

CAN I DO THAT AT VIRGINIA GAY HOSPITAL?

a conversation with **DR NABI**

dr. Jasmine Nabi is a medical oncologist, a physician trained in internal medicine specializing in the treatment of cancer with medicines, also called chemotherapy. She is a physician with Mercy Hospital's Hall-Perrine Cancer Center in Cedar Rapids, and for the past eight years she has worked with patients at Virginia Gay.

Dr. Nabi is one of 29 specialists who provide patients the opportunity to have appointments at Virginia Gay Hospital. The other specialists with clinics at the hospital practice in the fields of podiatry, pain management, pulmonology, cardiology, psychiatry, neurology, GYN, orthopedics, nuclear medicine, ENT, nephrology, and urology.

"One thing I like about being in Vinton," says Dr. Nabi, "is that Virginia Gay is like having a large team but in a small environment. For example, my clinic space at Virginia Gay is just around the corner from the emergency department, so it's easy for the physician or PA there to ask me for an opinion. There might be a suspicious CT scan or a question about a patient of mine who is at the hospital for another reason."

Dr. Nabi also appreciates the ability to work closely with her patient's primary care provider at Virginia Gay, seeing them face-to-face rather than working through email or leaving messages. "At Virginia Gay I can just go to the clinic with a



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question about a patient and have a conversation with his or her provider. Sometimes a physician will come upstairs to see me so we can discuss a patient's progress," explains Dr. Nabi. "In a large hospital that just doesn't happen. The primary care physician may be across town, and there's a good chance we might never meet. At Virginia Gay it's almost like a family environment where we all get to know one another and learn to work well together."

Dr. Nabi characterizes her experience at Virginia Gay as very welcoming. "I've not only met new patients in Vinton, but I've also treated people who are part of the staff at Virginia Gay. The staff is great to work with, and patients have been warm and generous. I think they appreciate not having to travel for their appointments. Some of my patients don't feel comfortable driving; others have schedules that make appointments in Cedar Rapids difficult."

Oncology treatments frequently require imaging scans or lab tests, and Dr. Nabi asks that they be done at Virginia

Vinton who couldn't travel to Mercy very easily. She had children to care for at home, and it was also difficult for her to keep appointments at the end of the day when the children were out of school. We made as many appointments as we could in Vinton, and we made them when her children were in school so she could still be the mom she wanted to be. That's what I really enjoy: helping people get better while they go on with the activities that make their lives meaningful."

The Hall-Perrine Cancer Center has three specialties involved in cancer care: surgical oncology, radiation oncology, and medical oncology. "Many patients need comprehensive cancer care involving all three specialties," Dr. Nabi says, "and when they do, we can provide them in one place."

"Mercy is known for providing excellent cancer care and part of that is because we've been doing it for a long time," explains Dr. Nabi. "We not only understand the complexities of treatment from a medical perspective, but our expertise includes social

workers, financial counselors, specially-trained nurses, and pharmacists, all of whom have years of experience focused entirely on the treatment of cancer."

Dr. Nabi remembered working with a patient who had been receiving treatment at a different organization, and the patient needed an oral chemotherapy pill. "It was upsetting to me that she was left on her own to determine if the treatment would be covered by her insurance. She had spent hours on the phone trying to get an answer. She had enough going on in her life that she shouldn't have been dealing with this on top of it all. We would never expect a patient to figure that out for themselves. That's what our team does. We have people who are experts at navigating all those things so the patient and our medical team can stay focused on getting the patient healthy again." 🍀

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Gay whenever possible. "I can order scans and other tests done at Virginia Gay and be confident that I'll get the information I need. Tests here are also more convenient and comfortable for the patient as well."

Dr. Nabi also tries to use other visiting specialists as much as possible. "For example," she says, "if a patient needs a urologist, I'll suggest seeing a urology specialist with the group who visits Virginia Gay, and if the patient agrees, then we'll keep that appointment in Vinton as well."

A point of professional satisfaction for Dr. Nabi is her commitment to understand the person, not just the disease.

Dr. Nabi shared the following story as one example. "I had a patient in



Dr. Nabi finds professional satisfaction in being committed to understanding the person she treats and not just the disease.