

# HEALTH MATTERS

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# HEALTH MATTERS

FALL 2020

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**HEALTH MATTERS** is a bi-annual magazine published by Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) to inform residents of the Roaring Fork Valley about the continuous improvements and investments AVH and its Network of Care clinics are making to ensure the long health and vitality of our residents and community.



# ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL



## on the COVER

The early days of combating COVID-19 required an unprecedented cooperative effort by everyone at AVH and the community, according to Dr. Catherine Bernard, AVH Chief of Staff. Read our story, starting on page 8.

## our MISSION

To deliver extraordinary healthcare in an environment of excellence, compassion and trust.

## our VISION

To foster our community as the healthiest in the nation.

## our VALUES

Patient-centered Care • Accountability • Respect for Others  
• Integrity • Teamwork



## SHARE YOUR STORY!

**HEALTH MATTERS** would like to hear how AVH made a positive impact for you or a loved one. Please email [communityrelations@aspenhospital.org](mailto:communityrelations@aspenhospital.org) so that we may consider your story for an upcoming issue and inspire others on their journeys.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

With regards to employment, access to, or provision of care, Aspen Valley Hospital District (AVHD) shall provide all individuals with the full and equal enjoyment of the services, privileges, facilities, advantages and accommodations without discrimination, as required by Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010. AVHD shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (which includes gender-based discrimination), disability, religion, age or veteran status. Gender-based discrimination includes discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression and nonconformity with sex stereotypes.



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or visit [aspenhospital.org/calendar](https://aspenhospital.org/calendar).



It has been exciting and inspiring to watch how AVH has adapted to the constantly changing dynamics of the insidious COVID-19 virus, continuously innovating to meet the community's needs for safe and effective healthcare.

Since the beginning of March, it has been exciting and inspiring to watch how Aspen Valley Hospital has adapted to the constantly changing dynamics of the insidious COVID-19 virus, continuously innovating to meet the community's needs for safe and effective healthcare.

In response to COVID, AVH established and has maintained a Respiratory Evaluation Center for symptomatic patients in a safe and isolated environment, as well as serving as a COVID testing site. AVH stepped into the community testing role to support both the diagnosis and care of symptomatic patients and to assist Pitkin County's Public Health Department with its "Box it In" containment strategy. Testing has also been provided for asymptomatic persons who have been exposed, who need to travel or who are protecting against viral spread. In turn, the community has done its part to adhere to the Five Commitments of Containment. Together, under the guidance of our public health and elected officials, our community has been able to safely progress with its reopening strategy.

All the while, our AVH team has provided compassionate care to our patients, earning a **five-star rating** for quality of patient experience from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Out of nearly 3,500 hospitals that CMS ranked, only 266 in the U.S. — and only four in Colorado — received this prestigious recognition. On a related note: Press Ganey, the organization that monitors quality of care in over 1,000 hospitals across the country, has awarded AVH two Guardian of Excellence awards for inpatient and Emergency Department services, to recognize our "phenomenal performance" measured by patient-reported experience.

While COVID has presented immediate and unprecedented challenges that AVH has risen to meet, the AVH Board of Directors has never taken its sights off the future of healthcare and their vision of fostering our community as the healthiest in the nation. This has involved creating organizational partnerships with a spirit of collaboration that AVH embraces.

Perhaps our most exciting partnership is with The Steadman Clinic, to join forces as the premier hospital and the nation's leading provider of orthopedic care and research. Our community, an internationally renowned resort location, is the ideal host for world-class orthopedic medicine, providing our local patients and visitors from around the world with the most advanced orthopedic services available anywhere. Effective December 1, The Steadman Clinic will become our community practice comprised of some familiar physicians from OrthoAspen, new physicians and nationally acclaimed surgeons from The Steadman Clinic in Vail. In late 2021, our partnership will unveil a new facility in Willits that will serve as a hub for orthopedic services, including the Steadman Philippon Research Institute, a state-of-the-art surgery center, a Steadman Clinic location and rehabilitation services.

AVH is your community hospital — and much more. It is truly our privilege and honor to meet the needs of our community for the past 129 years, today and into the future. At our heart, we have never changed and will always be your provider of local, personalized and extraordinary care. ■

Dave Ressler  
Chief Executive Officer



# DIETITIAN DEMOS OFFER A FEAST OF INFORMATION

*Free program goes virtual, expands reach*

**A**t Aspen Valley Hospital, COVID-19 prompted a complete rethinking of both our medical services and our full slate of community education programs. One program that has adapted to the times with remarkable success is Dietitian Demos, which swiftly transitioned from in-person to virtual presentations.

"Part of AVH's mission is to help make our community the healthiest in the nation, and the Dietitian Demos support that vision with meal-preparation and evidence-based nutritional guidance," said Lauren Mitchell, MS, registered dietitian at AVH. "Moving the demos online was fairly easy and has actually allowed us to reach a larger audience than our onsite events."

Dietitian Demos launched soon after Mitchell joined AVH in December. She and fellow registered dietitian and Nutrition Services Director Kristy Bates share the duties, with Mitchell's videos offering quick tips for making wise food choices and Bates' showing how to prepare healthy entrées, appetizers and side dishes.

Topics tend to be timely, reflecting a season or situation with a focus on simple, practical recipes and advice. In one demo created early in the pandemic, Mitchell explains how nutrition can support the body's natural infection-fighting abilities; while August's topic was nutrition for new and expecting mothers to align with National Breastfeeding Month.

"People in our community are hungry for information about making the best choices for a healthy lifestyle," Mitchell said. "We want Dietitian Demos to be a source they go to for nutrition facts that are science-based, relatable and fun."

To view current and archived Dietitian Demos, including recipes, visit AVH's Instagram channel **@aspenhospital** or our website at **aspenhospital.org/dietitian-demos**. AVH adds new demo videos about twice a month, so check back often! ■



*"Moving the demos online was fairly easy and has actually allowed us to reach a larger audience than our onsite events."*

- LAUREN MITCHELL, MS,  
REGISTERED DIETITIAN



# PHYSICIANS AND PATIENTS DISCOVER THE SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE OF TELEMEDICINE

**L**ike many of her patients, Aspen Valley Hospital otolaryngologist Heather Murphy, MD, didn't know much about telemedicine before COVID-19 reached the Roaring Fork Valley. Phone calls were as close as she had ever come to having a virtual patient meeting, and she couldn't imagine how telemedicine could effectively substitute for face-to-face visits.

However, Dr. Murphy did know one thing: Because she shares clinic space with her husband, AVH ophthalmologist Mike Murphy, MD, she needed to give telemedicine a try.

"My patients tend to be sick, and my husband's patients are older. Because of COVID-19, we knew we couldn't keep putting both populations in the same place together," Dr. Murphy said. "Telemedicine allows us to keep caring for our patients without having them spend time together in a waiting room."

Enhanced safety is just one of multiple benefits of telemedicine, which is a fast-growing trend in healthcare. After launching telemedicine months ahead of schedule in the middle of March, AVH providers have now performed more than 560 telemedicine visits, spanning an array of medical specialties.

## PATIENT APPRECIATION

Another reason Dr. Murphy has become an advocate for virtual visits is that her patients appreciate the convenience and continuity of care. "They immediately grabbed onto it, because we could continue providing services during the pandemic," she said. Telemedicine has been a success with patients who travel to AVH from New Castle, Meeker, Steamboat Springs and beyond. Many express relief that telemedicine is available, saving them hours-long trips.

"We are a rural, critical-access hospital, and our community is separated by mountains, forest fires and viruses. With telemedicine, we can still have appointments even if patients can't get here in person," Dr. Murphy said. "I'm astounded at how quickly and completely patients and providers have taken to telemedicine."

To learn more about telemedicine or to schedule an appointment, please visit [aspenhospital.org/telemedicine](https://aspenhospital.org/telemedicine). ■





*Dr. Heather Murphy (right) and Sarah Peterson, RN, conduct a "virtual visit" with a patient as part of AVH's telemedicine services. Patients now have the option for in-person or virtual visits.*

**"Telemedicine allows us to keep caring for our patients without having them spend time together in a waiting room."**

**- HEATHER MURPHY, MD**

## More AVH Network of Care updates

### **SNOWMASS VILLAGE**

The **Snowmass Clinic** opened July 1 at its new location at 77 Wood Road, Suite #N200, in Snowmass Base Village. The state-of-the-art facility features seven exam rooms, a triage room and general X-ray services, as well as enhanced rehabilitation care for physical therapy patients. The clinic is open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Call **970.544.1518** for information about the clinic's medical services or **970.544.1177** for rehabilitation services.

### **BASALT**

AVH's **Midvalley Lab** has successfully transitioned to its new home at the Midvalley Health Institute building in Basalt (in the same location as Aspen Valley Primary Care). The address is 1460 East Valley Road, Suite 264, in Basalt. For information, call **970.544.1528**.





# LEADING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

## Stories from the front line

**W**hen the going gets tough, the tough step forward. And as COVID-19 made its way into the Roaring Fork Valley earlier this year, clinicians and staff from Aspen Valley Hospital and our Network of Care stepped forward to help lead our community's efforts to treat patients, reduce transmission of the virus and communicate lifesaving public information. We are proud to share some of their stories from the earliest days of the crisis.

### CATHERINE BERNARD, MD Emergency Medicine and AVH Chief of Staff

If Dr. Catherine Bernard has learned one lesson from COVID-19, it is the importance of patience. Providers, she said, have learned how to practice patience when treating those who arrive in the emergency department with COVID-related illnesses — and that includes knowing *when* to provide care.

"One of the major takeaways from the pandemic is that we all are learning to slow down just a little bit," Dr. Bernard said. "We've seen a definite shift away from trying to fix problems immediately and, instead, waiting for more information that can lead to better long-term outcomes. For me, the 'hurry up and wait' approach has been a new experience."



*Dr. Catherine Bernard, AVH Chief of Staff, said COVID-19 provided new lessons in treating patients during a pandemic. Photo courtesy of Kelsey Brunner/The Aspen Times.*

Only toward the end of her medical training did Dr. Bernard select emergency medicine as her specialty. Having explored other areas of medicine, she was attracted to the fact that emergency care brings together multiple specialties in a real-time environment.

The decision has served her well, she noted, because "nothing more real-time than COVID is happening right now in healthcare. You receive information or guidance, and then it changes as we discover more about the condition. It's a perfect picture of what medicine is, but the process usually happens over the course of years instead of weeks or months."

The rapid changes in COVID-19 prevention and treatment protocols have been confusing not only to clinicians but also to the general public, and Dr. Bernard sympathizes with those who have had difficulty keeping up with and following best practices.

"It is hard sometimes for people to understand how quickly and dramatically things can change in science and medicine," she said. "But the practice of good evidence-based medicine requires change as new information becomes available."

Describing herself as a "silver linings kind of person," however, Dr. Bernard said she is heartened by the way in which the Roaring Fork Valley's residents and medical entities have joined forces to share information about COVID-19.

## Aspen and COVID-19: A Timeline

### » JANUARY 20

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 is reported in the U.S.

### » MARCH 5

Colorado announces its first case of COVID-19; Pitkin County activates its emergency public health team.

### » MARCH 8

A female visitor to Aspen tests positive for the virus after returning home to Australia.

### » MARCH 9

Aspen Valley Hospital stands up its Incident Command Team.

### » MARCH 10

Gov. Polis declares a state of emergency related to COVID.

"All of us in the tri-county region are doing a great job of coming together for the good of our communities. We all took the threat very seriously from the start, prepared quickly to protect staff and patients, and kept services available for those who needed them most," she said. "AVH and everyone in the region have done an exceptionally good job of working together. I feel fortunate to practice medicine in Aspen, because that kind of cooperation doesn't exist everywhere."

**KELLY LOCKE, MD**  
**Family Medicine**

Well before COVID-19 made its appearance in our area, AVH clinicians and administrators were aggressively developing strategies to limit the risk to our patients and staff. Dr. Kelly Locke was part of a team that took a high-profile role in these discussions to launch and run a Respiratory Evaluation Center on the AVH campus. Aspen Valley Primary Care Director Alyssa Franklin spearheaded logistics with input from Drs. Kelly Locke, Michael Plachta and Edward Wiese.

"We knew that controlling exposure was key to controlling the spread of COVID-19, and the Evaluation Center has been



*Dr. Kelly Locke and team were instrumental in launching and running the Respiratory Evaluation Center at AVH, initially counseling and testing patients from their cars.*

an effective way for us to accomplish that," Dr. Locke said. "It provides a safe environment where we can assess patients experiencing respiratory symptoms and limit their interaction with other patients and personnel."

Initially located in a tent outside the AVH Emergency Department, the center offered drive-up evaluation of symptoms. After triaging and testing, medical teams either referred the patient to the Emergency Department or provided instructions about isolating and recovering safely at home.

Dr. Locke noted that the Evaluation Center also kept potentially infected patients from visiting a regular doctor's office, further reducing community spread of the disease. In doing so, the center helped ensure that medical resources were available to those patients most vulnerable to serious consequences of infection.

Another important role the center's personnel performed was educating and comforting patients who had become alarmed about symptoms they normally would not have been concerned about — and this was occurring at the same time that medical professionals themselves were racing to understand the virus' symptoms, complications and spread.

"Especially early on, when we couldn't do a lot of testing, we definitely did a lot of counseling and reassuring patients about the disease process and symptoms to watch for as the infection progressed," Dr. Locke said.

Yet, much of the work he has done to screen and treat patients in the Evaluation Center feels distinctly familiar from his years as a family medicine physician. "Looking at it as a practitioner, I think our work with coronavirus is very similar to what we do every day in the office: counseling, testing and reassuring patients," he said. "Now we just do it with a mask and shield and full personal protective equipment on."

»» MARCH 11		»» MARCH 12		»» MARCH 13		»» MARCH 14			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The World Health Organization declares a pandemic.</li><li>• Six new cases of COVID-19 are confirmed in Pitkin County.</li><li>• AVH limits non-essential access to the hospital and all Network of Care locations.</li></ul>		Pitkin County declares a Local Disaster Emergency, and Pitkin County Public Health issues its first COVID-related public health order.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Colorado reports its first known COVID-related death.</li><li>• Aspen public schools close.</li></ul>		Colorado suspends all downhill skiing operations.			
»» MARCH 15		»» MARCH 16		»» MID MARCH		»» MARCH 17		»» MARCH 18	
Pitkin County Public Health recommends that visitors and residents of Pitkin and three other counties minimize social contact.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AVH and the Midvalley Surgery Center postpone elective procedures.</li><li>• The state health department orders closure of the state's bars, gyms, restaurants and some other businesses.</li></ul>		Pitkin County's unemployment rate is less than 3%.		Colorado launches a dedicated website for COVID-19 information.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AVH launches telemedicine services with the first Aspen Valley Primary Care virtual visit.</li><li>• Colorado orders all public and private schools to close for four weeks.</li></ul>	





Photos above courtesy of AVH and Kelsey Brunner/The Aspen Times.

#### » MARCH 19

Gov. Polis suspends nonessential medical procedures statewide.

#### » MARCH 20

AVH launches its Respiratory Evaluation Tent in the hospital parking lot, an alternative site to evaluate and test patients with respiratory symptoms.

#### » MARCH 23

Colorado opens the health insurance marketplace to help consumers find coverage during the pandemic.

#### » MARCH 24

- A 94-year-old man becomes the first person in Pitkin County to die of COVID-19.
- AVH staff begin making masks to supplement the hospital's PPE supply.

#### » MARCH 25

As cases in Colorado top 1,000, Gov. Polis issues statewide stay-at-home orders.

The Respiratory Evaluation Center continues to operate, from a location inside the hospital. Patients must be referred by a primary care physician for help managing moderate to severe respiratory symptoms and for symptomatic COVID testing. (The center is not a walk-in clinic.) Please check [aspenhospital.org](https://www.aspenhospital.org) for hours of operation.

## BRAD HOLMES, MD Hospitalist

Board certified in both internal medicine and pediatrics, Dr. Brad Holmes has been instrumental in guiding AVH's response to issues of testing patients for COVID-19. His interest sprang from clinical experience in Malawi where he worked with Baylor College of Medicine's international HIV program just before moving to Aspen two years ago.



*Dr. Brad Holmes participated in our regular community meetings, educating residents about COVID-19 and ways to protect themselves.*

"A lot of my work in Africa centered on testing, early identification and prevention of HIV in a resources-limited environment," Dr. Holmes said. "So as concerns about COVID-19 grew in Aspen and the number of test kits was limited, I felt like my experience could help us figure out how to use our resources efficiently."

With input from a range of stakeholders, Dr. Holmes helped AVH develop a strategy to prioritize COVID-19 testing for symptomatic patients in the Emergency Department and in-patient settings.

"The ultimate goal of testing is to identify the people most likely to spread the disease so we can 'box in' the virus," he said. "As testing becomes more widely available, we can adjust our approach to make the most of those additional resources."

Dr. Holmes has also taken a role in educating the public about COVID-19, such as using lay terms to explain complex concepts and the slow pace of scientific discovery. "Pretty much every conversation, I caution people with the message we are still learning, our information and testing are not perfect, and our treatments are not perfect," he said. "Things are going to evolve as we continue to learn more, and we'll probably change our minds on certain things; that's how science works."

Plus, viruses are particularly tricky to tackle, and Dr. Holmes noted that — even after many years — researchers still have not developed cures for the common cold, flu, herpes, HIV and other viral infections.

In addition, Dr. Holmes has been involved in building a strong sense of cooperation among the area's hospitals, public health departments and healthcare providers for a more unified, effective approach to COVID testing across the region. "We live in a transient community, so the COVID situation in Eagle and Garfield counties affects all of us in Pitkin County, too," he explained. "It's important for us to work as a team with everyone in the tri-county area."

The doctor's best advice: Get information from reputable sources, comply with the Five Commitments of Containment and continue to stay in shape — physically as well as mentally. "After all," Dr. Holmes said, "even for people who don't get COVID-19, this has been a stressful time." ■

### »» APRIL 1

Local health officials ask VRBO and Airbnb to cancel and stop accepting area short-term rentals.

### »» APRIL 3

Statewide hospitalizations exceed 800.

### »» APRIL 10

Colorado officials announce they have purchased more than \$46 million worth of medical supplies for distribution to facilities statewide.

### »» APRIL 21

Colorado hospitals prepare to resume non-emergency surgeries.

### »» APRIL 24

AVH partners with Pitkin County Public Health to expand COVID-19 testing.

### »» APRIL 27

As stay-at-home orders ease, restaurants and retailers begin to offer curbside pickup.

### »» APRIL 30

Gov. Polis extends ban on downhill skiing to late May.

### »» MAY 1

AVH resumes elective surgeries and procedures.

### »» MAY 4

Pitkin County, Aspen, Basalt and Snowmass Village require individuals to wear a mask in public.

### »» MAY 21

In a community meeting, AVH CEO Dave Ressler urges a smart, cautious approach to reopening the local economy.





# *You're in Good Hands:* **Our COVID-CLEAN Pledge**

**A**spen Valley Hospital is committed to ensuring the safety of our patients, visitors and dedicated staff. Our COVID-Clean Pledge reflects this commitment with a detailed overview of the steps we are taking to prevent coronavirus infection and ensure the wellbeing of our community.

From universal mask-wearing to disinfection protocols and visitation limits, we took quick action early in the crisis, solving multiple problems in a fast-evolving situation to ensure safety in the hospital and the locations that make up our Network of Care.

Our goal is to provide peace of mind and a safe, clean healthcare environment. We achieve this by adhering to federal, state and local recommendations — and exceeding these requirements where we believe even greater prudence will be beneficial.

When you visit the hospital or one of our clinics or offices, you can feel assured that we remain vigilant in our efforts to protect you. With all of us working together, the COVID-Clean Pledge ensures our medical services will continue to be available for all who need them.

To view our full COVID-Clean Pledge, please go to **[aspenhospital.org/covid-clean-pledge](https://aspenhospital.org/covid-clean-pledge)** or click on the button below. ■



## »» MAY 22

Pitkin County's unemployment rate peaks at 23.6%, the highest in Colorado.

## »» MAY 25

AVH receives a \$470,000 award from the 2020 Rescue Fund to support Pitkin County Public Health-directed COVID-19 testing not paid for by insurance carriers through 2020.

## »» JUNE 4

Places of worship and fitness centers are among facilities allowed to reopen at reduced capacity.

## »» JUNE 15

Pitkin County begins allowing crowd sizes of up to 50.



*Amanda Matthew with baby Marlow  
born June 18 in the Aspen Birth Center.*

»» JUNE 23

Eagle County officials express concern about a cluster of coronavirus cases among young Basalt residents.

»» JUNE 24

Outdoor visitation is allowed at Colorado's residential care facilities.

»» JULY 1

- State authorities allow professional sports to resume but temporarily close bars for in-person service.
- AVH increases its COVID-19 testing capacity to seven days per week in the hospital's Respiratory Evaluation Center.

»» JULY 9

Pitkin, Eagle and Garfield counties announce a coordinated regional COVID-19 testing strategy.



# EVEN DURING A PANDEMIC, FAMILY FINDS COMFORT AT THE ASPEN BIRTH CENTER

**H**aving a baby is stressful even in the best circumstances. But having a baby during a global pandemic can take the stress to a whole new level.

For Amanda and Brian Matthew, however, welcoming their son, Marlow, to the world in June at the Aspen Birth Center was a lesson in comfort, kindness and outstanding care. "Everyone at the Birth Center and the hospital has done such a great job in an uncertain time," Amanda said. "They were very cautious about safety but also so loving and kind to me and my family."

*"Everyone at the Birth Center and the hospital has done such a great job in an uncertain time. They were very cautious about safety but also so loving and kind to me and my family."*

— AMANDA MATTHEW

Amanda grew up in Aspen and, after earning her nursing degree, returned to her hometown to work in Aspen Valley Hospital's same-day surgery department. She and Brian, a pastor at Crossroads Church of Aspen, already had two children — Emery, 5, and Nora, 3 — born at the Aspen Birth Center. It was only natural, therefore, that they would choose the same setting for their third child's birth.

However, circumstances were a little different this time. For example, COVID-19 prompted AVH to implement additional safety precautions. Birth Center staff wore personal protective

equipment. And while Brian could be present as Amanda's designated support person, he was required to wear a mask when outside her room and, had he needed to leave the hospital building, he would not have been allowed to come in again.

Also, other loved ones could not visit the family while they were at AVH. "That wasn't so bad for me," Amanda said. "New moms are pretty exhausted, so having some down time before we went home was fine."

Otherwise, the experience felt "pretty normal," Amanda said. "Everyone was so cautious and yet so comforting. They've done such a great job of navigating these uncharted waters."

Marlow arrived just before 1 a.m. on Thursday, June 18, weighing 6 pounds and 9 ounces. Many of the Birth Center staff members — including pediatrician Harvey Fahy, MD; midwife Nancy Bachelder; nurses Jenny Tighe, Wendy Lyall and Suzanne Robinson; and lactation consultants Jackie Schroeder and Heather Knott — had also been present for the birth of Marlow's two siblings.

"For me, having my babies at the Aspen Birth Center has been very comforting. I work so closely with everybody that they feel like family," Amanda said. "Having Marlow reminded us how exceptional the Birth Center is: the medical staff, the lactation consultants, the kitchen and housekeeping staff — all of them made the experience so wonderful."

Visit [aspenhospital.org/aspen-birth-center](https://www.aspenhospital.org/aspen-birth-center) or call **970.544.1130** to learn more about the Birth Center. ■



*Amanda and Brian Matthew with Emery, Nora and newborn, Marlow.*

## » JULY 10

AVH reports over 2,600 individuals have been tested for COVID-19.

## » JULY 16

Gov. Polis issues a statewide mask mandate.

## » JULY 13

AVH leadership reports the hospital had 24 positive tests during the week of July 5-11, the highest number since the pandemic began.

## » THE STORY CONTINUES

For the latest COVID-19 updates from AVH, visit [aspenhospital.org](https://www.aspenhospital.org).

For the latest COVID-19 community status and testing updates, visit [covid19.pitkincounty.com](https://covid19.pitkincounty.com).



# *Strong Partners,* **STRONGER YOU**

Landmark partnership enhances world-class orthopedic care

**T**he Roaring Fork Valley is not only one of the world's most beautiful and desirable places to live and explore, it's also one of the most physically active. Residents and visitors alike place a high priority on maintaining an active lifestyle, whether to boost their everyday health, train for their personal best or compete at a professional level.

A population this active deserves comprehensive, world-class orthopedic care to keep them in the game — and a new partnership between Aspen Valley Hospital and The Steadman Clinic will soon bring more orthopedic care experts, research insights and advanced treatments to our community.

"The benefits of an active lifestyle are many, but we often experience setbacks related to the use and overuse of our musculoskeletal framework as we strive to move faster and be stronger," said Dave Ressler, CEO of AVH. "The Steadman Clinic has been studying these dynamics for over two decades and, through Steadman Philippon Research Institute (SPRI), has developed the best practices, backed by evidence, for addressing all of them through prevention, training and interventional procedures."

## **NEW, FULL-TIME ORTHOPEDIC PRACTICE BRINGS TOGETHER BEST OF BOTH WORLDS**

"After The Steadman Clinic expressed an intent to expand into the Aspen area, partnering with the Vail-based organization only made sense," Ressler said. "Through the partnership, The Steadman Clinic will provide orthopedic care through a new, full-time practice."

AVH ensures that patients will enjoy round-the-clock access to orthopedic trauma care; expanded orthopedic services, such as hand and wrist care and hip arthroscopy; and the availability of advanced orthopedic care for all of our residents and visitors.

The partners will maintain a location at AVH's Aspen campus and are also developing a state-of-the-art orthopedic facility at Basalt's Willits Town Center. The facility will house a surgery center; a Steadman Clinic space; plus a SPRI research lab; and rehabilitative services to round out the continuum of care.

"This agreement brings together two premier healthcare providers to deliver world-class orthopedic services and cutting-edge research via SPRI to the Aspen community," said Dan Drawbaugh, CEO of The Steadman Clinic and SPRI.

## **BENEFIT OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION**

Through SPRI, the partnership will also add new capabilities in research and education, such as supporting the training of future orthopedic surgeons and the development of technologies to advance the knowledge of musculoskeletal health. AVH will be a crucial partner in SPRI's research.

"We are fortunate to have an outstanding team of physicians joining the practice," said Marc Philippon, MD, managing partner of The Steadman Clinic and co-chair of SPRI. "Add our commitment to research and education, and we know this will be a relationship that benefits all involved."

Ressler couldn't agree more. "AVH, The Steadman Clinic and SPRI will work together to keep our community active and enjoying our healthy lifestyles, while other patients travel from around the world to experience what we have in our own backyard," he said.

The new Steadman Clinic in Aspen will begin seeing patients on December 1, 2020. ■

The partners will maintain a location at AVH's Aspen campus and are also developing a state-of-the-art orthopedic facility at Basalt's Willits Town Center.





## RENOWNED PHYSICIANS DELIVERING EXPERT, COMPREHENSIVE ORTHOPEDIC CARE

Building on Aspen Valley Hospital's existing orthopedic services, the partnership will keep some of our current providers in place, add specialists recruited to the area and a rotation of physicians from The Steadman Clinic in Vail.

### THE ASPEN-BASED PHYSICIAN TEAM INCLUDES:



*Dustin Anderson, MD  
Physical medicine  
and rehabilitation*



*Waqqar Khan-Farooqi, MD  
Foot and ankle, and  
trauma care*



*Jared Lee, MD  
Shoulder, knee, hip  
and sports medicine*

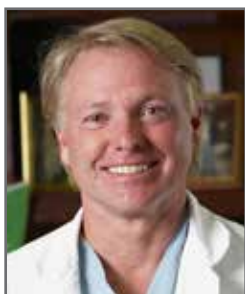


*Joseph J. Ruzbarsky, MD  
Shoulder, knee, elbow  
and hip preservation  
surgery*



*Thea Wojtkowski, MD  
Hip, hip replacements  
and trauma care*

### THE STEADMAN CLINIC PHYSICIANS WHO WILL ROTATE IN FROM VAIL INCLUDE:



*Marc J. Philippon, MD  
Sports medicine, hip  
disorders and hip  
arthroscopy*



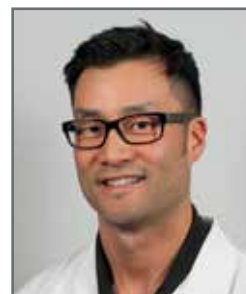
*Thos A. Evans, MD  
Orthopedic interventionist of  
spine and joint, regenerative  
medicine specialist*



*Jonathan A. Godin, MD, MBA  
Shoulder, knee, hip and sports  
medicine surgeon*



*Tom R. Hackett, MD  
Complex knee, shoulder  
and elbow surgeon*



*Raymond H. Kim, MD  
Adult joint reconstruction,  
knee and hip arthroplasty*



*Peter J. Millett, MD, MSc  
Shoulder, knee,  
elbow surgery and  
sports medicine*



*Matthew T. Provencher, MD  
Complex shoulder, complex  
knee and sports surgery*



*Kavi Sachar, MD  
Hand, wrist and  
elbow surgery*



*Randy W. Viola, MD  
Hand, wrist, elbow and  
orthopedic trauma specialist*

# Annual Impact Report

## HIGHLIGHTS



Melinda Nagle, MD, Chair



Lee Schumacher, Vice Chair



Chuck Frias, Treasurer



Greg Balko, MD



David Eisenstat

From where we stand now in 2020, looking back at 2019 provides a view as breathtaking as any in the Colorado Rocky Mountains. So much has happened since the start of the year that it can be difficult to recall a time before the U.S. reported its first case of coronavirus infection in January.

Yet, we must not lose sight of the important accomplishments Aspen Valley Hospital recorded in 2019, because these achievements allowed the hospital to respond to the quickly-evolving public health crisis with impressive agility and success.

Among the most crucial achievements in 2019 were:

- Building a robust network of physicians for the community, in particular increasing the number of primary care providers and expanding the scope of specialty care services available locally, including the midvalley.
- Achieving successful reaccreditation by the Joint Commission, an industry standard for assuring the highest quality and safety of medical care.
- Completing the hospital's redesignation as a Level III Trauma Center, which ensures round-the-clock access to lifesaving emergency care.

AVH and our community wisely created and prioritized, funded and completed the projects that positioned us to act — not simply react — for the good of our patients and all of Roaring Fork Valley's residents and visitors.

- Receiving the community's continued commitment to quality, local healthcare through the passage of our mill levy extension for 10 years, with a 73% favorable vote.
- Completing construction of our new Snowmass Clinic location in the Base Village, which we delayed opening until this July because of COVID.
- As we would learn later in 2020, AVH also continued to provide extraordinary care to our patients, earning a perfect five-star rating from Medicare, one of only four hospitals in the state to do so.

Such achievements did not occur in a vacuum. Instead, they continued the incredible work that dedicated individuals and groups — AVH medical personnel, employees, administrators, donors, volunteers, the Board of Directors and more — have performed over many years. The multi-phase expansion and upgrade of our facilities and our investments in electronic medical records and telemedicine technology are just a few notable examples.

We did not get to this point by anticipating a global pandemic. However, AVH and our community wisely created and prioritized, funded and completed the projects that positioned us to act — not simply react — for the good of our patients and all of Roaring Fork Valley's residents and visitors. Thank you for being part of our past, present and future success. ■

Melinda Nagle, MD  
Chair of the AVH Board of Directors  
Member of the AVH Foundation Board of Directors



Through these challenging times, AVH's Strategic Plan continues to guide us as our talented and engaged healthcare professionals provide the highest quality care for our community while increasing our operating efficiency and maintaining financial stability.



# 2019

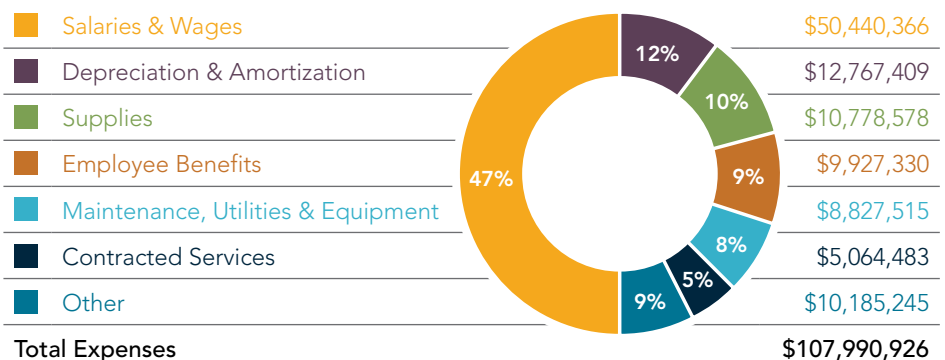
## COMMUNITY IMPACT

- **1,867 community members** took advantage of low-cost health fairs.
- **473 people employed**, making AVH one of the largest employers in our community.
- **\$2 million** of uncompensated healthcare services provided to patients in need.
- **\$4.4 million** in Medicaid subsidies.
- **\$700,000** in direct financial support to outside agencies for programs that serve the needs of our most vulnerable community members. We partnered with Pitkin County's Healthy Community Fund to support:
  - + Aspen Detox Center
  - + Aspen Homeless Shelter
  - + Community Health Services
  - + Mind Springs Health
  - + Mountain Family Health Center's Basalt location
  - + West Springs Hospital

### 2019 REVENUES



### 2019 EXPENSES



**TOTAL INCREASE IN FUND BALANCE**

**\$1,229,531**



# THE NEW FACE OF FUNDRAISING DURING COVID-19



*Rehabilitation Services staff members show off their new socks, generously donated by Darn Tough Socks.*



*Justin and Amanda Leonard donated their newly developed nutritional supplements, Tiny Tweaks, to Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation.*

In response to the overwhelming show of support for the lifesaving care being delivered when COVID-19 hit our community, Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation launched an Emergency Fund to accept these special donations.

As staff members heroically performed their duties, grateful patients, families and community members looked for ways to show their appreciation. From handmade signs, to homemade cookies, to masks, to food and even a donation of socks, the love and support shown will not soon be forgotten.

In fact, the overwhelming number of donors who specifically wanted to “feed the front lines” prompted the creation of a fund within a fund to accept donations of food and beverages to help fuel staff while on duty.

At no time in Aspen Valley Hospital’s 129-year history have resources been pushed so far to the outer limits. Continuing emergency, routine and preventative care while at the same time battling a worldwide pandemic has been a challenge — but a challenge we have been preparing for.

In 2006, the Hospital’s Board of Directors came together and launched the single largest construction and modernization project in its history. The goal? To bring the facilities up to contemporary standards that meet — and even exceed — best practices for safety, efficiency, privacy and infection prevention. The Board could never have predicted this pandemic. However, they ensured we were prepared for it. ■



*Bumble was a lead “Feeding the Front Lines” donor, providing breakfast weekly to Hospital staff.*



*Staff arrived at Whitcomb Terrace, an assisted living facility located on the Hospital campus, and was welcomed with words of appreciation from the community.*

0401 CASTLE CREEK ROAD, ASPEN, CO 81611 ■ 970.544.1302 ■ [avhf@aspenhospital.org](mailto:avhf@aspenhospital.org)



# INSPIRING DONATIONS IN MANY FORMS

**T**hree of the four phases of the Master Facilities Plan (MFP) are complete and the new facilities have allowed Aspen Valley Hospital's response to the COVID-19 pandemic to be swift and aggressive. The fourth and final phase of construction hangs in the balance. Once complete, every clinical and non-clinical area will be housed in new or newly renovated space.



*The fourth and final phase of the Master Facilities Plan connects the newly constructed East and West Wings through a centralized admissions area that allows for greater access, efficiency and privacy. Included in this phase is The Renée and Lester Crown Center for Specialty Care, which will bring together many on-campus specialists into one office.*

## Highlights of areas completed to date include:

- a four-bed ICU with state-of-the-art negative pressure capabilities to control air flow along with centralized monitoring systems and respirators;
- a new high-tech lab with COVID-19 testing capability;
- a new ER with a trauma treatment suite and a roof-top helicopter landing pad;
- a 16-bed patient care unit with private rooms and bathrooms;
- a five-bed private and fully appointed birth center;
- a private oncology and infusion center;
- a new diagnostic imaging center with advanced MRI and CT technology;
- a new surgery center with three high-tech ORs; and
- an expanded rehabilitation services department.



*ICU rooms are equipped with the latest technology, including high-tech monitors and respirators, and have negative pressure capabilities to control air flow.*

All these upgrades have been made possible because of the incredible philanthropic support received to date. In fact, the Foundation's \$60 million capital campaign has now reached the \$48.1 million mark — and counting!

Despite the challenges this year has presented, "The show must go on," and we continue to raise funds and keep our community engaged. This year, with great support from our hosts, Melissa and Marc Ganzi, the owners of the Aspen Valley Polo Club, the annual Polo Benefit went virtual and all proceeds benefited the Emergency Fund. Live streaming of the games, thanks to Chukker TV, and a posh online auction, thanks to so many local businesses, were the event highlights.

In total, our Summer and Snow Polo fundraising events have raised over \$2 million for our community hospital. ■



*2019's Chukkers, Champagne & Caviar was the social event of the season. 2020's polo benefit successfully welcomed donor participation in a virtual format!*

**DONATE  
NOW**

BY CLICKING  
THIS BUTTON ▼





# SUPPORTING OUR MISSION

*Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation gratefully recognizes the following donors who have made gifts over the past year and also donors whose lifetime cumulative giving is \$100,000 or greater.*

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Continued on page 24



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Rotary Club of Aspen  
James Rothschild  
Royal Salute  
Jeannette Rubio  
William Rutledge  
John Rutledge  
Stephanie Ryan

### S

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Lauren Salzer  
Nathan and Karen Sandler Charitable  
Fund at the Jewish Community  
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Sando Foundation  
Corrine and Lenny Sands Foundation  
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Lisa Vantine  
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Marguerite VillaSanta,  
Dr. Frank C. Marino Inc.  
Briana Von Ohlen

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Judy and Joseph Zanin,  
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\*Fondly remembered

This list represents donors from July 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020 and also donors whose lifetime cumulative giving is \$100,000 or greater. While we have made every effort to ensure accuracy, if we have made an error please contact us at **970.544.1302** so we can correct our records.





## THE IMPACT OF PHILANTHROPY

**Let's face it**, this worldwide pandemic has proven that Aspen Valley Hospital can never be too prepared. Managing COVID-19 cases while also caring for the thousands of other patients who present for tests, treatments, and preventative care has been a challenge — but a challenge we have been preparing for.

Over the past decade, an unprecedented four-phase Master Facilities Plan (MFP) has been underway, and three of the four phases are complete. These critical upgrades and improvements allow the Hospital to provide care in new, state-of-the-art facilities with advanced technology that assures patient safety, privacy, and extensive infection prevention capabilities.

The fourth and final phase of the MFP still needs to be completed and is 100% contingent on philanthropic support. Completing this phase will bring all of our facilities up to the latest standards and will ensure that we are operating to our fullest capacity.

While we cannot predict the future, we can plan and prepare for it.

**Your support can save lives.**



### ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

0401 Castle Creek Road | Aspen, Colorado 81611

970.544.1302

[avhf@aspenhospital.org](mailto:avhf@aspenhospital.org)

[supportaspenvalleyhospital.org](http://supportaspenvalleyhospital.org)

EIN 46-0865487

[DONATE ONLINE NOW](#)

# DIRECTORY *of services*

Want to schedule an appointment? Wish to check on a patient? Have a billing question? For all of your questions and requests, here is a list of Aspen Valley Hospital phone numbers to call.

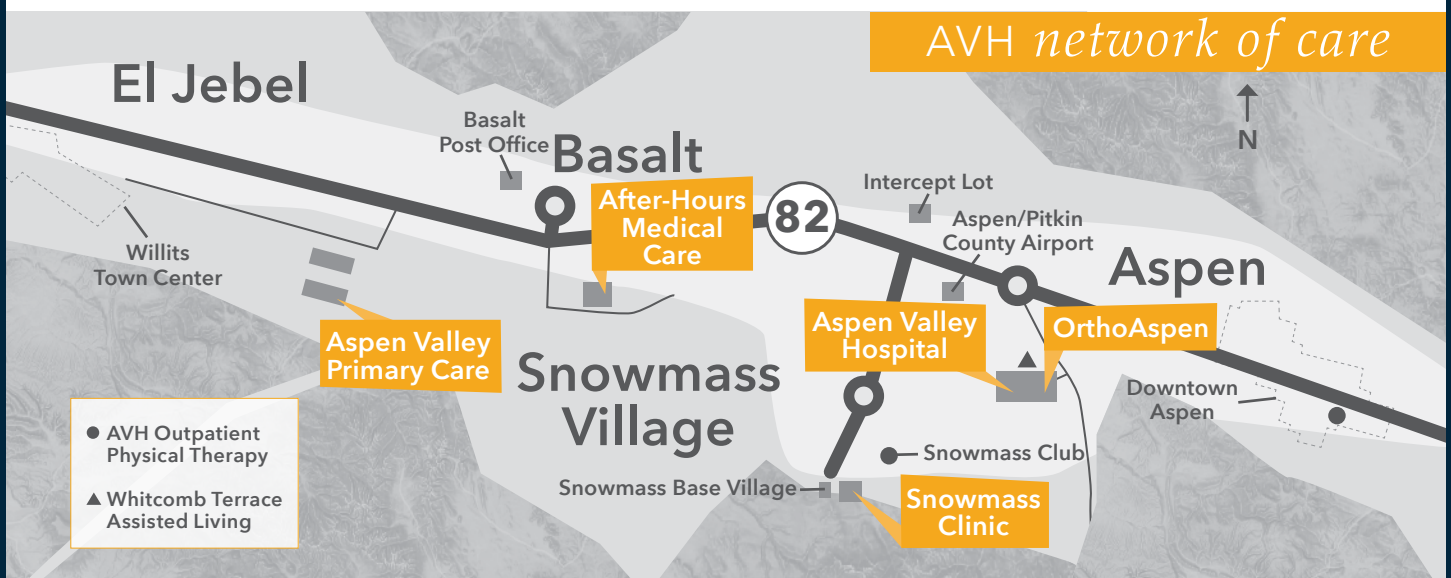
## HOSPITAL DEPARTMENTS

General Information	970.925.1120
Administration	970.544.1261
Admissions	970.544.7350
Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation	970.544.1302
Aspen Ambulance District	970.544.1583
Aspen Birth Center	970.544.1130
After-Hours Medical Care in Basalt	970.544.1250
Billing Help Line	970.544.7694
Breast Center	970.544.1420
Business Office/Billing	970.544.7377
	800.262.3067
Cardiac Rehabilitation	970.544.1383
Cardiopulmonary/Respiratory Clinic	970.544.1264
Community Relations	970.544.1296
Diabetes Education	970.544.7394
Diagnostic Imaging	970.544.1192
Diagnostic Scheduling	970.544.1392
Emergency Department	970.544.1228
Gift Shop	970.544.1304
Human Resources	970.544.1367
Laboratory	970.544.1570
Medical Records	970.544.1290
Midvalley Imaging Center	970.927.5087
Nuclear Medicine	970.544.1127

Nutrition Services	970.544.1157
Oncology & Infusion	970.544.1507
Outpatient Scheduling	970.544.1392
Pain Center of the Roaring Fork Valley	970.544.1146
Patient Care Unit	970.544.1135
Pharmacy	970.544.1778
Physical Therapy/Rehab Services	970.544.1177
Same Day Surgery/Outpatient	970.544.1327
Snowmass Clinic	970.544.1518
Spanish Resources	970.544.1543
Surgery Scheduling	970.544.7391
Whitcomb Terrace Assisted Living	970.544.1530

## MEDICAL PRACTICES

Center for Medical Care	
Aspen Valley Primary Care	970.279.4111
Cardiology	970.544.7385
Ophthalmology	970.544.1460
OrthoAspen	970.544.1289
Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose & Throat)	970.544.1460
Endocrinology	970.544.1395
Pulmonology	877.225.5654
Rheumatology	970.544.1395



# ASK THE EXPERT

Elizabeth (Betsy) Brew, MD, FACS, general surgeon at Aspen Valley Hospital, on the importance of breast health screenings and the satisfaction of helping women through an extraordinarily stressful time.

## **W**hy are regular breast health screenings so important for women?

Breast cancer affects one in eight women in the U.S. Ninety percent of these women have no family history of breast cancer, so screening is the most effective tool to detect cancer early, when treatment options and outcomes are best.

**What is the #1 reason women avoid screenings, and what would you say to a woman who has that rationale?** Unfortunately, many women avoid screenings because they do not think they are at risk. They think if they do not have a family history of breast cancer or if they are healthy, they won't get breast cancer. To overcome this perception, I tell my patients that a mammogram and possibly whole breast ultrasound are still the best techniques that we have for early detection of breast cancer.

## **What are recommended guidelines for breast health screening?**

I like the American Society of Breast Surgeons guidelines, which are relatively simple to follow. Basically, all women age 25 and older should have a formal risk assessment for breast cancer. Then at age 40, all women at average risk should start annual 3D screening mammograms. Women with dense breast tissue should consider supplemental imaging, such as an ultrasound. Women should continue annual mammograms until their life expectancy is less than 10 years. For women at higher risk, earlier screening and possibly breast MRI scans should be considered.

## **How would you describe AVH's breast health services?**

Our services are excellent. The Breast Center has state-of-the-art

Breast health screenings are the most effective way to detect cancer early when treatment options and outcomes are best.



equipment, and we have radiologists specially trained in interpreting breast images — which is remarkable for a small hospital. If a woman needs care beyond imaging, our nurse navigators offer caring, individualized support. AVH also provides outstanding medical oncology care if there is a diagnosis of breast cancer.

## **Why did you choose to specialize in breast care and breast cancer surgery?**

When I started in practice, there were very few women general surgeons. I joined a group in Wheat Ridge, Colo., in 1996 and was their first woman surgeon. As a result, my practice quickly filled with women, many with breast health issues.

I also enjoy the multi-disciplinary approach to breast cancer treatment, which involves the patient, her family and friends, and her care team: surgeon, radiologists, radiation oncologists, medical oncologists and genetic counselors. Most importantly, I appreciate being able to take care of women at a moment of great stress and help them realize they will likely be cured and can resume their normal lives.

## **How is your membership in Surgical Specialists of Colorado an advantage in treating breast cancer?**

I started at AVH by covering trauma cases and quickly realized there was a need for a breast surgeon in the valley. I was amazed how many women were driving to Vail and Denver at such a stressful time in their lives. My experience as a partner of SSOC, combined with AVH's resources, has allowed me to provide outstanding care for women in their own world.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. To learn more about the Breast Center at AVH and breast health screenings, visit [aspenhospital.org/breast-center](https://www.aspenhospital.org/breast-center) or call 970.544.1420. ■





## ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL

401 CASTLE CREEK ROAD ASPEN, CO 81611 (970) 925-1120

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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Photo by Vital Films

## HOW TO GET TESTED FOR COVID-19

If you have symptoms of cough, fever and/or shortness of breath:

1.



Call your doctor or Aspen Valley Primary Care at **970.279.4111** to get a referral for testing (no walk-ins).

2.



There is no cost for the test beyond insurance (if you have it). No insurance needed.

3.



Aspen Valley Hospital's Respiratory Evaluation Center is open to see and test referral patients with COVID-19 symptoms under the following schedule\*:

- Evaluation of moderate to severe symptoms: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 12 noon.
- Community testing: Monday - Friday, 1 - 5 p.m., with a physician referral.
- Weekend hours for community testing: 12 noon - 2 p.m., with a physician referral.

\*Hours may change. Please check [aspenhospital.org](https://www.aspenhospital.org) for the latest updates.



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[AspenHospital.org](https://www.AspenHospital.org)



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