

Johns Hopkins Bayview

# health & wellness

## The Ultimate Gift

How one man became an organ donor—and changed the lives of seven strangers (pages 4-5)

*Brenda Ryan sees her brother Doug's name on the donor wall for the first time.*

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JOHNS HOPKINS  
MEDICINE

# Link Between Childbirth and Pelvic Floor Disorders

**G**iving birth makes women more vulnerable to developing a pelvic floor disorder later in life. About one third of adult women will have a pelvic floor disorder, such as prolapsed uterus or bladder control problems, and twenty percent of these women will need reconstructive surgery to fix it.

Victoria Handa, M.D., director of the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Johns Hopkins Bayview, and her research team study how childbirth leads to long-term, physical and functional changes in a woman's body. They study what aspects of childbirth are most likely to cause harm to mothers later, leading to pelvic floor disorders. The team aims to find ways for doctors to detect and reverse damage after birth to keep mothers healthy long after their babies are born.

Other gynecology and obstetrics research topics at Johns Hopkins Bayview include STD and HIV prevention, women with HIV, reproductive health of incarcerated women, constipation and rectocele, urinary incontinence and obstetric fistulas.

Victoria Handa, M.D.

Director,

Department of Gynecology  
and Obstetrics



## Pelvic floor disorders may result in:

- **Rectocele** - vaginal bulge from herniation of bowel into the vagina. Rectocele can make it difficult to completely empty your rectum of stool.
- **Urinary incontinence** - loss of urine control, or the inability to hold your urine until you can reach a bathroom.
- **Fistula** - connection between the bowel and the vagina or skin.
- **Prolapsed uterus** - For many women, prolapse can include descent of the uterus, vagina, bladder and/or rectum resulting in a “bulging” sensation within the vagina. In some cases, frank protrusion of these organs can occur. Pelvic organ prolapse can result in symptoms including urinary leakage, constipation, and difficulty with intercourse.

To learn more about Dr. Handa's research, watch this short “Discoveries for a Better Tomorrow” video at <http://bit.ly/HandaResearch>

# 3rd Annual Family Fun-n-Fit Day

Lace up your sneakers, grab a few friends and join us for a morning of fun and exercise



**Saturday, September 16, 2017**

*Rain date: September 17, 2017*

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Joseph Lee Park

5900 E. Pratt Street

Baltimore, MD 21224

Johns Hopkins Bayview has partnered with the Friends of Joseph Lee Park and the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to host “Family Fun-n-Fit Day,” a free event dedicated to the health and wellness of the communities surrounding the Medical Center.

The festivities include a number of activities to promote physical fitness and healthy lifestyles. Entertainment also will be provided, including live music, games, and arts and crafts.

*Free parking is available on the Johns Hopkins Bayview campus with easy access to Joseph Lee Park.*

For more information, email [jennken47@gmail.com](mailto:jennken47@gmail.com) or visit [facebook.com/JHBayviewFFnFD](https://facebook.com/JHBayviewFFnFD).

# The Ultimate Gift

How one man became an organ donor—and changed the lives of seven strangers

**A**s the oldest of six children and a former U.S. Marine, Douglas “Dougie” Cowan was used to helping others. If a friend needed a ride, he’d pick him up.

If a stranger needed money, he’d give it to him and say, “Go have a beer, it looks like you need it.”

If his sister needed a shoulder to cry on, he’d be there.

“He always wanted to be somebody’s big brother,” says his sister, Brenda Ryan. “He was a very compassionate and deep person.”

So it didn’t surprise Ryan when at age 18, Cowan registered as an organ donor. “He said, ‘I’m a Marine, and once a Marine, I’m always going to be someone’s hero,’” Ryan recalls. Registering ensured he could continue to help others, even in death, she says.

Cowan died at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center on December 31 at age 37, but through his donated corneas, left lung, kidneys, pancreas, liver, tissue and tendons, he helped save or improve the lives of seven people, Ryan says.

“All I could think about was how proud he would be that not only was his last wish fulfilled but that he gave hope to and saved so many lives,” she says.



## Becoming a donor

On any given day, more than 120,000 people in the United States and more than 3,500 people in Maryland are waiting for a lifesaving organ, says Kate Marych, RN, program coordinator for organ and tissue donation at Johns Hopkins Medicine and the Living Legacy Foundation, which coordinates donation and transplantation in area hospitals, provides donor family support and educates hospitals and the general public about the power of donation.

“Donation is important because there’s a huge need for lifesaving donations, and the need is growing every day,” Marych says. “One person can save up to eight lives with organ donation and help more than 50 people through tissue donation.”

In 2016, Johns Hopkins Bayview had 18 organ donors—the most it has ever had, she says.

To recognize the selfless decision to give the gift of life, the Medical Center installed a donor recognition wall in December featuring the names of Johns Hopkins Bayview patients who donated organs and tissue between 2012 and 2016. (Patients who donated organs and tissue prior to 2012 are featured on the wall at The Johns Hopkins Hospital.) The donor wall also includes a touch-screen for patients and visitors, where they can learn more about organ donation.

There are several ways to become a potential organ donor. The most common is to notify the Motor Vehicle Administration when receiving or renewing a driver’s license. Registered donors receive a red heart on their license. Other ways include adding organ donation wishes into an advanced directive or will and registering online with Donate Life Maryland—a non-profit organization established by the Living Legacy Foundation, the Medical Eye Bank of Maryland and the Washington Regional Transplant Community.



To register to be an organ, eye or tissue donor, visit [register.donatelifemaryland.org](http://register.donatelifemaryland.org).



## Organ, Eye and Tissue Donor Memorial Wall

*Whoever saves a single soul is considered to have saved the entire world. — Anonymous*

This past May, more than 140 people gathered at a special ceremony honoring Johns Hopkins Bayview patients who made the selfless decision to be organ donors. The event, which featured a musical performance and heartfelt remarks from donor families and organ recipients, concluded with the unveiling of the Medical Center's organ, eye and tissue donor memorial wall. More than 80 names are listed on the wall, including living donors and "donors in spirit"—those who were registered as organ donors but were unable to donate due to medical reasons.

Located in the lobby of the Francis Scott Key Pavilion, the 20-foot wall features a touch screen for patients and visitors to learn how to register as an organ donor, scroll through myths about donation and read patient stories. The design of the wall itself—10 interwoven circles with names dispersed throughout—represents the infinite connection organ donors have to the individuals and lives they have saved. Future plans include the installation of "swipe technology" for individuals to register as an organ donor using their driver's license or state ID.

However people choose to register, the most important part of the process is talking with family members about their wishes, Marych says.

### Leaving a legacy

Inspired by her brother, Ryan also registered as an organ donor when she turned 18. Earlier this year, when her son and Cowan's godson turned 18, he registered as well.

"My brother's influence had an impact," she says.

Ryan calls Cowan her "first friend in the world," and losing him—especially at such a young age—was heartbreaking, she says. But she takes comfort in knowing he continues to make

a difference in others' lives. "I have a loss, but through my loss, people live," she says.

Ryan calls the recipients of Cowan's organs "part of my brother's legacy." To them, she simply says: "Thank you for letting my brother touch your lives."

—Allison Eatough



*Organ recipients and donors, and their family and friends, listened as stories were shared about lives saved through donation.*

# Recovering from Stroke

Stroke Center provides advanced, life-saving care to one of Johns Hopkins Bayview's own

*Shalini Chandra, M.D., is recovering with the help of Bayview's Stroke Intervention Clinic (BaSIC).*



**A**fter battling neck cancer, Shalini Chandra, M.D., an assistant professor of medicine and hospitalist at Johns Hopkins Bayview, thought she was headed toward recovery.

Doctors had successfully removed the tumor located near her carotid artery. She began advising patients on how to move forward after a cancer diagnosis and was happily awaiting the arrival of her new baby boy.

But in April, while visiting a realtor friend's open house, the 42-year-old internal medicine specialist suffered what she thought was a severe nose bleed. Emergency Medical Technicians took her to Johns Hopkins Bayview, where doctors discovered she had developed an aneurysm near her tumor site.

They treated her aneurysm, but soon after, Dr. Chandra developed a blood clot that traveled to her brain. This led to another setback: a stroke.

Luckily, Dr. Chandra was already at Johns Hopkins Bayview—one of only three Comprehensive Stroke Centers in Maryland. That means she had immediate access to advanced, life-saving stroke care.

Led by Elisabeth Marsh, M.D., associate professor of neurology, the Stroke Center embraces a multidisciplinary approach to care, with everyone from emergency medicine physicians, vascular neurosurgeons, interventional neuro-radiologists and neuro-intensivists and rehabilitation specialists working together to create comprehensive treatment plans.

## Spotting the signs

Moments after her stroke occurred, Dr. Chandra knew something was wrong.

"I couldn't spell properly, and I noticed I had right-sided neglect," she says. "My colleagues were pinching me on my right side, and I wasn't responding."

Elisabeth Marsh, M.D.  
Associate Professor,  
Neurology



Doctors immediately began treating Dr. Chandra and moved her into the hospital's Neuroscience Critical Care Unit. Quickly identifying the signs and location of the stroke are essential for patients to receive the best treatment, Dr. Marsh says.

"In the brain, it's like real estate," Dr. Marsh says. "It's all about location. You can have a piece of a clot affecting a relatively large area of brain that doesn't appear to cause problems. But you can have a small stroke in a critical area that leaves a patient devastated."

At Johns Hopkins Bayview, stroke team members are experts in both acute treatment and recovery. They have access to the latest technology in stroke care, including new procedures like intra-arterial thrombectomy. With this minimally invasive procedure, doctors use a catheter (similar to when a patient is having a heart attack), but they bypass the heart to access and remove the clot from the brain.

### Returning Home

Bayview's Stroke Intervention Clinic (BaSIC) ensures patients receive continual care four to six weeks after they leave the hospital.

"The transition from rehabilitation back to work or home can be difficult," Dr. Marsh says. "At the clinic, we help patients by making sure they are taking the correct medications, sharing research on the recovery process and guiding them so they can return to their prior level of function or find a new level of function."

Dr. Chandra was "quite lucky," Dr. Marsh says. Her stroke did not cause major damage. But she still has trouble multitasking, and her complex thinking is "one step" behind, Dr. Chandra says.

"If you look at me, you'll think there's nothing wrong," she says. "Multitasking just takes me longer than it used to."

Dr. Marsh expects most of Dr. Chandra's higher level thinking will return within six

months. To help move her recovery along, Dr. Chandra plays Sudoku or Scrabble at least once a day, as well as challenging brain games online. She also enjoys spending any free time she has with her newborn son.



*Shalini Chandra with her baby boy.*

She credits Johns Hopkins Bayview and its quick-thinking staff for being where she is today.

"The level of experience that is available and accessible for stroke patients is bar none," Dr. Chandra says. "I can't say enough good things about my hospitalist team, the nursing staff, just everyone. I can't thank them enough."

—Allison Eatough

Johns Hopkins Bayview recently received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award with Target: Stroke<sup>SM</sup> Honor Roll Elite. The award recognizes the Medical Center's commitment to delivering advanced stroke treatments to patients quickly and safely.

### Stroke Prevention:

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, someone in the United States has a stroke every **40 seconds**. And every **four minutes**, someone dies of stroke. Here are a few ways you can prevent stroke from happening.

- Lower blood pressure
- Lose weight if obese or overweight
- Quit smoking
- Treat diabetes
- Reduce high cholesterol

### Know the signs of a stroke:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden difficulty seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden difficulty walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Source: National Stroke Association



Learn more about stroke care at [hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/strokecenter](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/strokecenter).



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## Making the Decision to Breastfeed

Every baby deserves a healthy start in life, and breastfeeding provides just the right amount of nutrients to help a baby grow.

Moms benefit, too. In addition to creating a strong bond between mother and baby, breastfeeding also burns calories and releases hormones that contract the uterus, helping it return to its normal size after childbirth. Mothers who breastfeed also have a lower risk of ovarian and breast cancers.

At Johns Hopkins Bayview, staff members are

committed to supporting and educating mothers who are interested in breastfeeding their babies. Perinatal nurses and lactation counselors teach

parents in the hospital on the latching and feeding process, and offer corrective interventions, if needed. They also educate parents on the benefits of breastfeeding.

“Our job is to provide parents with all of the information,” says Rebecca Hoyt, BSN, RNC-OB. “It is their right to do what they think is best for their family.”

### Among breastmilk's many benefits:

- It has DHA – a fat that helps a baby's developing brain, nervous system and eyes.
- It is full of antibodies, which help babies fight infection.
- It lowers a baby's risk for respiratory illnesses, ear infections and diarrhea, as well as the risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- It's convenient, free and always at the right temperature.



For more information about breastfeeding services at Johns Hopkins Bayview, call 410-550-0397.

## Johns Hopkins Bayview health & wellness

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