

Healthy Halifax

YOUR RESOURCE FOR BETTER LIVING



Winter/Spring 2017

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Muscle Memory

TAKING PREVENTIVE STEPS CAN IMPROVE YOUR CARDIAC HEALTH

There are more than 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the human body. Like roadwork delays on I-95, obstructing the flow through those vessels can cause major problems. Blockages in the body are the result of plaque, a waxy substance that travels in the bloodstream and sometimes sticks to vessel walls.

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- + Innovative Approach to PAD
- + Exercise Ideas
- + Focus on the Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative

IN MY VIEW

DUE TO MANY CHANGES BROUGHT BY THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA), the thought of its repeal adds complexity and frustration for patients and families. It's important to remember that ACA is an insurance reform bill and minimally affects the manner in which healthcare services are provided.

The ACA's significant payment cuts to hospitals and doctors provided the catalyst for these groups to redesign the way health-care was delivered. As healthcare providers, we understood that scarce, or borrowed, resources had to be invested in preventive and primary care to change



the curve for increasing sick-care services.

Our focus is on the Triple Aim developed at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. We believe that if we can 1) improve the patient's experience, 2) improve the health of populations, then 3) the costs of healthcare will decrease for all.

We understand that high-quality care is often more satisfying to patients. When vaccines and primary care visits can prevent illness, then there is less sick care needed. In this model, you go to the doctor when you are healthy to stay healthy. It requires people to participate in their health and consider behavior modifications that can reduce poor health.

There are times when someone is doing everything possible to be healthy, but because those around them are sick, they get sick. The Triple Aim also focuses on the health of populations in a building, community or region, because you are only as healthy as those around you.

Finally, studies have shown that if healthcare and preventive care is available, there is a reduction in the amount of expensive, sick-care services. So patient-centered, high-quality care lowers the overall cost of care to ourselves, our businesses and our country.

Halifax Regional remains dedicated to the Triple Aim and will be a leading partner in your health.

WILL MAHONE, PRESIDENT
wmahone@halifaxrhc.org

►► Improved Imaging for Urological Conditions

Halifax Regional has purchased a dedicated digital urology imaging system that better diagnoses bladder and prostate cancer in patients.

The Hydra Vision Plus uses optimized geometry and a large field-of-view image intensifier for maximum anatomical coverage, sharper images and enhanced comfort. The system has already proven effective in better diagnosing patients, allowing for quicker procedures and more effective patient care, according to Natarajan Rajan, MD, Halifax Regional Urology.

Generous donations to the Halifax Regional Foundation helped make the purchase possible. "It's a great feeling to see our goal of being the leading partner in the health of Roanoke Valley residents supported in such a substantial way," says Will Mahone, Halifax Regional president and CEO.

Bladder cancer is the fourth most common cancer among men in the United States. The death rate from prostate cancer in North Carolina is one of the highest in the nation. Due to these and other staggering statistics, Halifax Regional took a stand to provide the Roanoke Valley community with the most advanced equipment in the urology field.



The Hydra Vision Plus provides sharper anatomical images to help better diagnose bladder and prostate cancer.

►► 'Warrior Diplomats' Share Emergency Preparedness Knowledge

Halifax County is no stranger to natural disasters. Just think back to Winter Storm Helena, which dumped more than 9 inches of snow at the beginning of 2017, or Hurricane Matthew, which tore through the area last fall. Thankfully, the county is becoming better equipped to handle such weather thanks to soldiers from Fort Bragg. Specifically, troops assigned to Company B, 83rd Civil Affairs Battalion, 20th Engineer Brigade, have partnered with the county and Halifax Regional Medical Center to share knowledge and experience in emergency preparedness.

Lessons learned from the storms facilitated conversation between the soldiers — who call themselves "warrior diplomats" — and the emergency

response workers.

Soldiers toured the medical center to analyze its emergency casualty care operations, engineering and logistic support, and disaster aid operations in order to gain a better understanding of the hospital and offer quality feedback on existing plans. During the information exchange, both sides talked about their specific capabilities and equipment.

"Being a rural county, the monetary aspects are not as well placed as some of the metropolitan counties," notes Buddy Wrenn, emergency management coordinator for Halifax County. "What we lack there, we can make up for in training and preparedness with our first responders and the Army."



WINTER *Workouts*

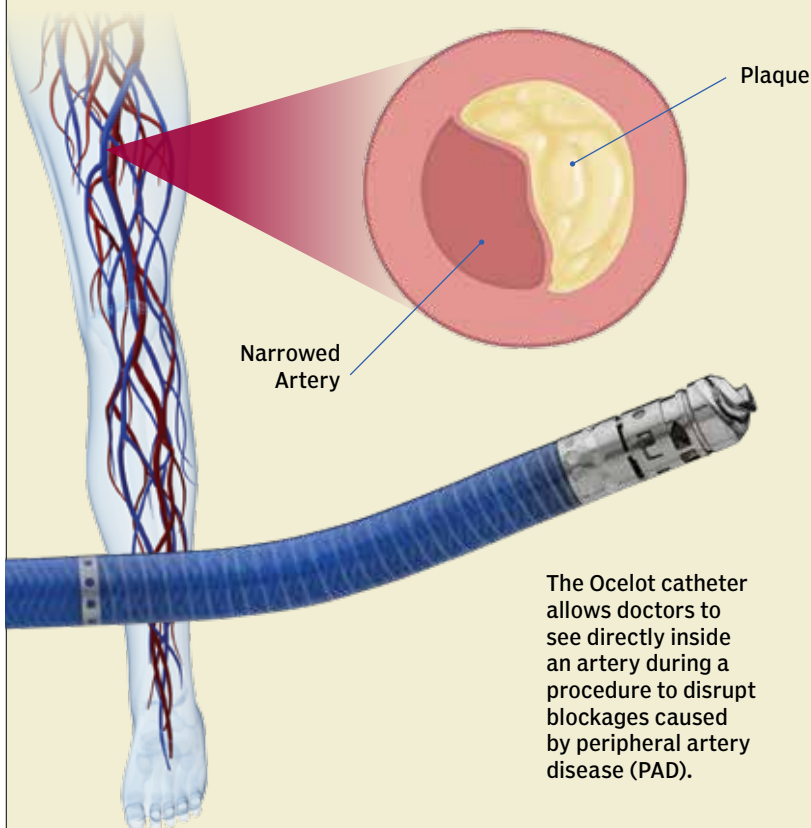
▶▶ New Catheter System Uses Innovative Approach to Treat PAD Symptoms

Halifax's heart doctors now use the Ocelot catheter system to treat patients suffering from the painful symptoms of peripheral artery disease, or PAD. A buildup of plaque in the arteries that blocks blood flow to the legs or feet causes this condition.

The Ocelot catheter is a minimally invasive treatment that restores blood flow in completely blocked arteries in patients' legs through a simple needle puncture to the artery. Optical coherence tomography (OCT) allows physicians to see from inside an artery. Thanks to Ocelot's lumivascular approach ("lumi" = light, "vascular" = arterial), physicians can more accurately navigate through totally blocked arteries without disrupting the healthy artery walls. Physicians traditionally have had to rely solely on X-ray as well as touch to guide catheters through complicated blockages.

"Peripheral artery disease is a common, costly and painful disease that greatly impacts quality of life, with patients experiencing cramping, numbness, discoloration and pain," says Haile Jones, MD, an interventional cardiologist at Halifax. "We are excited to offer this treatment to patients who could otherwise face the loss of a limb unnecessarily."

Peripheral artery disease affects nearly 20 million adults in the U.S. and more than 200 million people globally. In severe cases, patients often face amputation, the worst-case scenario associated with PAD.



Cold temperatures can put the best-intentioned exercise plans on hold. Still, the American Heart Association recommends either 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week, 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week or a combination of both. Here are a few easy ways to stay in shape during the chillier months and prepare for the warmer days ahead.



Exercise outdoors. When the weather is clear, consider walking, a great form of exercise that is good for your joints. A 2013 study found that walking briskly can lower your risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes as much as running. Work yourself up to 30 minutes a day to improve your heart health.



Go to a gym. Visit the local community center for a game of indoor basketball with friends and family. Grab a basketball, some jump ropes or a volleyball for a couple hours of fun physical activity. Organized classes also offer an opportunity to move to popular dance music and get your blood pumping.

Partner up. Want to increase your chances of staying with an exercise program? Studies show people who have a workout buddy are much more likely to stick with it.

Before starting or resuming any exercise activity, check with your physician to make sure you're ready and able. You'll get the best results by starting small and then ramping up your activities. Be sure to stretch cold muscles gently before starting, and then stretch again after your workout to cool down.



MAKE YOUR MOVE

Need a doctor to help you manage your health? Visit halifaxmedicalcenter.org/internal.html.

◀ continued from cover

Consisting mostly of calcium, fat and cholesterol, plaque causes atherosclerosis, a narrowing and hardening of the arteries, which often results in heart disease.

There are several steps you can take to keep your blood flowing smoothly. These include three actions you can start today.

THE BIG THREE

Eating well, exercising and quitting smoking top the list of critical heart-healthy behaviors. In terms of nutrition, make high-fat foods like barbecue an occasional treat, instead of an everyday staple. Lower your salt consumption by choosing home-cooked over fast or processed foods. Try baking instead of frying, and consider tasty substitutes for salt.

Physical fitness goes hand in hand with proper nutrition. Bear in mind: An effective exercise program doesn't only mean hitting the gym. It can be as simple as walking 30–60 minutes, and you can spread those minutes throughout your day. If you find it difficult to stick with your exercise plan, find a buddy and make it fun.

Rounding out the triad is stopping smoking. This may not be easy, but the



rewards are well worth it. Not only will your heart thank you, you'll find food tastes better and you will generally feel better. If you've tried to stop without success, consider partnering with someone who's also trying to quit.

DON'T IGNORE SYMPTOMS

As part of taking care of your body, maintain regular checkups with your doctor. It's also important to be mindful of heart-attack symptoms. Many people think of heart attacks as they occur in the movies, where the victim suddenly clutches his chest and collapses. Although that is possible, other symptoms can be easily overlooked or mistaken for something else.

What Roanoke Rapids resident Wannetta Jones (see sidebar at right) dismissed as heartburn turned out to be symptoms of a clogged artery. Had it gone untreated, it could have resulted in a heart attack.

While women generally have the same symptoms as men, they are more likely to experience fatigue, shortness of breath or just not feeling well. Women are also more likely to die from heart attacks because of their focus on taking care of others first.

ADVANCED HEART CARE CLOSE TO HOME

In 2016, Wannetta Jones began experiencing chest pains while walking and during other activities. She had suffered a heart attack in her 30s, has a family history of severe heart disease and had received treatment out of town on several occasions for blocked arteries. As she noticed symptoms were returning, Jones took a stress test at Halifax Regional Cardiology. She then underwent a heart catheterization and stenting at Halifax Regional's Cardiac and Vascular Center.



Wannetta Jones

Having family nearby was an important reason for choosing treatment at Halifax Regional. "You want to see your family when you're in the hospital," says Jones, 52. "Some of them can't find the time to visit out of town because of work schedules."

Jones was at first hesitant about going to Halifax Regional, because she hadn't had the procedure performed there before. However, in her words, "it was a great experience; they did a good job."

Now, Jones enthusiastically recommends Halifax Regional for heart care. "If you have problems, go there and get it taken care of," she says. "It's a good hospital, and they take good care of you!"

You can go a long way toward enjoying heart health if you choose a healthy lifestyle that includes good nutrition, exercise and cessation from smoking; maintaining regular checkups; and paying attention to any possible symptoms.

If you experience one or more of the following symptoms, call 911 immediately.



HEART-HEALTH EDUCATION

Halifax Regional's heart-care specialists offer state-of-the-art care, from diagnosis and emergency intervention to the latest treatments, preventive education and rehabilitation. To learn more, call **252-535-8109** or visit halifaxregional.org/cvc.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Heart Failure Support Group

Encouragement and helpful information in a group setting.
Second Wednesday of the month (March 8, April 12, May 10, June 14), 4 p.m.
 Halifax Regional
 250 Smith Church Road
 Roanoke Rapids
 Building #1, Classroom
Information: Contact Denise Norwood, outpatient case manager, at 252-535-8716 or dnorwood@halifaxrhc.org.

Diabetes Education & Support Group

Meetings are FREE and open to anyone with diabetes or interested in diabetes education.
Monday, March 13, April 10, 6:30 p.m.
 Halifax Regional
 250 Smith Church Road
 Roanoke Rapids
 Annex Building #1, Classroom
Information: For alternate locations, dates and times, or additional information about diabetes, contact Kim McDermott, RN, RV Diabetes Resource Center, 252-535-8478.

Roanoke Valley Breast Cancer Support Group

Every third Monday (March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19), 6 p.m.
 Halifax Regional
 250 Smith Church Road
 Roanoke Rapids
 Annex Building #1,
 Conference Room 2
Information: To learn more, call Kay Johnson at 252-586-4872.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Second Saturday Hike at the Roanoke Canal Trail

All hikes are scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. (so hikers should arrive early). Hikes will still take place in the event of rain or snow. However, they are cancelled in the event of a storm. Admission to the museum is FREE following the hike for anyone who participates in the hike.
Saturday, March 11, April 8, May 13, 9 a.m.
 Roanoke Canal Museum and Trail,
 Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870
Information: Call 252-537-2769.

Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative Monthly Play Days

Monthly Play Days are FREE recreational events for the whole family hosted by Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative (RV-CHI).
Tuesday, March 21, 4-6 p.m. Weldon Elementary
Tuesday, April 18, 4-6 p.m. Belmont Elementary
Information: Visit GetFitStayFitRV.com.



HEALTH OBSERVANCES

February

American Heart Month

March

National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

April

Alcohol Awareness Month

May

Arthritis Awareness Month

June

Men's Health Month

COMBATING Obesity

Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative (RV-CHI) was established in 2011 to oversee the prevention and intervention efforts of a network of community organizations. The group's mission is to improve the health of Roanoke Valley residents by providing healthy, accessible, affordable foods and easy access to exercise and physical activities.

RV-CHI is making strides toward realizing its vision with the help of its hallmark initiative, Get Fit, Stay Fit Roanoke Valley (GFSF), and other programs. GFSF, funded by the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, received

\$622,509 in 2014 as part of an infusion of more than \$1.2 million to Halifax County to combat child obesity.

Melissa Haithcox-Dennis, grant evaluator for RV-CHI, is excited about the positive changes the organization is driving. "At the time of the grant, Halifax County ranked 99 out of 100 with regard to [negative] health outcomes in North Carolina," says Haithcox-Dennis. "Within two years of the grant, we moved to 97. Moving from 99 to 98 would have been fantastic; 99 to 97 is nothing short of a miracle!"

RV-CHI's reach includes Northampton County, which is developing its own Places to Explore, Move and Play map, similar to Halifax County's. Northampton last year hosted its first Family Fest, attracting 810 participants.

Other vital RV-CHI programs include Healthy Corner stores, now offering healthy food options in convenience stores; a farmer's market, bringing local produce to the community; and healthy snack stations in small businesses, encouraging staff to eat healthy at work. A youth council, offering young people the opportunity to serve in leadership roles, is in the planning stages. See calendar at left to learn more about RV-CHI Monthly Play Days.



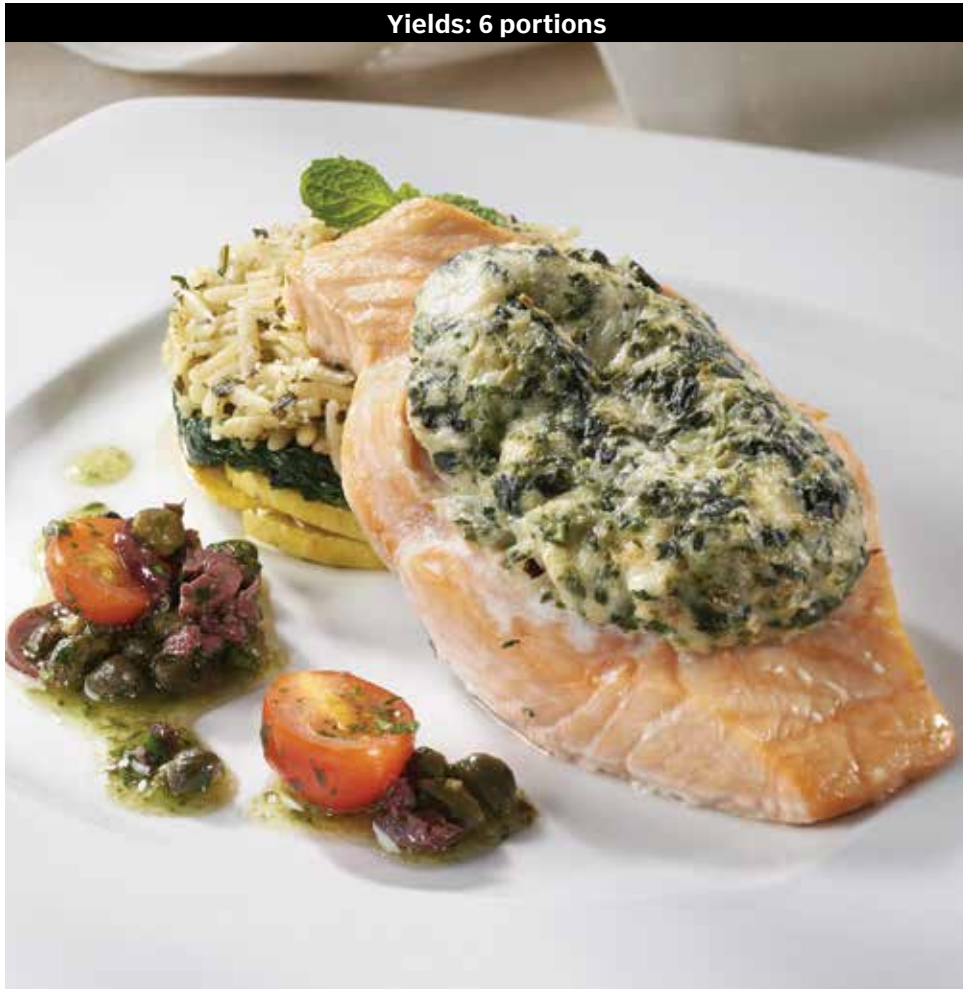
GET FIT, STAY FIT

Halifax Regional Medical Center is a major supporter of the Roanoke Valley Community Health Initiative (RV-CHI). You can learn more about RV-CHI and its many programs. Visit getfitstayfitrv.com or call 252-535-8771.

HEALTHY EATING

Spinach, Almond and Feta-Topped Salmon

Yields: 6 portions



1/8 tsp olive or canola oil
8 oz of fresh spinach
6 4 oz portions of salmon
4 oz sliced almonds
6 oz of feta cheese
1 oz of fresh dill
1 tsp of black pepper
1/4 cup of Chardonnay
1/4 cup of water
2 tbs of lemon juice

1. Sauté spinach over medium heat with olive or canola oil.
2. As soon as spinach is cooked thoroughly, remove from heat and mix in almonds and feta cheese. Mix all ingredients together until blended.
3. Place salmon portions on cookie sheet tray.

4. Pour Chardonnay and water over salmon.
5. Season salmon with lemon juice, pepper and fresh dill.
6. Spoon equal amounts of spinach mixture evenly on top of each piece of salmon.
7. Place in preheated 375° F oven for 12 minutes or until salmon flakes easily with fork.

ENTER TO WIN A \$50 VISA GIFT CARD!

Attention, *Healthy Halifax* readers. We want to hear from you! Fill out our readership survey at surveymonkey.com/r/halifax-survey and enter your name in a drawing to win a FREE \$50 Visa gift card.

HALIFAX HEALTHLINK

View and manage your personal hospital health record 24/7 with the Halifax HealthLink patient portal at halifaxhealthlink.halifaxregional.org. Questions? Contact **252-535-8098** or email portallogin@halifaxrmc.org.

FIND A PHYSICIAN

Looking for a primary care provider or specialist close to home? Visit physicians.halifaxregional.org to find doctors, office locations and more.

VOLUNTEER

Share your time and talents with Halifax Regional! For more information, contact Kay Hines, volunteer coordinator, at **252-535-8687**.

THIRTY-THIRD EDITION

Healthy Halifax is the quarterly newsletter of Halifax Regional. Please contact Jerrica Edmonds with questions or comments at **252-535-8743** or jedmonds@halifaxrmc.org. © 2016, Halifax Regional Medical Center.

ONLINE BILL PAY

Halifax Regional now offers Online Bill Pay. If you've recently been to Halifax Regional for services, you may have received a statement from Patientco in the mail. Your new financial statement will provide you with a variety of payment options. To pay online, visit gopatientco.com.