

thrive

FALL 2018

FOOD AS
MEDICINE:
WHAT THE
SCIENCE SAYS

STROKE
TREATMENT
IN THE FAST
LANE

GUARDING GROWING BONES

THE INFORMATION YOU NEED.
THE CARE WE PROVIDE.
THE COMMUNITY WE SHARE.

 **New York-Presbyterian**
Brooklyn Methodist Hospital

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THINGS
ARE
HAPPENING
HERE

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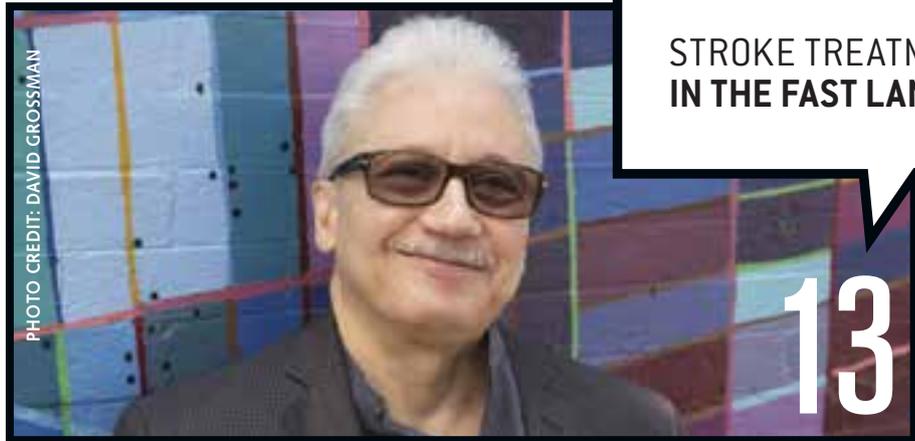
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**STROKE TREATMENT
IN THE FAST LANE**

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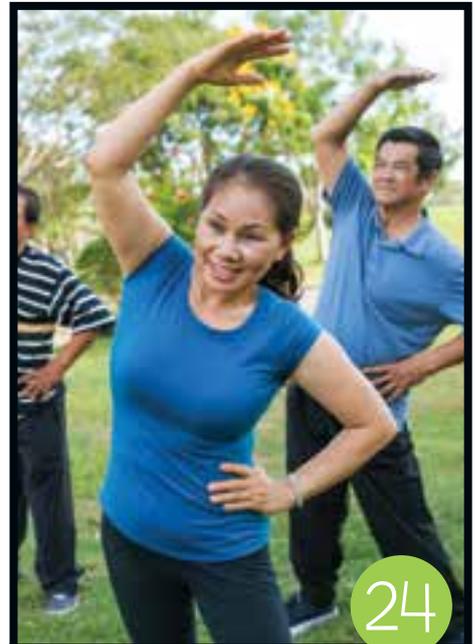
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**AGING GRACEFULLY
KEEP MOVING**

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Viewpoint

THIS ISSUE OF *THRIVE*
WILL BE THE LAST.
TO RECEIVE UPDATES ABOUT
COMMUNITY EVENTS,
HEALTH TIPS, AND THE
EXITING THINGS HAPPENING
AT NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN
BROOKLYN METHODIST,
REACH OUT TO US AT
BMHNOW@NYP.ORG.

Fall is upon us, and summer, like all things, must come to an end. To everything there is a season, and in the spirit of transition, we share that this Fall 2018 edition of *Thrive* will be the last issue.

Thank you, Brooklyn, for your readership. It has been a privilege to write for you and share the ways that NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital and our dedicated staff of healthcare professionals can help you and your loved ones lead full, healthy lives.

To receive updates about community events, health tips, and the exiting things happening at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist, reach out to us at BMHNOW@NYP.ORG.

Again, our thanks, and may you continue to *Thrive* in every season.

Best,
The NYP Brooklyn Methodist *Thrive* Team

YOUR HEALTH IN A HEARTBEAT

HERE'S A QUICK RUNDOWN OF HEALTH NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS TO KEEP YOU IN THE KNOW.

INFLUENZA SAFEGUARDS

Influenza season has arrived, just in time for your family's packed schedule with a new school year and the impending holiday season. Take a proactive approach to preventing the flu by getting an annual vaccine, avoiding people who have the flu, and washing your hands with soap and water, or cleaning them with sanitizer after touching shared surfaces like countertops, subway seats and door handles.



"Family members live in close quarters and interact physically, so they may spread germs easily between one another," says **Harold Horowitz, M.D.**, chief of infectious disease at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. "It is essential that everyone in the family gets a flu vaccine, especially if one or more family members have a compromised immune system."

Dr. Horowitz also recommends teaching children to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or the crook of their shirt sleeve when they cough or sneeze to prevent the spread of germs.

PILE YOUR PLATE

A common question from people trying to eat a healthier diet is "How do I eat more vegetables?"

Lillian Yang, R.D., clinical dietitian at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist, has the answer. "Add flavor. Season vegetables the same way you might season meat, with herbs, spices, a squeeze of lemon or balsamic vinegar," she says. "A tomato or zucchini seasoned like a steak takes on a whole new dimension of taste."

Ms. Yang also suggests having a variety of fruit and vegetables pre-washed and ready to eat. Try sweet peppers and cucumbers with hummus, or carrots and broccoli with cucumber-yogurt dip as a snack. Frozen vegetables are always great to have on hand as a backup to add to meals.

"Colors of vegetables indicate different nutrients, and vegetable variety is good for your gut health and reduces the need to take a daily multivitamin," Ms. Yang says. "People who fill half of their plates with vegetables at every meal tend to feel better and have more energy."

DETECTING AN INVISIBLE THREAT



Home appliances that burn fuel produce an odorless, colorless, lethal gas called carbon monoxide (CO). When windows are closed to protect against chilly weather, it is even more important to have proper ventilation to avoid CO poisoning. Here are four steps to keep your family safe from CO:

1. Have your fireplace, furnace and fuel-powered appliances serviced annually to keep them working properly, confirm proper venting and prevent CO leaks.
2. Install CO detectors in every hallway and bedroom. Avoid corner installations, as airflow may not reach detectors there.
3. Check or replace your CO detector batteries at least twice annually—coordinating your effort with spring and fall time changes provides a convenient, built-in reminder to do so. CO detectors need to be replaced every five years.
4. Go outside immediately and call 911 if you experience symptoms of CO poisoning, which include shortness of breath, lightheadedness, headache, dizziness and nausea.

200,000

THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF **ANNUAL FLU-RELATED HOSPITALIZATIONS** IN THE UNITED STATES

BY THE NUMBERS

8.8%

PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE IN NEW YORK STATE WHO CONSUME THE RECOMMENDED FIVE TO NINE SERVINGS OF VEGETABLES DAILY

400

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF **PEOPLE IN THE U.S. WHO DIE EACH YEAR FROM CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING**

5

KNOW YOUR *Family Tree*

While many health complications may be prevented by eating a healthy diet and exercising daily, some conditions are related to genetics—a factor that you cannot control.

National Family Health History Day, which falls on Thanksgiving day each year, is a great opportunity for families to discuss health conditions that often have a genetic component, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease or hypertension. By understanding your family health history, you can take steps to reduce your controllable risk for developing these medical conditions.

“Your family medical history is filled with genetic clues about your health,” says **Karen David, M.D.**, chief of genetics at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “Having candid conversations about medical issues can help you make choices to live your healthiest life.”



BANDAGE *or* BREATHE?

An old adage says “Let it breathe” when treating small wounds, but is that the best way to promote healing?

“Wounds need oxygen to heal,” says **Christopher Kelly, M.D.**, chief of pediatric emergency medicine at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist. Keeping wounds uncovered is a good idea unless it’s an area that gets dirty or irritated by clothing.”

Dr. Kelly advises that the most important thing is to wash the wound with soap and cool tap water to ensure it is free of dirt and other irritants.

“Proper care of wounds, even small ones, reduces the risk of infection,” he says. “You can apply antibiotic ointment once or twice a day as well as a bandage, if necessary.”

ONE-TWO **PUNCH**



Channel your inner prize fighter with an exercise plan that includes boxing.

Boxing classes are available at many gyms and fitness centers. With all the motion of throwing punches and mastering fancy footwork, this exercise offers benefits for:

- + **Heart health** – Participating in a daily aerobic exercise like boxing lowers the risk of developing many medical conditions, including vascular and heart disease.
- + **Core strength** – Boxing builds core muscles in the midsection as well as reaction time, both of which help with balance.
- + **Stress relief** – Excessive stress affects your physical and mental health. Boxing allows you to clear your mind and focus solely on the exercise, reducing stress through motion.

You can enjoy the benefits of boxing without the bruises by sparring with bags and mitts instead of an opponent; however, if you enjoy climbing in the ring with a sparring partner, wear protective headgear.



Pick Your

PROBIOTIC

DOs AND DON'Ts

Does your gut need more good bacteria?

IN THE EARLY 20th century, Elie Metchnikoff was dubbed the father of probiotics. Fast-forward to today, and seemingly everyone is touting the benefits of these gut-friendly microorganisms—typically bacteria. Probiotics are commonly offered in supplement form, both to help gastrointestinal (GI) issues and for general health purposes, but they do not affect everyone in the same manner.

“Studies have shown benefit only in patients who have a GI disorder or some ailment related to the GI tract,” says **Megha Kothari, M.D.**, gastroenterologist at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “The most proven digestive benefits are in people with antibiotic-associated diarrhea or traveler’s diarrhea.”

Patients with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory bowel disease, or ulcerative colitis, may also benefit from probiotic supplements. Ongoing research is investigating whether probiotics are useful for autoimmune disorders, food allergies and mental health conditions, such as depression or chronic fatigue.

“If you have a specific intestinal disorder or problem, certain strains may be better than others, so guidance from your physician would be beneficial,” Dr. Kothari says. “Also, some people may experience the side effect of diarrhea if they consume too much probiotics in a short amount of time.”

GUT-FRIENDLY FOODS

Probiotic supplements can be expensive and may not be an option for all people, but everyone can try to incorporate additional probiotic-providing foods into their daily diets. Many of these foods are also sources of cancer-fighting antioxidants or nutrients that contribute to bone growth, so they provide benefits beyond maintaining good gut health.

Try these foods that are chock-full of probiotics:

- + Fermented vegetable dishes like kimchi or sauerkraut
- + High-fiber foods like chia seeds and flax seeds
- + Apple cider vinegar
- + Natto
- + Yogurt, kefir and aged cheeses
- + Dill pickles
- + Kombucha
- + Traditional salami

“Ask your doctor which probiotic-containing foods might benefit you,” Dr. Kothari says. “If you’re able to, incorporating probiotics naturally through foods and lifestyle modification is probably best.”

DOs and DON'Ts

OF PROBIOTICS

DO Eat probiotic-rich foods if you are able. While probiotic supplements do not benefit everyone, nutrient-rich foods do.

DON'T: Use probiotic supplements without speaking to your doctor first. While probiotic supplements typically have few side effects, individuals with chronic illness or suppressed immune systems may be vulnerable to health complications. Safety can also vary by type of probiotic supplement and length of use.

DO Use a supplement with multiple strains of probiotics if you choose to try supplements. Dr. Kothari also says to look for supplements with a CFU count of at least 2 billion.

DON'T: Smoke or consume excessive amounts of alcohol. It can disrupt your normal gut probiotics, according to Dr. Kothari.

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Change of Place

For two months, Judith, a 35-year-old real estate agent and mother of twin 10-year-old boys, had not been feeling like her normal self. She was experiencing pelvic pressure, constipation and a frequent need to urinate. She was concerned but put off scheduling a doctor's appointment because she was busy and hopeful the problem would clear on its own.

WHEN JUDITH FINALLY scheduled an appointment with her doctor, she was surprised to learn that her symptoms were consistent with pelvic organ prolapse, also known as POP, a condition that impacts up to 30 percent of women. Judith's doctor explained that Judith had a number of risk factors, including cigarette smoking and obesity, as well as a history of childbirth. A pelvic exam during which Judith was asked to cough confirmed the preliminary diagnosis.

THE PROBLEM WITH POP

A hernia in the pelvic region, POP occurs when the pelvic organs push into or through the vaginal opening. These organs include the bladder, rectum and uterus. Typically, a network of fibers, ligaments and muscles attached to the bones in the pelvis support the organs by creating a hammock in which they rest.

In addition to childbirth, obesity and smoking, other factors that compromise pelvic support and increase the risk for developing POP include menopause, genetics, constipation, chronic coughing and poor muscle tone. What's more, being caucasian or repeatedly lifting heavy objects or engaging in exercise or work that is strenuous may also increase the risk of POP.

POP is classified into the following four types:

- + **Cystocele or dropped bladder**—This is the most frequently experienced type of POP, occurring when the bladder falls into or outside of the vagina.
- + **Rectocele**—This type of POP occurs when the rectum protrudes into the vagina or outside of it.
- + **Enterocoele or small bowel prolapse**—This condition occurs when a portion of the small intestine protrudes into the vaginal area.
- + **Uterine prolapse or dropped uterus**—This type of POP occurs when the uterus protrudes into the vagina or outside of it. It is sometimes linked with small bowel prolapse.

WARNING SIGNS

While some symptoms of POP are impossible to ignore, others may not be evident. Specifically, asymptomatic POP means a hernia has occurred but nothing is bulging or protruding past the vaginal opening. However, symptomatic POP—when tissue is pushing past the vaginal opening—can cause aching, heaviness or pressure in the



THE STRENGTH OF KEGELS

Kegel exercises are an effective way to strengthen pelvic floor muscles. Plus, they are easy to do and may be done anywhere. To perform a kegel:

1

Tighten the pelvic floor muscles—the ones that stop and start the flow of urine. Once flexed, count to eight.

2

Relax the muscles, and then count to 10 before repeating the exercise.

3

Try 10 repetitions, three times per day.

pelvis. Women with symptomatic POP may also experience bulging near the vagina, discomfort and pain during exercise or sex, incontinence, bowel dysfunction, or irritation in the vaginal area.

NONSURGICAL AND SURGICAL SOLUTIONS

“Some patients have such a low stage of POP, they don’t feel or see anything unusual. In those cases, treatments may not be necessary,” says **Marisa Mastropietro, M.D.**, gynecologic reconstruction surgeon and director of urogynecology and reconstructive pelvic surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “In women with symptoms, a change of diet and exercise, physical therapy, or a pessary—a soft prosthetic placed in the vagina to support organs affected by POP—may be all that’s needed. In severe cases, the patient may elect to have reconstructive surgery to correct the issue and improve urogynecologic function and quality of life.”

Surgeries to improve POP include cystocele repair to fix a prolapsed bladder or urethra, hysterectomy to remove the uterus, and vaginal vault suspension to correct the structure of the vaginal wall.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTION

Identifying and treating POP in a timely and effective manner is critical on a number of levels. If pelvic organ prolapse goes too long without treatment, it can cause harmful infections in the pelvic

area. Infections may prevent the bladder, kidneys and urinary tract from functioning properly. Left untreated, the infections could result in sepsis—a life-threatening response to infection that may cause organ failure.

“POP can also become restrictive, keeping many women from doing things they enjoy because of the discomfort or incontinence,” Dr. Mastropietro says. “That is why working with your gynecologist and having yearly pelvic exams is critical. When properly identified, POP is manageable and treatable.”

Keep in mind that POP may need to be treated more than once because the condition can recur.

“Surgeries are effective, but the body is still susceptible to wear and tear over time,” Dr. Mastropietro says. “Women typically have one or two procedures to address POP.”

The earlier POP is identified, the less likely it is to require ongoing treatment, so prompt detection and prevention are key.

REDUCING THE RISK

When it comes to POP prevention, the controllable risk factors include choosing a diet filled with fiber to prevent constipation, drinking plenty of water, quitting smoking if you smoke, and managing weight through diet and exercise.

“POP does not have to interfere with life,” Dr. Mastropietro says. “By partnering with healthcare providers, women can overcome this common condition.”



Avoiding the TROUBLE TRIFECTA

The flu can make you miserable enough by itself, but it can also create a domino effect that may lead to pneumonia and sepsis. Here is how you can stop the trouble trifecta before it starts.

“Some people
think the flu
vaccine will give
them the flu.

This simply isn't
the case.”

— SALEEM SHAHZAD, M.D.

YOU FEEL TERRIBLE. Your body is aching, you are freezing, and your skin is clammy. You have wrapped yourself in layers of blankets, have multiple boxes of tissue at the ready, and are drinking tea and water constantly whenever you are not resting. You are pretty sure you have the flu.

What you may not know is you may be on your way to developing pneumonia and/or are in the early stages of sepsis, an extreme bodily response to an infection that can become life threatening without quick medical attention.

“Most of the time, an otherwise healthy patient will not need to come to the hospital for the flu,” says **Saleem Shahzad, M.D.**, pulmonologist at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “However, when a patient has an underlying health issue or a chronic condition, he is more likely to develop sepsis as a result of flu-related pneumonia.”

THE SEPSIS SNOWBALL EFFECT

Pneumonia is one of the most common causes of sepsis. Initial symptoms of sepsis include shortness of breath, a quick heart rate, severe pain and discomfort, confusion and disorientation, clammy or sweaty skin, fever,

or an intense feeling of cold. Sepsis is a medical emergency and may result in potentially deadly septic shock if left untreated.

During septic shock, blood pressure decreases and organs do not receive enough blood and oxygen to function properly.

“Once sepsis is severe, the mortality rate rises,” Dr. Shahzad says. “The key is to start treatment as early as possible. At NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist, we have a Code Sepsis protocol that alerts us whenever signs of sepsis are present to ensure we are addressing it quickly.”

Learn the signs of sepsis so that you can immediately seek treatment. Better yet, take precautions to prevent flu-related infections so you can avoid the emergency room.

VITAL VACCINATIONS

In most cases, the flu lasts less than two weeks, but it may cause more serious complications. Flu is a common cause of pneumonia, which is an infection of the lungs that can cause coughing, fever and difficulty breathing. Despite available treatments and vaccines, pneumonia is still the leading cause of death for children under age 5.

PREVENTION IS BEST

“Prevention is key for both the flu and pneumococcal pneumonia,” Dr. Shahzad says. “The flu vaccine should be given to most people annually, and the pneumococcal vaccine should be given to select groups as well.”

Children younger than 5 years old and adults older than 65 should receive pneumococcal vaccines in addition to the flu vaccine. People with chronic conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, chronic liver disease or heart failure should also consider scheduling a pneumococcal vaccination due to their higher risk of developing complications from the flu, including pneumonia and other pneumococcal infections that affect the ears, sinuses, bloodstream and brain.

“The two pneumococcal vaccines are PCV13 and PPSV23,” Dr. Shahzad says. “They reduce your chance of contracting pneumonia and may also decrease its severity and potential complications if you do get sick.”

Myths and misconceptions about the flu vaccine and vaccinations in general may cause some people to skip their

recommended shots, but in fact, vaccinations defend the body. Adverse reactions to vaccines are rare, and the most common side effects are mild pain, fever, chills and weariness. Often, these side effects are signals that your body is beginning to build immunity against the vaccine’s targeted disease.

“Some people think the flu vaccine will give them the flu,” Dr. Shahzad says. “This simply isn’t the case.”

In addition to scheduling all necessary vaccinations, you should make sure to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or a disinfecting hand gel before eating and preparing food and after blowing your nose, using the bathroom, and changing diapers (see “Handwashing 101” below). If you already have the flu, avoid visiting public places for five to seven days after becoming sick to prevent the spread of disease.

“Prevention is key for both the flu and pneumococcal pneumonia. The flu vaccine should be given to most people annually, and the pneumococcal vaccine should be given to select groups as well.”

— SALEEM SHAHZAD, M.D.

HANDWASHING 101

You probably think you already know how to wash your hands, but if the process takes you only a few seconds to complete, you are likely not doing much to combat the germs that have accumulated on your hands. To properly wash up, follow these steps:

1. **Wet your hands with water.** The temperature of the water can be cold, warm or in between—whatever suits you.
2. **Lather your hands completely with soap,** making sure to get the suds on your palms, the backs of your hands, under your fingernails and between your fingers.
3. **Scrub your hands together,** continuing to cover the entire surface area of exposed skin and under your fingernails. Keep it up for 20 seconds or more. If you need an easy way to time yourself, mentally hum “Happy Birthday” at its normal tempo.
4. **Rinse your hands with running water** to remove the soap residue, dirt, grease and germs that you have scrubbed off your skin.
5. **Dry your hands** using a clean towel since this method helps lower the number of microbes on your hands. Using an air blower is not as effective and may add more germs to your skin.



BETTER BRAIN AGING

Tell your couch you will see it later. You have cognitive decline to prevent.

MILD COGNITIVE DECLINE in certain areas, like attention and memory, are a normal part of getting older, but conditions that cause debilitating loss of cognitive function, including dementia, do not always have to be. Protect your brain and decrease your own risk for cognitive decline by doing something your doctor already wants you to do every day—exercise.

A recent study found that for people with no genetic risk for dementia, inactivity significantly increased their chances of developing the condition. A different study found a link between poor fitness and weaker brain fiber, which increases risk of dementia. Still another found even individuals with genetic risk for dementia could reduce their chances of developing the condition through exercise.

TURN DOWN DEMENTIA RISK

Although research is still being done to determine the exact relationship between exercise and dementia, it is clear there is a link. Exercise is known to prevent a number of conditions

associated with higher dementia risk, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes, among others.

“Exercise reduces the risk of cerebrovascular disease, a condition that in the elderly significantly increases the risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease,” says **Al Ortega, Ph.D.**, neuropsychologist at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “Exercise may also reduce dementia risk through adult neurogenesis, which occurs when new neurons are formed in the brain. Production of these neurons is controlled by a protein called brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which is activated by, among other things, exercise.”

Research in lab animals has shown a direct relationship between elevated BDNF levels in the brain and the ability to learn and retain new information.

“The key appears to be in engaging in activity that increases the heart rate,” Dr. Ortega says. “Aerobic exercise, like running and swimming, appears to be best, but strength training, like weight lifting, may also benefit the brain.”

GET ON YOUR FEET

“Help yourself stay as cognitively intact as possible by keeping mentally and physically active,” Dr. Ortega says. “Watching TV while lying on the couch should be the exception to a normal day and not the rule.”

While you should talk to your doctor before beginning any new form of exercise, you have plenty of options. For instance, playing a spirited game of tag with your children or grandchildren can count as aerobic activity, and so can gardening, raking leaves, or taking a long walk through a park or greenway. Balance exercises—yoga or tai chi, for example—can decrease your fall risk as well as help you relax and reflect.

No matter the activities you choose, the most important thing is to be active at least 30 minutes each day. See “Keep Moving” on page 24 for some exercise ideas.

When Louis Lorenzo had a stroke, the expert care he needed came to him—and saved his brain from untold damage.

Stroke Treatment

IN THE FAST LANE



“About 85 percent of strokes are ischemic, meaning they happen because of a lack of sufficient blood flow to the brain ... During an ischemic stroke, the brain loses 1.9 million neurons every minute it goes without blood flow.”

—NATALIE CHENG, M.D.

LOUIS, A 68-YEAR-OLD RETIREE from downtown Brooklyn, leads a quiet, peaceful life. He spends his time reading, strolling around his neighborhood, and playing chess and checkers with his son. On the afternoon of June 13, however, a medical emergency disrupted his routine.

After waking up from a nap around 2 p.m., Louis took his regular medications and went into the bathroom where he saw himself in the mirror.

“I began to see redness and swelling on both sides of my face,” he says. “I sat in my lounge chair and felt numbness in my left hand, and it spread throughout my left arm.”

Louis knew his symptoms indicated something was wrong. He called 911 and told the operator what was happening. Then, he called his daughter.

“At the time, I didn’t know my symptoms were signs of a stroke,” Louis says. “I’d never had a stroke before.”

Within minutes, Louis’ daughter and two police officers arrived at his home. He credits them with keeping him conscious while emergency medical personnel (EMS) were en route. The vehicle that soon arrived on the scene was no ordinary ambulance—it was NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital’s new Mobile Stroke Treatment Unit (MSTU), equipped with the medical providers and technology necessary to treat Louis just steps away from his home. He would be the unit’s inaugural patient.

MOBILE MEDICINE

Two weeks before Louis had a stroke, NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist launched an MSTU to serve the people of Brooklyn, the third hospital to join the NewYork-Presbyterian fleet. Units were already serving Manhattan and Queens. The NewYork-Presbyterian MSTU program is the first of its kind on the East Coast and is the result of a partnership with Weill Cornell Medicine, Columbia University Medical Center, the Fire Department of the City of New York and the NewYork-Presbyterian health system. The mission of the MSTU is, quite simply, to take the diagnostic and treatment process that people who have a stroke normally undergo in the emergency department and bring it to homes, workplaces, parks and anywhere else strokes occur. That saves crucial time.

"About 85 percent of strokes are ischemic, meaning they happen because of a lack of sufficient blood flow to the brain, often because of a blood clot in an artery," says **Natalie Cheng, M.D.**, director of the stroke program at NYP Brooklyn Methodist and site director of the Hospital's MSTU. "Neurons [nerve cells in the brain] are particularly sensitive to loss of blood flow—when they're damaged, they don't regenerate like other cells in the body. During an ischemic stroke, the brain loses 1.9 million neurons every minute it goes without blood flow."

Neurologists have a potent tool to counteract ischemic stroke called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), an intravenous drug that can break up clots and allow blood to reach the brain again. There is a catch, however: To have the best chance of avoiding or minimizing physical and cognitive damage from a stroke, patients typically must receive tPA within four and a half hours after symptoms begin. That is where the MSTU can be a game changer.

Outfitted with a computed tomography (CT) scanner to obtain images of the brain—crucial in the diagnosis of stroke—as well as the equipment necessary to obtain vital signs and administer tPA, the MSTU is an emergency department on wheels for people who have a stroke. Its team includes two paramedics, a CT technician and a nurse with special training in delivering tPA on a mobile unit. A telemedicine connection allows a NewYork-Presbyterian neurologist to order a CT, blood work and medications, including tPA, in real time, as well as immediately see the results of imaging exams and other tests. The emergency medicine team at NYP Brooklyn Methodist can see that information as well, which speeds the preparation for the patient's arrival at the Hospital ER.

"The faster we deliver tPA medication to stroke patients, the more brain we can save and the less disabled they're going to be following the stroke," says **Michael Lerario, M.D.**, medical director of the NYP MSTU Program. "With the MSTUs, we can give tPA approximately 40 minutes faster than we can through standard care."

A GOLDEN SAVE

When Louis' 911 call came in on June 13, the dispatch operator alerted the MSTU because Louis' symptoms were consistent with those of a stroke. The MSTU can only be activated through the 911 system. The unit set out for Louis' home, along with a second ambulance—a precaution in case of a non-stroke diagnosis. When the vehicles arrived, Louis was displaying classic signs of stroke, including slurred speech, drooping on the left side of his face and difficulty moving the left side of his body.

"After I called 911, I was helped outside," Louis says. "I don't remember much—I was in too much pain. I just remember hoping that I would be okay and able to return home safely."

With the MSTU parked, the team swiftly gathered information about what had happened from Louis, his daughter and the police

“The faster we deliver tPA medication to stroke patients, the more brain we can save and the less disabled they’re going to be following a stroke. With the MSTUs, we can give tPA about 40 minutes faster than we can through standard care.”

— MICHAEL LERARIO, M.D.

officers, and then took CT images of Louis' brain. Dr. Lerario, the on-call telemedicine neurologist that day, reviewed the images.

"The team quickly recognized Louis' symptoms as signs of stroke, and the CT scan did not show a brain bleed or anything else to suggest we couldn't give him tPA, so I recommended the team administer it," Dr. Lerario says. "We call that first hour after symptoms appear 'the golden hour' because that's the time frame when tPA is most effective. We're able to give tPA during the golden hour in the emergency department less than 1 percent of the time because patients just can't get there fast enough. With the MSTU, we will be able to meet that goal much more frequently because we go to patients.

Louis received tPA 51 minutes after the onset of his symptoms—within the golden hour—a factor that made a world of difference for his recovery.

REMARKABLE RECOVERY

Once Louis received tPA, the MSTU took him to NYP Brooklyn Methodist. Dr. Lerario called Dr. Cheng to let her know the MSTU was on the way, and she looked at Louis' CT images before he arrived. The stroke Louis experienced rated 11 out of 42 on the National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale, meaning he experienced a moderate-severity stroke, according to Dr. Cheng. When she saw Louis for the first time, she was incredulous.

"I asked Dr. Lerario, 'Really? This is the same patient you told me about on the phone?'" she says. "Louis' symptoms were gone—his speech was fine and his face looked symmetric."

Swift treatment in the MSTU yielded an outstanding result for Louis. He did not have any lasting physical or cognitive harm from the stroke, although it left him with less energy and strength. He stayed in the Hospital for two days so Dr. Cheng could be certain his walking and speech were unaffected and to investigate why the stroke had occurred. The reason is still unclear, but doctors are looking into the possibility of an arrhythmia, also called an abnormal heart rhythm.

"The stroke made me value my family and my life more," Louis says. "I'm looking forward to regaining my full strength and energy. I don't think I would be alive if not for the MSTU and the police officers. I want to sincerely thank them for responding to my 911 call quickly and for taking care of me in an efficient and nice manner. If it wasn't for them, I'm not sure I would have made it. They are my heroes!"

GUARDING GROWTH

Growth plate injuries can affect orthopedic development, but that is no reason to keep children from enjoying their favorite sports and activities.

IT IS COMMONLY BELIEVED that overtraining for competitive sports can stunt children's growth, but this school of thought is not entirely true.

By themselves, sports and recreational activities will not affect a child's height. However, they can result in acute and overuse injuries that may damage children's growth plates—the sites of tissue and bone creation found at the end of long bones, including the thighbone and forearm.

"Growth plates are constantly changing and are made of calcium and cartilage that hasn't determined what it's going to be yet," says **Christen M. Russo, M.D.**, pediatric orthopedic surgeon at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. "Any part of the body that goes through constant change is weak and vulnerable."

FROM TODDLERS TO TEENS

Children are at risk for growth plate injuries from the moment they become mobile until the time their growth plates solidify in their teenage years. Although each child's bone structure develops at an individualized pace, girls' growth plates typically close when they are approximately 14 years old while boys' growth plates generally continue growing until they are approximately 16 years old.

"The range at which growth plates solidify varies widely," Dr. Russo says. "In children from 2 to 16 years old, we see all kinds of growth plate injuries that change based on the activities children are involved in during those years."

For younger children, these activities might involve swinging or sliding at the local playground or park. Making sure that equipment is not broken and is used appropriately can lower the risk of injury. Children should be careful on the monkey bars and not climb on top of swing sets.

Keep in mind that older or larger children at the playground may not notice smaller children, which could cause a collision, so children of all ages should be carefully supervised. Another hazard occurs when supervising adults climb onto some of the playground equipment with a child.

"Parents should not go down slides with their children," Dr. Russo says. "The parent's added weight means they'll whiz down the slide faster, leading to an increased risk of injury for the child if her foot or leg should get caught in the slide. Instead, parents should walk alongside the child as she slides down."

GROWING PAINS

Because cartilage is weaker than fully formed bone, accidents that might cause a sprain or strain in adults can result in fractures for children.

“Sometimes, the growth plate can close early due to injury,” Dr. Russo says. “Should this happen, it can cause limb length discrepancy, growth disturbances or an angular deformity if one side of the growth plate closes and the other side remains open.”

Dr. Russo is quick to stress, however, that the health benefits of physical activity far outweigh the risks of a growth plate fracture. Most children can pursue competitive sports with little chance of developing growth issues, particularly if their parents teach them how to prevent and seek treatment for injuries.

“We prefer that children be active rather than sit at home, especially since most fractures treated by pediatric orthopedists don’t cause problems with growth,” Dr. Russo says.

SPORTS SEASON

As children age, they may develop an interest in high-contact sports, such as hockey or football. Though sports with a higher chance of collision present more chances for children to experience an acute injury, wearing the proper equipment can help soften blows on the ice or on the field.

“Children, coaches and parents should follow guidelines for wearing helmets, pads and any other safety equipment recommended for their sport,” Dr. Russo says. “Children should also stay hydrated and eat right.”

OWING BONES

To promote healthy bones, make sure your children are eating foods rich in calcium and vitamin D, including fish, colorful vegetables and low-fat dairy.

Stretching and resting between practices and games is also important. If children perform the same action repeatedly without adequate rest, they risk developing an overuse injury. Even low- or no-contact sports and activities, such as swimming and dancing, can cause children to injure their joints and growth plates if they do not switch up their activities from time to time.

“With swimming, children should vary their strokes to prevent shoulder injuries,” Dr. Russo says. “Soccer, dancing, and track and field competitions can also cause overuse injuries in the knees, hips, feet and ankles, especially if children are competing on multiple teams.”

Examine your children’s practice and competition schedules to make sure they’re not being overworked, and encourage them to engage in multiple types of activities throughout the year to lower the risk of overuse injuries.

No matter how many precautions you take, your children may still get injured. Often, children are not aware of the severity of their injuries and will not tell their parents that they are hurt. If you notice your child limping or avoiding use of a favored arm, don’t hesitate to seek medical attention.

“Any pain that doesn’t go away after four to six hours is concerning,” Dr. Russo says. “If you’re not sure that your child is injured, consult a pediatrician who can refer you to a pediatric orthopedist in the case of a growth plate injury.”

Pediatric orthopedists are specially trained to treat growth plate injuries and lower the chance of growth complications through treatment. Seeing one early can get your child back to living the healthy, active life of an all-star.

DIAGNOSING & TREATING GROWTH PLATE FRACTURES

When a child develops a painful or tender area near the end of a bone due to a trauma or overuse injury, a growth plate fracture could be the cause. Pediatric orthopedists at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist recommend the child be examined by a doctor as quickly as possible, ideally within five days.

Doctors diagnose growth plate fractures through a physical exam and imaging tests, such as x-ray, computed tomography (CT) scan or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). While x-rays are useful when determining if a bone is broken, they cannot always detect growth plate fractures because the growth plate is made up of cartilage, and cartilage does not show up clearly on x-rays. If an x-ray is inconclusive, an MRI or a CT scan may provide a better rendering of the growth plate so a diagnosis can be made.

A growth plate fracture may mean the child will need a cast to stabilize the injury so it can properly heal. The length of time the cast is needed depends on the injury. If the growth plate is more severely injured, surgery may also be required so that bone fragments can be set using wires, screws or metal plates. Growth plate surgery is generally followed by a cast to promote stability and healing.



FRAYED CONNECTIONS

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Bones give the body shape, but to make movement possible, they need tendons and ligaments. When you have problems with these soft tissues, participating in the activities you love can be challenging.

INTEGRAL PARTS OF the skeletal system that are found throughout the body, tendons and ligaments are fibrous connective tissues. The main difference between them lies in what they connect—tendons attach muscles to bones, and ligaments join bones together. Bones owe a lot to these connective threads. Tendons allow bones to be mobile rather than stationary. When tendons help muscles pull on bones, bones are able to move. As they do so, ligaments help keep them stable.

Like many soft tissues, tendons and ligaments are susceptible to a variety of injuries both acute, like sprains and strains, and overuse, including tendinitis and bursitis. Fortunately, with proper treatment, tendon and ligament conditions don't have to keep you on life's sidelines.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

What you do for a living or for fun can be tough on your tendons if you repeat the same motion hour after hour, day after day—think typing on a keyboard or going for your customary evening run in ill-fitting shoes. Over time, that repetitive action can cause inflammation or degeneration of the tendon in the affected area—typically a joint—a condition known as tendinitis. The area around the tendon may become achy, swollen and tender. When tendinitis occurs, the very action that led to it can become difficult to perform.

“Movement typically intensifies tendinitis pain, which can make everyday activities and exercise difficult,” says **Henry Tischler, M.D.**, chief of orthopedic surgery at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “Joint pain with movement is a cue to see an orthopedist. If tendinitis is the diagnosis, quick treatment is important: It rarely lasts long if treated early.”

Changing your everyday routine to avoid a tendinitis-triggering repetitive motion, whether by working more ergonomically or taking a few days off from your favorite sport, may be enough to relieve symptoms. If not, icing the area and taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and a brace or splint can provide extra support. Physical therapy is an option for persistent tendinitis. If more advanced treatment is necessary, corticosteroid injections may be suggested.

TOP-TO-BOTTOM TENDON TROUBLE

The shoulder is one of the body's workhorse joints, so it is no surprise that the rotator cuff, a group of muscles and tendons that joins the top of the arm bone to the shoulder blade, can be prone to problems due to all of that exertion. Excessive lifting and overhead motion can cause tendinitis. Tearing of the soft tissues is another danger. Tears can be full or partial, and they may happen suddenly or be a long time coming.

“If you experience an acute rotator cuff tear from, say, trying to lift something heavy too fast, you'll know it right away,” Dr. Tischler says. “The pain is usually severe, and it may be difficult to move your shoulder soon after. Chronic rotator cuff tears, on the other hand, are subtler and can be related to tendinitis. They build over time, as do symptoms, including pain and stiffness.”

Rest and physical therapy can help heal a partially torn rotator cuff, but full tears require surgery. Arthroscopic surgery—a procedure in which a surgeon performs the operation with a scope through a small incision—is the go-to method for most rotator cuff repairs, which involves reattaching the tendons to the bone.

At the other end of the body, the Achilles tendon, which snakes down the back of the leg to link the calf muscle and heel bone, is a frequent victim of overuse, especially for weekend warriors or individuals who spend a lot of time standing while working. Without treatment, tendinitis can, over time, evolve into tendinosis, a condition in which the tendon develops tiny tears that the body cannot repair because of the ongoing stress of repetitive activity. Tendinitis and tendinosis both cause pain in the heel and back of the leg.

As with other overuse injuries, avoidance of activities that aggravate the Achilles tendon, along with steps to reduce pain and inflammation—for example icing and NSAIDs—are important first-line treatments. If those do not work, patients often progress to physical therapy, and then, if necessary, surgery to repair the tendon.

A HOTSPOT FOR LIGAMENT INJURIES

The role of ligaments is most crucial in the knee, where four major connective tissues help stabilize the joint during its daily battle against gravity and assist it in back-and-forth and side-to-side motions. The collateral ligaments—medial and lateral—protect the sides of the knee, and the anterior and posterior cruciate ligaments take care of the front and back of the joint, respectively.

Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) sprains and tears are two of the most common knee injuries, especially among athletes. They often occur as a result of specific movements during practices, games or exercise, such as a sudden stop or change in direction, or an awkward landing from a jump. ACL injuries come with distinctive symptoms.

“Many people report hearing a ‘pop’ just before falling to the ground because their knee, having sustained damage to a key stabilizer, gives out,” Dr. Tischler says. “Swelling and pain soon follow. Most people can still walk, but they may not have their full range of motion. If they return to activity without treatment and the knee sustains additional harm, the damage can be more severe.”

Protecting the knee with a brace and using physical therapy to rebuild strength may be all the treatment that a sprained ACL needs, but if the ligament is torn, surgery is the only option for an active person who wants to remain active. Surgery typically entails arthroscopic reconstruction of the ligament using tissue taken from elsewhere in the body, like the patellar or hamstring tendons.

“The rehabilitation that follows surgery is nearly as critical as the operation itself,” Dr. Tischler says. “Physical therapy helps patients regain the range of motion and strength they need to get back to their previous level of activity.”

**NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN BROOKLYN METHODIST HOSPITAL
COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey is to get your thoughts and opinions about important health issues in your community. NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital will use these survey results and any other information collected here to help develop health programs for your community. Please complete one survey for each adult over the age of 18.

Your responses to this survey will be anonymous.

To complete the survey, please visit: surveymonkey.com/r/WZ96739 or fill it out and mail it back to:

**NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital – Public Affairs,
506 Sixth Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215. Thank you for your participation.**

1 What are the most important health concerns in your community? (Please check one or two.)

- Prevent Chronic Diseases (ex: cancer, hypertension, diabetes, asthma)
- HIV/STDs, Vaccine Preventable Diseases, and Healthcare Associated Infections
- Healthy and Safe Environment
- Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Abuse Disorders
- Healthy Women, Infants and Children

2 What health screenings or education/information services are most needed in your community? (Please check up to three.)

- Blood pressure screenings
- Increase breastfeeding rates
- Cancer prevention education
- Medication management education
- Cancer screenings
- Mental health services
- Cholesterol screenings
- Nutritional education
- Dental screenings
- Prenatal care
- Diabetes education
- Preventing falls/injuries
- Diabetes screenings
- Reducing air/water pollution
- Drug & alcohol rehab services
- Reduce addiction and overdose
- Exercise programs
- Reduce maternal/infant deaths
- Healthy cooking lessons
- Reduce violence
- Healthy/affordable food choices
- Suicide prevention education
- Help quitting smoking
- Support for children with special needs
- Heart disease education
- Vaccination/immunizations
- HIV/AIDS & STD information
- Other (please specify): _____

3 What prevents people in your community from accessing medical care? (Please check up to three.)

- Cultural/religious beliefs
- Language barriers
- Don't know how to find doctors
- No insurance
- Don't understand when to see a doctor
- Too much stress
- Don't want to be judged by doctors
- Unable to get transportation
- Don't trust doctors/hospitals
- Unable to pay co-pays/deductibles
- Fear (not ready to face/discuss a health problem)
- There are no barriers
- Lack of availability of doctors
- Other (please specify): _____

4 Where do you and your family get most of your health information? (Check all that apply.)

- Doctor/health professional
- Radio
- Family or friends
- Religious organization
- Health department
- School/college
- Hospital
- Television
- Internet
- Workplace
- Library
- Other (please specify): _____
- Newspaper/magazines

5 Where do you go for most medical treatment? (Check one.)

- Neighborhood Internist
- Hospital Clinic
- Urgent Care Center
- Travel 30+ min to my doctor/hospital
- Nearest Emergency Room

6 How worried are you about developing heart disease or having a heart attack?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Extremely
- Slightly
- Moderately

7 How worried are you about getting cancer?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Extremely
- Slightly
- Moderately



**NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN BROOKLYN METHODIST HOSPITAL
COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

The following questions help us to ensure that we are getting the opinions of the diverse communities that we know reside in Brooklyn. Please complete each of the following:

8 What is your gender?

- Male Trans Intersex
 Female Queer/Questioning GNC

9 What is your age?

- 18–24 35–44 55–64 75+
 25–34 45–54 65–74

10 What is your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual Lesbian Asexual
 Gay Bisexual

11 ZIP code or neighborhood where you live: _____

12 What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself? (Please check all that apply.)

- African Eastern European
 African American/Black Hispanic/Latino
 Afro-Caribbean Native American/Indigenous
 Arab/Middle Eastern South Asian/Desi
 Asian/Pacific Islander Western/Northern European
 Caucasian/White Multi-racial
 Central/South American Other (please specify): _____

13 What is your primary language spoken at home?

- African (any dialect) Korean
 Arabic Polish
 Chinese Russian
 French Spanish
 German Tagalog
 Greek Urdu
 French Creole Yiddish
 Hebrew Other Asian
 Hindi Other Indo-European
 Italian Other: _____

14 What is your highest level of education?

- K–8 grade Some college
 Some high school College graduate
 GED Graduate school
 High school graduate Doctorate
 Technical school Other (please specify): _____

15 Do you currently have health insurance?

- Yes No

16 If “Yes” for question 15, what type of health insurance do you have:

- Employer based plan HIM/ POS/ PPO
 Medicare (includes Medicare Managed plans such as AARP, etc)
 Medicaid (included Medicaid managed plans such as HealthFirst, Fidelis, etc.)
 Veterans Administration
 Health Insurance Exchange or other Self/Pay Plan





Food as Medicine

WHAT THE SCIENCE SAYS

You may have heard that honey can calm coughs or that ginger can treat nausea, but do food remedies like these actually work?

USING FOOD as a way to treat or prevent certain medical conditions is a popular topic in the world of scientific research. In fact, the topic is so popular that it has given birth to a dedicated term for these types of remedies: functional foods.

“Functional foods provide health benefits beyond essential nutrients when consumed as part of a well-balanced diet,” says **Christine Locascio, R.D.**, clinical dietitian at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital.

WELL-KNOWN BENEFITS

You’re likely familiar with functional foods like honey, cranberry juice and ginger. These ingredients are associated with multiple health benefits, especially when it comes to coughs, urinary tract infections (UTIs) and nausea, respectively.

For example, multiple studies have shown that honey can be used to help suppress coughs in children who are over one year old and help them sleep better at night. This natural remedy is a great way to avoid over-the-counter cough- and cold medications, which have been linked to serious medical complications in children. Honey has also been shown to help with healing wounds and reducing the risk of mouth sores after radiation therapy.

Some functional foods have even received official recommendation from health organizations for the treatment of certain conditions. One such food is ginger, which is the only nonpharmaceutical method of treating nausea and vomiting during pregnancy that the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends.

Despite their effectiveness in some areas, however, functional foods are not miracle cures. While cranberry juice has been associated with a decreased risk of developing UTIs in adult women, it cannot be used to treat or decrease the length of an infection.

UNKNOWN BENEFITS

In addition to well-known remedies, scientists are just beginning to understand some functional foods that haven’t entered the popular lexicon.



icine:

"There are certain types of functional foods and nutrients that the general public is not aware of," Ms. Locascio says. "Take vitamin D as an example. While it is known as an essential part of building strong bones, it has also been shown to have a strong impact on our emotional health."

Multiple studies have shown that vitamin D deficiency is associated with depression. In some cases, correcting this deficiency can be comparable to the effects of anti-depressant medication.

"Vitamin D is the only vitamin that is also a hormone," Ms. Locascio says. "It has been shown to regulate brain serotonin synthesis, which is crucial to behavior-response and overall mental health."

Functional foods rich in vitamin D include fatty fish, such as salmon, tuna and mackerel.

NO KNOWN BENEFITS

Though many food remedies are backed by scientific findings, others are no more than misconceptions that can actually harm your health and nutrition. Despite popular opinion, drinking calorie- and sugar-packed orange juice does not help prevent colds or reduce their severity for most people. Even supplements packed with 1,000 milligrams of vitamin C won't do much to protect you from the cold virus.

"Our bodies can only absorb about 300 milligrams of vitamin C at a time," Ms. Locascio says. "It's better to take a zinc supplement on a full stomach, which has been shown to decrease the duration and slow the progression of the common cold."

Another eating habit that has become more popular is the gluten-free diet. While many people think that going gluten free means living a healthier life, the truth is that many gluten-free products are loaded with sugar or sugar substitutes. These foods are often calorie-dense and may result in a diet that's lacking in iron, folic acid, calcium, vitamin D, magnesium and fiber.

"If you want to modify your carb and grain intake, I would suggest finding items that have adequate amounts of fiber," Ms. Locascio says. "Adults should consume about 30 grams of fiber a day."

Despite the fact that some people, such as those with celiac disease or irritable bowel issues, should stick to a gluten-free diet, most should find healthier alternatives.

"Sneak vegetables in wherever you can," Ms. Locascio says. "Mash chickpeas into your tuna for some added fiber or mince kale into your eggs. You'll be surprised how you can make a simple, healthy addition to a recipe without completely changing a meal you love."

WHOLE-WHEAT PASTA WITH SALMON AND CHICKPEA SAUCE

This delicious dish offers up healthy doses of vitamin D and fiber.

Ingredients

- + 2 tablespoons whole-wheat pasta
- + 1 tablespoon olive oil
- + 2 ½ ounces salmon with skin
- + ½ cup low-sodium canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- + 1 garlic clove, minced
- + 3 ounces plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- + Pinch of oregano
- + Pinch of salt
- + Juice from ½ lime
- + Cilantro for garnish

Directions

- 1 Fill a medium-size pot with water and bring it to a boil. Add whole-wheat pasta (macaroni, rotini, ziti or shells) and cook until al dente. Drain the pasta and set aside for later.
- 2 In a large pan, add half of your olive oil and heat on medium-high. Once the oil is hot, add salmon with the skin facing down. Cook until the skin is blackened. Flip the salmon and cook until browned.
- 3 Remove salmon from the large pan to cool. Once cool, cut the salmon away from the skin and into bite-size pieces. Set aside for later.
- 4 Using the same pan, add the remainder of your olive oil and lower stove temperature to medium heat. Add chickpeas and minced garlic and cook until browned. Drain excess oil from chickpeas and garlic.
- 5 In a bowl, combine chickpeas, garlic, Greek yogurt, oregano, salt and lime juice. Use a hand mixer to blend ingredients until smooth.
- 6 On a plate, add your cooked pasta. Place the salmon on top and pour your sauce over it. Sprinkle the cilantro on top and serve.

Nutritional Facts

Serving Size: 1	Sugars: 7g
Calories: 518	Protein: 38g
Total fat: 21g	Dietary fiber: 6g
Cholesterol: 35mg	Sodium: 266mg
Carbohydrates: 51g	Potassium: 554mg

KEEP MOVING

Circuit training can help you stay active and lower your risk of various health complications.

NO MATTER YOUR age, exercise can sound exhausting. By engaging in physical activity, however, you can actually boost your energy levels and improve your health.

“Daily exercise is beneficial during the senior years,” says **Anna Gorelik, M.D.**, attending physician in geriatric medicine at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “As we age, physical activity can reduce the likelihood of developing health problems, such as cognitive decline, diabetes and heart disease, and it can also improve balance and help us maintain an ideal body weight.”

STRENGTHEN YOUR STEADINESS

The Fall Prevention Program at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital is designed to help you age safely, avoid falls and improve confidence in your physical stability. Healthcare professionals in a variety of fields, such as environmental gerontology, public health, trauma prevention and injury prevention, lead seminars addressing healthy living and home safety. Program participants also receive a senior home safety kit.

To learn more, visit www.nyp.org/brooklyn/about-us/community-outreach/fall-prevention-program or call 718.780.5367.

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

You can choose from many exercise options and design a workout routine that meets your physical needs while keeping you engaged.

“It is never too late to start a workout routine,” Dr. Gorelik says. “Find something you enjoy that is safe for your body and be consistent with it.”

If you like to work out in a group setting, try yoga and tai chi, which focus on flexibility, balance and gait. If you enjoy working out alone, try weight training and low-impact aerobic exercises, such as brisk walking and swimming.

“Some workouts may not be appropriate for every person, but a physical therapist can help determine the proper workout for you,” Dr. Gorelik says. “Depending on your overall health and capabilities, a physical therapist will develop a personalized routine that is accessible and sustainable.”

A CIRCUIT FOR SUCCESS

Approaching your workouts as circuit training sessions, a series of exercises that are completed in rotation with little rest between each one, offers you the opportunity to keep exercise feeling fresh and varied. Plus, this approach may offer cognitive stimulation.

A typical circuit training session may include 10 to 15 different exercises that focus on improving cardiovascular health and strength. You may do these exercises in one spot or rotate through a gym to access various equipment, such as resistance bands or weighted balls.

WINNING

“It is never too late to start a workout routine. Find something you enjoy that is safe for your body and be consistent with it.”

—ANNA GORELIK, M.D.

Don't try to do too much as you ease into a circuit training routine. Begin with fewer repetitions and lighter weights for shorter periods of time. As you build endurance and strength, you may increase repetitions and use weights that are slightly heavier for strength-building exercises, but be careful to not overdo it.

“Over-exercising is not beneficial and may be very harmful,” Dr. Gorelik says. “Remember to get approval from your healthcare provider before beginning a new workout routine, especially if you are living with heart or lung conditions.”

When it comes to circuit training, aim to workout between 20 and 30 minutes with short breaks between sets. Two to three times each week is an ideal frequency, leaving at least one day off between each session. If you push yourself to the point of exhaustion, you increase your risk of injury.

GET IN ON THE ACTION

Depending on your current activity level, age and goals, a physical therapist may guide you through a circuit-training program that includes stations like:



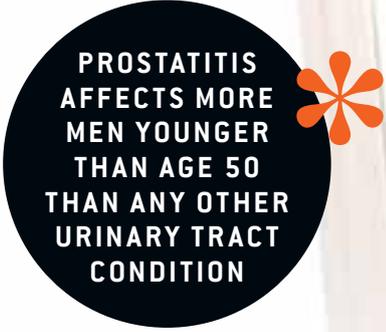
ALTERNATING LUNGES—Build strength in the calves, glutes and quadriceps by standing with your feet about hip-distance apart. Bend your knees slightly and step backward into a lunge with one foot. Step the foot forward and repeat on the other side for several repetitions. Focus on keeping the torso upright and the abdominal muscles engaged as you move and hold onto a chair if you need extra balance. This exercise is good for cardiovascular health improvement and weight management. Lunges, which are considered a strength training exercise, can also be beneficial for people with diabetes because they help lower blood glucose.



MODIFIED PLANK—This option engages your core muscles and develops strength in the arms, back and chest. Because it is one posture held for a longer period of time, you will not put stress on your joints, as you might with a series of push-ups. To do a modified plank, lie on your stomach and prop yourself up on your elbows by positioning them under your shoulders, with your forearms and fingertips touching the floor or a mat. Keep knees on the floor and lift the stomach so the body is flat like a board. This exercise helps prevent stiff joints and builds muscle, which makes it a good choice for people with arthritis.



STANDING BALANCE POSE—To tone the body and improve stability, stand with feet shoulders-width apart and toes pointed forward. Let arms rest by your sides, and then lift the right arm overhead while you raise the left foot forward and off of the ground. Hold this pose for a few seconds, then switch sides. Complete three repetitions. Yoga is ideal for hypertension, osteoporosis and weight management because it helps with lowering stress levels, improving balance and strengthening core muscles.



PROSTATITIS
AFFECTS MORE
MEN YOUNGER
THAN AGE 50
THAN ANY OTHER
URINARY TRACT
CONDITION

WHAT YOUR PROSTATE IS TRYING TO TELL YOU

Guys, when your prostate speaks, you should listen.

THE PROSTATE—the small gland sitting just below the bladder that supplies an essential ingredient of semen—may provide a variety of clues that something is wrong. Use this primer about three common prostate conditions to get to know the signs that you need to see your doctor.

1. PROSTATITIS

Prostatitis—inflammation of the prostate—occurs in two main forms, bacterial and nonbacterial. Prostatitis can make urination difficult, painful or more frequent. It can also cause fever, low-back pain, discomfort in the penis and testicles, and blood in the urine.

“Bacterial prostatitis is treated with antibiotics, but the length of time depends on whether the patient has acute or chronic prostatitis,” says **Ivan Grunberger, M.D.**, chief of urology at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. “Someone with chronic bacterial prostatitis may need to take antibiotics for an extended period of time, whereas someone with the acute form may only need antibiotics for a week or two.”

In the case of nonbacterial prostatitis, doctors may also prescribe antibiotics to help treat an underlying bacterial infection but will likely use a variety of other medications, too, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

2. BENIGN PROSTATIC HYPERPLASIA

The prostate grows for most of a man's life, but if it becomes too large, it can squeeze the urethra, making urination difficult. That abnormal enlargement of the prostate is called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). The oversized prostate may also contribute to weakening of the bladder, which prevents it from emptying completely.

If you have BPH, you may feel the need to urinate much more often than normal, especially at night, and with an abnormal urgency. You may have trouble initiating a urine stream, and when you do, it may be weak or intermittent. After urinating, your bladder may still feel full because it is not emptying completely. At the extreme end of the spectrum, kidney damage may occur.

Fortunately, doctors can prescribe a variety of treatments for BPH, including long-term monitoring, medications, minimally invasive surgeries—procedures that shrink or lift the prostate out of the way—and laser surgery to remove part of the prostate causing blockage. Open surgery for BPH is rarely necessary.

3. PROSTATE CANCER

The most common non-skin cancer, prostate cancer shows no symptoms in the early stages. However, in later stages, prostate cancer can cause many of the same symptoms as other prostate-related conditions, especially BPH. These symptoms include frequent and sudden urges to urinate, difficulty initiating urination, weak or erratic urine flow, trouble emptying the bladder and painful urination.

“Treatment for prostate cancer depends on a variety of factors, including the stage of the disease and the patient's overall health,” Dr. Grunberger says. “For men with early, low-grade disease, we may simply need to monitor the cancer over time. Others may need surgery to remove the prostate or other treatments to kill cancer cells or inhibit their growth, such as radiation therapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy or immunotherapy.”

Talk to your doctor about the treatment that is right for you.

Take a Cue FROM THE KIDS



RELAX, REFRESH, REFOCUS

Looking for new ways to manage stress? Consider embracing a few childhood activities.

AT THE END of a long day, many adults may turn to technology when it's time to wind down. While televisions, smartphones and computers seem to be the go-to relaxation options these days, they may actually cause more stress. News, social media and an endless onslaught of text messages and emails are always looming when you are connected. To truly relax, consider revisiting favorite childhood pastimes like sitting outdoors with a good book or playing a game.

SIMPLE PLEASURES

For five-year-olds, nothing says happiness quite like getting dirty outside or coloring with crayons. And according to certain psychology experts, activities like these may help adults connect with a carefree mindset, as well.

"Coloring activates the right side of the brain, calling attention to creativity," says **Paul Carroll, Ph.D.**, clinical psychologist with NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. "The left side of the brain—the side that tends to be focused on analyzing and, sometimes, worrying, quiets down in response."

Additionally, coloring calls the artist to be in the present moment, focusing on the current task instead of thinking about past or future events.

Coloring isn't the only kid-inspired option to try. Digging in the dirt of your rooftop, balcony or community garden can also be a rewarding and calming experience. By engaging in a moderate-intensity level exercise like gardening, you can reduce your risk for conditions like depression and high blood pressure.

WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR BED

Instead of checking your email one last time or catching up on the day's news, establish a bedtime routine that includes a warm bubble bath or reading a good book on your own or with your grandchildren.

Avoid suspenseful novels that can elevate your heart rate and, instead, choose books that are calming and positive to help you mentally prepare for a restful night's sleep.

"Anything that focuses your attention away from your to-do list is a good option to help you relax," Dr. Carroll says.



GARDEN FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR KITCHEN

When the weather begins to cool down in the city, gardening may fall off of the radar for many people with green thumbs. But herb gardens are easy to grow in your home and add an inspiring dash of greenery to your personal living space.

Begin by choosing seeds for herbs you want to grow and talk with gardening experts for tips about containers and watering. Place your pots in windowsills that get the right amount of light so your mini herb garden can flourish and you can enjoy the leaves of your labor.

Q&A

A native of Cairo, Egypt, **Hani Ashamalla, M.D.**, radiation oncologist and chair of radiation oncology at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital, is dedicated to enhancing his patients' quality of life.

HANI ASHAMALLA, M.D.



Inspired to Heal

Q What motivated you to become a doctor?

A My father was a doctor, and he influenced me. This is one of the few jobs in the world that lets you really help others feel better, and I like to be part of that.

Q Why did oncology appeal to you?

A I grew up in Cairo, Egypt, and earned my medical degree there. When I immigrated to the United States after residency, I shifted my focus to oncology from pulmonary medicine. It is a field of medicine in which you make major differences at a time when patients are facing very challenging circumstances. My job is to help them cope with drastic news, which is very rewarding both medically and psychologically.

Q What appeals to you about your specialty of radiation oncology?

A In the field of radiation oncology, advances are always happening. With all of the technologies available to us, I feel like we are on the edge of science.

Q What is the most rewarding aspect of working at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital?

A I love the friendliness and atmosphere among the doctors, nurses, technicians and custodians—we are one big, nice and happy family. I often see people smiling for no apparent reason. I have worked in several hospitals, and this is by far number one. The team is always focused on doing what is best for their patients.

Q What do you enjoy most about Brooklyn?

A I have been here since 1990, and I have seen tremendous growth. Park Slope is really beautiful. My younger son was born in the hospital where I work now, which is very meaningful to me. Now both of my sons are medical residents.

Q What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?

A I enjoy reading, swimming, walking and spending time with my wife, Nancy. I also volunteer in different communities. For example, I serve as a tutor for newly immigrated children.

Q What is one thing that you would change about yourself?

A All of us become addicted to the love of our work and our patients, and we sometimes forget our own needs and our families' needs. I tend to be one of those addicts, but I'm learning to find the balance in my life.

Q What is one thing you would do differently?

A I would live in Brooklyn instead of Port Washington.

Targeted Therapy for Small Cancers

Hani Ashamalla, M.D., radiation oncologist and chair of radiation oncology at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital, offers sophisticated solutions to the Brooklyn community. Take this quiz to learn more about the next-generation approach to cancer care.

1

What is stereotactic radiation therapy?

- a. A treatment utilizing sound to ease stress in patients living with cancer
- b. A therapy that incorporates the use of touchscreens to identify small cancers in the body
- c. External-beam radiation therapy focused on one specific area in the body
- d. All of the above

Answer: c. Stereotactic radiation therapy delivers radiation directly to small tumors in the brain. Doctors may also utilize this option to treat tumors in other areas of the body, including the liver, lung, pancreas and spine.

2

What are the benefits of stereotactic radiation therapy?

- a. Ability to access hard-to-reach tumors
- b. Improved cure rates
- c. Minimal rounds of treatment
- d. All of the above

Answer: d. Stereotactic radiation therapy offers a wealth of benefits for individuals living with small cancers.

“So much hope exists today where cancer treatments are concerned,” Dr. Ashamalla says. “We are in an amazing era where groundbreaking treatment options are abundant.”

3

True or false: Stereotactic radiation therapy is rarely used because of the high number of risks associated with the treatment.

Answer: False.

When treating small tumors, oncologists favor stereotactic radiation therapy because of the low level of risks.

“Side effects are very rare with this therapy because of its precision,” Dr. Ashamalla says. “Some patients may experience treatment site reactions, but these are very uncommon. Roughly 90 percent of patients will not have symptomatic site reactions.”

4

Fact or fiction: Stereotactic radiation therapy is another way to refer to traditional radiation therapy.

Answer: Fiction.

Thanks to the concentrated dosages and precise levels of radiation, stereotactic radiation therapy can be administered more accurately during a shorter period of time, having minimal impact on the body and creating less inconvenience for patients.

“If I were to treat a small lung cancer tumor with regular radiation for several weeks, the patient would be inconvenienced and healthy lung tissue may be unnecessarily damaged,” Dr. Ashamalla says. “The same would apply when treating the brain. Regular radiation may cause alterations of cognition and memory, while stereotactic radiotherapy may preserve tissue and function.”

5

What type of equipment is utilized to perform stereotactic radiation therapy?

- a. CyberKnife
- b. Gamma Knife
- c. Linear accelerator
- d. All of the above

Answer: d. Multiple technologies are available to offer this type of treatment, so healthcare providers customize treatment to meet each patient’s needs.



STEADFAST PHILANTHROPY

The dedicated support of our donors has helped make NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital a leading healthcare provider in our community.

EVERY GIFT, no matter the size, makes a difference in the lives of our patients and helps us fulfill our mission: to provide excellent healthcare services in a compassionate and humane manner to the people who live and work in Brooklyn and its surrounding areas.

WAYS TO SUPPORT NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN BROOKLYN METHODIST

UNRESTRICTED GIFTS give the Hospital the greatest flexibility to support our programs and services with the most urgent needs. Donors who contribute \$1,500 or more in unrestricted, nonevent gifts in a given year are recognized as members of the **George Ingraham Seney Society**. Donors who make nonevent gifts of any amount for at least three consecutive years are recognized as members of the **1881 Society**, commemorating the year of our founding.

RESTRICTED GIFTS can be made to a wide range of specialty services or programs designated by the Hospital as areas for support, consistent with a donor's personal interests. Such

areas of support include the Alzheimer's Program, Child Life Services, Lung Cancer Screening Program, among many others.

THE HEALERS' HALL OF FAME is our grateful patient program. Donors may nominate a doctor, nurse, staff member, and/or department for induction into our annual list.

GIFTS IN HONOR OR MEMORY of an individual can be made in any amount and for any purpose. All gifts can be acknowledged to the honoree or the family.

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES are available to recognize a donor's contribution to the Hospital. Gifts may be made in honor or in memory of an individual to name facilities, medical programs or funds that support medical staff and research.

BEQUESTS AND PLANNED GIFTS, made through a will, insurance policy or trust, leave a meaningful legacy to our Hospital. Donors can leave a specific dollar amount or a percentage of their estate. Through a planned gift, donors make a gift without depleting current assets and can reduce federal estate taxes.

We invite you to learn about ways to contribute by visiting nyp.org/brooklyn/give, calling the Department of Development at 718.501.6880 or emailing BMHdevelopment@nyp.org. Donations can be made online at www.donate.nym.org.

COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMERTIME SLUMP

WHEN I WAS A KID, SUMMER MEANT SPENDING ALL DAY OUTSIDE AND COMING BACK IN ONLY WHEN MY MOM SAID DINNER WAS READY. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT MY CHILDREN WOULD BE LESS ACTIVE IN THE SUMMER, BUT AFTER READING YOUR ARTICLE FROM THE LAST ISSUE ["KIDS AND SUMMER HABITS," *THRIVE* SUMMER 2018], IT MAKES TOTAL SENSE THAT THEY WOULD GAIN MORE WEIGHT WHEN THEY'RE NOT IN SCHOOL.

THIS SUMMER, I'M ENFORCING REGULAR BEDTIMES AND CREATING A SYSTEM WHERE MY CHILDREN CAN ONLY USE SCREENS AND DEVICES IF THEY SPEND AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF TIME PLAYING OUTSIDE. SOMETIMES, THEY EVEN FORGET ABOUT THEIR TABLETS ONCE THEY'VE STARTED UP A GAME OF WATER TAG.

JOANNE C.

PAINTBALL PROBLEMS

YOUR ARTICLE ABOUT "KEEPING LITTLE EYES SAFE" [*THRIVE* SUMMER 2018] REALLY HIT HOME FOR ME. MY COUSIN AND I USED TO PLAY PAINTBALL QUITE A BIT WITH OUR FRIENDS, BUT ONE DAY I ACCIDENTALLY SHOT HIM IN THE FACE SPLIT SECONDS AFTER HE REMOVED HIS MASK. HE HAD TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL, AND IT WAS A PRETTY TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED. EVEN THOUGH HE DIDN'T EXPERIENCE VISION LOSS, HE AND I STILL REFUSE TO PLAY PAINTBALL NO MATTER HOW MUCH OUR FRIENDS ASK. WE EVEN SOLD OUR EQUIPMENT. I'M GLAD YOU'RE SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT THE RISK OF PAINTBALLING.

BRADLEY

LEAST EXPECTED

I WAS SO GLAD TO READ YOUR ARTICLE, "IT TAKES TWO" [*THRIVE* SUMMER 2018]. I FOUND MYSELF IN A SIMILAR BOAT LAST YEAR AND WOULD'VE DEFINITELY BENEFITTED IF I HAD READ THE ARTICLE AT THE TIME.

MY HUSBAND AND I TRIED TO CONCEIVE FOR A LITTLE OVER A YEAR BEFORE WE TALKED TO A DOCTOR. HE TOLD US THE ASTHMA MEDICATION MY HUSBAND WAS TAKING WAS REDUCING HIS SPERM COUNT. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT MY HUSBAND'S DAILY INHALER MIGHT AFFECT OUR CHANCES OF HAVING A BABY.

LUCKILY, THE DOCTOR WAS ABLE TO SWITCH MY HUSBAND TO ANOTHER MEDICINE. AS IT TURNS OUT, NOT ONLY DID I GET PREGNANT A FEW MONTHS LATER, BUT THE NEW REGIMEN WOUND UP BEING MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE ASTHMA MEDICATION MY HUSBAND WAS PREVIOUSLY TAKING.

TO ANYONE ELSE PLANNING TO CONCEIVE—TALK TO A DOCTOR BEFORE YOU START TRYING!

PROUD MAMA,
KIMBERLY

Alzheimer's Disease Wellness Support Group*

For patients with cognitive deficits/memory loss and their caregivers.

For times, dates, location and to register (required), call 646.330.3286.

**Sponsored by the The Carolyne E. Czap and Eugene A. Czap Alzheimer's Program*

Care 4 Caregivers (Dementia)*

For caregivers of patients experiencing cognitive deficits/memory loss.

Meets the second Monday of each month, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

For location and to register (required), call 646.330.3286.

**Sponsored by the The Carolyne E. Czap and Eugene A. Czap Alzheimer's Program*

Brain Aneurysm Awareness Group

For individuals and their family members who want to gain awareness about brain aneurysms.

Sat., Oct. 6, Dec. 1

9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Buckley 820
Conference Room
506 Sixth Street
For more information, call 718.246.8610.

Breastfeeding Support Group

For mothers and their babies from birth to three months old.

Every Tuesday,

2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Wesley House Room 3K-C,
501 Sixth Street
Walk-ins welcome. No appointment necessary.
For more information, call 718.780.5078.

Cancer Support Group

Open to those with cancer and their families.

Meets Thurs., Oct. 4, Nov. 8, Dec. 6, Jan. 3, 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Buckley 820

Conference Room
506 Sixth Street

For more information and to reserve a space, call 718.780.5646.

Caregivers Support Group

For family members and friends caring for an older adult.

Meets monthly, 3 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

For dates, location and to register, call 718.596.8789, extension 337. Ask for Suzanne.

Congestive Heart Failure Support Group

An introduction to heart failure led by a cardiologist open to individuals and their family members.

Tues., Nov. 13, 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.

Buckley 820

Conference Room,

506 Sixth Street

Please call 347.442.4997

to register, required.

Diabetes Support Group

For people with diabetes and prediabetes.

Meets the last Thursday of each month, 5 p.m.-6 p.m.

No meetings in December.

Buckley 820

Conference Room,

506 Sixth Street

For additional information and to register, call 718.246.8603.

Look Good Feel Better®

For women with cancer who want to feel beautiful inside and out.

Thurs., Sept. 20, Nov. 15

3 p.m.-5 p.m.

Wesley House Room 6A,

501 Sixth Street

To register (required), call 718.780.3593.

MS Peer Support Group

Group is free and open to any individual living with a multiple sclerosis diagnosis.

Meets monthly on second

Thursdays, 12 p.m.-1:00 p.m.

Buckley 820

Conference Room,

506 Sixth Street

Preregistration required.

Call 1.800.344.4867.

Parkinson's Disease Support Group

For those with Parkinson's disease.

Wed., Oct. 17, Nov. 21, Dec. 19

2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

For location and to register (required), call 646.704.1792.

Parkinson's Disease Caregivers Support Group

For people caring for loved ones with Parkinson's disease.

Tues., Oct. 23, Nov. 27

2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

For location and to register (required), call 646.704.1792.

Parkinson's Wellness and Exercise Classes

Yoga: Meets first and third

Thursdays

Dance: Meets second and fourth

Thursdays, 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Wesley House Room 6B,

501 Sixth Street

For dates and to register

(required), call 646.704.1792.

Pulmonary Hypertension Support Group

For individuals with pulmonary hypertension.

Mon., Oct. 1, Dec. 3, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

Wesley House Room 7A,

501 Sixth Street

To register (required),

call 718.780.5614.

Stroke Support Group

Share your experience, meet other survivors and hear from different stroke specialists at NYP Brooklyn Methodist Hospital.

Meets the second Tuesday of each month, 2 p.m.-3 p.m.

Wesley House Room 6A,

501 Sixth Street

For more information,

call 718.780.3777.

Surgical Weight Reduction Seminar/Support Group

Led by a surgeon, this group is open to pre- and post-operative patients.

Fourth Thursday of each month, 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Carrington

Conference Room,

506 Sixth Street

For more information,

call 718.780.3288.

Please call the Department of Public Affairs at 718.780.5367 for updates to this calendar.

FRED L. MAZZILLI LUNG CANCER SCREENING AWARENESS DAY

Free blood pressure screenings, giveaways, celebrity appearances and an educational lecture. Current or former heavy smokers can fill out a questionnaire to pre-qualify for a low-dose CT scan. Light refreshments will be served.

Thurs., Nov. 8, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Carrington Atrium Lobby,
506 Sixth Street

Call 718.780.5367 for more information.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Senior Health Seminars

Join the hospital's doctors as they discuss health topics that are important to older adults.

Wed., Oct. 17, Nov. 28, Dec. 19, Jan. 16 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Brooklyn College Student Center,
East 27th and Campus Road

Call 718.501.6092 to register (required).

World Stroke Day

Free blood pressure screenings, educational materials and giveaways. Specialists from the Department of Neurosciences will be available to answer questions.

Mon., Oct. 29, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Carrington Atrium Lobby, 506 Sixth Street

Call 718.780.5367 for more information.

World Diabetes Day

Free blood pressure, dental and podiatry screenings. Diabetes educators, pharmacists and registered dietitians will be available to answer questions.

Wed., Nov. 14, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Carrington Atrium Lobby, 506 Sixth Street

Call 718.780.5367 for more information.