Honing in on Health
Saving Hearts, Saving Lives
The Gift of Life
A Diet That Keeps Pace With Age
Dear Friend,

Medicine has always been about the individual and delivering one-on-one care based on each patient’s needs. Yet increasingly, in the news and in the many reports on health care trends today, the phrases “personalized medicine” or “individualized care” are being used to describe a new direction in health care.

What has changed? Hospitals and physicians are focusing more closely on what consumers truly want, and at the same time, scientific and social advances are providing more and better ways to “customize” medicine. At Atlantic Health’s Morristown Memorial and Overlook hospitals, personalized care can mean a newly built environment, such as a redesigned family waiting area, more private patient rooms, consultation space for caregivers, or private areas for parents of neonates. Or, it can mean embracing our family-centered care model in pediatric programs that assures open and improved communication among medical specialists and families. Patients who come to us for screenings at our breast centers will find the personalized care that means that if the diagnosis is cancer or more testing is required, a nurse navigator is there to help guide the process of further diagnostic services, sharing results and treatment planning. And if you’ve been rushed to the hospital for stroke, we’re here to provide the best emergency neurological treatment, and then shepherd you along a continuum of care (see “A Continuum of Care” on page 7) through rehabilitation and your full recovery.

In all our services, we aim to listen to you, our patients, families and visitors, and continually enhance how we care for you.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Trunfio
President and CEO
ATLANTIC HEALTH

We Want Your FEEDBACK!

Tell us how Well Aware is helping you make better health care decisions, and you will be eligible to win a $100 Target gift card.

Along with your name, address and phone number, indicate which article made you want to share it with a friend or loved one or prompted you to further research a topic to find the best care for your needs. Email us at well.aware@atlantichealth.org or write to:

Atlantic Health, Attn: Well Aware
PO Box 1905
Morristown, NJ 07962

Must be 18 years or older to enter. Atlantic Health employees and their immediate families are not eligible for the drawing. Well Aware magazine welcomes your story suggestions. Any correspondence to the magazine may be reproduced in part or whole.

Boonton’s Katrina Musto sent this issue’s winning letter.

Dear Well Aware,

As a recent college graduate, I spent my summer interning for Century 21 Real Estate’s Corporate Headquarters, working in the departments of public relations and communications.

With three weeks from the time I graduated college to the time I started my summer-long internship, I was out and about with friends. However, I went from sitting in a desk in a classroom to sitting at a computer desk from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day. Except for the occasional staff meeting or conference call, I was constantly at my desk working.

The article “Posture Perfect” in the Fall 2009 issue struck a chord with me because I can relate to being one of the millions of students sitting in the same position for a good portion of their day. In college, it was hard to not spend most of my time in the classroom or library sitting. However, at my internship I would sometimes take mini-breaks and go visit with a co-worker instead of calling their extension, or stop by someone’s cubicle as opposed to shooting them an e-mail.

Taking mini-breaks such as these were mentioned in the article and can help ensure an ergonomic balance, and ease our backs and posture. The article mentioned numerous examples of how to help students fix their posture, and I found it to be very informative and something all students should be reading up on.

Sincerely,

Katrina Musto
Boonton
Work That Matters

You labor to provide for yourself and your family. However, a job also has the potential to satisfy you on intellectual and emotional levels—especially when your years of experience are used to benefit others.

IF YOU ARE seeking more job fulfillment and have a strong desire to help others, it may be the time to consider a career in the health care field.

Nurses, in particular, have been in short supply in the United States for most of the past 10 years, and additional shortages are projected in the coming years as large numbers of seasoned nurses from the baby boom generation retire. In many areas, efforts are underway to expand nursing school enrollments, delay nurse retirements and lure inactive registered nurses back to work.

The debate about health care reform may be complex, but one issue on which all parties agree is the consistent need for trained health care providers, particularly nursing professionals, in the future.

Time for a Change?

In other fields, some people in their 40s, 50s and 60s may feel devalued or pressured to make way for younger workers, but that is not the case in health care. Important workplace skills that transfer well to nursing from other professions include maturity, responsibility, solid work ethic and good judgment—all of which improve with experience.

One of the reasons Atlantic Health has been recognized as an excellent employer for mature workers is our impressive benefits package—on-site childcare, college planning workshops, prescription plans, working parent support, Medicare workshops, free annual physicals and gynecological exam for employees who work at least 22.5 hours a week, and elder care workshops, that proves especially important to members of the sandwich generation—those who must care for aging parents as well as growing or college-age children.

The American Health Care Association reports more than 135,000 registered nurses are now needed nationwide to fill open positions. As a preferred employer, Atlantic Health has responded to this national challenge by creating a locally meaningful work environment, which in turn supports a dedicated workforce. Taking care of employees is essential for quality patient care.

Atlantic Health Voted the Best

The results are in, and AARP—the nation’s largest membership organization for people over the age 50—has once again identified Atlantic Health as one of the best places to work for those older than 50.

This year, AARP has created a separate hospitals-health care list of Best Employers for Workers Over 50, and Atlantic Health ranked in at number one. AARP has recognized Atlantic Health as a top choice for workers over 50 for four consecutive years.

“We are pleased that AARP has taken notice of the relationship we have with our older workforce in years past,” said Andrew Kovach, vice president of Human Resources and Chief Administrative Officer for Atlantic Health. “We hope it brings a new light to the accomplishments of our 50-plus workforce and the daily contributions they make to Atlantic Health, our hospitals and our patients.”

Launch Your Career

Interested in finding out more about career opportunities at Atlantic Health? Log on to youtube.com/user/AtlanticHealthCareer or facebook.com and search “Atlantic Health Careers” to learn about new job postings and positions. When you become fan on Facebook, new job openings will appear in your news feed, meaning you’ll see the most recent postings each time you log in to your account.

For more information on career opportunities at Atlantic Health, visit atlantichealth.org.
Atrial fibrillation is a common cardiac condition that affects more than two million Americans each year. Jonathan Sussman, MD, cardiac electrophysiologist, and Stephen Winters, MD, director of the cardiac electrophysiology program for Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial Hospital, answer your questions.

Q: What is atrial fibrillation?
Dr. Sussman: Atrial fibrillation is a disorder in which the heart’s top two chambers quiver rather than beat, preventing blood from being pumped effectively. If a person is 65 or older, his or her chances of developing the condition increase. Many people who have atrial fibrillation don’t know they have it, and while it’s generally not a life-threatening condition, it is linked to serious health issues and therefore does require regular visits with a cardiologist.

Q: How is atrial fibrillation treated?
Dr. Winters: When patients seek treatment for atrial fibrillation, they have a variety of treatments and therapies available. In many cases, a cardiologist can simply keep an eye on the condition and treat symptoms as they occur. We can also prescribe medications that help prevent blood clots from forming in the heart, which can become ejected and cause a stroke, or help the heart achieve a normal rhythm.

The team at Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute is currently participating in a new clinical trial that’s testing an anticoagulation drug known as biotinylated idraparinux.

Q: What is interesting about this new drug?
Dr. Winters: Blood thinners, such as Coumadin, are the current standard medications for atrial fibrillation, but these medications can cause uncomfortable side effects and require patients to undergo regular monitoring with physicians. This clinical trial is evaluating a medication that would be a once-weekly injection, and that medication—along with other medications and treatments currently in trials—looks really promising.

Q: What other treatments are effective?
Dr. Sussman: Catheter-based ablation is emerging as an effective method of treating atrial fibrillation. While not without some minor risks, ablation treatment cures as much as 70 percent of patients coping with atrial fibrillation.

When other treatments fail, or for patients struggling with other cardiac conditions, surgery is also an effective way to treat atrial fibrillation.

To find out about cardiac screenings we offer in your neighborhood, call 800-247-9580 or visit atlantichealth.org.

You’re in Good Hands
Jonathan Sussman, MD, is a cardiac electrophysiologist for Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial Hospital. His background, education and skills make him uniquely suited to treat patients coping with atrial fibrillation, as he has conducted extensive research in his field and has subsequently made numerous presentations at meetings of the American Heart Association and the Heart Rhythm Society. Additionally, Dr. Sussman has performed approximately 200 ablation procedures and treated hundreds of atrial fibrillation patients with medication.

Stephen Winters, MD, is also a cardiac electrophysiologist for Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute. He attended medical school at Mount Sinai School of Medicine and with 30 years of experience, specializes in cardiac electrophysiology, cardiovascular diseases and internal medicine.

View more detailed profiles of each physician at atlantichealth.org. Select “Find A Doctor” and search for either Dr. Sussman or Dr. Winters.

Leading the Nation
Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial Hospital not only provides expert care for all cardiac patients, but it also is home to many firsts. Gagnon’s most recent pioneering effort occurred November 2 as the first facility to use ablation to cure a patient’s atrial fibrillation using the CARTO 3 System—an advanced imaging technology recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to enhance efficacy and reduce any potential risks.

Gagnon is the only location in New Jersey and just one of a couple facilities in the nation to use this leading-edge technology.
Ease Pain Through Diet

Certain foods and nutritional supplements could help you alleviate cumbersome back pain. Try these natural remedies to see what works for you:

- **Magnesium**—Green leafy vegetables, whole grains and nuts containing magnesium are key elements for healthy back muscles.
- **Vitamin D**—Found in some fish and other fortified foods, vitamin D helps build strong bones, enabling your spine to give you more support.
- **Water**—As we age, the body’s intervertebral disks naturally dehydrate. Keeping your body hydrated with water is important to preserve the moisture in the intervertebral disks.
- **Rosemary**—Certain herbs, such as rosemary, have been shown to help reduce inflammation in our backs. Other potential natural remedies include saw palmetto, cat’s claw, bromelain and licorice.

Awarded Spine Care Excellence

The Spine Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital has received Gold Seal of Approval™ certification for cervical spine treatment and lumbar spine treatment by The Joint Commission, meaning the program meets the high national standards set forth by the healthcare accreditation organization.

“We’re one of the few spinal centers in the country chosen for this level of accreditation,” says Charles Gatto, MD, board-certified orthopedic spine surgeon and chief of the spine service for the department of orthopedics for Morristown Memorial. “Thanks to everyone’s coordinated efforts in our Spine Center, we’re able to give our patients the highest level of dedicated care as smoothly and safely as possible.”

The Spine Center is a level one trauma center and specializes in highly advanced, technical care and coordinated services, including:

- disk herniations
- laminectomies
- minimally invasive surgical options
- spinal fusions
- spinal stenosis
- spinal injections

REGARDLESS OF THE reason, a consistent backache is the body’s way of letting a person know something is wrong and that specialized help is needed.

In the United States, approximately four out of five people will experience back pain at least once in their lives. With such a high number of cases, spine specialists are needed to ensure every patient receives high-quality spinal care. Recognizing this need, the dedicated spinal professionals at Morristown Memorial Hospital created the Spine Center.

Coordinated Care

Devoted to finding patients relief and getting them back to an active lifestyle, the new Spine Center offers a variety of spinal care in one convenient location.

“The spinal unit houses an entire staff of physicians, nurses, therapists, surgeons and social workers who all specialize in spinal care,” says Carl Giordano, MD, orthopedic spine surgeon and vice chairman of the department of orthopedics for Morristown Memorial. “We’ve structured the Center and coordinated our care so that we all work as a team toward the same goal—healthier spines and less pain for patients.”

For a referral to an orthopedist at Atlantic Health, call 888-334-4911 or visit atlantichealth.org.
According to the American Red Cross, approximately five million Americans each year receive blood transfusions from donors across the country, and approximately 32,000 pints of blood are used each day.

Why Blood Donation Is Important

Without a stocked supply of donated blood, elective surgeries can be inhibited, and clinicians may experience a diminished ability to care for the ill. Unfortunately, the demand for blood often exceeds the supply.

Blood donors give health care providers the ability to treat a variety of medical conditions and, in many cases, keep someone alive.

“Blood donations are utilized for three major functions. Red blood cells are used to carry oxygen in the body, the plasma in blood is instrumental in the clotting process, and platelets are important in maintaining proper coagulation,” says Robert Katz, MD, medical director for the blood banks at Morristown Memorial and Overlook hospitals. “Patients with inadequate red blood cells often have trouble delivering oxygen to the tissue, and blood transfusions can help improve the oxygen-carrying capacity. Patients who have experienced blood loss from trauma and those with coagulation disorders are often in need of plasma, and the blood vessels of patients undergoing chemotherapy are often susceptible to damage and are in need of additional platelets. To bolster the banked blood, we host blood drives throughout the year to allow our community to give the gift of life.”

Donate for your Valentine

More than half of all Americans are eligible to donate blood, but only about five percent do. In the state of New Jersey, that percentage is even smaller. This Valentine’s Day, give the gift that saves lives through blood donation.

Whether you are inspired by a loved one’s illness, or simply choose to give blood for your own reasons, you have potential to save three lives. At Atlantic Health, blood donation is easy and convenient with a variety of operating hours, valet parking and a beautiful new facility at Overlook Hospital.

Morristown Memorial Hospital hours
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
9:00 am to 7:30 pm
Thursday, Friday and Saturday,
8:30 am to 3:30 pm

For more information, please call 888-679-0690. Walk-in donors are welcome.

Overlook Hospital hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
8:15 am to 3:00 pm
Tuesday, Noon to 6:30 pm
Alternate Saturdays, 8:15 am to 3:00 pm

For more information, please call 888-362-1667. Walk-in donors are welcome.

“I generally donate about four times a year. I started because something so easy to do has the potential to save someone’s life. My daughters grew up watching me donate, and now that they are adults, they also donate regularly.” —Mickie Stueben, regular blood donor from Roselle Park
A Continuum of Care

When stroke occurs, you may first find yourself in an emergency department, but treatment for stroke is in fact a continuum of care, from emergency department to hospital via critical transport, to rehabilitation and finally to outpatient, in-home care.

IRENE MAURER, AN 80-year-old resident from Morristown, traveled such a stroke journey. Irene initially was taken to Morristown Memorial Hospital, designated as a Comprehensive Stroke Center, but was quickly transferred to Overlook Hospital for surgery to remove her clot, which eventually passed on its own.

“I was transferred to Overlook and learned I had suffered a stroke,” Irene said. “The left side of my body was paralyzed. After initial treatment, I was transferred to Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute.”

Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute is a 78-bed rehabilitation facility for inpatient, sub-acute and outpatient rehab. Since it’s affiliated with Atlantic Health, specialists at Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute provide an unsurpassed continuum of care for patients from Morristown Memorial and Overlook hospitals.

Focus on the Positive
Irene began rehabilitation, working to regain regular function through occupational, physical and other integrated therapies. Her neural pathways were damaged, causing her left arm to spasm whenever she tried to move it.

“I was transferred to Overlook and learned I had suffered a stroke,” Irene said. “The left side of my body was paralyzed. After initial treatment, I was transferred to Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute.”

People who have suffered a stroke receive excellent care through a complete continuum of services within Atlantic Health—a dedicated stroke center, inpatient care, home care, outpatient rehabilitation, support groups and an exercise program to minimize a person’s risk of recurrence. Our personalized stroke recovery program continues long after the initial hospital discharge.”

—Peggy Meade, director of the post-acute service line and integrative medicine for Atlantic Health

Living Well After Stroke

A first step in overcoming the effects of stroke is rapid treatment at a stroke center.

“The first line of defense against stroke is education, but after that it is knowing that getting endovascular neurosurgeon for Atlantic Neuroscience Institute and Irene Maurer’s surgeon. Time is brain, because we have just a short time to try and minimize the effects of a stroke on a person’s brain.”

WORKING TOWARD RECOVERY
Once a patient has completed initial treatment at Morristown Memorial or Overlook hospitals, he or she is transferred to Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute, where staff work toward healing with a more complete recovery using physical, occupational and speech therapy as well as integrative medicine. Because patients remain within the care of Atlantic Health between facilities, treatment management and transportation are facilitated with ease among staff members.

Inpatients at Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute undergo a minimum of three hours of therapy daily, designed to improve the physical and mental conditions that result from stroke. In 2007, the Comprehensive Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit became one of the first facilities in New Jersey to receive Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

People who have suffered a stroke receive excellent care through a complete continuum of services within Atlantic Health—a dedicated stroke center, inpatient care, home care, outpatient rehabilitation, support groups and an exercise program to minimize a person’s risk of recurrence. Our personalized stroke recovery program continues long after the initial hospital discharge.”

—Peggy Meade, director of the post-acute service line and integrative medicine for Atlantic Health

For a referral to an Atlantic Health physician or to learn more about our services, call 888-270-8238 or visit atlantichealth.org.
HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Cardiovascular Health Fair
Heart disease—learn about the latest in diagnosis, treatment and preventive measures.
Saturday, February 13, 8:30 am to 1:00 pm
Morristown Memorial Hospital, Malcolm Forbes Amphitheater, Auditoriums A, B, and Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute

Gastric Bypass
Third Tuesday of each month, 6:00 to 7:00 pm

Eating Adjustment
Mondays, December 7, January 4 and February 1,
10:00 to 11:00 am
The above weight-loss programs are held at the Metabolic Medicine & Weight Control Center, 95 Madison Avenue, Suite 304, Morristown. To register, call 973-971-7053.

DIABETES WELLNESS

Insulin Basics Education
Appointments are available: Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Medical Nutritional Counseling
Appointments are available: Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Gestational Diabetes Education Classes
Thursdays, 9:00 to 11:00 am

Diabetes Type 2 Education Class
Tuesdays, 5:00 to 7:00 pm or Thursdays, 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Diabetes Type 1 Pump Support Group
Learn more about living with Type 1 diabetes.
Thursdays, December 3 and February 4, 7:00 to 8:00 pm
Department of Medicine Conference Room, First Floor, Morristown Memorial Hospital

Diabetes Support Group
Thursday, January 21, 7:00 to 8:00 pm
Unless otherwise noted, all diabetes programs are held at the Anderson Building B, Adult Diabetes Center, Morristown Memorial Hospital. To register, call 973-971-5524.

CANCER CARE

Nutrition After Cancer Treatment
Learn about cancer-fighting foods for healing and good health.
Wednesdays, December 9, January 13 and February 10, 3:00 to 4:00 pm

Heart Health
Changing Lifestyles is a new program designed to assess your lifestyle by identifying habits, activities and choices that put you at risk for heart disease. Offered at Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial Hospital, the classes and workshops provide the tools you need to make healthy choices.

HEART HEALTH

Blood Pressure
Friday, December 11, Noon to 3:00 pm
Succasunna Shop Rite, Route 10 and Commerce Boulevard

Screenings

Blood Pressure and BMI Screening
Reinventing Your Life After Cancer
This eight-week program is designed to help you create a new vision for your life.
1st Floor Mind/Body Conference Room

SUPPORT FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Gynecological
First Monday of the month, Noon to 1:30 pm
Women’s Center Conference Room*

Breast
Third Tuesday of the month, 7:00 to 8:30 pm
1st Floor Conference Room*

Ostomy
Third Wednesday of the month, 7:30 to 9:00 pm
1st floor Radiation Oncology*

Prostate: US TOO
Tuesdays, January 5, February 2, 7:30 to 9:00 pm
Malcolm Forbes Amphitheater

Head and Neck
Wednesdays, December 16 and January 20 1:30 to 3:00 pm
3rd Floor Conference Room

Bereavement
Thursdays, call for dates, 5:30 to 7:00 pm
3rd Floor Conference Room*

Pancreatic
Third Thursday of the month, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm
3rd Floor Conference Room

Lung
Wednesdays, December 23, January 27 2:00 to 3:30 pm
3rd floor conference room*

I Cancer Vive
An eight-week class that empowers patients through mind, body and spirit.
Fridays, call for dates, 10:00 am to Noon
To register, call 973-971-6514

CANCER CARE THROUGH INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

Gentle Yoga
Wednesdays, 11:00 am to 12:15 pm
1st Floor, Mind/Body Conference Room

Restorative Yoga
Thursdays, 1:00 to 2:15 pm
1st Floor, Mind/Body Conference Room

All cancer programs are held at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, Morristown Memorial Hospital, unless otherwise noted. For information, call 973-971-6514.

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

Tai Chi/Oi Gong
Tuesdays, 5:30 to 6:30 pm
Fee: $16

Yoga
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 to 12:15 pm
Fee: $16

All Alternative Medicine programs are held at the Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute, 95 Mount Kemble Avenue, Morristown. For more information or to register, call 973-971-6575.

Changing Lifestyles is a new program designed to assess your lifestyle by identifying habits, activities and choices that put you at risk for heart disease. Offered at Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial Hospital, the classes and services provide the individual with guidance and support. Some of the services include:

- **Lifestyle screenings**
- **Nutritional services, such as healthy cooking classes**
- **Stress reduction services, such as massage, Jin Shin Jyutsu, craniosacral therapy, HeartMath and meditation**
- **Mind body exercises, such as yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, social dancing and walking, and Zumba**
- **Emotional support and hands-on healing**

For the current class schedule and fees, or to learn more about the program, call 973-971-6301.

Get the latest health and wellness news by signing up for your free, personalized e-health newsletter at atlantichealth.org.
Caring for the Mind While the Body Recovers

If a member of your family must spend time in a hospital to recover from an illness or surgery, your first concern is ensuring her physical recovery is adequately addressed. What happens, however, if she becomes depressed, agitated or anxious during the course of her stay?

HEALTH CARE WORKERS are becoming increasingly aware of the role the mind plays in each patient’s recovery. Twenty-two percent of patients who have physical issues, for example, also have an emotional problem. Psychosomatic medicine has developed during the last 50 years to address the psychiatric changes that illness or extended hospitalization can effect in patients.

The clinical liaison program at Morristown Memorial Hospital and the consultation liaison program at Overlook Hospital—jointly known as the CLP—offer the expertise of psychosomatic physicians to assess patients’ psychiatric symptoms and recommend courses of treatment.

Bridging the Medical/Psychological Divide

Any patient hospitalized at Morristown Memorial or Overlook Hospital is eligible to be seen by a psychosomatic physician. A patient enters the CLP when his or her attending physician notices symptoms that warrant psychiatric evaluation.

A psychosomatic physician visits the patient, conducts an evaluation and interviews family members for information regarding the patient’s psychiatric history. Based on the findings, the physician recommends a course of treatment.

“Growing scientific data demonstrate that not treating depression or anxiety may increase the progression of underlying medical illnesses,” says Christine Skotzko, MD, director of the psychosomatic medicine service for Morristown Memorial Hospital. “The CLP plays an important role in helping patients get back to living their lives.”

That’s a sentiment to which Yvonne*—who’s in her 80s and lives with diabetes—can attest. Her family brought her to Morristown Memorial after they noticed her losing weight and neglecting her favorite activities. When no medical cause could be found for her symptoms, a psychosomatic physician evaluated Yvonne and prescribed an antidepressant, vitamin supplements and temporary care from a home health aide. As a result, Yvonne improved dramatically and is once again enjoying time at church and with her loved ones.

*The patient’s name has been changed for her privacy.

“Psychosomatic medicine provides comprehensive care and a unique treatment plan for each patient’s overall well-being.” —Fatimah Tahil, MD, associate medical director for psychosomatic medicine for Overlook Hospital

A Recognition of Excellence

In May 2009, Fatimah Tahil, MD, associate medical director for psychosomatic medicine for Overlook Hospital, was awarded the 2009 Physician Clinical Excellence Award for her stellar performance in medicine and patient care by Peter Bolo, MD, chairman and medical director of the department of psychiatry and Atlantic Behavioral Health for Overlook.

Dr. Tahil made psychosomatic medicine her life’s work after observing depression in her husband’s roommate during a hospital stay.

“My receipt of the Physician Clinical Excellence Award is a recognition of the role of psychosomatic medicine at Overlook,” Dr. Tahil says. “The fact that a psychiatrist received this honor speaks to a new level of acceptance of psychosomatic medicine by the medical-surgical community for their patients.”

For a referral to a behavioral health specialist at Atlantic Health, call 888-270-8238 or visit atlantichealth.org.
For cardiac patients, the muscle lost during a myocardial infarction (MI) heart attack may eventually lead to heart failure due to a poorly pumping heart. Physicians at Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute are working to change this.

PATIENTS WITH HEART failure are now facing new options for a better quality of life with a miniature parachute-like device that partitions off the affected area of the heart—offered at just eight facilities nationwide.

These hospitals are participating in the PARACHUTE™ Feasibility Trial, a clinical trial designed to measure effectiveness of a device intended to increase blood flow and heart performance in MI heart attack patients.

As the only facility in the Northeast participating in the study, Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute remains on the forefront of care for cardiac patients across the community.

The PARACHUTE Procedure

The PARACHUTE cardiac device consists of a synthetic material stretched over a nickel and titanium wire frame. Inserted into the left ventricle of the heart via the femoral artery, the PARACHUTE device creates a barrier between damaged heart muscle—caused by lack of blood during a heart attack—and healthy heart muscle. With the formation of a wall between healthy and damaged muscle, the volume of the left ventricle is reduced by almost 20 percent and blood pumping becomes more efficient.

“Once the PARACHUTE device is implanted, it reshapes the left ventricle to ease the stress placed on the heart’s walls,” says Frank Smart, MD, chairman of the department of cardiovascular medicine for Atlantic Health. “In the initial test phases, the PARACHUTE procedure has proved to be a safe and effective way to help heart attack patients improve cardiac performance and ease symptoms of heart failure.”

Clinical Implications

Courtesy of programs such as the PARACHUTE trial, improved cardiac care has the potential to change the lives of MI patients across the country. “In our area, the work being done at Gagnon has the potential to restore quality of life for many people,” Dr. Smart says. “Initiatives such as the PARACHUTE study are a tremendous asset to Gagnon as well as its patients. Our commitment to offering advanced care never ends.”
A Day in the Life at the MICU

For nurses with the calling to provide care for critically ill patients and their families, every day on the floor can be filled with more emotion than an award-winning medical drama.

JOHANNA WATKINSON, RN, BSN, critical care nurse for Morristown Memorial Hospital, spends long shifts on her feet meeting the needs of patients in the medical intensive care unit (MICU). A strong spirit of camaraderie between these dedicated nurses is vital to maintaining a positive outlook.

“We definitely help one another cope,” Watkinson says. “Because of the strength of our relationships and our patient- and family-centered care model, my position here is incredibly rewarding.”

Changing Perspectives
The MICU at Morristown Memorial has unlimited visiting hours and encourages family involvement—a rarity in many critical care environments that provide care to the sickest patients. Both the nurses and families have adapted well to the changes, which are designed to keep spirits up during troubling times.

“In many facilities, this model of care is seen in pediatrics but not in other specialties,” says Crystal Di Serio, patient/family liaison for Morristown Memorial. “However, families are important to patients of all ages. The patient- and family-centered care model has transformed many of the day-to-day interactions our nurses have with patients, and ultimately, these changes have helped us create a powerful healing environment. A lot of times families want to express their fears and their concerns. I’m available to talk to them and provide them with the answers they need, which provides the best healing environment possible.”

For more information about what Morristown Memorial Hospital has to offer, visit atlantichealth.org or call 888-691-1030.
The medical intensive care unit at Morristown Memorial Hospital is a 10-bed unit designed specifically to care for critically ill patients. Unlike other intensive care unit models, the unit at Morristown Memorial allows additional family involvement, which helps to keep the mental health of patients, their loved ones and care providers at the forefront of medical healing.

“The medical intensive care unit is a stressful place. To ease stress on everyone there—nurses, patients and family members—we’ve decided that families are not to be treated as visitors; they should be there no matter what. We aren’t just treating the patient, we are treating the family.” — Denise M. Fochesto, MSN, RN, APN-C, manager of the MICU for Morristown Memorial Hospital

The Power of Palliative Care

For patients diagnosed with chronic or life-limiting illnesses, palliative care can improve quality of life and give patients a break from pain and other symptoms that can impede activities of daily living.

One of the most common misconceptions about palliative care is that it is only available to patients at the end of their lives. While palliative care is an important part of end-of-life care, the truth is that it can be a vital part of enjoying life during treatment for or while managing a chronic condition. Often, patients with cancer, congestive heart failure and liver failure, or those with chronic pain, fatigue or anxiety may benefit from palliative care.

A palliative care treatment regimen, which can include controlling symptoms such as pain and nausea, as well as meeting emotional and spiritual needs, is readily available for patients at Morristown Memorial Hospital.

“There are two ways to be ‘healed’: one is to remove illness from the body, and the other is to take away the power illness has over our lives,” says Karen Knops, MD, medical director of palliative care for Morristown Memorial Hospital. “By controlling symptoms and reminding patients that illness cannot change who they are, palliative medicine can be a powerful tool for healing.”
WE ARE WHAT we eat. Once we’re adults, it’s hard to change our ways. But increasingly, older people are seeking advice on adjusting a lifetime of eating habits. Remember, every food choice requires special consideration.

As your metabolism naturally slows with an aging body, follow these pointers from the experts.

**40s and 50s**
You may experience a shift in your metabolism and eating habits. Combat vitamin deficiencies in your 40s and 50s by adding more fiber-rich whole grains to your diet to improve digestive health, lower cholesterol levels and reduce your risk of coronary heart disease.

As a woman transitions into perimenopause, she may experience a change in the foods that she can easily tolerate. However, this can happen as men age, too. If your favorite food begins to cause indigestion, it does not necessarily mean you are sick. Unfortunately, food allergies can develop at any age, meaning the shrimp and scallop dish you enjoyed in your younger years may be off your menu permanently. This often is normal with aging, as our digestive systems tend to slow with age, meaning foods that once passed through the body with ease may cause you discomfort or pain.

**60s and Older**
Two of the most important nutrients at every age are calcium and vitamin D. Insufficient calcium can lead to osteoporosis, and vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium. By age 60, women and men should get 1,200 milligrams of calcium daily. In addition to commonly known sources of calcium, such as milk and cottage cheese, try adding some less-known sources, including canned salmon, raw broccoli and soybeans. Additionally, you may notice yourself eating less at each meal. Appetites change with age, so it’s important to ensure you’re getting all the nutrients you need. If a big breakfast is no longer appealing, break it up between a smaller breakfast and a mid-morning snack of fresh fruit.

**When to see a Nutritionist**
If you think you’re getting sufficient nutrients but still aren’t either maintaining or losing weight, or if you feel run down, consider enlisting the help of a nutritionist to aid in your pursuit of improved health.

“A nutritionist can accurately identify vitamin deficiencies and help diagnose metabolic conditions that may be impeding weight loss,” says Michael Rothkopf, MD, medical director of the Metabolic Medicine & Weight Control Center and internal medicine physician for Morristown Memorial Hospital. “We can assist you in creating a therapeutic lifestyle to aid in weight loss, increasing exercise and changing unhealthy eating behaviors.”

**Water: The Miracle Skin Fix**
Press down on your skin with your finger. Does it bounce back? If not, this is a simple way to tell if you’re dehydrated and if your skin is crying out for a drink.

Hydration is a key component in vitamin absorption and digestion, and it also provides cosmetic benefits.

Water works to flush toxins out of your skin that can lead to acne and other blemishes. Boost your intake to eight to 10 glasses of water a day, or until your urine is a clear or light color to see benefits.

For a referral to a dietitian at Atlantic Health, call 888-452-8012 or visit atlantichealth.org.
If pain has been keeping you off the golf course, you may be able to take simple sports medicine steps to improve your condition and get back on the green. In many cases, the pain golfers experience during play can be linked to improper posture or a lack of muscle flexibility and strength. With help from the Swing Away program offered at Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute in Morristown, physicians and Titleist- and Back-to-Golf-certified therapists can help you pinpoint what causes your pain and find out how to fix it.

The program is designed to evaluate a golfer’s swing and stance to determine if they’re placing too much strain in certain areas. Therapists then teach golfers what they can do to increase flexibility and strength.

Step by Step
The Swing Away program has several steps, each designed to maximize positive outcomes. Upon enrollment, a golfer will have a total physical therapy evaluation, during which medical history is reviewed and pain, posture, flexibility, strength and balance are assessed. In addition, the golfer’s swing will be recorded using a video motion analysis system.

“A golfer’s swing is specific to his or her physical limitations,” says Nathalie McMorland, physical therapist for Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute. “For example, if a golfer demonstrates decreased lumbar flexibility during the physical therapy evaluation, the body’s compensations will be noted on the video analysis. Since areas of compensation are often the source of pain for our patients, the video analysis system is a great learning tool.”

Following these analyses, golfers in the program are shown individualized exercises they can continue outside of therapy to effectively address their specific pain issues.

“When pain is left untreated, it often worsens until more severe damage is done,” says Suzanne Bowen, physical therapist assistant for Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute. “Our program helps golfers avoid more serious conditions like torn ligaments or muscles, tendonitis and disk herniations.”

Go to the Pro
To round out the treatment process, once golfers have addressed posture, stability, and muscle strength and flexibility issues in therapy, they are referred to local golf professionals to work on improving their game.

“We let the pros know what types of issues our patients are having, and they use this information to address technical issues, such as swing, grip or stance, that could be contributing to pain,” says Joseph Rempson, MD, board-certified internal medicine and physical medicine and rehabilitation physician for Overlook Hospital. “Having participation from the golf pros is a great conclusion to the program and helps our patients fine-tune their game.”

For many golfers, the game is not only a physical and mental challenge—it’s also valuable social time players look forward to spending with friends. When pain begins to interfere with the game, a golfer may decide to stop playing altogether.

To register for this program, call 888-676-7765.
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