

## Health Care, Custom-Made for Older Adults

HIGHLAND OFFERS INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS TO MEET SENIORS' GROWING DEMAND FOR SERVICES

Each day, about 10,000 people turn 65. This means that by 2050, one in five Americans will be over 65, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Health care institutions will have to be prepared to meet the complex needs of the older population.

Highland Hospital has long been a leader in providing comprehensive geriatric services to its patients in the hospital and throughout the Rochester community. Anticipating the growing need for this type of care, Highland recently implemented innovations designed specifically for older patients in the Emergency Department, on inpatient units and in the Geriatrics and Medicine Associates outpatient clinic.

"Older patients are more vulnerable than other adults," says Robert M. McCann, M.D., Chief of Medicine. "If we can make the hospital safer and more user-friendly for the elder population, everyone will receive better care."

*continued on page 2 ...*



*Older adults have unique needs that benefit from a specialist's care. Here, Dr. Supriya Mohile at Highland's Geriatric Oncology clinic.*



*To encourage your children to eat sensibly, set a good example and eat a well-balanced diet. And be sure to offer a variety of healthy snacks between their meals.*

## Help Your Teens Manage Their Weight

Even though your teens may act as though they don't notice you, think again. You may be surprised to find out that your actions influence your children more than you know. Therefore, the strongest ally in keeping your teens at a healthy weight is you.

Results of a California Health Interview Survey released in 2009 suggest that teens' food choices often reflect their parents' habits. The survey revealed that 62 percent of teens surveyed drink soda every day, 43 percent eat fast food daily and only 38 percent eat five or more servings of fruit and vegetables. The survey also indicated that children of parents with more healthful diets ate more healthfully themselves.

### Make Plates Colorful

You may not be able to control what your children eat when they aren't at home, but you can provide nutritious meals and a variety of healthful snacks. If you're unsure how to begin, think color.

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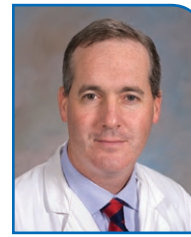
*Highland is a region leader in hospital care for older adults and has an inpatient space designed especially for their needs. Here, geriatrician Daniel Mendelson, M.D., visits a patient in the Acute Care for Elders unit.*

## Tradition of Collaborative Care for Seniors

Highland has more academic geriatricians than any hospital in the region to care for the inpatients who are 65 or older. Collaboration among geriatricians across multiple disciplines at Highland has always been the cornerstone of delivering high-quality care to seniors.

- **The Geriatric Fracture Center (GFC)**, which provides care to elder fracture patients, is one example. Geriatricians and orthopaedic surgeons partner to co-manage all patients' needs. Combined with standardized protocols, the co-management of patients has helped to significantly improve outcomes, such as reducing complications, length of stay and readmission rates.
- **The Acute Care for Elders Unit** – the only resource of its kind in the region – was specifically designed to meet the needs of older patients. Physicians work closely with specially trained nurses as well as pharmacists, therapists, social workers and other specialists to care for hospitalized older patients.
- **The Geriatric Oncology Consultation Clinic** also takes a multidisciplinary approach. A team of physicians and nurses and members of Nutrition, Pharmacy, Social Work, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy provide a comprehensive assessment to older patients with newly diagnosed and established cancers.

*The Wolk Emergency Department has created care protocols especially for seniors and has updated its patient areas to enhance their comfort and safety.*



Timothy Lum, M.D.

## Innovations Enhancing Elder Care

Highland continues to build on its tradition of collaborative care.

The Wolk Emergency Department (ED) has focused on streamlining care, so elder patients receive efficient treatment and spend less time in the ED. Doctors have worked closely with hospital geriatricians to develop guidelines for older patients who present with common elder conditions, such as syncope (fainting), hip fractures and pneumonia. And ED nurses have received geriatric-specific training.

Additionally, the ED has installed railings to help prevent patient falls and thicker mattresses that can prevent skin breakdown and formation of pressure ulcers. Clocks and calendars in rooms will help ensure patients stay oriented with their surroundings.

"We have to bring an increased level of vigilance when we treat older patients because they tend to be more medically complex," says Timothy E. Lum, Chief of Emergency Medicine. "They often have a number of conditions in their 60s, 70s and 80s that they didn't have in their 30s and 40s, and they're often on multiple medications."

Some of these medical complexities can put older patients at risk for developing delirium, a sudden onset of confusion that can last for days or weeks. Delirium can be caused by medications, infections or being put in an unfamiliar environment like a hospital. Patients at higher risk include those who have dementia, severe illness, dehydration or problems seeing or hearing.





To assist in preventing delirium in hospitalized patients, Highland has implemented the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP). Volunteers visit patients deemed at-risk of delirium twice a day to keep them as mentally and physically active as possible within the limitations of their conditions. The volunteers provide meal assistance and recreational activities, such as word games and puzzles.



Corey Romesser, M.D.

"Delirium can be hard to recognize, and the most important preventive measure is awareness," explains Corey Romesser, M.D., Director of Geriatric Inpatient Services.

HELP has proven to prevent functional decline, reduce length of stay, improve patient satisfaction and prevent unnecessary hospital readmissions.



*Geriatrics and Medicine Associates provides specialized outpatient care for seniors. The practice has expanded in the past year, adding more physicians, audiology services, and ear, nose and throat care.*

## Geriatrics and Medicine Associates

A group practice dedicated solely to the care of older adults is onsite at Highland Hospital. And like the hospital, Geriatrics and Medicine Associates (GAMA) is prepared to care for the growing elderly population.

In the past year, renovations at GAMA included the addition of new ear, nose and throat exam rooms and a new audiology booth. The practice also has welcomed additional providers and staff, including a geriatrician, endocrinologist, otolaryngologist, diabetes nurse practitioner and care manager.

"The staff makes our practice ideal for older patients," says Kevin McCormick, M.D., Ph.D., Medical Director of GAMA. "Our nurses and administrative assistants, for example, know each patient and their families. They understand which family member to call to talk about medicines and which family member handles appointments."

The location also is beneficial: Patients can be seen by specialists for many of their needs in one place. Patients can also go to the Lab across the hall from GAMA if blood work is needed.

The practice is accepting new patients as a result of the addition of Geriatrician Sorour Rahgoshay, M.D. And due to demand, Dr. Rahgoshay is seeing up to eight new patients each week.

"She has given us the ability to take on this growing need for geriatric care in our community," Dr. McCormick notes. "We are able to develop comprehensive plans for these patients. And Highland Hospital's support makes the coordinated care we provide possible."

When a GAMA patient comes into the Highland Emergency Department or is admitted, hospital physicians are in close contact with the patient's geriatrician at GAMA. Dr. McCormick and Dr. Rahgoshay are able to provide input on treatment plans and visit the patient while he or she is still in the hospital.

"Patients feel more comfortable when they see us in the hospital, and it allows us to know how our patients are progressing," Dr. Rahgoshay says. "We are not just reading their medical records upon discharge to understand what care they received in the hospital – we're seeing it firsthand."

## Beyond Highland Hospital's Doors

Highland's continuum of care for older patients extends beyond the hospital campus.

Many geriatricians at Highland provide medical direction and care in local skilled-nursing facilities. Highland also is closely linked to the University of Rochester Medical Center's Visiting Nurse Service as well as a network of skilled-nursing, assisted-living and rehabilitation services within the Strong Health Geriatrics Group.

In addition, Highland provides URMC medical students and internal medicine residents exposure to geriatric care throughout their rotations. As a result, future physicians are learning the unique needs of the older population, and they are able to apply what they learn in their medical specialty.

"We really feel at Highland, we've made a tremendous impact not only for the patients of today but for the patients of tomorrow," says Dr. McCann.

# Program Aids

## Cardiac Patients' Safety

Post-Hospital Care Plan Helps Prevent Needless Readmissions



Nationally, one in five hospitalized patients with heart failure return to the hospital within a week after discharge. The Cardiology Department at Highland Hospital is working to ensure more of these patients stay healthy when they go home.

"We want our heart patients to have the best chance at a full recovery," says J. Chad Teeters, M.D., Chief of Cardiology, "so we're making sure patients can have a plan for follow-up care before they leave the hospital."



Chad Teeters, M.D.

Heart failure occurs when the heart cannot pump enough blood to meet the body's needs. Developing over time, it can be caused by a variety of conditions, including coronary artery disease, high blood pressure or faulty heart valves.

Through Highland's Rapid Heart Failure Follow-Up Clinic, a Highland cardiologist identifies patients in the hospital who may be at an increased risk for heart failure. These can be patients who were admitted for a heart-related issue or patients who are diagnosed with a heart condition while in the hospital. Those at highest risk include patients who:

- Are 75 or older.
- Are coming from or going to a nursing home upon discharge.
- Are return heart failure patients (anyone who has been hospitalized for heart failure in the past 30 days).
- Do not successfully urinate within the first 24 hours after admission.
- Have impaired kidney function (creatinine clearance <50).

Once identified, patients have the opportunity to make an appointment with a Highland cardiologist within 72 hours of discharge.

"Follow-up care is critical to a patient's success," notes Dr. Teeters. "Those who will be readmitted will likely come back in three to seven days."

Highland cardiologists discuss medications and diet, then review and develop an individualized treatment plan for each patient. They communicate the results of the visit with the patient's primary care physician or home care coordinator.

"We want to optimize treatment from the moment patients arrive to when they leave, and we want to ensure the care and education we give keeps them from having to return," Dr. Teeters says.



# Expectant Parents, Unexpected Diagnosis

Proper Care Can Protect Mom, Baby from Gestational Diabetes



Pregnancy is often called the happiest time in a woman's life, but a diagnosis of gestational diabetes can be cause for concern. To give mothers peace of mind, Highland Hospital's Diabetes HealthSource is providing the tools and support women need to take control of the condition.

"Some women are nervous when they find out they have gestational diabetes, but they should know that they have the power to manage it," said Andrea Avidano, RN, MSN, BC-ANP, Diabetes Nurse Practitioner at Highland Hospital.

Two to 10 women out of every 100 pregnant women in the United States will have gestational diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gestational diabetes occurs when a pregnant woman – who has not been previously diagnosed with diabetes – develops high blood sugar. Researchers believe hormones that develop during pregnancy block insulin from doing its job, causing the high glucose levels.

Left untreated, the condition can be dangerous to the mother and/or baby. A woman whose blood sugar stays high could be at risk of preeclampsia, pre-term birth or C-section delivery. The baby could

have birth defects, increased birth weight or hypoglycemia. In some rare instances, there is risk of fetal death.

Fortunately, with the proper care women can control gestational diabetes. As part of routine prenatal care, all women should receive a glucose tolerance test between the 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> weeks of pregnancy. Women who have elevated blood sugar levels may be referred to Highland's Diabetes HealthSource, which provides education and medication management.

"We take a team approach to care," explains Sally Nordquist, RN, MEd, CDE, Program Coordinator at the Diabetes HealthSource. "Our diabetes educators focus on the gestational diabetes, so the patient's obstetrician can focus on the pregnancy."

Women first meet with a diabetes educator at the Diabetes HealthSource. They learn how to eat differently and how to check their blood sugar levels at home. The educator checks in with the patient regularly, and if she notices the patient's levels are trending up, the woman is referred to a nurse or provider, who may prescribe medications in the form of oral pills or insulin.

"Women can manage this condition with a combination of exercise, diet and, if needed, medications," Avidano notes. "I know it seems hard, but it's doable." Nordquist says there is a benefit to managing this disease during pregnancy.

"This gives mothers a jump-start on prevention of diabetes in the future," she explains, noting that women who develop diabetes during pregnancy have an increased risk of developing diabetes in 10 to 15 years.

Patients should schedule follow-up appointments after birth with their physicians to assess whether they need ongoing treatment.

To learn more, contact the Diabetes HealthSource at **(585) 341-7066**.



*Andrea Avidano, left and Sally Nordquist help moms-to-be with gestational diabetes learn how to manage their condition to keep themselves and their babies as healthy as possible.*



# Help Your Teens Manage Their Weight *... continued from page 1*

Nature offers a variety of delicious and nutritious fruits and vegetables sure to excite the palate. Make friends with the produce section at the grocery store and color-coordinate meals and snacks with a healthful variety.

**Red:** Tomatoes, apples, watermelon, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, pink grapefruit and kidney beans.

**Green:** Spinach, kiwifruit, broccoli, kale, green beans, green apples, green grapes, avocado and leafy greens.

**Yellow/orange:** Carrots, summer squash, butternut and winter squash, oranges, nectarines, peaches, orange and yellow peppers.

**Blue/purple:** Plums, blueberries, eggplant, purple grapes and blackberries.

**White:** Cauliflower, bananas, mushrooms, onions, garlic, parsnips and potatoes.

*It's easier to maintain a healthy weight if you eat more fruits and vegetables.*

## Smart Snack and Meal Ideas

Now that you have a variety of fruits and vegetables, how can their colorful appeal make nutrition a mealtime staple in your busy household? It's easy:

- Blend fruits and yogurt for a carry-along breakfast smoothie.
- Toss spinach, strawberries and walnuts with yogurt dressing for a dinner salad.
- Add sautéed mushrooms, onions, green peppers and garlic to spaghetti sauce.
- Keep chopped vegetables and low-fat dip handy for snacks.
- Replace high-fat desserts with sliced fruit.
- Combine beans, chopped peppers and low-fat cheese between two corn tortillas, and heat in a frying pan for a quick, nutritious lunch.
- Enjoy a large salad for lunch with beans and diced vegetables.
- Top sandwiches with dark green lettuce, tomatoes, avocado and peppers.
- Mix dried fruit, whole grain cereal and nuts for a quick trail mix.
- Top baked potatoes with sautéed vegetables, salsa and low-fat cheese.

Eating healthfully can be quick, easy and less expensive than fast food. Fresh foods don't require a lot of preparation and they are more satisfying than junk food. In addition, it's easier to maintain a healthy weight if you eat more fruits and vegetables.

So stock up on fresh fruits, vegetables and healthful beverages and slowly eliminate junk food and soda from the pantry. Everyone in your family will reap the rewards.





# Separate Fact from Fiction on Food Labels

Walking through the grocery store we are bombarded by terms and phrases used on food packaging. Low fat! Good source of fiber! 100 percent natural! The truth is that these terms can vary from informative and factual to misleading. Here are some common food claims you may encounter and what they really mean.

## Fat and Sodium Claims: Not All Are Created Equal

**Free** – Sodium-free means less than 5 mg per serving. Fat-free means food has less than 0.5 g per serving. Beware that fat-free does not necessarily mean calorie-free; it's important not to interchange the two terms.

**Low** – Low-sodium means 140 mg or less sodium per serving. Low-fat means fewer than 3 g of fat per serving.

**Reduced** – This food has at least 25 percent less sodium or fat than the regular version.\*

**Light** – This food has at least 50 percent less sodium or fat than the regular version.\*

\* Note: Foods that are labeled "reduced" or "light" products are being compared to a regular version of the product, so "reduced" products may not meet the standards of the "low" or "-free" varieties.

**Zero trans fat** – Foods that claim to have zero trans fat have less than 0.5 g trans fat per serving, but may still contain some of these harmful fats. If a product has partially hydrogenated oils included in the ingredient list then it still contains some trans fat.

## "Multigrain": Sounds Good, But Is It?

**Multigrain** – Foods labeled multigrain contain more than one type of grain. However, there is no regulation on how much of each grain must be present, and the grains may not be heart-healthy whole grains.

**Whole grain** – Like multigrain, food claiming to be "made with whole grains" does not necessarily contain a large amount of these whole grains. Look for foods listed as "100 percent whole grain" instead.

## Natural vs. Organic

**Organic** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture has specific requirements for food using the term "organic." Animal products labeled organic have

not been given antibiotics or growth hormones. Plant products labeled organic are free of conventional pesticides and fertilizers made with synthetic chemicals. There are three levels of organic certification you will typically find in your local store:

- 100 percent organic – Products are made entirely from organic ingredients.
- Organic – At least 95 percent of the product is made with organic ingredients.
- Made with organic ingredients – At least 70 percent of the ingredients used are organic.

**Natural** – The FDA does not have a formal definition for using the word "natural" in food. Manufacturers have wide discretion on using this term so long as food "does not contain added color, artificial flavors, or synthetic substances."

## Nutrient Terms to Learn

**Fortified** – Foods that are fortified have nutrients in addition to those that are naturally-occurring. This often makes them healthier than nonfortified foods.

**Enriched** – Enriched means that nutrients that have been lost during processing have been added back into food. They generally have fewer health benefits than foods that are fortified.

**Good source of/provides/contains** – The product must contain more than 10 percent but less than 20 percent of the recommended daily amount per serving.

**High source of** – Foods that claim to be a "high source" must contain at least 20 percent of the daily recommended amount per serving.

Think critically when looking at food claims on the labels in the grocery store on your next visit. For more advice on what foods make up a healthy diet, visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov).

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# Stretch and Save with a Free Highland Hospital Exercise Band

Looking for a new tool to boost your fitness? Resistance bands are an easy and low-impact way to stretch tight muscles, improve balance and build your strength. This ultra-light, portable piece of exercise equipment is easy to store, making it a great option for home use, hotel workouts or when you're at the gym.

Highland Hospital's light-resistance latex bands are perfect for exercise beginners or older adults. (To increase the resistance, fold the band over itself.)

Call **(585) 506-4703** to request your FREE exercise band.

Consult your physician before beginning a new exercise program. Limit one band per person, while supplies last. Please note that these bands contain natural latex rubber, which may cause allergic reactions in some people.

