



Health Matters

at Aspen Valley Hospital

Fall 2009



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Affiliations bring world-class cancer care to Aspen Valley Hospital

Question: When you have cancer, what is better than comprehensive state-of-the-art care?

Answer: Comprehensive state-of-the-art cancer care **close to home**.



The IMRT is a state-of-the-art cancer treatment method that delivers doses of radiation directly to cancer cells in a very targeted way.

At Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH), we know that when it comes to cancer, people want a quick and accurate diagnosis, information about their best treatment options, and the support of their family, friends, and healthcare providers. That's why we've expanded our care for cancer patients through affiliations with two leading Colorado cancer centers: Shaw Regional Cancer Center in Edwards, and Invision Sally Jobe in Denver. In addition, oncologist Doug Rovira, MD, now has a full-time presence in the valley with clinics at AVH on a weekly basis.

Shaw and Sally Jobe share similar philosophies with AVH when it comes to cancer care, both recognizing that while some specialized services may require travel, it is usually in the best interest of the patient to receive care locally.

"Cancer care is more than just a physician and a piece of equipment. It's about a community," says Joe Deuschle, Vice President of Shaw Regional Cancer Center, in Edwards. "The major difference between large institutions and Shaw is that we can keep you close to home, and our caregivers are part of your community. From an emotional and interpersonal standpoint, that's very important."

The only radiation center in the high country, Shaw employs a board-certified radiation oncologist, a board-certified oncology pharmacist, and a board-certified geneticist, all of whom are available to AVH patients. Patients also benefit from Shaw's many other services, including:

- PET/CT scanning capabilities
- Community awareness, education, prevention, and screening programs
- Fit for Survival, a personalized wellness program for cancer patients
- Jack's Place, a guesthouse offering affordable lodging for Shaw patients and their families
- Affiliation with the University of Colorado's cancer treatment program for referral of complex cases
- Ongoing programs and services for cancer survivors

Invision Sally Jobe is a practice of highly specialized radiologists providing outpatient imaging services. One focus of its affiliation with AVH is the growing drive to prevent breast cancer, including early screening for women with a higher disease risk due to genetic, environmental, or behavioral factors.



The PET/CT scan at the Shaw Regional Cancer Center helps physicians detect and diagnose cancer.



Meet Aspen Valley Hospital's Medical Oncology Director, Douglas Rovira, MD

Dr. Rovira joined the AVH Medical Staff in 1993, traveling from his practice in Denver to see patients in Aspen on a monthly basis for 16 years. This year, he made a decision to relocate to the Roaring Fork Valley. Now a resident of Basalt, he holds oncology clinics throughout the valley, including AVH every Wednesday.

Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine with a subspecialty certification in medical oncology, Dr. Rovira graduated from the University of Colorado Medical School and completed his residency at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center where he is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine.

"Oncology is a challenging field," says Dr. Rovira. "You interact with patients at a difficult time in their lives. They and their families need your medical expertise, guidance, and emotional support. A connection with the patient develops that is very rewarding. At the end of the day, I'm happy to be a part of my patients' lives."

Calendar of Events

Midvalley Health Day

Saturday, October 17 • 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.
El Jebel Community Center

Senior Health Fair

Friday, November 6 • 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Aspen Valley Hospital

Call 544.1296 for more information.

10 facts you probably don't know about cancer

- 1 This year, about 169,000 people in the United States will die of cancer caused by tobacco use.*
- 2 People who live at higher elevations have an increased risk of skin cancer.**
- 3 Among Coloradoans, an estimated 20,340 new cancers will be diagnosed in 2009.*
- 4 More than 90 percent of people diagnosed with colorectal cancer are older than 50, and the average age at diagnosis is 72.***
- 5 Among men, the most frequently diagnosed form of cancer is prostate cancer.*
- 6 In the early 1960s, the five-year relative survival rate for women diagnosed with breast cancer was 63 percent. Today, the rate is 89 percent.*
- 7 Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States.***
- 8 High consumption of red meat is associated with an increased risk of colorectal cancer, while consumption of milk and vitamin D may decrease this risk.*
- 9 Colorado has some of the nation's lowest rates of cancer death. From 2001 to 2005, fewer than 21 of every 100,000 men and fewer than 15 of every 100,000 females in the state died of cancer.*
- 10 Research strongly suggests that physical exercise is associated with a reduced risk of colon and breast cancer. Exercise may also be linked to a reduced risk of prostate, lung, and endometrial cancers.***

Sources: *American Cancer Society, "Cancer Facts & Figures 2009"; **Mayo Clinic; ***National Cancer Institute.

Q&A: What you need to know about the H1N1 flu

How is H1N1 spread?

The virus seems to spread in much the same way as the seasonal flu virus: through contact with infected individuals, especially when they cough or sneeze. You can also get the virus by touching a surface or object contaminated with the flu virus and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose.

Is an H1N1 vaccine available?

By the end of October, officials expect to have 120 million doses of vaccine on hand. Those recommended to receive the vaccine first include: pregnant women, people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months, healthcare and emergency services personnel, those who are 6 months to 24 years old, and persons between the ages of 25 and 64 years of age with chronic medical conditions. As more vaccine becomes available, it will be offered to others.

Do I need both H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccines?

The seasonal flu vaccine will not offer protection against the H1N1 virus, so you need both for maximum protection.

How is H1N1 flu different from seasonal flu?

One important difference is that H1N1 is relatively new and unpredictable. Another difference is in the types of people at risk for severe symptoms and complications. Unlike seasonal flu, older adults do not appear to be at increased risk for H1N1 flu. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says H1N1 has caused "greater disease burden" to people under age 25 than to people over age 64.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?

H1N1 flu symptoms included: fever, cough, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. Cold symptoms, diarrhea, vomiting, and other severe symptoms are also possible.

Is H1N1 infection dangerous?

So far, most people have recovered from H1N1 infection without medical care. Generally, those needing hospitalization have had a pre-existing condition — such as pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or kidney disease — that increased their risk for complications. So far, the death rate from H1N1 is similar to the death rate from seasonal flu.

In addition to getting vaccinated, how can I protect myself from the H1N1 virus?

- Coughing or sneezing into your sleeve
- Washing your hands or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often, especially after you cough or sneeze
- Keeping your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Avoiding contact with people who are ill

What should I do if I get H1N1 flu?

Unless you experience severe symptoms — such as breathing difficulty or chest pain — or have a chronic health condition, stay home and treat your symptoms with over-the-counter medications. "Social distancing" will minimize spreading the virus to others and is extremely important. The CDC recommends staying at home for at least 24 hours after your fever subsides (without the use of fever-reducing medications).

Can I spread the flu before I have symptoms?

Yes. You may infect others one to two days before symptoms develop — another reason **prevention** is so important!

How can I stay up-to-date on H1N1 news?

Your doctor is one reliable source of information. You can also call the Colorado Health Information Line for the Public (CoHELP) at **1.877.462.2911**. You may also check out **www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu**.

Community flu clinics for seasonal vaccine:

Wednesday, October 14 Wednesday, October 21

2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Snowmass Village Town Hall

1:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Aspen Middle School

Saturday, October 17

8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Midvalley Health Day

El Jebel Community Center

Friday, November 6

8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Senior Health Fair

Aspen Valley Hospital

Tuesday, October 20

2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Hotel Jerome

Watch the local papers for additional information about flu clinics (including H1N1).



This publication in no way seeks to diagnose or treat illness or serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Please see your physician if you have a health problem.

Para solicitar "Health Matters" en español, llame al 544.1543.

Engaged employees . . . loyal customers

In the business world, everyone "knows" that a satisfied worker creates a satisfied customer. In healthcare, we "know" that employees who are engaged in their profession are most likely to create an environment of excellence — an environment in which patients' expectations are exceeded, and a sense of loyalty is developed. This cause-and-effect relationship between employee and patient is something we consider regularly at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) — through ongoing patient surveys and biennial employee surveys.

In May 2009, AVH's most recent employee survey was conducted by Mountain States Employers Council (MSEC), and we are pleased to report some very positive results as compiled by MSEC.

AVH scored in the "very positive" range for job satisfaction, leadership, climate, customer service, and employee engagement, which incorporates employees' attitudes about being able to accomplish something important, their willingness to recommend AVH as a good place to work, caring about the quality of their work, feeling personally satisfied by their work, and understanding how their job fits into the big picture. AVH's highest score — which is typically a low score in organizations — was communication.

The areas where AVH employees gave the most favorable responses — employee engagement, customer service, and communication — are the areas that we feel are directly related to our high patient satisfaction scores. They come from a culture of commitment, pride, and ownership of the work.

According to Alicia Miller, Human Resources Director at AVH, "These survey responses reflect values and behaviors that translate into the highest quality of patient care. An empowered, engaged staff makes daily discretionary decisions in the best interest of our patients and, ultimately, that's why we're here."

Consistent with that perspective, AVH patient satisfaction is very high, with a recent acknowledgment from Avatar International for being in the top 5 percent of Avatar's hundreds of hospital clients. Our employees have collectively achieved what many hospitals will spend a lifetime trying to accomplish.



Dorothy Wiening and Michael DeLeon in the lab are representative of employees' commitment to service excellence.