



MemorialCare
Saddleback Medical Center
24451 Health Center Drive
Laguna Hills, CA 92653



CareConnection

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Fall/Winter
2021

MemorialCare is a nonprofit integrated healthcare delivery system that includes leading hospitals – Long Beach Medical Center, Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital Long Beach, Orange Coast Medical Center, and Saddleback Medical Center; award-winning medical groups – MemorialCare Medical Group and Greater Newport Physicians; MemorialCare Select Health Plan, and convenient outpatient health centers, imaging centers, breast centers, surgical centers, and dialysis centers throughout Orange and Los Angeles Counties.

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MemorialCare
Saddleback Medical Center



Sydelle Lepoff is grateful to be a breast cancer survivor after a successful treatment at Saddleback Medical Center.

The Importance of Annual Mammograms

Sydelle Lepoff required minimal treatment for breast cancer due to early detection at the MemorialCare Breast Center at Saddleback Medical Center.

Sydelle Lepoff, 74, has never missed an annual mammogram appointment. Even with the challenges last year brought to many in our community, Sydelle's annual screening remained on her 2020 calendar.

In November 2020, Sydelle visited the MemorialCare Breast Center



Nicole Lewis, M.D.

at Saddleback Medical Center to have her 3D mammogram. The mammogram revealed a minor abnormality, and though it was barely visible, an ultrasound and a needle biopsy were ordered for further testing.

Nicole Lewis, M.D., breast radiologist at Saddleback Medical Center, delivered the diagnosis: breast cancer. Dr. Lewis explained exactly what Sydelle was dealing with – a tumor that was only 0.8 millimeters in length, but should be removed as soon as possible.



Jackie Hower, M.P.H., R.T.

Upon diagnosis, the care team at the MemorialCare Breast Center developed an individualized support plan for Sydelle. She was paired with **Jackie Hower, M.P.H., R.T.**, breast care navigator at Saddleback Medical Center, who was with Sydelle every step of the way. Jackie explained Sydelle's pathology report, answered her questions and set her on a well-prepared path toward recovery.

"I'm here to offer support and guidance through a scary, confusing time," said Jackie. "Before I speak with a newly diagnosed patient, I schedule appointments for their breast magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and a surgical consultation. That way, the patient has a plan of action."



Nora Evans, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.A.S.C.R.S.

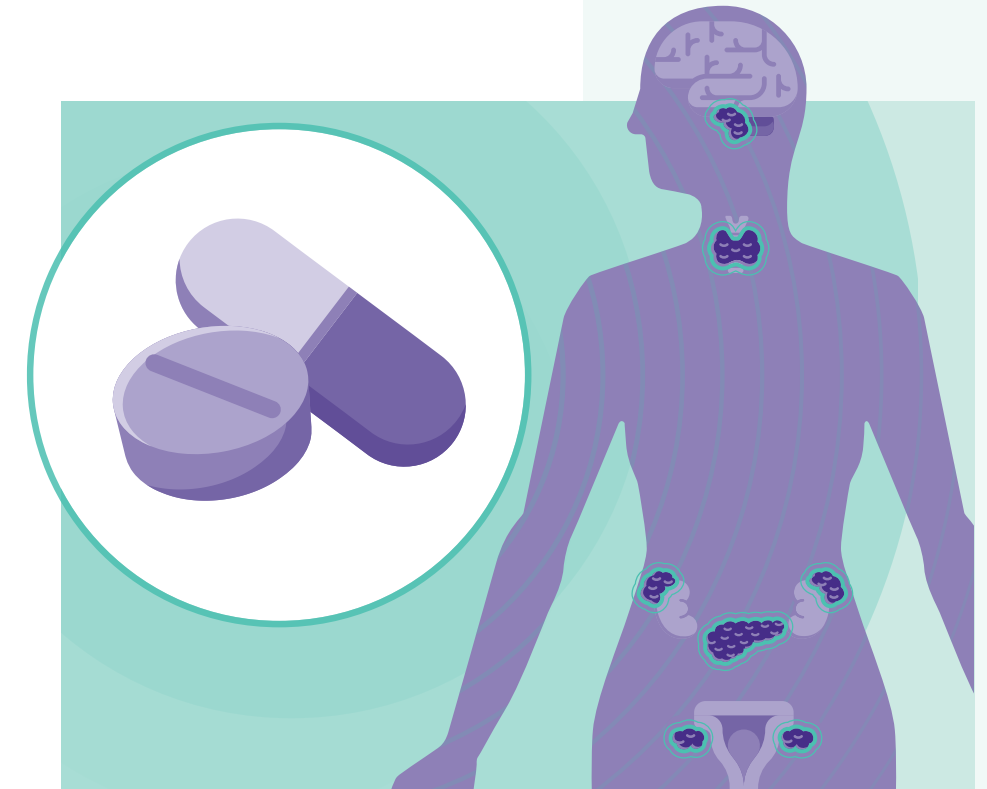
Sydelle met with **Nora Evans, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.A.S.C.R.S.**, a board-certified and fellowship-trained general surgeon, on Dec. 10. She recommended removal of the affected area and a small portion of surrounding breast tissue, called a lumpectomy, as well as the removal of one to four sentinel lymph nodes for analysis – where cancer cells are likely to spread first.

"The tumor was caught early thanks to Sydelle consistently maintaining her annual mammograms," Dr. Evans said. "Before we closed the incision, we took X-ray images of the removed tissue and sent them to our radiologist, who reported that all the margins looked clear. The pathologist later confirmed it."

Sydelle had a low-grade form of cancer that received growth signals from female hormones. As such, she was prescribed hormone suppression therapy instead of chemotherapy. The medication she takes daily is formulated to block the small amount of estrogen a woman's body still produces after menopause, reducing the chance of the cancer returning.

Sydelle was glad to learn that she would not need radiation therapy, per the direction of both her medical oncologist and radiation oncologist.

"My radiation oncologist called me in December, just before Christmas, and told me I wouldn't need radiation or chemotherapy so I could enjoy the holiday season," Sydelle recalled.



Where state-of-the-art technology and diagnostic breast radiology experts combine

The MemorialCare Breast Center at Saddleback Medical Center is the first of its kind in Orange County. Today, it remains at the vanguard with state-of-the-art equipment, including 3D mammography, high-resolution ultrasound and specialized breast MRI machines – but equipment is only part of the equation.

"The technologists who take the images are among the most skilled in their field. The radiologists are all fellowship-trained and focus their practice exclusively on breast imaging," said Dr. Lewis. "Studies show that radiologists who are fellowship-trained in breast imaging can interpret mammograms with greater accuracy."

Every new case is presented to the tumor board, where images and test results are reviewed by a multidisciplinary team of breast specialists and a treatment plan is developed. Thanks to her individualized plan and the early detection, Sydelle's treatment was successful – and she couldn't be more grateful.

"I don't think my experience could have been any better," Sydelle said. "I'm grateful for the people who managed to find this tiny tumor and took such excellent care of me. I encourage women to get their annual mammograms no matter what – because cancer doesn't care. You have to take care of yourself."

To learn more about our Breast Centers, please visit memorialcare.org/SBBreast.

Enhanced Bronchoscopic Procedures for **Diagnosing Lung Cancer**



Cedric Rutland, M.D.

As the leading cause of cancer death in the United States¹, lung cancer is a serious yet preventable threat. Preventative healthcare measures, such as quitting smoking and getting annual screenings, can help reduce the risk of this potentially fatal disease.

With the combined power of advanced technology and the multidisciplinary team of lung specialists at the MemorialCare Cancer Institute at Saddleback Medical Center, lung cancer can be diagnosed and caught at an early stage, which can reduce the mortality rate by 14 to 20%¹.

Those at a high risk for lung cancer may require a bronchoscopy screening, where a thin, flexible tube with a tiny camera is threaded through the mouth and into the lung's air passages. Navigational bronchoscopy is one option, which uses computed tomography (CT) images and electromagnetic tracking to create a 3D map of the lungs.

Another state-of-the-art option for screening is an endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) bronchoscopy, which combines camera and ultrasound technology to identify abnormal lymph nodes and collect samples using a fine-gauge needle. Most patients even go home the same day after this minimally invasive procedure.

Are you at risk?

Lung cancer is most treatable when it is identified in the earliest stages.

For information about our early lung cancer screening program or how to obtain a referral from your physician, please contact **Sherri Hoag, M.S.N., RN, O.C.N.**, lung nurse navigator at Saddleback Medical Center, at (949) 452-7416.

1. "Lung Cancer Fact Sheet." American Lung Association®.



The expert board-certified pulmonologists at the MemorialCare Cancer Institute at Saddleback Medical Center, **Cedric Rutland, M.D.**, **Vidal Espeleta, M.D.**, and **Bryan Vo, M.D.**, give patients peace of mind by identifying lung cancer early with EBUS technology.

"With advanced technology, we're able to access and sample lesions in areas we otherwise couldn't reach," said Dr. Rutland. "Both options are fantastic methods to diagnose cancer early and begin treatment as soon as possible."

For more information about lung cancer screening at the MemorialCare Cancer Institute, visit memorialcare.org/LungCancer.



Joint Solutions

When joint pain becomes too much to handle, our expert team has the solutions.



James Chen, M.D.

Commuting to work, doing household chores, exercising – when joints begin to cause pain, even these simple, everyday tasks can become challenging – which is why regular joint maintenance is vital for a healthy body and vibrant life. In fact, orthopedic surgeon **James Chen, M.D.**, often says human joints are a lot like car tires.

"We're all given a certain amount of mileage on our joints before they wear out. Enjoy the mileage but use it wisely, and listen to your body. If you have pain, it's there for a reason," said Dr. Chen.

Just like any vehicle, joints require regular maintenance to function properly. Dr. Chen encourages regular, low-impact exercise to help keep joints healthy, such as yoga, cycling and swimming. Though these activities can help, high-impact sports and general wear and tear with age can contribute to joint pain.

"In older patients, especially those over 65, physiological changes and degenerative conditions, such as osteoarthritis, are most common," Dr. Chen said.

Osteoarthritis occurs when the cartilage in the joint breaks down. No longer cushioned by the smooth, slippery tissue, the ends of the bones grate against one another, causing pain, inflammation and even structural changes in the bones themselves. This can cause potentially life-altering results, such as difficulty with walking, writing and other everyday tasks.

No matter the cause of the pain, if conservative treatments – such as anti-inflammatories, physical therapy and weight loss – fail to provide relief, it may be time to consider joint replacement surgery.

A state-of-the-art center for joint replacement

The MemorialCare Joint Replacement Center at Saddleback Medical Center offers the latest advancements in total joint replacement surgery. The precision of technology and the expertise of surgeons and physical therapists combine for a smooth procedure and recovery.

"The quality of care, start to finish, is excellent, and the expertise among our surgeons, nurses and clinical staff is best-in-class," said Dr. Chen. "It's an unbeatable combination and it's only going to continue to get better."

For more information about the MemorialCare Joint Replacement Center at Saddleback Medical Center, visit memorialcare.org/SBJoint.

Tips for a **faster recovery** after a total knee or hip replacement

- ▶ Always follow direction from a physician
- ▶ Consult a physical therapist for exercises to promote mobility and strength
- ▶ Don't engage in overly strenuous activity
- ▶ Manage pain, get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet and stay hydrated



Milestone: Saddleback Medical Center Implants 100th WATCHMAN Device



Ashish Shah, D.O.

April 30, 2021, began as a normal Friday for 82-year-old Mary Manthorne until, seemingly out of nowhere, a fluttering feeling in her chest overcame her ability to breathe properly. Her rapidly increasing heartbeat was a cause for concern, and she was taken to the emergency room. Once there, she was referred to **Ashish Shah, D.O.**, board-certified electrophysiologist and cardiologist at Saddleback Medical Center, who officially diagnosed her with atrial fibrillation on May 7.

Atrial fibrillation, also called AFib, is a common condition where the upper part of the heart beats irregularly. If the upper chambers don't pump efficiently, blood can enter the left atrial appendage (LAA), forming clots that can dislodge and travel through the bloodstream to the brain, causing a stroke.

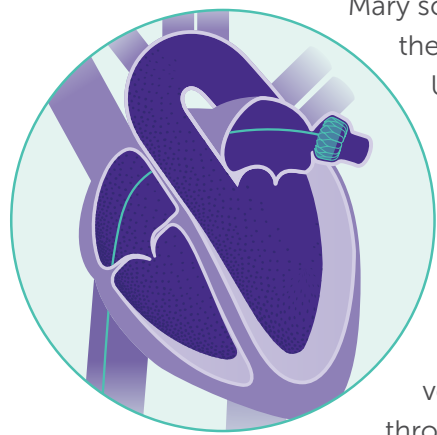
"During my appointment with Dr. Shah, he prescribed me with a blood thinner and said that it would help reduce the risk of stroke, but he also discussed an alternative," Mary recalled. "He told me about the WATCHMAN device, which he said has fewer potential side effects and risks."

The WATCHMAN device

While blood thinners are commonly prescribed to those with AFib, the MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute at Saddleback Medical Center offers a procedure where a tiny device, called WATCHMAN, is permanently implanted in the heart.

"The WATCHMAN is effective in reducing blood clotting within the heart and thereby decreasing the potential for a stroke by closing off the left atrial appendage – where a majority of blood clots caused by AFib form," Dr. Shah explained. "Not only that, but the recovery time is also quick – most patients undergoing the procedure can resume normal activities after a couple days."

Specially designed for individuals with non-valvular AFib, this



technologically advanced tool can produce life-changing results. The newest generation, the WATCHMAN FLX™, comes in a variety of sizes and is ideal for patients with unique anatomies.

Mary scheduled a consultation with Dr. Shah, where they analyzed the high cost and additional risks associated with medication.

Ultimately, Mary decided to proceed with the minimally invasive heart procedure using the WATCHMAN FLX.

On Sept. 28, a small incision was made in Mary's upper thigh, allowing Dr. Shah and **John Bahadorani, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.S.C.A.I.**, board-certified interventional cardiologist at Saddleback Medical Center, to guide a catheter – a long, thin flexible tube – through the femoral vein and into her heart. They then threaded the WATCHMAN through the catheter and positioned it at the entrance of the LAA. They pushed the self-expanding, umbrella-like device into the LAA and removed the catheter, marking the 100th WATCHMAN



Mary Manthorne (fifth from left) and the Structural Heart Program team celebrate the 100th WATCHMAN device implanted at Saddleback Medical Center.



John Bahadorani, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.S.C.A.I.

device implanted at the MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute at Saddleback Medical Center.

"One surgeon can implant the WATCHMAN device, but Dr. Shah and I always work as a team," said Dr. Bahadorani. "An interventional cardiologist and an electrophysiologist bring different skills to the table and that's much better for the patient. It's a higher standard of care, and that's what we strive for at the MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute at Saddleback Medical Center."



Scan the QR code to learn more about the benefits of the WATCHMAN device, and visit memorialcare.org/SBHeart for more information about cardiovascular services at the MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute at Saddleback Medical Center.

Technologically advanced treatments within the Structural Heart Program

With the most comprehensive structural heart program in the region, the MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute at Saddleback Medical Center takes pride in the variety of minimally invasive procedures available to patients to treat a number of heart conditions.



Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) treats aortic stenosis – the narrowing of the aortic valve, usually caused by calcium buildup.



The **patent foramen ovale (PFO) closure device** repairs a common congenital defect – a hole between the two atrial chambers of the heart.



The **MitraClip™ device** is used to treat mitral valve regurgitation – where blood flows backward through the leaky mitral valve.

