

HealthyYOU



TWO HEALTHY HEARTS

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Airlifted to Delivery

From preemie to thriving baby boy

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Meet Martin Walko, MD, Fellowship-Trained Weight-Loss Surgeon



▶ Watch his video at LVHN.org/Walko.

Surgeon Martin Walko, MD, recently joined Lehigh Valley Physician Group (LVPG) Surgery-Health & Wellness Center. Walko is a board-certified, fellowship-trained general surgeon who specializes in advanced minimally invasive gastrointestinal surgery, including small incision appendix, gallbladder and colon-rectal cancer surgeries. He also performs life-changing weight-loss surgeries, such as sleeve gastrectomy. For those considering weight-loss surgery, Walko has answers to frequently asked questions:

Q How much must I weigh to be a candidate for weight-loss surgery?

A ▶ It isn't so much the number of pounds, but whether your body mass index (BMI) puts you into a category considered morbidly obese. If you are obese and have other health problems, such as high blood pressure, diabetes or sleep apnea, you may also be a candidate.

Q How do I become a weight-loss surgery patient?

A ▶ Many patients are referred to our weight-loss program by their primary care provider. Others attend one of our free Information Sessions to learn more about weight-loss surgery before seeking a preliminary appointment. Many insurance plans have other requirements that must be followed for coverage.

Q What are my options for weight-loss surgery at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Hazleton?

A ▶ At Lehigh Valley Hospital-Hazleton we offer two weight-loss surgery options: **Sleeve gastrectomy** is a laparoscopic procedure that restricts how much food the stomach can hold. It also removes the portion of the stomach that makes ghrelin, a hormone that makes you feel hungry. During this operation, your stomach is made into a permanent tube about the size of a banana. For most patients, weight loss of 20 to 60 percent excess body weight by one year is typical. **Gastric bypass**, also called Roux-en-Y surgery, is a combination restriction and malabsorption procedure that is done laparoscopically. This procedure works by reforming your stomach to create a smaller pouch. A section of the small intestine will attach directly to the pouch, which means no calories or nutrients are absorbed. You will feel fuller sooner and eat less because your stomach pouch holds less food. If you suffer from reflux disorder, gastric bypass can help correct that. Most patients report 20 to 70 percent excess weight loss by one year.

THINKING ABOUT WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY?

Attend a free Information Sessions
Register by calling **570-501-4LVH (4584)**.

Jan. 16, 6-8 p.m., Health Center
at Mountain Top

Feb. 13, 1-2 p.m., LVH-Hazleton
Business & Education Center

March 13, 6-8 p.m., Health Center
at Mountain Top

LEARN MORE ABOUT MEDICAL WEIGHT MANAGEMENT OR WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY.

Visit LVHN.org/HYbariatrics.



Weight Loss Through Diet Alone

HOW JOHN STOFFA LOST WEIGHT
WITHOUT SURGERY

John Stoffa was in constant pain. At 6 feet 1 inch and 379 pounds, he had difficulty operating heavy equipment at his job. Stoffa also couldn't go fishing or hunting, or walk his beagle, Sparky. After applying for disability and being denied, the Drums resident was left with one option: weight-loss surgery.

In August 2015, Stoffa, now 51, met with the weight-loss surgery team at Lehigh Valley Physician Group (LVPG) Surgery–Health & Wellness Center, which includes registered dietitian Molly Sweeney. "I see weight-loss surgery candidates to help them begin changing their lifestyle habits," Sweeney says. "I help them learn to eat slower, eliminate foods they aren't allowed after surgery and increase their physical activity."

EXCEEDING NEW GOALS

One of the first goals Sweeney shared with Stoffa inspired him. "Molly told me to lose 5 pounds before our next meeting the following month," Stoffa says. "I lost 20."

"Actually, 26 pounds. I'll never forget that. He went above and beyond what I expected," Sweeney says.

His inspiration was twofold – his insurance company wouldn't approve the procedure without pre-surgery weight loss, and he was inspired by what he heard at the program's weight-loss surgery support group meetings. One man in the group lost 150 pounds on his own before having surgery. "All he did was listen to advice from a registered dietitian. I thought, if he can do that, so can I," Stoffa says.

LOSE WEIGHT WITHOUT SURGERY

Stoffa continued attending the weight-loss support meetings, but with a different goal in mind. He focused on exchanging old eating habits for newer, healthier ones:

- ▶ Instead of drinking 12 gallons of sweet tea every other week, Stoffa now drinks 120 ounces of water every day.
- ▶ When he wants a snack at night, he reaches for apples and pears instead of chips and ice cream.
- ▶ When wife Patricia wants pizza, he joins her but with a twist. "I used to eat six slices of pizza. Now I have a big salad first and then enjoy one slice."

Those changes added up to significant weight loss. "Once I lost 75 pounds, I realized I could lose weight without surgery," Stoffa says.

TODAY HE'S A NEW MAN

Stoffa's new job as a property manager for a home rehab business keeps him moving. He's also back to hunting – walking five miles on each trip – and fishing for smallmouth bass in the Susquehanna River in spring. Dog Sparky now gets three-mile walks.

Overall, he's lost 139 pounds and hopes to lose 20 more. The dramatic weight loss causes people to take a second look. "They say, 'Oh, you got the surgery,' and I reply, 'No, I didn't,' then I give them Molly's card. She changed my life."

–Leah Ingram



Delivering Brie-Anne's **'Awesome Baby'**

A MEDEVAC FLIGHT
ENSURES SPECIALIZED CARE
FOR HAZLETON WOMAN'S
PREMATURE CHILD

EXPECTING? REGISTER FOR LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL- HAZLETON'S PRENATAL CLASSES.

Call 570-501-4200.

Brie-Anne Wentz expected to have a baby shower on Saturday, June 25.

Instead, the 18-year-old found herself being airlifted to Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)–Cedar Crest to have her baby.

It was a first pregnancy for Wentz of Hazleton, and she was between six and seven months along. She'd been treated for a urinary tract infection (UTI) a month earlier, so when she started having pains in her stomach on Friday, she wondered if she'd come down with another UTI. Irregular pains persisted all night – sometimes an hour apart, sometimes two minutes. “The next morning, the pain was too much,” Wentz says. She went to the emergency room at LVH–Hazleton.

“We quickly determined that she was contracting frequently,” says Wentz’s obstetrician/gynecologist, Sheila Hockman, DO, with Lehigh Valley Physician Group (LVPG) Obstetrics and Gynecology–Alliance Drive. After sending off a fetal fibronectin test that would help predict preterm labor, Hockman found that Wentz was already dilated 4 centimeters. “That meant, yikes – things are happening pretty fast here,” Hockman says. The labor and delivery team started an intravenous line of magnesium sulfate that would slow contractions and help protect the fetus.

When the fibronectin test came back, the team decided to send Wentz to Allentown. “We can handle preterm births at Hazleton,” Hockman says. “But LVH–Cedar Crest has neonatology and maternal fetal medicine specialists and a NICU (neonatal intensive care unit). All those resources are just a 17-minute flight away.”

Hockman was concerned that Wentz

could deliver en route and considered using an ambulance. “There’s more room to work in a ground vehicle,” she says. “But a chopper is faster.” Time was crucial, so within an hour of Wentz’s arrival, she was being loaded onto Lehigh Valley Health Network’s MedEvac helicopter.

To Wentz’s surprise, Hockman jumped into the chopper. “Our MedEvac team is really good, but if I were Brie-Anne, I would want somebody familiar along,” Hockman says. “I wanted her to know we would be there to take care of her no matter what happened.”

“It was scary,” Wentz says. “I’d never been in a helicopter before and was worried something might happen to the baby. It was very comforting that Dr. Hockman was on the flight.” Wentz’s boyfriend, Tyler Galade, his mother, his sister and Wentz’s mother followed by car.

In LVH–Cedar Crest’s prenatal unit, the baby received steroid shots to help promote lung development while Wentz received more medication to help control labor. She rested as much as possible over the next two days until her water broke on Monday, June 27, and John Michael Galade came into the world at 9:11 p.m., weighing 3 pounds, 1 ounce. “That’s tiny,” Hockman says. “But fortunately he was beyond the gestation point where some of the most worrisome risks such as intellectual disabilities are of greatest concern.”

John Michael spent one month and one week in the NICU. Mother and father drove to LVH–Cedar Crest twice a week, staying at the nearby Hackerman-Patz house where out-of-town patients’ loved ones

can find convenient and affordable accommodations. “Both the baby and I were definitely well cared for,” Wentz says. “The nurses kept me really well informed about how the baby did that day and called me when I couldn’t drive to the hospital.”

Nurses educated Wentz on feeding the baby and hitting benchmarks such as taking at least 2 ounces at each feeding and eating on his own schedule while getting enough nourishment each day. When he had gained weight and seemed clear of risks such as breathing or eating difficulties, little John Michael went home. Now he sees pediatrician Stephan Glicken, MD, with LVPG Pediatrics–Hazleton Shopping Center.

“He’s doing so good, you wouldn’t know anything had happened,” Wentz says. “He’s happy and smiles all the time. He’s an awesome baby.”

–Richard Laliberte



Two Hearts Together

HOW ONE HAZLETON COUPLE CRUSHED IT IN CARDIAC REHAB

Hazleton resident Jack Klapac, 71, has no problem telling you that he has a family history of heart disease. He had his first stents placed in 2000 and began seeing LVPG Cardiology–Vine Street cardiologist Thomas Ciotola, MD, in 2007. “He takes wonderful care of himself, but despite this, he has cardiac problems,” Ciotola says.

Fast forward to December 2015. During a routine cardiology visit, Jack admitted he was having chest discomfort. His wife, Karen, 68, was with him at this appointment. “Mrs. Klapac told me she was worried about him having this discomfort all of a sudden,” Ciotola says. He referred Jack for a cardiac catheterization, which revealed a small blockage in a coronary artery. When Jack experienced chest pain during a follow-up stress test, the doctors decided bypass surgery was the best course of action.

Ironically, at the same time they were scheduling Jack’s bypass surgery, Karen started experiencing heart issues of her own, including shortness of breath and tightness in her chest. She also has a family history of coronary disease. After a nuclear stress test proved inconclusive, she too was referred for cardiac catheterization. It turns out, Karen needed stents.

Karen had her stent surgery on February 1, 2016, and Jack had bypass surgery on May 5, 2016, at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest. Jeffrey Snyder, MD, of LVPG Cardiology–1250 Cedar Crest performed both surgeries.

REHAB FOR TWO

Like all cardiology patients, the Klapacs were referred to cardiac rehabilitation to recover – 36 sessions over 12 weeks. Unlike most patients, they embarked on rehab together. They started in July 2016, going Monday, Wednesday and Friday to the Health & Wellness Center at Hazleton, where they worked with exercise physiologist Corinne Stone.

Stone explains that, unlike orthopedic rehab that’s focused on rebuilding strength after an injury, cardiac rehab goes much further. “We cover 15 to 16 educational topics before they graduate from cardiac rehab,” Stone says. “We bring in dietitians, we talk about the benefits of exercise for both cholesterol and stress management, we give them tips on dining out, and more.”

“I’m very proud of the staff here,” says Barb Hunsinger, RN, Director, Cardiology Services. “Corinne goes through every single piece of information she can find for patients and helps them develop a long-term plan.”

The Klapacs are model students, Stone says. “Some patients drop out of cardiac rehab after only a week or two. These two don’t smoke, they manage their stress, they are aware of their cholesterol, they eat a heart-healthy diet, they take their medications and they continue to exercise,” she says.

REHAB’S EXTRA BENEFIT

Ciotola says that cardiac rehab can help slow progression of coronary disease for those with a family history. “Some people, no matter what they do, will still develop problems,” he says. “But I always feel that people who work on this do better than the people who don’t do anything.” And people who can work with a partner are likely to do even better, like the Klapacs.

Even though they’ve graduated from cardiac rehab, the couple continues to work out at the Health & Wellness Center fitness center three times a week, where they walk on the treadmill or ride the recumbent bike. On the other days they walk for an hour around their neighborhood or at the local high school track. And though they eat heart healthy, they do allow for the occasional small splurge, Karen says. “After eating out recently, we shared a little cup of ice cream.”

–Leah Ingram



Corinne Stone
Exercise Physiology



Thomas Ciotola, MD
Cardiology



Jeffrey Snyder, MD
Cardiology

**LEARN MORE
ABOUT CARDIAC
REHAB AND OTHER
SERVICES OFFERED
AT THE HEALTH &
WELLNESS CENTER
AT HAZLETON.**

Visit LVHN.org/HWC.

Lehigh Valley Hospital– Hazleton’s Level IV Trauma Center

PROVIDES THE CARE YOU NEED FASTER

Whether it’s a high-speed motor vehicle accident or a broken ankle that brings you to the emergency department, Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)–Hazleton’s Level IV Trauma Center offers the continuum of care for patients with potential serious injuries.

The center is a Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation® (PTSF®) accredited Level IV Trauma Center. As such, LVH–Hazleton has resources at the ready to provide optimal care and reduce the likelihood of death or disability to injured patients. In August 2016, the PTSF reaccredited LVH–Hazleton as a Level IV Trauma Center for the next three years. It is the only trauma center in lower Luzerne County.

The Level IV designation was four years in the making and required substantial training throughout the hospital, along with new personnel dedicated to trauma care and stringent quality-of-care reviews. “Achieving this recognition means people in our region can be assured we’re working for the best outcomes for patients right here in Hazleton, and we have immediate access to higher-level care,” says Gary Bonfante, DO, Medical Director, Emergency Medicine, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hazleton.

TRAINING, PREPARING, APPRAISING

Training encompasses all levels of staff: All emergency room (ER) providers take Advanced Trauma Life Support® courses, which ensures the proper evaluation of a trauma patient. Nurses take the Trauma Nurse Course, a three-day training focused strictly on trauma. And each year, all ER staff must complete eight hours of continuing education courses with a trauma focus, as well as demonstrate mandatory competencies.

“We also have a very large multi-disciplinary performance improvement meeting each month that involves the directors/managers from multiple departments including orthopedic and ER providers, hospitalists, and ancillary departments,” says Trauma Program Coordinator Alexandra Malenka, RN, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hazleton. The group looks at metrics and conducts case reviews to evaluate their progress. “What are we doing well? Where can we improve? This involves a lot of education and involvement from all of these people,” Malenka says.

The center’s relationships with EMS (Emergency Medical Service) and MedEvac providers are essential to the success of the program. Together with the hospital, multiple protocols have been developed to ensure the most



critically ill patients are transported rapidly but safely. For instance, since bad weather may ground the MedEvac helicopter, the protocol states that the flight crew can accompany the EMS ground crew to help transfer patients who need critical care transportation.

KNOWING WHEN TO TRANSFER

Bonfante adds that his medical team can recognize when a patient may require advance resources at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Cedar Crest. The providers



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EMERGENCY ROOM
AND OTHER SERVICES
AT LEHIGH VALLEY
HOSPITAL—HAZLETON.**

Visit LVHN.org/Hazleton.

and nurses have the training to make those very important decisions. “The realities of medicine are that not every facility is going to have a neurosurgeon or a burn unit or other types of unique procedural care. To think otherwise is not realistic. We want to keep patients here and close to home when we can. We also want to offer specialized care when they need it,” Bonfante says.

He is proud of the lives that have been saved by the center’s team over the last year alone. “Were many of these

transferred? Absolutely. Would they have survived had they had to travel farther for their initial and immediate care at another center? Maybe not. I think those patients and their families are pretty happy we are here and were able to provide those critical, time-sensitive services and get them to the next stage of their care. Seeing smiling faces months later is a pretty cool reward for what we do,” Bonfante says.

—Leslie Feldman



Gary Bonfante, DO
Emergency Medicine



Alexandra Malenka, RN
Trauma

New Year, New You, Here's How

Many people set a New Year's resolution but don't follow through.

Thanks to a variety of programs offered by Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN), there are better and easier ways to stay committed to your goals.

Here are six resolutions LVHN can help you keep.

1 GET A CHECKUP.

Do you have a relationship with a primary care provider (PCP)? If you don't have a PCP, it's time to get one. Here's why. A PCP is your personal go-to for all your health care needs, whether you are well or sick. You can choose a PCP who specializes in family medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, geriatrics or pediatrics (for children).

LVHN CAN HELP:

Visit LVHN.org/findadoc to find the perfect provider for you. You can search for a doctor by name (if you have someone in mind), practice, city and zip code.



2

GET FIT.

Getting in shape or establishing a fitness routine is a common, but challenging, resolution. Regular

exercise is an essential part of good health. When done under the supervision of a personal trainer, exercise can help you recover from an injury or meet your fitness goals.

LVHN CAN HELP: Join the fitness center at the Health & Wellness Center at Hazleton. The center offers cardiovascular and strength training, and group fitness classes like spinning, yoga and Piloxing® – a Pilates-boxing combo. Visit LVHN.org/hazletonfitness.

3

ENJOY A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.

Proper sleep is important for your

overall health. Conditions such as obstructive sleep apnea, insomnia and restless leg syndrome can prevent you from getting enough sleep. Not only do you feel tired, but lack of restorative sleep can lead to health problems such as weight gain, high blood pressure, depression and a weakened immune system.

LVHN CAN HELP: Specialists at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hazleton Sleep Disorder Center use advanced technology to diagnose your condition and provide effective treatment. The center features a comfortable, relaxing setting for adult in-lab testing and home sleep studies. To learn more, call **570-501-1334**.

4

LOSE WEIGHT.

Dropping pounds may lower your risk for diabetes,

high blood pressure, sleep apnea, high cholesterol and other serious health conditions. As an added bonus, you may feel healthier and have a chance to enjoy activities that excess weight may have hindered. Each person's weight-loss journey is unique. Some people can achieve results with diet and exercise. Others need help and supervision from a weight-loss specialist. For some people, weight-loss surgery is the best option.

LVHN CAN HELP: The staff at LVPG Surgery–Health & Wellness Center Weight Management Program will design the weight-loss program that's right for you. They'll guide you through lifestyle changes, nutritional choices and how to maintain your weight after you reach your goal, whether it's achieved with or without surgery. Learn more at LVHN.org/HYbariatrics.

5

MANAGE STRESS.

Are you constantly worried? Do you feel like there aren't enough

hours in a day? If so, you're under a lot of stress. Some stress is normal, but too much stress is a problem. The body responds to stress through very intense physiological reactions that can impact your health.

LVHN CAN HELP: When excessive worry or stress consumes you, it is time to speak with your primary care provider. Your primary care provider can assess what is happening and offer guidance to services or treatments. If you need a provider, visit LVHN.org/findadoc.

6

NIX NICOTINE.

When you stop smoking or using tobacco products, you significantly improve your health and lower

your risk for serious health conditions. Plus, you'll keep some extra money in your pocket.

LVHN CAN HELP: The Tobacco Treatment Program provides private, confidential counseling over-the-phone or face-to-face. Interested in quitting? Call **610-402-CARE**.

Commit to a healthier year.

Visit LVHN.org/events or call **570-501-4LVH** to learn more about upcoming events, classes and support groups that can help you achieve your resolution.

–Ashley Scheffler

Lehigh Valley Hospital–Hazleton

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Call 570-501-4LVH or visit LVHN.org/HYmountaintop to make an appointment.