President’s Message

Dear Friends,

As the holiday season approaches, I am excited to share in the upcoming Symphony of Lights festivities with you. Over the past year we have had our aging displays completely refurbished and energy-efficient light bulbs added as well as many new displays constructed that we are looking forward to debuting. The lights will officially burn brightly when we flip the switch at Dazzle Dash, Sunday, November 20.

This year’s festivities will also include Howard County’s first outdoor ice rink. As an avid skater and hockey player myself, I am looking forward to lacing up my skates and getting back on the ice with my family. I hope you will bring your family and join us for our bigger and brighter Symphony of Lights festivities that all benefit HCGH. A complete listing of events with registration information is on the back of this issue of Wellness Matters. A map showing the location of all of our events within Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods is on page 11.

From our hospital family to yours, I wish you all a magical holiday season.

Sincerely,

Steve Snelgrove
Strokes: Preventable, Treatable and Survivable

Eric Aldrich, M.D., HCGH neurologist and director of Inpatient Neurological Services, answers your questions:

Q: **What is a stroke?**
   A stroke occurs when there is a sudden injury to your brain involving the blood vessels. There are two types:
   - Hemorrhagic—caused by an artery bursting, resulting in bleeding in the brain.
   - Ischemic—the result of a clot restricting blood flow to an area of the brain.

Q: **What are the signs of a stroke?**
The signs can include sudden onset of weakness to one side of the face, weakness on one side of the body, abnormal speech or loss of speech, imbalance and more rarely, a loss of vision to one side.

Q: **What are the risk factors for having a stroke?**
There are five major risk factors: smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and a family history (if anyone in your family has had a heart attack or stroke before the age of 55).

Not smoking is the most important thing you can do and, except your family history, the rest of the risk factors can be controllable with medications in combination with lifestyle changes (diet and exercise). Work with your primary care physician to control those risk factors. In addition, some patients may take a daily aspirin or similar blood-thinning medication to reduce the formation of blood clots.

Q: **What are recent trends in stroke treatment?**
One of the biggest victories in stroke treatment was in the 1990s with the approval of tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a clot-dissolving drug for use in acute ischemic stroke, that must be given within a few hours of the onset of the stroke. This resulted in a huge revolution that led to the creation of certified stroke centers and what are called brain attack teams. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of FDA approval of tPA for treatment of acute ischemic stroke.

Today, for those people in which tPA is ineffective or perhaps the clot does not completely dissolve, there are new devices that an interventional radiologist or neurosurgeon can use to remove the clot with x-ray guidance. This technology is the second revolution in stroke treatment.

Q: **What should you do if you think you are having stroke?**
Call 911 immediately. It is the most important thing you can do. There is a full system of stroke care that begins with the first responders who have been specially trained to begin stroke evaluations.

To hear more about stroke and treatment from Dr. Aldrich, visit hgh.org/videos.
Caring for Aging Parents

Caregiving for a loved one can be challenging. Here are some tips to help make the process easier.

Prepare for Doctor’s Visits
Older patients often have more health issues to discuss. Create an agenda and questions for the appointment. Attend appointments with your loved one, if you can, or send someone you trust, who can take notes and help remember and understand everything that was said.

“I also recommend patients bring all of their prescription bottles to their appointment,” says HCGH geriatrician Anirudh Sridharan, M.D. “Elderly patients are more susceptible to side effects and interactions between medications and they often see many physicians—so bringing bottles is extremely helpful to the physician.”

Organize Daily Medications
Use a pill dispenser with compartments for each day of the week or another reminder system to let your loved one know when to take medications. You can also keep a medication schedule and post it somewhere visible—the refrigerator or medicine cabinet. Set an alarm on your loved one’s phone, watch or clock to help make taking medications a part of the daily routine.

Make a List of Medications
Maintain a list of medications—with the name of the drug, the dose, how often it is taken and why. Keep a copy somewhere immediately accessible, like your purse or car, in case there is an emergency. Schedule annual medication reviews with your loved one’s primary health care provider. Keep in mind, many common drugs can have interactions with food.

Fill Prescriptions at One Pharmacy
Using one pharmacy makes refilling prescriptions simpler and it helps your pharmacist protect against drug interactions and avoid potential problems. Some pharmacies even deliver.

Take Advantage of Technology
Many health care providers, pharmacies and insurance plans offer apps or websites to manage records. These online tools can help you retrieve and share health care information quickly. If you rely on electronic files, be sure to keep a back-up of logins and passwords. Johns Hopkins MyChart is one example—for more information, visit hopkinsmedicine.org/mychart.

Discuss Advance Directives
Start the difficult but important conversations about end-of-life care early, when you’re not in a crisis, and there is more time to think and make better decisions.

“Advance directives identify who will make decisions regarding treatments, such as life support measures, when your loved one is too sick to do so themselves,” says Dr. Sridharan. “The designee should have a full understanding of the patient’s wishes.”

You are not alone
There are many great resources for caregivers. To start, visit pages at hopkinsmedicine.org/health/healthy_aging and download a free copy of the Johns Hopkins guide “Take Care: A Guide for Family Caregivers.”

Anirudh Sridharan, M.D., is a board-certified geriatrician on staff at HCGH.
Avoiding FALLS

The Facts
More than one in three people age 65 or older fall every year and the risk of falls increases as you age. Falls are the leading cause of death from injury among people 65 and older. Nine out of 10 hip fractures are caused by falls. Two-thirds of those who fall will do so again within six months. Falls can affect your quality of life, limiting activities you once enjoyed.

Who is at Risk of Falling?
There are many risk factors associated with falls and the more you have, the greater your risk. Those with decreased vision, decreased lower body strength, problems with feet or shoes, poor posture, balance or gait issues, dizziness, a history of falling, slower reflexes, confusion, low blood pressure due to medications or diseases are at greater risk. If you are on four or more medications, your risk is also significantly increased.

Preventing Falls
Regular exercise that improves strength and balance can help prevent falls. In fact, research suggests that regular exercise can cut your risk by 20 to 30 percent. According to Anirudh Sridharan, M.D., a geriatrician on staff at HCGH, “physical therapy can really help increase strength, and yoga and tai chi can help with balance.” Make sure you visit your doctor regularly to have vision, blood pressure and medications checked.

Easy Things You Can Do to Prevent Falls Include:
- Choose proper footwear
- Secure loose rugs and add non-slip strips to slick floors
- Space out furniture to allow room to move
- Improve lighting, especially around your bed; add night lights
- Leave stairways clear of items
- Use hand rails on stairs and install rails in showers/tubs
- Don’t climb ladders or carry items up and down stairs
- Avoid icy surfaces in winter

“The outpatient physical therapists at HCGH will sometimes go into their patients’ homes to assess potential fall hazards as part of the care plan for a patient who is at risk,” says Jamie Politzer, an HCGH physical therapist.

Have a Cane or Walker?
You may feel you are safe holding onto furniture, leaving your cane or walker in a corner. But in reality, furniture can tip or leave gaps in your support, causing you to bend and overreach, leading to more falls in your home.

After a Fall
You should report any fall to your doctor—even if you are not hurt. The reason for the fall may be related to a medical condition that should be addressed to prevent future injuries.

Dr. Sridharan adds, “When someone falls, even if they don’t injure themselves, they can get anxious that it will happen again. Often they start restricting their activity, which will lead to them becoming weaker and therefore more at risk for falling. It is a vicious cycle. Instead, work with your family and doctor to get yourself stronger so you can stay active and enjoy your life.”
The Aging Mind:  
Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer’s

Where are the keys? Did you mail that bill?
Where did you park the car? Worried about your memory?

According to Gena L. Romanow, M.D., a neurologist on staff at HCGH, “As you age, your recall ability may be delayed, but eventually you do remember the word you were searching for, or where you placed your keys. This temporary glitch in memory is usually a normal age-related change and not a sign of anything serious.

“However, memory loss is concerning when it is accompanied by a loss of function that affects daily living. Signs that there may be a serious issue may include missing multiple appointments, difficulty organizing a checkbook or the inability to figure out how to follow a recipe. Quite often, people with serious memory issues lack the insight to detect that there is a problem and are unaware there is an issue. Usually, it is a family member or caregiver who brings it to the person’s attention and helps to seek medical assistance.”

Dementia or Alzheimer’s?
Dementia is a term used to describe a number of different brain disorders that affect core brain function and the part of the brain responsible for thoughts, memories, actions and personality. Alzheimer’s is a disease that affects brain cells and one of the most common causes of dementia.

Are you at Risk?
“While genetics may play a role, advancing age is the most significant risk factor for Alzheimer’s,” notes Dr. Romanow. “The longer you live, the greater your risk.” Alzheimer’s affects about five percent of people above 65 years of age, and then doubles every five years, affecting about 20 percent of those over 80 years of age, and about 30 percent of those over 90 years of age.

Gena L. Romanow, M.D., is a neurologist with Contemporary Neurology in Columbia.
Appointments: 410-772-8020
A Dementia Diagnosis
An early dementia diagnosis gives you time to seek treatment and have conversations about your future. It empowers you to make decisions about finances, caregiving and living arrangements. “If you are diagnosed with dementia, it is also important that you continue to remain active outside of the home and not become socially isolated. A common symptom of dementia is a lack of interest in the world around you and the tendency to withdraw. Stay active in activities you enjoy,” Dr. Romanow says.

Driving and Dementia
“Some people fear losing their independence with the loss of their ability to drive. It is important to explore transportation options,” says Dr. Romanow. “People with moderate or severe dementia are not able to drive due to the loss of ability to integrate multiple pieces of information at once. However, people with early disease are sometimes able to continue driving within parameters, such as during the day, and on local roads, to known stops. A driving test by a professional trained in working with people who have dementia is a better way to determine this than an office exam.”

Treating Dementia
“Unfortunately, dementia is progressive. While there is no cure, there are medications that may help ease and delay symptoms,” says Dr. Romanow.

Keeping Your Brain Sharp
“A recommended 30 minutes a day of physical cardiovascular exercise is the only proven activity for keeping the brain active and possibly preventing disease,” says Dr. Romanow. “There is a lot of debate surrounding brain-training programs, but no proof that they specifically reduce the likelihood of dementia. Recent studies suggest that staying socially active, engaging in activities you find interesting and eating antioxidant rich food may be beneficial. Current studies also suggest that doing something you like, that is mentally stimulating for you, is effective in keeping your brain active.”

Caring for a Loved One With Dementia

1. Make decisions in advance. Have conversations about finances, health care, transportation and living arrangements, while it is still possible for your loved one to participate in the decision-making process.

2. Research resources. The Alzheimer’s Association is a great place to start—offering a 24-hour hotline and local support groups. Visit: alz.org/maryland.

3. Stay active. Encourage your loved one to remain socially active and continue to pursue activities he/she enjoys.

4. Play music. Dementia patients often respond to music from an era when they were active, and music is a great way to involve a younger generation in caregiving and connecting with the loved one.

5. Make safety a priority. Keeping the person you are caring for safe becomes a big issue as the disease progresses. You may need additional in-home help or to move your loved one into a care facility.

6. Manage medications. Keep a current medication list and seek medical assistance in eliminating drugs that might cause or add to your loved one’s confusion. Use pill boxes to manage medications and seek pharmacies that can prepackage medications in daily doses.

7. Stay calm. Personality and behavior changes, especially agitation and depression, are all common symptoms of dementia. Try to be agreeable in your conversations and do not argue, unless there is imminent danger.

8. Keep to a routine. Maintain regular routines in a calm, familiar environment to help reduce the stress and anxiety that often occurs in people with dementia.

9. Take care of yourself. Caregiving can be extremely stressful and comes at great cost, often including a loss of the relationship with the person you are caring for.
When the Time Comes for HOME CARE

As we age there typically comes a time when extra care is needed. Maybe you or your loved one suffered a broken hip after a fall and, following surgery, additional care at home is temporarily needed. You may be caring for your parent or loved one suffering from dementia and need to have a caregiver give you respite. In some cases, moving to a skilled nursing facility to provide care does make sense. But often, home care can be a much better option and often less expensive, as well as one that most patients prefer.

According to Susan Martin, senior director of business development for Johns Hopkins Home Care Group, “Following a hospital stay for example, home care coordinators can work with a patient’s physician and family to develop a plan to arrange for services when medically necessary. Bringing treatment to the home, such as nursing and physical therapy, reduces stress on the patient and their family.”

“The process for arranging additional services begins with an evaluation in your home with a nurse to determine what support services you or your loved one need,” says Karen Scherr, assistant director of Johns Hopkins Home Support. “Home care is tailored to the patient’s needs and is flexible. Situations change and sometimes a patient needs more or less care.”

A Broad Spectrum of In-home Care

In-home services can include skilled nursing; physical, occupational or speech therapy and infusion services; as well as instruction for caregivers on tending to wounds and even medication management. The home care professionals will also look through the home for potential obstacles that could cause a fall. Medical escort services are also offered to transport the patient to physician appointments and take notes to relay information to family or another caregiver. Support services including companion care, light housekeeping, meal preparation and personal care can be arranged on an hourly or shift basis for a short or long term.

“There are many benefits to a patient being able to stay in their own home. “It is nice for the patient to have continuity of care,” says Karen. “They see the same staff member and the staff member gets to know the patient.” Studies also show that patients heal faster from home. When healing at home, the risk for infection is also greatly decreased. Patients with dementia also have a tendency to do better in their own home.

For more information on home care resources, visit: hopkinsmedicine.org/homecare, hopkinsmedicine.org/health/healthy_aging or HCAOA.org for the Caring for America’s Seniors: The Value of Home Care Report or call 410-288-8993.

Contact your insurance company to determine your coverage for home care.
Animal-assisted Activities Program Brings Smiles
It was a dog day afternoon recently, when a friendly beagle by the name of Emmy Lou visited patients at HCGH. Emmy Lou is part of a pilot program at HCGH called the Animal-assisted Activities Program. While this was Emmy Lou’s first visit, she is expected to return every couple of weeks.

On the days the dog is scheduled to visit, nursing leadership asks patients whose conditions are appropriate if they would be interested in a visit.

“The patients who agreed to a visit were really excited. It brightened their day,” explains Brandy Toth, clinical program manager. “Then, when Emmy Lou visited, their mood got even better. It was uplifting for me to watch.”

If the pilot is successful, the program is expected to be expanded.

Johns Hopkins Medical Imaging Now in Columbia
HCGH is partnering with Johns Hopkins Medical Imaging in Columbia, Md. to offer a variety of diagnostic imaging tests to patients on an outpatient basis, including mammography, x-ray, ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) scan and dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) scan. Specialized testing, such as nuclear medicine tests, stereotactic breast biopsy and interventional radiology procedures, are still done on an outpatient basis at the hospital. For more details, visit hcgh.org.

To schedule an outpatient test at Johns Hopkins Medical Imaging in Columbia, call 443-574-5800.

Hospital is Named Baby-Friendly
HCGH proudly announces its designation as a Baby-Friendly birth facility, an initiative that encourages and recognizes hospitals and birth centers that offer breastfeeding mothers the information, confidence and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies. In an effort to provide the best experience for mothers and new babies, HCGH has implemented key education and policy initiatives and adopted best practices, such as rooming in and skin-to-skin contact, which allow the family to successfully bond with the new baby. The hospital also supports mothers who choose to formula feed their babies, providing support, information and education about safe formula feeding.

Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. is the U.S. authority for the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (“BFHI”), a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and based on the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.
Four Ways to Maximize Your 2016 Gift

As the clock ticks down toward the new year, consider these tax tips and timelines that will benefit you and Howard County General Hospital.

1. Receive a tax deduction with a cash gift.
   - Deduct up to 50 percent of your adjusted gross income if you itemize deductions. When cash gifts exceed this limit, carry over the excess deduction for up to five additional years.

2. Avoid capital gains tax with a gift of appreciated securities.
   - Claim a federal income tax charitable deduction for the full appreciated value of the securities held for more than one year—up to 30 percent of your adjusted gross income. If the value exceeds this limit, carry over the excess deduction for up to five years. Additionally, pay no capital gains tax for the gifted securities.

3. Make a gift and receive income.
   - Consider a charitable gift annuity or a charitable remainder unitrust. Both produce an immediate income tax deduction for the charitable value of your gift and income payments that can start immediately or in the future. Additional benefits apply if your gift is funded with appreciated securities.

4. Rollover IRA contributions for immediate impact.
   - For donors at least 70½ years old, transfer up to $100,000 directly from a traditional IRA to the Howard Hospital Foundation. The distribution counts toward some or all of the IRA’s required minimum distribution and the transfer is excluded from taxable income.

For more information, contact the Howard Hospital Foundation at 410-740-7840 or visit hcgh.org/bhfplannedgiving.

Partnering for Pink:
New Technology Funded for The Breast Center

Bosom Buddies Charities, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote breast cancer awareness, encourage early detection, support treatment and celebrate healing, recently helped to fund a Breast Imaging Specimen Unit for The Breast Center at HCGH. The Breast Center offers comprehensive breast services that include diagnostics and biopsies, and a full range of treatment options for breast cancer. The new technology will be used in the operating room to allow breast tissue to be tested immediately, thereby reducing a patient’s time in surgery and under anesthesia.

“The technology will allow our breast program to improve our coordination with breast imaging and increase both the operating room and radiology efficiency,” says Lisa K. Jacobs, M.D., medical director of The Breast Center at HCGH. “This will help to reduce operating room times and therefore decrease wait times for surgery and for breast imaging procedures. It also allows the surgeon to more directly evaluate the edges of the tumor and the quality of the lumpectomy.”

To learn more about Bosom Buddies Charities, visit BosomBuddiesCharities.com.
Dear Howard County General Hospital,

Over the last year I have accompanied my mother to your hospital several times. During one of her stays, we were greeted by nurse Michelle Tuazon. She was vibrant, cheerful, smiling and extremely positive and confident as she welcomed us. She indicated that she would be the nurse caring for my mother throughout the night. I immediately felt a sigh of relief, because I knew instantly her heart and soul were committed to providing quality, compassionate care and attention to my mother.

During her intake questions regarding my mother’s medical history, medications and allergies, she was professional, polite, thorough and very observant of my mother. At the end of the evaluation, she assured me that she would take very good care of my mother, not to worry and that if I felt I wanted to call throughout the night, that was okay. We returned home in the early hours of the morning exhausted but relieved that Michelle was her nurse. She welcomed my phone calls that morning with utmost respect and dignity and with my mother’s well-being as her top priority. With Michelle’s care and attention, my mother was soon discharged and home.

Several months later my mother was admitted again. When I arrived at 1 a.m. and saw Michelle, I sighed in relief. She told me to get rest and that she would take care of my mother and not to worry. I did not worry and was able to go home with no stress knowing that Michelle would do exactly what she stated she would do.

It is not every day that you meet people like Michelle that genuinely touch your heart during a family medical crisis. Howard County General Hospital should be proud to know there are employees like her that mean so much to the patients, their families and the residents of this community. I felt it was imperative to recognize Michelle for her professionalism, hard work, dedication and sincere devotion to provide quality care to her patients and their families. She is a true role model of how nurses and care providers should present themselves to patients and their families during their stay in the hospital. I wish there were more people like her. I feel sincerely honored to have met her and have her care for my mother. I am proud to donate to Honor a Caregiver in her name for all that she has done for my mother and our family. Thank you so very much Michelle Tuazon for being the best of the best!

Sincerely,
A Grateful Caregiver and Daughter

If you would like to make a donation to honor an HCGH caregiver, call 410-740-7840 or visit hcgh.org/honoracaregiver.

Michelle Tuazon, RN
Celebrate the 22\textsuperscript{nd} Symphony of Lights

Experience our all-new course featuring nearly 100 dazzling displays and celebrate the debut of an outdoor ice skating rink, a state-of-the-art laser light show, a 3-D holiday video and 20 new custom displays. See the back page for a complete listing of events.

*Presented by Howard Hughes Corporation & Downtown Columbia Partnership
Thank You to Our Symphony of Lights Sponsors

(Top level sponsors committed as of October 14, 2016)

Funding Received for Patient Safety Laboratory Pilot Program

COLA, a non-profit laboratory accrediting organization headquartered in Columbia, Md., is working together with HCGH to innovate educational tools and best practices to ensure quality and patient safety in clinical laboratory medicine. The organizations decided to combine their expertise to cultivate inter-professional education programs and tools and to explore validation of a causal relationship of proposed interventions in laboratory safety with improvements in population health. COLA is also providing financial support to hire a new Laboratory Patient Safety Officer for a three-year period.

“Today, through our work to safeguard quality in laboratory testing, we impact the lives of four million patients. When the opportunity to partner with HCGH presented itself, we were delighted to be making a difference right in our own backyard,” says Doug Beigel, CEO of COLA. “I have been searching for a values-driven organization who aspires to be a center of excellence for several years now. Now that we found each other, we are joining bright minds and big hearts to innovate a laboratory patient safety model.

“The most important part of this effort is to show that quality and safety in laboratory medicine matters because it impacts the lives of patients in very profound ways. Research states that over 70 percent of diagnosis and treatment decisions involve laboratory information. Better laboratory results lead to better outcomes. Together with the hospital we hope to provide research that can be used by other hospitals in the nation. If we can accomplish this, we can touch the lives of many people.”
Wellness Classes

Registration advised for all programs – visit hcgh.org

SPECIAL EVENTS

Kitchen Wisdom
Variety is the spice of life! Sample foods and learn how to spice up healthy meals with herbs and spices for a variety of taste. 1/16, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

Looking to Lose Weight?
Our certified nutritionist and registered dietitian will discuss physiology and health challenges that affect your weight. 1/9, 7–8:30 p.m. Free.

Living Well
This six-week workshop is for those living with chronic conditions as well as caregivers of those with chronic conditions. Learn techniques to cope with feelings of frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation; exercises for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility and endurance; and skills to communicate more effectively with family, friends and health professionals. Participants actively work with group leaders to promote a healthier lifestyle. Fridays, 2/24-3/31, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m. $28 includes textbook and CD.

Wellness Screening for Your Health
Knowing your numbers and taking action to improve them promotes your highest level of well-being. This free screening includes blood glucose check, blood pressure measurement, weight risk assessment, prediabetes risk assessment, education on healthy lifestyle choices and information about classes that address health risks. Take ownership of your health by working with our team to support you. 3/29, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Free.

HEALTHY HEART & LUNGS

Adult, Child and Infant CPR/AED
Learn skills to clear an airway obstruction, perform CPR and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). Earn two-year American Heart Association completion card (not a health care provider course). 12/6, 12/15 or 1/4. 5:30–9 p.m. $55.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Program†
Assistance for cardiac patients in the recovery phase following a heart attack, angioplasty or cardiac surgery.

Cardiac Rehabilitation Maintenance†
Exercise for cardiac rehab program graduates. Tuesdays and Fridays, 8 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. $60/mo.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation†
Exercise and education to assist patients with lung disease.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation Maintenance†
Exercise maintenance for pulmonary rehab program graduates. Tuesday and Friday afternoons. $60/mo.

† To schedule an appointment or for information about all cardiac or pulmonary rehabilitation programs and Medicare and insurance coverage, please call 443-718-3000.

HEALTHY FAMILIES

Prenatal Class for Early Pregnancy
Parents-to-be and parents in the first three months of pregnancy learn about the early stages of pregnancy including your body’s physical changes, your baby’s growth and ways to promote a healthier pregnancy. This is not a childbirth preparation class. Visit hcgh.org for Childbirth Preparation, Breastfeeding and Infant Care classes. 11/29, 7–9 p.m. Free.

Happiest Baby on the Block
Parents and parents-to-be learn techniques to quickly soothe baby. 1/17, 7–9 p.m. $50 per couple (includes parent kits).

FREE SCREENINGS

AIDS Screening
This World AIDS Day event includes a confidential AIDS screening, educational materials and local resources. Co-sponsored with Chase Brexton Health Services. Walk-in, registration is not required. 12/1, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

GET HEALTHY WITH DIET & EXERCISE

Dietary Counseling
Discuss your dietary concerns and goals with a registered dietitian. $40/half-hour visit.

The Mall Milers
Walk-for-health program at The Mall in Columbia. Blood pressure screenings on the second Tuesday of the month. Free.

Ongoing Support Groups: Visit hcgh.org or call 410-740-7601.
Cancer Support Groups: Call 410-740-5858.
IMPROVING WITH AGE

Medicare 101
Learn about Original Medicare (Parts A and B) and Prescription Drug coverage (Part D). Presented by the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, Howard County Office on Aging and Independence. 3/8, 7-8:30 p.m. Free.

Medicare 102
Learn about Medicare Health Plans (Part C) and Medicare Supplement Policies. Presented by the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, Howard County Office on Aging and Independence. 12/20, 10-11:30 a.m. or 3/15, 7-8:30 p.m. Free.

AARP Driver Safety
Classroom refresher for ages 50+. 3/10, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. $15/AARP members, $20/others.

Using Medicare’s Plan Finder
Learn how to use the ‘Plan Finder’ tool on medicare.gov to compare and review the Medicare Prescription Drug Plans available to you. Sponsored by the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), Howard County Office on Aging and Independence. Register 410-313-7391. 3/22, 7-8:30 p.m. Free.

NEW DIABETES PROGRAMS
HCGH’s new comprehensive diabetes programs focus on each individual and not just the disease. Courses are open to diabetes patients as well as their caregivers and are now held in the Wellness Center.

Prediabetes
Our certified diabetes educator and registered dietitian will teach you how to make changes to prevent or delay actual diabetes. 1/12, 7-8:30 p.m. $15.

Brief Diabetes Course
If you have been newly diagnosed with diabetes or just need a refresher on the basics of the disease, this brief course is designed to get you on the right path to living healthy. Certified diabetes educators cover the basics of diet, nutrition and lifestyle choices to help you manage your diabetes and achieve optimal health. Two-hour session. $25 (includes materials).

Comprehensive Diabetes Course
Designed for the newly diagnosed patient as well as for individuals who have been living with diabetes for years. Led by HCGH’s certified diabetes educator, nurse and dietician, this class provides in-depth education on managing diabetes as well as personalized programs and available options for helping you live healthier with the disease. Information on glucose monitoring, proper nutrition, exercise, medications and support programs will be covered in this advanced course. Offered as a full-day, six-hour course during the afternoon or two, three-hour sessions in the evening. $50 (includes materials).

Understanding Diabetes Injections
Individualized and hands-on instruction on how to safely administer and manage self-injections of insulin and other medications. This class covers all the current injectable diabetes medications. Our certified diabetes nurse educator will also help you understand common side effects of injections and how to determine effectiveness. 90-minute course. $25.

Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby – Managing Gestational Diabetes
This program for women diagnosed with gestational diabetes during pregnancy provides education and support in managing this condition throughout pregnancy. With a goal of minimizing complications, the course offers a comprehensive overview of the condition, how it affects mother and baby, nutrition and dietary recommendations to maintain good health as well as education on self-monitoring blood glucose levels. Taught by a certified diabetes educator. Two-hour course. $25.
DECEMBER

Holiday Gift Wrapping
December 10 – 24
The Mall in Columbia, Second floor
Looking for some relief from your holiday stress? Have all of your gifts wrapped for you by the HCGH Auxiliary for a fee based on the size of the package. All proceeds benefit the Claudia Mayer/Tina Broccolino Cancer Resource Center. If you would like more information about joining the Auxiliary, email hcgh-volunteers@jhmi.edu.

$5 off Drive-through admission with this ad (Valid Wednesdays and Thursdays)

Visit hcgh.org/symphonyoflights or call 410-740-7666.