RWJ Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

NEW BRUNSWICK • SOMERSET



Annabella Macias, 2, reacts to the sounds she can now hear coming through her headphones. Annabella was diagnosed with profound hearing loss as an infant and recently received two cochlear implants at The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

BREAK throughs

COCHLEAR IMPLANTS FOR KIDS
Breaking the Sound Barrier

HYPERHIDROSIS
No Sweat!

COMMUNITY HEALTH
Fitness Fun For Families



WELCOME

Dear Friends,

At Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ) and Health System, we are continually preparing for the future of healthcare by developing more effective, efficient ways to deliver quality care.

Research has shown us that if we want the best opportunity for improving the health and wellness of our communities, we can't do it alone. Partnering with other providers will enable us to expand beyond the walls of our hospitals and increase value to the populations we serve.

We are pleased to share that on July 14, the Robert Wood Johnson Health System signed a definitive agreement to merge with Barnabas Health. Once complete, this historic transaction will create New Jersey's largest healthcare system to be known as RWJ Barnabas Health. The new system will span eight counties and offer the diverse communities in New Jersey expanded access to the best in academic medicine and community-based care.

In other exciting news, the American Hospital Association presented RWJ with the 2015 Equity of Care Award, recognizing us as one of two top-performing hospitals in the country for demonstrating success at reducing healthcare disparities and promoting diversity and inclusion in leadership and staff at the organizational level.

We are committed to living diversity as a value, modeling it internally among our employees and patients, and externally. We work together in partnership with our doctors, nurses and allied health professionals to give residents of this state access to expanded specialty healthcare services and innovative therapies found only at a handful of institutions in the nation. Receiving this award is a true testament to the impact the RWJ team is making through this initiative.

We continue to provide equitable care and we cite examples in this issue of how we are bringing this kind of care into the diverse communities we serve. The Robert Wood Johnson Health System is leading the way to health.

I now invite you to enjoy another exciting issue of *Breakthroughs.*

Sincerely,

Stephen K. Jones, FACHE
President and CEO
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and Robert Wood Johnson Health System

BREAKthroughs

Jack Morris
Chair, Board of Directors
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

Stephen K. Jones, FACHE
President and CEO
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital
Robert Wood Johnson Health System

PRODUCED BY
The Marketing and Public Relations Department
Michael E. Knecht, FACHE
Vice President, Communications and Community Relations

PROJECT MANAGER
Melissa Ruzbarsky

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Victoria Allen
Lori DeMilto
Peter Haigney
Zenaida Mendez
Kathleen Roberts

DESIGN
Tara Ramirez

PHOTOGRAPHY
John Emerson
Alan Schindler

PRINTER
Mariano Press

VISIT US ON THE WEB
www.rwjuh.edu

TO FIND A RWJ PHYSICIAN
1-888-MD-RWJUH • 1-888-637-9584

RWJ Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital
NEW BRUNSWICK • SOMERSET

The articles in this publication are not intended to provide specific medical or surgical advice or treatment recommendations to any individual or group. The publication is for information purposes only.

Article requests, comments or suggestions for *Breakthroughs* may be e-mailed directly to support@rwjuh.edu.

For more information, or to receive additional copies of this publication, please contact the Communications and Community Relations Department at 732-937-8521 or webmaster@rwjuh.edu.

twitter.com/rwjuh • facebook.com/rwjuh

BREAK throughs

HYPERHIDROSIS 1
No Sweat!

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT 3
A Healing Community

COCHLEAR IMPLANTS FOR KIDS 5
Breaking the Sound Barrier

COMMUNITY CALENDAR 7
New Brunswick/Old Bridge

COMMUNITY CALENDAR 9
Somerset

PHYSICAL THERAPY 11
Parkinson's Patients Go Big and Loud

PELVIC SURGERY 13
Dancing to a New Beat

COMMUNITY HEALTH 15
Fitness Fun For Families

PARATHYROID SURGERY 17
A World of Difference

RWJ ROUND-UP 19
What's Happening at RWJ New Brunswick

RWJ ROUND-UP 20
What's Happening at RWJ Somerset

FALL 2015



Page 3



Page 5



Page 13



Page 15



RWJ
NEW BRUNSWICK

HYPERHIDROSIS
No Sweat!

When Tamy Kostadinova would write something on a piece of paper, it would end up drenched with her sweat.

Shown: Tamy Kostadinova, 20, suffered from excessive sweating of her hands. Her condition was so severe, she was unable to grip weights during her workouts to become a bodybuilder, so she turned to the experts at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital for a minimally-invasive procedure that changed her life.

Ms. Kostadinova had trouble gripping ordinary items, like a telephone or a pencil, because they would slip out of her unusually wet hands. She started noticing the problem when she was in third grade. Even though her hands were the most wet, she noticed her entire body seemed to perspire much more than the average person. By high school, the excessive sweating was taking a toll on her self-confidence. "It was really embarrassing," said the East Brunswick resident.

"Excessive sweating starts in early childhood or the early teen years, and if left untreated, never goes away. It affects everything patients like Ms. Kostadinova touch and do," said John Langenfeld, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and a thoracic surgeon at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ). The condition (also known as hyperhidrosis) typically involves the hands, but can also affect feet, underarms, and other body parts. About 7.8 million Americans have excessive sweating.

Ms. Kostadinova turned to RWJ for help with her excessive sweating because a few years earlier, surgeons there were able to rebuild her ankle, deformed from overtraining as a tennis player. Before that, she had been to five other surgeons who were unable to relieve her excruciating pain and near-paralysis.

Dr. Langenfeld is one of the only doctors in the region treating excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis) through a minimally-invasive surgical approach. The procedure is called video-assisted endoscopic sympathectomy, which cuts the nerve that signals the body to sweat too much. "Surgery is by far the best option, particularly for people with excessive sweating in the hands. It's an easy, quick procedure that provides instant relief," he said. For patients with sweaty hands, like Ms. Kostadinova, surgery cures the problem 98 percent of the time.

Alternative treatments for excessive sweating are known to have drawbacks. For example, "super" deodorants, which are designed to keep hands, feet and underarms dry, do not work for many patients. Relief from Botox injections is temporary, and when used on the hands can also be very painful. Botox is also known to cause flu-like symptoms. Another procedure that uses electricity to temporarily turn off sweat glands (iontophoresis) is not only difficult to perform, but it needs to be repeated regularly with minimal success. Some patients also claim this procedure, which involves placing hands or feet into water and then passing a gentle current of electricity through the water, is painful.

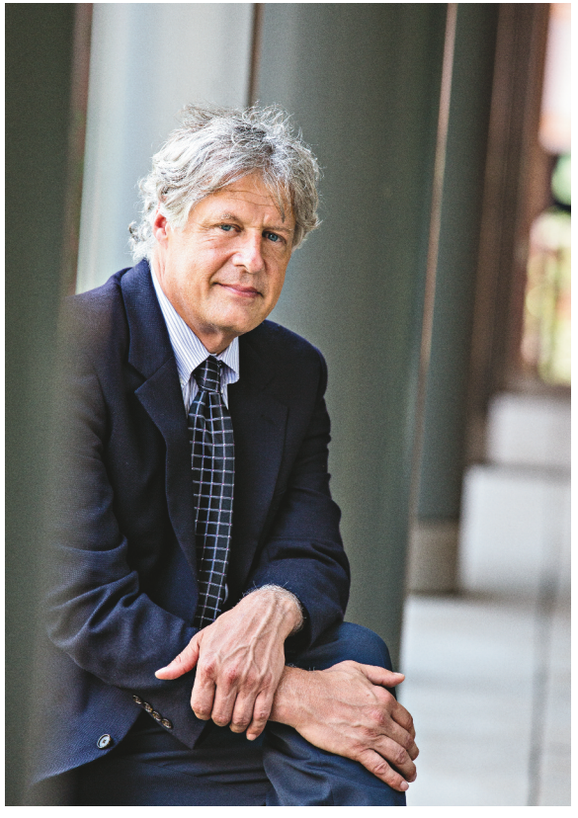
In May 2012, Dr. Langenfeld performed the 30-minute, same-day procedure on Ms. Kostadinova. After making two small incisions in her underarms, he placed an endoscope (a thin tube with a camera on its tip) into one and a tiny surgical instrument into the other. Dr. Langenfeld found and cut the nerve that leads to the glands that produce sweat, located deep inside the chest along the spine (part of the sympathetic nerve chain).

"I stopped sweating right away," said Ms. Kostadinova, now 20 and a junior studying criminal justice and criminal investigation at Kean University. "My life has completely changed. Everything has gotten better."

With her self-confidence back and her hands dry, Ms. Kostadinova is now well on her way to reaching her goal of becoming a police officer. After college she plans to enroll in both the police academy and the Army National Guard. Eventually, she hopes to become a homicide detective. "It's been my dream since I was eight years old. Being a strong woman is really important to me," she said. To build her strength, Ms. Kostadinova began working out with weights several years ago. Now she is preparing for bodybuilding competitions and training others.

"A lot of people suffer from excessive sweating for many years because they do not know that there is something out there that will help them," added Dr. Langenfeld. "This surgery is a life changer for them." The minimally-invasive surgery means little to no scarring, a shorter hospital stay, and most important, a faster recovery, with most patients returning to their normal activities a few days after surgery.

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/no-sweat or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.



Shown above: John Langenfeld, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and a thoracic surgeon at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, used a video-assisted, minimally-invasive surgical technique to stop the excessive sweating from which Ms. Kostadinova suffered. Dr. Langenfeld is also a thoracic surgeon at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

RWJ
SOMERSET

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT

A Healing Community

Being around other women by joining a support group at the Steeplechase Cancer Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ Somerset) helped Rita Coco and Bonnie Girvan heal beyond the traditional scars left by medicine and surgery.



Shown: Rita Coco (left) and Bonnie Girvan recently took a trip to Pleasant Valley Lavender Farm in Morganville, one of many outings they've had since developing a friendship at one of the women's cancer support groups at the Steeplechase Cancer Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset. Although both women were treated years ago for breast cancer, they continue to heal by taking advantage of the comprehensive calendar of support programs offered at the Center.

The group helped to address the emotional wounds that lingered as a result of facing a life changing battle with breast cancer. Once strangers, the women are now close friends, thanks to a bond they've developed since becoming members of the Steeplechase Cancer Center at RWJ Somerset's support group community. The women, who met at Wellness Workout which is one of the many programs offered, found they were able to talk with and get support from other women with breast cancer. "Being in a room with other women going through the same thing made me feel better," said Ms. Girvan, who had moved from Vermont to Bound Brook shortly before she was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 59. Ms. Girvan began attending the support group during her treatment at RWJ Somerset for aggressive HER2-positive breast cancer, which included removal of both breasts (double mastectomy) and breast reconstruction.

Ms. Coco, who was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 55, did not think that she needed the help of a support group until she finished treatment at RWJ Somerset for her Stage 3A estrogen-positive breast cancer: removal of her right breast, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. "When everything was over, I was kind of lost. I didn't have a purpose or a plan, and I didn't have anyone to talk to who'd gone through it," said the Middlesex resident. Feeling alone or falling apart after treatment is common, because patients have the space to feel again, said Nancy Cullinan, LCSW, CDE, CPT, Psychosocial Program Coordinator at the Steeplechase Cancer Center at RWJ Somerset. "Participating in support programs is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength, to fortify patients for a challenging situation," she added.

The support programs are part of the "full package of everything cancer patients need" to heal, said Kathleen Toomey, MD, Medical Director of The Steeplechase Cancer Center at RWJ Somerset. "Every patient gets the collective knowledge of every expert at the cancer center through our multidisciplinary approach, and the very latest in care," she said. The Steeplechase Cancer Center, a standalone facility served by its own private parking lot, is conveniently located on the RWJ Somerset campus. It is home to renowned cancer care experts, state-of-the-art diagnostic and imaging equipment, the most advanced technologies and therapies and the area's largest support and wellness calendar with nearly 20 different classes offered each month. Another unique amenity patients can take advantage of at the center is the Sanofi Wellness Boutique to help patients look, feel and be their best through features like a certified fitter trained to help with breast prostheses, lymphedema garments and wigs.

Although Ms. Coco and Ms. Girvan both completed their traditional treatment at the center years ago, they still participate in Wellness Workout, the support group, and classes such as yoga, Tai Chi, and healthy cooking, all part of an integrative therapy program. In the support group, they now help other women with breast cancer. "I let other women going through what I went through know that it's going to be okay," said Ms. Girvan.



Shown right: Nancy Cullinan, LCSW, CDE, CPT, Psychosocial Program Coordinator at the Steeplechase Cancer Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset is instrumental in developing the calendar of support programs available, and also facilitates the group where Ms. Coco and Ms. Girvan met.

Along with another group of women they met, Ms. Coco and Ms. Girvan regularly make plans to get together outside of the center. Whether it's a simple lunch, or more recently, a day trip to a lavender farm, the powerful bond these women developed through sharing and listening to each other's experiences is an important piece of the healing process. "I'm still scared the cancer will come back, but I have such a good support system now with other girls that are going through this that it's not as terrifying as it was in the beginning," said Ms. Coco.

Support programs are not limited to breast cancer patients, nor are they limited to patients treated at RWJ Somerset. The complementary programs and groups have something to offer everyone including patients, caregivers, community members and patients receiving treatment elsewhere.

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/steeplechase or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.

STEEPLECHASE CANCER CENTER PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Women's Cancer Support Group
Wednesdays: October 14 and 28; November 11 and 25; December 9 and 23; 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Lunch will be provided.

Men's Cancer Support Group
Wednesdays: October 14 and 28; November 11 and 25; and December 9 and 23; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Spirituality Support Group
Wednesdays: October 7 and 21; November 4 and 18; December 2 and 16; 1 to 2 p.m.

Young Women's Support Group: women under 45 years of age
Tuesdays: October 20; November 17; December 15; 6:30 p.m.

Breast Cancer Education and Networking Group
Tuesdays: October 13; November 10; December 8; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Support Group for Persons with Oral, Head and Neck Cancer
Wednesdays: October 21; November 18; December 16; 6 to 7 p.m.

Multiple Myeloma Support Group
Wednesdays: October 7; November 4; December 2; 7 to 9 p.m.

"Survivors In Motion" Oncology Rehabilitation Program
Call 908-203-6243.

Wigs and Accessories
Tuesday: November 17
1 to 3 p.m.

Look Good, Feel Better
Mondays: October 19; December 21; 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Nutrition and Cooking Class
Thursday, October 22: Fall Harvest
November 12: Squash, Squash, Squash!
December 10: Thai Holiday
1 to 2 p.m.
Registration required. Call 908-927-8721.

COCHLEAR IMPLANTS FOR KIDS

Breaking the Sound Barrier

RWJ NEW BRUNSWICK

Annabella Macias entered this world on June 10, 2013.



Shown: Annabella Macias (left), now 2, with her mom Maryann Florio (right), is shown smiling at the sounds she is now able to hear coming from her headphones. Annabella was diagnosed with profound hearing loss as an infant and recently received two cochlear implants.

But her mother and grandmother believe that her true birthday was November 10, 2014, when Annabella's cochlear implant was activated allowing her to hear for the first time.

"It's like she is coming into this world for the first time," Annabella's grandmother Lauren Rolaf explained.

Annabella Macias is one of the nearly three million children under the age of 18 born with some hearing loss. In Annabella's case, she was diagnosed as an infant with what doctors call "profound" or significant hearing loss.

Now, thanks to The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital (BMSCH) at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School's Pediatric Cochlear Implant Program, Annabella can hear sounds and is making daily strides with her speech development. The Pediatric Cochlear Implant Program combines the services and expertise of a nationally-recognized children's hospital and an academic medical center making it the only comprehensive pediatric cochlear implant program in New Jersey. A multidisciplinary team composed of audiologists, speech/language pathologists, a medical geneticist, clinical psychologist and pediatric otolaryngologists provides comprehensive evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation services to children with severe-to-profound hearing deficit under one roof. The program successfully completed its first cochlear implant in 2014. Annabella was among the first children to have the procedure which took place at BMSCH's Center for Advanced Pediatric Surgery, the state's only dedicated pediatric surgery center.

"Hearing loss can increase the risk of speech and language developmental delays," explained Kelvin Kwong, MD, Assistant Professor of Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and pediatric otolaryngologist (ears, nose and throat doctor) at BMSCH. "If a child cannot develop adequate oral communication skills, it can have a significant negative impact on their ability to learn."

According to Michael Chee, MD, also a Assistant Professor of Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Pediatric Otolaryngologist at BMSCH, growing up without the ability to hear in a hearing family can be a lonely experience for a child.

"Giving these children the ability to hear through cochlear implants allows them to share activities with their families and take part in age-appropriate learning activities," Dr. Chee noted.

The realization that Annabella could not hear was a shock to her mom, Maryann Florio. After her birth, Annabella passed the initial hearing test given at the hospital.

"In her first three months, she wasn't responding to any sounds in the house," Ms. Florio said. "You could bang a pot next to her and there was no response."

Ms. Florio took Annabella to the doctor for another hearing test, which showed no reading indicating significant hearing loss. Annabella then was evaluated by a pediatric ear, nose and throat specialist to rule out additional problems and by an early interventional developmental specialist to gauge her cognitive skills.

"Her cognitive abilities were totally normal," Ms. Florio said.

Annabella was fitted with hearing aids for six months to confirm the results of the second hearing test. After researching pediatric cochlear implant technology, Ms. Florio decided it was the best option.

Following three months of tests which included genetic testing, MRIs and CT scans, Dr. Chee and Dr. Kwong performed Annabella's first cochlear implant procedure on October 9, 2014 and her second implant on April 30, 2015. The procedures involved surgically implanting an electronic prosthetic device in the inner ear under the skin. The device stimulates the child's cochlear (inner ear) giving them the ability to process sounds through special hearing aids. The child often returns home the same day after implantation.



Shown above: The Pediatric Cochlear Implant Program at The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, led by Michael Chee, MD (left) and Kelvin Kwong, MD (right), both Assistant Professors of Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, is giving kids with profound hearing loss the opportunity to lead a normal childhood through a program that includes not only surgery to implant the device, but follow-up care and rehabilitation.

Because every sound is so new, audiologists gradually increase the device's volume. Ms. Florio said Annabella's first implant activation startled her a little, but she quickly became comfortable with it.

Annabella continues to attend classes at a school for the hearing impaired and meets regularly with an early interventional development specialist.

"I almost cried when I said, 'Annabella' and she turned around to look at me," Ms. Florio said. "I want her to grow up like the other children on the block. She is catching up quickly; this was just a short interruption for her."

Visit www.bmsch.org/hearing or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.

The following events take place in the Community Room on the second floor at the **RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center, 100 Kirkpatrick Street, New Brunswick, NJ** unless otherwise noted.

OCTOBER

WELLNESS COOKING SERIES: Asian Cuisine
Tuesday, October 13
6 to 7 p.m.
Elijah's Promise Chef
Join us for a cooking series featuring popular, seasonal, health-conscious recipes.

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Wednesday, October 14
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nadine Roberts, Certified Reiki Master & Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

Pink Party
Wednesday, October 20
6:30 to 8 p.m.
Join us as we celebrate how far you've come as a breast cancer survivor. You are not alone. Come and learn about the many resources available to assist you in your journey through wellness.

Cardiac Testing: Do I Need It?
Thursday, October 22
6 to 7 p.m.
Richard A. Cytryn, MD, FACC
Come hear a RWJ cardiologist discuss common cardiac tests, what they do and when you should have them done.

Family & Friends CPR
Tuesday, October 27, 2015
6 to 9 p.m.
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Mobile Health Service
The Family & Friends CPR Course teaches the lifesaving skills of adult hands-only CPR, child CPR with breaths, adult and child AED use, infant CPR and relief of choking in an adult, child or infant. Skills are taught in a dynamic group environment by using the AHA's research-proven practice-while-watching technique, which provides students with the most hands-on CPR practice time possible.

Bariatric Informational Session
Wednesday, October 28
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Ragui Sadek, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join us to find out if you are a candidate for weight-loss surgery!

NOVEMBER

WELLNESS COOKING SERIES:
Desserts for the Holidays
Tuesday, November 10
6 to 7 p.m.
Elijah's Promise Chef
Cooking series featuring popular, seasonal health-conscious recipes.

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Wednesday, November 11
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nadine Roberts, Certified Reiki Master & Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

AARP Driver Safety Course
Tuesday and Wednesday, November 17 and 18
6 to 9 p.m.
Consult your insurance agent for details.
Must attend both days.
Let us bring you up to speed! Brush up on your driving skills and learn new traffic laws and rules of the road, how to safely use anti-lock brakes, air bags, safety belts and more! Course participants may be eligible to receive an insurance discount. Fee: $15 for AARP members, $20 for non-members. For all drivers, age 18 and older with valid driver's license.
Registration is required!

DECEMBER

WELLNESS COOKING SERIES:
Healthy Holiday Party
Tuesday, December 8
6 to 7 p.m.
Elijah's Promise Chef
Cooking series featuring popular, seasonal, health-conscious recipes.

WALKS AND RUNS

American Parkinson's Disease Association Option 5K/Walk
Sunday, October 4
Johnson Park Grove
4 River Road & Violet Drive
Piscataway, NJ
www.apdanj.org

Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure
Sunday, October 4
Six Flags, Great Adventure
Jackson, NJ
www.rwjuh.edu/komen

American Diabetes Association: Step Out Walk to Stop Diabetes
Sunday, October 18
Sanofi Campus
55 Corporate Drive, Bridgewater, NJ
www.rwjuh.edu/stepout

American Heart Association Middlesex County Heart Walk
Sunday, October 18
Johnson Park – Grove 4
River Road & Violet Drive
Piscataway, NJ
www.rwjuh.edu/heartwalk

Amy Foundation Walk for Diane
Sunday, October 18
Buccleuch Park
New Brunswick, NJ
www.amyfoundation.org (registration opening soon)

American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer
Sunday, October 25
NJ Convention & Exposition Center
Edison, NJ
www.rwjuh.edu/makingstrides

EVENTS CALENDAR: OLD BRIDGE

The following events take place in the Community Room at the **RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center,Gateway Shopping Center, 1044 U.S. Highway 9, Parlin, NJ** unless otherwise noted.

OCTOBER

AARP Driver Safety Course
Thursday and Friday, October 8 and 9
6 to 9 p.m.
Consult your insurance agent for details.
Must attend both days.
Let us bring you up to speed! Brush up on your driving skills and learn new traffic laws and rules of the road, how to safely use anti-lock brakes, air bags, safety belts and more! Course participants may be eligible to receive an insurance discount.
Fee: $15 for AARP members, $20 for non-members. For all drivers, age 18 and older with valid driver's license.
Registration is required!

Bariatric Informational Session
Wednesday, October 14
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Ragui Sadek, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join us to find out if you are a candidate for weight-loss surgery!

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Tuesday, October 20
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nadine Roberts
Certified Reiki Master
& Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Thursday, October 22
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Nadine Roberts
Certified Reiki Master
& Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.



Fall Into Good Health - Screening and Education
Monday, October 26
4 to 7 p.m.
Join us! Have your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels checked and get lifestyle counseling and heart healthy information from our nurses! Free. No appointments needed.
Free giveaways!

NOVEMBER

Bariatric Informational Session
Wednesday, November 11
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Ragui Sadek, MD, Bariatric surgeon
Join us to find out if you are a candidate for weight-loss surgery!

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Tuesday, November 17
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nadine Roberts
Certified Reiki Master
& Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Thursday, November 19
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Nadine Roberts
Certified Reiki Master
& Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

Blood Drive
Saturday, November 21
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Registration is required, please call 732-235-8100 ext. 221

Unless otherwise noted, events are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

DECEMBER

AARP Driver Safety Course
Thursday and Friday, December 10 and 11
6 to 9 p.m.
Consult your insurance agent for details.
Must attend both days.
Let us bring you up to speed! Brush up on your driving skills and learn new traffic laws and rules of the road, how to safely use anti-lock brakes, air bags, safety belts and more! Course participants may be eligible to receive an insurance discount.
Fee: $15 for AARP members, $20 for non-members. For all drivers, age 18 and older with valid driver's license.
Registration is required!

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Tuesday, December 15
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Nadine Roberts
Certified Reiki Master
& Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

Strategies for Stress-Free Living…
Guided Imagery, Breathwork, and Meditation
Thursday, December 17
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Nadine Roberts
Certified Reiki Master
& Guided Imagery Practitioner
Experience holistic stress management techniques, focusing on integrative mind/body guided imagery and meditation, to help you cope with life's stressors.

EVENTS CALENDAR: SOMERSET WWW.RWJUH.EDU/EVENTS

The following events are sponsored by the **RWJ Somerset** campus. Individual event locations are noted.

OCTOBER

Considering Weight Loss Surgery?
Bariatric Informational Session
Thursday, October 1
7 to 9 p.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center,
First Floor Conference Room
Ragui Sadek, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join one of our bariatric surgeons to discuss the options for weight loss surgery and whether or not you may be a candidate.

HealthHike Walking Program: The Path to Wellness
Wednesday, October 7
10 to 11 a.m.
AMC Theatres at Bridgewater Commons Mall
Tia Hagins, RD, community nutritionist
Kim Brennan, RN, bariatric program coordinator
Understand dietary guidelines and strategies including MyPlate, to reduce the risk of chronic disease. Learn how to identify poor eating habits, calculate your ideal weight and hear about various weight loss strategies like bariatric surgery. Wellness Walkers will receive pedometers, tracking logs and complimentary screenings such as blood pressure and BMI.

Fun 'N Fit
10-week program begins
Saturday, October 10
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
RWJ Sports Physical Therapy and
Performance Center
This free wellness program educates children ages 8 to 14 and their families about good nutrition, exercise and activities to improve their health and reduce the risk of developing a chronic disease. A medical release form is required. For program qualifications and registration, please call 908-685-2814.

Continuum of Care Fair:
Discover Health Care Resources
Friday, October 16
8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Fuld Auditorium and Tarantino Promenade
Learn about area providers of homecare, durable medical equipment, home infusion, community programs, rehabilitation services, hospice, assisted living and long-term care options. Giveaways and raffle prizes provided.

Considering Weight Loss Surgery?
Bariatric Informational Session
Tuesday, October 20
7 to 9 p.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center,
Third Floor Conference Room
Glen Forrester, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join one of our bariatric surgeons to discuss the options for weight loss surgery and whether or not you may be a candidate.

Child and Babysitting Safety (CABS)
Saturday, October 24
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
RWJ Somerset Computer Training Room
$65 (includes course material)
This course teaches teenagers ages 11 – 15 how to care for younger children, including tips for working with parents and kids, safety, caregiving and first aid. Each student receives a 2-year certification in Child and Babysitting Safety and a 2-year certification in Heartsaver AED.
Register online at www.rwjuh-ems. org. For information, call MHS Education at 732-937-8686.

Interested in Joint Replacement?
Tuesday, October 27
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Sign in and light refreshments at 6:30 p.m.
Fuld Auditorium
Orthopedic Surgeon
Kyala Pascual, RN, Joint Surgery Institute Coordinator
Learn more about joint replacement surgery and RWJ Somerset's Joint Surgery Center. A question and answer session will be included.

NOVEMBER

Aquacize
Eight-week courses begin: Monday, November 2; Wednesday, November 4; Friday, November 6;
10:30 to 11:15 a.m.
Somerville YMCA, $46
Pam Granick & Ellen Helman, certified water fitness instructors
Enjoy this water exercise program that soothes arthritis pain, strengthens joints and improves range of motion and lung capacity. A medical release form is required.

Chair Yoga
An eight-week course begins:
Tuesday, November 3
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Joy 2 Dance Studio, Hillsborough, $48
Chanchal Arora, certified yoga instructor
Practice this ancient fitness routine that builds flexibility and strength and relieves pain associated with arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, migraines and back and neck strain.

HealthHike Walking Program: Lungevity
Wednesday, November 4
10 to 11 a.m.
AMC Theatres at Bridgewater Commons Mall
Robin Lucas, MD, pulmonologist, internist and critical care physician
Chris Kotsen, Psy.D, psychologist and medical director of the Tobacco Quit Center
Amelia Sherr, RN, lung cancer navigator
Discover strategies to keep your lungs functioning optimally, lung conditions such as asthma, COPD, pulmonary hypertension, pneumonia, emphysema and cancer, smoking cessation techniques, the importance of a lung cancer screen towards early detection and state-of-the-art respiratory therapies like (VATS) video-assisted thoracic surgery. Carbon monoxide testing available.

Tai Chi
6-week course begins: Thursday, November 5;
10 to 11 a.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center, $24
Bobbi Joels, certified tai chi instructor
Learn easy, low-impact movements to improve balance, flexibility and strength and reduce stress.

Bariatric Informational Session
Thursday, November 5
7 to 9 p.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center,
First Floor Conference Room
Ragui Sadek, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join us to find out if you are a candidate for weight loss surgery.

EVENTS CALENDAR: SOMERSET

VISIT WWW.RWJUH.EDU/EVENTS OR CALL 1-888-MD-RWJUH.

AARP Driver Safety Course
Monday, November 16
8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Brandywine at Middlebrook Crossing, $24
Includes a light breakfast and lunch.

Considering Weight Loss Surgery?
Bariatric Informational Session
Tuesday, November 17
7 to 9 p.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center,
Third Floor Conference Room
Glen Forrester, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join one of our bariatric surgeons to discuss the options for weight loss surgery and whether or not you may be a candidate.



DECEMBER

HealthHike Walking Program:
Life Recovery for the Cluttered Soul
Wednesday, December 2
10 to 11 a.m.
AMC Theatres at Bridgewater Commons Mall
Patricia Diesel, CPC, Professional Organizer
Perhaps you or someone you care about have decided that changes need to occur in order to lead a better life. Coming to that realization is a big step for everyone, but the next phase is equally difficult - "What are the changes I need to make and how do I go about doing it?"

Considering Weight Loss Surgery?
Bariatric Informational Session
Thursday, December 5
7 to 9 p.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center,
First Floor Conference Room
Ragui Sadek, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join us to find out if you are a candidate for weight loss surgery.

Fit Body, Fit Bones
Every Friday beginning: Friday, December 4;
Class times vary.
Call 908-685-2814 for availability.
Steeplechase Cancer Center, $45 per quarter
Valerie Hammond, group fitness instructor
Learn weight-bearing exercises to strengthen muscles and bones, improve balance and reduce the risk of fractures from osteoporosis. Peer leaders assist weekly in class instruction. A medical release form is required to participate.



Considering Weight Loss Surgery?
Bariatric Informational Session
Tuesday, December 15
7 to 9 p.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center,
Third Floor Conference Room
Glen Forrester, MD, bariatric surgeon
Join us to find out if you are a candidate for weight loss surgery.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Bariatric Support Group
Tuesdays: October 27; November 24
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Family Practice Conference Room
For anyone considering bariatric surgery, pre-op and post-op.

Alzheimer's Support Group
Tuesdays: October 20; November 17;
December 15
1 to 2:30 p.m.
Urgent Care Center, Hillsborough
If a family member or other relation has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia disorder, discover the available community resources, learn from others who are going through similar experiences and obtain additional educational materials.

Eating Disorders-Family Support
Every Tuesday
7:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Hamilton Conference Room

Eating Disorders-Patient Support
Every Tuesday
7:30 to 8:30 p.m.
1 West Room 197
For more information, call the Eating Disorder Unit at 908-685-2847.

Diabetes Support Group
Thursday, November 12
7 to 8 p.m.
Fuld Auditorium

Living Well with Diabetes:
Diabetes Overview
Leon Shulman, MD, Endocrinologist and Diabetes Center Medical Director
Call 908-685-2846 to register.

Stroke Support Group
First Thursday of each month:
October 1: Exercise Session by Stroke Survivor Valerie Hammond
November 5: Life After Stroke: Dealing with Your Emotions by neuropsychologist Lynette McKeon, Psy.D
2 to 3 p.m.
4 West Conference Room

Better Breather's Club
Thursdays: October 8; November 12; December 10
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Steeplechase Cancer Center
2nd Floor Conference Room
Promotes the management of COPD and other chronic lung disease (i.e. asthma, pulmonary fibrosis or lung cancer), offers a sense of belonging and hope and aims to improve quality of life.

Unless otherwise noted, events are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

For fee-based events, cancellations within two weeks of the program are non-refundable, regardless of circumstance. A medical release form is required for any exercise program.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

CPR and First Aid Classes
To register, call 908-685-2970 or visit www.rwjuh.edu/events.

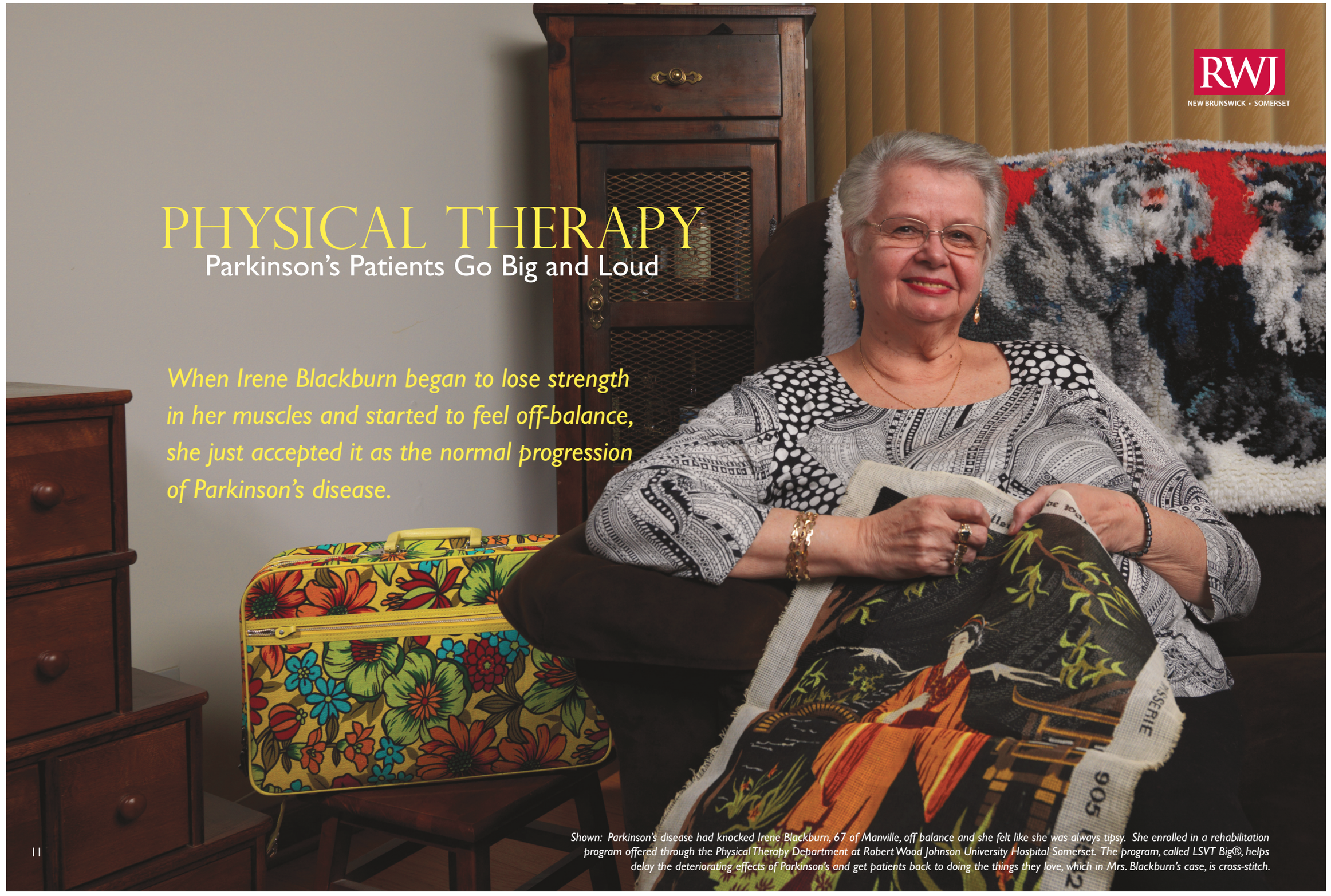
Diabetes or Osteoporosis Exercise Programs
To register, call 908-203-5972 or visit www.rwjuh.edu/sports-therapy.

RWJ
NEW BRUNSWICK • SOMERSET

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Parkinson's Patients Go Big and Loud

When Irene Blackburn began to lose strength in her muscles and started to feel off-balance, she just accepted it as the normal progression of Parkinson's disease.



Shown: Parkinson's disease had knocked Irene Blackburn, 67 of Manville, off balance and she felt like she was always tipsy. She enrolled in a rehabilitation program offered through the Physical Therapy Department at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset. The program, called LSVT Big®, helps delay the deteriorating effects of Parkinson's and get patients back to doing the things they love, which in Mrs. Blackburn's case, is cross-stitch.



Shown above: Members of the physical therapy program at RWJ Somerset, Amira Elgoneimy, PTA (left), Maria Elena Halka, OTR (center) and Venus Rivera, PT (right) all worked with Mrs. Blackburn during her LSVT Big® sessions. The program is also offered through the physical therapy service on RWJ's New Brunswick campus.

"My balance was so bad, I thought I would end up needing to use a wheelchair. I felt like I was tipsy because I would lean to the right side," said Mrs. Blackburn, 67, of Manville, who was diagnosed two years ago with Parkinson's disease. The neurodegenerative brain disorder causes the brain to stop producing dopamine, a neurotransmitter, which results in loss of control of body movements.

Falling was a constant fear for Mrs. Blackburn. Her leg muscles were so weak she needed help to get up out of a chair. She gave up doing her favorite arts and crafts because her hands and fingers weren't strong enough to hold a paintbrush or sewing needle.

Then she participated in a specialized rehabilitation program for individuals with Parkinson's disease called LSVT BIG®, which is offered by six certified therapists from the physical therapy outpatient service on both the New Brunswick and Somerset campuses of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ).

After completing five weeks of physical therapy and occupational therapy, both a part of the LSVT BIG program, at RWJ Somerset, "I feel like a whole new person," Mrs. Blackburn said.

"Our goal is to minimize the effects of Parkinson's and delay the deterioration," said Maria Halka, Mrs. Blackburn's occupational therapist. "Patients tend to perform movements in a slow, hesitant way and we work with them to amplify their movements to help them to get back to doing the things they love to do."

A typical treatment plan includes four sessions a week for four weeks – half of which are physical therapy sessions and half that are occupational therapy sessions. Patients also learn exercises to complete every day at home.

"We teach patients that in everything they do, from taking steps to writing their name, they need to think big," said Venus Rivera, a physical therapist who worked with Mrs. Blackburn. "Because of the way Parkinson's disease affects their muscles and movement, patients need to use more effort and make bigger movements in order to do their normal daily activities."

Some patients with Parkinson's disease may also require specialized speech therapy called LSVT Loud®, which is also offered by RWJ's outpatient physical therapy services and offered on both campuses also.

Over the course of 16 sessions in a month, patients are taught exercises to stimulate the voice box muscles.

"LSVT Loud is the best evidence-based program for voice and speech for patients with Parkinson's disease," said Katie Holterman, coordinator of speech and language services at RWJ Somerset. "Patients talk louder, develop clearer speech, slow down their rate of speech and improve their vocal quality so they are more easily understood when they are communicating with others."

This spring, a new medical wellness program for Parkinson's patients was introduced at the RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center in New Brunswick. The eight-week program includes two 1-hour small group sessions a week led by an athletic trainer and physical therapist to focus on building strength and improving movement. A medical wellness program was also launched at RWJ Somerset this spring for patients who graduated from the LSVT to help them maintain their progress. Led by a physical therapist and occupational therapist, sessions are held twice a week.

In addition, a weekly Parkinson's exercise group is also held at the RWJ Fitness and Wellness Center in New Brunswick. The class includes stretching and strengthening, a cardiovascular workout, posture enhancement and relaxation and breathing techniques.

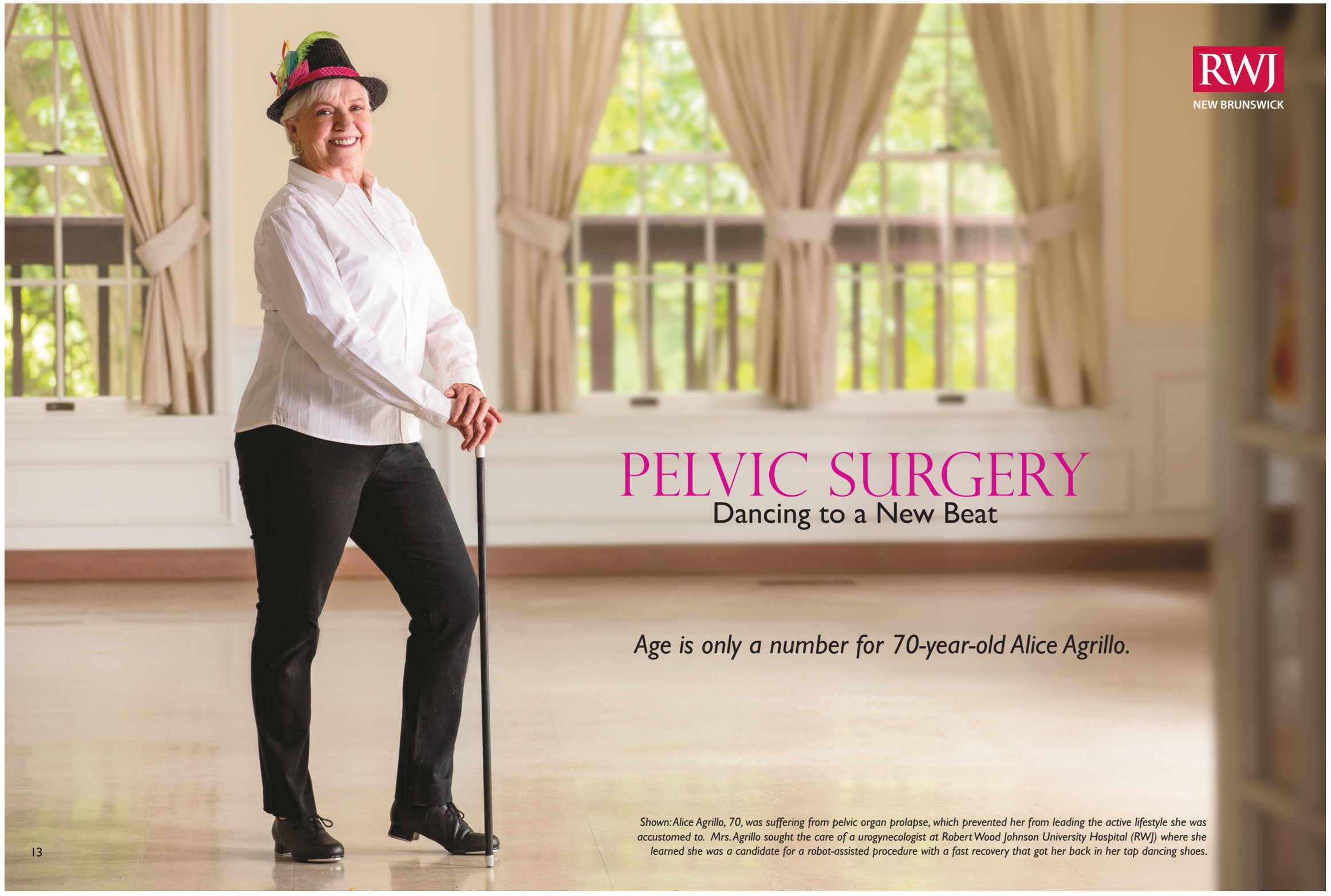
Following her therapy, Mrs. Blackburn built up her hand strength enough to begin rugweaving again. She uses a cane for walking but has regained her balance. With stronger leg muscles, she can easily get up and down from a chair by herself.

"I walk with a much stronger determination," she said. "I carry myself much better without any fear of falling."

Mrs. Blackburn continues to do exercises for about 30 minutes a day at home and swims three days a week at a Hillsborough fitness center.

"I really feel like I'm living again," she said.

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/physical-therapy or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.



RWJ
NEW BRUNSWICK

PELVIC SURGERY

Dancing to a New Beat

Age is only a number for 70-year-old Alice Agrillo.

Shown: Alice Agrillo, 70, was suffering from pelvic organ prolapse, which prevented her from leading the active lifestyle she was accustomed to. Mrs. Agrillo sought the care of a urogynecologist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ) where she learned she was a candidate for a robot-assisted procedure with a fast recovery that got her back in her tap dancing shoes.

The Cream Ridge resident likes to walk two miles several times a week and can usually be found on a dance floor, whether it's with her tap dance group or with her husband, Leo.

Her active lifestyle changed when her bladder began to drop and she started experiencing discomfort and pain in her vaginal area.

"I felt a lump bulging out of my body," Mrs. Agrillo said. "It was uncomfortable to walk, I couldn't dance – even sex was painful."

Mrs. Agrillo was suffering from pelvic organ prolapse, a condition in which structures such as the uterus, rectum, bladder, urethra or the vagina itself may begin to prolapse or fall out of their normal positions. Without medical treatment or surgery, these structures can fall further into the vagina or even through the vaginal opening if their supports weaken enough. The condition develops when the support network of muscles, ligaments and skin that hold pelvic organs, tissues and structures in place begin to weaken or break over time.

Pelvic organ prolapse can impact sexual functions and bodily functions such as urination and defecation. It can also cause severe pelvic pressure and discomfort, similar to Mrs. Agrillo's symptoms.

Mrs. Agrillo's gynecologist recommended that she follow a consistent exercise regimen to strengthen the vaginal area and potentially address the pain.

"I tried that for five years, but it didn't help," she explained. "I love to dance. I belong to a tap dance group where I live. There is a lot of jumping involved with tap dancing, but it became very uncomfortable. I didn't want to give it up."

As the pain and discomfort grew worse, Mrs. Agrillo asked her primary care physician for advice. He recommended that she see Manish Gopal, MD, a urogynecologist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ), who specializes in the correction of complex gynecologic and bladder problems as well as hernia defects in the pelvic floor. Dr. Gopal thought Mrs. Agrillo was an excellent candidate to have sacral-colpopexy and vaginal reconstruction with the robot. She was active, healthy and had no other serious health issues.

Recently, Dr. Gopal became the first surgeon in New Jersey to perform a minimally invasive robotic sacral-colpopexy using the *da Vinci*® Xi Surgical System, the most advanced generation of the *da Vinci* ® surgical robot.

"By using the *da Vinci*® Xi I can perform complicated procedures while leaving a small surgical footprint behind," Dr. Gopal said. "The procedure is much less invasive using this technology."

Because RWJ is the only hospital in the region using the *da Vinci*® Xi for procedures such as these, Mrs. Agrillo chose to have her procedure there.

"Years ago, I did per diem nursing there at RWJ," Mrs. Agrillo noted. "I knew that the hospital always had the latest technology and I felt safer there."

Dr. Gopal performs the surgery by making small, one centimeter incisions with the robot instead of one six-inch incision used in traditional methods.

"A six-inch incision is similar to the size of the incision used for a c-section," Dr. Gopal explained.

Using the robot, Dr. Gopal attaches permanent material (a mesh) around the vagina to provide support. It is anchored to the vagina and a ligament over the sacrum. This prevents the existing bulge from growing larger and becoming worse.

"Many patients can return home the next day, be back to work in two weeks and experience less pain as they recover," Dr. Gopal said. "The immediate return to quality of life is significant."

Mrs. Agrillo had the procedure in February and returned home just three days later. She started walking within the first 24 hours and needed virtually no pain medicine.

"I felt immediate relief from the pain I was having," she explained. "I had five little incisions, which healed right away. I feel fantastic now; I am back to walking two miles three to four times a week and dancing."



Shown above: Manish Gopal, MD, a urogynecologist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick, recently became the first surgeon in New Jersey to perform a minimally-invasive, robotic sacral-colpopexy for Mrs. Agrillo's pelvic prolapse using the da Vinci® Xi Surgical System.

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/minimally-invasive or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.

RWJ
SOMERSET

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Fitness Fun For Families

For the Torres family, the path to better health started with baby steps.



Shown: The Torres family, Ana (left), Saul (center) and Andrea (right), all participated in Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset's Fun 'N Fit education program, which combines healthy eating with regular daily exercise, resulting in the family adopting an overall healthier lifestyle.

"It is not easy if you want to change lifelong habits from one day to the next, but little by little anyone can improve their health and quality of life," said Saul Torres, 46, of Middlesex.

Mr. Torres, his wife, Ana, 47, and daughter, Andrea, 13, found the tools they needed by participating in Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset's (RWJ Somerset) Fun 'N Fit Program.

Supported by a grant from the Sanofi Foundation for North America, the free 10-week program teaches families how to eat right and exercise to improve their health. Twenty one families participated in the first year of the program, which kicked off last fall.

"We have seen many great successes in just one course of the 10-week program. Each participant that completed the program improved at least one health indicator, such as body mass index, blood pressure and cholesterol levels," said Serena Collado, Director of the Community Health Department at RWJ Somerset. "We hope that families adopt these choices long-term so that they continue to see and feel improvements in their health."

At the end of the inaugural Fun 'N Fit session, the average weight of the adult participants dropped from 199.4 pounds to 178 pounds. The average adult body mass index dropped from 31.21 to 28.49 and the average adult waist size shrunk from 40.49 inches to 35.36 inches.

All of the children who participated improved two health indicators, with one child improving five. For example, one boy reduced his waist circumference by four inches, lowered his cholesterol from 144 to 119 and improved his HDL from 46 to 51.

The Torres family was encouraged by Angela Rodriguez, MSN, RN, APNC, of Somerset Pediatric Group in Bridgewater, to register for Fun 'N Fit. The program motivated them to change their diet, and included tips for healthy eating like recommending smaller portion sizes, or baking food instead of frying it and drinking more water. Instead of watching TV after dinner, they now take walks together or play basketball in their driveway.

Mr. Torres says these changes helped him lose 15 pounds and lower his blood sugar level.

"Everything really comes down to a 'way of healthy living,'" he said. "You know how it goes… you are healthier, you feel better, you are happier and you make those around you happier."

Gary Benedict, exercise physiologist with the Medical Wellness Program at RWJ Somerset's Sports Physical Therapy and Performance Center in Bridgewater, leads the fitness component of the Fun 'N Fit program. He educates the families on the importance of exercise and helps give them ideas on ways to be more active as a family. Among the activities featured in the Fun 'N Fit program were Zumba classes, kickball, relay races, obstacle courses and a family hike.

"We encourage families to do things together – just get out and play and have fun," Mr. Benedict said.

Children should get 60 minutes of physical activity each day and adults should exercise about 150 minutes each week, he said.

"You don't need to be running a marathon," said Mr. Benedict. "Just add a little bit of activity each day, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking farther away from the door, and it will all start to add up to positive gains."

Tia Hagins, a registered dietitian and a community nutritionist at RWJ Somerset, provided the ideas for families to help them alter their eating habits like providing sample foods that make a healthy lunch, or pointing out acceptable low-fat snacks and teaching the right food choices for eating on the go.



Shown right: In addition to exercise and encouragement, nutrition is a large part of the Fun 'N Fit program. Tia Hagins, a registered dietitian and a community nutritionist at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset, helps families with ideas that help them alter their eating habits.

Participants were also given food journals to keep track of what they ate.

"Start with some simple changes, such as switching from whole to low-fat or skim milk, drinking water instead of soda and choosing whole grain bread over white bread," said Ms. Hagins. "Slowly add more fruits and vegetables to your diet so that they make up half of your plate and watch your portion sizes."

Mr. Torres says Fun 'N Fit taught him how to set reachable goals, such as getting rid of sugary foods gradually instead of all at once and committing to lose one pound a week instead of expecting to lose 10 pounds in one week.

"It is the little steps that actually help," said Mr. Torres. "The most important thing is to not give up."

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/events or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.

Fall Fun 'N Fit Session

Register Now! It's Free!

Open to children 8 to 14 years old and their families.

Next 10-week program starts: October 10 through December 19

Meets once per week on Saturdays

9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

RWJ Somerset is dedicated to teaching healthy lifestyles to families to prevent chronic diseases in our communities. The Fun 'N Fit program will equip children and families with the nutrition and exercise tools they can use to lead a long, healthy life.

To register, please call 908-685-2814



RWJ
NEW BRUNSWICK

PARATHYROID SURGERY

A World of Difference

Xuemei "Mei" Fan traveled 8,000 miles from Guangdong, China to New Jersey in late January – her first trip to the United States – in search of relief for a deteriorating condition that left her with no energy and in constant pain.

Shown: Huizhou Fan, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School arranged for his sister, Xuemei Fan, who lives in China, to come to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital for treatment of hyperparathyroidism. Following surgery, Ms. Fan has returned to China to be with her grandchild and Dr. Fan regularly communicates with her via Skype to make sure she's still feeling well.

Three weeks later, Ms. Fan, 60, was discharged from Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJ) and returned home feeling great and with just enough time to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

Two years ago, Ms. Fan started to feel shoulder, knee and other joint pain, she said. "Then there was heartburn and fatigue," she recalled. "A routine check-up test found that I had hypercalcemia - too much calcium in my blood."

Too much calcium can weaken bones and commonly results from overactive parathyroid glands located on or near the thyroid. An ultrasound and nuclear scan showed nodules on her thyroid. Fan underwent surgery in China; part of her thyroid was removed. However, following surgery her calcium levels remained high, and a parathyroid hormone test revealed above-normal results.

Ms. Fan developed "sleepy eyes" and had increasing pain and difficulty walking. She started to feel depressed. The illness was taking a toll on her physically, impacting her ability to practice as an internal medicine physician and affecting precious playtime with her young granddaughter.

In the meantime, Huizhou Fan, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, was growing more and more concerned about his sister's declining health. "She told me she fell a couple of times, and I thought 'This is no good. Her bones are getting weaker,'" he remembered. "If she breaks a bone after a fall, it won't heal."

Ms. Fan however, couldn't undergo a second surgery in China. Her brother suggested she visit RWJ for treatment.

Mr. Fan reached out to Xiangbing Wang, MD, PhD, Professor of Medicine at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Dr. Wang's professional interests include thyroid and parathyroid disorders and he specializes in endocrinology. The two originally became friends back in college in China. Their subsequent graduate, post-graduate and career pursuits took them in different directions across the globe, but more than a decade ago, they reconnected as peers at the medical school.

When Ms. Fan arrived at RWJ, Dr. Wang prescribed another nuclear scan and ultrasound and determined that she had ectopic hyperparathyroidism. "Hers was a dangerous condition," he explained. "Such high calcium levels can result in kidney stones, osteoporosis, severe dehydration and confusion and may interfere with the heartbeat."

Dr. Wang shared the findings with Stanley Trooskin, MD, Professor and Chief, Division of General Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and RWJ's Chief of Surgical Services, and they recommended the removal of Ms. Fan's enlarged parathyroid and remaining thyroid to treat her thyroid cancer.

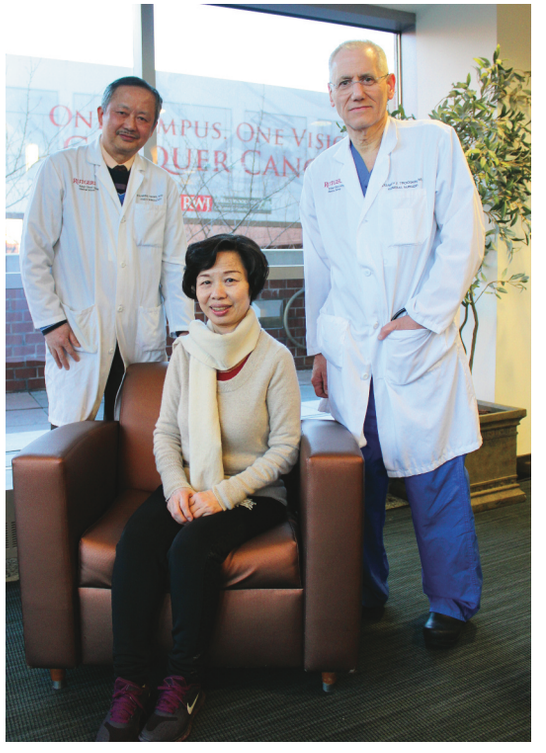
"This was a complex procedure. It was a re-operation, and we had to find the offending parathyroid, which in her case was near the clavicle, and remove the remaining thyroid, which was encased in scar tissue," Dr. Trooskin explained. "At RWJ, we do 500 thyroid and parathyroid operations each year. With the latest technology, we precisely localized the offending, enlarged parathyroid gland and removed it utilizing a minimally invasive approach, which is especially important when there's a lot of scar tissue."

Dr. Trooskin performed the surgery at RWJ and just one week following the surgery, Ms. Fan exclaimed "I'm a different person from when I arrived."

Her huge grin and sparkling eyes conveyed relief and pure joy. "I already feel more energetic," she added. "I can open my eyes! I can sleep better. I feel much better in general."

She will take medication until her bone density normalizes, Dr. Wang said, so her improvement would be gradual.

Ms. Fan said she was so profoundly appreciative of and impressed by the high quality of care she received and the teamwork at RWJ – citing Drs. Trooskin and Wang and the outpatient, radiology, operating room and Same Day Surgery staff in particular – that she planned to discuss her experience with her colleagues in China with the hope that they too can learn from her journey.



Shown above: Xiangbing Wang, MD, PhD, (left) Professor of Medicine at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and Stanley Trooskin, MD, (right) Professor and Chief, Division of General Surgery at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and RWJ's Chief of Surgical Services, treated Xuemei Fan, (center) a patient who traveled 8,000 miles from China to seek care at RWJ.

Visit www.rwjuh.edu or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.

RWJ NEW BRUNSWICK

RWJ ROUND-UP
What's Happening at RWJ New Brunswick

THE BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

Golf Outing a Success!



Thank you to everyone who supported RWJ's 27th Annual Invitational Golf Classic. The event was held on June 23 at Metedeconk National Golf Club. A record $371,000 was raised to boost RWJ telemedicine services.

COMMUNITY FORUM
Human Trafficking Part III



Part III in our series on human trafficking is open to the community.

Friday, November 20
9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Middlesex County Fire Academy

Please check back with www.rwjtrauma.org for additional information and registration details.

RWJ Receives National Award on Health Equity

RWJ was one of only two recipients of the prestigious 2015 Equity of Care Award presented by the American Hospital Association. The award recognizes hospitals for their efforts to reduce health care disparities and promote diversity within the organization's leadership and staff.

EQUITY OF CARE AWARD

Expanding Cancer Care Capablilities with Proton Beam Therapy

The Laurie Proton Therapy Center at RWJ New Brunswick now provides patients with the most precise and advanced form of radiation therapy. Proton beam is a painless, knifeless surgery during which a powerful beam of energy is delivered directly to a tumor, minimizing radiation exposure to the surrounding healthy tissue.

A 40-year-old patient with spinal myxopapillary ependymoma, a form of cancer affecting the spinal cord, recently became the first patient treated at RWJ, but the therapy can be used as part of individualized treatment plans for both adult and pediatric patients primarily with localized tumors.





Celebrating our Bone Marrow Transplant Patients: PAST & PRESENT





Over the summer, RWJ New Brunswick hosted a patient and caregiver reunion for its current and former bone marrow transplant patients. The program welcomed over 100 guests who were treated to a light supper, some inspiring remarks from patients and words of encouragement from their healthcare team.

The evening also gave patients the opportunity to thank the Bone Marrow Transplant Team for their dedication, compassion and spirit. The program recently marked its 1000th transplant.

RWJ ROUND-UP
What's Happening at RWJ Somerset

RWJ SOMERSET

Walgreen's Pharmacy Coming to Somerset

RWJ recently signed an agreement with Walgreen's to open a new pharmacy on the Somerset campus. The pharmacy will be located adjacent to the Emergency Department for the convenience of patients who are being discharged.

Walgreens

Somerset & New Brunswick Campuses Named to "MOST WIRED" List

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital's Somerset and New Brunswick campuses were once again named among the "Most Wired" organizations of 2015 by Hospitals & Health Networks Magazine. The annual list is compiled based on survey results that measure the level of information technology in a hospital. Congratulations on another well-deserved achievement!

HealthCare's most wired™

RWJ Somerset to Open Wound Care Center

The Center for Wound Healing will open this fall on the campus of RWJ Somerset. The Center will provide innovative care for chronic wounds and other conditions that prevent a normal lifestyle. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy will be available along with a multidisciplinary team of specialists who will develop individualized treatment plans for you.

For more information, please call 908-203-6200.



3-D Mammography Now Available at RWJ Somerset

The Sanofi US Breast Care Program at The Steeplechase Cancer Center recently installed 3D technology for use during all patient mammography screenings. The program continues to pursue the most advanced therapies and the latest state-of-the-art technologies for early detection to ensure patients have the best chance for successful treatment.



Main Lobby Renovations are Completed



RWJ Somerset recently completed renovations to the hospital's main lobby. The new, four-sided reception desk enables staff to assist patients and guests from all the main thoroughfares and entry points. A comfortable and functional new seating area provides ample space for guests.



ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON HEALTH SYSTEM AND BARNABAS HEALTH SIGN HISTORIC AGREEMENT

Barnabas Health and Robert Wood Johnson Health System recently signed a definitive agreement to merge the two health systems, a transaction, that once complete will create New Jersey's largest health care system and one of the largest in the nation -- to be known as RWJ Barnabas Health.

The agreement is with the state's Attorney General for review with an anticipated completion date in early 2016.

RWJ Barnabas Health will have approximately $4.5 billion in operating revenue across 11 acute-care hospitals, three children's hospitals, a pediatric rehabilitation hospital, a behavioral health center, ambulatory care centers and five fitness and wellness centers.

RWJ Robert Wood Johnson Health System

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON HEALTH SYSTEM

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital | www.rwjuh.edu

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton, rwjhamilton.org • Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Rahway, rwjuhr.com • Children's Specialized Hospital, childrens-specialized.org • The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children's Hospital at RWJ, bmsch.org • Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset, www. rwjuh.edu

RWJ Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

One Robert Wood Johnson Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
New Brunswick, NJ
Permit No. 1

RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

RUTGERS Cancer Institute of New Jersey

MAGNET RECOGNIZED AMERICAN NURSES CREDENTIALING CENTER

Would you like to be added to the mailing list to receive future issues of Breakthroughs? Visit www.rwjuh.edu/breakthroughs.

HEALTHY RECIPE GREEN QUICHE WITH BROWN RICE CRUST
FROM OUR FOOD AND NUTRITION DEPARTMENT

This issue's recipe is courtesy of the Food and Nutrition Department at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset.

Ingredients

Step one: preparing the brown rice crust

2 cups cooked brown rice
1/4 cup cheddar cheese (finely grated)
1 egg white (save yolk for quiche filling)
¼ tsp salt
1/8 teaspoon ground pepper

Step two: Prepare the filling

1 tablespoon olive oil
4 eggs (plus the leftover yolk)
1 cup milk
2 cups of kale (torn into small pieces)
1 cup sharp cheddar cheese (grated)
1 onion chopped
1 garlic clove chopped
1 pinch nutmeg (optional)
salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 400°. Grease a pie dish with oil or butter. Mix the crust ingredients in a bowl. Using damp hands, press rice mixture evenly in a pie dish and up sides. Bake for about 10 minutes (until edges start turning golden brown) and set aside to cool.

2. Heat olive oil in sauce pan over medium heat; add onions and sauté until translucent. Add chopped garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add kale to pan and cook until wilted (10 minutes); set aside to cool.

3. Wisk eggs and milk to combine in a bowl. Season with salt pepper and nutmeg. Add cheese and cooked vegetables to bowl, pour mixture into prepared crust. Bake until egg mixture is set in the center, about 30 minutes.

