Wellness Matters

WINTER 2012–2013

Surgical Relief for a Sprained Ankle

Seven Steps to Reduce Your Diabetes Risk

What is Atrial Fibrillation?
Dear Friends,

First, I want to acknowledge the loss of a wonderful physician and human being whose compassion extended far beyond the patients he cared for in our community. Dr. Clement Knight, an oncologist with Maryland Oncology Hematology, passed away suddenly on August 9, 2012. An active member of our professional staff for nearly 20 years, Dr. Knight served on the Cancer Committee since 2002 and was chair of the committee at the time of his passing. We extend our sincerest condolences to Dr. Knight’s family, co-workers and patients, and be assured that Dr. Knight’s legacy of compassionate care will continue here at HCGH.

We are pleased to participate in the Local Health Improvement Coalition convened by the Howard County Health Department. Joining forces with more than 50 community organizations to identify and prioritize health needs in our community, the coalition continues to work to foster collaboration among health and human service organizations to benefit you. The hospital has a number of initiatives underway to improve community health in the priority areas identified by the coalition—reducing obesity and enhancing access to health and behavioral health services.

Our commitment to improve the health and well-being of those who live and work in Howard County also includes our dedicated employees. For the second year in a row, HCGH received a gold certification from the Howard County Government as a Healthy Workplace. The Healthy Workplaces program recognizes and assists Howard County workplaces committed to improving employee health and well-being across six main categories: nutrition, physical activity, culture of wellness, mental health, environmental health and safety. Efforts are underway throughout HCGH to provide even more opportunities for our employees to live healthier lives.

To help you live a healthier life, I invite you to read articles in this issue of Wellness Matters on atrial fibrillation, seven simple steps to take to reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes, and what to do if you have a sprained ankle. In addition, we encourage you to participate in our various wellness classes to gain insight and practical tools to be proactive about your health and wellness. (See pages 5–6 for details.)

I also invite you to be a part of our 19th annual Symphony of Lights festivities, a fundraising event that benefits HCGH. Please plan to join us for Midnight at 7 on Monday, December 31, as we kick-off the hospital’s 40th anniversary year. I look forward to celebrating this important milestone for the hospital and our community with you! Also, please consider an end-of-year gift to the Howard Foundation, so that we can continue to provide valuable services to our community.

Sincerely,

Victor A. Broccolino, President and CEO
Howard County General Hospital

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Wellness Matters
Volume 16, No. 4 Winter 2012-13

Suggest an Article
Is there a medical topic you are interested in learning more about? We welcome your ideas. Please send your article ideas to contactus@hcgh.org.

Calling Foul on Sprained Ankles
Prevention tips and when you should see your physician for treatment

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Pictured on front cover:
Brittney Robinson is back on the court after ankle surgery at HCGH.

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Is there a medical topic you are interested in learning more about? We welcome your ideas.
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**FOCUS ON**

**ATRIAL FIBRILLATION:**
What is it and what can be done?

*Definition:* Atrial fibrillation occurs when the small upper (atrial) chambers of your heart beat in a rapid and irregular rhythm.

**The Effects**
“Atrial fibrillation can result in the heart ineffectively moving blood into the ventricles of the heart, increasing the risk of clotting. If an atrial clot forms and breaks off and travels to the brain, a stroke will result,” explains Dr. Sunil Sinha, a Johns Hopkins cardiologist on staff at Howard County General Hospital.

**The Risk Factors for Atrial Fibrillation**
According to Dr. Charu Mehta, an internist on staff at HCGH, it’s important to know your risk factors, many of which you can modify, including:

- Older age
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Coronary and/or rheumatic heart disease
- Heart failure
- Valvular heart disease or congenital heart defects
- Pericarditis (inflammation of the membrane around the heart)
- Hyperthyroidism
- Lung disease
- Excessive alcohol consumption

**The Symptoms**
“Symptoms can vary significantly,” notes Dr. Sinha. “One in five patients have no obvious symptoms and don’t realize they have a rapid, irregular heart beat. Most patients do have some symptoms. For some patients, symptoms are quite mild, and for others they can be quite severe and incapacitating.” Symptoms may include:

- Heart palpitations
- Shortness of breath—especially during exertion
- Weakness or problems exercising
- Chest pain
- Dizziness or fainting
- Fatigue and lack of stamina
- Leg swelling

“It is important for patients to see their doctor regularly after the age of 50 for a cardiac evaluation including an EKG,” says Dr. Mehta. “The diagnosis of atrial fibrillation warrants a comprehensive cardiac workup that usually includes an echocardiogram and a cardiac stress test.”

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**Atrial fibrillation**
a·tri·al fi·bril·la·tion
[ə’trel fi’bri l’a shen], noun.

1. Atrial fibrillation occurs when the small upper (atrial) chambers of your heart beat in a rapid and irregular rhythm.
The Treatment of Atrial Fibrillation

According to Dr. Sinha, there are four goals to be considered in treating atrial fibrillation:

1. Prevent blood clots from forming.
   Your physician may prescribe blood-thinning medication depending upon your stroke risk. (See information to right.)

2. Control how many times a minute your ventricles contract.
   Prescription medicines such as beta blockers and calcium channel blockers slow how fast the ventricles are beating and bring your heart rate to a normal level.

3. Restore a normal heart rhythm.
   If you are very symptomatic with atrial fibrillation despite appropriate rate control therapy, then restoring and maintaining normal (sinus) rhythm may help improve quality of life. Several non-invasive and invasive options can be pursued including anti-arrhythmic drugs, electrical cardioversion and catheter ablation.

4. Treat underlying medical conditions that can cause or increase your risk for atrial fibrillation.
   Your doctor may prescribe medications to address these issues or recommend lifestyle changes including eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, quitting smoking, limiting alcohol and caffeine, maintaining a healthy weight and reducing stress.

THE LONGTERM OUTLOOK

“Atrial fibrillation is not life threatening,” says Dr. Sinha. “It doesn’t trigger a heart attack or cardiac arrest, but it can, in many patients, reduce their quality of life. It can exacerbate or accelerate heart failure and increase the risk of stroke. Fortunately, we have a number of therapeutic strategies to combat it.”

According to Dr. Sinha, if you have atrial fibrillation and one or more of the following, your risk of stroke increases and taking blood-thinning medication is warranted:

- Congestive heart failure
- Hypertension
- Advanced age (75 years and older)
- Diabetes (type 2)
- Stroke

“The question of using blood thinners in older patients at risk of falls is often asked, especially since approximately six percent of those 75 years of age and older have atrial fibrillation,” says Dr. Sinha. “I think it is important to remember that older patients with atrial fibrillation are at a much higher risk of stroke and death. While the risk of bleeding may be greater for older patients, the benefit of stroke prevention usually still warrants using a blood thinner in most cases.”
Flu Vaccine
Offered in partnership with Johns Hopkins Outpatient Pharmacy. 12/3, 4–7 p.m. $25.

The Eyes of Children
Your child’s learning is affected by their vision. Learn about eye health and safety, common complaints and what you can do. Presented by pediatric ophthalmologist Anya Trumler, M.D., 1/17, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

Don’t be Defeated!
Foot, heel and ankle problems can really limit your daily activities. Discuss common complications and injuries, and the most effective physical therapy, medications and surgical options. Presented by orthopaedic surgeon and ankle specialist Ricardo Cook, M.D., 3/7, 6–8 p.m. Free.

Blood Pressure Screening and Monitoring
For times and locations, go to hchg.org or call 410-740-7601.

Phase II Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program
Exercise and education to assist patients with lung disease. 443-718-3000.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation Maintenance Program
Exercise maintenance for pulmonary rehab program graduates. Tuesday and Friday afternoons. 443-718-3000. $60 per month.

Phase II Cardiac Rehabilitation Program
Assists cardiac patients in the recovery phase following a heart attack, angioplasty or cardiac surgery. 443-718-3000.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Maintenance Program
Exercise for cardiac rehab program graduates. Tuesdays and Fridays, 8 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. 443-718-3000. $60 per month.

External Enhanced Counterpulsation Therapy
Non-invasive alternative treatment for patients with stage III or IV angina. 443-718-3000.

What Is Prediabetes?
Understand what prediabetes is and how to prevent/delay actual diabetes. 1/10, 7–9 p.m. $15.

Diabetes programs have convenient day and evening hours and are recognized by the American Diabetes Association.

Individualized Diabetes Management
Learn from a certified diabetes dietitian and nurse how to manage diabetes. 443-718-3000.

Living with Diabetes
Learn from an endocrinologist, podiatrist, psychologist, diabetes nurse educator and dietitian. 443-718-3000. (A condensed version of this course is offered in the evening.)

Healthy Weight, Healthy You
Part 1 – Looking to Lose Weight This Year: Plan meals that taste great, provide balance in your diet and promote health. 1/21, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

Part 2 – Kitchen Wisdom: Sample foods and learn how to spice up healthy meals with herbs and spices for a variety of tastes. 1/28, 7–8:30 p.m. Free. Register for one or both.

Women’s Self Defense
Women (16 and up) learn and practice highly effective, easy-to-learn techniques designed for adult situations. 4/6, 9 a.m.–noon. $50.

Smoke-Free Lungs
Education and support for those wanting to quit or who have quit. Attend one or all sessions. 11/29 or 1/16, 7–9 p.m. Free.
**FREE SCREENINGS**

**Podiatry**
Podiatrist Andrew Liss, DPM, will examine one or two areas of concern on your feet.
**11/13**, 5:30–7:30 p.m. Free.

**Varicose Vein Screening**
This event will be held in the Little Patuxent Specialty Care Center/Vein Center.
To register, please call 410-550-8346.
Presented by Richard Feinberg, M.D.
**11/19**, 5–7 p.m. Free.

**FR EE S C R E E N I N G S**

**IMPROVING WITH AGE**

**AARP Driver Safety**
Classroom refresher for 50+ years.
**3/11**, noon–4 p.m. $12/AARP members, $14/others.

**HealthScreenings**

**Healthy Families**

**Happiest Baby on the Block**
Parents and parents-to-be will learn techniques to quickly soothe the baby.
**1/16**, 7–9 p.m. $50 per couple (includes parent kits).

**Prenatal Class for Your Early Pregnancy**
Parents-to-be and parents in the first trimester will learn about the early stages of pregnancy including your body’s physical changes, your baby’s growth and easy ways to support your pregnancy.
**1/9**, 7–9 p.m. Free.

**To register for Childbirth and New Parenting Classes, as well as Birthing Center Tours, go to hcgh.org and click on Having a Baby.**

**Fitness Fun for Seniors**
Exercise to music at your own pace for ages 60+.
**$32.**

**Be Seated**
Seated fitness program for adults 50+.
**$36.**

**AgeWell**
Ongoing exercise program for ages 60+.
**410-313-7213.**

**Prenatal Exercise**
Taught by a certified instructor. Low impact exercise will help prepare your body for the birth process. Physician permission required. Thursdays.
**1/10-2/28**, 6:30–7:30 p.m. $88/eight sessions.

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**FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS**

**Kids Self-Defense**
Children (8–12) learn basic safety awareness and age-appropriate self-defense techniques.
**3/16**, 9–11 a.m. $27.

**Essentials in Babysitting**
Learn to manage children, create a safe environment, and apply basic emergency techniques.
**11/17**, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. $50 includes lunch.

**Home Sweet Home**
Children (8–12) and their parents learn safe, fun ways for children to stay at home alone.
**12/8**, 9–11 a.m. Free.

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**Ongoing Support Groups:** For a list of support group contact information, go to hcgh.org or call 410-740-7601.

**Cancer Support Groups:** For information, call 410-740-5858.
Brittney Robinson fell in love with basketball in ninth grade. She had always loved soccer, but, after playing basketball, she was hooked. She continued to play throughout her years at Oakland Mills High School, earning a scholarship to Wilmington University in Delaware. It was February 2011, Brittney’s junior year, when an ankle injury threatened to sideline her.

“I was at practice, and I went for a layup and came down on another girl’s foot, rolling my foot over and spraining my ankle,” says Brittney. “I knew in the back of my mind what had happened. Years before I had surgery for lateral ligament instability in my ankle, and I knew I would need it again.”
Ankle Surgery Puts Patient Back on the Court

“Most people suffering an ankle sprain invert their foot (the ankle turns inward). The most common ligament injured is the anterior talofibular ligament (ATFL). It is the weakest of the complex ligaments supporting the outside of the ankle,” notes Dr. Ricardo Cook, an orthopaedic surgeon on staff at Howard County General Hospital. “This is the structure Brittney injured playing basketball. She had a successful surgery in the past, yet regretfully reinjured the ligament.”

For one year, Brittney pushed through the pain, wearing an ankle brace and playing basketball so she could finish school and have the surgery at home in Howard County. “By the end of my senior year, I knew I couldn’t wait any longer. The pain was to the point it hurt to walk around campus. I returned home and saw Dr. Cook,” says Brittney.

In June 2012, Brittney underwent surgery at HCGH. “Brittney’s ligament had partially torn,” says Dr. Cook. “Its job of restraining the ankle was compromised, and the ligament became unable to support the ankle. By reconnecting the ligament and tightening it, we were able to re-establish the restraint and re-stabilize the ankle. During the surgery, we also were able to remove scar tissue that had built up in her joint.”

For one month following outpatient surgery, Brittney was in a cast and then a boot. “My ankle was pretty weak and stiff,” notes Brittney. “It was hard to get it to move at first and return to a full range of motion, but, with physical therapy, now my ankle feels normal.

“Basketball was my ticket. It became my life. It is the way I got to go to college and how I got my degree in sports management. I can’t imagine not being able to play, and thanks to Dr. Cook I still can,” says Brittney.

When Should You See a Doctor?

According to Dr. Cook, see an orthopaedic specialist if you:

• have pain after sporting activities
• suffer an inversion/twisting injury
• if you can’t walk or see an obvious deformity, see a doctor immediately.

“However, if you can get around with a wrap or ankle brace (high-ankle sprains may need a boot), use ice and elevate the ankle to reduce swelling and take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen for pain, you can wait a few days,” says Dr. Cook. “If you still have significant swelling, and you feel your ankle isn’t healing, you should get an X-ray to rule out a fracture. Sprains do take time to heal, sometimes up to six to eight weeks, and the majority of sprains do not need surgery. If your ankle heals and you don’t stress the joint during your recovery, the chances of you reinjuring the ankle in the future are not higher. If you continue to participate in sports with injured tendons/ligaments, you can irritate and injure additional muscles causing more damage.”

“Brittany’s ligament...became unable to support the ankle.
By reconnecting the ligament and tightening it,
we were able to re-establish the restraint and re-stabilize
the ankle. During the surgery, we were also able to
remove scar tissue that had built up in her joint.”

– Dr. Ricardo Cook

What is a Sprain?

A ligament is made up of strands of tissue, similar to rope. A minor sprain will stretch the ligaments. A more significant sprain can partially or completely tear the ligaments.

According to Dr. Cook, “Ankle instability refers to a condition when the ankle frequently turns in during activity. Sometimes this can occur with exercise or normal activities of daily living. Often, you will have swelling around the ankle that doesn’t go away.”

Dr. Ricardo Cook is an orthopaedic surgeon with Potomac Valley Orthopaedic Associates in Columbia. He specializes in adult joint reconstruction, sports medicine and trauma.

Appointments:
410-992-7800.
“Basketball was my ticket. It became my life. It is the way I got to go to college and how I got my degree in sports management. I can’t imagine not to being able to play, and thanks to Dr. Cook I still can.”

– Brittney Robinson

Don’t be Defeated!

Foot, heel and ankle problems can really limit your daily activities. Join orthopaedic surgeon and ankle specialist Dr. Ricardo Cook to discuss common complications and injuries, and the most effective physical therapy, medications and surgical options available at HCGH. 3/7, 6–8 p.m. Free. Register at hcgh.org.
Prediabetes occurs when your blood glucose (sugar) levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be considered type 2 diabetes.

“In addition to being more likely to develop type 2 diabetes, those with prediabetes have an increased risk for other health problems associated with diabetes including heart disease,” says Dr. Randal Riesett, a primary care physician on staff at Howard County General Hospital. “However, prediabetes can be reversed. If you’ve been told you are prediabetic or suspect you may be, addressing the onset of diabetes can prevent a host of potentially serious complications. It may be time to change your lifestyle and take these seven steps to prevent or delay developing type 2 diabetes.”

**Step 1 Recognize the Symptoms**

While some individuals experience no symptoms, you may gradually develop the following signs if you have diabetes or prediabetes:

- unusual thirst
- frequent urination
- blurred vision
- extreme fatigue
- frequent infections
- slow-healing cuts/bruises
- tingling/numbness in your hands/feet
- recurring skin, gum or bladder infections

**Step 2 Know Your Risk**

“While genetics play a role, your weight can be a strong predictor of whether you will develop diabetes,” comments Dr. Riesett. “Abdominal fat interferes with the way your body processes sugar and strains your metabolic system.” Additionally, ask yourself:

- Are you overweight?
- Are you 45 or older?
- Do you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, a family history of diabetes, a history of gestational diabetes or children with high birth weights?

**Step 3 Get Screened**

“Diabetes screening should start at an early age,” says Dr. Riesett. “Adults with a normal weight should have a glucose test every three–five years starting in their 20s. If you are overweight, obese or have a sedentary lifestyle and risk factors, have a glucose test every two–three years. Since 35 percent of children born after 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime, some pediatricians begin screening obese children during adolescence.”

Dr. Riesett also recommends an annual physical if you have high blood pressure or cholesterol to monitor your risk. “If you have been diagnosed as prediabetic, you should be closely monitored to assess compliance and progress with risk-lowering lifestyle changes,” notes Dr. Riesett.

**Step 4 Make Simple Lifestyle Changes**

“Prediabetic patients often believe there is time to address their condition,” says Mike Taylor, Johns Hopkins Diabetes program manager. “You don’t wait until you are 64 to start saving for retirement, and you can’t wait until you are on insulin to decide you don’t want to have diabetes. Keep it simple by assessing how much you move versus how much you eat. Eat one-third less of what you normally eat and find opportunities to move.”

William (Mike) Taylor is the clinical program manager, Johns Hopkins Diabetes at HGH. Appointments: 443-718-3000.
Lose Weight

“Aim to lose about seven percent of your total body weight through healthy eating and moderate exercise,” says Dr. Riesett, who recommends you:

• eat lots of fruits and non-starchy vegetables
• choose whole grain foods
• add dried beans and lentils to meals
• eat fish two–three times a week and opt for lean, skinless meats
• use non-fat dairy

Dr. Riesett recommends engaging in 30 minutes of moderate exercise five days a week. “You don’t have to go to the gym. Try walking or gardening. Forget your building has an elevator. Park in the farthest parking spot. Make more than one trip taking things up and down stairs. Cut back on TV and computer time. You will see progress.”

“Patients should realize that prediabetes can be reversed with moderate weight loss, regular exercise and dietary modification. Recently, one of my patients in his early 50s had a glucose level of 111 and was diagnosed as prediabetic,” recalls Dr. Riesett. “Within four months, he changed his diet, exercised five days a week and lost 25 pounds. His blood sugar decreased to 86, his cholesterol improved by 30 percent, and he significantly lowered his risk of developing diabetes.”

Review Your Approach to Food

“Eat breakfast daily, and close your kitchen after dinner,” recommends Mike. “When you eat before going to sleep, your body has no way to burn calories and instead stores food as fat.”

Nutritional labels on most U.S. packaged food indicate serving size and measurements of fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates, protein, vitamins and minerals. “The packaged ingredient list should only be a sentence; a paragraph can indicate the food is highly processed and therefore less healthy. Reading labels and tracking your intake will help you make better food choices and control your blood sugar, cholesterol, blood pressure and weight,” stresses Mike. “Sugar is usually hidden. With processed food, assume there is excess sugar. However, you don’t need to avoid natural sugar found in fruit. Your food also should look like it came from the farm.”

Beware of sugars and calories in beverages. “In addition to juice, sports drinks and sodas, avoid flavored coffee drinks—some larger sizes can have more than 1,000 calories,” says Mike.

Take Advantage of Local Resources

The Johns Hopkins Diabetes Management Program strives to help you make sense of diabetes.

For a complete listing of programs offered, visit hcgh.org/diabetes.

Dr. Randal Riesett

is an internist with Charter Internal Medicine in Columbia. He specializes in treating adults and adolescents starting at age 16.

Appointments:
410-910-2300.

What is Prediabetes?

Understand what prediabetes is and how to prevent/delay actual diabetes. 1/10, 7–9 p.m. $15.

HCQH Wellness Center
Register at hcgh.org.

Visit hcgh.org/wm for a healthy, diabetes friendly recipe.
Dear Friends,

As we celebrate Midnight at 7, a part of Howard County General Hospital’s Symphony of Lights, this New Year’s Eve, we will be kicking off a yearlong celebration recognizing HCGH’s 40th birthday—an exciting and important milestone for the entire community!

Birthdays are a chance to reflect on the lives of cherished individuals, recount memories and give thanks for the impact they have had on others during their lifetime. In celebrating the hospital’s birthday, we have the chance to chronicle the many advancements made in the quality of patient care and show its significance to all who live and work in Howard County.

That human connection was very real and impactful for Jackie Jones Benner and her late father, Jack Jones, an army veteran and former elementary school teacher. In a video tribute to a man who was part of so many milestones in her life, Jackie shares how HCGH’s personalized care made a difference to her and her father. “People move in and out of your hospital in an endless stream, but we are not faceless,” says Jackie. “You made us feel your care and concern. For that, my family and I are very thankful.” The Jones family is but one of many families in our community who have been touched by the expert care and personal attention provided at HCGH. I encourage you to hear firsthand Jackie’s inspirational reflection on the care HCGH provided. I promise, it will be worth your while! Visit http://bit.ly/UVSBMK to hear Jackie’s story.

While those who have watched this heartfelt video may not have known the “Man in 4117,” Jackie’s words of thanks have inspired others to donate to HCGH. With 2012 coming to a close, I ask you to consider making a year-end gift to HCGH, joining together with those inspired by the “Man in 4117” to help continue the hospital’s legacy of patient-centered care.

We also hope to see you at Midnight at 7 and the other Symphony of Lights festivities (see page 16 for details), all of which raise money to benefit HCGH, supporting our programs, services and dedication to putting our patients first.

Warm Regards,

Paul G. Skalny, Chair
Howard Hospital Foundation

Foundation Chair’s Message

Howard County Tourism & Promotion and all the “Community Conscious” partners helped Blossoms of Hope raise money for a very worthy cause during the month of April. On September 21, 2012, a $35,000 check was presented to the Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center (CMCRC) by Vicki Goodman, executive director of Blossoms of Hope, on behalf of Howard County Tourism.

“CMCRC is thrilled to be the recipient of this mutually beneficial community partnership for nearly 10 years. Year after year, these events have brought awareness and tourism to Howard County. Funds raised support CMCRC and the ever-increasing needs of cancer patients, helping to provide more than 7,500 services annually to patients and their families,” says Leslie Rogers, executive director, Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center.

A Giving Spirit

According to Kathy Bishop, her granddaughter, Mia Abrams, is a giving child and a bargain shopper. Those two attributes came to life when Mia imagined a way to help HCGH, a place that her family members credit to them, their families and those inspired by a little girl who embodies a giving spirit.
Kristi Carpenter of Clarksville always knew she wanted to help people. When her degree in business management didn’t result in a job in the business field after graduation, she took a position with a Howard County gastroenterologist as a medical assistant. “Dr. Russell Schub taught me so much when I worked for him,” says Kristi. “I knew I needed to move on in my career, so I joined HCGH as a registrar in the Outpatient Department. Soon, I started asking myself ‘what is my passion?’”

During this time, Kristi’s grandfather was being treated for stage IV prostate cancer, and she found herself interacting with the hospital. “I realized I want to take care of people and give back to the community I grew up in,” says Kristi.

Kristi heard about a nursing scholarship administered by the Howard Hospital Foundation and funded by the physicians of Maryland Oncology Hematology and applied. This year, Kristi was awarded a full scholarship to attend the two-year Howard Community College nursing program. In turn, after graduation and receiving her RN license, for every year she received the scholarship, she will work as a nurse at HCGH.

“As a physician, I feel it is important to nurture good quality nurses,” notes Dr. Nicholas Koutrelakos, an oncologist with Maryland Oncology Hematology. “Howard Community College offers an impressive nursing program. Funding the scholarship continues to foster the relationship that our practice has had with the Howard County nursing community. Many good nurses have come from the program, making it a wonderful investment in our community.”

“There are so many aspects of nursing,” notes Kristi who will graduate from HCC in 2014. “Most people see a nurse as just a nurturing figure, but it is so much more than that. Being a nurse is about providing education and teaching prevention so patients can better themselves. Having this scholarship has been magic. I am so lucky, and I look forward to graduating and fulfilling my dream.”
Location, location, location—a familiar catchphrase in real estate, especially for Creig and Carla Northrop—is at the heart of the Northrops’ recent $250,000 donation to Howard County General Hospital’s Campus Development Plan (CDP). By choosing to support HCGH, the Northrops chose to support a location to which they have deep roots.

“We are passionate about giving back and investing in our community,” says Creig, a successful local realtor whose two children were born at HCGH. “It is the most important thing we can do. I live where I work, I work where I live, and I was very fortunate to grow up in this community.”

Being a Howard County native has afforded Creig with the opportunity to watch the hospital grow. “It was one building—your local doctor’s office—and now it has become an award-winning institution,” states Creig. “The hospital administration’s leadership inspires us to be passionate about HCGH. The hospital’s partnership with Johns Hopkins Medicine, coupled with the medical professionals on staff, has put HCGH on the map.” And that’s exactly where the Northrops want it to stay.

“The Northrop’s donation to the CDP demonstrates a deep personal commitment to work for a better community for all of us,” comments Sandy Harriman, vice president of Development, Howard Hospital Foundation. “Thanks to the generosity of the Northrops, along with like-minded individuals and community organizations, we are pleased to announce the campaign has raised $18,305,587 to date. Through these funds, HHF is able to support the hospital in its continued mission to be the health care provider of choice in the region, offering state-of-the-art technology, award-winning health care services, and community health and wellness programs that make a positive impact on the well-being of our patients and their families.”

The knowledge that their donation helps pave the way for HCGH to continue its legacy of providing excellent health care services right here in the community is fulfillment of the Northrop’s overarching goal to pay it forward.

“You want your hospital to be a state-of-the-art facility and have good doctors on staff,” says Carla, also an active supporter of the Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center. “While HCGH serves those who live and work in Howard County, it is, in our opinion, one of the best hospitals in the country. We want to see the hospital grow with the community, and supporting the hospital in this manner is our way to help ensure that the level of care we have come to expect continues for generations to come. We believe in HCGH and its ability to help make Howard County a better place.”

Cuts Against Cancer

The Annual Cuts Against Cancer Haircut-a-thon was held on August 12, 2012, in the Medical Pavilion at Howard County and raised funds to benefit the Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center. With a record number of 13 salons and spas participating, the successful event hosted more than 400 attendees who enjoyed haircuts, manicures, seated massage and waxing.
Flu Vaccination

The best offense is a good defense especially when it comes to the flu. To better protect our patients, visitors and staff, HCGH is requiring its employees to receive annual flu vaccinations. “Roughly 36,000 Americans die annually from flu,” says President and CEO Vic Broccolino. “Because these deaths can be prevented, we strongly believe this is the right thing to do in order to protect our patients, visitors, co-workers and their families.”
April
Join Team CONQUER Cancer for the Athleta Iron Girl Columbia Half Marathon
Sunday, April 28, 2013
Proceeds benefit the Claudia Mayer Cancer Resource Center (CMCRC).
Team CONQUER Cancer, a group of men, women and teens, train and run races to support those with cancer by raising funds for CMCRC. To join Team CONQUER Cancer for the Iron Girl Half Marathon, call 410-740-7570 or email abroccolino@hcgh.org. To learn more about the TriColumbia Athleta Iron Girl Half Marathon visit TriColumbia.org.

For a complete listing of hospital events, visit hcgh.org.