

# INhealth

HEALTH AND WELLNESS MADE PERSONAL

Fall 2018

**THINK FAST:  
The Stroke  
Experts Are  
Here** 6

*get back  
to life*

Spinal stenosis surgery  
helps one athlete beat  
spinal pain

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**STICK TO IT**

Physical therapy app helps  
patients stay compliant

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Spinal stenosis occurs most often in the lower back and neck and can put pressure on the nerves that go through the spine.

## Stroke Excellence



We are happy to share with you the newly redesigned *INhealth!* In addition to providing information about Inova

Alexandria Hospital (IAH), this magazine now offers news from across the Inova system.

We at IAH pride ourselves on our services. Recently, we were named a Thrombectomy-Capable Stroke Center — one of only four hospitals in the country to achieve this distinction (page 6).

It is you, our patients, who push us to be our best. Because of her experience here as a patient, Nakiara Bell, NB, RN, (page 3), actually joined our staff. We are grateful to have patients — and staff — like her.

**SUSAN CARROLL, FACHE, MBA, MHA**  
Regional Executive Officer,  
Inova Eastern Region

# Welcoming



Photo: Lawrence Cheng Photography

*The Inova OBGYN - Shirlington practice is located within the Shirlington Gateway at 2800 S. Shirlington Road in Arlington. The team includes (L to R): Hillary A. Robinowitz-Elins, MD; Samrawit Berhanu, MD; Shweta V. Patel, MD; and Stephanie J. Williams, MD.*

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## MORE ONLINE

**Interested in learning more from *INhealth* magazine?**

Visit [inovanewsroom.org](http://inovanewsroom.org) to read additional stories, as well as view videos and podcasts pertaining to hospital news, programs, treatments and cutting-edge research.

# Wellness

## Comprehensive OBGYN care for every stage of life

At Inova OBGYN – Shirlington, women find the care they need for every stage of their lives — from puberty through menopause and beyond.

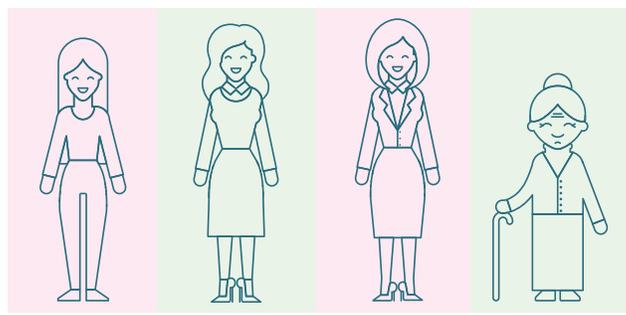
“We aim to give our patients the ultimate in service, convenience and comfort,” says Hillary Robinowitz-Elins, MD, one of four doctors in the practice. “Women come to us for routine gynecologic check-ups and obstetrical care, as well as treatment for more complex conditions such as fibroids, urinary issues and infertility. We even offer diet and nutrition counseling.”

Dr. Robinowitz-Elins and her colleagues, Samrawit Berhanu, MD; Shweta Patel, MD; and Stephanie Williams, MD, specialize in minimally invasive surgery, which means patients recover faster and return to work and activities sooner.

The all-female practice shares space with Inova Primary Care – Shirlington, making it easy for women to take care of multiple medical needs in one location. Other time savers include online scheduling and early-morning appointments.

Above all, the team is focused on forging a personal connection with patients.

“Our goal is to build a strong relationship with every woman who walks through our doors,” says Dr. Williams. “We treat each patient the way we’d treat our family members, and offer carefully considered, individualized care.”



*The doctors at Inova OBGYN – Shirlington care for women of all ages.*

### MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Inova OBGYN – Shirlington is conveniently located just off I-395 in the Shirlington Gateway Building. To schedule an appointment, call 571.777.2410 or visit [inova.org/shirlingtonobgyn](http://inova.org/shirlingtonobgyn).

### THE STATS

THERE ARE CURRENTLY AROUND **2,800,000 REGISTERED NURSES** EMPLOYED IN THE UNITED STATES.



*Giving birth at Inova influenced nurse Nakiara Bell, NB, RN.*

## Full Circle

### Nurse chooses Inova Alexandria Hospital to start her career

When Nakiara Bell, NB, RN, a nurse in the postpartum unit at Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH), first visited IAH six years ago for prenatal care, she had no idea that her pregnancy would alter the course of her professional life. At the time, she was in college studying to be a kindergarten teacher, yet the compassionate care she received here ignited a new interest.

“What really stood out to me is how all of the nurses supported me. Because my mom was not there to guide me [through labor and postpartum], they stepped in to fill that role,” says Bell. “They helped me to make the best decisions without pushing me toward something [that didn’t feel right] and made sure everything was OK.”

After taking a semester to care for her newborn, Bell returned to school with a new life goal — becoming a nurse. And recently that journey came full circle when she accepted a position on IAH’s postpartum unit.

“I just love helping families and first-time parents,” she says. “You can read all the books [about parenting], but when someone is actually there who can answer questions personally, having gone through a similar experience, it has a different effect. Being in this nursing role at IAH has been awesome.”

Want to join the nursing team at Inova Alexandria Hospital? Visit [inovacareers.org](http://inovacareers.org).

# Give It Another Shot

## Annual vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu

The flu virus is not fun. It causes high fever, headaches, body pains, extreme fatigue, sore throat, cough and other unpleasant symptoms. While some cases of flu are mild, others can be more serious and even life-threatening. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 36,000 Americans die and more than 200,000 are hospitalized each year due to complications from the flu.



*One way to prevent the spread of the flu is to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.*

An annual flu shot is your best protection. Why annually? There are different strains of flu every year, and the flu shot reduces the likelihood you will contract the flu virus. When more people get vaccinated, less flu infection can spread throughout the community.

The CDC recommends that adults and children ages 6 months and older receive an annual flu shot. Those with the most compromised immune systems — including children younger than 5; adults over age 65; pregnant women; and people with various medical conditions, like asthma, chronic lung disease and heart disease — are at a higher risk of developing complications from the flu.

In addition to receiving the flu vaccine, follow these tips to help prevent the spread of the flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth unless you have just washed your hands.
- Eat well, exercise, drink lots of water and get enough sleep.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. 

## FLU SHOT CLINICS

**Inova offers community flu shot clinics for adults and children 6 months and older. See the schedule and learn more about fighting the flu at [inovalink=org/flu](https://www.inova.org/flu).**

## Smart Sips

### Inova to eliminate most plastic drinking straws

For well over a decade, Inova has been a leading presence enacting sustainability efforts in the healthcare sector. When J. Stephen Jones, MD, took on the role of President and CEO last April, he considered the downstream impact of materials used throughout the system and advocated for Inova's sustainability efforts. Plastic use is one area of concern.

According to Seema Wadhwa, Inova's Assistant Vice President for Sustainability and Wellness, curtailing the use of plastic drinking straws is a new initiative that will be launched in the fall. "We can have a meaningful impact by cutting back on the use of this material," she says. "Inova

recognizes that plastic straws are not readily recyclable and can find their way to waterways, where they can cause harm to wildlife."

As the first health system on the East Coast to institute the change, Inova will eliminate plastic straws in a phased approach, first by pulling them from retail spaces, such as cafeterias and lounges. Patient care areas will then be reviewed to determine if plastic straw reduction or elimination is possible.

Of course, visitors and patients who have clinical or medical needs for straws will get them. "We have investigated plastic straw alternatives, including paper straws and bio-based straws," says Wadhwa, "and the replacements



*Inova's initiative to phase out the use of plastic straws is starting this fall.*

have been thoroughly vetted and meet our requirements for usability and cleanliness."

The plastic straw initiative is just one of the efforts in Inova's JustOne Campaign, through which the system is asking everyone to take one small action to foster a healthy environment. 

**Nov. 15 is America Recycles Day** and will mark the kickoff of Inova's straw reduction initiative. Learn how you and members of your community can participate. Visit [inovalink=org/JustOne2018](https://www.inova.org/JustOne2018).

## Among Friends

### Prostate patient finds expertise and familiarity at Inova Alexandria Hospital

With a long career in the healthcare field, Tom (whose name was changed to protect his privacy) instinctively knew he'd seek a second opinion about his medical care after being diagnosed with prostate cancer last year. But it was equally obvious to him that Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH) Cancer Center was the ideal place to both confirm his choices and pursue treatment.

Tom, whose cancer hadn't spread beyond the prostate gland, finished eight weeks of external beam radiation therapy at IAH this past spring and will continue hormone therapy over the coming year. But despite the rigor of his daily treatments, the 74-year-old looked forward to seeing the Cancer Center's staff, whom he now counts among his friends.

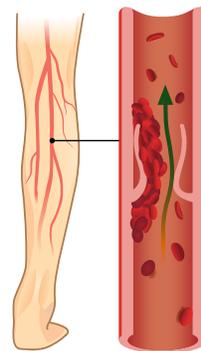
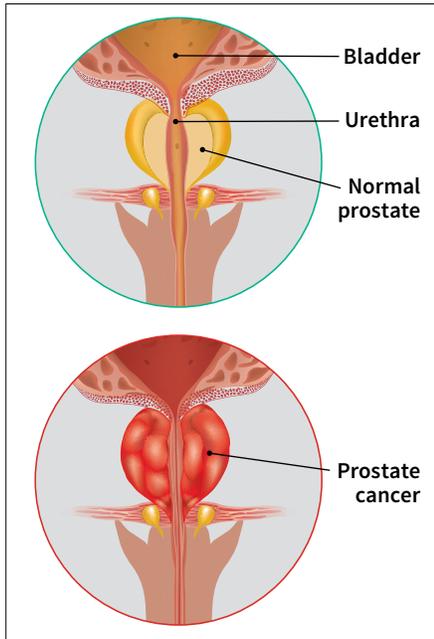
"They're very loving people," Tom says. "In the course of this extended time together, you get a wonderful sense of familiarity with people and relate to them as friends, not patient and staff."

Tom carefully considered his treatment options — which also included surgery — when first diagnosed with the malignancy. Inova physicians reassured him that radiation was "the treatment of choice" to optimize his results while reducing side effects.

"I would describe my experience there very simply: I felt safe," Tom adds. "What could be better than that?"

IAH Cancer Center Director Cori Ashton says Tom's observations exemplify the type of care Inova seeks to offer every cancer patient.

"One of the things I really care about is giving back to our patient population, which is something Inova does exceptionally well," Ashton says. "We go above and beyond not only for prostate cancer patients, but all patients."



*A blood clot that develops in a patient's veins is known as deep vein thrombosis.*

## What is deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and what should I know about it?

**Anthony Comerota, MD**, is a vascular surgeon at Inova Alexandria Hospital.

As care continues to improve for cardiovascular diseases, we're observing reduced rates of heart attack and stroke. However, there is increasing incidence of venous thromboembolic events, such as deep vein thrombosis (DVT), pulmonary embolism (PE) and death due to PE.

DVT is a condition in which a blood clot develops in a patient's veins. Troublesome DVT usually occurs in the lower extremities or pelvic area and causes symptoms such as swelling, pain, discomfort when walking, and discoloration of the involved leg. If the blood clot dislodges and travels to the lungs, it is called a pulmonary embolus, which, if large enough, can be life-threatening.

Death from PE resulting from DVT is preventable. Patients who are at high risk for DVT include those with family histories of DVT or PE, those who have experienced blood clots in the past, and patients with some forms of cancer. Other risk factors include recent major surgery, traumatic injury, pregnancy, taking birth control pills and prolonged immobility.

To help reduce the risk of DVT, here are some practical steps: lose weight if you are overweight, quit smoking, exercise regularly and avoid long periods of standing still. 📌



To learn more, visit [inova.org/dvt](http://inova.org/dvt). To make an appointment with Dr. Comerota, call **703.207.7007**.

For more information about Inova Alexandria Hospital's Cancer Center, call **703.504.7900** or visit [inova.org/cancer](http://inova.org/cancer).

# Attack on *Stroke*



## Inova Alexandria Hospital goes the extra mile in stroke care and treatment

**A**s the leading cause of disability and fifth-leading cause of death in the United States, stroke remains a serious health issue. Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH) recently furthered its commitment to help stroke patients. The hospital, which had been certified as a Primary Stroke Center for over a decade, recently received certification from the Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association as a Thrombectomy-Capable Stroke Center (TSC). It is only the fourth hospital in the country to receive this higher-level stroke certification.

“The distinction ensures that every patient directed to our hospital can get the highest level of care when it comes to the acute phase of an ischemic stroke,” says Jalil Bentaleb, BSN, RN-BC, SCRNP, Director of Neurosciences.

Specifically, TSC certification ensures that IAH meets rigorous standards for performing endovascular thrombectomy, a minimally invasive procedure that involves threading a catheter through an artery from the groin into the brain to remove a blood clot during an ischemic stroke, the most common type of stroke.

“In the past, if someone came in with a stroke and they were beyond the 4.5-hour window since they were last known well, they would be ineligible for the clot-busting drug tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), and there was nothing we could do for them,” Bentaleb says.

Endovascular thrombectomy extends the window for ischemic stroke treatment to up to 24 hours. “Using advanced CT imaging techniques, we can quickly identify patients who have blockage of a major artery causing a stroke, and our team moves very quickly to open the artery,” says Venu Vadlamudi, Neuro-interventional Radiologist and Medical Director of the Stroke and Cerebrovascular Disease Program at IAH. “Time is brain. The faster patients arrive to the hospital and receive tPA and/or endovascular thrombectomy, the better chance they have for recovery.”

In 2018, the IAH Stroke Program has seen a significant increase in the number of endovascular thrombectomy cases and this has been further bolstered by the recent TSC certification, drawing stroke patients from all across the Washington metropolitan area. As part of outreach efforts, stroke team members have done extensive training with first responders, including Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel and 911 dispatchers, to demonstrate the importance and effectiveness of IAH stroke protocols.

“We have even gotten patients from as far away as Prince George’s County, because the EMS teams know patients get outstanding care here,” says Alison Pinch, BSN, RN-BC, SCRNP, Stroke Program Coordinator.

“We are committed and passionate about excellent stroke care,” says Dr. Vadlamudi. “The ongoing efforts of the entire stroke program, from outreach to education to treatments, have been validated by achieving TSC certification so we can promise that each patient is given the best opportunity for recovery.”

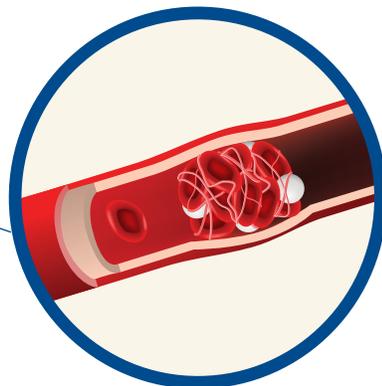
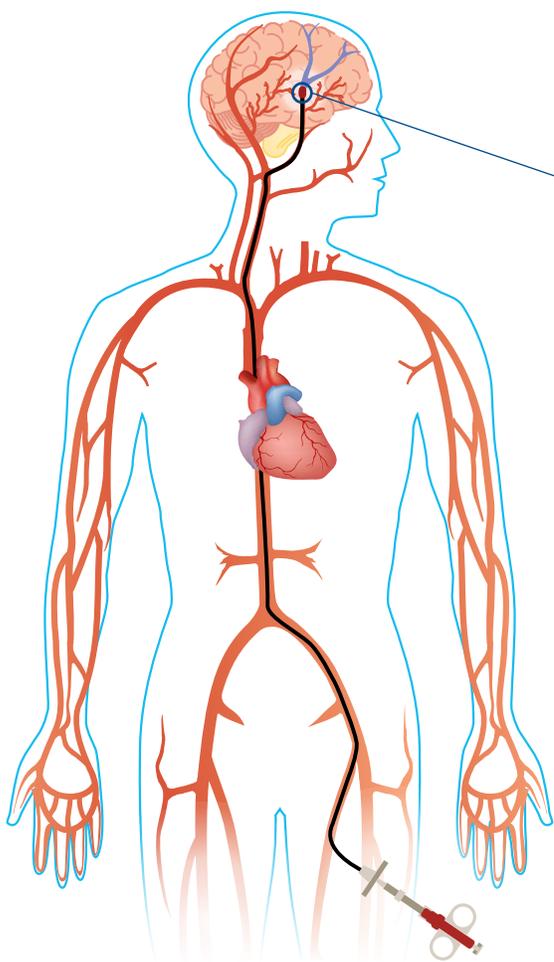


*The Joint Commission has certified Inova Alexandria Hospital as a Thrombectomy-Capable Stroke Center.*

# Understanding Thrombectomy

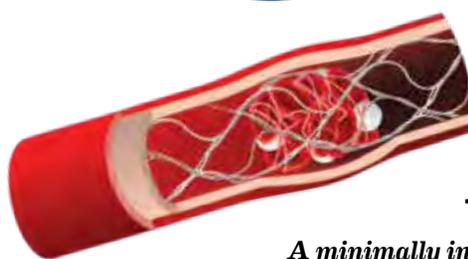
## **CONDITION:**

**Ischemic stroke:** The most common type of stroke, it is characterized by a blood clot that blocks blood flow through an artery, cutting off oxygen and nutrients to brain cells.



### **Large-Vessel Occlusion**

*A blockage in one of the major arteries of the brain, such as the middle cerebral artery.*



### **Endovascular Thrombectomy**

*A minimally invasive procedure to help patients with ischemic stroke caused by large-vessel occlusion. It involves threading a catheter from an artery in the groin into the brain and using a special device such as a stent retriever to remove the blood clot. It extends the opportunity for treatment up to 24 hours, far beyond the 4.5-hour window for the clot-busting drug tPA.*

## **STROKE EXPERTS**

Learn more about Inova's stroke program at [inova.org/stroke](http://inova.org/stroke).

## **SYMPTOMS:**

It's important to recognize the symptoms and act quickly. If you suspect a stroke, call 911 immediately! EMS can begin vital treatment in the ambulance.

- Sudden severe headache with no known cause
- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side
- Sudden confusion, or trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes

# Going the *D*

Spinal stenosis surgery helps CrossFit enthusiast Terri Farley return to form

“OUR ROLE IS TO TEACH PATIENTS AND TRY TO GET THEM BETTER IN THE WAY THAT MAKES THE MOST SENSE FOR THEM.”



—Corey Wallach, MD

A competitive CrossFit athlete, Terri Farley is in peak physical condition. So she knew something wasn't right a few years ago when she could not lift a gallon of milk off of her counter to put it away in the fridge.

“I didn't really have bad pain in my neck or anything horrible,” recalls Terri, who lifts weights and runs about five days a week. “But I couldn't raise my arm over my head.”

Having worked as a practice administrator with Inova orthopedic surgeon Corey Wallach, MD, she scheduled an appointment. Dr. Wallach determined she had a major spinal stenosis, which required surgery. While Dr. Wallach generally recommends more conservative measures for patients before operating, Terri's case was unique.

“In my practice, we look at the patient, where their symptoms are coming from and, most importantly, how it affects them,” says Dr. Wallach. “If the symptoms are mild, we'll treat the patient differently than if they are disabling. We start more conservatively with basic medications and physical therapy. The vast majority of patients will get better with those treatments. But the good news is for patients [like Terri] who need surgery, we have incredible outcomes.”

In Terri's case, she was able to go home the same day as her September 2014 surgery, and within two days she

was out and walking in her neck brace. After three months, she got the green light to return to her previous workout routine. This year, Terri Farley placed 150 out of about 6,000 participants in her age group of 50–54-year-olds in a CrossFit competition.

“I feel fantastic and happy with consistent strength gains that are equal on both arms!” she says. “I am thankful [Dr. Wallach] was able to fix me, and I am stronger than ever!”

Seeing Terri get back to doing what she loves was rewarding for Dr. Wallach. But, for him, it also reinforced his philosophy of providing individual attention to patients and educating them about their neck and back pain, in addition to treating it.

“I think there are a lot of myths and misconceptions when it comes to neck and back pain, and the word doctor comes from the Latin 'docere' which means to teach,” says Dr. Wallach. “Our role is to teach patients and try to get them better in the way that makes the most sense for them.” <sup>10</sup>

**ASK THE EXPERT** Corey Wallach, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon

<b>FREE Lecture:</b> Advanced Treatment for Neck Pain	<b>Date &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday, Nov. 27, 6 p.m.	<b>Location:</b> Inova Alexandria Hospital Boardroom 4320 Seminary Road Alexandria, VA
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See the **Ask The Expert** lectures on the back page of this issue to learn more.

# *istance*



## What Is Spinal Stenosis?

Spinal stenosis is a condition in which the spinal canal narrows and pinches the nerves, resulting in back and leg pain. Spinal stenosis often occurs in older adults, although younger people who are born with a small spinal canal may also develop symptoms. Treatments include the following:

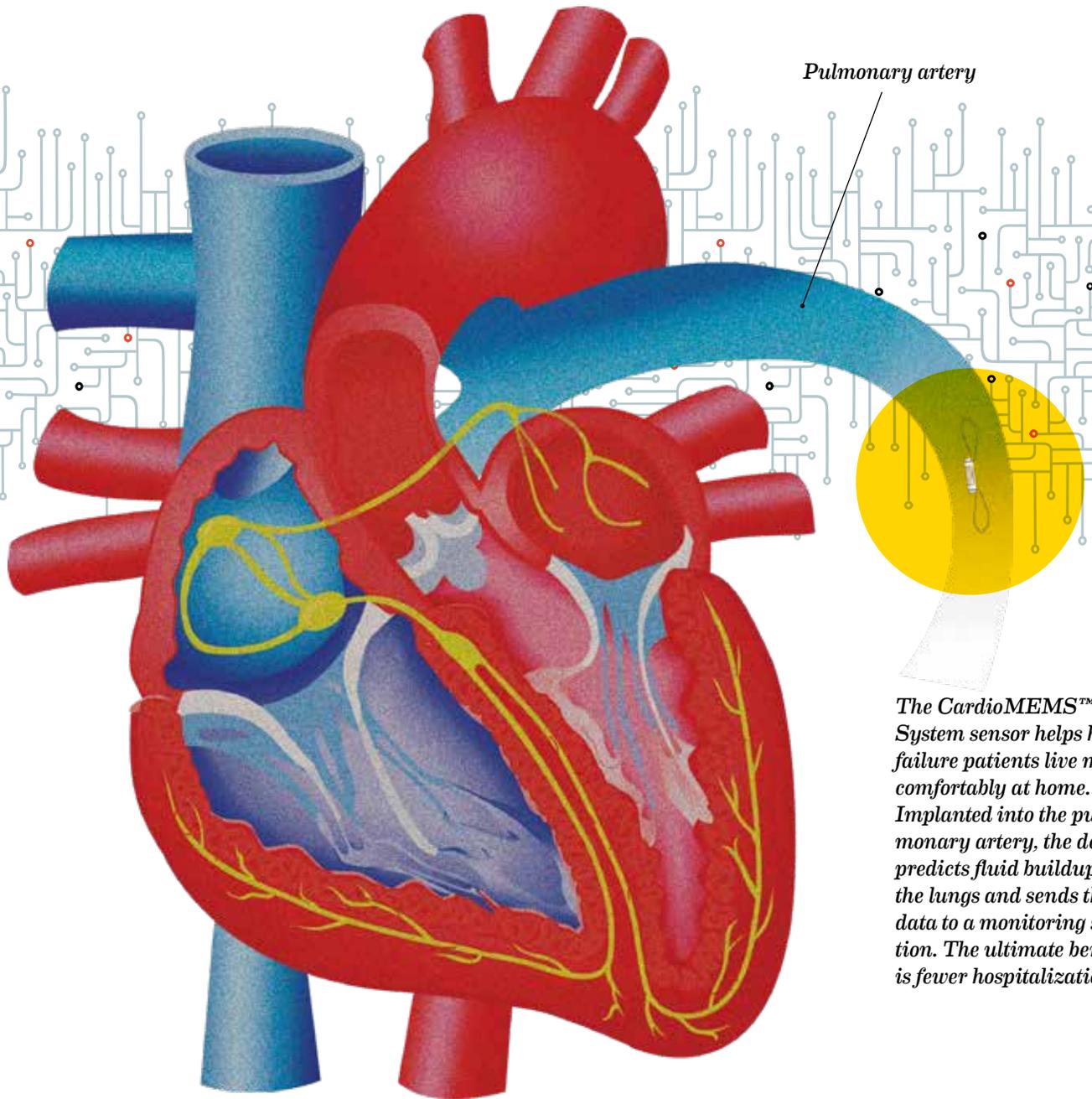
- Medication
- Physical therapy
- Laminoplasty
- Laminectomy
- Spinal fusion
- Interspinous/interlaminar implant
- Epidural steroid blocks
- Selective nerve root blocks/transforaminal epidural steroid blocks

*Terri Farley, who works out several days a week, suffered from spinal stenosis for years.*

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### GET ANSWERS

Learn more about the Inova Spine Program at [inova.org/spine](https://www.inova.org/spine).



*The CardioMEMS™ HF System sensor helps heart failure patients live more comfortably at home. Implanted into the pulmonary artery, the device predicts fluid buildup in the lungs and sends this data to a monitoring station. The ultimate benefit is fewer hospitalizations.*

# Home Is Where the *Heart* Is

Remote monitoring device provides proactive, personalized care for heart failure patients

**W**alter Williams, now 80, and his wife, Jeannette, rest a little easier these days, thanks to a unique, implantable, remote monitoring device that helps manage Walter's heart failure.

But it was a bumpy road for a while.

Walter was first diagnosed with heart failure in 1991, a condition whereby the heart muscle is damaged and cannot effectively pump blood throughout the body. This can lead to frequent and life-threatening fluid buildup in the lungs and surrounding body tissues as well as kidney failure.

The husband and wife team were vigilant about watching Walter's diet and fluid intake, but by 2016, Walter's condi-

tion had worsened. The Gaithersburg, MD, resident was nearing monthly visits to Inova Fairfax Medical Campus (IFMC) for emergency care, and with each hospitalization, his kidneys grew weaker, which made dialysis a looming possibility. "Every day was so stressful," Jeannette recalls. "We were always adjusting Walter's medication but never sure what, if anything, was working."

regarded implantable, battery-free sensor that essentially predicts fluid buildup in the lungs. Inova is believed to be the first hospital in the Washington, DC, area to implant this tiny, state-of-the-art monitoring sensor into a patient diagnosed with heart failure. One compelling reason to use the device? The chance to reduce hospital readmissions.

"We know that hospitalization is a significant marker for heart failure severity. But more doctors, nurses and drugs weren't bending the curve on hospital readmissions. Neither were daily weigh-ins and strict diets with limited salt intake," notes Dr. Desai. "Then we found the CardioMEMS system. This was highly personalized, precision

healthcare, which is always

Inova's goal. So we were very

early proponents."

Did Inova's hunch pan out?

The evidence points to yes.

Since Walter had the device

implanted, his ER visits have

dropped to only once in the

past 14 months. "My quality

of life is much better now —

more normal," he says.

Adds Jeanette, "The stress

level has been significantly

reduced. We are so thankful

to have Dr. Desai and his team."

Walter isn't the only patient benefiting from the CardioMEMS system. A 2014 clinical trial found that the device:

- Reduced hospital admissions for heart failure by 37 percent
- Reduced hospital re-admissions within 30 days by 78 percent
- Was free of complications for 98.6 percent of patients

### Staying Ahead of the Curve

For Walter, the path to better health began with Dr. Desai implanting the monitoring sensor — about the size of a paper clip — into the patient's pulmonary artery (the vessel that carries blood from

the heart to

the lungs).

The minimally

invasive, outpatient procedure took about 30 minutes. After a brief recovery period, the patient was discharged and at home.

Now, every day, Walter lies on a pillow and presses a button on a small home monitoring electronics unit. The system then measures the pressure inside Walter's artery, which forecasts fluid buildup in his lungs, and automatically sends this data to a monitoring station that is closely tracked by Amanda Millheim, RN, Heart Failure Nurse Specialist.

If Walter's pressure is higher than it should be, it's a sign that fluid might be backing up into his lungs. That's when Millheim alerts Dr. Desai, who can immediately adjust Walter's medications.

Because the CardioMEMS system senses increasing pressure up to two weeks before trauma strikes, it's a proactive system rather than a reactive system, giving doctors and nurses time to stay ahead of the curve and hopefully prevent hospitalization, or worse.

What sets Inova's system apart is the tight bond between Millheim and her Inova patients being remotely monitored. "Amanda is like a mother hen watching over our heart failure patients," Dr. Desai says. "They know she's tracking their data, preparing their weekly reports and ready to answer any question at any time."

"The CardioMEMS system is a tool that allows us to create a highly personalized approach to heart failure care," he adds. "It's a system that's brought some amazing results for so many of our patients." 

### THE HEART OF IT

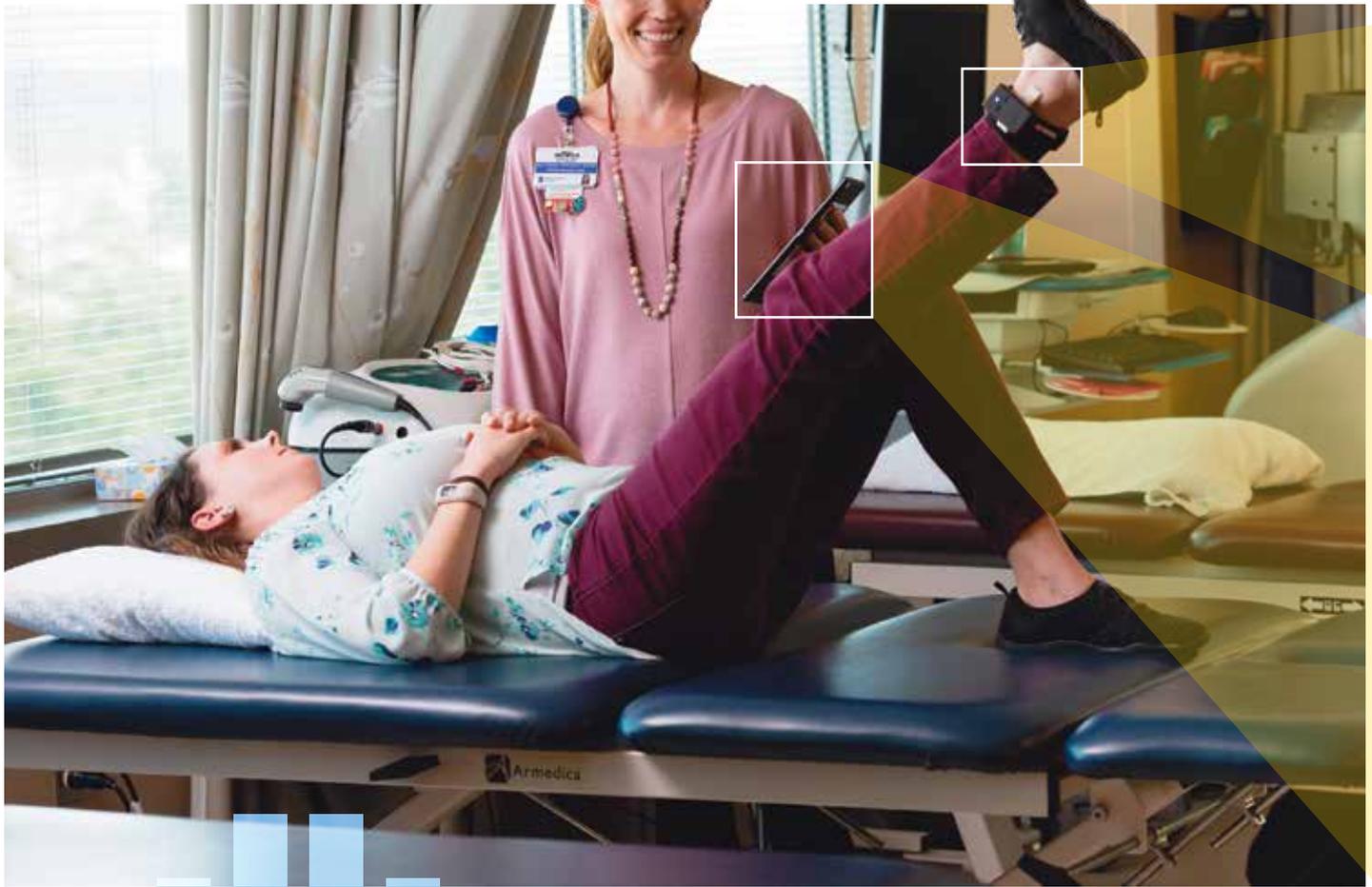
Learn more about the groundbreaking CardioMEMS HF System and other treatments for heart failure at [inovaheart.org/heart-failure/treatments](http://inovaheart.org/heart-failure/treatments).



*The CardioMEMS™ HF System sensor is about the size of a large paper clip and transmits data on the pressure within the pulmonary artery to a remote sensing device (above right).*

### A New Approach

That's when Walter's doctor, Shashank Desai, MD, Medical Director of the Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Program at IFMC, suggested the CardioMEMS™ HF System, a new and highly



Photos: Robert Rathe



# Driven by *Data*

Inova partners with tech company to improve physical therapy results

**I**magine you had knee surgery. Everything went well and you're back home. Of course, your physical therapist (PT) recommended a therapy treatment plan — which includes exercises at home as well as with your therapist at a physical therapy clinic. In an ideal world, you follow your PT's directions, and you're headed for a remarkable recovery.

“Following your PT's instructions isn't always easy,” emphasizes Mike Thomas, Co-Director of the Inova Personalized Health Accelerator (IPHA), a program looking to invest capital in companies with early-stage technologies that are of strategic interest to Inova.

Enter KinometriX. To work around noncompliance, Thomas and the IPHA team recently partnered with this Maryland-based company and developer of a platform to track patients' physical therapy

*Above, Monika Stolze, Program Manager for Adult Therapy Services at Inova Loudoun Hospital's Outpatient Specialty Rehabilitation Center, tests out the KinometriX sensor on athletic trainer Janna Ward.*



*The KinometriX sensor can be worn on the ankle, wrist or arm, and tracks relevant rehabilitation factors, including range of motion, torque and repetitions. Patient activity is tracked via a mobile app (below) and is reported back to the caregiver team.*



progress and hopefully keep them engaged in their rehabilitation process. “Life gets busy, and physical therapy sessions get canceled. Some patients stop exercising because progress is often so gradual they don’t even realize they’re improving,” Thomas says.

### Accelerating the Goal

How does KinometriX work? Simply put, the patient finds a convenient time to put a small sensor over their injured joint — similar to positioning a wireless-enabled wearable activity tracker. Next the patient performs their exercise treatment plan,

such as kicking the leg up and down as fast as possible 10 times. The sensors, powered by artificial intelligence algorithms, collect motion data, which are uploaded to KinometriX’s cloud platform. There the data are analyzed for key metrics, including range of motion, speed of motion, fatigue and neuromuscular control.

Tapping into the KinometriX app, patients as well as their physical therapist and healthcare provider can review real-time data and measure improvements. Specific to the patient, this data can help predict treatment progress or point to a need for plan adjustments.

### A Promising Test Drive

Currently, Inova Loudoun Hospital is working with KinometriX. “Everything is in the early research and development phase,” Thomas says. “We’re refining the system’s existing algorithms and collecting clinician

feedback, which will help us perfect the platform. We’re already excited about the potential here.”

By offering access to Inova, IPHA plans to attract leading healthcare entrepreneurs, investors and researchers, Mike Thomas, Director of IPHA, says. These unions will ultimately bring unique expertise to Inova’s ever-progressing quest to better evaluate, develop and implement technology solutions that add value to Inova’s operations, improve outcomes and keep Inova at the vanguard of healthcare innovation.

## A Strong Union

KinometriX is an ideal example of an Inova Personalized Health Accelerator (IPHA) candidate, with the KinometriX team working with IPHA as well as Inova leaders to further develop and refine this innovative technology. If successful, this new technology

should provide better outcomes to Inova patients.

As Program Manager for Adult Therapy Services at Inova Loudoun Hospital’s Outpatient Specialty Rehabilitation Center, Monika Stolze, DPT, sees positive patient reactions to the KinometriX platform. “Putting user-friendly data at our patient’s fingertips keeps them involved in their rehabilitation. They’re part of the process — instead of being passive recipients of care. We think this will increase compliance.”

With patients able to collect data at home, when it’s convenient, Thomas suspects that this, too, may inspire maximum patient follow-through with a clinician therapy plan. “It’s our hope that having access to objective, real-time data — without needing to schedule quite so many clinic appointments — will encourage patients to stick to their rehabilitation therapy,” he says.

Also, the KinometriX platform, based on artificial intelligence that presents immediate data, represents the next generation in healthcare. “We currently have the means to assess everything KinometriX measures, but it has to be done in the clinic,” Stolze says. “This platform represents the future, and what clinicians as well as patients expect.”

### AN EYE ON AI

Learn more about the Inova Personalized Health Accelerator at [inovapha.org](http://inovapha.org).

# You're Approved

New software system streamlines authorizations to speed patient care

In the hopes of having better medical outcomes, more physicians and patients are asking for genetic and molecular diagnostic tests, creating more personalized treatments for patients.

Unfortunately, it is also time-consuming and expensive. Many times, undergoing genetic testing requires prior authorization by a doctor, which is followed by a complicated matrix of requirements that involve multiple stakeholders. Then, even after a prior authorization has been obtained, a lab will still need to verify the authorization, which can create a back-and-forth dialogue that can delay the process and even negate reimbursement if an insurer refuses to pay.

Which is why the Inova Personalized Health Accelerator (IPHA) is rolling out CoverMyTest, a software system designed to streamline and automate the workflow for prior authorizations. The infrastructure will help expedite patient care and allow labs and physicians to efficiently conduct patient eligibility checks, deliver electronic prior authorizations and collect insurance verification.

In 2019, Lesley Anderson, Director of Business Development, Inova Genomics Laboratory, anticipates that more than 3,000 of about 10,000 patients receiving genetic testing at Inova will need preauthorization.

"Physicians care about this because they want to know when the lab results are in, and the lab cares about where we are in that process of getting everything authorized," says Rick Gordon, Co-Director of IPHA. "This gives everybody visibility, making sure patients can get the tests they need." 

## CARE TAILORED TO YOU

Learn more about genomics and the Inova Center for Personalized Health at [inova.org/icph](http://inova.org/icph).

## **IN** my own words

Inova's experts speak out

# *The Bar Is Set*

Loring Flint, MD, Chief Physician Executive and High Reliability Officer, seeks consistency in healthcare

As the Chief Physician Executive and High Reliability Officer, Loring Flint, MD, is tasked with setting top priorities and ensuring quality, safety and effective results create a positive patient experience. In 2018, his role shifted from Chief Medical Officer to Chief Physician Executive to help coordinate physician partnerships, drive the strategic direction of Inova and maintain operating responsibility for several departments.



Photo: Robert Rathe

“[ZERO HARM] STARTS WITH THE SIMPLEST THING: 100 PERCENT HAND WASHING.”

### What are you hoping to accomplish in your new role?

We are trying to create excellence in everything we do and have a zero-harm goal for all of our organizations. The latter is an aspirational goal because we are dealing with humans; the biology is different in each person, and how each handles medications, procedures and fighting disease is different. A key focus is eliminating and preventing any infections obtained in a hospital.

### How are you trying to make this goal a reality?

It starts with the simplest thing: 100 percent hand washing — washing hands when going in and out of a room, and after touching a patient or various pieces of equipment in the room. It's making sure you have sterile barriers when you're inserting a catheter or IV and cleaning the line every day and removing the catheters as soon as they are no longer needed. We are standardizing our processes to be sure we are doing everything possible to not inadvertently transmit an infection to a patient.

### What success have you seen so far?

Over the past two years, using a commonly accepted measure of harm, we have decreased harm by over 57 percent. We have a number of units, such as our pediatric oncology team, that have gone over 12 months without having an infection with a central line. Several units have had three to six months with no harm.

### What question should physicians be asking patients more readily?

Ask a patient at the end of the visit, “Is there anything else I can answer or do for you today?” It opens the door for the quiet issue that is lurking in the background. If a patient is coming in for a blood pressure check, you might learn they are really concerned about depression. It's important to make sure you're really being open and partnering with your patients. 

Visit [inova.org/physicians](http://inova.org/physicians) to find the right doctor for you.



# Crucial Help

Philanthropy drives pivotal program at Inova

When a person has been a victim of physical and sexual assault, they are at their most vulnerable. They may struggle with being able to inform others or share details of their story, much less offer forensic evidence of the crime.

Thankfully, the Inova Ewing Forensic Assessment and Consultation Team (FACT) program — the only one of its kind in Northern Virginia — provides compassionate, skilled care that addresses victims' emotional trauma from abuse, and also supports the collection of DNA evidence and documents injuries to assist the criminal justice process.

As crucial as this program is, it would not exist in its current form without a foundation of philanthropy, says FACT Director Mary Hale. In 2002, Betty and the late Charles Ewing and their family established dedicated funding for FACT services at Inova Fairfax Medical Campus, and in 2012 they supported the expansion of the department. The commitment of the Ewing family has allowed FACT to become one of the most comprehensive forensic programs in Northern Virginia. Growing from a staff of only on-call nurses, FACT now has six full-time and four part-time forensic nurses as well as a dedicated on-call staff. This ensures no victim has to wait for care.

In another generous gesture, the Ewing family also has expanded services to Inova Loudoun Hospital to improve access to care. Accessibility to services means more victims will reach out for help, Hale says. “To reduce the number and extent of these crimes, we need this program, as well as community education and resources,” she says. “This program makes a huge difference in the community, but we can't do it alone. Through generous philanthropy and the incredible FACT team, we're making an important impact every day for the most vulnerable among us.” 

## EMPOWERING VICTIMS

Learn more about the FACT program at Inova Fairfax Medical Campus and Inova Loudoun Hospital at [inova.org/FACT](http://inova.org/FACT).

Inova is a not-for-profit healthcare system located in Northern Virginia in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, serving over 2 million people with over 1,700 licensed beds. It consists of five hospitals including the area's only Level 1 Trauma Center and Level 4 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Inova encompasses many health services including the internationally recognized Inova Heart and Vascular Institute (IHVI), Inova Translational Medicine Institute (ITMI), Inova Neuroscience Institute, Inova Schar Cancer Institute and Inova Children's Hospital. Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research. More information about Inova is at [inova.org](http://inova.org).

If you do not wish to receive future mailings from Inova, please contact us at 703.972.2044 or [inova.org/unsubscribe](mailto:inova.org/unsubscribe).



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# ask THE EXPERT



## Knees, Hips, Shoulders and Other Joints

### Treatment Options for Hip and Knee Arthritis

**Michael Anvari, MD**  
Wednesday, Oct. 24, 6 p.m.  
Inova Fairfax Medical Campus  
\*Physicians Conference Center  
3300 Gallows Road  
Falls Church, VA  
\*or join via webinar

**Nigel Azer, MD**  
Wednesday, Nov. 28, 6 p.m.  
Inova Alexandria Hospital  
Boardroom  
4320 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, VA

### Treatment Options for Shoulder Pain and Arthritis

**Adam Lorenzetti, MD**  
Wednesday, Oct. 24, 6 p.m.  
Inova Loudoun Hospital  
44055 Riverside Parkway  
Suite 110  
Leesburg, VA

### Osteoarthritis and the Latest Advances in Joint Replacement

**Michael Anvari, MD**  
Wednesday, Nov. 14, 6 p.m.  
Inova Fairfax Medical Campus  
\*Physicians Conference Center  
3300 Gallows Road  
Falls Church, VA  
\*or join via webinar

## Heart and Vascular

### Preventing Heart Disease

**Stuart Sheifer, MD, FACC**  
Monday, Nov. 5, 6 p.m.  
Inova Fair Oaks Medical Campus  
Building 3580, Auditorium  
3580 Joseph Siewick Drive  
Fairfax, VA

### Minimally Invasive Techniques to Treat Valvular Heart Disease

**Matthew Sherwood, MD**  
Wednesday, Nov. 7, 6 p.m.  
Inova Fairfax Medical Campus  
\*Physicians Conference Center  
3300 Gallows Road  
Falls Church, VA  
\*or join via webinar

### Atrial Fibrillation

**Haroon Rashid, MD**  
Wednesday, Dec. 12, 6 p.m.  
Inova Fairfax Medical Campus  
\*Physicians Conference Center  
3300 Gallows Road  
Falls Church, VA  
\*or join via webinar

## Spine

### Advanced Treatment for Neck Pain

**Corey Wallach, MD**  
Tuesday, Nov. 27, 6 p.m.  
Inova Alexandria Hospital  
Boardroom  
4320 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, VA

## Special Events

### 80th Annual Ladies Board Rummage Sale

**Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 20 and 21**  
Morven Park Equestrian Center  
41580 Sunday Morning Lane  
Leesburg, VA

Learn more at [ladiesboard.org/rummage-sale](http://ladiesboard.org/rummage-sale).

### Brain Injury Services: The Journey Conference

**Thursday, Nov. 1**  
Inova Fairfax Medical Campus  
Physicians Conference Center  
3300 Gallows Road  
Falls Church, VA

Register at [inova.org/thejourneyconference](http://inova.org/thejourneyconference).

### Inova Medical Spa Open House

Presented by Inova Medical Spa & Life With Cancer  
**Tuesday, Nov. 13, 6 p.m.**  
Inova Medical Spa  
21785 Filigree Court  
Ashburn, VA

### 2nd Annual Holiday Open House

**Wednesday, Dec. 5, 6 p.m.**  
Inova HealthPlex Ashburn  
22505 Landmark Court  
Ashburn, VA

## FIND A PHYSICIAN

Looking for a doctor? Visit [inova.org/physicians](http://inova.org/physicians) or call our 24/7, bilingual physician-referral service at **1.855.My.Inova (1.855.694.6682)** to find one close to home or work.

## SUBSCRIBE NOW!

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