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LORI HARTMAN GERVASI,
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Regional Gamma
Knife Center Opens
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Brain surgery without the knife

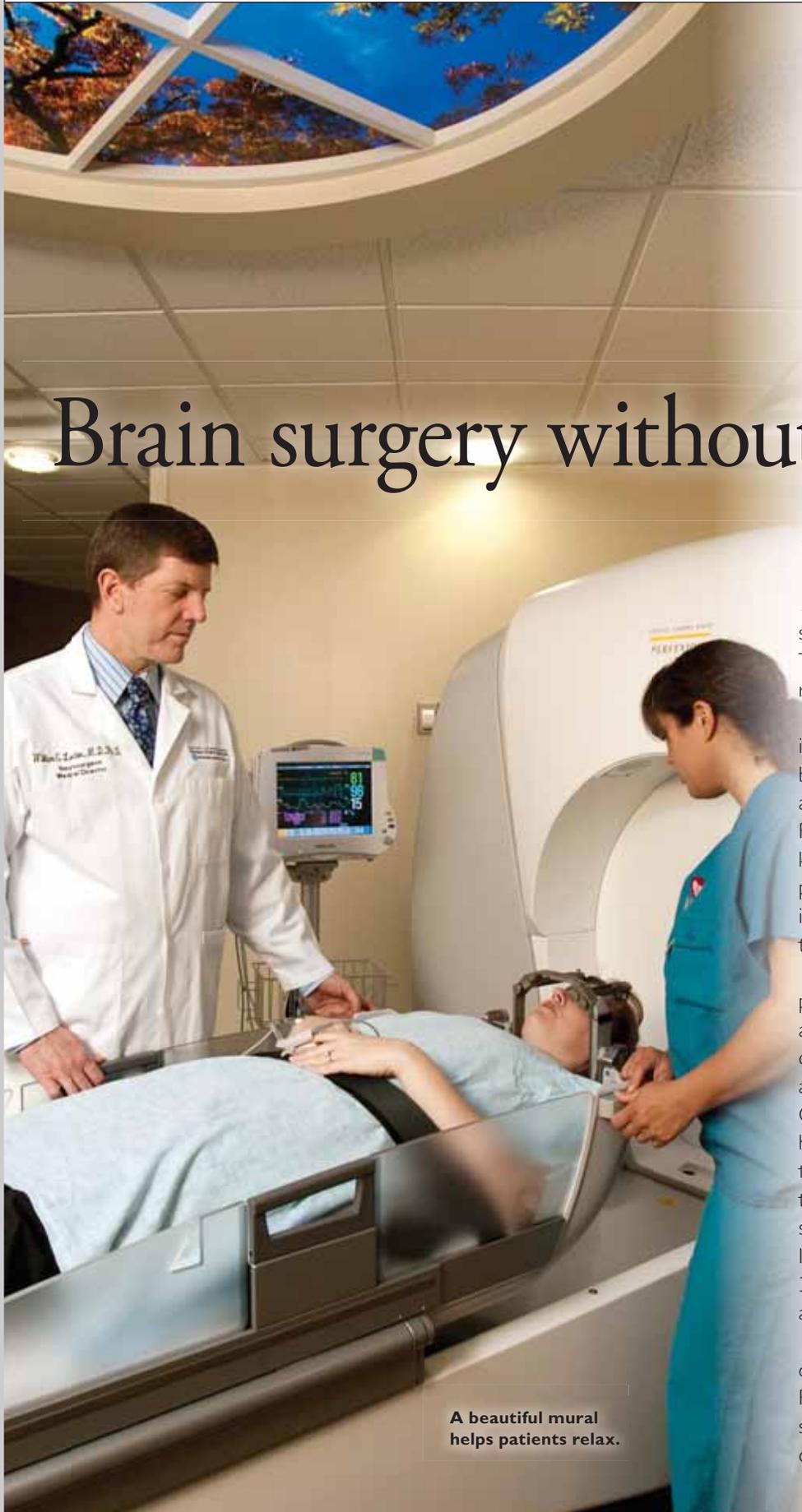
Imagine a successful treatment procedure for brain tumors and brain disease that does not involve surgery, stitches or even a hospital stay. The patient goes home the same day and returns to work a few days later.

At San Antonio Community Hospital in Upland, this non-invasive treatment for brain disorders is performed routinely at the hospital's new Southern California Regional Gamma Knife Center. Gamma knife radiosurgery is an outpatient procedure that is usually completed in a single session lasting 20 minutes to a few hours.

The Gamma Knife Center is helping people from all over the Inland Empire and beyond as word spreads about the center's state-of-the-art technology and medical expertise. San Antonio Community Hospital is the first hospital in the Inland Empire to use the Leksell Gamma Knife® Perfexion™, the most advanced radiosurgical system available, and the first in the Inland Valley to use the latest generation 3Tesla MRI technology to help provide amazing accuracy.

"The patients are coming in from quite a distance. There are only three Perfexion centers in Southern California," says William G. Loudon, M.D., Ph.D., the center's medical director and a prominent

A beautiful mural helps patients relax.



neurosurgeon. Dr. Loudon specializes in treating brain tumors in adults and children and has extensive experience in gamma knife techniques.

Technology isn't the only key to success at the Southern California Regional Gamma Knife Center. The staff treats the whole patient, combining top-of-the-line equipment and surgical expertise with a caring nurse navigator and a special program liaison.

"From the beginning of the process, through surgery and follow-up, we strive to make this the most pleasant experience possible for the patient," explains program liaison Heather Bierman.

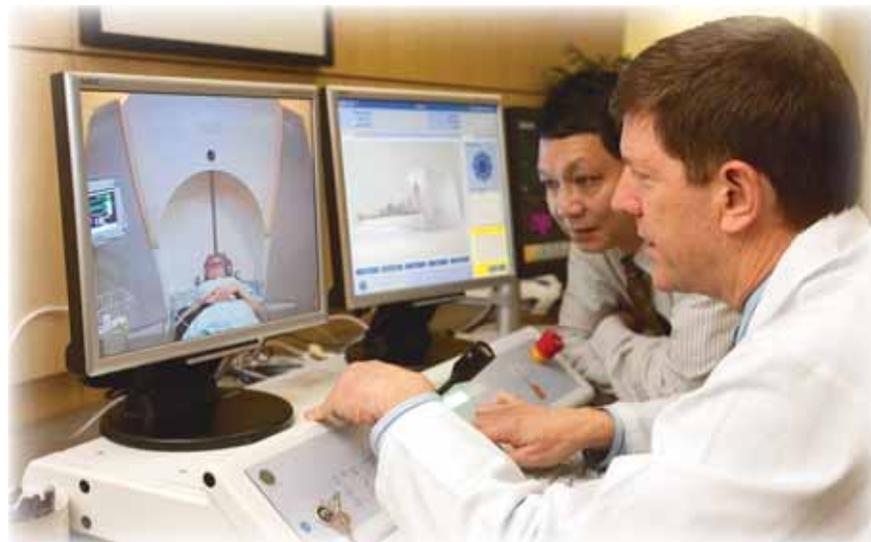
Non-Invasive Treatment

Gamma knife radiosurgery is now recognized as one of the most advanced treatments available for brain disease. Whole brain radiation and surgery are still useful treatment options for many patients, but both are riskier and have longer recovery periods. Now, notes Dr. Loudon, "We have a facility that will make gamma knife treatment available to people who would not have had the option before."

Gamma knife treatment also can be used in addition to traditional surgery, according to Dr. Loudon. "As a neurosurgeon, I no longer have to choose one or the other for patients. I can choose both. It's an incredibly powerful tool to make treatment more safe and practical."

Anesthesia is not needed for gamma knife procedures. A light sedation is used for placement of the head frame. After treatment, patients typically rest at home for a day or two then resume their normal activities.

"Gamma knife treatment is a good option for those that surgery can't help because they are high-risk patients or their tumor or lesions are too



Drs. William G. Loudon, neurosurgeon, and Yao-Jin Qian, physicist, consult on a patient case.

deep in the brain to be operable, Dr. Loudon explains.

How Gamma Knife Works

The gamma knife uses 192 low-dose radiation beams to target and kill cancer cells. Gamma knife can treat benign and malignant brain tumors, vascular malformations, and other brain disorders such as Trigeminal Neuralgia. None of the individual beams is powerful enough to damage brain tissue on its own, so each beam passes through healthy brain tissue without hurting it. When several beams intersect, however, their intensity is multiplied, and the doctors can target these intersections so they focus only where cancer exists. High doses are thus "sculpted" to precise shapes within the brain, disrupting the DNA of the cancer cells and preventing their reproduction.

"Gamma knife brings together the combined expertise of the neurosurgeon, the radiation oncologist, and the radiation physicist, all working together on the patient's case. On the day of treatment, the three of us collaborate by looking at the MRI, planning the treatment, and then working as a team to perform the procedure," Dr. Loudon explains.

Patient Support

In the days before treatment, patients come in for a guided tour of the center and learn about what to expect during and after treatment. Neuro Nurse Navigator Michelle Nordman, RN, stays with the patient at all times and phones patients a day or two after their treatment to check on how they are doing. "There's a lot of unknowns for them," says Nordman. "We want them to feel comfortable at all times."

Bierman, meanwhile, relays updates to the patient's loved ones who are waiting in the lobby and coordinates things on treatment day so everything goes smoothly and patients feel at ease. The treatment room even has an iPod docking station with speakers so patients can listen to their own music.

"We have one-on-one nursing with our patients," Bierman says. "If they need something, we are there. They can call us whenever they want to. We tell them we'll be right there with you."



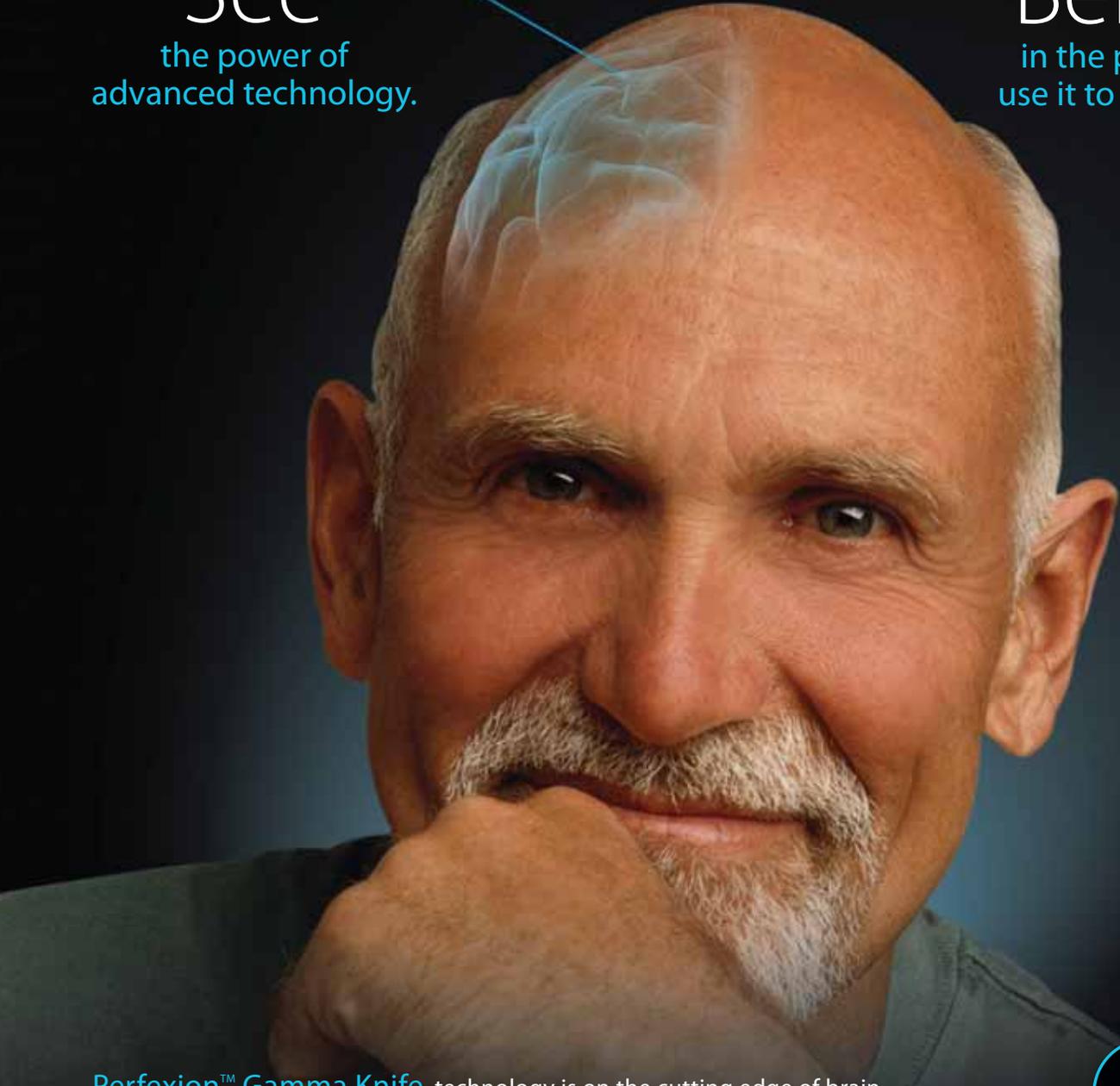
San Antonio Community Hospital,
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For more information, please visit
www.socalgammaknife.org or call
877-428-SACH (7224).

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Perflexion™ Gamma Knife technology is on the cutting edge of brain surgery, yet not a single cut is made. Instead of open brain surgery with a blade and incision, the Gamma Knife uses low-dose radiation to target abnormal cells with greater precision than traditional surgery. In fact, it's the most advanced, minimally-invasive treatment available for certain tumors and other brain disorders. And it's another advancement in technology brought to life by the people you know and believe in.



**SAN ANTONIO
COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

Technology Brought to Life

The Southern California Regional Gamma Knife Center at San Antonio Community Hospital is the only Gamma Knife Center in the Inland Empire. For more information, call:



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