

Better Together.

We are proud to be
your partner in health.



Intermountain
Health

St. Mary's Regional Hospital

- Heart health at every age
- Unleashing your pickleball superpowers safely
- The skinny on fad diets

How artificial
intelligence
is saving
women's lives
p. 5

A new beginning built on a legacy of caring

A note from Bryan Johnson



Dear friends and neighbors,

Since our founding in 1896 by the Sisters of Charity Leavenworth, St. Mary's has been driven by its mission to heal and serve those in our community who are vulnerable and underserved. So much has changed in healthcare over the last 128 years; however, this commitment will always remain at our core. It's how we began, it's who we are today, and who we always will be.

You may have noticed a few changes recently at St. Mary's. In 2022, we merged with Intermountain Health. As a result, we have a new name – Intermountain Health St. Mary's Regional Hospital, a new brand, and a new sign on the building. You may be wondering how all these changes will impact patient care and collaboration in the community. It will, in an exciting way. You can expect the same great care and, in the future, additional programs and resources to serve our community. We are committed to investing in the community, technology and innovation, and new opportunities to expand access to care.

We want to build on our promise to you that we will continue to improve the health of our community. Today, the healthcare system in the United States is centered around "sick care." We are beginning a new chapter that focuses on prevention and keeping people well.

We know people are healthier when they receive timely, quality care, close to home. St. Mary's is fortunate to offer the resources and expertise you would expect to find in a big city, yet we are also small enough, and blessed, to be a part of a community where people really care about one another and work together.

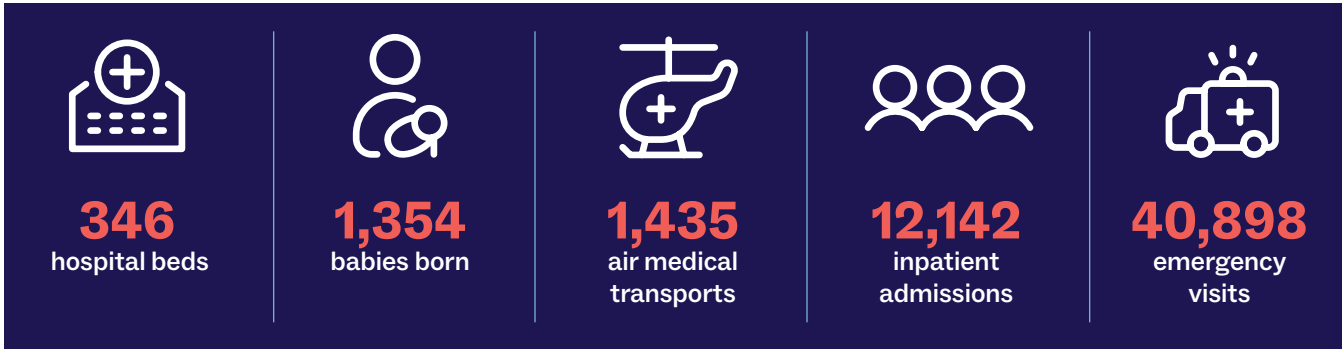
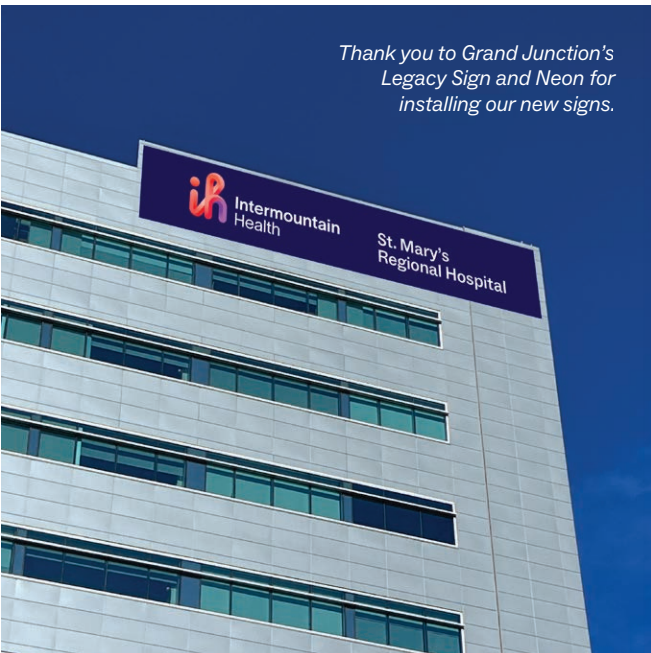
We recently launched a new campaign that reflects our belief that we are better together. It's called *The Power of We*. In the following pages you'll find stories of collaboration, healing, and hope that demonstrate *The Power of We* in action.

From all of us at St. Mary's, we know that our mission – helping people live the healthiest lives possible – is only possible when we navigate life together. Thank you for placing your trust in us.

Bryan

Bryan Johnson

President
Intermountain Health St. Mary's Regional Hospital
Western Colorado Market



Weighing in on fad diets

How to pick the diet that's right for you

If you type 'diet book' into Amazon's search bar, your query will yield more than 50,000 results. Whether you want to lose weight, boost your energy, or just feel better, the options to optimize your nutrition are endless. If you find it all confusing and contradictory, you are not alone. We asked Renee Cha, a registered dietitian at St. Mary's Regional Hospital, to weigh in on which diets really work.

Ditch the word diet

Cha's first piece of advice may surprise you. She recommends replacing the word diet in your vocabulary with lifestyle. Cha explains, "The word diet has such a negative connotation and unless you are extremely motivated and disciplined, it's not going to be sustainable. I don't think I know one person that has been able to stay on a 'diet', but I know many that live a healthy lifestyle."

Lasting change comes from lifestyle modifications aimed at living and feeling healthier. Although a slimmer waistline may be what motivates you, Cha says the focus shouldn't be to lose 1-2 pounds per week, but to take the steps that can result in the desired weight loss.

Put yourself on a budget

View your nutrition choices like you do money. For example, healthy adults should only have 2,300 milligrams of salt (sodium) a day. That's just a single teaspoon of table salt. Think of those 2,300 milligrams as a \$2,300 budget to spend for the day. The goal, whether it be salt, sugar or any other ingredient, is to know how much you have in your budget so you save where you can and spend where you want.

"If you know you're planning on enjoying pasta at night, eat a light breakfast and load up on veggies during the day," explains Cha. "I think a lot of diets have good parts to them, the Mediterranean diet is one of the best, but it should be a guideline, rather than a rule book."

These questions can help you make better short-term decisions and lead to lifelong changes:

- Are you making a mindful choice?
- What are you eating with it?
- Are you really hungry or does it just look good?
- How will you feel afterward? Is it worth it?
- How are you going to balance your decision?

The best defense is a good offense

Hangry, the state of being tired and hungry, is now an official word in the English-Oxford dictionary. It's also one of the official leading causes of poor nutritional choices. Set aside a few hours every week to prep a few large meals. Aim to eat 20 different plant-based foods throughout the week. It may sound like a lot of work, but it will eliminate stress during the week, save you an hour of cooking every night, and give your body what it needs to perform better.

Renee Cha, MS, RDN, CNSC is a registered dietitian at St. Mary's Regional Hospital.



A spoonful of sugar: How many is too many?

You probably know sugar is in your favorite drink, but did you know it's also hiding in yogurt, granola bars, almond milk, and more? Labels can be tricky to read. Sugar is always listed in grams. Here's what you need to know:

Four grams = 1 teaspoon

Limit your added sugar per day to 30 grams, that's 7.5 teaspoons.



Need more support?

When exercise and eating better aren't enough, the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Center at St. Mary's offers a wide range of solutions to help you achieve a healthier life.



Scan the QR code with your smart phone camera to learn more and meet our providers.

Achieve your best heart health


Steps you can take at every age to reduce your risk of heart disease


Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, causing about one in four deaths. The good news is that heart disease is largely preventable. There are things you can do at every age to improve your heart health. Here's a decade-by-decade look at heart-healthy habits you can adopt to increase your chances of living a longer, healthier life.

20s

Take care of your teeth and gums

Gum disease can double your risk of developing heart disease. Brush and floss every day.





30s


Find ways to relax

In your 30s, life gets complicated. Left unchecked, stress can create inflammation and cause high blood pressure.

40s

Step on the scale

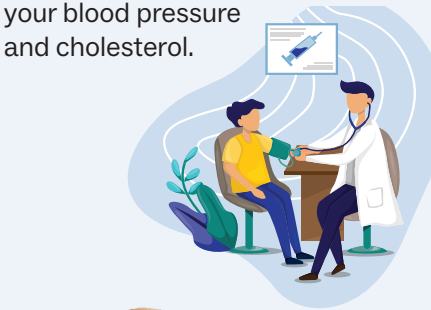
This is the decade when metabolism takes a nosedive. Being overweight can put you at greater risk for heart health problems.




50s

Know the symptoms of a heart attack

Men and women experience heart disease differently. Learn what to watch for and monitor your blood pressure and cholesterol.





60s


Take an aspirin a day


The risk of heart attack skyrockets during your 60s. Ask your doctor if a daily aspirin could reduce your risk.

70s

Exercise 150 minutes a week

Walking, balance exercises, and resistance training with weights can make your heart stronger.






"When it comes to your heart health, the time to act is now regardless of your age. It's important to know your heart disease risk factors and have regular checkups."

Sarah Herrera, MHA EP, CCRP
Manager
Clinical Cardiovascular Services

Need a primary care provider to help you on your heart health journey?

Patterson Primary Care Clinic is accepting new patients. Scan the QR code to schedule an appointment online or call 970-298-6601.





Armendariz looks forward to watching her children grow up.

Our team will fight for you

Offering the most advanced breast care on the Western Slope

A young Grand Junction mother faces breast cancer twice.

Jennifer Armendariz was just 33 years old when she was diagnosed with aggressive breast cancer. The Grand Junction school teacher and mother of two underwent 17 rounds of chemotherapy, a lumpectomy and 25 rounds of radiation only to see the cancer come back less than a year later.

"The second diagnosis was harder in a lot of ways," Jennifer explains, "The second time you know what your world is going to look like and to have to be back in that world so soon was earth shattering. I knew I needed to do whatever it took to be around for my kids."

After four additional rounds of chemotherapy, Jennifer decided she needed to go in a different direction for her care. She turned to Cancer Centers of Colorado at St. Mary's and the office of medical oncologist Alicia Swink, MD.

"When I first met Jennifer, I knew that she was coming to me with a difficult story. She was taking no chances," says Dr. Swink. "We knew that there was a new drug on the market that would be effective for her, but we had to fight for it."

The new chemotherapy drug appeared promising at first, the tumor was shrinking, but then it unfortunately stabilized. It became clear surgery would be Jennifer's safest treatment.

Dr. Joyce Sekharan, a general surgeon at St. Mary's, worked with Jennifer to develop a surgical plan. The cancer was still large, and it was difficult to tell the scar tissue from the disease on the MRI, so together they

decided on a bilateral mastectomy. The surgery was a resounding success.

"When I finally got the news that I had clean margins and that I was officially cancer free, it was so relieving," says Jennifer. "I just want to extend my thanks to Dr. Swink, Dr. Sekharan, and all of my doctors and nurses for taking such good care of me and for really valuing my life."

New artificial intelligence technology is improving breast cancer detection.

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women, affecting one out of every eight women. It is also one of the most treatable and curable cancers if it is detected early.

Artificial intelligence is making detection easier. St. Mary's Breast Care Center recently introduced a new Hologic 3Dimensions mammography unit that features the technology.

The software helps doctors spot breast cancer at its earliest and smallest stage by identifying characteristics commonly associated with cancer. The technology marks the images for additional evaluation by the radiologist and uses algorithms to provide a score that indicate the likelihood of cancer.

To schedule a screening online, scan the QR code or call 970-298-6900.



We believe in doing the right thing

Delivering on a promise to our community, our patients, and ourselves

New behavioral health collaborative touches the lives of Mesa County's most vulnerable

St. Mary's gifted \$300,000 to create a new intensive case management program to help people in Mesa County who need behavioral health treatment. The MAC (Multi-agency Collaboration) aims to keep people out of emergency departments and jails and instead allow them to receive support services and treatment in a setting that best meets their needs.



More than 300 people a month are seen in Mesa County hospital emergency departments who need behavioral health treatment. On any given day, 49% of Mesa County jail inmates are experiencing severe behavioral health challenges. Many of these inmates should be receiving mental health treatment.

"If a client is scared, starving, and houseless, they are not going to take the time to work on their mental health and they are not going to take the time to work on their physical health," says Aaron Jimenez, Foundations for Life, MAC Program.

MAC helps clients with both their case management needs and immediate needs. Over the long term, MAC aims to reduce recidivism rates by helping clients reframe how they see themselves, how they see the community, and how their see their role in the community.

Frederick is a testament to the program's potential. The team at St. Mary's put him in touch with MAC case managers after he was admitted to the emergency department with mental health issues.

"They've been giving me support since. I've been in and out of prison all my life. When I get out, I never have anybody," says Frederick. "This is the longest I've ever been out. I owe it to MAC. They've kept me from going back to my old ways."

The health of our community is our priority

St. Mary's contributed **\$82.3 million** to the Grand Valley and beyond in 2022. The impact can be seen in the thousands of people whose lives are better today as a result.



\$6.8 M
Spent providing charity care and financial assistance for patients who were unable to pay for their care.



\$18.8 M
Contributed by St. Mary's to our community partners to support identified community health needs.



1,480
Individuals served through Rose Hill Hospitality House, which provides overnight accommodations for out-of town patients.



\$37.1 M
Unreimbursed costs for care provided to Medicaid patients by St. Mary's.



894
Students completed clinical rotations at St. Mary's Hospital for hands-on training in nursing, radiology, laboratory, dietary nutrition, mental health, spiritual care, healthcare leadership, and emergency medical services.



10
Crucial hospital departments that continued offering subsidized health services, including the infusion center for cancer care, dialysis for kidney and diabetes care, and neonatal intensive care for premature and ill newborns.

St. Mary's program delivers free medical care to Mesa County's homeless

Every month, the Grand Valley Catholic Outreach Day Center provides a refuge to 1,700 people. It's an opportunity for people who are experiencing homelessness to take a warm shower, do their laundry, receive their mail, or make a phone call. With St. Mary's help, they also receive medical care.

St. Mary's Family Residency Program members go to the center each week to provide patients basic medical care, preventative health care and counseling services free of charge. The residents treat everything from infections to frostbite and work with those experiencing addiction issues.

"Every time I have come in here the doctors are compassionate and they really want to know how you are as a person," says Byron, a Day Center client. "You can count on them. There's never been a time that I came here that I was turned away."

For 12 years the St. Mary's partnership has made a difference in peoples' lives. Knowing they have a provider they can trust who will be there for them in a place they feel safe, means they're more likely to seek care when issues first arise.

St. Mary's has an unwavering commitment to improve lives and reach underserved communities. Our work with the poor and vulnerable has been a part of our mission from the beginning and will continue to be long into the future.



Byron knows he's being truly cared for by the St. Mary's Family Residency Program members.

We believe sharing food is sharing love

200,000
meals a year

St. Mary's is proud to be a long-time sponsor of Meals on Wheels Mesa County. The program serves 600 – 700 meals a day to people who are homebound and hungry.

For 83% of the clients served by Meals on Wheels, the home-delivered meal is their main meal of the day. Hot lunches are also served at eight dining sites where more active clients can gather for social interaction. Monthly grocery deliveries are also available.



3,171
pounds of recovered food

At St. Mary's, we do not believe in the idea of throwaway people or throwaway food. It's why we partner with Homeward Bound to reduce food waste and fight hunger.

Last year, Homeward Bound recovered more than 3,000 pounds of soups, sandwiches, salads, pizzas and other grab-and-go menu items from St. Mary's Columbine Café to feed shelter residents and community members in need.

Unparalleled expertise

In 2006, St. Mary's became the second hospital in Colorado to obtain robotic capability. As early adopters of this technology, we have developed expertise that is second to none.

26
robot trained
surgeons

18
years of robotic
surgical excellence

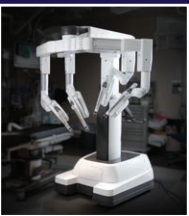
8,000+
robotic surgeries
performed

Scan the QR code to learn more.



Meet our surgical robots!

St. Mary's Regional Hospital has four da Vinci Xi robotic systems. They affectionately are named:



WALL-E



Eva



Baymax



Rosie



Ginny Ross

We are leading experts in
robotic surgery

Fourth robot gives patients more minimally
invasive surgical options

Robotic surgery delivers a faster recovery, especially when time is of the essence.

When Ginny Ross was diagnosed with uterine cancer, she chose to have a total hysterectomy with Dr. Bradley Corr, an obstetrics and gynecology specialist at St. Mary's.

"For a lot of uterine cancers, minimally invasive surgery with the robot is the standard of care," explains Dr. Corr. "The robot is completely under our control. We are standing at the bedside at the console doing the entire surgery. We're just using the robotic hands instead of ours. It allows us a lot of finesse and a lot of capabilities that we couldn't do otherwise."

Ginny needed a fast recovery. The cancer had spread, and she needed to begin a course of chemotherapy. A traditional open surgery could have delayed her cancer treatment by up to eight weeks while she healed. Instead, 30 days after undergoing her minimally invasive hysterectomy, Ginny started chemotherapy.

"My time in the hospital was considered outpatient because I didn't have to spend the night," says Ginny. "I went in and had the surgery, then I was in recovery. I actually walked to my car."

For gynecologic surgeries, the robotic surgical approach is associated with less pain, less blood loss, fewer complications, less scarring, shorter hospital stays, and better outcomes for complex conditions.

"We know that a recovery with a robotic surgery is far quicker than with an open surgery," says Dr. Corr. "With an open surgery, a patient is generally in the hospital for two to four days and they have a longer healing time, anywhere from about six to eight weeks, whereas with a minimally invasive robotic procedure, the patient goes home on the same day and often is healed within four weeks."

Ginny healed from her surgery in minimal time with minimal scarring. "I wouldn't have done it any other way. It's noninvasive, you recover quickly, and of course, Dr. Corr knows what he's doing," Ginny says, "I couldn't have asked for a better doctor and hospital."

Gently welcoming new life

Bloomin' Babies is the only birth center between Denver and Salt Lake City



Thena Ruth is the newest member of the Thrasher family. She made her arrival into this world at Bloomin' Babies Birth Center, weighing 6.2 pounds and measuring 19.5 inches long.

"In all honesty, it was my dream delivery," says her mother, Tydra Thrasher. "Everything about it was perfect. They helped me find my strength. The experience was relaxing and calm."

Tydra's two older boys were both delivered naturally in a hospital setting. She was too young to know about midwives when her first child was born, and her second child arrived seven weeks early, requiring care in the neonatal intensive care unit.

"When Tydra came to us for her third baby, she knew exactly what she wanted. She wanted a water birth in a birth center birth, and she wanted her husband to catch the baby," explains Heidi Phillips, Bloomin' Babies Certified Nurse Midwife. "It all happened according to her birth plan. It was a beautiful experience. She completely trusted her

body and experienced everything she wanted."

Tydra is one of a growing number of women turning to St. Mary's free-standing birth center for their prenatal care, delivery, and postpartum care. Bloomin' Babies delivered approximately 200 babies in 2023. The center offers expecting parents the best of both worlds with an experience that rivals the comfort of a home birth, but the security of knowing that St. Mary's hospital is only minutes away.

"What I love about being a midwife is the continuity of care," says Phillips. "I'm able to walk alongside a woman throughout her pregnancy, be there for the birth, and then provide care for her and the baby. It's rewarding to watch them flourish."

Using far less technology and intervention than is needed in a hospital, Certified Nurse Midwives are experts in the care of uncomplicated pregnancy and birth. They work closely with families to provide the safest, gentlest, and most natural birth.

"When you have your children, it's a moment you will never forget," says Tydra. "At Bloomin' Babies, they really care about you and try to give you what you want to make your experience the best moment of your life."

Heidi Phillips is a Certified Nurse Midwife and International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant with St. Mary's Bloomin' Babies Birth Center.



Thena Ruth



Creating Healthy Beginnings

Every pregnant woman and her children should have access to quality, affordable care. It's why St. Mary's is proud to partner with and support Hilltop's B4 Babies and Beyond program.

All services are free and available in English and Spanish. To learn more, visit hilltopsb4babies.org.

A few tweaks to help keep you from getting in a real pickle

Sports safety tips to keep you in the game



Justin McCoy, DO

Pickleball, the highly addictive sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping pong, is friendlier on the body than most other sports. However, like any other sport, there is a risk of injury that comes along with playing the game.

It's estimated that pickleball-related injuries cost Americans nearly \$400 million in healthcare last year. To avoid injuries on the pickleball court, follow these tips from Sports Medicine Specialist Dr. Justin McCoy:

- 1. Stretch and warm up your body** | Prior to pickleball play, spend 10 minutes getting your body ready. Spend five minutes warming up (try a brisk walk) and then five minutes stretching.
- 2. Be aware of your playing area** | Not all pickleball courts are created equal. Be aware of obstacles and avoid back pedaling during play.
- 3. Never play on a wet court** | Wet pickleball courts are slick and can lead to dangerous falls. To test a court surface, press your toe down firmly and make a twisting motion. If you see water rise or move, the court is unsafe for play.
- 4. Wear proper court shoes** | Invest in footwear that is designed for court sports and will support your feet. Sneakers and running shoes do not provide the right kind of support for the side-to-side motions in pickleball.

- 5. Know your limits** | Don't try to make plays that are beyond your abilities. Age, experience, physical condition, and athletic ability will impact the level of your game.
- 6. Stay hydrated** | A balance of food, water, and electrolytes and appropriate snacks are needed to prevent dehydration. Dehydration symptoms include dizziness, weakness, fatigue, an irregular heartbeat, and fainting.
- 7. Learn from a pro** | Yes, there are professional pickleball coaches. A pickleball coach can help you maintain good form, fundamentals, and habits, which will help you avoid injuries on the pickleball court.

Dr. McCoy says the most important piece of advice he can give picklers is to pay attention to what your body is telling you. Take time away from the court if you need to rest or recover. By not listening to your body, you could get an injury that will keep sidelined you for an even longer period.



Justin McCoy, DO, is a sports medicine physician with St. Mary's Regional Hospital & Rocky Mountain Orthopedics

Urgent care for your bones and joints

RAPID Ortho Service

We understand injuries happen when you least expect them. Rocky Mountain Orthopedics provides same-day access to orthopedic care through its new RAPID (Rapid Access to Precision Injury Diagnosis) Ortho Service. The state-of-the-art clinic is designed to provide adults and children with fast and efficient care for sprains, strains, fractures, or other orthopedic injuries.

Call for same-day scheduling or walk-in for immediate care.
Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
627 25 1/2 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81505
970-242-3535

Unlocking the power of dreams

St. Mary's provides jobs that are essential to a healthy economy



CareFlight of the Rockies pilot Tony Somogyi had sky-high aspirations for his career from an early age.

When Tony Somogyi was a kid, he dreamed of becoming a pilot for CareFlight of the Rockies. "I grew up in Mesa County. I am a '94 graduate of Palisade High School. I spent a lot of time at the hospital as a kid when my grandfather was going through prostate cancer. The nurses knew I wanted to be a pilot, so they shuttled me down to meet with the pilots quite a bit." While Tony was visiting when he was a young boy, he drew a picture of a helicopter and gave it to the pilots. Little did he know that his art would manifest into his future career.

After spending 20 years in the Army, Tony's childhood dream came true. He joined the 77 men and women who work for CareFlight of the Rockies as a helicopter pilot. The air ambulance fleet includes two fixed wing aircraft and two helicopters.

The teams cover a 250-mile area that includes Colorado, eastern Utah, and parts of New Mexico. Each flight has a crew of three: the pilot, a flight nurse, and a paramedic. They are often dispatched to remote locations that traditional rescue crews are unable to access quickly. They provide critical, lifesaving care when time is crucial. "I wanted my flying to be meaningful and so being able to help other people was a huge influence on my decision." Tony has been flying with CareFlight for five years. When he joined the team, he started looking through the history books. In the 1980s album, he found a folded piece of paper. When he opened it, he saw the picture he had drawn as a young boy. The team had saved it this whole time.

St. Mary's is a dynamic part of the Western Slope's economy.

As a healthcare provider, St. Mary's is clearly irreplaceable. As an employer, we also play a vibrant role in the health of the economy. St. Mary's is the second largest employer in Mesa County. It is our privilege to provide our caregivers with careers that make a difference and pay above-average wages. We are also proud to create jobs throughout our community by purchasing goods and services from other businesses.



3%
2,739 total people directly employed by St. Mary's equates to 3% of Mesa County jobs.



1,762
Our multiplier effect. This represents the number of jobs supported by St. Mary's spending and projects.



5%
4,701 total people employed directly and indirectly equates to 5% of Mesa County jobs.



\$443m
St. Mary's contributes 6% of Mesa County's GDP (directly and indirectly).



\$105m
Tax revenue created by St. Mary's economic impact.

Say farewell to the winter blues

An emotional spring-cleaning checklist for your mental health

Spring will arrive in just a few weeks. That means it's almost time to deep clean your home. In addition to shampooing your rugs and washing your windows, you may want to consider decluttering your mental health. Samantha Koehn, a licensed clinical social worker at St. Mary's, shares a spring-cleaning checklist to give your wellbeing a total refresh.

- 1. Acknowledge the 'hard' you've been through** | As humans we tend to minimize or ignore the difficulty we experience. Reflect on what you've experienced over the winter and allow yourself acceptance and grace.
- 2. Prioritize self-compassion** | Acknowledge that you are human, you need rest, and you make mistakes. Give yourself the same level of compassion and understanding that you extend to other people.
- 3. Celebrate the little wins** | Create a culture of gratitude for yourself. Let's face it, some days really stink. It's the little moments and successes that pull us through.
- 4. Focus on your locus of control** | There are so many things in our lives that cause distress that are out of our control. What we can control are our thoughts, emotions, and our responses.
- 5. Learn your window of tolerance** | Your window of tolerance is your ability to juggle demands and stress. Be realistic about what you can say yes to - and when you need to say no - to ensure you aren't taking on too much.
- 6. Invest in your support network** | Connect with and prioritize people in your life who rejuvenate you. Take a few minutes to scroll through your phone and call that person you've been thinking about, send a text message of appreciation, or schedule a date with your friends or spouse.



Take a moment to disconnect.

"We were not created to receive information 24/7, but because of technology, we are constantly getting bombarded with information. However, it is within your control to turn off your television or set your phone to do not disturb. Make it difficult to access work emails outside of work hours and remove apps or news feeds that you may mind-numbingly scroll through."

Samantha Koehn, LCSW
St. Mary's
Regional Hospital



Wellness begins with we.



St. Mary's Regional Hospital

The Power of We