MOSAIC

Parkway East Hospital creates waves in the heartland

Every new birth is a joy to Dr Lubna Ahmad Harharah

Professional blogger Xiaxue delivers first baby at Mount Elizabeth
Caring For You Wherever You Are

Whatever your healthcare needs, we are here to meet them. All over Asia, our Mount Elizabeth, Gleneagles, Pantai and ParkwayHealth brands have become synonymous with outstanding private healthcare. With a fully integrated network of hospitals, clinics and ancillary services as well as a professional medical team, we are committed to taking good care of you and your loved ones. With us, it’s not just about offering excellent patient care. It’s about making a difference in your life.

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* Clinics  ^ Ancillary Services
EDITOR’S NOTE

The production of this issue of Mosaic was met with record-high haze levels in Singapore and Malaysia. Once again, we are reminded that good health, like good air quality, is something that we should never take for granted.

It helps to keep fit and maintain a balanced diet to strengthen our body against harsh environmental conditions. Foods rich in Vitamins C and E as well as omega-3 fatty acids are also good for our immune system. If the haze returns, stay indoors, avoid strenuous activities and drink more water than you normally would.

Meanwhile, Parkway Pantai continues to delight our patients with new developments.

Parkway East Hospital is set to wow after an eight-month-long facility and equipment upgrade (pg 8).

Mount Elizabeth Hospital becomes the first hospital in Singapore to win the prestigious Singapore Service Excellence Medallion Commendation Award for Customer Experience (pg 18).

Over in Malaysia, our hospitals celebrated the good work of our nurses on International Nurses’ Day (pg 30), while ramping up efforts to engage the community through various CSR initiatives (pg 32).

Happy reading.

We want your feedback

Do you have an interesting story idea, news or happening you would like to share with us? Let us know and we will give you a special token of our appreciation. Write to: grpcorpcomms@parkway.sg, or Group Corporate Communications, Parkway Pantai Limited, #15-01, TripleOne Somerset, 111 Somerset Road, Singapore 238164.
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Caregivers’ emotions can affect patients’ well-being

Sufferers of Alzheimer’s disease or those with mild mental problems were inclined to mimic the emotions of the people whom they are close to.

In a study conducted by the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) involving 237 adults, MRI scans of the participants’ brains revealed that individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and mild mental impairment had higher emotional contagion, compared to the mentally healthy subjects. Emotional contagion is basic empathy that enables human beings to feel the emotions of others.

The study found that the greater the damage to the right temporal lobe of the brain, the higher the emotional contagion in the subject.

“In Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia, we think some people may have an increased sensitivity to other people’s emotions,” said Virginia Sturm, the lead researcher and an assistant professor at UCSF.

The findings have profound impact on understanding how caregivers’ emotions could affect the psychological well-being of these patients.

“In order to manage patients, it might be that the caregivers being calm and happy would go a long way in keeping their patient calm and happy,” said Assistant Professor Sturm.

Source: WebMD

Another milestone in human stem cells research

Oregon Health & Science University professor Shoukhrat Mitalipov and his team have succeeded in ‘creating’ human embryonic stem cells from skin cells.

Mitalipov’s achievement came after an enduring struggle by many researchers to the artificial creation of human stem cells. Mitalipov maintained that the objective of his work was to not clone humans but to produce human stem cells which could be used to develop into muscle, nerve and other cells of the human body. He hoped to use the technique to treat mitochondrial diseases.

According to Mitalipov, the success of the study was not due to anything unusual or new that they had done, but the knowledge gathered from studies attempted by other researchers. He added that having good quality eggs from healthy donors to kick-start his experiments was critical.

Source: CNN.com
Choosing suitable sun protection

Sunscreens that are pricier are not necessarily better. Recent findings by *Consumer Reports* reveal that products tested most effective are among the least expensive ones.

With a wide variety of sun protection available out there, you ought to know how to pick the one that is most suitable for you.

Get a sunscreen gel if you are a sports enthusiast. An oil-free sunscreen will suit you if you have acne, while a cream type is good for someone with dry skin. Consider a waxy type for your child because it does not drip into the eyes easily. A mineral sunblock usually contains zinc oxide or titanium dioxide, which sits on the surface instead of being absorbed into the skin, thus making it a choice for people with sensitive skin, including babies and toddlers. People who are hairy should opt for sprays and gels – they are easier to apply, as they do not cling to the hairs.

The most important point to remember is to get a sunscreen that protects against both long wave ultraviolet A (UVA) and short wave ultraviolet B (UVB) for more effective coverage.

*Source: WebMD*

Let’s run your weight down

Keen to shape up? Research says you can run your weight down – literally.

In the six-year-long National Runners and Walkers Health Study involving 15,237 walkers and 32,215 runners, the runners were generally found to be thinner than the walkers.

It is believed that running helps to curb appetite.

In separate studies, the walkers, after a one-hour session on the treadmill, were found to consume 50 calories more than what they had burned during exercise. The runners took in 200 calories lower than what they had expended.

Significant increase of peptide YY, an appetite-suppressing hormone, were found in the runners’ blood after exercise. The walkers’ levels of peptide YY were unchanged.

Despite all that, walking is still highly beneficial to health. A study proved that both running and walking, compared to being inactive, help to reduce the risks of developing age-related cataracts. Another study showed that both running and walking significantly reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure, high bad cholesterol levels, diabetes and heart problems, compared to not exercising at all.

*Source: CNN.com*
Possible new approaches to infertility treatments

A study funded by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development study revealed that a woman’s ability to repair ageing damage egg cells – more precisely called primordial follicle oocytes – would drop as she aged.

The researchers found in a study involving women, aged 24 to 41, that the activity of four DNA repair genes declined with age. They discovered that the egg cells of older women contained more severe DNA damage and subsequently died, as the bodies’ DNA repair capability weakened.

From the study, the team also learned that if a woman’s oocytes contained mutant versions of BRCA1, one of the four DNA repair genes, her supply of egg cells would end sooner than women with healthy egg cells would.

With this newfound information, scientists believed they can formulate new treatments that focus on strengthening the DNA repair systems in the ovaries, so as to enhance and prolong women’s reproductive abilities.

Source: eMedicineHealth

Facebook-profile viewing ups self-worth but weakens motivation

Stare at your Facebook profile for five minutes, and see if you feel good about yourself after that.

The results from a recent study suggested that you would.

The study’s lead researcher, Catalina Toma, used the Implicit Association Test to assess the self-perception of her participants. The assistant professor from University of Wisconsin–Madison explained that a person with high self-esteem would quickly think of words related to himself positively but would struggle to connect with the ‘negative’ ones.

However the same action of Facebook-profile viewing also affected the participants negatively by reducing their motivation. Participants were asked to do some simple subtraction and those who had looked at their Facebook profile before the test were observed to have answered fewer questions than the control group.

The researchers explained that as the participants already felt good about themselves after looking at their Facebook profiles, they had less motivation to further prove themselves and so did not bother to try hard to complete the task.

Source: WebMD
Keeping your teeth in check

Research has found that the health conditions of your oral cavity carry indications of your overall health.

Gum disease, especially bright red bleeding gums or gums with small abscesses or loose teeth, may signal serious health concerns, such as diabetes. Gum line infections may aggravate a diabetic condition and raise risk of heart disease and stroke.

If your tongue appears pale, it could be a sign of iron deficiency, which means you may have anaemia.

If you spot a receding gum line and loose teeth, get yourself checked for osteoporosis, which may be causing changes to your teeth-supporting bones.

Problems such as bleeding gums and dry mouth may also indicate poor nutrition due to eating disorders, including anorexia, bulimia and binge eating. If the insides of one’s front teeth are eroding, it could mean that this person is suffering from bulimia and have practised forced vomiting, causing stomach acid to wear out the enamel.

In addition, dental health is also linked to other health problems such as reflux disorder, dementia, heart disease, erectile dysfunction, Parkinson’s disease as well as celiac disease. Hence, monitoring oral hygiene can help ensure you stay in the pink of health.

Source: News-Medical.Net

Beetroot and greens can lower blood pressure

Researchers from Queen Mary, University of London as well as Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry found that beetroot and green vegetables are effective in lowering blood pressure in people with hypertension.

In a latest study, 15 volunteers drank 250 ml of beetroot juice and their blood pressure fell by 10 mmHg. The effect lasted 24 hours but was most pronounced between three and six hours after consumption.

Scientists have known that nitrate – abundant in beetroot – is responsible for lowering the blood pressure. Consumed, nitrate is converted in the body into nitrite and subsequently nitric oxide, which opens up blood vessels to enhance blood flow and therefore brings blood pressure down. The dietary nitrate available in the beetroot juice provided for the experiment was about 0.2 g, an amount from about two beetroots or a large bowl of lettuce.

Besides beetroot and lettuce, many other vegetables such as rocket, fennel and cabbage, are also rich in nitrate.

However, Professor Peter Weissberg, the medical director of the British Heart Foundation, which funded the study, cautioned that “we need larger studies in patients to determine if nitrate-rich vegetables are effective at lowering blood pressure over the long term”.

Source: WebMD
ship of the east

Parkway Pantai’s only hospital in Singapore’s heartland is creating waves.

A gradual metamorphosis has been taking place in the east. What was once a quiet little maternity hospital is now developing quite a name for itself in various aspects, and there are plans to up the ante in the near future too.

Starting with the name change to Parkway East Hospital (PEH) in 2010, this 91-bed hospital that was formerly known as East Shore Hospital slowly began making some ripples in the area. The growth soon went into fast-forward mode once its new Chief Executive Officer, Dr Vincent Chia, took the helm in January 2012.

Along with infrastructural modifications and a clear vision, he and his team have given PEH a whole lot of heart, which collectively has brought the hospital closer to its tagline of being the hospital that “feels like home”.

captain of the ship

Formerly Vice-President of Business Development at Parkway Shenton, Dr Chia was very familiar with the nuts and bolts of primary care work. Managing the hospital business was, however, new to him.

But he took the challenge in stride and before long knew exactly what he needed to do to navigate his ship forward. Fortuitously, he was very familiar with the sea he was sailing in.

“I was actually very happy when I was offered the job. I grew up in this area and feel totally at home here. Although I now live in Choa Chu Kang, my dad and siblings are all still here,” said Dr Chia.
The task at hand was not without difficulties though. Having identified a few obvious things that needed to be fixed, he had to find workable solutions while keeping the limitations in mind.

“Due to the size of the hospital, we were limited by what we could do within a short period. As a small frigate, we did things creatively. We avoided comparing ourselves to aircraft carriers like Mount Elizabeth or warships like Gleneagles and Mount Elizabeth Novena!”

**a much-needed makeover**

Over an eight-month period, PEH underwent several major physical changes. One of the areas was the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

“With the new features and upgraded technology and equipment, we are now on par with other bigger tertiary hospitals despite our size. We also brought in two endovascular surgeons and that significantly enhances the range of services we can provide at the ICU,” shared Dr Chia.

The biggest impact was felt at the first level. The original red flooring tiles were replaced, giving the hospital a more

“I think what they needed was the leadership giving them direction. So in my first speech to everyone, I told them to do three right things – wow the doctors, wow the patients and wow the staff. To start it off, I asked them to greet every single patient and relative they saw, and I made sure I practised it too.”
modern ambience. Themed advertisements brighten and brand the walls along the corridor, and the bistro at the end of the corridor now boasts a trendier look.

four strategic pillars
Aside from the physical changes, clinical services were streamlined and repackaged as part of PEH’s strategic projects to carry it forward using existing capabilities and maximising strengths.

The first pillar of the initiative was the Diabetes, Endocrine and Endovascular Centre.

“We knew that although diabetes was managed in an outpatient setup, patients will eventually require inpatient care due to complications. So these services are now integrated and offered in the outpatient setting instead of waiting for patients to be admitted,” explained Dr Chia.

More recently, the Integrated Sports Injury Services was launched. Keeping space constraints in mind, this second pillar makes use of existing services that have been linked up without the need for additional space.

“Since we are so near to East Coast Park, we wanted to cater to the weekend warriors and kids with injuries. Our physiotherapists are actually sports-trained, so they can assess injuries and refer patients to a doctor or surgeon if necessary,” let on Dr Chia.

Conceptualised and waiting to be crystallised is the third pillar, the Outpatient Eldercare Centre, which Dr Chia anticipates would be launched at the end of this year or early next year.

“We would like a geriatrician to take care of memory loss, incontinence, dementia and falls among other things at the outpatient setting. But because ageing is a multi-organ condition, we’re likely to receive referrals to our other specialists in the inpatient setting as well,” he highlighted.

As the wheels are turning, Dr Chia already has ideas for the fourth pillar – an institution that offers a fertility-maternity-children services continuum. “This can be achieved by bringing together existing clinicians and services, so that their programmes can further interlink to enhance the value of care to our patients.”

“I think we’ve identified the right niche because our revenue from women and children currently makes up 40 to 45 per cent of the pie. Obstetrics has always been our bread and butter, and for a small hospital, we actually do about 2,200 deliveries per year! We’re really proud of this legacy and would like to take it to the next stage,” he revealed.
people power
As much difference as physical changes and strategies can make, Dr Chia also knew that the most important aspect was the people. The doctors and other staff members were the key resources with much potential.

“We want to build a holistic ecosystem with the right mix of doctors. So we engaged them more, identified the disciplines that work and brought in more people according to the needs. We still have a lot to do but I think we’re heading in the right direction.”

With the other staff members, his approach was different. Dr Chia felt there was a need for mindset change and knew that would only come with a motivated staff.

“I think what they needed was the leadership giving them direction. So in my first speech to everyone, I told them to do three right things – wow the doctors, wow the patients and wow the staff. To start it off, I asked them to greet every single patient and relative they saw, and I made sure I practised it too,” he related.
His efforts paid off. In the latest round of Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore assessment, PEH came in tops among the private hospitals despite being audited during the renovation period.

“That was really a morale booster for us because if we can top it at the most trying time, then there’s no reason why we can’t do it again!”

He also wanted staff to have a say in where they were heading. The vision to serve the community was a collective decision. He ensured the accountability to the vision was maintained by appointing staff to be in key committees and giving them a free hand in decision-making.

Dr Chia did not stop there. “To understand what motivates them, I need to understand what their thoughts and concerns are. So whenever I get the chance, I’ll have my meals at the bistro. That’s when I can interact with them.”

His sincerity did not go to waste. When a mock practicum was conducted recently, the assessors were pleasantly surprised to find out that every staff member knew who their CEO was.

**way forward**

In a short period, PEH has already passed several significant moments. It scored the first successful public-private hospital collaboration when it leased a ward to Changi General Hospital. It also got into the Singapore Book of Records for the “Largest Gathering of People Born in the Same Hospital” with 583 persons during an Open House attended by more than 1,000 visitors. Invitees included those who were born at PEH like Member of Parliament for Joo Chiat and Guest of Honour, Mr Charles Chong.

“All these gave us confidence. We just needed to constantly reinvent ourselves,” emphasised Dr Chia.

To that end, the ‘Friends of Parkway East’ membership scheme was born in February 2013. Besides offering a teddy bear range as a welcome gift – to cater to the paediatric patients who make up a large proportion of its outpatient traffic – it also provides members with other services such as health screening packages.

While there are many other plans being formulated, for the immediate future, PEH will focus on space and equipment, more strategic pillars and developing dedicated staff. In the longer term, Dr Chia hopes to create an annex block that will house more wards, operating theatres and the ICU.

When asked to provide a defining identity for PEH, Dr Chia was quick to say “family”. He believes that PEH is slowly becoming the “soul of the community” and the warm spirit is an epitome of what PEH stands for. With his guidance, a strong team and the route it is on now, PEH may well soon be where patients can recover and recuperate in a place that feels like home.
Three hundred NTUC members received free health screenings at Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital (MNH) on 27 April 2013 as part of May Day celebrations by the Labour Movement.

On the collaboration with NTUC, Dr Kelvin Loh, Chief Executive Officer of MNH, said, “Quality healthcare can be accessible. Through this ongoing partnership, we are happy to play our part in bringing value-added healthcare services to the NTUC members.”

Since December last year, Parkway Pantai has introduced value-for-money healthcare services for over 700,000 NTUC members. These include affordable rates for general practitioner services, travel vaccination packages, health screening and medical wellness packages at Parkway Shenton clinics, customised medical specialists’ packages at Parkway East Hospital as well as accident and emergency services at Parkway Pantai’s hospitals in Singapore.

From 1 May this year, the benefits are extended to choice rates on medical services at MNH, including specialist consultations, health screenings and packages for other health services. Members are able to book and receive their first specialist consultation at MNH within 48 hours for only S$60.
In a landmark public-private sector collaboration, Parkway Shenton and National Healthcare Group opened the new Ang Mo Kio Family Medicine Clinic (AMK FMC) at Broadway Plaza on 11 May 2013.

Dr Koh Hau-Tek, Medical Director of Parkway Shenton, said, “We are happy to once again contribute to new initiatives in public healthcare. Through this collaboration with the National Healthcare Group, we are able to share our expertise in family medicine with the multi-disciplinary team at the FMC. We look forward to making the FMC a valued healthcare resource for the people of Ang Mo Kio and the Central region.”

A new model of care piloted by Singapore’s Ministry of Health, the AMK FMC offers a comprehensive range of healthcare services, including treatment of common ailments, such as cough and cold, aches and pain, chronic diseases covered by the Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS), as well as diabetic foot screening and retinal photography.

With its team of qualified family physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals as well as on-site pharmacy and basic laboratory services, patients get to enjoy enhanced care with one-stop convenience. They can see the same doctor for each visit and waiting time is now shorter, thanks to an appointment booking system.

Patients who qualify for CHAS can enjoy subsidised care at the FMC. Under the Chronic Disease Management Programme, patients can also use their Medisave to pay for treatment of chronic diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension.
Thirty teams comprising 150 people across Parkway Pantai’s Singapore business units competed in the Gala Bowl held on 24 March 2013 at Orchid Bowl in E!Hub, Downtown East. The inter-department competition saw plenty of splits, spares, strikes and laughter, as the staff gave their full concentration to pins instead of patients and cheered for one another. Mount Elizabeth Hospital bagged the ultimate Challenge trophy as the top-scoring winning team.
How many times have we joked with colleagues about *lim kopi* or *teh* (meaning to drink coffee or tea) with the big bosses? For 18 of Parkway Pantai staff in Singapore, this turned real on 2 April and 11 June 2013. They had tea in groups of nine in a cosy corner of Mandarin Gallery with Dr Tan See Leng, Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director. The staff certainly grabbed the opportunity to share their thoughts and feedback candidly about their experience working in Parkway Pantai, and we know they had a wonderful time! The second tea session, comprising only nurses, even saw a birthday celebration. These casual tea sessions, hosted by Dr Tan, are meant to be a platform for the senior management to engage staff and understand ground concerns and sentiments better. Staff of all levels and facilities can volunteer to participate or be nominated.

A total of 26 Parkway Pantai staff participated in the various categories of the Sundown Marathon on 1 June 2013. Their running fees were partially sponsored by the company as corporate efforts to encourage the staff to lead a healthy lifestyle and have quality work-life balance.
a great recovery experience – it’s possible

The ability to deliver quality clinical care and outstanding customer service makes Mount Elizabeth Hospital the first hospital to win the Singapore Service Excellence Medallion Commendation Award.

As one of Asia’s leading hospitals, Mount Elizabeth Hospital (MEH) understands how a strong service culture can benefit patients, especially in times of distress. The 345-bed tertiary care hospital aims to make hospital stays more pleasant for its patients by putting their needs first.

“Good customer service means that customers can get what they need quickly and accurately. In the case of a hospital, the most important thing is that patients can get an accurate diagnosis and best-in-class treatment without delay. At MEH, we are committed to fast, accurate diagnosis and the most appropriate treatment within 48 hours,” says its Chief Executive Officer, Dr Kelvin Loh.

MEH’s patient-centric approach paid off when it became the first hospital to clinch the 2012 Singapore Service Excellence Medallion Commendation Award for Customer Experience in April this year.

Organised by agencies of the national GEMS* Up movement, the Medallion recognises eminent achievements by organisations and individuals in inspiring and sustaining a culture of service excellence in Singapore. Commendation awards are presented to organisations that have excelled in key organisational service attributes.

“We are proud to be chosen for the Customer Experience award despite keen competition from the hospitality

*Go the Extra Mile for Service
“Whether they are in front-line or back-end roles, all our staff must enjoy engaging with people and have a service ethos.”

industry,” says Dr Loh. “We believe that even during hospitalisation, it’s possible to have a great recovery experience. We anticipate our patients’ material comfort needs, just as great hotels do. Winning the award encourages us to continue our mission to provide our patients with an exceptional experience.”

harnessing technology
Always looking out for better and more efficient ways of diagnosing and curing illnesses, MEH adopts best clinical practices and new medical technologies to provide high quality clinical care for its patients.

It recently acquired a 320-slice CT scanner, which can diagnose and outline heart vessel blockages in a heartbeat, without requiring hospitalisation. MEH is the first hospital in Southeast Asia to use the PET CT and DaVinci surgical system in 2004 and the Aquilion ONE CT scanner in 2008.

“This is part of our efforts to help our patients recover faster and yet spend less on medical bills. We have over 400 active accredited specialists but that alone is not enough. We need to back them up with advanced diagnostic tools,” explains Dr Loh.

a patient-centric culture
Enhancing the customer experience, however, requires more than just investments in technology. Hiring the right people is the first step, says Dr Loh.

“Whether they are in front-line or back-end roles, all our staff must enjoy engaging with people and have a service ethos. It’s important to choose the right people – those with the desire to provide care and good service.”

The hospital’s patient-centric culture has encouraged many of its staff to go out of their way to delight customers.

“Staff are empowered to go the extra mile for patients without having to seek approval from their managers. For example, we had an American patient who lost his mobile phone and could not contact his loved ones. This prompted one of our staff to buy a phone for him and the patient really appreciated the gesture,” says Dr Loh.

Besides regularly communicating their mission of creating a customer-centric organisation to the staff, the senior management of MEH also leads by example.

“Building a service-oriented culture starts with the leadership. We encourage all our leaders to interact with our patients to get new insights and hear what they feel about us. When the staff see their leaders doing that, delivering good customer service becomes the norm,” he adds.

The article is adapted with permission from SPRING Singapore. The original article first appeared in the June 2013 issue of SPRINGnews.
On 13 May 2013, Gleneagles Hospital (GEH) kicked off its inaugural Service Quality Campaign to promote and recognise good customer service.

Speaking to more than 80 staff about ‘Going the Extra Mile’, guest speaker Dr Low Guat Tin, who is retired Associate Professor in Policy and Leadership Studies at the National Institute of Education, said that fun and laughter at work is important as it creates better teamwork. Moreover, happy staff make happy patients.

A sure indicator of the campaign’s success was the Service Champion Tree in the Level 3 Foyer of GEH, which ‘grew and blossomed’ with cards as the staff recognised exemplary service by their fellow colleagues with heartwarming messages. A total of 539 leaves of compliments were received. Twenty-three staff with the most number of cards were awarded for their excellence in service delivery.

The campaign momentum continued to build up right until its closing on 17 June. One of the highlights was...
“Fun and laughter at work is important as it creates better teamwork. Moreover, happy staff make happy patients.”

Laughter Yoga by Shahrul Channa, which got the participants, including GEH’s Chief Executive Officer, Dr Kok Mun Foong, and Acting Chief Operating Officer, Phua Tien Beng, revved up for the various individual and group exercises.

The hospital also introduced “The Gleneagles Touch” brand campaign by presenting awards to the top three entries that captured the essence of “The Gleneagles Touch” in photographs. Dr Kok shared some of the compliments received by the hospital and how “The Gleneagles Touch” from our staff had enhanced the patient experience.

The staff were reminded that to deliver the best care to our patients, they need to understand each patient’s unique needs and have the patient’s interest at heart, so that GEH can live up to its promise of being ‘on your side’.

With this, the campaign concluded with the unveiling of a photo gallery at the newly refurbished main lobby near Admissions counter.
A natural inclination for it, the scope to treat patients with visible results and a posting in KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital were good enough reasons to seal the deal. Dr Lubna Ahmad Harharah was sold on the obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G) specialty since she was a houseman and has not looked back since.

“The birthing process and pregnancy are a special occasion for couples and it is truly rewarding to be part of that happy moment. Besides, in O&G, a lot of it is preventive. Conditions like sexually transmitted infections or cervical cancer, for instance, can be treated to prevent the progression of the disease,” elaborates the 38-year-old.

The road to becoming a doctor was, however, not as easy. Dr Lubna faced the objections from her more traditional Arabic family. Her father felt dentistry would be a better path for a woman as it offers more regular hours.

“What made it worse was the competitive environment in Singapore. This meant I was looking at an overseas education as the local university has an admission quota for female medicine students. My father was reluctant to send his daughter overseas. I also had to convince several of my family members like my uncles and grandfather that this is what I wanted to do before they finally relented, and I’m really glad they gave me their support.”

**the weird and the wonderful**

After 10 years of working in the public sector, Dr Lubna eventually set up practice at Parkway East Hospital in late 2010. As she grew up in the eastern part of Singapore, the familiar surroundings made it all the more easier to settle in.

Her patients, who mostly hear about her by word of mouth and from her website, tend to be a mix of local Muslims, Indonesian expatriates and Caucasian foreigners. Dr Lubna acknowledges the patients’ higher expectations for options now that the Internet has made a wealth of information readily available. Although it takes up more time, she makes it a point to ensure her patients fully understand their conditions and the treatment choices, so they can come to a well-informed decision about their bodies.

“I don’t know if that sets me apart. I think all of us in O&G are equally medically knowledgeable. From the patient’s
perspective, I think it’s more of the whole setup and how comfortable they feel with the doctor,” she rationalises.

As with most O&G specialists, Dr Lubna has had her share of couples coming in with their own birthing plans.

“Some couples have a preference for certain birthing positions or conditions, but not all are suitable for our setup. I do try to accede to their requests, yet some may not be so safe. For instance, I prefer not to do water births,” she lets on.

One request she was pleasantly surprised with was a mother wanting to cut the umbilical cord following the delivery of her baby.

“We managed to do it and it was definitely the first time I had received such a request. Good thing she didn’t ask to deliver her own baby!“

“The birthing process and pregnancy are a special occasion for couples and it is truly rewarding to be part of that happy moment. Besides, in O&G, a lot of it is preventive. Conditions like sexually transmitted infections or cervical cancer, for instance, can be treated to prevent the progression of the disease.”

the music in her life

Her ability to not take herself too seriously is definitely a plus point when it comes to forging bonds with her patients. In all likelihood, it is also the trait that appealed to her guitar teacher husband, whom she was introduced to by a friend at a gathering. In a classic example of her self-deprecating nature, Dr Lubna declares her marriage to him as the “highlight of this story”.

Her husband’s love for music has obviously rubbed off on her as well as on the little ones. Her eight-year-old son takes up the piano while her daughters, aged four and two, are likely to follow suit when the time comes, “whether it is the piano or something else”. The home furnishings and décor of the house are also “under his purview as he’s the more creative one in the family”.

“He’s really good with children and very relaxed by nature. There’s always a lot of laughter at home,” she reveals.
raising kids
Growing up in an extended family where grandparents, parents, several aunts and uncles and many cousins all lived under one roof, Dr Lubna enjoyed her childhood thoroughly and believes it helped give her the right values and foundation. In her own way, she tries now to do the same for her children.

Unlike the typical Singaporean family, bonding over outdoor activities is preferred over visits to the shopping malls. Dr Lubna’s love for nature frequently takes the family on nature walks and to the beach.

“I’m quite strict and I try to inculcate the right moral values. For me, it’s important to live your life and help as many people as you can. That’s how I want to raise my children too. Life is not about getting rich. It’s about doing the right thing and contributing to society.”

Although she is clearly the disciplinarian in the house, her focus is rarely about her children’s schoolwork and activities.

“I feel being morally upright is more important than what you achieve in school. So as far as studies go, I try not to stress them or push them too much, though I do help them with schoolwork whenever I can,” she says.

With her busy schedule, finding the perfect work-life balance is still, by her own admission, “work in progress”. But she knows it is achievable as she has seen her other more established colleagues enjoy it.

“I’m definitely thankful for the more time I have since moving to private practice. I know I’m not a superwoman so if I can balance the existing two aspects of my life well, that’s good enough for me.”
firefighting in his blood

What do firefighting and surgery have in common? Plenty, according to this fireman’s son, who has lived up to his father’s dream of becoming a doctor.

Listening to Dr Ivan Randal Ranatuga speak of his childhood is like hearing a historical account of post-independence Kuala Lumpur. Born in 1971 to a fireman father and homemaker mother, the 42-year-old consultant orthopaedic surgeon, who is currently attached to Pantai Hospital Ampang, speaks fondly of his early days when his father worked at the Hang Tuah Fire Station, one of the oldest fire stations in the country.

“We stayed in the Bomba quarters not far from the fire station, and our family was one of the only two Indian families there. But we were all like one big family back then. When there was a wedding, everyone helped to cook and clean. We ate and played at each other’s houses, even waking up at 4am during the fasting month to prepare sahur together with our Muslim neighbours,” he reminisces.
Earning a monthly salary of RM500, Dr Ivan's father worked as a football referee in the evenings. He still remembers how his father would meticulously wash his whistle and referee paraphernalia as soon as he returned from the fire station to prepare for his second job, which started at 7.30pm. On weekends, he would referee for the whole day to earn more money.

Being financially strapped did not bother the young Dr Ivan until his straight A’s in primary school got him a place in the prestigious Victoria Institution. His daily walks to and from his new school opened his eyes to a whole new world, where he saw big cars sending students to school and plying the roads.

Eager to succeed in life and enjoy a better standard of living, he strove to get top grades. With no money for tuition yet no opportunity to indulge in self-pity, he threw himself into his studies wholeheartedly, putting aside everything boys loved, even sports.

“The irony is that I never played football or other school sports although my father was a referee. I felt sports were a luxury, almost a waste of time, because I’d rather be studying,” he recalls. He did not even learn to ride a bicycle.

His devotion to his studies paid off, first with entry into Victoria Institution for his secondary school education, and later earning him a scholarship at University Malaya (UM) in 1994.

**staying on course**
At UM, he remained sharply focused on his studies, earning himself Gold Medals in clinical work in his first and second years of medical school. It was also here that he met his soul-mate, Audrey Lynn Raj, a fellow Catholic, whom he would marry four years later. The couple was blessed with a beautiful daughter, Angelyn, in 2000.

“My wife and my daughter are like my compasses; they help to give a check and balance to my life,” he chuckles merrily. “Otherwise, I’m very much a social nerd. I used to be sloppy and had trouble interacting with people because I was so engrossed in my own analytical world. Fortunately for them, I’m more well-balanced now!”

He cites an example of his interview session with the Kuok Foundation, from which he applied for a scholarship. His mind heavily bogged down by clinical work, exams, studies and a part-time job as a tuition teacher, he arrived flustered and stressed to a roomful of hopeful applicants.
When his turn came, he was irritated when the interviewer asked, “So tell us what makes you better than all those guys out there.” Frustrated that the interviewer had not taken note of his record of academic excellence, he retorted, “What kind of question is this? Please stop wasting my time,” before walking out.

Not only did he win that scholarship, he went on to get more scholarships from other organisations, such as the Rotary Club and Lions Club.

“It’s about knowing what you’re capable of and executing it accordingly,” he explains. His life philosophy also expounds why he later chose to specialise in orthopaedics.

**scalpel-sharp focus**

Perpetually pragmatic, orthopaedics appealed to him even as a medical student when he realised how structured the discipline was. There is no ambiguity about bone problems, he insists, thanks to X-rays and MRIs.

These radiographic images allow him to conduct diagnoses and treatments with precision and accuracy, reducing hospitalisation time and costs for patients, unlike other conditions with multi-factorial causes, which require more complicated care and treatment.

“It’s the nerd in me. I like things to be compartmentalised into their relevant fields. Orthopaedics is exactly like that,” explains Dr Ivan.

After graduation from UM, he worked in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Sabah for a few years before returning to pursue his master’s degree. His five years in Sabah were the best time of his working life, he admits.

“The people are friendly and will go out of their way to help you. Life in Sabah was just like my childhood days at Hang Tuah; everyone trusted each other,” he says.

Despite how far he has come, the family-loving doctor has simple pleasures such as eating, travelling and hanging out with family members. He still maintains strong connections with his former classmates from Victoria Institution today.

Those guys stuck by me when I was a struggling student who walked to school every day. It’s the kind of bond that no money can buy,” he quips.
moving forward

After getting his master’s degree, Dr Ivan served at Tengku Ampuan Rahimah Hospital in Klang for several years before joining Pantai Hospital Ampang in June 2012. His plan now is to establish a dedicated Spine Centre that is modelled after the one in the National University of Singapore, where he had a six-month training stint.

“I see a huge untapped market around this densely populated area. We will be able to fill the gap in orthopaedic surgery, making the hospital a hub for specialised spine services in this part of the capital city,” he states.

He envisions a spine centre fully-equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, an operation theatre, two physiotherapists, specialised spine anaesthetists, digital imaging and equipment for minimally invasive surgery.

His eyes light up when the subject of surgery is broached. “I love doing surgery! It makes me feel in total control,” he enthuses. In the operation theatre, he says that his adrenalin is on fire, all five senses are on high alert and he makes calculated movements.

The entire surgical team is well-briefed on what to do in the event of an emergency. The synchrony is crucial to ensure the success of a surgery, he elaborates, much like fire-fighting. With this specialisation, he has come full circle, achieving his parents’ expectations of serving mankind.
a tribute to our nightingales

We share the highlights of the treats that awaited nurses of Pantai Hospital Ayer Keroh and Gleneagles Penang.

striving for the best
The nurses were the stars of the evening as Pantai Hospital Ayer Keroh (PHAK) celebrated International Nurses Day on 20 May 2013 outdoors, carnival-styled, complete with a buffet dinner, treasure hunt and lucky draw.

The hospital organised the event for their 400-strong team of nurses as a show of appreciation towards their contributions.

PHAK Chief Executive Officer, Gan Kong Hoe, in his welcoming speech, gave credit to his team of nurses, saluting the work they do. He reminded everyone that “it is important for the hospital to recognise the invaluable role our nurses play in delivering quality healthcare to our community”, and encouraged his nurses to rise to the challenge and reach new levels of competency.

Endorsing the profession of nursing as a vocation with a bright future, he stressed that nursing offers a limitless world of career opportunities and quoted examples of former nurses having successfully advanced themselves in other fields and even risen to the ranks of chief executive officers.

The celebratory mood peaked with the presentation of the Best Employee of the Year Award to Senior Staff Nurse Martini Binti Misran of Obstetrics & Gynaecology Ward.
serving from the heart
As a special touch, Gleneagles Penang placed a Nurses’ Dedication Tree in the hospital lobby one week prior to the Nurses’ Day celebrations. Words of encouragement, gratitude and praise were written on small cards by patients and their families, nursing colleagues as well as consultants. These cards were hung on the Dedication Tree to motivate and delight the nurses.

The Nurses’ Day celebrations were held on 11 May 2013 at the new hospital auditorium. It was officiated by Gleneagles Penang Chief Executive Officer, Ronald Koh.

The nurses experienced a special 15-minute laughter therapy targeted to reduce stress in the daily life of a nurse.

There was a high-energy special performance of songs by some talented nurses themselves, accompanied by a guest guitarist, a patient’s father.

With a delectable dinner provided and a lucky draw to round up the evening programme, it was a night that the nurses enjoyed and felt deeply appreciated for their labours of love.
a magical date

PHAK Junior Club goes on a Fun Date during the school holidays.

Organised by Pantai Hospital Ayer Keroh (PHAK) with sponsorship by Golden Screen Cinemas in Aeon Bandaraya Melaka, more than 30 children were treated to the screening of *Oz: The Great and Powerful*, an after-party at A&W Restaurant and given special goodie bags on 12 April 2013.

The participants were between four to 12 years old, with the younger children in the company of their parents. Parent Nurul Nazira brought her son Adam Rayyan to join the Junior Club activities for the first time. She expressed her delight with the club’s effort in organising regular events for their members, saying, “Fun Date allows us to provide our child with a platform to interact with other children from their peer group in a carefree environment. Adam is already looking forward to the next event!”

Gan Kong Hoe, PHAK’s Chief Executive Officer, said, “We are pleased that PHAK Junior Club serves as a common ground for children to be a part of an enriching experience of diversity, fun and learning from one another. The club activities are all planned with the children’s interest in mind – from educational workshops that encourage learning to parties, such as Fun Date, that allow them to intermingle and enjoy themselves. We hope more members will be able to benefit from our Junior Club programmes to come.”

PHAK Junior Club is a free club membership exclusive to children who are delivered at PHAK. Membership is valid until they turn 13 years old. For more updates on the club activities, visit the PHAK website or its Facebook page.
Gleneagles Penang organised several activities for the public on 25 May 2013 in response to the first nationwide Retinal Diseases Awareness Week.

The week-long Retinal Diseases Awareness Campaign was launched to improve awareness on age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and diabetic retinopathy (DR).

AMD, a common eye condition among people aged 50 and older, is a leading cause of vision loss in older adults around the world. DR is a complication from diabetes, causing damage to the blood vessels in the retina. The longer a person has diabetes, the higher their chances of developing DR.

The hospital aimed to raise public awareness, especially in those considered at high risk, about the need for regular screening and early detection to prevent blindness from AMD and DR.

Activities of the day included free health screening with blood glucose tests, Amsler grid tests and fundus photography at the lobby of the new building of Gleneagles Penang. Educational videos on AMD and DR were played throughout the screening exercise. Participants had their results interpreted on the spot by the hospital’s ophthalmologists and their staff who had closed their clinics for the day to support the activities.

There was also a health talk by Consultant Ophthalmologist, Dr Jonathan Choon, themed Your Retina: The Key to Your Vision.
hypertension affects businesses

Forum by Gleneagles Kuala Lumpur and British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce highlights the impact of high blood pressure on the economy.

In conjunction with World Health Day 2013’s focus on hypertension, Gleneagles Kuala Lumpur (GKL), together with British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce, planned a special healthcare forum on this silent killer on 9 April 2013.

According to the Malaysian Society of Hypertension, only 40 per cent of Malaysians suffering from hypertension are properly diagnosed with the disease.

“Hypertension is a condition that is highly preventable, yet one that is often overlooked here in Malaysia. In an effort to prevent further neglect and push for prevention, Gleneagles Kuala Lumpur is answering WHO’s call to raise public awareness on this condition,” said GKL Chief Executive Officer and Gleneagles Hospitals Regional Chief Executive Officer, Amir Firdaus Abdullah.

Datuk Dr Lokman Hashim Sulaiman, Deputy Director-General of Health (Public Health), Ministry of Health, emphasised, “Hypertension, with its lack of symptoms and continuous presence, is an issue that has to be taken more seriously especially because it directly affects the public’s lifestyle choices. Malaysians need to be more active in learning about the risks regarding hypertension and its strong association with cardiovascular diseases – in particular because heart diseases are the number one killer in our society.”

A core component of the healthcare forum was a presentation Cost of Illness to Businesses by David Varley, AXA Regional Head, Health and Protection Development. He established fundamental links between businesses and unhealthy workforce by demonstrating the cost of illness that can, and does, affect businesses in Malaysia.

“Businesses today are under pressure due to rising healthcare costs, increasing age of the population, a demand to provide strong employee benefits and most importantly, attract and retain quality staff. A holistic healthcare policy, one that is beneficial to the overall well-being of employees, will prove to be financially beneficial in the long run as it improves employees’ productivity and retention, leading to overall business efficiency,” he said.

En Route
times of giving

Two Pantai hospitals get blood levels up.

Pantai Hospital Ampang (PHA) and Pantai Premier Pathology, together with National Blood Centre, organised their first public blood donation drive this year at PHA on 24 April 2013, which saw close to 150 participants. Another two blood donation drives are in the pipeline. Meanwhile, Pantai Hospital Ipoh looked internally for donors on 17 May 2013 and was rewarded with 51 staff volunteers.
Naturally, apprehension and nervousness had filled the days leading up to the delivery as she had not known what to expect. “But it turned out to be easier than I thought. When I first saw my baby, it was like ‘Who is this stranger?’ Now I think I’m getting the hang of it. Although it’s really tiring because you have to keep waking up to feed

“They made everything perfect and it was the best day of my life!” That was how professional blogger Wendy Cheng, better known as Xiaxue, described her experience when she delivered her son at Mount Elizabeth Hospital (MEH).

Giving the interview three days into motherhood, things were just beginning to sink in for first-time mom Wendy.

**everything perfect**

Professional blogger Xiaxue shares the precious moments of her first bundle of joy.
preparing for the new addition

Discovering a baby was on the way was a surprise for both Wendy and her engineer husband, Mike Sayre. Although it was unplanned, they were overjoyed.

The first three months were, unfortunately, not very pleasant for the 29-year-old. "It was quite torturous as I had very bad nausea and was vomiting so frequently," she shared.

But after that, things settled down and despite her small stature, she did not have any difficulty carrying the baby. However, the couple faced a minor hiccup closer to her due date, and she had a decision to make.

"My obstetrician told me that the baby was getting a bit too big and if I wanted to have him naturally, I would need to induce him within the next few days. I wasn’t mentally prepared to go through that. So I decided to go for an elective C-section," shared Wendy.

This time she was better prepared. The baby’s necessities were already packed a week before, and all the excited soon-to-be parents had to do was get their own luggage sorted out, and make their way to the hospital.

like magic

So, on the carefully selected date of 31 March 2013, little Dashiel Marquet Sayre was born. "I chose that date so that it would read ‘310313’. I think it has a nice ring to it," said Wendy.

Much to her surprise, the operation had gone easier than she had expected.

"It took only about 20 minutes to deliver the baby after the epidural was administered. Although I was awake during the procedure, I was rather loopy. But everything was made very easy because of the really professional staff. Everyone, from the doctor to the nurses to the anaesthetist, helped me to calm down during the surgery. So it really felt great."

And holding her son in her arms made everything worth the while.

"It’s hard not to love him. Initially, he was a little puffy, but now he has shrunk in size a little and he’s more or less settled into his features. We thought his eyes and hair were black but later when we looked at him again in the sunlight, we realised his eyes were bluish grey. So that was a surprise. He looks more like his daddy for now," remarked Wendy.

The first day of being a parent, however, was a little tough. Recovering from delivery and being a new mom, all at the same time, was not without its moments.

"I was a little overwhelmed. I was new to it and did not know what to do. The fact that I was bedridden made it all the more worse," she revealed.

Having her friends and family with her, who were equally excited about the new addition to the family as she was, made a big difference and helped her get through that first day.

"I really felt a lot of love from everybody. I have been having a regular stream of visitors and have truly enjoyed every moment," she said.

The professionalism of the nurses is another plus point Wendy is quick to credit. The very informative classes they conducted helped her gain confidence in managing a newborn.
“I can’t really remember all their names, but I really appreciate all their help and advice. I was particularly impressed by the lactation consultant, Lilian. There I was trying so hard to get my baby to latch on, and the moment she taught me how, it was like magic!”

**a luxurious aftermath**

Visibly glowing with happiness, Wendy was enjoying every moment of her post-delivery experience. In addition to the very obliging hospital staff and the support of family and friends, she was also basking in the love of a really involved, hands-on husband.

“The first night he was really helpful – fetching me water, attending to the baby when he cries, and helping with the breast-feeding. I couldn’t have asked for more. He’s in love with the baby. And the baby is in love with him too. And that makes me love both of them more,” she let on.

Staying at the Daffodil suite, MEH’s luxury suite, made Wendy’s recuperation even sweeter. The comfortable setup that caters for both parents was ideal. And the food was the icing on the cake.

“The food is really yummy. I tried some of the confinement food dishes too, like the fish dishes, because that would help with the wound healing, and the sea bass and codfish were really delicious. The food is almost restaurant standard!”

**life in the immediate future**

Preparing to head home within the next few hours of the interview, Wendy was not worried. Her mom will be on hand to help with baby care.

“She’s also going to try confinement food on me. I’m willing to give it a try but the hardest part will be not showering or washing the hair for such a long period. But my mom is quite easy going and she said she’ll let me bathe in Chinese herbs.”

Back home, Wendy intends to spend the month being a good mom and gradually resume her blogging. Her fans may be disappointed though, as she does not plan to chart Dashiel’s milestones on her blog.

“When it comes to parenthood, there are usually a lot of comments from know-it-all people, and that turns
Suite of Service

Facilities at Mount Elizabeth Hospital allow patients to deliver in comfort and luxury.

The Daffodil/Magnolia Suite Package includes:

- Personalised Antenatal Class or Birth Plan Consultation
- Personalised Hands-on Bath Demo and Coaching
- Personalised Breastfeeding Session
- Baby Blood Test Screening and Vaccination
- Day and Night Private Nurse Services
- Lodger for Father with Meals
- Customised Postnatal Menu
- Postnatal Home Visit

me off. So I’m going to stick to blogging about myself,” she explained.

And why not? In just three days, Wendy has newfound respect for mothers and believes all mothers are “hardworking and self-sacrificial”. So perhaps blog followers can expect a mother’s take from her perspective.

For now, she is happy to just spend time with her son and enjoy the joys of motherhood. And though not able to think about having another baby yet, she has not ruled it out.

“I will probably stop at two if I get a girl next. I will think about it in a few years’ time.”

Asked if she would have her number two at MEH, Wendy responded emphatically, “Definitely! If not for anything else, but for the fantastic food!”
MaterniT21 Plus
This non-invasive pre-natal genetic test detects trisomies 13, 18 and 21 in unborn babies as early as the 10th week of pregnancy. Trisomy is a condition in which an extra copy of a chromosome is present in the cell nuclei, causing developmental abnormalities.

who should go for this test
This is test is recommended for pregnant women with one or more of the following:
• aged 35 years or older at delivery
• personal or family history of chromosomal abnormalities
• foetal ultrasound abnormality suggestive of abnormal number of chromosomes
• positive serum screening test

test method
Circulating foetal DNA is extracted from the blood sample of a pregnant woman. The DNA is analysed to detect abnormalities in chromosomes 13, 18, 21, X and Y.

This test must be referred by an obstetrics and gynaecology specialist. Blood collection is available only at Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital and Gleneagles Hospital on designated days. The turnaround time is usually two to three weeks from the day of blood collection.

Although MaterniT21 has a high sensitivity and specificity, it is not considered a diagnostic test. Invasive prenatal diagnosis is recommended for patients with a positive test result.

For more information, email enquiriesmat21@parkway.sg or call +65 6248 5873 or +65 6248 5874.
**Pathway Fit**

This individualised genetic fitness profile helps you establish and maintain a healthier lifestyle by understanding how your genetics and lifestyle may affect your diet, nutrition and exercise, as well as your metabolism and response to exercise. You can also learn how your genes might affect how you perceive and desire specific foods and influence your eating behaviour. In addition, Pathway Fit screens for muscle potential and how your body responds to exercise, as well as your potential to maintain a healthy weight.

**who should go for this test**

Anyone who wants to:
- achieve healthy weight
- improve energy
- increase performance
- live healthier

**test method**

The patient’s saliva sample is used to analyse over 75 different genetic markers known to affect metabolism, exercise and energy use within the human body. The results are applied to the most current research on the relationship between genes and diet, nutrition and exercise.

Patients may request for a personalised diet plan.

The average turnaround time for the test is three weeks.

For more information, email enquiriespathwaytests@parkway.sg or call +65 6248 5873 or +65 6248 5874.

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Look out for other advanced genomic products by ParkwayHealth Laboratory, including CardioSure, which assesses your risk of heart disease, in the next issue of Mosaic.
Increasingly, kidney cancers and renal tumours are being detected at an early stage due to widespread use of abdominal imaging.

Rather than removing the entire kidney, as in the case of radical nephrectomy, Mount Elizabeth Hospital and Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital offer the option of partial nephrectomy, which is the removal of the diseased part of the kidney, using robotic-assisted laparoscopic surgery.

Partial nephrectomy is preferred over radical nephrectomy for early kidney cancers as patients can enjoy the benefits of laparoscopic surgery, which include shorter recovery time and lower risk of complications.

Likewise, partial nephrectomy for small renal tumours can help to preserve renal function. It has also been shown to improve overall cardiovascular survival in patients compared to radical nephrectomy.

**kidney-sparing surgery**

Speed is of the essence in partial nephrectomy. The entire surgery, which involves the excision of the tumour and repair to the surrounding nephrons and muscles, has to be completed within 30 minutes to prevent kidney damage from lack of blood and oxygen.

However, partial nephrectomy using conventional, straight laparoscopic instruments has proven to be challenging for urologists due to their limited range of motion. This is where robotic-assisted laparoscopic partial nephrectomy comes in.

The Da Vinci robotic system, which offers seven degrees of freedom with 90 degrees of articulation, enables surgeons to perform the operation with greater speed and precision, thereby achieving their goal of saving the kidney rather than removing it.

Robotic-assisted laparoscopic partial nephrectomy offers numerous advantages over conventional open surgery, including:

- excellent clinical outcomes and cancer control
- short hospital stay
- low blood loss
- precise tumour removal and kidney reconstruction
- excellent chance of preserving the kidney in certain kidney conditions
- low rate of operative complications

By preserving the healthy kidney tissue, the patient may be spared from future kidney diseases and dialysis.
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STEAMED CHICKEN WITH CURRY SPICE

By CHEF TRAVIS MASIERO

This recipe is adapted with kind permission from Parkway Cancer Centre’s Awakening the Appetite.

SERVES 4

Ingredients
4 chicken breasts, skin removed
100g buna-shimeji mushrooms
2cm knob of ginger, peeled and cut into thin strips
1 red chilli, seeded and sliced finely lengthwise
1 spring onion, sliced finely

For the spice mix
1 teaspoon turmeric powder
1 teaspoon coriander seed, toasted
2 teaspoons cumin seed, toasted
1 teaspoon fenugreek seed
2 teaspoons ginger powder
1 teaspoon fennel seed
1 teaspoon white pepper powder
2 green cardamom pods
3 cloves

1 teaspoon black pepper
2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

DIRECTIONS

To make the spice mix, combine all the ingredients for the spice mix in a spice grinder and blitz to a fine powder.

Season the chicken breasts liberally with the spices until well coated.

Set a large bamboo steamer over boiling water. Lay the mushrooms on the bottom of the basket. Then, lay the chicken over the mushrooms. Scatter the ginger and chilli evenly over the chicken. Close the steamer and steam for 15 to 20 minutes or until the chicken juices run clear.

Arrange the mushrooms on a plate. Top with the chicken and remaining chilli and ginger. Sprinkle with spring onions and serve.
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