

A Publication of  
**CLARA MAASS MEDICAL CENTER**

Spring 2021

# healthy *together*

**EATING  
TO PROTECT  
YOUR HEART**

**4 SIMPLE  
EXERCISES  
FOR EVERY BODY**

**WHAT AN  
EYE EXAM  
CAN REVEAL**

**SAVE LIVES  
CHOOSE VACCINATION**



## Let's Beat COVID-19

The development of COVID-19 vaccines is one of the greatest achievements in medical science. At RWJBarnabas Health, we're proud to be a key part of the effort to get the vaccine into the arms of all eligible people in New Jersey.

We also remain committed to fighting the spread of the disease. That's why we join with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in urging everyone, whether vaccinated or not, to continue with the simple precautions we know are effective in preventing the spread of the coronavirus:

- Wear a mask.
- Stay at least six feet apart from people who don't live with you and avoid crowds.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and often; use a hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available.

The reason for this continued caution: In some cases, COVID-19 vaccines may protect against severe infection, but may not necessarily prevent mild or asymptomatic infection. If this is the case, an infected person could still spread the virus.

The COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately ravaged our community over the last year. However, our future is becoming brighter every day with the arrival of the vaccine. At Clara Maass Medical Center, in accordance with New Jersey's phased approach to vaccine distribution, we have administered the COVID-19 vaccination to thousands of individuals in our community. In March, we expanded access to the COVID-19 vaccine for the community in our Emergency Department for patients who are receiving treatment, meet the criteria for eligibility and are having difficulty accessing the vaccine.

It will take all of us working together as a community to minimize the ongoing effects of COVID-19. Together, we can protect friends, family and neighbors and end this pandemic.

Yours in good health,



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




**MARY ELLEN CLYNE, PhD**  
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
CLARA MAASS MEDICAL CENTER



## HEALTH NEWS



Tanya Howard, RN, received the first COVID-19 vaccine at CMMC from Susan Hagen Morrison, MD, allergist, immunologist and infectious disease specialist.

### CMMC ADMINISTERS COVID-19 VACCINES TO FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES

Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) opened its COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic on December 21 with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The first CMMC employee who volunteered to receive the COVID-19 vaccine was Tanya Howard, a Registered Nurse in the Intensive Care Unit. "I made the decision to be among the first to receive the COVID-19 vaccine to protect myself and my family, and to help bring an end to the awful pandemic that has affected the entire country," Tanya says. "As a nurse who has worked along the front lines over the last 10 months caring for patients that I knew would never recover from COVID-19, I know the vaccine represents a promising moment in time for our community and the entire world."

**Clara Maass Medical Center** | **RWJBarnabas HEALTH**

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# VACCINATING NEW JERSEY

**AS AVAILABILITY INCREASES, EXPERTS HAVE ONE STRONG MESSAGE FOR THE PUBLIC: GET THE SHOT.**

“At the outset, we knew we would be helping with the COVID-19 vaccination effort,” says John Bonamo, MD, MS, Executive Vice President and Chief Medical and Quality Officer at RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH). “But we weren’t aware just how much the state would be relying on healthcare systems to make this happen.”

Just as they did when the pandemic first hit, the experts at RWJBH rose to the challenge. “We opened our first vaccine clinic the week the vaccine came out in December,” he recounts. “Then we opened clinics at each of our 11 acute care hospitals.”

RWJBH is also administering the vaccine at the Middlesex County megasite in Edison, which it runs; the former Sears in the Livingston Mall; RWJBarnabas Health Arena in Toms River; Brookdale Community College in Monmouth

County; and smaller clinics, including in Bayonne and in the Greenville section of Jersey City.

“We’re also assisting municipal efforts in four counties—Ocean, Somerset, Essex

and Monmouth—by providing some or all vaccinators for their clinics,” Dr. Bonamo says, “and we’re partnering with the state, the National Guard and others. In addition, we’ve applied for more vaccination sites for physician offices.”

As of mid-March, RWJBH had already vaccinated approximately 150,500 people and was vaccinating more at the rate of 2,000 a day at its hospitals and 4,000 a day at the Edison megasite. However, Dr. Bonamo says that number will increase significantly as vaccine availability does. “We’re ramping up,” he says. “We’re in this to get it done.”

By summer, Dr. Bonamo says, vaccine supplies will make it available to all who want it. The challenge will shift to making sure everyone who’s eligible chooses to be vaccinated.

## DISPELLING FEARS

“Many people started out with ‘vaccine hesitancy’—they wanted to see how other people did with the vaccine first,” says Dr. Bonamo. “As they saw others feeling good about having had the vaccine, they became more open to it.” That led to the

clamor for vaccination appointments the state saw in the winter.

Vaccine hesitancy persists, however. “There’s understandable mistrust, especially in the black community, born of all the social inequity and healthcare injustice that has happened over the years,” he says. “We’re working hard to dispel that with all kinds of outreach and town halls being done by healthcare professionals of color.”

Older adults should prioritize getting the vaccine, Dr. Bonamo says. “The years they have are precious, and many seniors who got COVID-19 did not do well,” he says. “Often, that’s because they have at least one other comorbidity—diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, kidney disease, lung disease or obesity—that contributes to their risk.”

Dr. Bonamo emphasizes that his message isn’t just for certain groups, but for everybody who’s eligible for the vaccine. “Get vaccinated,” he says. “That’s it. It’s safe, it’s smart, it’s advanced science and it’s the right thing to do to protect yourself and your family.”




JOHN BONAMO, MD

To learn more or to make a vaccination appointment, visit [www.rwjbh.org/covid19](http://www.rwjbh.org/covid19).





A middle-aged man with short, graying hair is captured in a dynamic pose on a blue tennis court. He is wearing a white short-sleeved polo shirt under a cream-colored V-neck sweater vest, dark blue athletic pants with a small white Nike swoosh on the left leg, and white sneakers with red accents. He holds a black tennis racket with a white grip in both hands, positioned as if he's about to hit a ball. A bright yellow tennis ball is visible in the air to his left. The background is a solid blue wall with a large red letter 'L' partially visible on the right side.

Hip replacement patient  
Curtis Melton is now in  
good form for sports that  
had previously become  
too painful.

# BACK IN ACTION

A HIP REPLACEMENT ALLOWS AN ISELIN MAN  
TO GET BACK TO THE ACTIVITIES HE LOVES.



Whenever Curtis Melton, 58, a pharmaceutical representative from Iselin, sees someone struggling with hip pain, he remembers how he used to live with the same pain. “I want to tell them that they could get their lives back if they had hip replacement like I did,” he says.

Curtis was an avid tennis player, golfer and runner who once averaged 20 miles a week. Eventually, his hip pain and stiffness became so bad that he couldn’t take even a short walk in comfort. In early 2020, Curtis made an appointment with reconstructive orthopedic surgeon Frank Femino, MD, Medical Director of the Joint and Spine Institute at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC).

“Curtis was really suffering. You could see the pain in his face,” Dr. Femino remembers.

An X-ray confirmed that Curtis’s left hip was severely arthritic. The cartilage was so worn down that the bony surfaces of the joint had become rough and were rubbing together, a condition known as “bone on bone.”

In cases this severe, hip replacement is often recommended. However, Dr. Femino advocates first trying conservative management to alleviate symptoms before scheduling surgery. This may include weight loss, physical therapy or more holistic treatments such as acupuncture and yoga. “I give the patient the choice to make the call,” says Dr. Femino.

Curtis discussed all his options with Dr. Femino. “He took the time to answer all my questions,” Curtis says. “He even agreed to have a special



FRANK FEMINO, MD

conference with my wife and daughter to discuss their apprehensions. He told me that as an athlete, I was a prime candidate for hip replacement.”

“Curtis already had good muscle tone and physically he was strong,” says Dr. Femino. “The hip was his only limiting factor.”

Curtis’s surgery was scheduled for March 2020, but elective surgeries such as his were postponed for a time because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### GETTING READY

In the meantime, presurgery classes at CMMC proved vital for Curtis as Dawn Bibbo, MSN, RN, ONC, Manager, Orthopedic and Bariatric Services at CMMC, helped him prepare. “She filled me in on everything to expect,” Curtis says. “She told me what exercises to do and what to wear for physical therapy and recovery, and about the kind of spinal anesthesia I’d have that would allow me to wake up clearheaded, pain-free and ready for rehab.”

Hip replacement surgery, designed to improve function and ease pain, involves removal of the damaged hip joint and replacement with an artificial implant. “The hip implants I use come in different sizes and shapes, and the device is personalized for each patient,” Dr. Femino explains.

The method he employs is minimally invasive, meaning that the incision is small and therefore heals faster. “I use a lateral approach, which is from the side, toward the front, with the patient lying on his back. This allows me to measure leg length and check stability,” Dr. Femino says. “This lateral approach is one of the most stable, with a small chance of hip dislocation.”

To help speed recovery, Dr. Femino does not use heavy opioids for pain management. “We use spinal anesthesia and also a local anesthetic around the hip, instead of general anesthesia, so patients wake up feeling fine and ready to do physical therapy,” he says.

### HOME THAT NIGHT

Curtis’s surgery was rescheduled for June. On the big day, he recalls, he was lying on the bed in his room, waiting

to go down to surgery. A doctor came in and asked for his name, which hip he was having done and other questions to check Curtis’s cognition.

“Everything’s good,” the doctor concluded. “And who’s your doctor?”

“Dr. Femino,” Curtis replied.

“Dr. Femino?” said the visiting doctor. “Well, I want you to know he did both of my hips!”

“I thought, wow,” Curtis says. “Now I felt as if every box had been checked. I was ready.”

Curtis’s operation was at 8 a.m. “I woke up afterwards, and it was like Christmas Day. I was mentally prepared for everything that would happen.

“The rehab people were great and quickly got me out of bed. I was on a walker by 3 o’clock, and went home at 6:30 that night. The visiting nurse began coming to my house the next morning.”

“Curtis’s positive attitude helped his rapid recovery,” Dr. Femino says. “At two weeks post-op he walked in without a cane, leapt right up on the table and said ‘I feel great!’”

Three weeks after surgery, Curtis started hitting golf balls; five weeks later, he played a round of golf. And four months after surgery, he was playing full doubles tennis again.

“The surgery has been a real mood booster,” Curtis says. “I’m not in pain anymore.”

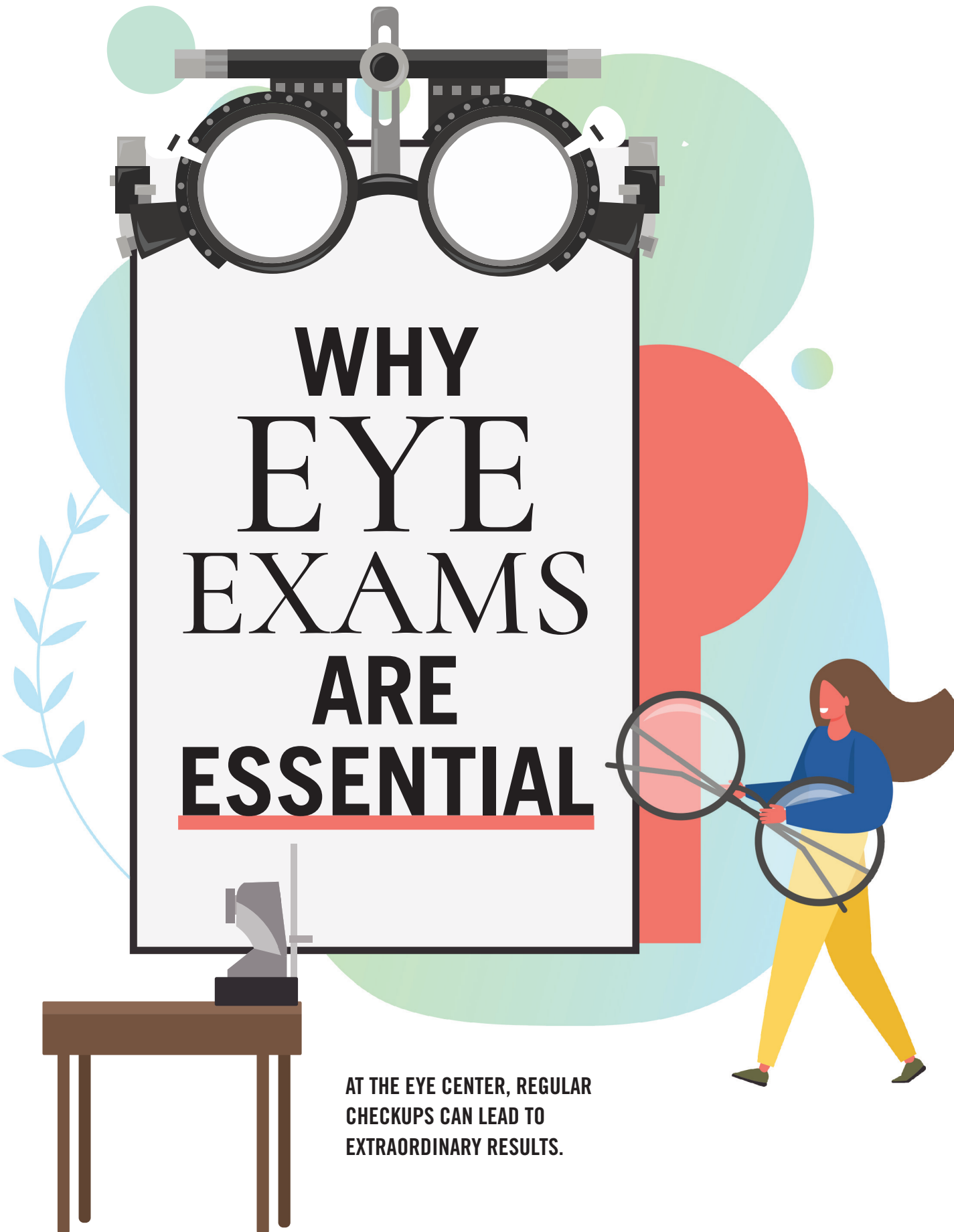
Thanks to advances in technology and techniques, hip replacement is increasingly appropriate for a wide range of people. “I’m seeing a full spectrum of patients,” says Dr. Femino. “Many young ones who want to stay active, but also patients in their 90s, who are good candidates if they’re in good health.”

Another benefit is that newer hip implants are long-lasting. “I used to say that hip replacements can last 15 to 20 years,” says Dr. Femino. “But the ones I use now have extended wear lives. We can offer Curtis and our other patients the best chance possible for a device that will last a lifetime.”

To learn more about joint replacement surgery at the Joint and Spine Institute at Clara Maass Medical Center, call **844.63.ORTHO** or visit **[www.rwjbh.org/ortho](http://www.rwjbh.org/ortho)**.





An illustration featuring a large white sign with a black border. At the top of the sign is a black phoropter. The sign has the text 'WHY EYE EXAMS ARE ESSENTIAL' in a large, black, serif font. The word 'ESSENTIAL' is underlined in red. To the left of the sign is a blue laurel wreath. In front of the sign is a brown wooden table with a grey eye exam device on it. To the right of the sign, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and yellow pants, is walking and holding a large magnifying glass over the sign. The background consists of large, overlapping circles in shades of green, blue, and red.

# WHY EYE EXAMS ARE ESSENTIAL

**AT THE EYE CENTER, REGULAR  
CHECKUPS CAN LEAD TO  
EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS.**



The Eye Center at Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) provides care for everyone from infants to senior citizens. That means offering a full spectrum of ophthalmic care, including the most sophisticated, cutting-edge techniques.

However, it's not unusual for routine checkups and everyday interventions to make dramatic differences to patients, according to Michael Landolfi, DO, Medical Director of the Department of Ophthalmology at CMMC and Director of the Eye Center. "I can't stress enough how important it is to have regular comprehensive eye examinations," he says.

"For example, we saw a young boy who was having serious problems in school and had grown so withdrawn that his parents were worried," he continues. "They brought him into the center for an eye exam, but he was so overwhelmed by the equipment that it took two or three visits before he relaxed. I had to use an eye chart that was made up of images, rather than numbers.

"Once he was finally examined, it became clear that he'd been unable to see the blackboard but hadn't known how to verbalize this." The simple fact of being fitted with eyeglasses transformed the child's life, Dr. Landolfi says.

## WHAT EYES REVEAL

Routine eye examinations can also detect serious health issues in the rest of the body, such as high blood pressure, lupus and even brain tumors, he explains.

That was the case when one of Dr. Landolfi's longtime patients recently came to the center for a routine exam. "As we were talking, I noticed that since the last time I'd seen her, there was a slight change in her lower eyelid—a small growth," Dr. Landolfi recalls. "While being careful not to needlessly frighten her, I recommended that she make an

appointment with an ocular plastic surgeon to have it checked out.

"A few days later, she called to thank me. The surgeon had discovered that the spot was lower



MICHAEL LANDOLFI, DO

## EYE EXAMS: HOW OFTEN?

According to the American Optometric Association, comprehensive eye examinations should take place on the following schedule—more often if the patient is at risk for vision problems due to health-related conditions:

Birth through age 2	At 6 to 12 months
Ages 3 through 5	At least once between 3 and 5 years of age
Ages 6 through 17	Before first grade and annually thereafter
Ages 18 through 64	At least every two years
Ages 65 and older	Annually

eyelid cancer and had already begun treating it.

"It was because she'd been seeing me for years and I know her well that I was able to detect the spot quickly. This is an excellent example of why regular eye care visits are essential," he says.

One of the most common illnesses that can be discovered through an eye exam is diabetes. "As part of a routine eye exam, we dilate the pupil and study the back of the eye," Dr. Landolfi explains. "With diabetes, there is often bleeding and swelling evident in the retina. When this is discovered, I send patients to see their regular healthcare provider. Some patients are unaware that they have diabetes, while others are aware of their condition but don't realize that it's not fully under control."

## A RANGE OF CARE

As essential as routine checkups are, they are just the beginning of the care provided at the Eye Center. The Eye Center provides prevention, diagnosis and treatments for all kinds of eye problems, diseases and injuries, such as dry eye, glaucoma, macular degeneration, diabetic eye disease and cataracts.

All ophthalmologists and surgeons at the center are board-certified and can provide advanced treatment such

as interocular lens implant; cataract, glaucoma and retina surgery; and 24-hour pediatric eye emergency trauma care.

For older adults, advances in cataract surgery have been especially meaningful, Dr. Landolfi says.

Cataracts, a clouding in the lens of the eye, are the result of a buildup in protein and are a normal part of aging. Traditionally, the goal of cataract surgery was to lower the prescription of eyeglasses; it wasn't possible to completely correct for distance, nearness or astigmatism. Now, however, with a single multifocal implant inserted during surgery, doctors can correct a patient's vision so substantially that there is often no need for eyeglasses.

Dr. Landolfi has special memories of a particular cataract surgery.

"A grandmother who spoke only Spanish came in with her daughter the day after surgery to have her eyepatch removed. As soon as I took it off, she began weeping. I thought perhaps she was in pain and asked the daughter if she would translate what the grandmother was saying and why she was crying.

"The daughter saw her mother looking out at the waiting room, where the family was waiting. With tears in her own eyes she told me, 'It's because this is the first time she has seen her grandchildren.'"

To learn more about eye surgery at Clara Maass Medical Center, call **973.450.2000** or visit [www.rwjbh.org/claramaass](http://www.rwjbh.org/claramaass).



Foundation and  
hospital Board of  
Trustees member  
Mei-Mei Tuan

# MANY WAYS TO CARE

**A TRUSTEE, DONOR AND GRATEFUL PATIENT FINDS  
THAT GIVING HAS ITS REWARDS.**

**A**s residents of Montclair, Mei-Mei Tuan's family had firsthand experience with the kind of care Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC) provides. Whether a family member was there for a kidney stone, a dislocated shoulder or any other medical need, they found that "the focus is really on caring for patients, rather than getting them in and out the door as fast as possible," Mei-Mei says.

"Compare that with the treatment my grandmother received at a well-known hospital in New York City, where she was treated like a number instead of a person," she says. "Some New York hospitals want you to feel like you're lucky to be there, whereas Clara Maass makes you feel like they're lucky to provide care for you."

Mei-Mei's commitment to supporting her local community led her to join the Board of Trustees at both the Clara Maass Medical Center Foundation

and the medical center itself, positions she retains today although her family has moved to New York City. (She and her family still travel to CMMC when they need medical care.) A cofounder and co-owner of Notch Partners LLC, which provides human capital services for institutional leveraged buyout funds, Mei-Mei is CEO of Phoenix Partners, a specialized executive search firm focused on diversity in leadership.

She is also a member of the Committee of 100, a prestigious leadership organization for Chinese Americans. Through Mei-Mei's efforts, the Committee of 100 donated much-needed personal protective equipment to CMMC during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mei-Mei says her goal is to use her board membership as a way to make a positive impact on people's lives. "Trust in a local healthcare provider is paramount," she says. "Only a local

hospital can play that vital role as a trusted member of the community."

## BIG GOALS

Mei-Mei was recruited to the board by fellow hospital and foundation trustee Brian Sterling, who along with his wife, Linda, made a significant donation toward upgraded Labor and Delivery suites at CMMC. "He inspired me to make a donation to upgrade the facilities in the Emergency Department," she says. She was also influenced by Mary Ellen Clyne, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer of CMMC. "As a former nurse and one of the few female hospital CEOs, she is truly inspirational," Mei-Mei says. "She's professional and also very personable, with zero pretensions."

As a board member, Mei-Mei says, "I want to help Clara Maass solidify its reputation as a world-class institution that also sets a shining example of how to provide quality care for patients. I'm proud to support Clara Maass because they are always investing, not in things that make them feel important, but things that directly provide better care to patients."

That's a rewarding feeling, but not the only benefit of giving, she finds. "When you support Clara Maass," she says, "you really feel that you become a member of their family."



## SAVE THE DATE

**Let's Hit the Links!**

The very popular **Clara Maass Medical Center 2021 Golf Invitational Featuring Former NY Giant David Diehl and Friends** will take place on Monday, July 12, at the Canoe Brook Country Club in Summit. To learn more, call **973.450.2277** or visit **[www.rwjbh.org/claragolf](http://www.rwjbh.org/claragolf)**.

To learn about giving to the Clara Maass Medical Center Foundation, visit **[www.claragiving.org](http://www.claragiving.org)**.







# HEART RACING? IT COULD BE YOUR MEDICATION

**BRIEF PERIODS OF INCREASED HEART RATE ARE  
COMMON AND HAVE A VARIETY OF CAUSES.**

Everyone experiences an increased heart rate at some point. You exercise, and your heart rate increases. You become frightened or stressed, and your heart beats faster. You might experience the increased heart rate as a skipped beat, a flutter or a pounding in your chest.

“A temporary increase in heart rate has many causes,” says David Dobesh, MD, Chief of Cardiac Electrophysiology at Jersey City Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group with offices in Jersey City and West Orange. “Emotional stress, physical stress, psychological stress, even things like caffeine, nicotine, too much alcohol or fever. Your body is performing a complex balancing act with your pulse.”



DAVID DOBESH, MD

A lesser-known but common source of increased heart rate is medication, including some kinds of over-the-counter medicines and certain prescriptions. “People should be aware that some medicines do

briefly increase your heart rate,” says Dr. Dobesh, “and usually those episodes are not something you should be concerned about.”

## POSSIBLE CAUSES

Common medications that may increase heart rate for a short period of time include:

- Decongestants, specifically those that contain pseudoephedrine, a stimulant. “If the decongestant has a capital ‘D’ at the end of its name, it contains this ingredient,” says Dr. Dobesh.
  - Some inhalers for asthma, emphysema or COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease).
  - Theophylline, an oral asthma medication.
  - Medications for ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder).
  - Diuretic medications (used to help prevent fluid retention) could result in dehydration, says Dr. Dobesh.
  - Some blood pressure medications may inadvertently lower blood pressure too much.
- “If your pressure is very low from either dehydration or overmedication, the body will respond by increasing the heart rate to compensate,” he explains.



## WHAT IS TACHYCARDIA?

For most people, a heart rate between 60 and 100 beats per minute (bpm) is normal. When your heart beats more than 100 bpm for reasons unrelated to physiological stress, that’s known as tachycardia, from the Greek words for “swift” and “heart.”

If increased heart rate is a concern, basic testing, such as an electrocardiogram or blood work, can be done to determine whether you should be referred to an electrophysiologist—a cardiologist who specializes in heart rhythms. The electrophysiologist will look for possible types of tachycardia that are caused by an abnormality of the heart itself and can affect how well the heart pumps blood.

Examples include atrial fibrillation (AFib), atrial flutter and supraventricular tachycardia (SVT). A wide range of treatments may be considered, including lifestyle changes, medications and medical and surgical procedures.

“Some medications carry warning labels about increased heart rate but in practice this side effect is unusual,” Dr. Dobesh says. “These include certain antidepressants and also thyroid medications, which will not usually increase heart rate if they’re taken at the recommended dose.”

Similarly, herbal supplements such as ginseng, valerian root and orange bitters should not increase heart rate when taken in normal doses, he says.

While a short-term increase in heart rate from medication or emotional or physical stress is normal, increased heart rate that lasts for a long time is not. “If you’re repeatedly feeling symptoms of a racing heartbeat that make you uncomfortable, tell your doctor,” advises Dr. Dobesh. “Further testing may be appropriate.”

Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you. To connect with one of NJ’s top cardiovascular specialists, call 888.724.7123 or visit [www.rwjbh.org/heart](http://www.rwjbh.org/heart).



# EXPECT OUTSTANDING CANCER CARE

THE NCI COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER DESIGNATION CARRIES  
A WORLD OF MEANING FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) Comprehensive Cancer Center designation is the highest credential a U.S. cancer center can attain. But what does it mean for a patient?

“For a cancer patient, the question of where to be treated can be terribly confusing. The NCI designation tells a layperson that the institution is among the top centers in the country for delivering cancer care and performing research,” says Steven K. Libutti, MD, Senior Vice President, Oncology Services, for RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) and Director, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center.



STEVEN K. LIBUTTI, MD

Though Rutgers Cancer Institute is located in New Brunswick, the beneficial effects of its research, clinical trials and advanced treatments are felt throughout New Jersey thanks to its

unique partnership with RWJBH.

“The beauty of our partnership is that Rutgers Cancer Institute is fully integrated with each of the healthcare system’s 11 hospitals,” Dr. Libutti explains. “When a patient is being treated at any RWJBarnabas facility, he or she has an entryway to an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center and will get the same level of care and access to advanced treatments and clinical trials.”

## PERSONALIZED CARE

For all their mastery of technology and treatments, the healthcare providers at RWJBH and Rutgers Cancer Institute never lose sight of the human element. “Our whole goal is to provide personalized care not only for the type of cancer you have, but for you as a

patient,” says Dr. Libutti.

Nurse navigators “reduce the burden of diagnosis,” he explains, by working with the patient throughout treatment, coordinating appointments and ensuring that specialists involved have the information they need. “We wrap the patient in a plan of care created just for him or her,” Dr. Libutti says.

Patients who want to know more about their treatment options through RWJBH and Rutgers Cancer Institute can call the Oncology Access Center at 844.CANCERNJ (844.226.2376), where oncology specialists stand ready to help determine the next steps. “That number is our ‘Easy Button,’ our way to put you on the first step to a successful outcome,” says Dr. Libutti. “We’re only a phone call away.”



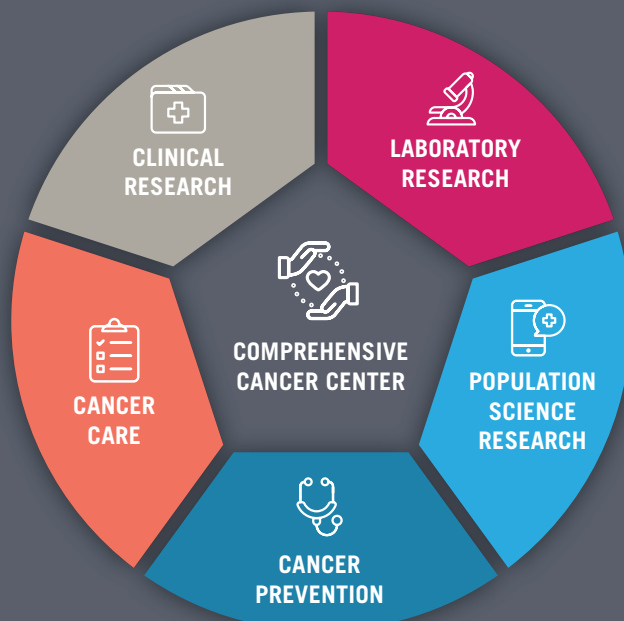
A Cancer Center Designated by the  
National Cancer Institute

## BADGE OF HONOR

A Comprehensive Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute places an organization among the top tier of cancer institutions in the country. Rutgers Cancer Institute, together with RWJBarnabas Health, is the only Comprehensive Cancer Center in the state of New Jersey.

## ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

The designation requires the highest level of achievement in five areas:





## THE DESIGNATION MADE A DIFFERENCE

These survivors are among many who have had the benefit of cutting-edge research, clinical trials and care through the RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers Cancer Institute partnership.



### A RARE T-CELL LYMPHOMA

Ling Jin needed treatment for a rare and aggressive form of T-cell lymphoma, requiring high-dose chemotherapy and radiation treatments in preparation for an allogeneic stem cell transplantation, sometimes referred to as a bone marrow transplant. As she underwent chemotherapy, a lymphoma was discovered behind her eye, which was resolved through brief and highly targeted proton beam therapy.

After an extensive database search, an appropriate donor for bone marrow cells was found, and last June, Ling had a successful stem cell transplant at Rutgers Cancer Institute.



### BREAST CANCER WHILE PREGNANT

Breast cancer survivor Liz Tague found out she was pregnant—and soon after, learned that her breast cancer had recurred. After consulting with an oncologist in New York, Liz opted to have her treatment closer to home, guided by Rutgers Cancer Institute and RWJBarnabas Health.

Following a lumpectomy and chemotherapy, Liz gave birth to a healthy son. Now it was time to consider radiation therapy to prevent further recurrence. Her doctors proposed proton beam therapy, which can be precisely targeted to spare previously irradiated tissues. Three years later, Liz is back to work as a teacher and enjoying family time with her toddler.



### STAGE 4 KIDNEY CANCER

Jim Gritschke was fit and active, but weight loss and sharp pains in his right leg led him to an orthopedic surgeon. The diagnosis: a large tumor on his kidney from metastatic renal cell carcinoma, which had spread to his pelvis.

Jim required major robotic surgery to remove the kidney and tumor, followed by radiation and systemic therapy. He had the benefit of the latest technology and a multi-specialty team at a high-volume center, as well as the opportunity to participate in a clinical trial for immunotherapy. Jim has now returned to his favorite activities.

**“THE BEAUTY OF OUR PARTNERSHIP IS THAT RUTGERS CANCER INSTITUTE IS FULLY INTEGRATED WITH EACH OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM’S 11 HOSPITALS.”** —Steven K. Libutti, MD

## THE PATH TO A PRESTIGIOUS DESIGNATION

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Cancer Act, which established the NCI Cancer Centers program. Out of the thousands of U.S. facilities that have cancer programs, just 51 are NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers. The NCI designation is a grant that brings significant dollars to the Rutgers Cancer Institute and has a positive economic impact on the state of New Jersey.



Submission of a written application between 1,200 and 1,500 pages long

1



A site visit from a variety of national cancer experts, who examine infrastructure, basic research, clinical care, clinical trials and more

2



Scoring to determine rankings

3



After five years, institutions must reapply for the designation.

4



### A PARTNERSHIP FOR PATIENTS

RWJBarnabas Health, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state’s only NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—provides close-to-home access to the latest treatment options. To learn more, call **844.CANCERNJ** or visit [www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer](http://www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer).





# BRAIN ANEURYSMS: WHAT TO KNOW

**BEING AWARE OF  
THE SYMPTOMS  
CAN KEEP YOU OR A  
LOVED ONE SAFE.**

About one in 50 people in the U.S. has a brain aneurysm—a “balloon” of blood protruding from an artery. The majority of these will never burst or even require treatment.

For those whose aneurysms do burst, however—approximately 30,000 people each year—the consequences can be devastating, leading to brain damage, stroke or death.



**ANIL NANDA, MD**

“We want to raise awareness about aneurysms because some studies have shown that almost a quarter of people who have a ruptured aneurysm die because

of misdiagnosis,” says neurosurgeon Anil Nanda, MD, MPH, Senior Vice President of Neurological Services for RWJBarnabas Health and Chairman, Department of Neurosurgery, for Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

“We have seen an increase in ruptured aneurysms during the COVID-19 pandemic. This may be because people have been less active during this period, perhaps gaining weight or not controlling high blood pressure,” he says.

People who may have warning signs of an aneurysm often neglect them, assuming they’ll simply go away, he says. In addition, many people have avoided seeking care because of fear of going to a hospital during the pandemic.

“The classic symptom is a severe

headache—one that feels like the worst headache of your life,” Dr. Nanda explains. “Not every headache is an aneurysm, of course, and most of the time it’s not anything serious. But if you have this terrible headache along with neck stiffness, and bright light bothers you, you should go to the Emergency Department to have it investigated.”

## ADVANCED TREATMENTS

Aneurysms can be diagnosed by a CT (computed tomography) scan, which uses X-rays to determine whether blood has leaked into the brain. Doctors may also order an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), which uses computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of the brain.

Other diagnostic tests include



a cerebral angiography, which is performed by passing a catheter (a long, flexible tube) from the groin artery to inject a small amount of contrast dye into the neck and brain arteries, and a cerebrospinal fluid analysis, which measures chemicals that indicate bleeding in the brain.

“If we do determine there is an aneurysm, whether it’s ruptured or in danger of bursting, we look at the risk factors and determine the appropriate course of action. If surgery is indicated, we’ll get our team together and perform it within 12 to 24 hours,” says Dr. Nanda.

“For years, a procedure called clipping was the only way to fix an aneurysm,” he explains. In this procedure, a craniotomy is performed to create an opening in the skull and then a small metal clip is placed on the aneurysm to stop the blood flow.

“Clipping is still the best solution for some cases,” Dr. Nanda says. “Today, however, the mainstay of treatment is coiling. We can thread the catheter through a groin artery to place a coil on the aneurysm, and there is no need to open the skull.”



## WHAT IS A BRAIN ANEURYSM?

A cerebral (brain) aneurysm is a weak spot on a brain artery that balloons or bulges out and fills with blood. If it bursts, it spills blood into the surrounding tissue, an event that’s called a hemorrhage. Brain cells, deprived of oxygen, begin to die, and the patient may have a stroke.

## TEAM OF EXPERTS

Decisions about treatment are made on a case-by-case basis. “We have a multidisciplinary team at RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers,” says Dr. Nanda. “We have neurologists, neurosurgeons, a neuropsychologist, a neuroradiology team and endovascular specialists, all providing input about what will be most effective for the patient. We’re like a special forces team, able to come together quickly. The patient gets 10 experts for a problem immediately, which is a huge advantage.” Nurse

practitioners, neurology nurses and neurophysiology technologists round out the care team.

“Another benefit of being part of a large system is that we have the advantage of research, clinical trials and education,” Dr. Nanda says. “We can do what we call translational research, meaning we take basic research that’s being done on stroke and translate it into the clinical realm. It’s a bench-to-bedside approach where we can really improve the condition of patients.”



## RISK FACTORS

- Uncontrolled blood pressure.
- Smoking.
- Family history of aneurysms.
- Older age.
- Head injury.
- Substance abuse, particularly cocaine.
- Heavy alcohol consumption.
- Conditions present at birth, including polycystic kidney disease and cerebral arteriovenous malformation, an abnormal connection between arteries and vessels in the brain.



## POSSIBLE SIGNS OF A RUPTURED ANEURYSM

**If you experience these symptoms, call 911:**

- Sudden, severe headache.
- Double vision.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Stiff neck.
- Sensitivity to light.
- Seizures.
- Loss of consciousness, even if brief.
- Cardiac arrest.



## POSSIBLE SIGNS OF AN UNRUPTURED ANEURYSM

**If you experience any of the following, consult your doctor right away:**

- Drooping eyelid.
- Dilated pupil in one eye.
- Pain above and behind the eye.
- Changes in vision or double vision.
- Confusion.
- Weakness and/or numbness on one side of the body.

For more information about neurosurgical services available at RWJBarnabas Health, visit [www.rwjbh.org/neurosurgery](http://www.rwjbh.org/neurosurgery).







# WHY CHILDHOOD VACCINATIONS CAN'T WAIT

**DON'T DELAY ROUTINE VACCINATIONS THAT WILL KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE FROM PREVENTABLE DISEASES.**

**T**he rate of routine childhood vaccinations—for diseases like measles, mumps, pertussis and more—has declined significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, and pediatricians are worried.

“This decrease in vaccinations is a huge concern to us,” says Uzma Hasan, MD, Division Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Saint Barnabas Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group.



UZMA HASAN, MD



PATRICIA WHITLEY-WILLIAMS, MD

“We don’t want to experience a resurgence of vaccine-preventable illnesses that we have previously had very good control over. We don’t want to see our patients develop life-threatening issues like encephalitis from measles or meningitis from *Haemophilus influenzae* type B, which are prevented by safe, routine childhood vaccinations.”

“Parents have been hesitant to bring their children to doctors’ offices or clinics for fear of exposing them to COVID-19,” explains Patricia Whitley-Williams, MD, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at the Bristol-Myers Squibb Children’s Hospital at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and Division Chief of Allergy, Immunology and Infectious Diseases at Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

“However, these offices are following all the recommended guidelines from

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,” Dr. Whitley-Williams says. “Offices are sanitized in between patient appointments, plastic barriers are up, patients and visitors are checked for fever and masks are worn.” (For children, wearing a mask is recommended over the age of two years.)

“Pediatricians’ offices have protocols in place to keep well children and sick children apart,” adds Dr. Hasan. “Some set aside special time periods just for vaccinations. Many places require that people check in over the phone and wait outside in their cars. Patients and families then are brought straight into the office, so there’s no exposure to other people in a waiting room.”

Parents who have safety concerns should contact their pediatrician’s office to ensure that proper safety measures are in place, the doctors advise.

## FOLLOW THE SCHEDULE

Timing is important when it comes to childhood vaccinations, Dr. Hasan says. “Please don’t put off having your child vaccinated because you think it’s better to space the shots out,” she says. “The schedule of vaccines has been carefully determined to minimize risk and get the best response for each age.” The recommended schedule for routine childhood vaccinations can be found at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines).

Expectant mothers should get the Tdap vaccine to protect the baby against pertussis, sometime between the 27th and 36th weeks of pregnancy, the CDC recommends. “That vaccine has been a game changer for protecting vulnerable newborns,” Dr. Hasan says.

One vaccine many parents are eager to explore for their children is the one for COVID-19, Dr. Hasan says. “I can’t tell you how many calls we get about that,” she says. “We’re eagerly awaiting the results of trials so we have safety data for the younger age groups, particularly for vulnerable populations such as those with kidney, heart or lung disease.”

In the meantime, routine childhood vaccinations should proceed as advised by your pediatrician. “Parents and guardians should be assured that these vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective,” says Dr. Whitley-Williams, “and they save lives.”

To find a pediatrician at RWJBarnabas Health, call **888.724.7123** or visit **[www.rwjbh.org/doctors](http://www.rwjbh.org/doctors)**.

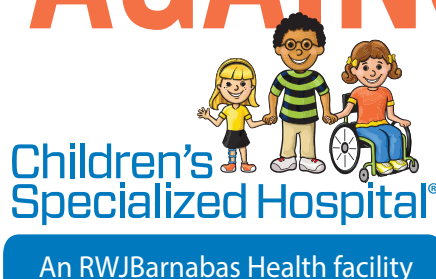




Hard work at the Inpatient Chronic Pain Management Program enabled Olivia to compete in triathlons again.

# A RACE AGAINST PAIN

**A COMPETITIVE ATHLETE  
ACHIEVES HER DREAMS THANKS  
TO AN INNOVATIVE PAIN  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.**



Olivia Christmann, 19, had been in pain for months when she came to Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH) in New Brunswick.

A competitive athlete, Olivia had been training for the Age Group Triathlon World Championships in August 2015 when she crashed her bike while riding at 27 miles per hour. The impact of the crash left Olivia suffering from a broken nose, a torn gluteus maximus and several strains in her legs.

Though her injuries healed with time, her pain continued and got progressively worse. Finally, Olivia was diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), a form of chronic pain that develops after an injury but gets worse over time. While CRPS is not well understood, it's thought that high levels of nerve impulses are sent to the affected site.

Olivia tried several outpatient therapies, but her pain persisted, leaving

her unable to do most social or physical activities. Even walking to the car after a therapy session was an ordeal.

After researching other avenues for treatment, Olivia learned about the four-week Inpatient Chronic Pain Management Program at CSH.

"I was searching for a way to get my life back to normal," says Olivia. "During the initial evaluation, they asked me what my goals for the program were, and the first thing that I said was that I wanted to race again." She entered the program in January 2016.

## WILL TO WIN

During her time at CSH, Olivia learned techniques for moving in a way that would help her manage the pain. Her natural competitiveness came out during timed activities like learning how to step in and out of a tub, or going for a walk

outside. "I always strived to beat my time from the day before," she recalls. Swimming, aquatic therapy and group and individual psychotherapy helped her learn to desensitize herself to pain and function normally.

After four weeks, Olivia was feeling more in control of her CRPS—and ready to get back to her senior year of high school. By the end of that year, she had been accepted into a prestigious university and was back to competitive sports.

In 2019, nearly four years after her accident, Olivia competed in the Age Group Triathlon World Championships, the same competition she'd been training for when she crashed her bike.

Olivia recalls the moments before the competition began: "I remember thinking, 'I can't believe I'm actually here!' And that's when it all hit me: There's no way I would have been able to do it if it weren't for my time at Children's Specialized Hospital. The treatment I got there gave me the chance to live out my dreams."

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

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





## THERE'S NOTHING MINOR ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN RWJBARNABAS HEALTH AND THE SOMERSET PATRIOTS.

When two powerhouse organizations combine forces, the result is a big win for the community. Fans and friends of the Somerset Patriots not only get to see great baseball—the team was recently selected as a Double-A affiliate for the 27-time world champion New York Yankees—they also learn new ways to stay healthy.

“Baseball players work at their craft every day to be the best that they can be. Their exercise routines and nutritional habits are rooted in the principles of living healthy. Like our community, they rely on experts to help guide them along the way. That’s why our partnership with RWJBarnabas Health is so important and works so well,” says Steve Kalafer, Somerset Patriots Chairman Emeritus and RWJBarnabas Health (RWJBH) trustee.

Over the 22-year history of the partnership, RWJBH has hosted regular health fairs, blood drives and food drives, and has provided information on how

community members can get access to key health services and screenings. Somerset Patriots players have benefited, too: RWJBH provides sports medicine services to keep players on the field of play.

For kids, the Somerset Patriots, in partnership with the health system, created the Hit a Home Run Program. Featuring former pitcher Nate Roe, the education program for schools (delivered virtually this school year) is designed to teach young children how to eat healthier, make smarter lifestyle choices, be a good teammate and friend and understand the importance of exercise.

### FRIENDS IN NEED

The Somerset Patriots team has been a stalwart supporter of RWJBH. Last summer, the organization raised more than \$16,000 for the RWJBarnabas Health Emergency Response Fund to help support healthcare professionals as they served communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The money was



At left, the Somerset Patriots and RWJBarnabas Health have recently enhanced their longtime partnership. Above, former pitcher Nate Roe delivers health information for area students (photo taken pre-pandemic).

raised in a variety of ways, including online auctions, merchandise sales of T-shirts and face masks, a pop-up shopping event and drive-in movies at TD Bank Ballpark.

“We are so grateful to the Somerset Patriots for their continued support of our hospital and our community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, from donations of food for our staff to hosting blood drives and holding events to benefit our Emergency Response Fund,” says Tony Cava, President and CEO of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset, a pillar of healthcare throughout Central New Jersey. “Their ongoing support helps ensure that our community has access to the comprehensive healthcare services they need.”

### A SOURCE OF PRIDE

RWJBH employees, many of whom live locally, take great pride in the partnership, attending games and participating in group events. Players feel that spirit as well.

“We pride ourselves on being active in our community to help make a difference,” says Somerset Patriots President and General Manager Patrick McVerry. “Our fans are always there for us at the ballpark and for all of our efforts. We know that through our partnership with RWJBarnabas Health, we are able to make sure our fans and community are always in good hands where their health is concerned.”

To learn more about the Somerset Patriots and the RWJBH partnership, visit [www.milb.com/somerset](http://www.milb.com/somerset) and [www.rwjbh.org/partnerships](http://www.rwjbh.org/partnerships). To donate to the RWJBH Emergency Response Fund, visit [www.rwjbh.org/giving](http://www.rwjbh.org/giving).



# IS SALT SABOTAGING YOUR HEALTH?

HERE'S WHAT IT DOES TO THE BODY AND HOW YOU CAN CUT BACK.

“Salt is all over the place in our diets—sometimes in obvious places like a salt shaker, and other times hidden in the food we consume,” says Elie Chakhtoura, MD, Director of the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory at Clara Maass Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. “The total amount of sodium we need is less than 500 milligrams a day, but most Americans consume north of 3,200 milligrams daily.”

That level of sodium can, over time, have bad effects on the body. “It affects the brain, releasing hormones and reactive



ELIE CHAKHTOURA, MD

oxygen radicals that can increase blood pressure,” Dr. Chakhtoura explains. “Salt can also stress the sympathetic nervous system, which directs the body’s response to

dangerous situations, so you have a kind of ‘fight or flight’ reaction.”

In addition, excess salt leads to fluid retention. “Therefore, the volume of fluid in the blood vessels is increased and the heart has to work harder to pump it,” he says. “The excess force can cause high blood pressure and stiffening of the blood vessels. This will ultimately lead to harmful effects on the heart and kidneys.”

## SODIUM IN HIDING

To cut back on salt, first realize that most of what you get comes from unexpected places, Dr. Chakhtoura says. “To the extent possible, avoid or minimize processed foods,” he says. “The worst offenders are canned soup, rice and noodle mixes, ketchup, mustard and bottled salad dressings.

“What I tell patients who are trying to cut down on salt is to read the label,” he continues. “You could already be at a third of your recommended daily amount of salt by the time you finish your bowl

## FLAVOR ALTERNATIVES: 6 SALT SWAPS

“Incorporate a variety of flavors into your diet and you may find yourself craving these instead of salt,” says Heather Barraco, MS, RDN, CDCES, Clinical Nutrition Manager at Clara Maass Medical Center.

1. **Black pepper:** especially if freshly ground.
2. **Hot spices:** cayenne pepper, jalapeños and roasted chipotle peppers.
3. **Garlic:** fresh or powdered.
4. **Basil:** works very well with tomato, pasta dishes, garlic, onion and olive oil.
5. **Citrus:** fresh juice and/or zest of a lime, orange, lemon, grapefruit or other citrus fruit.
6. **Vinegars:** all types of vinegar (cider, white wine, red wine, balsamic, rice or flavored) in dressings or drizzled on veggies or fruit.

of breakfast cereal.” Deli meat, smoked meats and cured meats are all loaded with salt, as is cheese, he adds.

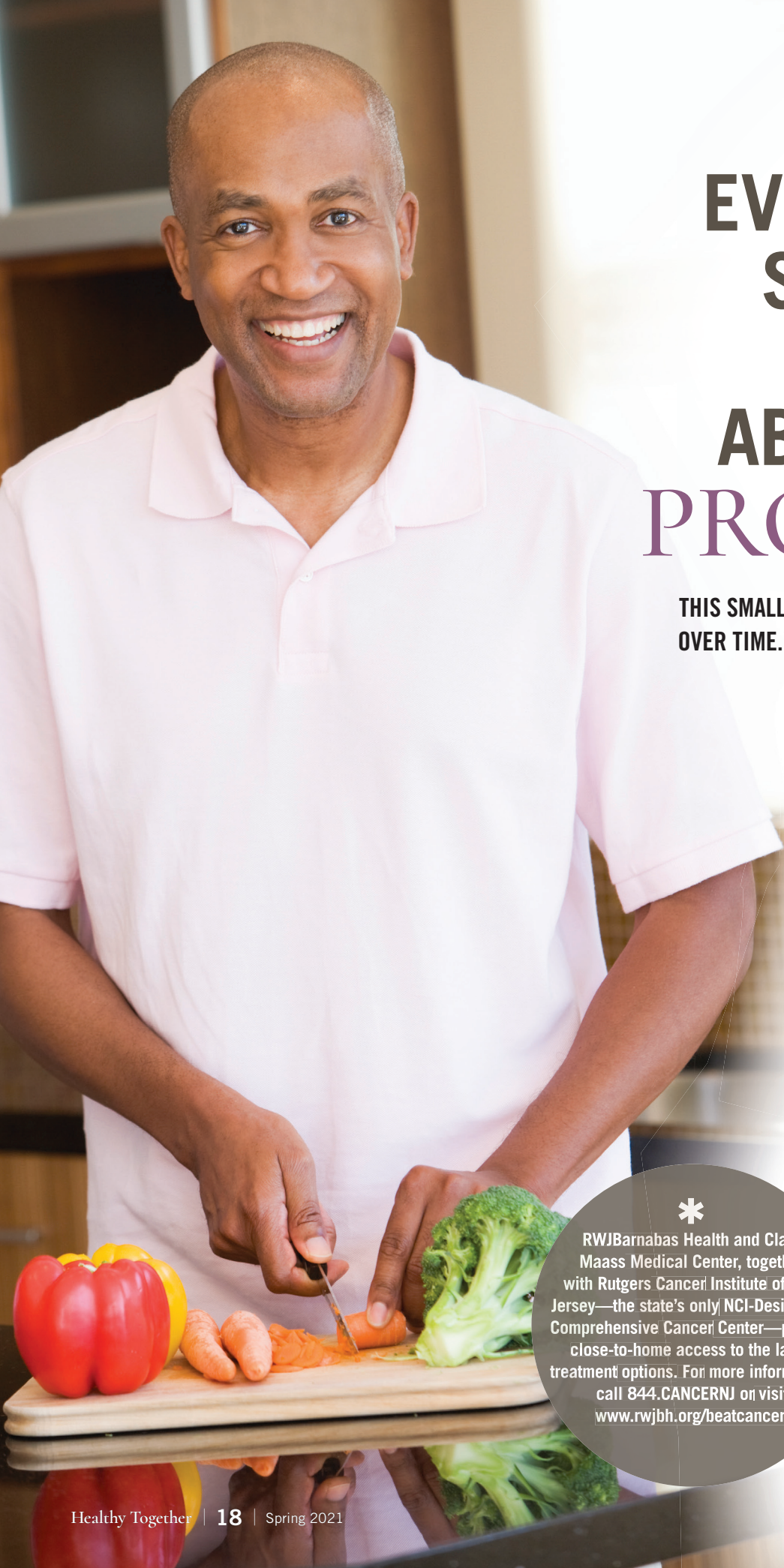
Eating out is also a potential hazard, Dr. Chakhtoura says. “Restaurant food tastes good because it’s high in both salt and fat, and that’s especially true of fast-food places. Cutting back on eating out can be a major step in decreasing your salt intake. If you go to a restaurant or diner regularly, ask them if they can accommodate you by cutting back on the amount of salt in your meal.”

Over time, perhaps in just a few weeks, the craving for salt will go away, “You will get used to spicing your food in other ways,” Dr. Chakhtoura says. “We don’t need to be a prisoner of our diet; a bit of cheese with wine is not a big deal. Just use insight and good judgment. Also, exercise for 150 minutes over the course of a week to keep your blood vessels and blood pressure in good order.”

Whoever your heart beats for, our hearts beat for you. To connect with a top cardiovascular specialist at Clara Maass Medical Center, call **888.724.7123** or visit **[www.rwjbh.org/heart](http://www.rwjbh.org/heart)**.







# WHAT EVERY MAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HIS PROSTATE

**THIS SMALL BUT IMPORTANT GLAND CHANGES  
OVER TIME. HERE'S HOW TO KEEP IT HEALTHY.**

**I**t's about the size of a walnut, just below the bladder and surrounding the urethra. Most men don't even realize it's there during their first few decades of life. But the prostate gland becomes more important to men as they age, and it could cause major trouble if it's left unchecked.

"Men often have few to no symptoms in the early stages of a prostate issue, even with a serious disease like prostate cancer," says Robert Caruso, MD, a urologist with Clara Maass Medical Center and a member of RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group. "That's why routine prostate screening is so important."

## **What does the prostate do?**

Located at the base of the bladder, the prostate gland produces fluid that nourishes and protects a man's sperm.

Also, the muscles inside the prostate gland function as a valve. Those muscles close the bladder and keep urine in.

## **How can I keep my prostate gland healthy?**

Being in overall good health will help your prostate gland stay in tip-top shape. Follow a heart-healthy diet. "Broccoli, brussels sprouts and



RWJBarnabas Health and Clara Maass 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](http://www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer).

cauliflower have proven anticancer properties,” Dr. Caruso says. “A diet with a variety of vegetables is best.” Limit the amount of foods associated with a high risk of prostate cancer, such as red meat and saturated fats. Also, exercise regularly to improve your circulation.

### How can I tell if my prostate isn't healthy?

“Symptoms of prostate issues include having a weak urine stream, urinary frequency, burning on urination, pelvic pressure sensation, waking up more than two times a night to urinate, feeling the need to strain or push when urinating, or having blood in the urine,” Dr. Caruso says.

### What changes to the prostate occur over time?

It grows bigger, which is a natural part of aging. “Most men's prostate glands grow between 1 to 3 percent per year during their adulthood and inflammation may accelerate this growth,” Dr. Caruso says.

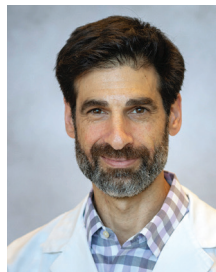
However, about 50 percent of men at age 50 will develop an enlarged prostate (also called benign prostatic hyperplasia, or BPH), which can cause discomfort and difficulty with urinating. By age 80, up to 90 percent of men have BPH.

BPH is the most common prostate-related health concern. Other prostate problems include prostatitis, an inflammation of the prostate most often caused by infection, and prostate cancer.

### How is BPH treated?

Treatment may include behavioral changes, such as minimizing caffeine and evening fluids, or medication to relax muscles in and around the prostate and make urination easier. If these measures aren't effective, next steps may include:

- **Transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP).**



ROBERT CARUSO, MD



This procedure trims away excess tissue blocking urine flow.

- **Simple prostatectomy,** a removal of only the inner part of the prostate, “rarely necessary these days,” says Dr. Caruso.
- **UroLift.** In this brief, minimally invasive procedure, tiny implants lift the enlarged prostate out of the way to help improve urine stream and reduce urination frequency.
- **Rezūm.** Done under mild anesthesia, this water vapor therapy infuses steam into the urethra, which relaxes the gland and opens the urethra. Like UroLift, it only takes a few minutes and can be done in the office.

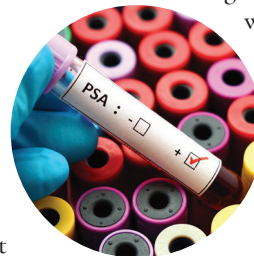
### When should men begin screening for prostate cancer?

Most men should start talking with a doctor about routine prostate cancer screening between the ages of 40 and 45. “A shared decision-making process is used to determine the appropriate time and frequency of screening, depending on personal risk factors,” says Dr. Caruso. “If after initial evaluation men fall into a low-risk category, they may safely resume screening around age 50 to 55. African-American men and men with a family history of prostate, breast or ovarian cancer are encouraged to start the discussion at age 40.”

Screening includes two tests—a physical exam of the prostate, also called a digital rectal exam, and a blood test that checks for the level of prostate-specific antigen (PSA), a protein made by cells in the prostate gland. Your doctor will determine follow-up screenings based on the results.

### What do PSA tests reveal?

Doctors evaluate two factors. One is PSA velocity, a measure of PSA levels over time. “If the velocity is more than 0.75 per year, that's considered significant and may indicate cancer,” Dr. Caruso



## TREATMENTS FOR PROSTATE CANCER

After skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. One in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime, according to the American Cancer Society. However, survival rates are very high, especially when the cancer is caught early. Because prostate cancer can be slow-growing, not every man will need to be treated right away. However, depending on the stage of the cancer, leading treatments include:

- **Radiation therapy,** utilizing a state-of-the-art linear accelerator that delivers external beam radiation with precision, or brachytherapy, in which radioactive material is sealed in a seed and placed inside the body.
- **Cryotherapy,** which uses extreme cold to freeze and kill prostate cancer cells.
- **Radical prostatectomy,** which removes the entire prostate gland, sometimes with nearby tissue, such as lymph nodes. Surgeons at CMMC use the da Vinci Robotic Surgical System, with tiny incisions for greater precision (the end of the instruments can bend like a human wrist) and up to 10 times magnification. This helps quicken recovery and reduce side effects or complications.

says. The other is PSA density, which compares the PSA to the size or volume of the prostate.

If your PSA results indicate possible prostate cancer, your doctor will ask you to get a biopsy of the prostate, which will determine whether or not you have cancer.

Some newer blood tests, such as 4Kscore and other genetic and genomic tests, can also help assess the risk of aggressive prostate cancer after an abnormal PSA or digital rectal exam.

To find a urologist at Clara Maass Medical Center, call **888.724.7123** or visit [www.rwjbh.org/claramaass](http://www.rwjbh.org/claramaass).





# 4 EXERCISES

## ALMOST EVERYBODY CAN (AND SHOULD) DO

STUCK INDOORS AND SITTING TOO MUCH? THESE SIMPLE, HIGHLY EFFECTIVE CONDITIONING EXERCISES WILL PUT YOU ON THE ROAD TO FITNESS.

“Exercise can be fun, but it doesn’t have to be flashy,” says bariatric surgeon Naveen Ballem, MD, Medical Director



NAVEEN BALLEM, MD

of the Bariatric Program and Chief Clinical Effectiveness Officer at Clara Maass Medical Center. “Every exercise we do should be straightforward

and have a specific goal attached to it. For best results, keep it simple—and keep it consistent.”

That’s the thinking behind the four exercises shown on these pages, which require no equipment or special skills. These moves have benefits for people who are experiencing aches and stiffness due to a sedentary lifestyle.

“Exercises that strengthen hip and gluteus maximus muscles are commonly recommended by personal trainers to help people with the normal activities of everyday life, such as

picking up groceries, placing items on a high shelf or getting up from a chair,” Dr. Ballem says.

“I also highly recommend cardio exercises. Even a 15-minute interval, like a brisk walk, is very beneficial for the heart,” he says.

Think of the exercises shown on these pages as a sneak peek at what a personal trainer might recommend for you. Caution: If you have any health issues that might impair your ability to exercise, be sure to consult with your doctor first.



### BENEFIT:

Oxygen flow to lower back, hip and abdominal muscles is increased, relieving tightness and tension and enabling them to move better.



### BELLY BREATHING

- Lay on a flat surface, knees bent and feet on the ground.
- Place one hand on your stomach, one on your chest.
- Slowly breathe in through your stomach, not your chest, then breathe out through your stomach. If you are doing the breath correctly, you will feel your stomach fill up, not your chest. (Use your hand placement as guidance.)
- Do 10 times. Take a quick break, then do two more sets of 10 repetitions.

*Note:* If you have problems lying on a flat surface, sit on the edge of a sturdy chair, nice and tall, with good posture (see photo above). Place one hand on your stomach and one on your chest and proceed as directed above.



## BRIDGING

- Lay flat on your back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor, toes pointed straight and about hip- or shoulder-width apart.
- Squeeze your gluteus maximus muscles (buttocks). Keeping them squeezed, lift hips up into the air. Be careful not to move them too high; shoulders, knees and hips should be in a straight line.
- Hold for a count of 5 to 10 seconds. Come back down and relax for a second or two. Do a total of 10 repetitions, then two more sets of 10 repetitions.

**BENEFIT:**  
Improves posture and hip strength; helps to keep feet straight when walking so that walking feels easier.



## STANDING HIP EXTENSION

- Press both hands against a wall, palms flat, arms extended at shoulder height or a bit lower.
- Stand with good posture (ribs lifted a bit).
- Lift one leg up to approximately a 90-degree angle, driving knee toward chest; hold for 5 to 8 seconds.
- While you are in the “up” position, squeeze the glute muscle of the leg that’s on the ground.
- Put leg back down. Do a total of five times, then switch legs.
- Do a total of three sets.

**BENEFIT:**  
Strengthens the gluteus maximus, the meaty posterior muscle that extends the hip, improving posture and back health.

## SIT-TO-STAND EXERCISE

- Stand facing away from a stable chair, such as a kitchen chair (not a soft, cushioned chair). Feet should be shoulder-width apart and toes pointed straight.
- Push your butt back toward the chair while simultaneously reaching your arms forward.
- Move down slowly until your butt touches the chair, then stand back up slowly. Knees will bend, but put the primary focus on pushing your hip muscles back and reaching your arms forward.
- Do three times. Do a total of 10 repetitions.
- As muscle strength improves, do squats without using a chair for support.



**BENEFIT:**  
Squatting is a prerequisite to walking well. Strengthens leg and hip muscles. Helps with mobility in getting up from a chair, bed or toilet. Stronger muscles improve knee health and lead to better gait and posture.

## WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY: INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Clara Maass Medical Center hosts virtual sessions open to all.

- **Bariatric Surgery Online Information Seminar:** April 5, May 3 and June 7, from 6 to 7 p.m. A bariatric surgeon discusses the bariatric surgery journey, from the procedures to the risks and benefits.
- **Weight Loss Support Group:** April 7, May 5 and June 7, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. This after-surgery support group allows you to share and discuss your experiences with your peers, as well as address topics to assist you in your weight loss journey.

To register, go to [www.rwjbh.org/claramaass](http://www.rwjbh.org/claramaass) and click on “Events.”



# DO YOU NEED A MAMMOGRAM?

**BREAST CANCER  
SCREENING SAVES  
LIVES—AND GETTING  
A MAMMOGRAM IS  
SAFER THAN EVER.**



RWJBarnabas Health and Clara Maass 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](http://www.rwjbh.org/beatcancer).

## DON'T DELAY. SCHEDULE TODAY.

Early detection can be lifesaving. If you've put your mammogram on hold due to the pandemic, wait no more. Safety protocols for breast screening are firmly in place, including:



Screening for COVID-19 symptoms upon entry.



Strict social distancing measures.



Enhancing already rigorous cleaning and disinfecting practices.



Mandating a mask or face covering for all patients and staff.

## HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK



Perform breast self-exams.



Maintain a healthy weight.



Stay active and exercise.



Eat fruits and veggies.



Limit alcohol consumption.

## NEED-TO-KNOW NUMBERS



**99%**

5-year relative survival rate for localized breast cancer

**40%**

Since 1990, mammography has helped reduce breast cancer deaths by 40% in the U.S.

**3.8 million**

breast cancer survivors in the U.S.

**1 in 8**

U.S. women will have breast cancer in her lifetime



**40  
YEARS  
OLD**

the age at which women of average risk may choose to begin annual mammograms



**1 in 6**

breast cancers occur in women aged 40–49

**15%**

of breast cancer patients have a **family member** with breast cancer

To make an appointment for a mammogram at Clara Maass Medical Center, call 888.724.7123 or visit [www.rwjbh.org/mammo](http://www.rwjbh.org/mammo).



At left, the team from CMMC celebrates the opening of the Blue Bear Laundry Room at Newark's Barringer High School by cutting a ceremonial red ribbon. Above, Jose Aviles, EdD, Principal, Barringer High School; Mary Ellen Clyne, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer, CMMC; and Roger León, Superintendent of Newark Public Schools, celebrate the opening.



# THE POWER OF A LAUNDRY ROOM

**FOR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, THE BENEFITS OF A DONATION GO WELL BEYOND CLEAN CLOTHES.**

Some students at Barringer High School in Newark haven't had access to a laundry facility, either at home or nearby. That has changed as a result of a collaborative effort from Clara Maass Medical Center (CMMC).

A sign hangs above the entrance to the Blue Bear Laundry Room at the high school, which is outfitted with two high-quality commercial-grade washing machines and two gas dryers. All were purchased from Paul's Appliances, a small family-owned business that has been located in Newark since 1932.

The laundry room, which is free for students, is one aspect of CMMC's strategy to prioritize the needs of its surrounding community through social

impact and community investment initiatives. The laundry room project was identified as an initiative by Sarah Bonilla, MPH, Director of the Center of Excellence for Latino Health at CMMC, with the enthusiastic support of Mary Ellen Clyne, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer of CMMC.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Families who are housing insecure often have few opportunities to do laundry. With a laundry facility at the school, students are able to wear clean clothes, thereby improving attendance, boosting confidence and ending bullying and ridicule.

"By partnering with the school to create the laundry facility, we are able

to make an intentional, direct impact in the lives of our students and their families," says Bonilla, who also leads social impact and community investment and reinvestment initiatives for CMMC. "We even purchased the equipment from a local supplier to ensure that this project makes a one-hundred percent investment in our community." The collaboration was formalized with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CMMC, RWJBarnabas Health and Newark Public Schools.

"We really want the community to see us as a good neighbor, a friend and as an anchor institution that benefits the community in various ways," says Dr. Clyne. "We are grateful for this partnership, which will bring so much good for current and future students," says Jose Aviles, EdD, Principal of Barringer High School.

The opening was attended by community leaders, including Newark Municipal Councilman At-Large Luis A. Quintana; North Ward Councilman Anibal Ramos, Jr.; Superintendent of Newark Public Schools Roger León; members of the Newark Public Schools Advisory Board A'Dorian Murray-Thomas and the late Octavio "Tave" Padilla. Also in attendance was Akbar Cook, Principal of West Side High School in Newark, who created a laundry facility at that school.

To learn more about social impact initiatives at RWJBarnabas Health, visit [www.rwjbh.org/social-impact](http://www.rwjbh.org/social-impact). To learn more about the Center of Excellence for Latino Health, call 973.450.2996 or visit [www.rwjbh.org/claralatinohhealth](http://www.rwjbh.org/claralatinohhealth).



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

## Prevention and care for every heart in every community.

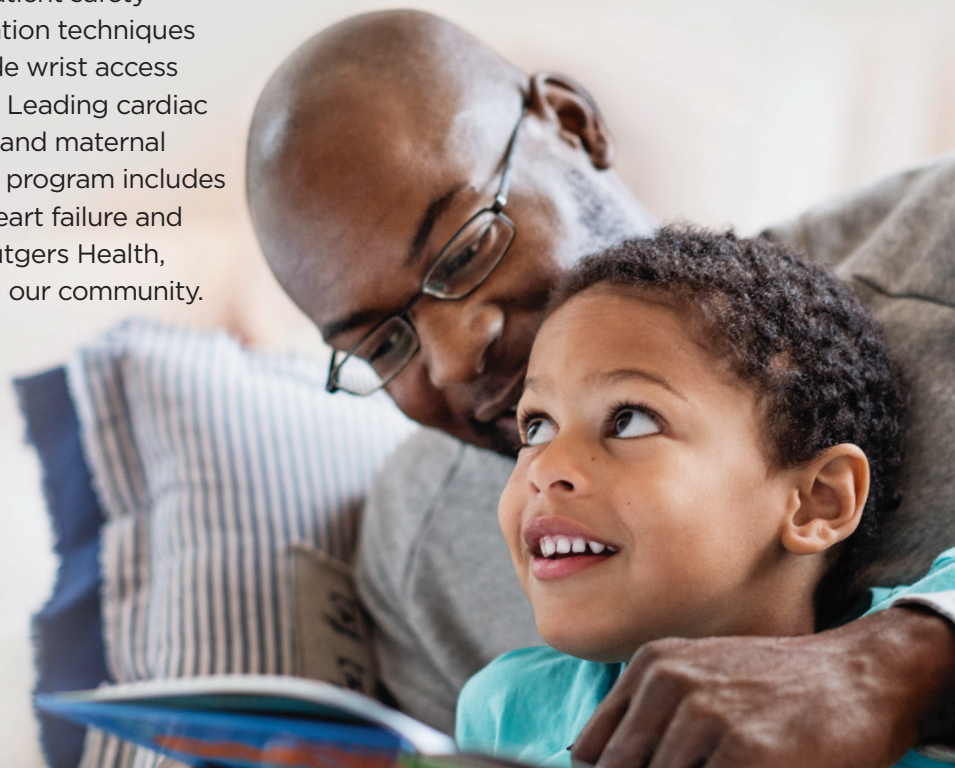
Clara Maass Medical Center has a passion for heart health. We've established ourselves as a leader in patient safety and quality. Our industry-leading catheterization techniques for emergent and elective angioplasty include wrist access (when appropriate) to reduce recovery time. Leading cardiac specialists provide expert care for oncology and maternal care patients. And our nationally recognized program includes certifications in acute coronary syndrome, heart failure and cardiac rehabilitation. In partnership with Rutgers Health, it's all part of our dedication to every heart in our community.

Learn more at [rwjbh.org/heart](http://rwjbh.org/heart)

## Clara Maass Medical Center

**RWJBarnabas**  
**HEALTH**

Let's be healthy together.



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