

MARYLAND'S

HEALTH MATTERS



COVER STORY:
A NEW CHANCE
AT LIFE

ADVANCED HEART VALVE
REPLACEMENT MEANS GOOD
HEALTH CAN BLOOM AGAIN

PAGE 5

WINTER 2021

HEARTFELT TRUST
LOCAL JUDGE
PRAISES
LIFESAVING CARE
RECEIVED DURING
PANDEMIC

PAGE 8

ACADEMIC MEDICINE
AT WORK
RECEIVING THE GIFT
OF LIFE THROUGH THE
KIDNEY TRANSPLANT
PROGRAM

PAGE 10



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER



A NEW CHANCE AT LIFE

GOOD HEALTH IN BLOOM—After a beautiful fall day spent gardening, Carroll Stratmeyer couldn't breathe. A rapid diagnosis and advanced heart repair at UM St. Joseph saved his life.



8

HEARTFELT TRUST

A LEGACY OF CARING—Judge J. Norris Byrnes has trusted UM St. Joseph for his family's care for decades and experienced a life-saving diagnosis and advanced heart treatment at the height of the pandemic.

10

ACADEMIC MEDICINE AT WORK

THE GIFT OF LIFE—University of Maryland Medical Center kidney transplant program helps its own surgeon



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER

THOMAS B. SMYTH, MD
President and CEO

MARY ANN HODES
Director of Marketing and Communications

Maryland's Health Matters is published by the Marketing and Communications Department at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center. This publication is not intended to provide professional medical advice. It is to provide general health and wellness information.

STAY CONNECTED WITH US



facebook.com/
StJosephMedicalCenter



youtube.com/
SJMCTowson



instagram.com/
sjmctowson/



twitter.com/
SJMCTowson

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please send us your comments, information requests, change of address or opt-out requests to:
umsjmatters@umm.edu; 7601 Osler Drive, Jordan Center, Towson, MD 21204; or call **410-337-1700**.

University of Maryland Medical System complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. For more information, contact the Compliance Director at 410-328-4141 or compliance@umm.edu.
ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 410-328-4141.
注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 410-328-4141。

NOTE: All photographs taken during the COVID-19 pandemic were produced using appropriate prevention measures, including physical distancing and masking when distancing was not possible. Photographs without these measures in place were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, we are taking extra steps to ensure your safety when you walk through our doors. According to the University of Maryland Medical System's Universal Masking Policy, everyone must wear a mask inside at all times in UMMS facilities.

CONSISTENT RECOGNITION

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER HAS BEEN NAMED A TOP 50 HEART HOSPITAL AND A BLUE DISTINCTION CENTER FOR CARDIAC CARE.

FOR MORE THAN a decade, UM St. Joseph Medical Center has been named one of the top-performing cardiovascular hospitals in the U.S. This is the 11th year UM St. Joseph has been honored as one of the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by IBM Watson Health based on a scorecard of clinical and patient satisfaction data. UM St. Joseph has also been recognized by the American Heart Association with the Mission: Lifeline NSTEMI Gold Achievement Award and the Mission: Lifeline STEMI Receiving Center Gold Plus Achievement Award.

In addition, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield has recognized the medical center with a Blue Distinction Centers+ for Cardiac Care designation as part of the Blue Distinction Specialty Care program. Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated providers that show expertise in delivering improved patient safety and better health outcomes, based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical

community and leading accreditation and quality organizations.

EXCEPTIONAL CARE SAVES MORE LIVES

According to the latest statistics provided by *IBM Watson Health*, if all Medicare inpatients in the U.S. received the same level of care as that provided at top-performing cardiovascular hospitals such as UM St. Joseph, the results could be:

- More than 11,000 additional lives saved
- More than 2,800 additional heart patients complication-free
- Over \$1.5 billion saved in health care costs

Thomas B. Smyth, MD, the medical center's president and CEO, proudly attributes these honors in cardiac care to "the hard work of our talented staff and physicians and their ongoing commitment to providing leading-edge treatment with loving service and compassionate care."



For more information, visit 100tophospitals.com and bcbs.com/bluedistinction.



Black Women's Health

UNDERSTANDING WHAT AFFECTS BLACK WOMEN
DISPROPORTIONATELY AND HOW TO TURN THE TIDE

BLACK WOMEN ARE at increased risk for some serious and dangerous conditions, including COVID-19. In fact, the pandemic has put a spotlight on these health disparities. Why does this happen and what can be done to level the playing field?

UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

Black women are enjoying a longer life expectancy today. However, this life expectancy still remains nearly four years less than their white female peers.

What is causing the discrepancy? According to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, researchers suspect it's because younger Black women are more likely to suffer from diseases that affect white women later in age. As you might suspect, living with a disease for many years wears down the body. This slow wearing results in earlier death.

It has been found that Black women are at greater risk for many conditions, including the following:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Infant mortality
- Kidney disease
- Mental health disorders
- Stroke

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

One of the most pressing health needs facing Black women is heart disease. According to the American Heart Association, by the age of 20, nearly half of all Black women will be living with a type of heart disease.

If you are a Black woman, take heart disease to heart. Talk with your physician today to find out if you're showing early signs or symptoms of heart disease.

SUPPORTING A CHANGE

Lowering the incidence of these diseases requires addressing the root causes of health disparities. Raising awareness of the overt and implicit bias affecting Black women throughout their lives is needed to address these forces in a meaningful way.

One big step is enhancing provider-patient communication to ensure that everyone speaks the same language. Clear discussions about disease risks, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and prevention empower every patient to expect—and ask for—equitable care. Involving or enhancing the role of community health workers and educators may help promote trust and communication.

In addition, research indicates that patients have better outcomes when treated by people with a similar appearance. Training and engaging more health care providers of color is an important part of improving care for diverse communities. With these steps things can change, starting today.



Visit umstjoseph.org/findadoc to find a physician.



University of Maryland St. Joseph Heart Institute patient
Carroll Stratmeyer with Shumile Zaidi, MD



A new chance at
LIFE

A JOPPA MAN TAKES
A SURPRISING
JOURNEY TO
THE UNIVERSITY
OF MARYLAND
ST. JOSEPH HEART
INSTITUTE.

SEVEN STENTS AND a new aortic heart valve—that’s what physicians found Carroll Stratmeyer, 78, needed when he arrived by ambulance at University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center’s Emergency Department. All three of his major heart arteries were blocked, both carotid arteries in his neck were severely blocked and the aortic valve in his heart was barely working.

The challenge facing the team of emergency physicians, cardiologists and cardiac surgeons was how to save his life.

A BEAUTIFUL FALL DAY TURNS CRITICAL

Carroll’s lifesaving journey to UM St. Joseph’s Heart Institute began one day last October after the retired Bethlehem Steel pipefitter spent four hours digging a hole to plant one of two new sugar maple trees in his front yard in Joppa. His hobby is gardening. Every year he plants a large organic vegetable garden from which he shares the fruits of his labors with friends, neighbors and family. He takes great pride in his landscaping work.

“That evening, I couldn’t breathe or move, and I couldn’t stop belching. By the next day, my chest pain was much worse,” said Carroll, whose wife, Jackie, called an ambulance which took him to nearby University of Maryland Upper

Chesapeake Medical Center. Following testing there, an expert team of physicians determined that Carroll needed a three-way heart bypass operation, so they arranged for his transfer by ambulance to the closest hospital in the University of Maryland system that performs open-heart surgery: UM St. Joseph Medical Center.

NOT A CANDIDATE FOR OPEN-HEART SURGERY

At UM St. Joseph Medical Center, board-certified cardiologist Ronald Schechter, MD, who was on call that Sunday, led the team managing Carroll’s care. Following testing, they determined that he was suffering from three major problems.

“Mr. Stratmeyer had suffered a heart attack, he had a bad heart valve and his heart muscle was weak,” said Shumile Zaidi, MD, a board-certified cardiologist specializing in interventional cardiology and director of the Cardiac Catheterization Lab and Structural Heart Disease Program at UM St. Joseph, who was brought in on the case. “Because of the blockages in the carotid arteries of his neck, he was at risk of suffering a stroke during open heart surgery.”

Due to this unique combination of cardiovascular issues,



Carroll Stratmeyer and his wife, Jackie, speak with Shumile Zaidi, MD, at the end of an appointment.

it was determined that Carroll might not be able to survive open-heart surgery. However, said Dr. Schechter, “I told Mr. Stratmeyer and his wife that although he had a very



Cardiologist Ronald Schechter, MD

challenging set of problems, I thought we had a pathway to successfully stabilize the situation and a potential solution. I told them I believed that Dr. Zaidi, our cardiac catheterization team and our critical care team were up to the task and could get him a great outcome.”

Dr. Zaidi added, “Dr. Schechter called me and was the one who drove the solution to the problem. The next best option was to determine if we

could perform cardiac catheterization with stents and fix his other problems.”

LIFE-THREATENING BLOCKAGES

“His left main artery was 90% blocked; his anterior descending artery was 95% blocked and his circumflex artery was 95% blocked. Additionally, the arteries were blocked in multiple places. A heart ultrasound revealed that he had aortic stenosis, meaning that his aortic valve was not opening and closing properly. His heart muscle was weak and pumping at 25%. Normal is 50% to 60%. Both neck arteries had extreme blockages,” described Dr. Zaidi.

“I was totally shocked to have all that blockage,” said Carroll, who had no known history of heart disease and recently had his cholesterol checked with good results. He said that he used to jog and quit smoking a long time ago.

A REASSURING PLAN TAKES SHAPE

“The doctors came to the conclusion that Carroll could not have open-heart surgery. It was heartbreaking,” said Jackie. “Then they brought in Dr. Zaidi, and that man was a miracle worker. He said he would clean out my husband’s heart arteries, place stents in them and fix his aortic valve. Dr. Zaidi came to my husband’s hospital room at 11 pm that night to reassure him that everything would be OK and that he would be operating the next morning. Dr. Zaidi had so much confidence that he gave us confidence.”

To open Carroll’s blocked arteries and implant stents, said Dr. Zaidi, “a major concern was could we perform heart surgery so that Mr. Stratmeyer would survive despite his weak heart muscles. The answer was that we implanted an Impella® pump into his heart

to take over pumping his blood. The pump temporarily becomes your heart until the stent procedure is complete so that blood continues traveling to your brain and organs.”

The Impella is inserted through a sheath through a small incision in the femoral artery of the leg and guided over a wire into the left ventricle of the heart.

SEVEN STENTS AND A NEW HEART VALVE

All this took place in UM St. Joseph Medical Center’s cardiac catheterization laboratory. To open the heart’s arteries, Dr. Zaidi and the cardiac catheterization team performed a rotational atherectomy, which, he explained, “is almost like using a drill to shave the plaque out of the arteries. Then, we placed seven stents into his arteries, they were so diseased.”

Two stents went into the left main artery, three stents went into the anterior descending artery and two more stents went into the circumflex artery.

Carroll was weaned off the heart pump and remained in the hospital. Several days later, Dr. Zaidi gave him a new aortic valve without having to open his chest. The valve replacement was performed in the hybrid operating room (OR) adjacent to UM St. Joseph’s cardiac catheterization lab. A hybrid OR is an advanced procedural space that combines a traditional operating room with an image-guided interventional suite. This combination allows for highly complex, advanced surgical procedures. Again, Dr. Zaidi performed the procedure by going through Carroll’s leg artery, using guided imagery to replace his diseased valve with an artificial valve. Carroll only required light sedation for the procedure.

“Within 48 hours, Mr. Stratmeyer looked like a different person,” said Dr. Zaidi. “He was less short of breath and more functional. This is probably one of the hardest cases I’ve done because of its complexity. It was challenging from all aspects, but planning was the key.”

“It’s very important that Mr. Stratmeyer is both a physically and mentally strong man with a great will to survive,” added Dr. Schechter. “He never gave up and this allowed us to get him through this.”

SPRINGING BACK TO THE GARDEN

Carroll said of his experience, “I’ve never heard of anybody getting seven stents. I’m doing much better now.”

“The care at University of Maryland St. Joseph couldn’t have been any better,” said Jackie. “Despite everything, it was a wonderful experience. I could go on and on.”

Carroll received physical and occupational therapy at home. He is regaining his strength and looking forward to spring when he can plant a new vegetable garden.

His wife added, “Our grandson came over to finish planting the other sugar maple tree. I’ll always look at these trees, watch them grow and remember what happened.”





Building Strong Links OF TRUST

THE PLACE TO TURN TO FOR LIFE-SAVING
CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

JUDGE J. NORRIS BYRNES has trusted the clinicians at the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center not only with his care, but with his parents', too. He and his family have experienced firsthand the hospital's unwavering commitment to loving service and compassionate care.

After learning from Lawrence Snyder, MD, internist at UM St. Joseph, that his shortness of breath might be aortic stenosis (a gradual build-up of calcium in his aortic valve), Judge Byrnes elected to be cared for at UM St. Joseph, which was named one of the *IBM Watson Health* "50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals for 2020."

Judge Byrnes was referred to Jeremy Pollock, MD, cardiologist at UM St. Joseph, who confirmed that his symptoms, if left untreated, could cause a serious health problem; the valve would continue to narrow and cause symptoms, including shortness of breath, chest pain and dizziness.

Without effective treatment, 50% of patients with aortic stenosis may die within two years. Until the early 2000s, the only course of treatment would have been more invasive open-heart surgery to replace the abnormal valve, followed by a hospital stay and recovery at home.

A NEW, MINIMALLY INVASIVE APPROACH

Fortunately for Judge Byrnes and many patients before him, UM St. Joseph has been performing lifesaving minimally invasive transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) procedures since 2018, having celebrated their 200th procedure this past June.

Judge Byrnes' TAVR was performed by Shumile Zaidi, MD, interventional cardiologist and director of the Cardiac Catheterization Lab and Structural Heart Disease Program at

UM St. Joseph. After a one-hour procedure and a one-night hospital stay, he was already on the quick road to recovery.

"It was amazing," Judge Byrnes said. "The people in the CCU [Cardiac Care Unit] were wonderful. They took great care of me and made sure I was as comfortable as I could have been."

FULL SPECTRUM OF CARE

Judge Byrnes' recovery was complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Patients are often prescribed post-operation cardiac rehabilitation in the medical center, but outpatient programs were put on hold to maintain physical distancing.

"Medically supervised exercise is an important part of TAVR recovery," Dr. Zaidi said. "The stenosis causes deconditioning over time, so patients need to build up their endurance and strength to achieve the best quality of life possible."

Judge Byrnes continued his recovery at home, then eagerly returned to the hospital to officially start his cardiac rehabilitation when the Emmert Hobbs Cardiovascular Fitness Center reopened.

"Everyone wore masks, and the machines were spread apart, so I felt safe," Judge Byrnes said. "The cardiac rehab team members were wonderful to work with. I looked forward to coming in to get all my strength back."

Judge Byrnes has also taken Pilates classes and now alternates between aquatic aerobic classes and working with weights every week.

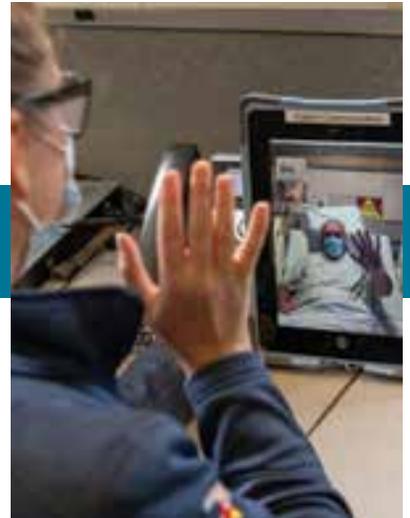
"I was lucky enough to have the procedure before my stenosis became a bigger problem and even luckier to have a team dedicated to my aftercare. I am grateful to those who supported my journey to a healthier, longer life."



To learn more about heart care services at UM St. Joseph Medical Center, visit umstjoseph.org/heart.

APPLAUSE FOR A GREAT NEIGHBOR

ROSEDALE FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES ITS NEWEST BRANCH RENOVATION WITH A GIFT IN SUPPORT OF THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND ST. JOSEPH MEDICAL CENTER.



IN THE EARLY 20th century, Seward's General Merchandise Store in Rosedale was a place for farmers to get supplies, news and the local gossip. In 1908, a group of neighbors decided to bring their savings to the store, depositing a grand total of \$71 in the store's safe, with a plan to grow their investment and fund opportunities for their community to buy land and houses . . . and a bank was born.

One hundred and twelve years later, Rosedale Federal Savings & Loan Association holds more than \$1 billion in assets. Kevin Benson, president and CEO of Rosedale Federal, maintains that, despite its size, the bank's core mission has never changed.

"We have a singular tenet: 'Your Neighbor. Your Guide. Your Bank,'" Benson said. "Investing in our customers and our local community is what we are about."

NEIGHBORLINESS IN ACTION

UM St. Joseph is the fortunate recipient of Rosedale Federal's charitable commitment to the local community. In August 2020, Rosedale Federal completed a state-of-the-art renovation of its Towson branch that includes a coffee kiosk and children's play area. To celebrate the occasion, the bank made a six-figure gift to support its neighbor: UM St. Joseph, less than a mile up the road.

"St. Joe's focus on 'Our Patients, Our Colleagues, Our Community' is so in line with our own dedication to highly personal service, we saw a fantastic partnership," Benson said.

Rosedale Federal has chosen to support a new Patient Experience initiative at UM St. Joseph. The initiative helps ensure that patients and family members will have the technology in hand to enrich their experience.

"It's so easy at a stressful time to forget essential items like your phone charger," Benson said. "And during the pandemic, we have seen just how critical devices like iPads are for patients and families who desperately want to stay in touch. By providing technology with a personal touch, we remain true to our core of caring for our neighbors. At the same time, our St. Joe's project lets our community know that Rosedale Federal is committed to the cutting-edge technology you would find in a mega-bank, but on a more personal scale."

GIVING THE EXTRA MILE

Rosedale Federal's charitable contribution will also support a Patient and Visitor Resource Center, a component of a new Hospitality Center that will open at UM St. Joseph in 2021. Patients and families will have access to several convenient services free of charge, including the ability to securely

print, scan, copy or fax important documents related to their family members' care. Guests will also have access to a dedicated, private computer station where they can conduct research regarding surgical procedures or health conditions.

"Rosedale Federal's generous gift is a beautiful example of our hospital's mission to provide loving service and compassionate care," said Thomas B. Smyth, MD, president and CEO of UM St. Joseph Medical Center. "Rosedale Federal understands and generously supports enhancing the personal touch through technology. We are both grateful and blessed to have such wonderful neighbors."

By encouraging philanthropic support, the Foundation is committed to supporting the growth of UM St. Joseph Medical Center through its affiliation with the University of Maryland Medical Center and School of Medicine.

To learn more about how to make a charitable gift, visit umstjoseph.org/giving, call 410-337-1397 or e-mail SJFoundation@umm.edu.

THE Gift OF *Life*



THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND MEDICAL CENTER (UMMC) KIDNEY TRANSPLANT PROGRAM SEAMLESSLY BLENDS COMPASSION, EXPERTISE AND INNOVATION TO PROVIDE A TRANSPLANT SURGEON WITH A KIDNEY OF HER OWN.



SILKE VERENA NIEDERHAUS, MD, clinical associate professor of surgery, made up her mind to become a transplant surgeon at age

11, after receiving her first kidney donation from a nine-month-old deceased donor. Dr. Niederhaus is a member of the UMMC kidney transplant team. This multidisciplinary team is the largest in Maryland, consisting of expert surgeons, nephrologists, nurse coordinators, immunologists and others who specialize in this advanced type of care. Located in Baltimore, UMMC serves as the academic medical center for the University of Maryland Medical System and is uniquely positioned to provide the advanced, multidisciplinary care that kidney transplant surgery requires.

As part of this experienced team, Dr. Niederhaus provides a unique perspective as someone who has twice undergone transplant surgery herself. Most recently, Dr. Niederhaus received a transplant using the UMMC paired kidney exchange.

Watch our video series about Dr. Niederhaus' compelling story at umm.edu/journey.

"Our paired kidney exchange program activates when a donor is ready to give a kidney, but it isn't a good match with the recipient," explained Daniel Maluf, MD, FACS, director of the transplantation program and interim chief of the transplant surgery division at University of Maryland School of Medicine (UM SOM). "This program allows that donor to trade with another donor's recipient."

A good kidney donor match involves compatible blood typing, cross matching and antibody testing results that indicate the transplant is likely to be successful. Blood relatives are often good matches, but others may be as well.

"This program requires an advanced level of care and consideration," Dr. Maluf said. "Not all transplant centers provide this service. It's a complex procedure that requires a large group of donors to meet many recipients' needs. UMMC is able to participate in multiple paired kidney exchanges nationally, which helped Dr. Niederhaus meet her match for a living donor."

Continued on page 12

SCAR-FREE SURGERY

More than 2,000 living donors have changed the lives of patients through the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) Transplant Center, but unless one of them told you, it's unlikely you would be able to tell they had surgery. UMMC is the first hospital in Maryland and third hospital in the country to use minimally invasive kidney donation procedures that leave almost no scars on the donor's body.



This innovative surgery is called the single port technique, in which the surgical incision is placed inside the donor's navel. Also called laparoendoscopic single site (LESS) surgery, it involves expert surgeons' removing the donor's kidney through the single incision. Once healed, the incision is concealed within the navel, making the surgery virtually scar-free. In addition to the cosmetic benefits, patients also have fewer limitations in movement after this type of surgery, making it a safe and attractive option for living kidney donors.

While this form of kidney donor surgery is comparatively newer than multiple-port laparoscopic surgeries, it has become the consistent standard of care at UMMC for the past several years. The transplant team conducts workshops to train other surgeons on this groundbreaking technique, and has written a chapter in the latest edition of the surgical textbook *Kidney Transplantation* explaining this technique's benefits. As knowledge about LESS surgery increases, UMMC remains one of the first and most experienced hospitals in America to perform it.

THE LIVING DONOR PROGRAM

100,000+ PEOPLE

ARE CURRENTLY AWAITING A NEW KIDNEY,

AND THE AVERAGE WAIT TIME TO RECEIVE ONE FROM A DECEASED DONOR IS

THREE TO FIVE YEARS.

That is why one-third of kidney donations at University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) come from living donors.

"If you have a choice between a deceased or living donor, you choose the living donor," said Silke Verena Niederhaus, MD, clinical associate professor of surgery at UMMC. "A living donor is the only chance you have to get a kidney soon enough to stay off dialysis."

Dialysis is a procedure needed when normal kidney function is reduced to a fraction of what is required to clean the blood naturally. Dialysis involves multiple treatments that may take hours every week, along with dietary modifications and regular laboratory tests—often challenging but essential steps to prolong life.

WHO CAN BECOME A LIVING DONOR?

Most of our donors are related to the patients receiving their kidney, but not always. As long as your blood type is compatible with the patient's, it is possible you could become a living donor. Living donors must be at least 18 years old and in good general health. To ensure this, a donor surgeon performs a thorough evaluation of each living donor, as does a transplant nephrologist. Both physicians review physicals and test results to ensure each donor is healthy and will not be put at risk by donation. Donors at UMMC usually have a quick and excellent recovery with a 100% survival rate.

Want to give someone the gift of life? Call **410-328-5408** to speak to our experts about becoming a living donor.

LIVING & GIVING

Kidney donations can be given by deceased or living individuals, but waiting for a deceased kidney donation can take years. Living donations are essential to keeping patients alive and healthy, especially when waiting for a deceased donor could delay their much-needed care. Generally, patients who receive kidneys from living donors have higher long-term survival rates than those who receive kidneys from deceased donors. Living donors also provide patients with more options, as kidneys from unrelated living donors can be just as successful as those from blood relatives.

“Living donor kidneys can last longer and recipients do better, so that’s what we aim for,” said Nadiesda Almanzar Costa, MD, assistant professor of medicine at UM SOM and nephrologist at UMMC. “The exchange program is a great benefit when patients can’t find a donor match on their own.”

Dr. Niederhaus was part of the kidney exchange program, and eventually, her husband became her best match for a donor.

“My husband jokingly said the morning of his donor evaluation, ‘Well, if I have cancer, you’re going to figure this out by this afternoon,’” Dr. Niederhaus said. “Ironically, by lunchtime we found out he had a cancer in his right kidney.”

THE SEARCH CONTINUES

Dr. Niederhaus’ husband received a robotic partial nephrectomy, a delicate minimally invasive surgery that removes the cancerous tumor while preserving the healthy kidney, that has now resulted in his being cancer-free. However, on that fateful day, Dr. Niederhaus was still without a donor. In the end, Dr. Niederhaus’ kidney exchange included eight different people. Four separate donors provided functioning kidneys to four individual patients, including Dr. Niederhaus, over the course of a week. Felicia Stolusky, who was unable to donate a kidney to her mother, became Dr. Niederhaus’ living donor.

“I performed the surgery with another nephrology specialist,” said Eugene J. Schweitzer, MD, professor of surgery at UM SOM and a transplant surgeon at UMMC. “It was incredible to see the donor kidney immediately functioning and to be a part of another successful kidney donor transplant.”

Dr. Niederhaus was back on her feet the day of her surgery and returned to her office to review patient charts seven days later. To avoid any potential exposure to infection, she waited three months to resume performing surgeries.

“Dr. Niederhaus returned to her regular life right after her surgery,” Dr. Costa said. “She’s such an inspiration. I am in awe of what she can do. She’s a great friend, an excellent physician and an amazing advocate for people with kidney disease.”



Take Control to Avoid KIDNEY DISEASE

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW DIABETES
AFFECTS YOUR KIDNEYS.

“**ONE IN THREE** adults with diabetes may have chronic kidney disease, which is often asymptomatic in early stages,” said outpatient diabetes educator Patti McGraw, BSN, RN, CDE, with the Nutrition and Diabetes Center at University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center. “People with diabetes need to control their blood sugar to prevent damage to the kidneys.”

WATCH BLOOD PRESSURE, TOO

“The American Diabetes Association recommends keeping blood pressure below 140/90, although for people at higher cardiovascular risk, the goal is lower,” McGraw said. “Follow your health care provider’s recommendation and schedule routine follow-up visits.”

Also, understand your risks for developing kidney disease and ways to improve your kidney function.

“The UM St. Joseph Nutrition and Diabetes Center offers excellent outpatient education,” McGraw said. “Knowledge is power. Learn how to keep your diabetes under control to prevent or delay diabetes-related complications.”

The Center provides education on meal planning, home blood glucose monitoring, medications, physical activity, healthy coping and problem-solving to help patients manage their diabetes.

To learn more about the UMMC kidney transplant program, call **410-328-5408** or visit **umm.edu/transplant**.

A physician order is required for the program. For help with a referral or for more information, call the Nutrition and Diabetes Center at **410-337-1382**.

COVID-19 Immunity: What You Need to Know

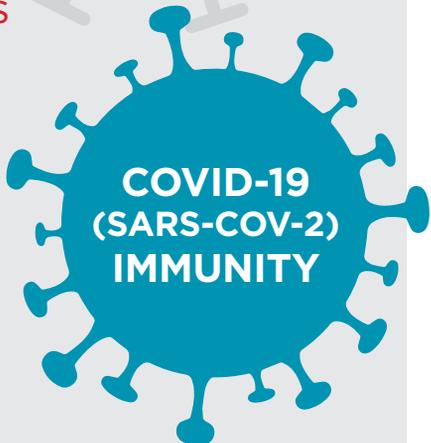


HOW VIRUSES WORK

Viruses are pieces of genetic material surrounded by a protein coating. When viruses enter our bodies, they find a cell and inject it with their genetic material. This allows them to take control of the cell and multiply.

To understand immunity, it is important to know how viruses work and how the immune system responds to them.

To battle this, the body's immune system must destroy infected cells. When the body first encounters a new viral infection, it deploys T cells, which find and kill infected cells. If the infection continues, the body then deploys B cells, which create antibodies that can better attack infected cells. Even after the infection has passed, antibodies remain in the body to help the body fight off future infection. This is called natural immunity.



COVID-19 (SARS-COV-2) IMMUNITY

It's important to get the COVID-19 vaccine even if you've recovered from the disease.

Natural immunity varies from person to person and for different diseases. It is still unknown how long natural immunity lasts for COVID-19.

Do you still need to wear a mask and social distance after getting the COVID-19 vaccine?

The vaccine will help to keep you from getting sick from the virus, but experts are still learning if the vaccine protects against the spread of the virus. Until we have more answers, it's important to continue to protect yourself and others through COVID-19 prevention measures.



HEALTH MATTERS CALENDAR

Community Health Events

WINTER/SPRING 2021

CLASSES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Are you interested in learning more about diabetes? Do you want to receive encouragement and up-to-date information? Please join us for the Diabetes Support Group, designed to encourage an exchange of information and support between presenters and attendees. Meetings held virtually on Zoom. **Call 410-337-1382 to register.**

- First Monday of every month, 1-2pm

STROKE SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP

Provides a forum for learning, listening and socializing with others. Our free stroke support group encourages participants to share their experiences as well as offer comfort and empowerment to others. A team of stroke professionals will provide useful information about healthy living, stroke management and support after experiencing a stroke. Meetings held virtually on Zoom. **Call 410-427-2175 or contact KarenGonzalez@umm.edu to register.**

- Third Tuesday of every month, 2-3:30pm



LET'S TALK ABOUT HEALTH

A Community Conversation

Tune in for a lunchtime webinar series on a different health topic each month. Topics include: Accessing Care, Children's Health & Safety, Men's Health, Women's Health, Diabetes, Pulmonary Health, Pharmacy/Medication, Cardiovascular Health, Advanced Directives, Asthma, Stroke, and more! **Learn more and register for the webinar at umms.org/letstalk.**

- Third Wednesday of every month, 12pm

PROGRAMS

PREVENT T2

A class for those with prediabetes with a goal of preventing or delaying the onset of Type 2 Diabetes. Group meets regularly for a full year. To be held virtually on Zoom. **Registration required.**

Call 410-337-1479.

STEPPING UP YOUR NUTRITION

A session for older adults who are interested in improving their nutrition and strength to help reduce fall risk. To be held virtually on Zoom.

Registration required. Call 410-337-1479.

- Tuesday, March 9, 1-3pm

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Schedule a lifesaving donation. For medical and eligibility questions, please call 1-866-236-3276 before scheduling your appointment.

To register, call 1-800-733-2767.

- Tuesday, Feb. 23, 7:30am-1:30pm
- Thursday, March 25, 7:30am-1:30pm
- Irwin Center

TAI JI QUAN: MOVING FOR BETTER BALANCE®

Reduce your risk of falls! Improve balance, strength and physical performance. This class will meet twice a week for 12 weeks. To be held virtually on Zoom. **Registration required. Call 410-337-1479.**



FAMILY EDUCATION CLASSES

Call **410-337-1880** or visit umstjoseph.org/readyforbaby to register. Fees apply.

CHILDBIRTH CLASSES

Our childbirth classes provide educational and helpful information for happy and healthy birth-and-beyond experiences. Classes are taught by registered nurses certified in childbirth education, with years of skilled and compassionate clinical experience. Offered as a five-week series, a three-week series or a day-long class to meet your scheduling needs.

ON-DEMAND CHILDBIRTH CLASS

This Childbirth Class is designed with YOU in mind—specifically for busy parents who can't commit to an in-person class. You will be assigned your own certified childbirth educator for one-on-one consultations at your convenience, with all the education and information you need VIRTUALLY!

BREASTFEEDING CLASS

Is breastfeeding right for you? Learn about the benefits to you and baby, best-bet techniques and tips for success. This one-day class is for expectant mothers and their partners to provide education and an introduction to breastfeeding their babies. This class is taught by a certified lactation consultant.

BABY CARE CLASS

Care for your baby with confidence! This two-session class over two weeks offers expert instruction from our registered nurse educators. Learn everything you need to know to get ready to bring your baby home and how to care for your little one through the first year.

BREATHING EASIER FOR BABY

Allows you and your partner time to learn and practice the skills you need for labor and delivery of your newborn. Designed for couples planning for low-intervention, or unmedicated, birth experiences, this class provides education to help parents labor at home longer or manage labor comfortably after being admitted to the hospital.

PRENATAL YOGA

Stay active and healthy during your pregnancy. This yoga class is offered to expectant mothers delivering at University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center and is taught by one of our certified yoga instructors.

GRANDPARENTS' UPDATE

A great “refresher” for new grandparents, featuring instruction on infant CPR and choking safety, the latest safety concerns regarding newborns, and how to best support and care for the new mom and baby you love.

CIRCLE SUPPORT GROUP

For women in pregnancy, postpartum and throughout life, led by one of our certified midwives. Meets on the second and fourth Monday of every month from 2:30–4pm.

LITTLE LATCH CLUB

Feeding support group for moms and newborns, led by a board-certified lactation consultant. Discuss feeding triumphs and struggles with other moms. All forms of feeding are welcome. Meets every Thursday from 10am–12pm.



University of Maryland
 St. Joseph Medical Center, LLC
 7601 Osler Drive
 Baltimore, MD 21204-7700



NONPROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 PERMIT NO. 93

END COVID



IT STARTS WITH YOU.

The COVID-19 vaccines are authorized by the FDA as safe and effective. Vaccination is the best tool for stopping the virus and helping us keep our communities safe.

Don't wait. Get the vaccine.

LEARN MORE: umms.org/vaccine



UNIVERSITY
 of MARYLAND
 MEDICAL
 SYSTEM