

INhealth

HEALTH AND WELLNESS MADE PERSONAL

Fall 2018

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*worth.
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Baby
Zachary
Reinsma spent the
first months of
his life in the
NICU.

Care Excellence



We are happy to share with you the first issue of the newly redesigned *INhealth!* This magazine offers important information about Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH), plus news from across the Inova system.

Congratulations are in order for IFOH nurses! IFOH has attained its third Magnet® designation — the highest national nursing honor. It is important to us that you have peace of mind. Whether you are new parents comforted by our Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) or a cancer patient relieved to have fewer, more precise radiation treatments, we have your back.

Thank you for the privilege to serve this wonderful community.

JOHN FITZGERALD
Chief Executive Officer,
Inova Fair Oaks Hospital

Laser-Foc



SBRT targets tumors in the spine, lung or liver.

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MORE ONLINE

Interested in learning more from *INhealth* magazine?

Visit inovanewsroom.org to read additional stories, as well as view videos and podcasts pertaining to hospital news, programs, treatments and cutting-edge research.

used

SBRT helps Inova oncologists provide precise radiation treatment

When it comes to fighting cancer, the more options your physician has, the better. One of these important tools is stereotactic body radiation therapy, or SBRT. This therapy takes advantage of the latest technology to deliver precisely focused radiation to cancerous tumors.

"We're using this technology to be as precise and accurate as possible, which allows us to use much higher and more focused doses of radiation," says Ashish Chawla, MD, Medical Director of Radiation Oncology at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH). "SBRT not only shrinks tumors, but in some circumstances, it can be as effective as surgery at controlling tumors long-term."

SBRT is often used for patients with tumors in the spine, lung or liver, and can be used for patients who are not good candidates for surgery. Because of the precise nature of the technology, the full treatment consists of about five appointments over one to two weeks, which is easier for patients to handle than the usual four to six weeks required for standard radiation therapy.

"[SBRT] is now one of the essential components of a high-quality, comprehensive cancer program," says Dr. Chawla. [i](#)

EXPERT CARE

For more information about Inova Schar Cancer Institute, visit inova.org/cancer or call 571.472.4724.

High Standings

U.S. News ranks Inova Fair Oaks Hospital third in Washington, DC, area

In August, *U.S. News & World Report* recognized Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) as a Best Hospital for 2018–2019. The publication ranked IFOH third in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area and sixth in all of the state of Virginia. *U.S. News*

bases its rankings on objective measures of service and performance, including risk-adjusted survival and readmission rates, hospital volume, patient experience and more.

"We could not achieve this level of success and improvement without the hard work and dedication of our staff, physicians and volunteers," says John Fitzgerald, CEO of IFOH. "Our entire team strives every day to deliver world-class care to our patients and our community."

In addition to the ranking by *U.S. News* — which also recognized IFOH's many hospital services, such as orthopedics, diabetes treatment, and knee and hip replacement, among others — *Becker's Hospital Review* named IFOH one of the 100 Great Community Hospitals for 2018. [i](#)

Learn more about Inova's accolades at inova.org/usnews.



Inova Fair Oaks Hospital staff celebrate the Magnet® designation earlier this year. The honor recognizes the hospital's efforts in nursing.

Nursing Achievement

Inova Fair Oaks Hospital attains third Magnet designation



The American Nurses Credentialing Center again has designated Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) a Magnet® facility. This prestigious recognition — IFOH's third since 2009 — honors the work and culture of nursing.

"Magnet designation is a privilege and it is valued by our staff, patients, providers and prospective employees as a sign of distinction and honor," says Deborah Fulbrook, Chief Nursing Officer at IFOH. "It has been demonstrated that Magnet hospitals achieve higher patient satisfaction scores, higher quality outcomes, and [the recognition] further supports our journey for all staff engagement."

The achievement places IFOH in the company of just 8 percent of hospitals nationwide. To date, only 477 of the approximately 5,000 hospitals in the United States have attained Magnet status. To be named a Magnet facility, IFOH submitted a written application and completed a three-day site survey with three Magnet appraisers who spoke extensively with the hospitals' nurses and nurse leaders, physicians, providers and ancillary partners about the work they do every day. [i](#)

To join Inova Fair Oaks Hospital's Magnet® team of nurses, visit inova.org/for-nurses.

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 [inova.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 [inova.org/JustOne2018](https://www.inova.org/JustOne2018).

The Greater Good

Giving to Inova Blood Donor Services helps save lives

Medical emergencies happen every day, and one critical need is blood. Inova Blood Donor Services provides blood to approximately 20 hospitals in the Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, metropolitan area, including Inova's five hospitals.

"Our goal is to collect 200 units [of blood] per day to support the hospitals we serve," explains Nicholas Lilly, Compliance and Regulatory Affairs Manager at Inova Blood Donor Services. "Each organization has a different use level and emergencies happen at all times; sometimes those 200 units could be used within minutes."

Because of this need, Inova Blood Donor Services collects blood on a daily basis, seven days a week, 363 days a year (except on Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, unless there is a special blood drive). Giving blood provides a critical resource for the community while also saving lives.

Note: If you're considering giving blood, visit inovablood.org for more information about eligibility. You may be eligible and not even realize it. Here are some common misconceptions people have about giving blood:

They don't need my blood, there must be a substitute.

False. When it is needed, there is no medical substitute for donated blood.

I can't donate because I have diabetes. While true for people with type 1 diabetes, as long as diabetes is controlled, people with type 2 diabetes can donate blood.

I don't want to risk getting a bloodborne disease. There is no danger of contracting a disease from donating blood.

Needles used are sterilized and single-use, meaning a new needle is used for every donation.

Donating blood hurts.

Most donors describe it as nothing more than a pinch.

I've been turned away from donating before, so I shouldn't try again. Regulations can change and new tests come out that might change your eligibility. Call **1.866.256.6372** to find out if you're eligible. 📞



There is no medical substitute for blood, which is why new donors are in demand.



Concierge medicine allows a physician to spend more time with the patient.

What is the Inova VIP 360° program and what is the value of joining?

Sandy Ibrahim, MD, is a family physician and Medical Director of the VIP 360° program.

Inova VIP 360° is a concierge medicine program, which affords the primary care provider and the patient the time that they both deserve to manage health care issues as they arise.

It represents an approach to medicine that is both preventive and therapeutic. Patient and physician retention is high with this model because VIP 360° physicians feel it is the ideal way to practice medicine. There are no rushed visits, and there is a same-day conversation with your own physician, and easy access after-hours to a top-rated team of primary care providers. Here are some additional highlights of the program:

- Seven full-time physicians make up the program across four offices in Northern Virginia: Fair Oaks, Fairfax, Lansdowne and Springfield.
- Each physician has a cap of 400 patients; traditional providers care for over 4,000 patients each.
- Patients receive same-day or next-day office visits.
- Office visits are 30 minutes long, twice that of a typical doctor's office.
- Annual physical exams are three to four hours long and include formal audiology, labs, vision screening, body composition mapping, one hour with a personal trainer and an entire hour with the doctor. 📞



For more information or to schedule a free consultation, visit inova.org/vip360.

Inova Blood Donor services is always looking for new donors. For more information, visit inovablood.org or call **1.866.256.6372**.

Getting Reflux *Right*

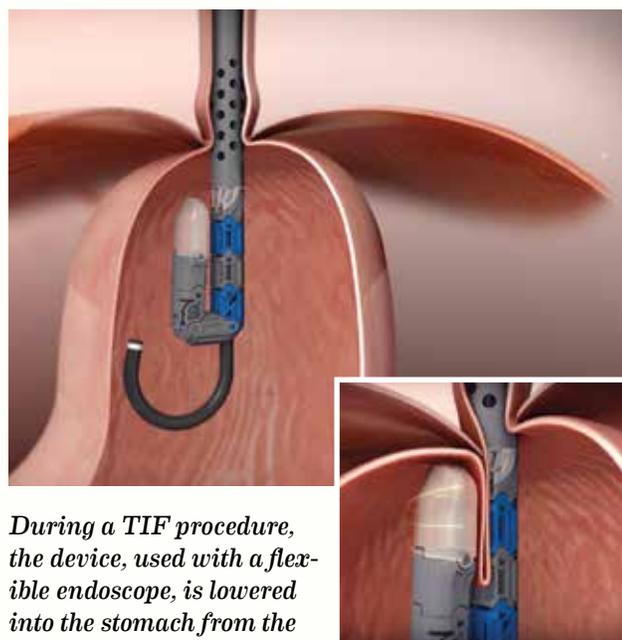
New TIF procedure offers a better solution for chronic heartburn

Providing the best patient experience means staying on top of the latest in medical technology. Starting July 1, doctors at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH) began performing the new TIF 2.0 procedure on patients with gastroesophageal reflux disease, also known as GERD or acid reflux. The purpose of the procedure is to relieve patients of chronic, intense heartburn without the side effects of more traditional surgery.

“TIF doesn’t require any surgical wounds, and there is no scarring and less time is spent in the operating room. It doesn’t have the same side effects as [traditional] laparoscopic surgery used to treat GERD,” says Allen Blosser, MD, gastroenterologist at IFOH. “TIF is an example of how we can now repair lower esophageal issues with an endoscopic approach rather than a surgical approach; we don’t have to open the patient’s abdomen. This is the newest wave of treatment options.”

Dr. Blosser explains that with more traditional laparoscopic surgery, GERD patients often experience side effects such as difficulty swallowing, belching or vomiting. In particular, being unable to belch often causes uncomfortable gas bloating throughout a patient’s GI system. TIF avoids these complications while also being a less involved procedure with consistent positive outcomes.

And while most patients who would be candidates for traditional GERD surgery will also be candidates for the TIF procedure, Dr. Blosser emphasizes that offering the latest and greatest in technology is only one aspect of IFOH’s approach to treatment.



During a TIF procedure, the device, used with a flexible endoscope, is lowered into the stomach from the esophagus (main image).

The upper part of the stomach is folded up and around the lower part of the esophagus (inset). Fasteners are then delivered through the layers of esophageal and upper stomach tissue to anchor the repair. This process is repeated to fuse the esophageal and upper stomach tissues and form the valve, which prevents reflux.

“We have one of the highest safety and response scores of any hospital on the East Coast,” he says. “We have an outstanding GI department and surgical department with superior outcomes. And while we’ve been recognized for bringing in new technology [such as TIF], our quality is due to the skill of our doctors and staff as well as the alternatives to surgery that we offer.” 

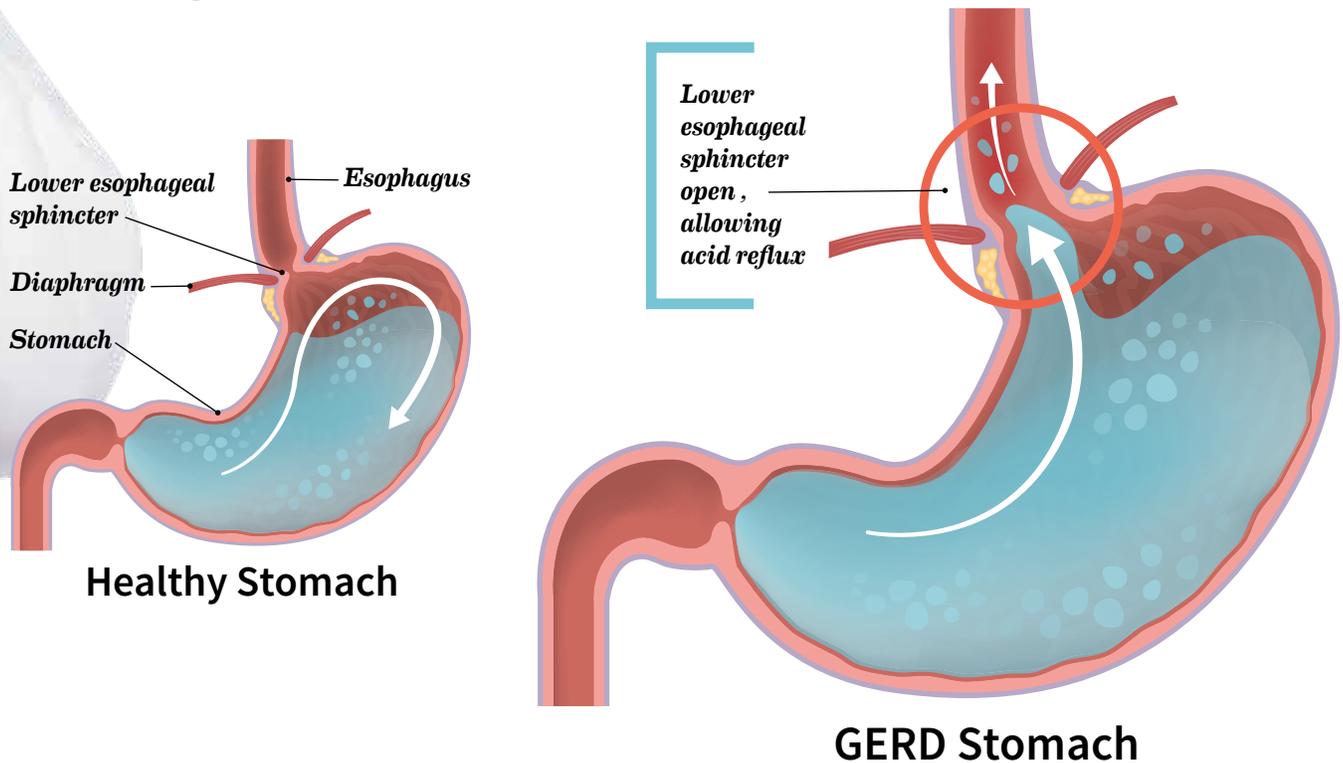
What Is GERD (or Acid Reflux)?



CONDITION:

Gastroesophageal reflux disease, also known as GERD or acid reflux:

A digestive disorder in which the lower esophageal sphincter is weak or relaxes inappropriately, allowing the stomach's contents to flow up into the esophagus.



SYMPTOMS

Bad taste in mouth	Food regurgitation	Chronic cough and/or sore throat	Burning pain in chest	Stomach pain	Bloating
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CAUSES

Bad diet	Obesity	Unhealthy lifestyle	Medications	Eating close to bedtime	Pregnancy
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THINGS TO AVOID

Trigger foods	Heavy meals	Alcohol	Lying down after meals	Smoking
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NONSURGICAL SOLUTIONS

For more information on Inova Fair Oaks Hospital's endoscopy services, call [703.391.3600](tel:703.391.3600).

Worth *the*

Parents of premie find solace, hope and community at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital

At 28 weeks pregnant, Lauren Christopher, 41, stopped feeling her baby move. She went to Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH), where her doctor discovered she had low amniotic fluid and poor blood flow through the umbilical cord.

A week later, her doctor determined she would have to prematurely deliver. Alan Silk, MD, a neonatologist with Fairfax Neonatal Associates at IFOH, assuaged her worries about having a preterm birth. “Immediately, he put me at ease,” Lauren says. “He just had a very calming demeanor.”

Lauren’s son, Zachary Reinsma, was born 11 weeks early on Friday, March 23, 2018. He weighed 2 pounds, 11 ounces.

Zachary is now a healthy baby boy at home with his mother and father. But after he was born, Lauren and her partner, Justin Reinsma, 45, faced a trying three-month journey.

Trouble Early On

After about a week in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at IFOH, Zachary’s heart rate and respiratory rate plummeted. Though doctors weren’t initially sure what had happened, they later discovered Zachary had an infection.

Over the next few months, doctors, nurses and specialists, including occupational and physical therapists, in



the NICU worked to help Zachary grow and gain weight. They also provided him with respiratory support, as his lungs were not yet fully developed.

“During the whole experience, I was so impressed by the doctors and the nurses,” Lauren says. “It never felt like they were holding back information or talking down to you. From the very beginning, the hospital wanted the parents to be well-educated and well-informed.”

HELPING BABIES GROW

To learn more about the NICU at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, or to make an appointment with Fairfax Neonatal Associates, call **703.391.3560**.

Wait

Finding Community

Lauren, who manages grant programs for the federal government and lives in Reston, Virginia, visited Zachary every day for three months. Justin was able to visit evenings thanks to the NICU's 24/7 access. Lauren says the bonds she developed with IFOH NICU nurses and doctors were truly special. IFOH felt like her new home.

"After a while, I realized that as much as I was there for Zachary, in a way, I was also getting treatment," she says. "Because even though they didn't put it this way to me, looking back, it was a form of emotional support. It felt like an extended family [at IFOH]."

Zachary was discharged on June 18 after nearly tripling his birth weight. Dr. Silk says he felt a particularly strong bond with Lauren and Justin because Zachary was in the NICU for so long.

"We all worked together to get the baby healthy and to get the baby in good enough condition to go home so they could take care of him," Dr. Silk says. "They're a really nice family. I'm super-pleased and satisfied that the baby is doing well." 

Lauren Christopher and Justin Reinsma hold healthy baby Zachary Reinsma, born a preemie at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital. Zachary was finally able to go home after three months.

Support All Around

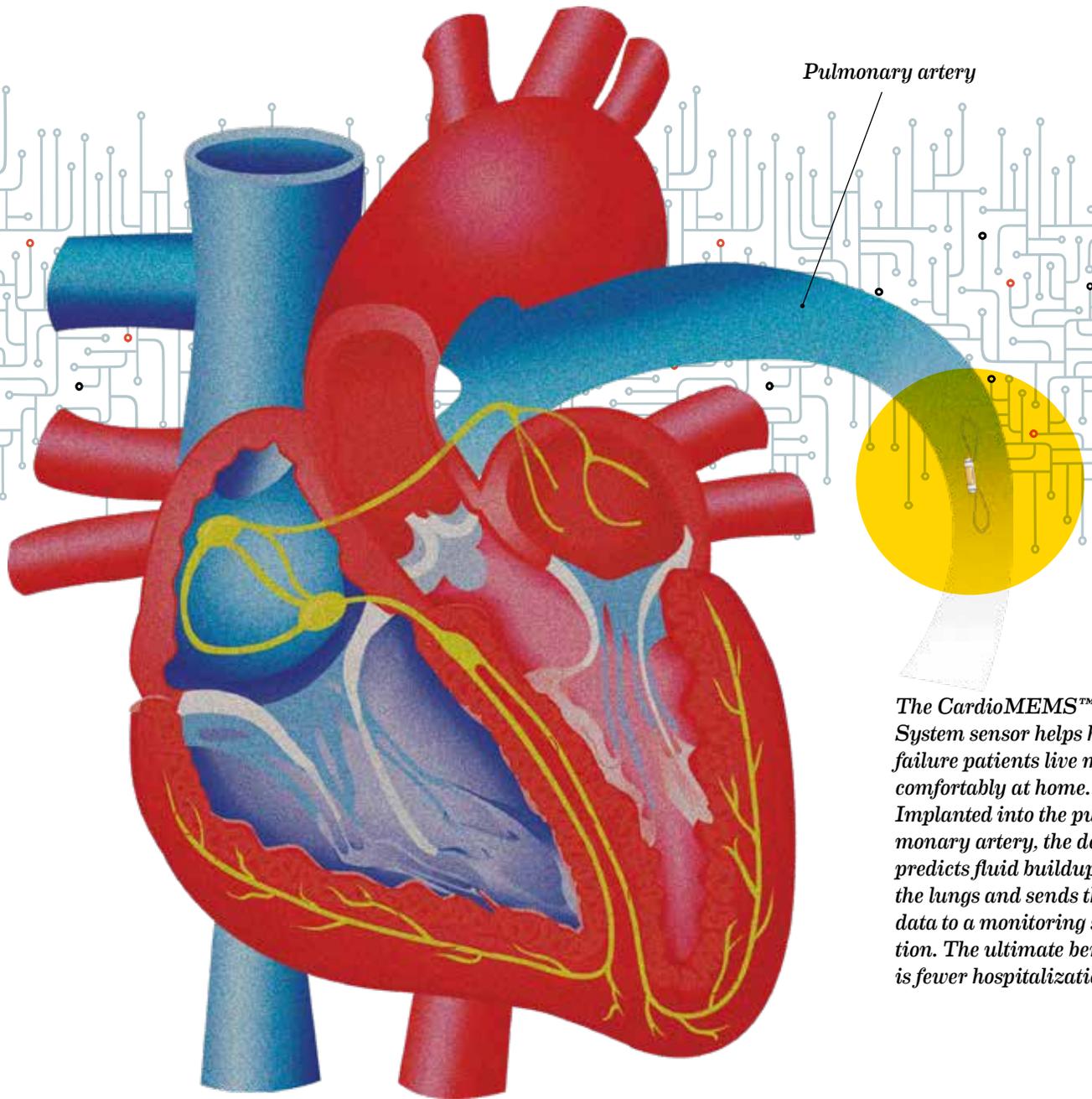
March of Dimes, a national nonprofit that supports families dealing with premature birth, has family support specialists at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital (IFOH). Alan Silk, MD, a Neonatologist at IFOH, says the hospital is lucky to be one of the few NICUs in the country with March of Dimes support on-site.

Lauren Christopher found the hospital's March of Dimes support invaluable. One day, she hit an emotional low point. One March of Dimes family support specialist told Lauren

about her personal struggles, as her own son was born with infantile cancer.

Lauren says hearing about how other people had been through much worse and made it through put everything into perspective for her. "It helped me realize that I could go home and be with my family, even though Zachary was at the hospital, because of how much I trusted the doctors, nurses and specialists," she says. "I knew they had his back when I wasn't there."





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

Walter 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." 



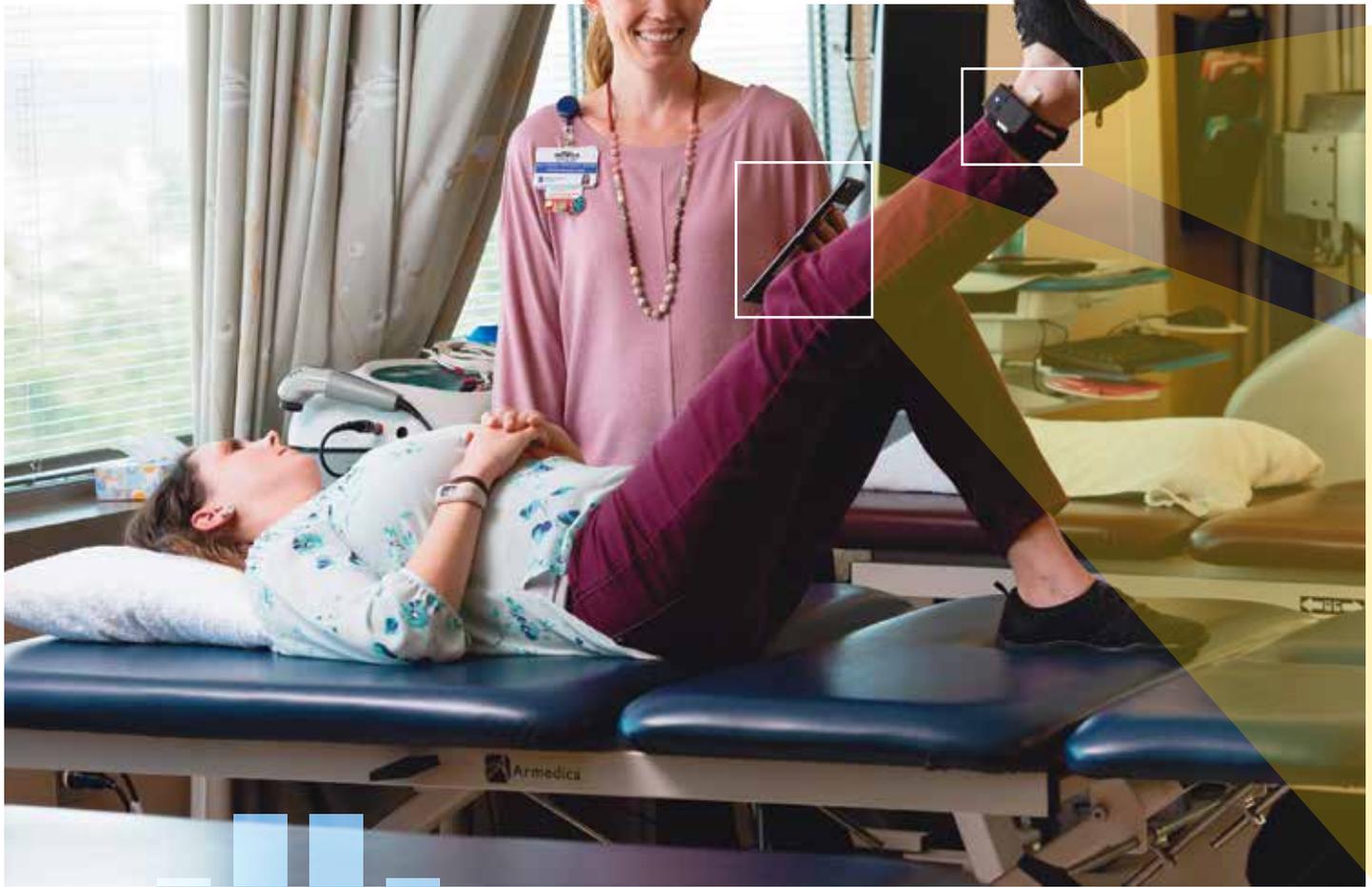
The CardioMEMS™ HF System sensor is about the size of a large paper clip and transmits data on the pressure within the pulmonary artery to a remote sensing device (above right).

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

THE HEART OF IT

Learn more about the groundbreaking CardioMEMS HF System and other treatments for heart failure at inovaheart.org/heart-failure/treatments.



Photos: Robert Rathe



Driven by *Data*

Inova partners with tech company to improve physical therapy results

Imagine 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.

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.

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 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.

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.

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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.

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.

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

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