

# WOMEN'S healthsource

Debbie Meyer (here with her daughter) is back on the courts after shoulder surgery. Turn to page 4 for her story.

**Regular  
Mammograms:  
When to Start?**

See page 3.

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LOWER STRESS LEVELS TO RAISE HEART HEALTH



Main Line Health

# Advanced Stroke Treatment That's Close to Home

**New, state-of-the-art neurovascular** services at Bryn Mawr Hospital mean residents of the Philadelphia suburbs will no longer have to go far for emergency neuro care. And that shorter travel time could be the critical difference in preventing permanent disability or death, explains Joan Gibson, director of nursing operations at the hospital.

Stroke is a leading cause of death among American men and women. When treating stroke and aneurysms, "time is brain," says Gibson. "The faster we can get people to the hospital and get the blockage open, the more likely it is to improve the overall outcome."

Debuting in summer, Bryn Mawr Hospital's multimillion-dollar neuro-interventional lab, part of a larger Main Line Health strategy, will offer innovative, nonsurgical procedures to treat people with embolic strokes and nonruptured aneurysms. The services are the first clinical collaboration between Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and Bryn Mawr Hospital.



The new procedures are similar to those done in the area of cardiac care, Gibson says. For example, Bryn Mawr neurosurgeons will be able to place a stent in the brain to open a narrowed or blocked artery and prevent a stroke.

In the past, many such procedures would have required open surgery, but Bryn Mawr's new lab offers an endovascular approach. Doctors make a tiny incision in the skin and use the body's blood vessels to navigate their way to the brain. These less invasive

procedures can mean shorter recovery times and overall better health outcomes, Gibson says.

Because the procedures are typically needed during a health emergency, Bryn Mawr's neurointerventional lab will have a neurosurgeon on hand 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"There's a growing need for these services,

and we wanted to provide a comprehensive neurovascular program to our community," says Gibson. "We want to be a center of excellence, and in conjunction with our Jefferson colleagues, we will be." ●

## Time Is Brain

Learn about the risk factors for and signs of a stroke. Sign up for our April 26 Heart-Health Webinar, "Time Is Brain: Advanced Stroke Treatment," at [mainlinehealth.org/webinars](http://mainlinehealth.org/webinars).

## Spanish Omelet

This tasty dish provides a healthy array of vegetables and can be enjoyed for breakfast, brunch, or any meal!

### Ingredients

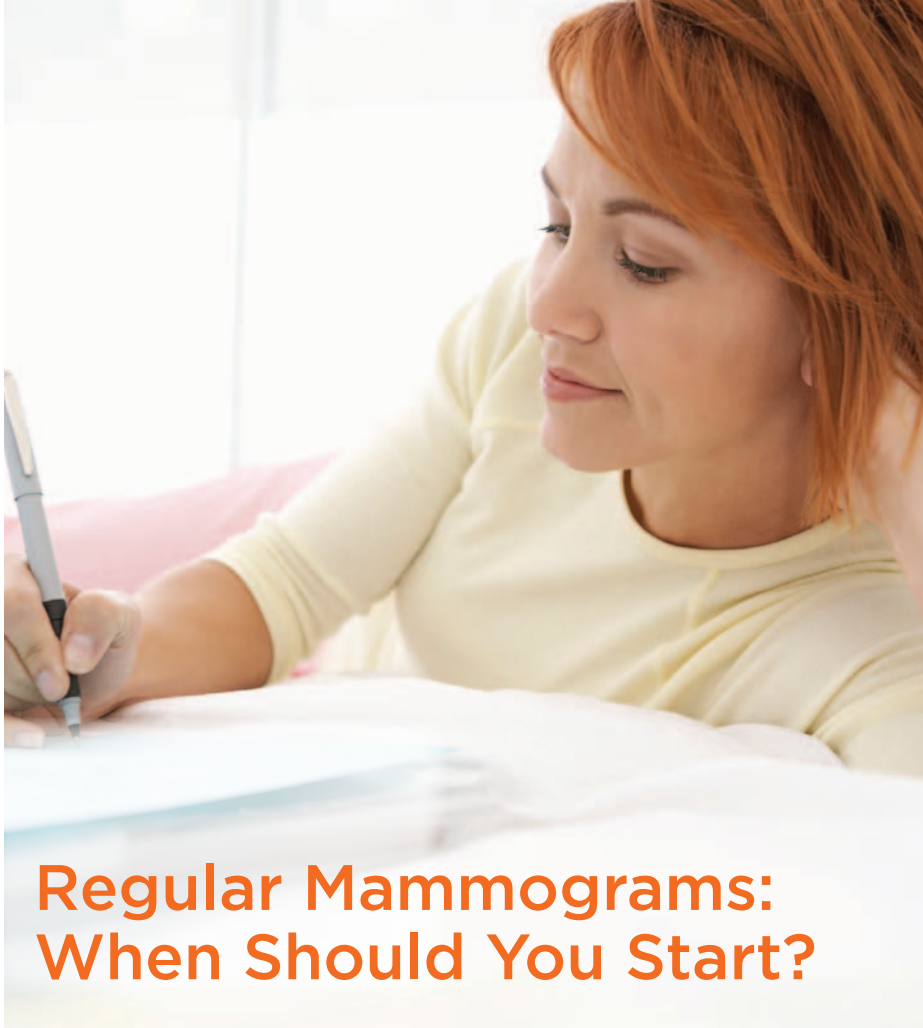
5 small potatoes, peeled and sliced  
1 Tbsp. olive oil or vegetable cooking spray  
½ medium onion, minced  
1 small zucchini, sliced  
1½ cup green/red peppers, sliced thin  
5 medium mushrooms, sliced  
3 whole eggs, beaten  
5 egg whites, beaten  
Garlic salt with herbs, to taste  
3 oz shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese  
1 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Cook potatoes in boiling water until tender.
3. In a nonstick pan, add oil or vegetable spray and warm at medium heat.
4. Add the onion and sauté until brown. Add vegetables and sauté until tender but not brown.
5. In a mixing bowl, slightly beat the eggs and egg whites, pepper, garlic salt, and mozzarella. Stir egg-cheese mixture into the cooked vegetables.
6. Oil or spray a 10-inch pie pan or ovenproof skillet. Transfer potatoes and egg mixture to pan. Spread with Parmesan cheese and bake until firm and brown on top, about 20 to 30 minutes.



Makes 5 servings. Each contains: calories: 242, carbohydrates: 18 g, protein: 19 g, fat: 9 g



## Regular Mammograms: When Should You Start?

**In the past few years, for many women,** the answer hasn't been clear. Guidelines from a federal task force in 2009 recommend mammograms beginning at age 50. But at a recent conference of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA), the organization strongly recommended that yearly screenings begin at age 40. This recommendation is supported by the American Cancer Society, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the National Cancer Institute.

Tina Stein, MD, a diagnostic radiologist with Riddle Hospital, points out that the federal task force didn't include expert breast imagers.

"Evidence at RSNA was provided by a review of screening mammograms obtained between 2000 and 2010, which detected more than 6,000 cancers. Eighteen percent of these were in women ages 40 to 49," Dr. Stein says. "One-third of these were in women who had no symptoms. That means 373 women would have had their cancers for 10 years by the time

they were eligible for a mammogram, according to the guidelines."

Dr. Stein, who has discovered many cancers on mammograms that weren't present on the previous year's mammograms, says that radiation exposure is very low and shouldn't discourage women from having the screening. Talk with your doctor or radiologist about any concerns you might have.

"Digital imaging has lowered the exposure by more than 20 percent compared to film," she adds. "In any event, the risks of mammography are far outweighed by the clear benefits." ●

### Mocktails, Manicures, and Mammograms (DEXA Scans, Too!)

**On Thursday, May 17, 4 to 8 p.m., Riddle Hospital is offering a special night to make getting a mammogram and DEXA scan a little more enjoyable, thanks to pampering and refreshments. Call 1.484.227.2640 for an appointment.**

## A Safer, Easier Way to Diagnose Breast Cancer

If your mammogram reveals a suspicious imaging abnormality, you may be advised to have it biopsied through ultrasound-guided, MRI-guided, or stereotactic methods. This used to mean a trip to the operating room. But recently, a less invasive option for biopsies has become the standard of care, says John Stassi, MD, Bryn Mawr Hospital breast imaging director.

A percutaneous biopsy involves using a tiny incision and local anesthesia. Special needles retrieve cores of the abnormal tissue, an amount about the size of a dime. That means less scarring than a traditional biopsy, as well as fewer potential complications related to having general anesthesia.

For abnormalities that aren't clearly suspicious, doctors might recommend waiting to see if they change with time. But Dr. Stassi says the stress of wondering about a questionable mammogram or ultrasound can be avoided through the relative ease of a percutaneous biopsy.

"A major benefit of choosing a percutaneous biopsy is the peace of mind that we give a patient when we tell her that an abnormality isn't cancer," Dr. Stassi says.

### Try a Walk-In Screening

Riddle Hospital's Comprehensive Breast Center and Main Line Health Center in Newtown Square make getting your mammogram easier. With our new Walk-In Wednesdays program, walk-in appointments are available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Just bring your prescription for your mammogram. Call 1.866.CALL.MLH for details.

# Don't Shrug Off the Pain

## Expert Treatment Heals Rotator Cuff Disorders

**The discomfort in Debbie Meyer's right shoulder had gotten worse with time. It became hard for her to do even simple things, like moving a computer mouse and lifting a laundry basket. Doctors suspected the athletic Malvern resident had a small tear in her rotator cuff from years of playing tennis. Physical therapy hadn't helped, but Debbie, 52, was reluctant to consider surgery.**

Then in May 2011, Debbie slipped in her bathroom, breaking a bone on the outside of her foot and further injuring her shoulder. Three months later, Charles Odgers, MD, an orthopaedic surgeon and shoulder specialist at Paoli Hospital, performed minimally invasive surgery to repair Debbie's rotator cuff.

The rotator cuff is a group of small muscles and tendons that envelopes the shoulder joint, enabling the shoulder to move while enhancing its stability.

Debbie's operation and recovery went so smoothly that she wishes she'd considered surgery earlier. She gave up tennis two years ago because of her shoulder pain. Now, she's back hitting ground strokes and gearing up to play again.

### Experience Counts

If shoulder pain is keeping you from doing the things you love, Main Line Health can help. Our experienced orthopaedic surgeons are experts at healing rotator cuff disorders. Surgery can often be performed with minimally invasive procedures, so there's less trauma to muscles and patients recover more quickly.

Rotator cuff disorders treated at Main Line Health include:

- **Tendinitis.** Tendons in the rotator cuff can become inflamed from overuse or injury. Young athletes and workers who repetitively use their arms overhead are especially at risk.
- **Calcific tendinitis.** Calcium builds up in the tendons, causing inflammation and pain.
- **Tears.** Most often, tears occur over time, as the tendon wears down with age. Tears can also happen suddenly—during a fall or when you lift a heavy object with a jerking motion. A partial tear does not completely sever the soft tissue. Full-thickness tears go all the way through.

### Signs and Symptoms

Rotator cuff problems can be disabling. You may feel pain when you raise your arm or reach out to lift something. Your shoulder may be weak and have limited range of motion. Sometimes people feel a catching or popping sensation in the shoulder when they try to lift their arm. Many report pain that interrupts their sleep.





Mother-daughter team Debbie (right) and Kailey stretch out. Charles Odgers, MD, checks Debbie's shoulder at his Paoli office. On the day of Debbie's surgery, Dr. Odgers performed emergency surgery on Kailey's finger to heal an infection following a gymnastics injury. Read Kailey's story at <http://community.mainlinehealth.org>.



### Surgery Can Ease Pain

Most rotator cuff injuries can be treated conservatively, with rest from activities that cause pain, medication, steroid injections to lessen inflammation and pain, and physical therapy to improve shoulder strength and flexibility.

"Surgery is usually recommended when conservative treatments don't help, and for people with full-thickness rotator cuff tears, especially if they're younger than 60 and physically active," Dr. Odgers says.

Doctors may recommend open surgery when rotator cuff tears are large or complicated. However, "most full-thickness rotator cuff tears—like the kind Debbie had—can be repaired with arthroscopic surgery," Dr. Odgers says. The surgeon inserts a small camera called an arthroscope and small instruments through three or four tiny incisions in the shoulder. Patients usually have less postoperative pain and stiffness and recover more quickly than they would with open surgery.

### Back on Track

After surgery, Debbie followed Dr. Odgers' rehabilitation regimen to a T. She began a stretching exercise program at home and then worked enthusiastically with her physical therapist to increase her shoulder strength and flexibility. Now, she's reaping the rewards.

"Four months after my operation, I turned a big corner," she says, "and by a year you probably won't be able to tell I had surgery." ●

### Find Relief for Joint Pain

Find solutions to shoulder, hip, knee, and other joint pain by attending FREE seminars offered through Main Line Health. Call 1.866.CALL.MLH for scheduling and information.

## Truth About Toning Shoes

It sounds so good: Slip on a pair of toning shoes and you'll tone your lower body and burn more calories. But a study by the American Council on Exercise casts doubt on such claims. Volunteers walked on a treadmill while wearing either toning shoes or traditional running shoes. The toning shoes didn't offer any boost in their calorie burning, cardio workout, or muscle activity.

"A toning shoe is deliberately unstable, with a strongly curved base," says Joshua Davidson, physical therapist with Main Line Health Outpatient Rehabilitation Network in Exton. "The idea is that this will force your muscles to work differently to keep you balanced, thereby firming muscles and burning more calories."

Before you start wearing toning shoes, "consult a certified fitness professional or medical professional with experience in strength and conditioning," Davidson says. "If you have lower extremity issues, diabetes, or burning or tingling in your legs, you'll need to be evaluated first."

### Go with the Pros

The Main Line Health Outpatient Rehab Network team works with people of all ages who have a variety of conditions. Learn more online at [mainlinehealth.org/outpatientnetwork](http://mainlinehealth.org/outpatientnetwork).



## HOSPITAL updates

### Lankenau Medical Center 1,300 More Parking Spaces for Your Convenience

Lankenau Medical Center recently added 1,300 new parking spaces, making its campus more accessible for patients and visitors. Construction is also under way on the new 260,000-square-foot Patient Pavilion, which will offer the most technologically advanced heart, vascular, and lung care. To serve its community's needs well into the future, Lankenau is advancing the health care specialties that have earned it national acclaim. Finally, our Facebook page is updating to a new name: Lankenau Medical Center. Like this new page for links to wellness articles, events, patient testimonials, doctor interviews, and more.

### Riddle Hospital Personalized Therapy for Children

For children with autism or developmental delays, it can be hard to learn to move and communicate well. Therapists at Riddle Hospital use occupational, physical, and speech language therapy to help children gain these skills. Each play-based therapy session is conducted in a child-friendly environment with a focus on the goals established during the child's evaluation. Parents are encouraged to participate in the sessions to support learning. Main Line Health Outpatient Rehabilitation Network therapists are trained to treat children with a wide variety of diagnoses, including autism, feeding problems, and motor and communication deficits. To learn more or to schedule an appointment, call 484.227.3370.



## WOMEN'S HEALTH SOURCE calendar of events



Registration is required for most programs. To register, call toll-free 1.888.876.8764 or visit [mainlinehealth.org/events](http://mainlinehealth.org/events), where you'll find a complete list of classes. Main Line Health events are FREE unless otherwise noted!

### Heart-Health Webinars

Well Ahead Webinars are FREE online presentations by Main Line Health physicians and health professionals on a variety of topics. Check out this spring's heart-healthy webinar series:

- March: Genetics and Heart Disease
- April: Time Is Brain: Advanced Stroke Treatment
- May: Everyday Cholesterol Management

- June: Strong Hearts in the Summer Heat

These 45-minute webinars begin at noon or 7 p.m. Learn more at [mainlinehealth.org/webinars](http://mainlinehealth.org/webinars).

### Senior Supper Club at Riddle Hospital

This monthly event features a meal and an informative presentation about healthy living for older adults. Held on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 4:30 p.m.

- March 28: Save Your Eyes with Leon M. Mielcarek, Jr., MD
- April 25: The History of Riddle Hospital with Kay Ferrari, historian

- May 23: Better Hearing and Speech with Barbara J. Madden Cafeteria at Riddle Hospital  
Fee: \$6 per person. Register by calling 1.888.876.8764.

### Senior Supper Club at Paoli Hospital

Paoli Hospital presents fun, social evenings for adults ages 60 and older. The events begin at 5 p.m. and include a nutritious meal and healthy programs presented by Paoli Hospital staff.

- Thursday, April 12: Navigating Homecare

- Tuesday, May 22: Senior Living Communities

Fee: \$6 per person. Register by calling 1.888.876.8764.

### Infant Safety Health Fair

From car seat inspections to home baby proofing, this fair will cover it all.

Saturday, April 14, 9 a.m.

Bryn Mawr Hospital  
Register by calling  
1.888.876.8764.

### Mother's Day Tea

The Main Line Health Women's Heart Initiative and Lankenau Medical Center invite you to enjoy tea sandwiches and listen to discussions about women's heart health and mother-daughter relationships. Dress for tea!

Saturday, May 12

8:30 a.m. to noon

Lankenau Medical Center

Register by calling

1.888.876.8764.

### NICU Golf Outing

The Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) of Main Line Health will host their 16th Annual NICU Golf Outing at Springfield Country Club. The event will also feature a silent auction, formal dinner, and dance.

Friday, May 18, noon

Springfield Country Club

Register at [mainlinehealth.org/nicugolf](http://mainlinehealth.org/nicugolf).

### Medical Myths Explored: What's True, What's Not

Heard a medical myth recently? Let our medical experts give you the real truth.

Tuesday, May 22, 6:30 p.m.



Registration is required for most programs. To register, call toll-free 1.888.876.8764 or visit [mainlinehealth.org/events](http://mainlinehealth.org/events), where you'll find a complete list of classes. Main Line Health events are FREE unless otherwise noted!

## HOSPITAL updates

Main Line Health Center in Broomall. Register by calling 1.888.876.8764.

### Chariots of Fire

Bryn Mawr Hospital and Bryn Mawr Film Institute team up for a special presentation around orthopaedic health. Join Robert Good, MD, for this reception and movie screening. Light fare served. **Wednesday, May 23, 6 p.m.** Bryn Mawr Film Institute 824 W. Lancaster Ave. Fee: \$15/\$10 WHS members Register by calling 1.888.876.8764.

### Cancer Survivors Day

Join us for inspirational events to celebrate life and hope. Refreshments will be served. Call 1.888.876.8764 for details. ● **Thursday, May 31, at Riddle Hospital Health Center 3, 5 to 8 p.m.** ● **Tuesday, June 5, join Paoli Hospital at the Desmond Hotel, Malvern, time TBD** ● **Thursday, June 7, at Main Line Health Center in Newtown Square, 5 to 7 p.m.**

## DESIGN YOUR BEST LIFE STRATEGIES FOR YOUR HEALTH, HOME, AND HAPPINESS

Whether it's your health, finances, nutrition, physical activity, or simply an organized home, this symposium will provide useful strategies to help you achieve peace of mind. Enjoy the keynote presentation by Emmy Award-winning broadcast journalist Tracy Davidson from NBC10 News entitled "Focus Your Attention, Focus Your Life."

Register by calling 1.888.876.8764 or visiting [mainlinehealth.org/whs](http://mainlinehealth.org/whs). Co-sponsored with Main Line Media News and Villanova University Conference Center. Luncheon included.

**Saturday, March 31, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
**Villanova University Conference Center**  
Fee: \$15/\$10 WHS members

### Riddle Duck Race for Cancer Survivors Day

To buy chances on a duck in the race or to learn how to get involved, call 484.227.4480. **Sunday, June 3 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Newlin Grist Mill

### Older Americans Events

In May, join us for a month of events geared toward seniors. For details, call 1.888.876.8764 or visit us online at [mainlinehealth.org/RiddleOlderAmericans](http://mainlinehealth.org/RiddleOlderAmericans).

### Paoli Hospital Welcoming a New Family Practice

Paoli Hospital has opened a new practice in Audubon at 950 Forge Avenue, Seton Center, with Mark S. Gottlieb, DO. Board certified in family medicine with more than 17 years of experience, Dr. Gottlieb treats patients ages 12 and older. For an appointment, call 1.866.CALL.MLH. In addition, the Paoli Hospital Maternity Unit is expanding! Renovations will combine state-of-the-art facilities with the excellence of Paoli's maternity and NICU staff. The larger unit will include patient rooms, a well-baby nursery, NICU, and operating rooms. It is expected to be complete by spring 2013. To learn more, visit [mainlinehealth.org/paolimaternity](http://mainlinehealth.org/paolimaternity).

### Bryn Mawr Hospital Expanding Pediatric Care

Bryn Mawr Hospital and the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children are proud to announce the expansion of their partnership to bring specialized pediatric care services to southeastern Pennsylvania. "Bryn Mawr Hospital wants to ensure our youngest patients have access to the best pediatric care," says Andrea Gilbert, president of Bryn Mawr Hospital. The pediatric partners will strengthen their collaboration during the next year to include around-the-clock care in the pediatric emergency department, with additional board-certified emergency medicine physicians and expanded specialty consultation services for inpatients at Bryn Mawr Hospital. To learn more, call 1.866.CALL.MLH or visit [mainlinehealth.org/peds](http://mainlinehealth.org/peds).

## Three Main Line Health Hospitals Ranked Among Best by U.S. News & World Report

Lankenau Medical Center and Bryn Mawr and Paoli Hospitals—once again—have been ranked among the top hospitals in the Philadelphia region by *U.S. News & World Report*. They have been recognized in the following areas:

- **Lankenau Medical Center:** Cardiology and Heart Surgery, Gastroenterology, Geriatric, Nephrology, Neurology and Neurosurgery, Pulmonology, and Urology\*
- **Bryn Mawr Hospital:** Gastroenterology, Geriatrics, Orthopaedics, and Urology\*\*
- **Paoli Hospital:** Orthopaedics, Gastroenterology, ENT, and Urology\*\*

"This achievement puts us among an elite group of hospitals in the Philadelphia region to receive this distinctive honor and serves as another validation from an outside source that the best care can be found right here in our local communities," says Jack Lynch, president and CEO, Main Line Health.



# Small Microscope Treats Big Gastro Disorders

## Several years ago, Deanne Sherman

was diagnosed with Barrett's esophagus, a condition of abnormal, potentially precancerous change in the lower esophagus. The former celebrity reporter with three sons and four grandchildren was told she might have to have her esophagus removed to prevent esophageal cancer. Then she found out about the world's smallest microscope.

Deanne decided to get a second opinion at Lankenau Medical Center. Bob Etemad, MD, gastroenterologist and medical director of endoscopy at Main Line Health, told her she wouldn't need such a drastic surgery, thanks to a new imaging technology known as probe-based Confocal Laser Endomicroscopy (pCLE), or Cellvizio.

## Cellvizio Enables Faster Treatment

Lankenau Medical Center physicians who specialize in gastrointestinal disorders are the first in the Philadelphia area to use Cellvizio, the world's smallest flexible microscope. It's used to diagnose gastrointestinal and biliary diseases during regular endoscopy procedures so patients can be treated immediately.

"Until now, if we found areas that appeared abnormal during an endoscopic procedure, we would have to send it to a laboratory for analysis, which can take up to a week," says Dr. Etemad. "This sometimes is a problem when the

Cellvizio, the world's smallest flexible microscope, helps Main Line Health doctors diagnose and treat people with gastrointestinal disorders more quickly.



biopsies do not confirm our suspicions. We may then need to rebiopsy with an additional procedure. With Cellvizio, we have a tool that helps us better identify the dangerous tissue during the initial diagnostic exam, removing it the same day and then going back to ensure we removed it all. We have a lot more information."

## More Accurate Diagnoses

Cellvizio allows doctors to more accurately differentiate cancerous and precancerous changes in tissue during colonoscopies, endoscopies, and standard cancer detection procedures. While the person is having an endoscopy, the tiny microscope is threaded through a traditional endoscope. The structure of the digestive tract appears in real time on the screen, allowing the doctor to recognize typical features of healthy and diseased tissue. It adds only a few minutes to the standard endoscopic exam, and it has a



Deanne Sherman was treated using Cellvizio.

proven safety record, with no adverse events reported in thousands of cases.

"I can't tell you how relieved I was to hear Dr. Etemad tell me there was another option," says Deanne. "Since I retired, my husband and I have made many plans to travel and visit family and friends. After three minimally invasive endoscopy procedures, I am cancer-free and ready to live my life."

At Lankenau, Cellvizio will be applied to gastrointestinal cancers and diseases of the colon, bile duct, pancreas, and esophagus. ●

## The Latest Technology

Lankenau Medical Center is one of about 50 centers in the U.S. using the Cellvizio focal probe. Cellvizio is cleared by the FDA for use in the gastrointestinal tract and lungs. To schedule an appointment with Lankenau's Gastroenterology Department, call 1.866.CALL.MLH.

## Lankenau, Bryn Mawr Among Nation's Top Cardiovascular Hospitals

Lankenau Medical Center and Bryn Mawr Hospital have been named among the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Thomson Reuters. The study examined the performance of more than 1,000 hospitals, analyzing outcomes for patients with heart failure and heart attacks and for those who received coronary bypass surgery and percutaneous coronary interventions such as angioplasties.







## Should You Call a Doctor About That Cut?

**Whether it's from chopping vegetables** or falling off your bike, cuts and scrapes are a normal part of life. But when is a cut too serious to treat yourself? And what's the best way to handle first aid?

You should call your doctor or go to the ER if the bleeding is spurting or can't be stopped, or if the injury has any of these characteristics:

- The wound is deep or gaping open.
- You lose feeling or function—for example, you can't feel or move a finger that has a cut.
- There is dirt or glass in the wound that you can't remove by washing.
- The wound is caused by an animal or human bite.
- Signs of infection develop, such as increasing pain, redness, pus, or fever and chills.

Fortunately, you can treat most minor cuts yourself. "First, thoroughly wash your hands, then wash the cut with lots of soap and water to remove any dirt and germs," says Rebecca Witham, MD, medical director, Wound Healing & Hyperbaric Medicine Center at Paoli Hospital. "Avoid using alcohol or peroxide, as these can be damaging—

plus, they sting!"

If it's bleeding, cover with a clean cloth or bandage and apply firm pressure directly to the cut for 10 to 15 minutes. If possible, elevate the injured part above the level of your heart.

"Wounds heal best when they're covered," Dr. Witham says. "Bandage the wound daily with ointment. It's OK to wash the wound with soap and water at each dressing change."

Most minor wounds heal within a week. "If you've had slow-to-heal wounds in the past or the wound gets worse despite your treatment, call your doctor. He or she may refer you to a wound center, where the most modern, specialized care is available for hard-to-treat wounds," Dr. Witham adds. ●



### Help to Heal

**Wound Healing Centers are available at Lankenau Medical Center and Bryn Mawr and Paoli**

**Hospitals. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is offered at Bryn Mawr and Paoli. Our Contact Center specialists can help guide you to one of these centers. Ask them how by calling 1.866.CALL.MLH.**

## Grow an Allergy-Friendly Garden This Spring!

If you're one of the estimated 40 million Americans with hay fever, the grasses, trees, and weeds in your yard can aggravate symptoms. Certain greenery is more likely to be a trigger, such as Johnson, rye, Timothy, bluegrass, and fescue grass, and maple, oak, ash, birch, hickory, and walnut trees.

"Try to keep these irritating offenders off your property, but remember that your neighbors might have them and pollen can travel for miles," says Albert S. Rohr, MD, Bryn Mawr Hospital allergy and immunology specialist.

Having allergies doesn't mean you're stuck landscaping with gravel and concrete. These buds and blooms have less chance of giving you the sniffles:

- **Flowers:** lilac, daisy, geranium, dahlia, hibiscus, iris, rose, tulip
- **Trees:** cherry, crepe myrtle, redwood, apple, dogwood, pear, plum

Gardening is worth the effort; it's good exercise and produces nutritious food. But before you head outside, be prepared. Check the daily pollen counts in your area at [aaaai.org/global/nab-pollen-counts](http://aaaai.org/global/nab-pollen-counts). Take your allergy medications beforehand. Wash your hands often, and rinse your eyes when you come back inside. And shower before bed to avoid getting pollen on your sheets.

## Preventing Stroke in People with Atrial Fibrillation

Atrial fibrillation (AF) is a common type of heart-rhythm disorder. The risk for this condition increases as we age.

“AF is characterized by an irregular and often rapid heartbeat that causes poor blood flow to the body,” says Francis D. Ferdinand, MD, Main Line Health surgical director of clinical effectiveness. “This can lead to blood clots in the left atrial appendage of the heart, which can cause a stroke. In fact, people with AF have a fivefold higher risk of having a stroke than people who don’t have AF.”

Treatment for AF can include lifestyle changes, medication, and surgery, including the revolutionary AtriClip procedure, which is now offered at Lankenau Medical Center. AtriClip is an option for patients with AF who neither respond to medical therapy nor are candidates for the Maze procedure, a minimally invasive surgical technique that uses electrical impulses to restore regular rhythm. Both AtriClip and Maze are performed in our Hybrid Cardiac Operating Room/ Electrophysiology Lab.

In the AtriClip procedure, Dr. Ferdinand places the rectangular-shaped AtriClip device around the left atrial appendage of the heart, then “closes” the device, much like a clamp shuts off blood supply. “This prevents blood from flowing into and out of the left atrial appendage, reducing the risk of blood clot formation and stroke,” he says.

## Lower Stress Levels to Raise Heart Health

**Unfortunately, stress is a part of life,** especially these days. None of us is immune to it.

Stress is difficult on the body, especially the heart. Although there are some things we can’t change, such as our genetics, there are things we can do to manage stress and its harmful effects, says Andrea Becker, MD, cardiologist with Main Line HealthCare in Conshohocken.

First, for optimum heart health, women who smoke should quit. “Smoking can only hurt you. If there was ever a time you were thinking about quitting, it’s now,” Dr. Becker says. “You’ll feel better, the air will smell

better, your food will taste better, your breathing will be easier, and you’ll save a ton of money!”

Exercise is critical. “Go to the gym, or go for a walk outside. Hit the golf ball, go for that bike ride,” she says. “You will sleep better and have more energy. Exercise is a healthy way to deal with the stresses of life.”

Find a hobby. “Paint that picture, or make that sculpture you’ve always wanted to do,” Dr. Becker says. “Treat yourself to dinner with your family, or go to a movie.”

As much as all of this doesn’t sound like medical advice, it’s good for your heart, Dr. Becker adds. ●

### Join In on the Heart-Health Webinar Series!

Want to learn more about caring for your heart? Sign up for the Heart-Health Webinar Series offered each month this spring. Next up are discussions on advanced stroke treatment and managing cholesterol. Learn more at [mainlinehealth.org/webinars](http://mainlinehealth.org/webinars).





## Assess Your Health Before Pregnancy

If there's a chance you might start a family soon, take time to take stock of your health. It's best to check in with your doctor at least three months before conception. During that visit, you can review your health history, as well as your family's. In addition, your doctor may advise you to take some specific steps.

Women planning a pregnancy should get 400 micrograms of folate daily from a folic acid supplement or multivitamin, or from foods such as fortified breakfast cereal. Daria Yanez, MD, OB/GYN physician at Riddle Hospital, explains, "Folic acid prevents neural tube defects. It's important to start taking folic acid before you're pregnant, because the neural tube starts to form even before you miss your first period."

At your doctor appointment, make sure you've had all the vaccinations you need. Tell your doctor about any prescription and over-the-counter medicines you take.

If you smoke, now's the time to quit. This is also a good time to avoid alcohol, which can make it more difficult for some women to get pregnant.

Finally, lose weight if you're

overweight. This can reduce the risks for birth defects, preterm delivery, and cesarean section. Dr. Yanez says, "If you've developed a good exercise program before conception, you should continue to exercise during the pregnancy, with some modifications.

"I generally tell my patients to stop taking oral contraception about a month before they plan to start trying to get pregnant," Dr. Yanez adds. "About 80 percent of couples having unprotected sex will conceive within a year. My advice is to not worry, have fun, and enjoy the next few months." ●



### Tops in Maternity Care

Riddle Hospital has received the HealthGrades Maternity Care Excellence Award™ for 2011. This five-star rating as one of the nation's best performing hospitals in maternity care puts Riddle among the top 10 percent of hospitals in the nation. For an appointment with a Riddle Hospital OB/GYN or to register for a childbirth education class, call 1.866.CALL.MLH.



## Join Your Members-Only Site!

Have you signed up for your username and password for the Women's Health Source Member Center? The members-only website at [mainlinehealth.org/whs](http://mainlinehealth.org/whs) offers you:

- Coupons for more than 50 local merchants
- Wellness quizzes
- Educational podcasts
- Health calculators

Sign up at [mainlinehealth.org/whsmember](http://mainlinehealth.org/whsmember) today! You'll receive an email within a week with your username and password.



**Like**  
**Almost There!**  
500 Likes Means \$500 for the AHA Go Red for Women Campaign. Like Women's Health Source on Facebook and help us reach our goal of 500 followers. We'll then donate \$500 to the AHA Go Red for Women Campaign to unite in the fight against heart disease. Main Line Health is the AHA Philadelphia Goes Red for Women Champion.



Lankenau Medical Center  
Bryn Mawr Hospital  
Paoli Hospital  
Riddle Hospital  
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital



**MAIN LINE HEALTH**  
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**KNOWLEDGE  
IS POWER**

## Forward Thinking Brings Peace of Mind

What if you had a serious illness and couldn't speak for yourself? Whom would you want to make health care decisions for you? These are important questions to consider and plan for.

Advance directives are documents that state your wishes about medical care in case you aren't able to make decisions for yourself. There are three types:

- **Living will:** Outlines the type of medical care you want to receive. It gives specific instructions about treatment, such as use of blood transfusions and tube feedings.
- **Health care power of attorney:** Lets you appoint someone to make medical decisions for you in case you can't. This can be a family member or other trusted person.
- **Combination document:** This document includes both a living will and health care power of attorney.

You can get advance directive forms from your state agency on aging, or ask your doctor or hospital if they have the forms. And you can update them if you change your mind about the care you'd like to receive. Be sure to give a copy to your doctor and a family member, and the hospital if you're admitted for care.

### Have a health question?

Ask our nurse counselor online at [mainlinehealth.org/askanurse](http://mainlinehealth.org/askanurse), by email at [whs@mlhs.org](mailto:whs@mlhs.org), or at 1.888.876.8764.

## Countdown to a Happy, Healthy Voyage

### A flight abroad, or a stateside

drive—no matter your getaway, you can take steps to keep it free of health concerns.

Two to four months beforehand, check [cdc.gov/travel](http://cdc.gov/travel) to see if there are health warnings for your destination. "Ask your doctor about vaccinations. You might need them even if you're traveling to developed nations," says Stanton Miller, MD, MPH, from the Main Line Health Occupational and Travel Health Clinic. "Also, contact your health insurance company to learn how medical care is covered while you're traveling."

One to two weeks beforehand:

- Fill your prescriptions. Bring enough for your trip and a few extra days. Keep them in their original containers.
- Pack a first-aid kit including items such as cough, cold, pain, and stomach medicines, antibiotic ointment, and bandages.
- Leave a copy of your passport, itinerary, doctor's phone number, and any prescriptions with a contact person at home.

Get a good night's sleep before you depart. This helps prevent jet lag if you're flying across time zones and reduces your risk of accidents if you're driving. On planes, walk around or stretch your legs at least once per hour to prevent dangerous blood clots.

Finally, while you're away, be careful with food and water, especially abroad. When in doubt, avoid raw meats, food from street vendors, and ice, and drink water from factory-sealed bottles. Remember to wash your hands frequently to prevent infection. ●



### Taking Off?

The Occupational and  
Travel Health Clinic at  
Main Line Health, located

on the Paoli Hospital campus, provides consultations, vaccinations, and prescriptions for your trip. Learn more at [mainlinehealth.org/occtravel](http://mainlinehealth.org/occtravel), or call 1.484.565.1293 for an appointment.