

Emerson Hospital



Pediatric Care Is Growing:

MassGeneral Hospital for Children
teams with Emerson to expand care

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

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HEALTH
CALENDAR
INSIDE

Hospitalists:
experts at
managing
hospital care

Surgical weight
loss: success for
area student

Infection
prevention:
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Emerson Hospital

BEYOND COMPARE

Emerson Hospital is an acute care medical center located in Concord with health centers in Westford, Groton and Sudbury. It is well known for its medical and surgical specialists, outstanding nursing care and patient-centered services, including the Birthing Center, the Bethke Cancer Center, the Polo Emergency Center, the Clough Surgical Center and the Center for Specialty Care.

A Letter from Christine Schuster



Dear Friends:

I hope this issue of *HealthWorks* finds you in good health and having enjoyed some relaxing time with family and friends over the holidays.

As we begin a New Year, I am happy to report that Emerson is once again finding new ways to keep you healthy and well. We continue to search for clinical partnerships that bring advanced, high-quality care to you in a setting that is warm, inviting and convenient. In this issue, you will read about a new pediatric partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital that is now active at the Emerson Hospital Center for Specialty Care on Baker Avenue in Concord. These new specialty services complement our broad array of pediatric services. As a mother of two active young girls, I am excited that world-class care is close to home for my family and yours.

On our main campus, the hospital is nearing completion of our ambitious, multi-year construction project to enhance the patient care experience in surgery, obstetrics and radiology. We recently opened the first phase of our new Clough Surgical Center, which offers spacious, state-of-the-art facilities for patients and families to prepare and recover from surgery. This same enhanced comfort and privacy will soon be available in our beautiful new Birthing Center and our technologically sophisticated Yeatts Interventional Radiology Suite.

The foundation for Emerson's programs and services is a deep commitment to the highest level of quality and patient safety. You will learn more about Emerson's rigorous program in infection control in the article on page 15.

In the meantime, I hope you will review our pullout Health Calendar on page 7 to see the many options for helping you keep your New Year's resolutions and improve your overall health and wellness.

I wish you and your family all the best for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,

Christine C. Schuster, R.N., MBA
President and CEO

On the cover: Rolling into surgery: at Emerson, children often head into the operating room in a wagon pulled by Mallory Harrison, child life specialist.



Open wide: pediatrician Michael Glazier, MD, takes a close look

Pediatric care:

Emerson has it covered

Tailored for kids, at the hospital and in the community

Within the walls of Emerson Hospital and in pediatric offices throughout the community, a network of pediatric care is growing. Much of it is preventive care aimed at keeping infants, kids and teenagers healthy. However, when they need specialized care, emergency care or a hospital stay, experienced pediatric providers are here.

The pediatrician's office: a place for wellness and prevention

Kids with fevers, sports injuries and earaches will always be found in the waiting rooms of pediatricians. But more than ever, trips to the pediatrician are about keeping children healthy. "We're practicing in an era when we can focus on wellness and prevention," notes Michael Glazier, MD, a pediatrician at Concord Hillside Medical Associates and one of dozens of pediatri-

cians affiliated with Emerson. "That is mainly true because a growing list of immunizations prevents children from developing once-common diseases like measles and mumps."

Those early office visits are about more than checking off the list of unpleasant shots, says Dr. Glazier. "For us, they are an opportunity to monitor a variety of things, from nutrition to development," he says. "For example, parents often need to be reminded about the right time to start a baby on solid foods, which is four to six months, when babies exhibit good oral motor skills."

From early on, pediatric visits include checking in with the growth chart. "One of the reasons we have these charts is to track a child's weight as an early indicator

of potential health issues," says Dr. Glazier. "If a child is jumping percentiles, we need to discuss eating habits with the goal of catching kids before they become obese and subsequently vulnerable for associated diseases such as diabetes, heart disease or hypertension."

"I often ask kids how many sodas they drink in an average day and hope the answer is none. A 12-ounce can contains nine teaspoons of sugar. Sports drinks, which are loaded with sugar and caffeine, are also a problem."

Similar to the schedule for immunizations, certain ages signal that it is time to check on specific progress, such as various behavioral and cognitive developmental milestones that are expected starting at birth. Other items on a pediatrician's list

continued on next page



Special Care Nursery staff Jonathan Cronin, MD, and Maureen Dufresne, RNC, check newborn Ashton Akin.

are aimed at keeping children safe. “By the time a child is in kindergarten, they should know their home address,” says Dr. Glazier. Wearing helmets and seatbelts also falls into this category. So does refraining from dangerous activities such as smoking, alcohol and drugs.

“There isn’t a particular age when I mention this to a patient, but I’ve had these conversations with 13-year-olds and 18-year-olds,” says Dr. Glazier. “It can be awkward, but I have a point to make: I’m not the police; I’m here to keep them healthy.”

“If a child is jumping percentiles, we need to discuss eating habits.”

MICHAEL GLAZIER, MD

In the hospital: 24-hour pediatric care

With a combination of good luck and good preventive health care, many children avoid trips to the hospital. When they do come to Emerson, they benefit from staff who specialize in caring for children. The pediatric hospitalists, a team of pediatricians who are on-site 24 hours a day, care for children from tiny infants to 21-year-olds.

“When any child comes to Emerson, we are the central point for care and communication,” explains Inger Marie Pu, MD, who directs the pediatric hospitalists. “We work closely with the child’s own pediatrician, spend time with the parents to make sure they are informed and contact pediatric specialists if they are needed.”

The hospitalists can be found on patient units, the nursery, Special Care Nursery, labor and delivery, the emergency department and the lab. “We’re versatile, because the patients we see represent the entire spectrum of pediatric health problems,” Dr. Pu notes. “When a child has a condition, such as a seizure disorder, that brings them to Emerson regularly, we get to know the child and the family very well.”

If a parent isn’t familiar with the role that hospitalists play, it doesn’t take long for them to see the benefits. “When a child needs to be hospitalized, I tell parents that this is the best of both worlds,” says Dr. Glazier. “I’ll be involved in planning their child’s care, and they will have the pediatric hospitalists, who specialize in inpatient care, available to them around the clock.”

“Many infants simply need time to feed and grow.”

JONATHAN CRONIN, MD

ACTING CHIEF OF NEONATOLOGY AT
MASSGENERAL HOSPITAL for CHILDREN

Helping children cope

The world of pediatric care at Emerson is further enhanced by the Pediatric Intervention Team, whose focus is helping children cope successfully with the hospital experience (see page 6). “Our team is a little unique,” says Kay Liebmann, R.N, nurse coordinator. “We go beyond what child life specialists typically do and really focus on the child’s emotional health.”

If a child is worried about needles, Mallory Harrison, the team’s child life specialist, knows what to do. “We use straight talk, delivered in a kind and gentle way,” she says. “We show them what the needle looks like, and we talk about how we’re going to keep them safe. Children know when you’re being genuine with them.”

The Pediatric Intervention Team, which was established more than 30 years ago, continues to fine-tune the hospital experience. In 2006, they launched a program that provides pediatric patients with a collection of toys and books known as a coping kit. Designed to be a healthy distraction, these age-appropriate kits are a hit with patients and parents, as well as the focus for community fundraising efforts.

“We use straight talk, delivered in a kind and gentle way.”

MALLORY HARRISON, CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST





“We’re versatile, because the patients we see represent the entire spectrum of pediatric health problems.”

INGER MARIE PU, MD
DIRECTOR, PEDIATRIC HOSPITALISTS

The smallest of Emerson’s patients receive the care they need in the Special Care Nursery. Some infants stay only a day or two in the five-bed unit, while some premature babies spend a month. “Many infants simply need time to feed and grow,” says Jonathan Cronin, MD, the acting chief of neonatology at MassGeneral Hospital for Children, who serves as the nursery’s medical director. “The nurses at Emerson are very skilled at working with infants whose ability to suck and swallow is not yet developed.”

Dr. Cronin works closely with the pediatric hospitalists, often consulting on infants who show signs of breathing or heart problems. In cases where an infant needs more extensive neonatal care, transport to MGH is a smooth process. “Transporting a sick infant, although worrisome to parents, is routine for us and very safe,” Dr. Cronin says.

Specialty care: extensive network gets bigger with MassGeneral MDs

This fall, pediatric care expanded with the arrival of several MassGeneral for Children specialists at the Emerson Hospital Center for Specialty Care on Baker Avenue, less than a mile from the hospital (see page 13). They join a network of pediatric specialists at Emerson who make care convenient for families in the community.

Ira Skolnik, MD, PhD, chief of dermatology at Emerson, brings rarely seen credentials to caring for children with skin conditions. Dr. Skolnik is board-certified in pediatric dermatology—one of only eight in Massachusetts—as well as in general pediatrics and general dermatology. He says there are several reasons why children may benefit from a pediatric dermatologist.



Photo: Robert Schoen

Pediatric hospitalists, including Inger Marie Pu, MD, shown visiting a patient, are the central point for care and communication.

“We specialize in treating stubborn diseases, such as eczema, warts and acne, which often require the use of medications not specifically approved for children,” says Dr. Skolnik. “Also, pediatric dermatologists are familiar with unusual or abnormal birthmarks, some of which can flourish in children at age six or seven.”

While adult dermatologists often perform skin biopsies on their adult patients, that is not true of pediatric dermatologists, notes Dr. Skolnik. “We try to avoid performing biopsies, especially in small children. We do our best to find another way to make the diagnosis.”

When ears, noses and throats spell trouble, a child’s pediatrician will often make a referral to an otolaryngologist. “If a child snores or is experiencing lots of strep infections, we look for a possible obstruction,” explains Daniel Vogel, MD, an otolaryngologist. “However, today we’re judicious about removing tonsils or adenoids.”

Recurring ear infections may call for the placement of ear tubes, says Dr. Vogel. “If

we determine that a child has fluid in the middle ear for a period of three months or so, or has repeat infections requiring antibiotics, we suggest ear tubes. They work well and require a quick surgical procedure.”

The pediatric surgery program at Emerson is first-rate, he adds. “That includes the anesthesiology staff, who are outstanding.”

The eye doctor: 3D glasses and picture books

Sooner or later, all children need to have a visual screening. Later is age three, according to American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations. If there is a family history of vision problems, notes O’Ine McCabe, MD, a pediatric ophthalmologist, a child should be seen sooner.

“For example, if one of the parents required glasses before age five or had a lazy eye, crossed eye or wandering eye, we want to see the child before age three,” says Dr. McCabe. Lazy eye (amblyopia), seen in about 5 percent of children, is typically found through an eye exam.

continued on page 6

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She encourages parents to watch for eye injuries. “Any forceful hit to the eye, such as from a soccer ball, should be evaluated by an ophthalmologist. There could be bleeding inside the eye, which can cause problems,” she says.

Parents who dread an appointment with the eye doctor needn’t worry, says Dr. McCabe. “Our entire staff is trained to work with children. We need their cooperation, so our approach is that they’re here to play games. After all, our patients get to wear 3D glasses and look at picture books.”

A hospital experience that’s just for kids

Pediatric Intervention Team makes test easy on patient and parent

No parent wants their child to have a medical procedure that causes fear or discomfort. That was the situation Lena Grant faced when her daughter, Elsa, was just two. It began when the toddler’s pediatrician, Aisling Gaughan, MD, diagnosed Elsa’s urinary tract infection.

“I was surprised to learn that babies could develop urinary tract infections,” says Mrs. Grant, an Acton resident with two other children. Dr. Gaughan was concerned that Elsa might have urinary reflux, a condition where urine flows backwards, potentially causing kidney problems. A test with a long name—voiding cystourethrogram (VCUG)—was needed to determine if that was the case. It involves inserting a catheter and obtaining fluoroscopic x-ray images.

“Dr. Gaughan told me that the Pediatric Intervention Team at Emerson was wonderful,” says Mrs. Grant, referring to the staff who provide emotional support to children and families. “They would do a good job of getting Elsa through the test.”

That proved to be an understatement. Once Elsa’s VCUG was scheduled, Mallory Harrison, the team’s child life specialist, called to explain the procedure in detail. “In addition, Mallory asked me all about Elsa, including her favorite toys,” says Mrs. Grant. “Mallory wanted to get to know Elsa up front. It gave me such a nice feeling.”



Elsa Grant, shown with her mother, Lena, has no anxiety about having an annual urinary test performed at Emerson.

A poster of Clifford the Big Red Dog—an Elsa favorite—and various toys were waiting for her when she arrived at Emerson for the test. But the Pediatric Intervention Team does more than simply distract the child who is having a VCUG. They helped develop the current standard of care, which includes the use of a mild sedative—something most hospitals don’t offer.

“Our goal is to make the VCUG a non-traumatic procedure,” explains Kay Liebmann, RN, nurse coordinator, “which is why we advocated for using mild sedation. This is consistent with our entire approach to pediatric patients at Emerson Hospital. We are always searching for ways to help children cope with the hospital experience.”

Look no further than Elsa Grant, who was found to have urinary reflux. She might outgrow the condition, but in the meantime, she makes a yearly trip to Emerson for her VCUG—three so far. “When it’s time to ‘get pictures of her tummy,’ she has no anxiety about it all,” says her mother. “They take the time to make it easy on both of us.”



Emerson Hospital's

PULLOUT
HEALTH
CALENDAR

healthcalendar

HEALTH & WELLNESS CLASSES

TALKING ABOUT HEALTH (FREE)

Emerson Hospital Speaker Series: to register, please call 978-287-3085

Don't miss these informative talks with Emerson experts. Seating is limited. Mark your calendar now!

All lectures are held in the North Assembly Room at Emerson Hospital.

Preserving sight: current technologies

Richard Rodman, MD, ophthalmologist

Deborah McCoy, MD, ophthalmologist

Tuesday, January 15, 7:00 pm

Updates on women's health:

HPV vaccine, breast cancer and menopause

Michelle Sinopoli, MD, obstetrician/gynecologist

Tuesday, January 22, 7:00 pm

Plastic surgery in 2008

Jeffrey Smith, MD, plastic surgeon

Tuesday, February 5, 7:00 pm

New innovations in spine care

Richard Ozuna, MD, spine surgeon

Tuesday, February 19, 7:00 pm

Nutrition wise: the diet-colon cancer connection

Ena Sandler, MS, RD, dietitian

Wednesday, March 19, 2:00 pm

Frankly speaking about cancer therapies

New issues and side effects with existing treatments

Jon DuBois, MD, hematologist-oncologist

Colette Horgan, RN, OCN

Tuesday, April 1, 7:00 pm

Travel medicine: your passport to healthy international travel

Anthony Lopez, MD, internist

Nancy Herriott, PA-C

Tuesday, April 29, 7:00 pm

Health – Help – Hope

An information session on programs, services and resources provided by the American Cancer Society and Emerson Hospital

Tuesday, May 20, 7:00 pm



HEALTH & WELLNESS CLASSES CONTINUED

The following courses are held at Emerson Hospital in Concord. Call 978-287-3777 to register.

PREPARE FOR SURGERY, HEAL FASTER WORKSHOP

If you are anxious about an upcoming surgical or medical procedure, chemotherapy or radiation, this workshop, based on Peggy Huddleston's five-step process, is designed for you. Please call to arrange a personal workshop.

\$95 includes book/relaxation CD
(one surgery companion may attend for free)

YOGA & MEDITATION

Reduce stress and muscle tension, learn to improve posture and flexibility, breathe more effectively and strengthen your core muscles as well as your entire body. Wear loose, comfortable clothing and bring an exercise mat. Not for expectant mothers.

Please choose Monday class taught by certified instructor, Patricia Buttner, or Friday class taught by certified instructor Nancy Dorenfeld.

\$91 for each seven-week session beginning:

Mondays 5:30-6:45 pm **Fridays 9:45-11:00 am**

Jan 7 Jan 11

Feb 25 Feb 29

April 14 April 18

June 9 June 6

July 28 Aug 1

PRENATAL EXERCISE for a healthier pregnancy

Specifically designed for mothers-to-be, this class teaches injury prevention through proper body mechanics. Led by Patricia Davis, Emerson Hospital physical therapist.

\$72 for each six-week session

Sessions begin: January 7, February 25, April 7, June 2, July 21

All classes are Monday 7:00-8:30 pm

NEW! POSTNATAL EXERCISE for getting back into shape

Join other new moms and babies and learn key exercises to help you regain your strength and energy level and get back into shape fast. Designed for new moms who are at least six weeks post-delivery. Taught by Patricia Davis, Emerson Hospital physical therapist.

\$72 for each six-week session

Sessions begin: January 9, February 27, April 9, June 4, July 23

All classes are Wednesday 10:45-11:45 am

TAI CHI—intermediate level

Tai Chi, an ancient Chinese martial art, is practiced to achieve therapeutic benefits, as well as to promote balance, flexibility and overall strength. The instructor is Ming Wu, PhD.

\$98 for each eight-week session.

Sessions begin: January 16, March 12, May 7,
July 2

Wednesdays 9:30-10:30 am



MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION— introduction plus eight-week program

Learn to use your inner wisdom and help improve health, relationships and quality of life. Approved for 30 contact hours for nursing for the eight-week program attendance. Presented by Patricia Howard.

Attend a one-evening introductory lecture:

either January 16 or April 2, 7:00-9:00 pm

\$45 (cost will be applied to the full program)

Eight-week program begins Wednesday, January 23, 7:00-9:00 pm, plus Sunday, March 2, 9:00 am-3:00 pm, OR Wednesday, April 9, 7:00-9:00 pm, plus Sunday, May 25, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

\$590 plus \$45 for required course materials/CD set

THE NO-DIET WORKSHOP

Explore your relationship with food, including the emotional and psychological factors that may control your eating behavior.

Presented by Alice J. Rosen, LMHC.

\$150 for six-week session plus \$80 for required course materials/4-CD set

Sessions begin: January 17 or April 3,

All classes are Thursday evenings 7:00-9:00 pm

BABYSITTING TRAINING: everything you need to know

One-day class, for ages 10-13, covers everything you need to know to be a great babysitter!

Pre-registration is required. Certificate of Participation awarded upon completion.

Taught by instructor Becky Patterson.

Choose a Saturday:

January 26, February 23, March 15, April 19,
May 10, June 28, July 26, or August 16

All classes held 9:30 am-2:30 pm

\$39 per person or 2/\$70 when registering together



NEW! LAUGHTER-SIZE

Learn how conscious laughter enriches life, promotes physical and mental health and provides an excellent workout for your heart and internal organs. Presented by Angie Duquette, founder of The Natural Connection of Easthampton.

Monday, January 28, 7:00-9:00 pm

\$35



Just for girls



CELEBRATE BEING A GIRL - get girl power!

This fun and educational day will help pre-teen girls age 9-12 develop positive body image and self-esteem. Presented by Frances Bigda-Peyton, EdD, psychologist and certified psychoanalyst.

Saturday, February 2, 10:00 - 11:30 am

\$30

RAISING CONFIDENT GIRLS

This workshop for parents will address the issue of girls' body image, the dramatic decline of self-esteem during the pre-teen years and what to do about it. Presented by Frances Bigda-Peyton, EdD.

Monday, March 10, 7:00-9:00 pm

\$35

REIKI—LEVEL I

Discover this hands-on energy therapy that can be used to provide relaxation, manage pain and promote overall wellness. Presented by Libby Barnett, MSW, of the Reiki Healing Connection. Participants will receive Reiki I level certification. Approved for five contact hours for nursing for a full day of attendance.

Saturday, February 2, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

\$145 Lunch will be provided.

REIKI—LEVEL II

Explore three ancient reiki symbols and learn to use them to advance your effectiveness as a reiki practitioner. Presented by Libby Barnett, MSW, of the Reiki Healing Connection. Participants will receive Reiki II level certification. Approved for five contact hours for nursing for a full day of attendance.

Sunday, February 3, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

\$160 Lunch will be provided.

LUNCH LIKEABILITY

Learn healthy and easy tips to turn drab, brown-bag lunch into a healthy and delicious break in your day. Presented by Mayra Seyfarth, Emerson Hospital clinical nutrition manager.

Tuesday, February 5, 7:00-8:30 pm

\$35



BABYSITTING TIPS AND TECHNIQUES FOR GRANDPARENTS

This workshop will give grandparents up-to-date information on caring for grandchildren. Topics include child development and behavior, accident prevention, feeding and diapering. Taught by instructor Becky Patterson.

Tuesday, February 19, 10:00 am-11:30 am

\$35

NEVER FORGET A NAME OR FACE AGAIN

Eliminate common memory problems that come with normal brain aging by learning simple memory strategies that can be used immediately. Presented by Mary Driscoll, a nationally certified developmental educator with a focus on adult learning theory. Workshop is limited to 15 participants.

Wednesday, February 20, 7:00-8:30 pm

Wednesday, February 20, 7:00-8:30 pm

\$35

INSPIRATION AND RESILIENCE FOR LIFE'S MAJOR CHANGES

Explore the secrets of thriving and gain tips for creating resilience, inspiration, purpose and joy when dealing with major changes in life. Presented by Dr. Fred Gerhard, clinical psychologist.

Monday, March 3, 7:00-9:00 pm

\$35

WOMEN'S PELVIC HEALTH

Learn exercises that can help prevent low back pain, sciatic pain and stress and urge incontinence. Wear comfortable clothes. Presented by Judy Curless, Emerson Hospital chief physical therapist.

Tuesday, March 18, 7:00-9:00 pm

\$35

Learn How to Massage Your Baby

Saturday, January 12, 9:30-10:30 am

Emerson Health Center in Westford

Infant massage teaches babies to relax, encourages them to be socially engaged and can result in better sleep. If you have a baby from newborn to pre-crawling, please join us.

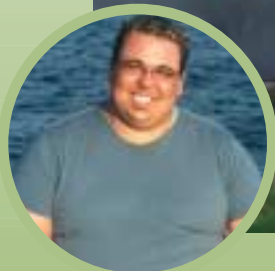
\$20

To register, please contact Lisa Bates at 978-287-3268



New life after weight-loss surgery

College student represents another Emerson success



Daniel LeClair, a Littleton native, lost 150 pounds and gained confidence.

Recent studies have confirmed that weight-loss surgery is the proven best way to return seriously obese individuals to health. But despite the fact that he weighed 340 pounds, Dan LeClair, a 22-year-old student at Salem State College, assumed he was too young. Besides, his schedule and dorm living would present a challenge.

Designation is a ringing endorsement by the American College of Surgeons

Emerson Hospital's Surgical Weight Loss Program recently received the Bariatric Surgery Center designation from the American College of Surgeons (ACS)—a stamp of quality that won't surprise the individuals who have benefited from the program since it opened in 2005.

According to Michael Jiser, MD, the ACS performed a comprehensive assessment of Emerson's program. "They looked at the quality of our program intensely, evaluating every aspect of our process, staff and facilities," says Dr. Jiser, who along with his colleagues, Roy Shen, MD, and Rebecca Shore, MD, have performed close to 1,000 gastric bypasses and lap-band procedures.

Experienced surgeons are one key component, says Karen Flanders, NP, who serves as program coordinator. Support before and after surgery is the other. "Patients who have considered other hospitals always tell us that Emerson's program is different," she says. "We take the time to educate patients and help them achieve success."

Then his stepsister had gastric bypass surgery, and Dan saw what happened. "A few months after her surgery, she started telling me how much better she felt," Dan recalls. "She wasn't running out of breath anymore, and her confidence was growing. I decided to take a closer look."

For the Littleton native, the first step meant attending an information session at Emerson Hospital. There, the three surgeons who perform weight-loss surgery explained the two available procedures—gastric bypass and lap-band surgery—and answered questions. The program's dietitian and mental health provider described the ongoing support they provide. "I sat at the back, still assuming that I wouldn't qualify for the surgery," Dan says.

Then he attended the program's support group meetings. "There were a lot of issues discussed—insurance coverage, the need to develop a new way of eating and those first days after the surgery," he says. "Some of it scared me."

A change in mindset—and a decision

But Dan couldn't deny that he was in trouble. His triglyceride level—a reflection of body fat—was dangerously high and, having been diagnosed with sleep apnea, he was using a C-PAP machine at night to assure that he received sufficient oxygen. In general, he just didn't feel good. "I had no energy and no motivation," Dan says. "Instead of walking five minutes from the

dorm to class, I'd find an excuse to get a lift from someone."

Once he made the decision to have weight loss surgery and had a date for his gastric bypass, Dan couldn't wait for it to happen. "I was so ready for the surgery that I wanted to sleep outside the hospital the night before," he recalls.

The surgery was performed in December 2006, and it was smooth sailing from there. "The care was awesome at the hospital," Dan says. "The nurses were always there when I needed them. I wasn't surprised, because in the months leading up to the surgery, I heard nothing but good things about Emerson."

Back at school, he successfully altered his diet, and the weight came off quickly—22 pounds in the first month. "At the two-month point, I could really feel the difference," he says. "I was breathing and sleeping better, and my energy increased." By summer, he was working out at a gym.

Within a year of the surgery, Dan lost 150 pounds and gained something else. "I have confidence now," he says, noting that after graduating with a degree in social work, he plans to attend graduate school. "I feel good, and I'm proud of myself."



ADVISOR

For more information on care at Emerson Hospital, call the toll-free Physician Referral Line: 1-877-9-EMERSON (1-877-936-3776) or visit the hospital's web site at www.emersonhospital.org.



George Flesh, MD
Urogynecology

I have an embarrassing problem where urine leaks whenever I sneeze. What can I do about it?

Urine leakage with coughing, sneezing or exercise, called stress incontinence, results from exaggerated movement of the urethra—the tube that carries urine from the bladder. It occurs mainly in women as a result of genetic predisposition, childbirth and aging.

Your doctor may suggest strengthening the pelvic muscles with Kegel exercises, which use the vaginal muscles to prevent urine leakage. If this doesn't work, a 25-minute, outpatient surgical treatment called a sling procedure (or TVT, for transvaginal tape) has proven quite effective.

Through a small incision in the vagina and two tiny punctures in the pubic area, a strip of polypropylene material is implanted to support the urethra. Since the surrounding tissue supports the sling, no stitches are required.

The results are immediate. About 85 percent of patients are completely cured of their stress incontinence, and 12 percent are markedly improved.



George A. Gonzalez, MD
Neurology

I've been taking a triptan medication for migraine headaches for several years without much success. Is there anything else I can do?

People often don't realize that triptans—medications developed to stop migraines after they have already started—now come in multiple versions that vary in how quickly they take effect, as well as in their side effects. For patients whose migraine headaches take hours to develop, some triptans may work too quickly. Those individuals need a drug that matches their headache pattern.

Other drugs, including some originally intended for treating epilepsy, are aimed at eliminating migraines altogether. A drug called Topiramate has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for preventing migraine attacks. Since it has to be taken daily, I only prescribe it to patients who have five or six migraines a month. For patients who average one migraine a month, I am more inclined to prescribe a triptan medication.

There has been great progress recently in treating migraine headaches. I urge anyone who suffers from migraines to seek a physician's care.



Stephen Hoenig, MD
Vascular Surgery

I've had a persistent sore on my foot for a couple of months. What should I do about this problem?

Any sore that doesn't heal after six weeks is considered a chronic wound and requires specialty care. These include sores associated with diabetes, skin grafts and surgical wounds, bone infections and burns associated with radiation therapy. A foot with wounds needs a circulatory assessment and an evaluation for pressure points that may benefit from a customized shoe or cast.

Emerson Hospital's new Center for Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine takes a specialized approach to treating wounds. Our full-time staff includes nurses, technicians and specialty physicians representing vascular and plastic surgery, podiatry, infectious diseases and other areas. All of us received intensive training in the most current approaches to wound therapy.

Treatment might include removal of infected tissues, antibiotic therapy and the use of specialized dressings and bandages. The center also features two hyperbaric oxygen chambers, which provide patients with 100-percent oxygen to foster blood flow and speed healing.

The sore you describe may well benefit from one of these specialized treatments.

ON CALL

EMERSON HOSPITAL IS PLEASED TO
INTRODUCE THE FOLLOWING NEW PHYSICIANS.

CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY



Shalini R. Anne, MD
John Cuming Building, Suite 610, Concord
781-391-0050
Dr. Anne received her medical degree from Mahadevappa Rampure Medical College in India and completed a residency in general surgery at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York. She completed fellowships in cardiothoracic surgery at SUNY Upstate Medical Center and minimally invasive thoracic surgery at Roswell Park Hospital. Board-certified in general surgery, Dr. Anne joins the practice of Cardio-Thoracic Associates with Loyde Romero, MD.

HOSPITALIST (INTERNAL MEDICINE)

These physicians are hospital-based internists who treat adult inpatients and do not have private office practices.



Sam R. Bagchi, MD
Emerson Hospital, Concord
978-369-1400
Dr. Bagchi received his medical degree from Georgetown University School of Medicine and Indiana University School of Medicine. He completed an internal medicine residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and served as chief resident at University of Hawaii School of Medicine. Dr. Bagchi is board-certified in internal medicine and is director of Emerson's hospital medicine service.



Tracy L. Green, MD
Emerson Hospital, Concord
978-369-1400
Dr. Green received her medical degree from University of Vermont College of Medicine and completed her residency at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield. Her clinical interests include palliative care, the goal of which is to provide patients with comfort and pain relief.

NEUROSURGERY



Stefan S. Kim, MD
John Cuming Building, Suite 410, Concord
978-287-3194
Dr. Kim received his medical degree from Wake Forest University School of Medicine in North Carolina. He completed a residency in neurosurgery at Medical College of Virginia and a neurosurgical oncology fellowship at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Dr. Kim specializes in neuro-oncology and complex spinal disorders.

ORTHOPEDIC MEDICINE/SPORTS MEDICINE



Allis C. Kim, MD
59 ORNAC, Concord 978-369-5391
133 Littleton Road, Westford 978-589-6868
Dr. Kim received her medical degree from Albany Medical College. She completed general surgery and orthopedic residencies at Albany Medical Center and a sports medicine fellowship at New York University Medical Center. Dr. Kim's clinical interests include sports medicine, knee and shoulder surgery. She joins the practice of Orthopedic Affiliates, Inc., with Drs. Driscoll, McInnis and Re.

PLASTIC SURGERY



Brooke R. Seckel, MD
John Cuming Building, Suite 700, Concord
978-369-4499
Dr. Seckel received his medical degree from Medical College of Virginia Hospitals and completed a fellowship in general surgery at University of California/San Diego School of Medicine. He also completed residencies in neurology at Boston City Hospital/Harvard Medical School, general surgery at Tufts-New England Medical Center and plastic surgery at Brigham and Women's and Children's hospitals. He is board-certified in emergency medicine, neurology and plastic surgery.

PSYCHIATRY



Alia Goodheart, MD
Emerson Hospital, Concord
978-287-3512
Dr. Goodheart received her medical degree from SUNY Brooklyn Health Science Center and completed a residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. She is board-certified in psychiatry and has a clinical interest in psychotherapy with a private practice in Sudbury.



David L. Spiggle, MD
Emerson Hospital, Concord
978-287-3512
Dr. Spiggle received his medical degree from University of Louisville School of Medicine. He completed a residency at Boston Medical Center and a fellowship in psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Spiggle is board-certified in psychiatry and has specific interest in psychosomatic medicine. He is a hospital-based psychiatrist and does not have a private practice.

MassGeneral Hospital for Children specialists arrive

Specialty care for children has expanded with the arrival of the following MassGeneral Hospital for Children pediatric specialists, who see patients at the Emerson Hospital Center for Specialty Care on Baker Avenue in Concord. For a referral, please contact your pediatrician.

Cardiology – Michael de Moor, MD, FACC

Office hours at Emerson: 2nd and 4th Thursday each month

Dr. de Moor, who serves as unit chief of pediatric cardiology at MGH for Children, treats all heart problems in children, including cardiac birth defects and heart rhythm problems. “We’ve made a lot of progress in refining interventional procedures and minimally invasive surgery in children,” he notes. Cardiac testing, including heart ultrasound and electrocardiograms, is available at Baker Avenue. Children needing heart surgery are sent to MGHfC.

Endocrinology – Paul Boepple, MD, and Rose Marino, MD

Office hours at Emerson: 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons each month

Drs. Boepple and Marino treat all endocrine conditions in children, including problems with growth, late or precocious puberty, diabetes and thyroid and adrenal problems. “Whether there is excess hormone or deficient hormone, today we are able to successfully treat most endocrine conditions,” says Dr. Marino. The two pediatric endocrinologists treat patients ranging in age from prenatal to 21 years.

Gastroenterology – Stephen Hardy, MD

Office hours at Emerson: 1st Wednesday each month

Dr. Hardy treats children with complex intestinal problems, including Crohn’s disease, celiac disease and short-bowel syndrome, all of which can limit a child’s ability to gain weight. “It is much easier to manage patients in an outpatient setting because we now have a number of treatment options that are effective and have fewer side effects, decreasing the need for hospitalization and allowing the child to enjoy a more normal life,” says Dr. Hardy, who has clinical interest in the nutritional needs of children on steroids or chemotherapy.

Nephrology – Elahna Paul, MD, PhD

Office hours at Emerson: 1st Wednesday each month

Dr. Paul diagnoses and treats all aspects of kidney disease in infants, children and adolescents, including hypertension, kidney stones, glomerular disease and urinary tract infections. “We are seeing increased numbers of children with hypertension,” Dr. Paul notes. “In kids, hypertension is often caused by kidney problems and is usually treated by the nephrologist.”

Surgery – Peter Masiakos, MD, and Daniel Ryan, MD

Office hours at Emerson: 2nd (Dr. Ryan) and 4th (Dr. Masiakos) Thursday afternoon each month

Drs. Masiakos and Ryan evaluate pediatric patients for the full spectrum of pediatric surgical diagnoses, from simple conditions such as inguinal hernias and circumcisions to the more complex, congenital conditions of the head, chest and abdomen, as well as tumors and vascular problems. They are also available for prenatal consultations. “Most minimally invasive operations performed in adults have been translated for children,” says Dr. Ryan, who directs the pediatric trauma program at MGHfC. “We are available to consult with pediatricians on a range of surgical issues,” adds Dr. Masiakos, who performs general, thoracic and minimally invasive surgery.

NEWS FROM EMERSON

Emerson Breast Health Center is recognized for excellence



Emerson Hospital’s Breast Health Center was recently designated a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology (ACR). The designation recognizes centers that demonstrate their dedication to improving women’s health by participating in rigorous quality assurance programs. The distinction means that Emerson’s mammography, stereotactic breast biopsy and breast ultrasound services have been fully accredited by the ACR.

Cafeteria expands and offers new features

The next time you are visiting Emerson, stop by the hospital’s new cafeteria, the North Bridge Café, which was recently renovated to create expanded seating and improved traffic flow. In addition to featuring new furniture, walls, flooring and lighting, the cafeteria now offers a wider variety of food thanks to the double-sided salad bar, full-service deli and grill. Other food service upgrades at Emerson include expanded hours (6:30 am – 1:30 pm) and a more extensive menu at the coffee kiosk in the main lobby.



Successful gala, Oh Baby!, benefits Emerson expansion



More than \$280,000 was raised at Emerson’s recent gala, Oh Baby!, held at the Boston Park Plaza in November.

The funds are being used for the expansion and renovation of the hospital’s Birthing Center, part of Emerson’s \$36 million expansion project. The overall project combines new construction with a series of innovative renovations and upgrades. It includes the new Clough Surgical Center and the Yeatts Interventional Radiology Suite. The expanded Birthing Center will comprise more than 14,000 square feet and feature all private rooms.

HealthWorks reader survey: thank you for responding

Thank you to all who mailed in the survey cards that were inserted in the last issue of *HealthWorks*. Based on the results, the overall response is extremely positive. In fact, 86 percent of respondents report that they read all or most of the publication. Many wrote in comments, including that *HealthWorks* is “informative, upbeat and up-to-date.” Susan Gagnon of Pepperell won a \$100 American Express gift certificate for completing the survey.

Hospitalists:

ON SITE AND WINNING OVER PATIENTS



Sam Bagchi, MD, director of hospital medicine, stops by to see Ruth Waywell of Carlisle.

acute care medicine—that is, the conditions that bring many people to the hospital. “We know the state-of-the-art protocols for treating pneumonia, heart attack, stroke and hip fractures,” says Dr. Bagchi. “As a result, we make sure patients get the best care up front. We push to get diagnostic testing and treatment underway quickly.”

At Emerson, hospitalists are found virtually everywhere—from admitting patients in the emergency department (ED) to discharging them when it’s time to leave. Emerson’s hospitalist service includes 11 physicians and three nurse practitioners who cover all three shifts.

“I left the next day convinced that hospitalists are a gift to patients.”

A CONCORD RESIDENT

Winning over patients

A Concord resident who recently developed atrial fibrillation—an abnormal heart rhythm that is potentially serious—experienced firsthand the difference a hospitalist can make. In addition to the ED staff, who checked her vital signs and determined she was not in danger, she was cared for by David Handin, MD, a hospitalist. “Because Dr. Handin was there, I received immediate attention from a physician,” she says. “He listened to me, explained everything and coaxed me into staying at the hospital overnight. I left the next day convinced that hospitalists are a gift to patients.”

Nursing staff feel the same way. “It benefits us to have hospitalists here,” says Donna Romilly, RN, a nurse on one of Emerson’s acute care units. “If a patient needs immediate attention, the hospitalist is either here on the unit or elsewhere in the hospital—just a minute or two away. They’re not dividing their time between an office and the hospital, so they can focus on our hospitalized patients. Hospitalists can take the time to sit down and review all the relevant notes and lab results.”

Dr. Bagchi says that he and his colleagues win people over, one patient at a time. “It’s up to us to establish trust with the patient and demonstrate our competence,” he says. “If patients are disappointed that their primary care physician won’t be coming to the hospital, we’re usually able to address their concerns by spending time with them, explaining everything and reassuring them. They begin to understand that we’re here for them.”

A decade ago, the word “hospitalist” was familiar to few people. Today, doctors who specialize in caring for hospitalized patients are growing in number, with more than 20,000 hospitalists now practicing in the U.S. As patients and family members are finding out, there are distinct advantages to having them on your team.

Sam Bagchi, MD, director of hospital medicine at Emerson Hospital, notes that hospitalists don’t replace a patient’s bond with their primary care physician. “But because we are on site at the hospital, we focus on making sure patients get the attention and care they need,” he says. “That includes seeing that the necessary tests and medications are ordered quickly. And because we’re based in the hospital, we can check in with our patients during the day and be readily available for family meetings.”

It is up to the hospitalist to communicate closely with each patient’s primary care physician, who often is busy seeing patients in the office and unable to spend much time at the hospital. “One of our most important skills is communication,” says Dr. Bagchi. “It’s the hospitalist’s job to keep the primary care physician informed, in addition to the patient and family.”

Experts at what happens in hospitals

Most patients would agree that good communication makes any hospital stay go more smoothly. However, hospitalists bring something even more important to the job: expertise in managing

All about surveillance: Virginia Caples, RN, CNOR, infection control manager, and Scott Paparello, DO, infectious disease specialist, confer regularly.



Controlling infection: vigilance pays off

Emerson's infection rate is below the national average in three important categories

The war on germs seems to be everywhere. Hospitals are on the front lines of preventing infections in their patients, but the battle is going on in airplanes, schools and health clubs, where hand sanitizer dispensers are now standard equipment. While Emerson has plenty of those, it also has highly qualified staff whose focus is infection surveillance, an activity that combines education, prevention and a degree of detective work.

"Decades ago, before we even talked about quality in health care, infection control staff were collecting data, analyzing it and making improvements to limit hospital-acquired infections," says Regina Burzynski, RN, senior director of patient care assessment. "They were the original quality leaders."

As Emerson's infection control manager, Virginia Caples, RN, CNOR, begins each day with a long list of objectives. "I evaluate every patient who has an infection to make sure the proper precautions are being followed," says Ms. Caples, whose background includes 24 years as a surgical nurse. "I check in with the lab to find out if any new infections have been identified, and I collect data so that we can track our successes, as well as areas where improvement is needed. When the opportunity

arises, I remind staff, patients and visitors of the importance of hand hygiene."

The pin on her lab coat reads: Have you washed your hands? "We encourage the staff to announce to patients that they have washed their hands before an encounter, because it is the single most effective way to prevent transmission of infection," Ms. Caples explains. "We've made it a campaign at Emerson."

New program screens at-risk patients

Ms. Caples also confers regularly with Scott Paparello, DO, an infectious disease specialist who serves as chairman of the hospital's Infection Control Committee. "We perform active surveillance, which includes reviewing cases and looking for reasons why patients are readmitted," he says. "We review all surgical cases by following up with individual surgeons to see how their patients are doing after discharge. And we work with home care nurses to determine if patients discharged from Emerson developed infections."

A new program at Emerson was designed to identify and treat patients who arrive with antibiotic-resistant infections, including methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), which has become a challenge in hospitals. MRSA can cause

serious complications, especially if it enters the bloodstream.

"We know that certain populations, including nursing home patients and individuals who are transferred from other hospitals, are more likely to harbor MRSA," Dr. Paparello explains. "For that reason, we have started testing those patients when they arrive, and then we treat those who are found to be positive. We also test all patients who are admitted to our Critical

Care Unit, because we don't want our sickest patients to be exposed to infection."



The vigilant infection control work is paying off. Emerson's rates are lower than the national

average in three main infection categories that are benchmarked by hospitals across the US: surgical site infections, ventilator-associated pneumonia and catheter-related bloodstream infections. Those statistics are gratifying, says Ms. Burzynski.

"What's different today is that issues are transparent; we talk about our issues with staff, patients and other hospitals," she says. "We exchange ideas — what works well and what doesn't. This is progress, and it translates into higher-quality care."



Special Programs

HealthWorks, published by Emerson Hospital, is mailed to residents in the hospital's service area and is distributed to the employees and physicians' offices affiliated with Emerson Hospital.

If you would prefer not to receive such mailings in the future, please let us know by calling 978-287-3085 or send an email to pr@emersonhosp.org.

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The information included here is intended to educate readers about health issues, but it is not a substitute for consultation with a personal physician.

The mission of Emerson Hospital is to deliver the highest quality, safest and most cost-efficient care to our patients and to maintain a professional and respectful environment for all members of the Emerson Hospital community.

AARP SAFE DRIVING PROGRAM

This classroom refresher course focuses on compensating for physiological changes that can affect the perceptual skills of drivers over 55 years of age. Call 978-287-3085 to register or for more information. Co-sponsored by Emerson Hospital and AARP.

Tuesday, April 29 and Thursday, May 1 (2-day course)

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Donaldson Conference Room, John Cuming Building

\$10.00 Lunch is provided.



Cancer Awareness Day

Saturday, May 3, 2008

The 14th annual Cancer Awareness Day will be held Saturday, May 3, in the Bethke Cancer Center at Emerson Hospital in Concord, from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. Free health screenings include: skin cancer screening,* an occult blood test for colon-rectal cancer, respiratory screening, blood pressure exam, diabetes screening, oral cancer screening, a lipid profile cholesterol test,** thyroid screening** and, for men, a prostate-specific antigen (PSA)** blood test to detect prostate cancer.

In addition, there will be numerous information tables staffed by physicians and representatives from many different departments.

*For patients who have not had a skin cancer screening within the past year. Registration is required.

**Registration is required. 12-hour fasting is required for the lipid profile cholesterol test—no food or drink except water!

Call toll-free, 1-877-936-3776 (1-877-9-EMERSON), 24 hours a day, for registration and information.