

# For Your HEALTH

Committed to the Health & Well-Being of El Dorado County

SPRING 2022

## Better Cancer Care Comes to El Dorado County



**MARSHALL**  
MEDICAL CENTER

It's about you

- ▶ Home is Where the Heart Heals
- ▶ Marshall Earns Top Hospital Award
- ▶ Choosing Health Through Weight Loss Surgery



# Gallstones? Recognize The Signs



**T**he gallbladder is an organ we seldom hear about—until it has to come out. It's a small organ located under the liver, helping with fat digestion. If the bile ducts or tubes leading out of the gallbladder get blocked or infected, you may develop gallstones, which are hard deposits that can cause severe pain.

Gallstones do not cause any symptoms aside from

pain that you would notice, but they can lead to inflammation or block a critical duct for organ function. Some symptoms you may experience include abdominal pain, indigestion, nausea and vomiting, fever, changes in urine or bowels, and in some cases even chest pain or jaundice (yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes).

If you experience these symptoms, talk to your doctor about gallbladder removal surgery. The gallbladder is an organ you can live without and, most times, removal is a simple outpatient procedure. Traditional laparoscopic surgery to remove the gallbladder requires four small incisions.

However, with the da Vinci robotic surgery system, one small incision is all it takes and there is virtually no scarring. Single-site gallbladder surgery also means minimal pain. Marshall Medical Center Surgeon Leighton Belden, MD, explains, “using da Vinci, you can see the ducts more clearly, which leads to fewer complications. The wristed motion using the surgical robot provides a better angle so patients experience less pain and a faster recovery.”

Talk to your doctor about what you're experiencing and if robotic-assisted surgery at Marshall Medical Center is right for you.

## Strength Training Is Good for Your Heart

Lifting weights does more than build strong bones. Strength training can also contribute to heart health by building lean muscle mass, which helps to burn extra calories, keep blood sugar in check, and improve cholesterol levels.

Strength training, especially for older adults, can also make it easier to perform everyday activities such as lifting a bag of groceries.

“Building lean muscle mass is very important to cardiac health. That's why we don't just measure body mass index (BMI), we also measure body fat percentage and muscle mass because muscle is more dense than fat,” explains Scott Vasconcellos, MD, cardiologist at Marshall. “I recommend 10 minutes of strength training for every 30 minutes of aerobic exercise.”

If gyms are intimidating for you, or you would simply prefer to work out at home, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests trying some of the following activities for strength training. You can find lots of helpful videos online to help you get started:

- Working with resistance bands, weight machines or hand-held weights
- Doing push ups, sit ups and other body weight resistance exercises
- Heavy gardening (digging, lifting and carrying)
- Yoga or Pilates
- Tai Chi



Be careful not to over do it. The American Heart Association recommends performing 8 to 10 resistance exercises two days a week. Look for exercises that use multiple major muscle groups – legs, hips, back, chest, abdomen, shoulders, and arms. And try to do each exercise to the point of muscle fatigue. Avoid overtraining, however, and stop immediately if you feel any pain.

## ABOUT MARSHALL MEDICAL CENTER

Marshall Medical Center is an independent, nonprofit community healthcare provider located in the heart of the Sierra Foothills between Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe. Marshall Medical Center includes Marshall Hospital, a fully accredited acute care facility with 111 beds located in Placerville; several outpatient facilities in Cameron Park, El Dorado Hills, Placerville and Georgetown; and many community health and education programs. Marshall has nearly 220 licensed providers and a team of over 1,400 employees providing quality healthcare services to the residents of El Dorado County.

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It is intended to provide information about health in general as well as healthcare services and resources available in El Dorado County. Information comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your healthcare provider.

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# Home is Where the Heart Heals

It was a beautiful summer day when Bob Florer, age 73 of Diamond Springs, started feeling some pain and pressure in his chest.

"I went home and tried to walk it off and also did some stretches but the pain and pressure wouldn't subside." A trip to the Emergency Department at Marshall Medical Center revealed that Bob had a cardiac event. He had surgery for a stent and was sent home to recover.

Once Bob's heart had healed from the heart attack, he explored his options for cardiac rehabilitation at Marshall. Bob chose to participate in the virtual Pritikin Intensive Cardiac Rehab from the comfort and familiar surroundings of his home. "I didn't want to exercise wearing a mask," explained Bob. "I sometimes have trouble with breathing and I just didn't want to have to worry about a mask on top of everything else." During his initial appointment, Reggie Higashi, an exercise physiologist at Marshall Cardiac Rehab, provided him with the equipment and technology he would need, including a blood pressure machine, heart rate monitor, pulse oximeter, and a tablet he would use to communicate with his team from home.

Twice a week, Bob spent 45 minutes doing monitored exercises with Reggie, such as squats with bicep curls, lunges with lateral raises, and trunk twists. He doesn't have any fancy equipment at home and was pleased that it wasn't necessary. Throughout the sessions, Reggie was able to monitor Bob's level of exertion and make adjustments to ensure he was progressing safely through the program. "I also kept up with the exercises on my own during our off days and my wife and I continued to go square dancing every Wednesday," added Bob. His sessions typically ended with a cool down, followed by a video or other heart health education materials from Pritikin, which Reggie was able to stream to Bob's tablet.



Bob was able to graduate from Marshall Cardiac Rehab on January 13, one of the first patients to finish the virtual cardiac rehab program.

Pritikin Intensive Cardiac Rehab, which can be done virtually like Bob or at Marshall's facility in Placerville, takes recovery from a heart attack a step further. Patients complete twice as many sessions that include not only the exercises Bob completed, but also an educational component at each visit. Patients can expect to learn how to:

- Implement significant lifestyle changes
- Create a personalized Nutrition Action Plan and Exercise Action Plan
- Lose weight using healthy, evidence-based strategies
- Make heart-healthy choices when preparing a meal or dining out
- Utilize a variety of strategies for tobacco cessation (if needed)
- Manage stress in their daily lives

To learn more about Pritikin Intensive Cardiac Rehabilitation through Marshall Medical Center, either at home or at Marshall, call us at 530-626-2766.



For more information about Marshall Medical Center, visit [www.marshallmedical.org](http://www.marshallmedical.org) or follow us on Facebook/[marshallmedicalcenter](https://www.facebook.com/marshallmedicalcenter), [twitter.com/MarshallMedical](https://twitter.com/MarshallMedical), on YouTube, LinkedIn and on Instagram



# Better Cancer Care Comes to El Dorado County



Nancy Getz

**A**s an ICU nurse, Nancy Getz was focused on healing very sick patients she saw at work every day. Health care was her business. Then she found a lump and everything changed.

Last February, Nancy received her COVID-19 vaccine and later found a lump near her underarm. “I just assumed it was a side effect from the vaccine. I knew a few people who had experienced this but I went to see my doctor anyway,” says Nancy. Her doctor sent her to get a mammogram. Just 18 months after a negative mammogram, this one came back positive for two lumps: the one Nancy found and a larger one in her breast. A biopsy confirmed they were malignant and she was diagnosed with aggressive triple positive breast cancer.

While no one is happy about a cancer diagnosis, Nancy was pleased to know that this type of cancer could be treated at the Marshall Cancer Center in Cameron Park. “It’s



**MARSHALL**  
CANCER CENTER

**UC DAVIS HEALTH**  
AFFILIATE

Marshall Medical Center and UC Davis Health recently announced an affiliation for cancer services that allows Marshall patients access to the renowned UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center through the UC

Davis Cancer Care Network.

The affiliation will offer Marshall patients leading-edge cancer care without leaving the western slope of El Dorado County.

The latest cancer clinical trials, and access to UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center oncologists ensure the latest diagnostic and treatment options.

For more information, visit [marshallmedical.org/cancer](http://marshallmedical.org/cancer)





Mary Beth Fahy

only 11 minutes from my home. I was relieved to not have to deal with an hour's drive to Sacramento while feeling ill and uneasy." Her course of treatment began with chemotherapy at Marshall's infusion center, followed by a lumpectomy and concluding with six weeks of radiation. All of this took place in Cameron Park, except for the surgery. "I love going to the Cancer Center for my appointments," explains Nancy. "It feels like they are invested in my care, they greet me by name, and I feel so bonded with my doctors and nurses. It's like being cared for by my own family."

Recently, Nancy learned that Marshall and UC Davis Health announced an affiliation for cancer services, giving Marshall patients access to the renowned UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center. "My first thought was that this is great! UC

Davis has everything. My next thought was that now Marshall patients will be able to participate in the latest clinical trials. That could mean the difference between life and death."

Placerville's Mary Beth Fahy also received a breast cancer diagnosis last year. Hers was found early thanks to Marshall's recently acquired 3D mammographic system. "It had been a couple of years since my last mammogram, so I curiously asked my oncologist if the tumor would have shown last year. She told me that it might not even have been visible even this year had it not been for the 3D machine."

Mary Beth was similarly pleased to hear the announcement about the affiliation with UC Davis Health. Her husband suffered from a brain tumor a few years ago and required treatment at a different Sacramento hospital. "It was so inconvenient," she exclaimed. "It felt like a big impersonal machine."

Dr. Mamatha Siricilla, a Marshall hematologist and oncologist, offers that in addition to access to clinical trials, treatment will be more streamlined if a patient has cancer that requires a sub specialty. "Those patients will be seen by a UC Davis specialist in a more timely manner since we won't have to transfer the patient between systems, and they can undergo their radiation, chemotherapy, and other infusions in Cameron Park," she explained.

Affiliation with the UC Davis Cancer Care Network allows Marshall oncologists to work directly with UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center oncologists to ensure the latest diagnostic and treatment options are available to their patients. Marshall's providers and clinicians will have access to continuing medical education opportunities at UC Davis Health. UC Davis oncologists will also be involved in the tumor board meetings for Marshall patients, where diagnoses and treatment plans are discussed and knowledge is shared.

"Our cancer center is an amazing community resource for people going through the cancer journey," says Nancy. "And now the advanced level of care, together with that special family atmosphere, gives Marshall cancer patients the best of both worlds."

# Improving Community Health



Marshall Foundation for Community Health supports the critical services that Marshall Medical Center provides, as well as community health programs in the area. As a result of donations by individuals and businesses, the Foundation provided more than \$630,000 during the 2021 fiscal year, including almost \$600,000 to Marshall Medical Center, strengthening the health of El Dorado County's western slope population.

One significant example is funding Marshall's Cancer Patient Transportation Program, which provides gas cards or rides for cancer patients traveling to and from oncology appointments. The program ensures that lack of transportation does not negatively impact health outcomes for cancer patients in the community. Transportation is a known barrier to healthcare nationwide, especially in rural areas. "Without the transportation program, I would not be able to keep my appointments. I'm 81 years old and have difficulty getting around. The rides are a lifesaver," said a patient.

Without adequate transportation, getting to and from frequent oncology appointments can be nearly impossible. A bus ride from Pollock Pines to Marshall's Cameron Park campus requires over two hours of travel, including ten minutes of walking and two transfers each way. A cab or ride share would cost at least \$25 one way. Low income and older patients are especially vulnerable to these obstacles. Now imagine worrying about all of this when you aren't feeling well. Since 2013, this program has provided

928 patients with 1,422 gas cards and 918 patients with 2,747 roundtrip rides provided by volunteers in a vehicle donated by Thomson's Auto Group.

Grants from the Foundation sustain the service, including fuel, registration, and maintenance of the cancer transport vehicle.

In 2021, the Foundation provided:

- Marshall Medical Center \$590,547
- Strength For The Journey \$13,650
- Mother Teresa Maternity Home \$1,500
- Child Advocates of El Dorado County \$5,000
- New Morning Youth and Family Services \$4,500
- 3 Strands Global \$3,000
- National Night Out Placerville and Camino \$1,000
- Emergency Medical Services Appreciation Week \$2,068
- Placerville Aquatic Center \$3,000
- SAFE-D \$1,500
- Hands4Hope \$6,000

"Everyone experiences challenges to live a healthy life, and we see these challenges across our community. With the support of our donors and volunteer leadership, Marshall Foundation for Community Health is able to dedicate resources that alleviate the barriers our fellow nonprofits and residents face. We are extremely grateful for the work these organizations do, and are honored to help fund their needs. A healthy community is a strong community," added Jamie Johnson, Executive Director of Marshall Foundation for Community Health.

To support the Foundation and the wellbeing of the residents of the western slope of El Dorado County, visit [marshallfound.org](http://marshallfound.org), or call (530) 642-9984.



**Marshall  
Foundation**  
for Community Health



# Marshall Earns Top Hospital Award

**H**ighlighting its nationally recognized achievements in patient safety and quality, Marshall Medical Center was named a Top General Hospital nationally by The Leapfrog Group. The Leapfrog Top Hospital award is widely acknowledged as one of the most competitive awards American hospitals can receive. The Top Hospital designation is bestowed by The Leapfrog Group, a national watchdog organization of employers and other purchasers recognized as the toughest standard-setters for healthcare safety and quality.

“In the past year Marshall has encouraged staff and providers to identify and report more safety risks prior to an incident occurring using the online Marshall Patient Safety Alert system and leadership follow ups to improve safety processes before an issue arises,” says Cindy Rice, RN, Chief Nursing Officer. “We also look for trends in safety issues during daily nursing huddles and formed a Quest for Zero committee which focuses on patient safety, including the prevention of patient falls and hospital acquired pressure injuries.”

The quality of patient care across many areas of hospital performance is considered in establishing the qualifications for the award, including infection rates, surgery, maternity care, and the hospital’s

capacity to prevent medication and other errors. The rigorous standards are defined in each year’s Top Hospital Methodology.

We are pleased to recognize Marshall as a Top Hospital this year,” said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. “Even with the continued strain of the COVID-19 pandemic, Marshall has demonstrated an extraordinary dedication to excellent health care in El Dorado County. We congratulate the board, leadership, staff and clinicians who put their patients first.”

To qualify for the Top Hospitals distinction, hospitals must rank top among peers on the Leapfrog

Hospital Survey, which assesses hospital performance on the highest standards for quality and patient safety. To see the full list of institutions honored as 2021 Top Hospitals, visit [www.leapfroggroup.org/tophospitals](http://www.leapfroggroup.org/tophospitals).

In addition, Leapfrog recently released Hospital Safety Grades for nearly 3,000 hospitals nationwide, giving Marshall an “A.” This grade is based on how well we prevent medical errors, accidents, injuries, and infections that kill or harm patients and reflects our performance on more than 30 evidence-based measures of patient safety, including postoperative sepsis, blood leakage, and kidney injury.



# Choosing Health Through Weight Loss Surgery

**F**or the first time in many years, Michelle Soto is looking forward to wearing spring and summer clothes. The difference this year? She's lost almost 80 pounds.

For most of her life, Michelle was thin and fit but once she had her first of three daughters, she noticed the weight getting harder and harder to shed. She decided she needed medical assistance to lose the 175 pounds she'd gained over the years. She started with Marshall Medical Center's team of registered dietitians.

After trying multiple regimens, Michelle was unable to lose weight on her own. She even stumped her nutritionist by managing to gain weight on an all-broth diet. It was then she decided it was time to look into bariatric surgery.

Michelle has always had a fear of medical procedures, but she knew she had to try to overcome that in order to get the help she needed. "I knew the only option was surgery but I was very nervous about it," she says.

She recounts her first meeting with Dr. Ryan Lussenden, Marshall's bariatric surgeon: "I don't know if it was his voice or his confidence but I just felt comfortable immediately. After the initial conversation, I was ready to go. I told him I was ready to have my surgery tomorrow."

Dr. Lussenden's advice for those considering the surgery includes doing your research. "Talk to friends and family. Reach out to people who have had the surgery. Be prepared for three to six months of preparation before surgery and be aware that it's a lifetime of changing behaviors. It's not over once the surgery is complete."

In the months before surgery, Michelle took nutrition classes, followed by the bariatric surgery classes. As part of the program, she also started seeing Marshall psychiatrist, Dr. Maisha Correia.

On the day of the surgery, Michelle was feeling anxious. She was comforted by a medical assistant who came in and held her hand until she went under anesthesia. "I understand these are medical professionals and they need to handle their business. But they all really do treat you like family. It was really comforting for me to have that support," shared Michelle.



Michelle followed the strict instructions when she returned home from the hospital. "Patients are usually in the hospital for two nights," explained Dr. Lussenden. "They typically experience pain for two to three days following surgery and we recommend they take two to three weeks off work to recover." Adding, "because the procedure is done with the assistance of a surgical robot, the recovery process is usually short and smooth."

In the months after surgery, Michelle has found new energy and has become known in her support group as "the workout queen," hitting the gym six days a week. She abides by all the guidelines to maximize her results. She's also working with Dr. Tarandeep Kaur, of Marshall Family Medicine in El Dorado Hills, who specializes in medical weight loss, to monitor her ongoing progress.

Seven months after surgery, Michelle has lost nearly 80 pounds. "The most dramatic weight loss will be in the first nine months after surgery and many patients will see a plateau around 18 months," explains Dr. Lussenden.

With the support of her doctors, Michelle found optimism and a focus on health. She reminds everyone who is considering taking this drastic step, "You're a beautiful person, no matter what the scale says. This program isn't just about weight loss, it's about a healthier you."