

LOWELL GENERAL HOSPITAL

for your health

MAGAZINE

Vol 1 – 2014

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that doesn't miss a beat

Managing winter asthma symptoms

The Center for Weight Management
celebrates 10 years of Healthy
Bodies, Healthy Lives

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opens at Imagine That

Restore healthy legs at
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Upcoming 2014 Health
and Wellness Programs

Save the date!

TeamWalk for CancerCare
Sunday, May 18, 2014

IGNITE HOPE,
INSPIRE COURAGE,
JOIN TEAMWALK

Lowell General Hospital

A CIRCLE HEALTH MEMBER
Complete connected care™

Dear Friends,



The start of a new year is a time when many of us make resolutions to improve our health. It is often quite easy to make a resolution but much harder to make those changes last. At Lowell General Hospital, we are excited to help our patients and members of the community make changes in 2014 that will have a positive and lasting impact on their health and well-being.

In order to best partner with area residents on this journey, we need to have a true understanding of the health challenges facing the members of our community. Lowell General Hospital, in collaboration with the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, recently commissioned the University of Massachusetts Lowell to conduct a community health assessment, which has provided key information that will guide us as we develop new and innovative services and programs. Be sure to see page 3 to learn more about the assessment's findings and the important areas we will concentrate our community benefit offerings on in the coming year.

While Lowell General Hospital continues to be recognized regionally and nationally for the high quality care we provide, we are always looking to improve the ways we deliver care and our patients' experience with us. We are also eager to hear from our patients and their families on how we can better serve you. We conduct regular patient satisfaction surveys that provide valuable information about areas we are doing well and those where our patients think we could do better. If you have recently visited Lowell General Hospital and think we could improve, I would encourage you to contact me at president@lowellgeneral.org to share your thoughts. We take your feedback seriously and share it with our staff to help develop new and innovative ways to deliver on our promise to provide *Complete connected care*SM.

On behalf of the employees, physicians and volunteers at Lowell General Hospital, I wish you and your family a very happy and healthy New Year!

Respectfully yours,

Joseph A. White
President, Lowell General Hospital

Improving lives, one patient at a time

Celebrating 10 Years of Healthy Bodies and Healthy Lives

The staff and patients of the Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery have been honored to meet with, and care for, so many people over the last 10 years. The program began in 2003 with a small team of three. The Center now has two offices - in North Chelmsford and North Andover - with a multidisciplinary team comprised of surgeons, nurses, dietitians, mental health counselors, and support staff. To date, the Center has performed more than 3,500 weight loss procedures.

Watch our new video which reveals the journey a few of our patients have traveled to become healthy at www.youtube.com/lowellgeneralhealth

Read more stories at www.lowellgeneral.org/successstories



Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery patients Jose and Elena Minaya from Lawrence have lost a combined total of nearly 200 pounds following gastric bypass surgery and have transformed their health and lives.

Assessment identifies key community health needs

Lowell General Hospital, in partnership with the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, recently commissioned the University of Massachusetts Lowell to conduct an assessment of community health needs for the Greater Lowell area, which includes the towns of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Lowell, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough, and Westford. The purpose of this assessment included evaluating the overall health of residents by involving a broad spectrum of community members, identifying the top health issues and strengths and weaknesses of the healthcare network, recommending actions to address priority concerns, and providing information that informs a community process to build consensus around strategies to improve the health of Greater Lowell residents.

Information was primarily collected through interviews with six key informants and 14 focus groups with 113 participants, and secondary data sources included demographic, socioeconomic, and public health data. The top health problems that were identified in the focus groups and interviews and supported by public health data include:

- mental health
- substance abuse
- diabetes
- obesity
- respiratory diseases (e.g., asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- cardiovascular disease
- Hepatitis B in the Cambodian community

Applying the assessment's findings to community offerings in 2014

Lowell General Hospital is leveraging these findings to help craft its 2014 community benefit program. Some highlights of 2014's plan include:

Chronic Disease

- Increase screening and educational offerings to address chronic diseases like asthma, cancer, cardiovascular, diabetes and stroke
- Provide grant funding to support chronic disease self-management programs for diverse cultures

Mental Health

- Increase prevention and education programs targeting at-risk youth
- Provide grant funding to support depression screenings throughout the community
- Help support community organizations working to decrease homelessness

Substance Abuse

- Increase number of tobacco cessation programs
- Offer education about the dangers of alcohol abuse and drunk driving at local schools
- Provide grant funding to support increased synthetic drug abuse awareness and prevention

Community Health Improvement

- Provide workforce development opportunities for local students
- Actively participate in collaboration and capacity building with local task forces, organizations and coalitions

While chronic disease, mental health, substance abuse and community health improvement are the hospital's main concentration areas for 2014, Lowell General is also focused on a variety of other important topics like access to care, breast health, cultural competency, domestic violence and sexual assault, emergency preparedness, health literacy, healthy eating and active living, and parenting and prenatal education.

To learn more about the Community Health Needs Assessment, please visit www.lowellgeneral.org/CHNA.



Lowell General Hospital and the Greater Lowell Health Alliance will host forums to share the findings of the community health assessment on:

- **February 25 from 6:00-7:30pm**
Lowell General Hospital Main Campus
295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell
- **February 26 from 9:30-10:30am**
Billerica Public Library
15 Concord Road, Billerica
- **March 10 from 6:00-7:30pm**
Chelmsford Public Library
25 Boston Road, Chelmsford
- **March 13 from 9:00-10:30am**
Dracut Library
28 Arlington Street, Dracut

Members of the community are invited to share their perspectives. For more information about these forums, please call 1-877-LGH-WELL.

Welcoming new physicians to Circle Health

For information on more than 700 physicians in over 30 specialties, call an advisor 24/7 at 1-877-LGH-WELL or visit www.lowellgeneral.org/findaphysician



Sai Gollapudi, MD

Family Medicine - 603-635-2802

Dr. Sai Gollapudi is a Family Medicine physician who has joined Circle Health. She is practicing at Pelham Healthcare Associates in Pelham, NH where she is accepting new patients. She completed her residency in Family Medicine at

Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, MN. Dr. Gollapudi received her medical degree from Guntur Medical College in Guntur, AP, India. She is fluent in English, Telugu, Hindi and Spanish.



Nelson J. Matos, DO

Family Medicine - 978-788-7782

Dr. Nelson J. Matos is a board-certified Family Medicine physician who has joined Circle Health. He is practicing at Primary Care of the Andovers in North Andover, MA where he is accepting new patients. He completed his residency in Family Medicine at Tufts University/

Lawrence General Hospital in Lawrence, MA. Dr. Matos received his medical degree from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine in Biddeford, ME. He is fluent in English, Spanish, Portuguese, limited French and two Angolan languages.



Kota Karanth, MD

Neurological Surgery - 978-458-1463

Dr. Kota Karanth is a neurological surgeon who has joined Circle Health. He is practicing at New England Neurological Associates in Lowell and Lawrence, MA where he is accepting new patients. He completed his residency in neurological surgery

at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria, IL, a complex spine surgery fellowship at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria, IL and a neurological surgery fellowship at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, IA. Dr. Karanth received his medical degree from Kasturba Medical College in Mangalore, Karnataka, India. He is fluent in English, Tulu and Kannada.



Emelyn Molato, MD

Family Medicine - 978-851-4141

Dr. Emelyn Molato is a board-certified Family Medicine physician who has joined Circle Health. She is practicing at Merrimack Family Medicine in Tewksbury, MA where she is accepting new patients. She completed her residency in

Family Medicine at Conemaugh Valley Memorial Hospital in Johnstown, PA. Dr. Molato received her medical degree from Far Eastern University in Quezon City, Philippines. She is fluent in English and Pilipino.



Yahaida Rimola-DeJesus, DO

Family Medicine - 978-788-7782

Dr. Yahaida Rimola-DeJesus is a board-certified Family Medicine physician who has joined Circle Health. She is practicing at Primary Care of the Andovers located in North Andover, MA where she is accepting new patients. She completed her residency in Family

Medicine at Lawrence Family Medicine Residency in Lawrence, MA. Dr. Rimola-DeJesus received her medical degree from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine in Biddeford, ME. She is fluent in English and Spanish.

Circle Health is coming to Westford in Summer 2014!

Urgent Care, Primary Care, OB/GYN,
Patient Service Center and more.

Learn more at www.circle-health.org



Circle Health News

Normand Deschene, President and Chief Executive Officer of
Circle Health and Chief Executive Officer of Lowell General Hospital

As the parent organization of Lowell General Hospital, Lowell Community Health Center, Visiting Nurse Association and our community of physicians, Circle Health is an integrated community healthcare delivery system that brings together providers and organizations across the continuum of care. Circle Health members and affiliates have a shared vision for providing convenient and affordable access to high-quality preventive, primary and specialty care right in the community. I am pleased to provide the following updates from our Circle Health members.

Lowell Community Health Center Partners with Lowell General Hospital to Expand Services

The end of 2013 marked one year of service in Lowell Community Health Center's new home on Jackson Street in Lowell. Through the generous support of individual donors, charitable foundations, Health Center staff, and Lowell General Hospital, Lowell Community Health Center's vision of increasing access to affordable healthcare for the people of Greater Lowell is becoming a reality. Over 5,000 new patients were able to access quality, culturally appropriate outpatient healthcare and wellness services at the state-of-the-art facility, and the Health Center now cares for 1 in 2 Lowell residents. This new home has allowed the Health Center to provide same-day care in its Access Center, add a full service pharmacy, and offer Lowell General Hospital diagnostic services all in one convenient location for patients. In the year ahead, Lowell Community Health Center looks forward to continued growth, along with offering innovative care to some of our most vulnerable and underserved neighbors.

Managing winter asthma symptoms

Over 23 million Americans have asthma, a chronic lung disease that affects breathing by causing tightening of the airways, inflammation and increased mucous production. Inflammation makes airways smaller, so that it is more difficult to move air in and out of the lungs. According to the Centers for Disease Control, over 13 million children are affected by this disease, and it is the most common cause of hospitalizations for children under the age of 15. Asthma tends to run in families, and although it cannot be cured, it can be controlled.

Dropping temperatures and cold dry air outside and contrasting warm dry air inside can worsen symptoms in children. Coupled with the increased risk of respiratory viruses that circulate in schools and public areas in the winter months, children with asthma may experience increased flare ups and more severe symptoms.

Symptoms of asthma include shortness of breath, chest 'tightness', wheezing, and a chronic cough that lasts over a week, often occurring during the night or after exercise. During an asthma attack, the lining of lung airways swells and mucus glands increase production, while muscles around airways tighten to make them narrower. All of these changes block the flow of air, making it hard to breathe. It's important during an attack to stay calm, and encourage your child to relax. Take quick relief medication as your asthma action plan dictates, and if quick relief medicine does not help, call your doctor and/or 9-1-1 and seek immediate assistance.

"Here in Lowell, asthma rates are higher than the state average," says Dr. Brian Sanders, Pediatric Emergency Department physician at Lowell General Hospital. "In younger children, asthma attacks can be triggered from indoor elements, such as dry, forced hot air, pet dander, dust mites, mold and dust from holiday decorations, and smoke from a fireplace. These exacerbated symptoms can escalate and often require hospitalization and vigorous respiratory therapy."

Knowing what causes asthma symptoms in your child is an important step to controlling symptoms. Allergy testing may help identify triggers. Your child's pediatrician can help you recognize what makes the asthma worse, and help find simple solutions to reduce and avoid asthma triggers.

As always, make sure children are consistently taking medications as prescribed, and have a rescue inhaler with you at all times.

"It's important to trust your instincts as a parent, as you know your child best," says Dr. Sanders. "With proper treatment for your child's asthma, including management of short-term medications such as inhalers to treat symptoms, and long-term control medications that treat the disease, your child should be able to stay active and symptom-free."

To learn more about asthma, visit the American Lung Association's website at www.lung.org.

When outside:

- Make sure your child's mouth is covered with a scarf or neck gaiter. The humidity of his or her breath will warm the air he or she is inhaling
- Try to promote indoor exercise in extreme temperatures
- Try to limit exertion whenever possible (i.e., hot chocolate or snack breaks while skating, sledding, or other outside activities)

For inside:

- Keep pets out of the bedroom as much as possible
- Dust and vacuum often
- Change the air filters in your home heating system
- Get a flu shot
- Make sure children wash their hands often to prevent colds and flu from spreading
- Cover bedding with dust mite resistant covers
- Humidify the air in the home. Ideally, the humidity should be about 30-45%. Higher levels encourage the growth of dust mites

Visiting Nurse Association of Greater Lowell Offers Free Bereavement Support Groups

The Visiting Nurse Association of Greater Lowell, Inc. is offering free bereavement support groups for adults who have experienced a significant loss through death. These facilitated groups offer an opportunity for discussion and sharing with others who are grieving.

- "Now What: Life After Loss" meets on the second Tuesday of every month, at 4:30pm, at D'Youville's Center for Advanced Therapy chapel, 1071 Varnum Avenue in Lowell.
- "Stitching Your Tapestry of Healing," begins on January 15 and will continue on the third Wednesday of every month from 3:00-4:30pm. Participants are invited to bring knitting, crocheting or other needlework to group meetings, which will be held at the VNA of Greater Lowell, 40-44 Church Street in Lowell. This group is sponsored by Lowell General Hospital.

For more information or to register for either group, call Johanna Kiefner, M.Div., LICSW at 978-458-3123. Johanna is Coordinator of Spiritual and Bereavement Services at the VNA of Greater Lowell's hospice program.

Restoring healthy legs: The Vein Center at Lowell General Hospital

Lowell General Hospital opened the region's premier multi-disciplinary center dedicated to treating the full spectrum of venous disease. Located at Lowell General Hospital's Saints Campus on One Hospital Drive, The Vein Center provides an easily-accessible outpatient setting for the treatment of conditions such as varicose veins, leg swelling and pain, and chronic venous insufficiency, a condition where veins have problems sending blood from the legs back to the heart.

Led by Medical Director Dr. Allan I. Hoffman, The Vein Center team includes board-certified physicians, licensed radiologic technologists and registered nurses. Each member of the team has specialized training in interventional procedures and advanced nursing care.

Venous disease, which refers to all conditions related to veins that become abnormal or diseased, is commonly characterized by large bulging veins known as varicose veins. Up to 40% of women and 25% of men are affected by this condition, which can develop through a combination of weakened vein walls and faulty vein valves. Normal vein walls, which

Treatments offered at The Vein Center include:

Endovenous Laser Ablation, where local anesthesia and ultrasound guidance is used to locate the affected veins and then laser therapy is applied to treat them.

Ambulatory Microphlebectomy, which involves the removal of varicose veins through micro-incisions using local anesthesia.

The selection of a specific procedure is based on a patient's symptoms, a physical examination, and an ultrasound if needed.

are usually very elastic and supple, can become weak and allow the recirculating blood to flow backward. Valves in these veins can also fail to function properly, allowing blood to pool and pressure to build. This damages veins, allowing them to become twisted, enlarged, and painful.

"While some patients receive cosmetic solutions, most are looking for relief from



The Vein Center team includes board-certified physicians, licensed radiologic technologists and registered nurses. Each member of the team has specialized training in interventional procedures and advanced nursing care.

compromised vein function," says Dr. Hoffman. "Varicose veins can be very painful, especially for those whose careers and livelihood require them to stand on their feet for hours at a time. Many patients enter our office in pain, and walk out after the treatment to lead happier, healthier, and more active lives."

Kathleen Laferriere, RN, BSN, CCRN, a nurse for close to 30 years, knows the disabling effect of varicose veins all too well. As a cardiac nurse at Lowell General, Laferriere assists with emergency lifesaving procedures for heart attack patients every day in the Heart and Vascular Center's Cardiac Catheterization Lab. Passionate in her career, she takes care of the sickest of patients, and thinks nothing of the long hours in the procedure room, standing on a hard floor wearing a lead apron.

"I call it the curse of the nurse," says Laferriere. "For a long time, I dealt with tired and achy legs, it's just something I got used to with a job that you rush around on your feet all day. It's when the pain and constant aching started waking me up at night, I decided it was time to do something about it."

In April of this year, Laferriere arranged for a consult with Vein Center physician Dr. Wei Du to discuss treatment options. An ultrasound confirmed treatment was needed in both legs, and that Laferriere was a candidate for

an Endovenous Laser Ablation procedure. In this treatment, a catheter is placed into the incompetent vein through a 1/4-inch incision and the diseased vein is closed using a painless laser to shut down the faulty veins. The veins then shrink down and close, rerouting the blood to the other healthy veins.

"I did one leg at a time, so I had two procedures spaced six weeks apart. Both times, the procedures were really quick, under a half hour, and I was cleared to go to work the next day. The staff was so helpful, fully explaining the procedure, recovery, and expectations. With prep time, procedure, and recovery, I was in and out in two hours. I didn't have any scars, just some very mild bruising, and I wore compression stockings for two weeks. I was able to resume my activities, and immediately started walking several miles a day and getting back to my regular exercise routine. The best part is there was no more waking up in the middle of the night and no more chronic ache."

All phases of the patient experience, from initial consultation and diagnosis to treatment and follow-up care are available at The Vein Center. A referral is required, and most procedures are covered by insurance. For more information, please call 978-937-VEIN (8346) or visit www.lowellgeneral.org/veincenter.

Maintaining healthy legs



Venous disease is an under-diagnosed and under-treated medical problem affecting over 80 million Americans. Here, Dr. Allan I. Hoffman, Medical Director at The Vein Center at Lowell General Hospital, discusses how you can keep good circulation in your legs:

Q. What factors contribute to varicose veins?

A. Many factors may raise your risk for varicose veins, including family history, older age, gender, pregnancy, being overweight, and lack of physical movement and exercise. About half of all people who have varicose veins have a family history of them. In addition, standing or sitting for a long time may raise your risk, as staying in one position for a long time may force veins to work harder to pump blood to your heart.

Q. Can I prevent venous disease?

A. There are a number of ways to keep good circulation in the legs to reduce your risk:

- Uncross your legs when sitting. Crossing your legs can restrict blood flow.
- Avoid high heels and wear low heels or flats.
- Elevate your legs parallel to the ground when reading and watching TV to improve blood flow to the rest of your body.
- Avoid long periods of sitting or standing. Change your position, shifting from one leg to the other.
- Get your legs moving! Daily activity such as walking helps generate blood circulation in legs.
- Maintain a healthy weight to take unnecessary pressure off your leg veins.
- Limit tub-time and take showers. Take warm (not hot) baths and end by splashing cold water on your legs. Hot baths can dilate blood vessels decreasing the return of blood from the legs to the heart.
- Don't wear tight clothes around your groin and calves, as this can restrict your circulation.
- Women should wear sheer support stockings or panty hose, and men should wear support socks. This can reduce leg discomfort by keeping blood from "pooling" in your feet and ankles, thereby reducing swelling.

Q: How can I be seen at The Vein Center?

A: Have your primary care physician call in your referral, and The Vein Center staff will take care of insurance authorizations, consultation, and ultrasound (if needed).



Every minute matters One heart attack patient's story

When you're having a heart attack, minutes matter. Just ask Lowell resident David Nowak. On an October night three years ago, he started experiencing arm pain and what he thought was heartburn.

"It got worse when I'd lie down," he recalls. "So I stood up for most of the night and slept about an hour."

The next morning, at the construction site where he was installing vinyl siding, his arm pain would worsen as he took heavy boxes off the truck. When he did easier work, the pain subsided.

"But an hour or two later, I was sweating drops like baseballs," Nowak says. "So I had a friend drive me to Lowell General."

When Nowak arrived at the Emergency Department and described his symptoms, the team sprang into action. "They took off my clothes, shaved my chest and hooked me up to some machines," he says. "Then a doctor came in and said, 'You're having a heart attack,' and they rushed me off to the Cardiac Catheterization Lab. It was 15 minutes, at the most, from when I got to the ER and was in the Cath Lab."

There, a Lowell General Hospital interventional cardiologist performed primary angioplasty to open the three blocked coronary arteries causing Nowak's heart attack, and placed three stents to prop them open.

"They absolutely saved my life that day," Nowak says. "They told me that one of the blockages was on the left side where they normally don't place stents, but I wouldn't have made it to Boston for open-heart surgery, that I had just minutes left. So they took the biggest stent they had and put it in."

Today, Nowak is doing fine and feeling better than ever, driving a flatbed truck to keep active ("there's a lot of lifting with offloading"). On the weekends, he enjoys construction projects and skiing in the White Mountains.

"I'm lucky to be here. The people at Lowell General are phenomenal."

David Nowak

The Lowell General Heart and Vascular Center: Cardiovascular care that doesn't miss a beat

There's tremendous peace of mind in knowing that the region's premier center for heart and vascular care is right here at Lowell General Hospital. We offer the latest technology, a team of skilled cardiac care professionals and a comprehensive array of services for diagnosing and treating cardiovascular conditions, including:

State-of-the-art Diagnostics

Prompt, accurate diagnosis is essential for fast, effective treatment. We have today's most advanced tools for identifying heart problems and helping doctors determine the best way to treat them:

- Cardiac catheterization
- Cardiac CT scan
- Echocardiogram
- Electrocardiogram
- Electrophysiology (EP)
- Holter monitor
- Stress testing (exercise, nuclear, pharmacological)
- Tilt table testing
- Transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE)

Leading-edge Treatment Options

Lowell General Hospital's Heart and Vascular Center offers a range of options for treating cardiovascular disease. This enables us to tailor treatment to the unique needs of each patient:

- Angioplasty (also referred to as percutaneous coronary intervention, or PCI) – May be done as emergency treatment for a heart attack (primary angioplasty) or to prevent a heart attack (non-emergent angioplasty)
- Stent placement – A tiny metal "scaffold" is placed in a narrowed artery to prop it open and maintain blood flow to the heart
- Cardioversion – An electrical shock is delivered to the heart to convert an abnormal heart rhythm back to a normal rhythm

- Enhanced External Counterpulsation (EECP) – A nonsurgical treatment for angina (chronic chest pain) and other conditions involving poor circulation
- Catheter ablation – An electrophysiology treatment that cauterizes (burns) cells to eliminate rhythm abnormalities
- Implantable devices – Pacemakers and implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICDs) are used to support a heart that doesn't beat fast enough (pacemaker) or to shock a heart back into a normal rhythm (ICD)

Cardiac Rehabilitation

Cardiac rehabilitation is an important part of recovery following heart surgery and other cardiovascular procedures. That's why Lowell General offers a comprehensive – and nationally certified – Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (see below).

All our cardiovascular services are provided by highly trained and experienced clinicians – giving you convenient access to a superior level of care – right here, close to home. For more information, please visit www.lowellgeneral.org/heartvascularcenter.

Cardiac Rehab helps heart patients reclaim their lives

If you've experienced a heart attack, major heart surgery, or have a serious cardiac condition, Lowell General Hospital's Cardiac Rehabilitation Program can help you regain your health, independence and overall wellbeing through a medically supervised regimen of exercise, education and support.

Housed in a beautifully renovated facility, the Cardiac Rehab Program is staffed by registered nurses, exercise physiologists and respiratory therapists, and consists of these two services:

- **Outpatient** – 12 weeks (36 sessions) of supervised and structured exercise and education to help you return to an active life, make healthy lifestyle choices, and reduce risk factors.
- **Maintenance** – You may exercise independently at home or at a gym, or at our facility twice weekly (for a membership fee).

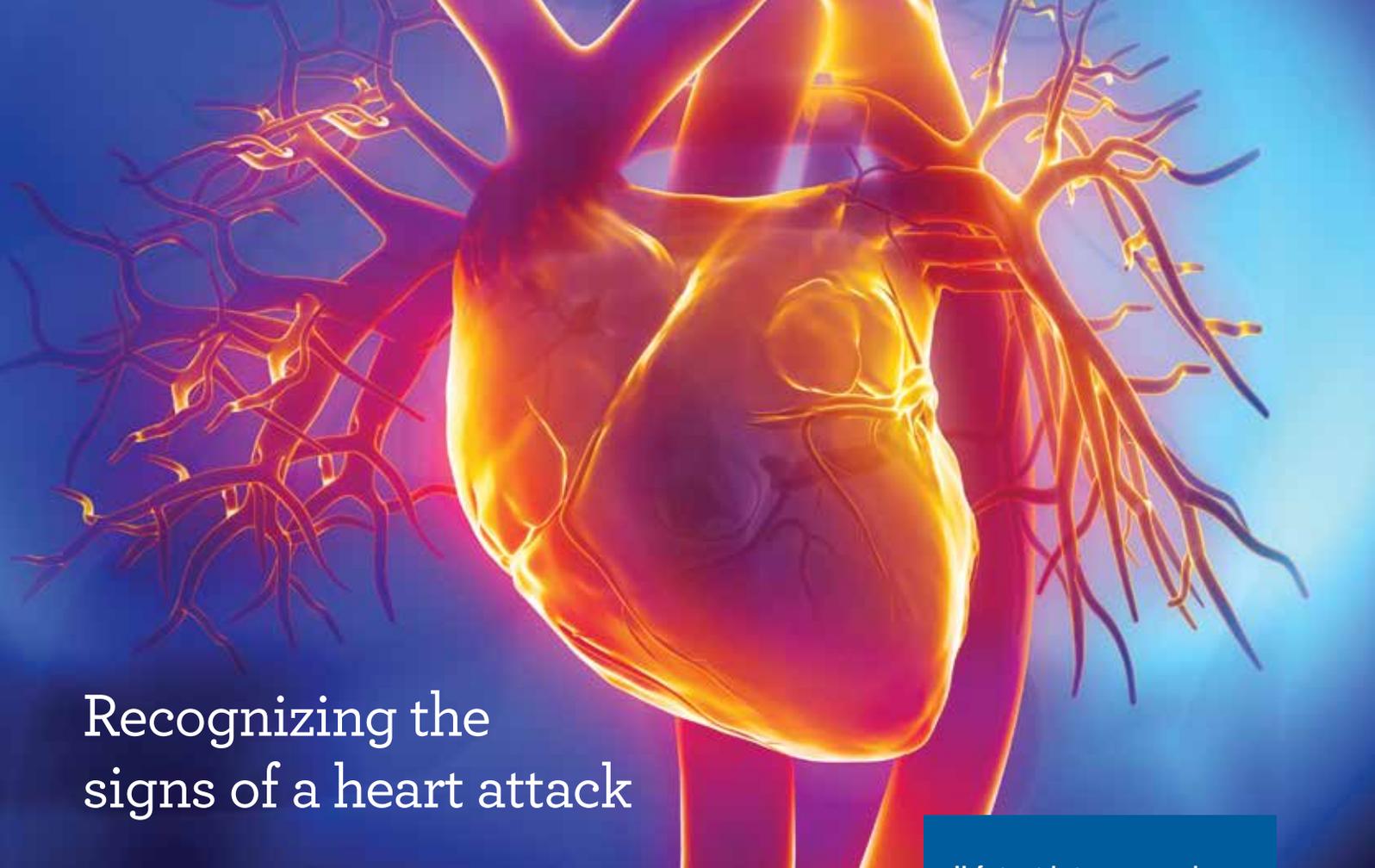
The program was recently re-certified by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, (AACVPR), indicating that it has met rigorous national standards for quality and effectiveness, notes Janice Paulsen, RN, Clinical Nurse Manager.

And cardiac rehab is effective. Research shows that patients who complete 36 sessions of cardiac rehab have a 47% reduction in the risk of death from any cause, and a 31% risk reduction for a heart attack in the next four years, compared with those who complete just one session.

Outpatient cardiac rehabilitation is covered by insurance. A physician referral is required.

Cardiac Rehabilitation is open Monday-Friday, 7:00am-5:30pm at the Lowell General Hospital Saints Campus. For more information, call 978-934-8238.

“This program empowers people to take charge of their heart health in a safe setting with dedicated professionals who encourage and monitor them.” *Janice Paulsen, RN*



Recognizing the signs of a heart attack

Did you know that sudden, intense chest pain isn't the only symptom of a heart attack? In fact, most heart attacks begin slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Sometimes the only symptom is shortness of breath, nausea or fatigue – which is why many people often dismiss it as something else, like the flu.

Cardiologist James Waters, MD, explains why time is of the essence: “A heart attack – also called a STEMI – occurs when a coronary artery becomes blocked,” he says. “Heart muscle damage starts to happen because the heart is deprived of blood. We must open the blocked artery to stop the heart attack; we do that by performing emergency angioplasty, also known as primary angioplasty.”

Angioplasty involves temporarily inserting and inflating a tiny balloon where the artery is clogged to widen it and restore blood flow to the heart. Door-to-balloon (DTB) time is the time from when a patient enters the Emergency Department to when the angioplasty balloon is inflated, opening the blocked artery.

“DTB times of 90 minutes or less lead to significantly improved patient outcomes,”

Dr. Waters notes. “Here at Lowell General Hospital, our average DTB time was 57 minutes for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and 95% of our STEMI patients receive angioplasty in under 90 minutes.”

This underscores the importance of calling 9-1-1 right away if you suspect you or a loved one is having a heart attack.

“EMTs and paramedics can activate the angioplasty team as they stabilize and transport the patient to the Emergency Department (ED),” Dr. Waters says. “The ED staff rapidly diagnoses a heart attack and starts life-saving medications, then our cardiac catheterization lab team is available to provide primary angioplasty around the clock, every day of the year.

“Your risk of a heart attack increases if you smoke, have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, family history of heart disease, stress and inflammation,” he adds. “Your awareness of these risks as well as knowing the signs of a heart attack can lead to seeking medical attention that can dramatically save your life.”

Unfortunately, too many people wait too long before getting help, risking damage to their hearts and even death. Play it safe – recognize these signs that a heart attack could be happening:

- Discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that comes and goes; it can feel like pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting, breaking out in a cold sweat, lightheadedness or dizziness
- Extreme fatigue
- A sense of impending doom

Notably, women are more likely than men to experience symptoms other than chest pain or discomfort.

Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, don't wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1. It's the fastest, safest way to get treatment that could save your life.



Health and Wellness Programs

Winter 2014

Get your body movin’

Gentle/Moderate Yoga

Wednesdays, March 5-April 9, 5:00-6:00pm, \$75

This class is for people who are new to yoga or like to work with a high level of instruction offered in a compassionate manner.

Insanity®

Mondays, March 10-April 14, 6:30-7:30pm, \$45

You’ve seen the infomercials and the crazy results. Insanity is a 60-day, cardio-infused, total body conditioning program. You will see changes in your body, and you will not be disappointed.

PiYo™

Mondays, March 10-April 14, 5:30-6:30pm, \$45

Increase strength and flexibility through choreography that’s fun, challenging and will make you sweat. You’ll build sculpted abdominals and increase overall core strength and stability. It’s about energy, power and rhythm. No previous experience required.

Tai Chi

Thursdays, February 6-March 27, 5:00-6:00pm, \$60

Tai Chi is known for many benefits including tension reduction, improved circulation and balance, increased strength and flexibility, as well as states of mental and physical relaxation.

Turbo Kick®

Tuesdays, March 25-April 29, 6:30-7:30pm, \$45

This class is a combination of kickboxing and dance to high energy music, with a unique blend of intervals of strength/endurance training and a relaxing cool-down.

Zumba®

Tuesdays, March 25-May 6, 5:30-6:30pm,

Thursdays, January 16-February 27 or

March 13-April 24, 5:30-6:30pm, \$45*

**class will not be held on January 30 or April 3*

This class consists of interval training sessions where fast and slow rhythms and resistance training are combined to tone and sculpt your body while burning fat.

Wellness and you

Anger Management Series

Wednesdays, March 12-April 16, 6:30-8:00pm, \$75

This six-session anger management workshop will utilize the principles of deep relaxation, slow breathing, constructive affirmations and guided imagery. You'll learn a variety of mind over body techniques to bring understanding and better control to anger issues while experiencing the benefits of meditation, quieting, and self-hypnosis.

Freedom from Smoking®

Tuesdays, February 4-March 25, 6:15-7:15pm, \$30
(fee refunded upon completion of course)

This eight-week American Lung Association program will give attendees the tools needed to end dependency on smoking and improve health and wellness.

Joint Replacement Education

February 3, March 3 or April 7, 4:00-5:00pm, FREE

Are you having your hip or knee replaced? Learn what to do before your surgery, what will happen on the day of your surgery, what will happen during recovery and tools for case management and discharge planning.

Introduction to Zentangle®

February 5 or April 2, 6:30-8:30pm, \$30

Zentangle is an easy to learn, relaxing method of creating images from repetitive patterns while reducing stress, increasing focus and creativity, and increasing personal well-being.

More Zentangle®

March 5, 6:30-8:30pm, \$25

In this class, you will build on what you learned in Zentangle 101. You will learn new tangles and play with embellishments and shading. Your tangles will be more complex and we will discuss ways to challenge yourself and explore your own creativity. Paper will be supplied; however, you will need to bring your Zentangle mini kit (included in the introductory class). Each class is unique - so join us for one or more.

Personal Safety and Self Defense

March 22, 9:00am-1:00pm, \$10

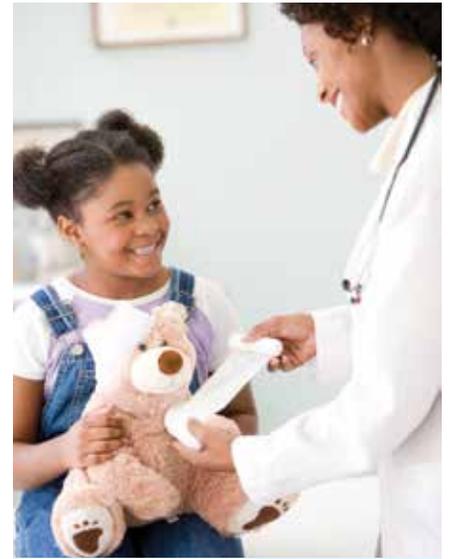
Learn warning signs of aggressive behavior, how to react to an attack and basic self-defense skills. This class is open to both men and women.



Self Defense for Women

March 31, April 2 and April 4, 5:30-9:30pm, FREE

This three-day course utilizes RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) approach to provide self-defense education for women, focusing on awareness, risk reduction and options for physical self-defense.



Teddy Bear Clinic

Saturday, April 19, 12:00-3:00pm, FREE

Lowell General Hospital and the Simon Pheasant Lane Mall in Nashua are teaming up to offer a FREE Teddy Bear Clinic! Kids bring your favorite stuffed animal or doll for a check-up, learn how to keep you and your teddy bear healthy, participate in fun activities and learn valuable health information for the whole family!

The Center for Weight

Management and Bariatric

Surgery FREE Weight Loss

Surgery Informational Sessions

Learn about laparoscopic gastric bypass and laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding, sleeve gastrectomy, pre- and post-surgery care, the benefits of surgical weight loss, how to work with your health insurance company and more.

North Chelmsford office:

20 Research Place

Tuesdays from 6:00-7:00pm:

February 4, or March 4

Fridays from 12:00-1:00pm:

January 17, February 21, or March 21

North Andover office:

203 Turnpike Street

Thursdays from 6:00-7:00pm:

February 6 or March 27

Spanish Sessions: Saturdays from 9:30-10:30am: February 8 or March 8

Get Med Smart



Lowell General Hospital's Get Med Smart program is designed to help ensure our community receives the best possible care.

We have created an easy-to-use and editable form to help you track your medical information.

For more information or to download a form, which is available in English, Spanish and Portuguese, please visit www.lowellgeneral.org/medsmart

Your heart health

CPR, AED, First Aid

First Saturday of the month, 9:00am-5:00pm, \$85

This one-day combined course is designed for participants to become certified in Basic CPR, AED, and First Aid. Cost includes workbook and face mask.

Cardiovascular Screenings

Second Monday of the month, 7:30-11:30am (30-minute appointments), \$25

Screening includes blood pressure, body mass index, body fat analysis, cholesterol, blood sugar, peripheral artery disease, and more.

Heart CT Calcium Score Scan

Please call 978-937-6023 to schedule your appointment, \$100

Cardiac calcium scoring is one of the simplest, yet most advanced methods to detect heart disease at its earliest stages. The Heart CT Score Scan does not require a physician referral and is not covered by insurance.

Heart Disease: Current Management and Future Strategies

February 10, 6:00-7:00pm, FREE

Join Dr. Kirk MacNaught, MD, FACC and learn how heart disease is currently treated with medications, angioplasty and surgery and what the possibilities are for the future.

ICD Support Group and Dinner

April 21, 6:00-9:00pm, FREE

Living with an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) can cause anxiety. Learn what you and your significant other can do to help calm your fears.

Stroke Survivorship Dinner

May 12, 6:00-8:00pm, FREE

Join us as we discuss ways to move forward in your stroke recovery and what you can do to prevent another stroke. Significant other/caregiver welcome.



Heart Healthy Fair

March 1, 8:00am-12:00pm, FREE

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the United States. BMI, body fat percentage, blood pressure, glucose and hip-to-waist ratio screenings will be offered. Attendees will be able to learn about blood pressure, cholesterol, heart disease, stroke and other heart attack and stroke risk factors. \$10 fee for a full cholesterol panel; registration required.



Support groups

Lowell General Hospital offers a variety of support groups for patients. For more information visit www.lowellgeneral.org/supportgroups

- Al-Anon
- AWAKE (Sleep Disorders)
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)
- HELPING HANDS
- Learn to Cope
- New Moms
- Overeaters Anonymous
- Parents of Murdered Children
- Perinatal Loss
- Smoking Cessation
- Weight Management

Online education

Register at www.lowellgeneral.org/onlineed or 1-877-LGH-WELL

These programs can be completed at your own pace from the comfort of home. Courses consist of concise, learner-friendly modules that focus on personal development and provide strategies for aspects of your life.

- Conquer Your Anxiety
- Understanding Key Warning Signs of Early-Onset Mental Illness in Children and Adolescents
- Workplace and Personal Skills Certificate

Parenting programs

Baby and Me Yoga

Thursdays, February 6-27 or March 6-27,
9:30-10:15am, \$40

This gentle yoga class for moms and their babies is designed to strengthen, tone and relax a mother's body and mind after pregnancy. Babies should be young enough that they are not crawling or walking.

Early Words

April 28, 6:15-7:45pm, \$5

Parents play a vital role in building their child's language development from a very young age. Learn how you should talk to your baby or toddler and additional strategies for increasing their vocabulary.

Effective Discipline for Young Children

February 19, 7:00-8:30pm, FREE

Discover the four reasons children misbehave and why parents discipline. Learn the difference between discipline and punishment, and see how your style of parenting can work effectively. This workshop offers several techniques to help parents be more effective at their most difficult job.

Family and Friends CPR

Second Monday of the month, 6:30-8:30pm, \$40

Learn important CPR techniques for all ages. This program is designed for parents, family members and those who want to learn lifesaving skills. This class is presented in partnership with Trinity EMS.

Infant Massage

February 19 or March 12, 6:30-7:30pm, FREE

Infant massage is a centuries-old tradition that offers benefits such as bonding, better sleep, improved colic, relaxation and better digestion.

Itsy-Bitsy Movement and Signs

Fridays, March 7-April 11, 10:00-11:00am, FREE

Explore new and different ways for parents and babies to utilize music and movement to benefit development and attachment. Infant sign language will be introduced and used in the songs each week.

SIDS Workshop: A Certification Course for Childcare Providers

March 3, 7:00-8:30pm, FREE

This SIDS training course will define sudden infant death syndrome, discuss risk factors and identify safe sleeping positions and environments.

What is Preschool All About?

January 29, 6:00-8:00pm, FREE

Confused about what preschool is, when the right time is and if it is right for your child? This seminar will help you understand all there is to know about the preschool years.

Who's Hitting Who?

Talking about Aggression and Bullies

March 4, 7:00-8:30pm, FREE

Is it bullying, harassment or just kids being kids? Who is involved? What are the effects? What can you or child do about it? This workshop is designed to help parents understand and respond to aggressive or bullying behaviors.

Sign up today for our FREE Community Health and Wellness e-newsletter at www.lowellgeneral.org/health

Tweens and teens programs

Babysitting Basics plus CPR

February 8, March 8 or April 12, 9:00am-1:00pm, \$60

Boys and girls ages 10 and older will learn babysitting skills, CPR and receive a CPR Anytime Kit to practice at home.



Dare to Prepare: What Teens Need to Know Before They Take the Wheel

January 23 or March 20, 6:30-8:30pm, FREE

This pre-driver's permit from AAA® is for parents and teens. This program provides critical information for teens before they take the wheel.

Let's Be Honest

March 1, 9:00am-12:00pm, FREE

Help your kids make the right choices with this interactive workshop. We will provide parents with strategies for responding to their children's hard-to-answer questions as well as techniques for talking about sexual health issues in a skilled, knowledgeable and comfortable manner.

Personal Safety and Self Defense for Teens

February 15, 9:00am-1:00pm, \$10

Learn the warning signs of aggressive behavior and how to react to an attack. Participants will also learn basic self-defense skills.

Sex Talk for Teens

March 1, 9:00am-12:00pm, FREE

Teens and tweens ages 11-17 have questions about their bodies, puberty, relationships and more. Our certified sexuality educators will provide facts during this two-part workshop in a comfortable and safe environment.

Childbirth classes

Lowell General Hospital offers a variety of classes to help you prepare for the birth of your child. Use the chart below to select the class that is right for you. Space is limited and registration is required. Call 1-877-LGH-WELL or visit lowellgeneral.org/health for dates, times and cost. Birthplace tours included.

Class	Time commitment	First baby?	Description
Prepared Childbirth	2 hours per week for 6 weeks	Yes	Provides information on the physical and emotional changes occurring during pregnancy, signs of labor, the progression of labor and birth, pain management options and techniques, the role of a labor partner, when to call your healthcare provider, basic infant care and support systems.
One Day Prepared Childbirth	One 8-hour class	Yes	In a faster-paced teaching environment, you will learn all the topics covered in our 6-week Prepared Childbirth class.
Weekend Prepared Childbirth	4½-hour class per day, for 2 days	Yes	Learn all the topics covered in our 6-week Prepared Childbirth class over the course of a weekend.
Online Prepared <i>Learn from home!</i>	You set the pace	Yes	This e-course covers pregnancy basics, preparing for birth, labor basics, stages of labor, childbirth, managing and coping with labor, interventions and postpartum.
Hypno-Birthing®	2½ hours per week for 5 weeks	For any expectant mother	Hypno-Birthing® is an empowering course for couples seeking more natural childbirth. Based on the fear/tension/pain cycle and the belief that a calm state is the key to unlocking natural pain relief.
Refresher	One 2½-hour class	No	Designed for parents who have previously had a baby. Reviews labor and delivery, breathing and relaxation techniques and more.
Prepared Teens	One 3-hour class	Yes	This class is open to any pregnant teen under the age of 19. Covers signs of labor, the progression of labor and birth, pain management options and techniques, the role of a labor partner, when to call your healthcare provider, postpartum care, breastfeeding, basic infant care and safety.



Getting ready for your baby

ABCs of Babies for New Parents

February 4 or April 1, 7:00-9:00pm, FREE

Get started as a parent with everything you need to know about infant care, feeding, development and achieving good sleep.

Basics of Babies

March 26, 6:30-8:30pm, FREE

Are you a new or expectant parent? Learn about parenting styles, behavior issues, pros and cons of breast versus bottle feeding, tips for getting your newborn to sleep and immunizations.

Big Brother & Sister Sibling Class

February 11 or April 8, 3:45-4:45pm, \$20

Children ages 3-8 will explore their feelings concerning the arrival of a new baby. They will read a story, do an art project and tour the Birthplace.

Boot Camp for New Dads®

January 25 or March 29, 9:00am-12:00pm, \$40

This nationally-recognized workshop is taught by fathers and is for men only. Rookie dads (men expecting their first baby) are oriented to the joys and challenges of fatherhood with the help of a coach and veteran dads with their newborns.

Breastfeeding Class

Second and fourth Monday of each month, \$40

Learn the art of breastfeeding. Discover the benefits for mom and baby, valuable tips and other information.

Fertility Yoga

Wednesdays, February 12-March 12,

7:15-8:15pm, \$10/class

Fertility yoga is for women who are trying to conceive. Relieve stress and bring balance, vitality and clarity to you and your reproductive journey. Partners welcome!

The Happiest Baby on the Block®

February 3, 6:30-8:30pm, \$15/family

Learn an extraordinary approach to calming your baby, tips on how to help babies sleep longer and ways to soothe even the fussiest infant in minutes. Fee includes program DVD and Soothing Sounds CD.

Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy You

January 27, 7:00-9:00pm, FREE

Women in their first or second trimester will learn about nutrition tips, prenatal testing, your baby's development, visits with your healthcare provider and much more.

Prenatal Yoga

Wednesdays, February 12-March 12 or

March 19-April 16, 5:15pm or 6:15pm, \$10/class

Learn stretching, breathing and relaxation techniques and modified yoga poses to help honor the body during pregnancy and the birthing process.

Quit Smoking for Your Baby

Now available as a Webinar - to register or for more information, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/health, FREE

Designed for expecting families, this program provides facts about the dangers of smoking while pregnant, second hand smoke, the importance of having everyone in the family quit and strategies for quitting.

Tiny Fingers, Tiny Toes:

Everything New Parents Need to Know

February 1, March 1, April 5, May 3 or June 7, 9:00am-4:30pm, FREE

This series teaches expectant parents about the care of their new baby, including newborn appearance, infant care basics, at-home safety and pediatrician visits.



Sign up today for our
FREE weekly parenting
e-newsletter for new and
expectant parents at
www.lowellgeneral.org/baby



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Circle Health Kids Clinic opens at Imagine That

Circle Health and Imagine That, the premier destination on Boston's North Shore for children's classes and workshops, educational indoor play and birthday parties, recently celebrated the opening of the Circle Health Kids Clinic at the Lawrence-based play area at the Riverwalk Properties. Imagine That is a 12,000 square foot space that renovated and designed an exhibit to mimic a child-sized health clinic complete with child-friendly medical equipment and technology like an exam table, x-rays and other tools to encourage imaginative play.

At Circle Health, we are continually looking for new ways to engage members of our community in improving their family's health and well-being. We are excited to partner with Imagine That and bring this fun and innovative kids play clinic to Lawrence. The Circle Health Kids Clinic is a fantastic way to keep health and wellness top of mind for families. From checkups to dress up, our new play space is also sure to inspire many future nurses, doctors and healthcare professionals!

Circle Health will continue to partner with Imagine That on the upkeep of the clinic as well as provide healthy living tips for children and families during the cold and flu season.

"We are excited to partner with Circle Health to bring you the Kids Clinic," says Jessica Brenes, Vice President of Operations for Imagine That. "The play clinic will be a great opportunity for children and families to not only learn healthy lifestyle habits, but also to familiarize themselves with the tools that are seen inside a pediatrician's office. The hope is to have the children gain comfort with these items, so any fears of the doctor will decrease and they will be seen as a friend to help them."



Imagine That and the Circle Health Kids Clinic are conveniently located in Lawrence off Route 495 in the Riverwalk Mill Building at 354 Merrimack Street, Building 1, directly above Salvatore's Restaurant. For hours and directions, visit www.imajinethat.com.