

# Referral for Endocrine Surgery



## Nicole Zern, MD, Endocrine Surgeon

General & Specialty Surgery Clinic

UW Medicine | Valley Medical Center

Your healthcare provider has referred you to an endocrine surgeon because they think you may have a condition affecting one of the glands in the endocrine system such as the thyroid, parathyroid, or adrenal gland. Dr. Zern has special training in the surgical care of these conditions and can offer you a complete evaluation and personal treatment plan.

## What can you expect during your first visit with Dr. Zern?

During your first visit, Dr. Zern will look at your medical history, do a physical exam, and talk with you about your symptoms and any tests that you may have had before. Depending on your condition, Dr. Zern may recommend more testing such as imaging studies or laboratory tests to make sure of your diagnosis. If surgery is needed, Dr. Zern will talk with you about what choices you may have for surgery including risks and benefits of the procedure, and answer any questions that you or your family may have.

## What are the benefits of endocrine surgery?

The benefits of endocrine surgery depend on your specific condition and may include symptom relief, hormone levels going back to normal, and/or removing cancerous or likely cancerous tissue.

## What can you expect during and after your endocrine surgery?

Endocrine surgery is usually done under general anesthesia and may take a few hours. During the surgery, Dr. Zern and the surgical team will closely watch you to make sure of your safety and comfort. Thyroid and parathyroid surgery is done through a small cut in the center of the neck. During parathyroid surgery,

they will check the the parathyroid hormone level to make sure they have fixed the problem before the operation is over. Adrenal surgery is also done under general anesthesia and usually this can be done using only very small cuts into the skin of the abdomen or lower back—in a minimally-invasive way using either laparoscopic or robotic surgery. Most patients are able to go home on the same day as their surgery, but some stay overnight in the hospital. Dr. Zern will give you detailed instructions for your care at home after the surgery and follow-up appointments.

## About Nicole Zern, MD

**Nicole Zern, MD**, is a fellowship-trained endocrine surgeon who specializes in surgical care for benign and malignant disease of the thyroid, parathyroid and adrenal glands. She is a board-certified general surgeon and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Zern is originally from Nebraska, completed medical school at Emory University in Atlanta, and then moved to Seattle to complete surgical residency training at University of Washington in 2010. She completed an endocrine surgical fellowship in Sydney, Australia and then returned to join the faculty at University of Washington for six years before joining the team at Valley Medical Center. Outside work, Dr. Zern enjoys time with her family including her husband, two young children and dog. They love to travel and are avid sports fans.

Go to [valleymed.org/endocrine-surgery](http://valleymed.org/endocrine-surgery) to learn more about Valley's Endocrine Surgery services and to watch Dr. Zern's provider profile video and her DocTalk, "When Surgery is Needed for Thyroid, Adrenal, or Parathyroid Conditions."



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## Where is the clinic located?

### General & Specialty Surgery Clinic

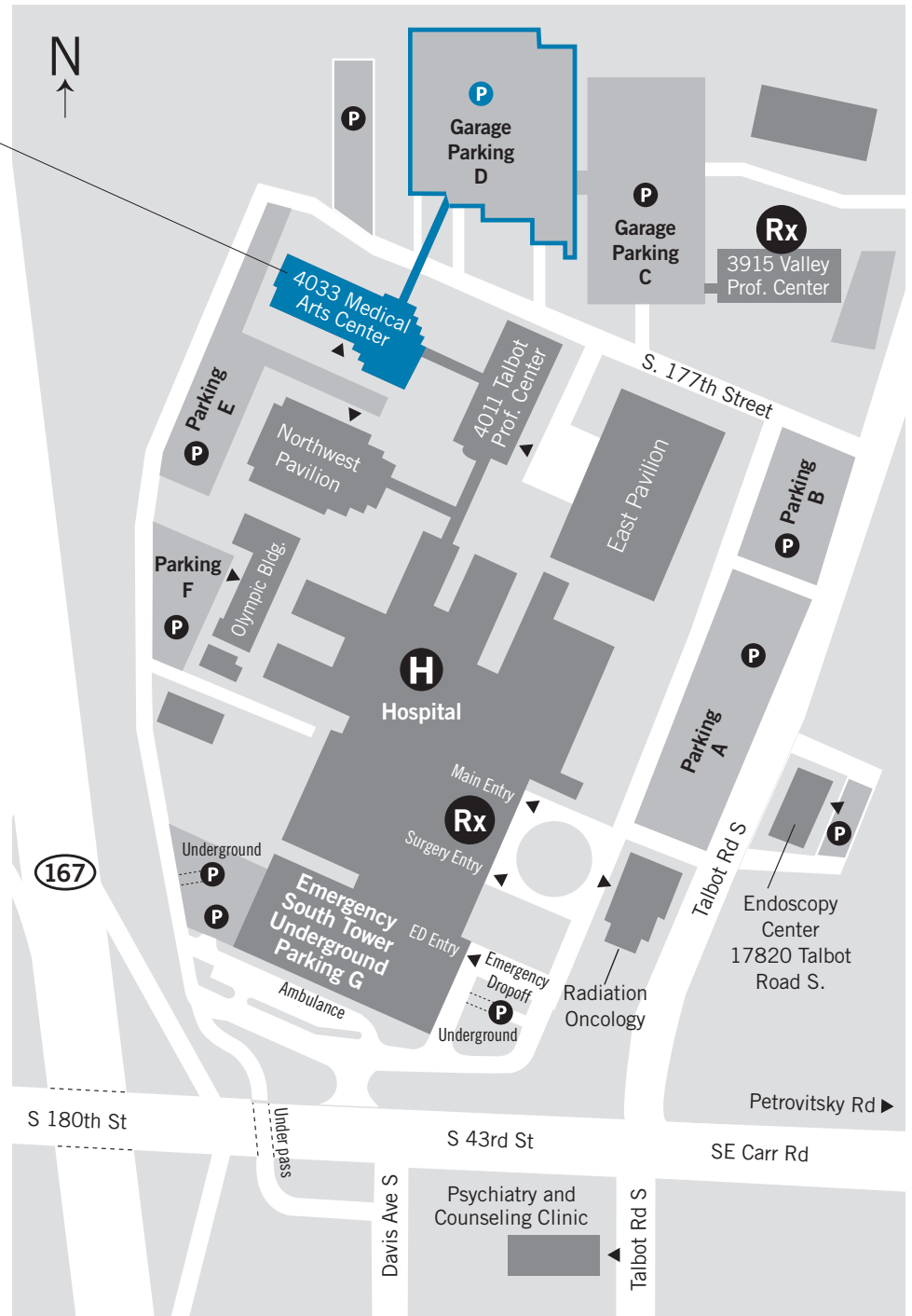
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For building location and the best place to park, go to

[valleymed.org/patients--visitors/maps](http://valleymed.org/patients--visitors/maps).



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