

## 2019 Resolution Issue

# Resolution: Get healthy

For busy execs, wellness often is overlooked — and shouldn't be; Atlantic program offers one-day checkup



A bathroom in the Morristown facility where Atlantic Health System's staff perform their all-day health assessment for executives feels more like a spa. — PHOTOS COURTESY ATLANTIC MEDICAL GROUP

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ith New Year's comes the unboxing of health-related resolutions. But, as Dr. **Damion Martins** is well aware, they tend to get the same treatment as Christmas lights — stowed away again when holiday excitement gives way to daily life.

So, like every year, his own resolution is to play a part in helping break that cycle.

That's not always easy. The **Atlantic Medical Group**-affiliated physician says business executives in particular fall into the usual trappings of quickly forgotten diet, exercise and other health commitments.

For years, he's been involved with providing health roadmaps to this group of busy individuals through **Atlantic Health System's** Executive Health Program, which provides patients — C-suite executives and other prominent figures — an extensive profile of their health after an all-day, personalized hospital checkup.

And his first bit of advice for anyone looking to get

serious about their health this year is to start with getting necessary health screening done. The amount of conditions caught through the testing done in Atlantic Health's exclusive program alone indicates why that's important.



**Damion Martins**

“Our own statistics over the years have shown 15 percent of people coming through our program have undiagnosed cancer they weren't aware of and 30 percent have undiagnosed heart disease, identified early enough to have intervention and significant outcomes,”

he said.

And it's not as if these individuals don't have access to health care — it might be the best on the market.

“But they're still not doing appropriate screening, because they're just too busy,” Martins said.



That's where Atlantic Health's program, offered at **Morristown Medical Center**, comes into play.

"Our concept has been to take 15 to 20 separate office visits and incorporate it into a one-day physical exam, or now a half-day health and wellness program," he said.

Martins said a lot of clients loved the program, but they wanted a way of offering it to more people within their company.

So, Atlantic Health developed another tier of this program, which focused on health and wellness. It's only a half-day commitment instead of a 10-hour affair, but it still involves some of the same screening as the more involved iteration for business executives.

"We've seen two-way traffic: Lots of clients come in for these extensive physicals every three to four years, but want to do some more regular health and wellness to stay connected as they continue on their journey, and then others come in for that health and wellness and then get excited about and want the other components," Martins said.

And, fueled by New Year's inspiration, the program is picking up speed now, Martins said.

Some of the more general advice physicians in these programs can provide



An exam room for Atlantic Health System's Executive Health Program.

probably comes as no surprise: besides eating healthier food and getting exercise, individuals should be getting more sleep.

"We're asking clients to get 7 to 9 hours of restorative sleep," Martins said. "We know people don't end up getting that, but it's one of the things that should be a focus heading into the New Year."

Between early-morning meetings, traveling and sleeping in hotels, Martins said this can be a challenge for people in the business community.

"And going along with that same lifestyle are lots of late-night dinners and drinks," he said. "It's hard to maintain a well-balanced diet (given that), so we really focus with our

nutrition plan on providing adequate advice as well as looking at where they're having issues.

"And the simplest bit of advice is, sometimes have a little to eat before a dinner meeting, so you're not starving and eating things you shouldn't be."

Those living life from one business trip to the next should also consider adopting an exercise routine that can be done anywhere, he added.

When it comes down to it, what's most important is that people not only come up with a plan for their health around this time of year — but that it isn't soon abandoned.

"As we prepare for 2019, we don't want this to be another year of buying a gym membership and going for 30 to 60 days, which is what most people do, and then don't show up anymore," he said. "We want people to continue on with their commitment to health and wellness."

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