One Patient at a Time

Making a Difference, One Patient at a Time

Whether they are regaining function after a stroke, getting back in top form following a surgery or recovering from an injury, thousands of area residents find that Thompson Health’s Rehabilitation Services Department is the place where care and experience connect.

In fact, in 2008, the department’s team of over 25 outpatient specialists handled a total of more than 32,000 visits.

“I am very proud of the positive impact our clinicians have on the community,” says Nancy Alexander, a physical therapist and certified strength and conditioning specialist who serves as Director of Rehabilitation Services.

Dr. Robert Meyer, Medical Director of the Department, says its staff is talented, devoted and diverse. Their expertise is growing, he adds, as team members obtain new and more specific certifications and credentials to better serve the needs of patients.

Among recent developments:

• The lymphedema treatment team in Occupational Therapy has expanded to three certified lymphedema specialists. Using Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT), they treat individuals experiencing swelling due to an impaired lymphatic system that could be genetic or caused as a result of surgery, cancer treatments, infection or trauma.

• The speech-language pathologist is completing qualification to conduct FEES (Flexible Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing) studies to evaluate people who may have swallowing difficulties due to a stroke or nerve and muscle disease, for example.

• Courtney Middleton, left, is one of three certified lymphedema therapists at Thompson, and recently became certified in hand therapy.

State-of-the-art Treatment for Varicose Veins
Alleviates Symptoms, Improves Appearance

For several years, Jean Storie simply lived with the pain and swelling caused by varicose veins. In recent years, however, the symptoms worsened.

A mother of three and registered nurse who spends a lot of time on her feet, she found herself experiencing severe leg cramps. Sometimes, they were so bad they would wake her up.

The Gorham woman went to the Polisseni Diagnostic Imaging Department at F.F. Thompson Hospital, where specialists led by Dr. David E. Lee use minimally-invasive procedures to improve leg function and appearance. Following a consultation, she underwent a total of three outpatient procedures beginning last fall. “It was definitely worth it,” she says.

Storie’s symptoms improved dramatically and so did the appearance of her legs. This summer, she says, she won’t feel so self-conscious while joining celebrities.

Practice ‘Sun Safety’
This Summer

Whether you’re headed out for a picnic, a leisurely stroll or a swim this summer, it’s more important than ever to take steps to prevent skin cancer. According to the National Cancer Institute, it is the most common form of cancer in the U.S., and most cases are considered to be sun-related.

“Even in upstate New York, the sun is strong enough to cause damage that can lead to skin cancer later in life,” says Dr. Dirk Bernold of Thompson Health’s Sands Cancer Center and Interlakes Oncology and Hematology, PC.

The two most common types are basal cell and squamous cell cancer, with more than 1 million cases diagnosed annually. Another type of skin cancer, melanoma, is more dangerous but less common. It accounts for approximately 60,000 cases each year and is on the rise, according to a recent study.

The good news is that if detected early, skin cancer is highly treatable.

The American Cancer Society recommends telling your doctor if you notice any change in the skin, such as the size or color of a mole, or any change in sensation.

To lower your risk, practice sun safety, even on hazy or overcast days:

• Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
• Wear comfortable, long-sleeved clothing made of tightly woven fabric
• Use sunscreen and lip balm with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher, reapplying after swimming or perspiring
• Cover your head with a wide-brimmed hat, shading your face, ears and neck
• If you choose a baseball cap, protect your ears and neck with sunscreen
• Wear sunglasses with 99 to 100 percent UV (ultraviolet) absorption

Bernold adds that when choosing sunscreen, it’s important to find one that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. “It says right on the bottle, and the cheaper ones work just as well as the expensive ones,” he says.

Proper protection can decrease levels of Vitamin D, so the doctor says supplements containing the vitamin and calcium—which Vitamin D promotes the absorption of—are
Benefits of a ‘short stay’ go a long way

When Eadie Webb had eye surgery last summer, she needed extra help as she recovered. Clark Meadows at Ferris Hills was the place she and her family turned to for that help, and they couldn’t have been happier.

“She just raved about the staff, and we didn’t have to worry about a thing,” said Eadie’s daughter, Marsha Songs of Victor.

Adjacent to Thompson Health’s independent living apartments for seniors in Canandaigua, Clark Meadows provides what is known as “enriched living,” both for people interested in short stays like Eadie’s, or those interested in calling Clark Meadows their home.

With apartment-style living and 24-hour staffing, Clark Meadows offers assistance with tasks such as bathing, dressing and medication monitoring. Housekeeping, transportation and social/recreational programs are also among the amenities offered for an all-inclusive monthly fee, or, for short stays, an affordable daily rate.

For some, a short stay during recovery from an illness or injury offers a comfortable introduction to enriched living. “We often find that having a positive experience eases the transition for both seniors and their families,” says Program Manager Susan Wilber.

To take a tour of Clark Meadows and enjoy a complimentary lunch, call (585) 393-4330. For a virtual tour, visit www.FerrisHills.com.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER
‘Making a Difference’

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CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER
‘State-of-the-art Treatment’

Supervised aquatic therapy is offered by physical therapists at F.F. Thompson Hospital, one of three locations for the Rehabilitation Services Department.

• A member of the Physical Therapy team will soon be certified in providing rehabilitation for Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo, a common cause of dizziness.
• The Physical Therapy team now has three staff members with McKenzie Spine Certification, employing therapy and motion to decrease back-related pains.
• The clinical coordinator of Occupational Therapy/Outpatient Services became one of just 5,200 people worldwide to be certified in hand therapy.

These developments enhance the already wide breadth of offerings within Rehabilitation Services, which includes athletic training for nine area high schools, a stroke support group offered in conjunction with Thompson’s state designation as a Stroke Center, aquatic physical therapy and joint replacement-related rehabilitation.

Jim Burgess of Bloomfield is familiar with the expertise and caring manner of the Associates in Thompson’s Rehabilitation Services Department. Several years ago, he received physical therapy at the department’s Farmington site following a fall from a ladder that left him with nerve damage in his neck and “Slowly but surely, I got the use of my arm back,” he says.

More recently, Burgess began going to physical therapy at Thompson’s Sports Medicine Center following a rotator cuff repair and removal of a bone spur on this left shoulder. Again, he is impressed with the progress seen from week to week by following the physical therapist’s recommendations.

“It’s amazing, the things they’re able to do there,” Burgess said. “You see all ages, and to see all these people who’ve been hurt and to know they’re going to get better is wonderful.”

For information about any of the programs offered by Thompson Health’s Rehabilitation Services Department, visit www.ThompsonHealth.com and click on “Rehabilitation Services” under “Health Care Services.”

Kick Start Your Day with an Energy Bowl

Grown in palm trees native to Central and South America, the açaí (Ah-Sigh-EE) berry has become one of the most popular “power foods” out there. The dark purple berry’s taste—a delicious combination of sweet and tart—is not the only reason. The berries contain anthocyanins. They are a form of phytochemicals, the natural chemical compounds found in all plants that protect against disease and promote health.

Puree made from the berries is rich in the same anthocyanins found in red wine. In fact, the puree has between 10 and 30 times more anthocyanins and can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

While you should be wary of weight-loss scams trying to capitalize on the buzz about açaí berries, there is no disputing the benefits of their antioxidants.
The Sports Medicine Center delivers what other promotions in the marketplace, LeBlanc says.

Athletic Trainer Mike LeBlanc, Director of the Sports Medicine Center.

“People often ask me, ‘what do you do to improve posture, strength, range of motion and flexibility?’ said Physical Therapist/Orthopedic Specialist Thompson.

They offer:
- Specialized rehabilitation of the extremities
- Orthotic intervention, fabrication and brace fitting
- Golf Fitness programs by golf conditioning specialists

The Sports Medicine Center is located at 3710 West Street in Canandaigua. To schedule an appointment, call (585) 396-6520.

While there is never a bad time of year to start an exercise program, most would agree that the sunshine and fresh air this time of year sure helps.

Those who need that extra boost may want to consider something else – a fitness consultation from The Sports Medicine Center at Thompson Health.

The one-on-one consultations are designed to identify each patient’s potential barriers to success and provide the tools and support to overcome them.

“Based on that initial assessment, we try to come up with a plan of goals and a plan to meet them – What is safe? And what does current research recommend that they do to improve posture, strength, range of motion and flexibility?” said Physical Therapist/Athletic Trainer Mike LeBlanc, Director of the Sports Medicine Center.

Although there is no shortage of diet and fitness promotions in the marketplace, LeBlanc says The Sports Medicine Center delivers what other offerings cannot: expert advice and counseling from trained, experienced medical professionals.

Don’t let the words “sports medicine” in the name fool you – while the consultations can be tailored to athletes who are looking to improve their performance, they are meant for anyone. In fact, they are sometimes sought by people who have never exercised before.

“The people who can really benefit are the ones that are relatively sedentary and could really use something to give them a little bit of a jump start,” says LeBlanc.

Fitness consultations, which cost $47, are just one of the services offered by The Sports Medicine Center, where physical therapists and athletic trainers specialize in the rehabilitation of injuries or conditions involving the back, shoulder, elbow, hip, knee, ankle and foot.

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The second annual PowerPlay Performance Camp, for junior and senior high athletes, will be held Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from July 20 through August 7 at Uptown Fitness in Canandaigua. Participants will focus on developing speed, power and agility while also learning how to prevent injuries. For information, call (585) 396-6700 or email James.Porcella@ThompsonHealth.com.

When the average person thinks of a health care setting, the players who first come to mind are typically physicians and nurses, but social workers often play a vital role as well.

In fact, within Thompson Health, they see between 85 to 90 percent of the residents of our skilled-nursing facility, the M.M. Ewing Continuing Care Center.

“The members of our Case Management/Social Work Department are valuable members of the team for many of our patients and residents,” says Dr. Carlos R. Ortiz, Senior Vice President of Medical Services. “Whether they’re advocating for a domestic violence victim who has just arrived in the Emergency Department, marshalling services for a senior citizen so he can return home to continue his recovery from surgery or simply lending an ear to a family going through a difficult time, their contributions help ensure that we provide exceptional care.”

Mary Savastano, the Director of Social Work/Care Management, said the profession is an excellent choice for those who not only want to help others but have an affinity for it and are able to make meaningful connections with patients, residents and loved ones.

“You have to be able to talk with people with compassion and understand what they may be going through,” she says.

In addition, Savastano says, medical social workers must have a firm grasp of the many resources available in the community and be able to work closely with representatives of other agencies as well as other members of the health care team. “That really is what helps us be successful, together,” she says.

With the eligibility requirements recently expanded at the same time more families are looking for ways to make ends meet, Thompson Health is urging community members to explore the options offered to New York residents.

The health system’s Facilitated Enrollment program is a friendly, face-to-face way to get no- or low-cost state health insurance, including Child Health Plus.

“I think a lot of people out there are eligible and have no idea,” says Lori Rivet, Facilitated Enrollment Coordinator.

As of last fall, families at or under 400 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for Child Health Plus.

Their monthly subsidized premium ranges from free to $40 per child, depending on income. For example, a family of two (single parent/child) with an annual income less than $35,000 would be eligible for a $15/month plan, while a family of four with an annual income less than $53,000 would also be eligible for a plan that costs $15 per month, per child.

Also, Rivet notes that under Child Health Plus, there are no co-payments.

Thompson has Facilitated Enrollment offices in both Wayne and Ontario counties, where staff members meet with applicants and help with the enrollment forms. They also follow up with applicants and assist with renewals.

For more information or to set up an appointment, call 1-585-396-6465 or, toll free, 1-888-756-7656.
Balloon Sinuplasty Helps Some Sinus Sufferers Breathe Easier

Change in seasons always signaled a sinus infection for Kimberly Bussey of Canandaigua. As someone with chronic sinusitis, it was something the 34-year-old speech pathologist just became accustomed to.

The congestion, the headaches that occasionally turned into migraines and the pressure that at times even made her teeth hurt made it difficult to function at work or during recreational activities.

Last fall, the sinus infection that arrived with the change in seasons never left. Then it turned into bronchitis, and despite allergy shots and an assortment of antibiotics, Bussey’s bronchitis and sinus infections continued to “flip flop” with each other during the winter.

These days, however, Bussey is breathing easier thanks to a new procedure called balloon sinuplasty™. Performed at EF. Thompson Hospital and offered through each of the Ear, Nose & Throat practices affiliated with the health system, the surgical procedure is less invasive than traditional sinus surgery.

“It’s not for everybody but it is for many people, and it will probably revolutionize the field of sinus surgery,” says Dr. W. Bradley Simmons, the ENT doctor who performed Bussey’s balloon sinuplasty™ in March.

Using a small, flexible catheter, a doctor performing the outpatient procedure inserts a tiny, deflated balloon into the sinuses. When it is inflated, the balloon macrostructures the honeycomb-like bone, widening the walls of the passageway to restore normal sinus drainage.

According to Acclarent, the company that created the technology for balloon sinuplasty™, some patients can return to normal activities within 24 hours.

Simmons says balloon sinuplasty™ is best for patients who have significant symptoms — repeated infections, pressure and facial pain — but who do not have sinus disease in terms of polyps that require removal through traditional sinus surgery. Patients who do have severe disease in the frontal sinus area can also benefit from balloon sinuplasty™, he says, when it’s used in combination with the traditional surgery.

“I’ve been amazed at the quick recovery and the excellent results,” the doctor adds. “I can tell you, I’m impressed.”

Bussey was similarly impressed and is looking forward to this summer, when she can truly enjoy things like getting outside for a little yard work or taking motorcycle rides with her husband.

“I guess I didn’t realize how congested I was,” she says. “It’s nice not to be, and it’s nice just to be able to smell things and taste things.”
Spring/Summer 2009 Survey

We are interested in the needs of our community. Please take a moment to answer the following questions to help guide Thompson Health in future planning and partnership development.

Your age: □ 18 – 25    □ 26 – 40    □ 41 – 55    □ 56 – 70    □ 70+  
Your zip code:  

What is the most pressing health care need for you and your family?  
☐ Transportation to health care  ☐ Housing for seniors  
☐ Obtaining health insurance  ☐ Availability of needed healthcare  
☐ Care for seniors  ☐ Please explain:  
☐ Finding a doctor  ☐ Other:  
☐ Prescription costs  

Which hospital do you primarily use?  
☐ F.F. Thompson  ☐ Soldiers & Sailors  
☐ Strong Memorial  ☐ ViaHealth Newark Wayne  
☐ Rochester General  ☐ Highland  
☐ Clifton Springs  ☐ Other:  
☐ Geneva General  

Where do you currently get your health information?  
(check all that apply and give specific names)  
☐ ThompsonHealth.com  ☐ Classes  
☐ Other Internet Sites  ☐ Health Reference Books  
☐ Newspaper  ☐ Physician  
☐ Radio  ☐ Brochures  
☐ TV  ☐ Other:  

Do you have health insurance?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No  

If offered, would you be interested in attending any of the following educational programs or utilizing any of the following services?  
(check all that apply)  

NUTRITION/FITNESS:  
☐ Weight Management Programs (Group or Individual)  ☐ Healthy Eating  
☐ Special Diets  ☐ Yoga, Tai Chi, Self Defense, etc.  
☐ Healthy Lifestyles  ☐ Other:  

CHRONIC DISEASES:  
☐ Diabetes Prevention and/or Care  ☐ Nutritional Counseling  
☐ Healthy Cooking  ☐ Insulin Information Session  
☐ Dementia Care  ☐ Support Group for Diabetes  
☐ Caregiver Education  ☐ Support Group for Dementia Care  
☐ Support Group for Respiratory Illness  ☐ Respiratory Illness:  
☐ Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease  ☐ Congestive Heart Failure  
☐ Support Group for Respiratory Illness  ☐ Other:  
☐ Asthma  

MIND/BODY HEALTH:  
☐ Stress Management Classes  ☐ Behavioral Modification Classes  

STROKE PREVENTION:  
☐ Prevention and Detection Education  ☐ Treatment Options  
☐ Support Group for Stroke Prevention  

IN HOME SERVICES:  
☐ Meals  ☐ Light Housekeeping  
☐ Transportation  ☐ Personal Companion  
☐ Light Home Maintenance  ☐ Errands/Shopping  
☐ Support (service referral, future planning, financial paperwork, etc.)  

DEALING WITH END OF LIFE ISSUES:  
☐ Finances and Paperwork Assistance  ☐ Counseling  
☐ Support Group for End of Life Issues  

OTHER:  
☐ Advanced Directives (Health Care Proxy, Living Will information)  ☐ Cancer Care  
☐ Information about health insurance options  ☐ Parenting  
☐ Senior Living Options  ☐ Youth Development  

Other comments:  

Name/address/e-mail (optional):  

Visit www.ThompsonHealth.com or call (585) 396-6111 for information about our current educational offerings. 

Thank you for taking the time to be our partner in health!