

A Publication of  
**MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER**  
**SOUTHERN CAMPUS**

SPRING 2019

# healthy

*together*

**BEST DOCTOR  
FOR SENIORS**

**BACK IN ACTION  
AFTER ANKLE  
REPLACEMENT**

**HOW TO SELECT  
A SURGEON**

**WHERE TO GET  
THE BEST CANCER CARE**

# SAFETY: It Takes a Team

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

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

At Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC), we celebrate the "good catches" made by our team members, whom we call the Safety Heroes. We learn from each experience. We also embrace team members who receive HRO training to train others. It's a daily routine to have a "Safety Huddle" each morning and discuss the prior shift and the expectations for the day. At MMCSC, it's everyone's responsibility to reinforce and build accountability, and to embrace "Safety Together" each and every day.

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

Yours in good health,

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

**FRANK J. VOZOS, MD, FACS**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MONMOUTH MEDICAL  
CENTER SOUTHERN CAMPUS  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, RWJBARNABAS HEALTH



## DIAGNOSING NERVE AND MUSCLE PROBLEMS

People who experience tingling, numbness, muscle weakness or pain in the wrist, arm or leg may be referred for what's known as EMG, or electromyography, testing, which is offered at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC). This procedure assesses the health of muscles and nerves by measuring the speed of nerve impulses and electrical communication between muscles and nerves. EMG testing can help diagnose carpal tunnel syndrome and a herniated disc in the neck or back. For more information, call 888.724.7123.

## LUNG CANCER SCREENING

If you're a former smoker, you may be eligible for lung cancer screening, which could save your life. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among men and women in the U.S., in part because it usually causes no symptoms until it's reached an advanced stage when treatment options are limited and prognosis is poor. MMCSC offers low-dose CT scans for people who are 55 to 80 years old with a 20-year pack history. For more information or to schedule a screening, contact MMCSC's Comprehensive Lung Cancer Program at 732.923.7966.

## STOPPING HAIR LOSS DURING CHEMOTHERAPY

MMCSC is now offering a therapy that may help cancer patients keep most of their hair while undergoing chemotherapy. Devices called cooling caps, which are worn before, during and after treatments, chill the scalp, which is thought to tighten blood vessels and reduce the effect of chemotherapy on hair follicles. For more information on the Paxman Scalp Cooling System and infusion services at MMCSC, go to [rwjbh.org/BeatCancer](http://rwjbh.org/BeatCancer) or call 732.961.2396.

**Monmouth  
Medical Center  
Southern Campus**

**RWJBarnabas  
HEALTH**

600 River Ave., Lakewood, NJ 08701  
732.363.1900 | [rwjbh.org/MonmouthSouth](http://rwjbh.org/MonmouthSouth)

**READ OUR INTERACTIVE DIGEST ONLINE!**

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

**CONNECT WITH US ON**

- @MonmouthSouthernCampus
- @RWJBarnabas
- RWJBarnabas Health

Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus 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/monmouthsouth](http://www.rwjbh.org/monmouthsouth). MMCSC 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 732.363.1900. MMCSC 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 732.363.1900.

# healthy *together* contents

SPRING 2019



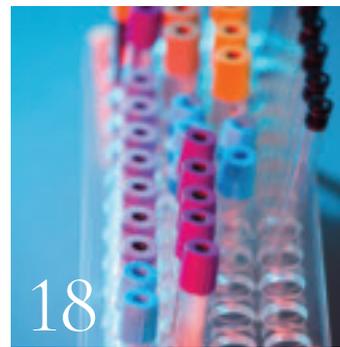
6



4



8



18



22

## 2. WELCOME LETTER.

A community update from our CEOs.

## 4. BACK TO THE GARDEN.

After years of ankle arthritis, an avid gardener can now plant without pain.

## 6. THE BEST DOCTOR FOR SENIORS.

Why patients 65 and older should see a geriatrician.

## 8. LAST WISHES.

An advance directive lets you inform loved ones about your preferences for end-of-life care.



12

## 9. MAKING A REAL IMPACT.

RWJBarnabas Health is committed to promoting community health.

## 10. BETTER CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS.

Healthcare providers are taking a fresh look at how to treat the elderly.

## 12. WHERE TO GET THE BEST CANCER CARE.

For patients, what does it mean to have access to a “comprehensive” cancer center?

## 14. THE GOAL: ZERO ERRORS.

Our health system is on a mission to achieve the highest safety standards.

## 16. A BABY'S BEST FRIEND.

How a therapy dog helped one little girl recover her strength.

## 17. MORE CONVENIENT CARE.

Generous donors are helping to improve access to screening and treatment.

## 18. LIFESAVING LAB TESTS.

Getting important bloodwork has never been easier.

## 20. TIPS FOR SELECTING A SURGEON.

How to find the right surgeon for you.

## 22. COMMUNITY EDUCATION.

A roundup of health screenings, support groups and educational programs to improve community wellness.



Joseph Saka, DPM, with Kimberly O'Donnell, who had a total ankle replacement in July 2018 after six years of discomfort. She's now pain-free.



# BACK TO THE GARDEN

**AFTER YEARS OF DEBILITATING ANKLE ARTHRITIS,  
AN AVID GARDENER CAN NOW PLANT WITHOUT PAIN.**

For six years, every step Kimberly O'Donnell took with her right foot was agonizing. The debilitating pain in her right ankle prevented her from participating in the daily activities she enjoyed most, such as gardening. Kimberly's ordeal began in 2012, when she underwent an ankle fusion. In this procedure, the worn ankle joint is cleaned and the bones are fused with screws, plates and bone grafts. The surgery provides pain relief, but it also limits motion.

Although ankle fusion is routine, Kimberly's recovery wasn't. Her foot was in a hard cast, which didn't allow for full range of movement. Eventually, she developed arthritis. "My ankle never healed right," recalls Kimberly, 61. "I was never able to fully regain the use of my foot."

Kimberly tried treating the pain with cortisone shots and braces, but nothing helped. Eventually, she made an appointment with Joseph Saka, DPM, a podiatrist at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMSC). He suggested a total ankle replacement, a procedure in which the ends of the damaged ankle bones are removed and replaced with an artificial joint made of plastic and metal. Since the new joint would enable Kimberly's ankle to move more freely, it would allow her to resume many of her activities and would reduce the risk of arthritis developing in other areas of her foot.

## CUSTOMIZING JOINT REPLACEMENT

Ankle replacements aren't new, but they've become the "gold standard" for treating painful arthritis in the last



JOSEPH SAKA, DPM

decade, says Dr. Saka. He recommended a specific implant: the Wright Medical INFINITY Total Ankle System, which is geared for people like Kimberly, whose ankle joints have developed severe arthritis. Unlike other implants, the INFINITY provides precise ankle measurements. The cutting jig—the guide that allows the surgeon to cut the implant—is custom-made, says Dr. Saka. Prior to the procedure, a CT scan of the patient's foot is taken and is used to create the implant. "That's a huge benefit because the cutting dies are accurate, and the implants fit perfectly," said Dr. Saka.

There are additional advantages to the INFINITY implant. It closely resembles a natural ankle joint because it contains titanium components and a polyethylene portion, which acts as a shock absorber. "It allows for a rolling type of motion similar to what the ankle does on a daily basis," explains Dr. Saka.

## A RAPID RECOVERY

In July 2018, Kimberly had the total ankle replacement procedure at MMSC. The recovery was much better than the one following her fusion surgery, she says. She wore a soft cast before transitioning to a boot and was allowed to put mild pressure on the area within weeks. Within a month, she was walking around, which helped to jump-start the healing process. Within two months, she was using only



decade, says Dr. Saka. He recommended a specific implant: the Wright Medical INFINITY Total Ankle System, which is geared for people like Kimberly, whose ankle joints have



## BEST CANDIDATES FOR TOTAL ANKLE REPLACEMENT

Total ankle replacement (TAR), also known as total ankle arthroplasty, is used to treat ankle arthritis. The arthritis may be caused by aging or an injury, such as a broken ankle or dislocation. The goal of the surgery is to relieve pain and preserve ankle motion so you can maintain an active lifestyle. A recent study showed that patients who've had TAR are able to participate in low-impact sports more often, and the majority experience little to no pain.

The procedure is ideal for patients who continue to experience ankle pain after trying conservative measures, such as anti-inflammatory medication, bracing, physical therapy, activity modification and injections. TAR is most likely to benefit the following:

- people over age 60
- people who participate in low-impact sports, such as stationary biking, walking, swimming and golf

a brace and a compression sock, which provide ankle stability and control. The fact that she was able to engage in activity immediately after surgery helped to speed her recovery. "When you bear weight on the ankle, you're helping it to function better," says Dr. Saka.

Today, Kimberly says her pain is gone, and she's looking forward to working in her garden. She credits the ankle replacement with giving her her life back. "It's absolutely fantastic," she says.

To find a podiatrist in your area, go to [www.rwjbh.org/doctors](http://www.rwjbh.org/doctors).



# THE BEST DOCTOR FOR SENIORS

WHY PATIENTS 65 AND OLDER SHOULD SEE A GERIATRICIAN.

**A**s people age, they tend to develop multiple health problems—diabetes, arthritis and high blood pressure, for instance—and may take several medications to treat them. Since illnesses and medications can affect older adults differently, it pays to see a geriatrician—a healthcare provider who specializes in caring for seniors.

At Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC), the James and Sharon Maida Geriatrics Institute provides comprehensive healthcare for patients who are 65 and older. The Institute's multidisciplinary team includes geriatricians, nurses, social workers, nutritionists, pharmacists, health educators, physical, occupational and speech therapists, and audiologists. Leading the team is Abhijit Chatterjee, MD, a fellowship-trained physician who is board-certified in both geriatrics and internal medicine. Here, he explains how a geriatrician can benefit older adults.

### Why see a geriatrician?

Geriatricians are board-certified internists or family physicians who have received additional training in caring for the aging body. They're well-versed in recognizing signs of illness in the elderly, as well as conditions that commonly affect seniors. These include frailty, dizziness, urinary incontinence, dementia, depression and sleep difficulties. They are also trained to treat these conditions and help the elderly function better with these medical problems.

### At what age should I see a geriatrician?

Although there is no hard and fast rule, age 65 is generally considered the ideal time to make an appointment with a geriatrician.



ABHIJIT CHATTERJEE, MD

### What's unique about the Institute?

The Institute is located within the hospital. Patients receive the personalized care of a physician with all the benefits

and resources of a hospital. We have two fellowship-trained, board-certified geriatricians, each with more than 20 years of experience in all facets of geriatric care, as well as a geriatric nurse practitioner. We also have a full-time social worker who can help patients navigate complex social issues, such as financial difficulties and living conditions. In addition, we have physical and occupational therapists, audiology services for hearing checks, nutritionists and pharmacists. If a patient needs a blood test or an X-ray, he or she can have it done right away.

### What's a typical visit like?

New patients fill out a form before their first visit. We ask about chronic medical conditions, the patient's living situation and next of kin. During the initial appointment, a nurse checks the patient's vital signs and conducts memory and depression screenings. Next, a physical exam is performed, and we ask the patient what medications he or she is taking. The more medications a patient takes, the more he or she is at risk for side effects. Sometimes medications can be stopped entirely or a lower dose can be prescribed.

Once the physical exam is complete, a comprehensive plan is formulated for the patient's well-being. Appropriate blood tests and X-rays are ordered, and a referral to a physical therapist may be made. This is important because a lack of stability can lead to falls, which is a concern if the patient is living alone. We may ask an occupational therapist to go to the patient's home to assess the situation and offer safety recommendations, such as installing handrails in the bathroom. In addition, a patient may receive one or more screening tests, such as a hearing check. A visit often concludes with a meeting with our social worker.

### What kind of impact can a geriatrician have on a patient's quality of life?

I feel I can truly make my patients' lives better. Taking care of a senior is more



## QUALITY END-OF-LIFE CARE

If a frail elderly person or an older adult with a terminal illness is admitted to Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus, physicians at the James and Sharon Maida Geriatrics Institute may be asked to provide palliative care, in which the symptoms of a serious illness are treated. The focus is on preventing suffering rather than curing the illness.

Institute physicians avoid ordering additional medical tests or prescribing more aggressive treatment if it won't improve the patient's overall quality of life. Says Abhijit Chatterjee, MD, a geriatrician at the Institute: "We encourage patients to come to terms with their illness and craft a treatment plan that will address the condition and help them be more comfortable."

effective when there is a team involved. The enormous resources available to us enable us to offer comprehensive care for all seniors, ranging from providing health maintenance and immunizations for the young elderly to managing disability in the frail elderly.

For more information on the James and Sharon Maida Geriatrics Institute at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus, call **732.886.4700**.



# LAST WISHES

**AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE LETS YOU INFORM LOVED ONES ABOUT YOUR PREFERENCES FOR END-OF-LIFE CARE.**

Imagine you're seriously ill and unable to speak for yourself. Would your loved ones know what kind of medical treatment you want? What kind of pain management you would prefer? It's important to think through answers to these questions and inform your loved ones in an advance directive, a legal document that tells your physician about your preferences for end-of-life care. "It's the greatest gift you can give to your family," says Claire Verruni, RN, CHPN, a community health educator and certified hospice and palliative care nurse at Monmouth



**CLAIRE VERRUNI, RN, CHPN**

Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC). "This way, they know they're doing exactly what you want."

Five Wishes is a type of advance directive that's legal in 42 states, including New Jersey. In the document, which was created by the non-profit organization Aging with Dignity, you spell out five medical, personal, emotional and spiritual wishes pertaining to end-of-life care. In the first wish, you choose a healthcare agent, a loved one who will make decisions for you when you're not able to do so; in the second, you detail the kind of medical treatment you prefer; in the third, you explain the type of comfort care you'd like, such as pain management and hospice care; in the fourth, you reveal how you'd like to be treated (if you'd like to be home when you die, for instance); and in the fifth, you outline your preferences for a funeral or memorial service. The form requires signatures from two

witnesses over age 18, but it doesn't have to be notarized in New Jersey.

## A MUST-HAVE CONVERSATION

"The beauty of Five Wishes is that it's a great tool for discussing end-of-life decisions," says Verruni, who gives one-hour presentations about Five Wishes to a variety of local organizations. "A lot of families struggle when a loved one doesn't have a conversation with anyone before he or she becomes seriously ill."

When selecting a healthcare agent, be sure the person you choose will agree to follow through on your wishes. "If your preferences go against his or her beliefs, it could be difficult for him or her to adhere to your wishes," says Verruni.

Anyone over age 18 can fill out the Five Wishes form. It can be completed at any time, but it's especially important to do so if you've received a life-limiting diagnosis. After you've filled out the form, review it every 10 years or sooner if a life circumstance changes (a divorce, a new diagnosis or a death in the family). Make sure the people who have witnessed your signature are aware of any updates.

Call **888.726.2362** to register for the Five Wishes seminar at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus on May 16 at 10 a.m.



# MAKING A REAL IMPACT

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

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

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

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

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



**MICHELLENE DAVIS, ESQ.**

## FINDING WHAT WORKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# BETTER CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS

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

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

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

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

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



JESSICA ISRAEL, MD

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

## A NEW APPROACH

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

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

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

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

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

## BEST PRACTICES

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

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

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

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



## HOW TO GET BETTER CARE

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

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

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



## THE CUTTING EDGE: BLOOD AND BONE MARROW TRANSPLANTS

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

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

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

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

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

RWJBarnabas Health, to explain.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All of these centers collaborate and share

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

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

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

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

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

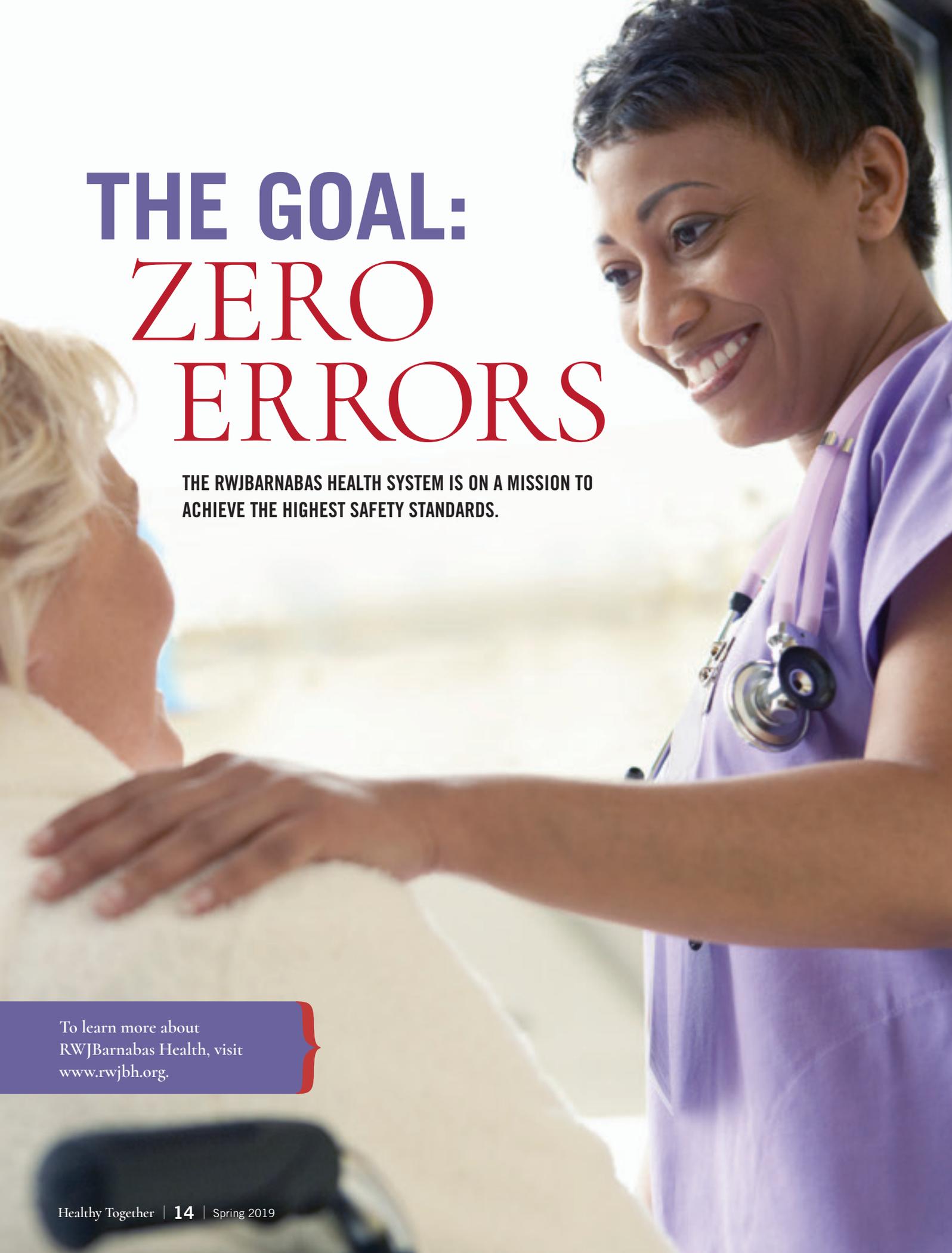
We're also creating an extensive cancer navigation program to help patients throughout and after treatment. Our goal as a cancer program is not only to have the best treatments, physicians and clinical trials. It is also to give the best care in helping patients navigate what can be the most challenging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



STEVEN K. LIBUTTI, MD



ROGER STRAIR, MD

A healthcare worker in purple scrubs is smiling and interacting with a patient. The worker has a stethoscope around her neck and is looking towards the patient. The patient's hand is visible, resting on a surface.

# THE GOAL: ZERO ERRORS

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

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

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

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

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

### THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL

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

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

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



JOHN BONAMO, MD

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

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

### TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

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

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

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

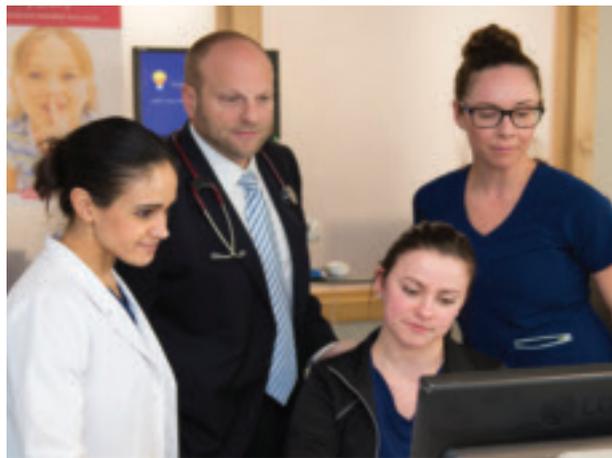
Recently, he recounts, a nurse was preparing a young woman to go into surgery for gall bladder removal when the patient mentioned she had a "funny feeling" in her chest. The nurse called an EKG (electrocardiogram) tech and refused to send the patient to the OR until the test was done. As it turned out,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

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

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

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

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



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

### MANY VOICES

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

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

### THE ABCs OF BECOMING AN HRO

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

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



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

# A BABY'S BEST FRIEND

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

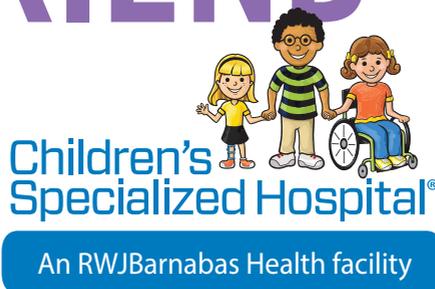
Respiratory Syncytial Virus, known as RSV, is an infection in the respiratory tract that can lead to serious problems. It's always a matter of concern when a baby gets it, but is even more so when the child has an underlying medical condition.

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



**MICHELE FANTASIA, MD**

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



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

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

time," her mother, Laura, says.

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

## EYES ON BURTON

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

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

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

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



From left: The ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the new MMCSC hospital shuttle and Claire Verruni, RN, CHPN, Community Health Educator, with Jan Krusch, MMCSC Auxiliary Council Member, who donated funds for a new mobile osteoporosis screening machine.

# MORE CONVENIENT CARE



## GENEROUS DONORS ARE HELPING TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SCREENING AND TREATMENT.

Medical care is more accessible than ever, thanks to the Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC) Foundation's fundraising efforts. Here's how patients will benefit:

### FREE RIDES TO APPOINTMENTS

It's not always easy to find transportation to a medical appointment. To help patients overcome this challenge, the MMCSC Foundation, MMCSC Auxiliary and FountainView Care Center in Lakewood purchased a handicapped-accessible van. "We'd like to thank our community partner, FountainView, and our Auxiliaries for their gifts," says Denice Gaffney, Vice President, MMCSC Foundation. Adds Steven Friedman, FountainView Chief Administrative Officer, "By providing members in our community with access to transportation for their medical appointments, MMCSC and FountainView are playing a vital role in helping the geriatric population address their health in a proactive manner so they can remain as active and independent as possible." Rides

are scheduled based on need and availability at the time the appointment is made.

### OSTEOPOROSIS SCREENING CLOSE TO HOME

A member of the MMCSC Auxiliary donated funds for a new mobile screening machine that uses ultrasound to assess a patient's risk of suffering a fracture related to osteoporosis, a dangerous thinning of the bones. Participants will be encouraged to share their test results with their physician, who may recommend a DEXA scan, the gold standard for measuring bone density. Women age 65 or older and men age 70 or older are advised to have a screening test, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

MMCSC health coaches will take the new machine on the road as part of

## SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendar for these upcoming Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC) Foundation events:

- **JUNE 1:** Humanitarian Gala at Eagle Oaks Country Club in Farmingdale
- **AUGUST 5:** 17th Annual Golf Classic at Eagle Oaks Country Club in Farmingdale
- **OCTOBER 24:** Flavors of the Jersey Shore Food & Wine Tasting at Pine Belt Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram Showroom in Lakewood

Reserve tickets by calling the MMCSC Foundation at **732.886.4438**.

their health screenings, which are funded in part by the Ocean County Office of Senior Services. "We're proud to improve the health of our seniors," says Gaffney. "These screenings are key to assessing patient risk and preventing disabling fractures."

For more information about the Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus Foundation, visit [www.monmouthsouthgiving.org](http://www.monmouthsouthgiving.org) or call **732.886.4438**.



## TRAVELING LAB VISITS

Mobile Unit Phlebotomy Services (MUPS) accepts walk-ins, but it's best to call ahead to avoid a wait. Here's the schedule of MUPS visits to area residential communities:

- The Fairways at Lake Ridge  
**8 to 9 a.m., first Monday of each month**
- Lake Ridge  
**8 to 10 a.m., second and fourth Monday of each month**
- River Pointe  
**8 to 10 a.m., third Monday of each month**
- Leisure Village West  
**7:30 to 11 a.m., every Tuesday**
- Leisure Village East  
**8 to 10 a.m., second and fourth Thursday of each month**
- Renaissance at Manchester  
**7:30 to 11 a.m., every Wednesday**
- Four Seasons  
**8 to 10 a.m., first and third Thursday of each month**
- Greenbriar Woodlands  
**7 to 10 a.m., first and third Friday of each month**
- Leisure Knoll  
**8 to 10 a.m., second and fourth Friday of each month**

# LIFESAVING LAB TESTS

GETTING IMPORTANT BLOOD WORK HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER.



From left to right: Nancy Cicala, phlebotomist; patient Robert Kenderes; Jane Marony, coordinator of the MUPS at Renaissance at Manchester, a 55+ community, and an MMCS Foundation board member; and Annamaria Manna, lab assistant.

Once a week, Mobile Unit Phlebotomy Services (MUPS) comes to Renaissance at Manchester, an active 55+ community, to take blood or urine samples from residents. When MUPS arrives, resident Robert Kenderes goes to the community clubhouse to have his blood drawn. He has the blood cancer chronic lymphoid leukemia, so laboratory phlebotomist Nancy Cicala and laboratory assistant Annamaria Manna check his complete blood count and send the results to his physician. Robert's form of leukemia, the most common type, results in abnormally high levels of white blood cells.

October 17, 2018 started out as an ordinary day for Robert. The traveling lab was visiting, and he had his blood work done at 10 a.m. Less than four hours later, he received an urgent call from Robert Arnold, MD, his physician, who had Robert rush to the hospital. It was discovered that Robert had a bleeding ulcer and by 2 p.m., he was given an emergency blood transfusion. Today, he's alive and well and credits the MUPS team from Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCS) with saving his life.

**A CONVENIENT SERVICE**  
MUPS, which is run by MMCS, has been traveling around Ocean County

for almost a decade. It's a critical service for older or disabled adults who may find it difficult, if not impossible, to travel to a physician's office or hospital for lab work. "It's especially valuable for those who don't drive, have mobility limitations or don't have time to get to our outpatient laboratory at MMCS for blood work," says Christopher E. Ramirez, MHA, MLS (ASCP)CM, laboratory manager at MMCS.

Of course, anyone can benefit from MUPS. Many young, healthy adults may not have the time to make a trip to a physician's office or hospital to get their blood drawn for a routine physical or to monitor a chronic condition, such as high cholesterol or type 2 diabetes.

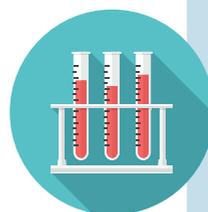
While MUPS has many advantages, it's still possible to have blood drawn at MMCS's outpatient laboratory, which is located at the front of the hospital. The lab is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



## THE BEST PREPARATION

Should you eat before your blood test or steer clear of food and drinks? Here are tips for an efficient appointment:

- Check with your healthcare provider to determine whether you should fast prior to your appointment. Certain blood tests—such as those that check cholesterol levels and blood sugar—require fasting. That means you can't eat or drink any fluids for around eight to 12 hours prior to the test. If you're fasting, bring a healthy snack to eat immediately after your lab tests. It's usually okay to continue taking your prescription medications, but check with your healthcare provider first.
- If you don't need to fast, try to eat breakfast before your blood test to avoid lightheadedness and dizziness.
- Drink plenty of water. This will speed up the blood draw, since water plumps up your veins and makes it easier for the phlebotomist to extract blood.
- If you're anxious about the blood test, don't look while it's being performed and try to distract yourself by thinking about an upcoming vacation or relaxing setting.
- Bring your lab order from your provider or the one that's on file and check with your insurance company to ensure the test is covered.



Pre-register for Mobile Unit Phlebotomy Services and select an appointment time and date by calling RWJBarnabas Health LINK at **888.724.7123**.



# TIPS FOR SELECTING A SURGEON

**THERE'S A LOT TO THINK ABOUT WHEN YOU FIND OUT YOU  
MIGHT NEED SURGERY. AT THE TOP OF THE LIST?  
FINDING THE RIGHT SURGEON FOR YOU.**

**W**hen your primary care doctor says that you might need a surgical procedure, your first step will be to choose a surgeon. The best way to begin finding one who's right for you is to ask people you trust. If you know people who have had the same procedure you need, ask if they'd recommend their surgeon. Ask your primary care physician and other doctors you know who they would choose for the procedure. Read on for other helpful insights and tips.

## **LOOK FOR EXPERIENCE & TRAINING**

It's important to choose a surgeon with a lot of experience and training in the procedure you're having. Surgeons who do more of the same procedure regularly have better results, or outcomes. Outcomes include better quality of life, less pain and fewer complications, such as infections or readmission to the hospital within 30 days.

There are no set numbers that define a high volume of procedures. But during your initial appointment, you can ask the surgeons you meet with about the number of procedures they've performed to treat your particular problem.

Training includes where the surgeon went to medical school and did his or her residency. Whether the surgeon completed a fellowship, has a subspecialty and is board-certified also matter.

A fellowship is another year of

training in a specialized area, like joint replacement. Examples of subspecialties are thoracic (chest) surgery and ophthalmic (eye) surgery.

Board-certified surgeons are experts who have completed additional education and passed a rigorous test in their particular medical specialty or subspecialty. Board-eligible surgeons are usually young doctors who've completed their residencies and can begin the certification process when they're ready.

On their websites, most hospitals and practices include bios of their doctors that list training, subspecialties and areas of interest. To view a listing of the expert surgeons at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC), visit [www.rwjbh.org/doctors](http://www.rwjbh.org/doctors).

## **GET MORE THAN ONE OPINION**

Based on the information you've gathered, select at least two surgeons to meet with to get their thoughts on your case. Having a second opinion is especially important if you're having a new or complicated procedure. Along with different opinions about whether you need surgery, surgeons may recommend different types of surgery for you.

Good surgeons don't mind when you get a second opinion, and insurance companies sometimes require a second opinion before surgery.



Surgical Services team members at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus include, from left: Lynn Moll, RN, BSN, OR nurse; John W. Gorechlad, MD, critical care and general surgeon; Juan Bermudez, MD, anesthesiologist; Michael Jaronczyk, MD, bariatric and general surgeon; Mukaram A. Gazi, MD, FACS, Chairman of Surgery and Chief of Urology; Geraldine Smith, RN, MSN, CNOR, Administrative Director of Perioperative Services; and Malou Cordero, RN, BSN, OR nurse.

Take a list of questions you want to ask during your initial appointment with a surgeon. For example:

1. How many times in the last year have you done this procedure?
2. How do your outcomes, including complications, compare to national averages?
3. What are the chances this procedure will work for me?
4. Why do you recommend this procedure for me?
5. What will my recovery be like?
6. Do you use minimally invasive surgery for this?
7. Is there any other way to treat the problem?
8. What will happen if I don't have the procedure?
9. Do I have time to think about other options or get another opinion?
10. Which hospital(s) are you affiliated with?

Once you've done all your research, think about the information you've found and how each surgeon you met with treated you. Then choose a surgeon you trust who has the right experience in the procedure you're having.

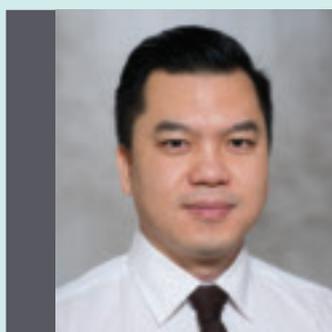
## MMSC SURGICAL EXPERTISE

Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMSC) has a highly skilled and experienced surgical team that offers expertise in a host of surgical procedures, including those involving:

- Bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, nerves and tendons (Orthopedic)
- Esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine and rectum (Digestive)
- Eyes (Ophthalmic)
- Feet and ankles (Podiatric)
- Urinary system (Urologic)
- Breasts

In addition, the hospital's board-certified, multispecialty surgeons—experts in their fields—are always ready to provide emergent surgeries, such as a gallbladder or appendix removal.

The surgical team is growing, and our surgical suites have been enhanced. "We have two new general surgeons and a new thoracic surgeon," says Mukaram A. Gazi, MD, FACS, Chairman of Surgery and Chief of Urology at MMSC. "We also have a staff of highly experienced surgeons who perform complex and minimally invasive surgeries for cancer and other diseases and conditions. We're excited about our OR renovations, which will enable us to provide the highest level of surgical care using the newest technology and state-of-the-art equipment."



### ANDREW NGUYEN, MD

Meet the newest member of our surgical team, thoracic surgeon Andrew Nguyen, MD. Dr. Nguyen, who is trained in advanced robotic thoracic (chest) surgery, works closely with our Lung Cancer Screening Program, which specializes in early detection, diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer.

To find a surgeon at MMSC, visit [www.rwjbh.org/doctors](http://www.rwjbh.org/doctors) or call **888.724.7123**. Watch Dr. Nguyen's profile video at [www.rwjbh.org/doctors/andrew-nguyen-md](http://www.rwjbh.org/doctors/andrew-nguyen-md).



# HEALTHY AND HAPPY

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, HEALTH SCREENINGS AND SAFETY WORKSHOPS AIM TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY WELLNESS.

Prevention is the key to a long and healthy life, and Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMCSC) makes it easy with a wide range of programs. Adults 55 and older can join the Better Health Senior Membership program, which provides access to free screenings, exercise classes, health education, social events and more. There are yoga, meditation and Zumba classes, as well as programs on healthy eating, stress management and relaxation techniques, diabetes management, and communicating with your physician.

MMCSC offers support groups for caregivers, grandparents raising grandchildren, people who are grieving the loss of a loved one, and cancer patients. “Since many

caregivers don’t have time to come for a support group, we have a call-in group,” says Jean McKinney, Regional Director of Community Health Education, Monmouth Medical Center and MMCSC. The call-ins for the Cancer Support Community take place from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month.

### PRIORITIZING SAFETY

Parents and kids can benefit from annual safety programs given by Safe Kids, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to prevent childhood injuries through education. Monmouth Medical Center is the lead organization for Safe Kids Monmouth/Ocean, the local coalition. This spring, there will be a workshop on helmet, bicycle and

pedestrian safety. Experts will discuss bike helmet fitting, as well as the rules of the road. A class geared for grandparents, which will be held in the summer, will focus on water safety and sunscreen use.

Free health screenings are offered on the second Wednesday of every month. Tests focus on memory, blood glucose (for diabetes), blood pressure, bone density and body mass index.

For a fee, MMCSC also provides vascular and low-dose CT scan lung screenings for people who may be at risk for cardiovascular disease and lung cancer, respectively. These screenings support our community needs through education, early detection and prevention. “Our goal is to prevent illness through screening and education,” says McKinney.

For more information about our programs, services and screenings, call **888.726.2362**.

**NICHE**  
NURSES IMPROVING CARE FOR HEALTHSYSTEM ELDER



# Community Education

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are free. They are held at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (600 River Avenue, Lakewood) and require advance registration by calling **888.724.7123**.

## Arthritis, Bursitis, Tendinitis, Oh, My!

**Thursday, May 2, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Are you one of the 50 million Americans living with chronic pain? In recognition of National Arthritis Awareness Month, Ted Freeman, DO, will discuss traditional as well as innovative solutions for inflammation, tenderness and pain. Conference Room ABC.

## Open Health Screenings

**Wednesday, May 8, 9 to 10 a.m.**

Do you know your numbers? Get your glucose, blood pressure, bone density and body mass index (BMI) tested. In addition, mini-memory screenings will be provided by Melanie Vernacchia, MSN, APN, OCN, Geriatrics and Palliative Care. 3rd Floor Conference Room. Please arrive no later than 9:45 a.m. for this event.

## Never Skip a Beat

**Monday, May 13, 2 to 3 p.m.**

Your heart doesn't beat just for you! Each year, nearly 800,000 adults living in the U.S. experience a stroke. Join us as we discuss stroke prevention and risk factors, signs and symptoms, and treatment options. This event will take place at the Manchester Library, 21 Colonial Drive.

## Vascular Screenings

**Friday, May 17, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Fee: \$49. Are you at risk for vascular disease? It's among the leading causes of death in the U.S., yet it's generally asymptomatic. This screening is noninvasive, painless and simple to administer. It includes an ultrasound exam for aortic aneurysms and carotid artery disease, as well as a noninvasive measure of blood flow in the legs. Test results will be reviewed by board-certified radiologists who will develop a report that will be forwarded

to your primary-care physician. After the screenings, attendees are invited to enjoy refreshments and participate in a stress and relaxation exercise session. Radiology Suite. For more information and to register, call 888.724.7123 and mention "Better Health."

## Bone Up on Your Health:

### Osteoporosis 101

**Monday, May 20, 2 to 4 p.m.**

Osteoporosis affects men and women of all ages and races. This presentation provides an overview of the nature and risk factors of osteoporosis, as well as the signs and symptoms of the disease. We will also cover popular treatment options and practical tips for protecting your bones. This program includes a complimentary bone density screening and will take place at the Manchester Library, 21 Colonial Drive.

## Live and Thrive with Exercise!

**Wednesday, May 29, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Join the 100,000 older adults across the U.S. who will be participating in various forms of physical activity on National Health and Fitness Day. Begin your day at 9 a.m. with our community partner, Ocean County YMCA, 1088 W. Whitty Road, Toms River, to tour the facility, participate in an Aquacise class, or try out their gym equipment at no charge. Then, at noon, come to Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus for a light lunch and an afternoon of movement and wellness, including Tai Chi, Pilates, meditation and other healthy surprises. Drop in at any point throughout the day and stay for as long or as little as you like. For more information and a full lineup of events, call 732.597.6075.



## SUPPORT FOR PARENTS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN

Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus recently formed an Autism Support Group, which is held the third Wednesday of every month. Founded by a Better Health member who is a retired psychologist and has experience helping families with autistic children, the group will provide support for parents of autistic children of any age.



# **Emergencies happen fast. We treat them the same way.**

## **Fast and efficient ER treatment**

At Monmouth Medical Center, Southern Campus we relieve the pain of waiting. From minor to complex medical and surgical emergencies, to broken arms and more, we're here to care for you quickly and effectively. And with special units dedicated to pediatric and geriatric care, we're equipped to treat all age groups.

Speed, dedication, superior service and access to the entire RWJBarnabas Health network, it all adds up to an Emergency Department that achieves high patient satisfaction rates and great outcomes.

For more information, please  
visit [rwjbh.org/monmouthsouth](http://rwjbh.org/monmouthsouth)

**Monmouth  
Medical Center  
Southern Campus**

**RWJBarnabas  
HEALTH**

Let's be healthy together.

