



Montrose Memorial Hospital
**SMALL HOSPITAL
IN COLORADO**



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800 South Third Street
Montrose, CO 81401-4291
MontroseHospital.com

Dr. Virginia Tjan Joins the San Juan Cancer Center at MMH

Medicine was always a part of her life and even as a child, Virginia Tjan knew she would become a doctor. Daughter of a physician who is still practicing at age 81, she planned to follow in his footsteps and practice internal medicine. Then during residency she began her oncology rotation. "I fell in love with treating cancer patients on day one and knew that was my path," Tjan said. Dedicated and passionate about her work, she is also empathetic and gracious and easy to talk to; qualities important to a cancer patient in any stage of treatment.

Tjan attended medical school at Ross University in Dominica, followed by a residency in internal medicine at Danbury Hospital in Danbury, CT and a fellowship in hematology and oncology in at the University of Connecticut Medical School in Farmington, CT. She worked for many years in the northeast but a sister in Denver kept encouraging her to head west. "Honestly, when you live in the east, Colorado sounds really remote and like a whole different world," she laughed. And then she took a leap of faith and headed west and fell in love again. She worked in Grand Junction for a decade and the last two years in Pagosa Springs and part time at the San Juan Cancer Center in Montrose and knew she had found a home, personally and professionally.

"I love this area and am thrilled to be in Montrose full time," Tjan said. She and her husband, Mack, love everything outdoors including dirt biking, swimming and taking their six dogs for an outing. With a daughter, two sisters and her parents on the Front Range and two sons and a brother not too far away in California, Tjan couldn't be happier. "Western Colorado is the perfect place for us."

Having worked with numerous doctors and group practices, Tjan says the San Juan Cancer Center is very special. "The doctors and staff are exceptional and share a similar work ethic," she said. "We are very supportive of our patients and of each other as we work to provide the very best clinical care in a nurturing environment, combining cutting edge technology and personal, individualized care. Montrose Memorial Hospital is very supportive and forward looking and has a great staff, which facilitates our taking on ever more complicated cases so that we can keep cancer care available here in our community."

Dr. Tjan wants to remind everyone about the importance of regular medical care including checkups and important screening tests such as mammograms, colonoscopies and bone density scans. "Because of fear of the COVID virus, some patients are avoiding routine medical care," she said.

“ Health care facilities today are following the strictest safety protocols and taking every precaution to keep patients safe. I want to encourage everyone to seek regular medical care and not ignore any suspicious symptoms. ”



Montrose Memorial Hospital Welcomes Dr. Mark Noel

"What does an Otolaryngologist do?" is a question frequently asked of Dr. Mark Noel, one of the newest members of the medical staff at Montrose Memorial Hospital. Another designation for an otolaryngologist is an ENT doctor, which stands for ear, nose and throat. Noel treats patients with problems in those areas, helping children and adults with chronic ear infections, chronic tonsillitis and chronic sinusitis. He also treats patients with various skin lesions and skin cancer on the face, head and ears, neck masses, thyroid or parathyroid masses, cancer of the mouth and throat, voice and swallowing issues, sleep apnea, balance issues, hearing loss and facial trauma.

Noel emanates warmth and compassion when you spend time with him and you sense a true sense of caring and kindness. He knew even as a child that he wanted to be a doctor. "I enjoy helping people and particularly enjoy being able to help them feel or function better," he said. "It is such a great feeling to see patients experience a significant improvement." Early in his medical training he gravitated towards surgery because he enjoys working with his hands.

Dr. Noel and his family lived in North Dakota for the last nine years and they are thrilled to be in western Colorado. His wife, Jaymie, grew up in Denver and he spent much of his youth in Utah. The Noels have five children, which keeps them active and involved. Their oldest daughter is studying nursing at Southern Utah University and the other children range from a second grader to a sophomore in high school. They are active in lots of sports and activities and Noel credits his wife, "who is full of life and makes any situation more fun", for keeping the wheels turning smoothly for the family.

The family enjoys spending time together and loves skiing, snowboarding, camping and hiking. They are excited to join the Montrose community with its year round access to a wealth of activities.

Noel was attracted to otolaryngology specifically because of the variety of patients he is able to care for, the wide diversity of disease processes that he sees and manages, and the opportunity to perform surgical procedures that it affords.



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MMH Receives Award

Montrose Memorial Hospital has been recognized by the Lown Institute as the #1 small hospital in Colorado. Receiving an A+ overall grade, the ranking is based on measurements from three categories, seven subcomponents and 42 detailed metrics to form a comprehensive listing.

The Lown Institute is a nonpartisan think tank utilizing data from patient outcomes, including satisfaction, safety and mortality rates. It also accounts for value of care measurements, and civic leadership metrics – for example how much a hospital invests in community health.

Montrose Memorial Hospital also ranks as the #6 overall hospital in Colorado according to the list. Earlier this year, Montrose Memorial Hospital was named a 5 star hospital by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services - a status achieved by fewer than nine percent of U.S. Hospitals nationwide. It is also the only hospital in Colorado to be named a Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital for five consecutive years.

