

FROM THE HEALTH EXPERTS AT NATIVIDAD MEDICAL CENTER

INSPIRING HEALTHY LIVES

SPECIAL HEART HEALTH ISSUE

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WINTER/SPRING 2023



Trauma Center Celebrates 8 Years

Earns Highest Level of Surgical Re-Verification

Natividad Trauma Center has once again been verified as a Level II Trauma Center. The expert verification comes from the Verification Review Committee, an ad hoc committee of the Committee on Trauma of the American College of Surgeons (ACS). This achievement reaffirms the trauma center's dedication to providing optimal care for injured patients and coincides with Natividad's eighth anniversary as Monterey County's Trauma Center.

Natividad Trauma Center serves the Central Coast and is the only Level II trauma center between Santa Barbara and San Jose. Our highly skilled trauma team is in-house and ready to respond with 24-hour immediate coverage by double-boarded Surgical Critical Care trauma surgeons, neurosurgeons, orthopedic surgeons, interventional radiologists, anesthesiologists, nurse practitioners, nurses, technicians and support staff.

"Since our designation in 2015, the trauma center and Natividad's staff have saved many lives that may have been lost if they had needed to fly to the Bay Area for definitive

care," said Natividad Trauma Medical Director and Chief of Surgery Dr. Alexander Di Stante. "The quicker we can treat patients with traumatic injuries at Natividad, the better."

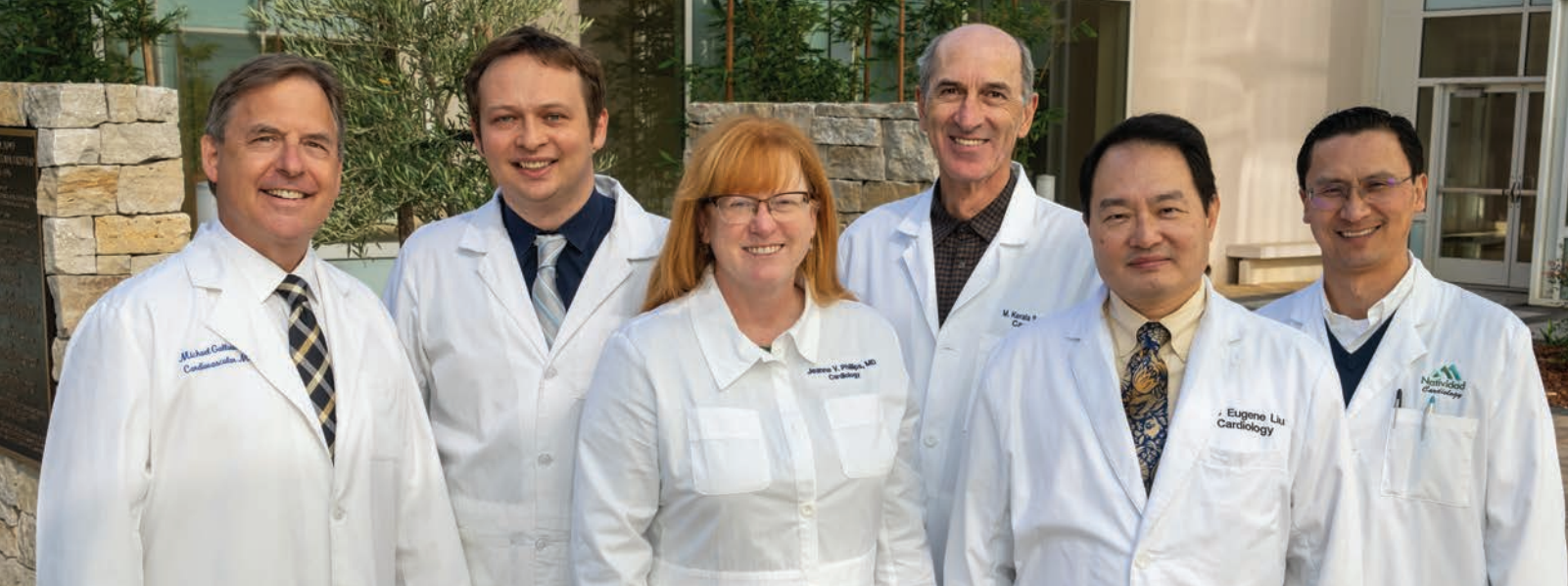
Dr. Di Stante, a 25-year trauma surgeon veteran, said getting treatment for severe injuries at a trauma center can lower the risk of death by 25%. Traumatic injury is chiefly associated with high-risk behavior and is the top cause of death of people ages 1 to 44 in California. Traumatic injury is also the leading cause of disability and can be a life-altering event affecting the patient, their family and caregivers. In addition, men are nearly twice as likely as women to be injured in a traumatic accident. Many of these injuries can be avoided with a few safety precautions.

"The ACS verification is a comprehensive process, and I'm very proud of our trauma team's dedication to detail and commitment to excellence in care for the community we proudly serve," said Natividad CEO Dr. Chad Harris.



Find out more about our trauma prevention and continuing education programs at natividad.com/trauma-center





Heart Health Tips from Natividad's Expert Cardiologists

Dr. Michael Galloway, Dr. Alexander Izmailov, Dr. Jeanne Vesey Phillips, Dr. M. Kerala Serio, Dr. Eugene Yu-Chuan Lui, and Dr. Nicholas Chee

We depend on our hearts for life itself. But, as strong as the heart is, it's also subject to disease that can weaken its ability to do its job. Did you know that cardiovascular disease (CVD), also known as heart disease, isn't just an older person's problem? More and more younger people are dealing with heart disease.

"Each risk factor increases your chance of developing heart disease. The more risks you have, the higher your overall risk," said Natividad Cardiologist Dr. Nicholas Chee. "Some of these risk factors cannot be changed such as age, sex or family history. But there are many important factors you can change, like choosing a heart-healthy diet and being physically active."

Heart disease is the #1 cause of death in the United States for both men and women. But you can do a lot to protect your heart and stay healthy. Preventing heart disease starts with knowing your risk factors and what you can do to reduce them. There's much in your control when it comes to matters of the heart. So please don't wait until it's too late. Natividad's cardiologists are here to listen, help and inspire you to live a healthier, longer life. Our experts will work with you to give you the knowledge, support and tools you need to meet your heart health goals.

TOP 10 RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

1. High blood pressure
2. High blood cholesterol
3. Overweight
4. Diabetes or prediabetes
5. Smoking
6. Lack of regular physical activity
7. Family history of early heart disease
8. A history of preeclampsia (a sudden rise in blood pressure and too much protein in the urine during pregnancy)
9. Unhealthy eating habits
10. Age 55 or older for women; 45 or older for men



When Should You See a Cardiologist?

Cardiologists are doctors who are experts in heart disease. Your primary care doctor may refer you to a cardiologist to closely monitor your health or to evaluate and treat you.

Seeing a cardiologist is recommended for people who:

- have heart disease
- are at risk of heart disease, such as those with family history of heart disease or stroke
- have symptoms of heart disease, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol
- smoke

Some types of heart disease you would see a cardiologist for include:

- abnormal heart rhythms such as atrial fibrillation
- congestive heart failure
- coronary artery disease
- valvular heart disease



Are you already being treated for heart disease or heart disease risk factors?

- ✓ Always take the time to review your course of treatment with your health care provider
- ✓ Ask questions if you don't understand something, need more information or feel something could work better

If you don't have any of the factors listed above, but you are concerned about your risk level, your primary care doctor may be able to help or refer you to one of our cardiologists. While some insurance providers require a referral, some will allow you to self-refer. New patient appointments are in person. Established patients may be seen in person or by phone or video appointments. Call (831) 796-1630 for more information.

10 HEART HEALTH QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Your health care provider is your partner in maintaining your wellness, not just helping you recover when you're sick. So here are some helpful heart health-related questions to discuss at your annual checkup with your primary care doctor or cardiologist.

1. What is my risk of developing heart disease?
2. What is my blood pressure? Do I need to do anything about it?
3. What are my cholesterol numbers? Do I need to do anything about it?
4. What is my body mass index (BMI) and waist measurement? Do I need to lose weight for my health?
5. What is my blood sugar level, and does it mean I'm at risk for diabetes?
6. Should I consider any screening tests for heart disease?
7. How can we work together to help me quit smoking?
8. How much physical activity should I be getting?
9. What is a heart-healthy eating plan for me? Should I see a registered dietitian or qualified nutritionist to learn more about healthy eating?
10. How can I tell when I'm having a heart attack? (see page 4 for more info)



Why Getting Your Body Moving Matters for Good Heart Health

Most of us don't get enough regular physical activity. But the human body was designed for exercise. From your musculoskeletal system to your heart, brain and all your organs: they all work better when you're moving regularly.

Regular physical activity can:

- Maintain strength and stability, helping to prevent falls
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Lower some heart disease risk factors such as “bad” LDL cholesterol levels and increase “good” HDL cholesterol levels and manage high blood pressure
- Lower stress and improve your mental health
- Lower your risk for other conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, depression and cancer

Aerobic exercise (where your heart beats faster and you might breathe heavier) benefits your heart and lungs the most. Brisk walking, running, biking, swimming, hiking, rowing or anything that gets your heart pumping counts.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that each week, adults get at least:

- 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, or
- 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or
- A combination of both moderate-intensity and vigorous-intensity activity

New to Exercise?



Talk with your health care provider before you start any new exercise plan. Discuss how much and what types of physical activity are safe for you. Even modest amounts of physical activity are good for your health. Something is better than nothing!

For someone who hasn't moved much in years, it might take 30 minutes to walk a mile. The good news? If it makes your heart beat faster, you're getting many similar benefits as someone in good shape who runs 4 miles in that same 30 minutes. Over time, you'll get in better shape, your speed will likely increase and you'll get tired less quickly.



Know the Signs of a Heart Attack



Warning signs include:

- Discomfort in the chest or arms
- Shortness of breath
- A cold sweat
- Nausea
- Lightheadedness

Call 9-1-1 if you have difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in your chest, new confusion or loss of consciousness, bluish lips or face.

How Getting a Good Night's Sleep Is Important for Good Heart Health and More

Getting good sleep isn't just important for your energy levels — it's critical for your heart health, too. Sleep helps your body repair itself. Getting enough good sleep also helps you function normally. "It can be hard to wind down at the end of the day, but it's so important for overall health," said Dr. Adelheid Ebenhoech, a primary care doctor at Natividad Medical Group Prunedale. "If you're having a hard time getting to sleep or staying asleep, make sure to discuss with your doctor. They might be able to help you get a better night's sleep."



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The number of hours the average adult needs of sleep each night

More than 1 in 3 American adults say they don't get the recommended amount of sleep. While this may be fine for a day or two, not getting enough sleep over time can lead to serious health problems — and make certain health problems worse.

6 Ways to Get Better Sleep

1. Stick to a regular sleep schedule. Go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning, including on the weekends.
2. Get enough natural light, especially earlier in the day. Try going for a morning or lunchtime walk.
3. Get enough physical activity during the day. Try not to exercise within a few hours of bedtime.
4. Avoid artificial light, especially within a few hours of bedtime. Use a blue light filter on your computer or smartphone.
5. Don't eat or drink within a few hours of bedtime; avoid alcohol and foods high in fat or sugar in particular.
6. Keep your bedroom cool, dark and quiet.



WHAT HEALTH CONDITIONS ARE LINKED TO A LACK OF SLEEP?

Adults who sleep less than 7 hours each night are more likely to say they have had health problems, including heart attack, asthma and depression. Some of these health problems raise the risk for heart disease, heart attack and stroke. These health problems include:

- **High blood pressure:** During normal sleep, your blood pressure goes down. Having sleep problems means your blood pressure stays higher for a longer period of time. High blood pressure is one of the leading risks for heart disease and stroke. About 75 million Americans — 1 in 3 adults — have high blood pressure.
- **Type 2 diabetes:** Diabetes is a disease that causes sugar to build up in your blood, a condition that can damage your blood vessels. Some studies show that getting enough good sleep may help people improve blood sugar control.
- **Obesity:** Lack of sleep can lead to unhealthy weight gain. This is especially true for children and adolescents, who need more sleep than adults. Not getting enough sleep may affect a part of the brain that controls hunger.

Source: CDC

Every Weight Loss Journey Begins with a Single Step

If you or a loved one is severely obese, you may have tried repeated programs of diet, exercise, and even medication, but have been unsuccessful in losing weight and keeping it off. Weight loss surgery, also known as bariatric surgery, may be the right choice for people with severe obesity. In addition to losing weight, bariatric surgery can help address some health-related obesity problems. It may help to:

- Reduce blood sugar
- Reduce blood pressure
- Reduce or eliminate sleep apnea
- Reduce cholesterol levels
- Ease stress and strain on the heart and joints

Bariatric surgery can be life changing, but it's just the beginning. Successful outcomes require weight loss patients to commit to lifelong diet, exercise and lifestyle changes. Every patient is evaluated before surgery by a multidisciplinary team to help determine emotional readiness for these rigorous lifestyle changes. It's critically important that patients have people around them who are supportive of the physical and emotional work they must do. It's also important that patients make attending our bariatric patient support groups a priority.



“It's been one and half years and I'm really happy with the results. I've encouraged a lot of people to get it. A few of them already got it and more are going to. It's kind of exciting.”

ALISSE CHAVEZ | Natividad Bariatric Surgery Patient

Minimally Invasive Bariatric Procedures

Most of our bariatric surgery patients have one of two laparoscopic procedures. The surgery is minimally invasive, performed through tiny incisions in the abdomen. That means our patients have less pain, a shorter hospital stay, less scarring and recover more quickly.

Are You a Candidate for Weight Loss Surgery?

If you meet the following criteria, you may be a candidate:

- 18 years or older
- Body Mass Index between 35 and 60 (Use the CDC BMI calculator at [cdc.gov/healthyweight](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight))
- Have made strong efforts at dieting in the last two years
- Able to walk
- Generally in good health

Are You Ready to Take the First Step?

If you're ready to take the first step on the journey of a lifetime, start by talking with your doctor. Learn more about Natividad's Bariatric Program at natividad.com/weight-loss



Scan here to find out if weight loss surgery is right for you.

ABOUT DIABETES

Type 2 Diabetes is Preventable. Not Inevitable.

In Monterey County, 45% of people have prediabetes, where your body doesn't respond normally to insulin and your blood sugar levels rise. The CDC estimates that more than 80% don't know they have the condition. Prediabetes puts you at an increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

Your chances of developing Type 2 diabetes depend on various fixed risk factors such as family history, age, genes or ethnicity. However, there's still a lot in your control, including lifestyle risk factors like diet, weight and physical fitness. "Taking action on what you can change may help delay or prevent Type 2 diabetes," said Natividad Diabetes Care and Education Specialist Lupe Bravo. "You can also ask your doctor for a simple blood sugar test to find out where you stand."

12 SIGNS You're at Higher Risk for Type 2 Diabetes

1. Are overweight or obese
2. Are age 45 or older
3. Have a family history of diabetes
4. Are African American, Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
5. Have high blood pressure
6. Have a low level of HDL ("good") cholesterol or a high level of triglycerides
7. Have a history of gestational diabetes or gave birth to a baby weighing 9 pounds or more
8. Are not physically active
9. Have a history of heart disease or stroke
10. Suffer from depression
11. Have polycystic ovary syndrome, also called PCOS
12. Have acanthosis nigricans – dark, thick and velvety skin around your neck or armpits

Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes: What's the Difference?

Type 1 diabetes is when the body can't produce any insulin. This most often occurs in children and young adults. If you have Type 1 diabetes, you have to take insulin injections every day.

Type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disorder and happens when the body can't make enough insulin or use it effectively. This type makes up 90 to 95% of the affected population.

The sooner you know you're at risk, the sooner you can take steps to prevent or manage the disease and stay healthy. Find out if you or someone you love is at risk for Type 2 diabetes by taking a quick online Diabetes Risk Test at diabetes.org/risk-test



Want to know your
diabetes risk? Scan to
take a 1-minute test.





Want to try a flavorful, healthy diet? Try Mediterranean

Are you motivated to make some changes to the way you eat so you can live a healthier, longer life? The Mediterranean diet is a top pick from most health experts and doctors. It can promote heart health, regulate blood sugar levels and even help brain function. Not to mention you might feel healthier and even lose some weight.

“Changing the way you eat can be hard. Expensive or extreme diet programs can be effective, but usually not long-lasting,” said Dr. Christine Nguyen, a primary care doctor at Natividad Medical Group Prunedale. “The great thing about the Mediterranean diet is that there aren’t hard and fast rules to follow. Instead, the diet gives guidelines for eating healthfully. That makes it easier to eat better every day — and the diet you’re more likely to stick to is the best one.”



3 TIPS for Mediterranean-Style Eating

- **EAT:** vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, potatoes, whole grains, herbs, spices, fish, seafood and extra virgin olive oil
- **EAT IN MODERATION:** poultry, eggs, cheese and yogurt
- **EAT RARELY:** red meat, sugar-sweetened beverages, added sugars, processed meat, refined grains, refined oils and other highly processed foods



Scan here to learn more.

Cowboy Caviar

A TikTok favorite recipe for 2022, this healthy dip or topping is always a crowd pleaser! Serve as a snack or bring it to a potluck with corn tortilla chips, or enjoy at home or work over a salad, brown rice or quinoa. Cowboy Caviar is a delicious source of plant-based protein and it’s high in fiber and vitamin C.

- 1 (15.5 ounce) can black beans, drained
- 1 (15.5 ounce) can black-eyed peas, drained
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained or 5 Roma tomatoes, seeds removed, chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped
- 2 cups frozen corn kernels, thawed
- ½ red onion, chopped finely
- 1 green or red bell pepper, chopped finely
- ½ cup chopped pickled jalapeno peppers or 1 fresh jalapeno
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- ½ cup chopped cilantro
- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

Combine all veggies and beans in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together spices, oil and vinegar. Combine all ingredients and stir well. Refrigerate if not serving immediately. This recipe makes 12 servings and can stay refrigerated for up to four days.