Full of Life Again
Sister’s support helps
Katelyn survive cancer

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On the cover:
Twin sisters Katelyn (left) and Corinne are in the pink again, now that Katelyn's cancer treatment is successfully completed. Read her story on page 5.

Photo by Mary Frederick, Amico Studios
Whether it's a quick pick-me-up or a full meal in a glass, the smoothie is a wonderfully flexible drink—but how healthy it is depends on what you put in it. "Commercially made smoothies are usually high in sugar, fat and calories," says registered dietitian Judy Holaska of Lehigh Valley Health Network. Since it takes no time to whip one up, why not make it yourself? Then you're in control of the proportions and ingredients.

"The building blocks of a smoothie begin with fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables," Holaska says. Add low-fat yogurt, milk, tofu, pasteurized egg whites or other protein-rich ingredients (see list, right).

Ground flaxseed provides heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, and wheat germ is packed with vitamin E and folic acid. "All you need is a blender and your imagination to make a healthy, nutritious snack or meal replacement," Holaska says.

"You can often entice breakfast-hating kids if you make the smoothie thick enough to feel like ice cream," says Christine Potterjones, M.D., a family medicine physician with the health network. To achieve that consistency, cut out the extra liquid, use frozen fruit and whip up your smoothie in the food processor instead of the blender.

Here are some mix-and-match ingredients to play around with. Frozen fruit and ice cubes will make a thicker drink than one using fresh fruit and juice or milk. If you're going the frozen route, make extra and keep it in the refrigerator to stir up and enjoy later.

Next Step: Get some healthy smoothie recipes by calling 610-402-CARE or visiting Mhn.org/healthyyou.
It's Tomato Season
Packed with nutrients, these tasty garden favorites are not everyone's favorite garden item? Freshly picked tomatoes are sweet, juicy and delicious. Most people think of tomatoes as vegetables, but they're actually fruits, from the berry family. They come in several varieties, sizes and flavors—everything from tiny cherry tomatoes to big, bold beefsteaks. The one thing they all have in common: they deliver potent health benefits.

"Tomatoes are full of essential nutrients like vitamins C, B and A, potassium, iron and phosphorus," says family medicine physician Abby Letcher, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Health Network. "They're also high in lycopene."

This phytochemical (plant nutrient) is responsible for the red, orange and yellow pigments in fruits and vegetables. It's an antioxidant that helps combat heart disease, degenerative conditions and cancer by neutralizing free radicals that damage cells. In particular, studies indicate that lycopene may decrease the risk for prostate cancer. Early evidence also suggests it could protect against lung, stomach, breast and other cancers.

Sun-Dried Tomatoes

When life (or your garden) gives you too many tomatoes, sun-dry them. They're versatile and go in almost any dish, including sauces, dips, pesto, soups and stews, salads, stuffings, and rice or couscous.

10 plum tomatoes
Olive oil
Salt

Cut the tomatoes in half the long way, then place them cut side up on a nonstick baking sheet. Drizzle or mist a little olive oil over each tomato and sprinkle with a little salt. Place in a 200°F oven and leave overnight or until dried (not crisp). After they've cooled, pack them into clean jars and cover with olive oil. Sun-dried tomatoes will keep for up to six months without refrigeration, as long as the tomatoes are completely covered in oil.
Though you can't go wrong piling fresh tomato slices on a BLT or chopping them with olive oil and mozzarella, it may be even healthier to serve tomatoes cooked. "The cooking process actually increases the lycopene content, so it's higher in things like tomato paste and tomato sauce than in raw tomatoes," says Laurie Baker, a registered dietitian with the health network. "Serving tomatoes—either cooked or raw—with 'good' fats like olive oil also helps the body utilize lycopene."

Tomatoes definitely can help you maintain a healthy weight. The average tomato (about one half-cup) has just 25 calories. So you can eat your fill without breaking the calorie bank, Baker says, and the high fiber content keeps you feeling full longer.

For the freshest, tastiest tomatoes, Letcher says, "I grow my own or buy them from farmers' markets. Some of the tastiest varieties, like Brandywines, were developed in our area." Select ripe tomatoes—they should be deep red and have a slight give when squeezed gently. "Especially when they're in season, work tomatoes into your meals and snacks as much as you possibly can," Baker says. An easy way is to toss cherry or grape tomatoes into salads. Or try blanching whole tomatoes by plunging them briefly into boiling water, then into cold water to loosen the skins. Add skinned tomatoes to sauces or puree them to make tomato juice.

And when company comes, serve fresh tomato salsa instead of the usual chip dip, Baker says: "It's a healthy way to snack."

**Next Step:** Get a collection of tasty tomato recipes at 610-402-CARE or lvhn.org/healthyou.

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**Tomato Salad**

**This simple recipe is Dr. Abby Letcher's favorite summer tomato treat.**

- 2 tomatoes (one red, one yellow) cut in cubes
- 1/2 pound mozzarella cheese cut in smaller cubes
- Fresh basil leaves, coarsely chopped
- A splash of balsamic vinegar
- A splash of extra-virgin olive oil

Toss all ingredients together and serve at room temperature or slightly cooled, with slices of whole-wheat baguette.

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**To Peel or Not to Peel?**

**Do you habitually discard the skin of fruits and veggies?** If so, you may want to reconsider, says registered dietitian Susan O'Donnell of Lehigh Valley Health Network: "You're missing out on important health-enhancing compounds like fiber and antioxidants that are found in the skin." When considering nature's packaging, here's how to proceed:

**Don't peel if you can avoid it.** As long as you don't mind the taste, leave the skin on. Many people peel yams, for example, just out of habit.

**Avoid chemical residue.** Buy fruits and veggies from an organic market, or ask the supermarket manager whether or not pesticides and chemical fertilizers were used. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, items with thinner skins (including nectarines, pears, peaches, apples and potatoes) contain higher pesticide levels.

**Eliminate buildup.** If you don't buy organic, scrub the skin with a nylon-bristle brush, then rinse with a produce detergent or solution.

**Use a light touch.** If you do opt to remove the skin, peel thinly. "A lot of the nutrients are found between the skin and flesh of the fruit or vegetable," O'Donnell says.
Program helps young patients build a string of strength

Matt's beads are a badge of courage

Seventeen-year-old Matt Carey keeps the necklace on display in his car, along with bumper stickers and other declarations of his pride in being a survivor. Among his beads are a lightning bolt for the day he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, and a birthday cake for finishing treatment before his birthday. Three footprint beads symbolize the strong friendships he made during treatment with two fellow patients and with his nurse, Karen Agrippine, R.N.

"Karen was so tuned in to Matt she could tell how he felt and what he needed the minute we walked in the door," says Matt's mother, Mary Jean Carey of Mt. Bethel. "We made a vow right from the beginning to get the best possible care and fight this as a family, and our family grew to include the entire medical team. They took care of everything, so all we had to do was focus on getting Matt better. He continued nearly all his activities throughout radiation and chemotherapy."

Matt's positive attitude has been an inspiration to everyone he's encountered, from his high school basketball team to others fighting cancer. "Hearing other people's positive stories really helped me when I was being treated," he says. "Now I want to do the same for others taking on this battle."

"The outpouring of concern for Matt and our family, from the treatment team and the community, was incredible," says Matt's father, Tim Carey. "You can really get through things if you have the right support and the right attitude."
HEALING From Cancer, One Bead at a Time

On any given day in the Pediatric Specialty Center at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg, you may find a pizza party in progress, a clown making balloons or a therapy dog coming to visit. And then there's the bead box—a favorite of the young cancer patients at the center.

Children of all ages document their journey with colorful beads that represent good and bad aspects of treatment. "The beads tell each child's unique story, becoming a journal of their experience," says Lesley Simpson, M.D., pediatric oncologist (child cancer specialist) at the health network. "They also make scary times more tolerable. Children can go from tears to excitement at the prospect of getting a new bead."

It's all part of the pediatric cancer team's commitment to bring joy into young patients' lives whenever possible. Simpson and her colleagues "get to know our patients on a very personal level, and we become like a family," she says. "Children often are sad when it's time to leave the clinic because they're having too much fun playing during their chemotherapy."

This upbeat approach helps ease their worries about missing out on things like going to school, attending prom or staying in touch with friends, Simpson says. "We make every effort to keep them out of the hospital when there's a special occasion, and to get them back quickly to their normal lives." A special back-to-school program eases the transition for elementary school children.

Families need support too, and the pediatric cancer team provides encouragement, education and resources. Each family begins treatment with a notebook that grows during treatment. Families are connected with support groups and local organizations that can help with financial, physical and emotional needs. Here are the stories of two such families.

Katelyn's beads remind her of each milestone

Seven-year-old Katelyn can relive the steps of her cancer journey when she pulls out her bead necklace. A pizza bead represents the food cravings she had during chemo. A pencil bead celebrates her return to school. A performance bead sparks happy memories of dancing in the talent show, while the crabby bead brings back the dark days of steroid treatment.

Katelyn was 4 when she was diagnosed with leukemia. "Nothing in life can prepare you for the day you learn your child is gravely ill," says her father, Ron Verba of Slatington. "It would have been an unbearable load without the comfort, care and support we got from everyone in the pediatric cancer program." The team explained every aspect of treatment and let the family all stay together while Katelyn was hospitalized.

Katelyn's mother, Carolyn Verba (shown with her here), was especially grateful for the communication between her daughter's treatment team and school. "The school helped set up a tutoring program," Carolyn says. "The school nurse let us know what illnesses were going around so we could protect Katy and her twin sister, Corinne, from infection. Corinne was Katy's little champion. She even made her own bead necklace.

"It's so wonderful now to see Katy full of life again and free of side effects," Carolyn says. "She's getting her energy back along with her hair, and I see a level of maturity in her that you don't often see in a 7-year-old. Her compassion for others is amazing."

Next Step: See a video of Katelyn and Matt with their bead necklaces at lvhn.org/healthyou.
She knew from the start—Danielle Montanez’s age (40), high blood pressure and thyroid problems made her a high-risk mother, but she felt reassured under the care of maternal-fetal medicine specialist Meredith Rochon, M.D. The happy result for Danielle and her husband, Carlos, of Bath: their 6-month-old son Cooper.

Your doctor can’t always tell you whether you’ll have pregnancy complications. If you have diabetes, high blood pressure or other chronic conditions, are over age 35 or had problems with previous pregnancies, you’re in the high-risk category right from the start. But most expectant mothers who end up “high-risk” get there because of something that comes up during the pregnancy—for example, they’re carrying multiples, they develop gestational (pregnancy-related) diabetes, or problems arise with the placenta or the baby.

“You can be high-risk from the start of your pregnancy or for five minutes during your delivery,” says Meredith Rochon, M.D., a maternal-fetal medicine specialist with Lehigh Valley Health Network.

There are ways you can minimize the risk for complications both before and during your pregnancy. Work with your doctor ahead of time to stabilize any chronic conditions, like diabetes. Maintain a healthy weight, eat a nutritious diet, exercise regularly, and abstain from tobacco, drugs and alcohol. Take a prenatal vitamin with folic acid daily. Have a full genetic screening if you have a family history of any genetic disorders or inherited diseases.

“Make sure any medications you’re taking are appropriate for pregnancy,” says Sandra Thomas, D.O., an obstetrician/gynecologist with the health network. “If you have high blood pressure or some other conditions, you may have to switch medications.”

If you know at the outset that you’re high-risk for complications, your doctor will monitor you regularly and if necessary, refer you to a maternal-fetal medicine specialist. (These physicians specialize in caring for both the mother and baby through a complex pregnancy.) Even if you’re problem-free, you will likely see a maternal-fetal medicine specialist at least once during your pregnancy, typically for your 20-week ultrasound test.

If there is an issue, the specialist will work with your doctor to map out a plan to give you the best possible care. “We work very closely with local physician practices,” Rochon says. “Some women we only need to see once and some we may follow hand-in-hand with their primary doctor throughout the pregnancy.”

Learning that you’re a high-risk mother can be scary—but that knowledge allows your care team to give you the special attention you and your baby need. “Rest assured that despite the label, most high-risk women have a good outcome,” Rochon says.

Next Step: Learn more about how to cope with a complicated pregnancy. Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyou.
Do You Need a Travel Medicine Specialist?

Q: What is travel medicine?
A: When you travel abroad, you can be exposed to diseases, insects and parasites we don't have in the United States. A travel medicine specialist is a physician educated to review your health history and travel plans and provide vaccines, medications and advice to help prevent illness and injury while you're traveling. Many travel doctors also specialize in infectious diseases. There is no board certification in travel medicine, but there is a Certificate in Travel Health (CTH) that requires passing an extensive exam. (A CTH isn't required to be a travel medicine specialist, but it is an indication that the practitioner is knowledgeable in the field.)

Q: Who should see a travel doctor?
A: Meeting with a travel medicine specialist is especially helpful if you have a chronic health condition, are going to an exotic location or are nervous about your trip. But anyone taking a cruise or traveling outside the United States can benefit.

Q: How far ahead of time should I make an appointment?
A: Four to six weeks prior to departure. You may need immunizations. Some don't take effect until a few weeks later, and some can't be given at the same time.

Q: What can I expect during my appointment?
A: Before you come in, we will collect information about your trip and your health history. We use that information to assess your risks. If you'll be in a four-star hotel in an urban area for a couple of days on business, your risks are different than if you're going on a mission trip in a rural area for a couple of weeks.

During your appointment, we will advise you on any diseases that are endemic to the area, give you any required immunizations and prescribe medications for traveler's diarrhea and malaria, if necessary. Depending on your situation, we also may teach you about jet lag, blood clots, personal safety, exposure to local animals, food safety, water hazards, insect-borne diseases, auto safety, sexually transmitted diseases, sunburn, altitude sickness, and more. And you'll be given written information about your destination(s) and any vaccinations or medications you received.

We will encourage you to have all your prescriptions filled before you leave and to carry a traveler's first aid kit. It's also helpful to develop a medical evacuation plan. You never know what might happen and what services will be available to you in another country.

Next Step:
Get Guidelines for International Travel by calling 610-402-CARE or visiting lvhn.org/healthyou.

Well-prepared travelers—Donna VanCott (left) and Joan Metzger of Macungie saw a travel medicine specialist before visiting Costa Rica with their friends, pictured on the contents page (l-r): Marietta Portland, (Metzger), Anne Lovette, Amy Rosen and Linda Steiner.
Checking in on Your Child’s Growth

Worried that he’s not on-track? There’s a wide range of ‘normal’

Every parent eagerly awaits that first toddling step. When it doesn’t happen by the time most babies start walking, some parents begin to fret. They shouldn’t, says pediatrician Anne Helwig, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Health Network. “There’s a large window of time for babies and children to develop each skill, and a wide range of what is considered normal. Every child explores and adjusts to the world at his or her own pace.”

That said, it is wise to know if your child is generally on-track. “There are certain ages that define when a milestone should be reached, and if it isn’t reached, it’s considered a delay,” Helwig says. “The best place to start is by scheduling well visits at intervals recommended by your pediatrician.” These visits are set up at specific ages for specific reasons, not just to measure height and weight. Your pediatrician will perform an exam and ask questions to make sure your child is growing appropriately—and to spot any red flags.

You also can track your child’s development by comparing notes with experienced family members and friends. Teachers, too, are valuable resources for parents of school-aged children. Even the Internet can be a good tool if used correctly. “Don’t be too quick to believe what you read online, and stick to...”
Did You Get a Complete Checkup?

Make sure these vital components aren’t left out

When you visit your doctor for your regular physical—and it should be yearly after about age 40—you know generally what to expect. The doctor will take your blood pressure, weigh you, listen to your heart and lungs, test your reflexes, and recommend various screenings.

But ideally, this key get-together with your doctor should include other things vital to your health, says Larry Todd, D.O., a family medicine physician with Lehigh Valley Health Network. At that next checkup, make sure your doctor...

- **Checks your skin for signs of cancer**—“This is especially important in areas like the low back that you can’t see yourself,” Todd says. “Skin cancer is becoming more prevalent, and melanoma—the deadly type—can occur at any age.”

- **Asks about your family health history**—Knowing what diseases or conditions run in your family allows the doctor to be watchful. “For example,” Todd says, “if you have a strong family history of diabetes we’ll do regular blood sugar testing.”

- **Knows if you’re a smoker**—“I always discuss this with my patients and strongly encourage smokers to quit,” Todd says. “Often it takes multiple attempts, but help is available.”

- **Finds out how you’re feeling emotionally**—“Many people are under great stress today,” Todd says. “Someone with mild depression typically won’t bring it up unless I ask, and treatment can make all the difference.”

- **Discusses your diet**—Even if you’re young and healthy, you still may be missing key nutrients—like calcium, vital for building strong bones in your 20s and 30s. If you’re a little overweight, your doctor can help you trim down now to avoid serious health problems later.

- **Updates your immunizations**—“You need a tetanus shot every 10 years, and people often forget,” Todd says. “Just like children, adults need regular protection from various diseases, including flu and pneumonia.”

- **Encourages you to exercise**—“Some of my patients are very reluctant, and this is such an important component of health,” Todd says. “You can work into it gradually. For the average person, a good goal is 30-40 minutes of aerobic activity several times a week.”

- **Asks about end-of-life care**—No one wants to think about it, but if you were terminally ill or injured, how much care would you want, and who would you want to advocate for you? Your doctor can help you put your wishes in writing and share them with your family.

Want to Know More about the screenings and tests men and women need at various stages of life? Call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyou.

If your child seems to be growing too quickly or slowly for no obvious reason, it may be time to consult a pediatric endocrinologist. “We can examine your child and run tests to detect thyroid conditions, growth hormone deficiencies, poor nutrition and puberty issues,” says Arnold Slyper, M.D., a pediatric endocrinologist with the health network. “The good news is that most children we see for short stature have a normal endocrine system, and those with abnormal growth can be treated very successfully with strategies like hormone therapy or a nutrition plan.”

Next Step: Get a Timeline of Childhood Growth Milestones by calling 610-402-CARE or visiting lvhn.org/healthyou.
What’s Going on in Your Head?
Unlocking the secrets of brain function

The brain has long been a mystery locked inside a box. Even if the protective shield of the skull is removed, all parts of the brain essentially look alike, making it difficult to learn how the organ works by viewing it. But today’s advances in neurosurgery and brain imaging technology are revealing more and more of the brain’s secrets.

“The human brain is extremely complex, and all its parts work together,” says Stefano Camici, M.D., a neurosurgeon at Lehigh Valley Health Network. Researchers have identified six major regions involved with functions of the mind and body. Any of those functions can be compromised by stroke, tumors, injuries and disease.

**Frontal Lobes**

Activity that feels most like “thinking” largely takes place in this biggest and most highly evolved area of the brain. The frontal lobes—one on each side—handle ideas, concepts, feelings and judgments, interpreting what’s going on around you and how you should act in response. Problems here, including Alzheimer’s disease, can change behavior and personality and make it hard to focus, plan or remember how to do tasks.

**Temporal Lobes**

More sensory information—especially hearing—is processed in the temporal lobes, which help you make sense of spoken language and music. These lobes also are linked to memory, and damage here can make it hard to understand speech, categorize objects or recall things you’ve seen or been told.
Like rocket science, brain surgery is considered a pinnacle of technical achievement. But how is it actually done? There are four major techniques, says neurosurgeon Stefano Camici, M.D. Surgeons use microscopes and sometimes computerized systems to help guide delicate procedures without damaging the brain. In some cases, patients are even kept awake (they don't feel any pain) to answer questions and make movements that tell doctors how the brain is responding.

Craniotomy entails creating a hole in the skull to access a specific area of the brain where surgeons may perform a biopsy, remove a tumor, get rid of a clot, drain blood, stanch an aneurysm or monitor pressure inside the cranium.

Ventriculostomy allows doctors to measure pressure inside the head and possibly relieve it by draining fluid through a tube.

Hemicraniectomy relieves massive swelling of the brain, which can result from a stroke. Surgeons remove a large part of one side of the skull, giving more room to the swollen brain and reducing pressure.

Stereotactic radiosurgery uses high-energy radiation delivered with extreme precision by a computerized system (Gamma Knife®) without the need for open surgery.

Next Step: To view a video about a type of craniotomy performed while the patient is awake, visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.
Get the Most From Your Pedometer
Simple steps can boost the power of a walking routine

If the longest journey begins with a single step, here's one that can put you on the path to better health: Clip a pedometer to your waist. Your next steps are just as easy: Start walking, and make every footfall count.

"Wearing a pedometer to count your steps is a low-stress way to increase physical activity without making it a huge chore," says Anna Keane, D.O., a family medicine physician at Lehigh Valley Health Network.

"Just wearing one makes you want to get on your feet and move," says Connie Fehr, exercise specialist at the network. "It's like having a little personal trainer." Here's how to make your pedometer a more powerful fitness tool:

Use a simple model. Some pedometers measure stride, count miles—even plot your location with GPS. "But basic models are easier to use and often more accurate," Fehr says.

Check that accuracy. Count 50 steps while wearing the pedometer and compare your own tally with the unit's. "Being off by one or two steps is considered accurate," Fehr says.

Set a goal. Wear the pedometer for a week while sticking to your regular routine, to find your typical step count. "Most people think they walk more than they do," Fehr says. Then work on adding steps. Fewer than 5,000 a day is considered sedentary. Aim for 10,000, a good target for enhanced health.

Imagine a destination. Plot your progress toward a distant place, figuring one mile for every 2,000 steps. Logging miles provides a sense of accomplishment.

Increase intensity. Use your treadmill's incline setting, walk more hills when you're outside, power walk or do intervals of fast and normal walking to build strength and endurance. Taking a cardio class provides about 5,000 steps in a single hour.
How Much Exercise Do I Really Need?

It depends on your reason for getting active

If you've found ways to sneak exercise into your daily routine, a new study from the Journal of the American Medical Association may have stopped you in your tracks. It says women with a normal body mass index (BMI) need to exercise 60 minutes a day, seven days a week to prevent weight gain. Is such an all-or-nothing approach your best bet?

“No,” says exercise physiologist Erin Bloodworth of Lehigh Valley Health Network. “We encourage people to get moving, even if it’s only for short periods of time. Every little bit helps.”

The study observed 35,000 women (both pre- and postmenopausal) for 13 years. Along with the 60-minutes-a-day finding, researchers also concluded that women who were already overweight or obese still gained weight even if they consistently exercised for an hour a day.

“But the study had its limitations,” says J. Howard DeHoff, M.D., an internist with the health network. “For example, diet was not a primary focus.” And the study ignored other benefits of exercise, such as lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels and prevention of diabetes, osteoporosis, anxiety and depression.

“The one thing you can take from the study is the importance of preventing weight gain in the first place,” DeHoff says.

So, how much exercise do you need? It depends on your goal:

If you're looking to prevent weight gain or lower your cholesterol, strive for about 20 minutes a day, or 150 a week. “Anything that raises your heart rate and makes you a little winded counts,” Bloodworth says. For inspiration, DeHoff offers the example of the Amish. “They are known for a diet of meats, cheeses and sweets,” he says. “Yet they remain healthy because of an active lifestyle that doesn’t rely on technology.”

If you're looking to lose weight, then a combination of exercise and diet is essential. Your primary care doctor can help you develop an effective plan.

Next Step: Sign up for a fitness class. See list on page 18, call 610-402-CARE or visit lvhn.org/healthyyou.
When You Need Heart Surgery Again
How to prepare for (or prevent) another operation

At age 76, James Steffy of Allentown can still toot his own horn—his Swiss alpine horn, that is. It’s no easy feat for the average person. When you consider that Steffy recently had his second heart surgery, his lung capacity is even more remarkable.

A retired Muhlenberg College administrator and a musician earlier in his career, Steffy had quintuple bypass surgery 22 years ago. “At that time, I saw people who were having their second heart surgery and questioned if I was in for the same thing,” he says. To avoid a repeat bypass, he followed a heart-healthy diet and exercised regularly, behaviors he learned in cardiac rehabilitation. (The fact that he didn’t smoke helped too.)

“I had no problems for 21 years,” Steffy says. Then an unrelated problem with his heart valves resulted in surgery to replace one and repair another.

It’s not uncommon for someone to need a second heart surgery. Nearly 20 percent of people who undergo bypass surgery need a repeat operation within 10 years. “That number is decreasing thanks to better cholesterol medications and surgical techniques, and our ability to open blockages nonsurgically with angioplasty,” says James Wu, M.D., Steffy’s cardiothoracic surgeon at Lehigh Valley Health Network.

People who’ve had a heart valve replaced with a tissue valve (versus a mechanical one) also may need a second surgery. “Tissue valves start deteriorating in about 10 years,” Wu says. (Tissue valve recipients can help prevent a second surgery by avoiding bacterial infection—for example, taking an antibiotic before dental work or invasive procedures like colonoscopy.)

Surgery veteran—James Steffy credits cardiac rehab with getting him back in shape physically and psychologically after two different heart procedures. He’s still strong enough to play the alpine horn he brought home from a 1970s trip to Switzerland, where he directed a music camp for college students.
Heart Palpitations

What does it mean when your heart is aflutter?

Although there is no theoretical limit to how many heart surgeries you can have, obviously you want to avoid them. Keeping your heart healthy after surgery is vitally important. "Every time you have another heart operation, the risks are greater because the surgeon must free the heart from the scar tissue that forms around it following surgery," says Wu's colleague Sanjay Mehta, M.D., a cardiothoracic surgeon at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg. Finding healthy blood vessels to create a detour around a blockage also can be challenging in a repeat bypass.

What about your ability to withstand and recover from a second heart operation? It has more to do with your overall health than your age. "Recovering from both operations was difficult," Steffy says. "The fact that I stayed in shape after my first surgery really helped me."

Steffy also was less apprehensive about the second surgery because his fear of the unknown was gone. "Having been through it, I believed in my doctors and saw how everyone worked together to ensure I got the best care," he says.

**Next Step:** Watch a 3-D animation of a heart bypass surgery at lvhn.org/healthyyou.

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**Ever feel a pounding sensation in your chest that gives you pause?** It lasts for a few seconds—sometimes longer—and then disappears. It's called a heart palpitation. "Palpitations can be brought on by stress, medication, one too many energy drinks or, in some cases, a serious heart rhythm problem such as atrial fibrillation," says Bruce Feldman, D.O., a cardiologist with Lehigh Valley Health Network.

If a racing heartbeat is a one-time thing, it's probably nothing to worry about, says Victor Otero, M.D., a family medicine physician with the health network. But if it lasts longer than a couple of minutes or increases in frequency over time, here's what you should consider.

**First, pay attention to the things you're doing that could be stimulating your heart.** How many double espressos do you drink after crawling out of bed in the morning? What are the ingredients in that herbal juice blend you sip at lunchtime? Has your doctor prescribed a new medication? Try refraining from caffeinated drinks and alcohol to see if that eases your symptoms, and talk to your doctor about medication alternatives.

Besides the things you ingest, the stress you're under may be giving you heart palpitations. Whether it's a stack of unpaid bills, an upcoming job interview or relationship issues, if stress is a probability you can try a relaxation technique like meditation to see if it reduces the racing heartbeat. "In some cases, deep breathing does decrease your heart rate and diminishes the sensation of the palpitation," Otero says.

**Second, look for a pattern.** Keep a journal: What leads up to the palpitations? Are they getting worse, happening more often, occurring spontaneously or waking you in the middle of the night? Armed with this information, you'll be better equipped to discuss your symptoms with your doctor. "It's important to note that you're more likely to have heart problems starting in your 40s and beyond, so if you're younger the cause for the palpitation is more likely to be benign," Otero says.

**Third, if you do experience persistent palpitations, see your family physician for an evaluation.** "To pinpoint the cause of an irregular heartbeat, testing options include an electrocardiogram (EKG), stress test or echocardiogram," Feldman says. (An EKG records the heart's electrical activity, a stress test measures how well it performs during exercise, and an echocardiogram uses ultrasound to create a picture of the heart.) Treatment can range from wait-and-see to medication to a pacemaker, depending on the underlying problem causing the palpitations.

**A final—and critical—point:** If you have a rapid heart rate accompanied by tightness in the chest, fatigue, sweating, dizziness or shortness of breath, call 9-1-1 immediately. That could signal a heart attack.

**Next Step:** Find out how energy drinks affect your heart by calling 610-402-CARE or visiting lvhn.org/healthyyou.
Lehigh Valley Health Network Update

A Place for Families

If a loved one needs care at Lehigh Valley Health Network and you want to stay nearby, you'll soon have a new option. Construction has begun on the Hackerman-Patz House, a new, two-story family lodging center at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest. The center will serve as a "home away from home" for families of loved ones requiring a longer hospital stay or treatment involving several roundtrips to the hospital.

When complete next year, the center will offer 15,000 square feet of space with amenities like private rooms and baths, a common lounge area, kitchenette, children's playroom, laundry facilities and a library. Families will be charged an affordable nightly rate (about half the discounted lodging rate in the local area), with fees used solely to cover the cost of operating the facility.

Most construction costs will be paid through a generous gift from Willard Hackerman and his wife, Lillian Patz Hackerman, of Baltimore, Md. Hackerman is the chief executive officer of The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company.

Hospital Joins National Cancer Institute Program

Lehigh Valley Hospital and the Cancer Center have been selected by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to join the NCI Community Cancer Centers Program (NC3CP). Membership in this select group of 30 cancer centers throughout the U.S. will bring expanded research opportunities and new treatments to the hospital's patients. It also will improve access to cancer care for underserved community members.

"Our research affirms that we are saving lives."

Matthew McCambridge, M.D., and his colleagues care for critically ill patients through telemedicine—the use of satellite technology, video conferencing and off-site monitoring to connect doctors and patients. This approach saves lives, according to a recent research study performed by McCambridge at Lehigh Valley Health Network.

The study, published in the Archives of Internal Medicine, shows that when telemedicine is combined with 24/7 direct intensivist (critical care) physician supervision, it lowers death rates by nearly 30 percent and

Lehigh Valley Health Network's intensive care units:

- Are staffed by critical care nurses and specially educated physicians (intensivists).
- Benefit from an extra layer of monitoring thanks to telemedicine and AICU technology.
- Use one of the industry's most advanced electronic charting systems, which automatically captures and transmits data from bedside monitors and equipment to the AICU.
Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via

Summer is a great time to train for a marathon. If that's too much, consider the half-marathon, be part of a relay team, walk a 5K or volunteer for a good cause that provides services for people with disabilities.

• Sun., Sept. 12
• Marathon and relay, 7 a.m. start at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest
• Half-marathon, 7:45 a.m. start at Main and Market Sts., Bethlehem
• 5K walk, start time and location to be announced

To participate, volunteer or get training tips, visit lvhn.org/marathon.

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 canceled due to low enrollment.

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

Exercise and Cognition
Learn how exercise can improve your brain power and enhance your memory. FREE
• Aug. 17; 2-3 p.m.
  At LVH–Cedar Crest

Funky Feet
An introduction to hip-hop dance for ages 8-12.
• Starting July 17, Sept. 11
  At Healthy You Fitness Center–Cedar Crest

Healthy Bones Series
Three-week series discusses keys to keeping your bones healthy.
Osteoporosis and You
• July 14, 6-7:30 p.m.
Osteoporosis Nutrition, Exercise and Well-Being
• July 21, 6-7:30 p.m.
Osteoporosis Treatment—Meet the Doctor
• July 28, 6-7:30 p.m.
  At LVH–Muhlenberg

Infant Positions
Position and play with your baby to promote healthy motor skills such as rolling, sitting and crawling. Learn why tummy time is important. FREE
• July 20; 2-3 p.m.
  At LVH–Cedar Crest

Parkinson’s Symposium
For patients and caregivers, learn all the latest information.
• Sept. 25: 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
  At Sheraton Four Points, Allentown

Twinkle Toes
An introduction to ballet and jazz dance for ages 4-7.
• Starting July 14, July 17, Sept. 8, Sept. 11
  At Healthy You Fitness Center–Cedar Crest

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

First Strides®
For women ages 12-112, this 12-week workshop helps you begin a walking or running fitness program, with the goal of participating in a 5K women’s event.
• July 26: 6:15 p.m.
  At Stroudsburg
• July 27: 5:30 p.m.
  At Bethlehem Twp. Community Center
• July 27: 6:15 p.m.
  At Lehigh Parkway
• July 28: 6:15 a.m.
  At Bethlehem Twp. Community Center
• July 28: 6:15 p.m.
  At Lehigh Parkway
• July 29: 6 p.m.
  At Hanover Twp. Community Center

Summer Festivals
Kutztown Community Day
• Aug. 1; 1-4 p.m.
  At Kutztown Park
Lehigh Valley Hospital—Muhlenberg Summer Festival
• Aug. 18-20; 5:10-30 p.m.
• Aug. 21; 3-10:30 p.m.
  At LVH–Muhlenberg
Richland Township Community Day
• July 31; 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
  At Veterans Park, Quakertown

You’ve Had a Stroke—What Now?
A group session to discuss therapy at home, tips for aphasia, depression and emotions, planning your time, setting goals. Stroke Center nurse answers questions.
• Sept. 22; 9:30-11 a.m.
  At LVH–Cedar Crest

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.
  At LVH–Cedar Crest
• Third Mondays; 2-4 p.m.
  At LVH–Muhlenberg

Community Exchange—Create a healthier community. Volunteer time and earn time by exchanging services with friends and neighbors. FREE
• Mon.-Sat., 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
  At LVH–Cedar Crest
• Mon.-Sat., 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
  At Da Vinci Science Center, Allentown

Guardianship Support Agency—Wants you if you are a local nonprofit with guardian services.

Health Insurance for Small Businesses
(2-50)—Education sessions, include 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
STAYING FIT
For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

Age-Proof Workout—Cardio and resistance toning combined with mind/body exercise.
  • Starting July 20

Aqua-New—Water exercise for posture, balance, strength and confidence.
  • Starting Aug. 24, Aug. 26

Balanced Fitness—Total body workout engages core stabilizing muscles using BOSU trainers and stability balls.
  • Starting Aug. 19

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 July 20, Aug. 9
  Level II—Starting July 16, July 20

Bollywood Dance—Learn combinations of Indian dance steps and hand-and-arm movements.
  • Starting July 16, Aug. 9

Boot Camp—Be prepared to sweat with challenging strength training and cardio workout.
  • Starting July 26, July 28, Aug. 28

Cardio Cross-Training—High-intensity mix of cardio and strength training.
  • Starting July 26

Cardio Kickbox—High-powered routine strengthens mind/body.
  • Starting July 19

Cardio Strength Combo—Aerobic conditioning with resistance using variety of equipment for total body workout.
  • Starting July 27

Chisel—Challenge muscles with weight workout targeting multiple muscle groups for sculpting and shaping.
  • Starting Aug. 19

Core Sculpt—Learn CORE exercises challenging your power center and stabilizing your spine.
  • Starting July 21

FlashFit—Circuit training to boost energy and burn fat.
  • Starting July 19

Interval Express—Alternate short bursts of intense cardio with active recovery.
  • Starting Aug. 23

Kickbox Training Camp—Combines basic muscle strengthening with fine-tuning of punch-and-kick skills.
  • Starting July 21

Mother-Daughter Zumba—Get fit together dancing to Latin-influenced music.
  • Starting Sept. 1

Pilates Express—Deep muscle conditioning to build core strength.
  • Starting July 20

PUMP—Muscle strength/endurance workout using progressive resistance.
  • Starting July 21

Staying Strong—Strength class combines low-impact cardio with resistance; improves endurance.
  • Starting July 22, Aug. 27

Strength Class—Use dumbbells, resistance bands and body weight to increase strength.
  • Starting July 27, July 28

Yodates—Combines yoga, dance and Pilates all in one class.
  • Starting July 27, July 29

Zumba—Join this Latin dance-influenced aerobics class.
  • Starting July 28, July 29, Aug. 9, Sept. 1

CAREING FOR MIND AND BODY
For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

Cosmetology Services—Skilled licensed professionals offer skin care and nail care services. Gift cards available.

Discover Relaxation Within—Ease stress through relaxation techniques.
  • Part 1 starting July 20
  • Part 2 starting Aug. 24

Everyday Tai Chi—Vertical flowing movements combined with rhythmic breathing.
  • Starting Aug. 4, Aug. 5

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

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction—Internationaly recognized program uses meditation and group support. Most insurances accepted.
  FREE Introductory Session Sept. 15
  • Sessions starting Sept. 27, Sept. 29

Yoga—Build flexibility, strength, reduce stress and rebalance.

Energyizing—Stimulating flow of poses
  • Starting July 20, Aug. 19

Relaxing—Gentle flow of poses
  • Starting July 19, Sept. 2

Very Gentle—Poses adaptable to chair and/or mat.
  • Starting July 20

Yogalatte—Add Pilates to yoga for core-body conditioning.
  • Starting July 20, July 21, Sept. 13
PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH
For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE.

Cessation, What Works?—How to succeed in beating tobacco addiction. FREE
  • Aug. 11

Clear the Air—Prepare to quit tobacco. Get tools to take action, stay motivated.
  • July 21

Tobacco Treatment Program—12-month program of individual counseling and ongoing support.

CPR
  • BLS Renewal
  • Fundamentals of Basic Life Support
  • Heartsaver AED and First Aid
  • Heartsaver Pediatric

Coalition for a Smoke-Free Valley
  • Advocacy
  • Keep Us Healthy
  • Secondhand Smoke

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

College of Knowledge FREE
Depression in the Elderly—Learn the symptoms, causes and treatment options.
  • July 14; 11 a.m.–noon

Future State of Geriatrics in the United States—The potential for the average life expectancy to increase and how it will impact the entire population.
  • Aug. 11; 11 a.m.–noon

Lessons Learned From Death and Dying Experience—A noted geriatrician discusses his experience with patients and families going through the dying process.
  • Sept. 8; 11 a.m.–noon

Exercise for Life—Low-impact/low-intensity class utilizes chair for muscle conditioning.
  • Every Mon., Wed., Fri.

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

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

Keep Fit and Stay Healthy

UV Facial Skin Analysis
  • July 19 at Healthy You Fitness Center–Cedar Crest; 5-7 p.m.
  • Aug. 16 at Human Performance Center; 5-7 p.m.
  • Sept. 20 at Healthy You Fitness Center–Muhlenberg; 5-7 p.m.

Lung Cancer
Osteoporosis—Heel Screening FREE
Vascular Disease
  Stroke
  Abdominal Aneurysm
  Peripheral Arterial Disease

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

• Diabetes and Technology
• Diabetes in Pregnancy
• Diabetes: Moving Beyond the Basics
• Insulin Pump Support Group
• Intensive Management
• Medical Nutrition Therapy
• Pre-Diabetes
• Sugar-Free Kids Support Group
• Sweet Success: Living Well With Diabetes Discussion Group
• Type 1 Self-Management
• Type 2 Self-Management

“I’m forever grateful for this place.”

On the first lap of a 1988 Pocono Raceway event, NASCAR legend Bobby Allison radioed his crew that his tire was going flat. In the second turn, the tire blew. Allison’s car hit the wall, spun and was struck on the driver’s side. His injuries were life-threatening.

As Lehigh Valley Health Network trauma specialists began treatment at the scene, raceway owners Drs. Joseph “Doc” and Rose Mattioli comforted Allison’s wife, Judy. “I told her we had a helicopter to take him to the Trauma Center, and that he would receive the best care,” Rose says. Allison spent six weeks at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest undergoing treatment for severe head trauma, a shattered leg and broken ribs.

Two decades later, Allison—now 72—recently returned to surprise his good friends the Mattiolis during an event to recognize their donation naming the health network’s Mattioli Trauma Center. “Thank God Bobby came here,” Rose Mattioli says.
Get Up and Go—Group exercise for those with Parkinson's disease or other movement disorders.

Joint Replacement Prep—What to expect for total knee or hip replacement. FREE
- July 21, Aug. 3, Aug. 18, Sept. 7, Sept. 15
- At LVH—Cedar Crest
- July 22
- At LVH—Muhlenberg

For Cancer Patients
Adolescent Support Group FREE
Bereavement Support Group FREE
Lehigh Valley Chapter of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition FREE
- Aug. 23
- With the American Cancer Society
Men Facing Cancer FREE
Preparing for Breast Cancer Surgery FREE

For Epilepsy Patients
Monthly Support Group FREE
- Meets second Thursday of the month

For MS Patients
Dinner and Discussion FREE
Lunch 'n' Learn FREE
MS School FREE

For Stroke Patients
Lunch 'n' Learn for Stroke Survivors and Family FREE
Stroke Exercise/Educational Program Stroke Support Group FREE

MANAGING YOUR WEIGHT
For details and to register, call 610-402-CARE

Weight-Loss Surgery
Surgery Information Night—What to expect. FREE
- July 21, Aug. 5, Aug. 18, Sept. 2, Sept. 15
Monthly Support Group—Support and information on weight-loss surgery. FREE
- July 28, Aug. 25

Weight Management Services
Individual
Nutrition Counseling—Assessment, body-fat analysis and goal-setting.
Nutrition Counseling/Body Composition Test—Counseling plus personal metabolism test and interpretation.

Six-Month Supportive Weight Loss Program—Individualized expert-level care for nutrition, behavior and fitness.

Group
Eating Well for Life—Learn healthy food choices for weight management.
- Part 1 starting July 28, Sept. 9
- Part 2 starting Aug. 25

- Starting Sept. 7

Program-Individualized expert-level care for nutrition, behavior and fitness.
- Part 1 starting Aug. 25
- Part 2 starting Sept. 15

Eating Well for Life—Learn healthy food choices for weight management.
- Part 1 starting July 28, Aug. 25
- Part 2 starting Sept. 9

- Starting Sept. 7

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"After I got the news, I couldn’t even watch my team play."

That’s how upset Mandy Housenick was when she learned at age 15 that she had hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM), a dangerous thickening of the heart muscle. The diagnosis came after years of doctors missing her condition or misdiagnosing it as asthma. Once she knew what the real problem was, she was forced to quit her field hockey team—as well as soccer, softball and basketball—or risk a sudden, potentially fatal heart rhythm.

Fast-forward to 2010. Housenick is now 31, lives in Northampton and works as a Philadelphia Phillies beat reporter for The Morning Call (above, she chats with outfielder Raul Ibanez at Citizens Bank Park). She’s under the care of cardiologist Matthew Martinez, M.D., of Lehigh Valley Health Network, who specializes in HCM. While field hockey is a thing of the past, she still has dreams about playing it.

Instead, Housenick channels her competitive drive into her demanding journalism job. And while she can’t sprint anymore, she can jog a mile in 10 minutes, thanks to medication that helps her heart beat more efficiently.
Need a doctor?

Does the number on your thermometer make you nervous? Relax. Lehigh Valley Health Network’s 610-402-CARE (2273) line is the easiest and most reliable way to find the right doctor.

Staffed by nurses and other professionals, we can help you:

- Find a doctor to meet your needs
- Make an appointment
- Arrange for a second opinion
- Register for programs you see in Healthy You
- Learn the latest about Lehigh Valley Health Network services

Get Your FREE magnet and forehead thermometer strip when you call 610-402-CARE for a doctor referral.

402CARE.com