

A Publication of
COMMUNITY MEDICAL CENTER

FALL 2018

healthy

together

**KID-SIZED
EMERGENCY CARE**

**NEW KNEE FOR
A BETTER LIFE**

**BARIATRIC
SURGERY:
CHOOSING HEALTH**

**A NEW STATE
OF HEALTH
FOR YOU &
YOUR FAMILY**



A New State of HEALTH

At its heart, healthcare is about people: about you and your family, your doctors and other members of your care team. Supporting that care are researchers—people with minds curious and rigorous enough to help determine which treatments work best and to discover new ones.

At RWJBarnabas Health, we stand for all these people—every single member of each community we serve. With our new partner Rutgers University, one of the nation’s leading public educators, we’re creating a new state of health in New Jersey. Together, we’re building a network of the best minds to deliver unparalleled patient care, to train the next generation of exceptional medical professionals, and to grow our shared commitment to groundbreaking research. Our goal is simple: for you and your loved ones to have access to the highest quality care in the nation.

For example, Community Medical Center, an RWJBarnabas Health facility, was recently recognized as a Center for Excellence in Robotic Surgery for providing the highest level of care, utilizing cutting-edge surgical technology. This national acknowledgement is a testament to our physicians, nurses, staff and the care they provide every day to patients needing surgery. Their commitment to our patients and their passion for what they do are truly remarkable.

Where you get your healthcare matters. With this magazine, we’ll share what we stand for and how our values are positively impacting the health of individuals and entire communities. We hope you enjoy reading more about what we’re doing—and its importance to your health—in the pages of this new quarterly publication, *Healthy Together*.

Yours in good health,

BARRY H. OSTROWSKY
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
RWJBARNABAS HEALTH



MICHAEL MIMOSO, MHSA, FACHE
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
COMMUNITY MEDICAL CENTER



HEALTH NEWS

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The percentage increase in stroke risk for folks who don’t eat breakfast versus those who do. Experts think it may be because eating helps prevent spikes in blood pressure. So how do you like your eggs? —STROKE



MEDITATE FOR BETTER SLEEP

You know meditation reduces stress and improves concentration, but did you know that it helps you sleep better? A study found that mindfulness meditation improved sleep quality among its participants.

—JAMA INTERNAL MEDICINE

SAY thank you :)

Study participants who took part in a five-minute practice of reflecting on what they’re thankful for were shown to have spikes in immunoglobulin A, an antibody responsible for fighting off viruses.

—JOURNAL OF ADVANCEMENT IN MEDICINE

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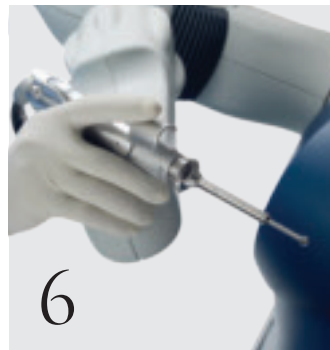
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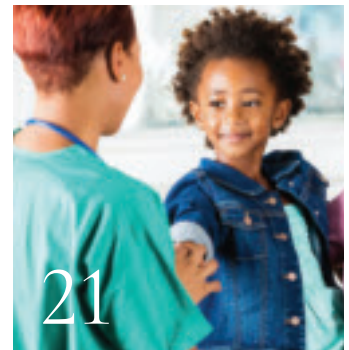
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Enjoying LIFE AGAIN

**A LOCAL RESIDENT IMPROVES
TYPE 2 DIABETES AND REGAINS
VITALITY AFTER LOSING MORE
THAN 100 POUNDS WITH
GASTRIC BYPASS SURGERY.**

Marion has always been young at heart. Now, at 57 and 115 pounds lighter, her body matches her spirit. She says that bariatric surgery at Community Medical Center (CMC) changed her life. “I got on a bike for the first time in 35 years,” she says. “It was rejuvenating!”

Weight has always been an issue for Marion, who began “packing it on” after

significant life events, including childbirth and the death of her parents. The added weight contributed to physical problems: Marion had a double knee replacement in 2013 and saw her type 2 diabetes spiral out of control. “I was dependent on insulin and taking pills to control my blood sugar, and I had neuropathy in my feet,” she says of the side effects of her weight, which climbed to 350 pounds.

When Marion started a new job in 2017, she learned that bariatric surgery was covered by her insurance plan. She knew the timing was right. Marion investigated programs throughout New Jersey and attended an informational session hosted by the Center for Bariatrics at CMC. Marion was convinced. “I was impressed and happy to find a great program close to home.”

PROMISES KEPT

At Marion’s first appointment, she met with Steven J. Binenbaum, MD, FACS, FASMBS, a board-certified bariatric surgeon. He recommended a laparoscopic Roux-en-Y gastric bypass which restricts food intake and calorie absorption and improves blood sugar levels. “Dr. Binenbaum said a bypass

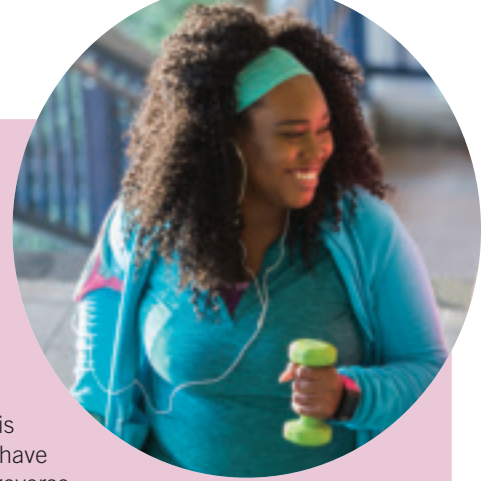
To learn about the advanced surgical weight-loss treatments and support services offered at the Center for Bariatrics, call 732-557-8966 or visit rwjbh.org/weightloss.



MORE THAN WEIGHT LOSS

The health benefits of bariatric surgery far outweigh lost pounds.

Bariatric surgeon James V. Pasquariello, MD, FACS, Medical Director of The Center for Bariatrics at Community Medical Center, says there's a misconception that bariatric surgery is solely about weight loss. "The main reason to have surgery," he says, "is not to look good, but to reverse the health effects caused by excess weight and to prevent future problems from ever happening."

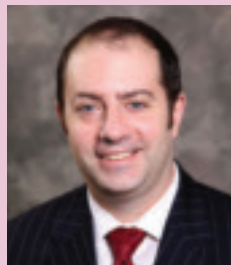


Combined with a healthy lifestyle, bariatric surgery can provide lifesaving benefits:

- Type 2 diabetes remission
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Improved respiratory health
- Reduced cancer risk
- Eliminating sleep apnea
- Bone and joint pain relief
- Improved fertility
- Relief of depression

A laparoscopic gastric bypass or sleeve gastrectomy procedure could be an option if:

- You have a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or greater
- Your BMI is 35 or more and you have weight-related health issues
- You've tried unsuccessfully to lose weight
- Excess weight is interfering with your quality of life



JAMES V. PASQUARIELLO, MD

"The benefits of bariatric surgery outweigh the risks," says Dr. Pasquariello, one of five board-certified bariatric surgeons at the Center for Bariatrics. "People come to us to get healthy—that's the real beauty of what we do."

was the best option due to my diabetes," says Marion. "I was terrified, but he reassured and educated me. I trusted him completely."

The Center for Bariatrics' staff assured Marion they would support her throughout her journey. "Boy, did they keep their promise!" says Marion. "I had access to the surgeon, dietitian, psychologist and nurses



STEVEN J. BINENBAUM, MD

whenever I needed them. They were my cheerleaders and were with me every step of the way."

A registered dietitian and certified diabetes

educator with 35 years of experience, Anne Van Meerbeke is part of the Center for Bariatrics team and consults with patients before surgery. She learns about their medical history and dietary habits, and develops a customized lifestyle management plan.

"Many patients think, 'I'll have surgery and be skinny and life will be great,'" says Van Meerbeke. "But there's a lot of medical preparation and counseling needed. I educate patients about nutrition and diabetes and focus on behavior modifications. My goal is to provide them with tools so they'll have the best outcome," she says.


Since the Center's launch more than a year ago, Van Meerbeke has made communication a priority. "I can text Anne a picture of a food label when I'm at the grocery store and ask, 'Can I eat this?' and

she'll respond right back," says Marion. For years, Marion didn't truly understand her diabetes or the foods that impacted it. "Now, thanks to Anne, I do," says Marion, who now has a normal blood sugar level.

INSPIRING OTHERS

Pounds away from her goal weight, Marion is inspiring others. She never misses a support group meeting. "I've become friends with the participants," she says. "It helps to be with people who understand what you're going through." Marion calls pizza her "hot button," but says she has learned to confront it: "I take a sniff then leave it and go for a walk or visit my grandkids." In January, Marion's grandchildren will reap the benefits of their active grandmother's transformation even more.

"We're going to Disney World!" Marion exclaims.



The Mako Robotic Arm-Assisted System for joint replacement includes software to help doctors pre-plan surgery and improve precision.

A Journey to Better Quality of Life

HOW ROBOTIC-ASSISTED KNEE REPLACEMENT IS HELPING ONE MAN GET BACK TO DOING THE THINGS HE LOVES.

For more information, call The Total Joint Replacement and Spine Institute at 732-557-8194 or visit rwjbh.org/ortho.

Frederick Yorke III is a beachcomber at heart. In his youth, he would spend summer days with his family on the beach at Seaside Park, learning such maritime pastimes as crabbing

and boating. As an adult, the longtime Ocean County resident has spent many an afternoon fishing off the Jersey shore.

But in recent years, progressive osteoarthritis has made it difficult for Fred to enjoy life at sea or on dry land. He started feeling pain in his knees and upper body while in his 60s, and the pain started intensifying five years ago.

As the pain increased, so did the limits on Fred's life. He had trouble walking any distance, and he could only visit handicapped-accessible places. "My biggest problem was stairs," says Fred, now age 76.

"I really couldn't function with stairs any longer. It got to the point where my wife, Janet, and I stopped visiting some friends and relatives because I couldn't get up their stairs."

TREATMENTS TRIED & FAILED

Fred tried different treatments, from physical therapy to hyaluronic acid injections, but the knees kept getting worse.



MARK KASPER, MD

"My wife and I finally decided that if I was going to have the quality of life that I wanted, then I needed to have knee surgery," Fred says. "No other treatment was going to help much." Fred's

primary care physician referred him to Mark Kasper, MD, an orthopedic surgeon with The Total Joint Replacement and Spine Institute at Community Medical Center (CMC). The Institute has The Joint Commission Gold Seal of Approval for hip and knee replacement, so Fred knew he would be in good hands.

On August 2, Dr. Kasper performed a total replacement of Fred's right knee using the Mako Robotic Arm-Assisted System. Mako uses computer tomography to create a 3-D model of the patient's bone anatomy. The surgeon uses that model to tailor surgery to the patient's unique anatomy, helping to protect soft tissue around the knee. The surgeon guides the robotic arm to remove diseased bone and cartilage, then to insert and adjust the joint replacement.

ROBOTIC SURGERY BENEFITS

Compared with traditional joint replacement surgery, robotic surgery allows the surgeon to make a smaller incision with more precise cuts to the surrounding tendons and tissue. Dr. Kasper notes that this reduces tissue and muscle injury during surgery and can promote more efficient healing.

While robotic surgery doesn't significantly shorten overall recovery time compared with traditional knee replacement surgery, Dr. Kasper notes that in practice he has seen patients progress more quickly during the first two months of recovery after robotic surgery.

The precision that comes with robotic-assisted surgery may give total knee replacement a more natural feel over time,



Frederick Yorke, seen here with his wife, Janet, is well on his way to reclaiming his quality of life thanks to robotic-assisted knee replacement at Community Medical Center.

says Dr. Kasper. Citing clinical studies, he notes that while patients overall are satisfied with their knee replacements, approximately 20 percent still sense that they're walking on an implanted knee years after surgery. By contrast, he says, "Patients who undergo total hip replacement hardly feel that they had a hip replacement. We're trying to create the same kind of experience for total knee replacement patients."

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Most patients who undergo total knee replacement through the Total Joint Replacement and Spine Institute return to full activities six months to one year after surgery, says Dr. Kasper. Along the way, patients follow a general timeline to recovery that begins one to four weeks before surgery with a pre-operative class

at the institute. Patients scheduled for total or partial joint replacement surgery are strongly encouraged to attend the class, during which the orthopedic nursing staff explains what will happen during the procedure and what to expect during recovery.

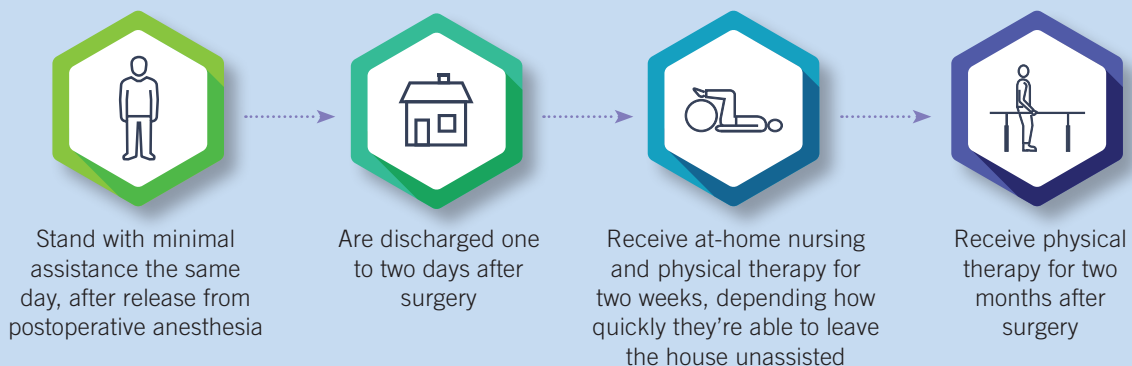
After surgery, Dr. Kasper notes, most joint replacement patients stand with minimal assistance the same day, and are discharged after one to two nights in the hospital.

As for Fred Yorke? Before he can set sail again, he must undergo total left knee replacement once he has fully recovered from the right knee procedure. But for now, Dr. Kasper is pleased with Fred's progress.

"He's going faster than the average," says Dr. Kasper. "He's two or three weeks ahead of schedule. He's very determined to recover."

RECOVERY TIMELINE

Following robotic knee replacement surgery at The Total Joint Replacement and Spine Institute, most patients:





Jennifer Bianco, RN, fits a sling for a young patient at KidCare, Community Medical Center's dedicated Pediatric Emergency Department.

HEAD TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT IF YOUR CHILD:

- Isn't acting normally or responding appropriately
- Is short of breath
- Shows signs of fever and rashes
- Has unmanageable vomiting or diarrhea
- Could have orthopedic injuries, such as strains, sprains or fractures
- Has overdosed on medication

KID-SIZED EMERGENCY CARE

A DEDICATED ED OFFERS SPECIALIZED CARE AND A REASSURING ATMOSPHERE.

As a parent, it's natural to fear the worst when your child feels unwell or gets hurt—and it's not always easy to tell whether a child needs urgent care or can wait to see his or her pediatrician.

The Pediatric Emergency Department (ED) at Community Medical Center (CMC) is designed to help. As soon as a child arrives, pediatric physicians and staff work together to provide rapid diagnosis and



WILLIAM DALSEY, MD

treatment for conditions ranging from minor injuries to life-threatening illnesses.

PEDIATRIC MEDICAL TEAMS

When families arrive at CMC, they are brought directly to KidCare, the hospital's dedicated Pediatric Emergency Department. Located adjacent to the main ED, KidCare treats 12,000 children each year—from newborns to teens. In addition to board-certified pediatricians in-house 24/7, the staff includes pediatric nurses with advanced training in pediatric life support. A FastTrack program provides quick and efficient care for pediatric patients who have less complicated concerns.

KidCare has child-sized diagnostic and

therapeutic equipment and eight pediatric treatment rooms with child-friendly amenities such as TVs, toys and even a fire truck exam table to distract uneasy patients.

MAKING ED TRIPS EASIER FOR KIDS WITH AUTISM

KidCare offers unique care for children with autism. "Our emergency department staff is skilled in treating children with autism and special needs," says William Dalsey, MD, Chair of Emergency Medicine.

In addition to training staff on sensory sensitivity, pain threshold and patient interaction, the ED provides iPads with special software, compression vests, noise-reduction earmuffs and other items to offer support, comfort and security to patients with autism.

KidCare staff members collaborate with experts from other departments—including orthopedists, neonatologists and anesthesiologists—to provide children with specialized care. "In more serious cases," says Dr. Dalsey, "our physicians work together to stabilize and safely transfer critically-ill children to tertiary pediatric hospitals."

Dr. Dalsey says the Pediatric ED has a long-standing relationship with pediatricians in the community. "They trust us to provide the best emergency care for their pediatric patients," he says.

For a referral to a pediatrician on staff, please call 888-724-7123.

A NEW STATE OF HEALTH

FOR NEW JERSEY, THE NATION, THE WORLD

WHAT THE UNPRECEDENTED PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN RWJBARNABAS HEALTH AND RUTGERS UNIVERSITY MEANS FOR YOU.

The state's largest integrated health system, RWJBarnabas Health, and Rutgers University, one of the nation's leading public research universities, have formed a groundbreaking partnership that will increase access to care and reduce healthcare disparities, while advancing health science discovery and innovation. RWJBarnabas Health will make a significant investment in recruiting and retaining the nation's finest doctors, researchers and medical students. That means more expert physicians to care for patients and more clinical trials to find better treatment options. Moreover, everyone on this dynamic new team has a mission to deliver excellence in every area of the patient experience. Altogether, the partnership means a transformation of the way healthcare is delivered in New Jersey.

That's the big picture. What's the personal picture for you and your family? You'll be able to get compassionate, world-class care without having to travel far from home. In the following pages, we'll share more good news about what this partnership means for you.



PARTNERSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



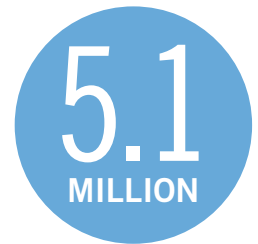
To be invested by RWJBarnabas Health in the education and research mission of the integrated academic health system, over 20 years



Committed by RWJBarnabas Health to encourage Rutgers medical students to remain in New Jersey and provide care to its residents



Physicians and providers (2,500) and staff (3,000) under the direction of the new Combined Medical Group



Patient visits conducted by RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers, combined, in 2017



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

HOW IN-STATE CLINICAL RESEARCH CONNECTS TO BETTER CARE FOR NEW JERSEY PATIENTS.

If you've read or watched anything about medical care in recent years, it's clear that the field of medicine is always advancing. How do medical treatments improve? Through clinical research or clinical trials. Doctors, nurses and scientists gather information through personal interaction with patients, or through collection of blood, tissue or data, to find new and better ways to detect, diagnose, treat and prevent disease.

When this research takes place in New Jersey, residents have the ability to participate in those clinical trials, and to be among the first patients to benefit from new treatments. Those opportunities will increase dramatically as a result of the RWJBarnabas Health/Rutgers partnership, which will double the Rutgers research portfolio—already the largest in New Jersey—and make it possible to hire about 100 new high-caliber principal investigators (lead researchers).

To learn more about this historic partnership, visit www.RutgersRWJBHtogether.org.

EXPANDING CANCER CARE

The Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey offers a prime example of how the partnership between Rutgers and RWJBarnabas Health will enhance both clinical research and patient care. Under the new partnership, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—is now able to more easily provide patients with greater access to outstanding cancer services and clinical trials close to home.

“For many cancers, standard therapy may not be sufficient to have the greatest success for an individual patient,” says Steven K. Libutti, MD, FACS, Senior Vice President of Oncology Services for RWJBarnabas Health and Director of the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. “We're constantly



STEVEN K. LIBUTTI, MD, FACS

looking for the next generation of therapies that will be more effective, and the only way we make those discoveries is through the conduct of clinical research.” Immunotherapy, in which a person's immune system can be used to fight cancer, is just one of many cutting-edge areas of study at Rutgers Cancer Institute.

ACCESS EVERYWHERE

Thanks to the new partnership, more cancer patients will have access to the most advanced care. Rutgers Cancer Institute will leverage telemedicine and video conferencing to bring experts at different sites together with patients. “We're also expanding the number of patient navigators we have in our program,” says Dr. Libutti. “These navigators are essentially partnered with a patient from the moment of diagnosis throughout his or her care. They can make certain the patient goes to the closest facility that has the capability to address that patient's particular cancer problem with exceptional treatment.”

For New Jerseyans who have cancer, home is where the care is. “The significance of this partnership is really our ability to bring cutting-edge therapies, state-of-the-art technologies and world-class physicians directly to patients in their own community,” Dr. Libutti says. “We strongly believe in the notion that cancer does not travel well. No patient in New Jersey has to travel out of state to get the most advanced and exceptional cancer care.”

To learn more about RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, visit rwjbh.org/cancer.



For a referral to a Combined Medical Group physician, visit rwjbh.org/medicalgroup or rutgershealth.org.

CARING WITH PURPOSE

A NEW VISION FOR HEALTHCARE UNITES PROVIDERS AND PATIENTS.

When many hearts and minds work with one purpose, healthcare can be transformed.

That's the guiding idea behind the Combined Medical Group, a joint physician practice that will be a key part of the partnership between RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers.

"Having a shared purpose, a vision and a set of core values excites our employees and physicians and other healthcare professionals," says Andy Anderson, MD, MBA, Chief Executive Officer of the Combined Medical Group. "They want to be part of something

that's going to help define the future of healthcare."

RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers are engaged in a partnership, not a merger, so each remains a separate institution. The



ANDY ANDERSON, MD, MBA

practitioners at RWJBarnabas Health and the faculty practice of Rutgers-employed healthcare professionals (including physicians, dentists, psychologists,

nurses, pharmacists and others) will collaborate and innovate as a team. The Combined Medical Group will include approximately 5,500 physicians, providers and staff.

VISION INTO REALITY

In order to integrate their efforts seamlessly, the group needs a common purpose. "We're focused on three areas," explains Dr. Anderson, who comes to the partnership from a similar role at Aurora Health Care in Wisconsin. "Those areas are: making sure we put patients first, valuing each member of the healthcare team and improving the health of the communities we serve."

That three-part purpose has to touch every aspect of the patient's experience, Dr. Anderson believes. "Healthcare is not only about hospitals. It's also about office practices, home-care services, access to medications and more," he says. "We want to better connect all those pieces and parts to make it easier for patients."

The effort will include a review of the electronic medical records system. "In the future state of the health system, a patient will be able to look at their medication list or next appointment, get reminders or get lifestyle recommendations, all through a single portal," Dr. Anderson says.

A FOCUS ON WELLNESS

The vision also includes focusing more attention on helping patients stay well. For example, having staff and providers talk more with patients about lifestyle habits can give them better control over chronic diseases like diabetes.

Though the goals of the Combined Medical Group are ambitious, they are also, in a way, simple. "We want to be the health system where patients want to get care," Dr. Anderson says, "and where people want to work."



GREAT MINDS, BIG HEARTS

THE RWJBARNABAS HEALTH/RUTGERS PARTNERSHIP OPENS THE DOOR TO NEW CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE—INCLUDING A GROUNDBREAKING NEUROSCIENCES ENTERPRISE.

Many critical conditions fall under the scope of a neurosurgical team: stroke, concussion, trauma to or infection in the brain or spine, and more. While Rutgers and RWJBarnabas Health already place among the top tier of neurosurgical care providers, their partnership is allowing the creation of a neurosciences institute of global renown.



ANIL NANDA, MD, MPH

“This is a unique opportunity to build a truly world-class center,” says Anil Nanda, MD, MPH, the newly appointed Senior Vice

President of Neurosurgical Services for RWJBarnabas Health. Dr. Nanda also will serve as Professor and Joint Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery at both Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School. He comes to his role from Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center—Shreveport, where he built an internationally known department of neurosurgery.

FOCUSED ON QUALITY

“Our challenge here in New Jersey is to build on different cultures in the medical schools and in different hospitals and create a unified system,” Dr. Nanda says. Among his top priorities are to look at safety; to identify whether all sites have the cutting-edge technology they need;

and to do a sophisticated data analysis of outcomes. “We’ve hired a biostatistician and an epidemiologist to help us create a neurological dashboard to look at safety and quality issues across the system,” he explains.

While good data and technical expertise are critical, they’re only part of successful neurosurgical care, Dr. Nanda says. “We want to do this in a compassionate setting, to treat patients like we would want our families treated,” he says.

Public health outreach on topics like concussions and stroke will be a priority, as will looking at ways to eliminate disparities in healthcare. “We want to make sure patients get very good care, even if they live in communities that are economically challenged. That’s very important to me personally,” Dr. Nanda says. “And I feel strongly that in the neurosurgical services line, a rising tide brings healthcare up for all people in New Jersey. That’s why this is a magnificent partnership, with a strength in numbers that will allow us to provide excellent care to all.”

To learn more about neurological services, treatment and care at RWJBarnabas Health, visit rwjbh.org/neuro.



A SPORTS SLAM DUNK

RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers University have partnered to develop an outstanding sports medicine program for Rutgers athletes, students and faculty, as well as for communities throughout New Jersey. The combined effort includes a new state-of-the-art athletic facility, the RWJBarnabas Health Athletic Performance Center, scheduled to be completed in July 2019.

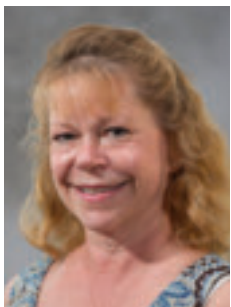


“Omar was very motivated and upbeat in physical therapy,” Dr. Fantasia says.

BACK ON TRACK

A YOUNG ATHLETE TAKES A DEVASTATING FALL AND GETS BACK UP—WITH THE HELP OF CHILDREN’S SPECIALIZED HOSPITAL.

Last April, Omar Shehabeldin, 14, was running for a school bus when he felt a “pop” in his knees and fell—hard. Instead of going to a track meet as he’d planned, he was taken to the Emergency Department at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick. Both knees appeared to be broken.



MICHELE FANTASIA, MD

In fact, the tendon that

connects the patella (kneecap) to the tibia (shin bone) had basically torn off in both legs. The tendons had to be surgically reattached with a type of hardware that looks like nails.

What had happened to cause such drastic injuries to the athletic Omar, who as a high school freshman was already a standout on the football team?

In fact, his family had long known he had Osgood-Schlatter disease, a not uncommon cause of knee pain in children. Bones, muscles and tendons change rapidly during growth spurts, and physical activity puts extra stress on them. “It started when Omar was younger,” says his mother Aliaa Gouda. “When he got on the floor to pray with his father, he would complain that his knee hurt. The doctor told us that he would outgrow it, as most children do.” Unfortunately, Omar was an exception.

WORKING IT

After surgery, Omar was sent to Children’s Specialized Hospital in New Brunswick for rehabilitation. “We stayed in close touch with the pediatric orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Stephen Adolfsen, who wanted to be sure the knee bones and patella had really fused before Omar began to bear weight on his legs,” says Michele Fantasia, MD, a specialist

in pediatric rehabilitation medicine at Children’s Specialized Hospital. “We worked with Omar on upper body and upper extremity training and core strengthening, all while he was in a special wheelchair that elevated his legs.” In June, Omar was cleared to walk with braces. In therapy, he began to bend his knees, bit by bit.

Omar was fortunate to have the considerable resources of Children’s Specialized, which include recreational therapy activities, water therapy and a therapy dog named Burton. “Our staff has experience in all developmental stages, and we are equipped with multiple therapeutic modalities,” Dr. Fantasia says.

Omar was discharged on June 21 and continues to go to the hospital for outpatient rehab. “Everybody at that hospital works with so much heart. It is a great place,” his mother Aliaa says. “In fact, we’re going to go back and volunteer to help people there.”

To learn more about Children’s Specialized Hospital, call 888-244-5373.

NEW WAYS TO FIGHT SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

AN INNOVATIVE PEER RECOVERY PROGRAM HELPS PEOPLE OPEN A WINDOW TO RECOVERY.

For information about placement into treatment for yourself or a loved one, call the State of New Jersey's IME (Interim Managing Entity) at 844-276-2777.

A hospital patient who has a substance use disorder may feel many things: fear, anger, loneliness, shame. What he or she may not feel is ready to accept help.

"That's where the magic of our Peer Recovery Program comes in," says Connie Greene, MA, CAS, CSW, CPS, Vice President of the RWJBarnabas Health Institute for Prevention and Recovery (IFPR). Peer Recovery Specialists—highly trained individuals who are in long-term recovery from their own substance use disorder—are available 24/7 at participating RWJBarnabas Health Hospitals through the Peer Recovery Program (PRP).

"Recovery Specialists are the best people to assess where this patient is at and how to engage him or her, because they've been in that bed," Greene explains. "That's a great relief for a person who may be isolated and may have exhausted relationships and resources."

For more information about the Institute for Prevention and Recovery, visit rwjbh.org/preventionandrecovery.

The goal of a Peer Recovery Specialist—one that often takes some time to achieve—is to get the person to agree to go to the next appropriate level of care, and to help him or her navigate the steps needed to maintain recovery.

NEW TACTICS FOR AN EPIDEMIC

In 2016 and 2017 alone, approximately 2,200 New Jerseyans died of overdoses. As part of the effort to reverse the tide, the IFPR staff has, with the help of state funding, gone from about 30 employees to about 160 over the past two and a half years.

The Peer Recovery Program is one of the innovative tactics the IFPR is using in its fight. In the past, patients who were brought to an emergency room with an overdose were given NARCAN to reverse the overdose, then sent on their way. Since 2016, participating RWJBarnabas Health hospitals have integrated Peer Recovery Specialists into ER teams, where they follow up with the patient and provide continuing support.



CONNIE GREENE, VP, IFPR

Now the Peer Recovery Program is functioning on medical floors as well. "Federal statistics tell us that between 9 and 10 percent of the population has a substance use disorder," Greene says. "So if you follow the data, up to 10 percent of the patients in our hospitals are affected."

Formerly, when a patient who was in the hospital for a different reason presented signs of a substance use disorder, physicians were often at a loss about how to proceed. Now Peer Recovery Specialists can be called in to come to the bedside, offer an intervention and guide the patient to the care that's needed.

"It's a very, very difficult job, but there is also the joy of holding someone's hand as they move into recovery," Greene says. Of the 5,500 people the Peer Recovery Program has interacted with, 85 percent have accepted recovery support services.

The blessings ripple out to family members as well. "Every morning when I see the whites of my son's eyes and hear him say 'Hi, Mom,' I want to cry, and then call you to thank you," one mother wrote to the Recovery Specialist who worked with her son. "May peace be with you on our journey as well—one day at a time."



KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS HEALTHY

TAME HYPERTENSION BEFORE KIDNEY DAMAGE OCCURS.

The heart beats steadily, creating pressure that moves blood through the body to nourish tissues and organs.

But when that pressure is too high—a result of obesity, genetics or other factors—the walls of blood vessels are damaged. They get weaker, narrower or harder.

Over time, the force of high blood pressure, or hypertension, can impair the arteries' ability to deliver sufficient blood to the

kidneys. In turn, kidneys can't fully perform their critical function of removing waste products and excess fluid from the body.

"There is a clear relationship between hypertension and renal failure that many



M. ISABEL ROBERTI, MD, PHD



RICHARD MANN, MD, MS

THE NATION'S #1 LIVING DONOR KIDNEY TRANSPLANT PROGRAM

Humans need only one kidney, so a person with two healthy kidneys can donate one of them to a desperately ill patient. Many people do just that, thanks to the world-class Living Donor Kidney Transplant program at Saint Barnabas Medical Center, which is ranked number one in the country. To learn more about kidney transplants or the Living Donor Institute at SBMC, visit www.rwjbh.org/sbmcckidneytransplant.



At right: The care team from the Renal and Pancreas Transplant Division at Saint Barnabas Medical Center.

To learn more about kidney transplant services at RWJBarnabas Health, visit www.rwjbh.org/kidneytransplant.

people may not be aware of," says Richard Mann, MD, MS, Medical Director of the Renal and Pancreas Transplant Program at RWJUH New Brunswick and Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. "In many cases, hypertension plays a role in the progression of injury to the kidney and, in some cases, hypertension is the primary cause of renal injury."

A COMMON PROBLEM

More than half of the U.S. population over age 20 has high blood pressure, and an estimated 3.5 percent of children and teens have it as well. "For a long time, pediatric hypertension was an under-recognized problem," says M. Isabel Roberti, MD, PhD, Director of the Children's Kidney Center at Saint Barnabas Medical Center. "Now the recommendation is for blood pressure screenings to begin as early as age 3."

A "silent" disease, hypertension can go undetected without regular screening. "The earlier we catch hypertension, the better," says Dr. Roberti. "Damage due to high blood pressure in children and teens is reversible, and action now can prevent their having kidney problems as adults." The good news is that, in both children and adults, hypertension is treatable with a multi-pronged approach including medication, diet changes and exercise.

A New **State of Health** for **NEW JERSEY**, for the **NATION**, for the **WORLD**

RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers University launch the state's largest academic health system

With the partnership of RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers University, it is the dawn of an incredible new era in health.

Jointly, RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers University will operate a world-class academic health system dedicated to high-quality patient care, life changing research and clinical training of tomorrow's health care workforce. By partnering, these two higher education and health care industry leaders will improve access to care and reduce health disparities in New Jersey and across the nation.

At the center of all of this are the patients who will benefit from increased access to a world-class academic health system, clinical innovation, groundbreaking research and newly developed centers of excellence, as well as more providers that families need to manage their health and wellness.





Members of Community Medical Center Foundation's Young Professional Advisory Council (from left to right) John Murray, Dr. Scott Beck, Erica Ward, David York, Esq., and Rudy Daunno at the Wave the Summer Goodbye event held at Chef Mike's ABG in Seaside Park.

NETWORKING FOR GOOD

EMERGING COMMUNITY LEADERS WORK TOGETHER TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CMC AS PART OF THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Steven Green and Erica Ward have their hands full. The Toms River residents are both business owners. Steven is the president of Green Label Title, a real estate title company, while Erica operates two businesses, BE CLEAN cleaning company and Aire-Master odor-control services. Busy parents of growing families, the two entrepreneurs also make time to volunteer for the Community Medical Center Foundation as part of the Young Professional Advisory Council.

Both Steven and Erica feel a strong pull to Community Medical Center (CMC). "The hospital has always been the backbone of our town," says Steven, who was born and raised in Toms River. Erica, delivering her second child at CMC this fall, says volunteerism has led her to a greater understanding of the medical center. "It makes me happy to know that my hospital is trying so hard to help its community," she says.

CONNECTING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The Advisory Council was created to appeal to a burgeoning group of young leaders in Ocean County's business community. "We host after-work networking events for professionals to mingle and learn about the hospital," says Allison Clemente, director of development. Members get an up-close look at the inner workings of CMC with tours of the hospital and presentations by medical staff.

Erica says she joined the Advisory Council to help raise

money for the hospital and to "connect with a great group of people." After Steven's involvement with the Advisory Council, he was asked to serve on the Foundation's Board of Trustees. "My goal is to introduce potential donors to the hospital and raise awareness," he says.

FUN WITH PURPOSE

The Advisory Council hosts several fundraising events throughout the year. "Bowl Your Heart Out," held at Ocean Lanes in Lakewood, benefited Cardiac Services. In September, "Wave the Summer Goodbye" was held at Chef Mike's ABG in Seaside Park. "It's always a fun night," says Clemente of the beachside event, which raised funds for Women's Health Services. Executive Chef/Owner Mike Jurusz prepared and donated food as well as hosting the event in his restaurant.

Erica and Steven say it's a "win-win" when business professionals join CMC fundraising efforts. "One person can do a lot, but together we can accomplish so much more," says Erica.

To learn more about the CMC Foundation's Young Professional Advisory Council, call 732-557-8131.



Having to return a second time to the J. Phillip Citta Regional Cancer Center at Community Medical Center for radiation therapy, Nancy Scardillo says it was a great comfort to see her team again: "It was like returning home to family." Here, Nancy is seated next to her physician Rajesh V. Iyer, MD, Chairman of the Department of Radiation Oncology, and surrounded by the rest of the treatment team.

The Comfort of CAMARADERIE

**A WARM WELCOME AND THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY IN RADIATION ONCOLOGY
EASE THE FEAR OF A RETURNING BREAST CANCER PATIENT.**

Nancy Scardillo breathed a sigh of relief when she completed radiation treatment in 2013. Her breast cancer experience over, Nancy returned to her busy life. The respite, however, was short-lived: A routine mammogram detected a mass in the other breast just four years later.

"I was much more frightened the second time around," admits Nancy, 65, of Toms River. "It was such a fear of the unknown." She took comfort from her radiation team at the J. Phillip Citta Regional Cancer Center at Community Medical Center (CMC), who had treated her cancer the first time around. "They welcomed me back with open arms. It was like returning home to family."

Nancy's first diagnosis in the left breast was ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), a non-invasive breast cancer considered Stage 0. She had a lumpectomy with a local breast surgeon and received radiation treatment at the J. Phillip Citta Regional Cancer Center at CMC. "Nancy had radiation therapy every day, five days a week for six-and-a-half weeks," says her radiation oncologist Rajesh V. Iyer, MD, Chairman of the Department of Radiation Oncology. "That was a standard treatment in 2013. She followed up with me every six months afterward and was doing well."

RETURN TO CMC

In the summer of 2017, Nancy's regular mammogram revealed a mass in the right breast. This one, though detected early, was more invasive than the previous cancer. Diagnosed as Stage 1, it was recommended that Nancy have a lumpectomy followed by chemotherapy and radiation.

Nancy underwent surgery and then received chemotherapy at a satellite of a large New York cancer center. She opted to return to the J. Phillip Citta Regional Cancer Center for radiation treatment. "Community has saved my life in the past," says Nancy, who experienced a brain aneurysm in 2012 and credits neurosurgeon Richard Hartwell, MD, with her diagnosis. "It felt right that I should return there to finish cancer treatment."

Nancy becomes emotional when she recalls her return to the Radiation Oncology Department, renovated since her previous visits. "It's important how a medical setting makes you feel when you're vulnerable, especially when you're going through something as serious as cancer. I liked that the waiting area felt welcoming and comfortable, like someone's living room. Everyone in the office treats me with kindness and respect. I'm 'Nancy,' not just another patient," she says of the front desk staff whose camaraderie put her at ease.

SAME TEAM. NEW TECHNOLOGY

Naturally, Nancy wishes she had not experienced cancer a second time, but she was grateful to be in trusted hands. Dr. Iyer says the timing was perfect from a technology standpoint. His department had just installed the Varian TruBeam Radiotherapy System, designed to deliver more powerful cancer treatment with pinpoint accuracy, speed and greater patient comfort.

"The TruBeam uses Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) and Image-guided radiotherapy (IGRT), two technologies that allow us to precisely

target tumor cells," explains Dr. Iyer. "Treatments are not only more targeted, but much shorter. What used to take 20 minutes can now be done in five to 10." Dr. Iyer notes that the J. Phillip Citta Regional Cancer Center has identical technology to that of larger cancer institutes. "There's no reason for patients to travel when they can experience the same quality of care here, closer to home," he says.

Nancy has the utmost respect for Dr. Iyer. "He doesn't sugarcoat or offer false promises, but really listens and makes me feel I can ask him anything," she says. In addition to Dr. Iyer's advice, Nancy was educated by a radiation oncology nurse who explained treatment expectations. "We provide a holistic approach here," explains Dr. Iyer. "We have our own social worker in the department and have access to nutritional counseling and support services if needed."

ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

A spiritual person, Nancy says prayer gave her the strength to persevere during cancer treatment. She also credits her radiation technologists, Laurie and Kim, who she calls her "coaches." According to Nancy, "My strong faith, Dr. Iyer and his team were what got me through each day. They were encouraging, supportive and had such compassion." Nancy was relieved to put her cancer journey behind her as she began 2018 cancer-free following treatment. She says she was sad, though, to say goodbye to her team. "I truly felt as though I was leaving my friends behind. They are a great group of people, and I am blessed to have had them in my life."

RWJBarnabas Health and Community Medical Center, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey—the state's only NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center—bring a world-class team of researchers and specialists to fight alongside you, providing close-to-home access to the latest treatments and clinical trials.

For a referral to a radiation oncologist, call 732-557-8148.



FORGING CONNECTIONS FOR SENIORS

A GRANT FROM THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION ADDRESSES SENIOR ISOLATION AND LONELINESS.

The “golden years” are often lonely years. As adults age, many older Americans find their inner circle shrinking when adult children move and spouses and friends become ill or pass away. While senior living communities promise an active second chapter, loneliness and isolation still exist behind closed doors.

SILENT HEALTH THREAT

A coalition of professionals in Toms River hopes to disrupt this silent threat to senior health. “Research shows that prolonged isolation is equal to the risks of smoking 15 cigarettes a day,” says Teri Kubiel, DNP, Vice President of Patient Experience and Community Affairs at Community

Medical Center (CMC). “It impacts heart disease, blood pressure and mental health, which may trigger additional visits to the Emergency Department.”

Dr. Kubiel and coalition members Keri Britske, Director of Community Outreach at CMC, and Lynette Whiteman, Executive Director of Caregiver Volunteers of Central Jersey, were part of a task force that organized focus groups throughout Toms River. The feedback they received identified senior isolation and loneliness as problems in need of solutions.

In response, they developed a unique pilot initiative titled the “Senior Ambassador Program.” It is funded by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson

Foundation through the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation. The Senior Ambassador Program is taking shape at Holiday City Carefree, a 55+ community in Toms River.

OFFERING A LIFELINE

Boasting one of the largest senior populations in the state, Ocean County has 92 communities for people age 55 and older. Though these locations offer numerous activities, many residents lack the initiative to join. “No matter how many bocce ball games are offered, seniors often won’t go if they’re alone,” says Dr. Kubiel.

The Senior Ambassador Program takes its cue from the resident assistant role at colleges. “We trained 10 volunteers who are residents at Holiday City Carefree,” she says. “They learned to identify neighbors at risk and how to stimulate communication and involvement in a non-threatening way.”

FreeCare, a group of senior volunteers who do apartment maintenance, have become a great resource. “They refer people to our ambassadors and even generate ideas for activities,” says Dr. Kubiel, noting that her group has learned to let seniors take the lead.

“It’s a journey that we’re on,” Whiteman says of the fledgling project. “Our senior population has so much wisdom. We need to take the time to listen and learn from them.”

TIPS TO EASE LONELINESS

- Connect with friends and family, in person and via technology
- Get out and about socially, to shop, for recreation
- Get involved in your community
- Learn a new skill or return to an old hobby
- Volunteer and help others
- Get a pet for companionship and comfort
- Seek support from a physician, counselor or trusted person

To learn more about the Senior Ambassador Program, contact Lynette Whiteman at lynettw@caregivervolunteers.org.

WHAT'S YOUR FLU IQ?

TAKE OUR QUIZ AND SEE HOW PREPARED YOU REALLY ARE FOR THIS YEAR'S FLU SEASON.

Maybe the flu *won't* strike you this year, with its fever, dry cough, sore throat, body aches and chills. But why take the chance? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that tens of thousands of people die from the flu and flu-related complications each year. Prevention is key—take our quiz, based on the latest CDC information, and learn what to do to avoid the flu.

1. Which of these symptoms is more specific to the flu than to a common cold?

- a. Cough
- b. Body ache
- c. Congestion
- d. Sneezing
- e. None of the above

2. Which of these are good steps to take to avoid getting the flu?

- a. Avoid infected individuals
- b. Get a flu vaccine
- c. Drink lots of fluids and maintain a balanced diet
- d. Wash your hands often
- e. All of the above

3. When you're exposed to the flu, how long does it typically take for you to become ill?

- a. One to four days
- b. One week to 10 days
- c. An hour or two
- d. A month
- e. Instantly

4. Who is *not* among those at highest risk for developing serious complications from the flu?

- a. Pregnant women
- b. People 65 years of age and older
- c. People who work more than 40 hours per week
- d. People with chronic illnesses like asthma and diabetes
- e. Young children

5. Which of these are recommended to help avoid the spread of the flu?

- a. Cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm
- b. Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap
- c. Stay away from work if you have symptoms
- d. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose
- e. All of the above

6. Which of these is true about the flu?

- a. It is caused by being cold and wet
- b. It always comes with a fever
- c. It is caused by a virus
- d. It cannot be diagnosed through tests
- e. You can catch the flu from the vaccine

7. What is the No. 1 step recommended by the CDC to prevent getting the flu?

- a. A flu vaccine at the start of flu season (usually October/November)
- b. Plenty of vegetables and fruits
- c. At least eight hours of sleep/night
- d. Staying away from populated areas
- e. Daily doses of aspirin



ANSWERS: 1. b; 2. e; 3. a; 4. c; 5. e; 6. c; 7. a

YOUR FLU IQ:

How many did you get right, and where do you rank? No matter your score, use the insights gained to reduce your future risk.

6–7: You're flu-prevention smart

4–5: Your flu facts need a booster shot

2–3: The flu is likely in your future

0–1: You have no clue about the flu

A close-up photograph of a person's arms and hands. The person is wearing a blue athletic top and a black smartwatch on their left wrist. A white cable is connected to the watch. They are also wearing a black beaded bracelet on their right wrist. Their right hand is holding a black and white sneaker. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

SWIFT RETURN TO A BUSY LIFE

**AN 18-YEAR-OLD'S PAINFUL HERNIA IS
REPAIRED WITH ROBOTIC-ASSISTED
SURGERY, ALLOWING FASTER RECOVERY.**

For a referral to a surgeon who performs robotic surgery, call 888-724-7123.

If robotic surgery makes you imagine a scene from science fiction, where a machine operates on you with a complete lack of caring, think again. The truth is that robotic surgery is performed by a very human, highly skilled surgeon who is assisted by advanced technology that provides enhanced control, dexterity and precision.

Sergey Grachev, MD, is one such surgeon, having undergone rigorous training to achieve his expertise and certification. Robotic surgery can be used for a variety of procedures in many fields, including cancer, colon and gallbladder surgery, as well as hernia repair.

A hernia occurs when an internal organ pushes through the surrounding layer of muscle and tissue and causes a bulge. There are a variety of types, but the most common, an inguinal hernia, occurs within the abdominal cavity, between the chest and the hips.

This was the type that Raymond Lubeski, 18, a college student from Manahawkin, noticed when he woke up one morning.

A TRUSTED PROVIDER

Raymond went to see Dr. Grachev, who already had a trusted relationship with the Lubeski family: Two of Raymond's uncles had undergone successful open hernia surgery with him in the past.

"I was scared when I first noticed it, but I recognized what it was. My uncles had experienced the same thing," Raymond says. "I don't know what it came from, since I hadn't lifted anything heavy. By the time I went to see Dr. Grachev, it had begun to hurt. He told me I should take care of it quickly and set up an appointment to have it repaired with robotic laparoscopy at Community Medical Center."

"It's important to take care of a hernia

at an early stage, when it's still small," says Dr. Grachev. "It's better to take care of it before it becomes painful and complications develop." Inguinal hernias don't improve on their own, and, over



SERGEY GRACHEV, MD

TIPS TO PREVENT HERNIAS

Take these precautions to help avoid hernias.

- Use your knees, not your back, to lift
- Avoid lifting heavy objects
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Avoid constipation through high fiber diet
- Drink plenty of water
- Treat allergies—to avoid chronic coughing or sneezing
- Stop smoking
- Warm up before exercising

time, the contents of the hernia can become incarcerated, or trapped, in the abdominal wall. If blood supply to the trapped tissue becomes cut off (called a strangulated hernia), a life-threatening situation can develop.

Robotic surgery has transformed hernia repair from a painful abdominal procedure that results in hospitalization, wound drains and a sizable abdominal scar into an outpatient procedure accomplished with small incisions. This leads to less chance of infection, less pain and a quicker return to normal daily life.

TWO DIFFERENT APPROACHES

In traditional open inguinal hernia repair, the surgeon makes an incision in the groin and pushes the protruding tissue back into the abdomen. The weakened area is then sewn, often reinforced with synthetic mesh. Stitches, staples or glue are used to close

the opening. Robotic laparoscopic repair is performed through several small abdominal incisions made by the surgeon. A small tube equipped with a tiny camera is inserted into one of these incisions. Guided by the camera, the surgeon repairs the hernia by inserting tiny instruments through the other incisions.

"Robotic surgery provides much better visualization because of the optical technology," says Dr. Grachev. "And the instrumentation is more precise, which allows better suturing than the open method."

At the hospital, Raymond received general anesthesia for his surgery, which lasted less than two hours. "The doctor and the staff at Community Medical Center were very reassuring in telling me that everything was going to be okay," Raymond remembers.

NO PAIN MEDS NEEDED

Following surgery, Raymond was able to go home later that same day.

"I didn't need pain medication," Raymond says. "I was back to my normal schedule in a couple of days, and the incisions healed quickly. I didn't know it was going to be so easy."

Community Medical Center has been accredited as a Center of Excellence for Robotic Surgery, one of only three such centers in New Jersey, and was an early adopter of robotic surgery—its program was the first of its kind in the region.

But for an 18-year-old like Raymond Lubeski, it's not the technological advancements that are so impressive; it's the fact that robotic surgery rid him of his hernia and enabled him to swiftly recover and return to his busy life.

WHY ROBOTIC SURGERY?

For hernia repair, the benefits of robotic-assisted surgery over traditional open surgery are many:

- Smaller incisions
- Superior surgical precision
- Less pain
- Shorter recovery period
- Reduced scarring
- Less time in the hospital
- Lower risk of infection
- Reduced need for narcotic pain medicines
- No need for surgical drains

Your family has no history of breast cancer. You still need a mammogram.

At Community Medical Center we offer the latest in comprehensive breast health services including screening and diagnostic mammography, genetic testing, breast surgery and more — like peace of mind. And with breast health centers conveniently located throughout Ocean county, finding us is simple, too.

Making excuses is easy. Making an appointment is easier. Schedule your visit at rwjbh.org/mammo or call **732-557-8150**.

Community Medical Center

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Let's beat breast cancer together.

