

LOWELL GENERAL HOSPITAL

# for your health

MAGAZINE

Vol 3 - 2013

## Advances in treatment at the Cancer Center

Providing outpatient testing  
throughout the Merrimack  
Valley region

Offering multidisciplinary  
approach to help those  
with chronic pain

Empowering overweight teens  
to make healthy choices

Fall & Winter Health  
and Wellness Programs

Circle Health is  
coming to Westford!

  
Lowell General Hospital

A CIRCLE HEALTH MEMBER  
Complete connected care™

# Dear Friends,



It is my pleasure to write to you for the first time as the President of Lowell General Hospital. As you may have recently read, I stepped into the President's role on June 1, 2013 after serving 10 years as Lowell General's Chief Operating Officer. Norm Deschene announced this change in May, so that he may devote much of his time to building and strengthening Circle Health in collaboration with our physicians, Circle Health's Chief Medical Officer Dr. David Pickul, and our partner organizations.

Norm continues to serve as Chief Executive Officer of Lowell General Hospital and president and CEO of Circle Health. He and I continue to work closely to ensure that we are delivering on our promise to provide *Complete connected care*<sup>SM</sup> to our community. Be sure to see page 5 to learn more from Norm about just some of the exciting work happening across Circle Health.

This also continues to be an exciting time for Lowell General Hospital. We recently united our pain management programs in a beautifully renovated space at our Saints campus (see page 3), allowing us to better care for the growing number of patients we serve with chronic pain. We continue to make great strides in providing comprehensive care for those fighting cancer. See pages 6-7 to learn more about new advances in radiation therapy and timely information related to prostate cancer and breast cancer

screening. With the community's continued generosity and support, TeamWalk for CancerCare in May raised more than \$908,000 to help cancer patients throughout the Merrimack Valley.

Our organization continues to be regionally and nationally recognized for the quality of our care. In fact, *US News & World Report* recently ranked Lowell General as one of the best hospitals for 2013-14 in Massachusetts – among the top 10 hospitals in the metropolitan Boston area and 12th overall in the state. *US News & World Report* identified Lowell General among the high-performing hospitals in the nation in four specialties: diabetes and endocrinology, gynecology, neurology and neurosurgery, and urology.

Thank you for helping make Lowell General Hospital one of the best hospitals in America. We look forward to serving you and your family for generations to come.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph A. White  
President, Lowell General Hospital

## When facing an unexpected illness or accident, where should you go for care?

For conditions requiring prompt medical attention, Merrimack Valley residents have several options available for emergency care.

### When to see your Primary Care Physician (PCP)

If you or your family needs care right away, try to reach your PCP, who knows your medical history, medications and health issues. He or she can help you with a treatment plan for minor problems, such as sore throat, earaches, rashes and minor cuts, as well as manage chronic conditions such as diabetes and asthma. Your physician helps you stay healthy by giving you preventive screenings and shots.

On the weekends and evenings, your PCP may still be reachable by phone, and can help you choose the best place for care. If you cannot reach your PCP and can't wait, then be sure to call your primary doctor as soon as

possible after treatment so your doctor will update your records and help you with any follow up course of treatment.

### When to go to an Urgent Care Center

Visit an urgent care center for non life-threatening conditions such as allergies, rash or hives, minor eye injuries, dehydration, urinary symptoms, scrapes or lacerations, sprains or possible fractures, stings and bites, minor burns, or conditions needing X-rays or laboratory tests. The Lowell General Walk-in Center is located at 1230 Bridge Street in Lowell (another urgent care center is coming soon to Westford) and can provide treatment in an accessible location.

### When to go to the Emergency Department

A visit to the emergency department of the nearest hospital is your only option if your



condition could cause significant harm or death without expedited medical attention. Dial 911 for immediate assistance when you have a life-threatening situation, such as chest pain, severe bleeding, difficulty speaking or breathing, or other major trauma. For serious medical conditions, Lowell General Hospital has two emergency departments operating 24/7 at the Lowell General Main and Saints campuses.

To learn more, visit [lowellgeneral.org/emergency](http://lowellgeneral.org/emergency)

# Pain Management Center offers multidisciplinary approach to help those with chronic pain

Over 50 million people suffer from chronic pain in the United States. For these people, even the simplest activities like getting out of bed in the morning can be a major hurdle. For some, pain has a significant physical and financial impact – impeding their ability to work or enjoy their favorite activities. Fortunately, pain sufferers can find relief and treatment for a variety of painful medical ailments which do not typically respond to conventional therapy at Lowell General Hospital's Pain Management Center.

The newly renovated facility within our Saints campus opened July 9 to unify the pain management programs at both the Saints and the Main campuses. The center is led by board-certified pain management physicians, Dr. G.K. Dwarakanath and Dr. Benjamin Henkle, who practice at the center full time. In addition, Dr. Atul Bhat and Dr. Michael Connelly conduct interventional pain procedures on a part-time schedule at the center. The care team includes nurses, physical therapists, and other professionals specially trained in a variety of techniques to manage pain. Here, patients will find comprehensive treatment for even the most difficult to treat conditions — such as pain caused by severe arthritis, cancer, or shingles. A spacious lobby area welcomes patients, with a patient paging system that ensures a quiet environment and patient privacy.

“Our goal is to provide comprehensive treatment by identifying the source of the pain and personalizing a plan unique to each patient to eliminate or reduce it. Most importantly, we empower patients in their care by teaching them how to manage it,” says Dr. Dwarakanath. “Our objective is to improve function and minimize pain.”

Services include injections and different types of nerve blocks to treat chronic pain. Medications may also be prescribed, including anti-inflammatory drugs, seizure medications, antidepressant drugs, and other new medications that recently have shown to have very promising effects in treating pain. Other treatments include injections that decrease pain and promote healing for shingles, and electrical nerve stimulation, to increase the body's own anti-pain substances.

“Our pain center also specializes in different techniques to treat chronic headaches as well as muscle tightness related to stroke or brain injury,” says Dr. Henkle. “We are able to dramatically decrease a patient's symptoms with injectable medications such as Botox®. In the case of migraines our patients

are reporting a decrease for three to four months in the number of headaches.”

*Physician referral is required. For more information, please call 978-937-6460 or visit [www.lowellgeneral.org/pain](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/pain)*



## Help is available for a variety of medical conditions that are often resistant to pain control, including:

- Acute and Chronic Back and Neck Pain
- Cancer
- Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS)
- Disc Disorders
- Facet Joint Syndrome
- Musculoskeletal Pain
- Myofascial Pain Syndrome
- Neuromuscular Diseases
- Pelvic Joint Dysfunction
- Peripheral Nerve Injuries
- Peripheral Neuropathies
- Shingles
- Spasticity related to stroke, brain injury, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, and spinal cord injury
- Spine Disorders
- Vertebral Compression Fractures
- Work-related Injuries

# Welcoming new physicians to Circle Health

For information on over 700 physicians in over 30 specialties, call an advisor 24/7 at 1-877-LGH-WELL or visit [www.lowellgeneral.org/findaphysician](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/findaphysician)



**Christopher Baker, MD**  
Orthopaedics – 978-454-0706

Dr. Christopher Baker is a board-certified Orthopaedic surgeon who has joined Circle Health. He is practicing at Orthopaedic Surgical Associates in North Chelmsford, MA where he is accepting new patients. He completed his

residency in Orthopaedics at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, MA and his Foot & Ankle fellowship at New England Baptist in Roxbury, MA. Dr. Baker received his medical degree from Boston University School of Medicine in Boston, MA.



**Namrata Patel, MD**  
Hematology/Oncology – 978-937-6800

Dr. Namrata Patel is a board-certified Hematology/Oncology physician who has joined Circle Health. She is practicing at Cancer Care Associates at Lowell General Hospital's main campus where she is accepting new

patients. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine at Stony Brook University Hospital in Stony Brook, NY and her fellowship in Hematology/Oncology at New York University Medical Center in New York, NY. Dr. Patel received her medical degree from Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, NY. She is fluent in English, Gujarati and Spanish.



**Samantha Ganick, MD**  
Urology – 978-256-9507

Dr. Samantha Ganick is a Urologist who has joined Circle Health. She is practicing at Merrimack Urology Associates, P.C. located in Chelmsford, MA where she is accepting new patients. She completed her residency in

Urology at Boston Medical Center in Boston, MA. Dr. Ganick received her medical degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine in Oklahoma City, OK.



**Jason Silva, MD**  
Orthopaedics – 978-275-9650

Dr. Jason Silva is an Orthopaedic surgeon who has joined Circle Health. He is practicing at Merrimack Valley Orthopaedic Associates in North Chelmsford, MA where he is accepting new patients. He completed his residency

in Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, MA and his fellowship in Sports Medicine at OrthoCaroline in Charlotte, NC. Dr. Silva received his medical degree from the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, MA.



**Ajay Nanavati, MD**  
Internal Medicine – 978-452-9700

Dr. Ajay Nanavati is a board-certified Internal Medicine physician who has joined Circle Health. He is practicing at Riverside Medical Group in Lowell, MA where he is accepting new patients. He completed his residency in Internal

Medicine at Brooklyn Hospital Center in New York, NY. Dr. Nanavati received his medical degree from The University of the West Indies in St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. He is fluent in English and Gujarati.



**Adam Weston, MD**  
Infectious Disease – 978-934-9220

Dr. Adam Weston is a board-certified Infectious Disease physician who has joined Circle Health. His practice is located at 275 Varnum Avenue, Suite 203 in Lowell, MA where he is accepting new patients. He

completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA and his fellowship in Infectious Disease at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, MA. Dr. Weston received his medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, MA.

## 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. We encourage you to speak with your healthcare provider or pharmacist to assist you in completing the form and keeping it up-to-date. The form should be carried with you at all times as well as taken to all physician and hospital visits, including any medical testing (lab, X-ray, MRI, CT, etc.) and pre-assessment visits for admission or surgery.

**Get Med Smart**



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

# Circle Health News

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



## VNA of Greater Lowell earns Innovation Award

Congratulations to the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) of Greater Lowell, which was recently presented with an "Innovation Award" by the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts! This award recognizes the VNA's effort to reduce health care costs by focusing attention on the needs of patients at high risk of hospitalization. Funded by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, this initiative extends VNA's expertise to those who may not be eligible for home health care under current regulations, but who are having difficulty managing a chronic disease.

As part of this effort, patients with heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and/or diabetes are being coached to live well by becoming more knowledgeable and confident in managing their own treatment. We know that a patient's quality of life is improved when they do not have to use the Emergency Department or be suddenly hospitalized to treat issues related to their chronic disease. In collaboration with Lowell General Hospital and Lowell Community

Health Center, the VNA provides coaching – by telephone, in person and through support and education groups, or tele-health monitoring if needed – home visits by a VNA nurse, assistance from community health workers, and close communication with each individual's physician.

This program is a great example of just one of the ways Circle Health is delivering on our promise of providing **Complete connected care<sup>SM</sup>** to our community! To learn more, call 978-459-9343 extension 2529.

## Circle Health Coming to Westford in 2014

Circle Health will be opening a new facility at Cornerstone Square on Littleton Road in Westford in 2014. Lowell General Hospital has always provided healthcare for Westford residents, and we are excited to be able to offer key Circle Health and Lowell General Hospital services in this convenient new location. The new facility will feature an Urgent Care Center, physician specialties like obstetrics and gynecology and primary care, as well as another Patient Service Center. Please visit [www.lowellgeneral.org/westford](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/westford) to learn more.

# Patient Service Centers offer comfort and convenience for outpatient testing

With six locations available throughout the Merrimack Valley, patients needing blood tests, imaging services, and pre-admission and outpatient testing will find a Patient Service Center close, convenient and accessible to their home or work. With expanded weekday and weekend hours, Lowell General offers diagnostic and testing services to meet the needs of the community.

### Lowell General Main Campus

295 Varnum Ave, Lowell, MA  
M-F, 5:30am-6:00pm / Sat, 5:30am-1:00pm  
978-937-6455

The Main Campus Patient Service Center provides patient registration; basic tests such as diagnostic X-rays, lab tests, and EKGs; pre-admission screening, including nursing and anesthesia assessment and education, Orthopaedic and sports medicine clinic (M-F, 6:30am-6:00pm), respiratory services, lactation consultants, nutrition services, as well as routine tests required prior to surgery. In addition, the Patient Service Center handles financial arrangements and patient registration for specialized services within the hospital, such as CT scans, mammography, and lithotripsy.

### Lowell General Saints Campus

1 Hospital Drive, Lowell, MA  
M-F, 6:00am-6:00pm / Sat-Sun, 6:30am-noon  
Laboratory Services: M-F, 6:00am-6:00pm;  
Sat-Sun, 6:30am-2:30pm  
978-458-1411, ext. 4415

- Pre-admission and outpatient testing
- Blood drawing
- Diagnostic X-ray
- EKG

### Lowell General Chelmsford Campus

10 Research Place, North Chelmsford, MA  
M-F, 5:30am-7:00pm / Sat, 5:30am-1:00pm  
978-275-1350

- Pre-admission and outpatient testing
- Blood drawing
- Diagnostic X-ray
- EKG
- Cast Room

### Lowell General Hospital Tewksbury

600 Clark Road, Tewksbury, MA  
M-F, 8:00am-5:00pm  
978-453-9321

- Pre-admission and outpatient testing
- Blood drawing
- Diagnostic X-ray
- EKG

### Lowell General Walk-in Center

1230 Bridge Street, Lowell, MA  
M-F, 8:00am-8:00pm / Sat, 8:00am-4:00pm  
978-459-2273

- Laboratory services (8:00am-4:00pm)
- Diagnostic X-ray

### Lowell General Hospital Laboratory Services

3 Meetinghouse Road, Suite 18, Chelmsford, MA  
M-F, 7:00am-3:30pm  
978-256-6108

- Blood drawing

Coming soon: Circle Health Westford!  
Cornerstone Square, Littleton Road, Westford

# Q & A with Matthew Katz, MD: The latest advances in Radiation Therapy



Dr. Matthew Katz is the medical director of the Radiation Oncology Department at Lowell General Hospital. Dr. Katz and Dr. Stephen Harris of Radiation Oncology

Associates, PA work collaboratively with Lowell General Hospital's team of dedicated physicians and staff to care for cancer patients and families.

## What are the latest advances in radiation therapy?

The radiation used for cancer treatment can be delivered in several different ways. With external beam radiation therapy (EBRT), a machine called a linear accelerator produces the radiation outside the body and "beams" it at a tumor. With brachytherapy, radioactive material is placed in the body near tumor cells. In some cases, radioactive material is injected into the bloodstream.

Today we have a range of EBRT options, from three-dimensional conformal radiation to specialized techniques – such as image-guided radiation therapy (IGRT) and intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) – that help shape and focus the radiation beam more precisely. Stereotactic radiosurgery is even more advanced and delivers an even higher level of radiation precision. And we're developing newer radioactive agents for brachytherapy that may improve survival in advanced prostate cancer.

## What do these advances enable you to do for patients with cancer?

The increased precision of EBRT enables us to target cancer cells while sparing nearby healthy tissue. This allows us to treat previously inoperable, early-stage lung cancer, and patients with either metastatic or recurrent disease. Plus, because the precision of stereotactic radiosurgery is increasing, we can consider

a second course of radiation therapy if cancer recurs – which wasn't always possible before.

## Are all these advances available at Lowell General Hospital?

Yes, we're fortunate to have cutting-edge equipment and, more importantly, a wonderful staff that works closely together. We participate in clinical trials that offer appropriate patients access to innovative therapies. For example, we have some breast cancer trials that may shorten the course of radiation treatment to three weeks versus six to six-and-a-half weeks.

## What's the most important thing about the radiation therapy resources at Lowell General Hospital?

Our goal is to provide the same level of care you'd find at any cancer center in the country, which means that the majority of patients who need radiation therapy can be treated here, closer to home.

## It takes a village: Why a team approach to prostate cancer care is so important

No man is an island – and it's especially true when he's facing prostate cancer. If you or someone you love has been diagnosed with prostate cancer – the most common cancer in men – you'll be glad to know that Lowell General Hospital offers an entire team of specialists with tremendous expertise in treating this disease.

"One of the good things about prostate cancer is that there are lots of successful treatments available," says Matthew Cohen, MD, a board-certified urologist with Merrimack Urological Associates, referring to surgery, various types of radiation therapy and chemotherapy as well as active surveillance (watchful waiting) in low-risk cases. "It's definitely to the patient's benefit to get opinions from different specialists before making a decision about treatment."

"It's important for patients with early-stage prostate cancer to have a conversation with a urologist and a radiation oncologist to understand their treatment options," adds Matthew Katz, MD, medical director of Radiation Oncology at Lowell General Hospital. "In more complex cases, it's helpful to have a medical oncologist involved if the cancer has recurred or spread.

"Also, because prostate cancer is often slow-growing, it's important to involve the primary care physician," he notes, "since, especially in older men, there may be other health issues to address in how we treat the prostate cancer."

"Here at Lowell General, we offer all these resources," Dr. Cohen says. "We decide together with the patient on the best plan of treatment. We get the best outcomes when the patient feels informed and that his course of treatment is his choice, his decision," he adds.



Matthew Cohen, MD

"We offer nearly everything offered at any of the Boston hospitals," says Dr. Cohen. This includes surgery using the state-of-the-art robotic da Vinci® Surgical System, and the most advanced radiation therapy approaches and chemotherapy agents available.

"Because we're all part of Lowell General Hospital, we can work together more closely," says Dr. Katz. "And the more closely we work together, the easier it is for the patient to have clear communication among the people involved in his care."

# Advances in breast cancer detection and treatment

“If there’s one thing I want women to know, it’s that mammography works,” says Jill Steinkeler, MD, board-certified diagnostic radiologist at Lowell General Hospital. “Its role is to detect breast cancer at an early stage, when it’s still curable, which is why regular screening is so important.”

Dr. Steinkeler and her colleagues follow the American Cancer Society’s guidelines for screening, which recommend that women have a baseline mammogram between the ages of 35 and 40, and routine annual mammograms after age 40. Women should also do breast self-exams monthly, and have a clinical breast exam as part of their regular physical.

“Some women at higher risk – those with a strong family history of breast or ovarian cancer or other genetic factors, or who’ve undergone chest radiation – might start regular screening before age 40,” she adds.

To make breast cancer screening convenient and accessible, Lowell General offers mammography at multiple sites (see pink box) with today’s most advanced imaging technology.

“All our mammography is digital,” Dr. Steinkeler notes, a technology that’s been shown to be better than traditional film mammograms in detecting breast cancer in women under age 50 and with dense breasts.

Lowell General Hospital also offers 3D mammography, or tomosynthesis. “This technology gives us three-dimensional images of the breast that can help us see lumps that are otherwise hidden by overlapping breast tissue,” Dr. Steinkeler explains. “This is helpful for all women, but especially for those with dense breast tissue. It’s been shown to increase the detection rate of breast cancer and minimize false-positive exams.”

In addition, Lowell General offers breast ultrasound, ultrasound-guided breast biopsies



Lowell General Hospital offers multiple sites for breast imaging:

#### **Main Campus**

**295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell**

Screening and diagnostic mammography, breast ultrasound, stereotactic biopsies

#### **Saints Campus**

**1 Hospital Drive, Lowell**

Screening and diagnostic mammography (tomosynthesis), breast ultrasound, stereotactic biopsies

#### **Lowell General Chelmsford**

**10 Research Place, North Chelmsford**

Breast MRI and biopsy provided by Shields Healthcare

#### **Women’s Imaging Center**

**4 Meeting House Road, Chelmsford**

Screening mammography

#### **Lowell General North Andover**

**203 Turnpike Street, North Andover**

Screening mammography (tomosynthesis)

*Mammograms can be scheduled at any site; no referral is needed. Call 978-937-6023 to schedule yours today.*

and cyst aspirations, breast MRI, and stereotactic and MRI breast biopsies.

When breast cancer is detected, Lowell General Hospital also offers a comprehensive array of today’s most advanced treatment options.

“Today we know that not all breast cancer is created equal,” says Murat Anamur, MD, a board-certified medical oncologist and medical director of cancer services at Lowell General. “With this understanding we can tailor treatment to the individual patient.”

With advanced testing now available, he explains, doctors can analyze the genes in breast tissue to understand the exact type of cancer a patient has, determine what drugs or treatment approach will hit that target most effectively, and even predict if a recurrence is likely.

“This field is growing fast, and there are new drugs being developed and approved and new concepts emerging all the time,” he notes.

When is surgery to prevent breast cancer, like actress Angelina Jolie had, something to consider? “This is one option for risk

reduction in carefully selected cases where there is a genetic component,” Dr. Anamur says. “If you have a family history of breast cancer – especially if it occurs in younger relatives – this is a red flag that it may have a genetic origin. We also look at how many other family members not only have breast cancer but also ovarian, prostate and colon cancer. Also, if you have cancer in both breasts, or if breast and ovarian cancer occur in the same person.

“In these situations, we refer you to our geneticist for testing,” he continues. “If you test positive for the BRCA gene mutation, we then do counseling regarding risk reduction, and removing both breasts is one option.” Also removing the ovaries is another. For post-menopausal women, there are three drug options.”

“Breast cancer today is more and more treatable, with options expanding all the time,” he adds. “But early detection through regular physical exams and mammography remains one of the most important things women can do to improve survival.”

# The Center for Youth Wellness

## Empowering overweight adolescents to make healthy choices

Being a teenager is challenging. But being an overweight teenager can be an overwhelming struggle, especially if the young person doesn't know the first thing about healthy nutrition or is embarrassed to be seen exercising.

Enter the Center for Youth Wellness (CYW) at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center. Two years ago, it launched an innovative 10-week adolescent weight management group program designed for young people 11 to 18 years-old. The program is available at Lowell General Hospital.

Most importantly, it's changing young lives for the better.

"Our program provides a safe, supportive environment where teens can feel comfortable learning new knowledge and skills so they can implement healthier habits on their own," explains CYW Clinical Director Michael Leidig, MS, RD, LDN.

"The group approach has real benefits," he continues. "Social isolation is common among overweight teens who often are struggling with friendships, teasing and bullying. In the group setting, it's more fun and they see they're not alone. Yet we keep the group small enough so each participant gets individual attention."

### A patient's perspective

Sixteen-year-old Malik is one participant who has seen the program work. He says that losing weight is his number-one priority because he realizes he needs to be healthy in order to get good grades – and he wants to attend college to study mechanical engineering. A few weeks into the program, he said, "So far it's really helping a lot; I've already lost five pounds. This opportunity is basically my life."

The program is designed exclusively for 11 to 18 year-olds with a body mass index (BMI) at or above the 95th percentile, or above the 85th percentile with a condition such as hypertension or hyperlipidemia. It is comprised of two initial assessment visits at Floating Hospital and 10 weekly group sessions that occur after school for two hours at the Greater Lowell YMCA. There also are



follow-up visits at three and 12 months after program completion as well as a monthly weight maintenance group.

The first hour of the after-school program, taught by a dietitian, focuses on nutrition, stress reduction and how to successfully make dietary and behavioral changes. During the second hour, enrollees take part in a variety of fun physical activities at the YMCA (all program participants receive a 10-week membership).

### Impressive results

"Most teens have participated in other weight management programs and often feel judged and deprived of the foods they love, which sets them up for a negative relationship with food and healthcare providers," Leidig says. "We focus on teaching the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the many eating situations they find themselves in."

"For example, they may not be eating breakfast at home, they're eating school lunches, and maybe hitting a fast-food restaurant or convenience store after school," he continues. "We teach them healthy options to choose in all of these situations. We're not giving out a diet or putting them on a strict calorie-, fat- or carbohydrate-controlled diet. We're empowering them to make the changes they want to make versus being told what to do."

"We don't eliminate treats either, but encourage them to reduce portion size and be mindful of what, when and why they're eating," he says, noting that many kids engage in emotional eating, turning to food without really being hungry.

"We don't expect teens to lose a ton of weight during our 10-week program," he adds. "But it's 10 weeks of helping them build healthy living skills and empowering them to make some important long-term changes. As a result, we start to see participants consuming more fruits and vegetables, and reducing sugary drinks in particular."

It's an approach that's resonating with the youth in the program.

"This program taught me that it is possible to eat and be healthy without starving myself," one teen wrote in an evaluation of the program. "It gave me the tools to lead a healthy life, with patience and determination changes can be made. It was also very supportive. I made amazing friends and had great discussions. Through this program I learned how to lead a healthy lifestyle, and that I am not in it alone."

"It's unusual to get positive comments from an adolescent going through a weight management program," Leidig says, "but during our program, a light bulb goes off and teens realize 'I can do it.' They decide to make changes versus being told to do so by a parent or healthcare provider. And they're so much more likely to succeed when the idea to make a healthy change is their own idea."

*The 10-week after-school teen program is available at the Greater Lowell Family YMCA. Currently, the only out-of-pocket cost to families is a \$50 administrative fee and any applicable insurance copayments for the first two assessment visits and the 3- and 12-month follow-up visits.*

*To learn more about the program and eligibility requirements, **sign up today for our next free information session on September 25 from 5:30-6:30pm.** Call 1-877-LGH-WELL or visit [www.lowellgeneral.org](http://www.lowellgeneral.org) to register.*

# Health needs assessment helps drive hospital's community health improvement work in 2014

Researchers and students from the University of Massachusetts Lowell recently conducted a community health needs study to distinguish the unmet medical and public health needs within the Greater Lowell community. The study, conducted on behalf of Lowell General Hospital and the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, assessed the needs in the city of Lowell as well as the towns of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough and Westford.

During the assessment, researchers conducted dozens of focus groups and individual interviews with key members of community organizations throughout the greater Lowell community over the course of a six month period. The findings of this important study will provide valuable direction to Lowell General Hospital and many Greater Lowell community organizations in the months ahead.

“Lowell General Hospital is committed to helping improve the health of the communities we serve,” said Michelle Davis, RN, MS, Vice President of External Affairs for Lowell General Hospital and chair of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance. “To be able to truly best meet the needs of our patients and the community as a whole, it is important to learn more about the key factors contributing to chronic disease and the challenges facing members of our community and how they affect their health. We are looking forward to engaging our community in this exciting process.”



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

- Thursday, October 10 from 5:00-6:30pm  
Tewksbury Public Library, 300 Chandler Street, Tewksbury
- Friday, October 11 from 9:00-10:30am  
Roudenbush Community Center, 65 Main Street, Westford

Members of the community are invited to join the sessions to share their perspectives on the findings. For more information, please call 1-888-LGH-WELL or visit [www.lowellgeneral.org](http://www.lowellgeneral.org).



## Save the date for the 2013 Fall Festival

October 26, 11:00am-2:00pm, FREE

Lowell General Chelmsford, Research Place in North Chelmsford

Your kids won't want to miss this exciting journey as they learn about their bodies and earn stamps on a "Passport to Health." Join us for fall-themed activities and games – healthy snacks and Halloween safety bags provided!



# Health and Wellness Programs

Fall & Winter 2013-2014



## Bike Safety Rodeo

September 15, 10:00am-1:00pm, FREE  
Target Parking Lot, 181 Plain Street in Lowell  
(rain date September 22)

Bring your bikes and finish the safety course for a chance to win a new bicycle! Refreshments and lots of fun for the whole family. Co-sponsored by Kiwanis, Trinity EMS and Lowell General Hospital.

## Get your body movin’

### Gentle/Moderate Yoga

Tuesdays, November 5-December 17, 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, September 9-October 14 or  
November 11-December 16, 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.

### Kickboxing

Thursdays, September 19-October 24 or  
December 5-January 9, 6:15-7:15pm, \$45

Strengthen and tone all muscle groups, utilizing punches and kicks. This high-energy cardio workout will tone and define your entire body while burning calories and increasing your metabolism.

### PiYo™

Mondays, September 9-October 14 or  
November 11-December 16, 5:30-6:30pm, \$45

PIYo is a unique class designed to 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 is required.

### Tai Chi

Thursdays, September 26-November 14,  
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, September 10-October 15 or  
November 12-December 17, 6:30-7:30pm, \$45

This class is a combination of kickboxing and dance to high-energy music. It’s the ultimate cardiovascular challenge that’s a unique blend of intervals of strength and endurance training with a relaxing cool-down.

### Zumba®

Wednesdays, September 11-October 16 or  
November 6-December 11, 5:30-6:30pm, \$45  
Fridays, October 25-November 29 or  
December 20-January 24, 6:15-7:15pm, \$45

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

# Wellness and you

## Diabetes 101

December 2, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE

Discover the signs and symptoms of diabetes and the strategies used to manage the disease.

## Freedom from Smoking®

Tuesdays, October 8-November 26, 6:15-7:15pm, \$30 (refunded upon completion of course)

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

## Guilt-Free Holiday Eating: Tips to Maintain, Not Gain During the Holidays

November 13, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE

The holiday season marks festive events and the possibility of extra pounds. Join an in-store nutritionist from Stop & Shop® and discover ways to survive the holidays and avoid packing on unwanted weight.

## Joint Replacement Education

October 7, November 4, December 2 or January 6, 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.



## Let's Meditate:

### Going Within to your Peaceful Space

October 21, 6:00-8:00pm, FREE

Cultivate your inner world and nourish your body, mind and spirit through meditation. Explore the *Sound Journey*, as well as simple mantra meditation and heart-centered meditation. All levels of meditators are welcomed. Bring a yoga mat or cushion if you choose to practice on the floor.

## Meditation Series

September 9, 16 and 23, 6:00-8:00pm, \$25

This series is for anyone who wants to cultivate their inner-world and nourish their body, mind and spirit through the means of meditation. All levels of meditators are welcomed.

## Personal Safety and Self Defense

November 16, 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

January 6, 8, and 10, 5:30-9:30pm, FREE

This course utilizes the RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) approach to provide self-defense education for women, focusing on awareness, risk reduction and options for physical self-defense. Call Alison at 978-937-6360 to register.

## Self-Hypnosis:

### The Five Minute a Day Stress Buster

October 7, 6:00-8:00pm, FREE

Learn a safe and effective hypnosis technique that helps alleviate stress, enhances deep relaxation and provides self-improvement and healing.

## Introduction to Zentangle®

October 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®

November 6, 6:30-8:30pm, \$25

Build on what you learned in Zentangle 101 and learn new tangles and play with embellishments and shading. 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).

## Zentangle®—

### Stress Relief for the Holidays

December 4, 6:30-8:30pm, \$30

Don't let the holidays stress you out! Through deliberate strokes and deliberate focus, Zentangle creates a relaxed state similar to meditation or being "in the zone." Fee includes supplies and a mini-kit

## 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: October 1, November 5 or December 3

Fridays from 12:00-1:00pm: September 20, October 18, November 15 or December 20

### North Andover office: 203 Turnpike Street

Thursday from 6:00-7:00pm:  
September 19 or October 3

Spanish sessions: Saturdays from 9:30-10:30am:  
September 14, October 12 or November 9

Registration is required – please visit [www.lowellgeneral.org/health](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/health) or call 1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355).

## Stress Management with Self-Hypnosis

October 9-November 13, 6:30-8:00pm, \$75

Stress makes us frustrated, ineffective, unhappy and it can even cause injury. Learn how to improve your ways of coping with stress by utilizing self-hypnosis and various 'natural' techniques such as relaxation, breathing, affirming, and visualizing.

## Substance Abuse:

### What You Need to Know About Opiates

November 12, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE

Whether you are a parent looking out for your child or a health care provider caring for patients, learn the truth about opioid use and abuse. Learn about how opioids affect the body, who's using and how, and the available community resources.



## Your heart health

### 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.

### COPD Seminar and Screening

October 9, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is one of the most common lung diseases that can make it difficult to breathe. A respiratory therapist will provide an overview of COPD including how the lungs work, causes and symptoms of COPD, tests and treatment options, and much more. A COPD screening will follow the presentation. This seminar is for people diagnosed with COPD or anyone who would like the screening.

### 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.

### Stroke Survivorship Dinner

November 4, 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.

## Support groups

Lowell General Hospital offers a variety of support groups for patients. For more information visit [www.lowellgeneral.org/health](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/health)

- Al-Anon
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Arthritis
- AWAKE (Sleep Disorders)
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- HELPING HANDS
- Learn to Cope
- New Moms
- Overeaters Anonymous
- Parents of Murdered Children
- Perinatal Loss
- Smoking Cessation
- Weight Management

## Online education

To register visit [www.lowellgeneral.org/health](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/health) or call 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.

- Career Growth
- Clear Mind, Bright Future
- Conquer Your Anxiety
- First Aid Basics
- Making Change Successful, Not Stressful
- Office Ergonomics
- Safe Driving
- Time Management: Strategies for Success
- Understanding Key Warning Signs of Early-Onset Mental Illness in Children and Adolescents

# Parenting programs

## **Baby and Me Yoga**

*Thursdays, September 5-26, October 3-24 or November 14-December 12, 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.

## **Celiac Disease and the Gluten-free Diet**

*November 5, 7:00-8:30pm, FREE*

Parents and childcare providers will learn what gluten is, what foods and common everyday items contain gluten, and discuss ways to avoid cross contamination. Dietitians will answer questions about food substitutions and ways to build a gluten-free diet into everyday life.

## **Early Words**

*September 19, 6:00-7:30pm, \$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.

## **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**

*October 7 or November 18, 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, September 27-November 1 or November 8-December 20, 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**

*September 16, 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.

## **Temper Tantrums and Power Struggles**

*November 12, 7:00-8:30pm, FREE*

This workshop will focus on the stresses that many children feel today. Parents can teach children the value of self-control so they are better prepared to handle their emotions. Learn ways to model coolness when facing problems, how to develop a feelings vocabulary and how to identify anger-warning signs before problems arise.

# Tweens and teens programs

## **Babysitting Basics plus CPR**

*October 12, November 9 or December 7, 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**

*September 12, 6:30-8:30pm, \$10/family*

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

## **Let's Be Honest**

*September 5, 6:30-8:00pm, 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**

*October 19, 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**

*September 19 and 26, 6:30-8:00pm, 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](http://lowellgeneral.org/health) for dates, times and cost. Birthplace tours included.

Class	Time commitment	First baby?	Description
<b>Prepared Childbirth</b>	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.
<b>One Day Prepared Childbirth</b>	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.
<b>Weekend Prepared Childbirth</b>	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.
<b>Online Prepared</b> <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.
<b>Hypno-Birthing®</b>	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.
<b>Refresher</b>	One 2½-hour class	No	Designed for parents who have previously had a baby. Reviews labor and delivery, breathing and relaxation techniques and more.
<b>Prepared Teens</b>	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.

Sign up today for our FREE weekly parenting e-newsletter for new and expectant parents at [www.lowellgeneral.org/baby](http://www.lowellgeneral.org/baby)

# Getting ready for your baby

## **ABCs of Babies for New Parents**

*October 1 or December 3, 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**

*October 24, 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**

*October 8 or December 10, 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.

## **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 from 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®**

*November 4, 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.

## **Boot Camp for New Dads®**

*September 28 or November 23, 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.



## **Great Expectations**

*October 2, 5:30-7:00pm, FREE*

Are you pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant? Stop by this fun baby shower themed event to learn more about our local providers (including obstetricians, pediatricians and family practitioners), meet our childbirth educators, lactation consultants, Birthplace nurses and more. Enjoy light refreshments and register for giveaways and raffle prizes including a \$300 Babies 'R Us® gift card.

## **Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy You**

*September 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 at 5:15pm or 6:15pm, \$10/class*

Learn stretching, breathing and relaxation techniques and modified yoga postures 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](http://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**

*November 4, 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.





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# TeamWalk for CancerCare raises \$920,000 for local cancer patients

Once again breaking previous records, the 14th annual TeamWalk for CancerCare held on May 19 raised \$920,000 to provide services and support for local cancer patients and their families. The Merrimack Valley's largest single-day fundraising event brought more than 5,000 walkers, volunteers, and supporters to the Tsongas Center on a beautiful Sunday morning. Many participants donned t-shirts for loved ones as they walked the 3-mile or 6-mile route through historic downtown Lowell and its river ways.

All funds raised directly support patients at the Cancer Center at Lowell General Hospital and those fighting cancer throughout the Merrimack Valley. The generosity of contributions to TeamWalk provide transportation to and from treatments, support groups and services, wigs, select

medication for those in need, and many health and wellness programs.

This year's event was once again hosted by Matt Noyes, chief meteorologist at NECN and Lori Grande, co-host of the JW & Lori Morning Show on Country 102.5 WKLB. Rene Rancourt of the Boston Bruins performed the National Anthem during opening ceremonies accompanied by the Color Guard from Lowell High School. Lowell Mayor Patrick Murphy, members of the New England Patriots Cheerleaders and the Dracut Pop Warner Cheerleaders were also on hand to cheer on the walkers and volunteers.

Since the walk began in 2000, more than six million dollars has been raised to provide assistance to well over 18,000 people in the community. The difference this event



makes directly impacts others – enhancing the likelihood of completing treatment, connecting patients and families to resources, and improving quality of life at each step along the way.

For more information, visit [www.teamwalk.org](http://www.teamwalk.org)

**Save the date for next year's TeamWalk for CancerCare – Sunday, May 18, 2014**