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FIND A DOCTOR
LVHN.org/findadoc

GET YOUR PRACTICE’S NEW NAME
LVHN.org/lvpg

READ THIS ISSUE of Healthy You magazine online – and read extra stories – at LVHN.org/healthyyou.
Introducing Epic

NEW ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD TELLS YOUR HEALTH STORY

The next time you visit your Lehigh Valley Physician Group (LVPG) provider, you will have your first encounter with Epic, Lehigh Valley Health Network’s (LVHN) and LVPG’s new electronic medical record (EMR) system. Epic is nearly everywhere – it’s used by more than half of the U.S. population – and it will transform how your care is managed and how you interact with your personal health information.

The first Epic benefit you will experience is having your condition, treatment and testing information accessible at every point in your care. LVHN obstetrician/gynecologist Michael Sheinberg, MD, has spent the last two years co-leading the team that’s bringing Epic to LVHN, and says Epic will streamline the information pathway.

“Because Epic spans the entire health care spectrum – from primary care offices to diagnostic tests to inpatient admissions – your patient story is woven into an accurate picture of a personal health record,” he says. “Our doctors and other providers, whether at an LVPG practice or in one of our hospitals, will see the full scope of your health and treatment.”

When You’ll See Epic

Now = Epic and MyLVHN active at LVPG and LVHN ambulatory sites
Aug. 1 = Epic active at Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)–Cedar Crest, LVH–17th Street, LVH–Muhlenberg and LVHN–Tilghman

Epic Numbers

180 million = Epic patient records in U.S.
1.6 million = LVHN patients
13,000 = LVHN colleagues
2 = You + your health care provider
1 = Your personal medical record on MyLVHN

IT’S YOUR STORY

With Epic, you and your providers will have improved access to your personal medical story. “Epic provides for a robust patient portal (website) called MyLVHN where you can accurately access your chart and interact with your health care teams,” Sheinberg says. When you activate your MyLVHN account, you will be able to see and manage the story of your own health.

WITH MyLVHN YOU CAN:

- Review appointment summaries
- See medication lists
- Print immunization histories
- Read test results
- Request prescription refills
- Send a secure message to your provider’s team

Parents and caregivers also will be able to access their child’s or loved one’s MyLVHN account, so they can help manage their care too. “Based on the experiences of other Epic-connected hospitals, patients begin to engage with their health team and their own care,” Sheinberg says. “As a doctor, I envision my patients interacting with their information, sending us questions and taking a more active role in their health and wellness. MyLVHN will empower patients to know and influence their own health story.”

–Jenn Fisher
Express CARE or ER?

When you have a health care need, your primary care physician is your first contact. Yet what do you do if it’s after hours? Lehigh Valley Health Network offers 10 ExpressCARE locations for common illnesses and minor injuries, open 365 days a year, along with emergency room care at our hospitals. If it’s after hours, you can use this chart to help you decide where to get the right care. Remember, in case of emergency (symptoms of a heart attack or stroke, for example), call 911 immediately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GO TO</th>
<th>CONDITION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Allergies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Animal bites (rabies vaccine at ER only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Back pain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Broken bone (open wound)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Broken bone (no open wound)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Bronchitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Chest pains (severe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Chest pains (from cold or bronchitis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Cuts (deep)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Cuts (minor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Cough, sore throat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Coughing up blood</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Ear pain</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Eye swelling, irritation</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Flu</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Flu shot</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Head injury</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Loss of consciousness</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Minor fever, colds</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Minor headache</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Nausea</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Poison ivy</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Rashes</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Severe abdominal pains</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Severe shortness of breath</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Sinusitis</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Sprains, strains</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Stroke signs (numbness, speech slurring, vision changes)</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Suicidal feelings</td>
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<td>Express</td>
<td>Wounds (minor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Wounds that won’t stop bleeding</td>
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Get Health Insurance

If you are uninsured or under-insured – or know someone who is – Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) can help you get the quality, affordable health care coverage you deserve through Healthy PA. Healthy PA is a new state plan that reforms Medicaid and creates a new private coverage option (PCO) for more than 600,000 eligible Pennsylvanians between the ages of 21 and 64. Many people who previously did not qualify for Medicaid may now qualify for Healthy PA.

LVHN is educating people about Healthy PA and helping them sign up. To learn more about Healthy PA:

- Visit healthypa.com.
- Come to the Mark J. Young Community Health and Wellness Center at Lehigh Valley Hospital–17th Street. Take the blue elevator to floor 1 and follow the signs.
- Call 610-402-CARE.
TOP 5 WAYS TO Spring Forward

Warmer weather is coming... we promise. Here are five ways LVHN can help you ring in the spring season in a most healthy fashion. To learn more about any of the items listed below, call 610-402-CARE.

1. TAKE A WALK.
   Soak up the spring sunshine and join friends at free Get Out! Lehigh Valley walks in Lower Nazareth Township, Emmaus and Quakertown.
   See page 21.

2. GET YOUR HEART IN SHAPE.
   Learn about your heart and meet others at two free events: Understanding AFib (April 27) and Women and Heart Disease (May 12).
   See page 21.

3. BREATHE EASIER.
   Quit smoking today. Start with a free session on April 9 offering techniques that really work.
   See page 21.

4. SHED SOME POUNDS.
   Interested in learning more about weight-loss surgery? Attend free sessions in March, April and May.
   See page 23.

5. CATCH A HOCKEY GAME.
   It’s not too late to see live hockey. Buy tickets to the April 14 Lehigh Valley Phantoms game and enjoy a free health fair courtesy of LVHN.
   See page 21.

Get Your Practice’s New Name

To make it easier for you to identify health care providers affiliated with Lehigh Valley Physician Group (LVPG), we have introduced a new naming convention for all LVPG practices. You’ll see the new practice names throughout this issue of Healthy You. For a full list of all LVPG practices by both old and new name, visit LVHN.org/lvpg or call 610-402-CARE.
The Gift
She’ll Never Forget

NEW KIDNEY MAKES POTTS TOWN WOMAN’S HOLIDAY
This past holiday season, Cherie Hessler received the best gift ever. Her longtime friend and co-worker Connie Harris gave Hessler her left kidney.

Diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease in 2013 at age 36, Hessler of Pottstown was the same age at which her mother learned she had the condition 26 years earlier. By November 2013, Hessler’s kidneys had failed, and she started nightly home peritoneal dialysis treatments to cleanse her blood.

“Cherie had told me what her mother had gone through to stay alive,” says Harris, 47, of North Philadelphia. “I knew she suffered, and I wanted to give Cherie a kidney to improve her quality of life.”

Hessler’s mother battled the disease from the time Cherie was age 11. Hemodialysis left her with bone-deep exhaustion and frequent nausea. Her first kidney transplant from a Philadelphia hospital lasted only 18 days. She received a second kidney in 1995, becoming Lehigh Valley Health Network’s (LVHN) 97th transplant patient. She died in 2009 from complications of a heart infection.

Harris and Denise Partlow, another close friend of Hessler’s, wanted to be donors and were tested last April. Partlow wasn’t a match, but Harris was and soon began the long process of becoming Hessler’s donor, not revealing the news to her until June.

“I wasn’t looking for a donor,” Hessler says. Though time-consuming, the dialysis regimen wasn’t taxing to her like the hemodialysis treatments her mother had.

When Hessler learned about Harris’ intention, she tried to talk her out of it. But Harris insisted. “I’m giving you a kidney,” she told her firmly.

Two weeks before the transplant, Harris and her sisters, who are African-American, took Hessler out for dinner and karaoke. “We decided she needed to taste ‘soul food,’ because she’ll probably crave it when she has my kidney,” Harris says. “It’s part of her DNA now.”

During the four-hour operation last Nov. 5, LVHN transplant surgeon Lynsey Biondi, MD, with LVPG–Transplant Surgery, removed Harris’ kidney, which then was inserted into Hessler by Biondi’s colleague, Michael Moritz, MD. It was LVHN’s 1,000th transplant surgery and the 241st “living donor” transplant performed in the program’s 23-year history.

“Living kidney donation is an ideal solution to the inadequate supply of deceased donor organs,” Moritz says. “The progress in small-incision technology and advances in anti-rejection medications enable transplant programs and living donors – both related and not to their recipients – to improve more lives than ever.” The long-term benefits continue to evolve; at LVHN, one-year success exceeds 95 percent.

To commemorate the gift, Hessler bought matching donor-awareness rings for Harris and herself. They both wear the silver bands topped with tiny green ribbons as a reminder of their bond.

“I was blessed by Connie’s generosity,” Hessler says. “I could never repay her.”

“I’m not looking for that,” Harris says. “It’s my Christmas present to a good friend.”

–Rob Stevens
I HAVE HEART DISEASE. WHAT’S THE BEST CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING DRUG FOR ME?

A: Statins should be your first choice for managing cholesterol if you have known heart disease (or if you’re at high risk). The American Heart Association (AHA) and the American College of Cardiology published new guidelines in 2013 recommending that anyone who has had a heart attack, stroke or other cardiovascular problem (as well as people at risk for developing heart disease) may benefit from taking a statin drug, which blocks cholesterol production in the liver.

At this year’s AHA Annual Meeting, researchers presented a new study showing heart-disease patients may receive additional benefit from lowering their low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or “bad” cholesterol) even further by combining a statin with ezetemibe (Zetia), a drug that prevents cholesterol from being absorbed in the small intestine. Patients on the combination therapy had an average LDL of 53 milligrams/deciliter versus 70 mg/dL for those taking a statin alone, and their risk for serious heart disease-related events dropped significantly. Bottom line: Statin treatment is important to lower your cholesterol if you have heart disease, and even lower LDL levels are better.

DOES A COMBINATION THERAPY CREATE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

A: A small percentage of patients on the statin/Zetia combination had liver function problems, but so did a similar percentage of statin-only patients. Overall, the combination therapy (like statins alone) is safe.

IF I DON’T HAVE HEART DISEASE, WOULD I STILL BENEFIT FROM COMBINATION THERAPY?

A: We don’t know, because only heart-disease patients were studied. Further research is needed. However, the cholesterol guidelines recommend statins for three types of at-risk patients in addition to those with known heart disease – patients with LDL above 190 mg/dL, those with type 2 diabetes, and those over age 40 with risk factors that raise their risk for developing heart disease within 10 years.

IF I HAVE HEART DISEASE AND MY LDL IS ALREADY LOW, DO I STILL NEED ZETIA?

A: If you have heart disease and your LDL on a statin is in the 50s without Zetia, then you don’t need it. However, if you take a statin and your LDL is above that, you may benefit from taking a higher dose of a statin or adding Zetia.

Next Step

LEARN MORE ABOUT MANAGING CHOLESTEROL. Visit LVHN.org/high-cholesterol or call 610-402-CARE.
A fever is your body’s natural way of fighting infection and inflammation. It’s also an important clue that can help your doctor diagnose an underlying illness. That’s why I’m surprised at the number of adults who do not own a thermometer or are unsure how to use one. If you have questions, keep these facts in mind:

**WHICH THERMOMETER IS BEST?**
There are four types of thermometers: ear, skin, mouth and rectum. I prefer mouth (oral) thermometers because they are the most accurate. (Rectal thermometers also are highly accurate but not preferred by most adults.) Traditional oral thermometers and the newer digital versions are equally effective and trustworthy.

**WHEN TO TAKE?**
The time of day does not matter. If you are experiencing symptoms such as excessive warmth, chills or achiness, it’s a good idea to take your temperature. Never take an oral temperature immediately after eating or drinking a hot or cold liquid. For accurate results, wait at least 20-30 minutes. Bathing in hot water and vigorous exercise also may affect temperature, so it’s best to wait after those activities as well.

**WHAT’S NORMAL?**
The commonly accepted “normal” body temperature is 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperature can vary slightly during the day and from one day to the next, but once it reaches 100.6 degrees or higher, it’s considered a fever. Keep in mind certain medications and conditions may lower body temperature and potentially mask fever. Ask your primary care provider if this applies to you so you can learn the appropriate steps to take when you experience fever symptoms.

**WHAT IF IT’S ELEVATED?**
If your temperature is mildly elevated, do nothing. Most fevers go away by themselves in a few days. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be used to treat your pain or discomfort, but your temperature does not need to be brought to normal.

**WHEN SHOULD I SEEK TREATMENT?**
If your temperature is over 102.5 degrees for more than a day, call your primary care provider. If it rises to 104 degrees or greater, seek immediate medical attention.
ABCs of Melanoma Prevention

To find melanoma, look for unusual moles with A-B-C-D-E in mind:

1. **Asymmetrical:** Two halves of a mole look different.
2. **Borders:** Edges look rough or uneven.
3. **Color:** A mole has multiple hues or shades.
4. **Diameter:** A mole is bigger than a pencil eraser.
5. **Evolving:** Moles change in size, shape, color or feeling.
No time is good for a cancer diagnosis. But the timing was especially jarring for Rebecca Schlegel of Easton. She was 26 in late 2012, and worked two jobs to support herself and her two daughters, then ages 5 and 2.

That’s why she didn’t think much about the hard-to-see moles growing behind one ear – until she snagged one with a zipper while pulling on a sweater. “It started bleeding all over,” Schlegel says. “I decided I should get those lumps removed.”

The lumps weren’t moles but melanoma, a type of skin cancer that can spread fast to other organs. A chest X-ray and MRI revealed areas of concern, so local doctors referred Schlegel to Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN). Further testing determined she had a tumor in her brain, three cancerous growths in her left lung and two in her liver.

More bad news followed. “Her melanoma had a mutation called BRAF,” says LVHN hematologist oncologist Suresh Nair, MD, with LVPG Hematology Oncology–1240 Cedar Crest. “BRAF is an aggressive gene in stage 4 melanoma. Most who have it survive less than a year.” But what actually happened to Schlegel defied conventional expectations and tapped one of the most exciting recent developments in all of cancer medicine.

FIRST STEPS
While Schlegel’s brain tumor could be surgically removed, the multiple growths indicated her cancer had entered her blood. She would need body-wide, systemic treatment to prevent her cancer from spreading further.

“This was all completely unexpected,” Schlegel says. “Being young with no risk factors, I felt, ‘Why me?’”

Schlegel quickly consulted with LVHN neurosurgeon Mei Wong, MD, with LVPG Neurosurgery–1250 Cedar Crest, who removed most of the brain growth. Such procedures are especially delicate. “In oncology, surgeons want to remove tumors with a margin of normal tissue to get every last cancer cell,” says LVHN radiation oncologist Alyson McIntosh, MD, with Allentown Radiation Oncology Specialists. “In the brain we don’t have that luxury; a majority of the brain is critical for normal function.”

McIntosh and Wong followed up with Gamma Knife® radiosurgery, in which focused beams of radiation precisely treat small areas with little damage to surrounding tissue. “We eradicate residual tumor cells to reduce the chances for recurrence,” McIntosh says.

GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH
While the timing of Schlegel’s tumor couldn’t have seemed worse, it couldn’t have been better in one respect. That’s because LVHN became one of only 10 sites nationwide selected for a clinical trial for a drug called anti-PD-1 prior to FDA approval. It removes molecular brakes that normally prevent the immune system from attacking cancer cells.

The trial paired anti-PD-1 with a similar drug called ipilimumab. Each drug, used consecutively, removes a different brake on the immune system and boosts the other drug’s impact. “This is probably the biggest-ever breakthrough for advanced-stage melanoma,” Nair says.

Schlegel, being young and otherwise healthy with few options to save her life, was a perfect candidate. She started treatment in summer 2013. “By the holidays, I was in 100 percent remission,” she says. “I was so excited I felt like screaming.”

Several months later, her young daughters accompanied her to a checkup for the first time. “It was very emotional,” Nair says. “Seeing this family together brought home the importance of having access to the latest treatments and having the tremendous teamwork necessary to offer them to our community.”

Nair continues to monitor Schlegel as part of the trial, and she’s now taking a newly available FDA-approved version of anti-PD-1. “Hearing I was in remission was a huge gift,” she says. “It’s wonderful to think that my kids and I can put cancer behind us.”

—Richard Laliberte
No More Restless Nights

SLEEP STUDY, CPAP THERAPY GIVE BANGOR TEEN MORE ENERGY

Relaxation techniques. Over-the-counter sleep aids. Christina Lessig tried them all. Yet last year the Bangor teenager still slept restlessly and struggled to stay awake during the day. “I was falling behind in school,” says Lessig, then a high school junior.

So her family doctor recommended a sleep study at the Health Center at Bethlehem Township. There, sleep technicians connected Lessig to electrodes and sensors to measure what happened while she slept. “They do the study in what feels a little like a hotel room, and then they hook you up to the equipment,” Lessig says. “It felt a little strange at first, and I wondered how I’d sleep at all, but everyone there relaxed me.”

After the study, pediatric sleep specialist and pulmonologist Dharmeshkumar Suratwala, MD, who’s affiliated with Children’s Hospital at Lehigh Valley Hospital, reviewed the results and determined Lessig had obstructive sleep apnea hypopnea syndrome (OSAHS). People with OSAHS have repetitive episodes of complete or partial obstruction of the upper airway during sleep. “These can lead to sleep disruption, restless sleep, episodes of oxygen desaturation and buildup of carbon dioxide,” Suratwala says.

The classic symptoms include snoring, restless sleep, difficulty waking up in the morning, excessive daytime sleepiness, lack of energy, poor attention span, academic difficulties and mood swings among others. Another risk factor is being overweight. “Obesity usually decreases the size and/or increases the upper airway collapsibility, leading to recurrent episodes of upper airway narrowing during sleep,” Suratwala says. Based on the findings of a population-based study, the risk for sleep-related breathing disorder increases by four- to fivefold in children with obesity.

To manage her OSAHS, Lessig received a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) mask. It’s connected to a CPAP machine that uses a flow of air pressure to keep the upper airway open during sleep. “The mask takes some getting used to, but now I’m comfortable with it,” Lessig says. “I have more energy, and I’m getting better grades in school.”

While the CPAP helps, Lessig continues to follow up with Suratwala and is focused on a new goal – losing enough weight so she no longer needs the CPAP. “My goal is to lose 100 pounds,” she says. “Eventually, I plan on joining the military, and I need to be off the CPAP by then.”

—Ted Williams

Next Steps

LEARN HOW A DOLL HELPS YOUNG CHILDREN DURING SLEEP STUDIES. Read the story at LVHN.org/news or call 610-402-CARE.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SLEEP DISORDERS CENTER at LVHN.org/sleep.
Advances in Children’s Surgery

MINIMALLY INVASIVE TECHNIQUES OFFER NEW OPTIONS

You’ve heard about minimally invasive (smaller-scar) surgery in adults for years. Such procedures are proven to reduce scarring, decrease infection rates, quicken recovery time and lessen post-surgery pain. Yet for children, such surgical options weren’t available until recently.

“Adapting minimally invasive techniques to children – particularly infants and smaller children – has been a challenge,” says pediatric surgeon Marybeth Browne, MD, with LVPG–Pediatric Surgery, affiliated with Children’s Hospital at Lehigh Valley Hospital.

The reason? Because children are much smaller in size, specialized instruments for adult minimally invasive surgery – such as the ports used in robotic surgery – leave a scar that is small in an adult but large in a child, eliminating the advantage of minimally invasive surgery.

RECENT ADVANCES
Now, however, the available instruments used in minimally invasive surgery have become even smaller. This means children now may benefit from smaller-scar procedures. Such surgeries are available if your child has:

- A variety of conditions of the chest (lung and esophageal problems or chest wall abnormalities)
- A variety of conditions of the abdomen (stomach, intestine, spleen, kidney or liver)

“Minimally invasive surgery represents an advancement in pediatric care that minimizes scarring and postoperative pain,” says Browne, an Allentown native and Salisbury High School graduate. “This is an evolving specialty. More pediatric surgeons are being trained in and becoming more comfortable with laparoscopic techniques.”

Browne recently returned to the Lehigh Valley after spending 14 years practicing and teaching pediatric surgery – including minimally invasive procedures – in the Chicago area.

“Having minimally invasive techniques available at Children’s Hospital at Lehigh Valley Hospital means parents and children don’t have to travel to Philadelphia or another part of the state for advanced pediatric care,” Browne says. “We can now perform many pediatric procedures minimally invasively. Our ultimate focus is doing what’s safest for your child while producing the best results.”

–Ted Williams

Smaller scars in surgery mean quicker recovery for children. LVHN surgeons have performed more than 26,000 pediatric surgeries over the past decade.
Help for a Failing Heart

LVAD HELPS LENNY KASABA, TAKE CONTROL OF HIS LIFE

Nauman Islam, MD
Cardiology
Watch his video at LVHN.org/Islam.

Timothy Misselbeck, MD
Cardiothoracic surgery
Watch his video at LVHN.org/Misselbeck.
During his 40-year career driving tractor trailers, Lenny Kasaba logged more than 3 million miles. But at age 70, he could only take three steps before becoming short of breath. It was frustrating for Kasaba, who enjoyed using heavy equipment to care for his large property in Plains Township, Luzerne County. “I used to be able to push a loaded wheelbarrow 400 feet, but it got to the point where I couldn’t push it at all,” he says.

The cause of Kasaba’s fatigue: heart failure. It’s a condition in which the heart muscle becomes weak, inhibiting its ability to pump oxygen-rich blood throughout the body. High blood pressure, heart valve or artery disease, or a previous heart attack can lead to heart failure. The cause of Kasaba’s condition was a viral infection that attacked his heart muscle and caused it to weaken over many years.

To determine how well a heart is pumping, physicians monitor ejection fraction, a measurement of how much blood is ejected out of the heart’s pumping chamber (left ventricle) with each contraction. “A normal ejection fraction is at least 55, which means 55 percent of the blood in the left ventricle is ejected out with each heartbeat,” says Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) cardiologist Nauman Islam, MD, with LVPG Cardiology–1250 Cedar Crest. “Lenny’s ejection fraction was less than 20, which is very severely reduced.”

LIFESAVING TREATMENT
Kasaba had two options. He could undergo a heart transplant, but didn’t want to face the risks. At the recommendation of his electrophysiologist Gregory Altemose, MD, he instead chose to get a left ventricular assist device (LVAD). “It’s a mechanical pump that is implanted to help a failing heart effectively pump blood throughout the body,” says Kasaba’s cardiothoracic surgeon, Timothy Misselbeck, MD, with LVPG Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery–1250 Cedar Crest. LVHN is the first in the region to provide this innovative treatment.

During an open-heart surgical procedure, surgeons connect one end of a tube to the bottom of the left ventricle and the other end to the aorta, the artery that delivers blood throughout the body. The LVAD pump, which sits in the middle of the tube, is placed beneath the patient’s skin. A battery and controller are contained in a pouch that the patient wears. Patients who receive LVAD must have it for the rest of their lives.

LIVING LONGER WITH LVAD
For many people with advanced heart failure who once had few treatment options, LVAD prolongs life and improves quality of life. “Nearly 70 percent of patients who receive LVAD are surviving two years or more,” Islam says. “The longest-surviving LVAD recipient is currently at nine years.”

BACK ON THE BACKHOE
Less than a year after receiving LVAD, Kasaba is able to operate his machinery and do everything he used to do. His energy and enthusiasm, as well as his overall medical condition, made him a good candidate for LVAD. “It’s an excellent treatment for people who want to do more, but can’t,” Islam says.

Two times daily, Kasaba monitors his vital signs and the LVAD equipment in his pouch, logging the data on its displays and ensuring its batteries are charged. “It’s instinct; I don’t even think about it,” he says. Kasaba, now 71, also voluntarily shares his experience with other people considering LVAD. “They’re worried,” he says. “I can show them I’ve been given a new life.”

–Rick Martuscelli

Heart failure symptoms
► Shortness of breath during rest, exercise or while lying flat
► Weight gain
► Visible swelling of the legs and ankles due to a buildup of fluid
► Occasional swelling of the abdomen
► Fatigue and weakness
► Loss of appetite
► Nausea
► Abdominal pain
► Persistent cough

Next Steps
WATCH A VIDEO about a woman given a second chance with LVAD. Visit LVHN.org/lvad.

LEARN MORE ABOUT CARE FOR HEART FAILURE at LVHN.org/heart or call 610-402-CARE.
An active 23-year-old preschool teacher, Debbie Faler seemed too young to have cancer. But when she noticed a lump in her groin, she got it checked out. It led to a sobering diagnosis – stage 3A Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

“It typically affects young people in their 20s and 30s,” says Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) hematologist oncologist Adam Kotkiewicz, DO, with LVPG Hematology Oncology–Muhlenberg. “It’s life-changing, but even in stage 4 it can be cured with appropriate treatment.”

Faler, who lives in Cresco, Monroe County, chose to get her cancer care 50 miles away, at Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)–Muhlenberg’s cancer center. “I had a really good experience at LVHN with gallbladder surgery six months earlier,” Faler says. “So I asked my gallbladder surgeon for a recommendation, and he told me about Dr. Kotkiewicz.”

After surgical oncologist Rohit Sharma, MD, with LVPG Surgical Oncology, confirmed Faler’s cancer through a lymph node biopsy last February, Kotkiewicz prescribed 12 chemotherapy treatments at LVH–Muhlenberg. But after her first treatment, Faler learned she could receive chemotherapy at LVHN’s then brand-new Health Center at Bangor – 25 miles closer to her home. “Her oncology medical records are all part of LVHN’s electronic medical record, so the oncologist can access the same information from any of our sites,” says hematologist oncologist Savitri Skandan, MD, who directed Faler’s chemotherapy in Bangor.

A PET scan after her second cycle of chemotherapy treatment brought Faler good news – the cancer was gone. She completed her treatments in Bangor. On days when she felt well between treatments, Faler attended concerts and accompanied her former students on field trips.

As Faler prepared for her final treatment last July, her family planned a surprise. Her mother, Deborah, and sister, Julie, searched gift shops throughout the Poconos and found a steel bell that they donated to the Health Center at Bangor. It’s now the center’s “Finality Bell.” On the last day of a person’s treatment, the bell is rung three times – once for love, once for hope and once for courage.

“It’s so important, like getting your diploma at graduation,” Deborah Faler says.

As Debbie Faler celebrated her “graduation” late last July, she rang the bell three times while tears flowed down her face. Then came a smile, followed by one more ring. “That’s for all who can’t,” she says.

–Sheila Caballero
An active 38-year-old woman and yoga teacher, Rebecca deJesús has lived with severe health issues. Since high school she’s had Crohn’s disease – an inflammatory condition of the intestinal tract.

“Crohn’s can lead to many health problems, including chronic diarrhea, bowel obstructions, fever, fatigue, pain, bleeding, anemia and weight loss,” says Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) hematologist oncologist William Scialla, DO, with LVPG Hematology Oncology. Currently, Scialla manages deJesús’ care for anemia along with anticoagulation therapy to prevent blood clots that can cause deep vein thrombosis and/or pulmonary emboli.

In addition, deJesús, of Bethlehem, struggles with a spinal joint disease (ankylosing spondylitis) and endometriosis, a painful disorder in which endometrial tissue grows outside the uterus. As a result, she’s had countless hospitalizations and multiple surgeries. “I couldn’t make plans because my illnesses are very unpredictable,” she says.

LIFESAVING SURGERY
In 2012, deJesús chose to have ostomy surgery. During the procedure, an opening (stoma) is made in the abdomen, and the small intestine is connected to a plastic, odor-free pouch that collects waste outside the body. “It was a tough decision,” she says. “But it saved my life.”

For many patients today, newer anti-inflammatory medicines such as adalimumab (Humira) and infliximab (Remicade) can powerfully reverse the course of Crohn’s. “I’ve seen patients on the verge of surgery, and a year later their colon is healed,” says LVHN gastroenterologist Paola Blanco, MD, with Eastern Pennsylvania Gastroenterology and Liver Specialists, PC.

In contrast, the seriousness of deJesús’ condition led to her ostomy. While many people are concerned an ostomy will force them to stop their favorite activities, deJesús is living proof that’s not true. “After an ostomy people can exercise, wear tight-fitting clothing, and have a normal and healthy life,” says Blanco.

deJesús credits the ostomy and her LVHN doctors for getting her life back. “I used to take several medications,” she says. “Now I give myself a Humira injection once every two weeks.”

Last summer, she and her husband went on vacation. “We swam in the ocean, went fly-fishing and hiked,” she says. She also became a yoga teacher, an accomplishment of which she’s quite proud. “My goal is to show other ostomy patients they can live active lives and still have a lot of fun,” she says.

—Alisa Bowman
Evan Bevan knew he’d need hip replacement surgery someday, but he kept putting it off. “I couldn’t fathom trading a piece of my body in exchange for a piece of metal,” says the 63-year-old New York City commuter bus driver.

Periodic cortisone injections relieved the pain in his left hip for several years. “When that relief only lasted a week, I knew it was time,” says Bevan, a recreational golfer from Bethlehem who began leaning on his 8-iron for support and cut his usual 18 holes down to 12.

So Bevan turned to Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) orthopedic surgeon Kevin Anbari, MD, with OAA Orthopaedic Specialists. Anbari performed hip replacement surgery inside the Center for Orthopedic Medicine at LVHN–Tilghman in Allentown, the region’s only campus dedicated solely to orthopedic care.

“The staff answered every question I had, the nurses took great care of me, and the hospital itself was like a hotel,” Bevan says. “I had a flat-screen TV in my room. I ordered tea off a menu, and it arrived within minutes. And my room had a cushioned bench that could seat five visitors.”

Hip replacement is major surgery. Anbari used a direct anterior approach. During the procedure he went in between Bevan’s thigh muscles to expose the hip and then removed the arthritic part of Bevan’s thigh bones and hip socket, replacing them with an artificial hip.

Yet for Bevan, the recovery was fast. He was out of bed the afternoon of his surgery and discharged by noon the next day. He exchanged his walker for a cane one week after surgery, and within two weeks was walking on his own and using the steps. “Health care professionals are my heroes,” he says, “from the primary care doctors who keep you healthy to the skilled surgeons who remove your pain and help you recover.”

Such recovery is common. “Most people overestimate how long they’ll be laid up,” Anbari says. “But most patients are out of bed the day of surgery, and many leave the hospital the next day, just like Evan did.”

And while Bevan was concerned about the surgery at first, he’s amazed at how much he now can do pain-free — from bending over to tie his shoes to playing 18 holes of golf and walking the whole course. “I would do it again if my other hip needs it,” he says.

—Alisa Bowman
Cycling Comes to Downtown Allentown

OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST TO HOST CLASSES AT ONE CITY CENTER

Long before he became an Olympian, Marty Nothstein dedicated himself to cycling and to the Lehigh Valley. He’s helped transform Trexlertown’s Valley Preferred Cycling Center into one of the world’s elite cycling venues. Now he’s partnering with Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) to aid in the revitalization of a city he loves.

“I was born and raised in Allentown,” says Nothstein, 43, who won an Olympic gold medal in sprint cycling at the 2000 Games in Sydney, Australia. “I’ve walked the streets in the downtown area countless times. It’s really exciting to be able to showcase our passion for cycling at a world-class sports medicine facility.”

WORLD-CLASS TRAINING
Elite amateurs and professionals who compete at the Cycling Center – which includes local, national and international athletes – will train at LVHN Fitness–One City Center. They’ll have LVHN state-of-the-art sports performance, fitness and rehabilitation services at their disposal as they prepare for competition.

“Having all these services under one roof is rare in the sports world,” Nothstein says. “Many of the best cyclists in the world come to the Lehigh Valley to train every summer. Now, with this new partnership, we’ll be able to help those returning from injury, as well as those looking for advanced training to become faster, better cyclists.”

YOUTH CYCLING
Nothstein, now the Cycling Center’s executive director, and LVHN also are developing a youth cycling initiative aimed at improving the health and physical education of Allentown-area adolescents. Nothstein himself will be among the Valley Preferred coaches – all elite amateur or professional cyclists – who will lead classes at LVHN–One City Center.

“We’ve had this sort of community engagement for many years at the Cycling Center,” Nothstein says. “By partnering with LVHN and using its facility downtown, we now have the ability to bring the healthy benefits of cycling to youths who may not have been exposed to it before.”

In addition to hosting spin classes at LVHN Fitness–One City Center, LVHN fitness specialists and Valley Preferred coaches will partner in presentations that build upon healthy messages both groups have been promoting region-wide, including healthy heart, anti-obesity, type 1 diabetes and general fitness information.

“This is a great opportunity to influence a lot of Allentown children toward a healthy lifestyle,” says LVHN orthopedic surgeon Neal Stansbury, MD, with VSAS Orthopaedics, who also is the Cycling Center’s medical director. “We’re thrilled to be a part of it.”

–Ted Williams
A longtime drummer and former small business owner, Charley “Bee” Bruzgulis has always enjoyed the rhythm of life. Yet a series of medical problems – including some heart issues – led to a problem that sapped away much of his enjoyment.

For more than a decade, Bruzgulis suffered from erectile dysfunction (ED), a condition that affects as many as 30 million men nationwide. “I was embarrassed,” says Bruzgulis, 66, of East Stroudsburg. “For a time I wouldn’t date. I wouldn’t go out.”

Even after he married his wife, Barbara, 13 years ago on New Year’s Eve, his ED persisted. He tried medications you see on TV, but they caused a rare side effect – buzzing in his ears. He also tried penile injections. Yet the frustration continued. “I wanted to please my wife and feel like a man again,” he says.

Back in the Rhythm

SURGERY HELPS EAST STROUDSBURG MAN OVERCOME ED

A NEW OPTION
Early in 2014, Bruzgulis saw his primary care doctor to treat a urinary tract blockage. During that visit, he mentioned his struggle with ED and received a referral to Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) urologist Clifford Georges, MD, with LVPG Urology–1250 Cedar Crest. Georges recommended penile implant surgery.

During the one-and-a-half-hour procedure, Georges implants two plastic cylinders into the penis and a pump into the scrotum. The pump includes a reservoir that holds fluid. The procedure typically requires an overnight hospital stay. Swelling subsides in two weeks, and patients can resume sexual activity six weeks after surgery. The pump can be inflated prior to intercourse and deflated afterward. “It essentially supplies the erection, and all other normal sexual function is preserved,” Georges says.

Surgery usually is recommended if other treatments have failed. Insurance plans may cover it if the cause of a person’s ED is considered organic (medical in nature, such as due to poor blood flow).

THE ‘GREATEST DECISION I EVER MADE’
Since Bruzgulis chose to have the procedure last February, the rhythm is back in his step. “I feel like a teenager again,” he says. Now he and Barbara enjoy all the benefits of marriage, including road trips, antiquing, geocaching, and of course, intimacy. It’s given Bruzgulis a message to share. “Some men go through deep depression or even suicide because of ED,” he says. “I want them to know – don’t be shy. Talk about it with your doctor. Be a man.”

–Kyle Hardner
What’s New

Discovering Resiliency
Mindfulness Strategies for Families With Ill Children
Caring for ill children can easily overwhelm us. Learn how to meet life’s challenges with mindfulness strategies that help cultivate resiliency and a healing presence. Six-week program.

Free Information session
March 25: 6-8 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest
Sessions starting April 8: 6-8 p.m.
at LVH–Cedar Crest
Retreat May 9: 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
at LVH–Muhlenberg

LVHN Health Fair Night at the LV Phantoms
Health activities and education for the entire family. Free with game ticket.
April 14: 7:05 p.m. at PPL Center, Allentown

March of Dimes 2015 March for Babies Walk
April 19: Registration: 9:30 a.m.; walk begins: 10:30 a.m. at Dorney Park, Allentown

Mini Medical School
April 1, 8, 15, 22: 6:30-8 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest

Osteoporosis Community Event
Learn your risk factors. Includes osteoporosis presentation, free bone density testing, giveaways, cooking demonstration and community resources.
April 26: 12:30-4 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest

Free! Osteoporosis Health Fair
Join us to learn ways to improve your bone health and prevent osteoporosis. Free heel screenings.
March 16: 9 a.m.–2 p.m. at LVH–Muhlenberg

Free! Understanding AFib
Meet cardiologists who specialize in keeping AFib under control. Learn about innovative treatments.
April 27: 6-7:30 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest or LVH–Muhlenberg

Free! Women and Heart Disease
What have we learned and what are the advances? Meet female cardiologists who specialize in women and heart disease and are there for you in all stages of life.
May 12: 6-7:30 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest or LVH–Muhlenberg

Caring for Mind and Body
Massage Therapy
Medical therapists offer different massage options at various sites.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
Internationally recognized program uses meditation and group support.
Information sessions: March 9, March 16, March 25
Class sessions starting March 31
Retreat May 9

Protecting Your Health

Free! Cessation, What Works?
How to succeed in beating tobacco addiction.
April 9: 4-5 p.m. at 1243 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., suite 2200

Tobacco Free Northeast PA
Tobacco treatment referral services available for individuals and businesses.

Around Our Community

Free! Community Exchange
Create a healthier community. Volunteer time and earn time by exchanging services with friends and neighbors.
Third Mon. of month: 2-4 p.m. at LVH–17th; First Wed. of month: 6-8 p.m. at LVH–Muhlenberg

Free! First Strides®
This 12-week workshop for women of all ages helps you begin a walking or running program. The goal: participating in a 5K.
Starting March 17: 6:15 p.m. at Little Lehigh Parkway, Allentown
Starting March 18: 6:15 p.m. at Little Lehigh Parkway, Allentown
Starting March 17: 6 p.m. at Hanover Township Community Center
Starting March 17: 5:30 p.m. at Bethlehem Township Community Center
Starting March 18: 9:15 a.m. at Bethlehem Township Community Center

Free! Get Out! Lehigh Valley
This healthy outdoor activity program with a Wildlands Conservancy guide connects you to parks, trails, gardens, rivers and more in your community. For details and new dates, go to getoutlehighvalley.org or call 610-402-CARE.
Louise Moore Park Walk
April 11: 10 a.m.
Rodale South Mountain Preserve Walk
April 25: 10 a.m.
Lake Nockamixon Walk
May 9: 10 a.m.

Would a Support Group Help?
Dozens of different groups provide comfort and support.

Aging Well
Aqua New
Water exercise for posture, balance, strength and confidence.

Screenings

Free! Clinical Breast Exams and Pap Tests for Uninsured Women
Appointment is necessary. Call 610-969-2800. Sponsored by Community Health and Wellness Center in collaboration with Allentown Health Bureau. Weekly 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Free! Rapid HIV and Hepatitis C Testing
Free, anonymous and confidential. Mon.-Thu.: 9 a.m.–3 p.m.; Fri. by appointment at LVH–17th Street

Lung Cancer Screening
Call 610-402-CARE for more information.
Raising a Family
Free Tours
Expectant Parent Tour
Sibling Tour

Preparing for Childbirth and Baby
Combination Class–Six-week series
Covers labor, birth, caring for your newborn, breast-feeding and what to expect in the days after birth.

Preparing for Childbirth
Three-week series
Weekend: Saturday one-day
On the Internet
Teens Only

Preventing Childbirth

Preparation for Baby
Baby Care
Breast-feeding Baby

Staying Safe
Babysitting – Safe Sitter
Babysitters ages 11-13 will learn essential life skills in one session for safe and responsible babysitting.
CPR – Family and Friends
Learn rescue skills for infants, children and adults, and what to do for an obstructed airway.

Safe Ride–Car Seat Safety
Certified technicians show how to correctly install car seats and secure children.

After-Delivery Support
Monday Morning Moms
Free!

Postpartum Support
Understanding Emotions After Delivery
Meets second and fourth Thu. of month: 6:30 p.m.
Parenting Workshops
Surviving Toddler Years March 9
Sibling Rivalry April 14
Keeping Calm May 19

Call 610-402-CARE to register for programs.
Men Facing Cancer
Meets third Mon. of month:
7:30-9 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest

Metastic Breast Cancer Support Group
Meets second Mon. of month:
7-8:30 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest

Support of Survivors
Breast cancer helpline
610-402-4SOS (4767)

Managing Your Weight
Create Your Weight
10-week program
Starting April 14: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
at 1243 S. Cedar Crest Blvd.,
suite 2200

Monthly Support Group
Support and information on weight-loss surgery.
Vitamins/Supplements
April 2: 6-7:30 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest

Mindfulness
May 6: 6-7:30 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest

Motivational Therapy Group
6-week program
Starting March 10: 4-5 p.m.
Starting April 21: 9-10 a.m.

Weight-Loss Surgery
Information Events
What to expect.
Evening sessions
March 19, March 31, April 21,*
May 7:* 6 p.m. at LVH–Cedar Crest
*Simulcast to LVH–Muhlenberg

Day sessions
April 10, May 11: noon at LVH–Cedar Crest

Weight Management Services

INDIVIDUAL
Nutrition Counseling
Assessment, body-fat analysis and goal-setting.

Nutrition Counseling/Metabolism 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.

Sports Performance Classes
Youth Program
For young athletes ages 8-11, two sessions/week for eight weeks concentrate on proper weight-lifting technique, flexibility and movement skills.

Junior Varsity Program
For athletes ages 12-14, two or three sessions/week for eight weeks emphasize gaining flexibility, strength and power.

Varsity Program
For athletes ages 15-18, advanced two or three sessions/week for eight weeks work on proper mobility, stability, increased strength and power.

LVHN Fitness Group Classes
Being an LVHN Fitness member allows you to partake in a variety of classes. Call 610-402-CARE for more information. See a list of class locations and descriptions at LVHN.org/fitness. Classes are offered at five locations.

Boot Camp
Cardio Cross-Training
Chisel
Core Synergy
Cycling (30-, 45- and 60-minute classes)
Get Up and Go
Energizing Yoga
Exercise for Life
Kettlebells
Pilates
Relaxing Yoga
Rip ‘n’ Ride
Staying Strong
STAT
Very Gentle Yoga

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