



INOVA ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL

# INhealth

## *Time is* **BRAIN**

Stroke can strike  
people of any age

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Cynthia Swift, 34,  
suffered a stroke  
last fall.

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## GASTROENTEROLOGY

### 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  
Inova Alexandria Hospital

# 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.

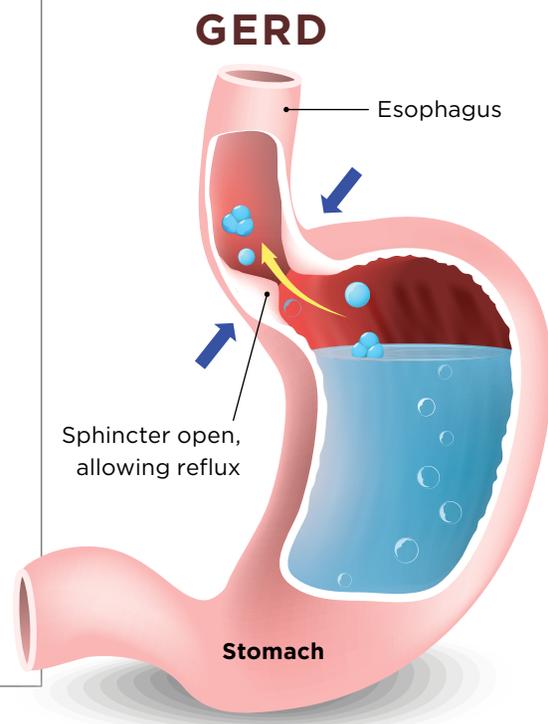
Over the years, he has created guidance and tools to treat heartburn as effectively as possible. These tools include an Esophageal Function Test to measure the flow of acid, and medicinal treatment options or surgical options such as LINX device implantation, for which Dr. Gillian is one of four certified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





● SLEEP MEDICINE |

# SLEEP Well

## Inova doctor develops new sleep apnea treatment

For people with sleep apnea who can't get the relief they need from continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines — devices to help open airways — or other treatments, there may be an answer. Inova Alexandria Hospital's Michael Abidin, MD, who specializes in ear, nose and throat disorders, has been developing a state-of-the-art version of the hyoid suspension procedure, a common sleep apnea operation. He has begun performing the treatment on sleep apnea patients within the past year.

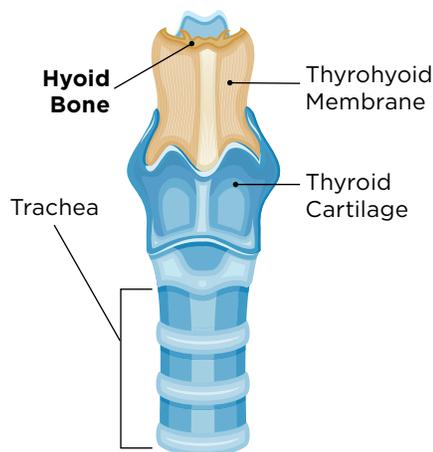
"I developed and perform this procedure at Inova Alexandria Hospital," says Dr. Abidin. "You can't get better care [for sleep apnea] than here. It's a cutting-edge, leading technology for a disease process that's difficult to treat, and it's available right here in our backyard."

Dr. Abidin's version of the hyoid procedure is an outpatient treatment that only takes one to one-and-a-half hours to perform. During the procedure, sutures that allow the doctor to adjust the position of the hyoid bone (located in the neck) are anchored to the bone.

This adjustment helps doctors reduce the amount of tissue in the patient's airway, eliminating sleep apnea.

Dr. Abidin's procedure is also unique in allowing re-adjustment of the sutures without additional surgery.

"Treating sleep apnea has a life-changing effect, and I'm pleased to be able to help people in this way," says Dr. Abidin.



### REST UP

Learn more about sleep disorders and treatments at [inova.org/sleep](http://inova.org/sleep).

● WELLNESS |

# Drink UP

Staying hydrated helps to avoid risk of heat stroke

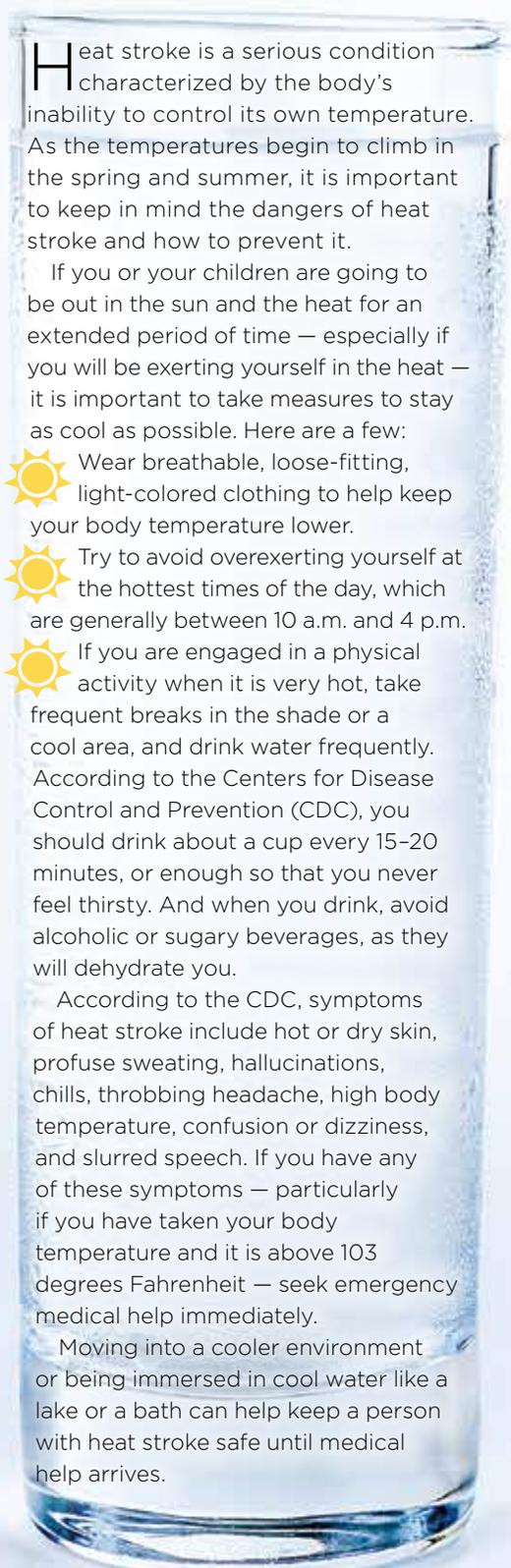
Heat stroke is a serious condition characterized by the body's inability to control its own temperature. As the temperatures begin to climb in the spring and summer, it is important to keep in mind the dangers of heat stroke and how to prevent it.

If you or your children are going to be out in the sun and the heat for an extended period of time — especially if you will be exerting yourself in the heat — it is important to take measures to stay as cool as possible. Here are a few:

- ☀️ Wear breathable, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing to help keep your body temperature lower.
- ☀️ Try to avoid overexerting yourself at the hottest times of the day, which are generally between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- ☀️ If you are engaged in a physical activity when it is very hot, take frequent breaks in the shade or a cool area, and drink water frequently. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), you should drink about a cup every 15–20 minutes, or enough so that you never feel thirsty. And when you drink, avoid alcoholic or sugary beverages, as they will dehydrate you.

According to the CDC, symptoms of heat stroke include hot or dry skin, profuse sweating, hallucinations, chills, throbbing headache, high body temperature, confusion or dizziness, and slurred speech. If you have any of these symptoms — particularly if you have taken your body temperature and it is above 103 degrees Fahrenheit — seek emergency medical help immediately.

Moving into a cooler environment or being immersed in cool water like a lake or a bath can help keep a person with heat stroke safe until medical help arrives.





# BACK AT IT

Spinal treatment options help you maintain your quality of life



When back pain gets in the way of everything you do, there are spine solutions that can help you get back to your everyday activities. Inova Spine Institute at Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH) includes a team of expert medical professionals who are available to help you get back to your normal life with the least amount of recovery time.

“We’re seeing people with vague, non-specific low back pain, buttock pain and leg pain, and we find that people are less and less active because they’re not going out and are not as independent as they like to be,” says Corey Wallach, MD, Medical Director of the Inova Spine Program at IAH. “Our goal is to maintain an individual’s level of function and independence.”

Using the latest technological advances to treat degenerative conditions such as disc herniations and spinal instability, the highly skilled team at Inova Spine Institute offers minimally invasive surgical procedures that get patients back to their activities with less downtime.

“Many of our surgeries are performed on an outpatient basis,” says Dr. Wallach. “We’re able to do minimally invasive surgeries where people are able to go home the same day or the next day.”

“There’s a select handful of conditions that would be well-treated with minimally invasive surgery,” adds Brian McHugh, MD, a neurosurgeon who joined the Inova Medical Group last September. “The most common are spinal stenosis and disc herniation, which very frequently can be treated with same-day surgery, and spondylolisthesis and degenerative scoliosis, which, when treated minimally invasively, typically require a 24-hour observation versus a multiday hospital stay.”

### QUICK RELIEF

Before considering spine surgery, the team at Inova Spine Institute offers many conservative pain management solutions, from physical therapy and rehabilitation services to pain management through neurostimulation, pain medication, weight loss and injections. “One of the real benefits of Inova Spine Institute is our collaborative nature,” says Dr. Wallach. “We have orthopedic surgeons working with neurosurgeons, working with our pain management team, working with neurologists, so we have all facets of spine care integrated to optimize our patient outcomes. I think that’s the main thing that sets our program apart.”

### SPINE CARE OPTIONS

To learn more about spinal conditions, treatment options and Inova Spine Institute, visit [inova.org/spine](http://inova.org/spine).

# GAME ON

## Reconstructive ACL surgery helps high school soccer player return to field

Ismail Waziry, a 19-year-old high school senior from Woodbridge, Virginia, has been playing soccer since he came to the United States from Pakistan in 2009. Early in 2015, he had an experience familiar to many athletes: he tore his anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL.

"It was during a game," Ismail says. "I tried to stop the ball and I turned really quick and one of my legs got stuck."

At first Ismail wasn't sure what his injury was, but soon he ended up in the office of Nadim Hallal, MD, who performed an MRI test and determined Ismail had a torn ACL. After a few weeks of physical therapy to reduce swelling, Dr. Hallal performed reconstructive ACL surgery on Ismail, taking a tendon from Ismail's hamstring and essentially creating a new ACL for him.

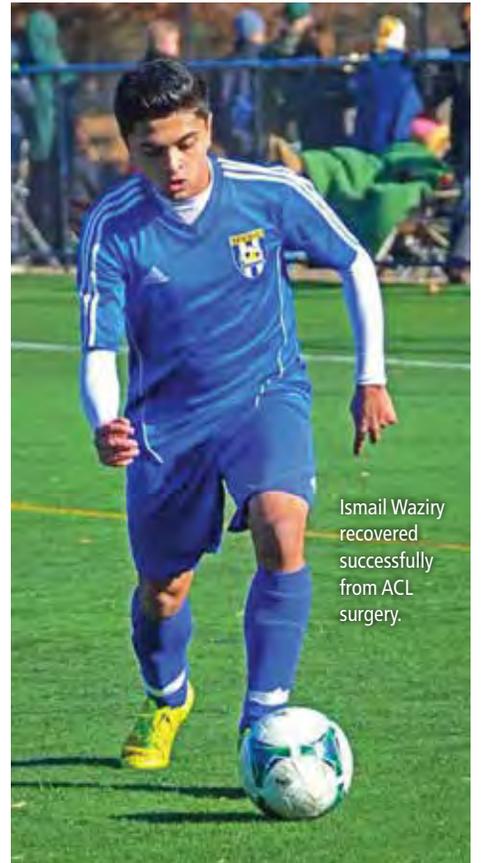
"ACL reconstruction is a minimally invasive, outpatient procedure," says Dr. Hallal. "It takes about an hour and a half and patients begin rehabilitative therapy about three days after the surgery. In fact, most people are returning to most of their normal functional activities within a few weeks."

Ismail had his surgery in June, and by December he was back to playing some light soccer with his friends. In February 2016, he returned to his high school team at full strength.

"I'm definitely happy I had the surgery," he says. "If I didn't have it, I wouldn't be able to play now."

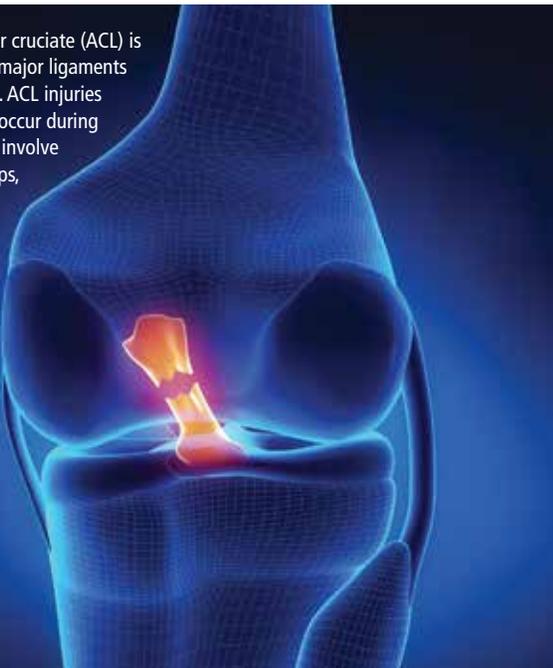
While ACL issues are common in Dr. Hallal's practice, he stressed that the multidisciplinary team at the sports medicine offices at Inova Alexandria Hospital can perform a wide range of services for athletes and non-athletes alike.

"We treat a host of knee, shoulder and joint injuries," he says. "These range from soft tissue injuries to meniscus injuries in the knee to cartilage injuries. And we treat many of these injuries with minimally invasive, arthroscopic methods."



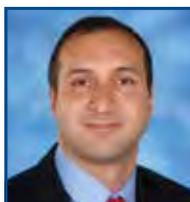
Ismail Waziry recovered successfully from ACL surgery.

The anterior cruciate (ACL) is one of the major ligaments in the knee. ACL injuries commonly occur during sports that involve sudden stops, jumping or changes in direction, such as soccer.



### FIND OUT MORE

To learn more about Inova Medical Group Orthopedics, visit [inova.org/inova-medical-group/adult/ortho](http://inova.org/inova-medical-group/adult/ortho).



**Nadim Hallal, MD**  
Orthopedic Surgeon

### Make an Appointment

**Inova Medical Group Orthopedic and Sports Medicine**  
6355 Walker Lane, Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA  
Phone: 703.797.6980

# FAST RESP

## Stroke can strike people of any age

**H**aving moved to the East Coast from California to complete her law degree, Cynthia Swift, 34, was busy launching a new career in public policy. The job required numerous hours at a computer and Cynthia pushed herself to adjust to the demands of her new workload. In late November, she began to experience pain on the left side of her neck and headaches that wouldn't go away.

One morning, after a poor night's sleep, she felt dizzy, so her roommate drove her to Inova HealthPlex – Franconia/Springfield. There, after undergoing a complete physical examination, she was sent home with a pain reliever and a muscle relaxant. "Because of my age and because I didn't have the normal symptoms of stroke, the doctor suspected it was muscle issues in the neck and said they see that a lot in people with jobs on the computer," says Cynthia.

### BRAIN ATTACK

But later in the afternoon, Cynthia lost sensation on her right side and began slurring her speech. She returned to the HealthPlex. A CT scan revealed a stroke, which occurs when a blood vessel carrying oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. The emergency team administered tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a clot-busting medication that improves blood flow. But it was clear she needed further treatment, so Cynthia was rapidly transported by ambulance to the Emergency Department at Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH), a

facility designated as a primary stroke center by the Joint Commission for Stroke Care Excellence.

"Once we treat a patient with tPA, our work does not stop there," says Jalil Bentaleb, RN, Stroke Program Management Coordinator at IAH. "tPA is the only FDA-approved treatment for ischemic strokes. It works by dissolving the clot and improving blood flow to the part of the brain being deprived of oxygenated blood. However, at times, tPA alone may not help us achieve the desired outcome. Thus, IAH provides an approach to stroke care that involves 24/7 interventional radiology. Mechanical treatments include the use of a catheter to directly deliver tPA at the site, or a retrieval device to remove the clot. Recent multicenter studies have shown that patients benefit from a combined approach of both tPA and mechanical thrombectomy."

### TEAM WORK

As Cynthia deteriorated rapidly, losing her ability to speak and becoming paralyzed on her left and right sides, the stroke team acted quickly. "I remember them asking me questions and I remember thinking, I know how to do this, but I just couldn't speak," says Cynthia. "I was aware of things going on in my mind; I just couldn't verbalize them. It was pretty bad."

After moving her to the Interventional Radiology Department, Keith Sterling, MD, Chief of the Department of



Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology, performed a procedure called basilar artery thrombectomy to remove the clot that prevented blood from flowing to the entire back of her brain. "She had a very severe stroke. A large blood clot had formed in the basilar artery," says Dr. Sterling. "We completely removed the clot, which restored normal blood flow to the brain immediately. When you have a large blood vessel occlusion, tPA can help, but the results

# ONSE



## Care Round the Clock

Inova HealthPlex - Franconia/Springfield, a freestanding emergency department that is part of Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH), offers top-notch stroke care.

“We have a very comprehensive approach to the stroke patient who is having an emergency,” says Martin Brown, MD, FACEP, Chairman, Department of Emergency Medicine at IAH. “We work closely with Emergency Medical Services, so if a person is identified in the field as possibly having a stroke, then we activate our stroke team, and when the patient arrives they go immediately to get a CT scan for an image of their brain to determine whether they are having a stroke. Then they’re seen by the emergency physician and the stroke team, and the decision is made as to whether they need a clot-dissolving medication, tPA, or interventional radiology.”

If a patient requires interventional radiology services, they are transported via ambulance to IAH, where the team is ready to care for them the instant they arrive.

## Excellence in Care

For two years in a row, under the leadership of Lewis Eberly, MD, PhD, Medical Director of Neuroscience and Stroke, Inova Alexandria Hospital (IAH) has been awarded the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines®—Target: Stroke Honor Roll-Elite Plus Quality Achievement Award. This award recognizes the hospital’s commitment to ensuring that stroke patients receive the highest quality treatment according to national stroke care guidelines. IAH also earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval® for stroke care. This certification as a Primary Stroke Center recognizes facilities that make exceptional efforts to meet the unique needs of stroke patients and foster better outcomes for stroke care.



Cynthia Swift, with her boyfriend, Justin, and roommate’s dog, Ellie, is resuming her life routines after suffering a stroke last fall.

## Act F.A.S.T.

If you think someone is having a stroke, act F.A.S.T.:

**F = FACE** Ask the person to smile



**A = ARMS** Ask the person to raise both arms



**S = SPEECH** Ask the person to speak a simple sentence



**T = TIME** Difficulty or impossible to complete one or more of these tasks? Call 911 now!



with the knowledge and expertise of their doctors,” she says.

As part of her recovery, Cynthia takes medication to control her cholesterol, two baby aspirin daily that act as a blood thinner, and acetaminophen for minor headaches. Now, just months after having a stroke, she looks forward to resuming her legislative work and getting back to her gym workouts. She hopes to go snowboarding again next winter. “Her outcome is phenomenal,” comments Dr. Sterling.

## STROKE SERVICES

To learn more about the Inova Stroke and Cerebrovascular Disease Program, call Jalil Bentaleb, Stroke Program Management Coordinator, at **703.504.7758** or **703.776.4700**.

are much better when using specialized catheters to remove the clot.”

A few hours after the surgery, Cynthia awakened and was speaking normally. She spent a week in a rehabilitation program at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, where she worked with the therapy team to improve her motor function, balance and speech. “I feel as though my outcome would not have been as good if I had not been near a hospital like Inova Alexandria Hospital

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 (ISCI) 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).

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[inova.org](http://inova.org)

IHS-064-IAH



# WELCOME, NEW PROVIDERS!

Here are new healthcare professionals who have joined the Inova Alexandria Hospital medical staff in recent months:

NAME	DEPT/SECTION
Zalmai Afzali, MD	Internal Medicine
Syed Moizuddin Ahmad, MD	Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
Said M. Ali, MD	Obstetrics/Gynecology
Ahmet Altay, MD	Internal Medicine
Sreekanth Ambati, MD	Nephrology
Zelalem Abera Ashiny, MD	Internal Medicine
Mesfin Tessema Assefa, MD	Internal Medicine
Michael C. Banker, MD	Thoracic/Cardiac Surgery
Rina Bansal, MD	Internal Medicine
John C. Chuks, MD	Internal Medicine
Harsh Datta, MD	Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
Mark C. Domanski, MD	Plastic Surgery
Mary T. Donofrio, MD	Pediatric Cardiology
John W. Dunkle, MD	Hospice and Palliative Medicine
Abdelghaffar Mohamed Elobeid, MD	Internal Medicine
Omid Entezari, MD	Internal Medicine
Aysha Farooqi, MD	Nephrology
George K. Gillian, MD	Surgery
Stuart Jack Goodman, MD	Neurology
Lalit K. Gupta, MD	Pulmonary Disease
Susan L. Hollander, MD	Psychiatry
Saeed Jadali, MD	Family Medicine
Muna A. Jama, MD	Family Medicine
Vijaya Krishna Kommineni, MD	Family Medicine

NAME	DEPT/SECTION
John V. Kottarathil, MD	Internal Medicine
Mirja Laroche, MD	Anesthesiology
Jason J. Madey, MD	Neurology
Raj P. Manchandani, MD	Medical Oncology
Muktak Mathur, MD	Family Medicine
Christopher Walter May, MD	Advanced Heart Failure/ Transplant Cardiology
John F. McCue, DO	Family Medicine
Rhonda G. McMillian, MD	Psychiatry
Olana B. Molla, MD	Internal Medicine
Seema N. Navalkar, MD	Pediatrics
Oge C. Onwudiwe, MD	Dermatology
Avinash G. Purohit, MD	Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
Lubna Rana, MD	Family Medicine
Meghan J. Rane, MD	Sleep Medicine
Samir S. Rao, MD	Plastic Surgery
Kevin M. Semelrath, MD	Emergency Medicine
Tina U. Shah, MD	Rheumatology
Jennifer A. Shea, MD	Cardiovascular Disease
Elizabeth M. Shin, DDS	Pediatric Dentistry
Aswani K. Suthrave, MD	Internal Medicine
Michael L. Szatkowski, MD	Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
Wosenyelew M. Tedla, MD	Internal Medicine
James C. Wade, MD	Medical Oncology
Tarique Zaman, MD	Internal Medicine

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