

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

SPRING 2019

# healthy

*together*

**DEFEATING  
DIZZINESS**

**A UNIQUE SURGICAL  
TEAM MEMBER**

**BETTER  
HEALTH:  
AGE 55+**

**WHERE TO GET  
THE BEST CANCER CARE**

# SAFETY: It Takes a Team

When it comes to safety, our philosophy is simple. RWJBarnabas Health is committed to zero incidents of preventable harm for our patients, families, visitors and each other. This quest, which we call Safety Together, is designed to help create the best possible outcomes for our patients and an exceptional work environment for our team.

We're applying the same tools used by High Reliability Organizations (HROs) in the manufacturing and nuclear industries. These companies have greatly reduced accidents by using standardized error-prevention processes. Similar safety systems are being embraced by our staff in both clinical and non-clinical roles as they go about their day-to-day tasks.

At Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton, we work hard every day to ensure the safety of every person receiving care, visiting or working in our facilities. Over the past two years, our hospital has consistently earned Leapfrog Safety Grade "A". In addition, The Leapfrog Group named RWJUH Hamilton one of the 2018 Top 35 General Hospitals in the country. *U.S. News & World Report* also recognized us as a top hospital for healthcare quality in its 2018 "Top Hospitals" issue. We are grateful for the acknowledgement and even more energized to continue our journey toward HRO status.

Becoming an HRO means everyone who works for RWJBarnabas Health knows that they can make a difference for our patients, for their teammates at work, and for our communities as a whole. We're excited to empower our family of employees to do everything possible to support our mission of excellence as we care for you and your family.

Yours in good health,

**BARRY H. OSTROWSKY**  
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
RWJBARNABAS HEALTH



**RICHARD FREEMAN**  
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON  
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL HAMILTON



## HEALTH NEWS

### DONATE YOUR TIME

Adult volunteer opportunities are available throughout the hospital. They include bedside harp internships; pet therapy visitation; gift shop or information desk assistance; and Emergency Department patient transport. To learn more and to apply, please call the Volunteer Office at 609.631.6981 or visit our website at [www.rwjhamilton.org](http://www.rwjhamilton.org).

### STROKE SIGNS

Actor Luke Perry's recent passing is a reminder that stroke can happen at younger ages. Perry, who starred on "Beverly Hills 90210" and "Riverdale," was only 52. "Act FAST" is a simple way to remember the signs of a stroke: "F" stands for face (does one side of the face droop when the person smiles?). "A" stands for arms (does one arm drift downward when the person tries to raise both arms?). "S" stands for speech (is the person's speech slurred or strange?). Finally, "T" stands for time. If you notice any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately.

### A GENEROUS GIFT



The Rotary Club of Hamilton donated \$5,000 to support the new holistic programs and services offered at RWJUH Hamilton. Programs include healing art workshops, meditation and Reiki, which promotes healing by improving the flow of energy around the body.

**Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton** | **RWJBarnabas HEALTH**

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609.586.7900

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# DEFEATING DIZZINESS

**HOW ONE WOMAN OVERCAME  
VERTIGO THROUGH  
PHYSICAL THERAPY AND  
HOME EXERCISES.**

What started as a routine trip to the supermarket ended with a visit to the emergency room when 70-year-old Georgianna Aiken experienced a severe bout of dizziness in the spring of 2018. “I’d never seen things move so quickly,” recalls Georgianna, who lives in Princeton Junction. “I was so nauseous and off-balance I couldn’t even walk.”

Emergency Department physicians couldn’t find the cause of her dizziness and sent Georgianna home with a prescription for the antihistamine meclizine, which is commonly used to treat dizziness and loss of balance (also known as vertigo). A visit to her primary care physician also returned no answers; nor did an appointment with a neurologist. Georgianna assumed the episode was just a fluke, but a few weeks later it occurred again at a nail salon. Then it happened again. And again. “There was no rhyme or reason to it,” she says. “I stopped driving and my husband had to take me

everywhere. I was even afraid to go for a walk because I worried that I would fall and hurt myself.”

Georgianna made an appointment with an ear, nose and throat specialist (ENT), who recommended she see Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, an audiologist at the Balance & Hearing Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. Dr. Sgarlato suspected that Georgianna had a vestibular disorder, in which there is damage to the parts of the inner ear and brain that control balance and eye movements. The body maintains balance with sensory information from the eyes, muscles and joints, and the inner ear. If input from any of these sources conflicts, dizziness can result. Dr. Sgarlato performed a series of tests, including videonystagmography (VNG), which uses video cameras and goggles to measure eye movements. “Your eyes make movements that tell your brain which direction you’re turning in,” explains Dr. Sgarlato. “But Georgianna’s eyes weren’t in sync. The VNG testing revealed a weak reading in her right eye, which led us to believe that something was going on with her right inner ear.”

## RETRAINING THE EYES AND BRAIN

Nearly 70 million Americans—as many as 35 percent of adults who are 40 or older—



Left, center: Georgianna Aiken, who was diagnosed with a vestibular disorder, with her treatment team: Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, on left, and Palak Mulji, PT, on right. Right: Georgianna underwent videonystagmography testing, which uses video cameras and goggles to measure eye movements. It revealed a problem with her right inner ear.



have experienced some form of vestibular dysfunction, according to the Vestibular Disorders Association. Dr. Sgarlato wasn't certain of the underlying cause, but she thought Georgianna might be suffering from vestibular migraine, a type of headache in which vertigo is the only symptom. While certain migraine medications can help, Dr. Sgarlato felt that Georgianna would benefit from physical therapy. She referred Georgianna to Palak Mulji, PT, a physical therapist at RWJUH Hamilton who specializes in vestibular disorders.



Mulji zeroed in on the problem right away. "Since her right inner ear wasn't functioning correctly, her eyes couldn't focus, causing her symptoms," she explains. "But I was confident that we could retrain her eyes and brain to act in sync." The first step was to teach Georgianna gaze stabilization exercises to improve vision and her ability to focus on a stationary object while her head was moving. "I'd turn my head from side to side while keeping my eyes focused on the letter X," recalls Georgianna. At first, it seemed daunting, but after just two visits, she experienced dramatic improvement. "Once I was able to master that and no longer felt dizzy, I graduated to walking toward an object, then turning around and walking in the other direction while slowly moving my head from left to right," she says.



The next step: throwing some balance into the mix. Mulji had Georgianna walk on a balance beam while looking at the letter X a few feet in front of her. She also played ball with Georgianna, encouraging her to turn from side to side while trying to catch or bounce the ball to improve balance and help her eyes and brain adjust to the sudden motion.

At home, Georgianna shook her head from side to side in sync with a

metronome. "This taught her to control her eye movements so she wouldn't get so off-balance when she turned," says Mulji, who also suggested dietary modifications. Georgianna was eating out a lot, so her diet was high in sodium. "Excess salt can lower fluid in the inner ear, which can trigger symptoms," says Dr. Sgarlato.

### A COMPLETE RECOVERY

After three sessions, Georgianna said she was feeling better. After eight sessions, she had recovered. "I knew that I'd overcome my vertigo in August when I went to a wedding and could feel an episode coming on while we were sitting at dinner," recalls Georgianna. "I just stared at one of the

flowers in the table centerpiece, and within two minutes I felt fine." Since then, she hasn't had another episode.

Today, Georgianna says she has her life back. She can drive, go shopping and take long walks without worrying about dizziness. Georgianna credits the staff at RWJUH Hamilton for her speedy recovery. "They were able to diagnose and treat the problem within two months," she says. Mulji praises Georgianna's perseverance. "She did her exercises at home faithfully, even on days when she didn't feel well," she says. "I gave Georgianna the tools she needed to get better, but she did it herself—with hours of hard work and sheer determination."

Connect with RWJUH Hamilton for balance, hearing and physical therapy services. Call **609.586.7900** or visit [www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonbalancehearing](http://www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonbalancehearing).





## BENEFITS OF ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERY

- Greater precision
- Smaller and fewer scars (in some cases, no visible scarring at all)
- Less blood loss and a lower risk of requiring a blood transfusion due to smaller incisions
- Reduced risk of complications and infection
- Less pain
- Shorter hospital stay due to faster healing
- Quicker return to work and daily activities



A variety of urologic, gynecologic, general and bariatric surgeries are being performed using robotic technology designed to improve outcomes in patients having surgery on organs.

# A UNIQUE SURGICAL TEAM MEMBER

**ROBOTIC TECHNOLOGY ASSISTS DOCTORS IN PERFORMING MORE PRECISE, MINIMALLY INVASIVE OPERATIONS WITH FASTER RECOVERY TIMES.**

To learn more about robotic surgery at RWJUH Hamilton, visit [www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonroboticsurgery](http://www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonroboticsurgery).

The operating rooms at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton feature a unique addition to the surgical team: a robot. “Our surgeons perform a growing number of procedures using this important tool,” says Matthew Benjamin, Assistant Vice President, Surgical & Clinical Services. Robotic-assisted surgery combines a physician’s expertise with advanced technology. This technique improves precision and results in a minimally invasive surgery.

READ OUR **INTERACTIVE DIGEST** TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERY.

[www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonmag](http://www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonmag)



A variety of surgeries are being performed using the da Vinci Surgical System. It's designed to improve outcomes in patients having cancer treatment or surgery on organs such as the stomach, gallbladder and kidneys. When using the robot, a surgeon sits at a console and uses controls to manipulate surgical instruments. The robot has a wide range of motion and can maneuver in tight areas, allowing a physician to perform delicate surgeries in hard-to-reach places.

Robotic surgery involves small incisions and the use of a laparoscope—a thin tube with a tiny camera and light at the end—to view a patient's anatomy. The images are sent to a computer screen,

which magnifies a patient's organs, improving the surgeon's field of vision.

### HELPING A WIDE RANGE OF PATIENTS

Introduced to RWJUH Hamilton about 10 years ago, the da Vinci Surgical System is currently used to perform urologic, gynecologic, general and bariatric (weight loss) surgeries.

Of course, not every patient is a candidate for robotic-assisted surgery. Physicians determine candidacy based on the patient's health and the severity of his or her condition. In some cases, the use of other technology is more appropriate. Here's how patients can benefit from procedures performed with robotic-assisted surgery.

## GENERAL SURGERY AND BARIATRICS

Several general and bariatric (weight loss) procedures can now be performed using the da Vinci robot. The system's new, procedure-specific instruments allow our surgeons to use the robot to perform surgeries such as gallbladder removal, hernia repairs and bariatric gastric sleeve procedures.

As with gynecologic procedures, robotic-assisted general surgeries involve less pain, shorter hospital stays and quicker recoveries. Hernia repairs can be done through the belly button.

### ■ SURGEONS



**CHARLES EISENGART, MD**  
GENERAL SURGEON

Robotic Procedures Performed:  
Cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal); Hemicolectomy (removal of part of the colon); Inguinal Hernia Repair (a type of hernia repair); Low Anterior Resection (removal of the rectum); Ventral Hernia Repair (a type of hernia repair)



**ELIE GOLDENBERG, MD**  
GENERAL AND BARIATRIC SURGEON

Robotic Procedures Performed: Gastric Sleeve (removal of part of the stomach for weight loss); Inguinal Hernia Repair; Ventral Hernia Repair



**VAL PROKURAT, MD**  
(GENERAL AND BARIATRIC SURGEON)

Robotic Procedures Performed: Cholecystectomy; Gastric Sleeve; Inguinal Hernia Repair; Ventral Hernia Repair

## UROLOGY

"Urology is one of the specialties the system was developed for," says Benjamin. "The structures in this part of the body can be difficult for a surgeon to access with his or her hands." Robotic-assisted urologic surgeries, such as removal of the prostate gland or a kidney, involve less trauma, less blood loss and a faster recovery than open surgery.

### ■ SURGEONS



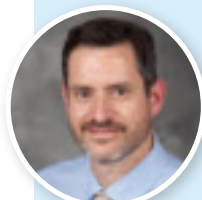
**MICHAEL COHEN, MD**

Robotic Procedure Performed:  
Prostatectomy (removal of the prostate gland)



**DEEP TRIVEDI, MD**

Robotic Procedure Performed:  
Pyeloplasty (urinary obstruction surgery)



**JOHN WATSON, MD**

Robotic Procedures Performed:  
Prostatectomy;  
Nephrectomy (removal of one or both kidneys)

## GYNECOLOGY

Robotic-assisted gynecologic procedures, such as hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) and myomectomy (removal of uterine fibroids), have several advantages over open surgery and traditional laparoscopic (minimally invasive) surgery. "There is less manipulation of the organs, which results in less post-operative pain and discomfort," says Benjamin. In addition, patients benefit from a quicker recovery and a shorter hospital stay.

In addition, some gynecologic procedures, such as hysterectomy and myomectomy, can be done using single-incision robotic-assisted surgery. The robot's arm is inserted into a small incision in the belly button, and there's no visible scarring.

### ■ SURGEON



**ROBERT MAYSON, MD**

Robotic Procedures Performed: Hysterectomy (removal of the uterus); Hysterectomy Supracervical (removal of the uterus but not the cervix); Myomectomy (removal of uterine fibroids); Ovarian Cystectomy (removal of an ovarian cyst); Single Site incision surgery





The RWJUH Hamilton Foundation Gala, held on October 20, 2018, raised more than \$100,000 for the Cancer Center at RWJUH Hamilton, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. From left to right: Richard Freeman, President and CEO; Stacy Spera and Tracey Destribats, Community Honorees; and Nina Melker, Chair, RWJUH Hamilton Foundation.

# CATCHING LUNG CANCER EARLY

**THANKS TO A NEW GRANT, IT'S EASIER THAN EVER TO BE SCREENED.**

In 2018, there were an estimated 234,000 new cases of lung cancer in the U.S., making it the second most common cancer diagnosis (breast cancer is first), according to the National Cancer Institute. Unfortunately, it's the leading cause of cancer death; fewer than 20 percent of patients survive five years because the disease is usually detected at a late stage.

To help save lives, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton provides a Lung Cancer Screening Program for patients with a history of smoking. In 2018, more than 180 patients at high risk for lung cancer were screened via low-dose CT scans. To increase that number, the RWJUH Hamilton Foundation recently received approximately \$60,000 in grant funds from the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. The funds will be used to cover screening costs and co-pays for 30 uninsured and underinsured patients, as well as medical evaluation fees for those who have a positive CT scan. Also covered are tobacco cessation education and counseling for uninsured and underinsured patients; nicotine replacement therapy options, such as gum and patches; and gas cards, which will encourage patients to come to the hospital for screening.

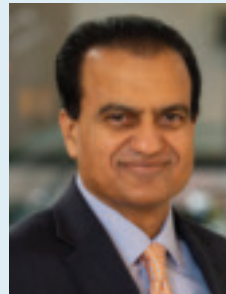
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**RWJBarnabas Health and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state's only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—provide close-to-home access to the latest treatment and clinical trials. Visit [www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer](http://www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer).**

For more information about the RWJUH Hamilton Foundation, please visit us at [www.rwjbh.org/hamiltongiving](http://www.rwjbh.org/hamiltongiving).



**FOLLOW THESE STRATEGIES TO REDUCE YOUR RISK OF SKIN CANCER.**



**MAQSOOD AMJAD, MD**

One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, making it the most common cancer in the U.S., according to the American Academy of Dermatology. The disease doesn't just affect fair-skinned people: "Studies show that when people of color are diagnosed with skin cancer, it's often in a late stage," says Maqsood Amjad, MD, Medical Director of the Medical

Oncology Program at RWJUH Hamilton Cancer Center.

May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month. With summer around the corner, it's a good time to think about the best ways to protect yourself from skin cancer. Here are a few simple steps you can take:

- **SEEK THE SHADE** when the sun's rays are strongest (between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.). Also, wear protective clothing, such as a hat and long-sleeved shirts and pants, as well as sunglasses.
- **USE A BROAD-SPECTRUM**, water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30. Don't forget to slather it on your ears, toes and the back of your neck, and aim to use 1 ounce, which is equivalent to 2 tablespoons. Reapply it every two hours or after swimming or sweating.
- **AVOID TANNING BEDS.** Exposure to ultraviolet radiation from these devices is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer.
- **CHECK YOUR SKIN** for any suspicious moles once a month.
- **HAVE A FULL-BODY SKIN EXAM** once a year (or every six months if you've had skin cancer or have a family history of the disease).

For more information about preventing and treating skin cancer, contact the RWJUH Hamilton Cancer Center at **609.631.6960** or [www.rwjbh.org/hamiltoncancer](http://www.rwjbh.org/hamiltoncancer).





# MAKING A REAL IMPACT

**RWJBARNABAS HEALTH IS COMMITTED TO PROMOTING COMMUNITY HEALTH, BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE A MEDICAL CENTER'S WALLS.**

A child is taken to the emergency department for asthma, is treated and sent home—to an apartment where leaky pipes cause mold that triggers her asthma.

A man is given a prescription for high blood pressure but can't afford to get it filled.

A woman is counseled about healthy eating to help control diabetes but doesn't have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Because social conditions play a critical role in wellness, RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) has ramped up its commitment to communities' whole health through its Social Impact and Community Investment (SICI) Practice.



**MICHELLENE DAVIS, ESQ.**

## FINDING WHAT WORKS

“Traditionally, the way in which institutions like ours have delivered healthcare has been to wait for people to come to us,” says Michellene Davis, Esq., Executive Vice President and Chief Corporate Affairs Officer for RWJBH, who heads the SICI effort. “Now we’re acting on the fact that health disparities begin and continue outside our doors. We’re looking at the whole patient and the context in which he or she lives.”

The range of approaches is broad. “Every RWJBarnabas Health hospital conducts its own community health needs assessment, because each community is unique,” Davis explains. Recent examples of SICI-related efforts include:

• **BUY LOCAL:** RWJBH has made a deep commitment to buy from local and minority- and women-owned businesses. For example, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center has a contract with Newark vendor Rock Ya Socks to

purchase socks for its patients, which has strengthened the vendor's capacity to grow and expand.

• **HIRE LOCAL:** RWJBH has pledged to hire 350 Newark residents by 2020 as part of the Newark 2020 partnership of local institutions and employers. Jersey City Medical Center's Career Ladders program, which will soon be adopted system-wide, helps develop a path to promotion for entry-level employees.

• **INVEST LOCAL:** To spur innovation and future investment, RWJBH has invested in Audible.com's Newark Venture Partners Labs IT innovation center to stimulate the establishment of new businesses.

Through partnerships, the RWJBH system helps improve community health, reduce disparities and enhance equity, including:

• **SAFE AND HEALTHY HOUSING:** Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick participated in the New Brunswick Healthy Housing Collaborative, designed to work with families to create high-health environments in homes throughout the region. RWJBH is currently in discussions with national, state and local partners to expand its commitment to creating affordable housing in other communities throughout the state.

• **FOOD SECURITY:** A Wellness on Wheels mobile greenhouse travels to communities throughout the entire RWJBH region. Additionally, youth in Newark created a documentary, “Food for Thought,” to explore the impact of food insecurity on a community's health.

Davis believes the SICI effort will inspire and energize not just RWJBH employees, but community members as well. “People will want to come to an entity that has high-quality, culturally competent clinical care, and at the same time invests in creating good in the world,” she says. “This is about being the change you wish to see in the world. Everyone is welcome to join us on this journey.”

To learn more about RWJBarnabas Health's social impact initiatives, visit [www.rwjbh.org/socialimpact](http://www.rwjbh.org/socialimpact).

# BETTER CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS ARE TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT HOW TO TREAT THE ELDERLY.

An elderly man who'd been admitted to the hospital was disoriented. "He thinks he's talking to his father, who died years ago," the man's daughter told his doctor. "Does this mean he has Alzheimer's?"

He did not. What he did have was delirium, brought on by the many changes in his routine caused by his admission to the hospital. It's a common problem for elderly patients, according to Jessica Israel, MD, Corporate Chair, Geriatrics and Palliative Care, for RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH).

"Family members get alarmed, but in many cases, that confusion is treatable—though we may have to be a bit of a detective to find out what the problem is," she explains. "It could be anything from untreated pain, to an electrolyte disturbance, to a urinary tract infection, to a sleep/wake cycle disturbance."

Sensitivity to changes in routine is just one of many reasons older patients need thoughtful care, Dr. Israel says. As the U.S. population ages—by the year 2030, 1 of every 5 residents will be older than 65, according to the U.S. Census Bureau—RWJBH facilities are at the forefront of a national drive to develop age-friendly care.



JESSICA ISRAEL, MD

"Throughout the system, we're taking a very close look at what it means to be age-friendly, not just in hospital care, but in all areas in which we treat patients," says Dr. Israel.

## A NEW APPROACH

The American Hospital Association, in partnership with the Catholic Health Association of the United States, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and the John A. Hartford Foundation, has created the "4M Model" to guide hospitals and health systems in providing age-friendly care. The four elements are:

**What Matters:** taking the time to sit down for a discussion with an older patient to understand his or her concerns, goals and preferences for treatment.

**Medications:** taking additional care with drugs. "Giving a new prescription to someone who is 90 years old is not the same as giving it to someone who is 19," says Dr. Israel. "As we age, medications don't work the same way in the body, and there's a greater risk of interactions."

**Mentation:** identifying and managing depression, dementia and delirium.

**Mobility:** making sure a patient is helped to move safely every day so he or she doesn't lose the muscle tone needed for everyday tasks.

## BEST PRACTICES

When Dr. Israel took on her role as Corporate Chair, Geriatrics and Palliative Care, almost two years ago, she knew that the RWJBH system already had some exemplary age-friendly programs. To extend their reach and to share ideas across hospitals, she created a geriatrics collaborative. "Every hospital in our system has a multidisciplinary team focused in geriatric care that may include doctors, nurses, social workers, physical therapists, administrators, pharmacists and health educators," says Dr. Israel.

Two areas stood out as ripe for expansion. One was the James and Sharon Maida Geriatrics Institute at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus, where Dr. Israel is the Director, which specializes in all aspects of inpatient and outpatient geriatric care. The other is Better Health, a senior membership program offered by the Institute, with a full range of health, wellness and social events. Both the Institute and the Better Health program will be replicated at Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton this year, with other RWJBH hospitals to follow.

The RWJBH system is moving ahead on multiple other fronts. Eight hospitals have or are working toward Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) certification, and all hospitals will ultimately have Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA). As part of the RWJBH partnership with Rutgers University, the geriatrics team also is working to enhance existing geriatrics fellowship training programs for physicians. And all RWJBH employees will take a computerized learning module, currently in development, that will help them understand what it means to be older.

The possibilities are endless, because geriatrics itself is so wide-ranging. "Sometimes the best person to reach out to is not a doctor, but a physical therapist, nutritionist or social worker," says Dr. Israel. "The thing I love most about geriatrics is that it's not some group of doctors telling you what to do. It's a team of people looking at your life and helping you live it to your best."





## HOW TO GET BETTER CARE

Jessica Israel, MD, Corporate Chair, Geriatrics and Palliative Care for RWJBarnabas Health, offers these tips for older adults.

- **Have an advocate.** “Sometimes four ears are better than two when it comes to a doctor visit or hospital stay,” says Dr. Israel.
- **Ask questions.** If you don’t understand something or it isn’t the way you thought it was going to be, ask.
- **Keep an accurate list of medications and physician contact numbers with you.** This will help doctors treat you more quickly if an emergency arises.
- **Explore advance directives.** “Patients of all ages should assign a healthcare proxy,” advises Dr. Israel. “But then also be sure to tell that person what your wishes are in the event that complicated medical decisions must be made.”

To learn more about age-friendly programs and services at RWJBarnabas Health, visit [www.rwjbh.org/seniorhealth](http://www.rwjbh.org/seniorhealth).





## THE CUTTING EDGE: BLOOD AND BONE MARROW TRANSPLANTS

For some cancer patients, a blood and bone marrow transplant (BMT) can be an effective treatment and even a potential cure. The Blood and Marrow Transplant Program at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey is the only such program in New Jersey that's integrated within an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center.

"All blood and immune cells are made in the bone marrow," explains Roger Strair, MD, PhD, Chief of Blood Disorders at Rutgers Cancer Institute. "Blood cells carry oxygen, fight infection and prevent bleeding. Immune cells also fight infection by attacking anything in the body that's perceived as not belonging, or foreign." In a BMT procedure from a donor, a patient receives a transplant of healthy blood and immune cells and those cells in turn grow and make new cells, including immune cells that can attack cancer cells. If the person's own cells are used, there is no immune attack of cancer, but the cells allow a rapid recovery from high-dose chemotherapy.

At Rutgers Cancer Institute, BMT is used to treat a variety of blood and immune disorders, including acute and chronic leukemias, various types of lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, multiple myeloma and more.

information. When a patient goes to an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, he or she gets the benefit of their collective knowledge, clinical trials and research.

### Does a patient need to travel to New Brunswick, where Rutgers Cancer Institute is located, in order to take advantage of its services?

No. We have built a network across all 11 RWJBarnabas Health hospitals so that the outstanding treatment and care provided by Rutgers Cancer Institute is available as close to home as possible for all New Jerseyans and those in our region.

If, for example, a patient lives near Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, that patient will find that the cancer program there is anchored by Rutgers Cancer Institute; that he or she has access to many of the same clinical trials as those taking place in New Brunswick; and that experts in surgery and radiation oncology and so on are partnered with Rutgers Cancer Institute.

Now, let's say that a patient needs a specialized service—for example, a bone marrow transplant, which we do in New Brunswick. Because we have a coordinated system, we can seamlessly transfer care of that patient to New Brunswick. Our partnership with RWJBarnabas Health allows patients to enter the world of an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center through multiple doors.

We're also creating an extensive cancer navigation program to help patients throughout and after treatment. Our goal as a cancer program is not only to have the best treatments, physicians and clinical trials. It is also to give the best care in helping patients navigate what can be the most challenging period of their lives.

Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, a partner of RWJBarnabas Health, is the state's only National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. Only 50 cancer centers in the U.S. have earned that classification. It's an impressive achievement—but what does it mean to cancer patients and their families?

We asked Steven K. Libutti, MD, FACS, Senior Vice President of Oncology Services,

RWJBarnabas Health, to explain.

Dr. Libutti is also Director, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Vice Chancellor for Cancer Programs, Rutgers Biomedical Health and Sciences.



### If a person who has been diagnosed with cancer asks your advice, what do you tell him or her?

A diagnosis of cancer can feel overwhelming, and people want to know where they should go for treatment in order to get the best possible outcome.

I always tell people that cancer doesn't travel well. It's more the rule than the exception that a patient requires multi-modality treatment, such as surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy. The patient is best served by staying as close to home as possible while getting exceptional treatment.

Patients should listen to the advice given by their physician, and get more than one opinion. They also need to be able to cut through the noise and static of the marketplace. That means they should understand the meaning of the word "comprehensive" when it refers to cancer treatment.

### What does it mean to be a Comprehensive Cancer Center?

Many cancer centers will use the word "comprehensive," but it doesn't have the same meaning as a Comprehensive Cancer Center that's designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), which is very specific and prestigious.

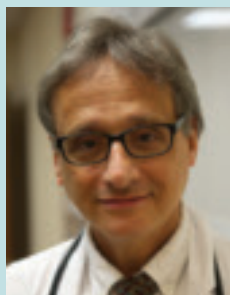
An NCI designation is a five-year grant that is acquired through an arduous, competitive, years-long process. Only 70 cancer centers in the country are chosen and of those, only 50 receive the designation Comprehensive Cancer Center, meaning

that they do laboratory research and clinical trials, as well as provide services directly to patients.

All of these centers collaborate and share



STEVEN K. LIBUTTI, MD



ROGER STRAIR, MD

A healthcare professional, likely a nurse, is shown in profile, smiling warmly. She is wearing purple scrubs and has a stethoscope around her neck. Her hands are positioned as if she is examining or comforting a patient. The background is bright and out of focus, suggesting a clinical setting.

# THE GOAL: ZERO ERRORS

**THE RWJBARNABAS HEALTH SYSTEM IS ON A MISSION TO  
ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST SAFETY STANDARDS.**

To learn more about  
RWJBarnabas Health, visit  
[www.rwjbh.org](http://www.rwjbh.org).



If a nuclear power plant has a serious accident, it's big news. In large part, that's because organizations in this and other high-risk industries, where errors can be catastrophic, have developed robust safety policies to prevent mistakes from being made. In industry parlance, they're what's known as High Reliability Organizations, or HROs.

The parallels to healthcare systems, with their high-stakes, highly complex operations, are clear. "At RWJBarnabas Health, we're on a journey to becoming an HRO," says John Bonamo, MD, MS, FACOG, FACPE, Executive Vice President and Chief Medical and Quality Officer at RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH). "There's no end point, no HRO certification. Instead, being an HRO is a way of doing business. Ultimately, it delivers the highest-quality care and safest experience for our patients and for our employees."

The aim of the initiative, called "Safety Together," is clear—and bold. "Our goal is zero incidents of preventable harm to patients and employees," Dr. Bonamo says. "That's it."

### THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL

"When people are interviewed in large-scale focus groups about what they want from a hospital, they tend to mention three things," says Dr. Bonamo. "One is, 'Help me'—that's about excellence in the quality of clinical care. The second is, 'Be nice to me'—and that's about the patient experience, the communication and kindness.

"Then there's 'Don't hurt me.' That's about safety, the third leg of the stool. For a long time, hospitals didn't pay enough attention to that.

"Now, the best hospitals realize that you can have the most expert surgeon and the greatest bedside manner, but those things aren't enough if a patient falls out of bed or gets an infection from a catheter."



JOHN BONAMO, MD

Over the past year, all employees at every RWJBH facility have received in-depth training in safety, error prevention and performance excellence. "We're giving employees a new skill set so

they can actively prevent harm," says Dr. Bonamo. The goal of zero defects is seen as everyone's responsibility.

### TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

To aid in this quest, staff members have a number of tools and techniques to use. They include:

**Stopping the line.** "In the past, if a staff member had a feeling something wasn't right, he or she might have buried that instinct, thinking 'I'm probably wrong,'" says Dr. Bonamo.

"Now they're empowered to say, 'I'm not comfortable with X, Y or Z.'"

Recently, he recounts, a nurse was preparing a young woman to go into surgery for gall bladder removal when the patient mentioned she had a "funny feeling" in her chest. The nurse called an EKG (electrocardiogram) tech and refused to send the patient to the OR until the test was done. As it turned out, the woman was in the middle of having a heart attack, and the delay may well have saved her life.

**Clarifying questions.** If a staff member is not sure about something that's happening, he or she can be comfortable asking for clarification. In addition, every order gets repeated back. If the dosage ordered is 50 milligrams, the pharmacist or nurse will clarify, "That's five-oh, right?" If the verbal order is for a urology test, there will be an alphabet check to be sure it wasn't for a *neurology* test.

**Cross-checks.** "That means that if you see me making a mistake, you correct me or ask if I'm sure that's right," says Dr. Bonamo. "In the past, people were afraid they'd be told to mind their own business.

"But now we realize that if I have a 1 in 1,000 chance of making a mistake and you have a 1 in 1,000 chance and we cross-check each other, there's a million in one chance of making a mistake. We're realizing that healthcare is a team sport."

**Safety huddles.** Every unit in every building has a stand-up safety huddle each morning to go over the previous 24 hours and forecast the next 24. An hour later, there's a facility-based huddle, a larger gathering with the same purpose.



For Seth Rosenbaum, MD, MMM, SVP, Chief Medical Officer at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, his team, and all RWJBH employees, HRO values are a daily priority.

### MANY VOICES

"Each of our employees has a new voice, a chance to practice at the top of their skills and be heard," says Dr. Bonamo. "We've made significant progress in our safety event rate, and we're confident it's going to continue to go down."

Each RWJBH hospital has created patient-family advisory councils to get more insight into how they can improve delivery of care. In any circumstance, Dr. Bonamo says, patients should demand the highest quality in their healthcare. "You wouldn't take a flight on an airline that didn't have the highest-quality standards and a great safety record," he says. "It's the same thing in healthcare. You should be seeking care in a facility that's on a journey to becoming an HRO."

### THE ABCs OF BECOMING AN HRO

At RWJBarnabas Health, all team members follow these principles of safety:

- S**peak up for safety.
- A**ccurately communicate.
- F**ocus on the task.
- E**xercise and accept a questioning attitude.
- T**houghtfully interact.
- Y**ou and me together.



Therapy dog Burton helped ease demanding therapy sessions for toddler Ava Finelli.

# A BABY'S BEST FRIEND

**HOW A THERAPY DOG HELPED ONE LITTLE GIRL RECOVER HER STRENGTH.**



**Children's Specialized Hospital®**  
An RWJBarnabas Health facility

Respiratory Syncytial Virus, known as RSV, is an infection in the respiratory tract that can lead to serious problems. It's always a matter of concern when a baby gets it, but is even more so when the child has an underlying medical condition.

That was the case for little Ava Finelli, who was born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA), a genetic disease affecting



**MICHELE FANTASIA, MD**

part of the nervous system that leads to weakness in the limbs. Children with SMA have weak intercostal (between the ribs) muscles, and underdeveloped lungs and chest muscles. When

Ava contracted RSV in January 2018, at not quite 2 years old, she could not cough strongly enough to rid her airways of mucus. She had trouble swallowing, and became weaker, struggling to lift her head and move her arms and legs.

Ava was sent to Children's Specialized Hospital for treatment. "She had an intensive therapy program," says Michele Fantasia, MD, the physiatrist and specialist in pediatric rehabilitation medicine who oversaw the plan. After several weeks of respiratory, physical, occupational and pool therapy, Ava showed remarkable progress and was able to lift her head and to better move her arms and legs. "It was incredible to see the progress Ava made in such a short

time," her mother, Laura, says.

"These kids require a whole team, and we're very well versed in treating children with respiratory issues as well as various neuromuscular disorders," says Dr. Fantasia. The doctor acknowledges that the team also had a secret weapon: Burton, a 2-year-old therapy dog. "She *looved* Burton," she says.

## EYES ON BURTON

During therapy sessions, Burton would position himself across from Ava so that she could work on stretching and moving her arms to reach him. He ran back and forth across the room so that she'd work on turning her head from side to side. Because Ava focused so intently on Burton, her therapy sessions were eased. "Burton was her motivator," Laura says. "He's so friendly and energetic, he really helped her forget how difficult the movements were."

Ava was discharged after two months. She continues to get outpatient therapy and to take Spinraza, a promising new medication for SMA. "She did very well with us overall," Dr. Fantasia reports, "and was able to go back to her home, family and typical toddler activities."

For more information about Children's Specialized Hospital, call **888.244.5373** or visit **[www.childrens-specialized.org](http://www.childrens-specialized.org)**.

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. Our locations in Bayonne, Clifton, East Brunswick, Egg Harbor Township, Hamilton, Jersey City, Mountainside, New Brunswick, Newark, Toms River and Warren treat everything from chronic illnesses and complex physical disabilities like brain and spinal cord injuries, to developmental and behavioral issues like autism and mental health.





# PLAYING IT SAFE

**AN ATHLETIC TRAINING PROGRAM  
PARTNERS WITH AREA SCHOOLS TO  
PREVENT AND MANAGE INJURIES  
AMONG STUDENT ATHLETES.**

**W**hen Jack Milazzo, 17, a senior at Robbinsville High School, sprained his thumb during a wrestling match, he turned to Tiffany Strauss, the school athletic trainer, for help. “She must have taped up my thumb six or seven times to find the right position,” he recalls. “She really took the time to listen to me and help me get back to wrestling.” Likewise, Tiffany came to the aid of Maya Johnson, 16, a junior and a basketball player at Robbinsville High School, when she broke her ankle outside of school. “She iced me, recommended certain stretches and told me what kind of brace to get,” recalls Maya. “I could feel the difference afterward.”

Tiffany is one of several local school-certified athletic trainers who have partnered with Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton Athletic Training, which launched in March 2018. RWJUH Hamilton collaborates with many local schools to provide sports medicine and athletic healthcare support, including Bordentown School District, East Windsor School District, Princeton Day School, Robbinsville School District, STEM Civics Charter School, The Hun School and The Pennington School. Under the physician oversight of medical director

Adam Redlich, MD, RWJUH Hamilton Athletic Training supports schools in several different ways, such as providing a full-time or part-time athletic trainer to complement the district’s athletic trainer; sharing a substitute when an athletic trainer needs a day off; and delivering educational workshops for healthcare professionals, coaches and the public.

## **SUPPORTING SCHOOL TEAMS**

Wherever they are working, athletic trainers are available to evaluate an individual when an injury or activity-related illness occurs, as in Jack’s case. Athletic trainers are nationally certified and state-licensed to evaluate and manage injuries ranging from concussions to ankle sprains, muscle injuries and bone contusions. In addition to secondary school and college settings, athletic trainers are key healthcare allies in the workplace. They work with “occupational athlete” employees with physically demanding

jobs that require repetitive motion. “In addition to creating a treatment plan for injured people, athletic trainers facilitate collaborative care with other healthcare specialists, such as physicians and physical therapists,” says Ryan Stevens, Manager, Athletic Training Services at RWJUH Hamilton and RWJUH Somerset.

Athletic trainers also work with school sports teams and local workplaces to develop and implement injury reduction programs. In one example, Stevens developed a 15-minute dynamic warm-up for cross-country athletes, which significantly reduced shin splints and knee pain. “It helped enhance their movement, stability and strength, and resulted in a huge decrease in overuse and repetitive stress injuries,” he says.

The students are grateful for the athletic trainers’ support. “Tiffany always talks about the importance of stretching and taking care of our bodies,” says Maya. “She goes above and beyond what you’d expect in an athletic trainer. I don’t know what I’d do without her.”

To learn how your athletes or employees can reduce their risk of injury and stay healthy, visit [www.rwjbh.org/athletictraining](http://www.rwjbh.org/athletictraining).

# BETTER HEALTH

**A NEW PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO HELP ADULTS AGE 55 AND OLDER ACHIEVE OPTIMAL WELLNESS.**



Older adults in the community will soon have access to an array of wellness events, activities and programs. A new program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton, called Better Health, is set to launch later this year. This free membership program, which is offered as a community service to RWJBarnabas Health family and friends, provides health education, free screenings, social activities, support groups and exercise classes geared for those age 55 and older. “We take a holistic approach to healthy aging,” says Shirley Roberts, Community Health Educator at RWJUH Hamilton and a leader in the program’s development.

The Better Health program will be based at the Center for Health & Wellness in the RWJ Fitness & Wellness Center,

3100 Quakerbridge Road, Hamilton, where members can take advantage of individualized fitness services and group exercise classes designed to increase balance, flexibility and strength. The Better Health Hub is located next door to an RWJUH Hamilton primary care practice and urgent care center, which is convenient for any members who need to see a physician.

## **IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE**

Better Health members may sign up for educational programs on a variety of chronic medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, diabetes and cancer. The classes are based on Stanford University’s Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, which teaches people how to address fatigue, pain, depression and frustration, as well as how to reap the

benefits of exercise and good nutrition.

Members will also have access to the many Better Health social activities. “Not only is it fun and interesting to meet new people, but opportunities for interaction may also reduce the risk of memory loss or dementia,” says Diane Grillo, Vice President, Health Promotion, RWJUH Hamilton.

Better Health members will also benefit from the Fitness & Wellness Center’s community partnerships, such as the one shared with the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). This program provides free medical assistance to New Jersey Medicare beneficiaries. SHIP counselors are located on-site at the Fitness & Wellness Center, so Better Health members may obtain answers to any Medicare-related questions they have.

Membership provides other benefits, such as a gift at the RWJUH Hamilton gift shop and discounts at the cafe. “This program will be a tremendous resource for the community,” says Grillo. “It will make Hamilton Township an even better place to live, work and play for older adults.”

More information about Better Health membership is coming soon. Follow our Facebook or Twitter page or visit [www.rwjbh.org/hamilton](http://www.rwjbh.org/hamilton) soon for launch details. Become a founding member!





# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

**WE OFFER A WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO HELP YOU MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH.**

The Community Education team develops a wealth of innovative health and wellness programs and provides support groups and screenings.

Whether you're seeking support and camaraderie, trying to slim down or searching for stress relief, you'll find a wealth of information in a variety of community education offerings from Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. Each month, community members participate in more than 75 health and wellness programs, 11 support groups and many health screenings. Most of these programs are free or low-cost.

Programs cater to a wide range of interests and ages, from young children to older adults. "Through surveys and research, we determine the top health needs of the community, then design programs to address them," says Diane Grillo, Vice President, Health Promotion at RWJUH Hamilton. A Medical Advisory Panel composed of 28 board-certified physicians advises on program development to maximize the benefit to attendees. Most classes are held at RWJUH Hamilton's Center for Health & Wellness, located at the RWJ Fitness

& Wellness Center, 3100 Quakerbridge Road, Hamilton. Some programs and screenings take place nearby in Ewing, Columbus and Trenton.

Among the new offerings is a holistic program focusing on non-medical wellness techniques. One that is especially popular is harp school, where students learn to play the harp to bring music to patients' bedsides. The schedule also includes classes on meditation, aromatherapy and Reiki, which promotes healing by improving the flow of energy around the body. In addition, patients of the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey at RWJUH Hamilton have access to a variety of holistic programs, including healing art workshops led by local artists.

## A FOCUS ON HEALTHY EATING

Another new program, KidsFit, aims to reduce childhood obesity. During this nine-week course, a dietitian and exercise physiologist work with children or teens and their families on healthy weight-loss strategies.

Kids and their parents may also join hands-on "Kids in the Kitchen" cooking classes in the Demonstration Kitchen, featuring healthy, delicious recipes. Some sessions are geared toward preschoolers, while others are designed for kids age 6 and older.

Given the variety of programs at RWJUH Hamilton, there are classes for everyone to enjoy. "Community members select programs related to topics that impact their life," says Grillo.


To view a current calendar of programs and events, see pages 20-24 of this issue of *Healthy Together*. To register for programs, call **609.584.5900** or visit [www.rwjbh.org/events](http://www.rwjbh.org/events).





# Community Education

All events are held at RWJ Fitness & Wellness, 3100 Quakerbridge Rd., and are **FREE** unless otherwise noted. Registration is strongly encouraged to ensure a successful program. Call 609.584.5900 to register.

 denotes a holistic event.

## KidsFit Program for Weight-Challenged Youth & Teens

For ages 8 to 16 and a Parent/Caregiver  
Call 609.890.4441 to register. This nine-week, all-inclusive wellness program teaches participants how to live a healthier lifestyle. Focus is on nutrition and healthy eating, physical activity, behavior changes and self-esteem.

## Pathwork: First Friday Lecture Study

**Fri., May 3, June 7; 7 to 9 p.m.**  
Pathwork, a body of practical spiritual wisdom, presents a step-by-step journey of self-discovery. This year's theme: Learning to Love. No class in July. Amy Rhett, Certified Pathwork Helper

## Orthopedics Open House: Joint Replacement

**Tue., May 7; 6 to 8 p.m.**  
Discover the latest advances in knee and hip replacement surgery, including robotic-assisted surgery. Learn how the Center for Orthopedic & Spine Health prepares you for a successful joint replacement and talk to our rehabilitation team. Dinner included. John R. Schnell, MD, fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon, and RWJ physical therapists

## Private Reiki Sessions

**Wed., May 8, June 12, July 10; 5 to 8 p.m., by appointment**  
**Tue., May 21, June 18, July 16; 2 to 5 p.m., by appointment**  
Reiki is a Japanese word that means universal energy and is increasingly recognized in the West as a beneficial adjunct to traditional medicine. Enjoy the profound relaxation of a private Reiki session. ½ hour: \$40; 1 hour: \$80, due when registering. Patti McDougall, Integrative RN, Reiki Master

## Kids in the Kitchen

Hands-on cooking class directed by a dietitian. For children accompanied by parent/caregiver. \$5 per child, \$5 per parent/caregiver. Registration with payment due 48 hours in advance; limited class size.

### • May is for Moms!

Simple recipes for Mother's Day morning  
**Thurs., May 9, 6:30 to 8 p.m. (ages 6+)**

### • Perfect Pasta Salads

Celebrate Salad Month with creative, kid-friendly faves  
**Thur., June 6, 6:30 to 8 p.m. (ages 6+)**  
**Fri., June 14, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. (ages 3 to 6)**

### • Red, White & Blueberries!

Healthy fare with a patriotic flair  
**Thur., July 11; 6:30 to 8 p.m. (ages 6+)**  
**Fri., July 12; 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. (ages 3 to 6)**

## Ask the Nurse Practitioner About Lung Health

**Mon., May 13, June 10 & July 8; 10 to 11 a.m.**

Do you have concerns about lung cancer, COPD or other lung disease risk factors and symptoms? Our nurse practitioner helps determine your risk for developing lung disease. Lung cancer screening available to current or former smokers (only). Vivian Owusu-Mensah, MSN, RN, ANP-BC, OCN

## Women & Lung Cancer

**Mon., May 13; 6 to 8 p.m.**  
Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women, killing more women each year than breast, uterine and ovarian cancers combined. Twenty percent of women who develop lung cancer have never touched a cigarette. Prevention, detection and the latest treatments are discussed by

Seeta Trivedi, MD, medical oncologist, Lung Health Navigator, and Vivian Owusu-Mensah, MSN, RN, ANP-BC, OCH.

## Just For Girls

**Tues., May 14, 6 to 8 p.m.**

**Wed., July 24, 1 to 3 p.m.**

Designed especially for pre-teens, this is a fun introduction to puberty, body image, self-esteem, and nutrition. This engaging program helps guide your special girl through this significant time in her life. Girls ages 9 to 11. Fee: \$12 per child (due at registration); caregiver free. (Book included: "American Girl: The Care & Keeping of You.")

## Mindfulness Meditation

**Wed., May 15, June 19, July 17; 1 to 2 p.m.**

Meditation is free, easy to learn and a gift you can give yourself for health and vitality. Learn simple techniques to slow down and become calm. No experience necessary.

## HealthRhythms® Drumming

**Wed., May 15, June 19, July 17; 7 to 8 p.m.**

HealthRhythms®, an evidence-based program, strengthens the immune system and reduces stress. It's also loads of fun! Drums provided or bring your own. Mauri Tyler, CTRS, CMP. Fee: \$15 per class.

## Tips & Techniques to Go From Stress to Ease

**Thur., May 16, 6 to 7:15 p.m.**

Life Success Coach Natasha Sherman teaches you powerful techniques, including mindfulness, meditation, "thought-busters" and paradigm shifts to move from stress to ease.

## Bone Up on Osteoporosis!

**Thur., May 16; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Osteoporosis diagnosis, risk factors and treatment are discussed, as well as the importance of weight training to optimize bone health for menopausal women.



## FIRST SATURDAY WALKS

### Walking in Nature: A Prescription for Better Health

Come discover the Abbott Marshlands with a knowledgeable guide. Each **First 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 [abbottmarshlands.org](http://abbottmarshlands.org).



Donna Reger, MD, board-certified, internal medicine; and Eve Gonsiorek, exercise physiologist/trainer.

#### **Estate and Medicaid Planning in NJ & PA**

**Thur., May 16; 6:30 to 8 p.m.**

Knowing your options is imperative when it comes to planning for care for you or a loved one. Elder law attorney Scott Bloom, Esq., provides resources and guidance for life's unexpected events.

#### **Ask the Diabetes Educator**

**Fri., May 17; June 14 & July 19; 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Bring your questions about pre-diabetes, type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes. M. Billie O'Donnell, BSN, RN, CDE. Appointment required.

#### **Weight Loss: Medical & Surgical Options**

**Tue., May 21, June 18, July 16; 6 to 7 p.m.**

Explore the options for shedding unhealthy weight. The Center for Weight Loss provides medically supervised weight loss and bariatric surgery. Ask our bariatric coordinator and our physician your questions about weight loss. Call 609.249.7510 for information.

#### **Facial Rejuvenation, Anyone?**

**Tue., May 21; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Learn about the latest techniques and injection materials for non-operative facial rejuvenation, including wrinkle removal and the latest fillers. Gary Smotrich, MD, board-certified plastic surgeon.

#### **More Than Just a Hearing Aid**

**Wed., May 22; 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month. Learn about hearing aids and see hands-on demonstrations. Free hearing screenings available with pre-registration appointment. Complimentary refreshments. Sponsored in part by Signia Hearing Instruments.

#### **Reiki Share**

**Wed., May 22, June 26, July 24; 7 to 9 p.m.**

For Reiki practitioners to share the gift of Reiki with

each other. This class is only open to those who are Reiki Certified. Bring a pillow, a small sheet and blanket. Fee: \$5 per class.

#### **Ask the Dietitian**

**Thur., May 23, 9 to 11 a.m.**

**Wed., June 26, 1 to 3 p.m.**

Do you have questions about diet and nutrition? Join Michelle Summerson, MEd, RD, for a one-on-one Q&A and receive a body fat screening. Registration required.

#### **Stroke Awareness Month**

**Thur., May 23; 6 to 8 p.m.**

In honor of Stroke Awareness Month, join Rao Pasupuleti, MD, and Connie Mocerri, RN, BSN, APN, stroke coordinator, as they talk about stroke risk factors, prevention, warning signs and the importance of prompt treatment.

#### **Common Spinal Conditions**

**Thur., May 30; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Cervical and lumbar spinal stenosis, as well as disc herniations, are two of the most common spinal conditions. We'll discuss symptoms and the latest non-operative and minimally invasive treatments. Rony Nazarian, MD, fellowship-trained in orthopedics and neurosurgery.

#### **Top Ten Hand Issues**

**Tue., June 4; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Learn the causes and latest treatment options for the most common hand conditions, as well as non-surgical and surgical treatments. Kimberly Zambito Accardi, MD, board-certified and fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon.

#### **Take Control of Your Health: Diabetes Self-Management**

**Thur., June 6, 13, 20, 27; July 11, 18; 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Designed by Stanford University, this six-week program gives people with Diabetes or Pre-Diabetes the skills and support needed for day-to-day management. Topics include menu planning, preventing complications, exercise, stress management and more. Free textbook.

## **RWJ FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER 15TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

**Sat., June 15, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Join us! Let's celebrate 15 years of health, wellness and fitness for our community. Participate in special fitness demonstrations, health screenings and fun for the whole family.



#### **Diagnosis & Treatment of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

**Wed., June 12; 1 to 2:30 p.m.**

Carpal tunnel syndrome is a common condition that causes pain, numbness and tingling in the hand and arm. We'll discuss the latest advances in diagnosis and treatment. Dorota Gribbin, MD, chairman, physical medicine and rehabilitation.

#### **Palliative Care for the Cancer Patient**

**Tue., June 18; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Research shows that palliative care and its many components are beneficial to patient and family health and well-being. It can also improve the overall quality of life by attending to physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Barbara Snyder, APN.

#### **Ask the Diabetes Team**

**Fri., June 21; 10 to 11:30 a.m.**

Do you have questions about the lifestyle changes required to achieve better control of Diabetes or Pre-Diabetes? Bring your questions to our Diabetes Educator, Registered Dietitian, and Health Coach.

#### **Arthritis of the Hip & Knee**

**Tue., June 25; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Osteoarthritis of the hip and knee occurs when inflammation and injury break down cartilage tissue. Signs, symptoms and treatment will be discussed. Hari P. Bezwada, MD, board-certified orthopedic surgeon.

#### **Minimally Invasive Integrative Tendon, Muscle & Joint Pain Treatments**

**Thur., June 27; 6 to 8 p.m.**

We'll talk about treatment options for stubborn musculoskeletal conditions (tendinitis and arthritis), notably scalp, ear and body acupuncture; prolotherapy (dextrose sugar solution) injections; PRP injections (platelet rich plasma); perineural injection nerve blocks; and other options. Adam Redlich, MD, Sports Medicine.

#### **Godesses Never Age:**

**TED Talk & Group Discussion**

**Thur., June 27, 12:30 to 2 p.m.**

We'll watch a short TED Talk about positive aging. Expect a lively discussion about it afterwards! All are welcome. Patti McDougall, Integrative RN.

**CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE**

**The Power of Energy Psychology**

**Thur., June 27, 6:30 to 8 p.m.**

Discover how “tapping” positively affects the patterns in your brain and helps to reverse unwanted habits, anxiety, and limited ways of thinking. Patti McDougall, Integrative RN, Certified Body Centered Therapist

**Incontinence: Concerns & Treatment**

**Fri., June 28; 10 to 11 a.m.**

We’ll discuss symptoms, causes and latest treatments for pelvic pain, urinary incontinence and other pelvic floor dysfunctions. Presented by pelvic floor therapist Rachna Mehta, DPT.

**Ask the Doctor!**

**Thur., July 11; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Do you have questions about lab work interpretation? Learn the normal values for cholesterol, pre-diabetes, kidney and liver function tests as well as other medical tests. Robert Silverbrook, DO, board-certified, internal medicine, will facilitate this informal community Q & A.

**Guided Cure: Lecture & Book Signing**

**Tue., July 16, 12 to 2 p.m.**

Guided Cure is a story about how, like a train wreck, cancer disrupts the lives of families. Find out how Paula went from stage III colon cancer to cancer-free in 20 months - naturally. Paula Beiger, local author and cancer survivor. Books available for purchase.

**What is Insomnia?**

**Tue., July 16; 6 to 8 p.m.**

People with insomnia tend to have difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep and/or waking too early in the morning. Treatment for insomnia may include behavioral, psychological and medical components or a combination thereof. Kevin F. Law, MD, board certified in pulmonary, sleep and internal medicine.

**Life Transitions: Challenge & Opportunities**

**Thur., July 18, 6 to 7:15 p.m.**

Divorce, career change, moving, aging. These are just some of life’s transitions. How do we make those shifts effectively and with ease? Life Success Coach Natasha Sherman shares strategies and tools.

**Are You Stressed?**

**Tue., July 23; 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

Take a simple test to determine your stress level. Information and coping strategies will be individualized for you. Shirley Roberts, MA, LPC. Appointment necessary.



Look for programs like these and other new offerings with the new Better Health program for members age 50 or better!

**50+ Bridge Club**

**Mon. & Fri., 12 to 3 p.m.**

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

**50+ Charity Knitting Club**

**Wed., 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Knitters make articles for hospital patients. Experienced knitters of all levels are welcome. For more information, call 609.298.7040.

**State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)**

Trained counselors provide free, objective, confidential help on questions and issues related to Medicare.

**Orthopedics Open House: Joint Replacement**

**Tue., July 23; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Discover the latest advances in knee and hip replacement surgery, including robotic-assisted surgery. Learn how the Center for Orthopedic & Spine Health prepares you for a successful joint replacement. Talk to our rehabilitation team, too. Dinner included. David Eingorn, MD, board-certified orthopedic surgeon and RWJ physical therapists.

**Dining Healthy with Diabetes**

**Thur., July 25, 1:30 to 3 p.m.**

Learn practical nutritional guidelines for managing diabetes, as well as sample recipes that will help you

reach your goals. Register 48 hours in advance. Fee: \$5.

**Chasing Away the Blues**

**Thur., July 25; 6:30 to 8 p.m.**

Do you often find it difficult to be upbeat? Do your emotions impact your relationships, work and daily activities? Doreen Miri, MA, NCC, LPC, will address treatment and coping strategies to increase motivation and help you find joy. Collaboration with NAMI Mercer.

**Is Climate Change for Real?**

**Tue., July 30; 6 to 8 p.m.**

Join George DiFerdinando, Jr., MD, MPH, FACP, adjunct professor, Rutgers School of Public Health, as he educates us on this controversial ‘hot’ topic.

Seniors

Support groups accept walk-ins. All programs are FREE unless otherwise noted.

Call for an appointment: 609.695.6274, ext. 215.

**Grief & Loss Group for Older Adults**

**Thur., May 2, 16; June 6, 20; July 11, 18; 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**

If you’ve lost a loved one or if you’ve been separated from your support system, you can find comfort and begin to cope better by interacting with others.

**The AARP Driving Course**

**Mon., May 6, June 3 & July 1; 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 license. Fee: \$20; \$15 for AARP members. (Cash or check only.)

**Letting Go of Clutter**

**Tue., May 14, June 11, July 9; 1:30 to 3 p.m.**

This support group explores how emotional ties to our “stuff” creates clutter and affects our mood.

**Discovering the Gold in the Golden Years**

**Tue., 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.**

An upbeat, safe place for older adults to express concerns and talk openly about stressors in a discussion group.

- **May 21:** Senior Scams
- **June 18:** Take Charge of Your Health
- **July 16:** The Difference between Dementia and Aging

**The Wise Woman: Positive Aging**

**Thur., 1:30 to 3 p.m.**

As we age, the twists and turns of life challenge us to remain positive and stay engaged in life. Interactive group format.

- **May 23:** Eating Healthy as We Age
- **June 27:** TLC? Therapeutic Lifestyle Change
- **July 25:** Blue Zones: Fountain of Youth



## MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS

The following physicians and experts provide guidance and expertise in developing our community health education programs.

**Richard Freeman, CEO**

**Seth Rosenbaum, MD, Infectious Disease, CMO**

**F. Javier Villota, MD, Internal Medicine Chair**

**Diane Grillo, MBA, Vice President, Health Promotion**

**Kim Zambito Accardi, MD, Hand Surgery**

**Maqsood Amjad, MD, Hematology/Oncology**

**Prajakta Ahvad, MD, Pain Management**

**Leslie Adelman Banks, Managing Partner, Fitness & Wellness Center**

**Hari P. Bezwada, MD, Orthopedic Surgery**

**Anjali Bhandarkar, MD, Internal Medicine**

**Gurvan Blackman, MD, Interventional Radiology**

**Sean Bradley, DMD, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery**

**Oleg Chebotarev, MD, Cardiology**

**Paul Codjoe, MD, Orthopedics**

**George DiFerdinando, Jr., MD, MPH, Orthopedics**

**Michael Duch, MD, Orthopedics**

**David Eingorn, MD, Orthopedics**

**Firas Eladoumikidachi, MD, Oncology/Breast Surgery**

**David Feldstein, MD, Interventional Radiology**

**Jarad Fingerman, DO, Urology**

**Elie Goldenberg, MD, General & Bariatric Surgery**

**Dorota Gribbin, MD, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation/Pain Management**

**Jay Groves, EDD, MMHC Fitness & Wellness Center**

**Joshua Hornstein, MD, Orthopedics**

**Navatha Kurugundla, MD, Pulmonary/Sleep Medicine**

**Kevin F. Law, MD, Critical Care/Pulmonary/Sleep Medicine**

**Marc Levine, MD, Orthopedic Spine Surgery**

**Matthew Lynch, MD, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery**

**Biagio Manna, DO, Thoracic Vascular Surgery**

**Shivaprasad Marulendra, MD, Gastroenterology**

**Ronniel Nazarian, MD, Orthopedic Spine Surgery**

**John Nolan, MD, Orthopedics**

**Earl Noyan, MD, Bariatric Surgery**

**Marguerite O'Donnell, BSN, RN, CDE, Educator, Community Education**

**Rao S. Pasupuleti, MD, Neurology**

**Val Prokurat, DO, Bariatric Surgery**

**Nazer Qureshi, MD, Neurosurgery**

**Pam Randolph, PT, DPT, Director, Rehabilitation Services**

**Adam Redlich, MD, Sports Medicine**

**Donna Reger, MD, Internal & Occupational Medicine**

**Anthony Ricketti, MD, Allergy & Pulmonology**

**Arjun Saxena, MD, Orthopedics**

**Reza Shah, DO, General & Vascular Surgery**

**Robert Silverbrook, DO, Internal Medicine**

**Lauren Stabinsky, MSN, RN, Director, Community & Corporate Wellness**



# Support Groups & Caregiving

Unless otherwise noted, support groups and caregiving classes are held at the RWJ Fitness & Wellness Center, 3100 Quakerbridge Rd. All programs are FREE unless otherwise noted.

## BEREAVEMENT

Call the Pastoral Care Office at 609.631.6980 for information.

## CANCER

All cancer support groups meet at the Rutgers Cancer Institute of NJ, 2575 Klockner Road. Call 609.584.2836 for information.

## BREAST CANCER

Meets first Tue., 6:30 p.m.

## GYN CANCER

Meets second Tue., 2 to 3:30 pm

## CONDITIONS

### ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday, May 15, June 19 & July 17; 6 p.m.

Oaks Integrated Caregiver Specialist, 609.396.6788, ext. 89713

### DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Fri., May 3 and June 7; 1:30 to 3 p.m. 609.587.5900.

### GRIEF & LOSS GROUP FOR OLDER ADULTS

Thur., May 2 & 16, June 6 & 20, July 11 & 18 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

If you have lost a loved one or have been separated from your support system, you can find comfort and begin to cope better by interacting with others.

### PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Call Bill at 609.587.7215 for information.

### STROKE SURVIVORS SUPPORT GROUP

Wed., May 1, June 5 & July 3; 6 to 7:30 p.m.

### SMOKING CESSATION

Start with a consultation. 609.584.2826

### QUIT SMOKING/ TOBACCO CESSATION SUPPORT GROUP

Thur., May 16, June 20 & July 18; 6 to 7 p.m.

Group counseling. Prescriptions for smoking cessation medication (gum, patches,

etc.) available upon request. To register, call Vivian Owusu-Mensah at 609.584.2826.

### NICOTINE ANONYMOUS

Fridays, 7 p.m.

Outpatient Auditorium, RWJUH Hamilton Hospital; 1 Hamilton Health Place. 609.584.0122. No registration required.

## CAREGIVING

An Oaks Integrated Care caregiver specialist will conduct these interactive workshops on crucial topics and facilitate a supportive group experience.

### CAREGIVER SERIES: CARING FOR LOVED ONES WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Mon., 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

- **May 6:** Creating a Safe Home Environment
- **May 20:** Community Resources
- **June 3:** Coping with Memory Loss
- **June 17:** Signs of Dementia
- **July 1:** Medicare and Medicaid
- **July 15:** Making Placement Decisions

### ADULT CHILDREN CARING FOR PARENTS

Mon., 5:30 to 7 p.m.

- **May 6:** Making Placement Decisions
- **May 20:** Seven Stages of Dementia
- **June 3:** Challenging Behaviors
- **June 10:** Creating a Safe Home Environment
- **July 1:** First Steps for Caregivers
- **July 8:** Coping with Memory Loss



## BARIATRIC WEIGHT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

Tue., May 14, June 11, July 9; 6 to 7 p.m.

The monthly Bariatric Support Group is for patients who are having or have had bariatric surgery. Become more knowledgeable about it during discussions with expert guest speakers. Call 609.249.7510 to register.





# Health Screenings

Screenings are FREE unless otherwise noted. Registration required. Call 609.584.5900 to schedule unless otherwise noted.

## HAMILTON RWJ FITNESS & WELLNESS CENTER 3100 Quakerbridge Rd., Hamilton

### Body Fat Screening Mon., May 6, June 17, July 22; 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Excess body fat is a preventable risk factor for heart disease. Track your diet and fitness progress and learn how much excess weight is safe to lose.

### Osteoporosis Screening Tues., May 7; 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Ultrasound of the heel can help detect osteopenia and osteoporosis.

### Cholesterol Lipid Profile, Glucose, Blood Pressure & Stroke Risk Assessment Tues., May 21, June 18, July 16; 8:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Simple finger stick. Fast 12 hours prior. Registration required. Fee: \$5 at time of registration.

### Memory Screening Tues., June 4; 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Mini-Mental Exam is a quick assessment to discern normal aging versus potential problems.

### Orthopedic Screening: Spine Thur., July 11; 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

An orthopedic physician and physical therapist will assess bone/joint pain, test strength and range of motion. Marc J. Levine, MD, Orthopedic Spine Surgeon

### Take-Home Colorectal Kit Tues., July 23; 9:30 to 10 a.m.

Learn how to use this simple take-home test to detect early colon cancer.

## RWJ HAMILTON AUDIOLOGY BALANCE CENTER 2 Hamilton Health Place, Hamilton

### Hearing Screening Wed., May 15, June 25, July 24; 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, CCCA  
Call 609.245.7390 to register.

### Fall Prevention/Balance Screening Wed., May 15, June 25, July 24; 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Palak Mulji, PT, DPT, and  
Jin Bo Jung, PT, DPT  
Call 609.245.7390 to register.

## RWJ HAMILTON VEIN AND VASCULAR SURGERY CENTER 3525 Quakerbridge Rd., Trenton

### Varicose Vein & Venous Screening Thur., June 20; 4 to 6 p.m.

Sto Poblete, MD  
Call 609.570.2071 to register.

## RUTGERS CANCER INSTITUTE OF NJ (CINJ) 2575 Klockner Rd., Hamilton

### Prostate Cancer Screening Mon., June 10; 5 p.m. at CINJ

Men's Health Month. Includes an exam and PSA blood test. Exam by Deep Trivedi, MD  
Thank you to the John Paul Geijer Memorial Foundation for its contribution to this screening.

## RWJ REHABILITATION AT DELAWARE VALLEY 123 Franklin Corner Rd., Suite 103, Lawrenceville

### Orthopedic Screening: Hip/Knee Thur., June 13; 4 to 6 p.m.

An orthopedic physician and physical therapist will

assess bone/joint pain, test strength and range of motion. John Nolan, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon, and a RWJ physical therapist

## NJAC FITNESS CENTER 4152 Quakerbridge Rd., Lawrenceville

### Orthopedic Screening: Upper Extremity Thur., May 9; 4 to 6 p.m.

Meet with an orthopedic physician and physical therapist who will assess bone/joint pain, test strength and range of motion. Arjun Saxena, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon

## TRENTON FARMERS MARKET 960 Spruce St., Trenton

### Blood Pressure Screenings Fri., May 17, June 21, July 19; 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Hypertension has no symptoms but can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney damage and eye problems. Knowledge is power! Know your numbers and learn natural ways to help reduce your blood pressure.