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SPRING 2020

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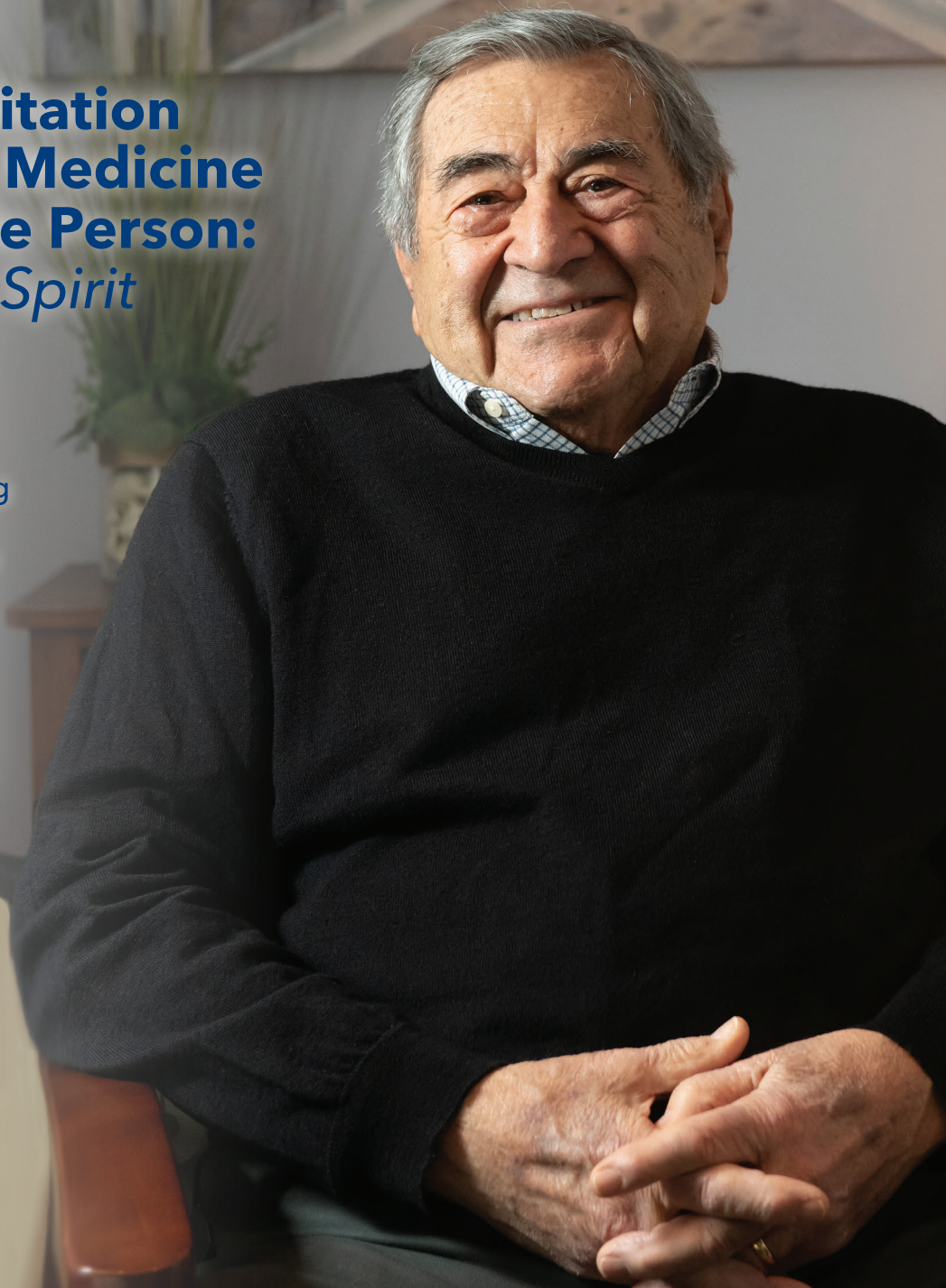
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

During These Uncertain Times, We Stand with You



At press time for this latest issue of *Focused On You*, our world faces a new reality with the unprecedented health crisis of COVID-19.

Early in March, MedStar Montgomery Medical Center received our first confirmed positive cases of COVID-19. From the moment those patients arrived at our hospital, they received the highest quality of care from our well-prepared providers and associates, who took appropriate precautions while treating them.

Our team is working around the clock to develop and deploy plans in a rapidly changing environment.

We are working collaboratively with our colleagues throughout the MedStar Health system, as well as with federal, state, and local authorities, to implement the best plan of care for our patients and their family members.

To our community: we want you to know that MedStar Montgomery Medical Center is here for you, to support your health and wellness needs every step of the way. With access to the best healthcare providers, resources, and practices, we are prepared to meet the challenge of the COVID-19 virus. We are in this together, and we stand with you as we continue to move forward.

I would like to personally thank our local community for the outpouring of support our team has received as your frontline healthcare workers. In times like these, we are most proud to call you neighbors. Know that the health and wellness of our community remains our top priority.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Yours in good health,

THOMAS J. SENKER, FACHE

President, MedStar Montgomery Medical Center, Senior Vice President, MedStar Health

Welcoming Our New Providers



Javairiah Fatima, MD
Vascular Surgeon

To schedule an appointment, please call **301-774-8962**.



Candice Fori, PA
Hematology & Oncology

To schedule an appointment, please call **301-774-8697**.



Erin Patricia Crane, MD
Diagnostic Radiologist, MedStar Breast Health & Imaging Center

To schedule an appointment, please call **301-260-3301**.

FOCUSED ON YOU

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Clearing Away the Smoke: Talk to Your Teen About Vaping

BY DR. MARILOU G. TABLANG-JIMENEZ, DIRECTOR OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AT MEDSTAR MONTGOMERY MEDICAL CENTER

Gone are the days when teen smoking was easy for parents to detect. With e-cigarettes, there is no more lingering smoke smell on clothes, and many parents are easily confused by new electronic gadgets. Unfortunately, these factors are part of the reason why vaping is so appealing to underage users.

Although e-cigarette companies say their products are intended for adult smokers over 21, teenagers, who are often not educated on the harmful effects of e-cigarettes, are still getting their hands on them. MedStar Montgomery Medical Center has seen an increase in concern from parents who fear their children may be caught up in the trend.

Truth Initiative, America's largest nonprofit health organization committed to ending tobacco use, published a survey in *Tobacco Control* that found 63% of e-cigarette users aged 15-24 did not know that the product always contains nicotine. Misinformation among youth is fueling the higher health risk of this new phenomenon. Below are a few tips on how to start a conversation with your teen.

Get your teen's perspective.

Ask "why?" before suggesting "why not." Let them know you are coming from a place of concern, not judgment.

Open the dialogue.

Invite your child to ask questions. This is the best way to understand what type of peer pressure they are experiencing and creates an opportunity for you to offer them other responses if they don't feel confident just saying no.

Help them understand the facts.

There's a widespread misconception among teens that vaping is safe. Many teens think they are inhaling flavors and water vapor, not realizing the side effects or the potential for addiction. E-cigarette vapor has different hazards compared to tobacco smoke and contains many chemicals that can cause health and respiratory issues. Educate yourself first and speak to the facts in a way that doesn't involve a lecture.



OVER 5,700 KIDS

Start vaping every day



1 JUUL POD = 20 CIGARETTES

One JUUL pod contains as much addictive nicotine as a pack of cigarettes



5 MILLION YOUTHS USE E-CIGARETTES

A 135% increase in just two years (2017-2019)

Speak in the present.


Kids often have a hard time connecting their current behavior with future health. Talk about the larger problems, but also those that can happen sooner rather than later, such as shortness of breath, mouth sores, mood impairments, and interrupted brain development.

Have regular conversations.

Look for opportunities to discuss vaping with your child, such as when you receive letters from school about vaping policies, or see advertisements or people vaping on TV. Even the youngest child can understand the dangers of the habit, so it's never too soon to start.

Be an example.

Set a positive example by making your house vape- and tobacco-free.

The most important thing is keeping your child safe and healthy. That includes helping them navigate peer pressure and misinformation. Don't be afraid to ask for help or contact your child's pediatrician, as this new phenomenon has taken countless parents by surprise. MedStar Montgomery has partnered with local schools to educate families about the dangers of vaping. To request a presentation at your school or faith organization, contact the MedStar Montgomery Behavioral Health Center at 301-774-8860. 



Marilou G. Tablang-Jimenez, MD, DFAPA

To learn more about our addiction and mental health services, please visit [MedStarMontgomery.org/BehavioralHealth](https://www.medstar-montgomery.org/BehavioralHealth) or call 301-774-8860.



PATIENT LORENZO MEROLA WITH CERTIFIED MEDICAL REIKI MASTER MARY PAT HULTENG.

Cardiac Rehabilitation and Integrative Medicine Treats the Whole Person: *Body, Mind, and Spirit*

BY JENNIFER GARRISON

For a man so lively, quick-witted, and bright, it's hard to believe that Mr. Lorenzo Merola is 93 years old. A retired biochemist, he resides in Leisure World in Silver Spring, Maryland, with his wife, Florence.

Most days, Lorenzo keeps up a positive attitude. "My philosophy is to laugh a lot, eat a lot, and joke a lot," he remarks. But recent serious health conditions interfered with that philosophy and led him to a variety of practices and services at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center.

In January 2018, Lorenzo had trouble walking and experienced shortness of breath. He saw Dr. Stuart Gould, MD, at MedStar Cardiology Associates, who discovered a severe aortic stenosis, or a narrow aortic valve. If left untreated, this condition makes breathing difficult and can be fatal. Thankfully, Lorenzo was stabilized and Dr. Gould recommended surgery.



Stuart Gould, MD

Because of his age, Lorenzo was hesitant to have surgery and go under anesthesia. He was relieved when Dr. Gould suggested a safer option: a transcatheter aortic valve replacement, or TAVR.

"The TAVR is a less invasive way to replace a heart valve than open heart surgery, and it's safer," explained Dr. Gould. "Because of Lorenzo's age, this was a better way to do the surgery."

The surgery was successful.

Dr. Gould prescribed outpatient cardiac rehabilitation three days a week to help Lorenzo build strength and balance. Once he completed the prescribed rehabilitation, he was hooked, and now continues to exercise two days a week at the clinic.

"I realize now the surgery and rehab improved the quality of my life," Lorenzo smiles. "I walk now and I don't get tired, even going upstairs. Sometimes Flo and I do a little slow dancing."

Through all this success, Lorenzo was still experiencing arthritis, a common issue with men his age. The arthritis caused knee pain that exercising had not helped, and one of the rehab technicians suggested he try a meditation class offered at the MedStar Health Center for Integrative Medicine.

"I never believed in meditation or any of that stuff," Lorenzo says, admitting he decided to give it a try anyway. "I went in at 10 or 11 in the morning with pain in my knees, and I came out with no pain. For me, it was miraculous."

Mary Pat Hulteng, Certified Medical Reiki Master, explains that in her one-hour meditation classes she performs reiki on the students as well. She describes reiki as, "a gentle hands-on healing treatment. It helps to reduce stress and energy blocks in the body, so the body can heal."

With Lorenzo's background in biochemistry, he said he always relied on science and never tried meditation or reiki.

"I have a great deal of respect for Mary Pat. The way she talks to us is very calming, very quieting," he says. "Through this breathing process, she treats from the feet up through the spirit. It's very uplifting."

"At Integrative Medicine, we work as a cohesive part of the healthcare team," explains Mary Pat. "We help people find harmony in their body. We address them as a whole person, body, mind, and spirit."

Since he's been doing meditation and reiki, Lorenzo says he no longer worries about his heart condition as he did before. He's grateful to the many MedStar Montgomery associates, doctors, nurses, and providers he has met. "MedStar Montgomery is a great place," he says, beaming. "All the personnel here, I'm in love with all of them." ◀◀

To learn more about all the services offered at MedStar Health Center for Integrative Medicine, please visit [MedStarMontgomery.org/IntegrativeMedicine](https://www.MedStarMontgomery.org/IntegrativeMedicine) or call **301-774-8673**.

Lorenzo's Treatment Plan: Services for Body, Mind, and Spirit

MedStar Health Center for Integrative Medicine

The MedStar Health Center for Integrative Medicine offers a quiet, peaceful atmosphere with soft lighting and aromatherapy for patients and the surrounding community. Integrative medicine, paired with a comprehensive healthcare plan, serves the whole person, body, mind, and spirit. Services include:

- Meditation
- Reiki
- Acupuncture
- Mindfulness Training
- Psychological Evaluation and Interventions
- Nutrition and Wellness Counseling
- Stress Management

To schedule an appointment, call **301-774-8673**.

MedStar Health Center for Integrative Medicine
at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center
18111 Prince Phillip Drive, Suite 202
Olney, MD 20832

MedStar Cardiology Associates

MedStar Cardiology Associates cardiologists see patients at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center, as well as at Leisure World Medical Center once a week.

To schedule an appointment, call **301-570-7404**.

MedStar Montgomery Medical Center
Cardiology Associates
18101 Prince Philip Drive, Suite 4100
Olney, MD 20832

Leisure World Medical Center
3305 North Leisure World Boulevard
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Cardiac & Pulmonary Rehabilitation

MedStar Montgomery Medical Center combines advanced medical technology, sophisticated diagnostics, and a multidisciplinary approach to create a program tailored to patients' needs, delivered by a team of nurses and exercise physiologists experienced in cardiac rehabilitation.

To schedule an appointment, call **301-774-8778**.

MedStar Montgomery Medical Center
18101 Prince Philip Drive, Second Floor
Olney, MD 20832

Regular Colonoscopies Help Reduce Risk of Cancer

BY JENNIFER DAVIS



WITH A FAMILY HISTORY OF COLON CANCER, KURT FISHER IS KEEPING UP WITH HIS HEALTH BY GOING IN FOR REGULAR COLONOSCOPIES SO HE CAN ENJOY HIS FAVORITE PASTIME WITH PEACE OF MIND.

“We aren’t guaranteed tomorrow, and I want to live, so I am going to be very proactive about my health. The MedStar Montgomery gastroenterology team has been so supportive.”

–KURT FISHER

“I have a family history of colon cancer,” Kurt Fisher explains. “My father passed away from a stroke, but he also had colon cancer when he died at the age of 84. I really want to make sure this kind of cancer isn’t an issue for me.”

Kurt is 59 and in good health, and he wants to keep it that way, so he has regular colonoscopies as recommended by his doctor.

A colonoscopy is a procedure that allows doctors to examine the inner lining of the colon and small intestine. A lighted tube and video camera inserted into the rectum help guide the search for polyps, tumors, and other signs of gastrointestinal problems.

“We think about 90% of colon cancers start as small precancerous polyps,” says Stanley J. Pietrak III, MD, a MedStar Health gastroenterologist. “The good news is they are relatively easy to remove when they are small, as long as we can see them.” Dr. Pietrak performed Kurt’s most recent colonoscopy.

Even a little bit of stool or retained food product can obstruct views during a colonoscopy, so patients have to empty their colon before the procedure. This is done by following a clear liquid diet the day before and taking medication that requires you to use the bathroom often.

For the actual procedure, patients are put under anesthesia. The colonoscopy takes up to 30 minutes on average, and Dr. Pietrak says if polyps are found, they are removed during the procedure.



**Stanley J.
Pietrak III, MD**

“It’s a little bit like removing a small mole on the skin,” Dr. Pietrak describes. “It involves a superficial cut that doesn’t require any additional interventions and doesn’t cause pain. We make sure the margins are clear, and you reduce your risk of developing colon cancer then and there. If you don’t have the procedure and don’t have polyps removed, they slowly grow over time and could become cancerous.”

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths, and 60% of those deaths could be prevented with a screening such as a colonoscopy. It’s estimated that one out of every three people is not up to date on their screening colonoscopy—which is generally recommended to start at age 50, or earlier if you have a family history.

Kurt is up to date. He’s had four colonoscopies in his life and says it’s an incredible relief each time to find out his colon is clear, and he is cancer free. He says he’s also grateful to the MedStar Montgomery gastroenterology team, who has been so supportive.

“You never know when a cancer diagnosis could arise, but I don’t want to wait and be told it is Stage 4, and there’s not much they can do to stop it,” Kurt says. “They tell me I have five years before I have to do another colonoscopy, and I will do it again when the time comes. We aren’t guaranteed tomorrow, and I want to live, so I am going to be very proactive about my health.”

Dr. Pietrak is a board-certified gastroenterologist specializing in benign and malignant diseases of the bile ducts, pancreas, and the pancreatic ducts, with a focus on therapeutic endoscopy. ◀◀

For more information about gastroenterology treatments, please visit [MedStarMontgomery.org/Gastroenterology](https://www.MedStarMontgomery.org/Gastroenterology) or call **301-774-8962**.



New Breast Health and Imaging Center Offers Advanced Technology and Compassionate Care

LESLIE A. WHITLINGER

MedStar Montgomery Medical Center's Breast Health and Imaging Center takes existing expertise in breast health to the next level, bringing today's most advanced diagnostic and treatment services closer to home.

Under one roof, the center offers breast health services from prevention to early detection to sophisticated cancer care in a comfortable environment. Services are delivered with compassion and sensitivity by a highly skilled and specialized interdisciplinary team. For those diagnosed with breast

cancer, a dedicated nurse navigator helps guide the way, coordinating appointments, offering advice, and directing patients to additional resources such as support groups.

"A breast cancer diagnosis is unexpected and is impacted by so many variables," says Dawn Leonard, MD, site director of the Breast Health Program. "So, we focus on treating the whole patient, well beyond the cancer. The new center enhances our ability to provide comprehensive, integrated, and personalized cancer care and preventive services, convenient to our patients."



Dawn Leonard, MD

“A breast cancer diagnosis is unexpected and is impacted by so many variables. We focus on treating the whole patient, well beyond the cancer.”

– DAWN LEONARD, MD

The Breast Health and Imaging Center, with its dedicated team of breast imagers, including diagnostic radiologist Erin Patricia Crane, MD, offers outpatient screening and diagnostic mammography using state-of-the-art technology, including:



Erin Patricia Crane, MD

- The new **SmartCurve™ Breast Stabilization System**, clinically proven to deliver a more comfortable and accurate mammogram. Shaped like a woman’s breast, SmartCurve™ helps to eliminate or reduce the pain that some women experience, potentially removing an all-too-common reason women cite for not getting mammograms on a regular basis.
- **Intelligent2D**, part of the new wave of innovative mammography, which produces a clearer 2D reconstructed image for more accurate diagnoses of early breast cancers.
- **Breast Tomosynthesis (3D Mammography)**, equipped with the latest C-View software to reduce radiation exposure.

Other diagnostic capabilities offered at the Center include:

- Digital screening
- Diagnostic mammograms
- Breast ultrasound
- MRI
- Image-guided breast biopsy
- Sentinel lymph node biopsy
- Axillary lymph node dissection

A full range of breast care services are also available on site (see sidebar).

Together, the new center’s technology, services, and staff underline the hospital’s commitment to cancer patients, now and in the future. The Center also demonstrates the strength of the MedStar Georgetown Cancer Institute.

“Bringing the expertise of MedStar Health cancer care to our local hospital is an incredible benefit for those we serve,” says Thomas J. Senker, FACHE, MedStar Montgomery Medical Center president. “It allows us to develop tailored, world-class treatment to give our patients the best possible care, right here in Montgomery County.” ◀◀



THE NEW CENTER’S TEAM PROVIDES THE BEST IN PATIENT CARE. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: TAMMY SODA, MAMMOGRAPHY SUPERVISOR, LASHAWN NEAL PLEASANT, MEDICAL OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, LAURA STOTTELMYER, MAMMOGRAPHY TECHNOLOGIST.

The Breast Health Program

From prevention to treatment, the Breast Health and Imaging Center at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center provides care for patients with both cancerous and non-cancerous breast conditions. With advanced treatments and technologies, MedStar Montgomery patients lead longer, fuller, and healthier lives than ever before.

Reflecting the latest research and best practices, the program’s array of services include:

- Multi-Disciplinary Breast Cancer Management
- Breast Surgery and Reconstruction, including:
 - Breast conserving surgery (lumpectomy)
 - Mastectomy
 - Nipple-sparing mastectomy
 - Prophylactic mastectomy
 - Intraoperative mastectomy
 - Immediate breast reconstruction
 - Prepectoral breast implant reconstruction
- Genetic Counseling and Testing
- Patient Navigation
- Survivor Support

For more information about the services offered at the Breast Health and Imaging Center, visit [MedStarMontgomery.org/BreastHealth](https://www.MedStarMontgomery.org/BreastHealth) or call **301-260-3301**.

Community Class Updates



For the latest news and updates on COVID-19, please visit

www.MedStarHealth.org/mhs/about-medstar/covid-19-info/



Here at MedStar Montgomery, the health of our patients, physicians, staff and visitors is our top priority.

With the MedStar Health Temporary Visitor Restriction Policy in place to protect our patients and care teams, our community classes are currently postponed, including:

- EXERCISE CLASSES
- SENIOR CLASSES
- SUPPORT GROUPS
- YOUTH PROGRAMS
- DIABETES CLASSES
- PARENTING CLASSES

For updates on the return of all community class offerings, visit MedStarMontgomery.org/Classes or call **301-774-8881** (Option 4).



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MedStarHealth.org/MedStarBlog

A Path to Better Sleep Through Mindfulness

BY REINA SEKIGUCHI

When thoughts of your to-do list, family struggles, relationship conflicts, or health challenges send your mind racing, falling asleep may seem like an impossible task. Mindfulness can help.

Proven to improve multiple areas of health and wellness, mindfulness is the deliberate, nonjudgmental act of paying attention to present-moment experiences such as bodily sensations, thoughts, and emotions. As part of the mission to provide whole-person medical care, MedStar Montgomery's Center for Integrative Medicine offers mindfulness classes.

While difficulty sleeping can result from an overactive mind at bedtime, mindfulness redirects that focus from the mind into the body. "The body doesn't have a story," says Stan Einstein, MSW, a MedStar Montgomery mindfulness instructor. "Using mindfulness, the body is just sensation."

The Center's program recommends taking a few minutes each day to check in with your body, drawing attention to physical sensations and the rhythm of your breath. "With mindfulness we learn to let go of judgments and whatever is happening in the mind, which makes sleep more likely," explains Stan. ◀◀



Stan Einstein, MSW

For more information on mindfulness training through MedStar Montgomery's Center for Integrative Medicine and the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, visit [MedStarMontgomery.org/MBSR](https://www.MedStarMontgomery.org/MBSR) or call **301-774-8673**.

Cancer Support Services

A variety of free services offered to cancer patients

MedStar Montgomery Medical Center provides a range of support services for cancer patients. These therapeutic services are offered at no cost to our patients and have been shown to help reduce common treatment symptoms such as anxiety, depression, pain, insomnia, and fatigue. Groups are open to patients undergoing treatment for any type of cancer and many classes allow caretakers as well.

Cancer Support Services

Support Group Sessions

- Provide a safe place to exchange encouragement and guidance and talk about the unique challenges of living with a cancer diagnosis.
- 1st Friday of every month from 3 to 4 p.m.
- Meeting Room A & B on the ground floor near the Infusion Center

Gentle Yoga

- Guided breathing, slow stretches, and tailored sequences are designed to meet patients' needs at all stages of cancer treatment and recovery.

- Every Thursday from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month from 3 to 4 p.m.
- Meeting Room A & B on the ground floor near the Infusion Center

Art Therapy

- Hands-on art projects are specially designed to provide a therapeutic oasis.
- 1st Wednesday of every month from 3 to 4:30 p.m.
- Meeting Room A & B on the ground floor near the Infusion Center
- No class in Aug. or Sept. 2020

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- Guided relaxation and breathing techniques reduce stress, fatigue, and other symptoms.
- Schedule your free session directly with Samantha Falzoi, Oncology Social Worker, at 301-570-7878. ◀◀



Samantha Falzoi, LCSW, OSW-C, ACHP-SW

For more information or to sign up for classes, contact Samantha Falzoi, Oncology Social Worker, at **301-570-7878** or Samantha.W.Falzoi@medstar.net.

Please note: With the temporary visitor restrictions currently in place, some of these sessions and classes may be postponed or changed.

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Your Time is Worth It



**Preventative Breast Health Care
Now in Montgomery County**

Schedule a Screening 301-260-3301

**NEW BREAST HEALTH AND IMAGING CENTER
AT MEDSTAR MONTGOMERY MEDICAL CENTER**



MedStar Health