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DURHAM, N.C.

VA Hospital celebrates silver anniversary



A QUARTER-CENTURY OF SERVICE TO VETERANS—The Durham Veteran's Administration Hospital, affiliated with Duke since it opened

April 6, 1953, has become known as one of the leading VA hospitals in the country. (Photo by VA Medical Media Productions)

The silver anniversary week for the Veteran's Administration Hospital concludes today with a tea for employees, volunteers and friends of the hospital.

The bands from Durham and Northern High schools will play during the event which is scheduled for 2-4 p.m. on the lawn in front of the VA Hospital.

The VA Hospital has been affiliated with Duke since it opened April 6, 1953, and has been an enormous boon to the medical school as a place where Duke physicians, residents, nurses, technicians and students work and learn.

During the past 25 years, the hospital has gained the reputation of being one of the best VA hospitals in the country.

Significant growth

When the hospital opened in 1953, it had 120 beds and a professional staff of 24 full-time physicians, 65 residents and interns and 154 nurses. There were 600 employees.

Today, there are 501 beds and the professional staff includes 205 faculty and resident physicians from Duke and 251 RNs and LPNs. The number of employees is 1,444.

The first major addition to the hospital was the research wing, which was dedicated in 1967.

Adjacent to the research area on the basement floor, clinical space was provided for a cobalt therapy machine which recently was replaced by a linear

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Here's some good news and some bad news

By William Erwin

A Duke study released last week contains some good news and some bad for the estimated three million American women taking estrogen replacement drugs.

The study, conducted by physicians at the Comprehensive Cancer Center, suggests that estrogen replacement pills offer some protection against a long list of diseases, including heart attacks.

But these same drugs can also increase a woman's risk of uterine cancer at least three fold, the study shows.

There's more good news, however. By taking pills mimicking the body's natural progesterone hormone, an estrogen user can bring her uterine cancer risk back down to normal, the study indicates.

Researchers

These findings were contained in a summary prepared for delivery at a meeting of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology in Los Angeles.

Conducting the research were Dr. Charles B. Hammond, professor of obstetrics and gynecology (ob-gyn); Dr. Frederick R. Jelovsek, assistant professor of ob-gyn; Dr. Kerry L. Lee, assistant professor of community and family medicine; Dr. William T. Creasman, professor of ob-gyn; and Dr. Roy T. Parker, professor and department chairman of ob-gyn.

Jelovsek presented the findings in Los Angeles. Ayerst Laboratories, a maker of estrogen drugs, partially sponsored the study.

Prepare for egg

Estrogen is the primary female hormone. Secreted by the ovaries, it causes girls to develop into women and

makes the lining of the uterus thicken each month as it prepares to receive a fertilized egg.

Estrogen production ceases with the menopause, when the ovaries stop functioning. This happens between the

ages of 45 and 55 for most women. Menopause can begin earlier than 45, however, if the ovaries must be removed for any reason or if they stop working prematurely.

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OUCH!!! — Twin Demeshia Burnette (or is it twin Temeshia?) gives a playful tug on Dr. Larry Mumford's glasses at the Intensive Care Nursery Reunion on April 12. The other Burnette twin is already preoccupied with a strand of the physician's hair. Mumford is a fellow in pediatric neonatology. More photographs from the reunion are on pages 2 and 3. (Photos by Parker Herring)

