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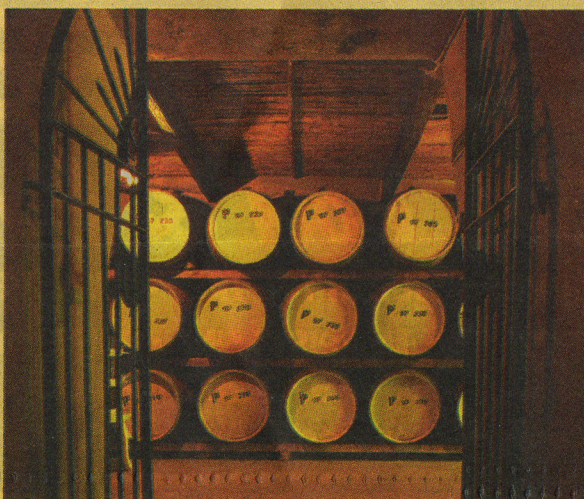
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The Best of NEW JERSEY

PART TWO

A guide to the Garden State



Positive outcomes

By Kathy Mullins
Special to The Star-Ledger

New Jersey's healthcare industry is renowned for its quality and innovation. A wealth of skilled medical specialists coupled with improved technology, have produced exceptional advances at Garden State healthcare facilities.

TVT Sling

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

Factors such as overactive bladder, stress incontinence, prolapse or pelvic floor dysfunction can cause female leakage. "First, we determine the cause through a physical exam to determine if medication, exercise or surgery is indicated," says Riachi.

HEALTHCARE

Stress incontinence, an involuntary loss of urine that occurs during physical activity, stems from weakened pelvic muscles that put undue pressure on the urethral sphincter.

Abdominal surgery has been the main approach to repair. "TVT is now a primary procedure," says Riachi. "This minimally invasive surgery, done under local anesthesia, allows faster recovery and has a very high success rate (85 percent to 90 percent)."

Through a minimal incision in the vagina and two small incisions in the lower pelvic area, a mesh sling (TVT) is positioned to provide support to the middle of the urethra. This "designer sling" can be tailored to the individual.

4-D Ultrasound

The obstetrical benefits of 4-D ultrasound are many. "In high-risk obstetrics, the sophisticated perinatal ultrasound unit gives us a better look into fetal development," says Dr. Manuel Alvarez, chair of the obstetrics/gynecology department at Hackensack University Medical Center.

"Previously, ultrasound scans were reconstructed to get some degree of depth. New enhanced probes make 3-D visualization possible. Viewing in real time provides the fourth dimension," says Alvarez.

"Many diseases of fetal development don't produce struc-



Cutting the ribbon of the new Pediatric Neurology and Seizure Program at Saint Clare's Hospital in Denville are hospital executives, from left, David Lundquist, Sister Catherine Marie Belongia, Dr. Alma Ratcliffe, Dr. Sandy Waran, and Joanne Simonetti.

tural abnormality. Using 4-D ultrasound, we can look at the baby's face and sometimes predict problems such as a cleft palate," he explains.

When conditions obstruct the natural course of labor, 4-D ultrasound helps determine whether Caesarean delivery is preferable. It's also used to evaluate ovarian tumors and infertility-causing abnormalities of the uterine cavity.

Pediatric Neurology

Saint Clare's Hospital/Denville opened its Children's Neurology and Seizure Program for diagnosis and treatment. Pediatric neurologist Sandy Waran is medical director.

Seizures, a condition caused by abnormal electrical discharges in the brain and the resulting impaired functioning of the body's nervous system, affect one of every 20 children. When seizures are properly di-

agnosed, treatments can be started that effectively control or prevent future seizures in about 85 percent of all patients.

The Pediatric Video/EEG (electro-encephalogram) Center has two observation units. The EEG measures or reflects the electrical activity in different areas of the brain via electrodes while a video camera monitors the child and records all activity during a seizure. Together, these technologies help determine the specific type of seizure.

In a majority of seizures, there are no symptoms such as prolonged convulsions or loss of consciousness. "This is why the monitoring services that we are providing at Saint Clare's are so important in properly diagnosing and then treating the neurological condition," Waran notes.

Bone Growth

Surgeons at Overlook Hospital have performed a first of its kind orthopedic implant that promotes bone growth from genetically engineered material. The procedure enables shorter recovery, less pain and less likelihood of repeat surgery. Standard bone grafts for long bone non-healing fractures require two surgical sites. During the new procedure, a paste-like substance is implanted into the fracture.

"The patient gets pretty significant bone formation within a couple of months of surgery and new bone mass is nearly as dense as the original bone. Because there is no need for a second surgical site, other complications such as pain, blood loss and risk of infection are eliminated," said orthopedic surgeon Andrew Levy.



Dr. Labib Edison Riachi, a uro/gynecological surgeon at Trinitas Hospital, Elizabeth, treats female incontinence.

Continued on page 43