

# health matters

Sunday, April 25, 2004

Volume 1, Issue 5

**About 700,000 Americans will have a stroke this year, and about 167,000 will die from it.**

**MAY** begins *American Stroke Month!* During American Stroke Month, the American Stroke Association will heighten the public's awareness of stroke warning signs and risk factors. For more info. call the American Stroke Assoc. at (888) 4-STROKE or visit [www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org).

health matters  
is brought to you by

El Centro  
Regional Medical Center  
An Agency of the City of El Centro

## You're Invited to the community HealthFair! May 6th, 3-6 p.m.

In honor of National Nurses Appreciation Week and National Hospital Week, ECRMC will be hosting a community HealthFair on May 6th from 3-6 p.m. at 1271 Ross Avenue in the Medical Plaza Building.

### OPEN to the PUBLIC!

#### Free SCREENINGS for:

- Blood Glucose
- Osteoporosis
- Blood Pressure
- Back Health
- Pulse Oximetry
- Cholesterol\*
- Body Fat Index

\*For cholesterol testing please come April 29, 3-6 p.m. same address to have blood sample drawn - the results will be available on May 6th.

Information will also be provided for: Women's Health, Men's Health, Smoking Cessation, First Aid, Safety, Physical Therapy, Infection Control, Osteoporosis, Diabetes, Asthma, and General Health.

## How to Survive a Stroke

Christmas, last year, had special significance for Armida Magana. She was back to work at El Centro Regional Medical Center just two and one half months after a stroke paralyzed her left side, with the side of her face so numb she thought it was sagging beneath her chin.

Magana was one of more than 700,000 Americans who suffer a stroke each year. By American Stroke Association count, someone in America has a stroke every 45 seconds and some one dies of a stroke every three minutes. Stroke has the third largest mortality rate behind heart disease and cancer.

Magana, who was the nurse director of the medical-surgical unit when she became ill, currently works as a discharge planner. She finds placement for patients who, because they need further care, cannot return home immediately upon discharge from the hospital.

She regards her recovery as "miraculous." She had the best medical care available, of course, but she also had "a lot of co-workers and friends praying for me. It's a tribute to the power of prayer that I am what I am today." She was told early on she could spend the rest of her life in a wheel chair.

While vacationing in San Diego, she awoke one morning with a minor headache but with difficulty walking and that strange feeling in her face. A registered nurse herself, she recognized the symptoms and



After ECRMC's Armida Magana suffered a stroke while vacationing in San Diego, her transfer to El Centro Regional Medical Center was a warm welcome home.

an ambulance was called. She was there for one week and then transferred to El Centro Regional "because I wanted to go home."

Recognizing stroke symptoms quickly as Magana did is vital to surviving a stroke. Besides the symptoms she experienced, there are others for which to be alert, sudden confusion and difficulty understanding or speaking, trouble seeing in one or both eyes, dizziness or loss of balance and coordination and sudden severe headache.

Although Magana said, like most stroke victims, she had no advance warning, she

admits she typified the average stroke victim. She smoked, had high blood pressure and was in a stressful job, three of the risk factors listed by the American Stroke Association. Others include drug abuse, diabetes, carotid artery disease, irregular heart rhythm, increasing age and heredity.

An emergency physician usually is the first to see a stroke victim, but soon a neurologist takes over. El Centro Regional Medical Center has two neurologists on its medical staff, Drs. Thomas Teske and

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## A Tribute to Our Unsung Heroes

by Virgie Galindo, Chief Nursing Officer

National Nurses Week is celebrated across the country May 6 to 12 to recognize the contribution of the nursing profession to healthcare. Today's nursing is significantly different from the Florence Nightingale era. Not only is its role expanded to different fields and different specialties, use of technology has increasingly altered the delivery of nursing care. Patients are sicker and care is more complex in this everchanging time of information and technology. The environment is more demanding and requires a different set of skills and sophistication to safely deliver care.



Yet the core essence of nursing remains unchanged today. Despite the changing landscape, nursing is first and foremost, still about caring. Caring remains our most powerful tool to heal and comfort and to make a difference in someone's life.



Virgie Galindo is the Chief Nursing Officer at El Centro Regional Medical Center.

Whether it's welcoming the birth of a new baby, recovering someone to health, saving a life, or at worst, providing comfort in times of death. As Chief Nursing Officer, I am privilege to witness many stories of caring at ECRMC. It could be as simple as holding a patient's hand to offer reassurance, an empathic smile to convey understanding, a compassionate hug to lessen the pain, or working tirelessly and foregoing breaks to resuscitate someone to life.

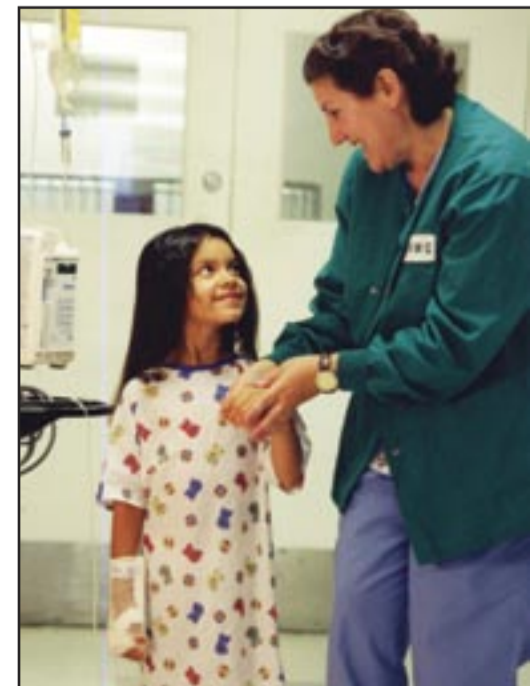


National Nurses Week is a tribute to the many unsung heroes of healthcare and the contributions they make everyday to make a positive difference. What a profession to be in this time and age. As Florence Nightingale once stated:

*"Nursing is an art, and if it is to be made an art, requires as exclusive a devotion, and as hard a preparation, as any painter's or sculptor's work. For what is the having to do with dead canvas or clod marble, compared with having to do with the living body."*



As we celebrate the occasion, we say thank you to our nurses for their hard work, commitment and dedication, always lifting spirits, and touching lives.



# Our Family Serving Yours

## Recognizing Stroke Symptoms

*Stroke, from page 1*

Andres Jacobo and one neurosurgeon, Dr. Travis Calvin. Three others have courtesy or provisional privileges.

Magana was an atypical victim in that more men suffer strokes than women. But women account for 61 percent of the stroke deaths in 2001. She was typical in that she had an Ischemic stroke, which is caused by an obstruction such as a blood clot blocking oxygen from reaching the brain. Ischemic stroke accounts for more than 83 percent of cases in the nation. Hemorrhage stroke results from the rupture of a blood vessel supplying the brain and accounts for the rest.

Effects of a stroke can depend on the location of the obstruction or aneurysm. Because one side of the brain controls the opposite side of the body, a left-brain stroke causes paralysis on the right side, speech and language problems, unusually cautious behavioral style and memory loss. A right brain stroke causes paralysis on the left, vision problems, rapid and inquisitive behavior, and memory loss.

Rehabilitation, a critical part of stroke recovery, does not reverse effects of the stroke but aims to increase strength, capability and confidence to continue daily activities as near normal as possible. Rehabilitation can include



Armida Magana regards her recovery from a stroke as "miraculous." Magana works as a discharge planner for El Centro Regional Medical Center.



Dr. Thomas Teske is one of two neurologists on staff at El Centro Regional Medical Center.

physical and occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, audiology, recreational therapy, nutritional care, often psychiatric or psychological counseling and family education.

Some stroke victims do get early warning signals, but they are often unrecognized and ignored. They are the transient ischemic attacks, also called TIAs, which produce stroke-like symptoms but do not last. Recognizing and getting treatment for TIAs can significantly reduce the likelihood of more serious strokes later. The American Stroke Association suggests calling 911 the minute such symptoms occur.

The American Stroke Association and the Ad Council, a leading producer of public service announcements, have joined forces in a three-year nationwide campaign to emphasize the importance of calling 911 immediately upon experiencing symptoms.

But Dr. Teske has an even more succinct recommendation for potential stroke victims, "Don't have one!" In other words, recognize your own risk factors and do something about them.

In retrospect, Armida Magana would testify to that.

# Calendar of EVENTS

### 4/26 – HEALTHCARE PROVIDER CPR CLASS

On April 26th at 6:30 p.m. there will be a Healthcare Provider CPR class at 1271 Ross Avenue, call 339-7377 for fee information.

### 4/28 – ECRMC BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

On April 28th at 6:30 p.m. there will be an El Centro Regional Medical Center Board of Trustees meeting, open to the public, at 1271 Ross Ave.

### 4/30 – FREE CONCERT AND BAZZAR

On April 30, ECRMC will host a free concert and bazaar. The SDSU Latin Jazz Ensemble will perform from 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. outside the hospital lobby, and the bazaar will continue until 1:30 p.m. For more information about the concert series call Elise Bryant at 339-7314.

### 5/4 – HEALTHCARE PROVIDER FIRST AIDE CLASS

On May 4th at 5:00 p.m. there will be a Healthcare Provider First Aide class at 1271 Ross Avenue, call 339-7377 for fee information.

### 5/5 – PRENATAL CLASS

On May 5th at 6:00 p.m. there will be a Prenatal Class (in English) at 1271 Ross Avenue, call 339-7377 for more information.

### 5/6 – 5/12 NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

National Nurses Week begins with National Nurses Day (May 6) and ends on Florence Nightingale's birthday (May 12). Please join us in celebrating our wonderful nurses throughout the month of May.

DID YOU KNOW . . . IT'S A FACT!

If all of your blood vessels were laid end-to-end they would extend for about 60,000 miles. That's far enough to encircle the earth more than twice.

## New Senior Nurse Director Joins ECRMC

A position of Senior Nurse Director, administration, at El Centro Regional Medical Center has been filled with the appointment of W. James McCracken, who brings to the position an extensive background in nursing and nursing administration.

McCracken, a native of Guatemala, comes to El Centro Regional Medical Center from Chicago where he served as Assistant Vice President of Patient Care Services. In the new position, he will report to Virgie Galindo, chief nursing officer and assistant administrator.

McCracken worked for a total of seven years with Norwegian American Hospital, Chicago, as assistant vice president of patient care services. In that position he oversaw patient care service areas in pharmacy, radiology, laboratory, dietary, housekeeping, emergency room, case management and nine physician clinics.

He joined the Norwegian American Hospital as a charge nurse in the Emergency Department in 1993, leaving in 1995 for a three-year association as a registry nurse for the Thorek and Ravenswood Hospitals in Chicago, and returning to Norwegian in 1998. He also had served the Norwegian hospital for two years as director of performance improvement, utilization review and risk management before advancing to the vice presidency.

His first position after graduating from the University of Illinois School of Medicine in Chicago with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing was as a staff nurse in the Trauma unit of Cook County Hospital, Chicago.



W. James McCracken joins ECRMC as Senior Nurse Director.

He earned a Master of Science degree in Nursing Administration from the North Park University in Chicago in 1992.

McCracken is certified as a Trauma Nurse Specialist, Risk Management and in Total Quality Improvement.

McCracken holds memberships in the Illinois Association for Healthcare Quality, the American society for Healthcare Risk Management, the Emergency Nurses Association, the Illinois Nurse Association and the American Organization of Nurse Executives.

"I've served in healthcare for the past 12 years, administratively and clinically," McCracken said. "I look forward to working and serving with El Centro Regional Medical Center as we improve the quality of healthcare to the people of the Imperial Valley."

**DISCLAIMER** This El Centro Regional Medical Center ("ECRMC") newsletter is for the sole purpose of providing readers with reference information as a means of introducing them to ECRMC and to the services provided by its physicians, health care providers, and affiliated clinics. The Information provided is not intended to replace obtaining medical evaluations and health care advice from qualified health care providers. Reference to specific products, processes, businesses, facilities, or services does not constitute or imply recommendation or endorsement by ECRMC. Physicians are not employees of ECRMC.

Staff Writer Robert V. Liggett ©2004 CONVEYOR GROUP

## Opportunity to Make a Difference

We are profoundly appreciative of the public response to our Building on a Legacy of Caring Campaign to help furnish and equip the hospital's expansion and modernization program.

We encourage you to join the many generous citizens who have contributed to this campaign. It is as simple as completing the pledge/gift form below to be part of this undertaking. If you would like more information, please call the Development Office at (760) 336-2685. Information is available about the tax advantages of making gifts.

All gifts will be recognized on the Honor Roll and the names of those making gifts of \$1,000 or more will be inscribed on a Donor Wall adjacent to the new lobby now under construction. Giving opportunities also are still available for naming certain areas within the hospital.

### PLEDGE/GIFT FORM

Clip and Mail to:

El Centro Regional Medical Center, Development Office  
1415 Ross Avenue, El Centro, CA 92243-4306.

**PLEDGE:** I/We prefer to give through a pledge:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year for each of the next \_\_\_\_\_ years (5 years max.) for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

The first payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed or will be made on or before \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

This pledge will be paid in \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ semi-annual \_\_\_\_\_ annual installments.

**CASH GIFT:** Please accept my/our gift to ECRMC \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ Check or money order is enclosed.

\_\_\_\_ Please charge to: \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL DONORS:** Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **ECRMC Building on a Legacy of Caring**. For more information please call the Development Office at (760) 336-2685 or email: [development@ecrmc.org](mailto:development@ecrmc.org). Your gift is an itemized deduction for federal income tax purposes.