PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY

Treating young neurology patients is a finely-honed skill for our nurse practitioner in Pleasant Hill, who has a deep background in developmental and behavioral pediatrics... – continued inside
Neurology team’s nurse practitioner uniquely connects with kids

The pediatric neurology practice of Jonathan Hecht, MD, PhD, and Candida Brown, MD, recently welcomed back nurse practitioner Dawn Saborit, who had briefly left the area. The three clinicians see a large volume of patients at Diablo Valley Child Neurology in Pleasant Hill — part of the John Muir Health + Stanford Children’s Health partnership —
The group treats children ranging in age from birth to their early 20s who have all types of developmental problems, including neuromuscular issues, headaches, migraines, seizures, ADHD, epilepsy, concussion, tics and movement disorders.

They also do prenatal consultations for fetal issues diagnosed via ultrasound or MRI and provide pediatric neurological consults at the John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek.

**Why is pediatric neurology a team effort?**

Dr. Brown says that because neurology usually involves multiple systems that affect the brain, it can require care from a lot of different providers, including speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists and sometimes rehab and orthopedic specialists. “There is enough need in the community for us to work as a team in our practice, and we love that Dawn is able to spend focused time with patients. As a nurse practitioner, she brings a different perspective to our team.”

Dawn agrees. “NPs tend to be a little more holistic. We’re trained to look at the social and emotional aspects of the family,” she says. “I am also a parent, and I understand children’s health issues. I want families to know and feel that I’m 100 percent devoted to their child’s care when I’m with them.”

Dawn comes from a background in developmental and behavioral pediatrics and holds a master’s degree in early childhood special education. After 10 years as a developmental specialist, she became interested in pediatric neurology. She completed a master’s degree in nursing at UCSF and feels that her experience in child development enhances her work today.

“It feels great to return to this practice. It’s a close-knit group, and I missed my patients, families and the wonderful people we work with,” she says.

The doctors feel that working with Dawn is of special value to families. Dr. Hecht explains, “There is always someone to take care of them, especially with urgent matters. Dawn can get their needs met quickly. She’s an excellent clinician, and we are very happy and lucky that she has returned. She is also critical at supporting families when they leave the visit, including navigating how to work with schools and insurance.”

**What to know about the practice**

“If you call us, we are responsive. We do fit patients in and we provide very personalized care compared to a large university setting. We get to know our patients personally. Our care team’s feedback and turnaround are quick,” says Dr. Brown.

The practice works closely with tertiary care facilities such as Stanford’s Epilepsy Center, neuro-oncology specialists, and neuromuscular and neurosurgical groups.

“Feel free to reach out,” Dr. Brown emphasizes. “We can help you take care of your patients and provide information about issues that should be seen sooner rather than later. We always say, ‘When in doubt, reach out.’”

Diablo Valley Child Neurology is located at 400 Taylor Blvd in Pleasant Hill. For more information, please call the office at (925) 691-9688.
The value of measuring lung function

Respiratory therapist Carol Journey is like a cheerleader as she urges her young patients to take a ferocious breath and then breathe out as hard as they can into a tube attached to a machine called a spirometer.

“This type of pulmonary function test is used to screen patients and rule out obstructions or restrictive lung disease,” she says. “It’s painless and not difficult, and they can watch their progress with a visual incentive on a computer screen, such as making a rooster move across a field.”

The data from spirometry can show whether a pulmonary condition is present and if so, gauge its severity. It provides two key measurements: forced expiratory volume and forced vital capacity. It allows providers to diagnose accurately if a child has asthma or another pulmonary condition so they can create an optimal treatment plan.

Why spirometry is key

“This is an extremely valuable test,” says pulmonologist Nancy Lewis, MD, who is part of the John Muir Health + Stanford Children’s Health partnership. “Spirometry is an essential part of the diagnostic process and allows us to monitor response to therapy over time, thus providing the best treatment program for each patient.”

Carol adds, “Especially for asthmatics, spirometry shows what type and strength of medication is needed. It’s great to use it in follow-up visits seeing real data around how the therapy is working.”

Besides asthma, a child with a pulmonary issue may be suffering from a neuromuscular disease (such as muscular dystrophy), severe scoliosis or the effects of premature birth, which can all affect lung function.

“There is a significant population of asthmatic patients in our area. Some asthmatics have undetected conditions. Others are undertreated which can be dangerous. We see children who have never been treated, and we even see kids on medications who don’t have asthma,” she adds. “This test is the key to proper diagnosis.”

“It’s great when you see a child who has had a lot of unexplained coughing, shortness of breath with activity, or recurring sickness, and you can pinpoint the cause. If it is asthma, they can be treated,” Carol says. “The child will feel much better and will be at less risk for further health complications.”

When parents see that a prescribed treatment such as inhaled steroids brings drastic improvement, she adds, “The whole family is so relieved and happy.”

Respiratory therapists are on site five days a week at the pediatric pulmonology clinic at 106 La Casa Via in Walnut Creek. The clinic may be reached at (925) 239-2900.
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY EVENING LECTURE**

**Pediatric myocarditis: When should their chest pain give you chest pain? with Janaki Gokhale, MD**

*Wednesday, May 17, 2017 \ 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.*

Location: Forbes Mill Steakhouse, 200 Sycamore Valley Road West, Danville, CA 94526

To RSVP, contact:
Beth Lannon — beth.lannon@johnmuirhealth.com or Sandra Stone — sandra.stone@johnmuirhealth.com, or call (925) 941-4148.

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**Pre-conference: The role of the PCP in transgender health care**

*July 20, 2017*

Location: The Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center Stanford University

**25th Annual Pediatric Update**

*July 21 – 22, 2017*

Location: The Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center Stanford University

For registration and more information, please visit: www.cme.stanfordchildrens.org

Contact: Marifin Besona, CME Coordinator — lpchcme@stanfordchildrens.org, or call (650) 498-6757.

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**John Muir Medical Center**

1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd, Walnut Creek, CA 94598

**Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.**

Ball Auditorium, Lower Level

**May**

*11* Radiology Risks, Shlomo Leibowitz, MD

*18* Perinatal CME/M&M, Kristin Hubert, MD, and Rosa Won, MD

**June**

*1* Abx Stewardship, Sruti Nadimpalli, MD

*8* Hepatitis B, Sabina Ali, MD

*15* Pediatric CME/M&M

*29* Bronchiolitis update, Alan Schroeder, MD

*Webinars* | Webinars are available via the internet starting at 7:30 a.m.

To access navigate to: https://johnmuirgm.globalmeet.com/CMEConcord
Cardiology
Janaki Gokhale, MD
Stafford Grady, MD
Phone: (925) 295-1701
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Critical Care
Budi Wiryawan, MD
Phone: (925) 941-4580
PICU Main Number: (925) 947-5230
John Muir Medical Center
1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Dermatology
Jennifer Sorrell, MD
Phone: (800) 995-5724
Fax: (650) 721-2884
Wednesday
106 La Casa Via, Suite 100
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Endocrinology
Suruchi Bhatia, MD
Cristina Candido-Vitto, MD
Phone: (415) 600-0770
Fax: (415) 600-0775
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Gastroenterology
Sabina Ali, MD
Kelly Haas, MD
Anita Sharma, PNP-BC
Diane Valmossoi, FNP
Maryann Christofas, MS, RD, CSP
Johanna Kammerer, RD
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Hematology/Oncology
Byron Smith, MD
Phone: (925) 947-5272
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Jay Balagtas, MD
Joan Fisher, MD
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Hospitalist Services (Pediatrics)
Lyn Dos Santos, MD
Office: (925) 941-4588
Pediatric: (925) 876-0489
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Infectious Disease
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Neurosurgery
David Hong, MD
Gerry Grant, MD
Camly Slawson, NP
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Monday & Thursday
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Orthopedics & Sports Medicine
Charles Chan, MD
Scott Hoffinger, MD
James Policy, MD
Stephanie Pun, MD
Referral: (650) 497-8263
Fax: (925) 322-8492
Physician Contact: (510) 549-8480
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
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Christy Boyd, MD
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Physical Therapy
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Rehabilitation and Sports
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Phone: (650) 736-2000
5000 Pleasanton Ave
Pleasanton, CA 94566
Physical Rehabilitation Center
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3480 Buskirk Ave, Suite 150
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Pulmonary
Nancy Lewis, MD
Phone: (925) 239-2900
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Tuesday – Wednesday
Karen Hardy, MD
Manisha Newaskar, MD
Rachna Wadia, MD
Eric Zee, MD
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Fax: (510) 457-4236
Monday, Thursday, Friday
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Rheumatology
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Dana Gerstbacher, MD
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Surgery
Thomas Hui, MD
Christopher Newton, MD
Wolfgang Stehr, MD
Wendy Su, MD
Phone: (925) 239-2900
Fax: (925) 932-2456
Monday Afternoons
106 La Casa Via, Suite 100
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Urology
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Cathy Costaglio, NP
Sarah Oppenheim, NP
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Physician Contact: (650) 732-9779
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INTRODUCING

CINDY EPPSTEIN, PHYSICIAN LIAISON

Cindy Eppstein’s role as a physician liaison with Stanford Children’s Health brings her career full circle. Cindy started her career working for a pediatrician in Oakland, and she has spent the past 26 years serving the dental community in various roles.

For help with physician referrals or for more information about John Muir Health and Stanford Children's Health pediatric specialty services, please contact Cindy by email at: ceppstein@stanfordchildrens.org or by phone at (650) 646-1518.

ABOUT OUR PARTNERSHIP

Through our partnership, patients can now see Stanford Children’s Health specialists locally in the East Bay. When hospital-based care is needed, patients can be treated at John Muir Medical Center in Walnut Creek. It all adds up to: your patients can receive excellent quality specialty pediatric care, close to home.

johnmuirhealth.stanfordchildrens.org  johnmuirhealth.com/ChildrensSpecialty