

HEALTH Wonders

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**AN INVESTMENT
IN COMMUNITY
HEALTHCARE**
PAGE 2

**LOSE WEIGHT—
AND KEEP IT OFF**
PAGE 3

**LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR
HEART IS TELLING YOU**
PAGE 5

**NURSING COMES BACK
TO THE BEDSIDE**
PAGE 6

JOIN US FOR A HEALTHY EVENT
PAGE 7

THE HEART OF IT

**DON REIS' HEART LED HIM
TO A DATE WITH DESTINY** PAGE 4

Working Together Is Better



A quote attributed to a 17th century author proclaimed that “no man is an island,” and the same sentiment applies to hospitals today.

According to the American Hospital Association, about one-half of the nation’s 5,700 hospitals are part of a healthcare system or network. Instead of trying to “go it alone” in the face of increased consumer demand, heightened competition and declining revenue, groups of hospitals and other healthcare providers are coordinating their efforts in order to deliver a broad spectrum of services to their constituents.

And so it is with University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. We aligned ourselves formally with University Hospitals in 1995, and have steadily intensified our service offerings in recent years to further develop as a regional healthcare destination site.

The University Hospitals affiliation affords great dividends by accommodating a growing resident base that requires high-quality, state-of-the-art services often unavailable in a community hospital setting. Significant investment at Geauga Medical Center—both in terms of technology and physician involvement—have resulted in the introduction of cardiac catheterization and vascular laboratories, a Center for Women’s Health, a digital MRI system, The Orthopaedic Center, an expanded emergency center, bariatric surgery and, soon, interventional cardiology services.

Healthcare truly is a local phenomenon, with patients expecting access and convenience to a full array of sophisticated services close to home. Today, Geauga Medical Center

touches more than 100,000 individual lives each year through direct services and community outreach throughout Geauga and surrounding counties.

University Hospitals’ regionalized approach to healthcare helps raise the level of services available in our immediate area, while drawing on subspecialized tertiary care resources when needed at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in University Circle.

With 150 locations throughout Northeast Ohio, University Hospitals serves the needs of patients through an integrated network of hospitals, outpatient centers and primary care physicians. Collectively, and with Geauga Medical Center as an “eastern hub” of our system, we are working to realize our goal of creating healthy communities while fulfilling our central mission: to heal, to teach, to discover.

We extend our best wishes to you and your family for a healthy and productive 2007.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Frenchie, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer
University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center

OFFERING
CONVENIENT
CARE CLOSE
TO HOME



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Keep It Off

University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center can help you lose weight—for good

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly two-thirds of American adults are overweight, and half of them are considered obese. The numbers in Geauga County are equally distressing, where an estimated 24 percent of adults are obese.

A vast number of weight-loss options—more than \$30 billion worth nationally—are available to Americans, but many of them are simply ineffective or impractical to use over time. The truth is, more than 90 percent of diets fail.

But what if your potential for long-term success could greatly be enhanced—especially if it helped you avoid or minimize other health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and reflux disease?

“Obesity is neck-and-neck with smoking as the leading cause of preventable death in the United States,” says Peter T. Hallowell, M.D. “Imagine the impact on disease if you could change these two risk factors.”

Surgery and Support

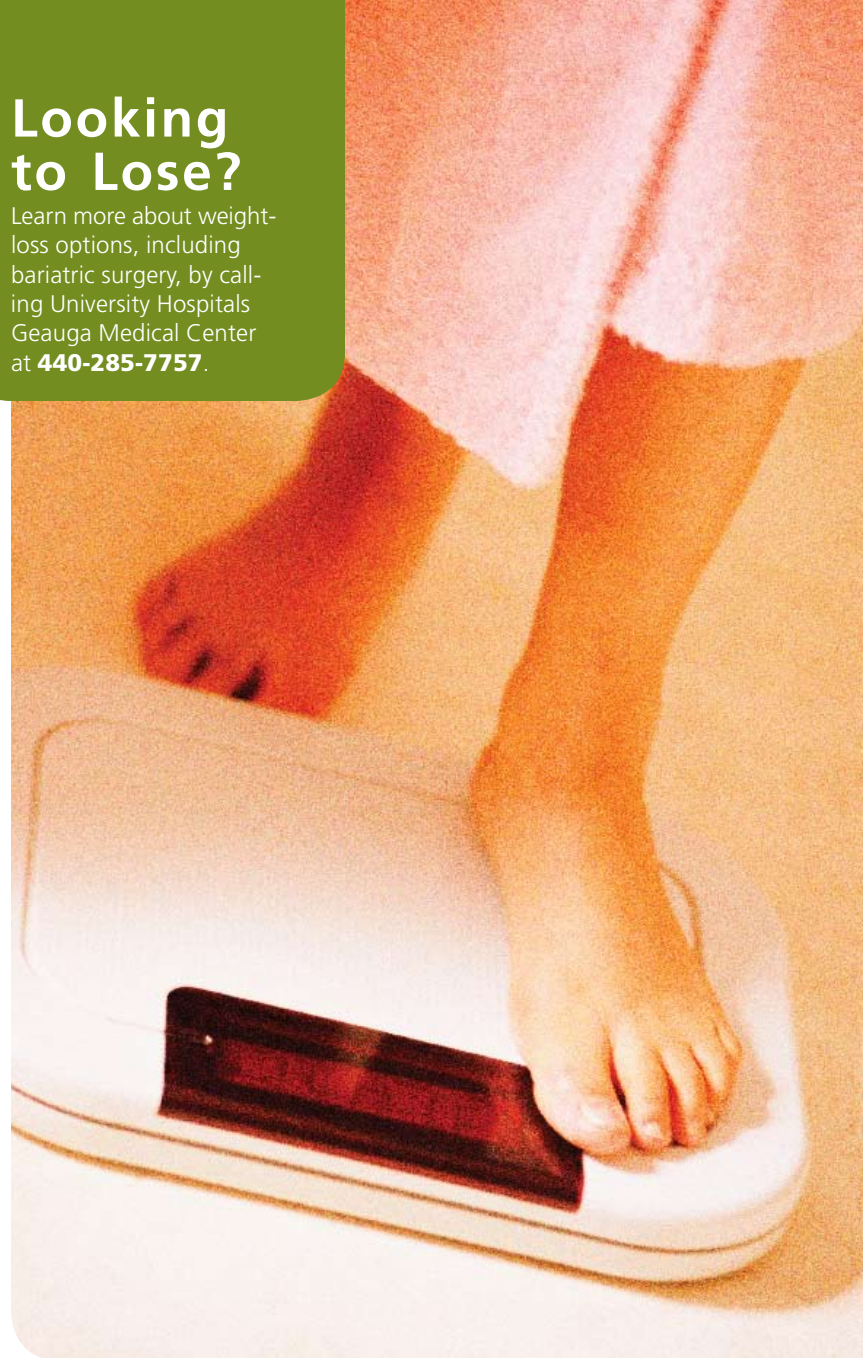
To help meet the need for effective, long-lasting weight-loss surgery, University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center has created a Center for Bariatric Surgery, based on the success of the bariatric program at University Hospitals Case Medical Center. A total of four surgeons with a combined 24 years of bariatric experience are now available to perform procedures in Geauga County.

“Our programs at Case Medical Center and Geauga Medical Center complement one another,” says Thomas Stellato, M.D. “In addition to the surgery itself, we incorporate education and follow-up through a multidisciplinary approach involving nurses, dietitians and behavioral therapists.”

After an initial meeting with one of the surgeons, surgical candidates attend a pre-operative support group where they receive

Looking to Lose?

Learn more about weight-loss options, including bariatric surgery, by calling University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center at **440-285-7757**.



more detailed information and hear from former bariatric surgery patients who share their experiences and answer questions.

“All patients are provided with facts and their options are explained so they can make an informed decision,” adds John J. Jasper, M.D.

“We offer our patients state-of-the-art surgical options for weight loss, including gastric bypass and the less-invasive LAP-BAND procedure,” adds Leena Khaitan, M.D., MPH, who is the most recent addition to the Case Medical Center bariatric group.

Not an Easy Fix

All four physicians stress that successful outcomes depend on each patient agreeing to follow through with significant lifestyle changes.

“This is not the easy way out,” Stellato says, “but we also make a long-term commitment to assist our patients and we will be available to them for the rest of their lives.” ●

Matters of the Heart

Don Reis—and his heart—have
a date with destiny

Sept. 27 is a date that Don Reis will probably never forget. On that day in 2005, he embarked on an experience that eventually led him—exactly one year later—to a profound improvement in his health status.

Reis, a 65-year-old Newbury Township resident, had dealt with hypertension for many years. But during spring 2005, he noticed a subtle difference in the way he felt, as if “something was going haywire” with his cardiovascular system.

His family physician, Steven Takacs, D.O., prescribed medication that partially lowered Reis’ blood pressure, and suggested he visit cardiologist Robert A. Botti Jr., M.D., to see if anything else was amiss.

It was.

Not Out of the Woods Yet

A stress test indicated a blocked blood vessel, and so—on Sept. 27, 2005—Reis underwent a cardiac catheterization. State-of-the-art digital imaging equipment in University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center’s cardiac catheterization laboratory allows Botti and other cardiologists to transmit patient information and communicate with their counterparts at University Hospitals Case Medical Center for immediate interpretation and treatment activity.

Botti identified a significant blockage and arranged for Reis to be transported to Case Medical Center that very same day for an artery-clearing stent to be inserted. In the near future, Geauga Medical Center will expand its Cardiovascular Center to offer angioplasty, stent and coronary bypass procedures to clear blocked arteries.

“This is a logical step for us,” says Botti, who notes that about one-fourth of heart catheterization patients require further intervention. “For the most part, we will be able to perform most cardiovascular services—except transplants—at Geauga Medical Center.”

Although his heart was performing more efficiently, Reis was not out of the woods yet, as a follow-up visit to Botti revealed a major obstruction in his left carotid artery. This led him to vascular surgeon Howard I. Darvin, M.D., who performed surgery to remove the blockage and reduce his risk for stroke.



Another Return Visit

Reis, a retired accountant, got on with his life for the first half of 2006. “I love to work on my vintage car, tinker in the yard and be with my nine grandkids,” he says. But during a trip to the family cottage on Kelley’s Island, Reis experienced a momentary “blackout” that eventually resulted in a return visit to Botti.

A slow heart rate was the reason for Reis’ new symptoms, so Botti inserted a pacemaker at Geauga Medical Center on—you guessed it—Sept. 27, 2006.

“I can’t say enough about the doctors and the hospitals,” says Reis about his one-year relationship with University Hospitals. “I’m feeling very good and I’m not expecting anything else—for a while.” ●

High-Quality Cardiac Care

With the advent of public reporting for hospital performance data, consumers are now able to locate information about various quality ratings for comparison purposes.

For many of the medical conditions posted on the Hospital Quality Alliance Web site, Geauga Medical Center ranks in the top 10 percent of all hospitals submitting data. For example, in the Hospital Quality Measures section for acute myocardial infarction (heart attack), Geauga Medical Center’s scores indicate 100 percent compliance for five of the six key measures. Complete data tables and hospital comparisons are available at www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/hospital.

“These measures help consumers educate themselves about the quality of care delivered in the hospital,” says Julie Novak, director of the quality center at Geauga Medical Center. “Our goal is to make sure the right patient gets the right treatment 100 percent of the time.”

Listen to Your Heart

Some heart attack symptoms are less prominent than others—but all of them are serious

Kathleen Ramsey

told her husband to go to work on the morning of Sept. 12, 2006, and she's lucky he ignored her.

That's because Sept. 12 is the day she woke up with constant pain in her left arm and across the back of her shoulders. Mike Ramsey stayed home and dialed 911 and, within minutes, his wife was in an ambulance speeding toward University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center.

A severe coronary blockage caused an arrhythmia that stopped Ramsey's heart at least a half-dozen times, but experts at the Norma N. Chapman Emergency Center managed to shock it back to life on each occasion before transferring her to University Hospitals Case Medical Center in University Circle. There, a stent was inserted into the blocked artery to open the vessel and allow blood to circulate normally.

Following her return home, Ramsey enrolled in Geauga Medical Center's Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Program to regain her heart



Kathleen Ramsey is taking on more activity several weeks after her heart-stopping experience. She credits John Berlinski, EMT-P, Denise Johnston, R.N., and Ewald E. Kundtz III, M.D., of the Norma N. Chapman Emergency Center for saving her life.

Diseases of the Heart—and Other Parts

Many people automatically think “heart” when they consider diseases of the circulatory system, but the reality is that the entire body can be affected. From the legs to the head and just about everything in between, vascular disorders can be a very real concern.

University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center's new vascular laboratory provides noninvasive exams, such as arterial flow studies and vein mapping, to diagnose conditions that interfere with blood flow. University Hospitals has purchased a sophisticated computer system to enable Geauga Medical Center personnel to share patient images and data with specialists at other University Hospitals locations.

“The ability to transfer vascular information throughout our hospital system,” explains Maria Schmidt, CNMT, manager of diagnostic imaging, “helps create a seamless enterprise that will benefit our patients.”



Tera Munaretto uses new technology to perform arterial studies in the new Geauga Medical Center vascular lab.

Don't Wait

Every second counts when you are having a heart attack. Even if you are unsure, call 911 immediately. To learn more about a woman's risk of heart disease, call the American Heart Association at **888-MY-HEART**.

health through a structured exercise regimen, and now she is able to reflect on her harrowing experience.

“I just can't say enough good things about the emergency department staff,” she says. “I think I have a lot more respect for all they do. And I'm sure glad they didn't give up on me when my heart stopped.”

“I also learned that I need to take better care of myself,” she continues. “I quit smoking the night before my heart attack, although that wasn't my plan. I'm also eating better now.”

Finally, Ramsey has a message for women who might not be aware of the signs of a heart attack or tend to shrug off any vague discomfort.

“Women should take their symptoms seriously,” she says, “so you can have the same outcome I did.” ●

Always There

University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center nurses are getting back to the bedside

The hallways and nursing stations at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center are a lot less noisy these days and the patient call lights are rarely used.

The dramatic drop in decibels can be attributed to the fact that nurses are spending more time with patients and less time at the desk down the hall.

Nurses at Geauga Medical Center developed a “Transforming Care at the Bedside” initiative after recognizing that nursing care had evolved into a system that did not support effective communication and resulted in less-than-optimal satisfaction for nurses and patients.

Planned and put into action in just 60 days, the new nursing model resulted in a 14 percent improvement in the patients’ overall rating of care after one month of implementation in the 2 West medical unit, according to independent patient satisfaction surveys.

Patient care teams, led by registered nurses, are now responsible for meeting the physical care needs of up to a dozen patients during a 12-hour shift. This includes bathing, changing linens and administering medications, plus making patient care rounds at least once



The increased focus on bedside nursing allows Marcie Oliver, R.N., to spend more time with patient Sandra Juredine in the expanded and renovated intensive care unit at Geauga Medical Center.

every hour to anticipate each patient’s needs and reduce the use of call lights.

Face-to-Face Communication

“We wanted nurses to get back to the bedside so we could improve communication,” says Jamie Wilson, R.N., a Geauga Medical Center nursing team leader, “and the best way to communicate with the patient is to be there.”

Team leaders carry cell phones so they can maintain direct communication with each patient’s physician. This reduces “telephone tag” and enables care decisions to be rendered and implemented more efficiently.

The new nursing model has also resulted in a higher nurse-to-patient ratio without increasing costs to the hospital. The model will soon be expanded to other medical and surgical units.

“Nursing has returned to the bedside and I feel I can provide much better care than we did before,” says team leader Shelley Gradomski, R.N. “This is what we went to school for.” ●

Meeting Your Many Needs

Plastic surgery is just one of the many services Geauga Medical Center offers through its hospital partnerships

University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center’s association with University Hospitals Case Medical Center offers distinct advantages to individuals living and working throughout the greater Geauga region. An impressive array of medical talent and technology are examples of how Geauga Medical Center can tap into the resources previously available exclusively at the Cleveland location.

So it is with plastic surgery, a discipline that offers a wealth of reconstructive and cosmetic

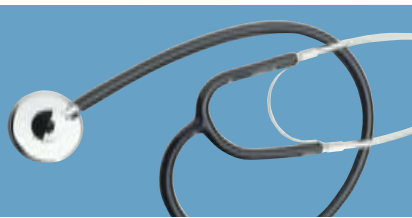
services from head to toe, such as:

- pediatric craniofacial deformities
- adult craniofacial deformities and cosmetic surgery
- hand injuries
- body contouring, including breast reconstruction and bariatric surgery follow-up
- ophthalmic plastic surgery

“We are in a unique position to offer fellowship-trained subspecialists at the Geauga Medical Center location,” says

Bahman Guyuron, M.D., FACS, chief of the division of plastic surgery at Case Medical Center and professor at Case School of Medicine. “Our entire team is available to provide services to people of all ages.”

In addition to plastic surgery, Cleveland-based physicians with expertise in cardiology, bariatric surgery and more visit Geauga Medical Center to help meet the increasing healthcare service demand in the region east of Cuyahoga County.



PHYSICIAN REFERRAL HOT LINE

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Health Update

Nasal and Sinus Center

The Nasal and Sinus Center at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center offers the latest treatments for individuals with conditions affecting their nasal passages. Board-certified otolaryngologists (ear, nose and throat specialists) provide consultation and care in the following areas:

- medical and surgical treatment of sinus disease
- functional and cosmetic nasal surgery
- treatment for airway obstruction related to sleep apnea
- nasal allergy relief

Women's Health Expo

Savor the sophistication of a spring fashion show while learning about the latest health trends and treatments at a Women's Health Expo, presented by University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center.

Join your friends and neighbors on Saturday, Feb. 3, in the grand ballroom of Renaissance Quail Hollow Resort, Concord from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Attendees may choose from among more than 10 presentations by University

Hospitals-affiliated physicians and allied health professionals. Topics include alternative treatments for menopausal symptoms, long-lasting weight-loss options and minimally invasive breast cancer therapies.

In addition to health presentations, the event will include continental breakfast, heavy hors d'oeuvres, fashion show and exhibits.

Women's Health Expo is free and open to the public, but space is limited and reservations are required. Call **440-285-7757** or visit www.uhhsgrh.com.

Gauga Fitness Challenge

University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center and the Geauga YMCA are partnering to help area citizens take the first step toward adopting healthy lifestyle changes.

Participants in the Geauga Fitness Challenge will receive three free group nutrition education sessions and three group fitness sessions, plus a pedometer to measure daily step counts and a diary for keeping daily diet and exercise

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records. Physicians, nurses and dietitians will offer articles and other resources on health and nutrition to provide additional encouragement.

Participating physicians will have registration forms available at their medical office locations. Height and weight measurements will be provided without charge. If a physical examination is required for medical clearance, the cost will be the responsibility of the participant.

For more information, call **440-285-7757** or visit www.uhhsgrh.com.



Geauga County's first Cardiac Catheterization Lab is conveniently located on State Route 44, approximately three miles south of Chardon Square. No matter where you live or work, you're just a heartbeat away from the finest diagnostic technology of its caliber in Northeastern Ohio. Call 440-285-7577 for a complimentary Physician Referral today.

Cardiac Care

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