

A Publication of
JERSEY CITY MEDICAL CENTER

FALL 2020

healthy

together

**BUILDING
STRONGER BONES**

**5 WAYS TO
SLEEP BETTER
TONIGHT**

**CHOOSING WHERE TO
HAVE YOUR BABY**

**PROTECT YOUR HEART
FROM STRESS**

Rising to the Challenge

During the COVID-19 pandemic, changes in healthcare have been unprecedented. Fighting a new and unpredictable virus and making it safe for patients to receive all types of care under these extraordinary conditions have become our top priorities.

We're proud of how RWJBarnabas Health has risen to these challenges, as stories in this issue show. From new mothers who need help with breastfeeding to seniors looking for advice on how and whether to have social interactions, we're here for you with support and guidance.

We offer telehealth services for children and adults through RWJBarnabas Health TeleMed®, which makes virtual visits available for many issues in both primary and specialty care. If an in-person doctor visit is required, know that all physicians in our RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group have implemented additional safety standards for their offices, including social distancing, mask wearing, intensified disinfection protocols and COVID-19 screening of patients and staff.

Of course, in the event you or a loved one need to go to the hospital, you can rest assured that each facility in the RWJBarnabas Health system has taken every precaution for the safety of patients, visitors and team members.

At Jersey City Medical Center, as a High Reliability Organization, safety comes first and is embedded in everything we do. As you enter the hospital, you will immediately encounter the safety measures we have implemented in adherence to established criteria of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We conduct active temperature and symptom screening checks, require masking or face covering and observe social distancing. We have even placed floor markings to indicate six feet of distance between people as they approach our hospitality front desk. To better prevent the spread of infection, we thoroughly clean and disinfect all rooms, including equipment and surfaces, in between patients. With the safety of our patients and team members at the forefront, we are taking heightened precautions and using best practices to continue to ensure the highest quality care, protection and support for all of our patients.

At RWJBarnabas Health, caring for the community is our mission and our passion. Please take good care of yourselves by wearing a mask when needed, washing your hands frequently and practicing social distancing.

Yours in good health,



BARRY H. OSTROWSKY
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
RWJBARNABAS HEALTH




MICHAEL PRILUTSKY
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
JERSEY CITY MEDICAL CENTER



HEALTH NEWS



Theresa LaFlam, RN, Manager of the Stroke Program, and Musaid Khan, MD, Medical Director of the Stroke Program, proudly hold AHA's Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award.

JERSEY CITY MEDICAL CENTER RECOGNIZED FOR QUALITY STROKE CARE



Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) has received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award in recognition of the hospital's commitment to ensuring that stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines.

"Jersey City Medical Center is proud of our incredible clinical team dedicated to improving the quality of care for our stroke patients by implementing the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Stroke initiative," says Michael Prilutsky, President and CEO. "The tools and resources provided help us track and measure our success in meeting evidenced-based clinical guidelines developed to improve patient outcomes."

JCMC additionally received the AHA's Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite award. To qualify for this recognition, hospitals must meet quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster tissue plasminogen activator, or tPA, the only drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat ischemic stroke.

Jersey City Medical Center | **RWJBarnabas HEALTH**

355 Grand St., Jersey City, NJ 07302
201.915.2000 | www.rwjbh.org/jerseycity

CONNECT WITH US ON

-  @JerseyCityMedicalCenter
-  @JCMedCenter
-  RWJBarnabas Health

Jersey City Medical Center 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.rwjbh.org/jerseycity. Jersey City Medical Center 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 201.915.2000. Jersey City Medical Center 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 201.915.2000.

healthy *together* contents

FALL 2020



2. WELCOME LETTER.

A community update from our CEOs.

4. A VISION FOR HEALTH IN HUDSON COUNTY.

JCMC offers care for the whole county.

6. DANCING THROUGH PREGNANCY.

A dancer chooses to have her baby close to home.

8. POWERFUL PARTNERS.

How a corporate partner helps Jersey City thrive.

9. GOING OUT: WHAT'S SAFE FOR SENIORS?

When it comes to COVID-19 and social contact, it pays to weigh the risks and benefits.

10. NEW MOTHERS, NEW CHALLENGES.

Virtual support is helping new and expecting moms get safely through the pandemic.

12. RADIATION ONCOLOGY: IT TAKES A TEAM.

Patients throughout the RWJBarnabas Health system have access to the most advanced cancer treatments.

14. EVERYDAY JOYS.

Expert care provides a young patient with the best possible quality of life.

15. HOW STRESS HARMS THE HEART.

Heart muscle disease is increasing, and experts think emotional distress is a major cause.

16. GETTING THE MOST OUT OF TELEHEALTH.

Virtual visits can provide big benefits.

17. 5 WAYS TO SLEEP BETTER TONIGHT.

Get a good night's sleep, even in a challenging time.

18. HEALTHY ADULT BONES, AGE BY AGE.

Love your bones, and they'll take good care of you throughout your life.

20. LIVING, WORKING AND HEALING IN JERSEY CITY.

Why a renowned oncologist chooses this side of the river.

22. HEARTS IN GOOD HANDS.

A team approach enables world-class care for cardiac patients.

Top, a rendering of the planned expansion of the Jersey City Medical Center Emergency Department. Below, this image was “wrapped” on trains on the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail system, which connects Bayonne, Jersey City, Hoboken, Weehawken, Union City and North Bergen.



A VISION FOR HEALTH

IN HUDSON COUNTY

JERSEY CITY MEDICAL CENTER MAKES FIRST-RATE CARE AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE COUNTY—AND IS EXPANDING ITS SERVICES IN BIG, BOLD WAYS.

As anyone who looks at the Jersey City skyline can see, Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) is growing by leaps and bounds—but the plans don’t stop at the boundaries of the city. “Our vision for the future involves all of Hudson County,” says Michael Prilutsky, President and CEO of JCMC. “There are about 700,000 people in Hudson County, and we are their provider of choice.” Here, he explains JCMC’s vision for healing, enhancing and investing in Hudson County:



A ROCK IN STORMY SEAS

Our vision for the future is always based on the past and the present. Jersey City Medical Center has been the anchor of healthcare in Hudson County since 1882. We've served during crises, such as treating the many 9/11 survivors who were ferried here. Every single passenger on the flight that landed in the Hudson River came here. When there was a crash in the Hoboken train station, with more than 100 injuries, most of those patients came here.

As for the present, there's no better indication of our role than what happened when we dealt with the region's surge in coronavirus cases earlier this year. Many hospitals had to go on divert—meaning that they had reached capacity and had to send patients elsewhere—but we were open the entire time. We coordinated with emergency services throughout Hudson County. It was an incredible effort by our team.

Several nearby hospitals had to shut down their maternity services, so for a period of two to three weeks, we delivered every baby in Hudson County and sent them home happy and healthy. We also provided the vast majority of behavioral healthcare during that time. Jersey City Medical Center was an immovable rock in the middle of stormy seas.

EXPANDING ALL WAYS

Jersey City Medical Center provides care equal to what patients can find in Manhattan—but without their having the hassle of travel across the river.



MICHAEL PRILUTSKY

We're doing this by making transformational investments in many different

service lines and bringing in new high-end specialists with impeccable credentials. We started that investment over the last few years in orthopedics and have been accelerating through additional services.

CANCER: In addition to expanding our roster of experts and services, we are aligned with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state's only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. That means our patients have access to the latest research and treatments, and the best cancer professionals, in the country.

We are also building a brand-new oncology center across from the main hospital campus. (To learn more about JCMC's expanded cancer programs, see "Living, Working and Healing in Jersey City" on page 20.)

MATERNAL CARE: For maternity, we recently opened the Lord Abbett Maternity Wing, where, in addition to world-class care, new mothers are guaranteed a private room, a place for their partner to stay and a view of the Statue of Liberty. We have a Level III Regional Perinatal Center that is second to none. Last year, we delivered quintuplets and sent them home healthy.

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE: We are continuing to add specialists to our comprehensive cardiac care program and continue to be the only full-service heart hospital in Hudson County. (To learn more about JCMC's comprehensive cardiovascular services, see "Hearts in Good Hands" on page 22.)

PRIMARY CARE: We encourage people to be proactive about their healthcare, and that means developing a relationship with a primary care provider who can screen for and treat many major health conditions. To that end, we've created primary care hubs in the Pavonia and Greenville sections of Jersey City and in Bayonne, and more will follow. We're integrating mental health services into our primary care offices as well.

PEDIATRIC EMERGENCY CARE: We get 15,000 pediatric Emergency Department visits each year, and that population deserves an experience tailored to their needs. So we're doubling the size of the ED. Eventually, the pediatric ED will have its own entrance and rooms.

SOCIOECONOMIC SUPPORT: Knowing that social determinants—where people live, what they eat, how they learn—has a major effect on overall health, we've invested heavily in population health. We're working with city and county agencies and foundations on the best ways to help communities. This includes healthy food programs, job training, connecting people with housing help, legal aid and insurance, and much more.

The reason we are able to move forward so effectively and with so much commitment to excellence is because we are part of RWJBarnabas Health, a leading health system that believes in our mission and believes in Hudson County. As the future unfolds, we will continue to be at the forefront of care for all the communities we serve in Hudson County.

To learn more about Jersey City Medical Center's providers and services throughout Hudson County, visit www.rwjbh.org/hudsoncounty.

here in Hudson County.

Jersey City Medical Center
RWJBarnabas HEALTH
rwjbjh.org/hudson

CARDIAC | CANCER | EMERGENCY | ORTHOPED CS | WOMEN'S HEALTH & MATERNITY

A pregnant woman with long black hair is captured in a dynamic dance pose. She is wearing a dark grey, sleeveless leotard and a long, light-colored skirt that flows around her. Her arms are extended upwards and outwards, and her head is tilted back, looking towards the top right. The background is a plain, light-colored wall, and the floor is also light-colored. The lighting is soft, highlighting the contours of her body and the texture of her clothing.

DANCING THROUGH PREGNANCY

**A PROFESSIONAL MODERN
DANCER HAS A HEALTHY
BIRTH, CLOSE TO HOME.**

Ever since she was a little girl growing up in China, Xin Ying has had a deep passion for dance. “It makes me feel confident and empowered,” says Ying, who moved to the United States in 2010 after working as the director of the Dance Department at China’s Sichuan University of Culture and Arts. In 2011, she joined the Martha Graham Dance Company in Manhattan, and she’s been a principal dancer there since 2016.

When Ying and her husband, Jess Livinghouse, found out they were expecting their first child in the spring of 2019, she turned to experts at Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) for her prenatal care and for labor and delivery. “I didn’t want to go to the city for appointments or worry about getting stuck in the tunnel when it was time to have the baby,” says Ying, a Jersey City resident. “My husband and I loved that Jersey City Medical Center was a top-notch hospital just a 10-minute drive away.”

ONSTAGE AND ENERGIZED

After Ying became pregnant, she began seeing OB-GYN Zaheda Muhammad, MD, of Liberty Women OB-GYN in Jersey City, who is affiliated with JCMC and whose office is right across the street from the main hospital. “She made me feel really safe and she was very reassuring,” Ying recalls. “She wasn’t like many other doctors who say, ‘You cannot do this, you cannot do that.’ She told me because I had been dancing my whole life, I could still exercise, perform and be the person I am.”

With her doctor’s approval, Ying danced for Martha Graham until she was five-and-a-half months pregnant. Her biggest challenge was all-day morning sickness throughout much of her pregnancy. “Dr. Muhammad told me to eat high-protein, low-carb meals, which really helped,” says Ying. “She also closely monitored my weight at each visit to make sure I was gaining a healthy amount.”

In her final performance before taking maternity leave, Ying danced the lead role in “Chronicle” at the New York City Center’s Fall for Dance Festival. “I felt really good and energized that day, and we



Opposite page, dancer Xin Ying performed until she was five-and-a-half months pregnant. At left, baby Frankie.

received a full-house standing ovation,” she recalls.

A SUPPORT SYSTEM

On February 12, Ying gave birth to a healthy 7-pound, 12-ounce baby girl named Frances, nicknamed “Frankie,” at JCMC. Ying was induced because her cervix would not open on its own, but the labor otherwise went smoothly. She says her stay in the new Lord Abnett Maternity Wing was a highlight of the experience. “Our room looked like a Four Seasons hotel and my husband and baby stayed with me the whole time,” says Ying.

Ying also appreciates the breastfeeding tips she received from the hospital’s lactation consultants. “The nurses taught me how to make sure the baby can latch on and the correct position to hold her,” she recalls.

Ying’s pregnancy and experience as a new mom are the focus of a documentary film by Teng Chen, an independent filmmaker based in New York. “Ying’s story is fascinating because many consider getting pregnant the end of a career for a dancer, but Ying wants to show people that doesn’t have to be true,” says Chen, who shot some scenes at JCMC. Although Chen is still filming, she plans to pitch the documentary to production companies when shooting is complete.

Today, Ying is enjoying new motherhood and teaching virtual classes from home for Martha Graham until the studio reopens. Frankie is a healthy, happy baby. “She has a bright personality and is very active like me—she loves to jump and kick,” says Ying.

When the documentary eventually airs, Ying says she hopes women take away some important messages. “As a woman you want to do it all, and I think that

HOW SHOULD YOU CHOOSE WHERE TO HAVE YOUR BABY?

Do your due diligence before delivery:

Ask what services are offered for high-risk pregnancies or unexpected complications. “Expecting moms should look into what type of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit [NICU] or special care nursery is associated with the hospital,” says Leah Dungee-Maignan, MSN, RNC-NIC, CBN, Director of Nursing for Maternal Child Services at JCMC. “The JCMC is a regional perinatal center, meaning we can take the sickest patients.” The hospital’s NICU is the only Level 3 NICU in Hudson County, with 24/7 coverage by board-certified neonatologists.

Consider what kind of labor and delivery experience you will have. “Take a tour of the facility before you decide,” Dungee-Maignan advises. The new 17,500-square-foot Lord Abnett Maternity Wing at JCMC features 20 spacious private suites, each equipped with a private bathroom, a smart TV and a sofa that converts to a sleeping space. Expectant moms can take a virtual tour of the maternity wing on the JCMC website.

Find out what services are offered before and after birth. Look for a complete range of services to complement personalized care. JCMC offerings include midwife services, pain management/ anesthesia options, breastfeeding education and instruction, support for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders and virtual childbirth classes.

takes a whole support system—of course your partner and family, but also good doctors and nurses and a good hospital,” she says. “You’re not in this alone, and the people around you can help you get through it.”

For more information about giving birth at Jersey City Medical Center, visit www.rwjbh.org/maternity.





POWERFUL PARTNERS

ROYAL BANK OF CANADA AND JERSEY CITY MEDICAL CENTER
COMBINE FORCES TO HELP THE CITY THRIVE.

“At Royal Bank of Canada, we see ourselves as committed to the community above and beyond our business—and Jersey City Medical Center is the bedrock of this community,” says John Thurlow, Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, U.S. Capital Markets, for Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) Capital Markets. “From day one, we knew there was a fit between our organizations.”

Ever since RBC transferred 40 percent of its U.S. staff to Jersey City in 2015, the global investment bank and Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) have partnered to create a healthier community. This year, JCMC was chosen for a \$50,000 award, based on employee votes, as part of RBC’s signature annual Trade for the Kids event, in which a portion of a day’s profit is donated to youth-serving charities.

JCMC has also received grants from the RBC Foundation–USA, which invests in local communities by supporting nonprofits in the areas of youth, health, human services and arts and culture.

For the past four years, RBC has made a generous grant to the Tiger’s Den, a school-based youth services program at Snyder High School in the Greenville section of Jersey City.

Those funds support Tiger’s Den summer programs, including mentoring, team-building and trips. “Each year, RBC employees participate in one or more of the Tiger’s Den programs,” Thurlow explains. “Last year, for example, we went along on a bowling outing.” This past summer, due to the limitations caused by the pandemic, Tiger’s Den funds were redirected to student needs such as food cards and laptops for remote learning.

MUTUAL BENEFIT

The relationship between RBC and JCMC is a two-way street. “We’ve provided our experts for video calls and presentations on a whole range of issues—from stress management, to diversity and inclusion, to behavioral health issues, parenting a special-needs child and more,” says Nicole Kagan, Vice President

of the Jersey City Medical Center Foundation, which raises funds for JCMC. “The kind of relationship we have with RBC is an example of Jersey City Medical Center’s commitment to keeping the community healthy, both inside and outside the hospital doors.”

“In addition to being a great source of medical insights, Jersey City Medical Center has also provided all of our Jersey City employees with a program called Gold Coast Medical Concierge Services,” Thurlow says. “It provides guidance for any health needs an employee may have and is a wonderful resource for us.”

“Our partnership with RBC is a model for robust community engagement,” says Kagan. “Their leadership is so thoughtful and collaborative, and RBC is an ideal corporate citizen—the kind that’s so important to help Jersey City thrive.”

Thurlow finds himself an advocate for Jersey City for personal as well as professional reasons. He moved to the city from his longtime home in the suburbs two years ago. “This community is so active in terms of continual improvement on every level,” he says. “As an individual, you can have an impact and play an important role to better the community. I truly can say I love Jersey City.”

To learn more about giving opportunities at Jersey City Medical Center, call 201.377.6057 or visit www.rwjbh.org/giving.



GOING OUT: WHAT'S SAFE FOR SENIORS?

**WHEN IT COMES TO COVID-19 AND SOCIAL CONTACT,
IT PAYS TO WEIGH THE RISKS AND BENEFITS.**

A senior citizen who lives alone had become depressed. Her family said she seemed confused when they spoke to her on the phone. Should she allow visitors into her home to help her, or was the risk of contagion too great?

An elderly couple was being urged to attend the wedding of a dear family member, and they very much wanted to be there. Should they go?

These and similar questions are being debated daily by older adults, who are among the groups most at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.



JESSICA ISRAEL, MD

“When stay-at-home recommendations began, many assumed that there would be a clear end date and kept a stiff upper lip as they socially isolated,” says Jessica Israel, MD, Senior Vice

President of Geriatrics and Palliative Care for RWJBarnabas Health and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

However, as questions about transmission and treatment persist, it’s become clear that life will not be going back to “normal” anytime soon—and prolonged isolation has health risks as well.

“Today, older adults need to evaluate the risk of having an interaction vs. the risk of not having it,” says Dr. Israel. “And we all need to be open to the fact that there’s no one-size-fits-all answer for everybody.”

THREE QUESTIONS

To weigh out the pluses and minuses of a social interaction, Dr. Israel advises, ask yourself three questions:

“What are the risks of what I’m thinking about doing?” Will people be masked, will there be the ability to wash or sanitize hands, and will commonly touched surfaces be sanitized? Will the event be indoors or outdoors?

“How am I feeling emotionally?” Are you emotionally OK, or is staying inside affecting your ability to live your life successfully? For example, do you have a hard time getting motivated to get out of bed to begin your day? Have you lost interest in talking to people on the phone or in doing things you could enjoy, such as sitting outside?

“How am I feeling physically?” Is your health good, or do you have trouble with normal activities, such as walking from room to room? Have you been putting off care for a health condition?

Based on these considerations, Dr. Israel advised the family of the depressed older woman that she should have visitors. “It was becoming an unsafe situation, and when it comes to depression, you can’t solve everything with medication,” she says. “The family had been trying to protect her by staying away, but she needed to see them in person, with all appropriate safety measures taken, of course.”

As for the elderly couple who were invited to the wedding, Dr. Israel asked them whether all guests would be masked and practice social distancing. The answer was no. “I had to tell them that I thought it would be too unsafe for them. They actually felt relieved,” she says.

“People come to me all the time and say, ‘Can I go to the hairdresser? Can I go to a restaurant that has outdoor seating?’” says Dr. Israel. “I tell them there may not be a great answer. No activity is without any risk at all, so you have to consider what you can do to mitigate that risk.”

The one activity that’s definitely off-limits for now is hugging grandchildren, says Dr. Israel. “We’re still learning, but it looks like young people spread the virus very easily, even if they show no symptoms at all,” she says. “I hate to say it, but hugging grandkids should be on hold for a while longer.”

To learn more about healthcare for seniors at RWJBarnabas Health, visit www.rwjbh.org/seniorhealth.



A pregnant woman with curly hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt, is smiling and holding a white tablet computer in front of her. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting with a white brick wall and a wooden headboard.

NEW MOTHERS, NEW CHALLENGES

**VIRTUAL SUPPORT IS HELPING NEW AND EXPECTING
MOMS GET THROUGH THE PANDEMIC SAFELY.**

The experience of being pregnant and having a baby is different during the era of COVID-19.

In-person baby showers aren't happening. Pregnant women aren't seeing friends and coworkers on a daily basis, so they can't have the kind of "Is this normal?" discussions that tend to come up between expecting and experienced mothers.

After the baby is born, many women have to go without help from other family members because of travel restrictions or fears of bringing COVID-19 into a home with a newborn.

"Many families are trying to navigate the emotional, physical and social challenges often experienced after the birth of a baby without the traditional support of friends and family," says Suzanne Sernal, Vice President for Women's Services at RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH). "We've been hearing that pregnant women feel anxious because they're isolated and not able to experience pregnancy and new motherhood as they'd imagined they would."

For many women, help has come in the form of virtual support groups, facilitated by experts at RWJBH hospitals. Specific topics vary from hospital to hospital, but two groups are open to all: virtual support for women who are experiencing perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) and virtual support for breastfeeding.

"One of the most important things women learn in these groups is that the things they're feeling are normal and they can talk about them," Sernal says. "We've created comfortable, safe virtual spaces for expecting and new mothers."

MANAGING ANXIETY

Women may come to a PMAD group feeling that they're alone, but in fact, PMAD—which used to be called postpartum depression—affects 1 in 5 pregnant and new moms. Though a very real illness, it is temporary and treatable, and peer support has been shown to be a powerful help.

In the group, new and expecting

mothers may express their sadness or anger, or feelings of being overwhelmed, without feeling judged.

"The conversations these women are having are so meaningful," Sernal says. "Some of them feel so isolated and sad at the beginning of a session, and by the end they're actually smiling and have been given a handful of resources they can immediately tap into as soon as the session is over."

Conversations can continue in a private Facebook community, and telehealth visits with a behavioral health specialist can be arranged. "We've been able to open the doors for more women to get support for mood and anxiety disorders because the virtual groups have eliminated geographic barriers," Sernal says.

BREASTFEEDING BASICS

Breastfeeding is good for both mother and baby, but it comes with many challenges—from latching-on to milk supply, tongue-tie, pain, pumping, diet, weaning and more. In virtual breastfeeding support groups, women connect with other new mothers as well as International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants to get the answers they need.

Lactation consultants allow moms to take the lead by raising issues that are of concern to them and provide their professional advice and insight as needed.

"When I got home from the hospital, I missed the support of the great lactation consultants and nurses there," says Lauren Tran, 34, of South Orange, who had a baby boy in mid-June. "I wondered if it would feel silly to do a breastfeeding group virtually instead of in person. But that feeling went away quickly, and we are building camaraderie and getting to know each other just as we would if we were in person."

"Knowing I'm not alone in challenges I'm dealing with is so helpful," says Shlomit Sanders, 33, of Elizabeth, who gave birth in April. "There are breastfeeding behaviors in babies that first-time moms have no idea about—for example, a feeding position that



PROTECTING MOMS AND BABIES FROM COVID-19

"The medical community is still learning about all of the potential effects COVID-19 may have on pregnancy and newborns," says Suzanne Sernal, Vice President for Women's Services at RWJBH. "What we do know is that all of the stay-safe recommendations—mask wearing, distancing, and frequent and thorough handwashing—that apply to us all are especially important for pregnant women and infants, and those who visit or care for them."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that mothers who come into a hospital for delivery be tested for COVID-19, even if they have no symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fever or chills, loss of taste or smell). "At RWJBarnabas Health hospitals, we've put every precaution in place to ensure the safety of everyone in our facilities, including mothers and their birth partners," says Sernal. "So far, we've delivered more than 10,000 babies during this pandemic and have kept every one of those mothers and babies safe and healthy."

works great one time and not at all the next. It's so comforting to normalize these behaviors."

"At RWJBarnabas Health, we've made ourselves available to all of the pregnant and parenting women in our communities, and we welcome their questions," Sernal says. "We want them to have a great experience, even as they take all the measures needed to stay safe and healthy during the pandemic."

To learn more about virtual breastfeeding support, visit www.rwjbh.org/breastfeedingsupport. To learn about the PMAD group, visit www.rwjbh.org/PMADsupport. To learn more about maternity care at RWJBarnabas Health, visit www.rwjbh.org/maternity.



RADIATION ONCOLOGY: IT TAKES A TEAM

PATIENTS IN THE RWJBARNABAS HEALTH SYSTEM HAVE ACCESS
TO THE MOST ADVANCED TREATMENTS FOR CANCER.



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.

Radiation oncology, which uses precisely targeted doses of high-energy radiation to eliminate cancer cells, is an effective treatment for a wide range of cancers.

Within the field, though, are numerous treatment options, and that leads to crucial questions. Would a patient's cancer respond best to external beam radiation therapy, in which high-energy rays are directed from the outside into a specific part of the body? Or internal radiation, which involves putting a source of radiation inside the patient's body? And within those two categories, which specific treatment is most likely to be more effective for a particular patient?

Cancer patients in New Jersey can be assured that they have the best minds in the field on their cases, thanks to the unique partnership between RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) and Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state's only National Cancer Institute-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center.

"All of the radiation oncology doctors at the 11 hospitals in the RWJBarnabas Health system and Rutgers Cancer Institute consult with each other. We don't hesitate to pick up the phone," says Bruce Haffty, MD, FACR, FASTRO, FASCO, Chair of Radiation Oncology for Rutgers Cancer Institute and for Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and New Jersey Medical School.

"Moreover, we all know what technologies are available throughout the system. So if a patient at one of our cancer centers needs a treatment that's available at Rutgers Cancer Institute or any RWJBarnabas Health facility, we ensure that treatment can be offered based on the individual patient needs. If a clinical trial at any of those places could benefit a patient, his or her oncologist will know about



BRUCE HAFFTY, MD

it and the patient will have access to it," explains Dr. Haffty, who is also the Associate Vice Chancellor for Cancer Programs.

"In this way, we can provide a seamless continuity of advanced care that's of great benefit to our patients," he says.

CONSISTENT CONNECTION

Physicians at RWJBH and Rutgers Cancer Institute represent a vast array of cancer specialties. "A physician can call a specialist at another RWJBarnabas Health hospital to consult on any case," Dr. Haffty says. "For example, I get calls all the time about cases in my specialties, breast cancers and head and neck cancers. The same kind of discussions go on among experts in gastrointestinal, brain, blood cancers—all kinds of subspecialties within radiation oncology."

Such consultations aren't left to chance. Cancer specialists at RWJBH and Rutgers Cancer Institute meet regularly to discuss their cases. "We've implemented peer-review planning sessions, where every new patient case at each facility is peer-reviewed by multiple physicians," says Dr. Haffty. "Physicians share their ideas about what treatments might best benefit the patient—perhaps Gamma Knife, CyberKnife, proton therapy or other sophisticated radiation therapy techniques. Very few health systems have all of these options available."

Physicians and patients also have the benefit of the most up-to-date national research and the latest clinical trials. As one of just 51 U.S. institutions designated a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the National Cancer Institute, Rutgers Cancer Institute is a leader in conducting cancer research and translating scientific discoveries into novel treatments.

"The partnership between Rutgers Cancer Institute and RWJBarnabas Health is unique in that it offers the latest technology available in combination with all of our subspecialty expertise," says Dr. Haffty, "and anybody who walks in the door anywhere in the system has the benefit of all of it."



ADVANCED TREATMENTS

Radiation oncologists at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and throughout the RWJBarnabas Health system are experts in the most advanced radiation treatments available, including but not limited to:

BRACHYTHERAPY: In this type of radiation therapy, the radioactive source is delivered through seeds, ribbons, catheters or wires placed within or just next to a tumor.

CYBERKNIFE: This robotic radiosurgery system is noninvasive and delivers intense, highly focused doses of radiation directed by a sophisticated computer guidance system.

GAMMA KNIFE RADIOSURGERY: This treatment uses multiple beams of radiation focused with extreme accuracy on the tumor or area to be treated. With Gamma Knife, no incision is required to treat tumors and other abnormalities of the brain.

INTENSITY MODULATED RADIATION THERAPY (IMRT) AND IMAGE GUIDED RADIATION THERAPY (IGRT): These therapies utilize advanced imaging and computerized radiation delivery techniques that provide high-resolution, three-dimensional imaging to pinpoint tumor sites while protecting healthy tissue.

PROTON BEAM THERAPY: This type of therapy uses protons (subatomic particles with a positive electric charge) to precisely target locations within tumors while protecting surrounding tissues and organs.

Your cancer care is too important to wait. Our cancer centers and our hospitals have taken every precaution as we continue to provide the most advanced cancer care. To schedule an appointment with one of our cancer specialists, call **844.CANCERNJ (844.226.2376)**.





Aiden Shanklin, left, has a custom treatment plan designed by his doctors to alleviate symptoms caused by a genetic mutation.

muscle tone or motor skills caused by damage to or abnormal development of the brain. CP symptoms often include exaggerated reflexes, floppy or rigid limbs and involuntary motions.

Aiden lived with this diagnosis for six years. Then he was taken to see Adam Aronsky, MD, a developmental and behavioral pediatrician at CSH in Mountainside. Dr. Aronsky felt that Aiden's clinical picture did not align with those of CP patients and suggested that he undergo genetic testing. That led to the discovery that Aiden actually had a GRIN2B mutation, a genetic disorder with symptoms very similar to those of CP.

"Because the symptoms of CP and GRIN2B-related syndrome are so similar, our treatment plan has not changed," Nicole says. "However, the new diagnosis has provided a lot of answers to my questions."

Aiden now sees three physicians at the CSH Mountainside location who work together to help with his treatment plan. Dr. Aronsky treats Aiden's bone and muscle function. JenFu Cheng, MD, a physical medicine and rehabilitation physician (physiatrist), provides Botox injections that assist with the parts of Aiden's body that have high muscle tone (spasticity). Neurologist Andrea Richards, MD, assesses any episodes he may have. For example, when there was concern that a laughing condition was a sign of a seizure, she was able to determine that it was just part of Aiden's personality.

"This experience has taught me that it's OK to ask questions, even if you think they don't make sense or seem silly," Nicole says.

"I encourage other families going through similar experiences to go with their gut, ask questions, research everything you can and share your experiences with others. You never know who will benefit from your story."

To learn more about Children's Specialized Hospital, call **888.244.5373** or visit www.childrens-specialized.org.

EVERYDAY JOYS

EXPERT CARE PROVIDES A YOUNG PATIENT WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF LIFE.



Children's Specialized Hospital®

An RWJBarnabas Health facility

At 8 years old, Aiden Shanklin is wheelchair-dependent, has a sensory processing disorder and functions at the level of a 1-and-a-half-year-old.

He also loves to laugh, listen to the acoustic guitar, ride horseback and swim or run his hands under water. Aiden is doing these things and living his best possible life, thanks to the loving care of his family and the expertise of doctors at Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH).

"Children's Specialized Hospital has provided us with such excellent care. I couldn't ask for a better team for Aiden," says his mother, Nicole. "They have given

us the opportunity to provide him the best quality of life that we can."

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

When Aiden was 9 months old, Nicole became concerned because he had trouble holding his head up and had no trunk control. "When I would go to lift him, it felt as if I were picking up a rag doll," she says.

A pediatrician diagnosed Aiden with cerebral palsy (CP), a disorder of movement,

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



HOW STRESS HARMS THE HEART

HEART MUSCLE DISEASE IS INCREASING, AND EXPERTS THINK EMOTIONAL DISTRESS IS A MAJOR CAUSE.

If someone says their heart is broken, you instantly know what that means: The person is feeling deep grief, usually from the loss of a love relationship or the passing of a loved one.

The pain is emotional, but it can feel—and be—physical as well.



FADI CHAABAN, MD

In fact, cardiac specialists know extreme emotional stress can actually “break” a heart’s functioning by reducing the ability of heart muscles to pump, thereby depriving the brain and organs of oxygen-rich blood.

This is called stress cardiomyopathy, also known as “broken heart syndrome,” and cases have been on the rise.

“Recent data show an increase of four times the number of stress cardiomyopathy cases compared to before the COVID-19

pandemic,” says Fadi Chaaban, MD, Director and Chief of Cardiology at Clara Maass Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.

HOW IT HAPPENS

“The mechanism for triggering stress cardiomyopathy is not completely understood, but it’s possible that there is a link between the brain and the heart where you have a high activation of neurons in the brain stem,” says Dr. Chaaban. “These in turn secrete a tremendous amount of stress hormones and neuropeptides, which could be captured by the receptors of the heart, leading to a temporary dysfunction of an area in the heart.” However, the COVID-19 virus attacks the heart in many ways that are still not completely understood, he notes.

Stress cardiomyopathy has the same symptoms as a heart attack: chest pain, shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness, nausea and vomiting, weakness and pounding of the heart. In addition to being triggered by intense emotion, it can be caused by significant physical stress, such as a severe asthma attack or a broken bone.

“Many times, a patient comes in with what presents as a heart attack, and we discover it was actually stress cardiomyopathy only after further testing, such as an echocardiogram or angiogram,” says Dr. Chaaban.

Women, especially those over 50, seem to be more at risk of emotion-caused stress cardiomyopathy. When men have the condition, it is more often caused by physical stress.

MANAGING STRESS

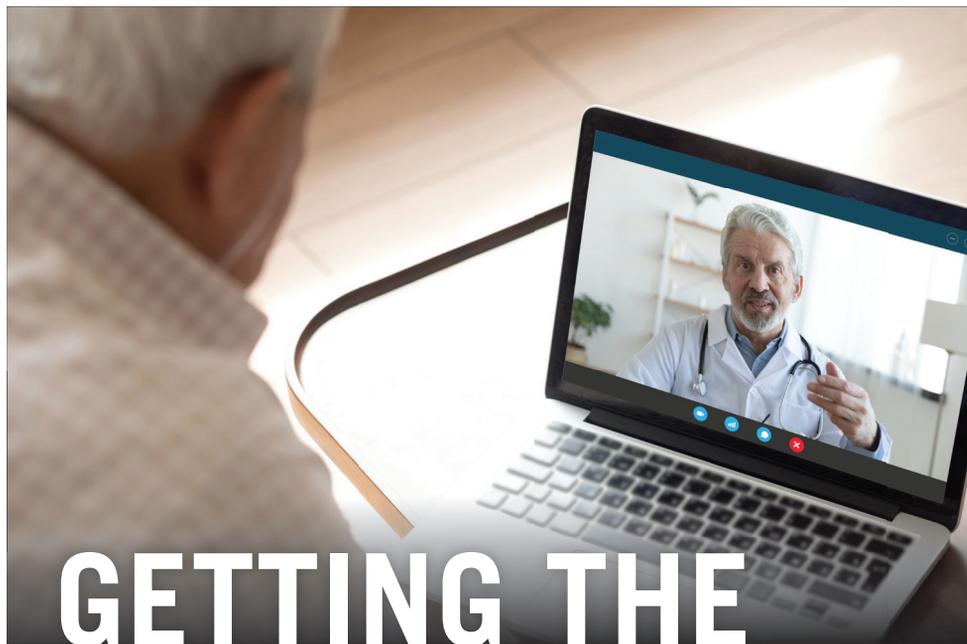
“We don’t know why some people get stress cardiomyopathy and others don’t, but what we can tell patients is that they are highly likely to fully recover,” says Dr. Chaaban. “We generally need to provide supportive treatment for several weeks, with medications to help improve blood pressure, remove fluid from the lungs and prevent blood clots.” For very sick patients, a ventilator or an intra-aortic balloon pump may be needed.

Managing stress is the most important thing anyone can do to protect the heart, he says. “The best way to de-stress yourself is to live a healthy life—stay active, eat well and maintain a healthy weight as well as a positive attitude,” he says. “Life is stress, but you can learn not to take things personally and become more resilient to whatever life throws at you.”

The most urgent message Dr. Chaaban has is for people to pay attention to their symptoms. “If you’re stressed out and suddenly feeling chest pain, don’t ignore it,” he says. “Get checked as quickly as possible. Call 911 or go to the Emergency Department. That’s a controlled environment where we can help you and support you until the stress has passed and your heart has healed.”

Your heart doesn’t beat just for you. Get it checked. To find a cardiac specialist at RWJBarnabas Health, call **888.724.7123** or visit www.rwjbh.org/heart.





GETTING THE MOST OUT OF TELEHEALTH

VIRTUAL VISITS WON'T REPLACE IN-PERSON APPOINTMENTS, BUT THEY CAN PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS.

Not long ago, virtual doctor visits—appointments conducted via video or phone—were relatively rare. Now they're commonplace, and they're here to stay. "The pandemic gave telehealth a jump-start, but I believe it will become a permanent part of the healthcare delivery system," says Andy Anderson, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer of the combined medical group of RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers Health. "We are seeing ever-increasing use of our RWJBarnabas Health TeleMed services."



ANDY ANDERSON, MD

Telehealth can be used for primary and routine medical care, as well as for some aspects of specialty care. "There's still enormous value in

face-to-face appointments and physical examinations, and that will never go away," says Dr. Anderson. "But telehealth has many uses, both for convenience and for making and maintaining the doctor-patient connection." Here, he explains why.

Can a wellness visit be done through telehealth?

A good deal of preventive screening can be done this way. A doctor can ask, "Have you had your mammogram? Have you scheduled your colonoscopy? What kind of diet are you consuming? Are you sleeping well?" Patients can self-report their weight and, if they have a blood pressure cuff at home—as many patients do—their blood pressure numbers. A doctor can screen for cognitive issues, give referrals, advise on a plan for self-care and recommend future tests and appointments.

Telehealth is not, clearly, a full substitute for an in-person visit and

examination. But it is a valuable way for people to get many of their healthcare needs met.

Besides wellness visits, what other kinds of primary care can be conducted virtually?

If you have an acute issue—for example, a cut or sprain, or a possible urinary tract infection—telehealth is a way to sort out the next steps, such as a doctor office visit, trip to urgent care or a prescription.

Also, aspects of care for chronic conditions like diabetes, heart failure and high blood pressure can be managed via telehealth. A doctor can ask about blood sugar levels, about symptoms and about medication side effects. The physician can see certain symptoms over video, such as swelling in legs.

Chronic disease management should be done in a combination of in-person and telehealth visits. But many patients have been very happy to have routine check-ins take place in a video visit, sparing them time they'd have to spend traveling to the doctor's office.

When an in-person visit isn't practical, why not just have a telephone call?

We encourage a video visit whenever possible, and fortunately, the technology for having one has become very simple to use. There's a huge visual component to communication—body language, expression. It's important to see the patient and have them see you when you're counseling or coaching them, or asking about side effects.

Are there any special issues for children?

For kids, much of their preventive care has to do with getting vaccines on schedule, so they'll need in-person visits more than most adults.

Can telehealth be used for COVID-19 screening?

Absolutely. In fact, it's a very important screening tool because, ideally, you don't want a person to show up to a medical office and potentially expose other people. An initial screening can be done effectively over the phone or via a video call by asking about the patient's health history and symptoms. Then prescriptions, tests or other next steps can be arranged as needed. The same is true, by the way, for people who have a bad cold or the flu.

To learn more about RWJBarnabas Health TeleMed®, call 888.724.7123 or visit www.rwjbh.org/telemed.





5 WAYS TO SLEEP BETTER TONIGHT

STRATEGIES FOR GETTING A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP, EVEN IN A CHALLENGING TIME

“Everyone is so stressed out these days,” says Jyoti Matta, MD, Medical Director for the Center for Sleep Disorders at Jersey City Medical Center. “Sleep gets impacted by our concerns and the feelings associated with them.” That seems to hold especially true in a time of pandemic. Indeed, the number of Google searches for terms like “can’t sleep” and “insomnia” hit an all-time high this past spring.



JYOTI MATTA, MD

Most people need seven to eight hours a night of uninterrupted sleep, Dr. Matta says. Not getting it can leave us vulnerable to infection due to a weakened immune

system. Here’s Dr. Matta’s advice for building up your sleep stats:

1 Stick to a routine. Many circumstances are beyond our control these days, but having a daily schedule is not. “Get up and get dressed at regular times,” says Dr. Matta. “The routine in your home office should be the same as in the workplace. Follow proper mealtimes and incorporate exercise as part of your routine”—but not close to bedtime, when the exercise might be too stimulating.

2 Go to sleep and get up at regular times. “Try not to oversleep or sleep in,

which throws off your sleep cycle,” says Dr. Matta. “Also, you may find you have more of a tendency to take naps now, but remember that a healthy, rejuvenating nap is just 15 to 20 minutes. Anything more than that affects your ability to sleep at night.”

3 Expose yourself to natural light every day. “We’re going from our phones to our computers to our tablets and televisions,” Dr. Matta says. “The ambient light that comes off of electronics is not good for sleep. It stimulates the brain and changes our circadian rhythms.” She recommends moving around the house or neighborhood daily to be sure you get natural light—and shelving the electronics as bedtime nears.

4 Watch what and when you eat. “If you eat closer to bedtime, reflux—in which stomach contents come back up into the esophagus—can kick in and lead to interrupted sleep,” Dr. Matta says. Avoid foods that are spicy, or high in acid, fat or carbohydrates (which can cause insulin to fluctuate and in turn disrupt sleep). Instead, target foods that are high in protein and fiber, especially closer to bedtime.

Also, limit caffeine and alcohol. “Alcohol may make you fall asleep, but it actually is a big deterrent to quality, continuous sleep,” says Dr. Matta.

5 Keep a sleep diary/worry journal. On the diary side, make note of things like the time you went to bed and woke up, how many times you woke during the night and how many hours of sleep you got. On the journal side, “just before bed, make a list of things to do tomorrow. Then tell yourself that there is nothing you can do about any of these things right now and that you will address them first thing in the morning,” says Dr. Matta.

“Give yourself that precious 30 minutes before bed and tell yourself there will be no worrying,” she advises. “Create pleasant, relaxing rituals so that bedtime will become something you look forward to.”

To schedule an appointment at the Center for Sleep Disorders at Jersey City Medical Center, call **201.915.2020** or visit **www.rwjbh.org/jcmcsleep**.

HEALTHY ADULT BONES



AGE BY AGE

LOVE YOUR BONES, AND THEY'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE.

Peak bone growth occurs during childhood, but bones continue to grow throughout life. “Bone is a pretty amazing thing,” says Richard Yoon, MD, Director of Orthopedic Research at Jersey City Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. “Bone is always in turnover, constantly being broken down and built back up at every age.”



RICHARD YOON, MD

The process of building up new bone becomes less

efficient as we get older, which can lead to osteopenia and osteoporosis, conditions in which bones become more brittle and prone to fracture. Fortunately, adults can take diet and lifestyle steps at every age to keep their bones as strong as possible.

AGES 20 TO 39

AGE-RELATED CONCERNS: “The most important thing is to develop and maintain good eating and exercise habits,” says Dr. Yoon. “If you do that now, you’re setting yourself up for lifelong good bone health as well as cardiovascular health and weight maintenance.”

WHAT TO EAT: The focus should be on an overall healthy and balanced diet.

“People this age don’t necessarily have to focus on their levels of calcium and vitamin D [important bone nutrients] because a well-balanced diet will usually take care of these requirements, and the body at this age will use what it needs,” Dr. Yoon says. For strong bones, limit alcoholic drinks to no more than one a day for women and two a day for men, and avoid nicotine.

HOW TO EXERCISE: As people enter their 30s, they are still strong enough to continue with their usual aerobic and weight-bearing activities, but should be increasingly careful because injury recovery takes longer. Over the course of a week, 150 minutes of exercise is recommended.

AGES 40 TO 55

AGE-RELATED CONCERNS: In peak career years, time is tight but exercise should not be neglected. For women, these are the perimenopausal years, in which bone loss increases due to dropping estrogen levels. Women should have a baseline bone density scan now.

Because men tend to have bigger and wider bones, they are less at risk for osteoporosis than women are. However, low testosterone levels can lead to loss of bone mass in men.

WHAT TO EAT: It's especially important now to make sure your body is getting enough calcium and vitamin D. Minimize drinking (one alcoholic drink a day for women, two for men) and don't use nicotine.

HOW TO EXERCISE: Good exercises at this age include yoga and Pilates, which use body weight and are focused on general strengthening rather than building muscle. Get 30 minutes of exercise at least five days a week.

AGES 56 TO 65

AGE-RELATED CONCERNS: "Recognize that your reaction time is slower, and you might again need to change the type of exercise you do to avoid getting injured," says Dr. Yoon. When women are postmenopausal, the loss of hormones means they should be especially attentive to bone health. **WHAT TO EAT:** As at all ages, eat a well-balanced diet with lots of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

"Postmenopausal women should probably take calcium and vitamin D supplements," says Dr. Yoon. Underlying medical conditions that might affect bone health include diabetes, kidney issues, lactose intolerance, celiac disease and Crohn's disease.

HOW TO EXERCISE: Instead of running, try walking or power walking. Consider cycling, stationary bicycling, spin classes or any low-impact exercise that is great for the heart. "And recognize that if you're having pain, then something isn't right," Dr. Yoon says. "Don't push through it."

AGE 66 AND UP

AGE-RELATED CONCERNS: Fractures start to become more common, often caused by daily activities, so slow down a bit, advises Dr. Yoon. "I can't tell you how many times a patient around age 70 comes into the hospital with a hip fracture because they were cleaning their gutter," he says. Older people are also more likely to have diabetes and other medical conditions that might make bones more brittle. **WHAT TO EAT:** In addition to a healthy, well-balanced diet, vitamin and calcium supplements become even more important, because as people get older, malnutrition occurs at a higher rate. For stronger bones, limit or eliminate



VITAMIN D AND CALCIUM: BONE HEALTH SUPERSTARS

VITAMIN D

RECOMMENDED DAILY AMOUNT (RDA): For adults ages 19 to 70, 600 international units (IUs); for over age 70, 800 IUs.

SOURCES: Oily fish, such as salmon, trout, whitefish and tuna; leafy greens; fortified foods, such as milk and cereal. Sunlight helps the body produce vitamin D. However, it can be difficult to eat enough vitamin D-rich foods and safely get enough sun for the recommended level, so supplements may be needed.

CALCIUM

RDA: For adults ages 19 to 50, 1,000 mg, about the amount in two servings of calcium-rich food like dairy products. Increases to 1,200 mg a day for women after age 50 and for men after 70.

SOURCES: Dairy foods; broccoli and leafy greens; tofu; nuts; fortified orange juice. Keep a food diary for a week or two to see how much daily calcium you get on average.

alcoholic drinks and don't use nicotine. **HOW TO EXERCISE:** Workouts should include exercises that help improve balance. "Really focus on the core, the lower back, the hip girdle, the muscles around the waist," says Dr. Yoon. "In addition to helping avoid falls, strong muscles fight chronic back, hip and knee pain." Good overall exercises include walking, swimming and seated exercises that can be done in a chair.

The good news is that there is no age limit for bone turnover. "In older patients who are more active, the bone is stimulated to remodel when you are using it," says Dr. Yoon. "The old saying 'Use it or lose it' is really true, and exercise is something that will help maintain your bone strength."

ORTHOPEDIC SERVICES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



Jersey City Medical Center offers the latest diagnostic and surgical technologies for orthopedic patients at two convenient locations:

MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING AT JERSEY CITY MEDICAL CENTER

377 Jersey Avenue, Suite 280-A, Jersey City

NEWPORT LOCATION

100 Town Square Place, Suite 208, Jersey City

To learn more about orthopedic services at Jersey City Medical Center, call **844.63.ORTHO** or visit www.rwjbh.org/ortho.



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



LIVING, WORKING AND HEALING IN JERSEY CITY

WHY A RENOWNED SURGICAL ONCOLOGIST CHOOSES THIS SIDE OF THE RIVER.

Russell C. Langan, MD, FACS, is a surgical oncologist on staff at Jersey City Medical Center with a specialty in diseases of the liver, pancreas, bile ducts and intestinal tract. Dr. Langan and his wife, who is also a physician, have two children, ages 4 and 6, and they have chosen to live and raise their family in Jersey City.

Why did you choose oncological surgery as your focus?

When I was a young resident, I noticed there was a different relationship between the patient and physician when cancer was at the heart of that relationship. It became very clear to me that cancer

surgeons can offer patients the potential for extension of life, and there’s just nothing more precious than that.

In medicine, generally speaking, interactions between patients and physicians are transient. But when a patient has cancer, the physician they choose to be involved in their care stays with them for life. These patients give us ultimate trust, which is amazing.

You have said that you are motivated by giving people hope.

Many patients with aggressive cancer come to my office and say OK, that’s it. I’m going to die. They don’t realize that the survival

Russell Langan, MD, with his wife Jessica Torrente Langan, MD, and children Gabriella, 6, and Sebastian, 4, at Hamilton Park.

rate statistic they found online is just the average. Meaning, 50 percent of patients are going to live longer than the average statistic, and you don't know where you're going to fall on that curve.

So we lay out modern, aggressive, high-quality treatment plans for patients, and many times they walk away saying, you know what, there is hope here. They just had to be given the data and the information.

You and your colleagues at Jersey City Medical Center collaborate with many different types of specialists. How does that work?

It works exceedingly well. In our multidisciplinary tumor board team, we have board-certified surgical oncologists, oncologists, radiation oncologists, gastroenterologists, genetic counselors, dietitians and other specialists working together under one healthcare system, RWJBarnabas Health, in collaboration with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

On a weekly basis, we spend three hours together discussing cases. The algorithm of care changes often during these conferences because other physicians suggest different approaches, driven by modern medical data. We strive to offer patients novel, effective and safe care that is personalized for them. That's the way cancer should be practiced in 2020, and that's how we do it at Jersey City Medical Center.

On the personal side, what made you and your wife choose to live in Jersey City?

We had been living in Manhattan, and while we were expecting our second child, it was clear that we wanted more space. While looking throughout the greater



WORLD-CLASS CANCER CARE IN JERSEY CITY

Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) is providing world-class cancer services to Hudson County, with new specialists, new locations and a significant investment in cancer care.

"Because of our partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, we can offer patients access to the most advanced treatments and the latest clinical trials," says Stefan Balan, MD, Chief of Oncology at JCMC.

"My parents are from Hudson County, and I know many people used to feel that in order to get the best cancer treatment, they had to cross the river to go to New York," says Jason Maggi, MD, a surgical oncologist at JCMC and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. "That has changed. At Jersey City Medical Center, we have a number of cancer specialists who have left well-known institutions in New York to bring the highest level of cancer care to Jersey City."

"We provide the best cancer care available anywhere," says Dr. Balan. "And we also listen and create relationships. Those who come to us are not just 'patients' to us; they are human beings, with real needs and values."

EXPANDED SERVICES

"Rutgers Cancer Institute is one of only 51 NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the country, and the only one in New Jersey," explains Dr. Balan. "That means we at Jersey City Medical Center are part of a nationally ranked institution, with all the expertise and opportunities that brings for patients."

In a few years, JCMC will open its own freestanding cancer center, the only one of its kind in Hudson County. In the meantime, the hospital's ambitious expansion includes advanced surgical oncology, offering complex and specialized surgical procedures. In medical oncology, JCMC offers clinical trials and advanced therapies. And in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute, JCMC provides patients with precision medicine, immunotherapy, CAR T-cell therapy and blood and marrow transplantation.

Last year, JCMC opened a Radiation Oncology practice at a stand-alone facility just a few blocks from the main hospital campus, and a state-of-the-art Infusion Center with its own lab and pharmacy is scheduled to open next year. Two gynecologic oncologists are now affiliated with JCMC, making it the only institution in Jersey City to offer this specialty. Moreover, an oncology nurse navigator follows every cancer case at JCMC through treatment and survivorship, communicating with all specialists involved.

JCMC is also working on expanded programs and outreach to improve many types of cancer screening in the community. "We want everyone in Hudson County to know they shouldn't be afraid to reach out to us when they need cancer care," says Dr. Balan. "No matter what, we'll take good care of you."



STEFAN BALAN, MD

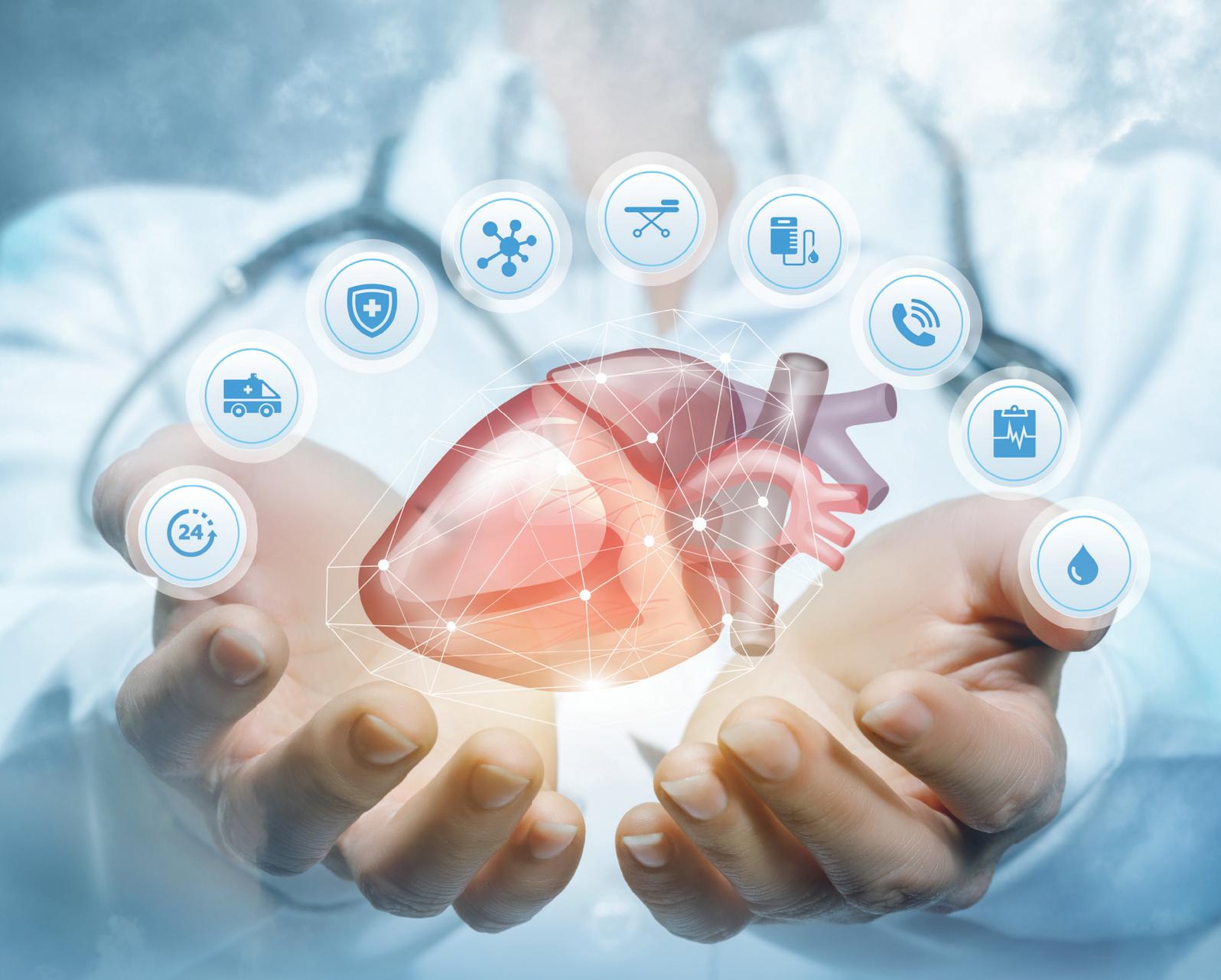


JASON MAGGI, MD

New York City area, we absolutely fell in love with Jersey City. It was clear that Jersey City had a very strong sense of community and access to activities for all ages. Since moving, we have never looked back. It is truly a wonderful environment to raise a family in! We spend a fair amount of time with our kids at Hamilton Park, and we are always bumping into families we know.

Jersey City has a special feeling to it. You're part of a community of people who care for each other and are trying to make the city the best place it can be.

We are doing the same at Jersey City Medical Center. I, along with many of my colleagues, previously worked in New York City and we've chosen to practice here in New Jersey, and specifically in Jersey City.



HEARTS IN GOOD HANDS

**A TEAM APPROACH
ENABLES WORLD-CLASS
CARE FOR CARDIAC
PATIENTS.**

Whether a patient needs a cardiac test or a highly specialized procedure, Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) can provide what's needed through its comprehensive cardiovascular services.

How does the expertise of JCMC's cardiac team improve care for you and your loved ones? Here, two JCMC cardiac specialists explain. Tyrone Krause, MD, Esq., Chief of Cardiothoracic and Chair of Surgery at JCMC, has performed heart

surgery for almost 10,000 people. Iosif Gulkarov, MD, JCMC's new Associate Chief of Cardiac Surgery, joined the JCMC team this past summer.

Dr. Krause and Dr. Gulkarov are members of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. Both have advanced training in highly specialized areas related to cardiothoracic surgery, which encompasses surgery of the heart and chest (thorax) area.

What is the range of heart care patients can receive at JCMC?

Dr. Krause: We already have the only team in Hudson County that offers open-heart surgery. For years, patients have also come to us when they need heart bypass due to narrowed or blocked blood vessels, replacement of valves that control blood flow to or from the heart, repair of the aorta and many other types of innovative care. Now, with cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Gulkarov on the team, we can expand our care for people with some of the most serious heart conditions.

Dr. Gulkarov: Like Dr. Krause and others on our team, I perform a variety of heart procedures using tools and techniques for minimally invasive surgery. I also specialize in grafting, or replacing, one and sometimes more than one, damaged artery during the same surgery to improve blood flow. My experience includes using advanced techniques to improve an irregular heartbeat, caring for patients with heart tumors and removing life-threatening blood clots in the lung.

With the variety of patients we see and techniques we use, having a strong team that knows how to work and communicate well is essential for giving patients the very best care. We're developing protocols to standardize that care.

Why is this team approach important for people with heart conditions?

Dr. Gulkarov: Heart surgery is not a one-person show, and it's not all about the heart surgeon. A comprehensive heart center like ours focuses on every member



Tyrone Krause, MD, Esq., Chief of Cardiothoracic and Chair of Surgery, with Iosif Gulkarov, MD, Associate Chief of Cardiac Surgery, at JCMC's Cardiothoracic Surgery center.

of the team, including nurses and other medical specialists. We have a vision of how to maximize each person's skills, and we work well together from the moment a patient first comes in and after they leave the hospital.

Dr. Krause: Heart care is very technical, and some of our patients are very, very sick. They might have a faulty heart valve, for example, plus issues like heart failure, where the heart muscle does not pump efficiently, or kidney disease, or diabetes. We can't fix one issue without understanding the other.

Therefore, some on our team help improve a patient's health so that they are able to have a specific procedure, and others are experts in caring for them after a procedure. Every single person caring for them is important. We make sure we all know our roles. We even do weekly drills to keep us sharp.

What are some other benefits of this team approach?

Dr. Gulkarov: Sometimes, the best treatment for a specific patient isn't

very obvious. But when you work side by side with many different experts, using a system that everyone is familiar with, communication is greatly improved. We learn about the expertise of others on the team, and they learn ours. We not only share a patient's test results—we share our own knowledge with each other. That allows us to determine the best plan to care for a specific patient.

Dr. Krause: We are part of an outstanding network of specialists across RWJBarnabas Health hospitals, and we work together to bring seamless heart care to our communities, close to home. This collaborative and multidisciplinary approach brings out the best in each specialist and results in better care for our patients.

When you come to Jersey City Medical Center for heart care, or any RWJBarnabas Health facility, you can expect exceptional cardiac expertise provided by a unified team committed to building healthier communities and offering seamless care across the RWJBH continuum.

Your heart doesn't beat just for you. Get it checked. To schedule an appointment with a cardiac specialist at Jersey City Medical Center, call **888.724.7123** or visit **www.rwjbh.org/heart**.



We've invested in Hudson County for generations.

Bringing a new baby into the world is one of life's most powerful experiences. It brings families and communities together. Jersey City Medical Center's state-of-the-art Lord Abbett maternity wing features all-private patient rooms with hotel-like furnishings, scenic views and private showers. The maternity wing is a tranquil space to heal, bond and begin life as a family. We'll continue healing, enhancing and investing in Hudson County by expanding and strengthening our network of physicians and outpatient facilities, so we can all live better, happier and healthier. Learn more at rwjbh.org/HudsonCounty

**Jersey City
Medical Center**

**RWJBarnabas
HEALTH**

Let's be healthy together.



We've taken every precaution, including COVID-19 screenings, temperature checks and mandatory masks, to ensure the safest environment for your baby's birth.