



ISSUE 1 / 2020

Stay Healthy

Heart of Gold

YOUR RESOURCE FOR
HEALTHY LIVING AND
WELLNESS

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so he pays it forward by inspiring others

FRESH SPACE

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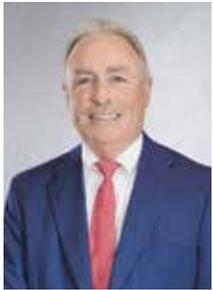
TAKE THE CHALLENGE!

Improve your heart health and check your blood pressure regularly



Meeting the heart disease challenge

Events like the Southern Tier Heart Walk support incredible research, lifesaving education and transformational advocacy in the fight against heart disease in our community. That's why I'm so proud to serve this year as chairperson of the walk. This is an annual event that makes an impact for longer, healthier lives. All who participate in the walk do so for some genuinely heartfelt reasons. The "Why" for me is both professional and personal.



As president of the community's largest healthcare system, I see both the negative impact of heart disease and stroke and the positive effects of beneficial research and world-class treatment, right here in our own region. Through the work of our Heart & Vascular Institute, UHS is a center for the diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of cardiovascular conditions. We are equally committed to education and prevention to help people stay as healthy as possible for a lifetime.

On a personal level, I have seen several family members affected by heart disease. This has prompted our entire family to take our health seriously, and stay committed to good nutrition, physical fitness and regular checkups.

You can join me in making a difference in the battle. This year, our goal is to raise \$380,000, which would beat our record from last year. Be part of it all by donating and keeping an eye out for the 2020 Southern Tier Heart Walk, which will be rescheduled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Also, together with the American Heart Association, we at UHS are encouraging everyone to participate in the Check It! Challenge. This effort asks you to *Check* your blood pressure twice a month for four months, *Change* to healthier habits and get your hypertension under *Control*. Look for details at nyuhs.org.

Again, thank you for walking with me on the road to better heart health for the Southern Tier.

John M. Carrigg
PRESIDENT & CEO OF UHS



take the challenge!

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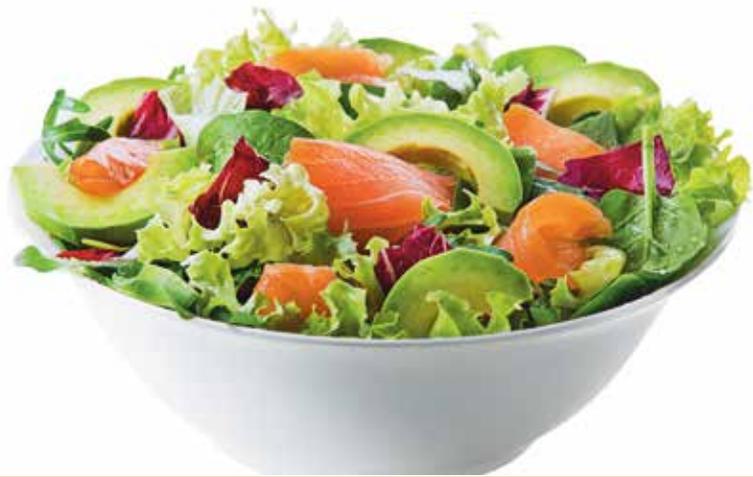
Did you know that about 28 percent of the population of Broome County has diagnosed hypertension? To address this fact, this spring UHS is partnering with the American Heart Association (AHA) to bring the Check It! Challenge to the Southern Tier. Between February and May, we are challenging UHS employees and our local community to commit to checking their blood pressure at least twice a month, in addition to embracing healthier habits that can reduce the risk of heart disease.

"High blood pressure, or hypertension, is often called the 'silent killer,'" says Thomas Genese, MD, FACP, internal medicine specialist at UHS. "Many people don't know they have it because there are no obvious symptoms at first. That's why we feel it's important to support the work of the AHA and the Check It!



MANAGING BLOOD PRESSURE

Each month of the Check It! Challenge has a theme. For the first month, we talked about how to manage your blood pressure. Here are some tips on blood pressure management from Thomas Genese, MD, FACP, internal medicine specialist at UHS:



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Challenge, so people have a better understanding of their blood pressure numbers.”

Participants will be able to track their blood pressure through a web application that can be accessed from any internet browser. The AHA has found that just monitoring and entering blood pressure numbers, as well as having access to information about improving heart health, gives a significant number of participants the inspiration needed to take action. If just a fraction of our community comes together to participate, it will have a big impact on the health of the Southern Tier. To be a part of it, check out nyuhs.org for updates on upcoming Check It! Challenge initiatives, or sign up at heart.org/southerntier.

 **JOIN NOW!**

Take part in the Check It! Challenge by visiting nyuhs.org. You can also access the Blood Pressure Tracker at ccctracker.com/UHS.

EAT HEALTHIER “Often, simply following a better diet can lower blood pressure by several points,” says Dr. Genese. Try limiting simple carbohydrates like white sugar and eat more healthy fats, like those found in avocado or fish.

REDUCE YOUR SALT INTAKE Cook more food at home to control the salt you use, or avoid highly processed foods, which are more likely to have higher levels of salt.

STOP SMOKING AND LIMIT ALCOHOL Both are associated with high blood pressure.

START AN EXERCISE PLAN Similarly to eating healthier, even small changes in your regular habits can have a positive effect on your blood pressure numbers.

Changing Lives at a Quick Clip

For mitral valve surgeries, a new minimally invasive treatment gives patients a needed option

A new device called MitraClip might be tiny, but it’s making a huge difference for some UHS patients.

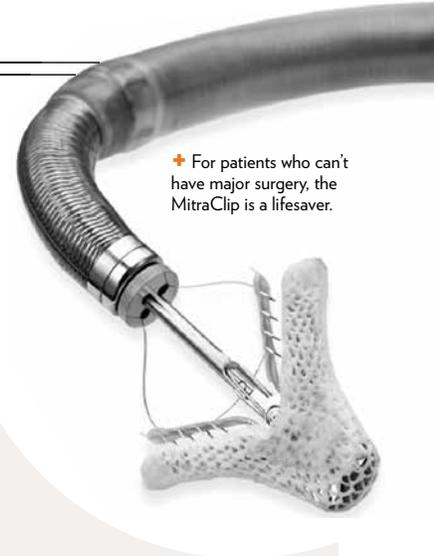
The device addresses mitral valve regurgitation, a condition that affects the area between the two sides of the heart. When the valve isn’t functioning properly, blood can leak back into the heart’s upper chamber instead of being pumped out the way it should. This can lead to shortness of breath, leg swelling and potential heart failure.

UHS has done many open heart surgeries to repair these valves, but that procedure isn’t appropriate for everyone, says Alon Yarkoni, M.D., at UHS’ Heart & Vascular Institute. Those who are older, in poor health or have other medical conditions like lung disease aren’t good candidates for such a major surgery. That’s where MitraClip comes in.

The device can be placed on the valve in a minimally invasive procedure, with just one tiny incision along the groin. The device is threaded up to the heart through a catheter. The surgery often takes only one to two hours, compared to the four or five hours for open heart surgery, and hospital recovery time is often just a day, as opposed to a week of hospital stay after open heart surgery.

UHS began using MitraClips in late 2019, and is already using them on a regular basis, Dr. Yarkoni says, giving many more patients an option they didn’t have before.

“For those who were too sick to have major surgery, this gives them a chance to have their mitral valve repaired, and that makes a big difference for their quality of life,” he notes. “We’re very excited to be offering MitraClip, because it allows us to help patients who would not have had this option before.”



+ For patients who can't have major surgery, the MitraClip is a lifesaver.

 **HEART TO HEART**

For more information on the MitraClip and UHS cardiology services, visit nyuhs.org/care-treatment/heart-vascular-care or call the UHS Heart & Vascular Institute at 607-763-6580.



HEART *of gold*

Cardiac rehab changed Terry Purtell's life, so he pays it forward by inspiring others

Like many people who experience cardiovascular disease, Terry Purtell, a 69-year-old resident of Binghamton, first confused the symptomatic chest pain he felt with heartburn. A day after receiving heartburn medication, Mr. Purtell found himself in even worse pain. He went to the hospital and eventually received an angioplasty—on Christmas Eve.

While this initial experience, which occurred in 1994, pushed him into a healthier lifestyle for a while, that waned and in 2006 he had his second angioplasty. “I never met a bacon double cheeseburger I didn’t like,” jokes Mr. Purtell. After his second angioplasty, he went through another period of healthy living, but it wasn’t until experiencing an incredibly stressful time in 2013 and 2014, including losing his son to colon cancer and undergoing triple bypass surgery, that Mr. Purtell started to take healthy living seriously.

“It was a terrible experience and I was severely depressed after that surgery,” says Mr. Purtell. “I was told I should start cardiac rehab. They said it would be six or eight weeks and to try it and see if I like it. Well, it’s been six years and I’m still going because I really like it.”

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Cathy Eggleston, RN, nursing coordinator at UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation, works with Mr. Purtell and explains that cardiac rehab is often successful for patients like him because of the social support, both from UHS staff and fellow patients. “You’re with the same people every time you come to exercise, so there is huge support from other patients going through the same experience you are,” says Ms. Eggleston. “There’s a lot of camaraderie and that’s a huge benefit to patients participating in this program, especially if they might be afraid or reluctant to exercise in other situations.”

Cardiac rehab patients form bonds with each other and the UHS staff. Ms. Eggleston says that Mr. Purtell is the perfect example of this: “He has a great attitude

and he’s always upbeat and positive,” she says. “When we have new patients or patients who are unsure about the program, he’s always willing to share some of his history and how well he’s doing with the exercise. He makes other patients feel more at ease.”

While Mr. Purtell may now be the perfect example of how cardiac rehab can change your life, it wasn’t always that way. He felt the camaraderie firsthand when he started going to cardiac rehab in 2014, and that paved the way for his current success.

“When I first started, I would see people in cardiac rehab with oxygen tanks, using walkers, using canes, and still coming in to use the machines,” says Mr. Purtell. “I was just inspired so much by these people, and that really did a lot for my state of mind. It made me want to get better because I was looking at people all around me also wanting to get better. Like they say, there is strength in numbers.”

PILLARS OF SUCCESS

While support from staff and fellow patients makes a big difference, there are other ways that the UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation Program promotes patient success. Ms. Eggleston explains that the program is split into three phases: inpatient, outpatient but with a recent cardiac event, and fully outpatient. Usually patients “graduate” from the first two phases and then phase three can last as long as the patient likes. Mr. Purtell has worked out in the Cardiac Rehab Program for close to six years and Ms. Eggleston says they have a patient who recently celebrated his 25th year of participating in the program.

For patients in the first two phases, UHS staff monitor patients’ vital signs. “They are monitored for 36 sessions,” says Ms. Eggleston. “So throughout the program we are monitoring the progress of their cardiovascular exercise. We’re monitoring their heart rate, heart rhythm, and blood pressure to see how they respond to the exercises.” This not only gives the



IS CARDIAC REHAB FOR ME?

At UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation, many patients who are in the program are referred by their doctor because they are currently receiving inpatient treatment or recently had a cardiac event. However, cardiac rehab is available to anyone with cardiac risk factors, regardless of their personal heart health history.

“Cardiac risk factors can include a lot of things—such as family history, poor diet, diabetes, or stress,” says Cathy Eggleston, RN, nursing coordinator at UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation. “The program is available to anyone with any risk factor, and all they need to participate is clearance from a physician.”

If you think you might benefit from a guided exercise program, talk to your physician, or contact UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation at **607-865-2155**.

✦ After decades of on-and-off heart problems, Terry Purtell has been working out at UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation regularly for the past six years and has never felt healthier.

SIMPLE INSPIRATION

We asked Southern Tier Heart Walk Inspiration Honoree Terry Purtell what advice he has for others who may be considering structured exercise such as UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation, or making lifestyle changes on their own. Here is his answer:

“I would say two things: Any of the things that you know aren’t good for you, do those in moderation. And keep moving—that’s it. Just keep your body moving, keep walking, keep exercising, because that’s the best thing for you. When I worked at the parks department, I would see women and men come in—in their 80s and 90s—just to walk around the center. And they would always say the same thing: ‘Terry, just keep moving.’ I think of that and it’s one of the things that gives me more inspiration.”



prevent further progression of their heart disease,” says Ms. Eggleston.

FROM REHAB TO ROCKSTAR

Creating this environment where patients can thrive is the goal of UHS Cardiac Rehabilitation, and it has given many UHS patients, including Mr. Purtell, the opportunity to live a longer, healthier, more enjoyable life. “Cardiac rehab is a place I can go and it’s a reminder to get well and stay well—it’s a lifelong thing,” says Mr. Purtell. “On your own, after a year you might think ‘I’m done,’ but when you’re at Cardiac Rehab with other people who are going through the same thing, it’s a constant reminder that this is something you need to work at and it needs to be part of your life.”

For Mr. Purtell, it’s the part of his life that keeps him healthy and able to enjoy the things he truly values in life: his family, including two grandchildren; working part-time for the local parks department doing maintenance on baseball fields, among other tasks; playing golf; and singing with friends in a barbershop quartet.

“I heard a guy on TV say, ‘I really want to be a rockstar grandpa,’ and I thought ‘You know, so do I,’” says Mr. Purtell. “If I’m walking around having problems breathing, I’m not going to be able to be that. So that’s just one thing I use for inspiration.”

And inspiration is a quality that Mr. Purtell does not lack. In addition to inspiring his fellow rehab participants on a weekly basis, he was named the “Inspirational Honoree” for the 2020 Southern Tier Heart Walk, which is being rescheduled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. “Terry is reaping the clinical benefits of continuing to exercise, but he’s also really enjoying himself, which makes him a great role model for other patients,” says Ms. Eggleston. “He shows them what you can do when you commit to making this lifestyle change.”

For Terry, the lifestyle change means more time spent fishing with his grandchildren, more weekly rounds playing golf with the “Over-the-Hill Gang,” or more performances with his quartet, such as their recent gig singing the National Anthem at a Binghamton University basketball game. It also means more time to inspire others. “I feel like I’m a representation of someone who had heart trouble and turned it around, and I’m just hoping that my story can get somebody else to look in the mirror and try to improve their life—to get a little healthier,” he says. 🌱

CHECK. CHANGE. CONTROL.

As part of our partnership with the American Heart Association, Terry Purtell will be honored at the Southern Tier Heart Walk, which has been postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Learn more about this event and the rest of our AHA-sponsored Check It! Challenge at nyuhs.org.

providers an idea of how the patient is doing, but it also ensures that exercise is performed at a safe level.

Also adding to the safety of Cardiac Rehab is the fact that it is done on-site at UHS, which means medical staff are already on hand in case of an emergency. Ms. Eggleston also points out that Cardiac Rehab staff can act as a liaison to a patient’s primary care or specialty provider if they notice something that might warrant a checkup. “We see our patients several times a week, so we can see changes in the files—for example, is their blood pressure spiking up? If we see something new, we will send that to their cardiologist so the patient doesn’t have to call the office and make an appointment,” says Ms. Eggleston.

And while helping patients improve their health through guided exercise is a key component of cardiac rehab, education is another strong pillar the program depends on. “Education is important because the patients aren’t just exercising, they’re also learning how to make lifestyle changes that are going to

fresh SPACE

The just-opened Gateway Building offers dining and convenience for the UHS Wilson campus

This February, UHS officially opened the doors to the newly-renovated Gateway Building. The four-story structure includes a brand-new kitchen, retail food service and dining space, as well as offices, conference rooms and supply-chain functions. Here's what can you expect to find at the new Gateway Building:



GET A BITE

The first floor of the Gateway Building is now open. Check it out for breakfast from 6:30 to 10 a.m.; lunch from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; and dinner from 4 to 7 p.m. Public access to the Gateway Building is through the pedestrian bridge over Baldwin Street from UHS Wilson.



GATEWAY 4 (4TH FLOOR)

This is the administrative location of the Chief Medical Officer, Medical Staff and Medical Affairs offices, and the Hospitalist Program. Quality & Patient Safety and the Advanced Practice Providers Program are also now calling Gateway 4 home. Additionally, Gateway 4 features a large conference space that will serve as the UHS Wilson Emergency Operations Command Center whenever needed.

GATEWAY 3 (3RD FLOOR) - MAIN ENTRANCE

This floor features our new dining area, as well as food and beverage vending. Dining in the Gateway Building will be exclusively on Gateway 3, which seats about 120. In addition to dining and vending, the floor includes two small conference rooms and a new physicians' lounge.



GATEWAY 2 (2ND FLOOR)

This floor is the new administrative home of the Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Operating Officer, and will house Nursing Safety & Quality, and Surgical Services. It also includes space for the UHS Infection Control Team and Food & Nutrition administration.

GATEWAY 1 (1ST FLOOR)

The foundation of the new Gateway Building is a brand-new kitchen and retail food-sales space on Gateway 1. You'll find weigh-and-pay hot main dishes as well as a salad bar. Each week guest restaurants will provide exciting food choices, including Indian cuisine by Moghul, Chinese dishes by Far East and barbecue from Brooks'. Gateway 1 will also be home to a selection of takeaway snacks and meals such as house-made salads, sandwiches, wraps, fruits and desserts. To drink, Gateway 1 offers Ellis coffee as well as other bottled beverages in on-the-go coolers. 🍹



Putting a little mindfulness in your day can pay off in major benefits

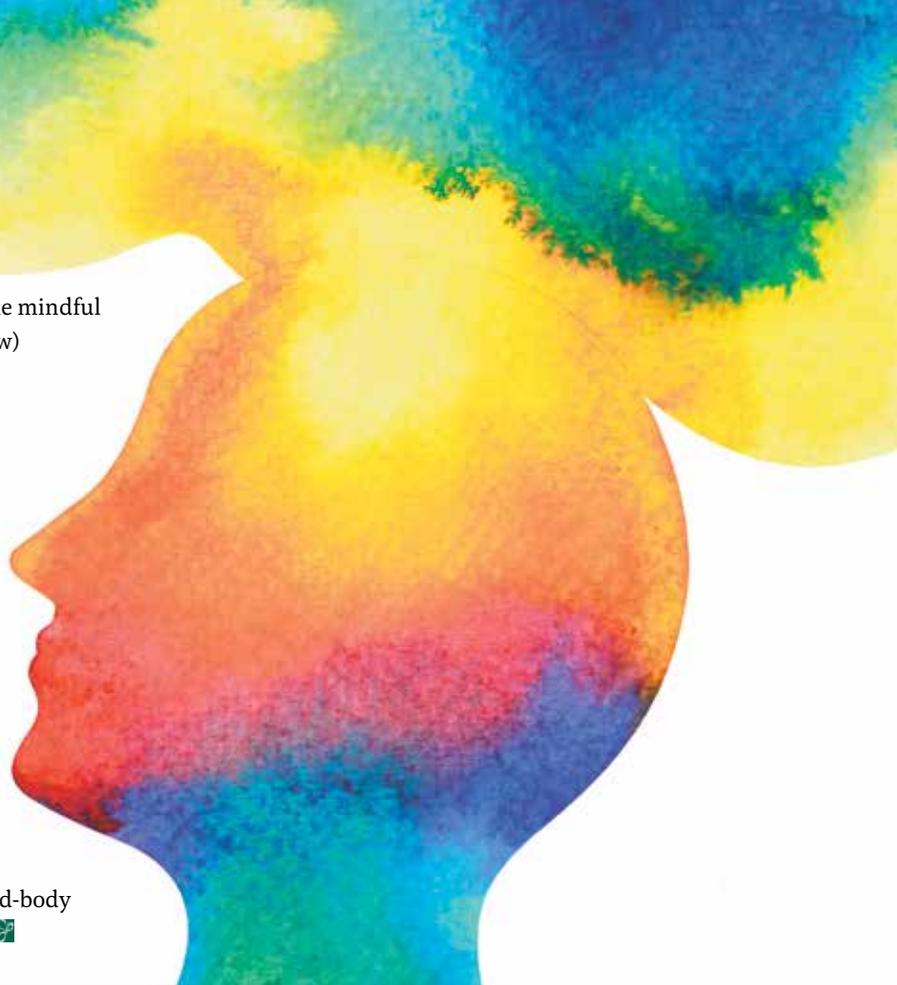
make the most of the mind-body connection

Lower blood pressure, better sleep, more energy, stronger immune system, reduced chronic pain, less muscle tension—the list of benefits from mindfulness reads like a checklist of essential health components. Research has found, over and over, that paying attention to your mind-body connection through simple mindful practices (see “Mindfulness Practices in 1 Minute or Less” below) can give you major mental and physical health advantages.

Plus, there’s often a ripple effect. For example, being more mindful might cause you to make nutritious food choices, and that improves sleep, which then boosts your energy for a workout the next day. Those effects stacking up can be powerful and make you feel more balanced and resilient, and less stressed and overwhelmed.

“For me, being mindful means being in the present moment as much as possible,” says Kayla Velie, UHS Employee Health and Wellness Coordinator. “That allows you to feel more fully here, rather than distracted by everything you need to do.”

UHS encourages mindfulness among its employees with resources such as wellness programs, dietitian advice and a health-promoting app. For people in the UHS community, we offer Stay Healthy seminars that emphasize wellness and setting healthy habits. Anything that lets people tap into a mind-body connection can bolster a sense of mindfulness, says Ms. Velie. 🌱



MINDFULNESS PRACTICES IN 1 MINUTE OR LESS

Being more mindful doesn’t mean you need to set aside a bunch of time, or even to find a quiet place. Try these anytime, anywhere strategies:



Write down 3 things. that make you feel grateful. Research shows that the simple act of keeping a “gratitude log” can make you feel calmer and more connected to those around you.



Eat your next bite slowly—very slowly. Rather than seeing food as on-the-go fuel, consider it a chance to be more mindful. On your next bite of food, first inhale the aroma of the spices, and then savor the flavors as you’re chewing.



Take 3 deep breaths. Making your exhale longer than your inhale engages your parasympathetic nervous system, making you feel more relaxed. On your three breaths, count up to five on your inhale, and then try exhaling for seven.



BE MINDFUL

Find out more about Stay Healthy wellness seminars at nyuhs.org.