

HealthLINK

YOUR CONNECTION TO HEALTH & WELLNESS

EMERGENCY

WHEN EVERY SECOND COUNTS

FAST ACTION BY VALLEY HEALTH'S
EXPERT TEAM SAVES LIVES 24/7

INSIDE: Thanks to state-of-the-art care, orthopedic surgery patients are back in the game faster. / Tips to help caregivers avoid burnout. / The facts about gynecologic cancers.

FALL 2019

 **ValleyHealth**
Healthier, together.

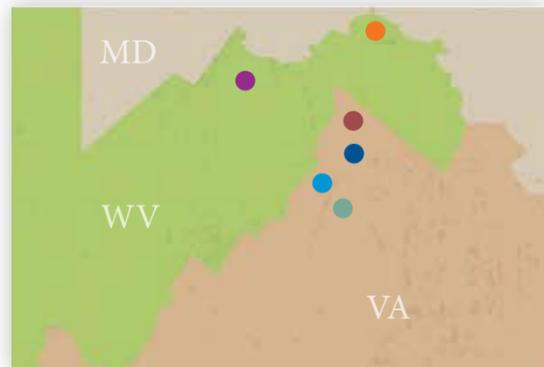
EMBRACING CHANGE

Change is in the air this time of year. Many look forward to the first cool fall day and pumpkins at the farm stand. But change is also part and parcel of health and wellness. Many of us have been encouraged to make lifestyle changes by our healthcare providers (“Eat more veggies!” or “Quit smoking now!”), or have witnessed changes in a loved one due to age or illness (read more on this topic on page 15).

In this issue of *HealthLINK*, you will be inspired by two women who have embraced change: one whose fitness routine helped ensure a quick recovery from total knee replacement surgery, and another who is making an amazing recovery after a car accident, thanks to exceptional care from the Valley Health trauma, critical care, emergency, neuro, and ortho teams. These stories—and the other articles that follow—will inform and educate ... so grab your first pumpkin spice latte of the season, learn and enjoy!

Want to ensure home delivery of every issue of *HealthLINK*? Call 540-536-5325 or sign up at valleyhealthlink.com/News.

On the cover (from left): Neurosurgeon Patrick Ireland, MD; Lisa Wells, RN; and surgeons Fadi Makari, MD, and Jeffrey Carter, MD.



Valley Health is a not-for-profit system of hospitals, services and providers. For more information about the many ways we serve the health and wellness needs of the community, visit valleyhealthlink.com.

Valley Health System includes:

- Winchester Medical Center (Winchester, VA)
- Page Memorial Hospital (Luray, VA)
- War Memorial Hospital (Berkeley Springs, WV)
- Hampshire Memorial Hospital (Romney, WV)
- Shenandoah Memorial Hospital (Woodstock, VA)
- Warren Memorial Hospital (Front Royal, VA)

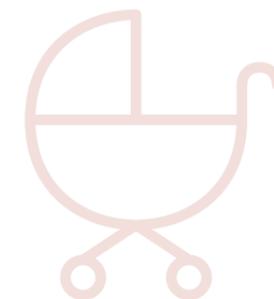
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- Outreach Lab Services
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- Quick Care
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- Valley Physician Enterprise
- Rehabilitation Services (Inpatient and Outpatient)
- Valley Medical Transport
- Wellness & Fitness Centers
- Urgent Care

→ For more information, visit valleyhealthlink.com/locations.



Five Winchester Medical Center co-workers delivered beautiful, healthy babies within months of one another in the hospital's Labor and Delivery Unit.



MOMS ON INPATIENT THERAPY TEAM SHARE WORK—AND PREGNANCY—EXPERIENCE

The women shared the joys and challenges of their pregnancies together.

Where's the best place in the region to give birth? Winchester Medical Center (WMC), of course! Just ask the five members of the WMC inpatient therapy team who had beautiful, healthy babies



within months of one another. The group—**four occupational therapists and one physical therapy assistant**—shared the joys and challenges of pregnancy, then delivered in WMC's Labor and Delivery Unit, which features private birthing suites offering privacy and comfort to moms, dads, partners ... and newborns. “I had a wonderful experience from beginning to end,” notes Catelyn Cottrill, WMC occupational therapist. “Having given birth at another hospital before, I didn't expect to be wowed, but [the WMC staff] is awesome!”

Although the babies have not yet commented, our guess is that Peter, Truett, Stella, Faith, and Liam would add that sharing this Valley Health experience means they are “healthier, together!”



Valley Health System
Serving Our Community by Improving Health

HealthLINK
The magazine of Valley Health System
Serving the northern Shenandoah Valley and surrounding areas in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland

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The information contained in *HealthLINK* is not a substitute for professional medical care or counsel. If you have medical concerns, consult a medical professional. A list of physicians, specialists and other care providers is found at valleyhealthlink.com/physicians.

HealthLINK magazine is published three times a year. Its purpose is to provide health and wellness information to the community and to connect area residents with health-care experts within Valley Health System.

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QUEST AWARD FINALISTS

Page Memorial and War Memorial Hospitals are finalists for 2019 QUEST® Awards for High-Value Healthcare. These accolades recognize top performance in five categories: affordability, effective care and coordination, prevention and treatment for leading causes of mortality, person and family experience, and patient safety.

“Improving community health and patient outcomes are priorities for our hospital teams, and the QUEST Award recognition reinforces our commitment to deliver the best care experience to the patients we serve,” states Tom Kluge, president, War Memorial Hospital. “Everyone on our team embraces the philosophy that ‘we are all caregivers,’ so it is rewarding to see this dedication—and our hard work—recognized.”

Page Memorial Vice President Portia Brown adds her congratulations to all team members who exemplify Valley Health’s mission and values every day. “We recognize that what we do ‘to’ patients, all the tests and procedures, is extremely important, but what we do ‘for’ patients—making them comfortable, keeping them safe, gaining their trust, and showing compassion—is equally vital,” she says, adding that that’s really at the heart of our efforts to create a positive patient and family experience.

VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM CEO TO RETIRE IN 2020

In June, Valley Health System President and CEO Mark H. Merrill announced that he will retire next year. He has led the region’s leading not-for-profit health system since 2009 and has committed to serve and assist in the transition process as the Board of Trustees recruits and hires a new chief executive. “Mark’s legacy is how his work has positively affected patients and families, co-workers and colleagues, physicians, friends and strangers,” observes Joseph F. Silek Jr., chair of the Board. “I thank him for his values-based leadership and his commitment to our community.”



LifeNet Health’s Rick Fowler and Linda Roberts join Shenandoah Memorial Hospital director Melissa Stalbird and President N. Travis Clark at the dedication of the Tree of Life donor commemorative.

SMH UNVEILS LASTING TRIBUTE TO ORGAN DONORS

For 20 years, Shenandoah Memorial Hospital (SMH) has partnered with LifeNet Health to increase awareness of organ donation and improve the lives of others through the procurement of eye and tissue donations. In June, officials from the hospital and LifeNet gathered with donor families and community members for the unveiling of the Tree of Life, located in the north lobby, which bears the names of patients who have helped enhance the lives of total strangers. “We will continue to add the names of those who donate,” says SMH President N. Travis Clark. “The countless number of lives saved and enhanced by these selfless acts is nothing short of amazing.”

HOT TOPIC

LOW-DOSE ASPIRIN: TO TAKE OR NOT TO TAKE

New guidelines caution against regular doses for certain cardiovascular patients

For years, the daily use of a low-dose (81-mg) aspirin was recommended by many physicians as a strategy to prevent or mitigate future heart attacks, stroke and other cardiovascular problems. However, earlier this year new guidelines were issued by the American College of Cardiology (ACC); the updated recommendations were made because of new research focused on internal bleeding that may be caused by daily aspirin use.

Valley Health cardiologist Saif Al-Najafi, MD, offered the following guidance on the new ACC recommendations:

Patients with coronary artery disease (CAD): Those who have had stents in their hearts, heart attack, stroke, coronary bypass, have peripheral artery disease or other cardiovascular conditions should continue a low-dose aspirin in consultation with their physician.

Those of any age, with none of the conditions mentioned above, who have experienced gastrointestinal or other bleeding should not take daily low-dose aspirin. However, those who are already on aspirin need to discuss the issue with their primary care physician or their cardiologist before discontinuing aspirin use.

Those over 70 with no history of CAD should not take a daily aspirin unless they have high LDL cholesterol that is uncontrolled despite statin use; of course, these patients should discuss their specific situation with their physician.

Patients from 40 to 70 years do not need to take a low-dose aspirin unless they have risk factors such as:

PREVENTIVE CARDIOLOGY CLINIC

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer in the U.S. Winchester Cardiology and Vascular Medicine | Valley Health sees patients who have questions about their heart health and/or are unsure about their risk factors for coronary artery disease. Call 540-662-0306 to make an appointment.



- Family history of CAD (male relative under 55 or female relative under 65 who had a heart attack, stroke or other condition associated with CAD)
- High LDL cholesterol levels, not controlled with statins
- High blood pressure, treated with multiple medications

As always, consult your primary care provider or cardiologist for advice and recommendations that are appropriate given your medical history.

VACCINATION IN THE U.S. THEN AND NOW

→ FROM POLIO TO PERTUSSIS, HERE'S A LOOK AT HOW VACCINES HAVE TRANSFORMED PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE U.S. OVER THE PAST CENTURY.

21,000

THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS PARALYZED BY POLIO IN 1952. VACCINATION ELIMINATED POLIO IN THE U.S. BY 1979.

4 MILLION

THE NUMBER OF CASES OF CHICKENPOX EVERY YEAR BEFORE THE VACCINE WAS INTRODUCED IN 1995. NOW, THERE ARE FEWER THAN 350,000 REPORTED ANNUAL CASES.

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AFFLICTED WITH MUMPS EACH YEAR PRIOR TO THE START OF VACCINATION PROGRAMS IN 1967. THE NUMBER OF ANNUAL CASES NOW WAVERS BETWEEN A FEW HUNDRED AND A FEW THOUSAND.

186,000

374

THE NUMBER OF MEASLES CASES IN THE U.S. IN 2018. PRIOR TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE VACCINE IN 1963, THE ANNUAL CASES TOTALED ABOUT 500,000.

(12.5 MILLION)

THE NUMBER OF RUBELLA CASES IN THE U.S. BETWEEN 1964 AND 1965. THERE HAVE BEEN ZERO CASES SINCE 2004.

ZERO

THE NUMBER OF SCIENTIFICALLY ESTABLISHED CONNECTIONS BETWEEN VACCINATIONS AND AUTISM.

→ Visit valleyhealthlink.com/pcplocation to find a primary care provider who can ensure you have the vaccinations you need. (Source of statistics: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

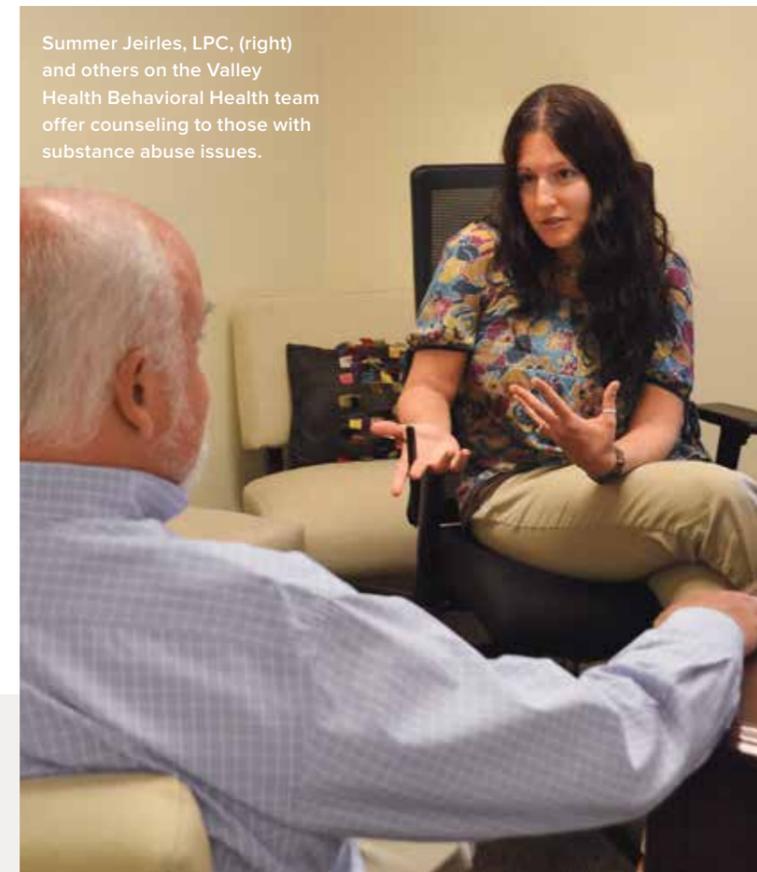
FAQs

AGING AND ALCOHOL USE

Drinking a few alcoholic beverages a week is not a problem for most adults, but high-risk alcohol use can be especially detrimental for those over 65 years old. Summer Jeirles, LPC, manager, Behavioral Health Integration, and Michelle Kling, RN, BSN, answer questions about how much is too much and the effects of alcohol overuse.

Q: AT WHAT POINT SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT MY ALCOHOL USE OR THE DRINKING OF A LOVED ONE?

A: For those over 65 years, the same guidelines apply to both men and women. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines low-risk alcohol use for healthy seniors as no more than three drinks at one sitting and no more than seven drinks per week. (For those with chronic health conditions, even these levels of alcohol use may be problematic.) Moderate or high-risk drinking can cause serious health, social and familial issues.



Summer Jeirles, LPC, (right) and others on the Valley Health Behavioral Health team offer counseling to those with substance abuse issues.

Q: WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS OF MODERATE/HIGH-RISK DRINKING FOR OLDER INDIVIDUALS?

A: As we age, our liver metabolizes alcohol differently and tolerance decreases. Seniors with cardiac and liver conditions, diabetes, hypertension, and other chronic diseases may find their conditions are worsened by alcohol use. The risk of falling also increases; in fact, the first “red flag” about alcohol overuse for many seniors is when they arrive in a Valley Health Emergency Department after a fall.

Seniors also face unique health and life situations. For many, aging is associated with loss. It is not unusual for older Americans to experience depression, anxiety, grief over the death of a loved one, pain and chronic health problems, insomnia, and loneliness. A lack of purpose after retirement or the challenges of raising grandchildren may cause some to “self-medicate” with alcohol. And for those who take prescribed drugs for pain, anxiety or depression, alcohol increases the risk of cross addiction and drug interactions.

Q: WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM CONCERNED ABOUT MY DRINKING?

A: First, have a candid conversation with your primary care provider (PCP). She will evaluate if your alcohol use is low, moderate or high risk, exacerbates other health conditions, and/or interacts with prescription drugs you take. Your PCP can also refer you to an appropriate treatment center, especially for those who experience withdrawal symptoms when cutting back or quitting, since some require a medically supervised detox. PCPs also screen for depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions and can refer you to one of Valley Health’s inpatient or outpatient behavioral health programs, if appropriate.

→ To learn more about Valley Health’s Behavioral Health services, visit valleyhealthlink.com/behavioralhealth.

ALWAYS READY

➔ VALLEY HEALTH'S TRAUMA TEAM IS PREPARED TO SAVE LIVES 24 HOURS A DAY

Car crashes and ATV accidents. Falls and industrial injuries. Gunshot and stab wounds. When patients arrive by ambulance or medical helicopter with serious, life-threatening injuries, the Winchester Medical Center (WMC) Trauma team goes on "alpha alert"—the highest level of trauma preparedness—and gets ready to mobilize to assess and treat a patient's unique set of injuries in a very, very short period of time. Using information received from the EMS responders, a trauma surgeon and specially trained Emergency Department staff prepare to stabilize and treat the patient. Anesthesiologists and other specialists are paged, and an operating room is placed on standby.

"We have five trauma surgeons on the Valley Health trauma care team," says Terral Goode, MD, medical director, WMC Trauma Services. "We work in shifts, so someone is always here, and other surgical specialists are on call, ready to provide highly specialized surgical care based on the unique needs of the patient. In addition, the hospital's Emergency Department nurses have committed themselves to staying current with advanced trauma training, and radiologists and pathologists prioritize needed medical tests for trauma patients, moving them to the top of the list so our team can intervene and save lives."

A VITAL RESOURCE IN A TRAUMA CARE DESERT

For residents of the northern Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, Eastern Panhandle and Potomac Highlands of West Virginia, and Western Maryland, having a Level II trauma center at WMC provides peace of mind. It means an experienced trauma surgeon from ACCESS—the ACute Care and Emergency Surgery Service—is on call 24 hours a day at WMC. And a highly trained, designated team is ready to act—swiftly and collaboratively—for the acutely injured. *continued on page 11*

DO THIS FIRST IN THE "GOLDEN HOUR"

Medical treatment during the first "golden hour" after the occurrence of a life-threatening injury is critical. So if you or someone you love suffers a traumatic injury, call 9-1-1 right away. "Don't drive them to the hospital yourself," Dr. Goode says. "You won't be able to take care of them during the ride. The emergency dispatcher can tell you what to do while you wait for the EMS responders, who can begin treatment in the ambulance and call ahead to the emergency or trauma center."



A multidisciplinary team, like these staff who cared for Marryn Blow (see page 10), is ready when trauma patients arrive at Winchester Medical Center.

Trauma patient Marryn Blow and her mother, Jennifer White.



BEATING THE ODDS: MARRYN'S STORY

Fast action from trauma team saves the life—and future—of local teen

When 19-year-old Marryn Blow arrived at Winchester Medical Center (WMC) following a fiery car accident, quick action by the WMC Trauma team saved her life. “Our Trauma team only has a few minutes to identify the injury that’s most life-threatening and address it. It might not be the most obvious problem, but it’s the one that will kill a patient fastest,” explains Terral Goode, MD, medical director of WMC Trauma Services.

Access to Valley Health’s multidisciplinary team is also essential. Blow’s injuries included multiple skull fractures, a traumatic brain injury, a broken pelvis, and badly shattered legs. When CT scans revealed the extent of the trauma to her brain, it became clear that brain swelling and a large blood clot were her most immediate, life-threatening injuries. Surgeon Fadi Makari, MD, immediately paged neurosurgeon Patrick Ireland, MD, who removed part of Blow’s skull to accommodate brain swelling and intervened to remove the clot.

“The Trauma team is fantastic at assessing a patient’s overall condition quickly, securing airways, stabilizing vital signs and

making sure blood is oxygenated,” notes Dr. Ireland. “Thanks to their quick action, Marryn was in the operating room in less than an hour.”

During Blow’s 50-day hospital stay, a multidisciplinary team of physicians, nurses with critical care, wound care and other specialized training, respiratory therapists, physical therapists, and more met each morning to review her case and plan next steps.

After her discharge from the hospital, Blow spent the next 20 days in rigorous acute inpatient rehabilitation at Valley Health’s Winchester Rehabilitation Center. She continues in-home and outpatient physical and occupational therapy, and is determined to make a full recovery. “I didn’t think there would be this much work in getting everything in my body to work right again,” says Blow, who has progressed from using a wheelchair to walking with crutches. “Other than my big toe, I had never broken anything before!”

“Marryn’s injuries meant she had only a 5 percent chance of making a functional recovery—and a 1 percent chance of returning to a normal life,” Dr. Ireland notes. That’s why Jennifer White, Blow’s mother, is beyond grateful for the care her daughter received from the staff at WMC. “The Trauma team’s actions and incredible care saved her life,” White says. “It’s really a miracle.”



Neurosurgeon Patrick Ireland, MD, with Marryn Blow.

“Last year we treated over 900 trauma patients, and the number increases every year,” notes Lisa Wells, RN, Trauma Services program manager.

In early 2019, WMC’s Level II Trauma Center status was reconfirmed by the state in an intense on-site review process that takes place every three years to ensure ongoing quality care. “Our region is so large. Without WMC, this would be a trauma-care desert, where people with critical injuries would be transported by ambulance or helicopter 70 miles or more to get treatment. That could be the difference between life and death,” Dr. Goode notes. Accredited by the Virginia Department of Health—and one of only a handful in the state—Winchester Medical Center is ready to handle virtually any type of traumatic injury.

“We are ready to care for people with blunt trauma to the chest and abdomen, as well as injuries to bones and joints; the brain and spinal cord; the kidneys and urinary tract; the face, neck and throat; the eyes; vascular injuries involving blood vessels large and small; injuries during pregnancy; and more,” Dr. Goode adds. “We are prepared for the worst, but always hope for the best.”

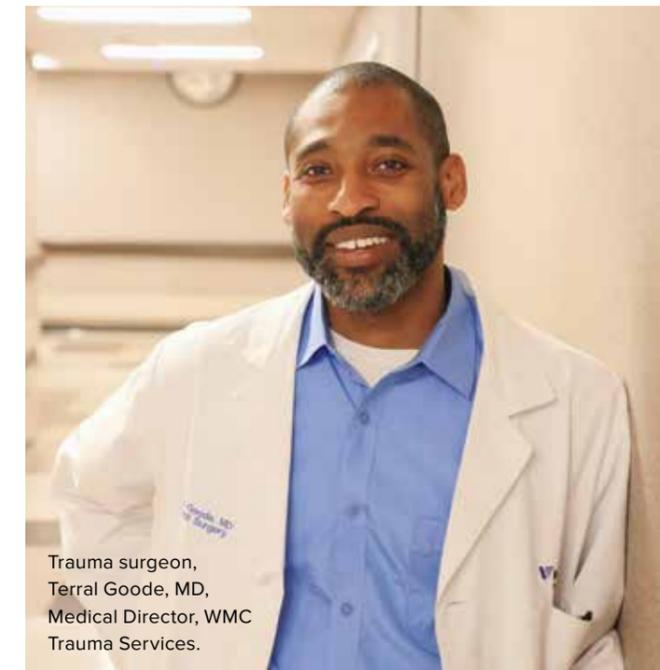
The Trauma Services team also contributes to ensuring the region’s safety in other ways. From participating in regional mass casualty preparedness drills to coordinating community safety awareness events and offering free Stop the Bleed training, the team is passionate about preventing injury and improving outcomes.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO INPATIENT CARE

The Trauma team’s rapid assessment and prompt treatment during the initial intensive, emergent phase of care are essential hallmarks of advanced trauma care, but this group also coordinates and oversees care for patients throughout their inpatient stay. Patients may be comatose, have extensive internal injuries or multiple bone fractures. Lifesaving emergency surgery may stabilize the injured, but recovery frequently takes weeks—or even months. Bringing in the right specialists at the right time while directing pain management, wound care, treatments from respiratory, physical and occupational therapists and the nursing team are critical functions that frequently result in what are sometimes referred to as “miraculous” outcomes.

“Without WMC, this would be a trauma-care desert, where people with critical injuries would be transported by ambulance or helicopter 70 miles or more to get treatment. That could be the difference between life and death.”

—TERRAL GOODE, MD



Trauma surgeon, Terral Goode, MD, Medical Director, WMC Trauma Services.

“These members of the trauma care team are really the unsung heroes of our program,” continues Dr. Goode. “They don’t expect recognition, but they are part of a parade of expert, dedicated staff whose expertise is critical to the recovery of these patients who come to us near death.”

Many on the Trauma team offer support for worried family members, but WMC’s compassionate nurses play an especially important role in providing comfort and communication.

Critical-care nurses, such as Dana Ashlock, BSN, CCRN, work closely with trauma patients, some serving as their primary nurse for 12-hour shifts. Sharing milestones in recovery is especially rewarding, and even critically injured patients can “feel” the support of loved ones. “It’s a very special feeling to be with the family when something good happens,” Ashlock says. “The emotional, mental and spiritual side of recovery from traumatic injury is half the battle.”

SAFETY NET FOR THE REGION

While no one wants or expects to be a trauma patient, it’s comforting to know that there’s a highly trained team of specialists always ready to jump into action any time trauma strikes. “Valley Health has made a huge investment in Trauma Services at WMC,” Dr. Goode adds. “It’s a real gift to the community to offer this advanced level of care.”

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Motivated patients like Sue Walter—a Valley Health laboratory employee and fitness instructor—prove that anything's possible, even after two total knee replacement surgeries

When Sue Walter, a beloved instructor at Valley Health's Wellness & Fitness Center, tells her students "you can do it!" and "the sky's the limit!" they always put more oomph into their workouts. That's because Walter's own journey to a healthier lifestyle is so inspirational, she's become a powerful cheerleader for others to take control of their health.

Walter had started working as a technician in Winchester Medical Center's (WMC) Pathology Lab in 2005, and when she learned that WMC had plans to open a wellness center, "I wanted to get my foot in the door right away," she says.

Soon, Walter began to exercise there regularly, eventually earning her certification as a fitness and aquatics instructor and teaching classes in addition to working at her full-time job in the lab.

When she was diagnosed with arthritic knees in 2006, she knew she needed to be proactive about managing her pain to prevent it from worsening. She benefited from conservative treatments for a time, but eventually her arthritis became increasingly painful, and she was ready to take the next step.

"It was clear that I was a candidate for total knee replacement [TKR] surgery, but I wanted to put it off as long as possible," Walter says. "At first, I was prescribed anti-inflammatories and steroid injections, which helped a lot, but I needed a longer-term solution." In 2016, after consulting with

"The entire care team—from the terrific nurses to my excellent surgeon to the rehab experts—was wonderful and extremely supportive of me as an athlete." —SUE WALTER



← Sue Walter, center, and her water aerobics class at Valley Health's Wellness & Fitness Center.

the expert orthopedic surgery team at WMC, she had TKR surgery on her right knee. The operation was so successful—and Walter so motivated to return to her daily activities—that she was back to teaching classes in water aerobics in just 10 weeks. She even went on to earn a new credential as a certified personal trainer soon after that.

Nonetheless, her arthritis was increasingly causing trouble with her left knee, and one year later she returned to WMC for her second TKR surgery. "I did even better after the second one," she recalls. "I knew what to expect, so it was easier, and the entire care team—from the terrific nurses to my excellent surgeon to the rehab experts—was wonderful and extremely supportive of me as an athlete."

"Sue did great with the surgery because she was so well-prepared," explains her orthopedic surgeon, Thomas Courtney, MD. "And the physical therapy after surgery is a tremendously important part of the recovery and a big commitment on the patient's part. So it really helped at every step of the way that Sue was highly motivated."

Not long after her second surgery, Walter was able to push herself to yet another level, earning her certification as a BOGAfit instructor. A yoga-based fitness regimen that improves balance and flexibility, BOGAfit is done on floating boards in a pool. In addition, Walter initiated a new low-impact strength-training program at the Wellness & Fitness Center called Hit the Deck Strong.

THE CONTINUUM OF CARE

Walter's case may be unusual; after all, not every TKR patient will (or can) pursue such an active lifestyle following orthopedic surgery. But her story demonstrates how an optimal recovery depends on the right combination of expert care, physical therapy and—perhaps most importantly—the patient's determination to get better.

"In my practice, I usually recommend TKR as a last resort," Dr. Courtney says. "I always start by discussing all the options with my patients, such as managing the pain through cortisone injections and maintaining a healthy weight. But when these measures are not enough, and when a patient's bad days start to outnumber the good days, then it's time for TKR."

Many factors may put a patient at risk for knee damage, including obesity or a prior injury. In her case, Walter had struggled with her weight, which was close to 300 pounds in the late 1990s. Over the past 20 years,

she managed to lose 115 pounds, and today she is keeping her weight stable through diet and exercise. But, says Dr. Courtney, her history of obesity may have played a role in the onset of her arthritis.

When it has been determined that a patient is a candidate for TKR, he or she works with the medical team to develop a plan of care. The surgery itself lasts approximately one hour and involves removing damaged cartilage, resurfacing the bones and implanting metal components to re-create the surface of the joint. “We tailor the knee replacement to each individual,” Dr. Courtney explains, “but the key with all procedures is to get patients moving their knee soon; the sooner they can get up and walk a bit, the better.”

For this reason, the importance of post-surgical physical therapy (PT) can't be overstated. “After a patient's TKR, we have three main goals in physical therapy: to bend the knee, to straighten the knee and to muscle it up,” says Chris Massonneau, physical therapist, who has been working with patients at Valley Health for 24 years. He teaches patients how to regain their range of motion through a variety of exercises, many of which can be done at home.

“I had the privilege of being Sue's physical therapist after her second TKR,” Massonneau adds. “She and I worked closely together to make the most out of her time in rehab. Sue had every advantage going into PT, given her fitness level. Her spirit, along with the seamless care she received at Valley Health, made her recovery that much easier.”

Today, at age 64, Walter says she's feeling better all the time. “The main thing I have learned is that you have to make health a part of your life,



In her aquatics class, Walter demonstrates her impressive range of motion, even with two knee replacements.

physically, mentally and spiritually,” she says. “And if I can pay it forward and share that message with others, well, then the sky's truly the limit.”

→ To learn more about orthopedic services at Valley Health, visit valleyhealthlink.com/ortho. Visit valleyhealthlink.com/rehab to learn more about rehabilitation services.

SELF-CARE FOR CAREGIVERS

→ MAKE YOURSELF A PRIORITY WHEN TENDING TO THE NEEDS OF LOVED ONES



If you're caring for a loved one who is disabled, elderly or has a chronic health problem, you aren't alone. Sixty-five million Americans are caregivers, providing much-needed help while working, raising children and maintaining a home, according to a National Alliance for Caregiving survey. The experience can be stressful, exhausting and joyful. Caregiving can raise your risk for anxiety, chronic pain, depression, diabetes, heart attack, high blood pressure, and obesity. It can also help you live longer by giving you a sense of purpose. These steps can help you stay healthy as you tend to others' needs:

DON'T GO IT ALONE. Caregivers who take breaks have better physical and mental health. Ask friends and family members to help out for a few hours or a day. One study found that caregivers who carved out time for an activity they loved had healthier blood pressure levels.

EAT WELL AND EXERCISE. Keep fruit and veggies on hand for snacks and make healthy meals you can enjoy with your loved one. Get outside for a few short strolls every day or do a strength-training routine while watching TV. According to the National Institutes of Health, the benefits include more energy; a brighter mood; and reduced risk for heart disease, diabetes and low bone density.

PUT YOUR OWN MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS ON YOUR CALENDAR—IN PEN! Make your own health a priority; you'll feel better and be able to better care for others in your life. As many as one-third of caregivers admit they don't keep up with their basic health checks and screenings.

TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS. Frustration, guilt, sadness, anger, love, grief—caregiving can trigger strong emotions. Talking with a friend or sharing with a support group are healthy ways to express them. Be sure to get help if you have signs of burnout such as depression; dependence on alcohol, sleeping pills or drugs; trouble sleeping; or the feeling that you are neglecting the person you are caring for.

PRACTICE POSITIVITY. In a recent Northwestern University study of 170 caregivers, focusing on positive emotions reduced depression and anxiety. Study participants made it a point to savor positive experiences, recognize personal strengths, keep a gratitude journal, perform a small act of kindness every day, or do a 10-minute meditation exercise while focusing on breathing.

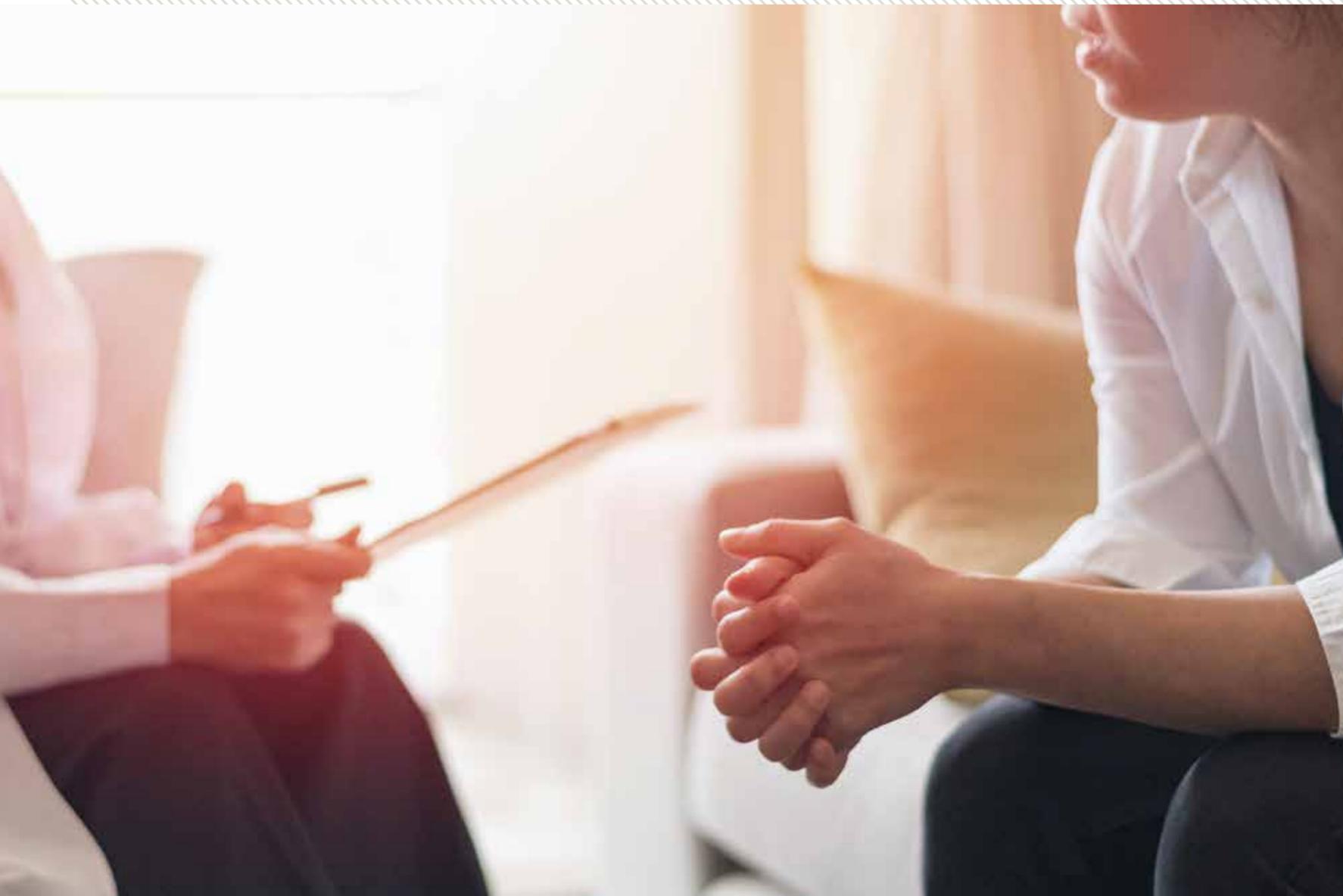
RECOGNIZE WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE NEEDS MORE HELP. If your parent or relative needs more care than you can provide, discuss the situation with his or her doctor. Grocery deliveries, home health visits, transportation services, and adult day care can help your loved one stay independent—and help you care for them.

→ Learn more at valleyhealthlink.com/homehealth.

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ValleyHealth
Healthier, together.

Call **833-VHS-DOCS** or visit valleyhealthlink.com/findaphysician.



THE FACTS ABOUT GYNECOLOGIC CANCERS

Know the symptoms, risk factors and smartest prevention strategies



Fortunately, we're living at a time when doctors use groundbreaking therapies to treat gynecologic cancers.

But a woman's best defense always depends on communicating with her doctor regularly—and at the first sign of symptoms.

CERVICAL CANCER is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection. The virus often goes away on its own, but if it doesn't, it can cause cancer. Fortunately, cervical cancer grows slowly. "It's very easy to screen for and to detect," says Julian E. Martinez, MD, a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist with Valley Health Shenandoah Memorial Hospital.

» **RISK FACTORS:** The more sexual partners you have, the greater your risk of getting HPV. Tobacco use also appears to increase the risk of developing cervical cancer.

» **SMART STRATEGIES:** Get regular Pap smears and HPV tests. Women age 21 to 29 years should get a Pap smear every two to three years. Women age 30 to 65 should either get a Pap smear every three years OR get a Pap and HPV test every five years.

The HPV vaccination has been effective in reducing HPV infections and cervical precancers. The two-dose HPV vaccination is recommended for both boys and girls 11 to 12 years old.

There's no screening for **OVARIAN CANCER**, so women should understand the risk factors and symptoms.

» **RISK FACTORS:** Women who have breast cancer, or have a family history of ovarian cancer, are at higher risk. Taking hormonal contraceptive pills (also known as birth control pills) for five years or more reduces a woman's risk by about 50 percent.

» **SMART STRATEGIES:** Talk to your doctor about symptoms like vaginal bleeding (especially after menopause), abdominal or pelvic pain, bloating, feeling full quickly, or losing weight while gaining abdominal girth.

Women who have had breast cancer and also have a genetic predisposition to ovarian cancer may choose to have their ovaries and fallopian tubes removed to prevent ovarian cancer. Experts suggest that women who plan tubal ligation for pregnancy prevention have the entire fallopian tube removed as a preventive measure.

ENDOMETRIAL (UTERINE) CANCER mainly affects post-menopausal women. There is no screening test.

» **RISK FACTORS:** Obesity and polycystic ovarian syndrome increase a woman's chance of developing endometrial cancer.

» **SMART STRATEGIES:** More balanced hormone levels can help prevent uterine cancer. "Women who have longer but fewer periods can take hormone pills or even use a [hormonal] IUD," Dr. Martinez says. Any woman who experiences bleeding after menopause should visit her doctor.

VAGINAL AND VULVAR CANCERS are rare. Still, during a woman's annual gynecological exam, her doctor will look for lesions.

» **RISK FACTORS:** If you have HPV, or have had cervical precancer or cervical cancer, you're more likely to get vaginal or vulvar cancer.

» **SMART STRATEGIES:** The best way to detect these cancers early is getting regular checkups. If you notice burning, itching, sores, or lumps in the vaginal or vulvar area, see your doctor.

"Some women may be uncomfortable discussing gynecologic problems with their care provider, but patients should trust their instincts and have a candid conversation with their doctor if they have concerns," notes James K. Nashed, MD, board-certified specialist in obstetrics and gynecology with Winchester Women's Specialists and chair of the OB/GYN department at Winchester Medical Center. "Your gynecologist or other provider is a valued partner in your well-being. Valley Health offers the full spectrum of important gynecological services for women of all ages, so whether you are 18 or 68, scheduling routine checkups, getting recommended screenings, being attune to changes in your body and maintaining a healthy lifestyle are all important when it comes to pelvic health."

→ Learn more about preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic gynecologic services at valleyhealthlink.com/gynhealth.

MORE THAN A FITNESS CENTER

Hampshire Wellness & Fitness offers an array of resources to promote health in the community



Like most gyms, Valley Health’s Hampshire Wellness & Fitness offers exercise classes, training, equipment, and facilities for physical fitness. But the center’s team also partners with many local organizations to impact public health and wellness—within and beyond the walls of the center.

Fun and engaging programs like Kids Zumba and Kids Yoga are available to all children in the community, and Diabetes Camp helps these special youth learn to manage their disease while connecting with other kids who face the same challenges. “It’s important for us to create opportunities for local kids,” says center director Trina Cox, MS, ATC. “In rural communities like ours, safe, healthy recreational activities are limited, so we are happy we can open our doors to all youth in the area—with no membership requirements.”

Swimming lessons (for children and adults) and “open swim” hours are offered year-round. Partnerships with Hampshire County Public Schools, West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, and other organizations build healthy habits for lifelong wellness. Swim time at Hampshire Wellness & Fitness has been a key part of the Positive Behavior Rewards student incentive programs in both Hampshire and Mineral county schools.

“Hampshire County schools are extremely appreciative of the collaboration between Hampshire Wellness & Fitness and our schools that has exposed students to new adventures and enhanced many school programs,” states Jeffrey Pancione, superintendent of Hampshire County Schools. “The students look forward to swimming at Hampshire Wellness Center, and for several, this is their first experience at a facility of this sort. We hope this early exposure will instill in our students a desire to pursue a healthy lifestyle.”

But area youth aren’t the only ones who reap benefits from Wellness & Fitness partnerships. Collaboration with Valley Health’s Diabetes Management team and the Hampshire County Diabetes Coalition to hold the annual Date with Diabetes program offers participants education and resources on diet, insulin and medication use, and other condition-related challenges. Many residents participate in Silver Sneakers classes and Walk to Be Fit, a community partnership with the Hampshire County Parks and Recreation Department.

The center’s team, along with support from generous members, sponsors fundraisers like the Trick or Trot 5K; Day of Caring; Refresh, Restart, Romney; and a backpack program for local schoolchildren. These activities support community programs and help friends and neighbors.

“We are committed to helping individuals achieve their personal fitness goals, but more than that, we are committed to creating a healthier Hampshire,” adds Cox. “We are proud that we are more than just a fitness center!”

→ For more information on Valley Health’s community outreach, visit valleyhealthlink.com/commbenefit.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Valley Health Wellness Festival

Saturday, October 5
Blue Ridge Community and Technical College
Martinsburg, WV

Hampshire County Health Fair

Saturday, October 12
Hope Christian Church
Augusta, WV

Pregnancy and Birth Open House

Saturday, October 26
Winchester Medical Center
North Tower Lobby
Winchester, VA

Girls Night Out

Thursday, November 7
Alamo Theatre
Kernstown, VA

Valley Health Employer Summit

Friday, November 8
Hilton Garden Inn
Martinsburg, WV

Cardiology 101

Free informational seminar
Tuesday, November 12
Winchester Medical Center
Conference Center
Winchester, VA



Experience the tastes and sounds of the British Isles, Germany, Italy, and Greece right here in the Shenandoah Valley.

Saturday, September 28, 11 AM–5 PM.
Winchester Medical Center Campus.
Visit valleyhealthlink.com/eurofest to purchase your Festival Passport or learn more.

Sponsored by the Winchester Medical Center Foundation. Proceeds benefit the Valley Health Cancer Center.

CELEBRATING CANCER SURVIVORS



Pink Ribbon Tea

Thursday, October 3
Shenandoah Memorial Outpatient
Center Lobby
Woodstock, VA

Cancer Survivors Celebration

Tuesday, October 22
Victory Church
Winchester, VA

Breast Health Empowerment Day

Saturday, October 26
Winchester Medical Center
Conference Center

- **Breast Health Symposium**
8:30–11:45 AM
Open to the public
- **Afternoon Celebration for Breast Cancer Survivors**
12:30–4 PM
Open to all breast cancer survivors, their partners or caregivers.

→ To learn more, call 540-536-8920.

VALLEY HEALTH AND ITS PHYSICIAN PARTNERS OFFER A RANGE OF INFORMATIONAL EVENTS, PARENTING CLASSES, SUPPORT GROUPS, SCREENINGS, AND OTHER HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACTIVITIES EVERY MONTH. VISIT OUR ONLINE EVENTS CALENDAR AT VALLEYHEALTHLINK.COM/EVENTS FOR A COMPLETE LISTING.



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