Living Proof
There is hope after miscarriage

Also inside:
Protein and Weight Loss
Inside a Medical Home
Know the 'Chain of Survival'
HealthyYOU
MAY 1 JUNE 2010

Be a More Effective Dad
Connection to kids has long-term benefits .................. 1

Salad—Always in Season
Turn bland lettuce into a luscious meal ..................... 2

It's That Allergy Time of Year
But sufferers have good treatment options .................. 3

Shed Pounds With Protein
The right foods make it easier to lose ...................... 4

The Truth About Antidepressants .................. 4

Hope After Miscarriage
Most women go on to have a healthy baby .................. 6

Treating Emergency Dizziness
Depending on cause, the cure may be simple .......... 7

What Is Triage?
Sorting patients by need helps ER provide care .... 8

If Your Blood Sugar Is Too High
It's cause for concern, and time for changes .......... 9

All About Brain Tumors
Treatment advances bring new hope ..................... 10

Know the 'Chain of Survival'
Four steps to save a cardiac victim ................. 11

Too Old for Heart Surgery?
If you're in good health, the answer is no .......... 12

What Is a 'Medical Home'?
It's a smarter way to give great care ................ 13

Distracted Teen Drivers
Multiple passengers can be fatal .................. 14

Your Attention, Please
Technology can affect kids' ability to focus ........... 15

Scheduling a School Physical .................. 15

Kids and Cardio Fitness .................. 15

Get Your Health Tip
in HealthyYou .................................. 16

Your Guide to a Healthy You
New and ongoing programs ..................... 17

Lehigh Valley Health Network
A PASSION FOR BETTER MEDICINE

On the cover:
Kim Wehr of Summit Hill has a happy family (including son Danny and daughter Riley) despite suffering several miscarriages. Learn about hope after miscarriage on page 6. Photo by Mary Frederick, Amico Studios
Ways to Be a More Effective Dad

Staying connected to kids has long-term benefits

In the old days being a great father meant you were a good provider. Today the notion of providing goes beyond financial security.

"Kids who have good relationships with their fathers do better at weathering storms throughout life," says pediatrician Matthew Saltz, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Health Network. Here's how to build your fathering skills:

1. Hit the "refresh" button. When you come through the door, pick up your child, give him a hug, ask about his day—"anything to reconnect," says health network parent educator Shel Dougherty. "It's like refilling a bank that emptied while you were away."

2. Have Daddy Days. Take your children on activities without Mom to create unique memories.

3. Set work boundaries at home. Don't jump on your computer or cell phone until the little ones are in bed. "If you're half-tuned into work, children will act out to get attention," Dougherty says.

4. Don't lecture. "Dads tend to over-explain," Dougherty says. Instead of saying "Do your homework or you'll get bad grades and won't get into college," just hand your child her backpack and say, "Homework."

5. Keep the tone friendly. Fathers often have a stern "Dad voice" playing in their heads from childhood, but this can make children tune out. Instead of yelling, be firm but kind: "I'm not OK with you playing with that, so please put it in the garage." Make chores fun—for example, carry your child to his messy room on your shoulders.

6. Establish ground rules. Before permitting an activity, ask what should happen when it's done. Children may already know what's expected ("We'll put the bikes back in the garage"), but getting a fresh agreement forestalls arguments.

7. Teach that mistakes are OK. If you scold children for messing up, the fear of disapproval will cause them to lie, blame others and become afraid of taking risks. Instead, say: "I wish that hadn't happened. What do you think you should do to fix it?"

Want to Know More about effective team parenting? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvn.org/health4you.

"Daddy Day"—Sean Mullen of Bethlehem and daughter Olivia, age 5, enjoy the fossil and dinosaur exhibit at the Da Vinci Science Center in Allentown.
Salads—Always In Season
How to turn a bland bed of lettuce into a luscious meal

These salad-building strategies can transform a boring first course into a mouth-watering main attraction. Whatever the season, here’s how to create a nutritional powerhouse you and your family will savor.

Start green. For the healthiest foundation, choose romaine, endive, red leaf lettuce or spinach, says Judy Holaska, a registered dietitian with Lehigh Valley Health Network. “Darker greens are a great source of vitamins and minerals,” she says. Skip the iceberg—it has zero nutritional value.

Go easy with the add-ons. You don’t have to eliminate extras like croutons, macaroni salad and ranch dressing, Holaska says—just keep portions small or substitute healthier versions. “Your salad should be mainly vegetables and fruits with some protein and a little healthy fat.”

Stock your pantry. Keep a supply of canned beans, artichokes, roasted red peppers, canned salmon, dried fruits, olives, whole grains, nuts, salsa and more. “That way you’ll always have the makings of a delicious and nutritious salad on hand,” Holaska says.

Add lots of color. Fruits and vegetables are rich in disease-fighting nutrients and fiber, so pile on the purple onion, yellow peppers and cherry tomatoes. Power up your plate with sliced baked sweet potato, rich in beta-carotene and vitamin C. Dried fruits like apricots and cranberries add flavor but are calorie-dense, so watch portion size.

Top it off with a healthy fat. “You need a little fat to help your body absorb certain key nutrients in vegetables,” Holaska says. “And fat appeals to the taste buds.” Focus on heart-healthy monounsaturated and omega-3 fats found in fish, avocados, olives, olive oil, seeds and nuts.

Add a serving of protein. It will help you feel full so you won’t be tempted to snack later. Turkey and chicken are naturally low in fat. Other good sources include tuna, salmon, hard-boiled eggs, low-fat cottage cheese and tofu. Chickpeas and black or white beans provide fiber and non-meat protein for vegetarians.
It’s That Allergy Time of Year
...but sufferers have lots of good treatment options

After a long, cold winter, most of us are eager for the blooming flowers, budding trees and sunny days of spring—but for allergy sufferers, springtime can be a mixed blessing. The pollen from all those glorious plants can cause sniffing, sneezing and itchy, watery eyes.

The good news is that you don’t have to suffer. “There are effective treatments out there,” says Lori Erschen, D.O., a family medicine physician with Lehigh Valley Health Network.

The new generation of antihistamines including loratadine (Claritin and Alavert) and cetirizine (Zyrtec) offer relief without causing drowsiness, so allergy sufferers no longer have to choose between sneezing and being awake and alert. The key is to take the medicine promptly.

“Antihistamines should work within a couple of hours, but if you wait to take them until you have significant symptoms, you may not get sufficient relief,” says Robert Zemble, M.D., an allergist with the health network.

In that case, you may need to add a decongestant (in oral or nasal form). Always follow the package directions, Erschen says, and talk to your doctor before taking a decongestant if you have high blood pressure, a heart condition, thyroid disease, diabetes, glaucoma, prostate issues or if you’re pregnant.

For some, over-the-counter remedies aren’t enough. “If your symptoms are severe or persistent or don’t respond to over-the-counter drugs, see your doctor,” Erschen says. “You may need a prescription medication, or it might not be allergies and you need to find out what it is.”

Various prescription drugs are available for those with severe allergies. If that still doesn’t do the trick, your doctor may recommend immunotherapy, which involves getting a series of injections to reduce your sensitivity to the allergen that affects you.

Meanwhile, on days when pollen counts are high you can reduce the impact by staying indoors, running the air conditioner, and dusting and vacuuming regularly.

Want to Know More ways to minimize seasonal allergy symptoms? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.

WHAT’S NEW on lvhn.org

Check Out Our Moselem Springs Blog

Do you live in Berks County? If so, you’ll want to check out a new blog at lvhn.org/moselemssprings. It gives you the chance to tell us what services you’d like to see at the Moselem Springs Health Center site (formerly the Inn at Moselem Springs on Route 222 in Richmond Township). The health network currently is exploring how to best meet your community’s health care needs, and would like to hear your views.

Feel free to visit the blog and post your comments. You also can sign up for e-mail updates and check back regularly to learn the latest about the Moselem Springs site. In the future, you’ll find details about grand-opening events.
Protein power—Over the years, the pounds had crept up on 51-year-old Ed Powell of Lehighton. When he topped 250, he began feeling lethargic and short of breath. After learning he had diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure, he followed his doctor's advice and saw a specialist. "I realized the long-term effects my weight would have on my life," he says. Protein shakes like this one and other low-calorie, high-protein foods helped him lose 40 pounds in six weeks. His ultimate goal is 180, a healthy weight for his 5-foot 9-inch frame. "It takes willpower, but this is the best thing I've done for myself in years," he says.

If you're trying to lose weight, here's your secret weapon: lean protein. Many dieters are so focused on what they need to eliminate, they forget about this vital nutrient that actually makes losing weight easier.

How? For one thing, protein-rich foods make you feel full longer by stabilizing your blood sugar. "When you eat carbohydrates like bread, pasta and sweets, your blood sugar rises," says Harpreet Singh, M.D., a bariatrician (weight-loss physician) at Lehigh Valley Health Network. "Your body then makes insulin to lower blood sugar, and when it falls you feel hungry again—so you eat more carbohydrates, and the cycle starts all over again."

Protein also maintains muscle and forces your body to burn fat for energy. The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn, says Tara Harding, a registered dietitian with the health network. "Muscle burns 10 times more calories than fat does," she says. "That's why exercise, including both cardiovascular and strength training, is so important for weight loss—it builds the muscle."

To put protein to work for you, include a serving in every meal. Choose lean-protein foods so you don't sabotage your weight loss with unnecessary fat. Frying, breading or sautéing with butter or oil adds calories and fat; stick with simple baking, broiling or grilling.

The Truth About Antidepressants

Is it true that antidepressant drugs are no better than a placebo for mild or moderate depression? When the Journal of the American Medical Association published this finding in January, it may have raised questions for you if you're among the millions of Americans taking the drugs. Psychiatrist Rory Marraccini, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Health Network suggests you keep these points in mind:

Antidepressants do work. "Having studied these medications, I'm a firm believer that they help people," Marraccini says. "Fewer patients need long-term institutional care today thanks to advances in psychiatric drugs."

But they're not an automatic cure-all. "If you come to your doctor feeling depressed, the vital first step is getting a good physical and psychiatric history," he says. "If your depression isn't severe, supportive psychotherapy may be an appropriate first-line treatment."

There are different kinds and levels of depression. Certain life situations—divorce, job loss, a loved one's death—can lead to symptoms of depression in anyone. And certain people are more prone to it due to their brain chemistry (which can run in families). "The question is how severely your symptoms impact your life and how long they last," Marraccini says.

Some people's symptoms go away on their own. "But the danger of not getting help is that mild symptoms may progress to become more severe ones," he says.
And watch the portion size. "A healthy portion of lean protein is the size of a deck of cards," Harding says.

Eating protein-rich snacks between meals also helps you lose weight. "It keeps your blood sugar constant and prevents you from overeating at mealtime," Singh says.

Low-fat string cheese, cottage cheese and yogurt are good snacks. If you enjoy protein bars, read the label and avoid products with any hydrogenated ingredients. Also watch the sugar, carbohydrate and fat content.

Lean-Protein Foods

Seafood: Bass, catfish, cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, swordfish, tuna, clams, crab, lobster, shrimp, mackerel and salmon

Poultry: Chicken, turkey and duck (white meat, no skin)

Game: Venison and buffalo

Beef: Lean cuts including eye round, rump and sirloin

Veal: Chop or roast

Pork: Lean cuts including tenderloin and center loin

Dairy: Fat-free or reduced-fat cheeses, yogurt and milk

Egg whites or egg substitute

Vegetarian: Low-fat hummus, refried beans and tofu, dried peas, beans, lentil, soy and vegetable burgers

The best treatment is a combination of antidepressants and psychotherapy or counseling. It’s been shown to be most effective in helping people overcome depression. Many of us resist getting help. "It’s common to feel reluctant about taking an antidepressant," Marraccini says. "In some cultures and communities, there may be even more stigma about seeing a therapist." Family and friends may need to step in, especially for people who are so depressed they feel powerless.

Treatment is not a life sentence. "Speak with your doctor about when would be an appropriate time to consider tapering your medicines," Marraccini says. "Several sessions of psychotherapy will teach you a great deal, including stress-management skills you can apply for the rest of your life."

Want to Know More about how exercise helps prevent depression? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.
Most women go on to have a healthy, full-term baby

The loss of a pregnancy, at whatever stage, can be devastating. But it doesn’t mean you should lose hope. Most women will go on to have a baby after one or even multiple miscarriages, says Joanne Quiñones, M.D., a maternal-fetal medicine specialist with Lehigh Valley Health Network. “More than 85 percent of women have a successful pregnancy after experiencing one miscarriage, and 60 percent do so after three consecutive miscarriages,” she says.

Miscarriage is defined as the spontaneous loss of a pregnancy before the 20th week. Between 8 and 20 percent of recognized pregnancies (those confirmed with an ultrasound) end in miscarriage. The vast majority occur in the first trimester and are a result of chromosomal abnormalities, which can’t be prevented.

Some of the factors that raise your risk for miscarriage are maternal age, uncontrolled diabetes, smoking, untreated thyroid disease and malformations of the uterus or cervix. While you obviously can’t control age, you can impact most of the other risk factors. Diabetes can be managed, thyroid disorders can be treated and malformations can be surgically repaired.

In women with recurrent miscarriages, the culprit may be an autoimmune disorder known as antiphospholipid syndrome. “About 15 percent of women with recurrent pregnancy losses have this condition, which increases blood clotting,” says Kailash Makhija, M.D., an obstetrician/gynecologist with the health network. “I have had cases where women with the condition went on to have successful pregnancies after starting blood thinners.”

The best strategies for preventing miscarriage are the ones every pregnant women should follow, Makhija says: “Have healthy habits. Don’t smoke, use caffeine in moderation, eat a nutritious diet and take prenatal vitamins with folic acid. If you are diabetic, maintain your blood sugar levels in the normal range.”

The typical warning signs of miscarriage are vaginal bleeding and abdominal cramps—familiar occurrences in early pregnancy. “The symptoms may be worrisome, but most women who experience them go on to deliver healthy babies,” Quiñones says. That said, you should definitely call the doctor if you have bleeding or cramps. He or she will likely perform an ultrasound and physical exam to see what’s going on.

If you’ve had a miscarriage and want to try again, how long should you wait? There is no hard and fast rule, Quiñones says. “Miscarriage can be a significant grief process for families,” she says. “On average, most people wait three to six months. But you can try again as soon as you are mentally, emotionally and physically ready.”

Want to Know More about preparing for a healthy pregnancy? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.
Treating Emergency Dizziness
Depending on the cause, there may be a simple cure

It hit Madeline Bradford out of the blue. "One morning I turned over in bed and everything started spinning," says the 61-year-old West Hazleton woman. "I felt like I was flying, and it was horrifying. I just lay there with both my arms clenched to the sheets."

Bradford dialed 9-1-1 and went to her local emergency room. After a few days in the hospital, she returned home, wobbly and sedated. The next day she suffered another severe attack. This time she was taken to Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest, where emergency staff had been educated to look for a common—and readily curable—inner-ear condition.

It turned out Bradford had this condition, called benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (or BPPV). Tiny calcium crystals had lodged in her inner ear canals and were causing her vertigo.

"Vertigo is a type of severe dizziness that is very debilitating, and it's a common complaint in emergency rooms and doctors' offices," says emergency physician David Burmeister, D.O., of Lehigh Valley Health Network. Doctors often are as puzzled by the symptoms as their patients are, since the underlying cause isn't easy to pinpoint.

One of the most common causes of vertigo, especially in women over age 60, is BPPV. The cure is straightforward. To treat Bradford, Burmeister's colleague Valerie Rupp, R.N, performed a series of head and neck movements designed to roll the crystals out of the inner ear canals. "This two-minute procedure actually fixes the problem instead of just medicating the symptoms," Rupp says. "It's effective in more than 85 percent of all patients."

One of those was Madeline Bradford. "I was cured—instantly," she says.

As you get older, chances are you'll experience the occasional dizzy spell. Does it warrant a trip to the emergency room? If the dizziness is severe or doesn't subside, or if you're having trouble seeing or speaking, don't hesitate to dial 9-1-1.

For milder bouts of dizziness, talk to your doctor. Whether the symptom is triggered by a rare disease or a common cold virus, your doctor needs as much information as possible to be able to prescribe the right treatment. Be prepared to share your symptoms, health history, medications, vitamins and herbal supplements you're taking, stress levels and any other subtle warning signs that may be relevant.

Your doctor may refer you to a neurologist or ear/nose/throat specialist. Both treat dizziness-related conditions, and today's new technologies help them more accurately assess the causes of balance and movement disorders.

Want to Know More about balance problems?
Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.

On her feet again—With the right treatment, Madeline Bradford recovered instantly from a debilitating bout of vertigo. She's back at work in her hair salon, putting the final touches on a style for Mary Jane Ricco of Hazleton.

Did you know...
Outpatient rehabilitation at Lehigh Valley Health Network offers a comprehensive balance and vestibular program with state-of-the-art equipment and rehabilitation specialists educated to meet your needs. If you're feeling dizzy or off-balance, ask your doctor about referring you. For more information, call 610-402-CARE.
What Is Triage?
Sorting patients by need helps emergency staff provide better care.

If you’ve ever spent time in an emergency department (ED), you may have wondered how this seemingly chaotic place manages to function. In fact, behind all the frenetic activity is a solidly organized system based on the concept of triage—a method of sorting the life-threatening cases from the less critical ones, ensuring timely care for everyone.

“The idea isn’t to deny care, but decide when you’ll be treated,” says emergency physician Alex Rosenau, D.O., of Lehigh Valley Health Network. “Our goal is getting everyone to the right place, at the right time, and with the right resources for a good outcome.”

Each arriving patient is assigned an ESI (Emergency Severity Index) number from 1 (most urgent) to 5. “A triage nurse greets you and spends about two minutes determining your condition and then assigning you to the appropriate area,” says Neil Kocher, R.N., an emergency nurse with the health network.

If the ED isn’t busy, every patient who comes in—regardless of condition—gets immediate treatment. But during busy times, like flu season, patients are seen according to their ESI level (see levels below).

If you fall into the less-severe categories, your best strategy is to call your primary doctor first. “Most primary-care offices can make same-day appointments for sick visits,” says Rachel Liebman, D.O., a family medicine physician with the health network.

Level 1—Patients who are unresponsive or not breathing (for example, cardiac arrest). These patients receive immediate intervention and typically are admitted to the hospital.

Level 2—Patients who are critical but conscious (for example, suffering chest pains). These patients usually are treated immediately, but can wait briefly if necessary. They too may be admitted to the hospital.

Level 3—Patients with unidentifiable complaints, like stomach pain. These patients usually are quickly sent in for testing. If the ED is busy, testing starts in a separate triage room while they wait to get into the treatment area.

Level 4—Patients requiring single procedures, like stitches or X-rays. At Lehigh Valley Health Network, these patients go immediately to Express Care, a part of the ED designed for non-life-threatening cases. If the ED is busy, they’re treated in the triage room or monitored in the waiting room until a caregiver is available.

Level 5—Patients not requiring any procedure (for example, people with poison ivy). These patients go to Express Care.
Why You Should Worry If Your Blood Sugar Is High

You've just had a blood glucose test, and the result isn't awful—your fasting blood sugar isn't over 125, the level classified as diabetes. But you are in that growing category of Americans with blood sugar levels between 100 and 125, a group known as "pre-diabetic."

"You don't need to panic if your doctor says you have pre-diabetes," says Christine Chen, M.D., family medicine physician with Lehigh Valley Health Network. But you do need to make some changes. "Getting this message early enough," she says, "gives you the chance to prevent progressing to full-blown diabetes."

And you don't want to do that. The 20 million (and rising) people in the United States with type 2 diabetes face serious health challenges. While major strides have been made in the treatment and management of diabetes, it still can lead to heart and kidney failure, vision problems, painful neuropathy in the feet and sometimes even amputation.

"Fortunately, type 2 diabetes is absolutely preventable," says Larry Merkle, M.D., endocrinologist at the health network. The fix is not complicated, but does take commitment. "Many people with pre-diabetes have reversed their progression toward diabetes by exercising more, eating a healthy diet and weight control," Merkle says.

How can these lifestyle changes prevent diabetes? The condition develops when your pancreas produces less and less insulin (the hormone that helps you process sugar), or your body becomes resistant to the insulin produced. Without enough insulin, glucose stays in your bloodstream instead of moving into cells that need energy.

The more fat cells you have (especially abdominal), the more insulin-resistant you become. That's why losing weight through diet and exercise is beneficial. "Storing fat was important to early mankind's survival in times of famine," Merkle says. "Today, it works against us."

If you haven't yet had your blood sugar tested, ask your doctor about it if you have any of the risk factors for diabetes (see list, right). The most common measurement is a fasting blood glucose test. Or your doctor may order a test called A1c, which gives a three-month average of glucose levels. If your score indicates you are even slightly pre-diabetic, start working to lower it.

Want to Know More about reversing pre-diabetes? To learn how other people have done it, call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.

Risk Factors for Diabetes

- Family members with the disease
- Being overweight
- Low HDL (good) cholesterol and high triglycerides
- High blood pressure
- Gestational (pregnancy-related) diabetes
- Waist over 38 inches in men, 35 in women
- Age 45+
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Smoking
- Hispanic, African American, Asian American or Native American heritage
All About BRAIN TUMORS
The diagnosis is scary, but new advances bring hope

Brain tumors can strike people of all ages and cultures, and evidence shows that your risk isn’t affected by what you eat, where you live or what electronic gadgets you use. A diagnosis is serious, but thanks to advances in surgical treatments, survival rates have increased significantly in recent years.

If you or a loved one faces a brain tumor diagnosis, here’s what to know:

**Symptoms:** Headaches, seizures and personality changes are potential signs of brain tumors. “But the same type of tumor can cause completely different symptoms—or even none at all—depending on where in the brain the tumor is located,” says family medicine physician Brooks Betts, D.O., of Lehigh Valley Health Network.

**Diagnosis:** Tumors often are found through an imaging study (MRI or CT scan). If your primary care physician suspects a tumor, she often will refer you to a neurosurgeon, who will conduct a physical exam to assess vision, balance, hearing, coordination and reflexes. Neurosurgeons also analyze the initial imaging study and may order others.

**Cancerous or non-cancerous?** Typically, a biopsy is needed to determine whether or not the tumor is

**Did you know...**
Lehigh Valley Health Network’s neuroradiologists and neurosurgeons work together to provide expert diagnosis of brain tumors, most often the same day as the patient’s appointment. The neurosurgery team also includes medical and radiation oncologists. They meet regularly to discuss cases and formulate treatment plans, and are actively involved in clinical research to give patients access to the latest treatments.
cancerous (malignant). Most commonly this is performed during surgery to remove the tumor. Surgeons take a small sample of the tissue for microscopic analysis. At Lehigh Valley Health Network, Dan Brown, M.D., the region’s only neuropathologist, performs this analysis. “I can provide consultation during the surgery,” he says. “This helps the surgeons alter their approach based on the initial pathology interpretation.”

**Tumor types:** There are more than 40 different types of brain tumors, defined by cell type, shape and location. Meningioma, a type that develops in membranes around the brain and spinal cord, is a common tumor that is typically non-cancerous. Others, such as malignant glioblastoma (the type Sen. Ted Kennedy had), are extremely aggressive. Survival rates depend on tumor location and size, how far it has spread, the patient’s age and ability to function. Tumors are graded based on their severity, from grade I (least aggressive) to grade IV.

**Treatment:** “Neurosurgery is the first line of treatment for many brain tumors, whatever the type,” says health network neurosurgeon Mei Wong, M.D. Surgeons like Wong use smaller incisions today, and sometimes can even remove a brain tumor transphenoidally (through the nose). Advanced procedures such as awake craniotomy and brain mapping help the surgeon remove as much of the tumor as possible without disturbing areas of the brain that control speech and movement.

Another option is Gamma Knife®, a non-surgical technique that delivers gamma radiation to cancerous and non-cancerous tumors with pinpoint accuracy. “There is always fear and uncertainty for someone diagnosed with a brain tumor,” Betts says. “Physicians support the patient and family throughout the entire process. No one goes through this alone.”

**Know the ‘Chain of Survival’**

These four steps can save a life

Atop the Whitehall Mall, Jack Burns was feeling fine as he cleared snow to install a new ventilation system. Then suddenly, the 56-year-old Auburn man went into cardiac arrest and collapsed. The calls were stacked against him: “Fewer than 5 percent of people who suffer cardiac arrest outside the hospital survive,” says Nainesh Patel, M.D., an interventional cardiologist with Lehigh Valley Health Network.

Burns beat the odds because people around him followed the “chain of survival.” “It’s a four-step process that saves lives when followed quickly and efficiently,” says Kerry Dempsey, program coordinator for the health network’s Emergency Medicine Institute.

The steps that saved Burns are the same steps you should use to save a cardiac arrest or heart attack victim:

1. **Recognize an emergency.** When Burns collapsed, it was an obvious sign that he was in cardiac arrest. That occurs when the heart stops beating, and is different from a heart attack, which happens when blood flow to the heart gets blocked. The warning signs of a heart attack may not be as easy to recognize, but it’s vital to know the symptoms of both conditions (see list below) so you can quickly take the next step in the chain.

2. **Call 9-1-1.** Burns’ colleagues immediately dialed 9-1-1 and notified mall security. The local fire department got him safely off the roof, a security guard hurried to the scene with one of the mall’s automated external defibrillators (AED), and an ambulance was dispatched to bring Burns to Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest.

3. **Begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if the victim is unresponsive.** CPR has several components. One is the AED, a computerized device that analyzes the victim’s heart rhythm and delivers a shock to help return the rhythm to normal. If an AED is available, use it before beginning chest compressions.

4. **Get advanced care.** The 9-1-1 call makes it happen by summoning paramedics to the scene. The paramedics began treating Burns and notified the emergency room that they were coming so the hospital could initiate its MI Alert for Heart Attacks protocol. (This ensured that the specialists and technology needed to care for Burns were in place when he arrived.) Heart specialists used cardiac catheterization to detect multiple blocked arteries and repaired them with bypass surgery.

Thanks to the chain of survival, Burns suffered minimal heart damage. He’s exercising, eating healthy and on the road to complete recovery.

**Cardiac Arrest Warning Signs**

- Loss of consciousness
- Loss of normal breathing
- Loss of pulse and blood pressure

**Heart Attack Warning Signs**

- Chest discomfort or pain that lasts more than a few minutes
- Discomfort or pain in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort
- Cold sweats, nausea or lightheadedness

Want to Know More

about administering CPR? To sign up for a course, call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org.
Too Old for Heart Surgery?

If you're in good health, the answer is no

Mickey Spiker was looking forward to having her knee replaced. She missed being able to take walks and run errands. It was only when her doctors discovered she had a valve problem and would need heart surgery first that the 84-year-old Allentown woman began to worry.

"How could I need heart surgery when I felt so wonderful?" Spiker says. "I tried to put it off, but they told me I could collapse without warning. I worried I was too old for open-heart surgery. But then I thought, 'If Barbara Bush can have it done, so can I.'"

Spiker had an aortic valve replacement in October. She spent a week in the hospital, then went home and steadily regained her strength, expecting to have her knee fixed within six months of the heart operation.

So how much does age factor in someone's eligibility for surgery? "Overall health is more important than age," says Gary Szydlowski, M.D., cardiothoracic surgeon at Lehigh Valley Health Network. "I've operated on people in their 90s, and I've had to say no to people in their 50s."

People with significant kidney, lung or liver disease, advanced cancer or severe vascular disease typically are not good candidates for heart surgery, he says. "But an otherwise healthy 80- or 90-year-old whose only issue is a bad heart valve can be restored to an active life. You're much more likely to be eligible for heart surgery if you take care of yourself."

Life circumstances are another determining factor. "We look at the person's independence and ability to care for himself," says health network cardiologist Jeffrey Snyder, M.D. "Will the surgery truly improve his quality of life? Can he get through the recovery period? Does he have someone to help care for him and get him to doctor visits and rehabilitation appointments?"

When someone is not a candidate for an operation, doctors look for alternative treatments. While surgery is the only option for valve problems, there are many treatments for other heart conditions, including angioplasty, stents, balloon therapy and medications. "As technology improves, we're constantly developing less-invasive alternatives, so fewer patients will require open-heart surgery," Snyder says.

Knowing what's ahead and having realistic expectations are important. You don't bounce back as fast at 85 as you do at 60, and you're more vulnerable to complications, says Anne Yawman, M.D., a geriatrician with the health network. "Your ability to cope with stress decreases as you get older, so small problems can quickly become big ones."

Older surgery patients need to be prepared for a longer
A good candidate—Mickey Spiker, age 84, needed valve surgery before she could have her knee replaced. On the road back to an active life, she’s shown here at her church, St. Joseph the Worker in Orefield.

recuperation that may include time in a nursing or rehabilitation facility. “You shouldn’t expect to feel like you’re 30 again, but if you’re prepared you can do very well,” Yawman says.

That’s definitely the case for Mickey Spiker. “I feel like I’m in my 50s,” she says. “Now that my heart’s fixed, I can’t wait to get moving again.”

Want to Know More about heart surgery?
Call 610-402-CARE or see a 3-D video at lvhn.org/healthyou.

Learn About Heart Valves
Learn about the latest updates in caring for valvular heart disease from a panel of Heart Valve Center experts. Get the facts from cardiologists, surgeons, nurses and cardiac rehabilitation specialists May 25 at 6 p.m. at two locations: Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg and Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest. To register, call 610-402-CARE.

What Is a ‘Medical Home’?
Pilot projects explore exciting new concept

If you have diabetes or asthma, you know it isn’t easy to cope with a chronic disease. If you’re fortunate, you have a good doctor who plays a vital role in monitoring illness and treating complications when they arise.

But wouldn’t it be wonderful if you had access to a team that knew you well and could help you prevent complications?

That’s one idea behind the "medical home"—a concept that’s coming to life at Lehigh Valley Health Network. Seven health network practices (internal medicine, family medicine and pediatrics) are participating in a commonwealth-sponsored, insurer-funded pilot to create medical homes across Pennsylvania. The ultimate goal is to improve primary care for all.

What is a medical home? “It’s a coordinated hub of care,” says health network internist Mark Kender, M.D. “The physician works as a team with nurses and other professionals to help you actively manage your condition and head off problems.”

Empowering the patient is what it’s all about, says Kender’s colleague, family medicine physician Malaika Stoll, M.D. “Your doctor can prescribe medications, but if you’re not exercising, eating right and taking those drugs correctly, you won’t get your diabetes under control.”

This kind of attention takes time—much more than the typical 15-minute doctor appointment. In a medical home, the other team members are specially educated to take over some functions. “For example, I’ve trained all our nursing staff to do diabetic foot exams,” Kender says. “I review the results, but spending less time on the nuts and bolts lets me focus on talking with my patients and motivating them.”

Each patient is assigned to a care team that gets to know him well. As he needs it, he receives help with diet, quitting smoking, exercise and all the other components of good diabetes management. “Caring for the whole person—and understanding his or her social and family situation—is fundamental to primary care and the medical home,” Stoll says.

For children with asthma, a medical home aims for a symptom-free lifestyle. “We educate families about the importance of keeping the home allergy-free, avoiding allergy triggers and using medications to control asthma,” says health network pediatrician Amy Jibilian, M.D.

Knowing the family also helps the doctor prevent needless tests. “If you come in with a stomachache and we know you or your family is going through a stressful time, we can explore that as a possible cause, rather than automatically ordering a CT scan,” Stoll says.

The medical home is a way to put the emphasis back on primary care, Stoll says. “We’ve learned that around the world, people live longer, are healthier, and care is more affordable when primary care is strong.”

Want to Know More about finding the right primary doctor for you and your family? Call 610-402-CARE.
When Young Drivers Are Distracted

Cell phone use, multiple passengers can be fatal

For weeks, the researchers watched teen drivers pull in and out of school property. What they saw was unnerving. “The students were talking on cell phones, changing radio stations, reading, applying makeup, driving with their knees, using iPods, holding pets—you name it,” says emergency research nurse Valerie Rupp, R.N., who coordinated the Lehigh Valley Health Network distracted-driver study.

After 4,700 observations at four Pennsylvania and New Jersey high schools, the researchers found that more than a third of teens drove with their attention split. “It’s a huge safety issue, because 80 percent of crashes are due to some kind of distraction within three seconds of the crash,” says Robert Barraco, M.D., a trauma surgeon with the health network.

“We see accident after accident in which young lives change in an instant because of distraction,” says his colleague, emergency medicine physician Shawna Murphy, D.O.

There are two main reasons why teens get in trouble driving, Barraco says: “They simply lack experience, and they are developmentally more impulsive than older drivers.”

Cell phone use is a dangerous distraction for teens, increasing the risk for a crash by 400 percent. When reacting to risks on the road, every second counts—and sending a single text message, the team found, takes the driver’s attention away for an average of 26 seconds.

An even bigger distraction for teens is having other teen passengers in the car. “Simply put, adding kids into cars driven by kids dramatically increases the risk for a fatal crash,” Barraco says. One teen passenger raises the risk by 50 percent, two double the risk and three triple it.

For the research team, prevention was the ultimate goal. As part of their study, they educated 10th- through 12th-graders on the risks of distracted driving. Then they went back out to the schools to observe. Cell phone use dropped 74 percent after the presentations.

Clearly, education works, and schools aren’t the only ones that can use this approach. “If you’re a parent, talk with your teens,” Barraco says. “Tell them that getting there safely is more important than when you get there.” Make sure they know what counts as distracted driving—including fiddling with a radio dial or even being emotionally distracted after a fight with a girlfriend or boyfriend.

Barraco also encourages parents to contact their legislators in Harrisburg. “States like New Jersey restrict the number of passengers for teen drivers and limit the use of cell phones while driving,” he says. “These laws do improve people’s behavior, and we should have distracted-driver legislation in Pennsylvania as well.”

Want to Know More about keeping young drivers safe? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyou.
Your Attention, Please
Technology can affect kids’ ability to focus

Nicole Rosenthal, D.O., has noticed a trend with her young patients. “I often have to ask kids to put down a cell phone or handheld video game during a medical exam,” says the Lehigh Valley Health Network pediatrician. “With technologies like texting and mobile Internet access, distractions come from so many directions it’s hard for children to focus on any one thing.”

Tech is a fact of life for youngsters today—almost a quarter of 6- to 9-year-olds have cell phones, and 84 percent of 15-year-olds do. You may have heard the theory that getting electronic information in short, fragmented bits contributes to attention deficit disorder and poor grades. But parents need to have a balanced attitude about technology, Rosenthal says. “While kids are bombarded with information, they’re savvy about processing it. Despite some downsides, technology actually can help with school readiness while promoting social development and self-esteem.”

In fact, schools incorporate technology into lessons, says Jen DeBelli, a science teacher at Wilson Area High School in Easton. She has students write blogs—making sure they use proper grammar, spelling and punctuation.

“Kids are good with computers and creative at using technology in projects,” she says. “That will be useful in the workplace someday.” And they have no problem concentrating when they’re engaged, DeBelli says. “They devour books from the Harry Potter and Twilight series.”

Whatever your view of technology’s impact, “it’s here to stay and we need to know how to deal with it,” Rosenthal says. To strike a healthy balance:

Set time limits on electronic media like TV, video games and computers—two hours a day for school-age children and none for children under 2.

Ban distractions like cell phones, Facebook and Twitter during the time children are doing their homework.

Get children outside for physical activity. Exercise can boost mental performance and sharpen focus.

Try to make bedrooms media-free zones where children can read and daydream without electronic diversions.

Model the behavior you want to see by reading more often yourself and turning off electronic devices.

Carve out family time (like meals) when no electronics are allowed.

Want to Know More about how technology is changing the way children think and learn? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthy-you.

Q: When should I schedule my child’s school physical?
A: Don’t wait until fall. An early start gives you time to correct issues like vision problems and ensure you’ll get an appointment before school begins. A sports physical also should be scheduled as soon as possible so your child doesn’t miss her first few days of practice.

Want to Know More about school physicals? Read the Ask Our Expert column with Elaine Donoghue, M.D., at lvhn.org/healthy-you. To get a printed copy, call 610-402-CARE.

Elaine Donoghue, M.D., is a pediatrician with Lehigh Valley Health Network.

Kids and Cardio Fitness

Nearly 40 percent of America’s children are overweight. With fitness levels on the decline, how can you help your child get the cardiovascular workout he needs to stay fit and healthy?

“The best strategy is interval training—light exercise, followed by a harder workout, followed by a lighter exercise, and so on,” says John Graham, director of Healthy You Fitness Centers. “This method gives kids variety, holds their interest and keeps them motivated to continue.”

Weight control is not the only benefit of cardio exercise. It also strengthens your child’s heart and lungs, builds stronger bones, lowers blood pressure, reduces stress and even improves sleep habits.

For a fun and safe cardio workout, sign your child up for a fitness program or camp. Other good options: taking walks, participating in organized sports, jumping rope or playing video games such as Wii Fit that get you up and moving.

Want to Know More about helping children get active? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthy-you.
Are you a big baseball fan, or do you simply enjoy spending warm summer nights at Allentown's Coca-Cola Park with the Lehigh Valley IronPigs? If so, you can enjoy a game or ballpark event this summer on select dates and get a chance to be featured in an upcoming Healthy You.

On June 10, when the IronPigs host the Toledo Mud Hens, visit the Lehigh Valley Health Network booth on the concourse. You can learn more about your health and participate in a fun photo opportunity. Be sure to sign in and tell us the one thing you do each day to promote your health. The health network will have a similar display at Coca-Cola Park for the Pigapalooza event on July 10 (see opposite page).

All people who get their photo taken and give us a health tip will be entered into a drawing. The prize: having your health tip featured in a November-December Healthy You story about the one thing you do to promote your health.

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“I wanted to help people like my Mom.”

Ask Martin Martino, M.D., why he became a gynecologic oncologist, and he'll smile as he tells you about his mother, Patricia Martino. When he was just a child, she was diagnosed with a rare form of uterine cancer. Thankfully she was treated by a team of great doctors and has been in remission for years. Today, Martino is thrilled he can help other people's mothers, wives and sisters.

He uses leading-edge surgical techniques—including robot-assisted surgery—to treat cancers of the female reproductive system. "Robotic technology significantly improves quality of life for women who need surgery," he says. "The incisions are very tiny and usually less than 1 centimeter, recovery is much faster and sometimes we can even spare the woman's fertility."

At Lehigh Valley Health Network, Martino has the latest da Vinci® S HD Robotic Surgical System. It gives high-definition 3-D imaging of the surgical field, providing clarity far superior to laparoscopic surgery. He uses the system for a range of procedures including complex hysterectomies.
Ready to take charge of your health?
We offer programs for all ages and needs. Some have a fee; others (marked as FREE) are no-cost. Call to register at 610-402-CARE or get details at lvhn.org. Registration is required. You’ll get a refund if a class is canceled due to low enrollment.

WHAT’S NEW
For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

The ABCs of Heart Valve Disease
Join physicians and other experts for discussion of valvular heart disease. Heart valve patients share their stories. FREE
- May 25; 6 p.m.
  At LVH-Cedar Crest
  At LVH-Muhlenberg

Balanced Fitness
Total body workout integrates BOSU balance trainers and stability balls to engage core stabilizing muscles.
- Starting June 24
  At Healthy You Center

Beauty for Life
A physician and esthetician inform you about nonsurgical options for a more youthful you. FREE
- June 15; 5:30-8 p.m.
  At LVH-Cedar Crest

Bollywood Dance
Learn combinations of Indian dance steps and hand-and-arm movements.
- Starting May 21, June 7
  At Healthy You Center and 1770 Bathgate

Cardio-Strength Combo
Aerobic conditioning with resistance using a variety of equipment for a total body workout.
- Starting June 1
  At 1770 Bathgate

Chisel
Challenge your muscles with a weight workout targeting multiple muscle groups for sculpting and shaping.
- Starting June 12, June 24
  At Healthy You Center and 1770 Bathgate

Core Sculpt
Learn CORE exercises that challenge your power center and stabilize your spine.
- Starting May 26
  At 1770 Bathgate

Facial Surgery Options
If you are looking to surgically enhance your facial beauty, this education session is for you. FREE
- May 18; 5:30-7:30 p.m.
  At LVH-Cedar Crest

Hand Arthritis
Learn to manage pain, increase range of motion and flexibility, and protect painful and inflamed joints. FREE
- June 15; 2-3 p.m.
  At LVH-Cedar Crest

Lower Extremity Swelling
Should you be wearing compression stocking? Learn about different causes of leg swelling and what you can do for it. FREE
- May 18; 2-3 p.m.
  At LVH-Cedar Crest

Third Annual Headache Symposium
Learn the effects of hormones on headaches and available therapies. FREE includes light dinner
- June 10; 5-8 p.m.
  At LVH-Cedar Crest

IRONPIGS HEALTH FAIR
Attend an IronPigs game and learn more about your health from Lehigh Valley Health Network professionals. Prizes and giveaways. FREE with game ticket
- June 10; 6-8:30 p.m.
  At Coca-Cola Park

Pigapalooza Fan Fest
Games and concerts for the entire family. Visit Lehigh Valley Health Network on the ballfield. FREE with event ticket
- July 10; noon-9 p.m.;
  rain date July 11
  At Coca-Cola Park

Ninth Annual Women's 5K Run/Walk
- June 12; registration 7:45-8:45 a.m.;
  run 9 a.m.; walk 9:02 a.m.
  At Hanover Twp. Community Center

Walk Your Way to Stronger Bones
Join this walk that also features osteoporosis prevention and treatment information. FREE
- May 22; 9 a.m.-noon
  At Bob Rodale Fitness Park, Trexlertown

Ongoing Programs
Be Safe in a Car
Mark J. Young Medical Challenge
Learn how to be a good driver. FREE with Center admission
- Mon.-Sat., 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
  Sun., noon-5 p.m.
  At Da Vinci Science Center, Allentown

Community Exchange—Create a healthier community. Volunteer time and earn time by exchanging services with friends and neighbors. FREE
- Third Mondays; 2-4 p.m.
  At LVH-17
  First Wednesdays; 6-8 p.m.
  At LVH-Muhlenberg

Guardianship Support Agency—Work for a local nonprofit with guardianship services.
Health Insurance for Small Businesses (2-50)—Educational sessions, including information on consumer-driven health plans, available at your office or Valley Preferred. FREE
Would a Support Group Help?—Dozens of different groups provide comfort and support. FREE

AROUND OUR COMMUNITY
For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

LEHIGH VALLEY HEALTH NETWORK 17
**STAYING FIT**

For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

- **Age-Proof Workout**—Cardio and resistance toning combined with mind/body exercise.
  - Starting May 25

- **Aqua-New**—Water exercise for posture, balance, strength and confidence.
  - Starting May 18, May 20

- **Ballroom Dancing**—Learn classic dances such as fox trot, waltz and swing.

- **Belly Dancing for Fun and Fitness**—Easy-to-learn dance moves promote muscle tone and positive body image with touch of flirty fun.
  - Intro—Starting May 18, May 21, June 7
  - Level II—Starting May 18, May 21

- **Boot Camp**—Be prepared to sweat with challenging strength training and cardio workout.
  - Starting May 17, July 3

- **Cardio Cross-Training**—High-intensity mix of cardio and strength training.
  - Starting May 17

- **FlashFit**—Circuit training to boost energy and burn fat.
  - Starting May 17

- **Gym Class for Kids**—Exercise in a safe, fun environment. Ages 8-12.
  - Starting June 4

- **Interval Express**—Alternate short bursts of intense cardio with active recovery.
  - Starting June 21

- **Kickbox Training Camp**—Combines basic muscle strengthening with fine-tuning of punch-and-kick skills.
  - Preview—July 14

- **Mother-Daughter Zumba**—Get fit together dancing to Latin-influenced music.
  - Starting July 7

- **Pilates Express**—Deep muscle conditioning to build core strength.
  - Starting May 19

- **PUMP**—Muscle strength/endurance workout using progressive resistance.
  - Starting May 26

- **Staying Strong**—Strength class combines low-impact cardio with resistance; improves endurance.
  - Starting May 27, June 30

- **Strength Class**—Use dumbbells, resistance bands and body weight to increase strength.
  - Starting June 1, June 2

- **Yodates**—Combines yoga, dance and Pilates all in one class.
  - Starting June 1, June 3

- **Zumba**—Join this Latin dance-influenced aerobics class.
  - Starting June 2, June 3, June 7

**SCREENINGS**

For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

- **HIV** **FREE**
  - Anonymous and confidential.
  - Wed., 1:30-3 p.m. and Thu., 10-11:30 a.m.
  - At LVH-17, AIDS Activities Office

- **Keep Fit and Stay Healthy**

- **Bone density**—Heel scan to learn about osteoporosis prevention and treatment. **FREE**
  - May 17; 5-7 p.m. at Human Performance Center
  - June 21; 5-7 p.m. at HealthyYou Fitness Center—Muhlenberg

- **Lung Cancer** **FREE**

- **Osteoporosis** **FREE**

- **Vascular Disease**
  - Stroke
  - Abdominal Aneurysm
  - Peripheral Arterial Disease

**CARING FOR MIND AND BODY**

For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

- **Massage Therapy**—Medical therapists offer different massage options at various sites.

- **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction**—Internationally recognized program uses meditation and group support. Most insurances accepted.
  - **FREE** Introductory session May 25
  - Sessions starting June 8
  - Retreat for participants, graduates July 17

- **UV Facial Skin Analysis**—Using a skin scope, professionals help identify sun damage, dehydration, skin type, pigmentation. **FREE**
  - Starting June 22

- **Yoga**—Build flexibility, strength, reduce stress and rebalance.
  - Starting May 18, June 24

- **Energizing**—Stimulating flow of poses
  - Starting May 18, June 24

- **Relaxing**—Gentle flow of poses
  - Starting May 18, July 8, July 19

- **Very Gentle**—Poses adaptable to chair and/or mat.
  - Starting May 18

- **Yogalatte**—Add Pilates to yoga for core-body conditioning.
  - Starting May 18, May 26, July 12
After-Delivery Parent Gathering—For support and discussion on adjusting to a new baby.
  • Wednesdays, 11 a.m.
Parenting Series—Five-week course to be a more effective, calmer parent
Parenting Workshops—Focus on hot parenting topics.
Balancing Life and Motherhood Workshop—May 5
Survivors Guide to Preteen/teen Years—May 17
Balancing Life and Fatherhood Workshop—June 7
Safe Ride—Car Seat Safety—Certified technicians show how to correctly install car seats and secure children. FREE

Raising a Family—Our flyer gives details for all programs listed below. Get your copy at 610-402-CARE or lvhn.org/healthyou.
Pregnancy and Childbirth
• Becoming Parents—May 12
• Expectant Parent Tour
• Fit to Be a Mom—Prenatal Exercise—Tuesdays, Thursdays
• My Baby and Me Sibling Tour
• Pregnancy 101—June 24
• Pregnancy Massage
• Prepared Childbirth
  One-Day Series
  Weekend
  On the Internet
Caring for Baby
• Baby Care
• Babysitting
  Safe Sitter—June 16
  CPR for Safe Sitter Student
• Breastfeeding
  Breastfeeding Baby
  Monday Morning Moms
• Depression After Delivery—Postpartum Support

Lehigh Valley Health Network has:
• The highest heart attack survival rate in Pennsylvania
• MI Alert for Heart Attacks, a program used to ensure the speediest care
• National Chest Pain Center Accreditation
• Digital cardiac catheterization labs for the clearest images

I thought it was indigestion. I wish I'd had it checked sooner.

Jeff Clauser felt the discomfort while digging his baked-goods delivery truck out of an 18-inch snowfall. Loading the truck later, the 49-year-old Bethlehem man felt lightheaded and nauseous. Then he collapsed and couldn't get up. "I felt helpless," he says.

Fortunately, help was nearby. His best friend and colleague called 9-1-1, and Clauser was rushed to Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg. In the cardiac catheterization lab, cardiologist Anthony Urbano, M.D., found a blocked artery. He opened it with a tiny balloon and inserted a stent to keep it open.

Clauser is a longtime smoker who had quit just weeks before his collapse. That was a good move to reduce his risk for further heart problems. "I've returned to my delivery route, and I'm feeling great," he says.
The surprise she wished for wasn't a brain tumor.

But the region's leading neurosurgeons were ready.

Not all surprises are welcome. The most complex brain and spine crises can occur without warning. Fortunately, the neurosurgery program at Lehigh Valley Health Network is prepared with the latest breakthroughs for the toughest cases.

Our neurosurgeons not only treat more brain tumors than anyone in the area, they perform awake craniotomy, an advanced procedure that removes brain tumors without harming crucial areas controlling speech.

We're also at the leading edge of nonsurgical approaches for serious brain conditions. Our specialists treat more stroke patients than any hospital in the area, and we use the most advanced devices for complex spinal fusion surgery. Advances that can make all the difference—right where you live.

A PASSION FOR BETTER MEDICINE.