel important."

Surgeons also feel strongly about the level of expertise and services available through the Same Day Surgery Center.

"Our referring doctors and patients place their trust in our surgical care, and we trust Eisenhower's Same Day Surgery Center for the way they help us provide that care," says Karl Schulz, MD, a Board Certified General Surgeon with more than 25 years of experience. "The Center provides outstanding anesthesia support that allows us to operate without complications on very sick and often elderly patients."

"Another important benefit is that, unlike some freestanding surgery centers, here we have the full resources of Eisenhower Medical Center behind us," Dr. Schulz continues. "That means that if one of our patients requires immediate specialty care or sophisticated high-tech equipment, it's available. If a patient has post-operative pain, nausea or is uncomfortable about going home or has medical complications, it is a simple matter to admit them to the hospital."

"The nurses are very dedicated; they provide quality care and emotional support to both patient and family," he adds. "In fact, many of my patients comment that the care they've received at this Center is the best care they've ever experienced." Fortunately, patients who are facing elective surgery can choose where to have their procedure performed.

"Some patients aren't aware of this," says Hentz. "But most surgeons in the Valley do their procedures at more than one location, and it is up to the patient to choose where to have their surgery. So, patients can choose to come here."

And Dr. Schulz shares a little known fact. "This is where most of the doctors come to have their own surgery performed," he says.

The Types of Surgery Performed at Eisenhower's Same Day Surgery Center

A wide range of elective surgery procedures — many of them performed laparoscopically — are available at the Center, including:

General surgery including gallbladder removal, hernia repair, colectomy (removal of part or all of the colon), port-a-cath placement (a device that's implanted under the skin through which blood may be withdrawn and drugs infused without repeated needle sticks), appendix removal, breast disease surgery

Ear, nose, throat (ENT) surgery including procedures to treat obstructive sleep apnea, snoring and/or inability to breathe through the nose, chronic sinus infections, problems of the larynx, nasal polyp removal, septoplasty (surgery to straighten the septum, the partition between the nasal cavities), tonsil and adenoid removal, biopsy of tongue and tonsil cancers

Urological surgery including procedures to improve urinary control issues in men and women, treatment of kidney stones, vasectomy, biopsy of the prostate

Cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery including facelifts, rhinoplasty (nose) and blepharoplasty (eye)

