

For Your Health

Lowell General Hospital

www.lowellgeneral.org

FALL 2006 • *Your resource for healthy living*

Weight Loss: When Is It Time
to Seek Medical Help?

A Whole Lot of Heart
Community Raises \$460,000 for
LGH's New Heart Center

LGH's Calendar of Events

LGH Partners with Tufts-NEMC
and Floating Hospital to
Bring Boston-Level Care
Close to Home



Dear Friends,



Wow. That was our reaction at Lowell General Hospital when we learned that you had ranked us among the top 10 percent of hospitals

nationwide in patient satisfaction—2006 Press Ganey Associates. To us, this is the most important measurement of how we do our jobs. Because when the day is done, all of our hard work has one purpose: To give you the best experience possible. We do this by always trying to exceed your expectations—going that extra step or that extra mile to serve you better.

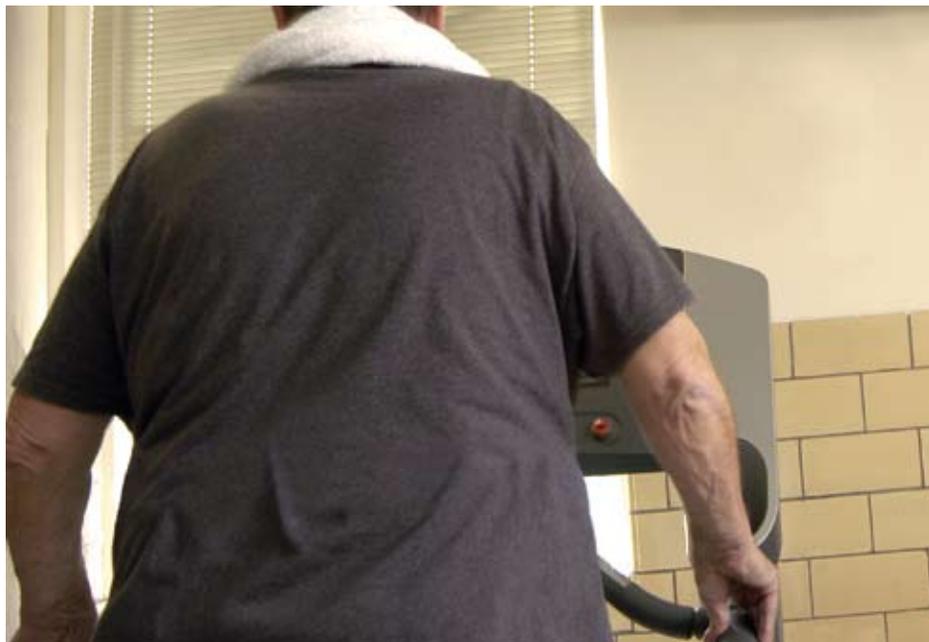
This issue of *For Your Health* is an example of reaching beyond what is expected, with several new services you might not expect in a community hospital. You'll read about our new Heart Center, the new Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery, and a new partnership with Tufts-New England Medical Center and the Floating Hospital for Children. You'll also learn about your risk factors for heart disease, as well as a program to help you stop smoking, because our goal is to keep you healthy and out of the hospital.

We thank you for honoring our efforts to provide the highest level of care possible. Your faith in us has inspired us to work even harder to exceed your expectations every day.

In good health,

NORMAND E. DESCHENE
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Weight Loss: When Is It Time



Losing weight can be a challenge. No one knows that better than you. Over the years, you've tried countless diets and lost dozens of pounds, but you've always regained them. Now your doctor is telling you that losing weight isn't just important—your health depends on it.

It may be time to seek help from medical professionals. Our new Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery at Lowell General Hospital offers a full range of comprehensive weight loss options, including medically supervised nutrition and exercise programs and weight loss surgery performed by some of the area's most experienced bariatric surgeons.

"What really sets us apart from other facilities that offer weight loss services is the depth and breadth of our program," says Michael Jiser, MD, the center's Medical Director. "Our weight management team is made up of highly experienced professionals who develop comprehensive, individualized programs to help patients lose weight and improve their overall health."

Obesity raises a person's risk for life-

threatening illnesses such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and some types of cancer. To determine your chances of developing obesity-related diseases, experts use the body mass index (BMI) to measure body fat based on height and weight. A BMI of 25 or more is considered overweight; 30 or more, obese; and 40 or more, morbidly obese.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"Commercial weight loss plans help many people eat healthier and control weight gain. But often, they're not enough," says Christine LaBrecque, RN, Director of the Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery. "For people seeking a more personal approach, the center offers medically supervised dietary counseling, behavior modification, and exercise programs," LaBrecque says. "Nurse

to Seek Medical Help?

practitioners, registered dietitians, a case manager, and a behavioral specialist work with board-certified physicians to meet patients' needs."

When diet and exercise alone aren't enough to achieve necessary weight loss, and more aggressive intervention is needed, your physician may recommend weight loss surgery. Bariatric surgery is an option if a patient's BMI is 40 or more—about 100 pounds overweight for men and 80 pounds for women. Surgery also may be considered for those whose BMI falls between 35 and 40 and who suffer from a serious obesity-related health problem, such as diabetes, heart disease, or severe sleep apnea.

At LGH, Dr. Jiser and his colleagues, Roy Shen, MD, and Rebecca Shore, MD, perform two kinds of weight loss surgery. The Roux-en-Y gastric bypass operation limits food intake and the amount of calories and nutrients the body absorbs. In another procedure known as adjustable gastric banding, the surgeon implants an inflatable silicone band around the top portion of the stomach. Weight loss surgery at LGH is performed with minimally invasive techniques, bringing many benefits to patients, including less pain, a shorter hospital stay, and a quicker recovery.



Medically supervised weight loss programs and bariatric surgery can positively change the lives of patients struggling with weight-related health issues.

LIFE-CHANGING RESULTS

Like any surgery involving anesthesia, bariatric surgery does pose risks. These include heart and lung complications, blood clots, and infections. But for the right candidates, the health benefits far outweigh the risks.

"The results can be life changing," Dr. Jiser says. "We see this all the time. Patients come back two or three years after surgery and say, 'Thank you for saving my life.' They're happier, have newfound energy, and a love of life. They can ride a bike again or get on the floor and play with their grandkids for the first time. It's just incredible." ●

HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Lowell General Hospital CEO and President Normand E. Deschene, FACHE, for being named Massachusetts Healthcare Executive of the Year by the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE).

"This recognition is richly deserved," says Massachusetts Hospital Association President Ron Hollander. "Norm Deschene is a leader in our association. His daily work is essential to the health and vitality of Greater Lowell, but his insights and ideas have truly benefited everyone in the Commonwealth."

Deschene has been a health care leader in the Commonwealth and the Merrimack Valley for more than 22 years.



Lowell General Hospital Board of Trustee Chairman John H. Pearson Jr. and the hospital's executive staff congratulate President and CEO Normand E. Deschene (center) on being honored as Massachusetts Healthcare Executive of the Year by the American College of Healthcare Executives. From left to right: Richard Jeffcote, Vice President/Chief Financial Officer; Patricia Crane, Special Assistant to the President; Wayne Pasanen, MD, Vice President/Medical Director; Board of Trustees Chairman John H. Pearson Jr.; Peter Zarrilla, Vice President Human Resources; LGH President Normand E. Deschene; Jody White, Vice President/Chief Operating Officer; Amy Hoey, Vice President of Patient Care Services/Chief Nursing Officer; and Win Brown, Vice President of Administration.

Is Bariatric Surgery Right for You?

Join us for FREE information sessions on surgical and nonsurgical weight loss options, held the first Tuesday of each month from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Clark Auditorium at LGH. For more information, call the Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery at 978-788-7200.



A Whole Lot of Heart

Community Raises \$460,000 for New Heart Center at LGH

Whether serving as CEO at Enterprise Bank or tending the neighborhood garden on his street, George Duncan's priorities have always been caring for the health, well-being, and the beauty of the community in which he lives.

In tribute to him as a person and a professional, community members raised more than \$350,000 in George Duncan's name at the 2006 LGH Challenge golf tournament in September. The entire tournament raised more than \$460,000, with funds going to support the Heart Center at Lowell General Hospital, which will include two new interventional cardiology labs.

"George Duncan's contributions and leadership have had an incredible impact on the growth and success of LGH, and the health of our community," says Normand E. Deschene, President and CEO of LGH.

Cardiovascular disease is now the number-one killer of men and women in the United States, claiming the lives of nearly 2.4 million Americans each year. As the threat of heart disease has grown in our community, LGH has continually expanded and advanced its cardiology services to meet that growing need. The first community hospital in the Commonwealth to perform emergency (primary) angioplasty more than two years ago, LGH began providing nonemergency



Members of the community came out to support LGH and pay tribute to Lowell resident and businessman George Duncan. Pictured above, former LGH CEO Bob Donovan (left), and current CEO (right) Normand E. Deschene, enjoy a moment with honoree Duncan, founder and CEO of Enterprise Bank.

angioplasty services this year through a clinical trial sponsored by Harvard, bringing the most effective procedure to prevent heart attacks to the people of Greater Lowell.

However, these advancements have presented a challenge.

"With the addition of primary angioplasty at Lowell General Hospital, we put together the region's most comprehensive cardiac program for the diagnosis and treatment of potentially lethal cardiac events," says Richard Birkhead, MD, Chief of Cardiology at LGH. "Now with the addition of new interventional



Tournament Chairman and Lowell Five Vice President Bill Quinn and Enterprise Bank Senior Vice President Chet Szablak enjoy a break from golfing.



LGH employee Chris Karski tees off.

cardiology space, we'll be able to meet the demand for this life-saving procedure."

The new Heart Center, with funding by the George Duncan tribute and the LGH Challenge, will include multiple interventional labs, treatment rooms, and reception and waiting areas to support the hospital's most advanced cardiac diagnostics and procedures.

"We are very grateful," says Dr. Birkhead. "This tribute to George Duncan will help us further the breadth, depth, and excellence of cardiology services we offer our community." ●

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES WHO MADE THE LGH CHALLENGE A SUCCESS. AT ENTERPRISE BANK, MARY ELLEN FITZPATRICK, CHET SZABLAK, DICK MAIN, AND JACK CLANCY SPEARHEADED THE BANK'S EMPLOYEE TRIBUTE COMMITTEE. NANCY DONAHUE AND ARNOLD LERNER CHAIRED THE TRIBUTE COMMITTEE.

Heart Disease: Are You at Risk?

It is a common misconception that heart disease only strikes the older, overweight population. Scott Leedberg found that out the hard way.

Scott considered himself quite healthy. Although he smoked, he had lost more than 45 pounds in two years and prided himself on leaving his work at the office and minimizing stress. There is no history of heart disease in his family, other than a mother with high cholesterol. At only 40 years of age, he never considered himself remotely at risk for a heart attack.

Last July, Scott woke in the night with what he thought was a bad case of heartburn. When still not feeling quite right the next morning, his wife convinced him to go to the emergency room at Lowell General Hospital, where he learned that blockage in his smaller arteries had caused a minor heart attack. Left untreated, he could have faced a more serious attack. Fortunately, he did not require surgery, but now takes medication to control his cholesterol levels and goes to cardiac rehabilitation three days a week.

Scott describes his heart attack as a wake-up call. Although he knew that smoking was bad for his lungs, he didn't realize the devastating effect it has on the heart. And



Scott Leedberg enjoys family time at home with his daughter, Meagan.

although he exercised occasionally, he was not doing enough to keep his heart in shape.

"If I had known about my risks earlier, I probably would have paid more attention and done something about it," says Scott.

Today, he is taking positive steps to eliminate possible risks. He has quit smoking and includes daily exercise as part of his morning routine. As importantly, he says, he is aware of the symptoms and how important it is to respond quickly.

"I didn't know it, but I was a recipe for disaster," Scott says. "I am so lucky my wife and the cardiac team at Lowell General Hospital were looking out for me that day." ●

WHAT'S YOUR RISK?

There are many well-known risk factors for heart disease, including the following:

- Age: Men 45 years and older and women 55 years and older are at greater risk
- Gender: Men are at greater risk of heart attack than women
- Family history
- High blood pressure
- High total and "bad" cholesterol
- Smoking

For a more detailed list of risk factors—and what you can do today to reduce your risk of a heart attack—visit www.lowellgeneralhospital.org



Harvard Vanguard certified nurse-midwives Kate Aeschliman, Cynthia Coughlin and Nancy Zelnik.

Midwives: Expanded Choices for Expectant Mom's

Join experts from Lowell General Hospital and Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates to learn about the individualized care and support that certified nurse-midwives can provide you during your pregnancy, labor and delivery. Find out how nurse-midwives can help you approach your birth as a unique and normal event.

Nurse-midwives from Harvard Vanguard's Chelmsford practice will share how they work collaboratively with obstetricians so you benefit from the expertise of both.

Thursday, November 30, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Lowell General Hospital, Clark Auditorium

Seating is limited, to register call **1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355)** or visit www.lowellgeneral.org. Get more information about the many advantages midwives have to offer by visiting www.lowellgeneral.org/midwives.



LOWELL GENERAL HOSPITAL SUPPORT GROUPS



Director of Oncology Social Work **Meg Lemire-Berthel, MSW (center)**, shares a moment with support group members **Dee Halzack (left)**, and **Sandra Padgett (right)**.

Support groups can help you cope and learn from the experiences of others. Please contact **1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355)** for meeting times and more information.

- **Arthritis Support Group**
- **New Mothers Support Group**
- **Down Syndrome Support Group**
- **Perinatal Loss Support Group**—please call **978-937-6324**
- **Cancer Support Groups**—please call **978-937-6142** for adults and **978-937-6129** for children

Registration required for all classes. Unless noted, you may register by calling **1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355)**. Online registration with credit card payment available at www.lowellgeneral.org.

■ BABYSITTING BASICS

For girls and boys, age 10 and older. Class covers basic safety; first aid; growth and development; babysitter activities; bottle-feeding; bedtime; and more.
November 18, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., \$30.

■ CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

To prepare for the birth of your newest family member, Lowell General Hospital offers the following classes. Please register early to assure availability.

- **Six-Week Prepared Childbirth**, \$150
- **Accelerated One-Day Prepared Childhood**, \$165
- **Refresher Class** for parents who have previously had a baby, \$40
- **Six-Week Hypnobirthing Class**, \$225
- **Breastfeeding Class**, \$40
- **Prenatal Yoga**, \$70

■ DIETARY PROGRAMS

- **Surviving the Holidays with Diabetes.** Keep diabetes in check and enjoy holiday meals.
November 15, 12:30 to 2 p.m., \$5.
- **Body Fay Analysis.** How does your body size up?
November 20, 12:30 to 2 p.m., \$10.

■ MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION

Discover deep resources for stress reduction and self-care. Offered in spring and fall. Call **978-937-6022** for dates. Cost is \$350.

■ FREEDOM FROM SMOKING PROGRAM

Declare your independence from smoking forever! Freedom from Smoking is a smoking cessation program provided by the American Lung Association. This class is for adults age 19 and older. Class starts January 9, \$75.

■ SIBLING CLASS

Children ages 3 to 8 explore their many feelings about the new baby, tour the BirthPlace with their parents, and more.
November 14 or December 12, 3:45 to 4:45 p.m., \$20.

■ YOGA OF THE HEART

Do you have a family history and/or risk factors for heart disease, cancer, or another debilitating disease? Relaxation training and adapted yoga to help decrease blood pressure, boost immune function, improve clarity of mind, and lower heart rate.
For more information or to register for upcoming classes, please call **978-937-6022**, \$125.

■ COMPLEMENTARY CARE

For our Cancer Center patients, we have guided imagery and meditation. Call **978-937-6396**.

HOW TO HANDLE HOLIDAY STRESS WITH HUMOR

Does the thought of the upcoming holidays cause you stress? Come hear humorist **Rosemary Verri** give you some humorous hints to handle the upcoming holiday season.



Rosemary Verri

LGH will bring a smile to your face with this entertaining FREE program. We ask that all attendees in turn bring a smile to someone in need by donating a new toy, hat, gloves, etc., to be given to local shelters. Seating is limited. Registration is required
December 4, 6 p.m.

New Physicians

Lowell General Hospital welcomes these new physicians to its outstanding medical staff.

Matthew A. Cohen, MD



Urology

A graduate of Tufts University School of Medicine, Dr. Matthew Cohen went on to complete an internship in general surgery and a residency in urology at Tufts-New England Medical Center in Boston. He continued on to Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, where he was chief resident in urology. Dr. Cohen may be reached at Merrimack Urology Associates, 31 Village Square in Chelmsford, at **978-256-9507**.

Vera L. Freeman, MD



General Surgery

Dr. Vera Freeman received her Doctor of Medicine degree from Downstate Medical University in Brooklyn. She completed a residency in general surgery at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse. Dr. Freeman went on to the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, where she completed a residency in general surgery, and a fellowship in minimally invasive surgery. Dr. Freeman joins Lowell Surgical Associates at 33 Bartlett Street, and can be reached at **978-452-5050**.

John Friel, MD



General Surgery

After earning his doctorate in medicine at Albany Medical College, Dr. John Friel attended the Coordinated General Surgery Residency program at University of Massachusetts School of Medicine in Worcester. He went on to complete a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford. Dr. Friel joins Lowell Surgical Associates at 33 Bartlett Street, and may be reached by calling **978-452-5050**.

Jeremy Moses, MD



Orthopaedic Surgery

A graduate of Harvard Medical School in Boston, Dr. Jeremy Moses went on to attend the Harvard Combined Orthopaedic Residency Program. He then completed a fellowship in sports medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Moses may be reached by calling Orthopaedic Surgical Associates of Lowell, 222 Merrimack Street, at **978-454-0706**.

Lowell General Hospital Welcomes New Physicians to The Cancer Center

The Cancer Center at Lowell General Hospital is pleased to add two new members to its exceptional team of physicians. With the addition of these outstanding doctors, The Cancer Center at Lowell General now brings you the areas most extensive team of physicians specializing in cancer care. Please join us in welcoming these fine physicians to the community's most trusted cancer center.

David Goff, MD



Radiation Oncology

A graduate of Georgetown University School of Medicine, in Washington, DC, Dr. David Goff joins The Cancer Center specializing in radiation oncology. He completed his internship in general surgery at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. He completed a residency in radiation oncology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, and went on to complete a fellowship in stereotactic radiosurgery/brachytherapy at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York.

Sharynn Hall, MD, PhD



Hematology/Oncology

Dr. Sharynn Hall joins the team of physicians at The Cancer Center as a specialist in hematology/oncology. Her credentials include a doctorate in medicine from University of Connecticut School of Medicine in Farmington and a doctor of philosophy degree in biological chemistry and molecular pharmacology, from Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences: Division of Medical Sciences, Boston. She completed an internship and residency in internal medicine through the Yale Primary Care Internal Residency Program and went on to complete a fellowship in hematology/oncology at Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven. Dr. Hall holds board certifications in internal medicine and medical oncology.

Does My Child Need to Go to Boston for Care?

New LGH Partnership Makes Decision Easier

As parents or expectant parents, you will face a lot of difficult decisions as you raise your children. Of all the decisions parents will make, there are none more important than those concerning their children's health. Located so close to a major city with large academic medical centers specializing in pediatric care, it's natural to find parents asking, "When do I need to take my child to Boston?"

A new partnership between Lowell General Hospital and Tufts-New England Medical Center and the Floating Hospital for Children makes that decision easier for parents. Through this partnership, Lowell General has brought Tufts-NEMC-Floating physicians—some of the top neonatal and pediatric specialists in the country—to your local hospital. Working in partnership with your primary care physician or pediatrician, they give your family specialized care without the trip to Boston.

PEDIATRIC SPECIALISTS IN YOUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD

■ Pediatric hospitalists—physicians who specialize in managing the inpatient care of children admitted to Lowell General's pediatric unit or needing a pediatric specialist—consult in our Emergency

Department, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

■ An outpatient center providing pediatric specialty clinics staffed by Tufts-NEMC/Floating Hospital for Children specialists in cardiology, gastroenterology, and pulmonology.

■ Experienced perinatologists providing highly specialized care, including genetics counseling, for women with high-risk pregnancies.

■ Around-the-clock neonatologist/physician coverage for babies born premature or sick and needing the higher level of care provided in a Level II Special Care Nursery.

■ Easy and quick referrals to pediatric specialists in Boston when necessary, with a dedicated program coordinator to facilitate the referral and scheduling process for patients of LGH physicians.

PARTNERSHIP HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL FOR OVER A DECADE

The two hospitals have partnered for the past 11 years to successfully care for more than 1,000 newborns in need of specialized treatment at Lowell General's Level II Special Care Nursery.

"The success of the past 11 years



Special Care Nursery director and Tufts-NEMC-Floating neonatal specialist Mario Cordova, MD, cares for a newborn at LGH's Level II Special Care Nursery.

has demonstrated what an outstanding academic medical center and community hospital can accomplish together," says Normand E. Deschene, President and CEO of LGH. "We've taken this relationship to a whole new level for our patients, creating a new model for regionalized maternal and child health care and giving parents a much simpler, efficient, and more personal way to access top-level care."

LGH can help you rest easy knowing your child has access to world-class pediatric care close to home. As a parent, isn't it nice to have one less thing to worry about? ●

NEED A DOCTOR? CALL OUR PHYSICIAN REFERRAL LINE AT 1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355) OR VISIT WWW.LOWELLGENERAL.ORG.



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