

Health Connection



THE MAGAZINE OF ALTA VISTA REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Advanced care for ear, nose and throat

New speciality offered at Alta Vista Regional Hospital



Eric Hensen, D.O.
Otolaryngologist

Alta Vista Regional Hospital is pleased to announce one of the newest medical specialties in Las Vegas and the surrounding area: Otolaryngology, the medical and surgical management and treatment of patients with diseases and disorders of the ear, nose, throat (ENT) and related structures of the head and neck.

Specialists in this field are known as ENT physicians.

Alta Vista Ear, Nose and Throat, the office of Eric Hensen, D.O., is located at 108 Legion Drive, Suite C, in Las Vegas. Dr. Hensen completed his medical degree at Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine in East Lansing, Mich. He finished his training with a residency in general surgery at St. John Hospital and Medical Center in Detroit, Mich., and in ENT-head, neck and orofacial plastic surgery at Tulsa Regional Medical Center in Tulsa, Okla. Dr. Hensen is board certified by the American Osteopathic Association.

As an ENT physician, Dr. Hensen treats such common conditions as sinus infections, earaches, sore throats and nosebleeds, as well as more complex problems like allergies, head and neck tumors, skin cancer in the face and neck area and major facial injuries in children and adults.

WHAT DO OTOLARYNGOLOGISTS TREAT?

Ears: Hearing loss affects one in 10 Americans. Otolaryngologists are trained in both the medical and surgical treatment of hearing loss, ear infections, balance disorders, ear noise (tinnitus), nerve pain and facial and cranial nerve disorders, and congenital disorders of the outer and inner ear.



Nose: About 35 million people develop chronic sinusitis each year, making it one of the most common health complaints in America. Management of the nasal area includes allergies and sense of smell. Breathing through the nose and the appearance of the nose are also part of otolaryngologists' expertise.

Throat: Also specific to otolaryngologists is expertise in managing diseases of the throat, larynx (voice box) and esophagus, including voice and swallowing disorders.

Head and neck: This center of the body includes the important nerves that control sight, smell and hearing and the face. In the head and neck area, otolaryngologists are trained to treat infectious diseases, benign and malignant (cancerous) tumors, facial trauma and deformities of the face. They perform both cosmetic and reconstructive surgery.

Call today!

Alta Vista Ear, Nose and Throat is accepting new patients. To make an appointment, call (505) 454-7300.

Preparing for outpatient surgery

Thanks to the miracle of science, surgeries that once required a hospital stay can now be done on an outpatient basis. That's good news for those who recover better in the comfort of home, but it also means that any necessary arrangements must be made before the surgery date. If you or a loved one is facing outpatient surgery, try the suggestions below to help make the experience as smooth as possible.

PLAN AHEAD

As surgery day draws closer, you'll find it helpful to have certain things taken care of. Once you know your surgery date and time, ask yourself these questions:

- **Do I need to make any changes in my house's setup?** You may have to set up a temporary bedroom on the first floor if you think you'll have difficulty climbing stairs, for instance.
- **Do I have enough food in the house?** Stock up on meals in the freezer (either homemade or store-bought) so you

won't have to worry about food preparation. Ask your doctor about dietary restrictions or recommendations.

- **Will I need help in the house?** Plan to have a friend or a family member drive you home from the hospital. It's also a good idea to have someone stay with you during the first 24 hours. After that, schedule your visitors. They'll brighten your mood but may also cut into your resting time. Be sure to limit visits based on how you feel.
- **Is there anyone I'm responsible for?** If you have baby-sitting or caretaking responsibilities, remember to make other arrangements for your recovery period.

THE DAY BEFORE

Your doctor will probably instruct you not to eat or drink within eight hours of surgery. Ask your doctor whether you should abstain from taking medication or bring a day's dosage with you to the hospital.

If you're recovering from or coming down with a cold, tell your doctor. Your surgery may be postponed until you feel healthy.

Because skin-tone changes can sometimes be a sign of postsurgery problems, don't wear any makeup the day of surgery, including eye makeup and nail polish. Also, plan to wear loose clothing to the hospital.

AFTER SURGERY

Tell your healthcare team about any discomfort, irritation or pain you feel. How long you stay at the hospital will depend on your ability to drink fluids, walk and urinate. The amount of pain you're in will also affect your discharge. Before you leave, get a written list of postoperative instructions, symptoms to monitor and in-case-of-emergency phone numbers.





A strong, stable core helps reduce your risk of injury and prevent back pain.

At the core of fitness

postures that focus on building flexibility, balance and strength.

- **Tai chi.** This Chinese ritual involves precise, relaxed exercises to increase both agility and balance.

- **Pilates.** It's the latest craze, involving the use of certain exercises to create longer and stronger muscles without the bulk.

- **Weight training.** Focus on exercises that target your core muscles. Start light and increase the intensity of your workout over time. You may want to consult with a personal trainer to develop a program tailored to your needs.

- **Stability ball.** Sometimes

Head of core conditioning? It's the "apple-a-day" way for you to ensure that your body stays strong and steady. Simply put, core conditioning is a series of exercises that target your core—the body's center of power that starts just below your shoulders and ends just below your hips. You work out to gain strength in the muscles that control your trunk and spine while improving balance, agility and flexibility. Adding core strength helps you perform daily functions like lifting grocery bags, playing with your kids and getting in and out of your car. A strong, stable core also helps reduce your risk of injury and prevent back pain.

Try these exercises to build the back, abdominal, thigh and buttock muscles associated with a strong core. Check with your physician first to be sure you're starting at a fitness level that's right for you.

- **Yoga.** This ancient practice involves stretching and holding

called a Swiss ball or a resist-a-ball, this large, rubber exercise ball is one of the best ways to actively target and stabilize your core. Start with the ball slightly deflated or secure it against a wall until you're ready to add more challenge to your balance. Choose a ball that comes with a video of basic exercises.

- **BOSU ball.** Shaped like a stability ball cut in half—flat on one side, domed on the other—the BOSU ball is designed to activate and strengthen your core as you perform exercises on it. Many gyms offer BOSU ball classes, and you can also buy video and DVD workouts to use with the BOSU at home.

- **Stability equipment.** Other light equipment ranging from foam rollers, balance pads and discs and mini-trampolines (ideal for beginners) to balance and wobble boards (for the more advanced) can help you improve core strength and stability.

Dear neighbors,



Brian P. Gibbons Jr.
Chief Executive Officer

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Health Connection*, our quarterly newsletter. We want to keep you informed of the many positive changes here at Alta Vista Regional Hospital, including new medical care, treatments and technology, physicians joining our staff and related news and events regarding issues and concerns that may affect your health.

In our ongoing commitment to provide quality healthcare to the residents we serve, we're pleased to introduce one of our newest physicians, internist Martin Ruiz, M.D. In addition, we're excited to announce one of our newest medical specialties in Las Vegas and the surrounding area: otolaryngology, the treatment of diseases and disorders of the ear, nose and throat (ENT). Otolaryngologist Eric Hensen, D.O., opened his practice here in November 2006. You can be assured we

will continue to focus on physician recruitment to meet the needs of our community.

We encourage you to visit our Web site at www.altavistaregionalhospital.com. It features numerous educational and interactive components, including Discovery Hospital, which offers a medical library on various diseases and conditions, an anatomy explorer, a body mass calculator, explanations of various procedures and tests, nutrition information and more. This is another way we're striving to provide quality care, close to home.

We're honored that you trust us with your family's healthcare and appreciate your continued support. Thank you for choosing Alta Vista Regional Hospital.

Best wishes,

BRIAN P. GIBBONS JR.
Chief Executive Officer
Alta Vista Regional Hospital

His medical training is in internal medicine.

He specializes in providing care with
compassion, dignity and respect.



Welcome Dr. Ruiz.

Dr. Ruiz is proud to bring his experience in internal medicine to the area. He's also proud to be a new member of the community. If you see him around town, please say hello. He's accepting new patients. Call **505-454-7300** today for your appointment.

Martin Ruiz, M.D.

Alta Vista Internal Medicine
2301 7th Street, Suite A • Las Vegas, New Mexico
505-454-7300
Member of the Medical Staff

 **ALTA VISTA**
REGIONAL HOSPITAL
www.altavistaregionalhospital.com

A circle of friends

Hospital program keeps seniors active and on the go

Exercise, trips, healthcare programs and social activities are the heart of Alta Vista Regional Hospital's (AVRH) Senior Circle program. Close to 500 mature local residents belong to this national, nonprofit organization that's committed to enriching the lives of adults ages 50 and older. Senior Circle offers a chance to meet new people and learn about important health issues.

Senior Circle encourages a healthy and active lifestyle by providing programs that encourage continued learning, wellness, health and volunteering, coupled with a host of social activities. If you enjoy food, fellowship and fun, Senior Circle is the place for you. Activities include exercise classes, walking groups, monthly health and wellness seminars, day trips, parties, potlucks, a beginner's bridge group, a scrapbooking group, a beading class and more.

Senior Circle members can take advantage of discounts at participating merchants in Las Vegas, including local flower and gift shops, restaurants, galleries, gyms and others. If you're a Senior Circle member and you or your spouse is admitted to AVRH, you'll receive an upgrade to a private room (based on availability) at no extra charge. We also offer members free cholesterol, triglyceride and blood sugar screenings once a year and flu shots (when available). Senior Circle offers national benefits as well, including prescription discount cards, Collette Vacations, an eye-care benefit plan and discounts on ADT Companion Services System. Members also receive a free subscription to our bimonthly chapter newsletter, *Circle News*, and our quarterly magazine, *Inside Circle*.

Friendships, camaraderie, exciting experiences, self-confidence and a renewed outlook on life are all elements gained from joining Senior Circle. Nurture a senior's heart and mind by recommending membership or join yourself. Membership is only \$15 a year per person or \$27 for a couple.



Seniors take part in a beading class. Standing: Kathy Breedlove, Anna Gallegos, Fita Gonzales and Flora Rice. Sitting: Joe Chavez and Patty Schlenker.



Gathering to enjoy a Senior Circle event are (from left) Gay Veit, Marilyn Valerio, Carmen Guerin, Larry Valerio, Frances Casey, Ursel Albers, Gerry Bloomer and Clara Zschaler.



Karen Topping
Senior Circle advisor

Learn
more!

Senior Circle

For more information about Senior Circle, please call Karen Topping, director of volunteer services and Senior Circle advisor, at (505) 426-3968 or e-mail karen_topping@chs.net.

HEALTHWISE QUIZ

How much do you know about **menopause**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1 The average age when women in the United States reach menopause is:

- a. 51
- b. 55
- c. 48
- d. 64

2 The single biggest risk factor for osteoporosis, or brittle bone disease, is menopause. All of the following are signs that you may have osteoporosis except which one?

- a. height loss
- b. tooth loss
- c. joint pain
- d. backaches

3 One of the few reasons you should consider using hormone therapy is to:

- a. prevent ovarian cancer
- b. relieve severe menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes
- c. protect against heart disease
- d. lower your risk of breast cancer

4 The transitional period of two to 10 years before menopause, characterized by hormone fluctuations that can cause menopausal symptoms, is called:

- a. premature menopause
- b. premenopause
- c. perimenopause
- d. postmenopause

5 Of the following remedies, which is the only one approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to relieve hot flashes?

- a. soy
- b. black cohosh
- c. phytoestrogens
- d. hormone therapy

Take control!

7 steps to healthy blood pressure and cholesterol

Heat disease and stroke kill millions of Americans each year. Unless you take steps to control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, you may be at risk for these diseases. Get on the road to better health today with these seven simple steps:

- 1 Take a walk.** Exercise helps control your blood pressure and improves your cholesterol. Choose activities you enjoy and strive for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week.
- 2 Manage your weight.** Reducing your weight by just 10 pounds may help lower your blood pressure and reduce bad cholesterol. Since dropping pounds may be easier when working with a group, ask your healthcare provider to refer you to experts, groups or classes that can help.
- 3 Toss the cigarettes.** Smoking causes blood vessels to narrow and blood pressure to rise. It also makes it easier for cholesterol-rich plaque to stick to artery walls. A smoking cessation class can offer extra support.
- 4 Eat well.** Enjoy vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans and legumes, along with moderate amounts of lean protein and healthy fats like those in salmon and olive oil. Avoid foods high in saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, sugar and trans fatty acids.
- 5 Try soy.** A recent study shows that two servings a day of uncooked soy protein—found in tofu, soy milk or soy powder—lowers cholesterol levels by as much as 9 percent.
- 6 Limit your liquor.** Women should consume no more than one drink a day and men no more than two drinks a day.
- 7 Get screened.** Routinely checking your blood pressure and cholesterol levels keeps you on top of your cardiovascular disease risks. If your blood pressure's high, ask your doctor about buying a blood pressure monitor for home use.





First-aid foresight

Would you know what to do?

Sooner or later, we all face a medical problem that calls for immediate first aid and clear thinking. Knowing what to do next is a health skill everyone needs.

Bleeding. Apply pressure to the wound with a thick, clean cloth and raise the wound above the heart. If bleeding is severe or isn't controlled in five minutes or if the wound is very dirty, longer than an inch or gaping, get immediate medical care.

Puncture wounds. Don't self-treat deep puncture wounds since they can result in deep-tissue injury or infection.

Burns. Run cool water over minor burns, immerse in cold water or wrap the burned area in a cold, wet cloth for about 10 minutes or until pain subsides. Apply an antibiotic ointment and cover with a bandage. Call your doctor if blisters form.

Poisoning. Before doing anything, call the National Poison Control Hotline at 1-800-222-1222. Induce vomiting only if instructed.

Shock. Shock may cause cold, clammy skin; weakness; confusion; a rapid heartbeat; or deep, shallow or irregular breathing. Keep the victim warm and lying down on his or her back until help arrives. Don't give the victim anything to drink.

Electrical injuries. Do not touch someone who has just been electrocuted—the current may pass through you. While waiting for help to arrive, try to turn off the source of electricity.

Sprains and strains. To treat sprains and strains, follow the RICE method: rest, ice, compression and elevation. Apply ice packs or cold-water compresses to relieve swelling. Wrap the injury in an elastic bandage and keep it elevated above the heart.

Broken bones. Quickly call for emergency assistance. It's best not to move the person or attempt to straighten a broken bone.

Dine the Greek way

Although many of their meals consist of 40 percent fat, residents of the Greek isle of Crete who eat a traditional diet live longer than most other ethnic groups. In fact, Greeks who haven't succumbed to Western-style meals are 20 percent less likely to die of coronary artery disease and about 30 percent less likely to die of cancer than Americans are.

These stats make nutritionists take note, and what they've found is that the traditional Greek diet is one of the healthiest eating styles you can choose. The diet focuses on:

- vegetables, fruits, fish, grains, beans, nuts and legumes like chickpeas
- olive oil as the sole source of added fat
- only a few weekly servings of poultry, eggs and sweets
- daily, small to moderate amounts of cheese and yogurt
- red meats saved for special occasions only

What's more, the Greek diet is tasty—a sign that you don't have to give up good food to stay healthy.

BEWARE OF TROJAN HORSES

But be cautious: Some Greek foods found in the United States don't fit the heart-healthy profile of traditional



Greek cuisine. The nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest analyzed typical restaurant-size portions of some popular Greek meals. What they found could stop your heart. For example, spanakopita (spinach pie in phyllo dough) has 410 calories and 24 grams of fat, beef or lamb gyro (sandwich) has 760 calories and 20 grams of fat and moussaka (a meat and eggplant casserole) has 830 calories and 48 grams of fat!

MEET OUR NEW INTERNIST



MARTIN RUIZ, M.D.
Alta Vista Internal Medicine
2301 Seventh St., Suite A
(505) 454-7300

Alta Vista Regional Hospital welcomes the newest member of its medical staff, Martin Ruiz, M.D., an internal medicine doctor.

"I look forward to providing quality patient care to the residents of Las Vegas and the surrounding areas," says Dr. Ruiz. "As an internist, I can handle severe chronic illnesses and situations in which several different illnesses may strike at the same time. I also bring to patients an understanding of wellness, including disease prevention and the promotion of health, women's health, substance abuse and mental health, as well as effective treatment of common health problems."

Dr. Ruiz completed his medical degree at Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara School of Medicine in Guadalajara, Mexico. He finished his training with a residency in internal medicine at Damas Hospital in Ponce, Puerto Rico. Dr. Ruiz is board eligible by the American Board of Internal Medicine. "My family and I are happy to relocate to a small community and feel the warmth of its residents," says Dr. Ruiz, adding, "Las Vegas offers a wholesome life that I feel provides a better opportunity to raise a child."

Dr. Ruiz's special interests include the treatment and management of diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity.

"We are pleased to welcome Dr. Ruiz to our community and the hospital's medical staff," says Brian P. Gibbons Jr., chief executive officer. "As part of our commitment to our community and in an effort to continue meeting the needs of our community, we are aggressively recruiting other medical professionals like Dr. Ruiz to join our medical staff."

Dr. Ruiz is accepting new patients. His office hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. To make an appointment, call **(505) 454-7300**.

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