

Monmouth

HEALTH & LIFE

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SWEET DREAMS in Brielle



YOUR COMFORT ZONE

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4 INTERIOR DESIGNERS SHARE

FOOD, FRIENDS, FAMILY
AN ASBURY PARK KITCHEN FOR ALL

7 SIDE TABLES
THAT TAKE CENTER STAGE

+ OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY
SEE PAGE 18!

The Best Care Close To Home

In this issue of *Monmouth Health & Life*, we celebrate both home and our 20th anniversary of partnering with the magazine that helps us spread our In Good Health messages with our Monmouth County neighbors.

This is also our October issue, and in the In Good Health pages, we introduce you to two Monmouth County residents who share their breast cancer journeys and the remarkable, compassionate care they received close to home. Monmouth Medical Center has a bold vision for the future of healthcare in Monmouth County—one that brings together world-class care with community connections; provides care when, where and how our patients prefer; and continues to shape the future of healthcare.

In 2023, we will break ground on our Vogel Medical Campus, which will have as its cornerstone a comprehensive cancer center in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state's only National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. This partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute means our patients have access in one convenient nearby location to innovative treatments, precision medicine, clinical trials and care informed by the latest research.

By offering our patients new hope with innovative solutions in the fight against cancer and supporting them in their journey from diagnosis to survivorship, right here, we are truly providing the highest level of cancer care close to home. We are thankful for two decades of partnership with *Monmouth Health & Life* in sharing hopeful messages such as this.



ERIC CARNEY
President and Chief Executive Officer
MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER
AND MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER
SOUTHERN CAMPUS





SIMILAR SURGERIES BUT DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES

Advances in pain management help a woman cope with her second mastectomy much more easily.

If you want a first-person account of how far breast cancer surgery has advanced in the past decade, just ask Suellen Clark. She had her first mastectomy in 2013, and another in 2022. Her experiences were entirely different. “I know that medical procedures have come leaps and bounds, especially in the breast cancer world, but I was floored by it,” she says.

Clark, who turns 67 in December, is a native of New Jersey but was living in California in 2013 when she discovered a lump in her right breast. It was found to be an advanced and fast-growing tumor, “a large mass, I believe stage 3,” Clark recalls. She underwent chemotherapy to shrink the tumor, had a mastectomy with lymph node removal in February 2014 and then had radiation therapy. After a night in the hospital, she was released with a 12-day prescription for narcotic pain medication.

The narcotics relieved the pain but caused severe constipation. And when she stopped taking the medications, the pain was intense. “I told my doctor, and she said, basically, that I had to just suck it up because she wouldn’t give me more narcotics,” Clark says. But the pain was so intense that she took anti-inflammatory medications for about two months—with only moderate success. “It never got back to normal for years. I had tingling in my right arm” from nerve involvement during the surgery, she says. “It wasn’t excruciating pain, just uncomfortable, constant irritation,” she remembers. “I’m not big on painkillers, but it was a good thing” she took the non-narcotic versions. It was, she says in true California style, “a gnarly surgery.”

Fast forward to 2022. Now retired and back in New Jersey—Tinton Falls, to be exact—to be near family, Clark had her regular yearly mammogram in April. “When they called me back and told me they needed to take more pictures, I knew something was up,” she says. The imaging found several small calcifications in her left breast, and a needle biopsy confirmed that three of them were cancerous. Clark says that even before the diagnosis, she had decided to have her breast removed. She had never reconstructed her right breast, and now found dressing comfortably to be difficult. “What was the point?” she says.

She was referred to Manpreet K. Kohli, M.D., Director of Breast Surgery and Breast Program Leader at Monmouth Medical Center. Clark’s cancer was “very early stage, so she had a really favorable

prognosis,” Dr. Kohli says. She removed one lymph node, which showed no involvement. The surgery, on July 27, was similar to her first mastectomy in 2013, “but it was a completely different experience for her,” Dr. Kohli says.

That’s thanks to advances in pain management. “We have done a lot to improve the experience for mastectomy patients, and one of the biggest breakthroughs has been improving how we manage pain with an Enhanced Recovery After Surgery protocol that we developed at Monmouth Medical Center,” says Dr. Kohli. “We use a long-acting, non-narcotic medication that is injected regionally in the surgical field during the operation. It blocks pain for up to five days, and makes it quite comfortable through the period patients would feel the most discomfort.”

This time, Clark went home the same day. “It was like outpatient surgery. I felt fine after,” she says. She was given narcotics to take “just in case,” she says, but never needed them. After the block wore off, “it was uncomfortable, but I wouldn’t call it pain,” she says. She took only anti-inflammatories for about two weeks. By late August, she reported, “it’s a little sore, a little puffy, but not painful. I have full arm movement, no restrictions. It’s great to wake up every morning.”

Dr. Kohli, who recently co-authored a study titled “A Proposed Multimodal Pain Control Regimen for Patients Undergoing Mastectomy with Reconstruction and Its Effect on Minimizing Narcotic Use and Hospital Length of Stay” published in the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, was pleased with Clark’s recovery at her first post-op office visit in early August. “She’s doing really excellent,” she says. There is no need for chemo or radiation therapy, but Clark will be on an estrogen blocker for five years to prevent cancer from developing in other areas. An oncologist will care for her during that time and into the future if necessary. “Dr. Kohli put me at ease,” Clark says. “I loved my California surgeon, but she was not as approachable as Dr. Kohli. I feel like I could hang out with her.”

And pain will not be an issue—for her or for future breast surgery patients. “It’s nowhere near how it was in the past, with pain pumps and morphine,” Dr. Kohli says. “And with the opioid epidemic, if we don’t even start them on narcotics there’s no chance to get hooked on it. Different eras, different experiences. She shows how much things had evolved.”



Manpreet K. Kohli, M.D.



For more information about the The Jacqueline M. Wilentz Breast Center at Monmouth Medical Center, visit rwjhb.org/mmcjoint.

TAKING A SWING AT BREAST CANCER

Monmouth Medical Center's Swing Pink program raises \$90K for breast cancer services.



More than 150 people came together under perfect blue skies at the Navesink Country Club in Middletown for the eighth annual Swing Pink event on Sept. 19 to benefit Monmouth Medical Center (MMC).

The event, which sold out each of its activities, raised record-setting proceeds of more than \$90,000 to benefit breast cancer services at MMC's Vogel Medical Campus. A groundbreaking on the new outpatient care center in Tinton Falls, which will include comprehensive cancer care in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, is expected in early 2023.

Swing Pink, led by co-chairs Terry Ingram and Debbie O'Donoghue, and supported by the Leon Hess Cancer Center Council, was a day filled with activity, lunch, and celebration. The morning started with participation in tennis, paddle, golf or pickle ball, followed by a celebratory luncheon outdoors on the patio, underwritten by the Ingram Family and featuring an update on cancer services at Monmouth Medical Center by Julie Chaudhuri, Regional Administrative Director of Cancer Services for the RWJBarnabas Health Southern Region. Guest speaker for the event was Oceanport resident and local business owner Erica Herbst, who shared her breast cancer journey since being diagnosed with advanced breast cancer in 2021.

In her early 40's at the time of her diagnosis, Erica, a single mom with a 13-year-old daughter, shared that as a very fit and active person, she initially thought the problem she was experiencing with her breast might be related to a recent athletic injury. Diagnosed on her first mammogram, she is a patient of Trishala Meghal, M.D., an MMC medical oncologist and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group, and is currently enrolled in the Her2Climb clinical trial, which is investigating whether adding the medication tucatinib to existing drug protocols for her condition can prevent the cancer from spreading to the brain.

"With HER2-positive breast cancer, the chances of it recurring in the brain are quite high," says Dr. Meghal. "Preventing that from occurring might allow us to give a patient other helpful, systemic therapies for a longer period of time."

In her remarks, Erica shared her positive outlook and hopefulness for the future. She also praised the care she is receiving from MMC and shared the story of Dr. Meghal checking in on her infusion treatment from her vacation hiking in the Grand Canyon.

"I am grateful to have the Monmouth medical team on my side!" she said.



Top: Breast cancer patient Erica Herbst shares her breast cancer journey during the Swing Pink luncheon. **Bottom:** Eric Carney, President and CEO of MMC and Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus, is pictured with Swing Pink event co-chairs, from right, Kristen Hoey, Alex Conley, Casey Kegelman, Jessica Angstrich, Sonya Moroney, Susan Olson, Kim Smith, Stephanie Flynn, Maggie Weikel, Debbie O'Donoghue, Terry Ingram, and Ann Rossbach.



To schedule your mammogram at rwjbh.org/mammo.

MORE FOR MOMS

The new Breastfeeding Wellness Center opens at MMC's Anne Vogel Family Care & Wellness Center.

Monmouth Medical Center's (MMC) outpatient Breastfeeding Wellness Center, which provides breastfeeding support before and after childbirth on an outpatient basis, is the newest program to open at the Anne Vogel Family Care and Wellness Center.

This program is designed to help and support families in reaching their breastmilk feeding goals through lactation consultations and breastfeeding support and education programs.

Conveniently located at the Anne Vogel Family Care and Wellness Center at the Monmouth Mall in Eatontown, the facility offers consultations with registered nurse (RN) international board-certified lactation consultants (IBCLC) to help mothers overcome challenges to breastfeeding. Additionally, it offers private prenatal consults and information on how to order a breast pump through insurance on an outpatient basis.

The center also offers free, weekly in-person and virtual support groups that promote breastfeeding through mother-to-mother support in a warm and welcoming environment. The support group is led by a registered nurse, board-certified lactation consultant. All topics and issues related to breastfeeding are included in the group discussions.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for the first six months of life, then to continue for two years or more along with starting solid foods. The more a baby receives breastmilk, the more protection they will have against short- and long-term illnesses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"One of the best things we can do as a start for our children is to provide them with the best nutrition available through breastmilk," says Tara Ann Murphy, MSN, RN, IBCLC, the Lactation Consultant for the Breastfeeding Wellness Center. "Not only is your baby being fed a milk that is customized for them, but it passes on the benefit of the mother's immune factors for as long as the baby receives breastmilk. Breastfeeding is one of the most rewarding experiences of motherhood and is the healthiest way to feed an infant during the first year of life."

MMC's expansive comprehensive breastfeeding program includes support prenatally with breastfeeding education prior to delivery, in hospital lactation support, and continued lactation services after discharge. It is designed to provide women with information about the benefits of breastfeeding, as well as the skills to successfully nurse their babies.

The program's lactation consultants address a host of issues related to breastfeeding through one-on-one prenatal visits and group breastfeeding information sessions, including assistance with positioning or latching infant, weighted feeds to determine transfer of milk, feeding strategies to support successful lactation, establishing a good milk supply, and managing nipple pain. The sessions also address infants with poor or slow weight gain, making too little or too much milk, breastfeeding premature and/or multiple infants, learning to pump, transition to work, treatment plan for engorgement, plugged ducts,



Tara Ann Murphy, lactation consultant for MMC's new Breastfeeding Wellness Center, is shown with, from left, Jonathan Teitelbaum, M.D., Chair of Pediatrics and Chief of Pediatric Gastroenterology, and Robert Graebe, M.D., Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

thrush or mastitis, and re-establishing milk supply. Oral assessment to identify possible tongue tie is provided as well.

"Breastfeeding helps you bond with your baby and is free," Murphy adds. "The goal of our breastfeeding program is to help to make sure that moms are off to a good start. The goal is to empower families to reach their feeding goals."

The Anne Vogel Family Care & Wellness Center opened this spring, with pediatric subspecialty practices in cardiology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, pulmonology and infectious diseases, as well as general surgery, urology and otolaryngology (ENT), and women's services including maternal/fetal medicine. The building also serves as the home for MMC's Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders Center and offers Urgent Care services and Lab Blood Drawing Station. The 82,000-square-foot medical and wellness facility includes wellness education and resources through the LiveWell Center and WEforum Demonstration Kitchen featuring Dorothea and Jon Bon Jovi Nutrition Education Programs.

Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH), a fellow RWJBarnabas Health facility, occupies the second floor of the Anne Vogel Family Care & Wellness Center, offering medical and therapy services including audiology, developmental and behavioral pediatrics, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychiatry, psychology, and speech language therapy. This is the first CSH location in Monmouth County and will serve to enhance access to their specialized services for local patients and families.



To learn more about the Breastfeeding Wellness Center, call 862.781.3873. To learn more about the programs and services offered at the Anne Vogel Family Care & Wellness Center, visit rwjbh.org/avfamilycare.

{ IN GOOD HEALTH }

EASY TO SWALLOW

A new advanced diagnostic tool gives pediatric gastroenterologists a clearer picture into digestive distress.

It's not unusual to witness a teenager go through rapid body changes, but Rami Arrouk, M.D., knew more than hormones were affecting his 15-year-old patient.

"He wasn't overweight and had a normal BMI when I first met him [this year]," recalls Dr. Arrouk, a pediatric gastroenterologist at Monmouth Medical Center. "But a year before I first saw him, he had been overweight and lost 80 pounds unintentionally."

The weight loss was the result of food avoidance, the doctor says, because the boy was afraid to eat. The patient, whose name has been withheld, complained that he had difficulty swallowing and a burning sensation whenever he consumed food.

"And it progressively got worse over the course of a year," Dr. Arrouk says. "He physically looked OK, but his inability to eat was diminishing his quality of life."

An esophagram suggested the boy was suffering from achalasia, a rare disorder that makes it difficult for food and liquid to pass from the mouth, through the esophagus and into the stomach. To make an official diagnosis, however, Dr. Arrouk recommended a test using the EndoFLIP impedance planimetry system.

MMC was one of the first two hospitals in the state (MMC's sister hospital RWJ University Hospital in New Brunswick was the other) to introduce EndoFLIP technology, and the Digestive Health Center is one of a handful of centers in the region with experts trained to use it. Doctors use it to diagnose a patient's digestive problems and guide a repair. To date, the center has performed approximately 200 EndoFLIP procedures—and it's effective for both adult and pediatric patients.

In Monmouth Medical Center's Endoscopy Suite, pediatric gastroenterologists can use the technology to observe a patient's esophagus by guiding a balloon mounted on a thin catheter down his or her throat. Sensors on the balloon measure the esophagus' pressure, size and ability to distend to allow food to pass through, helping physicians better diagnose and treat esophageal disorders.

"We can get a sense how well the esophagus functions," says Jonathan Teitelbaum, M.D., Chief of Pediatric Gastroenterology at MMC and the first pediatric physician in New Jersey to perform an EndoFLIP procedure. "We can see if the food pipe is tight or stiff, or if there is a narrowing of the food pipe. And we're watching it in real time with the FLIP test, watching for about 10 minutes. It's one more tool in our toolbox to really understand the reason why children have certain pains and complaints."

For Dr. Arrouk's young patient, the EndoFLIP test confirmed achalasia, which was treated surgically in June 2022 by Dmitry Oleynikov, M.D., Chair of the Department of Surgery.

"He has been eating well, and he is no longer avoiding food," Dr. Arrouk reports. "His weight is ideal now and he's maintaining proper nutrition. He's had to modify the size of each meal; he used to have one big meal but now eats three smaller meals. It's resulted in a new, healthy lifestyle change."



Rami Arrouk, M.D.



Jonathan Teitelbaum, M.D.



To learn more call the Digestive Health Center at Monmouth Medical Center at 732.923.6070.