

HEALTH NEWS *from the*

SPRING/SUMMER 2018

# valley health SYSTEM

## How she overcame *cancer*

*Joan Vennart,  
retired nurse, shares an  
important message*

### HENDERSON HOSPITAL'S "COMFORT MENU"

New options to manage pain

### HELP FOR A-FIB AND AORTIC STENOSIS

Updates and advances  
in cardiac care

*Compliments of*

The Valley  Health System®

Centennial Hills Hospital • Desert Springs Hospital • Henderson Hospital  
Spring Valley Hospital • Summerlin Hospital • Valley Hospital



With summer just around the corner, I want to wish you a season filled with fun times and happy memories. Sometimes, though, serious health issues intrude on our lives, and we must deal with them swiftly.

In this issue, we tell you about a more severe type of stroke called a large vessel occlusion (LVO) and the importance of getting timely, specialized care. You'll also learn about new technology

options in breast cancer surgery with the LOCazlier™, and you'll meet gynecological cancer survivor Joan Vennart, who has an important message for women. In other stories, Eric Chapin discusses his life-changing decision to have weight-loss surgery, and Cyndee Combs describes how smartphone technology helps monitor her cardiac condition.

Additionally, we offer specific tips to prepare for surgery. Every surgery, cardiac or neurological procedure is a serious undertaking. We delve into activities to help your recovery – from nutrition and smoking cessation to cardiac rehabilitation and physical therapy sessions.

On a lighter note, we celebrate the 10th anniversary of Centennial Hills Hospital, which opened in January 2008. We also share what's coming up with our Senior Advantage program, which plays a very important role in the educational and social lives of adults 55+.

Our goal is to always make the hospitals of The Valley Health System your number one choice, and we appreciate the opportunity to serve you 24/7, whether it's an emergency, an elective procedure or ongoing care throughout your recovery.

Karla J. Perez  
Regional Vice President

## IN THIS ISSUE

### 6 "SOMETHING DIDN'T FEEL RIGHT"

Joan Vennart tells how proactive care helped save her

### 7 "DON'T BE AFRAID"

Eric Chapin's amazing turnaround with weight-loss surgery

### 8 AN APP FOR A-FIB, AND MORE

New offerings in cardiac care



## High marks for wound healing at Spring Valley Hospital

With a patient satisfaction rate of 97.5 percent, the Advanced Wound Care & Hyperbaric Center at Spring Valley Hospital received the distinguished Wound Care Center® of the Year award from Healogics, Inc., for the West zone. Only seven of over 700 facilities managed by Healogics received this honor. The West zone encompasses 13 states, from New Mexico to Alaska.

**Specialists from Spring Valley Hospital's advanced center treat a variety of wounds, including diabetic ulcers, pressure sores, surgical incisions and burns. The center also has a Limb Salvage Program. For a referral to a doctor, call 702-388-4888.**



# Serious information about **SEVERE STROKES**

## WHERE YOU GO FOR TREATMENT MATTERS



**Raj Agrawal, MD**  
Desert Radiology

Not all strokes are the same. A large vessel occlusion, or LVO, is a stroke that occurs when a big vessel in the brain suddenly becomes blocked. This type of stroke tends to be more severe, and specialized

treatment is available only at certain hospitals, explains Raj Agrawal, MD, an interventional radiologist on staff at Centennial Hills, Spring Valley and Valley hospitals. That's why it's critical to call 911 at the first sign of a possible stroke, and let the emergency response team take you to the hospital to get the care you need.

### **Are LVO symptoms different?**

LVOs can have the same symptoms outlined in the FAST acronym on this page, such as facial drooping, arm weakness and speech difficulty. There can also be other associated signs, such as gaze deviation toward one side, difficulty understanding spoken or written words, or inability to recognize a person or an object. Emergency response teams are trained to recognize the possible signs and direct care accordingly, says Dr. Agrawal.

### **How are LVOs treated?**

For some patients, an advanced endovascular procedure called mechanical thrombectomy can offer an effective treatment option. This procedure involves making a small incision, usually in the groin, and threading a catheter with tiny instruments to the site of the blockage to retrieve the clot, explains Dr. Agrawal.

Centennial Hills, Spring Valley and Valley hospitals are all specially equipped to offer this procedure with support from biplane technology, which enables doctors to see 3-D images of the blood vessels in the brain.

In the past, many people with LVOs suffered paralysis, serious disability or even death, but medical advancements can now help patients enjoy healthier, more functional recoveries, Dr. Agrawal says. Getting the right care right away is critical. Any time you have symptoms, don't wait. Call 911. ■

*Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive surgery is right for you.*

## **RECOGNIZE THESE SIGNS OF STROKE AND ACT FAST**

**The most common symptoms of a possible stroke can be remembered by this acronym:**



**FACE:** Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?



**ARMS:** Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?



**SPEECH:** Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is it slurred or strange?



**TIME:** is critical! If you see any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

**If these symptoms appear, DON'T WAIT! Call 9-1-1 or seek medical attention right away.**

**To find out more about stroke care at The Valley Health System hospitals, visit [valleyhealthsystemlv.com/strokecare](http://valleyhealthsystemlv.com/strokecare) and scroll to "Stroke Care – Primary Stroke Center."**

# Tips to reduce **post-surgical pain**



Having an optimal recovery from surgery requires planning and preparation,

says **Saju Joseph, MD, FACS**, program director of the graduate medical education surgery program for The Valley Health System. It's important to talk with your surgeon and develop a strategy to manage pain, he says. Here, he explains more.



## **Q. What can I do before surgery to prepare?**

Exercise\* can be helpful because it can stimulate the body's natural ability to heal, thereby reducing nerve damage. If you are a smoker, quitting can also help. Smoking and nicotine can cause damage to blood vessels, nerves and skin. Stopping even two weeks prior to surgery can reduce complications and improve healing.

## **Q. How can my diet affect my recovery?**

Patients require a large amount of protein and complex carbohydrates to heal from surgery. An increase in healthy intake should begin at least two weeks before a planned operation and in conjunction with exercise. Make sure you discuss this with your doctor. For elderly patients, I encourage protein shakes to supplement their regular diet.

## **Q. What can I do to relieve pain after surgery?**

After surgery, activity is the key. The faster you get moving, the more circulation returns to the injured area and the faster nerves heal. In addition, walking stimulates core muscle to function, which acts to reduce the inflammatory signal caused by the surgery itself. Also, meditation, massage, Reiki and even chewing gum can sometimes help.

## **Q. What pain medications might be used?**

Narcotics are often the last resort, as they may have significant side effects and often slow healing. Today there are long-acting injections that can relieve pain for days to weeks. Surgeons can also insert catheters into the incision site to deliver medicines to the exact nerves damaged at the time of surgery. Additionally, anti-inflammatory medications may be used to reduce the cause of pain. ■

\*Before starting a new exercise routine, consult your doctor.

**For help finding a doctor, call 702-388-4888 or visit [valleyhealthsystemlv.com/find-a-doctor](http://valleyhealthsystemlv.com/find-a-doctor).**

Sometimes physical therapy or cardiac rehabilitation can help with recovery. Cardiac rehab is available at Summerlin and Desert Springs hospitals. Physical therapy is available at Centennial Hills, Desert View (Pahrump), Spring Valley and Summerlin hospitals.

Physical therapists are specialized in helping post-operative patients with their recovery. While many patients will not like being active just after surgery, their exercises are designed to expedite the healing process and reduce the time patients have pain and dysfunction.

## Advanced technology for breast surgery

Henderson Hospital is the first in Nevada to utilize the LOCalizer™, a breast lesion localization system approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in Spring 2017.

To identify the exact location of a lesion (or lump) before breast surgery, the LOCalizer uses a small, non-radioactive radiofrequency identification (RFID) tag system that is implanted via a needle and guided to the lesion using ultrasound or X-ray imaging for placement.

This replaces the traditional method of using a wire placed in the breast to locate the lesion. "Patients won't see something sticking out of their breast and be concerned movement



might dislodge it," explains breast surgeon M. Ferra Lin-Duffy, DO. Also, patients can have the RFID tag implanted up to 30 days before breast surgery instead of coming in several hours before surgery time for wire placement.

With the LOCalizer, surgeons can more efficiently locate and remove the lesion, along with the tag. This reduces the patient's time in the operating room while limiting the cosmetic impact to the breast. ■

## INTRODUCING OUR "COMFORT MENU"

To assist with patients' pain management, Henderson Hospital's leadership team developed a "comfort menu" in addition to traditional medication management. Options include requests for positioning, ice and heat therapies, essential oil aromatherapy for nausea and anxiety, music therapy via popular music channels on television, and comfort kits featuring ear plugs, eye masks and lip balm.

To assess the impact of aromatherapy on surgical patients, the surgery team conducted a randomized study of 109 patients who were placed in either the control group or the essential oil group. Results indicated patients in the essential oil group experienced decreased anxiety and improved vital signs with the use of lavender prior to surgery. Anxiety levels dropped by 80.4 percent when lavender was dabbed on the wrist.

The use of peppermint essential oils has also benefited patients suffering from nausea post-surgery, says Rachel Lemahieu, MSN, RNFA, CNOR, director of surgical services. Throughout Henderson Hospital, aromatherapy is used via diffusers in several waiting rooms. It's important to follow the guidelines on the oils you may use at home. ■

**The Joint Commission accreditation organization accepted this unique comfort menu as a "best practice," which could be implemented by other hospitals across the country.**



To learn more about our services,  
visit [hendersonhospital.com](http://hendersonhospital.com).





# The importance of GYN care even *after a hysterectomy*



In her mid-20s, Joan Vennart suffered from painful bouts of endometriosis and underwent multiple surgeries to address the problem. She continued to experience extensive pain, and when she was 31, she had a total hysterectomy.

Now 64, the retired OR nurse has been vigilant about an annual visit to her gynecologist for the past 30 years. "I know medical issues can still happen even if you don't have any female parts," she says. Just a few years ago, after decades of feeling fine, something did happen.

"Something didn't feel right, but I couldn't put my finger on it," she recalls. Her one ongoing symptom was groin pain that would last for up to 10 minutes once a day. She underwent a CT scan and learned her endometriosis had evolved into cancer that was sitting on top of her large colon and left ureter, along with a small spot on her diaphragm.

In one 5 ½ hour surgery at Summerlin Hospital in January 2015, she had three different surgeons operate on her to address each aspect of her condition. They included a colorectal surgeon, a urologist and a gynecologic oncologist. Eighteen chemotherapy treatments followed. She received a clean bill of health at her two-year anniversary last August.

Today, she is back volunteering at Summerlin Hospital, where she purchased a special brick in memory of her therapy dog, "Rhett," who brightened the lives of many patients during their hospital visits together. She has also made it her mission to educate others about the importance of an annual GYN visit, even if they've had a hysterectomy. "You have to be aware of what's happening, and you have to visit your gynecologist because they will begin a process of elimination as to what the problem can be." ■

Join other  
women through



Women Enlightened for Better Health (*we*) provides information, education and support for women as they juggle multiple responsibilities among family, home and work.

Designed to help women connect and share health topics important to them, their families and friends, our free *we* program provides information about upcoming classes and support groups at Summerlin Hospital, special health activities and seminars, volunteer opportunities and more.

To learn more or join, visit [summerlinhospital.com](http://summerlinhospital.com) and click on "Women Enlightened" under the "Events" tab.

Gynecological cancers include cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal and vulvar. Each type has its own symptoms, such as abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge; pelvic pain/pressure; urgent or frequent need to urinate or constipation; bloating; abdominal or back pain; or pain, itching, burning, tenderness or changes in vulva color or skin.\*

\*Source: [cdc.gov/cancer/gynecologic/basic\\_info/symptoms.htm](http://cdc.gov/cancer/gynecologic/basic_info/symptoms.htm)

# Turning his HEALTH AROUND



***“The overall message I’d want people to know is not to be afraid of it,” says Eric Chapin of the weight-loss surgery that changed his life.***



**Darren W. Soong  
MD, FACS**  
Bariatric Surgeon

Ten-plus years of unsuccessful dieting and exercise had Eric Chapin looking for a different weight-loss alternative. At age 44, his weight had reached 335 pounds, and it was starting to take a toll. “I couldn’t catch my breath, and my wife said I was snoring a lot,” he remembers. When his doctor told him he had prediabetes, that was his wake-up call.

He attended a bariatric seminar with Darren W. Soong, MD, FACS, to learn about the surgical options. It was a positive experience, he says, and made him realize that he didn’t need to keep beating himself up about his weight. He needed help.

On December 15, 2014, he had gastric sleeve surgery with Dr. Soong at the Center for Surgical Weight Loss at Desert Springs Hospital. This procedure reduces the size of the stomach, which decreases hunger and increases the feeling of fullness. “The hospital was awesome,” he says. “Within 24 hours I was out of there because of the type of care they provide.”

He says the procedure “works the way it’s supposed to,” and today, three years out, he’s down about 105 pounds and 48 ½ total inches. He’s committed to a healthy diet and exercise, and his focus has shifted from food to other things. “I never thought I’d be the guy who goes to the gym every day, and I enjoy it,” he says.

With the weight loss has come greater self-confidence. “I feel better about myself, more motivated, more ambitious,” he says. He and his wife have three daughters, and he wants to be active and healthy with them for the long haul. “There will be grandkids in the future,” he says. “I want to be around for that.” ■

**To learn more or to register for an upcoming seminar, visit [surgicalweightcontrolcenter.com](http://surgicalweightcontrolcenter.com).**



Eric before surgery

**Many insurance companies and Medicare cover the cost of weight-loss surgery. Check with your insurance provider and/or your physician about your coverage.**



*Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.*



# NEW IN CARDIAC CARE

## DIAGNOSING HER A-FIB THROUGH HER SMARTPHONE



After Cyndee Combs, 52, began experiencing sudden dizzy spells, shortness of breath and other troubling heart symptoms last year, she became the first patient in Nevada to receive the Confirm Rx™ Insertable Cardiac Monitor in an outpatient procedure at Desert Springs Hospital.

"It's teeny tiny," says Combs of the device, which is implanted just under the skin in her chest. It's synced with an app on her phone and automatically records her heart rhythm, sending reports directly to her cardiologist's office.

She explains that having access to this 24/7 monitoring helped confirm her diagnosis of atrial fibrillation with rapid ventricular response (A-fib with RVR), a condition where the lower chambers of the heart beat too fast. "It defined what was going on, so we were able to create a treatment plan for it," she says. She keeps busy as a nurse and also likes to stay active with her grandchildren. Now, she can get the care she needs to keep doing what she loves. "They were amazing," she says of her medical team. ■

To learn more about advanced cardiac treatment, visit [desertspringshospital.com](http://desertspringshospital.com) and click on "Cardiology" under the "Services" tab.

## TREATING AORTIC STENOSIS – WITHOUT OPEN SURGERY

Spring Valley Hospital now offers transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), a minimally invasive method to replace the aortic valve. TAVR is performed on patients with aortic stenosis, a serious condition caused by a build-up of calcium deposits on the valve. It can provide a viable option for patients who may not be good candidates for open heart surgery.

The procedure involves threading a catheter through the femoral artery near the groin or via a small chest incision. A collapsible valve is inserted within the diseased valve and takes over regulating blood flow. "The technology transforms a large operation into a minimally invasive, percutaneous procedure with reduced pain, blood loss and recovery times," says Georges Tanbe, MD, medical director of Spring Valley Hospital's cardiac catheterization lab.



Nauman Jahangir, MD, chief of cardiovascular surgery at Spring Valley Hospital and a surgeon with Las Vegas Cardiovascular Surgery Specialists, says, "Transcatheter and minimally invasive valve surgery techniques are opening up opportunities for life-saving procedures to a larger group of patients who can now look forward to an improved quality of life and a better and longer life span." ■

To learn more, visit [springvalleyhospital.com](http://springvalleyhospital.com) and go to "Cardiovascular Services" under the "Services" tab.

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive surgery is right for you.





## Centennial Hills Hospital

### KEY DEVELOPMENTS AT THE HOSPITAL LAST YEAR ALONE INCLUDED:

- Adding biplane angiography capabilities to treat stroke and other neurological diseases by utilizing minimally invasive neuro-interventional radiology procedures in the hospital's new biplane lab.
- Opening an outpatient advanced wound healing & hyperbaric medicine center.
- Completing an \$18.2 million expansion that added 60 private patient rooms and over 200 additional parking spaces.

Other highlights from recent years include: establishing a nursing education partnership with Nevada State College around the Caring Science Unit; opening a Level III neonatal intensive care unit for premature and/or medically fragile newborns; opening an outpatient therapy center for physical and pulmonary therapy patients; and adding neurosurgery to the hospital's surgical specialties.

"This is an exciting time in our hospital's history," said CEO/Managing Director Sajit Pullarkat, who has worked at Centennial Hills Hospital since its inception. "We've watched our community grow, and listened to residents who said they wanted to receive advanced medical care close to home. We will continue to explore new services and opportunities to enhance the patient experience." ■

Learn more about our services at [centennialhillshospital.com](http://centennialhillshospital.com).

*Since opening its doors in January 2008, Centennial Hills Hospital has worked non-stop to bring high-quality care to residents of northwest Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and surrounding communities. To commemorate a decade of caring and service, the hospital held a celebration in January with free health screenings, family activities and a special visit by Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn Goodman.*



Pictured from left are: Saj Pullarkat, CEO, Centennial Hills Hospital; Councilwoman Michelle Fiore, City of Las Vegas; Mayor Carolyn Goodman, City of Las Vegas; Warren Volker, MD, Chief of Staff; and Karla Perez, Regional Vice President.

### Look how we've grown!

	2008	2018
<b>Number of employees</b>	359	1,052
<b>Number of beds</b>	165	262
<b>Babies delivered</b>	435	3,101
<b>Number of surgery procedures</b>	2,152	6,116
<b>Total number of ER visits</b>	29,332	53,858

\*2018 statistics are based on data from 1/1/17 to 1/1/18.

# Have fun with our *Summer Enrichment Series!*

Even with telephones, social media and email, we can still feel disconnected and a bit lonely as our family and friends go about their daily lives. In fact, at their 2017 summer convention, the American Psychological Association presented research noting that loneliness and social isolation may be a greater public health issue than obesity.\*

That's why our Senior Advantage program offers a variety of educational seminars, lectures and social activities to connect our active adults (ages 55+) to new friends and experiences throughout the year.

We are pleased to present our 2018 Summer Enrichment Series to help our members focus on engaging the mind and body while meeting new friends.

**Reservations are required for all events through Direct Doctors Plus®, 702-388-4888, or by visiting us online. Got to [valleyhealthsystemlv.com](http://valleyhealthsystemlv.com) and click on "Senior Advantage" under the "For the Community" tab for the event calendar and information about joining Senior Advantage.**

\*Source: American Psychological Association, 125th annual convention, [apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/08/lonely-die.aspx](http://apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/08/lonely-die.aspx).



## *Paint a Picture Day*

Unleash your creative spirit! We'll make it easy by providing a professional artist from Paint Nite to walk you through the process.

**Wednesday, June 27, 11 a.m. (Lunch included)**

**Centennial Hills Hospital**

**Conference Rooms 1 & 2 • 6900 N. Durango Dr., 89149**

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## *Bingo and Ice Cream Social*

This special summer event is sure to be a winner! Take a break from the heat and join us for an afternoon of fun.

**Tuesday, July 24, 1:30 to 3 p.m.**

**Summerlin Hospital • 657 N. Town Center Dr., 89144**

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## *Healthy Buffet Eating*

Buffets abound in our town, and what a fun eating experience ... but can fun and healthy coexist? Absolutely, and we'll show you how while you enjoy a great lunch out with friends.

**Thursday, July 26, 11:30 a.m.**

**Sam's Town Firelight Buffet • 5111 Boulder Hwy., 89122**

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## *Dancing with the Seniors*

Put on your dancing shoes (the comfy ones) and join us for a step-by-step dance lesson with your favorite partner (age 55+).

**Friday, August 24, 1 to 3 p.m.**

**East Las Vegas Community Center • 250 N. Eastern Ave., 89101**



# CALENDAR of events

Reservations are  
required for all events.  
Please call our Direct  
Doctors Plus® referral line  
at 702-388-4888 or go to  
[valleyhealthsystemlv.com/  
saevents](http://valleyhealthsystemlv.com/saevents) to register.

SEMINARS BEGIN AT 11:30 A.M. UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

## Centennial Hills Hospital

### Stop the Bleed

Friday, June 15

### Importance of Treating Wounds

Thursday, July 19

### AARP Smart Driver™ Course\*

Tuesday, June 12

Tuesday, August 14

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Desert Springs Hospital

### How Sugars Impact the Heart

Tuesday, June 12

### Survival One: Senior Self-defense

Tuesday, July 10

### Advanced Wound Care & Hyperbaric Therapy

Tuesday, August 7

### AARP Smart Driver™ Courses\*

(South Magna Conference  
Room – Refreshments served)

Tuesday, June 19

Tuesday, July 17

Tuesday, August 21

1 to 5 p.m.

\*Cost: \$15 for AARP members;  
\$20 for non-members  
Lunch not included

## Desert View Hospital

### Balance Screenings

1st Tuesday of the month

8 to 9 a.m.

RSVP: 775-413-6905

### AARP Smart Driver™ Courses\*

Monday, June 11

Monday, July 9

Monday, August 13

Noon to 4 p.m.

RSVP: [desertviewhospital.com/events](http://desertviewhospital.com/events)

## Henderson Hospital

### Talking with Your Doctor

Monday, June 11

### Medicare Fraud

Monday, July 9

### AARP Smart Driver™ Course\*

Friday, July 27

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Spring Valley Hospital

### Overactive Bladder

Monday, June 18

### Help for Neuropathy

Monday, August 20

### AARP Smart Driver™ Course\*

Monday, June 11

Monday, August 13

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Summerlin Hospital

### Survival One: Senior Self-defense

Tuesday, June 26

### Heat Safety by Meteorologist Tedd Florendo

Tuesday, August 14

### AARP Smart Driver™ Courses\*

(Medical Office Building, Family  
Conference Room)

Friday, June 15

Friday, July 20

Friday, August 17

12:45 to 5 p.m.

## Valley Hospital

### Insight into Cardiac Cath Lab Procedures

Wednesday, June 20

### Asthma Triggers

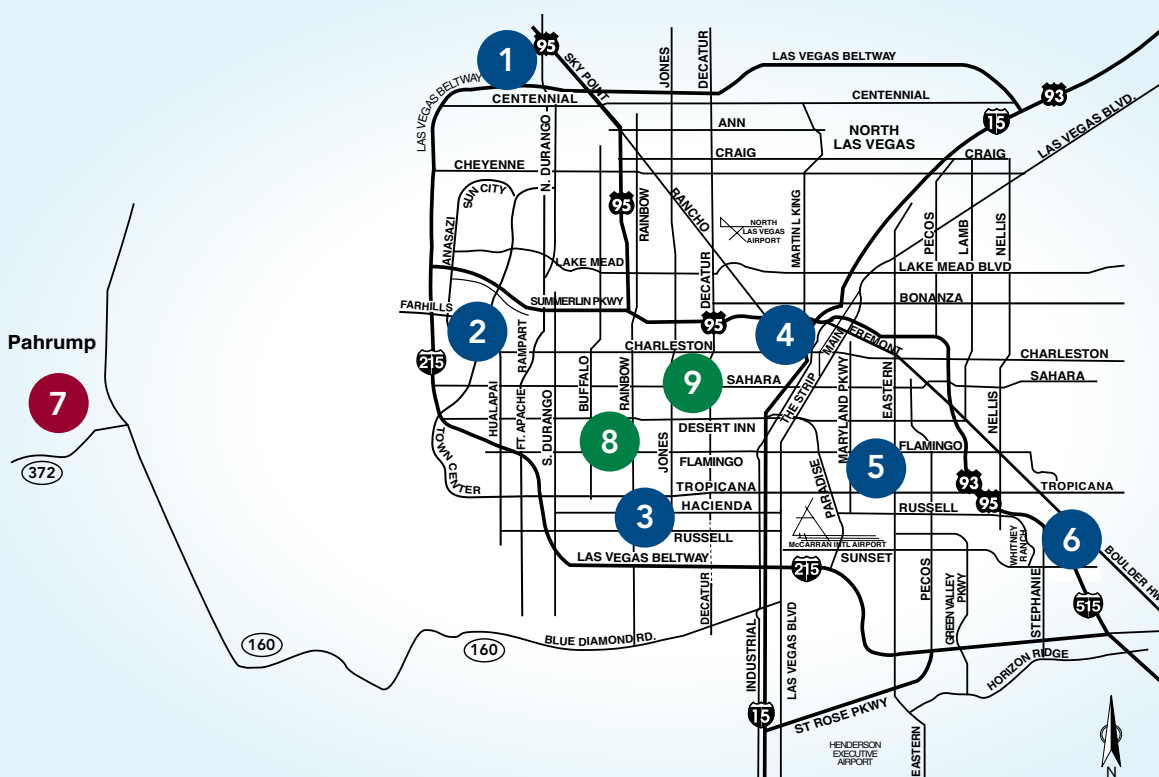
Wednesday, August 15

Remember to show your  
Senior Advantage card for  
admission to all hospital seminars.  
Call 702-853-3008 if you need  
a replacement card.

For information on other  
Valley Health System  
community events, visit  
[valleyhealthsystemlv.com/events](http://valleyhealthsystemlv.com/events).



# Our healthcare family is growing ...



- 1 Centennial Hills Hospital**  
6900 N. Durango Dr.  
at Elkhorn
- 2 Summerlin Hospital**  
657 N. Town Center Dr.  
at Hualapai
- 3 Spring Valley Hospital**  
5400 S. Rainbow Blvd.  
at Hacienda
- 4 Valley Hospital**  
620 Shadow Lane  
at Alta
- 5 Desert Springs Hospital**  
2075 E. Flamingo Rd. –  
2 blocks west of Eastern
- 6 Henderson Hospital**  
1050 W. Galleria Dr.
- 7 Desert View Hospital**  
(an affiliate of The Valley  
Health System)  
360 S. Lola Lane, Pahrump, NV
- 8 Spring Mountain  
Treatment Center**  
7000 West Spring Mountain Rd.
- 9 Spring Mountain Sahara**  
5460 West Sahara Ave.



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@valleyhealthLV



## HEALTH NEWS FROM THE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

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