

3 ADVANCED HEART
CARE IN WILKES

5 LATEST IN MRI
TECHNOLOGY

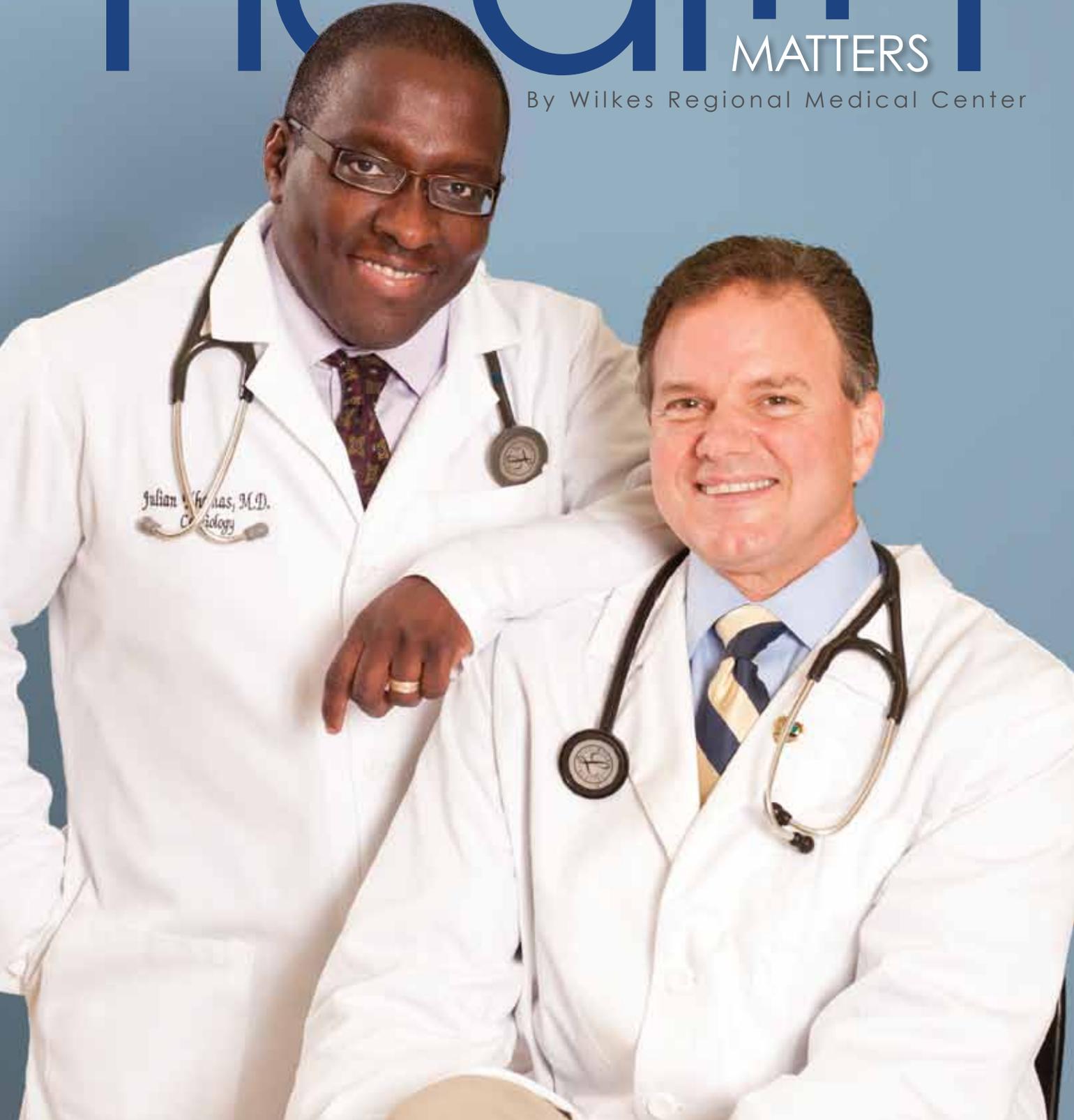
6 EXPERT
JOINT CARE

FALL 2011

YOUR health

MATTERS

By Wilkes Regional Medical Center



www.wilkesregional.org

Excellent service that shows



J. Gene Faile asked one member of the family as the elevator doors began to close. "Yes, I'm the hospital CEO," I replied. "Good," she said, "I want you to know this hospital has the friendliest people we've ever met. Everybody is so nice and helpful."

We hear compliments such as these everyday, and rightly so. Our PRC service scores validate our patients' appreciation of the service they receive. Our inpatient service scores are among the best in Carolinas HealthCare System (CHS), moving from the 50th percentile last year to the 80th percentile this fiscal year. The Diagnostic Center received a Top 5 award in service for increasing the service ranking for 2010 by 70 percentage points! Our emergency department (ED) is making outstanding progress as they are at the 60th percentile so far in 2011, which again is in the top tier of EDs in CHS.

Our commitment to service is who we are and what we stand for at Wilkes Regional Medical Center. Our standard of care and service is excellence. And if you ask our patients and their family members, they will tell you that we deliver on that commitment ... every patient, everyday.

Best regards,

J. Gene Faile, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer
Wilkes Regional Medical Center

As I entered the elevator last week leaving the third floor, I met a family who was visiting a loved one in the hospital. "Do you work here?"



New Emergency Department construction begins

When Wilkes Regional Medical Center (WRMC) opened on May 1, 1952, two people were seen on opening day in the emergency department (ED). Ground was broken in 1987 for the ED expansion on the south side of the hospital to see a volume of 40 patients per day. Now, the ED sees an average of 100 patients per day. WRMC is now undergoing construction for a 9,500-square-foot ED expansion, which

will more than double the size of the existing ED, and will increase the number of exam rooms from 19 to 29 rooms. The expansion will extend the building 88 feet into the current ED parking area and expand the new ED to a total area of 17,140 square feet. There will be 24-hour security on our campus to help direct parking, shuttle patients to and from the parking area to the ED and ensure your safety during construction.

It's all fun and games
until someone is hurting



URGENTCARE WEST PARK

336-903-6840



Advanced cardiology now at Wilkes Regional

We are pleased to announce the Heart Center of Wilkes Regional opened July 1 in a temporary office adjacent to the emergency department (ED) at Wilkes Regional Medical Center (WRMC), located on the ground floor. The Heart Center of Wilkes Regional offers cardiology services Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., provided by Wake Forest Baptist Health board-certified cardiologists, William Scarpa Jr., M.D., and Julian Thomas, M.D.

Drs. Scarpa and Thomas provide a full range of noninterventional cardiology services, which include echocardiology, stress echos, stress testing, nuclear studies, EKG and arrhythmia evaluation, coronary artery disease management (acute and chronic), heart failure, pacemaker and cardiac medication management and more. In addition

to offering general outpatient cardiology services, the Heart Center will also provide a full range of inpatient services.

The 2,200-square-foot heart center will be part of an addition to the WRMC ED, and will be located in the current ED parking lot. The heart center addition should be completed within a year.

MEET THE CARDIOLOGISTS

Julian Thomas, M.D., a board-certified cardiologist specializing in noninvasive treatments, moved to Wilkes in July 2010, from upstate New York, where he practiced at Samaritan Medical Center in Watertown. He completed a fellowship in cardiovascular medicine at Howard University Hospital in Washington, D.C. He has practiced cardiology for seven years.

In April 2011, William Scarpa Jr., M.D., also a board-certified cardiologist specializing in noninvasive treatments, moved to Wilkes to join Dr. Thomas in the new Heart Center of Wilkes Regional. Dr. Scarpa moved from Pinehurst, where he practiced medicine for three years at Pinehurst Cardiology. Before his move to North Carolina, he practiced in Newton,



William Scarpa Jr., M.D.

Julian Thomas, M.D.



N.J., for 17 years at Cardiology Medical Associates of Northwest New Jersey. He completed a fellowship in cardiovascular disease at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City and a nuclear cardiology fellowship at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Columbia Presbyterian in New York City.

Together they make a great team with more than 28 years of experience and are here to take care of your cardiology needs.

WHEN YOU NEED HEART CARE

For more information or to make an appointment with one of our cardiologists, call **336-651-8760**.

WRMC Diagnostic Imaging ranked among the best

The WRMC Diagnostic Center is a state-of-the-art outpatient facility with the highest level of technology available in medical imaging, in a very comfortable and aesthetically pleasing environment. The Diagnostic Center is on the cutting edge, providing one of the first digital mammography centers in the region. Our patient registration has been enhanced to provide easy access and faster service. Our imaging team is focused on providing excellent service and excellent care, making each visit outstanding.

TECHNOLOGY

We offer the highest level of technology in the region. Our commitment to patient care begins with acquiring high-quality images.

With state-of-the-art imaging we are providing your physician with the information necessary to accurately determine your treatment plan. Our commitment to our community keeps us on the cutting edge of imaging technology. Our board of directors and hospital administration has a long-standing history of supporting this commitment. Recent purchases of this commitment:

- ▶ Wilkes Regional Medical Center (WRMC) was the third hospital in the state to purchase a 16 slice computed tomography (CT) Scanner
- ▶ WRMC added a 64 slice CT scanner with cardiac capabilities
- ▶ WRMC became the first in the region to have digital mammography, and enhanced general radiology to digital,

making these services faster and of the highest quality

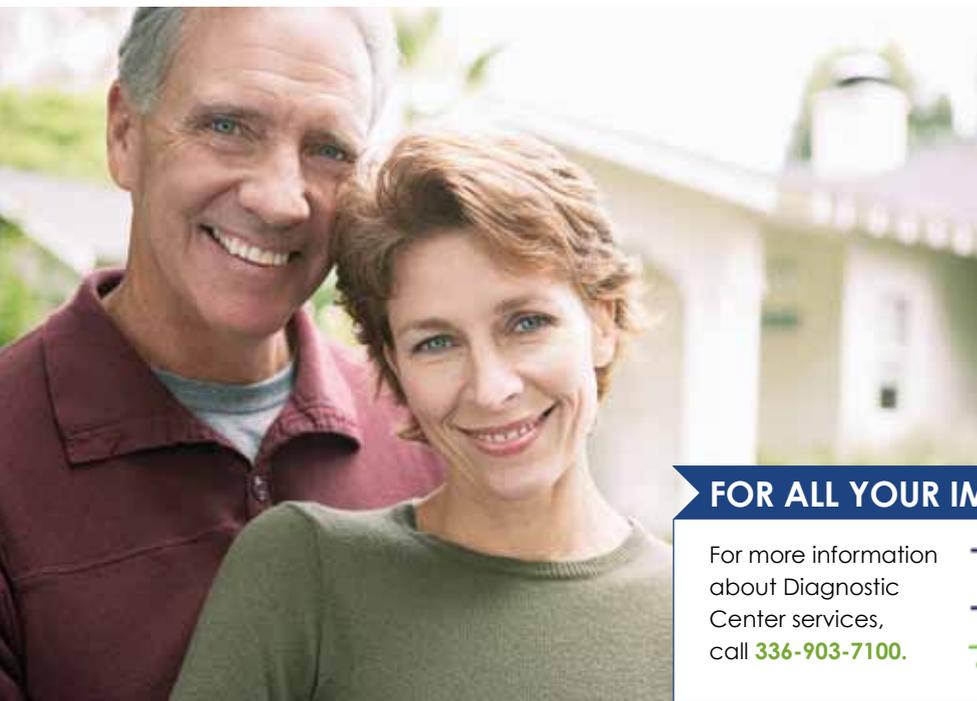
- ▶ In-house stereotactic imaging services were added to the Diagnostic Center's array of services to further provide the most comprehensive mammography service
- ▶ The most advanced 1.5 Tesla MRI system, the Toshiba Vantage Titan

SERVICE

The Diagnostic Center offers digital mammography, CT, ultrasound, general radiology, fluoroscopy and bone densitometry. Our mammography services, including stereotactic procedures, are accredited by the American College of Radiology and the Food and Drug Administration. The department is staffed by board-certified radiologists and nationally registered technologists.

QUALITY

We provide each patient with excellent care every day at the Diagnostic Center. Our patient satisfaction scores are currently ranked among the highest in the nation, with scores in the 90th percentile and higher. In addition, 85% percent of patients say they're likely to recommend the Diagnostic Center to their family and friends.



FOR ALL YOUR IMAGING NEEDS

For more information about Diagnostic Center services, call **336-903-7100**.



Wilkes Regional brings the latest MRI technology to you



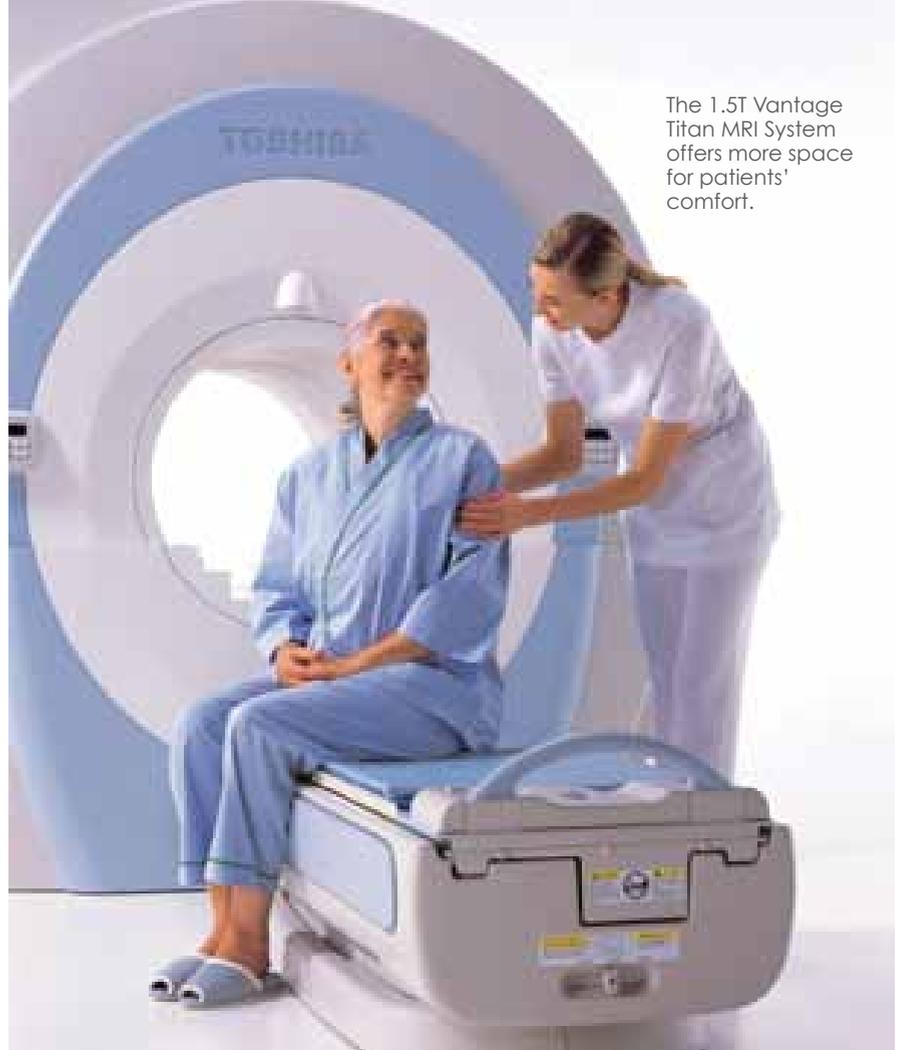
Jack McLarney, M.D.

Wilkes Regional Medical Center (WRMC) has acquired the latest in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology by completing the installation of the

new Vantage Titan from Toshiba. The new open-bore of the 1.5T Vantage Titan MRI System “provides a 35 percent increase in imaging area, resulting in a significantly enhanced patient experience,” says Jack McLarney, M.D., medical director of Diagnostic Imaging at WRMC and CEO of Valley Radiology Associates. “In conjunction with Wilkes Regional Medical Center, we’re proud to be able to provide a substantial enhancement to the current MRI imaging services for the patients in Wilkes County and surrounding region with the first high field strength open-bore magnet in the area.”

PATIENT BENEFITS

The Toshiba Vantage Titan is a dramatic improvement over traditional open-bore MRI systems, as it offers the largest and widest bore available for high field strength MRI scans. The high-field strength of the Titan 1.5T is associated with greater imaging accuracy than existent low-field



The 1.5T Vantage Titan MRI System offers more space for patients' comfort.

strength open magnets already being used in the Western Carolina region. The Vantage Titan’s large clinical field of view is unique for this bore size and produces high-quality images without compromising detail or overall imaging performance. The Vantage Titan’s bore size offers more space for patients inside the machine.

The Vantage Titan also significantly reduces the amount of noise using Toshiba’s patented Pianissimo technology, which creates a better imaging experience for all patients, especially those with claustrophobia. With this new technology, it’s the quietest MRI scanner in the market.

FOCUSED ON COMFORT AND CARE

The MRI suite located at WRMC has been newly renovated to meet the needs of our patients. The suite is tucked quietly away from the busy imaging center and has a spacious waiting area to make patients feel at home during their visit. The certified technologists are there to provide

We’re proud to be able to provide a substantial enhancement to current MRI imaging services.

—Jack McLarney, M.D.

excellent care and to help you feel as comfortable as possible.

The Vantage Titan reflects WRMC’s commitment to patient-focused care. Its spacious magnet, noise reduction technology and pleasant design work perfectly together to make your experience more comfortable. The Titan system provides more room in the magnet and less noise during the exam, so it is easier to remain motionless during your procedure. Your comfort, combined with the latest exam techniques on our Titan, assures that your doctor gets the best possible images for the most accurate diagnosis.

Arthroscopic surgery

Expert care for your joints

Years ago, surgery to repair a joint usually meant a large incision and a long, painful recuperation. These days, patients are finding relief from joint ailments through arthroscopic surgery, or arthroscopy, a minimally invasive procedure that allows for a less painful and faster recovery.

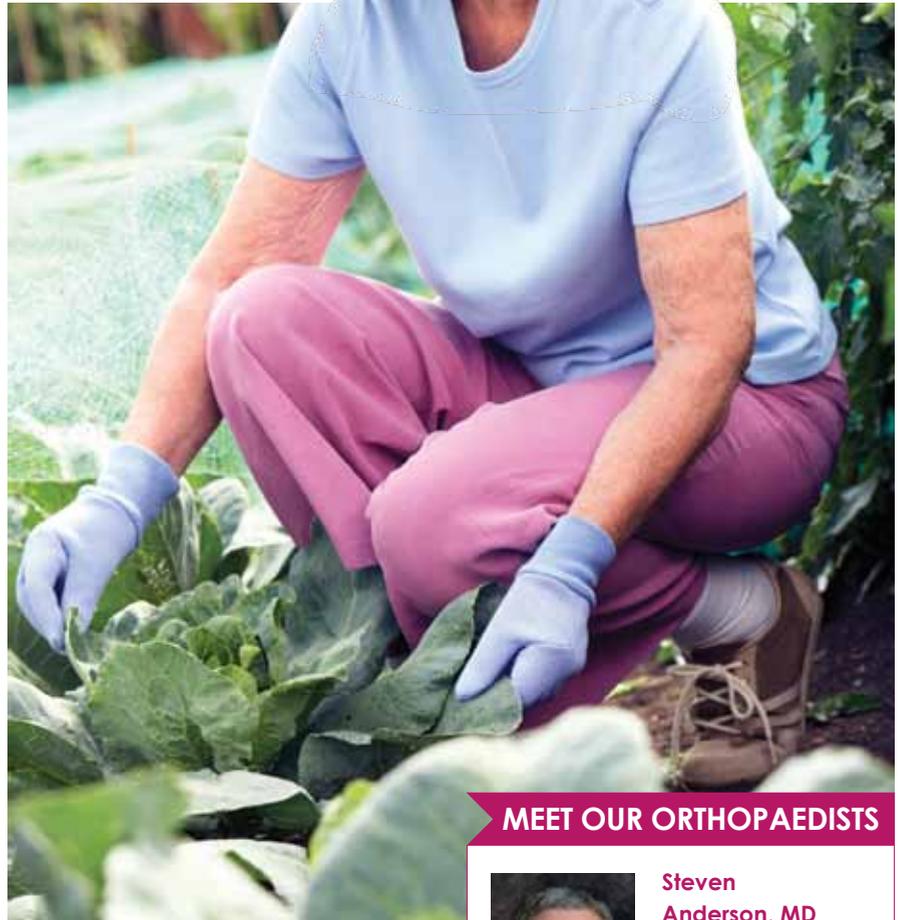
In many cases, arthroscopy is performed on an outpatient basis, eliminating the need for an overnight hospital stay. It's most often used to treat:

- ▶ bone spurs or loose bone fragments
- ▶ torn cartilage or ligaments
- ▶ inflamed or infected joints
- ▶ scar tissue
- ▶ arthritis
- ▶ unexplained joint pain

If you've tried medication, physical therapy and joint supports and they're no longer helping, you may be a candidate for arthroscopy. Because arthroscopy results in less trauma to muscles, ligaments and tissues than conventional open surgery that uses longer incisions, patients have less scarring, heal faster and resume normal activities sooner.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

The type of anesthesia you'll need—local, regional or general—depends on the joint that's affected and the procedure's complexity. During arthroscopy, the surgeon makes small incisions in the area around the joint. In one incision, he or she inserts an arthroscope, a small tube equipped with a camera, lenses and a light



for viewing. A video monitor lets the surgeon see inside the joint to repair damage using surgical tools inserted through the other incisions. A simple arthroscopy lasts about one hour.

After the surgery, you'll be sent home to recover and rest for several days, keeping the joint elevated and applying ice to relieve swelling and pain. You'll likely be able to resume normal activities in a few days, although the joint may take several weeks to fully heal. Depending on the joint operated on, your surgeon may suggest physical therapy or the use of crutches or a cane during your recovery.

MEET OUR ORTHOPAEDISTS



Steven Anderson, MD

Steven Anderson, MD
Board certified
Orthopaedic
Specialists of Wilkes
1917 W. Park Drive
North Wilkesboro,
NC 28659
336-903-7845



Craig Bennett, MD

Craig Bennett, MD
Board certified
Northwest
Orthopaedic
Associates
1914 W. Park Drive
North Wilkesboro,
NC 28659
336-667-5039

A gentler approach



Advanced laparoscopic surgery at WRMC

Laparoscopic surgery is a modern surgical technique in which operations are performed in the abdomen or pelvic cavities through small incisions. There are a number of advantages for patients who undergo laparoscopic surgery rather than an open procedure. These include:

- ▶ reduced hemorrhaging, which decreases the chance of needing a blood transfusion.
- ▶ smaller incisions, resulting in less post-operative scarring.
- ▶ less pain
- ▶ shorter hospital stays often with a same day discharge leading to a faster return to everyday living
- ▶ reduced exposure of internal organs decreasing risk of acquiring infections
- ▶ shorter recovery time

While laparoscopic surgery is clearly advantageous in terms of patient outcomes, the procedure is more difficult from the surgeon's perspective when compared to traditional, open surgery.

A COMMON PROCEDURE

Laparoscopic cholecystectomy (removal of the gall bladder) is the most common laparoscopic procedure performed. It is now seen as the standard of care and over one million cholecystectomies are performed in the United States annually, with more than 96 percent of those being performed laparoscopically. Laparoscopic procedures can also be used for hernia repairs and removal of

the appendix.

In advanced laparoscopic procedures where the size of the specimen being removed would be too large to pull out through a trocar site, as done with a gallbladder, an incision larger than 10mm must be made. The most common of these procedures are removal of all or part of the colon (colectomy) or removal of the kidney (nephrectomy). Some surgeons perform these procedures completely laparoscopically, making the larger incision toward the end of the procedure for specimen removal, or, in the case of a colectomy, to also prepare the remaining healthy bowel to be reconnected.

The laparoscopic approach is intended to minimize post-operative pain and speed up recovery times. Due to im-

proved patient outcomes, laparoscopic surgery has been adopted by various surgical subspecialties including gastrointestinal surgery, gynecologic surgery and urology. This approach has proven beneficial in reducing post-operative morbidities such as wound infections and incision hernias.

SURGICAL CARE AT WRMC

WRMC's general surgeons are experienced in performing laparoscopic procedures. To perform these procedures proficiently, our subspecialists have completed five-year surgical residencies. Shane Hodge, D.O., who joined Wilkes Regional Surgical Specialists in August, finished a residency focusing on advanced laparoscopic surgery.

MEET OUR GENERAL SURGEONS



Shane Hodge, DO



Brad Huggins, MD



Jon Thompson, MD



Alan Keys, MD

Wilkes Regional Surgical Specialists
1915 West Park Drive,
Suite 101
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
336-651-8700

Alan Keys, MD
Surgical P.A.
233 Jefferson Street
N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659
336-667-9300

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Achieving gold in quality



WRMC gets the Gold Seal of Approval

Wilkes Regional Medical Center (WRMC) kicked off the year with a stellar survey from The Joint Commission (TJC), the accreditation review organization for hospitals. This survey is completed every three years. TJC accredits and certifies more than 19,000 healthcare organizations and programs in the United States. TJC accreditation and certification is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to meeting certain performance standards. The result of this survey was the gold seal of approval.

ALWAYS COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

During the last year, WRMC has received several quality awards and was ranked one of the best for quality among the 33 healthcare facilities in the Carolinas Healthcare System (CHS). WRMC achieved a top score in seven out of eight of the system's quality goals. The Diagnostic Center was recognized for improving service excellence overall quality of care score by 70 percent, and WRMC received a silver level Touchstone Award for the emergency department quality project,

"Emergency Department to Inpatient Admission Turn Around Time."

This spring, Carolina's Center for Medical Excellence recognized WRMC for its commitment to quality improvement and exceptional performance in surgical care. And most recently, WRMC ranked among the best in CHS for the shortest lengths of stay; low mortality rates; quality measures that include heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care and infection rates; and a reduction in their readmission rate. WRMC was also recognized with five Bronze Touchstone Awards in June.

Joe Piemont, CHS President and Chief Operating Officer, with Dr. Roger Ray, CHS Executive VP and Chief Medical Officer, present Barbara Overby and Leigh Combs of WRMC with the Touchstone Quality Improvement Award.



EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE!

At Wilkes Regional Medical Center we are committed to excellence every day. To learn more about WRMC and our services, visit www.wilkesregional.org.