

# myUHCare

Conneaut  
Geneva

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## Heart to Heart

Meet an amazing couple  
who survived two cardiac  
events on the same day  
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# starting off

## In Pursuit of Patient Satisfaction

I'M BLESSED to have two wonderful parents. Many of the things I learned as a young boy came from watching them. My father has been in the car business for 51 years now, and when it was time for a customer's car to be serviced, he gave them his demo so they wouldn't be without a car. My father told me, one happy customer may tell two or three people, but one unhappy customer will tell 20 or 30 people. One unhappy customer or patient, in my opinion, is one too many. If you don't strive for excellence, you are playing for second place.



In 2009, University Hospitals Conneaut and Geneva medical centers scored extremely high patient satisfaction scores, with patients declaring they would definitely recommend us to their family and friends. These incredible results don't happen by accident. They are attained because our employees and physicians are committed to our patients and visitors. Our employees take pride in their jobs and wear a smile each day. I am very lucky to

experience it every day, and I know you will, too.

If you have any comments or concerns, please call me:

- In Conneaut: **440-593-0299**
- In Geneva: **440-415-0192**
- At home: **440-964-2505**

Sincerely,

Robert G. David  
President

## Recognized for Diversity

University Hospitals was named to DiversityInc's first-ever listing of Top 5 Hospital Systems. UH was recognized specifically for strong work-life benefits including telecommuting, flexible hours, adoption assistance, paternity leave, lactation programs and on-site religious accommodations.



## Better Breast Health

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and University Hospitals Conneaut and Geneva medical centers are promoting breast care throughout Ashtabula County and beyond.

**Free mammogram clinic.** Clinical breast examinations and screening mammograms are available for uninsured women ages 40 to 64 who reside in Ashtabula and Lake counties and meet financial qualifications (courtesy of the Komen Grant). Since 2003, the clinic's staff has successfully detected multiple breast cancer cases – all with successful results. Call **440-998-0695** to ask about a no-cost screening mammogram.

**Breast health education.** Nationally certified nurses from the community outreach team visit high schools throughout Ashtabula County to inform students about breast health care. To request a presentation on this vital issue, call **440-998-0680**.

**Support for survivors.** For the past eight years, UH Conneaut and Geneva medical centers have sponsored the annual Two-Mile Walk for the Cure to benefit the Northeast Ohio Susan G. Komen for the Cure and to increase breast cancer awareness. To learn more about the 2011 event and how you can participate, call **440-998-5763**.

## Launching Health Care Careers

University Hospitals Student Academy was developed to reach out to local high school incoming seniors who are interested in pursuing careers in health care. The academy is a paid, eight-week internship during which two students receive hands-on experience in a dynamic environment at UH Conneaut and Geneva medical centers.

A committee reviewed many applications by students and selected Tyra Miller, a senior at Lakeside High School, and Taylor DuFour, a senior at Edgewood High School, to attend the inaugural summer academy.

"I am looking for a diverse experience that will allow me to better plan and direct my choice for a medical career," Tyra says. "I believe that the UH Student Academy will allow me to explore my opportunities and give me that confidence boost I need."

"I am thrilled we are able to offer this program at our hospitals and to provide this valuable experience to students throughout Ashtabula County," says Robert David, President of UH Conneaut and Geneva medical centers. "Our community outreach efforts are many and truly *Make the Difference*."



Taylor DuFour (left) and Tyra Miller, the first University Hospitals Student Academy interns



### HELP FOR BLOOD DISORDERS



**Hematologist/oncologist Jason A. Stern, DO, is now seeing patients in Ashtabula County. To schedule a hematology or oncology appointment, call 440-460-1616.**

Hematologist/oncologist  
Jason A. Stern, DO

## Cancer and blood disorders call for a special kind of care

University Hospitals has brought its hematology and oncology expertise to our community. Fellowship-trained hematologist/oncologist Jason A. Stern, DO, is now offering his blood disorder and cancer expertise to Ashtabula County. Utilizing the resources of University Hospital Ireland Cancer center, Dr. Stern provides area residents with convenient, accessible consultation appointments as well as the diagnosis and treatment of anemia, blood cell disorders and all forms of cancer. Dr. Stern also can arrange access to chemotherapy infusion treatments at UH Geauga Medical Center in Chardon and participation in clinical trials at UH Case Medical Center in Cleveland.

### ASK THE EXPERTS

**Q. I'm a healthy woman and rarely need to see a doctor. Do I need a mammogram?**

**A.** Yes! According to the National Cancer Institute, one in eight women born in the U.S. will develop breast cancer at some point in her life. University Hospitals Conneaut and Geneva medical centers provide advanced digital mammography for accurate breast cancer detection and treatment. Unlike traditional film, digital mammograms are highly detailed pictures that enable doctors to magnify images, and shift contrast and color. Radiologists can detect slight changes in breast tissue, which facilitates earlier treatment. The digital system also enables medical team members to share images and consult with physicians in multiple locations.



### SCHEDULE YOUR MAMMOGRAM TODAY



To schedule an appointment for a digital mammogram, call the University Hospitals experts:

- In Conneaut: 440-593-0165
- In Geneva: 440-415-9554

# Battle of the Bulge (Hernia)

## Minimally invasive repair in Ashtabula County **limits pain and downtime**

**IF YOU'VE EVER LIFTED** something too heavy or overdone it during a weights workout, you know there can be consequences. One painful result is a hernia, when an organ pushes through a weak area of muscle in the abdomen or groin. Hernias are common, affecting men, women and children. Sometimes a bulge may be visible underneath the skin.

“When you have a hernia, you know it,” says Bill Cole of Erie, Pa.

A healthy, athletic 59-year-old, Cole had discomfort on one side, but, he says, “I was hesitant to have anything done because I’m healthy and I’ve been taking care of myself for the last 20 years and haven’t had anything serious wrong with me.”

Six months later, after his hernia began to show, he saw his family doctor, who

recommended that he see a surgeon. Cole couldn’t find anyone locally who specialized in hernia repair, so he turned to University Hospitals. Benjamin Bryant, MD, Chief of Surgery at UH Conneaut Medical Center, suggested repairing the hernia using minimally invasive surgery.

### **Better View, Better Surgery**

Approximately 600,000 hernias are surgically repaired in the U.S. each year, according to the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons. Dr. Bryant is the only surgeon in Ashtabula County performing laparoscopic hernia repair. The minimally invasive procedure definitely has its advantages.

“Traditional hernia repair involves an incision in the groin,” Dr. Bryant says. “You have to cut through the muscles, and there’s a nerve there that’s at risk. Laparoscopic repair is done using three small incisions below the bellybutton. You don’t even cut into the groin at all.”

A tiny camera – the “laparoscope” in “laparoscopic” – guides the surgeon to repair the hernia by placing a mesh patch over tears in the abdominal wall. In Cole’s case, this view proved especially helpful.

“Because the visualization is so great, we were able to diagnose and repair the hernia on his other side as well, through



Benjamin Bryant, MD, consults patient Bill Cole, who needed surgery to repair his hernia.

the same three small incisions,” Dr. Bryant says. “If we hadn’t been able to see it then, he would have likely required an open repair later.”

### **Rapid Recovery**

Laparoscopic hernia repair is less invasive; it can lead to less post-operative pain and help patients get back to normal faster than conventional surgery.

The day after his surgery, Cole was up and moving and experienced only minimal discomfort. And he didn’t stop there: He walked three miles on the peninsula on Lake Erie the day after his procedure, and was on his exercise bike the next day.

Besides his own rehabilitation, Cole credits Dr. Bryant’s surgical skills for helping him bounce back.

“I know that I healed better because of the way Dr. Bryant did the surgery,” Cole says. “He made no wrong turns. He knew exactly where he was going. He did exactly what he had to do and he got out of there.” □

## A QUICK FIX



In need of hernia repair surgery? Consider a laparoscopic option, which can lead to less post-operative pain and a quicker recovery time than traditional surgery. For more information, schedule a consultation:

- In Conneaut: 440-599-7640
- In Geneva: 440-415-0115



## Quit the Habit, Skip the Hernia



One of the biggest risk factors for hernias is a habit you can change today. Smoking can play an extensive role in causing hernias – and their recurrence – for two reasons, according to Benjamin Bryant, MD, Chief of Surgery at University Hospitals Conneaut Medical Center.

**1. Coughs.** “If you smoke, you’re going to cough a lot, and every time you do it causes a spike of intra-abdominal pressure that’s transmitted directly to where you’re going to get the hernia,” Dr. Bryant says. “So you’re constantly pounding on that area where a hernia may develop.”

**2. Nicotine.** Once the addictive substance gets into your bloodstream, it squeezes the blood vessels, narrowing them, Dr. Bryant says. “The tissues involved in the hernia area have a pretty tenuous blood supply as it is,” he says, “so if you’re constricting them in an area where the blood supply is already not too good, it thins the tissues out and weakens them.”

Bill Cole of Erie, Pa., originally hesitant to see a doctor about his hernia, is glad he came to UH Conneaut Medical Center.

# Two of Hearts

When Nancy and Jim Teare had cardiac events on the same day, they found themselves in caring, capable hands

**IT'S A WIFE'S** worst nightmare: You're awakened in the middle of the night by your husband. Something is wrong with him. You don't know what, exactly, but you just *know* you need to call 911.

Nancy Teare of Madison experienced this with her husband, Jim, a couple of years ago. When she woke at 3 a.m. to find Jim thrashing around in bed, she called 911. Jim was taken by ambulance to University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center and, diagnosed with congestive heart failure, was flown via helicopter to the UH Harrington-McLaughlin Heart & Vascular Institute at UH Case Medical Center.

Jim was successfully treated by Shyam Bhakta, MD, an interventional cardiologist at UH, but the story doesn't end there. While sitting at her husband's bedside, Nancy started to feel ill herself.

"There was no sharp pain or anything," Nancy recalls. "Just a strange fluttering feeling." Tests conducted at the institute showed she had a mild heart attack brought on by stress. Spasms of the artery caused pain and damage to a small portion of her heart.

"Although it's not highly common," Dr. Bhakta says, "when a family member is under a lot of stress in dealing with the illness of another family member, it can lead to heart problems and even a heart attack."

Thankfully, Nancy was at the right place at the right time – in the very capable hands of the doctors and nurses of the UH Harrington-McLaughlin Heart & Vascular Institute.

Today, the Teares are enjoying life again; in fact, they recently returned from a trip to Niagara Falls. Because of the quick action and medical expertise of the professionals at UH Geneva Medical Center and the UH Harrington-McLaughlin Heart & Vascular Institute, Nancy and Jim will be able to share many more journeys together. □



Jim and Nancy Teare suffered cardiac events on the same day and were treated at University Hospitals.

## HEAL YOUR HEART



Make an appointment with one of our cardiologists to learn if you are at risk of a serious heart condition. Call **1-866-994-2328**.

## Make the Call

Chest pain is the most common heart attack symptom for women and men. But, according to the American Heart Association, there's a greater chance that women also may experience other symptoms, including:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Back pain
- Shortness of breath
- Jaw pain

Remember: You don't have to be sure it's a heart attack to call for help. It's best to seek treatment fast. Don't be afraid to dial 911.

William Seeds, MD, gives Linda Goss an upclose look at the new joint technology that has changed her life.

# A Natural Fit

The next generation in knee replacement has arrived: personalized artificial implants

THE LATEST ADVANCEMENT in knee replacement surgery is a perfect fit for patients – because the implants are modeled after their own knees.

William Seeds, MD, orthopedic surgeon and Medical Director of the Ohio Bone & Joint Institute at University Hospitals Conneaut Medical Center, performed the region's first anatomic knee replacement surgery on Linda Goss, an art teacher at Geneva High School. Four steps comprise the new Conformis joint-replacement technology.

**1 Take the picture.** Once Dr. Seeds determined that Goss would be the right patient for the procedure, he ordered a CT scan to get a clear view of the troublesome knee.



A before-and-after look at Linda Goss' knee replacement using Conformis technology.

**2 Make the mold.** Imaging from the CT scan was used to sculpt the implant. "If we can do a better job of meeting the patient's true anatomy with the implant," Dr. Seeds says, "then we're likely doing a better job of aligning it, and it's likely going to fit the patient better."

**3 Place the implant.** Dr. Seeds performed the surgery, which resulted in very little postoperative pain for Goss. "It wasn't extremely painful and definitely not as bad as I thought it would be," she says.

**4 Get moving again.** Goss attended physical therapy two to three times a week for about four weeks, and, she says, "every day I can feel that there still is progress." □

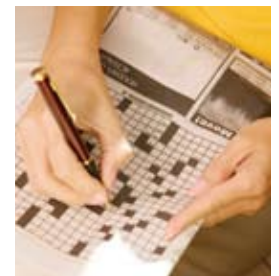
## It's All in the Wrist

University Hospitals' orthopaedic surgeons are as adept at treating injuries as they are at replacing joints. Karen Hersman recently learned this firsthand.

After a serious fall left her with a severely shattered wrist, Hersman feared she might lose mobility in her hand. But Michael Retino, DO, an orthopaedic surgeon at University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center, repaired the damage with one plate and nine screws.

Later, when her thumb locked in place as a result of her fall, Dr. Retino performed a procedure called a trigger finger release to restore movement.

"All in all, the man was a saint," Hersman says of Dr. Retino. "I can't thank him and all the staff enough. I was broken and they put me back together again."



**DON'T LIVE WITH JOINT PAIN**



Schedule an appointment:

- In Conneaut: 1-888-464-4344
- In Geneva: 440-415-0295



# Seeking Sweet Dreams

Charles Guy can rest easier now that his sleep apnea is in check

**T**HERE ARE TWO very serious things about sleep apnea. First, most people don't even realize that they have it. And second, it can have negative effects on your body and your heart. John Baron, MD, a sleep medicine specialist at University Hospitals Geneva Medical Center, told me it could even cause a stroke or a heart attack. The big thing is to find out if you have it.

In 2007, I was being treated for cancer and I needed surgery, but the doctor didn't feel that I was physically able to withstand the operation. So first he gave me stress tests and then had me tested for a sleep disorder at the Center for Advanced Sleep Medicine. At one point during the evening I stopped breathing for two and a half minutes. When I returned for a second test I was fitted for a CPAP mask to help me breathe. CPAP, or continuous positive airway pressure, is a machine that I wear on my head at night that keeps my airway open while I sleep.

CPAP took some getting used to, but now I couldn't get a good night's sleep without it. The machine does the work; I don't have to strain or anything.

Before, I couldn't rest my body enough to get rid of the fatigue. Now I can. I don't feel as tired anymore when I wake up. □



Stacey Honser, a technician at the Center for Advanced Sleep Medicine, guides patient Charles Guy through the process of evaluating a sleep disorder.

## Time for a Wake-Up Call?

Could your snoring be affecting more than just your sleep? With sleep apnea, you can actually stop breathing while you're sleeping and not even know it – for 10 to 20 seconds at a time, 20 to 30 times every hour.

Left untreated, sleep apnea can increase your risk for heart attack, stroke, hypertension and even diabetes. If you're concerned about sleep apnea, schedule a consultation at the Center for Advanced Sleep Medicine by calling **440-415-0165**.