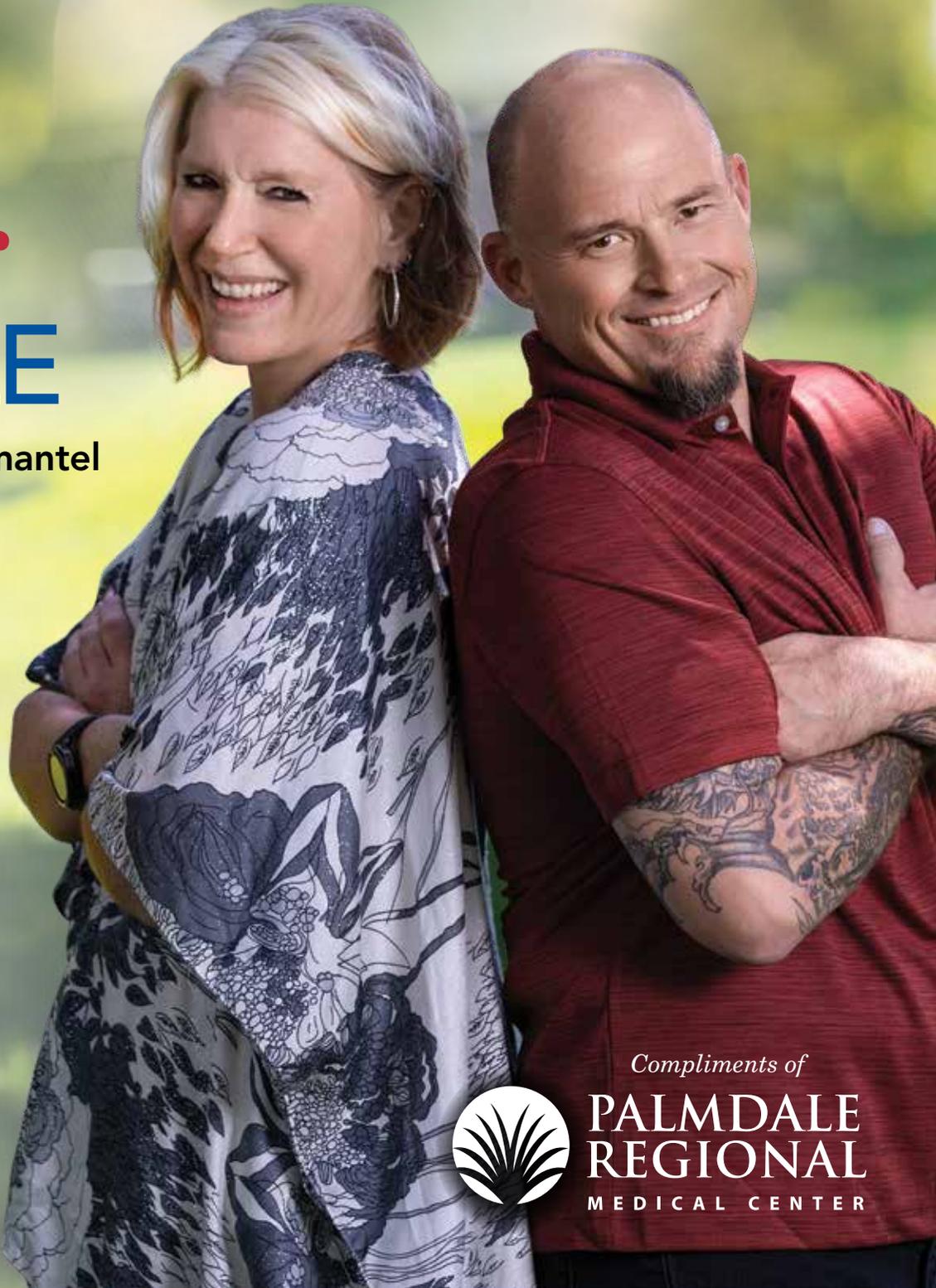


palmdale

REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Power COUPLE

Mary and Brien Siemantel tackled weight-loss surgery together

Mission Accomplished

Georgia Reece's inpatient rehab success

Ask the Doctor

Could weight-loss surgery be right for you?

**EXPANSION
COMING!**

See page 2



Compliments of

**PALMDALE
REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER**

FROM THE
CEO

Discover the Difference at Palmdale Regional



We have great news for the Antelope Valley! As you may have read, we announced in July plans for a significant expansion at Palmdale Regional Medical Center to support the future health needs of our growing community. We will be investing in new service lines, additional patient beds and leading-edge clinical innovations. Perhaps the most exciting news is the opening of a new maternity center including all-private rooms and a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

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A couple's weight-loss surgery journey

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Bariatric surgery basics and beyond

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A patient shares her rehab story

Our longer-term strategic plan includes a second patient care tower on Palmdale Regional's campus, as well as the prospect of constructing a new, freestanding behavioral health hospital for treatment of mental health needs and substance use disorders.

Since its opening in December 2010, Palmdale Regional has provided residents and visitors with high-quality care in a modern, comfortable setting with all-private rooms. Whether our patients come to us in need of vital services like emergency care or stroke treatment when sudden medical issues arise, or specialized services like weight-loss surgery or inpatient rehabilitation, we are privileged to play a critical role in helping people live happier, healthier, more active lives.

Please follow us on social media and visit our website for updates and hospital news. As we grow, we remain committed to providing the best possible patient experience and giving you more ways to **Discover the Difference** at Palmdale Regional.

Sincerely,



Richard Allen
Chief Executive Officer



We're GROWING

HERE'S A PEEK AT OUR PLANNED EXPANSION PROJECT

- Opening of a new 33,000-square-foot maternity, labor, and delivery unit.
- Significant investments to the hospital's infrastructure (e.g., imaging equipment, cardiac catheterization lab, pharmacy and clinical laboratory, and other ancillary support services).
- Strategic assessment for the potential expansion of intensive care services; the opening of an additional 36-bed nursing unit for joint, spine and bariatric care; and potential expansion of the hospital's emergency department.

The expansions are projected to be completed in phases over the course of the next two to four years. **To learn more, visit palmdaleregional.com/expansion.**





Paying tribute to a special organ donor

Hospital staff lined the hallways of Palmdale Regional Medical Center last summer in an “honor walk” for organ donor and respiratory therapist Paula Swain. An honor walk is the final walk that a family takes together as a patient is moved at the end of life from their room to the operating room to become an organ donor. A Donate Life flag was also raised at the hospital for Swain, as her brother, Brent Swain, looked on. “She would have been thrilled to see all this,” he said. “She always wanted to just help others.”



Honored to serve as volunteer home builders

In recognition of Military Appreciation Month in May, and again in September, a team from Palmdale Regional Medical Center participated in a building project with Homes 4 Families to build a new neighborhood in Palmdale for armed forces veterans and their families. This photo above is from the beginning phase of the project – the first of its kind in the Antelope Valley!

Welcome new physicians



DENNIS BEGLARYAN, DO

Specialty: Interventional radiology
Medical school: Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine in Pomona, CA
Residency: University of Oklahoma Medical Center and Meadowlands Hospital Medical Center in Secaucus, NJ
Fellowship: Harbor UCLA Medical Center
Board certification: Diagnostic Radiology



TYLER A. CARSON, DO

Specialty: Neurosurgery
Medical school: Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine in Pomona, CA
Residency: Riverside University Health System
Fellowship: University of Tennessee



MICHAEL COHEN, MD

Specialty: Infectious diseases
Medical school: University of Southern California
Residency: Santa Barbara College Health System
Fellowship: UCLA
Board certification: Infectious Diseases and Palliative Care



PHONG DARGON, MD

Specialty: Vascular surgery
Medical school: University of Massachusetts Medical School
Residency: Oregon Health & Science University
Fellowship: Loma Linda University



TEJWANT S. DHILLON, MD

Specialty: Interventional cardiology
Medical school: Dayanand Medical College in Ludhiana, India
Residency: Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, NY
Fellowship: Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY
Board certification: Board of Nuclear Cardiology; National Board of Echocardiography; Cardiovascular Diseases; Interventional Cardiology; and IBHRE (Heart Rhythm Society)

STRENGTH in Numbers

To truly understand the amazing weight-loss journeys that Mary and Brien Siemantel are on, you must first understand just how much family means to them.

In 2013, Mary Siemantel was a thirty-something mother of three who was more than 100 pounds overweight. While she was taking medicine to control her blood pressure and her cholesterol, Mary was growing increasingly worried about her health. Mainly, she fretted about the impact her poor health could have on her kids. Her own mother had died at a young age and she didn't want her children to ever feel the pain she felt at that loss. She was ready to do anything to keep that from happening. ►



**TACKLING
WEIGHT-LOSS
SURGERY
TOGETHER**



"I did all the things people do to lose weight," she says, "but nothing seemed to stick." Mary is a clinical quality analyst at Palmdale Regional and she saw the success some of her coworkers had with bariatric surgery. "Nobody really wants to have surgery because they're overweight," she says, "but I decided it was a tool I needed and that's just how I had to look at it." After months of preparation, Mary had gastric sleeve surgery with John Yadegar, MD, in December 2013.

There is a common misconception that weight-loss surgery is a quick fix but, in reality, much of the hard work begins after surgery. Mary was adjusting to her new normal but it wasn't always easy. In fact, watching her struggle helped inspire her husband, Brien, to begin a weight-loss journey of his own.

Brien can pinpoint the exact moment his new path began. The whole family was enjoying a meal out, but Mary's habits had changed completely. Brien was eating foods that were no longer an option for

her when he looked up and saw the pain on his wife's face. "I realized I was sabotaging her," he says. "At that moment, I understood that if I didn't change, too, she was going to be totally alone on this journey," he says. "I couldn't let that happen. If I could have scheduled my surgery right then and there I would have."

In March 2015, at the time of his gastric sleeve surgery with Dr. Yadegar, Brien weighed approximately 280 pounds.

Both Mary and Brien are candid about the challenges they faced after surgery and how their approaches to post-surgical life differ. They each handle meal prep, food tracking and even exercise in different ways. "Mary and I are polar opposites, but we bring out the best in each other," Brien says. What's most important is that they are there to support one another. "If Mary is having a rough day, I can reassure her that she's got this. If she's having a great day and I'm having a rough day, her success helps power me through."

Their individual approaches have paid off. Mary now weighs 135 pounds and has become a Certified Personal Trainer. "She's the most impressive individual I know," Brien says proudly. "It's not in her DNA to promote herself, but she's an inspiration to people."

As for Brien, he now weighs nearly 100 pounds less than he did when his journey began. "My life is not the same," he says. "It's absolutely amazing to feel like this – to feel so energized. It's a completely different life."

Both Mary and Brien never lost sight of what motivated them to begin with. "This journey has given me peace of mind," Mary says. "My family is the reason I do what I do every day," she adds. "To be around for them and to do everything I can to stay around for them, that's what I'm going to do." ■

To learn more about weight-loss surgery at Palmdale Regional, visit palmdaleregional.com/weight.

Bariatric Surgeon John Yadegar, MD, says it's not uncommon for couples to pursue weight-loss surgery together. "We help them navigate the practicalities of taking this journey together," he says. "We want to help tailor the experience so that it fits their specific needs." He adds that couples often schedule their surgeries several weeks apart. "That gives the first patient time to adapt to life after surgery," he says. "They can then help their partner catch up very quickly." As for the Siemantels, Dr. Yadegar couldn't be more pleased with their success. "They are a terrific couple," he says. "I really want to say wholeheartedly that they are an excellent example of how successful weight-loss surgery can be. They really are an inspiration. Every time I see them it warms my heart."

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.

Your questions about *weight-loss surgery answered*



Just over 93 million Americans are considered obese according to

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's an epidemic that takes a tremendous toll on the nation's health. Weight-loss, or bariatric, surgery is one solution. **John Yadegar, MD**, Medical Director of the Bariatric Program at PRMC, explains what you need to know about weight-loss surgery.



**THE WEIGHT-LOSS
SURGERY PROGRAM**

AT PALMDALE REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER



Q: Who is a good candidate for weight-loss surgery?

Someone who struggles with obesity and has tried non-surgical approaches to weight loss, including lifestyle changes and exercise, but hasn't been able to lose weight and keep it off. Patients have to have a body mass index (BMI) that is greater than 35 with a co-morbidity such as diabetes or sleep apnea. Those with a BMI of 40 or above don't have to have a co-morbidity. We want the patient to be well-informed about the process and fully committed to the long-term lifestyle changes that are needed for success.

Q: What would you tell an individual who is interested in bariatric surgery?

I would encourage them to meet with patients who have been through this process. It's one thing to hear statistics, but it's the quality-of-life issues that really touch the patient. To hear somebody say they can now sit on an airplane without a seatbelt extender or that they went horseback riding – these are the stories that strike a chord.

Q: What are some misconceptions that people have about weight-loss surgery?

That the surgery is going to take care of everything. That's just not the case. Surgery is a tool. After that it's up to the patient to make lifestyle changes, improve their nutrition, take their supplements and attend follow-up appointments. And while the patient also has to be realistic about expectations, it's important to understand that this is the best, most significant and most well-sustained option that we have to date.

Q: What should individuals considering weight-loss surgery know?

Resolving obesity is not just about improving conditions like diabetes, cholesterol, high blood pressure and sleep apnea. It can resolve dozens of other medical challenges. For instance, it can help with migraines, carpal tunnel and urinary incontinence. It can also reduce the risk of some cancers and help improve fertility. Patients have a lot to gain from losing the weight. ■

To find a doctor, visit palmdaleregional.com/doc or call 800-851-9780.

Georgia Reece **DISCOVERED THE DIFFERENCE!**

Her “five-star treatment” in acute rehab

Georgia Reece had one major goal when she entered the Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional Medical Center: learning how to walk again after breaking her right thigh bone (femur) in a car accident.



“When I arrived, I was in severe pain and could barely get out of bed,” she recalls. She quickly discovered that she was in the right place to get better physically and emotionally.

Initially upon arriving, she was grateful to have her own private room and bathroom, and she was immediately reassured by the caring, compassionate staff. “They made me feel like they were there just to help me.”

She was a little intimidated at first by her rehab regimen, which included three hours of therapy a day. But her team helped her manage her pain and her schedule, and she steadily gained confidence walking with a walker. “Even when I didn’t want to go to physical therapy or dinner, they had a gentle way of prodding me and helping me see the light at the end of the tunnel, and of course I always felt better.”

In between therapy sessions, she ate meals with other patients, and she also had a chance to practice real-life skills like cooking and laundry, which boosted her confidence and morale. “I got to leave a half-week early because I was doing so well,” she says. “I felt very confident by the time I went home. It was pretty miraculous.”

As an added personal accomplishment, she quit smoking during her 11-day stay, which was something she’d been wanting to do for months.

Reece gets emotional when she talks about her experience. “I fell head over heels for all the therapists and everybody that helped me,” she says. “I am grateful that the Antelope Valley has a place like this ... It was five-star treatment all the way around.” ■

Learn more at
palmdaleregional.com/rehabcare.

RESTORING INDEPENDENCE

The Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional is designed to help restore function and enhance quality of life for patients with disabling physical or neurological conditions, including:

**STROKE • BRAIN TRAUMA • BRAIN INJURY
SPINAL CORD INJURY • ORTHOPEDIC INJURY**

The unit features 27 private rooms and specialized areas for training and activities.



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Stroke Services

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AHA®/ASA® Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus® Quality Achievement Award 2019

Patient Safety

The highest-graded hospital in the Antelope Valley. Awarded a 'B' for Patient Safety in Leapfrog's Spring 2019 Hospital Safety Grade

The Rehabilitation Institute at Palmdale Regional

The region's only acute rehabilitation center helps patients suffering from disabling physical or neurological conditions such as stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury and complex orthopedic issues. Features include 27 private rooms, specialized areas for training and advanced technology.

Weight-Loss Surgery

Accredited by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP®)

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HEALTH NEWS FROM PALMDALE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

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