

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

SUMMER 2020

healthy

together

**A MIRACULOUS
RECOVERY**

**GOING ABOVE AND
BEYOND FOR PATIENTS**

**LIFE-CHANGING
REHAB**

**CANCER
CARE:
THE HUMAN
TOUCH**



New Ways to Care

At RWJBarnabas Health, in addition to treating medical conditions, we actively engage on a variety of levels to promote the health and well-being of our communities.

That outreach takes many shapes, including healthy living classes, educational programs for seniors, partnerships with local arts organizations, providing healthy food and much more.

Social distancing and other pandemic-related restrictions haven't stopped these efforts, only changed their form. We're providing virtual support for all kinds of needs, including breastfeeding, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, arthritis, addiction recovery and more. People who want to learn about wellness techniques, such as guided relaxation or chair yoga, can find what they need through our online programs. For a full list, visit www.rwjbh.org/events.

Meanwhile, we are creatively retooling signature events such as runs, walks and galas to include virtual participation. Our annual Running with the Devils 5K will be going virtual as well (learn more at rwjbn.org/runningwiththedevils). Our partners are also creating new events, such as the Somerset Patriots, who hosted sold-out drive-in movies at TD Bank Ballpark with proceeds going to the RWJBarnabas Health Emergency Response Fund to help local healthcare workers. To make a donation to the fund, visit www.rwjbn.org/give.

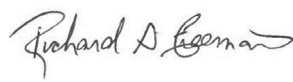
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton's Wellness Programs are going virtual. Among the many advantages of online learning, you'll find that our virtual classrooms offer the same opportunity for you to stay healthy—but in your own space and at your own pace. You will learn from the very best educators and physicians to help you make good lifestyle choices. As the leader in wellness and community education programs, we are excited to offer additional options to our community. So, whether you are attending a program online from your home now or at our Wellness Center or a community location in the future, you can be assured that we are offering the very best experience for all.

How we meet the needs of our diverse communities will continue to evolve, but our commitment to providing a broad range of culturally competent care for our communities hasn't changed—and never will.

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



WELCOME TO THE NEW HEAD OF BARIATRIC SURGERY

Ragui Sadek, MD, FACS, FASMBBS, has been named Medical Director, Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. He will oversee The Center for Weight Loss at RWJUH Hamilton. Dr. Sadek is also an Assistant Professor of Surgery at Rutgers Medical School and an Adjunct Professor at Rutgers School of Pharmacy. RWJUH Hamilton's bariatric surgeons use the most advanced techniques, including minimally invasive robotic-assisted surgery, to reduce the risk of complications and speed healing. For more information about bariatric surgery at The Center for Weight Loss at RWJUH Hamilton, call 888.724.7123 or visit www.rwjbn.org/weightloss.




BRINGING HOPE TO HAMILTON

In May, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton and Shop Hamilton, a small business association, launched the "Hope is in Hamilton" campaign to inspire optimism in the community. The campaign, which was originally planned to raise awareness of cancer, shifted its focus in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. Community members were asked to use social media to share messages, photos and acts of kindness that brought them hope paired with the hashtag #HopelsInHamilton. In addition, lavender ribbons symbolizing hope were placed around the Township.

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

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

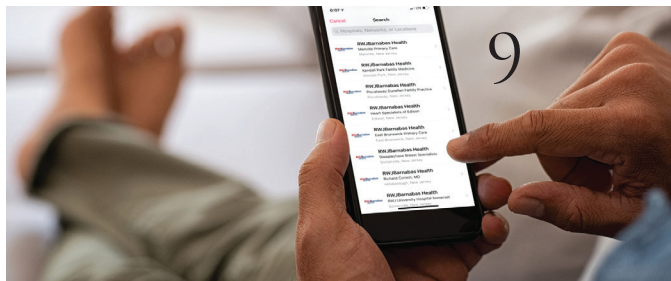
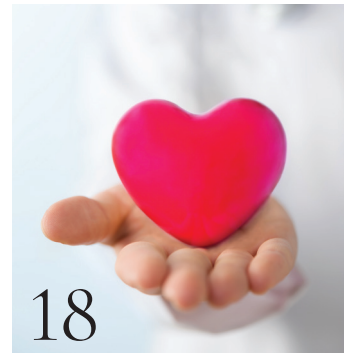
CONNECT WITH US ON

-  @RWJHamilton
-  @RWJHamilton
-  RWJBarnabas Health
-  www.linkedin.com/company/290186/admin

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. For more information, see link on our home page at www.rwjbn.org/hamilton. RWJUH Hamilton cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo. ATENCIÓN: Si usted habla español, servicios de asistencia lingüística, de forma gratuita, están disponibles para usted. Llame al 609.586.7900. RWJUH Hamilton konfòm ak lwa sou dwa sivil Federal ki aplikab yo e li pa fè diskriminasyon sou baz ras, koulè, peyi orijin, laj, enfimite oswa sèks. ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 609.586.7900.

healthy *together* contents

SUMMER 2020



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- 9. YOUR HEALTH, AT YOUR FINGERTIPS.** Now you can manage your healthcare from an app on your iPhone.
- 10. CANCER CARE: THE HUMAN TOUCH.** How oncology nurse navigators help patients.

- 11. 'THE SKY'S THE LIMIT.'** Intense physical therapy helps a teenager move again after a traumatic neck injury.
- 12. SUPPORTING ARTS FOR THE HEALTH OF IT.** Partnerships with local arts organizations promote the well-being of communities.
- 14. A HIGH-TECH LOOK AT THE HEART.** Artificial intelligence powers a noninvasive, highly accurate test for coronary artery disease.
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CLASSES FOR HEALTHY LIVING

All programs will be held virtually unless otherwise indicated. In-person classes will be limited in size and held at the RWJUH Hamilton Fitness and Wellness Center. Attendees will be required to bring a mask and practice social distancing to help ensure safety. For more information or to register, call the Health Connection at 609.584.5900 or visit us online at www.rwjbh.org/Hamilton.



MIND

[LIFELONG LEARNING]

Coronavirus in the U.S.: Considerations for Travelers

🌐 Thu., September 10; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, travel increases your risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19. Learn how to protect yourself. Registration required.

F. Javier Villota, MD, Medical Director, Occupational Medicine, Corporate Health and Travel Medicine

Vertigo? Understanding Why Many Adults Develop Dizziness

🌐 Thu., September 17; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Dizziness and imbalance are common complaints in older adults. Audiologist Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, will explain the causes and treatments. Registration required.

Women's Health: Take Charge Today

🌐 Tue., September 22; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Mammograms, bone density screenings and Pap smears that are essential for women's health. Is it time for you to schedule one of these screenings? Registration required. Donna Reger, MD, board-certified in internal medicine

How to Stop Stress from Stealing Your Health

🌐 Wed., September 30; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

During these challenging times, do you find that stress is keeping you awake, increasing your blood pressure and making you anxious? Learn how to take control of your health using simple 60-second solutions. Registration required. Carol Rickard, LCSW

Peripheral Artery Disease and Wound Care

🌐 Thu., October 1; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

One in every 20 Americans over age 50 has peripheral artery disease (PAD), which can manifest in cramping, numbness, weakness or heaviness in the leg muscles. This disease poses particular problems for patients with chronic wounds. Risk factors, lifestyle changes and treatment will be discussed. Registration required.

Reza A. Shah, DO, FACOS, FAPWCA, Medical Director, The Center for Wound Healing

Lifestyle Can Save Your Brain

🌐 Thu., October 8; 11 a.m. to Noon

Groundbreaking research has shown that our lifestyle can prevent or significantly delay cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease. We will discuss the factors that can make a difference: Nutrition, Exercise, Unwind, Restore and Optimize (NEURO). Registration required. Shirley Roberts, MA, LPC, NCC

The Science of Habit Change

🌐 Thu., October 15; 11 a.m. to Noon

Avoiding COVID-19 and maintaining our overall health isn't easy. Knowledge and intentions without motivation are insufficient. Discover the latest research on motivation and learn how to devise strategies for positive change. Registration required. Maureen Lebel, PhD

The Neurological System

🌐 Tue., October 20; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

A neurologist is a medical doctor who evaluates, diagnoses and treats diseases that affect the

nervous system.

Jill Giordano Farmer, DO, MPH, board-certified in neurology, will discuss Parkinson's disease and movement disorders. Registration required.

Diabetes Awareness Month

One in 10 Americans has diabetes.

During November, increase your awareness of risk factors and symptoms and learn how to live healthfully. Registration required. Marguerite Billie O'Donnell, BSN, RN, Certified Diabetes Educator

• Diabetes Made Simple

🌐 Mon., November 2; 2 to 2:45 p.m.

• Diabetes and Gratitude—A Perspective Shifter!

Mon., November 9; 2 to 2:45 p.m.

New Developments in Hearing Aids: Computer Technology for Your Ears

🌐 Wed., November 4; 10 to 11 a.m.

Audiologist Lorraine Sgarlato, AuD, will explain advances in hearing aid technology and the latest treatment options. Registration required.

Medicare Update 2021

🌐 Thu., November 5; 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Learn about changes to your Medicare benefits and drug plan from Mary McGeary, Director of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Open enrollment is from October 15 through December 7. Registration required.

Sleepless in Hamilton!

🌐 Thu., November 12; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

More than 3 million Americans experience insomnia, also known as sleeplessness. The disorder occurs when a person has difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep as long as he or she desires.

Marcella M. Frank, DO, FACOI, FCCP, FAASM, board-certified in internal medicine, pulmonary diseases and sleep medicine, will discuss the causes, symptoms and treatment. Registration required.

ORTHOPEDICS OPEN HOUSE: Joint Replacement

🌐 Tue., November 17; 6 to 7 p.m.

Discover the latest advances in knee and hip replacement surgery, including robotic-assisted surgery. Learn how the Center for Orthopedic & Spine Health and our rehabilitation team prepare you for successful joint replacement. John R. Schnell, MD, fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon. Registration required.

Sepsis: Understanding Serious Infection

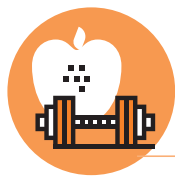
🌐 Wed., November 18; 11 to 11:45 a.m.

Sepsis is an infection that starts in one area of the body, such as a wound, the urinary tract or respiratory tract. Knowing the signs and symptoms is important because early detection and treatment are essential in beating an infection. Registration required. Natalie Jones, MSN Ed, RN, CCRN

Navigating Transitions in Care: Elder Law Planning in NJ versus PA

🌐 Thu., November 19; 6 to 7 p.m.

Elder law attorney Scott Bloom, Esq., will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of transition planning between NJ and PA. Topics such as Medicaid, inheritance tax and estate tax, as applied in NJ and PA, will be addressed. Limited class size. Registration required.



BODY [NUTRITION & FITNESS]

Kids in the Kitchen

Dietitian-directed and kid-created from the comfort of your own kitchen! Registration required.

Michelle Summerson, MEd, RD

- **School Day Snacks**—Munch, crunch and nibble some new ideas!

 Wed., September 9; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.


- **Creepy Creations**—Halloween fare with a healthy flair!

Wed., October 7; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

- **Theme Night Dinners**—Get creative in weeknight meal prep.

Wed., November 18; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.


Plant-Based Diets for Wellness: Beginners

 Mon., September 14; 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.

We will explore how a plant-based diet will help you save money and support the environment, mind, body and soul. Get up to speed on plant-based protein, how to stay full, and general kitchen staples. Registration required.

Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM


The Lunch Bunch: Virtual Cooking for the Pre-K Crowd

 Fri., September 18 & 25 & October 2; Noon to 1 p.m.

Encourage adventurous eating by pairing up with your preschooler in your very own kitchen! Simple recipes and helpful tips on creating positive mealtimes. Registration required.

Michelle Summerson, MEd, RD


Culinary Nutrition in the Kitchen

 Mon., September 21, October 19 & November 16; 11:15 a.m. to Noon

Prevention, reversal and management of chronic lifestyle disease can start wherever you are, with what you have. Kick off your week with the most up-to-date, evidence-based nutrition research, recipes and interviews with MDs, allied health professionals and chefs. Registration required.

Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM


Eating Greens to Beat the Blues

 Mon., October 5; 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.

Mental Illness Awareness Week occurs the first week of October, and self-care is essential for preserving wellness. Learn quick, easy and delicious preparations of common green leafy vegetables dense in folate to support brain health. Registration required.


Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM

Ask the Dietitian

 Tue., October 6; 9 to 11 a.m.

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


Bariatric Nutrition Basics

 Mon., October 12; 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.

Discover the latest on supplements, the science behind the liver-shrinking diet, recipes that promote healing after surgery and more. Learn how to optimize your health with nutrition.

Registration required.
Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM


Fit Families: A Virtual Wellness Program

 Mon., October 19 & 26, November 2 & 9; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Do you want to make healthy changes for your family? This dietitian-directed series will focus on nutrition basics, budget-friendly recipes and incorporating fitness into daily routines.

Registration required.
Michelle Summerson, MEd, RD

Jersey Fresh Supper Club: A Three-Course Meal for Two

 Mon., November 23; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.


This cooking class will touch on classic flavors of the season while keeping you and your loved ones in good health. We'll prepare roasted garlic and rosemary bisque, cauliflower steaks with mushroom gravy and a silken pumpkin tart. Registration required.

Alyssa Luning, RD, CSOWM



SPIRIT [HOLISTIC HEALTH]

Mindfulness Meditation for Beginners


 Wed., September 16, October 21 & November 18; 1 to 1:30 p.m.

Tue., October 13; 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.

Learn to relax and unwind in this free class. No experience necessary. Registration required.

Patricia McDougall, BSN, RN, Integrative Therapies Nurse


HealthRhythms® Drumming Circle

 Wed., October 21; 7 to 8 p.m.

Come drum with us! HealthRhythms® is an evidence-based program that strengthens the immune system and reduces stress. It's also fun! Drums will be provided. Registration required. Fee: \$15

Mauri Tyler, CTRS, CMP

Creating YOU!

 Tue., November 10; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Do you have dreams and desires stuck inside you? Learn how to bring your "amazingness" to the world. Registration required.

Kathi Szabo, life coach

CLASSES FOR HEALTHY LIVING



[SCREENINGS & SUPPORT GROUPS]

[SUPPORT GROUPS]

Nicotine and Tobacco Dependence Treatment Program

🕒 Mon. & Wed., 1 to 5 p.m. and Fri., 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

One-on-one and walk-in hours for individual/group counseling. Prescriptions for smoking cessation medication (gum, patches, etc.) are available upon request. To preregister or for information, contact Michael Kosloski, BA, CTTS (Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist) at 732.837.9416 or email quitcenter@rwjbh.org.

Nicotine and Tobacco Dependence Treatment Program

Virtual Group Counseling

🌐 Thu., beginning September 10, 6 to 7 p.m.

To preregister or for information, contact Michael Kosloski, BA, CTTS (Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist) at 732.837.9416 or email quitcenter@rwjbh.org.

Bariatric Weight Loss Support Group

🕒 Tue., September 8, October 13 & November 10; 6 to 7 p.m.

Call 609.584.5900 to register.

[HEALTH SCREENINGS]

Cholesterol Lipid Profile/Glucose/Blood Pressure & Stroke Risk Assessment

🕒 Fri., September 11, October 9 & November 6; 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Simple finger stick. Fast 12 hours prior. Registration required.

Attendance limited. Fee: \$5

Take-Home Colorectal Kit

🕒 Tue., November 10; 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

Learn about colorectal cancer, screening tests and how to use a simple take-home test to detect it early. Registration required.

Better Health Program

A Senior Membership Program



Robert Wood Johnson
University Hospital
Hamilton

RWJ Barnabas
HEALTH

Better Health Program

INTRODUCING THE BETTER HEALTH PROGRAM AT RWJUH HAMILTON

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 will engage your mind, encourage you to move and help you reflect. Members will meet like-minded people and learn from the doctors and professionals who make your well-being a priority.

The programs listed below are exclusively for Better Health members. They will be held virtually unless otherwise indicated. In-person classes will be limited in size and will be held at the RWJUH Hamilton Fitness and Wellness Center, 3100 Quakerbridge Road, Hamilton. Attendees will be required to wear a mask and practice social distancing to help ensure safety.

To learn about complimentary membership, attend the "Meet Your Better Health Program" class. For additional information, call Joyce Cantalice, Manager of the Better Health Program, at **609.584.6422**. To register for a program, call the Health Connection at **609.584.5900** or visit us online at www.rwjbh.org/Hamilton.



VIRTUAL



IN PERSON



VIRTUAL & IN PERSON

Meet Your Better Health Program for VIPs 65+

Thu., September 10, October 1 & November 19 and Tue., October 27;

1 to 2 p.m.

3 to 4 p.m.

Explore the benefits of the Better Health Program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. Meet Sara I. Ali, MD, Geriatric and Internal Medicine, and learn the benefits of geriatric medicine, including managing chronic illness.

Fear of Outliving your Retirement

Wed., September 16; 10 to 11:30 a.m.

David Bossio, Investment Specialist, will discuss options for securing your retirement funds. The session will include a question-and-answer segment. Limited seating.

Living with Dementia: Symptoms & Treatments

Thu., September 17, October 8 & October 29;

1 to 2 p.m. and

3 to 4 p.m.

Join Sara I. Ali, MD, Fellowship-trained, specializing in Geriatric Medicine, for a discussion on dementia. The focus will be on symptoms, current treatments and living with the condition. Limited seating.

Senior Shakedown

Tue., September 22; 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Please join Justin Scott, Esquire & Author of *Senior Shakedown: Unknown Dangers of Getting*

Old, and How to Protect Your Loved Ones, for a spirited discussion on scams targeting our seniors. Seating limited.

Music and the Brain

Wed., September 23; 10 to 11 a.m.

Join Sheli Monacchio, Director of Life Care Resources at Van Dyck Law, for an interactive conversation about the benefits of music. Seating is limited.

Polypharmacy: Managing Your Medications

Thu., September 24 & October 15

1 to 2 p.m.

3 to 4 p.m.

Sara I. Ali, MD, Geriatric and Internal Medicine, will lead a discussion on managing multiple medications while treating several illnesses. Limited seating.

Music Through the Decades

Tue., September 29; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Take a stroll through memory lane with Ellen Renee from EllenRenee Productions with music from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Sing-along or just watch. Attendance limited.

Retirement Planning Overview

Wed., October 7; 10 to 11:30 a.m.

David Bossio, Investment Specialist, will discuss key items to review before and during retirement. Seating is limited.

Navigating the Medicaid Process

Tue., October 13; 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Justin Scott, Esquire & Author, explains the process and benefits of Medicaid. Seating is limited.

Music from the "Crooners"

Tue., October 20; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

In the mood for a little Frank Sinatra? How about Doris Day and Bing Crosby? Join Ellen Renee from EllenRenee Productions for a fun-filled hour of memories from the best of the times. Limited seating.

Grieving the Living

Wed., October 21; 10 to 11 a.m.

Please join Sheli Monacchio, Director of Life Care Resources at Van Dyck Law, for an open conversation about different types of grief. Whether you're grieving a loved one with dementia or the loss of your independence, how do you best cope? Seating is limited.

Psychiatric Care for our Aging Population

Thu., October 22 & November 12; 1 to 2 p.m.

3 to 4 p.m.

Sara I. Ali, MD, Geriatric and Internal Medicine, will focus on the prevention, evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders in our healthy and ill aging population.

The Gift of Gratitude

Wed., November 4; 10 to 11 a.m.

Sheli Monacchio, Director of Life Care Resources at Van Dyck Law, will lead a conversation about the gift of gratitude and creating the habit of mindfully being grateful. Seating is limited.

Estate Planning

Tue., November 10; 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Justin Scott, Esquire & Author, will explain why estate planning is important regardless of estate size. The program will include a question-and-answer session. Seating is limited.

Swing Music

Tue., November 17; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Let's get into the "Swing" with great music from this era. Sing or just listen—join Ellen Renee from EllenRenee Productions for a good time. Attendance is limited.

Legacy Planning

Wed., November 18; 10 to 11:30 a.m.

David Bossio, Investment Specialist, will discuss how to provide for your family and loved ones after you're gone. The program will include a question-and-answer session. Seating is limited.

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

AGING HEALTHFULLY

A GERIATRICIAN EXPLAINS THE IMPORTANCE OF CARE GEARED TOWARD OLDER PATIENTS.

About 15 percent of Americans are currently age 65 and older, according to the U.S. Census. By 2060, that number is expected to jump to about 25 percent. So there's a pressing need for geriatricians—physicians who care for older adults. Here, Sara Ali, MD, a geriatrician at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton, explains how patients benefit from these physicians.

How are geriatricians different from primary care physicians?

We treat chronic conditions that affect patients of all ages, such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. But we also treat health problems that tend to affect the elderly, including dementia, movement disorders like Parkinson's disease and frequent falls. We spend more time with patients during office visits than primary care physicians are able to—30 to 45 minutes instead of 15 minutes.

What health problems do you see most often in older patients?

"Polypharmacy" is a huge problem. This occurs when patients are prescribed too many medications by different doctors. Not only can this cause drug interactions, which can lead to side effects like falls and

confusion, but patients become frustrated and sometimes want to stop taking their medications. I help them understand which medications are most important and which ones they can stop. Other common conditions include memory problems, mood disorders like depression—which, in a geriatric population, often stems from a lack of socialization—and frailty.

How do geriatricians fit in with the hospital's Better Health program?

Better Health, which provides education, social activities, support groups, exercise classes and membership benefits for those ages 55 and older, is part of a larger initiative to build a comprehensive geriatrics program to improve seniors' quality of life. Better Health is part of our outpatient geriatrics practice. Health coaches educate patients about their screening and treatment options through lectures and seminars.



SARA ALI, MD



Join Better Health and discover the benefits of membership. Call **609.584.5900** or visit www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonbetterhealth.

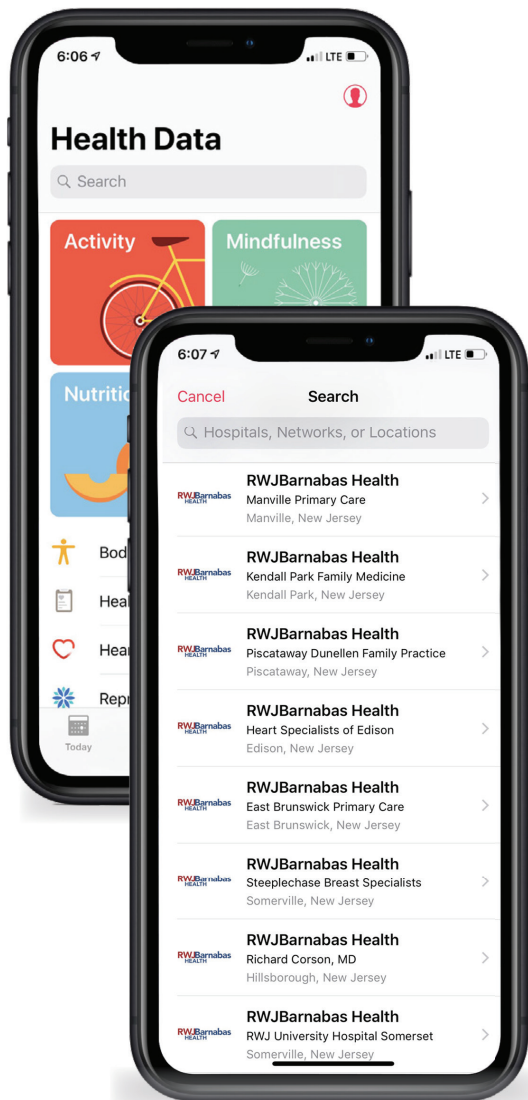
MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS

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

- Richard Freeman, CEO**
- Seth Rosenbaum, MD, MMM, CMO, Infectious Disease**
- F. Javier Villota, MD, Chair, Internal & Occupational Medicine**
- Diane Grillo, MS, VP Health Promotion**
- Sara Aii, MD, Internal Medicine / Geriatrics**
- Maqsood Amjad, MD, Hematology / Oncology**
- Leslie Adelman Banks, Fitness & Wellness Center/ Managing Partner**
- 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**
- George DiFerdinando, Jr., MD, MPH, Public Health**
- Michael Duch, MD, Orthopedic Surgery**
- David Elagorn, MD, Orthopedic Surgery**
- Firas Eladoumikdachi, MD, Oncology / Breast Surgery**
- Jill Giordano Farmer, DO, MPH, Neurology**
- Jessica Federman, Director of Marketing**
- David Feldstein, MD, Interventional Radiology**
- Jarad Fingerman, DO, Urology**
- Marcella M. Frank, DO, Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Disease and Sleep Medicine**
- Elie Goldenberg, MD, General Surgery / Bariatric Surgery**
- Dorota Gribbin, MD, Physical Medicine & Rehab / Pain Management**
- Joshua Hornstein, MD, Orthopedic Surgery**
- Kevin F. Law, MD, Critical Care / Pulmonary / Sleep Medicine**
- Marc Levine, MD, Orthopedic Spine Surgery**
- Kenneth M. Liebman, MD, Neurosurgery**
- Matthew Lynch, MD, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery**
- Biagio Manna, DO, Thoracic Vascular Surgery**
- Shivaprasad Marulendra, MD, Gastroenterology**
- Ronniel Nazarian, MD, Orthopedic Spine Surgery**
- Amanda Newsham-Tinsley, Marketing**
- John Nolan, MD, Orthopedics**
- Earl Noyan, MD, Bariatric Surgery**
- Marguerite O'Donnell, BSN, RN, Community Education**
- Rao S. Pasupuleti, MD, Neurology**
- Val Prokurat, DO, Bariatric Surgery**
- Pam Randolph, PT, DPT, Director of Rehabilitation Services**
- Adam Redlich, MD, Sports Medicine**
- Donna Reger, MD, Internal Medicine / Occupational Medicine**
- Anthony Ricketti, MD, Internal Medicine / Allergy & Pulmonology**
- Arjun Saxena, MD, Orthopedic Surgery**
- Reza Shah, DO, General Surgery / Vascular Surgery**
- Robert Silverbrook, DO, Internal Medicine**
- Lauren Stabinsky, MSN, RN, Director of Community and Corporate Wellness**
- Kim Zambito, MD, Hand Surgery**

YOUR HEALTH, AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Now you can manage your healthcare right from the Apple Health app on your iPhone. You can easily keep track of allergies, conditions, immunizations, vitals and more, and consolidate your health records in a timeline—all in one place. Here's how:



1

If you don't have one yet, create a username and password for the RWJBarnabas Health Patient Portal (www.rwjbh.org/patientportalenroll).



2

Download the Apple Health app from the Apple Store. (You'll need an iPhone running iOS 11.3 or later.)



3

Be sure your iPhone is password-protected, ideally with two-factor authentication.



4

Go to the Health Records section of the Health app, search for RWJBarnabas Health, and log in.



5

After you log in once, your health records will start to appear in the Health app, and will update automatically.

Download the Apple Health app at the Apple Store and access your RWJBarnabas Health medical records at www.rwjbh.org/patientportalenroll.





RWJBarnabas Health, together with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—provides close-to-home access to the latest treatment options. For more information, call 844.CANCERNJ or visit www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer.

patient’s home,” Silva says.

Communicate constantly. This is essential in two ways. First, the nurse navigator is the central clearinghouse for information provided from the many specialists on

a cancer patient’s care team—medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgical oncologists, social workers, nutritionists and more. The navigator can ensure that no aspects of treatment fall through the cracks and that the patient receives the highest quality of care.

Second, the navigator can follow up to be sure a patient understands what’s happening.

“Doctors do a great job of explaining, but often you can see the patient’s mind drift off as the person starts to worry about things like, ‘Who’s going to pick my kids up from school?’” Silva explains. “A navigator can talk to the patient later about what he or she understood and relay the necessary information over again in smaller bits so it’s easier to process.”

Set priorities. “Sometimes what feels urgent to a patient is not clinically urgent, but our nurse navigators have the ability to know what is truly time-sensitive,” Silva explains. “For example, recently a young man needed to see a specialist as soon as possible. Based on the navigator’s intervention, he was able to get in to see the doctor in one day.”

Save time. Often, a patient needs several medical procedures—for example, an echocardiogram and a port insertion before chemotherapy treatment can begin. A nurse navigator can arrange for multiple appointments to be scheduled at the same facility on the same day. “A navigator is key to making sure all the pieces fit together and to minimizing the time a patient needs to spend at a facility,” Silva says.

“An oncology nurse navigator is a critical part of a patient’s cancer care team,” she continues. “He or she is the kind of person who can anticipate what’s needed and make it happen—and who has a relentless desire to help patients.”

CANCER CARE: THE HUMAN TOUCH

HOW ONCOLOGY NURSE NAVIGATORS HELP PATIENTS

Patients who seek care through the RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) Oncology Access Center have a big advantage: They get connected to an oncology nurse navigator who acts as their problem-solver and supporter before, during and after treatment. The oncology nurse navigator becomes an important member of the patient’s healthcare team and serves as his or her advocate while compassionately supporting their physical, emotional and spiritual needs from diagnosis through survivorship.

“When you choose RWJBarnabas Health for your cancer care, you’re not only getting quality care, but someone to walk beside you on your treatment journey,” explains Jeanne Silva, RN, Director, Nurse Navigation, Oncology Services at RWJBH. “Moreover, we coordinate all of our resources, so that if a patient has a problem—be it financial,

social or medical—the navigator can help the patient get the benefit of resources from throughout the health system.”

When a patient makes an appointment with an RWJBH cancer provider, the oncology nurse navigator will follow up with the patient the next day. “The navigator asks if there are any questions about the upcoming appointment and goes through some of the specifics of what will happen,” Silva says.

That’s just the beginning. Oncology nurse navigators, who are located at each RWJBH facility, also do the following:

Identify possible barriers to treatment.

Does the patient have financial or insurance concerns? Does the patient have family or friends who can provide support? Is there a transportation issue? The nurse navigator can identify and help with these problems right away. “In one case, we

were able to get a patient to see a specialist located 70 miles away from the



To contact the Oncology Access Center, call **844.CANCERNJ (844.226.2376)**.



Sam Jarmer made remarkable progress at Children's Specialized Hospital and continues doing well with outpatient therapy.

'THE SKY'S THE LIMIT'



Children's Specialized Hospital®

An RWJBarnabas Health facility

AFTER A TRAUMATIC NECK INJURY, INTENSE PHYSICAL THERAPY HELPS A TEENAGER MOVE AGAIN.

July 24, 2019: a grayish, unremarkable day on the beach at Ocean Grove. Lifeguard Sam Jarmer, 16, dives into the water to cool down, but hits a hidden sandbar.

Soon after, Sam's mom, Jessica, sitting on the beach several blocks away, sees a call from Sam's boss come in on her phone. "I immediately knew not only that he was injured; I could feel that it was bad," she remembers.

When he hit the sandbar, Sam suffered a burst fracture in the C6 vertebra near the base of the neck and lost the ability to move his arms and legs. A fellow lifeguard jumped in to lift his head above the water, and a trauma team was dispatched from a nearby hospital. Sam was strapped to a backboard, and six of his fellow lifeguards carried him to a waiting ambulance.

"He kept saying, 'I'm so sorry, Mom,' because we were supposed to go on vacation the next day," Jessica remembers.

Sam was in surgery for six hours while the burst vertebra was replaced with a titanium cage. He spent the next five days

recovering at the hospital. At that point, he could occasionally raise his arms a bit, but nothing more.

It was time for intensive inpatient rehabilitation and therapy at Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH) in New Brunswick. "I remember feeling that this would be the place that would make it all better," Jessica says.

MAKING PROGRESS

The first piece of good news came from Michele Fantasia, MD, Director of the Spinal Cord Injury Program at CSH. Her evaluation determined that Sam's injury was "incomplete," meaning that Sam still had some motor and sensory function below the level of injury. "As I say with all incomplete injuries, 'The sky's the limit,'" Dr. Fantasia told Jessica.

Four months of recreational, physical and occupational therapies followed. "The occupational therapists made modifications

for everything," Jessica remembers. "They kept constructing things in some kind of magical workshop they had." There was a special fork to help Sam relearn how to feed himself, a device to help him brush his teeth and more.

"Everyone at Children's really helped me when I was at one of the lowest points in my life with my injury," says Sam. "They just showed compassion in all of the support and love that they gave me." On November 19, Sam was discharged from CSH.

Today, Sam continues with a rigorous program of outpatient physical therapy. During the COVID-19 lockdown, he did his exercises via telemedicine for a few weeks. His older brother, home from college, was there to help.

Sam continues to work on his core muscles, arms and fingers. He now has muscle control in all parts of his legs and continues to work on walking independently. "I'm staying positive," he says. "I know it will take time and I'll be back to where I was, but for now I've just got to keep pushing forward."

To learn more about Children's Specialized Hospital, call **888.244.5373** or visit **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.



[ANYTOWN] **A musical with a mission:** “Anytown,” an original educational musical, tells the story of Hope, a high-achieving high school student who becomes addicted to opioids after a soccer injury. The show has toured middle and high schools in New Jersey and was developed through a partnership with George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick, RWJBH and the Horizon Foundation of New Jersey.



[BEAT BUS] **They've got the beat:** Students in Long Branch, Asbury Park and Neptune have experienced a state-of-the-art mobile recording studio to create their own music thanks to the Beat Bus, a collaboration between Lakehouse Music Academy and the Asbury Park Music Foundation that is supported in part by RWJBH. In addition to providing a means of creative expression and new ways to collaborate, the Beat Bus helps prepare students for success in the digital age.



[ASBURY PARK MUSIC + FILM FESTIVAL]

Making (sound) waves: The Asbury Park Music + Film Festival, of which RWJBH is a Founding Partner, celebrates the role of music in film, as well as the shore town's long history as an incubator of great music. It benefits underserved children in Asbury Park and surrounding areas by providing music education, instruments and social connection opportunities. **Note: All photos on these pages were taken before the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing guidelines.**



SUPPORTING ARTS FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL ARTS GROUPS HELP PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES.

Research has shown that the arts stimulate creativity, ease stress, promote joy, improve memory and enhance education. That's why RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH), with its strong commitment to creating and sustaining healthy communities, partners with local arts organizations.

"We understand the clear and beneficial impact that taking part in the arts has on health and well-being," says Michael Knecht, Senior Vice President of Strategic Marketing and Communications for RWJBH. "These partnerships are an important way for us to help people in our communities and also support local grassroots organizations."

RWJBH supports a broad range of arts events. Music, dance and film are high on the list: RWJBH has sponsored the Asbury Park Music + Film Festival; the Bridge Arts Festival

in Bayonne; the Montclair Jazz Festival; the Central Jersey Jazz Festival; Maplewoodstock Music & Art Festival; the "Sounds of the City" free outdoor concerts presented by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark; and the SOMA Film Festival in South Orange and Maplewood.

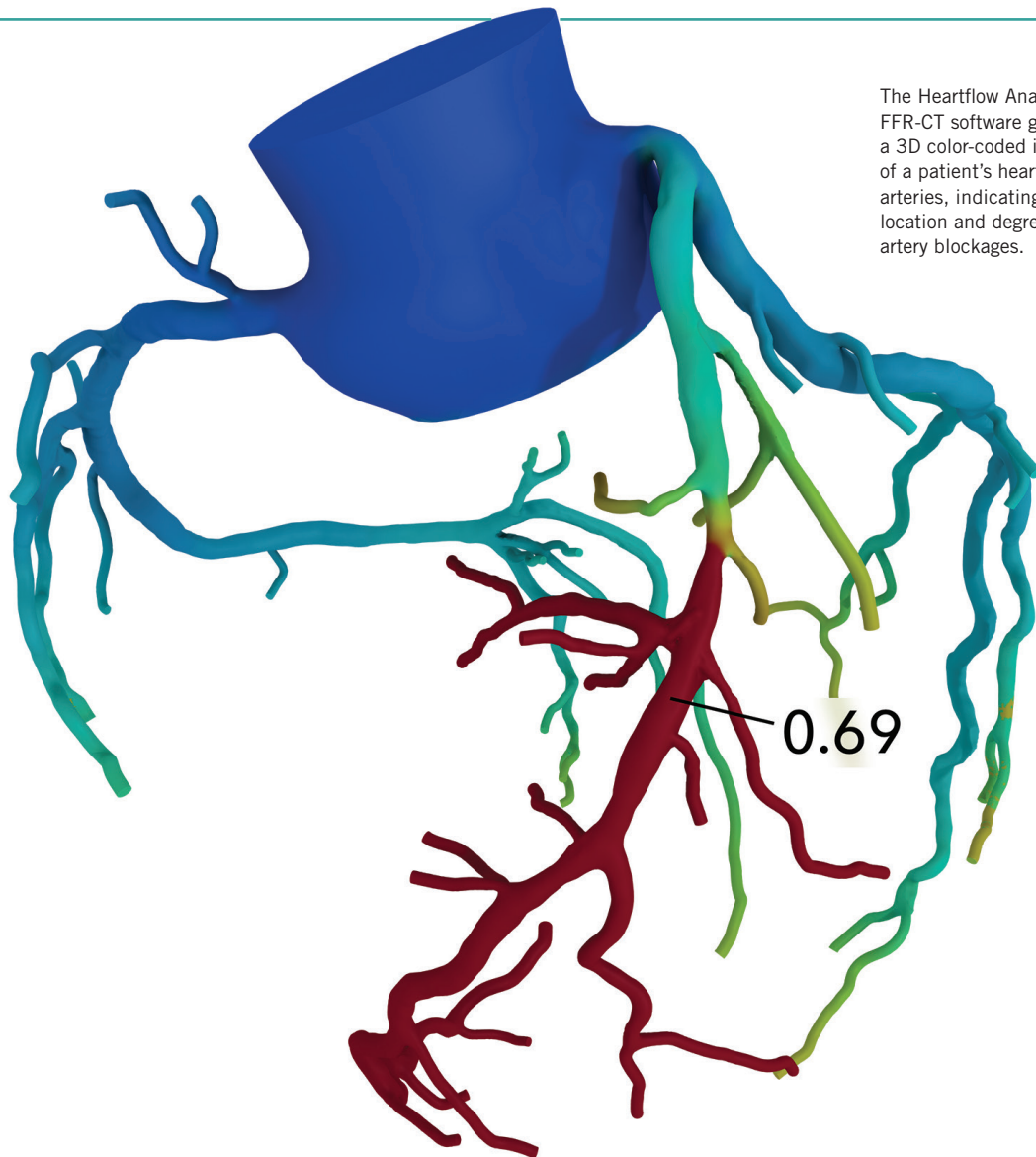
Drama has a place as well. RWJBH is a sponsor of the New Jersey Repertory Company, a professional nonprofit theater in Long Branch with a mission to develop and present new plays. And in a proactive move to help stem the opioid epidemic among young people, RWJBH has partnered with the George Street Playhouse in New

Brunswick and the Horizon Foundation of New Jersey to create "Anytown," a one-hour musical that demonstrates how addiction can happen to anyone. The show has toured to schools throughout the state, followed by Q&A discussions with students.

"These partnerships are all part of the RWJBarnabas Health commitment to reaching out beyond the walls of our medical centers to help people get and stay healthy in all kinds of ways," says Knecht. "And they're wonderful examples of how meaningful collaboration with local organizations can make an impact throughout the state."

To learn more about RWJBarnabas Health corporate partnerships, visit www.rwjbh.org/corporatepartners.





The Heartflow Analysis FFR-CT software generates a 3D color-coded image of a patient's heart and arteries, indicating the location and degree of artery blockages.

A HIGH-TECH LOOK AT THE HEART

**DOCTORS CAN NOW USE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR A NONINVASIVE,
HIGHLY ACCURATE TEST FOR CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE.**

“After the test, they told me I was a walking time bomb,” says Ray Duarte, 50.

As the Regional Director of Information Technology at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus and at Monmouth Medical Center, Ray had volunteered to be among the first for an advanced noninvasive technology known as Fractional Flow Reserve Computed Tomography (FFR-CT). This test evaluates how well blood flows through a patient’s heart arteries and determines whether—and where—blockages exist.

“I had upper back pain on and off, for which I was seeing a chiropractor with no relief,” says Ray. “I did have high cholesterol, which I was addressing with improved diet and exercise, and a family history of heart disease.

“However, due to my active lifestyle and symptoms that were not typical for heart disease, my primary care doctor told me he would never have recommended so much as a stress test for me,” Ray recalls.

But the FFR-CT test showed that Ray’s right coronary artery was 99 percent blocked. Without the test and subsequent treatment, such a blockage could have led to a heart attack at any time.

FINDING THE BLOCKAGES

The powerful, artificial intelligence-based FFR-CT test is used to diagnose coronary artery disease (CAD)—blockages in the blood vessels supplying the heart. CAD is a leading cause of death in the U.S., accounting for 600,000 to 700,000 deaths

per year. It can cause shortness of breath, chest pain (typical and atypical) and heart attack, and can lead to death.

When a patient has chest pain or suspicious symptoms, the usual



RAJESH MOHAN, MD

noninvasive ways of detecting inadequate blood flow include an **electrocardiogram (ECG)**, which uses electrical signals; a **stress test**, in which blood flow is tested while a patient exercises, via ECG or an **echocardiogram (ECHO)**, which uses ultrasound waves; or a **nuclear stress test**, which uses radioactive dye and an imaging machine. In addition, a **computed tomography (CT) scan** can show calcium deposits that could narrow arteries.

Prior to FFR-CT technology, however, the only way physicians could see for certain whether coronary arteries were blocked was to do an invasive procedure, known as **cardiac catheterization and angiogram**. In this procedure, a special dye is injected through a long, thin, flexible tube (catheter) that is threaded through an artery in the leg up to the arteries of the heart.

If a blockage is found, the cardiologist can decide whether to correct it during the angiogram—for example, by inserting a small tube (stent) to keep the artery open—or to send the patient for bypass surgery.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

While a crucial and sometimes lifesaving technology, an angiogram often shows no significant blockages, according to Rajesh Mohan, MD, MBA, FACC, FSCAI, an interventional cardiologist and Chief Medical Officer at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC).

That’s where noninvasive FFR-CT comes in. Using “machine learning,” an application of artificial intelligence, the software compares images from existing CT scans of a patient’s heart to an ever-growing database of tens of thousands of other CT images. This large database helps physicians analyze the likelihood that any specific blockage could cause harm and also provides direction about treatment.

“The FFR-CT technology creates a three-dimensional image of blood vessels and color-codes them based on

the severity of the blockage,” says Dr. Mohan. “It then also shows how each blockage impacts blood flow to the heart.” Armed with this knowledge, a physician can decide whether lifestyle changes, medication, a stent or surgery is the best course of action.

“With this information, we can give our patients a more definite diagnosis and have confidence in the best treatment plan without putting them through unnecessary invasive procedures,” says Dr. Mohan. “Its accuracy is unlike that of any other noninvasive tests available to us.”

IS FFR-CT FOR YOU?

Since CAD is a common type of heart disease, many patients can benefit from this advanced technology.

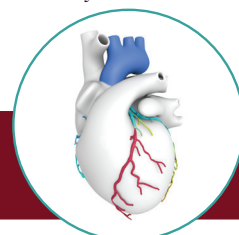
However, FFR-CT is not available everywhere. Specialists at MMCSC are among the first in the state to use it, and MMCSC is the earliest hospital in the state to utilize it in the Emergency Department and throughout the hospital, as well as for outpatients.

“The test needs to be done appropriately, according to criteria set by the American College of Cardiology,” says Dr. Mohan. “Patients need to have symptoms—for example, chest pain or shortness of breath on exertion, which a lot of people actually disregard.

“If these exist in association with some of the coronary risk factors like smoking, hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol and family history, then I think that patient is an ideal candidate for this study.”

As for Ray Duarte, a stent procedure opened his blocked artery, his back pain has resolved and medication is controlling his cholesterol. He is back to an active lifestyle.

Says Dr. Mohan, “We at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus are excited and privileged to introduce such a cutting-edge, revolutionary technology.”



Your heart doesn’t beat just for you. Get it checked. To learn more about FFR-CT or to find a cardiac specialist, call **888.724.7123** or visit **www.rwjbh.org/heart**.



MIND, BODY AND HEALTH

WHY CARING FOR THE WHOLE PERSON IS THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE

At his yearly physical, a patient is found to be 35 pounds over ideal body weight. He has hypertension, and his lab results indicate prediabetes. His doctor urges him to change his diet, be more active and lose the extra weight to reduce his risk for stroke, heart disease and diabetes.



FRANK A. GHINASSI, PhD

The patient acknowledges that he should. But at his next yearly physical, he's still 35 pounds overweight.

In that all-too-common scenario lies the possibility for a new approach to healthcare,

one that simultaneously provides help for behavioral as well as physical issues. “The goal is to help people make better choices—about things like what they eat, how they exercise and about alcohol and nicotine—and thereby avoid many chronic health disorders,” says Frank A. Ghinassi, PhD, ABPP, Senior Vice President, Behavioral Health and Addiction at RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH), and President and CEO of Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care.

“Through integrated care delivery, we want to treat both body and mind, preferably in the same location and during the same healthcare visit,” he says.

In the case of the overweight patient, for example, the primary care provider will look to determine the cause of the

patient's inability to lose weight. “Is the issue genetic? Does the patient have a low metabolism?” asks Dr. Ghinassi. “Or is there a mood disorder that's affecting energy level and motivation?”

Once barriers to a healthier lifestyle are identified, doctors and behavioral health specialists can work together to develop solutions tailored to the patient's specific needs.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

“Often, people with behavioral and addiction disorders are treated ‘from the neck up’ and are referred to dedicated behavioral health offices,” says Dr. Ghinassi.

But that approach can create roadblocks. “Maybe the patient can't get an appointment for three weeks, or he doesn't like the idea of walking into a building that says ‘counseling services’ or ‘psychiatry’ on the sign,” he explains.

To provide coordinated care, RWJBH and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care are bringing services closer together. “At many of our primary care and pediatric delivery sites, primary care physicians work with psychologists or social workers who are located in the same office suite or in the same building,” says Dr. Ghinassi. “A patient can be offered a chance to meet the physician's behavioral health colleague even before leaving the initial appointment, find out what might be possible and perhaps find it easier to commit to following up with a subsequent call or visit.” The next evolution of care at RWJBH and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care will be to have a clinical social worker or psychologist located right in the same office space as the primary care provider.

Integrated healthcare is the future, Dr. Ghinassi believes. “People tend to come to a healthcare system when they're in crisis—they need coronary artery surgery, for example, or their depression makes them unable to function in daily life. Of course, we'll always be there for those people,” he says.

“However, we're evolving to an equal focus on early screening and intervention. Together, RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care are on a mission to improve the health and life satisfaction of patients and families throughout New Jersey.”

For help accessing mental health services, call the RWJBarnabas Health Access Center at **800.300.0628**.





From left to right: William Walsh, Chair, RWJUH Hamilton Board of Directors; Nina Melker, Chair, Foundation Board and Vice Chair, RWJUH Hamilton Board of Directors; Lasanta Horana, MD, gala honoree; and Richard Freeman, President and Chief Executive Officer, RWJUH Hamilton. **Note: This photo was taken before mask and social distancing recommendations were in place.**



A GENEROUS DONATION

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton recently received 42,000 surgical masks and \$40,000 from the New Jersey-based not-for-profit organization United Moms Charity Association (NJUMCA), whose goal is to meet the needs of the community. The funds are being used to purchase supplies and equipment to ensure the safety of patients and staff members. The hospital recently acquired a second Tru-D disinfection robot, which uses ultraviolet light to inactivate microorganisms. It's an environmentally friendly and chemical-free way to enhance the hospital's stringent cleaning standards. "This contribution aligns with our commitment to be a high-reliability organization focused on providing the highest quality, safest patient care possible," says Richard Freeman, President and Chief Executive Officer of RWJUH Hamilton, which received its ninth Safety Grade A from The Leapfrog Group last spring. "We continue to do amazing work caring for our community with the help and support of generous partners such as NJUMCA."

SUPPORTING HIGH-QUALITY HEALTHCARE

A CORPORATION, PHYSICIAN AND TWO COMMUNITY MEMBERS WERE RECOGNIZED AT THE ANNUAL GALA.

On November 8, 2019, more than 300 hospital and community leaders gathered at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton's annual gala. Called the Autumn Affair, the black-tie dinner was held at The Stone Terrace in Hamilton. "It was a well-attended, festive event," says Nina Melker, Foundation Board Chair, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and Senior Vice President, Private Banking, at Berkshire Bank in Hamilton. Each table featured flowers in shades of orange and had a chocolate-dipped wine bottle. Guests received autumn-themed candy at the event, which raised about \$172,000 for RWJUH Hamilton. The following honorees were celebrated:

- Rue Insurance has been a community leader in Mercer County for more than 100 years. The company helps clients protect their assets and improve their profitability. William Rue, Sr. is a Past Chair and Director on the RWJUH Hamilton Board. William Rue, Jr. serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Lakeview Child Center and is a former member of the hospital's Young Professionals Group.

- Lasanta Horana, MD, is Chair, Medical Director and Attending Physician in the Emergency and Pediatric Emergency Department. He's also a member of the hospital's Critical Care Committee, Medical Quality Council, Medicine Peer Review and Medical Executive Committee. He's a former member of the Young Professionals Group.

SAVE THE DATE!

On Friday, September 18, the Young Professionals Group is hosting a movie night featuring *Trolls World Tour* from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at Arm & Hammer Park in Trenton. Proceeds will benefit the Cancer Center. For more information, please visit www.rwjbh.org/rwj-university-hospital-hamilton/giving/special-events.

- George Rabito, MD, has been serving the community at Hamilton Holistic Wellness Center for 35 years. He takes comfort knowing that RWJUH Hamilton is providing excellent care for his patients. Sherise Ritter, also known as Sherry, is Managing Director of The Mercadien Group, which provides accounting and consulting services, and Co-Chair of the firm's Nonprofit and Human Services Group. George and Sherry have been a part of the RWJUH Hamilton family for more than 15 years. Sherry has been a member of the Hospital Board, Foundation Board, Governance Committee and Audit Committee.

To make a donation in support of the hospital, visit www.rwjbh.org/hamiltongivenow.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

**NO REQUEST IS TOO MUCH FOR RWJUH HAMILTON
STAFF MEMBERS, WHO GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO
ENSURE THAT PATIENTS' NEEDS ARE MET.**



In August 2019, Robert Mitchell, a 48-year-old truck driver, was traveling through New Jersey when he noticed that the pain and swelling that had started in one finger a few days earlier had spread throughout his entire left hand. “It got so bad that I could barely drive, and I was shaking and sweating,” recalls Robert, who lives in Springfield, Mo.

Robert headed to the nearest hospital, which was Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. There, he was admitted and diagnosed with a staph infection. Unbeknownst to him, a small cut on one of his fingers had become infected after he banged his hand on his truck door, and he needed emergency hand surgery to remove the infected areas. While he was lying in his hospital bed, Robert worried about his 10-year-old dog, Hopper, a Jack Russell Chihuahua mix, who was still in his truck. “He keeps me company on the road so I don’t get too sad and lonely missing my family,” says Robert, who has four children: Ryan, 27, Kayla, 25, Dusty, 23, and Ethan, 19. “I love him like one of my kids.”

ACTS OF KINDNESS

As soon as Robert explained that his furry friend was in the parking lot, the RWJUH Hamilton staff sprang into action. Security personnel took turns making sure Hopper was fed and walked several times a day. (Robert’s truck has an auxiliary power unit, so Hopper could stay cool and comfortable in air-conditioning even in the sweltering summer heat.) Still, Robert worried about Hopper. Admitted on a Thursday, Robert had surgery the next day. By Saturday, “I was begging the hospital staff to take the IV antibiotics out of my hand because I wanted to drive home with my dog,” he recalls.

On Sunday morning, Robert’s hand surgeon, Daren Aita, MD, stopped by to check on Robert and change the dressings on his hand. Robert shared his concerns about Hopper. “He explained that Hopper



“I SAW A PHOTO OF HOPPER CUDDLING WITH DR. AITA WHILE HE SCRATCHED HIS BELLY, AND I KNEW MY DOG WAS IN A GOOD PLACE.”

Robert Mitchell, Springfield, Mo.

was stuck in his truck and he was worried about his dog,” recalls Dr. Aita.

As a fellow dog lover, Dr. Aita understood the gravity of the situation. He excused himself to call his wife, who readily agreed to swing by and pick up Hopper. “I walked back into the room and said, ‘I realize that you don’t know me at all, but you’re going to be in the hospital for the next five to seven days, and my family and I would be absolutely delighted to watch Hopper,’” he says. Robert hemmed and hawed for a few moments but ultimately agreed.

A GRATEFUL PATIENT

As soon as Hopper’s paws crossed the Aitas’ front door, he couldn’t have been happier. He warmed up immediately to the Aitas’ own dog—a mixed breed they adopted from the Caribbean—and made himself right at home. Every day, the family sent Robert pictures of Hopper. “I saw one of Hopper cuddling with Dr. Aita while he scratched his belly, and I knew my dog was in a good place,” says Robert.

A few days later, Robert was discharged, and he and Hopper had a reunion in the parking lot. Today, he keeps in touch with the Aitas, occasionally emailing them pictures of Hopper. “Before this experience, I had a negative impression of people on the East Coast—I thought they were rude and unfriendly,” he says. “But the hospital staff members were awesome, from the nurse who searched the hospital for hours to find me a cell phone charger to the security folks who kept checking on Hopper. I wouldn’t have gotten the same level of care back home in Springfield.”



TREATING PATIENTS WITH COMPASSION

Lanet Henderson, a phlebotomist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton, has always been able to successfully draw blood. But when a young man with Down syndrome arrived for routine bloodwork one December evening, she wondered if she’d be able to do it. The patient’s mom had warned the blood draw station’s receptionist, Kate Niwore, that her son was a “tough stick.” “He would either pass out during the blood draw or panic so much the process would have to be stopped,” recalls Niwore. As a result, he’d never had a full series of lab work.

Henderson knew the best strategy was to keep the patient calm by engaging him in conversation. She started by asking if he had pets, then moved on to whether he had a girlfriend. “He started to giggle, so I knew I had hit on a good topic,” she says. Over the next few minutes, the two chatted about everything from his recent breakup to what he was doing that weekend. “I told him he could always take me out to dinner, and he joked that I was too old for him,” says Henderson. Ten minutes later, the blood draw was done. “His mom was in tears—she was amazed that Lanet had been able to get everything without any issues,” says Niwore.

Henderson’s secret is to treat all patients as equals. “As long as you approach everyone with a smile and compassion, you’ll get results,” she says.

Learn more about Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton at www.rwjbh.org/hamiltonabout.



HELP FOR INTIMATE PAIN

PHYSICAL THERAPY ENABLED ONE PATIENT TO OVERCOME AN EMBARRASSING CONDITION—FAST.

Jess*, 21, had a very personal problem: She experienced pain every time she had intercourse. Rather than suffer in silence, she mentioned it to her gynecologist, who referred Jess to the Pelvic Health Program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton. Located in the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness, the program

provides treatment for bladder, bowel and pelvic floor conditions.

Rachna Mehta, DPT, CIMT, OCS, PRPC, a physical therapist who's an expert in pelvic rehabilitation, saw Jess, who's a junior in college, in November

2019. As the two spoke, Dr. Mehta realized the young woman's problems extended beyond painful sex. "Jess had a history of bed-wetting as a child," she recalls. "She became continent at age 12, but she still wet her bed about one to three times a month." Jess also experienced the urge to urinate frequently—some days, every 30 minutes and one to two times per night.

Dr. Mehta evaluated Jess's pelvic and abdominal muscles. She found that Jess had moderate pain and spasms in her hip, lower abdominal muscles and pelvic floor muscles. "Problems with the pelvic floor muscles can lead to pain during intercourse as well as the need to urinate frequently," says Dr. Mehta.

HANDS-ON HEALING

Dr. Mehta decided Jess could benefit from abdominal massage. "Using hands-on, manual therapy techniques, we

worked on her abdominal muscles," she says. "We released the fascia, the tissue that covers the muscles. If the abdominal muscles are in spasm, then the bladder can't relax and the patient feels the frequent urge to urinate." Dr. Mehta also used specialized techniques to relax the muscles surrounding the urethra, the tube that carries urine out of the body.

In addition, Dr. Mehta helped Jess modify her diet to avoid bladder irritants, which lead to frequent urination. Caffeine, carbonated beverages, tea and spicy foods can be problematic, she says. Dr. Mehta also encouraged Jess to "retrain" her bladder to stop her frequent bathroom trips. "She recommended urinating every two to three hours," says Jess.

Jess also learned how to perform hip stretches, squats and yoga poses, which



**RACHNA MEHTA, DPT,
CIMT, OCS, PRPC**



REAPING THE BENEFITS OF REHAB

Rehabilitation can help patients with a variety of medical problems, says Pamela Randolph, DPT, Director of Rehabilitation Services at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton.

- **ORTHOPEDIC CONDITIONS.**

“Physical therapy is often the first treatment patients try before having surgery,” says Dr. Randolph. “If a person suffers from movement dysfunction or a muscle imbalance, for instance, we can correct those to prevent surgery. We also provide therapy for those who do have surgery to improve their outcome.”

- **NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS, SUCH AS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, PARKINSON’S DISEASE AND MIGRAINES.**

These patients can benefit from physical therapy, occupational therapy or speech therapy—or all three.

- **PELVIC PAIN, INCONTINENCE AND CONSTIPATION.**

“We have expanded our program to include both male and female patients,” says Dr. Randolph. “Our pelvic floor therapists use many different techniques, including biofeedback, manual therapy and patient education.”

- **CANCER.**

“Rehab helps cancer patients improve their endurance and strength during or after their treatment,” says Dr. Randolph. Therapists can also help ease the symptoms of lymphedema, a complication that can occur during treatment.

- **BALANCE PROBLEMS.**

Patients who have trouble with balance or suffer from conditions like vertigo can benefit from vestibular rehabilitation.



VIRTUAL REHAB

While RWJ Rehab is open for in-person visits, patients may have the option to receive treatment via telehealth. Contact your preferred site to schedule your next appointment.

help to relax and stretch the pelvic floor muscles. “This decreases the need to urinate and reduces discomfort during sex,” says Dr. Mehta. She also taught Jess Kegel exercises—in which the pelvic floor muscles are tightened and then relaxed—to strengthen them.

QUICK RESULTS

Jess saw Dr. Mehta twice a week for about an hour. After just three or four visits, Jess noticed a significant improvement in her symptoms. “My university classes last about 90 minutes, and sometimes I would get up two or three times to go to the bathroom,” she recalls. “Now, I can sit

through a lecture comfortably.”

About 10 days after her therapy began, Jess wasn’t experiencing any pelvic pain and was sleeping through the night. Since December, she hasn’t had any pain with intercourse, either. “I noticed an improvement in my symptoms very quickly,” says Jess. “My advice to anyone suffering from pelvic problems is not to be too embarrassed to ask for help.” Jess did so well that Dr. Mehta discharged her from therapy in March. “I’ve benefited from the program tremendously,” says Jess. “It’s improved my quality of life.”

* NAME CHANGED TO PROTECT PRIVACY.

Find out how rehab can change your life. For more information, visit www.rwjrehab.com.





Richard Young is back to his favorite workouts now that he feels well.

A REMARKABLE RECOVERY

THANKS TO EXPERT AND COMPASSIONATE CARE, A PATIENT WITH ADVANCED CANCER IS NOW IN REMISSION.

RWJBarnabas Health and RWJUH 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.

Richard Young, of Hamilton, didn’t have his first screening test for colorectal cancer until October 2016, when he was 62. The results were devastating. Although he had no symptoms, the colonoscopy—in which a flexible, lighted tube is used to examine the entire colon



SEETA TRIVEDI, MD

and rectum—showed he had colorectal cancer. A month later, Richard, a retired teacher at the New Jersey Department of Corrections, underwent a harrowing surgery at another hospital. “Surgeons removed 14 inches of my colon, and there were complications,” he says. Richard developed hernias that had to be corrected in emergency surgery. Although he had expected to be hospitalized for just two or three days, “I was there for the better part of two weeks,” he says. After the surgery, Richard learned that the cancer had already spread to five

of 17 colonic lymph nodes. He started receiving chemotherapy.

COMPASSIONATE CARE

Unfortunately, Richard was dissatisfied with his care. He came to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH) Hamilton in January 2017 for a second opinion. It was a world of difference, he says. “The staff members are amazing—

CANCER-FIGHTING FOODS

Diet is a powerful weapon against cancer. Consider including the following healthy foods in your daily diet:

- Tomatoes contain lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that may halt tumor growth.
- Berries, such as strawberries and raspberries, destroy cancer-causing substances and slow tumor growth.
- Milk, yogurt and cheese contain calcium, which may help lower the risk of colorectal cancer by reducing the risk of cell damage and destroying cancer cells.
- Found in spinach, flax seeds and seafood, zinc may help stop the growth of cancer cells.
- Carrots, sweet potatoes, kale, broccoli and papaya contain Vitamin A, which may help reduce the risk of developing squamous cell carcinoma, a type of skin cancer.

everyone from the people at the front desk to the doctors,” he says. “They make you feel like you’re their only patient because you receive their undivided attention.”

Richard underwent a PET/CT scan to reassess the status of the disease. It revealed that the cancer was in lymph nodes throughout his body, including his chest, abdomen and armpit. He learned that the disease was now considered Stage IV—the most advanced stage. “It was a big blow,” recalls Richard. His physician, Seeta Trivedi, MD, an oncologist at RWJUH Hamilton, advised switching to a different type of chemotherapy. “I recommended a targeted agent,” says Dr. Trivedi. Richard recalls that she broke the news gently and patiently. “She took the time to explain why I needed chemotherapy, as well as the side effects I could experience,” he says.

BATTLING SIDE EFFECTS

Richard struggled with the chemotherapy treatments. “He had a lot of trouble with

his blood counts,” recalls Dr. Trivedi. “His red blood cells and platelets took a longer time than usual to recover from treatment.” Sometimes he’d require a platelet transfusion, and on several occasions, his counts dropped so low he had to skip a month of chemotherapy. “Richard also experienced fatigue,” says Dr. Trivedi. “He had a lot of diarrhea and lost a lot of weight.”

Faced with these challenges, Richard felt discouraged at times. “I learned that Stage IV colorectal cancer is incurable, so it was a pretty rough time in my life,” he says. After six months of chemotherapy, test results were encouraging. They showed that a lot of the cancer was gone, but signs of cancer remained in the lymph nodes in his right armpit. Richard would need a longer course of treatment.

With the support of his two daughters and girlfriend, Chris, Richard soldiered on. Around the eight-month mark, he had completed the bulk of his treatments, and Dr. Trivedi switched him to a less taxing maintenance therapy. In all, he was treated for 18 months. In November 2018, the chemotherapy sessions were discontinued after he was hospitalized twice for esophageal bleeding. “Dr. Trivedi visited me every day I was in the hospital,” says Richard. A PET/CT scan taken after he was discharged showed that his cancer was finally in remission and he wouldn’t need more chemotherapy for the time being.

A GRATEFUL PATIENT

Today, Richard is still in remission. “He’s staying positive and he’s doing well,” says Dr. Trivedi. He sees her for a checkup once a year. “Life is good,” says Richard. He enjoys lifting weights, taking walks and spending time with Chris, his daughters and three grandchildren. He visits RWJUH Hamilton once every six months for blood tests to check his platelet levels. Before the pandemic began, he brought the doctors and nurses treats like candy and cookies once in a while to thank them. “I owe them my life,” he says.

Early detection is important.
To schedule a colonoscopy,
call **609.631.6930**.



SUMMER SALAD WITH RASPBERRY BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

Serves approximately 4 to 6 people

RASPBERRY BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

- ¼ cup raspberry jam
- 3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard

Whisk together.
Season to taste.

SALAD

- 2 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- 1 cup spring mix, baby arugula or baby spinach
- 1 cup snow peas or sugar snap peas
- 1 cucumber, diced
- 4 to 6 radishes, sliced
- ¼ cup flat leaf parsley
- ¼ cup toasted almond slices

1. Prepare the dressing and set aside.
2. Toss salad ingredients in a large serving bowl.
3. Mix in the dressing or serve on the side.
4. If desired, garnish with toasted almonds before serving.

Lose more than just weight. Lose your sleep apnea.

The Center for Weight Loss at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

At Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, instead of emphasizing short-term goals like reducing the size of your waist, we focus on long-term benefits like reducing your risk of diabetes, sleep apnea and hypertension. Beginning with a nurse navigator, every aspect of the program, including bariatric surgery, will be clearly presented so you can make the right choice. Attend one of our information sessions to learn more.

Robert Wood Johnson | **RWJBarnabas**
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Hamilton | Let's be healthy together.

rwjbh.org/weightloss

* Results are not guaranteed and may vary by individual



**We've taken every precaution to keep you safe.
So if you've put off bariatric care due to COVID-19, please don't delay it any longer.**