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Surgery at Kings Mountain Hospital: A Growing Service

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Surgery is not generally a pleasant topic of conversation; especially if you are scheduled for it. Surgery does, however, have a very positive side besides the expected outcome. It helps a community hospital remain stable in the volatile world of healthcare. Kings Mountain Hospital offers a diverse range of surgical options for its patients. And, when faced with a surgical necessity, it's always good to remain close to home when possible. That's the philosophy behind surgical services (and all services) at Kings Mountain Hospital.

Vickie Richards, LPN, Surgical Scrub Tech, has seen her share of operations. She sees the anxiety and sometimes fear in her patients. Her reassurance is often enough to calm them. Her skills, however, make the difference. "I have always been fascinated by the surgical process," Richards said. "I feel at home in the operating room and I work with some of the finest surgeons that I have ever seen," she added. Indeed, Kings Mountain Hospital has an established tradition for surgical excellence. But, until recently, surgeries at our local hospital were on the decline.

"When I first began working at Kings Mountain Hospital, we had surgical cases stacked on the schedule. Then, because of the decline in physicians in this community, the cases seemed to drop little by little," Richards noted. The shortage

of primary care physicians became a crisis throughout Cleveland County and the surrounding areas in the mid-90's. And, because there were too few physicians referring surgical cases to Kings Mountain Hospital, the volume dropped dramatically. Fortunately, things are different now and surgery is experiencing a regrowth.

Through aggressive recruitment efforts, the physician crisis ended and surgical volumes for the hospital began to increase. Richards takes this as a positive sign for the future of the hospital. "Kings Mountain Hospital is a great place to work. We are a family and treat our patients as one of our own. There is hardly a week that goes by that we do not receive a card or letter from a former patient thanking us for being there for them. It's more than a job - it's a way of life for us," Richards said.

Kings Mountain Hospital offers several different types of surgical specialties and techniques. One of the latest techniques, laparoscopic surgery, is routinely performed at Kings Mountain Hospital and is used in a large percentage of cases. This technique is minimally invasive and requires significantly less time for recovery because of the small incisions necessary for the procedure. "Laparoscopic procedures are the norm. Our surgeons prefer it and use it when appropriate," Richards said.

General surgery at Kings Mountain Hospital is complemented by orthopaedic, urologic and podiatric specialties. "We are seeing more vascular cases and our foot surgery volumes are

growing," Richards noted. In addition to traditional cases, endoscopic procedures are regularly performed. These special procedures have tripled over the last year and now constitute a significant portion of the total surgical volume. Colonoscopies, EGD's, PEG tube placements and other endoscopic treatments and diagnostics are offered at Kings Mountain Hospital.

Because of the minimally invasive techniques and the special endoscopic procedures utilized, the majority of surgical cases at KMH are through the outpatient department. "Patients like being able to return home after a procedure. Most people rest better at home but they know that we are here if they need us," Richards said. That patient-centered approach to healthcare is the philosophy at Kings Mountain Hospital. And, while that approach is refreshing, it necessitates multiple responsibilities for employees like Richards. "We have to wear a couple of hats here," she said. "I have responsibilities that include evaluating and purchasing surgical equipment and maintaining appropriate levels of surgical supplies. And, I help to monitor equipment for maintenance," she added.

It is good for this community to have the level of surgical services that Kings Mountain Hospital has. And, it's good to have a dedicated surgical personnel like Vickie Richards. Also, it is comforting to know that you do not have to leave the community to have the latest services that are backed by the largest healthcare system in the region, Carolinas HealthCare System.



Vickie Richards, LPN
Surgical Scrub Tech

For more information about surgical and endoscopic procedures at Kings Mountain Hospital, call 739-3601.

Vitamins, minerals may make life easier for women

A new study published in the American Journal of the College of Nutrition means good news for the more than 80 percent of women between the ages of 18 and 49 who suffer with Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS).

Nearly 40 percent of women of childbearing age experience PMS symptoms that are severe enough to affect their daily routines. Many of these women have searched for years for relief from such PMS symptoms as cramps, water retention, mood swings and cravings.

For the study, entitled "The Potential for Dietary Supplements to Reduce Premenstrual Syndrome Symptoms," Adrienne Bendich, Ph.D.,

reviewed studies on the effects of dietary supplements from the vitamin, mineral and herbal categories and certain food groups. Of all the supplements she reviewed, calcium most effectively decreased PMS symptoms.

According to a 1998 study in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, a dose of 1,200 mg of calcium per day resulted in a nearly 50 percent decrease in PMS symptoms.

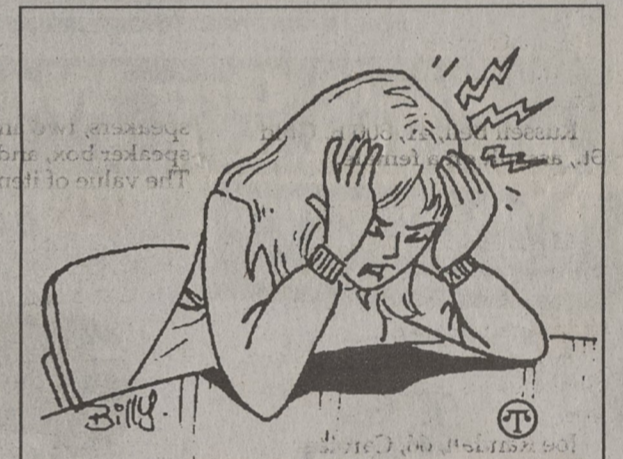
Among the other minerals reviewed, magnesium had some positive effects on headaches and mood swings. Vitamin B6 also exhibits promise in alleviating mood-related premenstrual symptoms and vitamin E offers the potential to improve

emotional and physical symptoms.

With regard to herbal supplements, Dr. Bendich found that borage seed showed no strong evidence of effectiveness; however, primrose oil did show some promise. Other herbs have not yet been tested in well-controlled trials. In addition, interaction between some herbs, such as wild yam root, and medications may cause adverse reactions.

Calcium, at this point, seems to be the best choice for women suffering from PMS. Since most women do not consume nearly enough calcium-rich foods in their daily diets, Dr. Bendich recommends that they consider supplementing their

diets to safely obtain the recommended level of 1,200 mg/day with products such as Tums or Os-Cal.



Women may wish to consult their doctors about supplements, like calcium, that could help alleviate PMS symptoms.

Your food allergies: Making you fat?

Every day, thousands of Americans resolve to lose weight and "eat healthier." What many of these people don't realize, asserts a new book, is that these battles may be lost before they're ever begun. That's because these personal crusades have a hidden enemy: food intolerance. Even such wholesome foods as fruits, fish and wheat can be triggers that cause the body to change its metabolic processes. Not only can this cause the body to resist weight loss, but it may also lead to medical conditions ranging from migraines to fatigue, from eczema to arthritis. Plus, being overweight is considered a risk factor for cancer, heart disease, diabetes and other diseases.

Discovering your own personal food intolerances, and eliminating those foods from your diet, are key factors in losing weight and maintaining overall good health. That's the message behind *Your Hidden Food Allergies are Making You Fat* (Prima Publishing, \$15), by Rudy Rivera, M.D., and Roger D. Deutsch.

A complex biological process, food intolerance is, simply stated, an individualized biochemical sensitivity to foods that might otherwise be wholesome and harmless. This sensitivity causes the immune system to react as if it were protecting the body from an enemy such as a bacteria, virus or parasite. This reaction causes intricate systems within the body to begin malfunctioning.

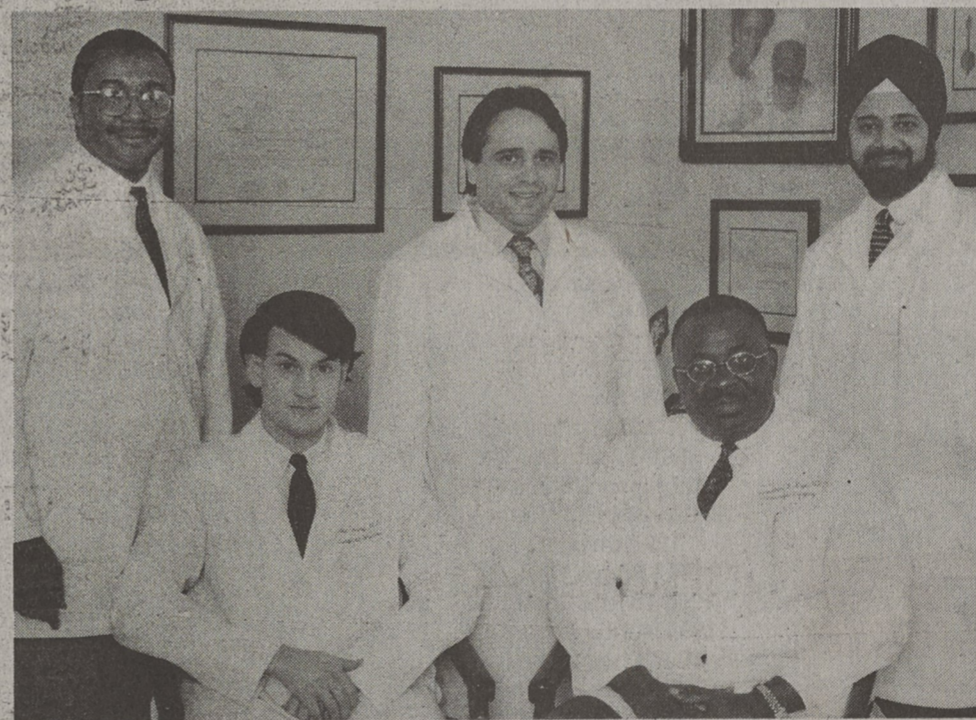
"Food intolerance and allergy have become an increasingly serious problem in recent decades," says James C. Breneman, M.D. "Food allergy might be the cause or aggravation of almost any disorder, and, often enough, it is the cause."

Ultimately, no drug, no medical therapy and no diet alone can improve your health or help you lose weight, the authors write, if you continue to bombard your body with your own personal poison. In addition, the book details some interesting scientific studies. In one, women who addressed their food intolerances were able to not only lose weight but lost fat from their thighs-something they had previously been unable to accomplish.

People can determine their food intolerances with the help of a simple blood test. The procedure, called the ALCAT Test, is interpreted by a computer for objective and reproducible results.

Your Hidden Food Allergies are Making You Fat is available at bookstores, online at www.alcat.com or by calling 800-881-2685.

These Surgeons Could Practice Anywhere,



Our new physicians left to right: Obirna N. Enuchalu, MD, FACS, FICS - Eric S. Young, MD - Paul A. Armstrong, DO - Augustine R. Eze, MD - Inderjeet Singh, MD

We're Glad They Chose To Practice Here.

When it comes to surgery, you want to be selective about the surgeon you choose. And because you want the most skilled surgeons, we've expanded our surgical staff to include the highly qualified surgeons of **Metrolina Surgery**. Located at 120-118 S. Railroad Avenue, these surgeons are on staff at Kings Mountain Hospital and offer a diverse range of surgical services - from minor procedures to more complex surgical

procedures including: **Vascular Surgery, Laparoscopic Surgery, Hernia Repair, Breast Biopsies, Abdominal Surgery, Gallbladder Surgery and Varicose Vein Surgery.**

You can rest easy knowing that these physicians utilize the latest technology and surgical expertise to help you recover safely. So, if you need surgery, depend on the surgeons right here at home. To learn more about the services of **Metrolina Surgery** call 730-9131.



Kings Mountain Hospital
Carolinas HealthCare System

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"The ALCAT Test... will change the future of health care!"
William D. Cress, M.D., Editor of The New England Journal

Your Hidden Food Allergies Are Making You Fat

The ALCAT Test
Weight Loss Breakthrough

Rudy Rivera, M.D.,
and Roger D. Deutsch

A new book indicates that food intolerances may make weight loss difficult, and could cause other medical problems.