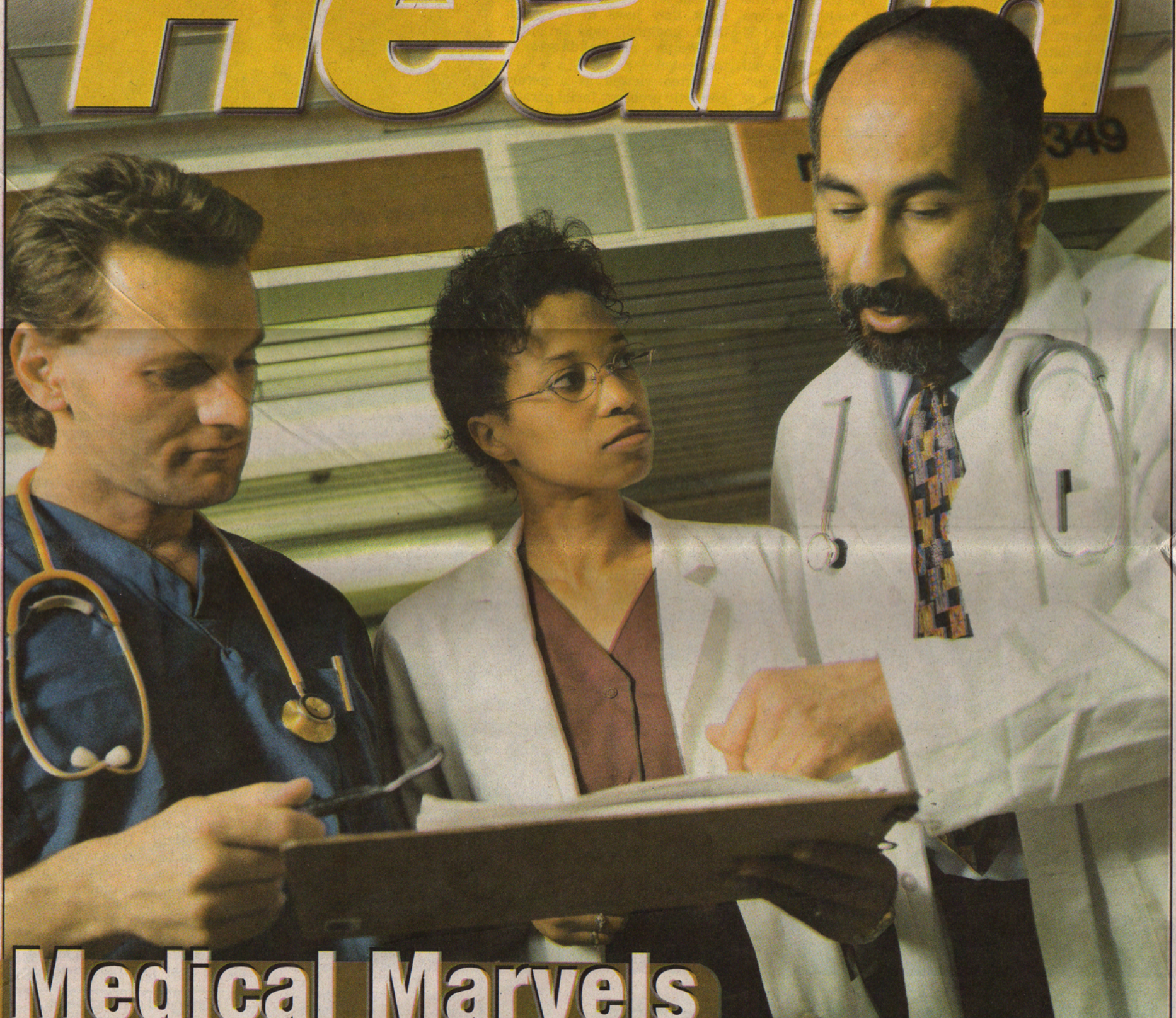


here's to your

Health



Medical Marvels

State-of-the-art procedures are ensuring better outcomes for patients

By Kathy Mullins
Special to The Star-Ledger

People who have suffered from aggravating medical conditions—including obesity, facial paralysis, incontinence and more—have every reason to be optimistic that relief is possible with new surgical and treatment options.

Obesity is a national health crisis. At Somerset Medical Center, Dr. David Ward of Allied Surgical Group (Morristown, Summit) performs bariatric (gastric bypass) surgery laparoscopically through five small incisions. Gastric bypass benefits people who are morbidly obese (an average of 100 pounds overweight) and have been unsuccessful with traditional methods of weight

reduction.

Notes Ward, "When this became a minimally invasive, quick-recovery procedure and the media profiled success stories, like NBC's *Al Roker*, we saw exponential growth in this surgery—from 46,000 bypass procedures in 2001 to close to 200,000 in 2003."

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Plus:
Updates from New Jersey
healthcare providers

Advanced medical options

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In the procedure, the surgeon partitions the stomach and re-connects the intestine to a tiny stomach pouch. This restricts the flow of food into the digestive tract and inhibits the absorption of food by the intestine. Hormone changes lessen the desire to eat.

Losing excessive weight has other health benefits. Hypertension, Type II diabetes, gastroe-

sophageal reflux, stress incontinence and joint disease are among conditions that may improve or resolve.

"Patients are very satisfied," says Ward. "The recovery time is short, their health improves as they lose the weight and 90 percent never regain weight."

Birth trauma, skull or facial fractures, stroke and ear surgery are some precipitators of facial paralysis. Hackensack University Medical Center's (HUMC) Center for Facial

Nerve Disorders and Facial Reanimation offers comprehensive medical, psychological and rehabilitative services in one location.

"Far too often, these patients think they have to live with their condition," says Dr. Richard Winters, medical director of the center.

"Often viewed as a purely cosmetic problem, facial paralysis can cause medical problems, including chewing difficulties, blockage of air into the nose and



Hackensack University Medical Center offers comprehensive medical, psychological and rehabilitative services through its Center for Facial Nerve Disorders and Facial Reanimation.

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inability to speak clearly," says Winters. "Patients suffer emotionally and psychologically as well."

"Comprehensive diagnosis can be complex," he adds. Specialists with expertise in plastic and reconstructive surgery, otolaryngology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology and neurology seek to identify the type of paralysis, determine its depth and degree, and develop an appropriate treatment plan that will restore the patient's symmetrical (balanced) appearance and functioning.

Female incontinence and vaginal vault prolapse cause embarrassment and diminish quality of life.

Dr. Labib Edison Riachi, a uro/gynecological surgeon at Trinitas Hospital, Elizabeth, performs the TransVaginal Tape (TVT) sling procedure to treat female incontinence in women.

Through minimal incisions in the vagina and lower pelvic areas, a mesh sling (TVT) is positioned to support the middle of the urethra. This "designer sling" can be tailored to the individual. Saline is introduced into the bladder, the woman coughs and the sling position is adjusted so there is tension-free support.

Riachi does not recommend TVT for younger women intending to bear children, since the

For severely overweight people, diets offer a hollow promise of success. Pascack Valley Hospital is committed to restoring health in individuals suffering from obesity through an exemplary surgical program that provides quality care, education, compassion and support. Join us for a seminar on the types of weight loss (bariatric) surgery, including the newest minimally invasive techniques. *Choose Pascack valley Hospital.*

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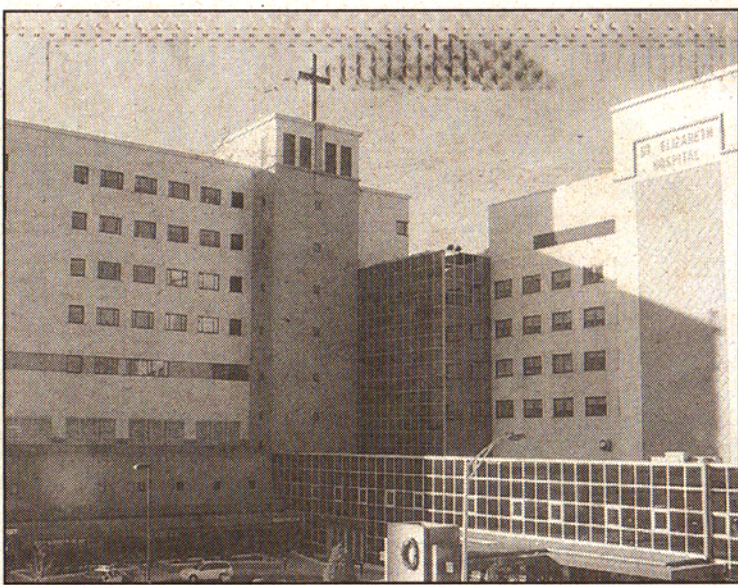
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The uro/gynecological surgical team at Trinitas Hospital in Elizabeth treats female incontinence and vaginal vault prolapse.

Medical marvels

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force of delivery would cause the sling to fail. Instead, he tries physical exercise of specific pelvic floor muscles. Some medications also can help, and treatment modalities can be combined.

Pelvic vault prolapse can occur following a hysterectomy. The cuff of the vagina is usually suspended to ligaments. If this is not successful or if the ligaments relax following surgery, the vaginal vault can prolapse.

Posterior Intravaginal Sling-plasty (IVS), now in use in Europe, could be approved for U.S. use in February. Posterior IVS follows the same principles as TVT. With laparoscopy guidance, a sling is positioned to strengthen and replace the weakened pelvic ligaments and bring the vault back up to its normal anatomic position.

Conductive keratoplasty (CK) is a new treatment for temporary vision correction for low to moderate farsightedness (hyperopia). Designed for people who have never worn glasses, CK uses radiofrequency energy, rather than laser or scalpel, to reshape the cornea.

"Typically, CK appeals to someone who is starting to have difficulty reading and does not want the inconvenience of glasses," says Dr. Theodore Perl, director of corneal surgery at Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston. "As we age, our eyes lose accommodation—CK turns back the hands of time. It's not permanent. Every five or six years, the eyes may need a touch up."

CK has very little downside; complications are minimal. "The patient will lose some distance vision in the eye that we

correct for near vision," Perl explains. "Prior to surgery, we use lenses to simulate post-CK vision and weed out those that would be dissatisfied."

Having performed 6,000 corneal transplants and some 7,000 refractive surgical procedures, Perl now is utilizing Wavefront technology for custom view ablation. A scanning process creates a customized ablation map of the patient's optical system, which is transferred to the computer for laser guidance during corneal surgery.

"With Wavefront, we're able to treat subtle aberrations in the optical system and get more predictable results than with traditional laser correction," says Perl. There's less likelihood of postoperative nighttime symptoms such as starbursts.

Candidates for Wavefront must meet tight standards. Sometimes only one eye qualifies so the other is treated with traditional LASIK.

"Using modern technology, ophthalmologic specialists can offer vision correction that is safe and quick," says Ellen Freeman, refractive surgery coordinator for Eyecare & Surgery Centers, with locations in Westfield, Woodbridge and Warren. The centers offer a wide range of procedures from oculoplastic and reconstructive surgery to strabismus (crossed eyes) correction to LASIK surgery.

Seniors who have been walking around with cataracts find they can see colors again after a quick surgical procedure to remove cataracts using the Eyecare & Surgery Centers' new Dodick Laser Photolysis system.

This laser cataract removal system uses laser bursts at 2-5

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Designed for people who have never worn glasses, conductive keratoplasty is a new treatment offering temporary vision correction for low to moderate farsightedness.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lang



Meet Harry and Sylvia Lang, formerly of Butler, New Jersey and now active members of our lifecare retirement community, Franciscan Oaks. Both Sylvia and Harry volunteer at

Saint Clare's Hospital and Harry serves as the Resident Council President.

Free from the worries of house maintenance, cooking and cleaning, the Langs now enjoy the various activities Franciscan Oaks has to offer.

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