

Health Connection

BROUGHT TO YOU BY SOUTH TEXAS
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Empower yourself
Become a Healthy Woman

Tips for the caregiver
Taking care of someone
with the flu

**We care for our
community**

The PACS difference
Better communication,
enhanced results

Breathe easy
Pulmonary services
right here at home



**SOUTH TEXAS REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER**
Quality Care. Right Here.

www.strmc.com

LETTER FROM OUR CEO



Jim Resendez, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

Dear neighbors,

Welcome to a new year and another issue of *Health Connection*. As we move ahead in 2010, South Texas Regional Medical Center (STRMC) is focused on ways to meet your individual health care needs. Last year, we welcomed several new medical staff members to our hospital:

Irfan Agha, M.D., nephrology and internal medicine; James P. Dorman, M.D., general surgery; and Gustavo A. Ferreira, M.D., pulmonology. Rest assured that recruiting new physicians to complement our talented medical staff will continue to be our top priority. Bringing new physicians to STRMC and helping you remain active in managing your health care are two ways STRMC helps keep our community healthy.

STRMC's Flu Fast Track, opened last October, was another resource that further enabled us to help keep the residents of our community healthy. We're responsive to your needs and welcome the opportunity to develop new ways to deliver quality medical care when you need it.

We look forward to sharing news throughout the year of our service line expansions, physician development and enhanced community outreach efforts. Please don't forget that we're able to provide you with information about our medical services and programs 24 hours a day at www.strmc.com!

Best wishes for a healthy new year,

JIM RESENDEZ, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
South Texas Regional Medical Center

Celebrating success!

HEALTHY WOMAN
A SOUTH TEXAS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER RESOURCE

South Texas Regional Medical Center's (STRMC) Healthy Woman program thanks Atascosa County for having gone wild with them at their fifth anniversary celebration!

A SOLD-OUT EVENT

Record ticket sales resulted in a sold-out event in six days. On November 5, more than 300 guests gathered for the special event to celebrate a year of success with one day of celebration. Guest speaker Lisa Smartt had audience members in tears with laughter as she performed her famed "Hope for Women Who Can't Find Their Keys." Evening highlights included presentations of the 2009 Top Recruiter Award to Rita Castillo, STRMC's chief quality officer, and the 2009 Communitarian Award to Cindy Carr, owner of Nest Feathers Home Décor & Gifts.

Special thanks to 2009 and 2010 Platinum Partners: Alejandra Moreno, M.D., Cosmic Creations, Nest Feathers Home Décor & Gifts, Pleasanton Express, Sign Co. Graphics and South Texas Sleep Diagnostics.



Lisa Smartt (left), with Danielle Marie Flores, STRMC marketing director, wowed the audience with her humor and wit.



Cindy Carr accepts the 2009 Communitarian Award from Jim Resendez, FACHE, STRMC chief executive officer.

! Join Healthy Woman!

To join our free Healthy Woman program, please visit www.strmc.com!

Caring for someone with the flu

Given the statistic that between 5 percent and 20 percent of the U.S. population gets the flu each year—and up to 200,000 cases annually are serious enough for hospitalization—chances are you may be caring for a sick family member. Taking precautions during any flu season can help reduce the chances that you'll get infected.



THE CAREGIVER'S ROLE

To reduce the likelihood of others getting sick, assign the duty of primary caregiver for a sick family member to one adult. Pregnant women and those who are at an increased risk of severe illness from flu shouldn't care for anyone who has the flu. As caregiver:

- **Avoid close face-to-face interaction** with the sick person. If close contact is unavoidable, consider wearing a face mask or respirator.
- **Talk with your physician** about whether your personal medical condition makes it advisable for you to take anti-viral medication.
- **When holding a small child** who's sick, place the chin on your shoulder so he or she won't cough in your face.
- **Clean your hands** with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after you touch a sick person or handle used tissues or laundry.
- **Monitor yourself** and household members for flu symptoms, and contact your physician if symptoms occur.

It's important to keep the sick person away from other people as much as possible—especially those who are at high risk for complications from influenza. Keep the sick person in a room separate from the common areas of the house. His or her bathroom should be cleaned daily with disinfectant. Try to keep the sickroom door closed and have the ill person wear a face mask if he or she needs to be in a common area of the house.

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY

It's always a two-pronged challenge for caregivers to juggle care of a sick loved one and prevent well family members from getting sick, too. This flu season, proper infection control is more important than ever. By practicing these precautions, you can provide the necessary care to help a family member shorten their bout with the flu virus and minimize the spread of flu to other family members, including yourself.

! We're here for you

For more tips on caring for someone with the flu, visit www.strmc.com.



Our community's best interest is STRMC's first interest

When our community is in need, South Texas Regional Medical Center (STRMC) responds. Throughout this medical center's history, we've demonstrated time and again that when our patients talk, we listen. Community concerns about the H1N1 flu virus prompted STRMC to take action!

Events surrounding the H1N1 flu virus led to soaring patient volumes in our emergency department during evening and weekend hours. Our staff understood the

! Better health is just a click away!

If you haven't visited STRMC's Web site at www.strmc.com lately, a quick stop there can provide valuable information for you and your family about the H1N1 virus and seasonal flu.

Along with information about the flu, you'll find an award-winning online health library that includes 12,000 adult and pediatric health topics in both English and Spanish. Also available are daily health news headlines, audio podcasts, interactive health assessments, a drug interaction checker and much more. Click the "Health Resources" tab to get started!

Quality medical care and comprehensive health information are available close to home—right here at STRMC.

STRMC's Flu Fast Track meets the growing needs for patient care and helps prevent widespread community illness.

convenience of the emergency department's 24-hour availability but was focused on the best interest of every patient.

FLU FAST TRACK OPENED

To prevent patients from enduring longer-than-necessary wait times and possibly compromising the health of other patients if they were contagious, STRMC opened a Flu Fast Track in the heart of Pleasanton on October 22.

The Flu Fast Track was the first of its kind ever offered by the hospital. The program is caring for hundreds of patients of all ages, after hours and on weekends.

This proactive approach has helped resolve many of the challenges that both the seasonal flu and H1N1 flu virus present. STRMC's Flu Fast Track meets the growing need for patient care and helps prevent widespread community illness.

COMMUNITY FIRST

STRMC's responsibility to the community it serves contributes to the overall improvement and general welfare of each resident. Trust STRMC to be your health care leader whose first interest is always in our community's best interest.

Helping you breathe easy!

Pulmonary services, right here at home



Gustavo A. Ferreira, M.D.
Board-Certified
Pulmonologist

Missed work, distant drives, frustrating maps and the wrong exit ramps. Does this sound like fun? Probably not. But for many locals, this does sound like their last trip to San Antonio for a visit to a physician.

Fortunately, residents of Atascosa County can finally say goodbye to the days of hitting the road to find a skilled pulmonologist. This is

because Atascosa Pulmonary & Sleep Associates (APSA) offers a full range of pulmonary care like that of big-city practices without the big-city drive. APSA is located in Jourdanton.

MEET DR. FERREIRA

Board certified in both pulmonary diseases and internal medicine, Gustavo A. Ferreira, M.D., pulmonologist with APSA, is this area's only full-time pulmonologist and your newest neighbor! Dr. Ferreira calls Pleasanton his

newfound home. You're likely to encounter Dr. Ferreira, his wife and two young children at a local supermarket or park. Their family enjoys this area's pace of life and contributing to a stronger localized medical community.

Dr. Ferreira has more than 25 years of medical experience throughout the United States and abroad. Dr. Ferreira is no stranger to south Texas. He practiced pulmonary care in the cities of Brownsville and Alice from 2002 to 2005 and enjoys the opportunity to come back to the area.

Serving as an independent member of South Texas Regional Medical Center's medical staff, Dr. Ferreira's skills have enhanced the hospital's intensive care unit by adding 24-hour coverage and expanded services for critical pulmonary care patients.

IN-HOUSE PATIENT SERVICES

Dr. Ferreira specializes in treatment of pulmonary conditions such as asthma, allergies, pulmonary disease and sleep disorders. Additional patient services offered include care for:

- asthma
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- critical care
- emphysema
- insomnia
- lung cancer
- lung disease
- pulmonary function testing
- sleep apnea
- sleep disorders

Located at 1901 Highway 97 East, Suite 220, on the second floor of the Steidle Medical Office, APSA is certain that you'll be satisfied with the experienced and friendly care that Dr. Ferreira and his staff provide to each patient.

! Catch your breath today!

Don't allow yourself to surrender to the Texas winds, rains and other allergens that make you feel miserable! Patients can schedule consultations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Schedule yours today by calling (830)

769-APSA (2772).



Health Connection is published as a community service of South Texas Regional Medical Center. There is no fee to subscribe.

The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your health care provider.

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Better patient care through enhanced communication

PACS makes it possible

South Texas Regional Medical Center's (STRMC) recent purchase and implementation of the new picture archival and communication system (PACS) from Carestream Health will provide radiologists with immediate electronic access to medical imaging exams and enable faster and more efficient distribution of radiology reports and images to referring physicians and patients.

RAPID RESULTS

"This investment will provide a more efficient workflow for medical imaging exams, which can save time and provide added convenience for our patients, referring physicians and staff," says Barbara Lewis, director of imaging at STRMC.

To enhance PACS, the hospital ordered the Carestream computed radiography systems that capture patients' medical imaging exams digitally, instead of on radiographic film. These systems offer rapid results and reduce the need for retakes.

"With a film-based system, patients must wait while the film is being processed and checked for quality," says Lewis. "Digital imaging systems provide faster image capture and also require fewer retakes due to the built-in flexibility of digital imaging and display technology."

STRMC is providing faster, more advanced service with the same recognized quality care you've come to expect. This is another way we're providing quality care, right here.



Barbara Lewis
Director of Imaging



! Experience the digital difference!

Need to pick up your imaging studies? Ask us for a CD of your medical images instead of X-ray films to take to your physician. For more information about radiology services at STRMC, call (830) 769-5258.