

HEALTH MATTERS

An *IN GOOD COMPANY* publication

Comprehensive Breast Cancer Care

page 4

A New Way to Treat Blood Clots

page 10





Letter to the Community

Staying healthy isn't just about treatment for illness. In this issue of *Health Matters*, we share our commitment to all aspects of health care and our dedication to caring for the whole person over their life span.

Our ability to care for complex conditions is enhanced by utilization of the latest innovative medical technologies. On page 10, please read about newer techniques to treat dangerous blood clots, also known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and venous thromboembolism (VTE). Our cardiologists offer a minimally invasive procedure to remove blood clots quickly and safely. On page 8, we highlight our utilization of robotic-assisted surgery for a range of prostate conditions. This technology ensures good outcomes while reducing patients' pain and recovery time.

Our commitment to leading-edge care is also demonstrated in our partnerships with several academic medical centers. On page 4, we explain our dedication to comprehensive breast cancer care along with our partners from City of Hope. Cancer patients receive the highest level of care right here in the South Bay.

On page 6, we highlight a service that aims to keep each senior citizen we serve as healthy and functional as possible. The annual Medicare Wellness Assessment for Medicare recipients ages 65 and older can make a significant difference in avoiding serious illness and disability and in promoting overall well-being. And if you are looking for a physician to help keep you healthy, please read about open enrollment, on page 7, and the importance of finding the right doctor for you.

We pride ourselves on our relationships with the residents of the South Bay area—many of which date back decades. As a community hospital, we care for our friends and neighbors. And we strive to offer high-quality, academic-level medical care to each individual patient. That combination of compassion and quality defines us. Whatever your needs, from wellness to worrisome, we stand ready to help.

Take care and stay well,

Garry Olney, Chief Executive
Providence Little Company of Mary San Pedro and Torrance

Take Care of Yourself



Part of our mission is to help keep our community healthy and up to date on medical developments. Check out these upcoming opportunities offered by Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Centers San Pedro and Torrance.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY LECTURES

All community lectures are free and held live virtually over Zoom.

MEN'S HEALTH

November 18
5:30-6:30 p.m.
Speaker: Asghar Askari, MD
Join us for this community lecture focusing on men's health, including treatment options and medication for benign prostatic hyperplasia and other prostate issues. We will help break down myths about men's health and answer your questions.
RSVP at [Providence.org/SouthBayLectures](https://providence.org/SouthBayLectures) or 888-HEALING (432-5464).

REACH YOUR WEIGHT LOSS GOALS FOR 2022

January 20, 2022
5:30-6:30 p.m.
Speaker: Houman Solomon, MD
Reclaim your health and discover the real you! Start your weight loss journey today. Join us to find out if weight loss surgery

or weight loss management is right for you. Learn about surgery options, hear from a registered dietitian and have your questions answered.
RSVP at [Providence.org/SouthBayWeightLoss](https://providence.org/SouthBayWeightLoss) or 310-303-5613

KEEP YOUR HEART HEALTHY

February 17, 2022
5:30-6:30 p.m.
Speakers: Rishi Kaushal, MD, and Matthew Powers, MD
Even if you feel healthy, you may have undetected risk factors. Join us and learn how to take better care of your heart. We'll discuss the signs and symptoms of heart disease, prevention and the latest treatment advancements. Also learn about Providence Little Company of Mary and Keck Medicine of USC's new partnership in bringing world-class cardiac care to the South Bay.
RSVP at [Providence.org/SouthBayLectures](https://providence.org/SouthBayLectures) or 888-HEALING (432-5464).

CLASSES

LOW-COST HEART SCREENINGS

Providence Little Company of Mary is proud to offer valuable, low-cost heart screenings to our community. Screenings are available at our hospitals during the week, as well as on the weekends at our Advanced Care Center in Torrance and the Providence Medical Institute in Manhattan Beach. Getting screened today could help avoid problems in the future. Register online at [Providence.org/heartscreening](https://providence.org/heartscreening) or call 888-HEALING (432-5464).

PRENATAL AND BABY CARE CLASSES

Virtual:

CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION
(Also offered in Japanese)
Education to expecting parents and their partners about the process of labor and birth and the choices available to them.

BREASTFEEDING BASICS
Topics include the important basics on how to get started with breastfeeding immediately after delivery; common problems and solutions; and when to get professional support.

BABY CARE BASICS
Education for parents-to-be on the skills necessary for taking care of the newborn. The class covers:

- Infant development
- Safe sleep practices
- Nutrition
- Bathing
- Feeding
- Child safety
- Immunizations

LABOR EPIDURAL & NEONATAL CARE

Join an anesthesiologist to learn about epidurals and pain relief options during labor. Also hear from

a neonatologist who will discuss the medical care of your newborn.

MATERNITY TOUR

(Also offered in Japanese)
Maternity Tour equips parents-to-be with information on what to expect during the birthing process at Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center Torrance.

In Person:

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT GROUP
This hands-on/in-person Breastfeeding Support Group for new breastfeeding patients runs from the time baby is born through 6 weeks of age.
Tuesdays and Saturdays | 10 a.m.

VIRTUAL BAGELS, BIRTH AND BABIES
Receive peace of mind and walk away even more prepared to birth at our medical center. Also receive helpful hints for pregnancy, birth and newborns.
Tuesdays | 10 a.m.

BIRTH PLAN BUILDER AND OB CARE COORDINATOR CONCIERGE GUIDANCE
Connect directly with our OB care coordinator and receive personalized guidance as you prepare for your upcoming birth, assistance in building your birth plan and local resources and referrals. Contact Rena Koerner at Rena.koerner@providence.org or 310-303-6708.

To register for an upcoming class or to get more information, call 888-HEALING (432-5464) or visit [ProvidenceClasses.org](https://providenceclasses.org). You can also find a virtual maternity tour on our Facebook page @ProvidenceTorranceWomensHealth.



For Rosie Torres, a routine mammogram led to the discovery of breast cancer and treatment through a partnership with City of Hope and Providence Little Company of Mary.

Michael Neveux Photography

VIP Cancer Care

A star surgeon who treats patients like celebrities? Yep!

Rosie Torres of San Pedro had not been at her workplace for months. First her office was shuttered due to COVID-19, and then she was off for nearly two months with back surgery. As she prepared to return to her office, she decided to check off some chores. Her primary care doctor had retired, so she found a new one to get her cholesterol prescription refilled.

"During a routine telehealth visit the new doctor mentioned I should get a mammogram because I had not had one in three years," explains Torres, 53, a mother of two adult children and a new grandmother.

Torres went for the mammogram at Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center Torrance. The results were shocking. She had breast cancer. "Cancer does not run in my family, so this was the last thing I expected," she says.

Overwhelmed by the news, Torres learned her breast cancer was stage 0—basically caught as early as it could be—but that the cells were labeled "grade 3," which means an increased risk that the tumor cells were invasive.

Torres' first stop was oncological breast surgeon Lorena Gonzalez, MD, assistant clinical professor in the Department of Surgery at City of Hope, a cancer research and treatment center. Providence Little Company of Mary and City of Hope have been in partnership since 2018 to bring National Cancer Institute–accredited care to the South Bay. "All I knew was that City of Hope specializes in cancer treatment, so that is what I wanted."

But she did not stop there. She decided to check out other doctors that friends recommended. She even ended up visiting a "celebrity breast surgeon."

Torres kept coming back to Dr. Gonzalez, though. "She was just so open and presented options. She explained everything in terms I could understand and never told me what to do. She let me make the choices." As Torres did her homework and explored options, Dr. Gonzalez encouraged her.

"Treating breast cancer is about scientific-based recommendations, but there is also an art to treatment," says Dr. Gonzalez, who is also a breast cancer survivor. "It is not just about following an algorithm. So I feel it is important to get that second opinion. And I want patients to be involved in the decision-making."

Torres ultimately chose a breast-conserving lumpectomy surgery with Dr. Gonzalez that was done in March.

Because City of Hope South Bay offers comprehensive breast cancer care, including clinical trials, diagnosis, surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and genetic counseling under one roof, Torres says her care was seamless and convenient. In fact, she had the surgery and was back home the same day. She had daily radiation therapy for four weeks and notes that Dr. Gonzalez was integral in making sure this also went well. Dr. Gonzalez urged Torres to meet the radiation oncologist prior to surgery.



"I routinely do that for our patients, because I really want them to understand the pros and cons and see what they are signing up for," explains Dr. Gonzalez.

Torres also benefited from Providence Little Company of Mary and City of Hope South Bay's access to cutting-edge technology. Her surgery included the use of the SAVI Scout, a nonradioactive surgical technology that guides a surgeon to the precise site of the tumor and can increase the likelihood of complete tumor removal. Without the SAVI Scout technology, the patient would first have a wire inserted into the tumor before the actual surgery. This is often uncomfortable and inconvenient.

"This advanced technology is a huge improvement over inserting a wire," says Dr. Gonzalez. "Just the fact that the patient does not require two procedures in one day means there is a lot less stress."

Just days after surgery, Torres returned to her walking exercise routine. Soon after, she was able to meet up with her trainer and gym friends for workouts at her local park and to play with her grandson.

Torres' course of treatment also requires endocrine therapy, a once-a-day pill that she will take for five years to prevent possible recurrence. There have been small bumps with her endocrine therapy, but Torres says Dr. Gonzalez—true to her nature—has been attentive and recommended adjusting her medication.

"In the end what I learned is that I never needed a 'celebrity surgeon.' I needed someone who would treat me like a celebrity, and that is exactly what Dr. Gonzalez has done." ●

For more information on cancer services, call 844-925-0942.

A Fresh Approach to the Senior Years

Medicare recipients qualify for an annual exam designed to enhance health and quality of life.

Today’s generation of older adults are more active and vibrant than any previous generation. The primary care physicians affiliated with Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Centers San Pedro and Torrance are determined to support that approach to aging by encouraging Medicare recipients ages 65 and older to schedule an annual Medicare Wellness Evaluation.

The assessment, which takes about 30 to 45 minutes and takes place wherever you receive your Providence primary care, addresses topics and issues that may not be included in a standard health care office visit, says Elizabeth Sander, MD, president of Providence Medical Associates.

“We encourage all of our seniors ages 65 and older to have an annual senior wellness evaluation. A Medicare benefit with no cost to the patient, it is not what people think of as the usual annual physical examination. It is an assessment of their current functional status and risk factors for developing some conditions associated with aging.”

- The visit includes discussion of :
- Risk of falls and fractures
 - Urinary incontinence
 - Vision
 - Hearing
 - Vaccinations
 - Cancer and osteoporosis screenings
 - Depression
 - Dementia
 - Advance care planning
 - Medication management

“If any conditions or issues are noted, we have specific measures that we recommend,” Dr. Sander says. “For example, if we find someone is at risk for falls or has had falls, we will look for treatable causes and then work to reduce the risk of falling through physical therapy or other interventions. The Medicare Wellness Assessment is aimed at early identification and treatment of potential



conditions to prevent progression.

“Mental health screening has emerged as a vital service that can identify and help seniors who are lonely or struggling emotionally, and we have behavioral health specialists at four of our sites,” she says. “Our primary care providers are comfortable with prescribing medication if that is appropriate. Often, I will prescribe a list of activities that are fun and enjoyable for seniors. Many seniors need more social interaction.”

Completing advance care directives and other documents to prepare for aging is a service seniors appreciate, she says. Providence Medical Associates also offers a class on advance care planning, directed by nurse practitioners, that focuses on the details of the document and how to make decisions regarding end-of-life care.

The annual Medicare Wellness Assessment tends to cover topics that some people may have avoided talking about—but should discuss, Dr. Sander says.

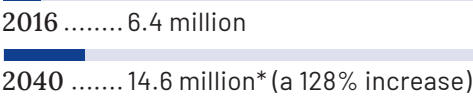
“Most of my patients feel the assessment is beneficial to them. These may be topics patients do not like to discuss. But when it is part of this assessment, it is not as intimidating.” ●

THE GRAYING OF AMERICA

Number of Americans 65 and older



Number of Americans 85 and older



* projected

Source: The Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For more information on scheduling a Medicare Wellness Assessment, contact Monique Rogers-Guy at 310-792-4038.



MEDICARE
OPEN
ENROLLMENT
OCT. 15—DEC. 7

Q&A

Choose Wisely During Open Enrollment

A few weeks remain in the annual enrollment period for making changes to your current health plan and selecting providers you will access starting Jan. 1, 2022. Make sure you have done your homework and are satisfied with your choices. We asked Martha Gonzales, president of CHM Insurance Services, to explain why open enrollment is a good time to review your health insurance options.

Why is it important to review your coverage during open enrollment each year?

It’s important that you do an analysis or review of what your current utilization has been. Have there been any significant changes in your patterns of care? Are you taking new medications? Have your needs changed? Has there been a decline in vision or hearing? Are you OK with hearing and vision coverage? If you are extremely happy with your plan and everything has stayed fine, it’s OK to say ‘I’m going to stay put.’ You don’t have to make changes. But after open enrollment closes, it’s difficult to make changes.

How do I ensure I can keep my Providence physicians? Always confirm that your

doctors are still in the group. Never assume your doctors will stay in the network. At CHM Insurance Services, we do a free needs assessment for anyone who calls our office. We take a look at doctors and affiliations to make sure they have a relationship with Providence.

What happens if I choose a plan that doesn’t list all my preferred doctors?

If you are choosing a Medicare HMO, you are required to stay in the HMO network. Medicare Advantage PPO patients have out-of-network access, but it involves a higher cost. With Medicare supplemental insurance, you can choose any doctor.

Why are plans that include access to Providence physicians a good choice?

Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center Torrance has been named a World’s Best Hospital three years in a row, and Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Centers San Pedro and Torrance both have earned “A” grades from the Leapfrog Group for patient safety for many years. The Providence doctors are board-certified. Their commitment to using quality measurements is

exceptional. Providence uses electronic health records, which helps minimize errors. When you pick a Providence doctor, you’ll be able to see specialists close to home.

Why is it important to consider which hospitals are under my plan?

Your medical group is going to determine what access you have to hospitals, convalescent homes, skilled nursing homes and diagnostic facilities. When you choose the Providence network, you’ll have access to a quality hospital like Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Centers.

Are there any new significant changes in Medicare options?

Premium costs are inching up. Medicare is now recognizing coverage for acupuncture. Also, many of the plans are making provisions for covering telehealth visits. ●

For more information on selecting Providence physicians during open enrollment, go to ChooseProvidence.org or call 844-992-1257.

Game-changing Prostate Cancer Surgery

We're home to the South Bay's longest-running robotic-assisted surgery program.



Shane O'Donnell | Photography

When urologist Garrett S. Matsunaga, MD, co-founded the robotic-assisted surgery program at Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Centers San Pedro and Torrance in 2006, he viewed the technology as a game changer, particularly for prostate cancer surgery.

"The robotic technology allows urologists to remove the prostate laparoscopically for prostate cancer and do it better than when we had to perform an open procedure," he says.

Laparoscopy, also known as keyhole surgery, offers numerous advantages. "Through tiny incisions of 5 to 8 millimeters, we're able to introduce instruments into the abdominal cavity to do various procedures," says Dr. Matsunaga. "The benefit of that is, smaller incisions equate to less pain, shorter hospitalization, faster recovery and less blood loss."

A challenge with radical prostatectomy has been the walnut-size prostate's location deep in the pelvis. "You are operating in a very narrow space, and with traditional laparoscopic instruments that could not allow rotation at the wrist, it was technically so difficult that very few surgeons could do a good laparoscopic prostatectomy," says Dr. Matsunaga.

At Providence Little Company of Mary, highly skilled surgeons now perform thousands of robotic-assisted radical prostatectomies each year. "One of our strengths is we have the longest-running robotics program here in the South Bay," says Dr. Matsunaga. "Providence had the vision to invest in this technology, which now is the standard of care. They were one of the leaders in acquiring this technology and supporting their surgeons in getting trained and using this technology effectively."

Additional strengths include an experienced operating room staff and postoperative care team that Dr. Matsunaga describes as "second to none." "It is the whole team that creates a successful robotics program," he says.

AN EXTENSION OF SURGEONS' HANDS

Dr. Matsunaga thinks of the robotic da Vinci Surgical System, which has wristed instruments that can rotate 270 degrees, as an extension of his hands. "It gives us the ability to operate with greater precision compared to traditional laparoscopic instruments," he says. "The system has two cameras—one for the left eye, one for

the right eye—and that affords the surgeon depth perception, so you have a three-dimensional view. We have better magnification with the robotic camera as well."

When removing the prostate, surgeons must be very careful, because it sits next to the urinary sphincter and on top of nerves that affect sexual function. "The challenge of radical prostatectomy is you have to remove the entire prostate and not leave any cancer behind, but you have to do it in a manner that protects the integrity of the sphincter so that the man does not lose urinary control, and then you have to carefully separate the prostate away from these nerves to preserve sexual function," says Dr. Matsunaga.

He refers to these objectives as the trifecta of a successful radical prostatectomy. "Robotics allowed us to successfully do this technically difficult surgery in a very narrow space down in the pelvis and achieve this trifecta in most cases," he says.

Before surgery, Dr. Matsunaga discusses risks with patients. "The risk of leaking urine long-term—six months to a year out—is probably less than 1%," he says. "The risk of erectile dysfunction depends on several factors, including the individual's sexual function prior to surgery as well as the extent of the cancer, which sometimes affects the nerves that make erections possible."

"Every surgery has risks, so we also talk about the standard risks of surgery," says Dr. Matsunaga. "Any time we are doing laparoscopy, there is some blood loss, although our blood loss is low. Patients requiring a transfusion for blood loss after a laparoscopy is essentially 0%. Risk of infection is also very low, probably less than 0.1%."

After surgery, patients typically spend one night in the hospital and are discharged with a catheter, which is removed after one week. "By week two we are often reminding our patients, 'I know you feel well, but no heavy lifting and no strenuous activity for at least four weeks,' because you want to let everything heal," says Dr. Matsunaga. "Patients heal so much faster now with the robotic approach." ●

For more information on robotic-assisted prostate surgery and other types of robotic-assisted surgery, call 844-925-0942.

Transformative Technology

Advanced treatment for blood clots offers new hope.

Each year, close to 1 million Americans are diagnosed with venous thromboembolism (VTE), a blood clot that forms in a vein, often resulting in disabling pain and poor quality of life. The clot can travel to the lungs, causing a pulmonary embolism which can be life-threatening. Approximately 100,000 people die from VTE annually. Unfortunately, the disease is often undertreated.

That is why Rishi Kaushal, MD, an interventional cardiologist at Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Centers San Pedro and Torrance, is leading a change movement for VTE patients within the greater South Bay community. Dr. Kaushal wants to improve and save lives by offering new treatment options to VTE patients: the Inari ClotTrievers for deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and the Inari FlowTrievers for pulmonary embolism (PE). Currently, Providence Little Company of Mary is the first and only health system in the area utilizing this transformative technology.

Traditional treatments for VTE relied on blood thinners (anticoagulants), which can stop the clot's growth and prevent future clots but may be less effective at dissolving the clot immediately. Larger, life-threatening clots in the lungs are typically treated with clot-busting drugs called thrombolytics, which often require admission to an intensive care unit and may lead to excessive bleeding.

In contrast, with the Inari systems, a catheter is inserted through a small vein, and a small net-like device is guided through the catheter to capture and retrieve the clot.

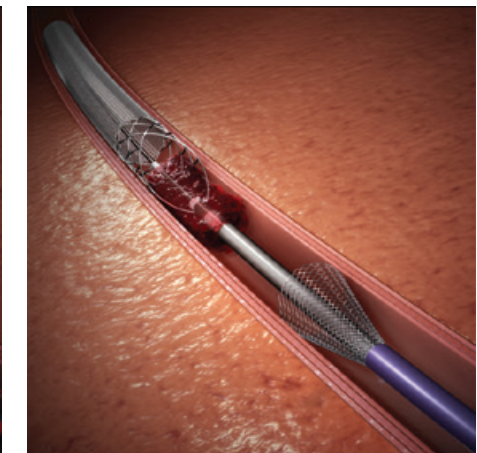
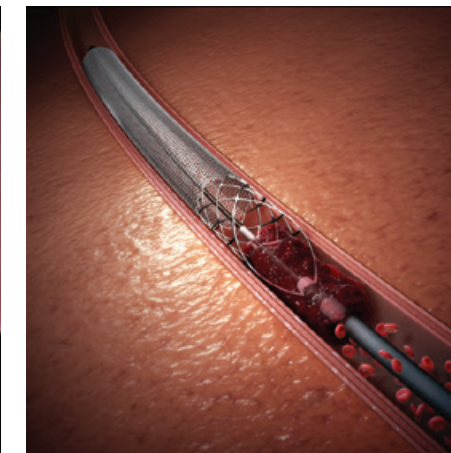
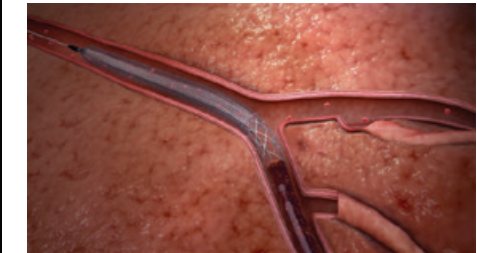
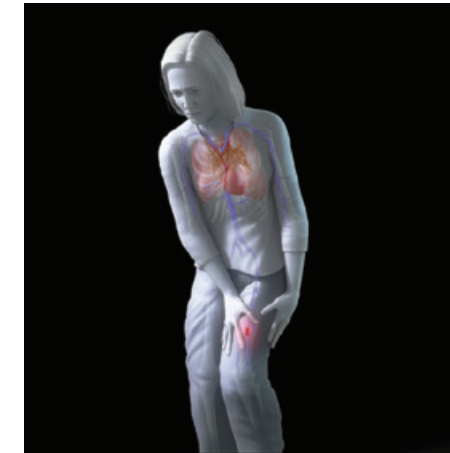
"This low-risk, high-success treatment is minimally invasive and well-tolerated by most patients, often with an immediate and noticeable clinical improvement," says Dr. Kaushal. "This procedure can be lifesaving in the case of pulmonary embolism and can greatly improve a patient's quality of life when it comes to a DVT. The technology is a game changer for us."



Dr. Rishi Kaushal

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a type of VTE that occurs when clots form in the legs and, occasionally,



CAPTURING CLOTS

Using the Inari systems:

A catheter is inserted through an artery

A small net-like device is guided through the catheter to the clot

The clot is retrieved and removed

in the pelvis or arms. A large clot can be fatal if it breaks off and travels to the lungs. "With the ClotTrievers, the clot can be removed during an outpatient procedure and the patient can go home the same day," says Dr. Kaushal.

According to Dr. Kaushal, the best candidates for the ClotTrievers procedure are patients with DVT in the legs above the knee joint, particularly those who experience leg pain, swelling or discomfort, or patients who cannot tolerate blood thinners.

PULMONARY EMBOLISM

A pulmonary embolism (PE) is a life-threatening type of VTE in which a blood clot travels to the lungs. Treatment for large PE often involves an intensive care stay with administration of clot-busting drugs through a catheter placed in the pulmonary arteries. "Although this therapy can be effective, these heavy-duty blood thinners are often used in critically ill patients with

multiple medical problems, with a resulting elevated risk of serious bleeding that we would like to avoid," says Dr. Kaushal.

The Inari FlowTrievers, designed specifically for PE, avoids the need for powerful clot-busting drugs, so the risk of major bleeding is minimized. "The clot is removed with a device that applies negative pressure to suction out the clot," says Dr. Kaushal. "Because of the efficacy of the procedure and the reduced need for an ICU stay, we are able to get patients home sooner and safer than prior treatments have allowed."

Dr. Kaushal says that the best patient candidates for the FlowTrievers are those whose pulmonary embolism is causing a significant impact on their oxygen level and heart strain.

He adds, "But even with patients who are stable, we are now finding that many individuals can have long-term consequences from not removing the clot immediately. So even stable

patients with a large amount of clot may benefit from the procedure."

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Dr. Kaushal is excited to offer his South Bay community the safest and most effective therapies for life-threatening conditions such as VTE, utilizing leading-edge technology such as the FlowTrievers and ClotTrievers.

"We want our community to know this transformative technology is available at Little Company of Mary," says Dr. Kaushal. "We have a team of physicians and nurses dedicated to the treatment of venous thromboembolism and are ready to treat DVT and PE using the latest technology." ●

For more information on treatment of blood clots, call 844-925-0942.

Providence Little Company of Mary
San Pedro and Torrance
Fall 2021

Providence Health System
Southern California
3345 Michelson Drive, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92612

Providence.org/Torrance

Providence.org/SanPedro

*The medical information contained in this newsletter should
not be substituted for advice from your personal physician.*

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Providence Little Company of Mary named
A World's Best Hospital
Three Years in a Row



Caring for our South Bay community and beyond.

Little Company of Mary offers the highest level of care and compassion integrated with a full spectrum of specialty programs. We are proud to have cared for our community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and are continually going above and beyond to save lives. We are where to go for the best care.



Call 888-HEALING (432-5464) or visit providence.org

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