



*Rocky Mountain
Regional
Trauma Center*



2007

*Annual
Report*



Developing a Trauma System to Care for the Region's Most Severely Injured

The Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center — 1976 – 2008

In July 1976

Dr. Ben Eiseman hired Dr. Ernest E. “Gene” Moore, a greenhorn at the time, and asked him to formalize a Trauma/Surgery Service at then-Denver General Hospital.

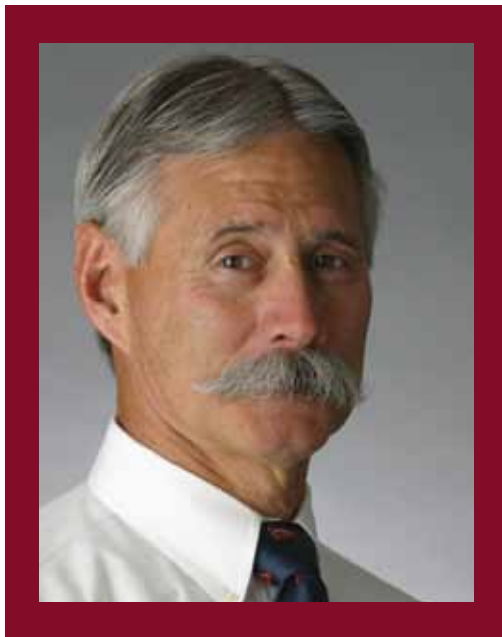
The concept of a trauma service was stimulated by the recent national emphasis on trauma care, and the fact that as an urban public safety net hospital, Denver General was emerging as a regional leader for severely injured patients. At this same time, a new specialty in Emergency Medicine was attracting more and more attention.

“Then, like now, people knew that if you were severely injured and in need of medical attention, Denver General/Denver Health is the place to be,” said Dr. Moore.

Under Dr. Moore’s guidance, the Trauma/Surgery Service began to grow, and the Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center (RMRTC) was established. In addition to caring for the most severe cases of trauma, the Center also began conducting medical research. As Colorado’s only academic Level I trauma center, the RMRTC has had many “firsts,” and has become a national and international leader in caring for trauma patients. In fact, because of its reputation as a leader in research and patient care, the Center attracts surgery fellows from around the world who come to Denver Health to learn how to save lives.

Dr. Moore also believes in sharing what is learned

at Denver Health, and co-edited, with Dr. Kenneth Mattox of Houston and Dr. David Feliciano of Atlanta, the textbook *Trauma* which was recently published in its sixth edition, and is known worldwide as “the book” for trauma surgeons. In addition, he has penned and published more than 1,000 articles and books. In 1994, Dr. Moore was elected president of the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, the first-ever from Colorado to hold this prestigious position.



The RMRTC team’s assistance reaches beyond the city limits to places throughout the state of Colorado. Trauma surgeons from Denver Health provide the trauma service at Vail Medical Center, and in Steamboat Springs to cover for the local surgeons so that they can take days off and vacations. They also travel around the state and throughout Region

VIII providing lectures, and developing an integrated consultation referral program.

Throughout the years, Dr. Moore’s vision has always been to ensure that the people of Denver and Colorado have access to the best trauma care available.

“It’s all about our patients. We know they are suffering. Our job is to first save their lives, and then return them to a normal life. We take great pride in what we do, and through experience, research and teamwork will continue to ensure that the people of Denver and Colorado know that when they have an emergency, the place to come is Denver Health,” he says.

Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center Firsts

Published some of the earliest information on defining the role of Emergency Department resuscitative thoracotomy and the management of penetrating wounds to the neck, chest and abdomen.

One of the first models of “Acute Care Surgery” encompassing trauma surgery, critical care, and emergency surgery.

First to document the safety and efficacy of early enteral feeding following abdominal trauma

Trained the first ICU Clinical Specialist.

Published some of the first series of splenorraphy and splenic autotransplantation.

First to identify the key role of phospholipase A2 following gut ischemia.

Developed the “Denver MOF Score”, which is now one of the standard scores used internationally for multiple organ failure research.

First description of MOF Syndrome.

First to propose the “Two Event Model of MOF.”

Published the first report of the association of stored blood transfusion with post-injury MOF.

Established one of the first two Acute Care Surgery fellowships in the country, and graduated the first AAST certified fellow.

Most quoted trauma surgeon in the world — Ernest E. “Gene” Moore, M.D.

Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center Coverage

In 2007 the Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center cared for 1,900 severely injured patients from 49 Colorado counties, and 35 states, many of whom were flown here because of the reputation of exceptional trauma care and survival.

Counties

Adams	Eagle	Larimer	Pitkin
Alamosa	Elbert	Las Animas	Prowers
Arapahoe	El Paso	Lincoln	Pueblo
Archuleta	Fremont	Logan	Rio Grande
Bent	Garfield	Mesa	Routt
Boulder	Gilpin	Moffat	Summit
Broomfield	Grand	Montezuma	Teller
Chaffee	Gunnison	Montrose	Washington
Conejos	Huerfano	Morgan	Weld
Custer	Jefferson	Otero	Yuma
Delta	Kit Carson	Ouray	
Denver	Lake	Park	
Douglas	La Plata	Phillips	

States

Arkansas	Iowa	New Mexico	South Dakota
Arizona	Kansas	New York	Tennessee
California	Louisiana	Nevada	Texas
Colorado	Maine	North Carolina	Utah
Connecticut	Michigan	Ohio	Virginia
Florida	Missouri	Oklahoma	Washington
Georgia	Montana	Oregon	Wisconsin
Illinois	Nebraska	Pennsylvania	Wyoming
Indiana	New Jersey	South Carolina	

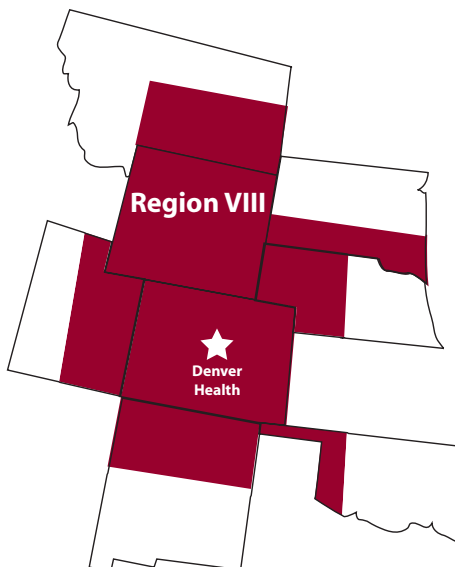
95%
Overall
Survival Rate

97%

**Blunt Trauma
Survival Rate**

94%

**Penetrating Trauma
Survival Rate**

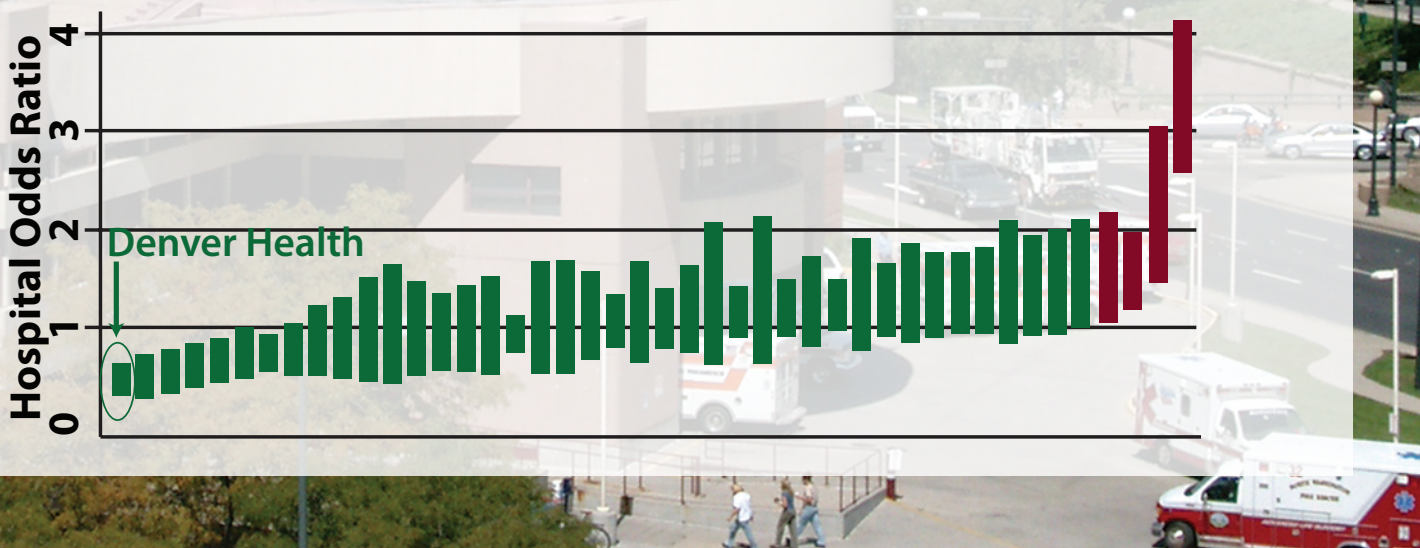


The Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center Team

Admissions	Laboratory	Paramedics	Surgery
Anesthesiology	Maxillofacial Surgery	Pediatrics	Surgical Intensive Care Unit
Blood Bank	Microsurgery	Pharmacy	Translation Services
Chaplain	Neurosurgery	Physical Therapy	Transportation Services
Critical Care Transport	Nursing	Plastic Surgery	Trauma Coordinators
Emergency Medicine	Occupational Therapy	Radiology	Trauma Outreach
Emergency Department	Operating Room	Rehabilitation Services	Trauma Registry
Environmental Services	Ophthalmology	Respiratory Therapy	Urology
Injury Prevention	Orthopedics	Clinical Social Work	Utilization Management
	Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery	Speech Therapy	

Trauma Care: Best in the Nation

Hospitals whose quality of below average are in **red**. Denver Health, at the other end of the scale (**in green**) has the best trauma outcomes in the nation, as determined by the American College of Surgeons.





Angels in the Outfield

Rai Henniger, senior vice president for the Colorado Springs Sky Sox baseball team, and fan favorite team enthusiast who is just as well known for his fireworks displays, dance moves with the mascot, and fearless t-shirt shots into the crowd, was going through his regular routine and setting up for game day May 12, 2007, when something went very, very wrong.

Despite being known for his cautiousness, a firework malfunctioned and a 2½-inch spherical titanium shell shattered Henniger's face.

It was an accident that would impact Rai, the Henniger family and the Sky Sox forever.

Steve DeLeon, the grounds keeper, who is certified in CPR and first aid, began administering care immediately. He was joined by two artillery soldiers from Fort Carson, Christopher Smith and Michael Cordosi, who had just returned from duty in Iraq and were experienced in first aid. The soldiers used towels to help stop the bleeding, and kept Henniger talking until the ambulance arrived.

Heather, Henniger's wife, got the call that something had happened, and within minutes was at Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs.

Three Memorial doctors – a neurosurgeon, plastic surgeon and an eye specialist – gave Heather the news. Rai had suffered facial fractures of the nose, eye socket, upper jaw and cheekbone, and an additional fracture through the base of the skull. He had also suffered multiple soft tissue injuries, and his left eye was so badly ruptured, it had to be removed.

"It was like this cloud just enveloped us," Heather said. "They used terms like 'catastrophic' and 'devastating,' and said it was beyond their scope here in Colorado Springs." Doctors told Heather the best place for Rai to have a chance of surviving was Denver Health.



They transported Henniger to Denver Health Medical Center by helicopter. Heather made the trip by car with a friend.

“The nurses in SICU were phenomenal,” said Heather, “especially Jared Wright and Ed Alvarez.”

Jared Wright, RN, was working the night Rai came in and was one of the first on scene.

“Ed saw me when I was at my worst. He wasn’t even Rai’s nurse, but he stayed with me to make sure I was all right,” said Heather. “It is such a great team in the SICU.”

Rai spent weeks in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, the Step-down Unit and the Medical/Surgical Unit.

After a total of 10 surgeries — and still more to go — Rai continues to heal.

“I was in survival mode at Denver Health, just trying to get through each day, and I was fortunate to have the staff and Denver Health to help me through it,” said Heather.

Things are starting to look up for the Henningers. Rai is on the mend, and the Sky Sox have assured him that his job is waiting for him, whenever he’s ready. And, with Heather, and their three children as his support team, Rai is getting better every day.

“I feel very blessed that we were sent to Denver Health,” said Heather. “I truly believe that Denver Health was absolutely pivotal in Rai surviving.”

St. Valentine’s Day Angels



It was a cold and snowy Valentine’s Day when Rod Yokooji first met Denver Health Paramedics Sean Hedlof and Demetri Zannis.

Rod awoke early that morning with sharp pains in his throat; he took some Tums and went back to bed. While at work, the pain returned and he began to sweat, “that’s when I knew things were bad,” Rod recalled.

Rod called his wife from his office and asked her to come pick him up and take him to the doctor. When he got in the car with her, she immediately called 911. She relayed the information to the dispatcher that he had a lump in his throat, his chest was tight and his left arm was numb.

Hedlof and Demetri responded to the 911 call in less than six minutes.

As the paramedics rushed Rod to the nearest Emergency Department at Saint Joseph’s Hospital they started to lose Rod. A defibrillator was used to restore Rod’s heartbeat — eight times. They also called ahead to the Heart Unit at the hospital informing them that they needed to bypass the Emergency Department and go straight to the Cardiac Cath Lab, in

order to be able to save their patient.

In the hospital Rod was told by several care providers, including his cardiologist, that it was a miracle he was alive.

“I know I am here today because of Demetri and Sean’s extraordinary care. Without them, I don’t think I ever would have even made it to the cardiac unit.

“Even now, months later, every time I hear or see an ambulance, I think of Demetri and Sean. We rarely hear about how many people are alive because of paramedics’ dedication to saving a life.

“I don’t think that thank you is enough. These guys are my angels.”

7,142 Surgery Clinic Visits



Training the Next Generation of Emergency Medicine Physicians

Denver Health had the foresight to establish an Emergency Residency Program in 1973, six years before emergency medicine was formally recognized as a medical specialty.

As of 2007, Denver Health, University Hospital, The Children's Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital/Kaiser Permanente compose the Denver Health affiliated residency in Emergency Medicine.

"We've come a long way in the last 34 years," said Vince Markovchick, M.D., director of Emergency Medicine at Denver Health. "Over the years, we've trained emergency medicine physicians who now hold directorships at some of the most prestigious and busiest Emergency Departments across the country."

To date, more than 300 residents have graduated from the program. Graduates run emergency medicine programs at Harvard; Beth Israel Hospital in New York; Cook County Hospital in Chicago; Maricopa County Hospital in Phoenix; Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida; Vancouver Hospital, Vancouver, Canada; Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland; Washington University in St. Louis; the Mayo Clinic and New York University/Bellevue Hospital.

Also, 44 percent of graduates from the program stay in Colorado and work in local emergency rooms throughout the state.

Because of the duration of the emergency medicine residency program — four years — and the breadth and depth of the educational experience of residents, along with the volume and variety of patients cared for, very highly-skilled Emergency Medicine specialists are developed. This skill level and vast medical knowledge, also make the program one of the most sought after in the country. In 2007, 760 applicants vied for 14 available slots in the program.

In addition to training the next generation of emergency medicine physicians, the Emergency Residency Program at Denver Health has been vital to providing emergency care for Denver residents, Colorado citizens and visitors to the Rocky Mountain region.

“We’re very proud of our Emergency Medicine Residency program here at Denver Health,” said Markovchick. “We’re proud of what our residents learn, and we’re proud of the fact that we provide some of the best emergency care in the country, and therefore have some of the best outcomes for our patients.”

A Life Changed



In May of 2002, Jeremiah Archuleta was leading a somewhat reckless life.

“I just didn’t really care about anything back then. I had no real plan in life and ran with the wrong crowd,” he said.

That was until one fateful night when he chose to accept a ride from a stranger. Jeremiah jumped into the bed of the stranger’s truck for the ride to a friend’s house. Suddenly, the truck rear-ended the car in front of it, and Jeremiah was thrown over the vehicle and into the road.

Denver Health paramedics responded and immediately brought the injured 22-year-old to the Denver Health Emergency Department, where they treated his injuries, which included a broken neck and an irregular heart beat.

Jeremiah does not remember a lot about the day of the accident, nor does he remember a lot about his stay at Denver Health.

“I may not remember a lot, but I do know that the men and women of Denver Health saved

my life,” said Jeremiah. “I truly believe that my accident happened for a reason. It gave me another take on life, and Denver Health gave me another chance at life. I’ve been told I probably should have died from my injuries that day.”

Now 28-years-old, Jeremiah attends Metropolitan State College as a fine arts major.

“All of my art reflects my accident,” he said. “My art provides me with the opportunity to reflect on what happened to me in a positive way. My accident was truly a life-changing event.”

Jeremiah chooses to recreate his accident through his art as a reminder to always be grateful for his second chance at life. He plans to graduate from college in the fall and will hold an art show, which he will dedicate to Denver Health, at the end of his final semester.

91,316 Emergency Department Encounters (includes Urgent Care Clinics)

347 Emergency Medicine graduates of the program since 1973



A Smooth Operation



In the early morning when many of us are still asleep, Ann Andis makes her way to her office outside of the Operating Rooms at Denver Health. Within feet of her office are the hospital's 12 operating rooms, already bustling with action as surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, technicians and others constantly travel through corridors and from room to room.

As Director of Perioperative Services, Andis is responsible for the smooth flow of the operating rooms, making sure they are staffed and ready to go. As a Level 1 trauma center, Denver Health's ORs are constantly ready, and Andis is exceptionally adept at managing an area that to an observer may seem chaotic, but in fact is highly organized and efficient.

Many might think that surgeons, nurses, technicians and other clinicians walk in to the operating room (OR) and begin their work. From a patient's perspective, they know their surgery is scheduled for a specific time and that's it. But a surgery is more complicated than a patient can ever imagine.

Preparing for a patient's surgery begins the day before. Nursing and scrub staff are assigned to a specific surgery on the preceding afternoon based on their skill level. This is crucial because the OR is an incredibly fast-paced environment and it is imperative that the highly skilled staff are prepared, know the case and type of surgery to be performed, and are in place and ready to go before each surgery.

The entire surgical team meets in a “huddle” to discuss the case and ensure everyone is on the same page. This is an example of patient safety at its finest. Once the surgeon makes the first incision, there is no waiting for an instrument or piece of equipment to arrive in the OR suite, and neither is there time for questions. Everything needs to run smoothly and safely.

As a Level 1 trauma center, operating rooms are staffed 24/7.

“My job is always a challenge and I’m never bored,” said Andis. “I love what I do with a passion. It is a very challenging environment in which to work and most satisfying.”

“Patient-centered care is the core of my philosophy, and we are very team focused and very caring. We all help and make sure everyone is supported in order to provide the best patient care possible.”



A Patient Walks in to Say “Thank you”



Chris Annesley had the weight of a plane on his leg December 3, 2006, after he slipped on the icy tarmac while flagging in an airplane at Denver International Airport, and was pinned under the nose gear of a A319 airplane.

Annesley was rushed to the Rocky Mountain Level I Trauma Center at Denver Health where during a month-long stay he had numerous surgeries, including the amputation of his right leg.

“I had a wonderful experience in the hospital, in light of what happened,” Annesley said.

Annesley was transferred to the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, but can’t remember his nearly two-week stay in the unit.

“I’ve been told that I joked around with the staff, and even that I had a favorite nurse, but I can’t remember any of it. All I know is that I woke up in the Step-down Unit on December 19.

“Throughout my stay, the whole staff was incredible. I felt comfortable with everyone from the doctors down to the food service workers who delivered food. Everyone was truly great.”

Since his accident, Annesley has received a new prosthetic leg. That allowed him to walk into the Surgical Intensive Care Unit to say, “thank you,” to his care givers.

“I am looking forward to getting back to a pretty normal life. I am extremely thankful to Denver Health and my caregivers for their care, understanding and expertise,” he said.

Since his stay at Denver Health, Annesley has undergone five additional surgeries, and has learned to think of his prosthetic leg as normal.

“I am also planning on going back to work. My company has been extremely supportive of me and even if I’m not back on the tarmac, I will be able to go back to work.”



Providing High Quality Care for All the Right Reasons

Wade Smith, M.D. director of Denver Health's Orthopedic Service, has spent his life meeting challenges. And he likes to make a difference.

"All along I may have been predisposed," he said, "as my father was a physician. I watched him perform autopsies when I was young and worked in his laboratories.

"My father was a first generation American whose parents came from Europe, and my mother was a linguist," he said. "My father believed that you practice medicine to take care of people, not for money."

The elder Dr. Smith was a rebel of sorts. When he observed that Cincinnati had a higher rate of cervical cancer than normal, he provided free Pap smears from the pathology department.

"My siblings and I were taught that it is important to make things right, and to feel the burden of society," Smith said.

This explains why Smith's work treating the complex injuries of trauma patients in the Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center makes his life as an orthopedic surgeon very satisfying.

Dr. Smith likes the fact that his work can make a difference in his patient's recovery. He particularly appreciates the challenge of working with people who assuredly would be severely impaired without timely and high quality treatment.

"My father believed that you practice medicine to take care of people, not for money."

—Wade Smith, M.D.

When asked what achievements make him feel rewarded, he said his greatest happiness is in working with the world-class orthopedists at Denver Health in developing the excellent program that serves so many people.

“The physicians here are unselfishly and unflinchingly providing top quality service and engaging in research to further the field,” he said. “We have some of the best people in the world right here in Denver, providing high quality health care for all.”

A Run Gone Awry

Danelle Ballengee was well known for her extensive training schedule which included scenic routes in Moab, Utah. As an adventure/endurance athlete, Danelle was out for a run with her dog, Taz, on a December afternoon when she fell 60 feet down a hillside. She lay on the ground in a ravine unable to move because of a broken pelvis.

As the sun set and it began to get cold, Danelle decided to sleep for the night. Temperatures dipped into the 20s but her dog stayed with her, keeping her warm.

The next morning when neighbors realized she hadn't returned home when expected, they notified her father who called the Moab police. The search was on, but by nightfall Danelle was still missing.

She spent a second night in the wilderness. When she awoke in the morning, Taz was gone.

On the third day after falling, a search-and-rescue team spotted Taz running near the trail head. He wouldn't let the rescuers near him, instead pointing towards the trail as if to beckon them to follow. Rescuers followed the dog and found Danelle.

In addition to the broken pelvis, Danelle now had frostbite on her toes.

Danelle was initially airlifted to Denver Health Medical Center where Orthopedic Surgeons David Hak and Wade Smith performed the operation to repair her shattered pelvis.

Hak and Smith inserted a titanium plate and pins into the pelvis to repair the damage. They expected about a six-month recovery before she could walk again. They were wrong.

In May 2007, less than six months after breaking her pelvis, Danelle won the 12-hour, 60-mile multisport Adventure Xstream Adventure Race Series in Buena Vista, Colo. She was the race's only female competitor.



12,716 Orthopedic Clinic Visits
54 Orthopedic Papers Published
77 Presentations by Orthopedic Surgeons



Caring for Future Leaders

Karan Hutchins, RN, a trauma coordinator for Denver Health's Level One Trauma Center, is a sympathetic liaison to families whose children have suffered a major trauma.

As a trauma coordinator in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Hutchins is no stranger to seeing kids who have injuries that no child or adult should have to endure. And, as a mother, it's not something she will ever get used to seeing.

"When we receive a trauma involving a child, we go to work to ensure that our young patient is everyone's top priority," says Hutchins. "I'm responsible for making sure everyone talks to each other; the attending physicians, nurses, other trauma coordinators, and the parents. We want to ensure that everyone is on the same page, and we are providing the best care for our patients."

When young patients have recovered to the point they are cleared for rehabilitation, it is time to call in Tara Miller to take over.

A physical therapist, Miller is assigned to the Pediatrics Unit.

"When we begin rehab, we coordinate with our occupational and speech therapy colleagues as well," said Miller. "Pediatrics is the highest priority for us.

"During rehab, we look at all the resources we can use to help the patient. We talk to the nurses and the family to perform an evaluation on how best we can care for them."



Starting home therapy right away is important for those patients with special needs. Rehab staff work with Clinical Social Workers to develop a plan for home rehabilitation and how to work with insurance plans and the patient's home situation. Families are paramount to the patient's recovery.

"We make sure all providers give the same information to the family," said Miller. "With head injuries, we tell the family to observe the child closely and report any differences in behavior, such as a lack of concentration, failing grades or if they have problems dressing."

"I've been at Denver Health for 23 years and have seen many changes," said Hutchins. "Families know we're here if they need us. We reassure them and do the best for their child. I go home tired every day, but with a good feeling of having helped a possible future leader in our society."

Tragedy Turns to Inspiration



It was a bitter cold January night when Tyler Carron, Nikko Landeros and their dates left a high school dance and headed home. All of a sudden changing a flat tire on a snowy dark road turned into a life altering tragedy that the small town of Berthoud, Colorado will never forget.

Outstanding wrestlers at Berthoud High School, the boys got out of their Pathfinder to change the flat tire when they were hit from behind and pinned between the two vehicles.

The accident was only about a mile away from their school, and the first on scene to help were fellow students who immediately applied tourniquets while the boys' dates called for help.

Both boys were airlifted to Denver Health Medical Center where the Orthopedic Trauma Surgery Team were waiting and ready.

The Orthopedic Trauma Team includes physicians from Denver Health's Center for Complex Fractures and Limb Restoration (CFx) who specialize in caring for the most severe bone trauma cases. These physicians are on-call and in the hospital providing orthopedic surgery coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Orthopedic surgeon Philip Stahel and trauma surgeon Clay Cothren were the physicians on call the night of the accident.

"At Denver Health the orthopedic surgeons and trauma surgeons work in a unique environment in that we are all part of a team that works very closely on a regular — almost daily — basis," said Philip Stahel, orthopedic surgeon, and the surgeon who cared for Tyler and Nikko. "Dr. Cothren and I gathered our teams and immediately took the boys into the operating room."

"We quickly realized we needed to make a decision — limb or life — it is a phrase we use when we have to make a decision to lose the limb but save the life," Stahel explained.

Both boys had complete amputations of both legs.

The town of Berthoud quickly mobilized, along with the state's wrestling community, and an outpouring of love and support for Carron and Landeros suddenly overwhelmed their families. Fundraisers were held, local contractors donated time, construction materials and talent to renovate the boys' homes and make them handicapped accessible.

Meanwhile the boys stayed in the Pediatrics Unit at Denver Health recuperating for nearly a month. Each of the boys had more than 15 surgeries.

The boys went home, entered grueling rehabilitation, were fitted for prosthesis, and in May of that same fateful year, Tyler, on his own, walked across the stage at graduation to receive his diploma.



139 Pediatric Trauma Patients
2,920 Pediatrics Rehab Patients



Anesthesiology

Keeping patients out of harm's way

For Doug Warnecke, one of the most rewarding aspects of his work as a nurse anesthetist is when a patient wakes up after surgery and says with surprise, “Is it done?”

To the patient, it has been seconds since Warnecke offered comfort and confident reassurance before putting them under. Little does the patient realize that while they slept and surgeons worked, Warnecke watched over them like a guardian angel, monitoring every heartbeat and every breath, making sure the patient stays out of harm's way during the surgery.

A nurse anesthetist or certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA) is a type of advanced practice nurse with a Master's Degree in Nurse Anesthesiology. CRNAs are qualified to provide all types of general and regional anesthesia.

Working closely with other health care professionals such as surgeons, dentists, podiatrists and anesthesiologists, a CRNA takes care of a patient's anesthesia needs before, during and after surgery or the delivery of a baby by:

- Performing a physical assessment
- Participating in preoperative teaching
- Preparing for anesthetic management
- Administering anesthesia to keep the patient pain free
- Maintaining anesthesia intraoperatively
- Overseeing recovery from anesthesia
- Following the patient's postoperative course from recovery room to patient care unit

At Denver Health, CRNAs work in a “team anesthesia” practice model, meaning an attending physician (Anesthesiologist) is always assigned to an anesthetic case with a CRNA, and the two providers work as a team to provide the highest quality patient care. This type of practice model has been shown to be of higher quality than either provider could provide working independently.

CRNAs also play a large role in the Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma center. There is always an attending physician, a resident-in-training, and a CRNA in the hospital, ready to respond to a trauma case.

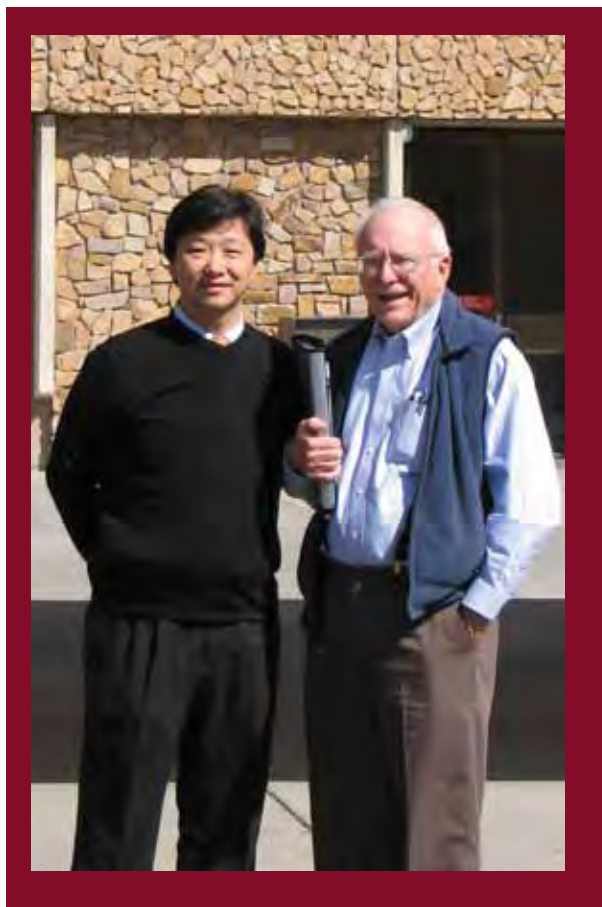
According to Warnecke, Trauma Anesthesiology is one of the many subspecialties in anesthesia care. Trauma Anesthesiology focuses on advanced resuscitation procedures including massive blood transfusion, advanced airway management, and insertion and interpretation of invasive monitoring modalities. Survival from traumatic injuries is directly related to the speed and skill in which resuscitation maneuvers are undertaken.

“One of the best things about being a nurse, and a nurse anesthetist in particular, is the ability to assist someone as they navigate the health care system. A patient is always anxious and afraid as they seek care for a situation that is rarely their choice,” said Warnecke. “Equal doses of kindness and skilled professionalism is the remedy that every client is seeking.”

The Anesthesia department at Denver Health administers approximately 11,000 anesthetics a year and 10 percent are for acute traumatic injuries.

Warnecke has been at Denver Health for 20 years, and the administrative supervisor for the last 15.

Seeking Out the Best for Care



No one wants to be diagnosed with cancer, but if you are, then there are decisions to make. For John Hall, one of Colorado’s Nobel laureates who resides in Boulder, the decision of how to deal with the news of prostate cancer was not easy.

“It’s a very daunting process. All treatments look great, but in the end, you have to find the best fit for you and your body.

“Luckily my prostate cancer was detected early. I didn’t want anything invasive so I searched and found Dr. Fernando Kim.”

Dr. Kim performed a minimally-invasive radical laparoscopic prostatectomy on Hall in November 2007.

“The people were gracious, compassionate and direct. It was great,” said Lindy Hall, John’s wife. “The nursing staff in Surgery is outstanding. The day of John’s surgery, I lost count at 15 staff who introduced themselves to me. The compassion and interest in families as an extension of the surgical procedure is phenomenal.”

After two days in the hospital, Hall was home in Boulder recovering.

“In the hospital I started walking almost immediately,” Hall said. “Then, at home, went on to longer walks, and getting out and about as a passenger/shopper with my wife on some of her errands.”

Dr. Hall, a Nobel Laureate in Physics, and on faculty at the University of Colorado at Boulder, points out that there is not a focus in this country on men’s health issues, like prostate cancer, which will affect more than one in 10 men in their lifetime.

“It may be embarrassing for a minute to get checked, but if men don’t get that screening, then it can cost them their lives.”

“Everyone I work with is starting to get grey hair, so I am encouraging them to go to their doctor and get checked. While I hope they’re healthy, if something is found, it’s nice to know that a great hospital like Denver Health, and a fantastic surgeon like Dr. Kim are right here in Denver.”



Caring for the Whole Patient



When Reverend Dirk Van Der Vorst, director, Chaplaincy Services, is called to provide spiritual comfort for patients and families in Denver Health, he frequently prays in the elevator on his way to the unit.

“God give me the strength to be gracious,” he prays.

“Over the years, I believe God has allowed me to not be surprised at anything, accept everything, and prepare to absorb anything.”

When “Chaplain Dirk,” as he is known, enters the Surgical Intensive Care Unit to comfort a family whose loved one has suffered a traumatic injury, he first talks with Megan Rotter, the unit’s clinical social worker.

Together, they work hand-in-hand to make patients and families lives less complicated and more at ease during their loved one’s stay at the hospital. They provide the emotional and cognitive part of health care.

“We help each other do what is best for the patient and family,” said Rotter. “Our job is to ease the pain and help the family and patient along the road to recovery, as long as it may be.”





Home Base for the Flying Angels

Denver Health is the medical home base for the helicopter operations of Angel Flight West in Colorado.

Angel Flight uses private and corporate helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft to link both volunteer pilots and commercial airlines with people who have non-emergent health care needs and require travel to and from regional and national medical facilities. All costs associated with the flights are donated.

“This is a wonderful program for people — especially the most needy — to get access to medical treatment,” said Patricia A. Gabow, M.D., CEO and medical director, Denver Health. “Partnering with Angel Flight allows patients in the Rocky Mountain region to be treated by our highly-skilled providers.”

Denver Health offers a wide array of services to Angel Flight patients, including access to the Rocky Mountain Regional Trauma Center, the Center for Complex Fractures and Limb Restoration, the Minimally Invasive Surgery Center, as well as a multitude of additional specialty services.

“As an Angel Flight mission command pilot, and a member of the Denver Health and Hospital Authority Board of Directors and the Angel Flight Board of Directors, it has given me great pleasure to be able to bring patients from the rural areas of Colorado and surrounding states back to Denver Health to meet with their physicians for much needed follow-up appointments,” said Kevin P. Kauffman, chairman and CEO, K.P. Kauffman Company, Inc. “Our program allows these patients to return home to heal, yet affords them the opportunity for continuity of care with a doctor who knows all the intricacies of their case.”

Angel Flight West serves patients and hospitals in 13 western states – Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming, and is part of Homeland Security national transportation system.





An October Never Forgotten



It started out as just another day on the job for Scott Hinshaw, 38, a Colorado State Patrol trooper, but turned into one he would never forget.

On October 11, 2007, Trooper Hinshaw's world was turned upside down. Trooper Hinshaw and his partner, Zachariah Templeton, 27, were assisting a motorist along Interstate 76 when a 17-year-old boy, driving a Ford F-150, slid off the highway, went into the median and ran over the two troopers. It was the 15th anniversary of his marriage to his wife, Susan.

Hinshaw would survive. Templeton would not.

Hinshaw's injuries included a broken thigh bone, a second leg fracture, knee injuries and a large amount of muscle and ligament damage.

"Trooper Hinshaw suffered a very high-energy series of injuries to primarily his lower extremities," said Wade Smith, the chief of orthopedic surgery at Denver Health Medical Center during a news conference. "But he is working hard to get

back on his feet. He is a very determined young man."

But, there was another factor in Trooper Hinshaw's recovery. The Colorado Rockies were on the road to the World Series, and the trooper did not miss a game, even while in his hospital bed.

"I'm not a flash in the pan fan," he was heard saying to all of his care givers on the floor.

One day, while on the Orthopedics Unit, a bat and baseball autographed by the Colorado Rockies was delivered to his room.

"He lit up like a 12-year-old on Christmas morning," Susan said.

"He is a really big sports fan," Dr. Smith added. "I think the success of the Rockies might have played a little bit into his recovery."

Smith said Hinshaw's focus on the Rockies was extremely good news because he was not overly concerned about his injuries although he was undergoing intensive rehabilitation.

"Trooper Hinshaw made an amazingly fast recovery," Dr. Wade Smith said.

Whether it be for love of the game, or love of his life, Colorado State Patrol Trooper Scott Hinshaw will celebrate his 16th wedding anniversary in 2008, with his wife, Susan.



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