

NEW LOOK

Healthy Living

MAGAZINE



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Stay Hydrated, Stay Healthy

Did you know water is essential to your health?

Hydration keeps your body functioning properly — especially during the summer months, when warm temperatures and high humidity can quickly take a toll.



“If you’re feeling thirsty, you’re probably already dehydrated,” says **Pam Sepp, RD, LDN** (left), clinical dietitian at UPMC Altoona. “Water is an essential nutrient. We can’t live without it.” Although requirements vary by age, weight, fitness, activity level, and other factors, the National Institutes of Health recommends that men drink 11 to 15 eight-ounce cups of water daily while women drink nine to 11 eight-ounce cups daily.

Check your urine

It’s the simplest way to determine your hydration status. Clear or pale-colored urine is a good indicator that you’re well hydrated; if it’s dark yellow or amber, you probably need more fluids.

Be aware

We all lose water, or body fluids, naturally when we sweat or go to the bathroom. Dehydration occurs when we don’t replace those lost fluids. In addition to increased thirst and decreased urination, signs of dehydration include fatigue, and dry skin, lips, and mouth, as well as muscle cramps, confusion, constipation, urinary tract infections, lightheadedness, and dizziness.

According to Pam, if you experience a persistent headache, or are always tired, you may be chronically dehydrated.

Make it a habit

Staying hydrated has many benefits, including a sharper focus and more energy. To keep up with your fluid intake, be sure to:

- Carry a water bottle with you and drink from it throughout the day.
- Eat water-rich fruits and vegetables like melons, strawberries, grapes, cucumbers, and bell peppers. Yogurt and popsicles have a high water content, too.
- Pack a cooler and take frequent breaks when you have outdoor activities.
- Drink water before, during, and after exercise.

Skip the sports drinks

Unless you’re an avid athlete — like a long-distance runner or cyclist — or spend a lot of time working outdoors, skip the sports drinks, which are high in sugar and calories. “Water really is the best,” says Pam.



Dehydration is common and dangerous for the very old and the very young.

- Older adults are at increased risk because our sense of thirst decreases as we age. They also may be reluctant to drink fluids due to bathroom issues.
- Young children also are vulnerable because they can lose fluids rapidly and can’t communicate that they’re thirsty.

“It’s important to keep up with the fluids. Dehydration can happen quickly,” says Pam. “Even mild dehydration can impair kidney function, and it’s the main cause of urinary tract infections in older adults.”



Power in Numbers: A Team Approach to Breast Cancer Treatment

While breast cancer treatment has advanced significantly over the years, it’s been found that patient outcomes improve even more when a team of doctors and other caregivers work together to tailor a treatment plan.



Just as each woman is unique, so is every breast cancer case. That is why, at UPMC Altoona, our Interdisciplinary Breast Cancer Review Committee meets every Tuesday to review complex breast cancer cases and craft the best approach to treatment for each woman.

Committee members — breast surgeons, radiologists, pathologists, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, a nurse navigator, and other advanced practice providers — discuss the patient’s medical and family history, and review imaging and pathology results. Together, they craft a personalized course of treatment and share it with the patient and her doctors.

“A breast cancer diagnosis is very stressful,” says **Dianna Craig, MD** (above, left), a board-certified surgeon in the UPMC Altoona Breast Health Center. “Our approach ensures good communication among all members of the team, as well as with the patient, her family, the referring doctor, and her primary care doctor.”

Care team builds patient confidence and trust

This interdisciplinary approach to breast cancer treatment came about in response to patient feedback. “Two years ago, when we had just opened the Breast Health Center, we conducted a focus group with breast cancer patients to find out what we could do better,” says Dr. Craig. “They told us that they wanted a coordinated care team, and we listened.”

The committee follows the National Comprehensive Cancer Network Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology. “Our role is to agree on a game plan before treatment begins,” explains Dr. Craig. “Patients find it reassuring to know that every member of the team is involved in the process. Our overall goal is better patient care.”

Lauren Deur, MD (above, center), a board-certified, fellowship-trained diagnostic radiologist at UPMC Altoona, explains how the committee views each case individually.

“There is not always one right way to treat breast cancer,” she explains. “Some patients benefit from having chemotherapy before surgery, while others benefit from having it after — or not at all. We learn from each other’s experiences, and share our knowledge in a collaborative way that allows us to decide which approach is best in each patient’s case.”

Dr. Deur believes firmly that the team-focused approach is “an enormous benefit to patients. We give them the best options based on the latest research. They can be confident that we are offering the best possible care and solutions.”

Pictured above and on the cover: UPMC Altoona’s Interdisciplinary Breast Cancer Review Committee members (left to right) **Dianna Craig, MD**, breast surgeon; **Lauren Deur, MD**, diagnostic radiologist; **Joshua Siglin, MD**, radiation oncologist; and **Christy Servello, PA-C** at the UPMC Altoona Breast Health Center.

Smarter Care for Hip Fractures

UPMC Altoona's coordinated approach to geriatric fractures focuses on getting older adults back on their feet faster and with fewer complications.



Now in its fourth year, UPMC Altoona's pioneering Geriatric Fracture Program was created to provide faster and more coordinated care for older adults with "fragility fractures" — fractures caused by a fall from standing height or below.

"While fragility falls include fractures of the wrist, spine, and other parts of the body, hip fractures can be life threatening," says **Charles Harvey, DO** (left), medical director of UPMC Altoona Elite Orthopaedics. "The program is growing: Last year, we treated 259 patients with hip fractures, compared to 180 two years earlier — an increase of nearly 45 percent."

Collaboration that counts

The program emphasizes a team approach, and each team member has a clear understanding of the role he or she must play at every point of a patient's care. The team includes doctors, nurses, therapists, counselors, social workers, and other specialists. That approach, says Dr. Harvey, ensures that patients receive faster and more coordinated care — and improves communication.

"When you identify a goal and bring the right people together to work on it, you see results," says Dr. Harvey. "Although many of our elderly fracture patients also have other complicating illnesses, we're seeing steady improvements in patient satisfaction because of this comprehensive team approach."

Good bone health: today and tomorrow

"While good care after a geriatric fracture is essential, what most influences how well you heal is your overall bone health before an injury," says Dr. Harvey.

Osteoporosis is the most common underlying cause of hip fractures. If you are a woman age 65 or older, or a man age 70 or older, the National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends getting a bone density test to determine your risk of a fracture. If you are diagnosed with low bone mass, treatments are available.

And in your younger years, there are ways to improve bone health that will reap important benefits as you age, including:

- **Nutrition:** Poor eating habits and a lack of calcium and vitamin D in your diet when you're young put you at risk for fractures as you age.
- **Drinking and smoking:** Excessive alcohol use — especially in adolescence and young adulthood — affects bone-forming cells. Smoking also has been identified as a factor in poor bone health.
- **Physical inactivity:** Once you're over the age of 20, exercise is key to preventing bone loss. Staying active also helps with coordination and balance.

NEW LOCATION



UPMC Altoona Elite Orthopaedics' Hollidaysburg office has moved to the new Logan Medical Building at 800 S. Logan Blvd., Hollidaysburg.

Doctors will continue to see patients at their locations in Bedford and Huntingdon. Call 814-889-3600 for an appointment.

THE GUIDE to Healthy Living

Four tips to avoid falls and fractures as you age.

About 12 million older adults fall every year in the United States — and every 20 minutes, an older adult dies as the result of a fall. But falls aren't an inevitable part of the aging process, says Dr. Charles Harvey. Here are key steps you can take.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

Staying active is essential: Weak leg and abdominal muscles increase the risk of falling. While everyone starts to lose muscle mass as they age, exercise can help you become stronger and more flexible. You're never too old to begin!

- Build your core strength by working out on a stationary bike or lifting light weights
- Improve your balance through the martial art of tai chi
- Ask your doctor to create an exercise plan that's right for your fitness level



SEE YOUR DOCTOR

- Regular doctor visits can help uncover any underlying medical problems that could lead to falls
- Tell your doctor if your medicine makes you dizzy or unstable; the more prescriptions you take, the more likely you are to fall
- Eye exams can detect poor depth perception and other vision problems that make you vulnerable to falls

DID YOU KNOW?

Falls don't just happen to older adults! Seniors over age 70 and children under age 5 have the greatest fall rates. The most severe falls among children are linked to baby walkers, windows, and play equipment.



CHECK YOUR SURROUNDINGS

According to the National Institutes of Health, six out of every 10 falls happen at home.

- Store frequently used food and household items in easy-to-reach places
- Rearrange furniture to create more open spaces for walking
- Make sure all carpets and handrails are secure
- Use nonskid mats and grab rails in your tub or shower
- Be sure every room has sufficient lighting — especially steps, entrances, and outside walkways



GET THE RIGHT SUPPORT

If you have balance problems, don't lean on bedside tables, furniture, or other items to steady yourself. Your doctor can help you determine what walking aid is best for you — a walker or pronged cane — and advise you on its proper use.

A pump so tiny it can be inserted through an artery and placed inside the heart within minutes is offering new hope to critically ill heart patients at UPMC Altoona.

Cardiologists at UPMC Altoona began using the Impella®, dubbed the “world’s smallest heart pump,” in January. Designed to provide temporary support, the tiny pump helps keep blood circulating in patients with seriously weakened hearts.

“The pump allows us to put the heart on autopilot so it can rest,” says **George Jabbour, MD** (right), an interventional cardiologist and director of the cardiac catheterization lab at UPMC Altoona. “It increases the chance of survival for these very sick patients.”

The pump, which is smaller than the width of a pen, is inserted in a standard heart catheterization procedure through an artery in the leg. It is then snaked up into the ascending aorta and placed in the left ventricle, where it helps push blood through the heart. It can remain there up to four days.



Advanced Heart Pump Comes to UPMC Altoona

“It takes a load off the heart muscle, allowing it to rest and recover,” says Dr. Jabbour. “It also keeps blood flowing to vital organs, including the brain and kidneys.”

According to Dr. Jabbour, the pump “can make a big difference” for gravely ill patients. UPMC Altoona is the first hospital in the region to offer the new technology.

“In the past, if someone was considered too high risk for surgery, there wasn’t much we could do here. They either had no option or faced a 2- to 3-hour transfer to Pittsburgh for a specialized procedure,” he says.

“A growing number of patients in our community have serious heart issues. This pump supports our most at-risk patients so they can undergo a needed — and potentially lifesaving — procedure,” adds Dr. Jabbour. “It’s allowing us to provide the latest technology to our patients.”



How it works

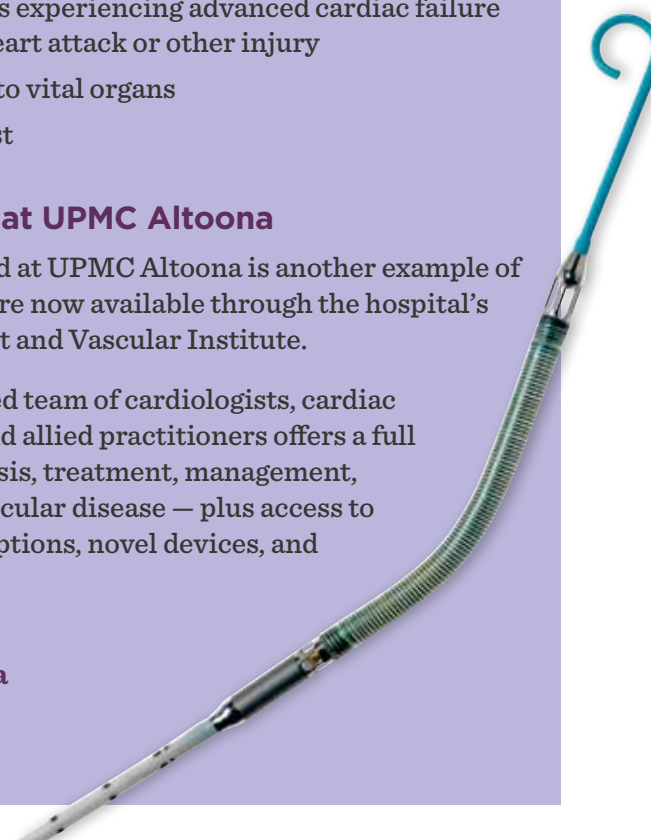
- Protects very high-risk, critically ill patients during an angioplasty or stenting procedure to open blocked arteries
- Stabilizes the heart in patients experiencing advanced cardiac failure or shock caused by a severe heart attack or other injury
- Maintains critical blood flow to vital organs
- Allows the heart muscle to rest

World-class cardiac care at UPMC Altoona

The new heart pump introduced at UPMC Altoona is another example of the advancements in cardiac care now available through the hospital’s affiliation with the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute.

The hospital’s community-based team of cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, vascular surgeons, and allied practitioners offers a full range of services for the diagnosis, treatment, management, and prevention of heart and vascular disease — plus access to the most advanced treatment options, novel devices, and leading-edge clinical trials.

Visit UPMC.com/HVIAaltoona to learn more.



News from the UPMC ALTOONA FOUNDATION

Advancing Knowledge Through Foundation Scholarships and Continuing Education

Scholarship Enables Nurse to Complete a Master’s Degree

Shawn Varner, RN, BSN, CCRN, is this year’s recipient of the Donna Y. Deichert Scholarship. Shawn successfully manages a nursing career and family responsibilities while pursuing her master’s degree in nursing.

The scholarship was created in memory of Donna Y. Deichert, who worked as a nurse in UPMC Altoona’s cardiac intensive care unit for more than a quarter century. “The Foundation is grateful to the Deichert family and pleased to pass their generosity on to a hard-working and deserving scholarship recipient,” says **Chris Rickens**, UPMC Altoona Chief Nursing Officer.

“UPMC Altoona is one of only two hospitals in the UPMC system that sponsors a medical laboratory science program,” says **Joe Pufka**, director of UPMC Altoona’s Laboratory Services.



Laboratory Science scholarship students: Brooke Gold, Kassie Smith, Brittany Smith, Ashlyn DeArmitt, Emily Eichelberger (back row, left to right) and Caitlynn Barger (front row, center).

Continuing Medical Education for Residents and Medical Faculty

The UPMC Altoona Foundation recently funded a continuing medical education webinar focused on sharing the latest information on family practice for residents and faculty in the Altoona Family Physicians Residency program. “The availability of interactive remote continuing medical education saves thousands of dollars in travel costs and physician time,” says **Donald Beckstead, MD**, director of the program. “This type of education is very important both in training our 28 residents and in keeping our 15 medical faculty members current.”



Shawn Varner (left) and Chris Rickens, UPMC Altoona Chief Nursing Officer

Laboratory Science Students Receive Scholarships

Six medical laboratory science students (pictured at right and above) were awarded scholarships from the UPMC Altoona Foundation.

The students work full schedules at UPMC Altoona’s laboratory while completing a rigorous educational curriculum. The scholarship helps them gain practical, hands-on experience while enabling the hospital to recruit and retain prospective laboratory professionals.

Socks for Kids

In June 2016, UPMC Altoona employees and volunteers collected socks for kids and donated them to local charities. Socks are a much-needed clothing item for many area youth.



Cancer Survivors APPRECIATION PICNIC

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, September 16, 2017
at DelGrosso’s Amusement Park in Tipton, PA

UPMC Altoona and UPMC CancerCenter are proud to host a picnic for cancer patients, cancer survivors, family members, surviving family members of cancer patients, and caregivers.

Please plan to join us for a fun and relaxing afternoon under Pavilion 2 at DelGrosso’s Amusement Park.

Meals will be provided for everyone, with face painting for kids of all ages, a basket raffle, and bingo.



Call UPMC Altoona Foundation at 814-889-6740 for more information.

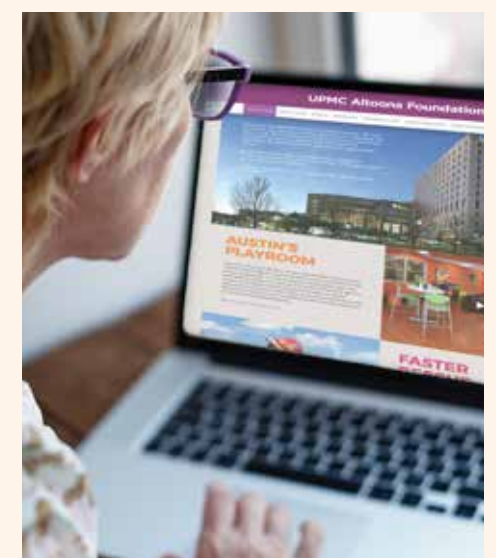
Take a Look at Our New Website!

The new UPMC Altoona Foundation website features:

- Stories of our donors’ funds in action
- A complete listing of our Guardian Angels, UPMC Altoona staff members nominated by patients who are grateful for their care
- A calendar of upcoming Foundation activities, plus photos of recent events
- A link to our planned giving page, where you can learn about gifts with tax advantages, as well as those that provide a lifetime income
- A list of the Foundation’s programs and services, such as the Donna Jean Hospitality House and Palliative Care Tree of Life program

And our new website now makes it easier than ever to donate online!

Experience it for yourself at UPMCAaltoonaFoundation.org.



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Q & A

Ask the Expert

Low-dose CT scan for lung cancer screening

About 85 percent of lung cancers are caused by smoking, and the risk of developing lung cancer increases as we get older. **Mehrdad Ghaffari, MD, FCCP**, chief of pulmonary services at UPMC Altoona, says the use of low-dose CT scans to screen for lung cancer can help identify the disease at an early stage so that it can be successfully treated and even cured.

Q.

Who's at risk for lung cancer?

A. Smoking is the #1 cause of lung cancer — and it's among the most preventable. When you stop smoking, you reduce your risk. If you've smoked a pack a day for 20 years, you're 33 times more likely to get lung cancer than if you never smoked!

Q.

Who should be screened for lung cancer?

A. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends annual screenings for individuals between the ages of 55 and 79 who have smoked for 20 to 30 years or have quit smoking within the last 15 years.

Q.

Why is screening important?

A. The sooner lung cancer is detected, the better your chance of survival. At stage 1, lung cancer has a very good cure rate. However, lung cancer is virtually symptomless until the later stages.

Q.

What is a low-dose CT scan?

A. This is a new intervention to identify early stage lung cancer. A low-dose CT scan is a relatively noninvasive, painless procedure that uses low-dose x-rays to screen the lungs for cancerous lesions. On average, it has only one-eighth the radiation of a regular CT scan. And under certain circumstances, the benefits far outweigh the risks.

A chest x-ray is not a substitute for this test. The small nodules involved in early stage lung cancer can easily be missed on a chest x-ray.

Q.

How is it done?

A. The actual scan itself takes less than a minute, and the costs are generally covered by insurance. All low-dose CT scans are done at our outpatient facility at Station Medical Center.

Q.

Is lung cancer preventable?

A. Absolutely. The best way to prevent lung cancer is to never start smoking. But if you do smoke, stop now — especially if you're under the age of 50. That's when you'll reap the greatest benefits.

If you are a current or former smoker, talk to your primary care doctor or pulmonologist about lung cancer screening.

MEET DR. GHAFFARI

After graduating from one of the Middle East's leading medical schools, Mashhad University of Medical Sciences in Iran, Dr. Ghaffari came to the United States in 2000 to pursue a residency at Sinai-Grace Hospital in Detroit and a fellowship at the University of Tennessee in Memphis. He joined UPMC Altoona Blair Medical Associates in 2008 and is board-certified in four specialties: critical care, internal medicine, pulmonology, and sleep medicine.

In addition to serving as chief of pulmonary services at UPMC Altoona, Dr. Ghaffari also is medical director of the hospital's medical intensive care unit. He and his wife, endocrinologist **Haleh Haerian, MD**, also of UPMC Altoona Blair Medical Associates, have two young children. He especially appreciates the friendly and relaxed interaction he enjoys with his patients. "This community is a great place to work and raise a family," he notes.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Ghaffari, call 814-946-1655.

Healthy Living
CLUB



UPMC Altoona

UPMC Altoona's *Healthy Living Magazine* is published four times a year. If you are not receiving the magazine by mail and would like to be added to our mailing list, join our Healthy Living Club. It's FREE, and the magazine is just one of many benefits!

Join online at UPMCAaltoona.org or call 814-889-2630 or 1-888-313-4665.

Looking for a doctor or specialty service?

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