

# Health

All About our  
**Women &  
Newborns  
Center**

**Breast  
Health  
Services**

**An Unusual  
Case of  
Appendicitis**

Our New  
**Cardiology Unit**



# Letter from the president.

Dear Neighbor,

I officially announced in August that I would be retiring on January 28, 2022, after a 42-year career mostly with MedStar Health. It has been a true honor and privilege to have served as president of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center for the past seven years, as well as MedStar St. Mary's Hospital since 1992.

Fortunately, I'm pleased to share that Stephen T. Michaels, MD, FACHE, chief operating and medical officer at MedStar St. Mary's, will become the next president of MedStar Southern Maryland and senior vice president of MedStar Health, effective January 28, 2022. Dr. Michaels also served as Vice President of Medical Affairs for MedStar Southern Maryland from late 2012 to late 2014. He was a practicing orthopedic surgeon prior to his roles in hospital leadership, with an office located in Oxon Hill. He brings with him a tremendous amount of talent, expertise, and knowledge, and I'm confident that his experience will be invaluable to our community.

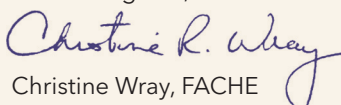
Speaking of new opportunities, we are so grateful for all of the new physicians who recently joined our family here at MedStar Southern Maryland! You'll find out who some of them are in this edition. There's also information about the new MRI and da Vinci Xi Surgical System that our hospital acquired earlier this year. Both of these technologies have impressive features and capabilities that align with our mission to focus on caring for patients, and their loved ones, by utilizing advanced technology under the guidance of expert clinicians.

In August, we celebrated the re-designation of 3 West as MedStar Southern Maryland's new cardiology unit! I truly believe it is all-encompassing of our current and future growth opportunities. In addition, our hospital will be getting a new Behavioral Health unit in summer 2022!

There's a heavy focus on specialized services for women including our breast health and obstetrics programs. We will continue to showcase our highest commitment to protecting and caring for the women in our community.

Admittedly, this goodbye is a very difficult one for me. As A.A. Milne once said, "How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." I've grown to know and love the exceptional community we serve here at MedStar Southern Maryland as well as my fantastic colleagues and coworkers, and I will definitely miss all of it very much, but I also know that you are in excellent hands with Dr. Michaels taking the lead as the new hospital president. Although it's bittersweet, I'm very much looking forward to spending more time with my husband, John, and my 18-month-old granddaughter, Harper. I wish all of you well!

Kindest regards,



Christine Wray, FACHE  
President, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center and Senior Vice President, MedStar Health



**Christine Wray, FACHE,**  
President, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center



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Some photos were selected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. All patients and providers are expected to follow the current MedStar Health guidelines for safety including proper masking and physical distancing where appropriate. Learn more at [MedStarHealth.org/Safe](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Safe).

**Health** is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. It in no way seeks to diagnose or treat illness or serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Please see your physician if you have a health problem.



# Tidbits

1

## 'Inspire' comes to Southern Maryland

We are proud to exclusively offer a new surgical treatment, Inspire, for sleep apnea patients in Southern Maryland! Otolaryngologists Andrew Lee, MD, and Seema Pai, MD, attending physicians at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center and MedStar Washington Hospital Center, spearheaded our first two surgeries this past October. Special thanks to the collaborative efforts of our very own Perioperative nursing director Deborah Walker, assistant nursing director Tracy Humes, Central Sterile Processing assistant director Gwendolyn Carter, as well as Supply Chain leaders Florence Smith and Wanda Andrews-Saunders.



1

2



## New cardiology unit on 3 West

3 West is now the new home to MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's new cardiology unit! A celebration took place at the hospital recently to commemorate the new unit's grand opening. To read more about this, please turn to page 13.

3



## New da Vinci Xi robotic surgical system

Our hospital recently acquired an enhanced robotic surgical system called da Vinci Xi which features more modern design features and overall functionality. This innovative technology is quite impressive and will improve our service line for providing minimally invasive surgical options. Check out page 14 for a brief overview and next steps.

4



## New behavioral health unit

We're excited for what 2022 will bring as we anticipate the soft opening of a new behavioral health unit, which aims to enhance quality of care for patients with modernized services. Renovations will include a time-out room, electronic alarms and medication window. Please see page 14 to learn more about what's coming.

# Local patient recalls unusual **appendicitis diagnosis** during pre-screening visit for **colorectal cancer**.



**F**ort Washington resident Adam Dodgshon got the biggest surprise of his life last year around Christmas time. Dodgshon was booked for a colorectal cancer screening appointment at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's Gastroenterology and Hepatology office with gastroenterologist Alireza Meighani, MD. Dodgshon, however, initially had a routine check-up with a primary care doctor one day prior.

While being examined by the primary care doctor, Dodgshon explained that he was experiencing discomfort in his abdomen. Dodgshon, pre-diagnosed with intestinal gas, was then advised to take Gas-X as a remedy. But that attempt was unsuccessful.

Fortunately, Dodgshon was scheduled to visit Dr. Meighani the very next day at MedStar Southern Maryland. "I went to the pre-screening and was still having some pain," Dodgshon recalled during a phone interview. "Dr. Meighani was not satisfied with my original diagnosis and was concerned that it could be a lot more serious."

Dr. Meighani pinpointed that something wasn't quite



—Alireza Meighani, MD  
Gastroenterologist

—Adam Dodgshon  
Gastroenterology Patient

right despite Dodgshon, who was 50 years old at the time, having great health overall. "That's the usual age to have a colonoscopy for screening of colorectal cancer, which was the purpose of Adam's visit," Dr. Meighani said. "When I was talking to him, he mentioned having some belly pain about three of four nights prior. The more I asked him about it, the more serious it sounded to me. So, I put him on an examination bed which revealed typical findings of appendicitis."

After reviewing some information initially obtained through the primary care physician, Dr. Meighani urged him to get a CAT scan immediately. Dodgshon obliged and had one the next day, on Christmas Eve, at MedStar Southern Maryland's Emergency Department.

The CAT scan revealed Dodgshon's appendix had severe inflammation, which had caused the pain in his abdomen to worsen. Within a couple of hours that same day, Dodgshon was referred to Chaitanya Vadlamudi, MD, a full-time general surgeon at MedStar Southern Maryland, for emergency surgery. "Everything was explained to me really well—the procedure, how many incisions and that I would be under general anesthesia," Dodgshon said. "The staff did a really good job with helping me understand exactly what was happening. I felt very comforted. Next thing I know, I woke up around 6 p.m. and was told that I would be kept overnight."

Dodgshon spent one day in recovery at MedStar Southern Maryland and appreciated having an opportunity to celebrate Christmas at home the very next day. All of his abdominal pain had subsided shortly after the new year began.

In February of this year, Dodgshon went back to have a screening colonoscopy performed by Dr. Meighani. "He was very grateful and appreciated how swiftly I acted," said Dr. Meighani. "If appendicitis is underdiagnosed or not diagnosed, the appendix can perforate or lead to severe sepsis which is deadly."

Specialty training makes all the difference at MedStar Southern Maryland. The hospital has some of the region's most experienced gastroenterologists and general surgeons.

“As far as the multidisciplinary care, it was pretty seamless for me. I received outstanding care from the get-go.”

— Adam Dodgshon  
Gastroenterology  
Patient

Dr. Meighani is particularly passionate about helping people. He loves discussing goals and desired outcomes with his patients. "As a physician, it's always important to be able to distinguish what is serious and what is not," Dr. Meighani said. "It gives me a sense of gratification, especially with more severe cases like Adam."

For Dr. Meighani, each patient's journey leading up to the procedure is just as important as the procedure itself.

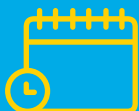
"My whole experience went very well," said Dodgshon. "The pre-screening is really important. MedStar Southern Maryland will give you a full opportunity to explore any concerns that you have. As far as the multidisciplinary care, it was pretty seamless for me. I received outstanding care from the get-go."

Dr. Vadlamudi's expertise spans from open abdominal to laparoscopic surgeries, to performing less minimally invasive endoscopic procedures with the help of robotic-assisted technology. Ensuring patients get the specialized care they deserve is something that Dr. Vadlamudi takes seriously.

But most importantly, Dr. Vadlamudi is grateful to collaborate with a multidisciplinary team of experts. "I feel like my efforts and hard work are complemented and reflected by everybody around me. That's what allows me, as a surgeon, to be effective. It's a huge blessing," he said. "I really give Dr. Meighani the credit for doing what he did, when he did it. That's the great thing about being a part of the MedStar Health system—we do a good job with providing expedited care and positive outcomes for patients. I think it's just a great story overall."



—Chaitanya Vadlamudi, MD  
General Surgeon



To schedule an appointment with Dr. Meighani, gastroenterologist, please call **301-877-4599**.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Vadlamudi, general surgeon, please call **301-877-7202**.



# Making special deliveries on a daily basis.



Thinking about having a baby? Consider the Women & Newborns Center at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center.



**M**edStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's Women and Newborns

Center is a comprehensive birthing center dedicated to promoting lifelong women's health and family-centered care across the region. It was designed to create a more inviting atmosphere with your comfort and health in mind.

Expectant families are provided a full range of services from preconception counseling and pregnancy testing to ultrasounds, obstetric hospitalist and genetic services including prenatal diagnosis/screening, as well as special dietary services. Our in-house physicians, nurses and newborn specialists have the experience necessary to treat normal pregnancies, high-risk pregnancies, and a broad range of obstetrical conditions. Obstetricians, pediatricians, and anesthesiologists are available onsite, 24 hours a day. Programs are designed with patients' needs in mind and the staff have deep roots in the Southern Maryland community.

While most births occur without complications, it is comforting to know that MedStar Southern Maryland's Women and Newborns Center has the region's only Level II Special



bedside manner of our nurses and doctors are exemplary.”



**Striving to provide top-notch neonatal care**

Our Women and Newborns Center features private postpartum rooms, free wireless Internet access, pullout beds for your significant other, special dietary services, comprehensive gynecologist services, separate treatment area for high-risk deliveries and a staff of obstetrician hospitalists which includes a neonatologist on the floor every week day, rotating hospitalist pediatricians working in the special care nursery as well as anesthesiology services.

In the outpatient clinic, our staff can provide various types of preconception counseling and any additional neonatal care that patients need.



“The collaboration aspect is just really unique from other places that I’ve been,” said Women and Newborns Center director Toni Boyd, DNP, MSN, RN, NE-BC. “Our nurses and physicians are able to listen to each other and focus on being a team, figuring out what patients need and making sure they get that high quality care.”

The Women and Newborns Center also has two dedicated operating room suites, conveniently located on the same floor.



**When you arrive**

When you arrive inside of MedStar Southern Maryland’s main front entrance/lobby area, you’ll make your way toward our registration department. From there, one of our associates will then escort or direct you to the Women and Newborns Center down the hallway. Once there, you may go to our triage room for testing or be escorted to one of

our eight private suites for those who are in active labor.

In addition to offering obstetrics and neonatology services, the Women and Newborns Center also has a gynecology unit where women can prepare for and recover from their procedures in a serene, comfortable surrounding while receiving attentive care from our specialized staff.

MedStar Southern Maryland is committed to serving as the perfect place to start or build your family—we’ll make every effort to ensure all families have access to the finest medical care, comfort, and privacy.

**During and after labor**

Pregnancy is an exciting time and our skilled staff will be there for patients every step of the way, ready to answer questions and help them navigate the world of prenatal care and testing. MedStar Southern Maryland is one of very few hospitals that have banded together to participate in a statewide neonatal collaborative and focus on improving outcomes for high-risk babies.



During labor, patients will have many questions about their own healthcare and childbirth as it relates to the health of their baby. Our obstetricians are available to provide support for patients and most importantly, high-quality care from the first visit to delivery and postpartum care.

When your delivery date arrives, our Women and Newborns Center will be ready to welcome expectant families with state-of-the-art labor and delivery suites. Nothing makes Dr. Mazarei and her team happier than to see healthy little ones make their journey home. “The other aspect of care that I like is the collaboration between nurses and physicians,” Dr. Mazarei said.

Our private suites allow you to keep your new bundle of joy with

Care Nursery which offers medical monitoring and specialized care for babies who are born as early as 32 weeks, have a low birth weight (as low as 3.3 pounds) or other medical complications. If a higher level of neonatal intensive care is needed, we can transfer newborns to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.

“What’s interesting about our hospital is that we do 1,200 deliveries a year. At least 75 percent of our patients are considered high risk,” said Nahid Mazarei, MD, Chairwoman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at MedStar Southern Maryland. “As part of the MedStar Health system, we have a seamless process of addressing complex obstetric and neonatal issues. We collaborate with physicians from MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and MedStar Washington Hospital Center who specialize in maternal-fetal medicine and are trained to care for high-risk obstetric patients. These specialists also have offices conveniently located at MedStar Health Brandywine. If I had to highlight care, the



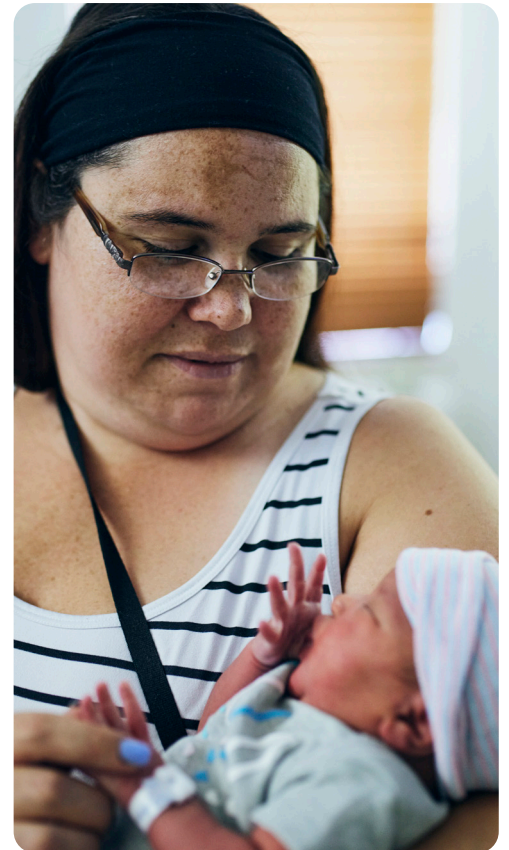
you during your stay. It is important to continue skin-to-skin care and use this time to bond.



All new moms, their support person and infants are given matching identification bracelets to ensure security.

New moms typically stay in the hospital for two days if they had a vaginal delivery, and three days if a C-section was performed.

All of our nurses have advanced training in breastfeeding and lactation consultants who are always available by referral for patients needing more support.



## Visitation policy update for the Women & Newborns Center

A reality of our new normal includes the continued fluctuation of COVID-19 cases across our region. With this consideration and to continue prioritizing the safety of our patients and associates, our visitation policy may be subject to change. To learn the latest visitation policy at **MedStar Southern Maryland**, please visit [MedStarHealth.org/COVID19](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/COVID19), and click on "Visitor Policy".



For more information about our Women and Newborns Center, including the opportunity to view a virtual video tour, please visit [MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Baby](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Baby).





# Physician spotlight

Dr. Parker and Dr. Mazarei intervene during a critical situation

In late December 2016, Dr. Mazarei received a phone call from the labor & delivery nursing team around 2:30 a.m., following a medical emergency that involved an expectant mother whose baby girl was also in grave danger.

While in active labor, fetal material had entered the woman's bloodstream which caused her heart and lungs to collapse, resulting in a seizure. Dr. Mazarei and Dr. Parker spoke to each other separately while driving to MedStar Southern Maryland from home. Their medical expertise led to a diagnosis of amniotic fluid embolism, a rare but extremely life-threatening condition that can happen during labor or soon after.

When Dr. Parker arrived, she ran down to the blood bank, counted units of blood herself and determined the number of platelets needed before contacting the Red Cross for extra units.

The baby, who had been delivered via an emergency C-section, went into cardiac arrest three times due to pockets of air entering her walnut-sized lungs. Paramedics were forced to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation for an hour while en route to Children's National Hospital, where the baby would spend a week before being reunited with mom.

Having endured countless hours in the Intensive Care Unit, the woman's blood began to coagulate again thanks to steroid treatments and the units of blood obtained by Dr. Parker. "We are very lucky to have Dr. Parker who is double board certified in both critical care and obstetrics," Dr. Mazarei



Left: Dr. Mazarei and Dr. Parker with baby Laila. Right: Patient LaWan Sybert-Mujiheed with daughter Laila (Photos taken in 2017).

said. "What is great about this place is that with the MedStar Health network, you get layer after layer of support."

Fortunately, the woman eventually came out of comatose and was transferred to the MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital where she spent months in rehab, learning how to eat, swallow and speak again. Remarkably, she made a full recovery.

Nearly five years later, what's left is an inspiring, touching memory. "The expeditious manner in which everybody came together was nothing short of a miracle," said Dr. Mazarei. "There was an incredible amount of respect and multidisciplinary care given to this patient—that is something Dr. Parker and I are very proud of."



To schedule and appointment with Dr. Mazarei or Dr. Parker, please call **301-877-7200**.



—Autumn Ballard, MD



—Victoria Greenberg, MD

## Maternal-fetal medicine services now available for Southern Maryland region

For the first time ever, MedStar Health is offering Maternal-Fetal Medicine services at MedStar Health at Brandywine. Maternal-Fetal Medicine specialists, who are board certified, provide detailed evaluation, management and supervision for high-risk pregnancies with ongoing maternal disease such as diabetes, hypertension, autoimmune or renal disease, etc.

These specialists work closely with referring care providers to provide prenatal evaluation and care through a multidisciplinary approach. Services include comprehensive, one-on-one evaluations/recommendations and preconception counseling.



For an appointment, please call **301-782-2220** and remain on the line after the prompts to speak directly with a representative.

# Peace, hope and healing: **Why cancer patients should choose our Breast Health Program**



**B**reast cancer is the most diagnosed form of cancer among women. But thanks to advances in treatment options, millions of breast cancer survivors can lead active and fulfilling lives. At MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, our MedStar Breast Health Program features a multidisciplinary team of surgeons, radiologists, medical/radiation oncologists, plastic surgeons, nurse practitioners and genetic counselors who all provide high-quality, comprehensive breast care.

Our cancer experts - which includes a diverse group of nationally and internationally renowned specialists for many forms of cancers - began seeing patients at the new MedStar Georgetown Center Institute at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center in late 2019. They collaborate as a team to develop the best treatment plan for each individual's cancer, and then execute that plan in a convenient, accessible location.

When we say that we offer a multidisciplinary team approach, we mean it. From performing new oncoplastic surgical techniques and nipple-sparing mastectomy to treating various malignant and benign breast tumor conditions, our breast care experts have the knowledge and expertise necessary to help patients recover faster, with better results.

## **Get to know our new cancer center**

Our hospital's cancer program is fully accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC), a designation that recognizes the hospital for providing quality, comprehensive care using a multidisciplinary approach. Fewer than one-third of cancer programs in the country are CoC accredited.

The MedStar Georgetown Cancer Institute at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is an essential part of our ability to offer the best care. Even though our hospital has offered radiation therapy center for decades, the new 25,000 square foot cancer institute offers diagnostic imaging, chemotherapy and radiation therapy all under the same roof. Notable capabilities include a state-of-the-art infusion center, a brand-new women's imaging suite and robust radiation therapy treatments.

## **State-of-the-art treatment options for breast cancer patients**

The MedStar Georgetown Cancer Institute at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center combines unmatched medical expertise with leading-edge therapies and access to robust clinical research to provide the best care possible for those who



not only live and work in Prince George's County, but also the Southern Maryland region. Patients want to know that they have the best of the best, and that's what we offer.

MedStar Southern Maryland was one of the first hospitals in Maryland to begin using the renowned Halcyon™ image guidance system, which delivers a new kind of faster, more accurate radiotherapy. Thanks to greater efficiency and comfort, our breast cancer experts are able to direct radiation to a cancerous tumor while sparing surrounding health tissue.

In addition, our state-of-the-art infusion center offers eight treatment bays, which deliver chemotherapy or immunotherapy infusions in a soothing, comfortable environment. Patients

can expect to see the same providers and staff as they progress through their treatment journey.

Because our new cancer center is part of the MedStar Georgetown Cancer Institute, patients also have access to clinical trials offered through the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center which is the only institution in the Washington, DC, metropolitan region that has been designated as a comprehensive cancer center by the National Cancer Institute. Our multidisciplinary team of cancer experts work together to provide the latest, evidence-based therapies to treat cancer.

### **Brand-new women's diagnostic imaging suite**

When a breast lump is detected, we offer digital imaging tests to determine whether the lump is benign or malignant. For those who are diagnosed with breast disease, we inform you about your options so you can make fully informed choices that meet your special needs.

Our outpatient women's diagnostic imaging suite is accredited by the American College of Radiology, offering patients an aesthetically pleasing experience in conjunction with excellent medical care. We have high-tech equipment for 3D mammography, breast ultrasound, breast biopsies and bone density scans. Our on-site radiologists—all of whom are fellowship-trained breast imaging experts—interpret exams promptly to facilitate any necessary follow-up imaging almost immediately.

Diagnostic imaging services also feature "smart curve" technology, with a curved paddle that makes mammograms more comfortable. Stereotactic and ultrasound biopsy capabilities are now all in one place.

## **MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center welcomes MedStar Health breast surgeon Patricia Wehner to the team**

**M**edStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to welcome

Patricia Wehner, MD, FACS, a board-certified and fellowship-trained breast surgeon who recently joined the hospital as site director of its MedStar Breast Health Program. Prior to coming to MedStar Southern Maryland, Dr. Wehner practiced at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown. She also currently practices at MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC, and will continue seeing patients at this location as well.

Dr. Wehner attended the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, prior to starting a residency in general surgery at MedStar Washington Hospital Center. She then completed a breast oncology fellowship at the University of Southern California. As part of the specialty care provided at MedStar Southern Maryland in Clinton, Maryland, Dr. Wehner treats an array of conditions such as ductal carcinoma in situ, inflammatory breast cancer, invasive breast cancer, Paget's disease of the breast and Phyllodes tumor. Surgical procedures offered for patients include axillary node dissection, lumpectomy, and breast conservation with oncoplasty as well as mastectomy.



"I knew at age seven that I wanted to be a doctor. And, I chose to work with breast cancer patients because of the special closeness I can build with women at this vulnerable time in their lives," Dr. Wehner said. "You can be assured that I will treat patients referred to me with the utmost respect, while providing individualized care that is expected from MedStar Health."

Dr. Wehner is currently the Associate Program Director of the MedStar Georgetown Breast Fellowship and an Assistant Professor of Surgery at Georgetown University. She won a Scientific Impact Award in 2013 from the American Society of Breast Surgeons and is also a recipient of the Alliance of Independent Academic Medical Centers' Excellence in Patient Quality and Care Award. Dr. Wehner also earned the distinguished role of being part of the MedStar Teaching Scholars Program for MedStar Health Research Institute.



For appointments with Dr. Wehner at MedStar Southern Maryland, please call **301-877-5607**. To learn more, please visit **[MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Wehner](https://www.MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Wehner)**.



# Type I and type II diabetes

Talking about type I and type II diabetes with primary care physician Toni Turner

**D**iabetes mellitus is a chronic health condition that affects millions of adults in the United States every year. This disease refers to a spectrum of disorders, involving carbohydrate metabolism, which lack a hormone produced in the pancreas called insulin.

Without the presence of insulin to regulate glucose levels in the body from carbohydrates consumed, blood sugar levels can rise to dangerous levels and with life threatening consequences. Patients with diabetes mellitus, regardless of type, must be willing to put forth an earnest effort in lifestyle modification, as well as participate in patient-centered education, according to Toni Turner, MD, a MedStar Health primary care physician based out of Mitchellville.

“Clinical best practice measures must also consider each patient’s care in the context of the established social determinants of health,” said Dr. Turner, who is board certified in internal medicine. “Clinicians have to meet the patient where they are as far as support/finances or lack thereof, and at the individual’s level of health literacy.”

The same measures advised in the delay and prevention of type II diabetes, according to Dr. Turner, are the same measures to be used in managing the disease and in fostering a healthier lifestyle. In addition, working in collaboration with treating physicians with open and honest communication is essential.

Dr. Turner said the development of type II diabetes is not only

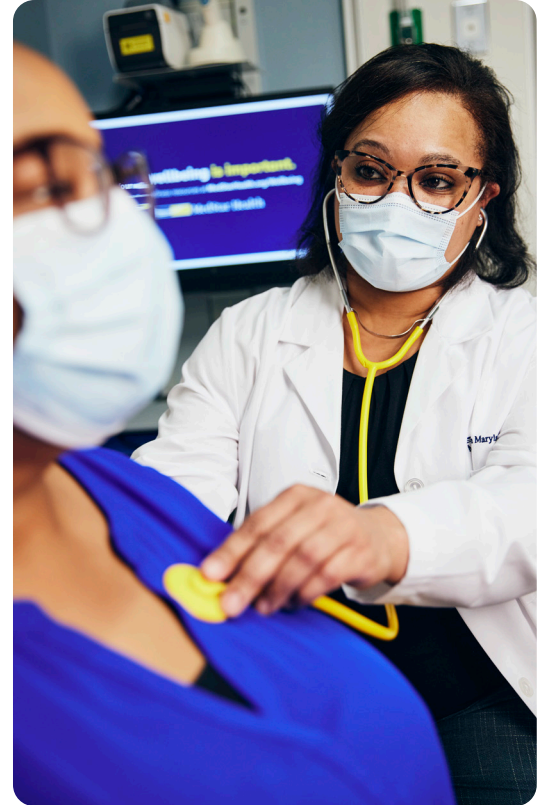


linked to genetics, but also strongly associated with lifestyle choices and obesity. Consequently, the need for insulin replacement cannot be used as a means to distinguish a type I diabetic from a type II diabetic.

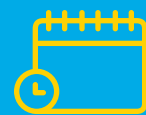
“The disorder in glucose regulation involves both suboptimal insulin production, as well as a resistance to this insulin at the end organ tissues where it acts in the utilization and management of sugar,” said Dr. Turner.

While regular exercise and healthy eating are the hallmarks of diabetes prevention and management, an individualized approach is key to helping people make significant, lasting health changes.

Dr. Turner recommends trading a “sedentary lifestyle” for moderate-intensity exercises such as a brisk walk, which can decrease insulin resistance, or striving to workout at least 30 minutes every other day. “There are measures of lifestyle modification that can be taken to stave off the development of



type II diabetes. Alternating days of aerobic exercise with resistance/weight bearing exercise increased muscle mass, improving carbohydrate metabolism,” Dr. Turner said. “For those who are overweight or obese, reducing as little as 5 to 7 percent of their starting weight, and maintaining this loss, can delay, if not prevent, progression to type II diabetes.”



Dr. Toni Turner is a primary care physician at MedStar Health Mitchellville. She is accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment with her, please call **301-430-2700**.

## Tidbit

# 3 West officially becomes MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's new cardiology unit



A special ceremony was held August 3 to celebrate the re-designation of 3 West as MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center's new cardiology unit. Department leaders and supporting staff heard from several key speakers.

Cody Legler, DNP, APRN, NP-BC, Chief Nursing Officer & Vice President, said MedStar Southern Maryland will focus on evolving the strategic advancement of its cardiology service line and overall inpatient capabilities for community members. Overflow space will extend to 3 East. "We know that we have a journey with this. We'll be creating new metrics and looking at different ways to provide advanced services for the patients in our community," Legler said. "Everything from the lab to our in-patient unit, and eventually our critical care space in different ways as well."

The newly re-designated 3 West cardiology unit will feature beds with cardiac monitoring machines and specialized cardiac care provided by MedStar Southern Maryland's multidisciplinary clinical care teams, all of which is offered in-house.

Kim Brown-Gross, Nursing Director, is excited to oversee the new unit. "I believe this dedicated cardiac unit will be great for our organization. The physicians and nurses have a great collaboration with each other and discuss the patients' care in the morning huddle, during discharge throughput rounds, and Interdisciplinary Model of Care (IMOC) rounding. Admitting the cardiac patients on one unit will allow the staff who are trained on patients who have cardiac diagnoses, to monitor continuous telemetry and interpret rhythms. It will also allow early intervention with medication and the staff will

have a dialogue with the physicians to improve the patients prognosis."

Having a designated cardiology unit is something that Dr. William Suddath, Chairman of Cardiology, has envisioned for the past several years. "This is a real turning point for MedStar Southern Maryland. We've come a long way in the past few years," said Dr. Suddath, a Maryland native who joined the hospital in 2018 and also serves as medical director of the cardiac catheterization laboratory. "We look forward to cardiology being as strong as it can possibly be and will continue to support the population here with a variety of cardiology programs."



For more information about cardiology services at MedStar Health, please visit [MedStarHealth.org/Heart](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Heart).

## Tidbit

# New da Vinci Xi Surgical System brings expandable technology platform to MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center

**M**edStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to announce the recent acquisition of the da Vinci Xi Surgical System, which can be used across a spectrum of minimally invasive surgical procedures and has been optimized for multiquadrant surgeries in the areas of gynecology, urology, thoracic, cardiac and general surgery.

This surgical system, which is an upgraded version of the hospital's previous surgical robot that was originally acquired in 2014, arrived at the hospital in July 2021 as part of MedStar Health's multisite expansion project. It is designed with key features such as wristed instruments, intuitive motion and an ergonomic design.

Other unique highlights include immersive 3D-HD visualization; an overhead instrument arm architecture; a simpler, more compact design with improved vision definition and clarity; smaller, thinner arms with newly designed joints; as well as longer instrument shafts for greater operative reach.

Deborah Walker, nursing director of Perioperative Services at MedStar Southern Maryland, said the hospital is truly thrilled and will continue offering minimally invasive surgical options for the Southern Maryland community.



## Tidbit

# New Behavioral Health unit coming to MedStar Southern Maryland in summer 2022

**A** new Behavioral Health unit is coming soon to MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center which will feature more modernized services, including four therapeutic-friendly spaces designed to enhance quality of care for patients.

Rodney Scales, Director of Behavioral Health, said that he looks forward to renovations that better align with departmental goals and objectives. Among the highly anticipated things to come are a time-out room, space for involuntary administrative

hearings, electronic alarms, additional cameras and even a new medication window that will alleviate challenges associated with compliance standards.

The renovations, slated for completion within the next nine months, are part of MedStar Southern Maryland's annual operating plan. Scales said MedStar Health already had this plan in the works prior to him joining the hospital in 2017.





# MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center welcomes new interventional cardiologist Brian C. Case.



**M**edStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to welcome

Brian C. Case, MD, FACC, a board-certified and fellowship-trained interventional cardiologist who joined the hospital in August 2021.

Dr. Case, a Montgomery County native, graduated cum laude from St. George's University School of Medicine in 2012 and then participated in an internship at NYU Langone Hospital-

Long Island, formerly known as NYU Winthrop Hospital. Dr. Case completed an extensive residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and was selected as the chief medical resident in 2016 for internal medicine. He then obtained fellowship training through a joint program at both MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C., where he was honored as a chief cardiology fellow

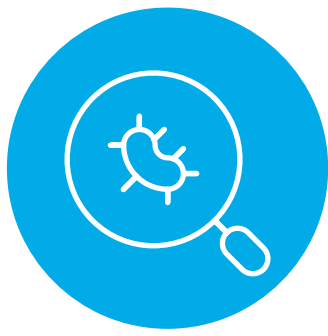
in 2019, followed by two years of combined research and clinical interventional cardiology.

As part of the specialty care provided at MedStar Southern Maryland in Clinton, Maryland, Dr. Case treats patients with coronary artery disease through modern technological interventions such as intravascular imaging and invasive physiology to help guide stent selection, placement and deployment. His training includes performing intravascular ultrasound and optical coherence tomography for intravascular imaging, as well as fractional flow reserves and instantaneous wave-free ratios for evaluation of physiological cardiac ischemia.

"My hope and goal is to incorporate my experience in training into the clinical practice and daily decision making for our patients here at MedStar Southern Maryland," Dr. Case said. "In the world of interventional cardiology, using intravascular imaging and invasive physiology on a daily basis will help guide treatment plans and allow us to provide more individualized, high-quality heart care. It's about having transparency and innovation that leads to the best possible outcomes for our patients. Because how we treat people is the heart of what matters."



For appointments with Dr. Case, please call **301-877-5677**. To learn more, visit [MedStarHealth.org/Case](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Case).



# Sepsis: **An overview**

**D**id you know that sepsis affects more than 1 million adults, killing up to half of them, in the United States each year?

Those who are the most prone to sepsis include adults 65 and older with certain chronic conditions or weakened immune systems, pregnant women and children younger than 12 months. Typical signs or symptoms may include a high heart rate, low blood pressure, confusion, disorientation, extreme pain/discomfort, fever, shivering, feeling very cold, shortness of breath and clammy or sweaty skin.

It's important to know what signs to look for so that potential life-threatening medical emergencies, like tissue damage, organ failure or even death, can be prevented. "Sepsis is a common condition seen in hospitalized patients with an associated high mortality rate. Since the initial publication of the Surviving Sepsis Campaign management guidelines in 2004,

there has been improvement in the recognition of sepsis. Yet, it remains a common cause of death and therefore requires ongoing awareness," said Edwin Yu, MD, Chief of Infectious Disease at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. "Since sepsis is the body's response to infection (bacterial, fungal, viral, etc.), the only way to prevent it is to prevent infection."

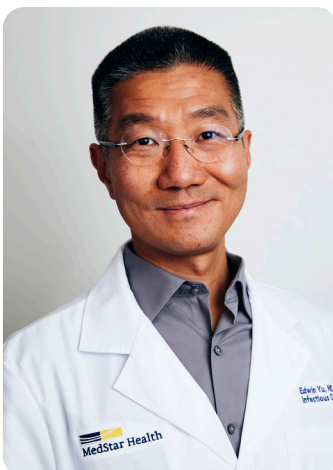
At MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, there are policies and protocols in place to prevent patients from acquiring this illness which develops when an infection triggers a chain reaction throughout his or her body. Our infection control coordinators run daily reports to identify patients who may be prone to infection.

The hospital's coordinators collaborate with clinicians to use those reports as a means of preventing hospital-acquired infections including clotting, surgical site infections, COVID-19 and sepsis. They also perform rounds throughout the hospital to ensure any construction sites have

the right barriers in place.

"Adherence to hand hygiene and best practices for preventing hospital acquired infections would help mitigate some cases of sepsis. Furthermore, with the growing threat of antibiotic resistance, treatment of sepsis may be compromised as a cornerstone of therapy requires early administration of appropriate antibiotics," Dr. Yu said. "There are well described risk factors for sepsis including advancing age and conditions that suppress the immune system. But we must also recognize the growing threat of antibiotic resistance and ensure adherence to antimicrobial stewardship practices [understanding indications for antibiotic use, limiting duration of therapy and ensuring appropriate dosing] to help limit the emergence of resistance."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends taking the following steps to help reduce one's risk of developing sepsis.



—Edwin Yu, MD

## How to get ahead of sepsis.

- 1** Talk to your healthcare professional about how to take care of your chronic condition(s) and getting recommended vaccines.
- 2** Practice good hygiene such as handwashing and keeping skin cuts clean and covered until healed.
- 3** Know the signs and symptoms of sepsis which may entail receiving confirmation via a medical assessment.
- 4** Act fast! Get medical care immediately either in-person or through a telehealth service. In more severe situations, a visit to the emergency may be needed for completion of a medical assessment.



# Heart & Soul

# Heart & Soul

# Nondiscrimination Statement



# MedStar Health

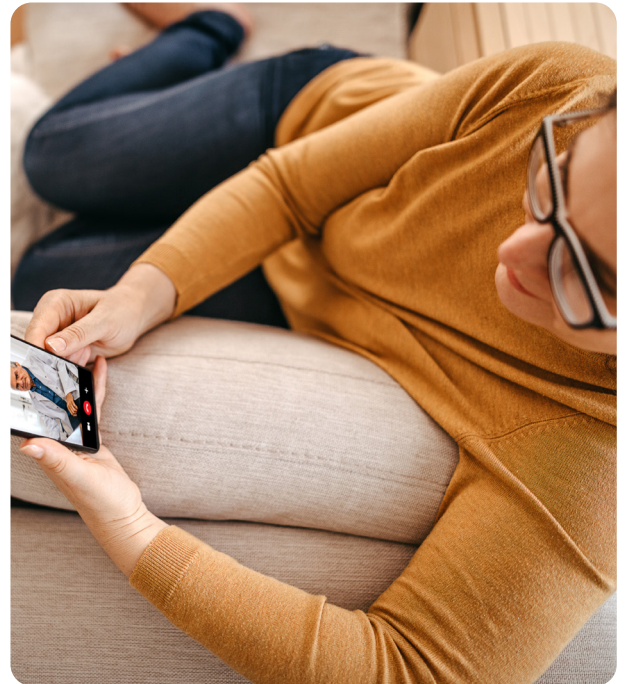
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