

Healthy Halifax

Summer
2019



YOUR RESOURCE FOR BETTER LIVING

STARTING HEALTHY HABITS

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children learn
the ropes 4*



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for You

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Awareness

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Fighters



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK The Way I See It

After many months of due diligence, planning and preparation, Halifax Regional Medical Center was proud to officially become part of Vidant Health on June 1. This partnership will allow our region to continue to receive high-quality care for patients and families. Vidant's mission is to improve the health and well-being of eastern North Carolina.

Our vision is to become the national model for rural health and wellness by creating a premier, trusted healthcare delivery and education system. Vidant works closely with its community hospitals and now has added Halifax Regional – its eighth – to the system. Both organizations understand the unique challenges of rural healthcare, and we are committed to ensuring that high-quality care is readily available in our area.

Patients throughout eastern North Carolina have depended on Halifax Regional since the first hospital opened in Roanoke Rapids in 1912.

Halifax Regional Medical Center will continue to be a foundation for the people of Roanoke Valley and the surrounding communities. We look forward to a bright future and feel honored to continue to serve this area through our partnership with Vidant Health.

WILL MAHONE, PRESIDENT



Halifax Regional leaders, from left: Will Mahone, president; Sherry Jensen, vice president of Financial Services; Fannie Greene, board chairwoman; and Jason Harrell, vice president of Patient Care Services.

Halifax HAPPENINGS

A Team Effort



This group of paramedics is now part of Halifax Regional's emergency care team.

Halifax Regional integrates paramedics, LPNs into care team



Many times, paramedics are seen as outsiders to emergency department processes, helping patients solely during transport to the hospital. However, Halifax Regional is leading

the way to strengthen communication and collaboration between paramedics, doctors and nurses to deliver better patient care. Paramedics and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) at Halifax Regional are now an

Find Dr. Right



You're selective about a lot of things, like the car you drive or the clothes you wear. The same discerning attitude should apply to your healthcare provider. Here are a few factors to consider when looking for a new doctor.

1. Area of knowledge: Check for expertise that matches you and your family's healthcare needs. Internal medicine physicians specialize in treating adults, while family physicians serve as both pediatricians for kids and internists for adults. Whichever

type of physician you choose, look for board certification, which means that the doctor is on top of the most current information related to their specialty. **2. Reputation:** Consider asking your friends and relatives who they like and

integral part of the care team, enabling registered nurses to be more focused on bedside care.

Patient rounding by a charge nurse or delegate in the waiting room has also been implemented as a standard of care. Convenient Care has been re-opened and is a resounding success as these patients are typically in and out of the Emergency Department (ED) within 1.5 hours.

Since the introduction of these new procedures, patient satisfaction has been on the rise, as well as staff satisfaction. Teamwork and trust are the building blocks of the new ED at Halifax Regional, and it shows.

Screening Scrutiny



Prostate cancer is the second most common form of cancer, only surpassed by skin cancer. Men are at a higher risk of developing the disease if they are older, have a family history of prostate cancer or are African-American.

The prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test and a digital rectal exam are most commonly used to screen for prostate cancer. In recent years, however, the widespread use of PSA testing has come into question. In 2018, the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force released its final recommendation on PSA screening, indicating that men aged 55 to 69 years should talk to their physician about the potential benefits and harms related to the test. According to the document, screening is not recommended for men 70 years and older. (Among the reasons are false-positive and false-negative results, and the stress and anxiety of living with slow-growing prostate cancer that does not require treatment.)

Men should begin discussions with their doctor about screening at age 50 if they do not have a family history. Those with a family history should start at age 40. The recommended age for screening for African-American men is 45. Talking with a physician helps men understand their risks and make more informed decisions.

Surgical removal of the entire prostate gland is a common treatment for prostate cancer, depending on age, overall health, stage of the cancer and whether the cancer has spread.

Robotic surgery may offer a shorter recovery period compared with traditional surgical procedures.



STRONG STUFF

To learn more about men's health services, visit halifaxregional.org/our-services/mens-health. Call 252-535-8011 to request an appointment.

then go online. You can learn about ease of making appointments and read about patients' experiences.

3. Insurance: Call your insurance company to learn whether the doctor you are considering is covered under your plan and what co-pays may be required.

4. Location: Convenience matters, so look for doctor's offices nearby or on your

frequently traveled routes.

5. Office environment: One way to get a feel for what the practice is like is simply to pick up the phone and call. Pay attention to how the staff responds to your questions. Are they too busy to talk? Do they express a sincere interest in you? With a few conversations and a little research, you can find the perfect fit for you and your family.

Be in the Know and Win!



Halifax Regional Medical Center is now part of Vidant Health! Learn more about this development and stay in the loop on important health news and information from Halifax Regional. Visit halifaxregional.org/sign-up-for-updates to receive digital updates. Those who provide their information will be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 Visa gift card.



FIND A DOC

Look for a doctor at physicians.halifaxregional.org.

Avoiding

Developing healthy habits starts at a young age



Children need the energy from food to grow and develop, but eating too much can open the door to being overweight and lead to health issues — such as diabetes and heart disease — that can last a lifetime. To help your child avoid obesity and its potential complications, start with a healthy diet and physical activity.

“The imbalance between food intake and output causes obesity,” says Sandeep Tiwari, MD, FAAP, pediatrician at Park Avenue Pediatrics. “Over the last few decades, lifestyle changes have resulted in the piling on of calories from eating more processed foods.”

A recent National Institutes of Health study gives insight into one part of the obesity puzzle. Researchers found that consuming a diet mostly composed of ultra-processed foods actually drives people to overeat and gain weight compared to diets made up of whole or minimally processed foods.

“Most of my obese patients are on a processed food diet,” notes Sheila Bhagwandass, MD, FAAP, Park Avenue Pediatrics pediatrician. “I tell them most packaged food is not really healthy. The problem is that it’s easier than preparing a meal from fresh ingredients.”



CUTTING OUT PROCESSED FOODS

Ultra-processed foods tend to have more carbohydrates and preservatives, and not enough fiber, both of which contribute to a high glycemic index (GI). GI is a number indicating how fast carbohydrates are converted into glucose, or sugar, in the body.

So what is the source of these ultra-processed foods? It’s largely fast foods and convenience foods — the ones we love to eat. And unfortunately, it’s a love that starts early. “A child’s preference for processed food often begins when a parent offers a 9- or 10-month-old their

obesity



first taste of a fast-food meal,” Dr. Tiwari points out.

Parents should consider slowly changing those preferences by involving children in meal planning, grocery shopping and even cooking. Kids who participate in food decisions may develop a sense of ownership in what the family eats, and the time spent together in the process can help strengthen family bonds.

While more people are aware of health issues such as obesity, major lifestyle changes don't occur overnight.

“Change takes time,” says Dr. Bhagwandass. “I find parents and children are more aware, but they are not necessarily acting on what they know. Most likely, it will be the children of the kids we see now who will most benefit.”

ON THE MOVE

In addition to having a better diet, children need to move every day. Children ages 6 to 17 should have at least one hour of moderate to vigorous activity each day, according to the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention. This should include aerobic, muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening activities.

Other important habits for children are drinking plenty of water and receiving sound sleep every night. In the fight against childhood obesity, area residents have an effective partner in the Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative (RV-CHI), which provides education about healthy living. (See “Empowered Through Education.”)

Since RV-CHI began, Dr. Tiwari has seen a positive shift in his patients. “Before RV-CHI, we would be the ones talking with parents about the importance of healthy eating and exercise,” he remarks. “Nowadays, it's the parents who initiate those conversations.” ■■

Empowered Through Education



The Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative (RV-CHI) was created to empower Roanoke Valley residents to live healthily by increasing access to play spaces, information, healthcare, organized recreation and locally grown produce. Founded in 2011, RV-CHI represents collaboration among healthcare providers, child and family agencies, businesses, individuals, and community- and faith-based groups.

RV-CHI provides resources and information to promote understanding of the importance of healthy eating and physical activity to address the challenges presented by obesity. One important resource is the Places to Explore, Move and Play map that identifies specific opportunities for play and other activities.

Visit getfitstayfitrv.com to download the maps and take advantage of the many resources and activities available to residents of Halifax and Northampton counties.

NEED A PEDIATRICIAN?

Visit physicians.halifaxregional.org to look for a doctor who suits your needs.

You've Got Skin in the Game

Be on the lookout for signs of skin cancer



Summer is in full swing. While it's the time of year to enjoy the beautiful days, it's also important to be on the lookout for signs of skin cancer and take steps to protect ourselves from the disease.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, with 1 in 5 Americans developing the disease in their lifetime. In the practice of Carol Rupe, MD, family physician at Roanoke Clinic, the rate of post-summer skin cancer among patients appears at around 20%. Skin cancer from sun exposure makes up the highest number of cases.

It's important to be aware that skin cancer does not discriminate, Dr. Rupe points out. Unfortunately, skin cancer among people of color may not be caught until later stages. "Skin cancer in people of color is harder to detect because of pigmentation," says Dr. Rupe. "This population group is also prone to skin cancer in places such as the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, the groin and inside of the mouth. Melanomas also may develop under the nails."

There are two types of skin cancer: melanoma and nonmelanoma. Nonmelanoma skin cancer can occur anywhere on the skin but is most often found on body parts that receive the greatest

sun exposure. "Be alert for areas like a bump that gets irritated and doesn't go away," Dr. Rupe says. "A scaly patch can be a precancerous lesion which is very common on the ears, nose and face, and on the scalp of men who are balding."

Basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas, the primary non-melanoma skin cancers, spread only locally and are highly curable with early detection and treatment.

Melanomas are the most deadly form of skin cancer, and most cases can be attributed to exposure to ultraviolet radiation from sunlight. The rate of new melanoma cases has tripled since the 1970s. Unlike nonmelanomas, melanomas can spread throughout the body via the blood system.

Risk factors include blistering sunburn during childhood or adolescence, prolonged exposure to tanning beds, a history of nonmelanoma in you or a family member, the number of moles on your skin, older age, and fair skin or freckles. Melanomas most often appear as moles that are unevenly shaped; have irregular borders; have multiple colors; or show changes in appearance, color, shape or elevation. ❖



WANT A NEW LOOK?

Roanoke Clinic offers cosmetic procedures. Call [252-537-9176](tel:252-537-9176) to schedule a private consultation to learn more about the cosmetic services available, their costs and what you can expect. For more information, visit halifaxregional.org/locations/roanoke-clinic. Cosmetic procedures are not covered by insurance.

Skin Self-Exam

Here is guidance from the American Cancer Society on performing skin self-exams:

Face the mirror

- ▶ Check your face, ears, neck, chest and belly. Women: lift your breasts to check the skin underneath.
- ▶ Check your underarm areas, both sides of your arms, the tops and palms of your hands, in between your fingers and your fingernails.

Sit down

- ▶ Check the front of your thighs, shins, tops of your feet, in between your toes and your toenails.
- ▶ Now use a hand mirror to look at the bottoms of your feet, your calves and the backs of your thighs, first checking one leg and then the other.
- ▶ Use the hand mirror to check your buttocks, genital area, lower and upper back, and the back of the neck and ears. Or it may be easier to look at your back in the wall mirror using a hand mirror.
- ▶ Use a comb or hair dryer to part your hair so that you can check your scalp.



Sun Safety



Summer offers seemingly endless days of light and sun, but the sun also can be dangerous, and it is important to protect yourself against its powerful rays. Here are some frequently asked questions about sun exposure:

Q WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO PROTECT MY FAMILY AGAINST SKIN CANCER?

Most of us cannot completely avoid exposure to the ultraviolet radiation of the sun. To lessen the risks, make applying sunscreen a part of every family member's daily routine, and avoid sun exposure between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest. Also stay in the shade when possible and wear protective clothing.

Q HOW DO I DETERMINE THE MOST EFFECTIVE SUNSCREEN?

Broad-spectrum sunscreens are able to absorb both ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B radiation. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher for best protection. Sunscreens containing PABA (para-aminobenzoic acid) may cause allergic reactions and should be avoided. Remember to reapply all sunscreens frequently throughout the day, especially after swimming or working up a sweat.

Q DO SUNSCREENS INTERFERE WITH THE ABSORPTION OF VITAMIN D?

There has been concern that sunscreen usage could result in vitamin D deficiency. Oral vitamin D supplements are a safe alternative to sunshine for achieving adequate vitamin D levels. ■■

Healthy Halifax is the newsletter of Halifax Regional. Please contact Jerrica Edmonds with questions or comments at 252-535-8743 or Jerrica.Edmonds@Vidanthealth.com.

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Spotlight on Halifax

A Healing Place

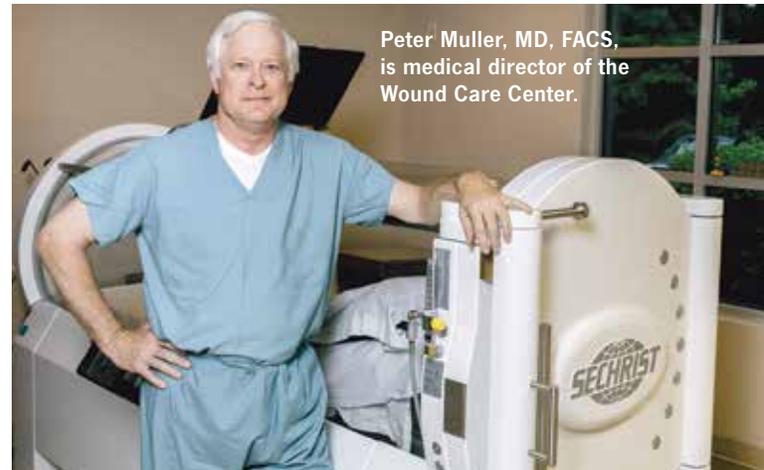
Wound Care Center treats variety of chronic wounds



Most of us assume a wound will heal on its own. But for around 8 million Americans, chronic nonhealing wounds have a significant impact on daily living.

Halifax Regional's Wound Care Center addresses a variety of chronic wounds, such as diabetic foot ulcers; venous ulcers, caused by problems in leg veins that result in leg swelling; and pressure ulcers related to mobility impairment. Treatments include removal of dead tissue (debridement), specialty dressings, skin replacement and nutritional counseling.

Wounds heal best when they have an ample supply of oxygen-rich blood flow. When that flow is restricted, the healing process is compromised. Peter Muller, MD, FACS, medical director of the Wound Care Center, points out that an effective way of increasing blood flow is through hyperbaric oxygen therapy. “The primary component of wound healing is oxygen delivery to the wound site,” Dr. Muller says. “Our hyperbaric oxygen chambers provide 100% oxygen under pressure, which



Peter Muller, MD, FACS, is medical director of the Wound Care Center.

increases the amount of oxygen dissolved in the bloodstream and can improve the healing rate.”

As an indication of the Wound Care Center's talent in healing wounds, Healogics, the nation's largest provider of advanced wound healing services, honored the center with its second Center of Excellence Award. The center previously received a Center of Distinction award in 2016, followed by a Center of Excellence award in 2017. The award is based on healing rates above 91%, patient satisfaction rates greater than 92% and wound healing in less than 30 median days.

“It means a lot to us to have our dedication affirmed by the Healogics organization,” says Michael “Mick” Olesnevich, RN, program director at the Wound Care Center, which is one of more than 700 wound care centers in the United States. ■■

THE RIGHT CARE

Find out more about the Wound Care Center at halifaxregional.org/wound-care. Call 252-535-2350 to make an appointment.

FIND A PHYSICIAN

To find doctors, office locations and more, visit physicians.halifaxregional.org.

ONLINE BILL PAY

Your Halifax Regional statements from Patientco offer a variety of payment options. To pay online, visit gopatientco.com.