

balance

HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS FOR WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS SP+SU|13

Become an **Empowered Patient**

IN THIS ISSUE:

INNOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Commitment to Excellence =
Higher Standards of Care

STROKE—NO TIME TO WAIT

How tPA Saves Lives





Coming Soon!

Mercy Medical Center will soon be providing a patient portal, a way to allow patients to access their own health information in a safe and protected way—delivered to your desktop, smartphone, or tablet app!



Take Two Apps and Call Me in the Morning

Make your smartphone or tablet your health coach.

HEALTH TRACKERS AND symptom checkers can help keep you well, and also provide valuable guidance when you do get off track. Applications (apps) lack the depth of a conversation with a health provider and cannot be substituted for professional medical advice, but for everyday use, they're portable, speedy, and often free.

No app is perfect. Try out several, and then weigh the good and bad of each until you find the app that's right for you.

Health Trackers

If you have a chronic health condition, it can be tough to juggle metrics and medications. That's where health trackers come in.

An app such as **HandyLogs** (www.handylogs.com) can make monitoring and medicating simple. For instance, if you have diabetes, you can record your glucose readings and input medications. More than a memory assist, HandyLogs has a function that allows you to collect data from multiple devices to help look for trends over time and share your historical data with a health provider. HandyLogs offers specific versions for high blood pressure, weight-loss goals, and more.

The good: Powerful analytics allow you to drill deep into your monitoring logs.

The bad: To combine analytics for different conditions, such as cholesterol tracking with glucose tracking, you need to invest in the paid, premium version.

Available for: Android, Blackberry, iPhone, and iPad

Symptom Checkers

Symptom apps may include dictionaries or graphic illustrations to help users explore symptoms. The apps help you determine what's wrong, how to fix it, and when you need outside help.

Supported by a portable app and a website, **iTriage** (www.itriagehealth.com) offers a simple, user-friendly interface. Click on the illustration to isolate a body part, then scroll through lists of symptoms associated with that body part. After helping you narrow down your symptoms, the app suggests a possible condition and directs you to several appropriate facilities (clinics, emergency rooms, or specialists) for the problem. It even includes an estimated price list for treatment.

The good: There's no cost to use iTriage. The interface has simple pictures, clear text, and helpful information about medical conditions and medications.

The bad: Some guidance may be generalized. For instance, a user can drill down to identify a strained ligament. The app may recommend a podiatrist, among other providers, which may not be most appropriate for the location of the injury.

Available for: Android phones or tablets, iPhone, and iPad

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HAVE YOU TRIED THE ITRIAGE APP? VISIT WWW.ITRIAGEHEALTH.COM TO
LEARN MORE.
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Asparagus Tapas with Red
Pepper Sauce Recipe



ON THE COVER:

Become an
Empowered Patient



Mercy
MEDICAL CENTER



A member of the Sisters of Providence
Health System and Catholic Health East,
sponsored by the Sisters of Providence.

Committed to providing great care, delivering it efficiently,
and living up to our Mission of being a “transforming, healing
presence in the communities we serve.”

Dear Friends,

Mercy Medical Center continues to focus on initiatives that reflect our “zero defect” mentality regarding quality and safety measures. For example, Mercy’s CareLink electronic medical record initiative incorporates evidence-based care and best practices to ensure the coordination and continuity of the highest quality of care, through the implementation of enhancements to our electronic medical record system, the development of evidence-based orders and documentation, and changes in workflow processes.

Mercy is also developing a Health Information Exchange to seamlessly and safely exchange data between physicians and Mercy. The health information exchange will also include a patient portal that provides patients with safe electronic access to their medical information such as laboratory test results.

We are in the process of converting 75 percent of our inpatient rooms to private rooms; studies show that patients in private rooms have lower infection rates and rest more comfortably in a quieter, peaceful environment of care.

With deductibles and co-pays on the rise, the issue of health care costs is more relevant to patients. Mercy has partnered with Noble Hospital, leading local physicians, and Accountable Care Associates to launch the Accountable Care Organization of New England (ACONE). The ACONE is designed to provide high-quality care at a lower cost by improving the management of chronic disease, reducing hospital admissions and readmissions, and providing shared incentives for better outcomes.

Mercy has launched our CareConnect initiative, a care integration system that will transform care delivery using evidence-based protocols, a computerized patient tracking system and new care coordinator positions. In combination, these elements are effective in improving the patient experience of care in our hospital and reducing costs.

Construction is underway for a new Medical Office Building on the Mercy campus. The three-story building will include 25,000-square feet of medical office space on each floor. The building will be constructed utilizing “green” technologies and will be an environmentally friendly and responsible structure.

As we move through 2013, ever mindful of our role as caretakers, we look forward with confidence in our ability to innovate and transform in ways that are best for our patients and our entire community. We strive to provide the best health care and the best health care experience possible. Take a closer look in this issue of *Balance* to see how we are taking important steps to improve your health care experience and learn about some of the amazing Sisters of Providence Health System services spotlighted here.

Your partner in good health,

Daniel P. Moen
PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Sisters of Providence Health System



One of Mercy’s newly renovated healing spaces

Become

an Empowered Patient

Navigating your way through the health care system can be daunting. Mercy Medical Center can help.

ILLNESS IS A complicated matter. From understanding your condition to finding its best care, the whole process can easily be overwhelming. But there are many steps you can take to feel more empowered.

To begin, improve your health literacy. Health literacy involves understanding the information you're receiving and being able to put it to good use. Don't be put off if you don't immediately understand everything you read or hear; everyone experiences trouble understanding at times.

Help Yourself

You can improve your health literacy by:

❑ **Asking questions.** Ask for clarification of anything you don't understand.

"When we go to the doctor, often we get nervous and forget the questions we wanted to ask," says Sharon Adams, RN, senior vice president-patient care services and chief quality officer at Mercy Medical Center. "That's why we should think about questions beforehand, write down signs and symptoms, and note any changes in our health care. Don't be frightened to ask what tests are being done and why, and ask lots of questions about any recommended medications. We need to take ownership of our care and make sure we're in control of the situation."

Physicians count on communication as a primary diagnostic tool. Feel free to ask about anything that concerns you, even embarrassing matters; your physician has seen and heard it all before.

❑ **Repeating information** back to the doctor or nurse will give him or her a chance to correct any misunderstandings or provide additional information. Physicians and patients often have very different understandings of information.

❑ **Bringing medications**—including over-the-counter medications, herbs, or other supplements—to your doctor's appointment. This gives the doctor the opportunity to discover any potential adverse drug interactions.

❑ **Carrying a card with information on all your medications** (including OTC medications, herbs, and supplements). As you go through the system, you'll be amazed at how many times you are asked about this.

❑ **Using the Internet** to learn about specific conditions and other information. If you go online, use reliable sources, such as www.my.clevelandclinic.org, www.mayoclinic.com, or www.ahrq.gov.

Bring Along a Friend or Loved One

Consider taking another adult with you during visits to act as your advocate. Having someone with you during an appointment may be especially helpful if you are anxious or expect to receive critical or potentially upsetting test results. What you hear may affect your ability to follow the physician's discussion, so having someone there will help with understanding and remembering specific details.

The person accompanying you to the appointment should be well-informed about your situation, including your medical history, your concerns, tests you've had, medications you are taking, whether you need help with reading or don't use English as your primary language, and how to get in touch with family members. Mercy provides interpreters for non-English speaking patients and family members and special equipment for hearing-impaired persons.

In the Hospital

Navigating your health care can be a real challenge, especially when you're admitted to a hospital. Mercy Medical Center's new CareConnect program can make the process easier. Among the program's many patient-friendly features, CareConnect provides patients and families with an itinerary of each day's activities, from admission to discharge.

"Many times patients feel they don't have control while in the hospital, and things come as a surprise," Adams says. "CareConnect creates a hospital-wide coordination of patient flow so it appears seamless to the patient. The new system makes patients feel comfortable about what's going on and how it will impact their day. CareConnect is a prime example of Mercy's commitment to high-quality patient care and to being the Greater Springfield area's provider of choice."

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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CARECONNECT, CALL 413-748-9032.
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CareConnect will soon make health care navigation at Mercy Medical Center even easier.

“CareConnect is a complete transformation of our model of care,” says Scott Wolf, DO, MPH, senior vice president of medical affairs, chief medical officer, and chief operating officer, Mercy Medical Center and Sisters of Providence Health System. “It will be like having an air traffic controller for the hospital.”

CareConnect at Mercy, the only hospital in the region with such a program, operates from a new Care Coordination Center hub. Information passes to and from the hub, and it is used to orchestrate the flow of activity throughout the hospital.

"From the beginning, patients are made aware of how many days they can expect to stay," says Sharon Adams, RN, senior vice president-patient care services and chief quality officer at Mercy. "This allows patients to have a sense of control."

The Care Coordination Center makes patient hand-offs from unit to unit more efficient than ever and improves scheduling. Patients benefit by decreased wait times for tests to be completed.

"The operation focuses on the patients' experiences and outcomes," says Dr. Wolf. "This is an enormous investment to ensure patients at Mercy receive optimal, world-class care. At the end of the day, we're here to serve patients and the community in the best way we can."



clip and save



Please fill out in pencil

Name: _____

Address:

City: _____

State: **Zip:**

Phone # (Home):**Primary Care Physician Name:**

Phone #: _____

Other Physician's Name:

Physician's Phone #:_____

Pharmacy #1:

Phone #:

Pharmacy #2:_____

Phone #:

Emergency Contact: _____

Phone #: _____

Name of Health Care Proxy:

- Influenza – Date: _____

• Tetanus® – Date:

- Pneumococcal – Date:




Our mission is to heal. Our passion is to care.

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Allergies:_____

 Mercy Medical Center is a member of the Sisters of Providence Health System and Catholic Health East, sponsored by the Sisters of Providence.

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Innovations & Improvements

Mercy Medical Center's commitment to excellence drives an even higher standard of care. As a result, we are continuously making improvements, and we have a lot to share.



MyHealth 
JOURNEY TO BETTER HEALTH

Want to support the important work of Sisters of Providence Health System? Our fund development team offers a wide array of opportunities to be part of our work, including "Catch the Spirit" programs to learn more, an annual fundraising lunch, charitable gift annuity opportunities, online giving and online store, and much more. Discover more at www.sphsfunddevelopment.com.

FROM IMPROVING PATIENT safety to launching new technological systems, every change that takes place at Mercy means enhanced care. Here's the latest.

Finding the Evidence

Mercy team members have been utilizing the most up-to-date research on best care practices, patient safety, and evidence-based medicine. Putting their heads together to turn these studies into day-to-day processes, leaders of programs such as Mercy's CareLink have implemented enhancements to the electronic medical record system, created new workflow routes, and updated hospital documentation. Our goal is total safety, or "zero defects."

Information Revolution

On the subject of developing new programs, Mercy is also working on a new communication program to connect care providers and patients directly. Called a

health information exchange, the program—which contains portals for both patients and providers—takes the form of an online system that can be used for physician-to-hospital and physician-to-physician exchange of information. In addition to the physician portal, patients also use the patient portal to access their health records from home with all the security that medical records require. Whether patients want access to laboratory tests or medical histories, they'll be able to find the information instantly through the exchange.

Offering More Privacy

When poring through the evidence for patient safety programs, it was discovered that not only do patients prefer private rooms during a hospital stay, but in some cases it can help lower the infection rate. As a result, 75 percent of all inpatient rooms are being transformed into private rooms, allowing patients a more peaceful stay at Mercy.



Teeing Up for Brightside

As we continue to enhance our programs across Sisters of Providence Health System, our fund development team works to foster new partnerships. One way they do that is through the Annual Brightside Golf Classic.

The 33rd Golf Classic takes place Monday, July 22, at the Springfield Country Club and the Ranch Golf Club. Participants will enjoy a dinner reception at the Springfield Country Club immediately after golfing, but that's just a small part of the great feeling they'll have that day. By sponsoring or taking part in the Classic, golfers support Brightside's important work with children and their families throughout Western Massachusetts. What could be better than helping a child in need?

Golf for a Good Cause

The founding ministry of Sisters of Providence Health System, Brightside continues to offer essential home-based counseling services for children and their families in our community. Offering wraparound services for children facing potential psychiatric hospital placements, the program helps young people have brighter, healthier futures.

While many more families would love to take part in this wonderful program, the need for funding requires many children to wait until Brightside can expand its services. That's where the community comes in. Giving to Brightside, whether through the Golf Classic or through a personal donation, offers children hope for tomorrow. Brightside continues its proud legacy of caring for children, serving more than 500 children and their families each year. It is with great pride that we celebrate the 140th anniversary of the Sisters of Providence this year and note their 120th year as a Diocesan Congregation.

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Please contact Brenda McCormick at 413-748-9920 to find out more about supporting Brightside through the 33rd Annual Golf Classic, or visit www.sphsfunddevelopment.com/events.

Lowering the Costs

To fight rising costs, Mercy has joined Noble Hospital and numerous local physicians to start the Accountable



Care Organization of New England (ACONE). Through ACONE, the groups will help each other manage chronic disease, reduce unnecessary readmissions, prevent unnecessary emergency department visits, and share in the benefits of achieving excellent outcomes and lower costs.

Expanding Your Options

We're working on a new three-story, 75,000-square-foot medical office building, which will provide access plus convenience by housing several medical practices, including Hampden County Physician Associates, two Mercy physician practices, Weldon Rehabilitation Hospital's outpatient programs, and Mercy Hearing

Center. All construction is being done with environmental responsibility, recognizing not only the inherent value of protecting our natural resources but also the health benefits to our neighbors of building in a "green" manner.

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STAY ON TOP OF THE LATEST NEWS FROM MERCY MEDICAL CENTER AT WWW.MERCYCARES.COM.
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Taming Teen Angst

Many parents are bewildered when an affectionate, happy child suddenly turns into a teenager—sullen and distant, or moody and melodramatic. With patience and persistence, you can navigate the turbulent teen years together and become a stronger family in the long run.

YOU MAY RECALL life as a teenager, but your child's experience is likely to be very different. Children become preteens earlier now—as young as age 9 for girls and 12 for boys. Also, the effects of peer pressure and media influences are greater today.

"Parents can best prepare by educating themselves on what is normal and explaining what the child can expect," says Maria Zygmunt, LMFT, director of Brightside's Family Stabilization Team and Community Support Program. "Sharing what you've read helps validate the advice, so it's coming from an expert—not just mom and dad."

Remember the "terrible twos?" The teen transformation is similar; in both stages, children develop independence and identity. But teens have to contend with much more rapid and significant changes in hormones and brain structure. Confusing physical

sensations, unfamiliar emotions, and the influence of parents, peers, and popular characters all collide in the teenage mind, requiring time and effort to sort out.

Making the Transition

During the teen years, your child may disengage, becoming engrossed in electronic devices or disappearing into activities and friendships that exclude you. When your child shuns you and questions your values, it's tempting to overreact, but that approach can backfire. Open communication helps you maintain a solid connection with your teenager, while you simultaneously begin to "let go."

Work to build that bond at an early age, and your preteen child will be more receptive for it to continue. Participate in your child's activities, and talk about his or her interests. Be willing to listen objectively to his or her concerns. Your child will be more likely to open up if you do not judge, blame, or shame him or her.

"Teens are going to make mistakes," Zygmunt says. "Let your child know you are there to help."

Accepting that your child is growing into an independent adult does not mean you have to tolerate unacceptable or dangerous behavior.

"Parents should not try to force their own viewpoints on a child," Zygmunt says. "However, parents must set firm and consistent limits and consequences."

If you worry your child's behavior is more than normal rebelliousness, don't be afraid to step in. If an outgoing child suddenly grows silent and solitary or has always earned good grades but is now failing, it may signal a problem.

If your child participates in very risky behaviors—such as cutting, drinking, drugs, running away, sneaking out, or isolation—don't let it escalate. Consider individual or family therapy. Identify how family members can contribute to solutions. If you feel unable to handle your child's behavior yourself, seek professional help.

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IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR TEEN'S BEHAVIOR, BRIGHTSIDE FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN CAN HELP. TO LEARN MORE, CALL 413-788-7366.
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Maria Zygmunt meets with a client in her home.



Emilio Melchionna, MD

Stroke—No Time to Wait

Every four minutes in America, a person dies of a stroke. However, a clot-busting medication known as tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), when given within three hours of symptom onset, can save lives.

WHEN AN ISCHEMIC stroke strikes suddenly, an artery supplying blood to the brain is blocked. The longer the blockage is left untreated, the more fragile brain cells die.

“Approximately 2 million brain cells are lost every minute a stroke continues without treatment,” explains Patti Henault, RN, stroke coordinator at Mercy Medical Center. “For an ischemic stroke, medication can be given to help dissolve the clot. But as with any type of stroke, time is brain and every second counts. Getting a patient to the hospital’s emergency department [ED] is an important first step.”

When medically appropriate, tPA can be given intravenously or by arterial catheter.

“Clot-busting drugs dissolve the clot and reestablish blood flow. Studies show that patients who receive tPA have improved outcomes several months after a stroke,” Henault says. “The ED nurses at Mercy have been specially trained to recognize stroke

symptoms and call a ‘stroke alert’ when appropriate. We can then begin to administer tPA, if necessary, and get the patient on the road to recovery faster.”

Once the stroke alert is sounded, a dedicated stroke team responds. This group of highly skilled professionals consists of the ED provider (a medical doctor or physician assistant), ED nurse, neurologist on call, neurosurgeon on call (if the stroke is hemorrhagic—caused by a ruptured blood vessel), computed tomography scan technician, radiologist, phlebotomist/ED technician, and stroke coordinator.

STROKE IS ALWAYS CONSIDERED AN EMERGENCY. IF YOU EXPERIENCE COMMON STROKE SYMPTOMS, SUCH AS SUDDEN ONSET OF NUMBNESS OR TINGLING OF THE ARMS, LEGS, OR FACE, OR DIFFICULTY SPEAKING, CALL 9-1-1 AND DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DRIVE YOURSELF TO THE HOSPITAL.



Preventive Services For Good Health

Take an active role in your family’s well-being with preventive health care.

AS PART OF the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, many routine screenings and other preventive care services may now be covered by your health insurance.

Preventive services are broken into three categories.

The adult category includes:

- adult immunizations
- aspirin counseling
- monitoring your basic health “numbers” such as blood pressure and cholesterol
- screening for conditions such as depression

A second category of free preventive services is specifically designed for women, including those who are pregnant, and includes:

- age-specific support, such as osteoporosis screenings
- counseling services
- gynecologic- and obstetric-specific screenings
- supplements

The largest category of complementary preventive services focuses on the needs of children. There are 27 unique preventive health services provided for children free of charge

under the Affordable Care Act.

This category covers a wide range of health benefits, including:

- influenza and pneumonia vaccines
- obesity counseling
- oral health risk assessments
- routine vaccinations and screenings
- well-child visits for children until age 21

Work closely with your physician to make the most of these complementary health services and keep your family well.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH CARE REFORM AND THE PREVENTIVE SERVICES COVERED BY THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT, VISIT WWW.HEALTHCARE.GOV. CONTACT YOUR INSURANCE PROVIDER FOR A DETAILED LIST OF ALL PREVENTIVE SERVICES INCLUDED IN YOUR PLAN.



A Surgical Innovation You Should Know About

In January 2013, Mercy Medical Center acquired a new, leading-edge surgical technology that is changing the norm for biopsy of lung lesions (damaged tissue due to injury or disease) in the central part of the chest. Endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) provides a way to diagnose and remove lesions in the central chest without having to make incisions.

Conventional diagnosis for lung lesions in the central chest involves a more invasive procedure known as mediastinoscopy. Traditionally, mediastinoscopy required an incision in the neck that could leave noticeable pain and scarring. EBUS combines the internal views of a flexible bronchoscope with the added capabilities of ultrasound imaging at the tip of the scope. This provides the same level of visualization as a traditional mediastinoscopy, but it can be performed as an outpatient procedure with no incision. Because of this, EBUS—conducted while the patient is under minimal sedation—eliminates postoperative pain and allows for a quicker recovery from the procedure.

Behind the Scenes: Thoracic Surgery

When you hear the words “thoracic surgery,” you might picture an invasive, open-chest procedure. As Neal Chuang, MD, explains, today’s thoracic procedures aren’t anything like that.

THORACIC PROCEDURES, WHICH are used to diagnose and treat diseases of the chest, lungs, diaphragm, and throat, have long been considered some of the most invasive procedures surgeons perform. That’s because the chest wall—a solid mass of bone and muscle—blocks access to the thoracic region.

“When patients hear they have to undergo chest surgery, most are afraid about their ribs needing to be opened or removed altogether,” says Dr. Chuang, thoracic surgeon and director of thoracic surgery at Mercy Medical Center. “Such painful, invasive measures aren’t necessary anymore. In fact, many of the diseases we treat can now be addressed through advanced, minimally invasive approaches.”

From Technology to Technique

Increasingly, the Thoracic Surgery Clinic at Mercy uses video-assisted thoracic surgery, or VATS, to treat once-complex procedures less invasively. VATS gives Dr. Chuang the ability to clearly visualize the surgical area without having to open the chest cavity through large, painful incisions.

Dr. Chuang specializes in a form of VATS known as thoracoscopic lobectomy. This surgery removes a lobe of the lung affected by cancer or other disease using a thoracoscope—a rigid scope with a lighted camera at the end. The thoracoscope is inserted through small incisions, instead of the larger incision required by traditional surgery. Mercy is one of the few hospitals in the area to offer this minimally invasive approach to removal of lung cancer or diseased tissue.

“Thoracic surgery is moving firmly in the direction of minimally invasive procedures, thanks to technologies such as VATS and state-of-the-art instrumentation,” Dr. Chuang says. “Patients who undergo minimally invasive thoracic procedures experience less postoperative pain and faster recovery times and can often return home the following day.”

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THORACIC SURGERY AND MERCY’S LUNG CANCER PROGRAM, VISIT WWW.MERCYCARES.COM AND SEARCH “LUNG CANCER.”



Neal Chuang, MD

healthy balance

HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS
FOR WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

WELLNESS PROGRAMS/ CLASSES

BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM

Participating in the blood donor program enhances a patient's quality of life by providing a unique gift. There is no substitute for human blood. The Blood Donor Program at Mercy Medical Center is also out in the community sponsoring blood drives with local businesses. Donate blood. It's safe. It's simple. It saves lives. Please visit www.mercycares.com for more information, or call us at 413-748-9511. Follow us on www.facebook.com/GiveLife.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASSES

A variety of childbirth education classes are offered, including Childbirth and Teen Childbirth, Breastfeeding, Expectant Mothers' Fitness, Infant CPR, Breastfeeding and Returning to Work, New Mothers' Exercise, Sibling, and What to Eat During Pregnancy. All programs are open to the community, but preregistration is required. Please call 413-748-7295.

CPR CLASSES

CPR training and refresher classes are held at the Memorial House Auditorium on the Mercy Medical Center campus. For more information, please contact the department of nursing education at 413-748-9029.

DIABETES EDUCATION CLASSES

The Diabetes Education Center at Mercy Medical Center, 300 Stafford Street, Suite 253, offers a variety of classes open to people with diabetes, their family members, and children, as well as members of the general public. Join others with diabetes at our every-other-month support group, monthly diabetes self-management classes, and diabetes foot exams. Certified diabetes educators lead discussions and activities to assist in managing your diabetes day by day. To inquire about diabetes classes, please call 413-748-7000.

MERCY HOSPICE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Touch a life; become a hospice volunteer. We welcome you to join the next Volunteer Training at 2112 Riverdale Street, West Springfield. For more information or to register, please call 413-540-0140, ext. 1143.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD GLUCOSE SCREENING

Monthly cholesterol and blood glucose screenings are held in Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center's Breck Room. The fee is \$10 for the cholesterol screening and an additional

\$2 for the blood glucose screening. Fasting for 12 hours is required (water is permissible). Preregistration is not necessary. For more information, please contact the department of nursing education at 413-748-9029.

MERCY HEARING CENTER

The Mercy Hearing Center holds regular seminars, hearing screenings, and luncheons at no charge. Staffed with caring professionals who provide diagnostic, treatment, rehabilitation, and counseling services for people with hearing problems, the center has licensed, certified audiologists who hold advanced degrees in hearing assessment and rehabilitation of hearing loss. For more information, please call 413-748-6840.

LECTURE HEALTH COACH

The Health Coach lecture series provides easy-to-understand information about important health care issues. For more information, please call 413-748-9733.

SUPPORT/THERAPY GROUPS

AMPUTEE SUPPORT GROUP

A peer-level support, education, and advocacy group for individuals who have experienced amputation and their families. Meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-6892.

APHASIA SUPPORT GROUP

People with aphasia will find information and fellowship at these weekly meetings. The group meets every Friday from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at Weldon Rehabilitation Hospital's fourth floor dining room. For more information, please call 413-748-7486.

BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

For people who have suffered a head injury as well as their family and friends. The group offers participants the opportunity to share their experiences, achievements, and challenges in an understanding and supportive environment. Meets the third Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-6892.

CANCER CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

For all people caring for someone with cancer and their family members. The group meets the second Monday of every month from 7 to 9 p.m. at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-9453.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Provides a safe environment in which people with cancer, family members, and caregivers can express their fears, concerns, questions, struggles, and successes. Meets every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-9453.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Provides support for people who have experienced loss of a spouse, partner, family member, or friend. Meets every Monday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. (excluding holidays) at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-9453.

MEMORY LOSS CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP-MOUNT SAINT VINCENT CARE CENTER

The group's focus is to emphasize overall well-being and the spiritual and emotional needs of the caregiver. Meets the first Wednesday of every month from 6 to 7 p.m. at Mount Saint Vincent Care Center, 35 Holy Family Road, Holyoke. For more information, please call 413-532-3246.

SPINAL CORD SUPPORT GROUP

Provides information and support to people with spinal cord injury and their families. Meets the last Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-6892.

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

Stroke survivors, as well as their families and friends, are invited to attend. Meets the fourth Monday of every month at 7 p.m. at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center. For more information, please call 413-748-7486.

TOUR CATCH THE SPIRIT

A networking and friend-raising informational series. The brief program discusses current services, advancements, what distinguishes us from other providers, and future plans of the health system. Please call 413-748-9920 for more information.



Scan this QR code with your smartphone to access an up-to-date healthy balance schedule.

ASPARAGUS TAPAS with Red Pepper Sauce

Asparagus, the classic spring vegetable, makes a fun, satisfying, and zesty appetizer. Each serving is bursting with flavor—and vitamins A and C, folate, calcium, and fiber.

INGREDIENTS

Sauce

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 2 large red bell peppers, chopped, plus thin strips for garnish
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

Tapas

- 2 Tablespoons raspberry vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons fresh basil, chopped; reserve ½ tablespoon for garnish
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 ½ pounds asparagus spears, trimmed
- Parmesan cheese, shaved for garnish
- 2 whole wheat bagels, halved and toasted

DIRECTIONS

To make the red pepper sauce, heat oil in large skillet. Add bell peppers and garlic. Stirring occasionally, cook until peppers are soft, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside to cool slightly.

In a blender or food processor, puree the red pepper mixture until smooth. Add vinegar, basil, salt, and black pepper, and stir until combined.

To prepare the asparagus, boil salted water in a large saucepan. Add asparagus spears and simmer, covered, until tender but firm, about 5 minutes. Drain and set aside.

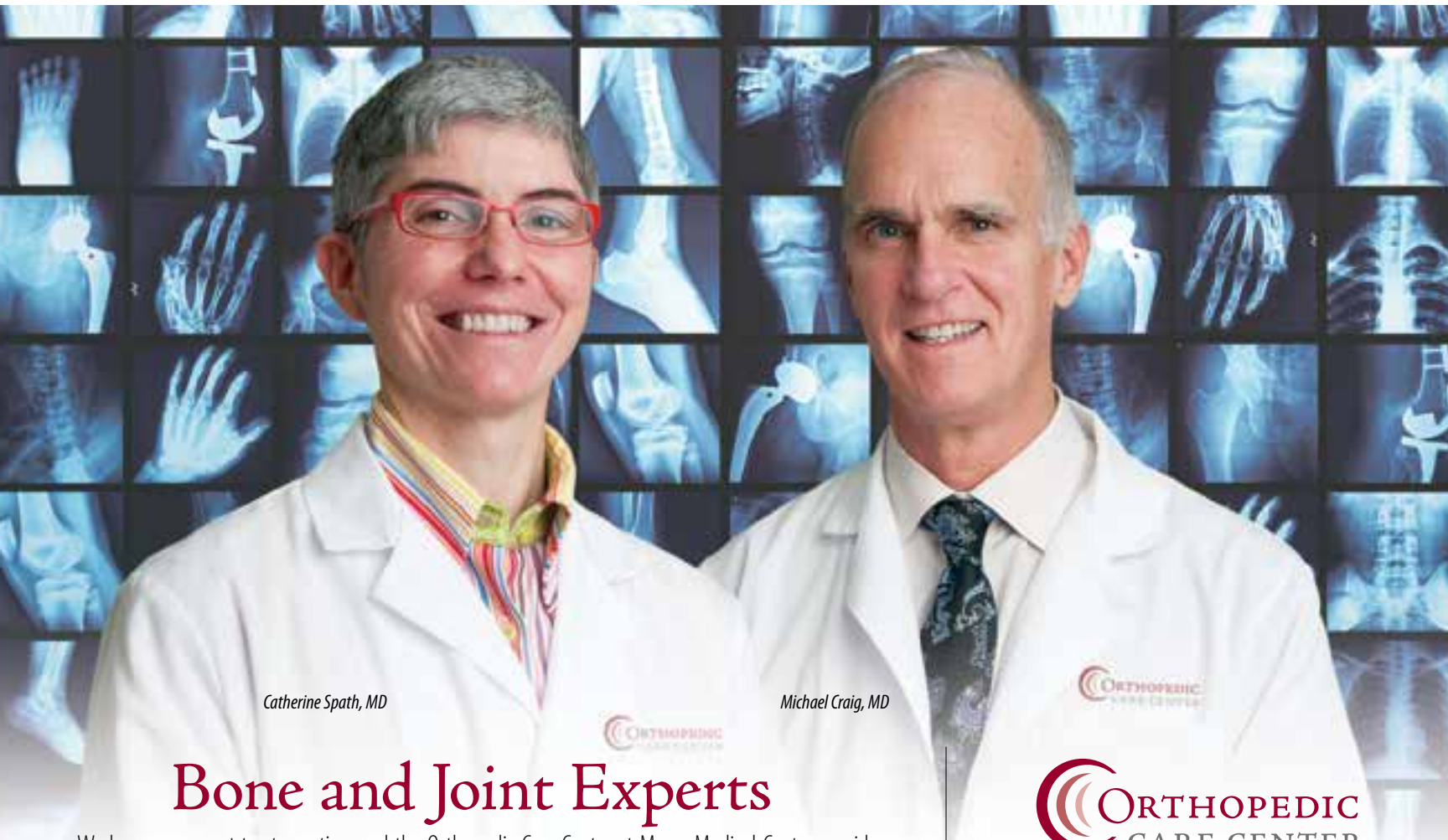
To serve, pour red pepper sauce onto a large plate. Arrange asparagus over sauce. Garnish with pepper strips and chopped basil, and shave Parmesan over the top. Serve with toasted bagels.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS PER SERVING

254	2mg	11g
Calories	Cholesterol	Protein
5.1g	519mg	10g
Fat	Sodium	Fiber



This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



Catherine Spath, MD

Michael Craig, MD

Bone and Joint Experts

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Doctor Craig is board-certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery and his post-graduate medical training includes a fellowship in spinal surgery.

Doctor Spath is board-certified and has a Certificate of Added Qualification in Surgery of the Hand. Her particular area of interest is caring for patients with hand/wrist trauma.

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