

Setting the Standard in **Digestive Care**



Nationally recognized digestive health experts

Science + Skill + Innovation

CLEAR MEASURES OF EXTRAORDINARY CARE

More than 70 million Americans suffer from digestive disorders, interfering with work, play and daily activities. GI Associates is helping improve health and quality of life by bringing the world's most advanced digestive care to people across the region and beyond.

The extraordinary level of care at GI Associates has attracted the respect of medical communities worldwide and earned the trust of patients across the nation. This report outlines some of the hallmarks of the practice, including **EXPERTISE, RESEARCH, INNOVATION, FOCUS** and **QUALITY**.

"I was apprehensive about coming to a surgery center, but I had a pleasant experience. Thank you for putting my fears at ease."

FROM THE ROUTINE TO THE VERY RARE

GI Associates provides comprehensive care for a variety of GI conditions, including:

- Abdominal pain
- Autoimmune liver diseases
- Barrett's esophagus
- Celiac disease
- Chest pain – noncardiac
- Colic
- Colon polyps and cancer
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Diverticulosis and diverticulitis
- Esophageal cancer
- Fatty liver disease
- Gallstones
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)/heartburn
- GI bleeding
- Hemorrhoids
- Hepatitis
- Hiatal hernia
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Lactose intolerance
- Liver cancer
- Malabsorption
- Obesity
- Pancreatic disorders
- Pancreatic-biliary cancer
- Sphincter of Oddi dysfunction
- Swallowing problems
- Ulcers



EXPERTISE

Top specialists working together

The largest single-specialty gastrointestinal group in Wisconsin with 14 locations in 12 communities, GI Associates offers the combined strength of 22 board-certified, fellowship-trained physicians internationally respected for expertise and innovation in digestive care. Using state-of-the-art technology, these physicians offer the latest strategies and treatment options to achieve the best possible outcomes. Patients also benefit from the expertise of a transplant hepatologist and a pediatric gastroenterologist. GI Associates continues to be the only practice in southeastern Wisconsin offering care across the life span.

Nationally ranked care

Top ratings and national recognition are clear measures of the high quality of care the group provides. Here are a few examples:

- In a recent poll conducted by Best Doctors, Inc., leading medical specialists from across the country selected the top 25 digestive health doctors in Wisconsin. Eleven of those chosen were GI Associates specialists.
- Eighteen GI Associates physicians were identified as “best doctors” by Milwaukee Magazine, based on a 2010 local survey of their peers.
- Five of the group’s physicians were asked to present on various topics at the National Digestive Disease Conference.
- The group serves as a national and international referral center for pancreatic-biliary cancer and treatment of other highly specialized GI disorders.

RESEARCH

Finding new ways to fight digestive diseases

With a healthy determination to stay ahead of the curve, GI Associates is one of the few private practice groups to pioneer new research in the digestive health arena. That benefits patients by providing a pipeline to the newest treatments with more options for outstanding care and better outcomes.

Advancing care through clinical trials

Clinical trials give patients more options by offering early access to new innovations, including drug therapy and technologies not yet available to the general public. The Wisconsin Center for Advanced Research, the investigative arm of GI Associates, typically participates in 10 to 12 clinical trials at any given time.

Over the past 10 years, an average of 18 studies originated by GI Associates have been accepted for presentation at the National GI Conference every year.

“Very pleasant experience. The nurses and doctors made my procedure so much easier than I thought it would be.”



INNOVATION

Pioneering new procedures

Because GI Associates can quickly integrate the latest advances into its practice, patients benefit sooner from new strategies to streamline care, speed recovery and improve outcomes. Some of GI Associates' "firsts" include:

- One of the first in the country to perform endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) to diagnose problems in the liver, gallbladder, bile ducts and pancreas.
- Among the first in the state to use endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) to diagnose and stage cancers for effective treatments of digestive organ cancers.
- The only group in the state performing hemorrhoidal banding with the CRH Oregon System™ — a painless and effective hemorrhoid treatment.
- Performs double balloon endoscopy, allowing physicians to reach and treat areas of the small bowel that were previously inaccessible. This breakthrough can be used to treat problems such as bleeding ulcers and cancers — reducing the number of small bowel resections.
- Performs HALO procedures to remove precancerous areas in the esophagus caused by Barrett's esophagus.
- The first and only physician group in Wisconsin to offer the SmartPill® GI Monitoring System.

QUALITY

Best practice builds better care

GI Associates sets clear, measurable standards that raise the bar for all practitioners. The group is a founding member of the Gastroenterology Practice Management Group, LLC, a national organization of 12 prominent gastroenterology practices establishing best-practice guidelines and clinical benchmarks for GI specialists across the United States.

Superior colonoscopy results

In a recent initiative, the group evaluated the rate at which its physicians reach the cecum during a colonoscopy. If the exam excludes this landmark area of the colon, precancerous polyps may go undetected. The findings were impressive: GI Associates physicians reach the cecum 99 percent of the time — well above the national average.

Colorectal Screening: Stop cancer before it starts

More than 50,000 Americans will die from colon and rectal cancers this year. But with early and regular screening exams, 90 percent of cases could have been prevented or cured.

GI Associates offers screenings that save lives. With early detection, providers can find and remove colon polyps and catch the cancer at its earliest, most treatable stage. It is important that every patient talk to his or her doctor about when and how often to be screened by an experienced GI specialist.

GI Associates physicians removed polyps from 43 percent of patients who received colonoscopies in 2008. Approximately 50 percent of the polyps removed were precancerous tissue.

FOCUS ON PATIENTS

Making care more convenient

Fighting digestive diseases means making leading-edge care accessible to patients. With 14 locations across southeastern Wisconsin — including three freestanding endoscopy centers — patients are never far from one of GI Associates' offices. Members of GI Associates are also on staff at 12 area hospitals from Kenosha to Watertown.

Responding quickly to needs

GI Associates goes the extra mile to respond to patients and providers. More than 90 percent of patients are seen within one week of a phone call for routine visits, and patients who have been admitted to a hospital are seen within two hours. Referring physicians can expect to hear from GI Associates within 24 hours for urgent patients and 48 hours for all other patients.

Satisfied patients: A mark of success

Committed to continual quality improvement and patient satisfaction, the practice regularly surveys patients and uses Press Ganey® research to determine attitudes and opinions about the quality of the care experience. The results show that more than 98 percent would recommend GI Associates to families, friends and neighbors for care. More than 15 percent of referrals are from other gastroenterologists around the globe for highly specialized digestive health care.

"I appreciate the friendly, warm, caring approach of all the staff."

GI ASSOCIATES IS A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

According to — AND BECAUSE OF — our employees

GI Associates has been recognized by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel as a Top 100 Workplace* in Southeastern Wisconsin. It's all because of our employees. Their candid, positive responses to an independent survey of tens of thousands of area workers put us in the top tier of employers in the region. While their opinions helped us earn this distinction, it is their commitment to providing the best possible patient experience and level of care that really makes us special.

***GI Associates ranked #18 in the Top Midsize Workplaces (150-499 employees) division and #2 in the same division specific to health care.**

NUMBER OF PROCEDURES IN 2008 VERSUS 2009

Procedure	2008	2009
Colonoscopies	18,278	18,670
Upper GI Endoscopies	15,560	15,955
Sigmoidoscopies	595	607
ERCP	2,820	2,889
EUS (endoscopic ultrasounds)	1,093	1,276
Capsule Endoscopy	N/A	255



Nationally recognized digestive health experts

For more information about GI Associates or to refer a patient, please call (414) 908-6500 or (414) 454-0600 or visit www.wigia.com.



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