

Imaging Center for Women in North Stafford: World Class Care in Your Community

When it comes to women's health, medical imaging plays a crucial and integral part. For the women in the Stafford region, the Imaging Center for Women (ICW) in North Stafford will offer high-tech, world class medical imaging services with the same exceptional customer service they have received at the Fredericksburg ICW location. ICW North Stafford is located at 125 Woodstream Drive, Suite 101 in Stafford, VA.

The center provides services that include 2D mammograms and DEXA bone density scans. It also features the latest imaging technology in the fight against breast cancer: 3D tomosynthesis, also known as 3D mammography.

A 3-dimensional image of your breast provides better images for screening as well as diagnosis. Unlike a 2D mammogram, which provides a radiologist with a flat image of the breast tissue, the 3D mammogram provides images of a breast in one millimeter slices, similar to the pages of a book.

"A 2D mammogram is a 2-dimensional picture--a flat image--of a 3-dimensional structure," said Dr. Roni Talukdar, board certified and fellowship trained radiologist. "When you do that, you have a phenomenon called superimposition, where your normal breast tissue overlaps other normal breast tissue. Sometimes that normal breast tissue, when it overlaps other breast tissue, can look like cancer. Sometimes that normal breast tissue can hide a small cancer."

During a 3D mammogram, multiple

images are taken to create a 3-dimensional view of your breast tissue. This results in superior image quality, less biopsies, and fewer call-backs. This all adds up to greater peace of mind for women, and that's the aim of ICW North Stafford.

"Studies show a clear benefit from yearly screening with 3D mammography" said Dr. Talukdar. "We're doing our very best to make it as accessible as possible for our community."



The goal of ICW North Stafford is to encourage more women to take advantage of screenings that can detect breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages with a convenient, easy to reach location. Board certified, fellowship trained radiologists from the top programs in the country at ICW North Stafford make it easier for women to get world class care in their own backyard.

That's what gives the ICW in North Stafford such an advantage, according to Dr. Talukdar. "Even though our physicians have trained at some of the best programs in the nation, we are a local group that lives in this community." For the women in the region, that expertise and world class care can make all the difference.

New Location: VIVA Stafford

Virginia Interventional and Vascular Associates (VIVA) has opened a new location in Stafford. It is located at the Medical Pavilion on the Stafford Hospital campus and provides patients in the community with a greater level of convenience in their medical care. "With the growth in population and in the number of doctors in the Stafford area, we felt it was important to provide a location in their community," said Dr. Doherty, VIVA Medical Director. Patients can schedule an appointment at VIVA Stafford to consult with a physician or receive pre and post procedure care for all of the services VIVA provides.

Being located on the Stafford Hospital campus will allow VIVA Stafford to support interventional radiology procedures performed at the hospital. Its location within the local community makes it more convenient for patients and physicians alike. "It's our commitment to Stafford and the greater Fredericksburg region," Dr. Doherty explained. "By moving closer to our patients we minimize their travel time

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Important Medicare Change for Medical Providers – Starting Jan.

1, 2020, providers who order advanced outpatient imaging tests for Medicare patients must first consult an approved clinical decision support system.

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Medical Providers continued page 3*

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North Stafford

Raising Awareness for Nutcracker Syndrome and Venous Compression Syndromes

Nutcracker Syndrome is a rare condition, but its rarity doesn't make it any less painful or difficult to deal with. The syndrome involves the compression or narrowing of the renal vein, which causes the slowing of blood flow from the left kidney. This then presents as pain and discomfort in the abdomen, groin, or pelvis. The symptoms are part of what makes Nutcracker Syndrome so hard to diagnose, as abdominal pain is also a symptom of numerous other medical concerns.

According to Dr. Donald Doherty, the Medical Director of Virginia Interventional and Vascular Associates (VIVA), a typical patient is a woman in her twenties to fifties who has had chronic abdominal discomfort. "Sometimes a patient has suffered for years before they visit our office for a consultation," said Dr. Doherty.

A typical patient could see a variety of doctors, such as a gynecologist, a gastroenterologist, or even a surgeon, and still not detect the real problem. Many of these women have undergone invasive medical procedures such as endoscopies or laparoscopies to investigate their chronic pain. This is where non-invasive medical imaging can make all the difference.

"In the course of the patient's workup, most patients will have a CT scan or MRI of the abdomen and pelvis," said Dr. Doherty. "Often the narrowing of the renal vein is seen during the scan. Many of the women will have dilated varicose veins around their ovaries or deeper in their pelvis."

Treatment involves venography, or inserting a catheter into the affected veins and taking pictures from inside the veins. Ultrasounds may be used from inside the vein to decide if the treatment is necessary. Once it has been decided that treatment will be helpful, a balloon or vascular stent may be used to open the vein. Any dilated veins in the abdomen or pelvis that may be

contributing to the symptoms may be treated at the same time. Most procedures are completed in just a few hours and nearly all patients are able to return to home the same day.

The diagnosis and treatment are all part of what VIVA offers its patients. The physicians at VIVA are fellowship trained vascular specialists, and their interventional radiologists are all well informed when it comes to Nutcracker Syndrome.

"[Interventional radiologists are] the physicians uniquely qualified to review the whole medical history, integrate it with the imaging history, and then put a plan together for further evaluation and minimally invasive treatment. There's no other specialty that offers this combination of skills."

VIVA's presence in Fredericksburg, Stafford, and surrounding areas serves the community well. VIVA's interventional radiologists are well versed in venous compression syndromes such as Nutcracker Syndrome. They are also educated about the two other similar syndromes: May-Thurner syndrome—or the compression of the veins from the left leg—and pelvic congestion syndrome, venous reflux within the ovarian veins. "All three are interconnected. The treatments [for the three syndromes] are similar and generally if you see one, you must look for the other two."

As far as Dr. Doherty is concerned, the best way to combat these venous compression syndromes is to increase awareness. His goal is to educate both patients and referring clinicians about what Nutcracker Syndrome and the other venous compression syndromes are, what the symptoms look like, and what can be done.

"These syndromes aren't well understood or well communicated to patients, and we really work to raise awareness," Dr.



PHOTO BY DAN DONEHEY

Doherty said. "For many women, the symptoms are so vague that they have suffered for several years before someone recommends a consultation with an interventional radiologist. There are many women who needlessly suffer for long periods of time who could be helped with an evaluation and consideration of treatment." ■

VIVA Stafford continued from page 1

and can more closely communicate with their physicians in the Stafford area."

VIVA provides technology that's at the forefront of medical innovation, and this secondary location will serve to enhance the level of service already offered.

News Briefs

Ribbon Cutting Held for Advanced PET/CT

Medical Imaging of Fredericksburg celebrated a ribbon cutting of an Advanced PET/CT this August. The addition of this equipment to the facility will provide doctors with the newest molecular imaging technology to detect and treat cancer. The new PET/CT machine places Medical Imaging of Fredericksburg on par with some of the most prominent cancer research hospitals. ■

Referring Physician Resources

Changes for Medicare Patients and Clinical Decision Support Coming in 2020

Clinical Decision Support (CDS) software has long been a part of the medical community, providing vital tools to assist physicians and their teams in making informative, swift decisions. From diagnostic support to patient data reports, CDS has aided physicians in all specialties.

The final Federal rulings for Medicare will change requirements for use of CDS systems. According to the Federal Register Final Rule CMS-1676-F, beginning January 1, 2020, advanced outpatient imaging tests for Medicare patients must first consult an approved CDS system. If the system is not consulted, the imaging test will not be approved for billing.

This new rule aims to reduce regulatory burdens and assist physicians in selecting the imaging test that would best improve health outcomes for patients, based on the unique needs of those patients. It also looks to aid furnishing providers, such as radiologists,

by providing consultation information and ensuring that patients are getting appropriate imaging.

Ed Swager, CEO of Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg, adds that the new rule will not in itself prevent a provider from ordering tests, even if the applicability or ranking of the test is deemed low. “The ordering provider, in theory, will order high-end imaging like they always do. Under the new rule, the provider will let the CDS software know the patient’s clinical condition and let the software rate the appropriateness of the study based on the clinical condition by giving the test a ranking of high to low. Based on the final rules, in time, providers ordering studies scoring with low relevance would be required to obtain preauthorization from Medicare.”

The release of the rule was originally slated for the beginning of 2018, but has now been pushed back to January 1, 2020.

“Ever since the proposed rule was introduced several years ago, Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg has been preparing for the CDS change. With the date of implementation now January 1, 2020, this will give vendors and providers another 24 months to have the appropriate software, as well as implement the new codes and modifiers from Medicare.”

According to Mr. Swager, the first year of the ruling will be mostly educational, allowing both the physicians and the CMS to implement the new software and see how it truly works. “The first year is an educational and testing year, which will give everyone more time to meet the complexities and changes that are coming.”

Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg and the Mary Washington Healthcare system have been working to ensure that the transition is seamless for both physicians and patients. By collaborating with National

Decision Support (NDS) to update CDS software, their goal is to make certain every provider’s system is up to date and ready for the change. “If an ordering provider does not have the software, then we’ll look to identify some web-based tool for them,” said Mr. Swager.

For patients in the region who ask if this ruling could affect their medical imaging tests, Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg has ensured appropriate imaging tests for years. “Our group has historically reviewed Medicare claims and Medicare procedures to make sure that they’re appropriate studies,” said Swager. “We’ve already been doing that part of the process.”

Providers with questions should call Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg at (540) 361-1000. Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg will continue to update providers as the changes are finalized. ■

10 Years of Innovation Expands Its Reach

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Ed Swager, Chief Executive Officer

Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg (RAF) is the largest provider of medical imaging services in the Fredericksburg, Stafford and Spotsylvania area. RAF's interventional radiology and vascular surgery group, Virginia Interventional & Vascular Associates (VIVA), performs minimally invasive procedures, vascular lab studies and vascular surgery.

RAF publishes *Imaging Advances* periodically for referring physicians and the greater medical community. For more information, please contact Tammy Gressly, Director of Administrative Operations, tgressly@rafadmin.com, (540) 361-1000.

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Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg
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Fredericksburg, VA 22408

Physician Spotlight: Dr. Vishal Bindal

The new physician Director of MRI for Radiologic Associates of Fredericksburg (RAF) started as a board certified, fellowship trained neuroradiologist many years ago, but his love for where he works and what he does hasn't changed. "Everyone works well with each other. I love the team environment, it's been perfect," Dr. Vishal Bindal said of his colleagues.

Dr. Bindal has traveled to many places before finding himself in Fredericksburg, Virginia. First raised in the United Kingdom, Dr. Bindal moved to northern Virginia with his parents when he was just seven years old. After attending Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, he went on to Duke University, where he earned his undergraduate in Chemistry, his doctorate in Medicine, and his master's of business administration. In 2003, he interned at Lankenau Hospital in Pennsylvania, and then moved to UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Hospital for his residency in radiology.

It was during his medical school rotation that he discovered his passion for radiology. "I fell in love with it," said Dr. Bindal. "And I felt that I was pretty good at it. I like seeing subtle patterns. I also love how radiology gives you the ability to do a lot of different things: you get to see nearly every disease process and make a real difference in patient care."

In 2008 he returned to Duke University for a fellowship in neuroradiology. Upon graduating in 2009, he accepted the position with RAF as a neuroradiologist, and he knew he had found where he wanted to be.

"I was very impressed with the practice and the people. It's a great group of people where everyone is fellowship trained and highly skilled. It seemed like a very good culture, and it turned out to be true."

This is high praise from someone who's seen quite a bit of the world outside of Fredericksburg: as of now, he's visited six out of the seven continents (he hasn't visited Antarctica – yet) and has traveled



to over 25 different countries. He just got back from a summer trip to Iceland.

After all his international traveling, however, Dr. Bindal still looks forward to working with his patients and being a part of RAF.

"[RAF is] patient and clinician focused, and their focus is on doing good work and adding value to the patients. I was very impressed with that."

His passion for what he does is clearly part of the reason for his new appointment as physician Director of MRI. Dr. Bindal is very excited for the new position and how it will enable him to help more patients and clinicians. "I like the way we can help out other clinicians, aid in diagnosis, and help find the right care for the patient," said Dr. Bindal. "I think we really make a difference." ■