

A Publication of
**ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL HAMILTON**

Fall 2022

healthy *together*



**SECRETS OF
BETTER
BALANCE**

**A NEW LIFE
AFTER SPINE
SURGERY**

**HEART ATTACK
OR STROKE:
KNOW THE
DIFFERENCE**

**HELPING
PATIENTS
NAVIGATE
CANCER**

MESSAGES FROM LEADERSHIP



“Being recognized nationally for excellence is an important validation. That’s why I am delighted that Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey together with RWJBarnabas Health achieved High Performing status in the adult specialty category for cancer in the most recent *U.S. News & World Report* Best Hospitals survey. This demonstrates the extraordinary, multidisciplinary care we provide for our communities, informed by groundbreaking cancer research, scientific leadership and transformational discoveries alongside exceptional patient experience.”

BARRY H. OSTROWSKY | Chief Executive Officer, RWJBarnabas Health



“As New Jersey’s largest and leading academic healthcare system, we pride ourselves on providing exceptional care for our communities together with our partners such as Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. We congratulate Rutgers Cancer Institute on receiving the highest score in New Jersey in the adult specialty category for cancer in *U.S. News & World Report’s* annual Best Hospitals survey. This validates the exceptional level of cancer care we provide across our health system.”

MARK E. MANIGAN | President, RWJBarnabas Health



“Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton’s commitment to quality and excellence continues with the certification of our bariatric program. These procedures continue to improve our patients’ quality of life and overall health. Our expert team is fully committed to providing the support and resources needed for every step of our patients’ journeys.”

RICHARD FREEMAN | President and Chief Executive Officer, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton | RWJBarnabas HEALTH

1 Hamilton Health Pl., Hamilton Township, NJ 08690 | 609.586.7900

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- www.linkedin.com/company/rwjuh-hamilton

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HEALTH NEWS



Timothy Ryan, MSN, RN, CEN, hospital coordinator for the NJ Sharing Network (holding award), joins Richard Freeman, President and CEO (far right) in accepting the 2022 Workplace Partnership for Life Gold Award on behalf of RWJUH Hamilton.

PARTNERING TO PROMOTE ORGAN DONATION

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton’s organ and tissue donation awareness program was honored with the 2022 Workplace Partnership for Life Gold Award from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The hospital coordinates its outreach efforts with NJ Sharing Network, a nonprofit organization responsible for the recovery and placement of donated organs and tissue in New Jersey. “Sometimes there is a lack of understanding about the importance of organ donation, and building that awareness is part of our partnership with the NJ Sharing Network,” says Diane Grillo, Vice President, Health Promotion, RWJUH Hamilton. In 2022, RWJUH Hamilton conducted multiple awareness and registry activities throughout the community to encourage new donor registrations.



RWJUH Hamilton senior leadership and nursing leaders join Ragui W. Sadek, MD, Director of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (center, wearing blue cap), to celebrate accreditation of the hospital’s Bariatric Surgery Center.

BARIATRIC SURGERY CENTER FOR WEIGHT LOSS PROCEDURES ACHIEVES ACCREDITATION

The Bariatric Surgery Center at RWJUH Hamilton has been accredited by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP).

MBSAQIP works to advance safe, high-quality care for bariatric surgical patients through the accreditation of inpatient and outpatient bariatric surgical centers in the United States and Canada. A center achieves accreditation following a rigorous review process proving it can maintain physical resources, human resources and standards of practice. All accredited centers report their outcomes to the MBSAQIP database.

healthy *together* contents

FALL 2022



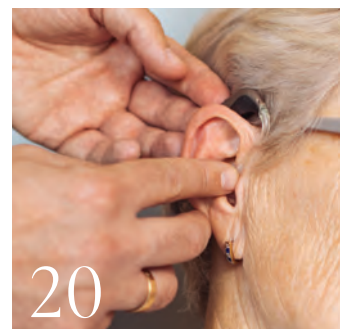
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What you need to know about dizziness, vertigo and other unsteady sensations.

22. HEART ATTACK VS. STROKE.

How they compare—and what you can do about them.

Classes for Healthy Living

All programs are IN PERSON unless otherwise noted. In-person classes will be limited in size and held at the RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center. Attendees will be required to bring a mask and practice social distancing to help ensure the safety of everyone present. For more information or to register, call the Health Connection at 609.584.5900 or visit us online at www.rwjhb.org/events.



Diabetes Game Show!

Wed., November 2; 1 to 2 p.m.
Join a fun-filled “feud” and test your diabetes knowledge for a chance to win. Brush up on lingo in this group competition. Presented by Shesha Desai, PharmD, RPh, BC-ADM, Diabetes Program Coordinator

50+ Bridge Club Mondays and Fridays, noon to 3 p.m.

Join us if you have basic knowledge of the game and point system.

1st Saturday Walks: Walking in Nature — A Prescription for Better Health

Come discover the Abbott Marshlands with a knowledgeable guide. Each 1st Saturday Walk will explore a different part of this rich and diverse natural area. Guides and locations will vary so that all marshland trails will be explored during the year. For meeting times, location, trails and cancellation information, go to <https://abbottmarshlands.org>.



Management of Common Spine Disorders: Roundtable Discussion with Multiple Specialties

Wed., November 16; 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Come listen and learn as common spine ailments are presented to a panel of experts in different medical fields. Hear from neurologists,

radiologists, pain management specialists and physical therapists about how they evaluate and treat back pain. **Dinner is included.**

What Is Cardiometabolic Medicine?

**Wed., November 9;
5 to 6 p.m.**

Join Taher Modarressi, MD, for a discussion on managing your cardiovascular and metabolic health. Dr. Modarressi is board-certified in endocrinology, diabetes, metabolism, clinical lipidology and obesity medicine.

How Smart Are Hearing Aids Today?

**Thu., November 10;
10 to 11 a.m.**

We discuss the remarkable features of today’s hearing aids. Bluetooth technology, artificial intelligence, rechargeable batteries, tinnitus therapy and more! Join Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, to learn more about the latest in hearing aid technology!

The AARP Driving Course

**Mon., November 14,
December 12 & January 9;
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Be a safer, better driver. Most insurance companies will lower your premium with a completion certificate. Bring your NJ or PA driver’s license. Fee: \$20 for AARP members presenting a valid AARP card; \$25 for nonmembers. Cash or check only to AARP. Call 609.584.5900 for fee and information.

You Only Have One Heart: Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)

Mon., November 14; 6 to 7 p.m.

Join Edward A. Wingfield, MD, FACC, FSCAI, in a discussion about PAD, including risk factors, prevention and treatment. Dr. Wingfield specializes in cardiovascular diseases and interventional cardiology. **A heart-healthy dinner is included.**

The Link Between Hearing Loss and Dementia: Can Hearing Aids Save Your Brain?

Thu., December 8; 10 to 11 a.m.

According to several major studies, older adults with hearing loss are more likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease and dementia, compared with those who have normal hearing. Prevention is key! Audiologist Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, discusses your options.

“Love Your Heart” Discussion Group

Thu., December 8; 2:30 to 4 p.m.

Unhealthy nutrition and difficult emotions, such as depression, can put us at risk of heart disease. Join us to explore the connection between food and mood, along with a recipe tasting and discussion. Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM, certified specialist in obesity and weight management, and Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse

Ask the Diabetes Coordinator

Wed., January 11; 2 to 3 p.m.

Shesha Desai, PharmD, RPh, BC-ADM, will host an informative Q&A session on keeping diabetes controlled throughout the new year.

Hearing Loss and Tinnitus

Thu., January 12; 10 to 11 a.m.

It’s not uncommon for individuals to have tinnitus with hearing loss. Join Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, to learn about the latest in technology to help treat tinnitus and hearing loss.



Oaks Integrated Care Caregiver Conference: Caregiving for Today and Tomorrow

Thu., December 8; 5 to 7:30 p.m.

Caregivers of seniors with dementia and memory loss are invited to attend this conference to gain insight into communicating and dealing with anger and other challenging behaviors. Many caregivers describe feeling moody, helpless and short-tempered, saying and doing things they later regret. In this presentation, participants will learn a variety of approaches for managing emotions and actions in the moment, along with activities and resources for handling the anger and other challenging emotions that affect caregivers. Attendees will also learn ways that Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia affect an individual’s ability to communicate across different stages and will get tips to better communicate with people living with the disease. Mary-Catherine Lundquist, MDiv, Program Coordinator for Care2Caregivers and the COPSA Institute for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders, and Robyn Kohn, MA, CDP, Director of Programs and Services at the Alzheimer’s Association. For more information, contact Steven Guarino at 609.694.2595. Conference presented by Oaks Integrated Care Senior Well-Being Program. **Dinner will be provided.**

The Senior Well-Being Program is funded under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended through a grant by Mercer County ADRG.

Cyberbullying: Dealing with the Haters

**Mon., January 16;
1 to 2 p.m.**

Cyberbullying can harm the online reputation of anyone. There are distinctive concerns involved, since it can be persistent, permanent and hard to notice. This discussion will increase participants’ digital awareness about the online world.

Orthopedic Open House: Joint Replacement

Tue., January 17; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Discover the latest advances in knee and hip replacement surgery. Learn how the Center for Orthopedic & Spine Health and our rehabilitation team prepare you for a successful joint replacement. Presented by Michael R. Duch, MD, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon fellowship-trained in sports medicine, along with Maureen Stevens, PT, DPT, GCS, Cert MDT, and Courtney Fluehr, PT, DPT. **Dinner is included.**



BODY

NUTRITION, FITNESS & WELLNESS

Hamilton Healthy Lifestyle Initiative (HHLI)

Tuesdays, November 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29; December 6, 13 & 20; January 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31; 10 a.m. to noon

This 13-week program is designed to help participants meet healthy living goals, with a new topic each week on ways to optimize health and meet individualized wellness goals. The classes provide a safe space



and a support group initiative where participants can learn and support each other. Measurements of success throughout the program will be according to participants' preference, such as weight, blood pressure, strength, blood sugar, cholesterol, energy or quality of sleep. The final session will conclude with a potluck lunch. Let's get through the holidays together! Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM

Clinical Culinary Nutrition

Thursdays, 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Get up to date on current nutrition issues, hear from other health/culinary professionals and sample tasty new recipes with our registered dietitians. Space is limited—register at least 48 hours prior to event. Fee: \$10. Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM

• **November 10: Power Up with Plant Protein**

Did you know that all plants contain protein? Learn what lower-sodium alternatives are out there and how to prepare them deliciously to support a powerful heart, body and planet.

• December 1: Traditional Diabetic Dietary Patterns

Whether or not you are affected by diabetes, discover how consistent carbohydrate dietary patterns can help with blood sugar control this sweet holiday season.

• January 19: Meal Planning and Food Prep

Let's support lifestyle changes for preventive health! Come by to learn how to prepare food for a stress-free week of healthy meals.

Ask the Dietitian and Optional Body Fat Screening

Wed., November 16, December 14 & January 11; 9 a.m. to noon

Do you have a question about diet and nutrition? Join a community education dietitian for a one-on-

one Q&A and receive a body fat screening, if desired. Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM. Registration required.

Kids Fit: In the Kitchen Garden!

Thursdays, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Did you know that in the winter, farmers can grow indoors using something called hydroponics? Learn more about nutritious herbs and recipes with special guest Desmond Hayes, agricultural scientist and CEO of GeoGreens. For children 5 and older with a parent/caregiver (required). Fee: \$10. Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM

• November 17: Party with Poultry Herbs

Nothing smells more like the holidays than the smell of sage, rosemary and thyme. Let's grow, taste and cook them into comfort food favorites.

• December 15: Herbs ... for Dessert?

Yes! It's cookie time! Surprise your

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

What's in the (Lunch) Box? A Virtual Program

Thu., November 3, December 22 & January 26; noon to 1 p.m.

All things seasonal, all the time! Learn what wonderful fruit and vegetables are up to this time of year and how to make them shine. Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM

taste buds with treats that can be made with herbs like cinnamon basil, licorice basil and chocolate mint.

• January 12: Growing into the New Year

Participants will learn more about growing microgreens and leave with a plant of their own.



SPIRIT

HOLISTIC HEALTH

Communicate Better to Live Happier

Wed., November 9; 10 to 11:30 a.m. Communication is the fundamental, essential way in which we as humans connect with each other, but how we do it makes all the difference. Learn how words can influence outcomes that the speaker may have never considered. This information can be a wonderful gift to yourself and others for the holidays. Fee: \$15. Edie Glover, MSW, LSW

Angels Among Us

Thu., November 10; 1 to 3 p.m. Who are the four main archangels, from a spiritual perspective? These mighty and loving celestial

beings are associated with specific characteristics, such as protection, communication, healing and peace. Find out how we can invite them into our lives and sense that they are truly with us. Fee: \$15. Donna Sweeney, Reiki Master, Integrated Energy Therapist

Private Reiki Sessions

Tue., November 15, December 20 & January 17; 3 to 6 p.m., by appointment

Enjoy the profound relaxation of a private Reiki session. Reiki is a form of energy medicine to help relax the body and soothe the soul. Fee: \$60 per hour. Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse, Reiki Master/Teacher

Mindfulness Meditation for Beginners

Wed., November 16, December 21 & January 18; 1 to 2 p.m.

Calm your anxious mind and tense body with the relaxing and healing practice of mindfulness meditation. No experience necessary. Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse

HealthRhythms® Drumming Circle

Wed., November 16 & January 18; 7 to 8 p.m.

Join our drumming circle to help drum your cares away. This evidence-based program is shown to reduce blood pressure, calm stress and increase the fun in your life. Drums provided. Fee: \$15. Mauri Tyler, CTRS, CMP

“Love Your Heart” Discussion Group

Thu., December 8; 2:30 to 4 p.m.

Unhealthy nutrition and difficult emotions, such as depression, can raise the risk of heart disease. Join us in exploring the connection between food and mood during a discussion and recipe tasting with Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM, certified specialist in obesity and weight management, and Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse.



Winter Solstice Celebration Drum Circle

Wed., December 21; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Join us as we “drum back the sun” on the longest night of the year and celebrate with ritual, stories and, of course, drumming. Drums and light snacks provided. Fee: \$15. Mauri Tyler, CTRS, CMP

Create Your Own Vision Board

Thu., January 19; 1 to 3 p.m.

The start of the new year is a great time to help solidify what you would like to do, be and have in 2023. Create a vision board as a physical representation of your dreams. Bring scissors; all other supplies provided. Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse

A Meditation Sampler for Everyone

Tue., January 24; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

We will feed the body with a few simple movements to clear and ground us. Sample different meditation methods to explore which one works for you. Bring a towel or yoga mat; chairs will be available. Fee: \$15. Carol Ann Meier, Reiki Master

Reiki Share

Wed., January 25; 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Have you been Reiki-certified (at any level)? Come share the gift of Reiki with others. Give a session, get a session. Bring a sheet and small pillow. Fee: \$5. Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse, Reiki Master/Teacher

Classes for Healthy Living



YOU SUPPORT GROUPS

Peripheral Neuropathy Support

Call 609.587.7215 for assistance or information.

Bereavement Support

Call 609.631.6980 for registration and location.

Breast Cancer Support Group

First Tuesday of every month; 6:30 p.m.
Please call 609.584.2836 to confirm attendance. This group meets at the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, 2575 Klockner Road, Hamilton.

Nicotine and Tobacco Dependence Treatment Program

Mondays & Wednesdays, 1 to 5 p.m.
One-on-one and walk-in hours for individual/group counseling. Prescriptions for smoking cessation medication (gum, patches, etc.) available upon request. To preregister or for information, contact Michael Kosloski, BA, Certified Treatment Specialist, 732.837.9416, or email quitcenter@rwjrh.org.

Nicotine and Tobacco Dependence Treatment Program: Group Discussion

Thursdays, 5 to 6 p.m.
Group counseling. Prescriptions for smoking cessation medication (gum, patches, etc.) available upon request. To preregister or for information, contact Michael Kosloski, BA, Certified Treatment Specialist, 732.837.9416, or email quitcenter@rwjrh.org.

Caregiver Support Group

Wed., November 2, December 7 & January 4; 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Supportive discussion group for those caring for a loved one who is aging or has a chronic illness—shared experiences can be healing. An Oaks Integrated Care caregiver specialist will conduct these interactive groups on crucial topics and facilitate a supportive group experience.

Grief & Loss Support Group

Thu., November 3 & 17, December 1 & 15 and January 5 & 19; 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
If you have lost a loved one or been separated from your support system, you can find comfort and begin to cope better by interacting with others. An Oaks Integrated Care Senior Well-Being Specialist will moderate.

Caregiver Series: Caring for Loved Ones with Chronic Conditions

Mondays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
November 7: Dealing with Challenging Behaviors
November 21: Caregiving during the Holidays
December 5: Ways to Manage Caregiver Stress
December 19: Coping with Memory Loss
January 9: Exploring Types of Dementia
January 23: Seven Stages of Dementia
Caring for a chronically ill senior can take a physical and emotional toll on family members. An Oaks Integrated Care caregiver specialist will conduct these interactive groups on crucial topics and facilitate a supportive group experience.

Adult Children Caring for Parents

Mondays, 5:30 to 7 p.m.
November 7: Caregiving during the Holidays
November 21: Ways to Manage Caregiver Stress
December 5: Dealing with Challenging Behaviors
December 19: Exploring Types of Dementia
January 9: Seven Stages of Dementia
January 23: Coping with Memory Loss
An Oaks Integrated Care caregiver specialist will conduct these interactive groups on crucial topics and facilitate a supportive group experience.

Letting Go of Clutter

Tue., November 8, December 13 & January 10; 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
This support group explores how our emotional ties to our “stuff” can create clutter and affect our mood. An Oaks Integrated Care caregiver specialist will conduct these interactive groups on crucial topics and facilitate a supportive group experience.

Bariatric Weight Loss Support Group

Tue., November 8 & January 10; 6 to 7 p.m.
Call 609.584.5900 to register.

Alzheimer's Support Group

Wed., November 16, December 21 & January 18; 6 to 7 p.m.
Support and information for family and friends of people with Alzheimer's disease. An Oaks Integrated Care caregiver specialist will conduct these interactive groups on crucial topics and facilitate a supportive group experience.

Wise Women Discussion Group

Thu., December 22 & January 26; 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
Join a community of women as we discuss relevant topics and find purpose and meaning. Patti McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse
December 22: Where Do You Find Spirituality?
January 26: Reevaluations Rather than Resolutions



HEALTH SCREENINGS

Hearing Screening

Tue., November 8, December 13 & January 10; 9 a.m. to noon
RWJ Balance & Hearing Center
2 Hamilton Health Place
Hamilton Township, NJ 08690
Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD. Call 609.245.7390 to register.

Fall Prevention/Balance Screening

Tue., November 8, December 13 & January 10; 9 a.m. to noon
RWJ Balance and Hearing Center
2 Hamilton Health Place,
Hamilton Township, NJ 08690
Jinbo Jung, DPT. Call 609.245.7390 to register.

Memory Screening

Thu., November 10 & January 12; 11 a.m. to noon
Are you concerned about “senior moments”? The Mini-Mental State exam is a quick assessment to discern normal aging vs. potential problems. We will also be conducting a lecture related to improving your memory. Registration required.

Osteoporosis Screening

Thu., December 15; 1 to 3 p.m.
Ultrasound of heel and personalized information. Appointment and registration required.

Cholesterol/Glucose/Blood Pressure Screening

Tue., January 17, 8 to 10 a.m.
Get a general cholesterol and glucose screening with just a finger stick. Participants must be fasting. Appointment and registration required. Fee: \$10

Take-Home Colorectal Screening

Thu., January 19; 10 to 11 a.m.
Learn how to use a simple take-home test to detect early colon cancer, and listen to a lecture about how to reduce your risk. Registration required.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL CLASSES.
Visit www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonbetterhealth or call 609.584.5900.

Unless noted, all programs will be held at the RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center, 3100 Quakerbridge Rd, Hamilton Township.

THE BETTER HEALTH PROGRAM

AT RWJUH HAMILTON

Rediscover your Mind, Body, & Spirit in Retirement
Better Health Program
Complimentary Membership at 65+ years old



There's no better time to be 65+ years old, and there's no better place to experience it than at the Better Health Program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. This complimentary program's mantra is "Rediscover your mind, body and spirit in retirement." Members meet like-minded people and learn from doctors and other professionals who make your well-being a priority.

The programs listed below are premier programs. We continue to offer more than 30 other programs exclusively for Better Health members. A full calendar of events and programs can be found at www.rwjbh.org/events. To become a Better Health member or register for a program, call the Health Connection at 609.584.5900 or visit us online at www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonbetterhealth and click "register now."



Healthy Lifestyle Initiative with Alyssa Luning, RD, LDN, CSOWM, and Joyce Cantalice, Better Health Manager
Tuesdays, November 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29; December 6, 13 & 20; January 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31; 10 a.m. to noon
There's no one better to guide

you through this 13-week program to meet your healthy living goals than Alyssa Luning and Joyce Cantalice. If you've participated in any of their classes, you know it will be full of interesting information, lively conversation and useful options for everyone. Each week, a new topic will address ways to optimize your health and meet your individualized wellness goals. Classes will provide a safe space and a support-group initiative where participants learn and support each other. Measurements of success throughout the program will be of your preference—for example, body weight, blood pressure, strength, blood sugar, cholesterol, energy or even sleep quality. The final session concludes with a potluck lunch. Let's get through the holidays together!



Beautiful Forever with Caterina Young, Owner and Master Artisan, and Tinisee, Makeup Artisan, blo Out Lounge and Colour Bar, Hamilton
Friday, November 4; 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Back by popular demand is our Beautiful Forever Program for women. The blo Out Lounge and Colour Bar is special with its commitment to "Guidance. Education. Experience"—much like RWJUH Hamilton's Better Health Program. Caterina, Tinisee and our volunteers will be with us for the

big makeover reveal. Join us as they guide us through the transition, educate us on techniques that matter and share secrets to getting the right hairstyle and makeup to help us feel and look our best every day, not just on appointment day. Says Caterina: "At blo Out, you are family, not a client, and we are committed to helping you find the beauty on the inside as well as the outside." To learn more about Caterina and the artisans at the blo Out Lounge and Colour Bar, visit www.blooutloungeandcolourbar.com. To be considered for a free makeover, please email a current picture and why you would like to be chosen to BHProgram@rwjhb.org.

Using Your Wits
Wednesdays, January 4, 11, 18 & 25, and February 1; 1 to 2 p.m.

We all know that physical fitness is an important component of healthy aging. But did you know your brain also needs a workout to maintain or improve its performance? Using Your Wits has been developed by Lisa Bayer, CDP, currently with Always Best Care (ABC) Senior Services. Prior to joining ABC, Lisa stretched her brain muscle as the Director of LearningRx Brain Training Center. This offering is an informative, fun and interactive series on keeping our brains healthy as we age. Each of the series' five parts is independent of the other parts and is approximately one hour in length. Join us for one part or all!



Let's Talk Vitamin D and Anti-Aging, with Anupama Adlakha, MD, CHCQM, Physician Advisor
Thursday, November 3; 2 to 3 p.m.

Dr. Adlakha will go into detail about what vitamin D is and how it relates to antiaging. We've all heard that a few minutes of sun exposure can provide our daily intake of vitamin D. Is it true? What benefits does vitamin D have for our bodies? What does the sunshine vitamin have to do with antiaging? Join Dr. Adlakha for a fascinating and informative discussion.



DISCUSSIONS WITH SARA ALI, MD
Geriatric Medicine and Internal Medicine

Meet Our Pharmacist and Let's Talk Medication
Thursday, November 17; 1 to 2 p.m.

Dr. Ali is excited to introduce you to Lalitha Sukumar, PharmD, Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacist. Lalitha recently joined Dr. Ali's practice and has met many Better Health members during office visits. Together they'll share how patients benefit from having a pharmacist on staff. They'll also discuss concerns that many seniors have about taking too much medication. When is it safe to reduce some medicines? Which ones can't we live without?

Diabetes Management
Thursday, December 15; 1 to 2 p.m.
Recently Dr. Ali added Lalitha Sukumar, PharmD, Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacist, to her practice. Learn how they are partnering their skills with new technology to help patients understand and manage diabetes at a higher level with better results. Join us to learn more about managing diabetes effectively.

Hypertension Management
Thursday, January 12; 1 to 2 p.m.
Teaming up to lead this conversation on hypertension management, Dr. Ali and Lalitha Sukumar, PharmD, Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacist, will discuss the causes, symptoms and treatment of hypertension, also referred to as high blood pressure. Don't miss this opportunity to positively impact your overall health! All attendees will be offered a free blood pressure screening.

KEY FACTS ABOUT BREAST CANCER

IMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF EARLY DETECTION AND ADVANCED TREATMENT OPTIONS

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women, according to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), with about 1 in 8 developing the disease in her lifetime. Survival rates improve when the cancer is detected early.

“Even in advanced stages of breast cancer, there are new, novel therapies available that can prolong life,” says Meera Yogarajah, MD, medical oncologist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

To help mark October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Dr. Yogarajah explains more about this common but treatable disease.

What’s the most important thing to know about breast cancer?

Age-appropriate screening promotes early diagnosis and early intervention, which leads to improved chances of survival and overall better outcomes. Risk increases with age, so the benefits of screening increase with age as well. The American Cancer Society suggests women have the option to start screening annually at age 40, which should be individualized based on patient preferences after discussion of potential risks and benefits. Women ages 45 to 54 should have a mammogram every year; those 55 and older can continue yearly screening or switch to every other year if warranted. Women at especially high risk for breast cancer due to factors such as family or personal history should begin regular screening at an earlier age.

What tends to surprise people about breast cancer?

A higher body mass index, or BMI, is associated with higher risk of breast cancer in post-menopausal women. Weight is a modifiable risk factor, meaning it’s something we have some control over. So paying attention

to weight and aspects of lifestyle such as eating a healthy diet and engaging in regular physical activity can reduce the risk of breast cancer. That’s something not everyone is aware of.

What are treatment options if you’re diagnosed?

Treatment generally involves a multidisciplinary approach that may include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and other therapeutics. Treatment plans are highly individualized and tailored to you depending on factors such as the subtype of cancer you have. Examples include whether the cancer is hormone receptor positive, HER2 positive or triple negative. These subtypes reflect cancer’s susceptibility to specific treatments. Determining your cancer profile helps guide you and your oncologist toward the most effective therapy.

How has treatment for breast cancer changed?

Treatments are increasingly focused on specific targets such as hormones and proteins that, if blocked or controlled, can stop or slow the growth of cancer cells. In hormone receptor positive early-stage breast cancer, a genomic test called the Oncotype DX Breast Recurrence Score is predictive of chemotherapy benefits and recurrences. Based on the scores, not everyone who needed chemotherapy in the past needs it today, and research continues to advance.

Patients at RWJUH Hamilton, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—have access to clinical trials for both early- and late-stage cancers. Your provider can help evaluate whether you’re a candidate for this treatment option.



MEERA YOGARAJAH, MD

*
RWJBarnabas Health and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—provide close-to-home access to the most advanced treatment options. Call 844.CANCERNJ or visit www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer.

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RWJBarnabas HEALTH

Let's be healthy together.





HOLIDAY BLUES? HERE'S HOW TO COPE

WHY THE HOLIDAYS CAN BE AN EMOTIONAL MINEFIELD— AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP KEEP NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AT BAY

The days are getting shorter, the weather's getting cooler and soon the holidays will be here. For some of us, the weeks and months leading up to the holiday season are filled with eager anticipation. But for many others, this time can be an emotional minefield fraught with crippling anxiety and depression. Here, psychiatrist Arnold Williams, MD, Medical Director of the Behavioral Health Center, part of RWJBarnabas Health's Behavioral Health and Addictions Services, explains the link between the holidays and depression—and offers advice to help you cope.

Why do people get depressed around the holidays?

The holidays coincide with late fall and winter, when exposure to sunlight is decreased. This can have a profound effect on mood. In addition, many businesses slow or even shut down during the holidays, and, for some, that may mean fewer opportunities for social interaction.

Do the holidays tend to exacerbate existing depression?

The holiday season is a time of reflection and gift-giving, which can be rewarding for those in fortunate circumstances. However, isolation, separation from loved ones and anniversaries of loss can all worsen depression.

What's the difference between being depressed and simply feeling sad?

Depression implies a wide constellation of symptoms over several days or weeks. The emotion itself is



ARNOLD A. WILLIAMS, MD

only one component. Most commonly, that emotion is sadness, but there can also be anger, loneliness, worry or anxiety, as well as changes in thoughts and behaviors. Examples include losing interest in things you usually enjoy, a decrease in energy, changes in appetite or sleep

7 WAYS TO COUNTERACT HOLIDAY DEPRESSION

According to RWJBarnabas psychiatrist Arnold Williams, MD, there are things you can do to mitigate depression:

1. Maintain contact with friends and family, if possible.
2. Get as much natural sunlight as you can.
3. Exercise—walk, run, move.
4. Practice yoga, mindfulness and meditation. They work!
5. Recognize that this too shall pass. You've survived all of the bad days you've had so far—that's proof that things can get better again.
6. Don't try to ease the pain with substances; it will compound the problem.
7. Know that you're not alone. Reach out to a professional who can help you.

patterns and reduced self-esteem. At its most extreme, depression can include suicidal thoughts or feelings of not wanting to be alive.


Do depression and anxiety always go hand-in-hand?

They can happen together or separately. Philosophically, depression and anxiety are two sides of the same coin. Anxiety is an anticipatory "what if" reaction, dreading the unknown and fearing the worst. Depression is a conclusion that the worst is happening right now and may not ever get better.

How does grief impact depression and vice versa?

Grief can be a trigger for a relapse in depression, and a person who's been depressed may experience a prolonged grief period. The holidays are difficult partly because they're usually connected to memories of a lost loved one.

If you or a loved one are in need of mental health treatment, call our Access Center, open 24 hours a day, at 1.800.300.0628 to learn more about your mental health options or visit www.rwjbh.org/behavioralhealth.



HELPING YOU NAVIGATE YOUR CANCER JOURNEY

ONCOLOGY NURSE NAVIGATORS OFFER COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO PATIENTS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS.

Being diagnosed with cancer is life-changing. It can have a profound effect on your psyche, leaving you feeling frightened, confused and overwhelmed. At the same time, you need to make calm, clear and timely decisions about important matters such as doctors and treatment options.

That's why RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) and Rutgers Cancer

Institute of New Jersey, the state's only National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, developed the Oncology Nurse Navigation Program.

For a person with cancer, a nurse navigator is not just a valuable resource, but a smiling face and a caring individual to help you and your family maneuver the often uncharted territory of your cancer journey.



*

RWJBarnabas Health, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—provides close-to-home access to the most advanced treatment options. Call 844.CANCERNJ or visit www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer.

EACH NAVIGATOR BRINGS A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE, ENERGY AND EMPATHY. YOU’RE UNIQUE WITH YOUR OWN STORY, AND THE NAVIGATOR IS THERE TO LISTEN AND HELP.

you helps you participate fully in treatment decisions, achieve quality outcomes and reduce stress.

When was the program developed, and how has it changed since its inception?

The RWJBH nurse navigation program began in 2018 with 18 navigators. Today we have 45 navigators and are growing. Oncology nurses receive navigation-specific training as well as ongoing education to improve care through measures such as shortening the time between diagnosis and meeting with an oncologist and improving access to palliative care.

Our program is the state’s largest. We routinely conduct quality improvement projects and have presented our outcomes nationally to share best practices. We are one team across our facilities. If you see an oncologist from Rutgers Cancer Institute, for example, but want to receive radiation therapy closer to home or need to see an RWJBH subspecialist, we help coordinate your care seamlessly between sites.

What are some benefits that patients might find surprising?

You’re quickly assessed for any barriers to care and provided resources to overcome them. Barriers often include lack of knowledge, transportation difficulties and financial hurdles. Helping you ease worries allows you to focus on getting well. One aspect is that anxiety and fear of the unknown sometimes prevent people from starting potentially life-saving treatments. We’ll assess this and provide support so you can get the right care. Or, for example, if you’re a candidate for a clinical trial, the navigator can educate you about that and connect you with a research team.

Each navigator brings a wealth of knowledge, energy and empathy. You’re unique with your own story, and the navigator is there to listen and help.

Jeanne Silva, MSN, RN-BC, Assistant Vice President, Oncology Access and Nurse Navigation, Oncology Services, explains what the Oncology Nurse Navigation Program is and how it works.

What does the Oncology Nurse Navigation Program do?

If you’re diagnosed with cancer and are a patient at RWJBH, the program

places an expert at your side who advocates for you and provides direction, support and information through all phases of treatment at no additional charge. The nurse navigator is the hub of your care team, communicating your needs across departments and answering your questions about what to expect, what to do, where to go and why. Having a trusted, committed expert guiding



ONE STEP AT A TIME

SPINA BIFIDA COULDN'T STOP LITTLE NIKOS.
THE TEAM AT CSH WOULDN'T LET IT.



Thanks to the dedicated care and support of his physical therapists (previous page) at CSH, the love of his parents and his own indomitable spirit, Nikos Kaymakcian, who was born with spina bifida, continues to make great strides.

at RWJBarnabas Health.

CSH physical therapist Tara Iannello, who has been working with Nikos since then, “is an angel,” says Nicole. Nikos also works with physical therapist Natalie Vulpis. “She gives Nikos a push when he doesn’t want to do something and has also been a great fit for him,” says Nicole.

The CSH physical therapists go out of their way, not only to provide great care, but to customize it and make it fun. “Last year, Nikos loved superheroes,” says Nicole, “so Tara set up superhero action figures in stations so he had to practice walking to each one.”

Though Nikos has some weakness in his ankles and feet due to nerve damage, he’s on par with all other milestones for his age and, says his mom, “he’s now walking with braces and his walker, taking steps on his own.

“I can’t say enough good things about what the people at CSH have done for my son. We’re so blessed.

We love them with all our heart.”

The feelings are mutual.

“He’s such a sweet and funny kid, and he’s gotten so strong,”

Iannello says of Nikos. “We have no doubt that he’s going to do great things in this world.”



Nikos Kaymakcian is a happy little boy who loves pirates and practicing karate with his older brother, Arman. As he approaches his fourth birthday, his parents, Nicole and AJ Kaymakcian, can’t help but wonder how their lives might be different if they hadn’t sought a second opinion when Nicole was pregnant with Nikos. It was then, at their 20-week ultrasound, that Nicole and AJ were told that their son has spina bifida, a neural tube defect (NTD) that often results in spinal cord and nerve damage. “The doctor told us that our son would never walk or be able to use the bathroom on his own and would require a shunt to drain fluid from his brain,” Nicole recalls. In one fell swoop, their hopes and dreams for their baby came crashing down.

But a friend whose child had received a similar diagnosis recommended that

Nicole contact her neurosurgeon for a second opinion. After examining Nicole and her baby, the doctor told Nicole to go home and enjoy her pregnancy. “He said, ‘When your son is born, we’ll do surgery and take it from there,’” she remembers. And that’s what happened.

In October, 2018, Nicole gave birth to Nikos at Monmouth Medical Center, and the neurosurgeon performed the baby’s surgery the following day. Before his first birthday, Nikos began early intervention with physical therapy at Children’s Specialized Hospital (CSH), part of the Children’s Health Network



To learn more about outpatient programs and services at Children’s Specialized Hospital, visit rwjbh.org/cshoutpatient or call **888.244.5373**.

At Children’s Specialized Hospital, we provide world-class care for children and young adults who face special health challenges across the state of New Jersey and beyond. We treat everything from chronic illnesses and complex physical disabilities, like brain and spinal cord injuries, to a full scope of developmental, behavioral and mental health concerns. We have convenient locations throughout the state: Bayonne, Clifton, East Brunswick, Eatontown, Egg Harbor Township, Hamilton, Jersey City, New Brunswick, Newark, Somerset, Toms River, Union and West Orange.

THE LOWDOWN ON LOW-DOSE ASPIRIN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE LATEST GUIDELINES FOR HEART ATTACK AND STROKE PREVENTION

For years, taking a daily low-dose aspirin for the prevention of heart attack and stroke has been a widely accepted practice. But the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recently issued updated guidelines recommending against its use in certain patients for primary prevention of heart disease. Here, cardiologist Jeffrey S. Lander, MD, Co-Director of Sports Cardiology at RWJBarnabas Health, Co-Medical Director of the Cardiac Care Unit at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group, explains.

How are the new guidelines different from the previous guidelines?



JEFFREY S. LANDER, MD

The 2022 guidelines state that using aspirin in select 40- to 59-year-olds may have some benefit in preventing heart disease, but it is not recommended for people aged 60 and older.

This is a big change from the 2016 guidelines, which recommended using aspirin for primary prevention in adults aged 50 to 59 who were at risk for cardiovascular disease, and to consider its use for certain adults aged 60 to 69 who were at risk for cardiovascular disease.

What prompted these new recommendations?

Older trials of aspirin use for primary prevention showed benefits—for example, reduction in heart attacks. However, more recent studies did not show a significant reduction in cardiovascular disease. In addition, many of these trials also showed significant risk of internal bleeding among those taking daily aspirin. Given these findings, the recommendations changed.

Are there exceptions to the new guidelines?

It's very important to remember that these recommendations don't pertain to patients with a prior history of heart attack, stroke, bypass surgery or a

recent stent procedure. If someone has that history, it's generally beneficial to take a low-dose daily aspirin as it helps reduce the risk of recurrent cardiac disease or events.

If someone has been following a low-dose aspirin regimen for years, what should they do?

In that case, it's important that they speak to their doctor or healthcare provider before making any changes. All of the risks and benefits should be weighed prior to stopping aspirin. Most of the time when aspirin is to be stopped, it's OK to simply stop; a step-down approach isn't needed.

How will the new guidelines change your recommendations to patients?

I feel that most of the latest evidence is in support of the new guideline recommendations.

Each patient is unique, and when recommending to either use or not use aspirin for primary prevention of heart disease, the risks and benefits should be discussed and weighed by doctor and patient to make an individualized plan.

Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you. To connect with a top cardiovascular specialist at RWJBarnabas Health, call **888.724.7123** or visit www.rwjbh.org/heart.





SUPPORTING HOLISTIC CANCER CARE

AN ANNUAL EVENT DRAWS SPONSORS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR 'A WONDERFUL EVENING.'

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton recently held its sixth We vs. C™ event to support the Holistic Program at the hospital's Cancer Center, this year with the theme "Bohemian Dream."

"It was a wonderful evening filled with many diverse experiences that were enjoyed by guests," says Donna Bouchard, RWJUH Hamilton Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair of the event. "From a tremendous selection of culinary delights to beautiful dancing, music and interactive activities, the event had something for everyone."

Many guests commented on the event's relaxed ambiance and distinctive entertainment presentations, Bouchard notes. A raffle of items such as gifts and travel packages "was also a huge success," she says. "We were thrilled to welcome so many guests interested in supporting We vs. C and our holistic programming."

Members of the event planning team, RWJUH Hamilton leadership and the RWJUH Hamilton Foundation thank the many sponsors, listed at right, that made the event a success.

At the We vs. C event were (from left) Yolanda Zaffutti Stinger, Chair, Foundation Board; Lisa Freeman, Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair, We vs. C; Richard Freeman, President and CEO, RWJUH Hamilton; Donna Bouchard, Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair, We vs. C; and Michael Pratico Jr., Vice Chairman and Board Member.

PRESENTING SPONSOR

- The Parkinson Alliance

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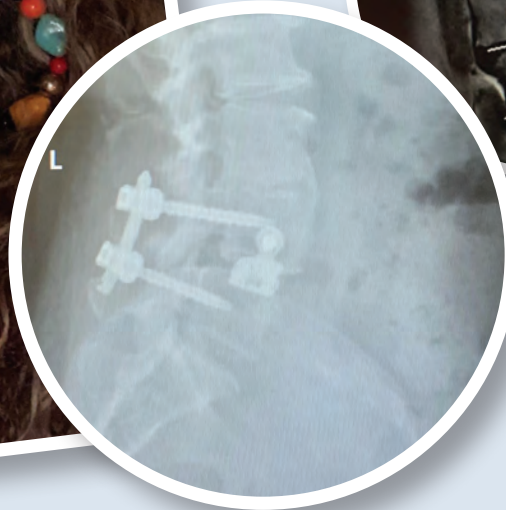
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To learn more about how to support Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, visit www.rwjbh.org/wevsc.





Lourenza Mejia was amazed at how effectively an implant placed during spine surgery resolved an abnormality in her lower back.



SOLVING A SPINAL PROBLEM

DECIDING TO UNDERGO MINIMALLY INVASIVE SPINE SURGERY CHANGES A WOMAN'S LIFE.

Lourenza Mejia didn't want spine surgery. "I put it off for more than three years," says the Hamilton Township resident.



MARC J. LEVINE, MD

She wrestled with a dilemma that many people who are pondering surgery must address: At what point does pain, decreasing quality of life or the threat of poor health in

the future make a significant procedure the best path forward?

Looking back, Lourenza is certain about her decision. "I love to tell my story," she says. "If you have any spinal problem, don't hesitate to see my surgeon and have him solve it."

PINCHING THE NERVE

It was during an exercise class in 2017 that Lourenza noticed the first hint that something wasn't right: a sensation she describes as a shock in her left leg. "It came from nowhere, would come and go,

then stop,” she says. “I’d feel it for seconds, and that was it.”

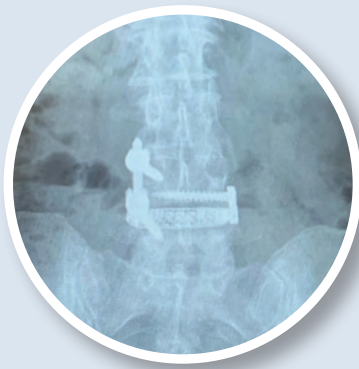
The odd sensations at first didn’t affect her daily life. But she had worked as a biomedical lab technologist and had an inkling of what might be going on. Concerned, she consulted a doctor who had performed minimally invasive spine surgery on her husband, Juan Carlos Mejia, in 2009: Marc J. Levine, MD, Director of the Orthopedic Spine Surgery Program in the Orthopedic and Spine Institute at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

“Dr. Levine ordered an MRI,” Lourenza recalls. The results weren’t encouraging. “He told me I had spondylolisthesis,” she says.

Spondylolisthesis is a condition in which one bony vertebra of the spine slips forward in relation to the vertebra below it. In Lourenza’s case, this occurred between the L4 and L5 vertebrae, which meant she had a structural defect in the lumbar spine of her lower back, an area that’s subject to stress during normal movement.

“The vertebrae are essentially blocks of bone connected to a ring that encloses the spinal cord running down the middle,” Dr. Levine says. “When one ring moves forward, there’s less space in the middle where the nerves are.” That can pinch nerves in the spinal canal, causing a range of symptoms, including pain.

Lourenza likely had been predisposed to the condition at birth. “She’s a very active person, and the problem developed due to excess stress over many years,” Dr. Levine says. Surgery can resolve the issue, but Lourenza was hesitant. Then her symptoms became markedly worse.



“THESE MINIMALLY INVASIVE PROCEDURES ALLOW PATIENTS TO RECOVER MUCH MORE QUICKLY WITH LESS PAIN THAN THEY WOULD WITH TRADITIONAL OPEN SURGERIES. MANY TIMES, RESULTS CAN BE DRAMATIC AND TRULY SURPRISE PEOPLE.”

Marc J. Levine, MD

A TIMELY DECISION

“In 2019, I started feeling tingling and numbness in my feet,” Lourenza says. “I knew my main spinal nerve was being compressed.” She especially felt numb when standing or walking. When on her feet, she began holding on to her husband for support. “The numbness feeling was terrible,” she says. “I started feeling unsafe due to the sense that I could fall at any moment.”

The value of surgery started to become clear. “At this point, I was more scared to become dependent on others than to go for surgery,” Lourenza says. “Surgery offered a chance to have my life back.”

Further delay could have restricted future treatment. “In this type of pathology, if people wait too long, a deformity can progress to a point where it limits the minimally invasive approaches that we were able to use in her case,” Dr. Levine says.

He recommends seeing a doctor early in a degenerative process and monitoring progress over time. “If there are no symptoms, there usually is no surgery,” he says. “But if there are symptoms and a deformity is worsening, you may have fewer options if the deformity gets past a certain point from a structural standpoint.”

Lourenza decided to proceed with surgery in September 2021 at RWJUH Hamilton both because the hospital was right in her own community and because her husband’s earlier spine surgery had turned out well. “I trusted Dr. Levine,” she says.

SPARING THE BACK

“We used a relatively new minimally invasive procedure called an extreme lateral interbody fusion,” Dr. Levine says. The procedure accesses the spine through small incisions in the side rather than through the back or front of the body. “This approach doesn’t disrupt major back muscles and avoids the often-painful long-term problems people can have with open procedures,” he says.

Dr. Levine placed a titanium implant in Lourenza’s spine and locked it in place with a plate and screws. Special imaging called fluoroscopic intraoperative imaging took continuous X-rays that provided the surgical team video-like views of the spine as they worked.

“The implant allows us to realign, fix and fuse the spine, which takes pressure off the nerve and prevents the deformity from worsening,” Dr. Levine says.

“These minimally invasive procedures allow patients to recover much more quickly with less pain than they would with traditional open surgeries. Many times, results can be dramatic and truly surprise people.”

Lourenza was among the amazed. “Starting about three hours after surgery, I was able to stand without any symptoms,” she says. “No pain, no numbness, no tingling—nothing!” Just as remarkable, she required no physical therapy after surgery. “The only exercise indicated by Dr. Levine was to walk, walk, walk as much as possible,” Lourenza says. “After three months, I went back to my workout classes. I’m so grateful to Dr. Levine. He’s our angel.”

To learn more about the Orthopedic Spine Surgery Program in the Orthopedic and Spine Institute at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, call **609.689.7031** or visit www.rwjbh.org/spine.





THE HEARING/BALANCE CONNECTION

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT DIZZINESS, VERTIGO AND OTHER UNSTEADY SENSATIONS

Feeling dizzy, lightheaded or otherwise unsteady is as common as it is dangerous. About 69 million Americans have balance problems including vertigo—the sensation of spinning or moving even though your body remains still.

Balance difficulties often contribute to potentially debilitating falls in people over age 65. That makes it important to understand what keeps us steady and what can go wrong, says Jinbo Jung, DPT, Senior Physical Therapist at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton Balance and Hearing Center. Here's what you need to know.

Dizziness isn't just a vision problem.
“There's a relationship between hearing

and the balance, or vestibular, system,” Jung says. What experts sometimes call the balance organ is located in the inner ears. It consists of a bony structure containing three fluid-filled canals that help determine where the body is in space. Nerves connect the vestibular system to the brain, which sends information through the central nervous system to the rest of the body. “The vestibular system is sensitive to changes in head and body position, which also involves movement of the eyes,” Jung says.

Solutions often come from physical therapists and audiologists.

Primary care physicians often refer patients with balance problems to an audiologist who has expertise in assessing

vestibular disorders. Treatment is then often handled by physical therapists specially trained in vestibular therapy. Vestibular deficits can make everyday activities like walking, climbing stairs, showering and brushing teeth difficult, but therapy can rehabilitate people and help them regain control over their movements, activities and lives.

Tests can pinpoint problems.

A variety of tests help audiologists and physical therapists understand what's causing balance issues. For example, using a variety of methods to observe eye movements as the head tilts in assorted positions or as you view an object from different directions can reveal which ear and even what part of



HOPE FOR HEARING LOSS

Judith McCallister had tried hearing aids before, but they didn't seem to help much. Then a nephew of the 79-year-old resident of Bucks County, PA, encouraged her to seek help at the nearby Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton Balance and Hearing Center. "After a couple of follow-up visits, my new hearing aids were working properly," McCallister says. "I absolutely am feeling different and more independent. My phone is through my hearing aids—I even stream TV through them."

More people like McCallister could have similar success. Hearing loss affects about a third of adults ages 65 to 74 and nearly half of those older than 75, according to the National Institute on Aging. Yet only about 20 percent of people who might benefit from treatment seek help.

"There's an unfortunate stigma around hearing loss and treatment options, especially hearing aids, but hearing loss is a common medical condition," says Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, Senior Audiologist at the Balance and Hearing Center.

It's not a superficial problem. "Adults with hearing loss are at higher risk of developing certain health conditions such as social isolation, depression, anxiety, falls, cognitive decline and even dementia," Sgarlato says. She recommends that adults ages 50 to 60 get screened for hearing loss and those 61 and older receive diagnostic testing annually.

Treatment options include hearing aids, special training, certain medicines and surgery, with options tailored to patients' lifestyles and resources. The RWJUH Hamilton Balance and Hearing Center offers a 30-day full refund on hearing aids, which allows patients to find the right match and fit at no cost until they're fully satisfied with a hearing device.



DO YOU HAVE HEALTHY HEARING?

You might need a hearing evaluation if:

- You experience dizziness
- You've had a fall
- You have pain or ringing in your ears
- People around you often seem to mumble
- You often ask people to repeat themselves
- Others complain that you turn the TV volume too high
- You have trouble following conversations when more than one person is talking
- You have to listen carefully or strain to understand a conversation
- You have trouble hearing on the phone
- You have difficulty hearing in noisy settings such as restaurants

the vestibular organ is involved.

Simple body movements can restore balance.

Many cases of dizziness are caused by a condition called benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), in which tiny crystals that help maintain orientation in the inner ear become displaced. "The distinct feature of BPPV is a room-spinning sensation," Jung says. "Treating it requires a simple maneuver to get crystals back where they belong." A

therapist often can correct the problem in a single session.

Treatment is individually tailored.

People with severe symptoms, difficulties with both ears or more complex vestibular issues may require multiple sessions or additional forms of rehabilitation therapy. A trained vestibular therapist may work on posture, head position and gaze to help people deal with problems such as staying balanced while walking,

especially when turning the head—as you might do while strolling down a grocery aisle. In some cases, balance difficulties may signal an underlying chronic health issue such as uncontrolled diabetes or blood pressure, or an issue with the neck or brain.

"Most people see good results from vestibular therapy in a matter of weeks," Jung says. "If they don't, we know what to recommend for further evaluation, such as seeing a neurologist, to get people the help they need."

To learn more about the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton Balance and Hearing Center, call **609.245.7390**.



HEART ATTACK

HOW THEY COMPARE— AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT THEM

Heat attack and stroke can seem similar:

- Both involve reduced blood flow and can share underlying causes.
- Lifestyle measures can help prevent them.

- Having poor heart health can boost risks of stroke and vice versa.

But in other ways, heart attack and stroke are very different. Here's how they stack up.



Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you. To connect with a top cardiovascular specialist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, call 888.724.7123 or visit www.rwjbh.org/heart.



HEART ATTACK

WHAT IS A HEART ATTACK?

A heart attack is a medical emergency usually caused when a blockage such as a blood clot reduces flow in one or more of the coronary arteries—blood vessels that supply the heart with oxygen-rich blood.

WHAT ARE KEY WARNING SIGNS?

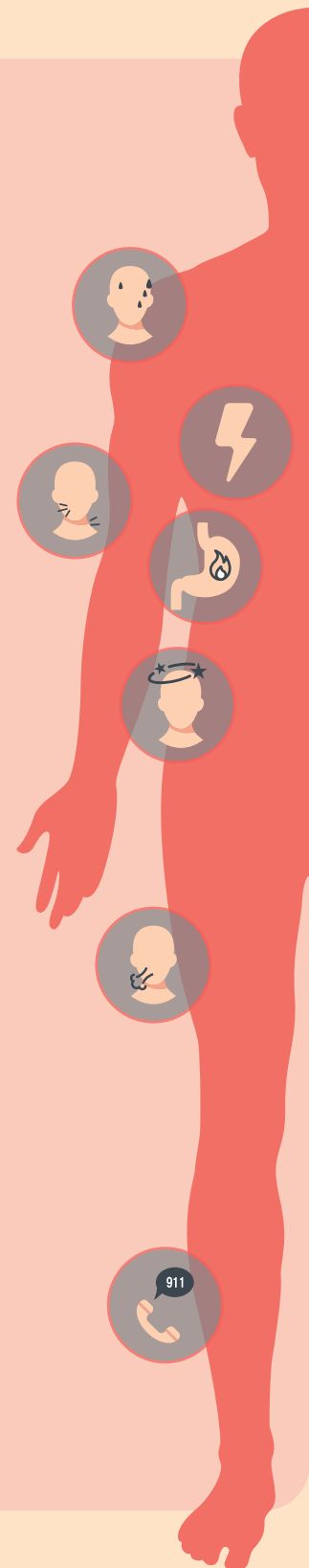
- Cold sweat
- Chest pain or pressure. (Men may notice chest discomfort more than women do.)
- Pain in the jaw, neck or back
- Pain or discomfort in one or both shoulders
- Nausea or indigestion
- Weakness, lightheadedness or faintness
- Shortness of breath

I THINK I'M HAVING A HEART ATTACK. NOW WHAT?

Call 911 immediately. Getting to an emergency room right away helps ensure you receive treatment as soon as possible, which can prevent a heart attack from getting worse, reduce damage to the heart muscle or even save your life. For example, doctors at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton can perform minimally invasive angioplasty, which quickly opens clogged coronary arteries and restores blood flow to the heart.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A HEART ATTACK?

Cardiac rehabilitation is an important way that people who have had a heart attack not only can recover but also can restore heart health and learn to reduce risks of having another heart attack.



VS. STROKE



STROKE

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke is a medical emergency—sometimes called a brain attack—in which a blockage such as a blood clot reduces the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the brain (ischemic stroke) or an artery in the brain leaks or bursts (hemorrhagic stroke). Strokes cause brain cells to die from lack of oxygen within minutes.

WHAT ARE KEY WARNING SIGNS?

- Sudden eyesight impairments such as double vision or vision loss
- Droopy face or uneven smile
- Difficulty speaking
- Balance problems such as dizziness, unsteadiness or poor coordination
- Sudden confusion or difficulty understanding others
- Severe, sudden headache without a known cause
- Weakness or numbness, especially on one side of the body

I THINK I'M HAVING A STROKE. NOW WHAT?

Call 911 immediately. Every minute counts, and it's important to receive medical care as soon as possible—preferably at a Primary Stroke Center such as RWJUH Hamilton—to prevent lasting complications such as brain damage or disability, or even stave off death.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A STROKE?

Neurorehabilitation guided by experts at RWJUH Hamilton's Center for Neurosciences can help people who have had either ischemic or hemorrhagic strokes relearn skills that may have been lost after a brain-damaging incident or learn new skills to improve quality of life.

HOW CAN I PREVENT HEART ATTACKS AND STROKES?

What's good for your heart is generally good for your brain. Key steps like these can reduce your risks of both heart attack and stroke.

- Control blood pressure. High blood pressure damages blood vessels and can increase the risk of a blockage.
- Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy and seafood. Avoid added sugar, saturated fats and sodium.
- Limit alcohol. Drinking too much can raise blood pressure.
- Manage diabetes. High blood sugar can damage nerves and blood vessels.
- Quit smoking. Smoking damages blood vessels and increases your risk of blood clots.
- Keep active. Getting your heart pumping for at least 150 minutes a week can lower blood pressure and other risks.



To learn more about the Center for Neurosciences at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, visit www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonneuro.

Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you.

Leaders in emergency and elective angioplasty.

Ever feel tightness in your chest when going up a flight of stairs, or short of breath after carrying in the groceries? These can be signs of coronary artery disease. If you think you may be at risk, you should talk to a cardiac specialist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton. At RWJBarnabas Health, we perform more elective and emergent procedures than any other health care system in New Jersey. Our heart team can clear blocked or narrowed arteries to safely restore blood flow to your heart. Schedule an appointment with one of New Jersey's top cardiac specialists at rwjbh.org/heart

**Robert Wood Johnson
University Hospital
Hamilton**

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HEALTH**

Let's be healthy together.

