Society of Thoracic Surgeons rates SJH in nation’s top 12% for Adult Cardiac Surgery

St. Joseph Hospital is the only known hospital in Orange County to receive a top tier, three-star rating for Adult Cardiac Surgery from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons. The newly developed, comprehensive rating system compares adult cardiac surgery in hospitals across the country and awards one, two or three stars.

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons has earned a reputation as a leader in medicine’s quality movement over the past two decades. Their ratings are data driven, encompassing outcome measures such as complication and mortality rates, as well as process measures and adherence to evidence-based care throughout the patient’s hospital stay.

In an analysis of U.S. hospitals from July 1, 2006, to June 30, 2007, approximately 12 percent received the three star rating; 77 percent received a two-star rating and 11 percent received an STS one-star rating.

Congratulations to Richard Gates, MD, and Brian Palafox, MD, Medical Directors for the Cardiac Surgery Program, and the entire St. Joseph Hospital’s cardiac surgery team, who have championed clinical excellence and earned this coveted accolade.

Phlebotomy rounding raises bar
On April 21, 2008, SJH has initiated the use of phlebotomy “rounding times.” This means a team of Phlebotomy staff now round on units to draw routine blood specimens at specific times during the day. This new process to improve workflow alerts clinicians as to when a routine Lab specimen will be drawn.

Rounding times begin after AM lab draws and will continue Q 3hrs. After 2000, labs will be drawn as ordered. The turnaround time for results will be unchanged or improved.

With the implementation of this process, we ask that physicians use the STAT status judiciously. Only order a test STAT if it is indeed critical to patient treatment.

We are excited to finally move ahead with this process improvement and believe it will support our efforts to provide perfect care at SJO. If you have any questions, please contact Sheila Brown, ext. # 17320

Scrap the patch for acute and post-op pain

Use of fentanyl transdermal patches (Duragesic) is NOT indicated for use in acute or post-operative pain. There have been several instances of patient harm across the nation due to the inappropriate use of transdermal fentanyl therapy, including instances of hypoventilation and death. The FDA came out with a Public Health Advisory last year regarding the inappropriate use of the fentanyl transdermal patch. In addition, the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) has circulated a Medication Safety Alert. The manufacturer of transdermal fentanyl patches has been required to revise labeling and update the black box warning by the FDA. Regulatory agencies, as well, are expecting hospitals to comply with safety considerations regarding the use of fentanyl transdermal patches.

In order to ensure safe and appropriate use based on the black box warning, the SJH P&T approved a policy two years ago that states that the initiation of fentanyl transdermal therapy is appropriate only for the treatment of chronic, moderate to severe pain in opioid-tolerant patients. Opioid-tolerant patients are defined as those who have been taking at least 60 mg of oral morphine daily or at least 30 mg of oral oxycodone daily, or at least 8 mg of oral hydromorphone daily or an equianalgesic dose of another opioid for a week or longer.

The FDA and black box warning state that initiation of fentanyl transdermal therapy is NOT indicated for:

• Acute pain
• The treatment of mild pain
• On an as needed basis
• Post-operative pain (except for those maintained on fentanyl transdermal therapy prior to surgery)
• Patients who are NOT opioid-tolerant

For the safety of your patients, please make sure that fentanyl transdermal therapy is used appropriately and within approved guidelines for the safety of our patients.
Welcome to new SJH Medical Staff

Since January 1, 2008, the following physicians have come aboard:

Sahanaz Bonyanpoor, DDS, Peds Dentistry
Lilian Cavin, MD, Tele-Radiology
Ralph deGraca, MD, Anesthesiology
Saar Danon, MD, Cardiology-Peds
Charles Eifrig, MD, Ophthalmology
Afshin Forouzannia, MD, Rad Oncology
Peter Geddes, MD, OB/Gyn
Dimitri Goufman, MD, Otorhinolaryngology
Bruce Hoyle, MD, Family Practice
Michael Jazayeri, MD, Plastic Surgery
Krishan Khurana, MD, Rheumatology
Paul Kim, MD, Radiology
Thuy Le, MD, Cardiology/Electrophys
John Maurice, MD, Thoracic Surgery
Kirk Ohanian, MD, Radiology
Douglass Rusnack, MD, Tele-Radiology
Chun-Ting Shang, DDS, Peds Dentistry
Bradley Snyder, MD, Tele-Radiology
Hae Young Song, MD, Allergy & Immun
Mary Taylor, PhD, Psychology-Peds
Quang Vo, MD, Thoracic Surgery
Armand Widjaja, MD, Pediatrics
Douglas Woolard, MD, Tele-Radiology

Doctors in the news

So far in 2008, the following physicians have been featured in the media (online, radio, TV and print mediums):

Lawrence Barnett, MD (music in the OR)
Steven Barnett, MD (music in the OR)
Raymond Casciari, MD (new CMO, quality measures)
Theodore Coutsofides, MD (chewing gum clinical trial)
Craig Ennis, MD (beef recall, superbowl heartburn)
Peter Fotinakes, MD (adjusting to the time change)
Chao-I Lin, MD (spring allergies)
James Pierog, MD (Flu, HazMat event)
Ervin Ruzics, MD (OneLegacy Surgeon for a Day)
Lawrence Santora, MD (EBCT calcium scoring)
Paiwen Sheen, MD (quadruplets)
Lawrence Wagman, MD (new Exec. Director, Cancer Ctr)
Theodore Williams, MD (Heath Ledger)

Vaccination mutation

Nursing standardized procedure for administration of influenza and pneumococcal vaccines has been updated to mirror Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations. Robert Armen, MD, Quality Council Chair and Infectious Disease specialist, reports that the changes include the ability of Nursing to provide vaccines without a physician order to patients receiving chemotherapy or radiation therapy as well as to patients with HIV or AIDS. Physicians may still opt out of vaccines with a reason documented; however, opting out for eligible patients is considered by CMS as a deviation from evidence-based practice.

In other vaccination news from the CDC, more than one in four children in the U.S. is out of compliance with federally recommended childhood vaccination guidelines. Public health officials are concerned that missed vaccinations could make communities vulnerable to childhood diseases that have been suppressed for decades.

How’s your “webutation”?

The St. Joseph Hospital online physician referral service receives an average of 7,256 visits per month. To ensure that you are tapping into this tremendous referral source, please visit www.sjo.org. If you are not found in the “Find a Doctor” pages, then a participation application is not on file and needs to be completed and submitted. Please contact SJH Physician Relations at (714) 744-8829 for the web application.

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SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT:
Please send your news items to:
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via fax to (714) 744-8670
or call (714) 744-8559.

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