

# FOLLOW THE LEADER

## Young Patients

It's a commonly held belief that certain health concerns are confined to the older adult population. As our cover story shows, this is not the case. Cynthia Swift, only 34, suffered a stroke just months ago.

While she may have been younger than the more typical stroke sufferer, her situation was no less dire. She required the clot-busting drug, tPA, and the expertise of a capable stroke team. Thankfully, Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH) has been designated a primary stroke center by The Joint Commission.

Stroke is not the only area where IAH shines. Inova Spine Institute (page 4) provides patients conservative and surgical treatment options for back issues. And the hospital's sports medicine services (page 5) help people like high school soccer player Ismail Waziry, who underwent surgery for a torn ACL.

IAH is excited to offer two new services and treatments as well. As you'll see on these next two pages, a new Heartburn Treatment Center has opened at our hospital, led by G. Kevin Gillian, MD. Also, Michael Abidin, MD, has developed a cutting-edge sleep apnea solution.

IAH is eager to help you with all your medical needs. Best wishes for a happy and healthy summer!



**SUSAN CARROLL FACHE, MBA, MHA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
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## GASTROENTEROLOGY

# FEEL THE BURN?

## New Heartburn Treatment Center helps patients experience relief

Inova Alexandria Hospital recently opened its new Heartburn Treatment Center, a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to treating heartburn and related disorders. The center's director is surgeon G. Kevin Gillian, MD, who is well-known for his expertise in treating heartburn, also known as gastroesophageal reflux (GER).

The center offers conservative and surgical treatment options. Its comprehensive, streamlined approach capitalizes on the expertise of gastroenterology, surgery, pulmonary medicine and ENT physicians who aim to improve patients' quality of life and reduce their risk of long-term complications caused by GER and related disorders and by prolonged use of medications. The center is equipped to handle the following conditions:

- Heartburn not controlled with standard medical management
- Difficulty swallowing or a chronic lump in the throat (globus)
- Chronic hoarseness or loss of voice
- Adult-onset asthma with reflux issues
- Non-cardiac chest pains
- Difficulty sleeping due to regurgitation or choking
- Medications only "taking the edge off" heartburn symptoms

### FOCUS ON GERD

Dr. Gillian, president of the American Society of General Surgeons, is proficient in many areas of laparoscopic surgery. However, he maintains a strong focus on hernia issues and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). He has over 18 years of experience treating heartburn-related disorders such as GERD, hiatal hernias and swallowing disorders.

Over the years, he has created guidance and tools to treat heartburn as effectively as possible. These tools include an Esophageal Function Test to measure the flow of acid, and medicinal treatment options or surgical options such as LINX device implantation, for which Dr. Gillian is one of four certified trainers in the U.S.

Heartburn is an irritation of the stomach caused by stomach acid. If the lower esophageal sphincter — located where the esophagus meets the stomach — opens too often or does not close tightly enough, stomach acid can reflux, or seep, into the esophagus and cause the burning sensation. (See illustration below.)

"All of these different procedures are available to fix the structure of the esophagus," comments Dr. Gillian. "They are minimally invasive and only involve an overnight stay. I'm bringing a couple of new procedures to the hospital that didn't exist there before."

## FIND ANSWERS

Learn more about treatment for heartburn at [inova.org/hbtc](http://inova.org/hbtc).

