



**Inpatient care
that counts:
See page 5**

Positive changes are on the horizon



Lynn M.
Oswald, FACHE

DEAR COMMUNITY MEMBER,

I hope that you're enjoying your summer. We at Fort Hamilton Hospital hardly have time to notice that summer is here. Since

announcing our decision to join the Kettering Health Network, our board of trustees has been working nonstop to complete the work that needs to be done in order to join our new health care system. The Kettering Health Network folks have been extremely welcoming and helpful as we've completed the work that helps both sides be sure that we know everything there is to know about one another before we finalize our affiliation arrangements.

NEW AND EXPANDED SERVICES

By the time this newsletter is in your hands, I expect that the agreement will have been signed and that we have begun implementing the plan that's been created to allow Fort Hamilton patients, employees and physicians as well as our community to benefit from all that the Kettering Health Network has to offer. In future newsletters, I'll share specifics about this plan with you so that you're fully aware of the new and expanded services and other opportunities that are available to us as a Kettering Health Network hospital.

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Say good night to sleep problems

When was the last time you got the recommended seven to eight hours of sleep at night? Lack of sleep makes it dangerous for you to drive, leads to weight gain and raises your risk of developing high blood pressure and diabetes. Try these tips to conquer five common causes of sleep problems:

> **SLEEP STEALER: Menstruation**

Cramps, bloating and hormonal changes keep you tossing and turning.

The remedy:

Over-the-counter pain relievers and medications can dull cramps and relieve bloating.

> **SLEEP STEALER: Bad habits**

You stay up late, have a late-night snack or cocktail, fall asleep with the TV on or work in bed, leading to less-than-stellar sleep.

The remedy:

- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day—weekends, too.
- Skip nighttime caffeine, nicotine and alcohol.
- Eat at least two to three hours before bed.
- Keep your bedroom cool, dark and quiet.

> **SLEEP STEALER: An overactive mind**

You lie awake, stressing over money, your to-do list or your job.

The remedy:

- Relax. Read, listen to soothing music or knit until you feel sleepy.
- Make a to-do list before bed. Tell yourself you'll deal with it tomorrow, then go to sleep, worry free.
- Speak with your health care provider if you're depressed or overwhelmed by stress.

> **SLEEP STEALER: Sleep disorders**

Obstructive sleep apnea is a common sleep saboteur, and women are more likely than men to cope with insomnia, restless legs syndrome and leg cramps.

The remedy:

Speak with your physician, who may order a sleep study to determine what's causing the problem and how to treat it.

> **SLEEP STEALER: Pregnancy**

If it's not the constant getting up to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, it's your ever-growing belly and pesky acid reflux that keep you up. And once the baby's born, his or her middle-of-the-night cries wake you.

The remedy:

- Cut back on beverages before bedtime.
- Place pillows between your knees to help support you as you sleep or buy a pregnancy pillow.
- Sleep on your side with your knees bent to take pressure off your back.
- Avoid spicy foods to prevent heartburn. ●

> **Need more sleep?**

The Sleep Disorders Center at Fort Hamilton Hospital can help. To learn more or to schedule an appointment, call **513-867-6240**.



Test your heartburn knowledge

You eat a greasy burger and fries and chase it down with a big soda. Soon, you feel the burning pain in your chest known as heartburn. If you have heartburn or acid indigestion more than twice a week, it's known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). The condition occurs when the sphincter muscle separating the esophagus from the stomach doesn't close properly, allowing stomach contents (including acid) to rise up into the esophagus, causing a burning sensation in the chest or a bitter taste in the mouth. If left untreated, GERD can lead to more serious conditions, including esophageal cancer. Test your knowledge about this common, treatable condition:

1 Which of the following is not regularly confused with GERD?

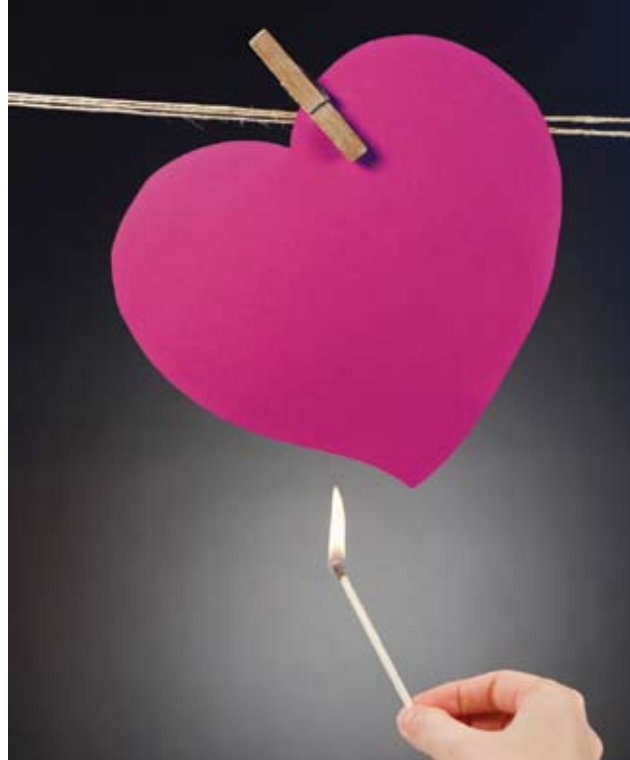
- A. stiff neck B. asthma C. laryngitis D. chest pain

ANSWER: A. GERD is common in people with asthma and can even worsen their condition. Frequent acid reflux can cause sore throats or laryngitis. And some GERD sufferers mistake the surge of acid reflux in the esophagus for angina or heart-related chest pain.

2 What can you do at home to help alleviate your GERD symptoms?

- A. wash your hands frequently C. maintain a healthy weight
B. eat softer foods D. go to sleep early

ANSWER: C. Being overweight places excess pressure on your abdomen, which causes stomach acid to back up into the esophagus. Don't try squeezing into too-tight jeans—the pressure on your stomach can push acid into the esophagus. Extra sleep can't cure GERD, and getting into bed within three hours of eating can make the condition worse. Elevating the head of your bed 6 inches can help, though; you'll use gravity to keep your stomach contents out of your esophagus.



3 What treatment is often recommended for new GERD patients?

- A. antacids C. antidepressants
B. proton pump inhibitors D. surgery

ANSWER: B. Over-the-counter antacids are OK for infrequent heartburn, but for GERD, doctors often prescribe proton pump inhibitors, which can decrease the flow of stomach contents to the esophagus and simultaneously heal esophageal damage caused by stomach acid. Your doctor may also prescribe pro-motility drugs, which help move food from the stomach and remove acid from the esophagus. If medication doesn't help control the condition, surgery is an option.

4 True or false: Chewing gum makes heartburn worse.

ANSWER: FALSE. Chewing gum or sucking on hard candies forces you to make more saliva, which acts as a natural barrier to acid, helping to ease the burn. Just avoid peppermint—it can make the problem worse. ●

> Eat better, feel better

Fort Hamilton Hospital offers medical nutritional therapy to help you deal with conditions such as high blood pressure, pre-diabetes, high cholesterol or excess weight. For more information, call registered dietitian Carla Metzler, R.D., L.D., at **513-867-2337**.

The future of imaging is here

at Fort Hamilton Hospital

Fort Hamilton Hospital is now offering an imaging powerhouse—a new Philips Gemini TruFlight PET/CT scanner—to its patients. This combination scanner uses positron emission tomography (PET) and computed tomography (CT) to help physicians evaluate patients with greater accuracy than ever before, often requiring fewer diagnostic tests. “We’re very pleased to be able to offer our patients this important advancement in diagnostic imaging,” says senior vice president Lynn M. Oswald, FACHE.

ONE MACHINE, MANY USES

The Gemini TruFlight PET/CT scanner at Fort Hamilton provides highly accurate diagnostic information that helps health care providers catch potential problems early on or plan more precise treatments for conditions such as:

- **Cancer.** Physicians can obtain information about the type of tumor, its location and whether or not it has spread. The effectiveness of chemotherapy or radiation therapy can also be monitored with the device.

- **Heart and vascular disease.**

Health care providers can obtain precise measurements of blood flow in and around the heart to determine appropriate treatments for patients who may have heart disease.

- **Neurologic disorders.** Doctors can view the areas of the brain that cause epileptic seizures to determine whether surgery is an option. They can use the scanner to check patients for Alzheimer’s disease.



> Did you know?

Medicare and a growing number of private insurers are approving the reimbursement of charges related to PET/CT scanning.

A BETTER OPTION FOR PATIENTS

The result of all this in-depth diagnostic information means more precise targeted treatments for patients. In many cases, additional surgeries or procedures can be avoided. Scans are painless, and because they’re completed quickly, exposure to radiation is less than with traditional X-rays.

The open design of the PET/CT scanner is patient friendly as well. “Some patients feel anxious being fully enclosed in a traditional PET scanner—this system will help them relax and feel more comfortable,” says Linda Reilman, M.D., director of radiology at Fort Hamilton. ●



> Image is everything

Ask your doctor whether PET/CT scanning at Fort Hamilton Hospital is right for you. For more information, visit www.FortHamiltonHospital.com or call **513-867-2327**.

Hospitalists > The quarterbacks of inpatient care

It used to be that when patients were admitted to the hospital, their primary care physicians (PCPs) would handle their general care during their stay. Today, more and more PCPs are entrusting the care of their hospitalized patients to hospitalists. This allows them to focus their energies on seeing patients in the office.

INPATIENT CARE SPECIALISTS

Hospitalists are board-certified internal medicine physicians who care for patients only in the hospital setting. At Fort Hamilton Hospital, hospitalists care for patients who may not have a personal physician on staff or at the request of a PCP. "Hospitalists, by their constant presence at the hospital, are able to efficiently manage inpatient care and act rapidly to any situation that may arise," says Manish Sachdeva, M.D., co-director of the hospitalist staff at Fort Hamilton.



Manish Sachdeva, M.D.

COMMUNICATION IS A MUST

Working closely with the PCP, hospitalists coordinate patient care and make referrals to surgeons or specialists, when necessary. "Hospitalists maintain communication with a patient's PCP at all times. They're truly the quarterbacks of the inpatient experience," Dr. Sachdeva says. When a patient is discharged, the hospitalist completes a report that's faxed to his or her physician within hours to ensure a continuity of care.

- Some of the other tasks hospitalists perform include:
- assessing your condition upon admission
 - ordering tests
 - coordinating your care with nurses and physicians
 - providing regular care updates to you and your family

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS

Patients are the beneficiaries of this direct involvement in all aspects of their care. Studies show that hospitalists help reduce

a patient's length of stay, reduce treatment costs and improve quality of care. Since they're on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, someone is always available to answer questions about your care. "As a hospitalist, I feel that by practicing full time in the hospital, I can spend extra time helping patients during a vulnerable time of their lives," says E. Robert Ghazal, M.D., co-director of the hospitalist staff at Fort Hamilton. ●



E. Robert Ghazal, M.D.



Kavita Jyotula, M.D. (l)
Susheela Rajan, M.D. (c) and
Manish Sachdeva, M.D. (r),
discuss patient care.

> Meet our hospitalists

The following physicians are board certified in internal medicine from the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM):

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Farhan Arif, M.D. | • Edward Marcheschi, M.D.* |
| • E. Robert Ghazal, M.D. | • Susheela Rajan, M.D. |
| • Kavita Jyotula, M.D. | • Manish Sachdeva, M.D. |

* Also board certified in sports medicine from the ABIM

> Our team is on your side!

To learn more, visit www.FortHamiltonHospital.com.

After the ED: What next?

You've read enough about heart-attack warning signs and bagel-cutting accidents to know when you should head to the emergency department (ED). But will you know how to care for yourself when it's time to go home? Recent research has found that 78 percent of patients discharged from the ED don't fully understand the instructions that they're given by doctors. That can lead to complications. If you find yourself in the ED, consider these points:

If you've had a heart attack ... You'll be admitted to the hospital, not sent home. When you eventually do leave the hospital, be sure to ask the doctor how to take any prescribed medication and what dangerous symptoms to watch for that could require another visit to the ED.

If you've been injured ... Many people have their wounds sealed with topical skin adhesive, but others receive stitches or staples. Some stitches dissolve and don't warrant another doctor visit, but others need to be removed by a physician, so you should understand whether—and when—it's necessary to make a follow-up appointment, especially if the stitches are in an area that you can't see. Find out whether you can get the wound wet; how to clean it and change your bandages, if need be; and how it will look and feel if it gets infected (redness and a foul odor are likely signs).

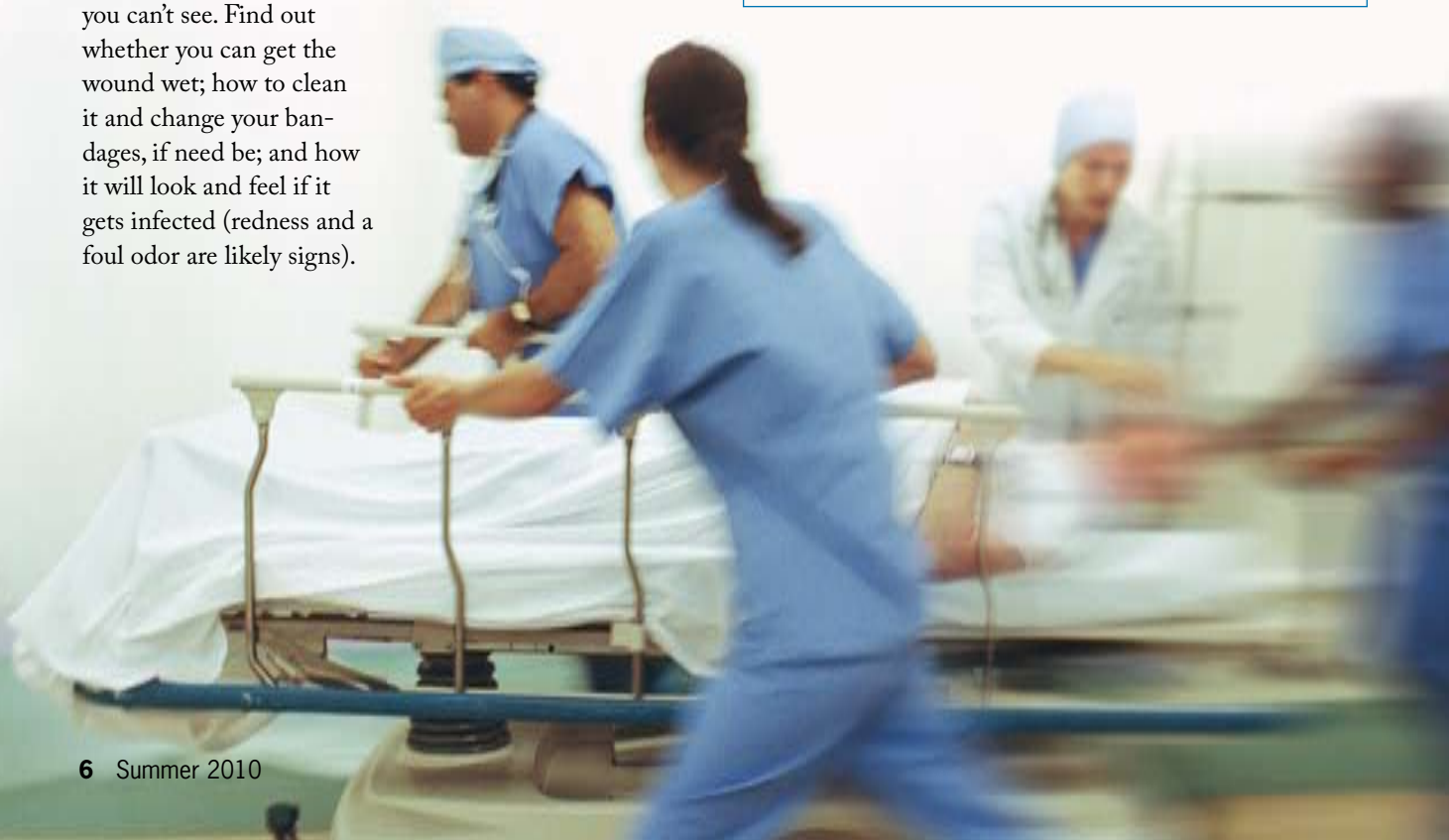
DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW UP

If the doctor gives you written instructions about taking medication or asks you to be on the lookout for symptoms that could signal infection or a relapse, make sure you understand everything before leaving. Find out what pain medication to use and whether you'll need a prescription. Ask whether to return to the ED or to your health care provider if your health worsens; the doctor's response will depend on your condition and the time of your visit. Many ED doctors recommend an appointment with your provider a week or two after being discharged, so ask whether this will be necessary. You probably won't need to phone your health insurance company after your ED visit, although some companies require a phone call beforehand. ●



Ready to care for you

The Carruthers Emergency Center at Fort Hamilton Hospital is here to serve you and your family. For more information, visit www.FortHamiltonHospital.com.





Don't let golf injuries sideline you

Most people hit the links to calm the mind, but golf can be stressful on the body. Swing too hard and you can develop tendinitis. Lug your clubs around all day and you could strain your back. If you're one of the 28 million golfers nationwide, take steps to avoid these common injuries during your next outing:

> Get back in action!

Pain shouldn't put an end to your summertime activities. Dr. Gula's office is located at the Physicians Office Center, 1010 Cereal Ave., Suite 103, in Hamilton. For more information or to make an appointment, call **513-867-4165**.

- ▶ **GOLFER'S ELBOW** If you overemphasize your wrists while swinging or accidentally hit the ground with your club, you could develop this painful tendinitis along the inner elbow.
 - **Treat it:** "If rest, physical therapy and anti-inflammatory medications don't help, you may need cortisone injections or surgery," says Douglas C. Gula, D.O., an orthopedic surgeon at Fort Hamilton Hospital.
 - **Prevent it:** Stretch before playing, and strengthen your forearm muscles regularly. (Try wrist curls or squeezing a tennis ball.)
- ▶ **BACK PAIN** Whether you hunch over the ball, your golf bag is too heavy or your back just can't handle all the twisting you do while teeing off, back pain is a serious issue for golfers.
 - **Treat it:** Ice the painful area for the first two to three days, then switch to heat. Try over-the-counter painkillers if necessary. Don't lie down hoping to get better; bed rest isn't recommended. At night, sleep in the fetal position.
 - **Prevent it:** Warm up with a few practice swings, gradually increasing to your full range of motion. Between golf outings, use the rowing machine at the gym to strengthen your back muscles. If you prefer to walk the course, consider a wheeled golf bag.
- ▶ **SUNBURN** You may not instinctively reach for sunscreen, but you'll be outside for hours during the sunniest part of the day, so without protection, you risk getting burned.
 - **Treat it:** Take a cool shower to soothe a burn, then apply a moisturizing lotion like aloe vera to the affected areas. Anti-inflammatory medications can help with pain and soreness.
 - **Prevent it:** Liberally apply sunscreen half an hour before heading outside. Wear long sleeves and a broad-brimmed hat (though a golf visor is better than nothing).
- ▶ **HEAD INJURIES** Golfers suffer more than 8,000 head injuries annually. Sometimes, an errant ball is to blame. Other times, someone accidentally stands in the path of a swinging club.
 - **Treat it:** See a doctor or visit the emergency room, depending on the severity of the injury and whether you've lost consciousness.
 - **Prevent it:** Listen for people shouting "fore!," and stand back when someone else is swinging. ●

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POSITIVE CHANGES ARE ON THE HORIZON

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IMPROVEMENTS UNDER WAY

In addition to the affiliation effort, we're also working on a number of other significant projects at Fort Hamilton. The two most challenging projects we face are full implementation and operation of the new PET/CT scanner and initial planning for a total renovation of our Family Birthplace unit. You can read more about the PET/CT scanner inside this issue of *Living Healthy* (see page 4). And, as more information becomes available about the Family Birthplace project, I'll be very excited to share it with you.

Stay tuned, and thanks to everyone in our community for the ongoing support you provide to our hospital. Take care, and have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Oswald, FACHE
Senior Vice President
Fort Hamilton Hospital



PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

Richard I. Sternberg, D.O.

RICHARD I. STERNBERG, D.O., is a board-certified physician specializing in pulmonary care, critical care and internal medicine. Dr. Sternberg is president of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine Associates. A staff of five, including two nurse practitioners, help run the practice, which has been located in Hamilton, Ohio for 17 years.

As director of Pulmonary and Critical Care Services, Dr. Sternberg oversees the care provided to patients while they're in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Fort Hamilton Hospital. The health care providers in the ICU use a

multidisciplinary team approach to patient care, enabling them to deliver care effectively and efficiently.

Dr. Sternberg also cares for patients who have respiratory illnesses such as asthma, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) and lung cancer.

He resides in Hanover Township with his wife and four children. His wife, once a nurse at Fort Hamilton, owns and operates two medical spas in West Chester, Ohio. Their children will either be in college or graduate school next year. Dr. Sternberg enjoys playing golf and traveling.



Breathe easy

Summer heat and humidity can cause breathing difficulties for people who have asthma, COPD or other lung conditions, but help is available. For more information, call **513-867-2870**.