

# Healthy Living

M A G A Z I N E



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UPMC Altoona

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# Get a Flu Shot for Someone You Love

Did you know that you could have the flu for 48 hours before showing any symptoms? That means in just one weekend visit with relatives, you could unwittingly pass on the flu with a cough, sneeze, or kiss to people in high-risk groups, such as:

- Your cousin who is pregnant
- Your 80-year-old grandmother who lives in a senior community
- Your aunt who is undergoing chemotherapy
- Your newborn nephew

## Why do people avoid getting a flu shot each year?

“Over the years, flu shots have been so effective at reducing widespread influenza outbreaks that they have become a victim of their own success,” says **Garrett L. Kirkpatrick, DO** (above right), the new sole practitioner at UPMC Keystone Family Medicine at 2612 Pleasant Valley Blvd. in Altoona. “Most of us don’t realize how devastating a flu epidemic can be.”

During last year’s moderately severe flu season, nearly 71,000 Pennsylvanians caught the virus and 148 people died — the majority of whom were 65 or older. “While last year’s vaccine didn’t really protect older adults against the dominant Type A H3N2 flu strain we had, it did help reduce other circulating flu viruses,” says Dr. Kirkpatrick. “It also lessened flu risk for many people, especially children and seniors.”

**So even if you never seem to get sick, consider getting vaccinated for someone you love.** “With communicable diseases like the flu, it’s both a personal — and social — consideration,” he says. “Most of us bounce back from the flu after a few days or weeks, but it can be life-threatening to older adults, pregnant women, young children, and people with compromised immune systems.”

## How can you avoid getting — or spreading — the flu?

**Cough or sneeze into your elbow, not into your hand.** “The most common way we spread the flu is through tiny droplets that become airborne whenever we sneeze, cough, or talk,” says Dr. Kirkpatrick. “When you cough and don’t cover your mouth, you can spread those droplets to people up to 6 feet away. And if you cough into your hand, you can spread the virus by touch when opening a door or shaking someone’s hand.”

**Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** As with any illness, keep your hands as germ-free as possible through frequent and thorough washing. Use bleach wipes on touch screens, phones, keyboards, doorknobs, faucets, and other frequently touched and shared items.

**Get a flu shot.** “Vaccines are still the single best way to prevent the flu. Get vaccinated each fall, and remember it takes up to 2 weeks to become protected,” says Dr. Kirkpatrick. “Pregnant women should definitely get a flu shot, and adults over 65 may need a high dose vaccine. Babies can get their first flu shot at 6 months of age.

“If you think you have the flu, contact your family doctor,” advises Dr. Kirkpatrick. “Antiviral medicines can help reduce your symptoms and speed up recovery, but only if taken within 48 hours.”

**If you don’t have a family doctor, call Dr. Kirkpatrick at 814-944-9355 to schedule an appointment.**

## Meet Dr. Kirkpatrick

**Dr. Garrett Kirkpatrick, who grew up near Cleveland, Ohio, recently graduated from the UPMC Altoona Family Physicians Residency Program, where he was chief resident. His wife, Duyen, a native of Vietnam, is currently in her final year of that same program. When not working and studying, both love exploring and hiking our area’s many parks.**



# UPMC Altoona's Heart-Saving Cath Lab Is a Team Effort

Sheri Crowover knows all too well what a heart attack feels like. She experienced her first major heart attack at age 46 and another a year later. Both times, she woke up with severe chest pain and nausea, and was flown to UPMC Altoona for an emergency heart catheterization.



Over the past 7 years, the Millcreek resident has had 5 separate procedures to open blocked coronary arteries — all performed at UPMC Altoona by **George Jabbour, MD** (above with Sheri), an interventional cardiologist and medical director of the cardiac catheterization lab. He also inserted 5 stents to keep blood flowing in her arteries.

Sheri, who suffers from coronary artery disease and congestive heart failure, recently returned to UPMC Altoona for another scheduled heart catheterization.

"I wouldn't go anywhere else," says Sheri, now 53. "Both times I was flown there, I didn't think I'd make it. But Dr. Jabbour and the cath lab team saved my life — twice."

"I tell everybody: They are the best," adds Sheri. "Why would I go anywhere else?"

## Because minutes matter

Heart muscle will die if blood flow isn't restored quickly. "When you're having a heart attack, time is muscle. Quick intervention increases your chance of survival and minimizes damage to your heart," says Dr. Jabbour.

At UPMC Altoona, a team of cardiologists, nurses, and technologists is ready to perform life-saving cardiac treatments any time of the day or night.

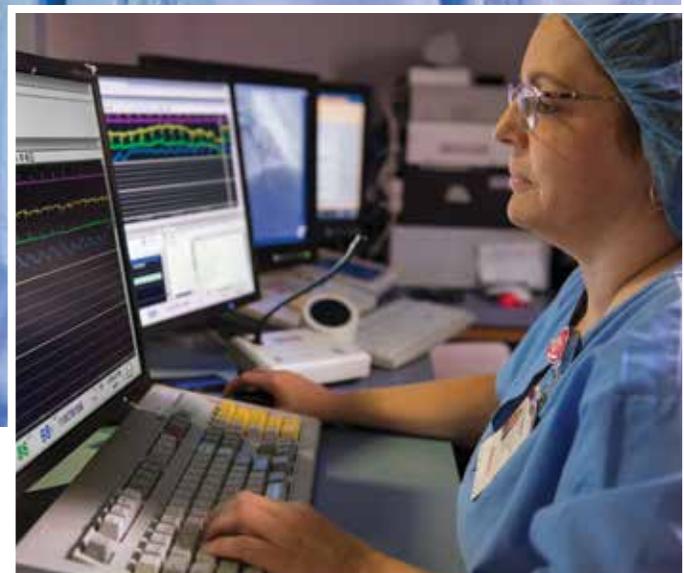
In the United States, the average time for hospitals performing an intervention such as an angioplasty — a procedure to open narrow or blocked coronary arteries using a thin catheter, or tube, with a balloon at its tip — is 90 minutes, starting from the moment a patient enters the hospital until the balloon is inflated and blood flow restored. At UPMC Altoona, the cath lab's "door-to-balloon" time averages less than 60 minutes.

## Experience and expertise

According to Dr. Jabbour, life-saving interventions are safer when doctors and hospital staff have a higher degree of experience with the procedures. More than 4,000 patients are treated annually in UPMC Altoona's cath lab, making it the busiest in the region.

In addition, the hospital's partnership with the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute means patients have access to cardiac surgeons and vascular surgeons, who are on call 24/7 to treat emergencies.

"Complications can arise even during scheduled procedures. Without that expertise immediately available, that complication can lead to loss of a limb or loss of life," says Dr. Jabbour.

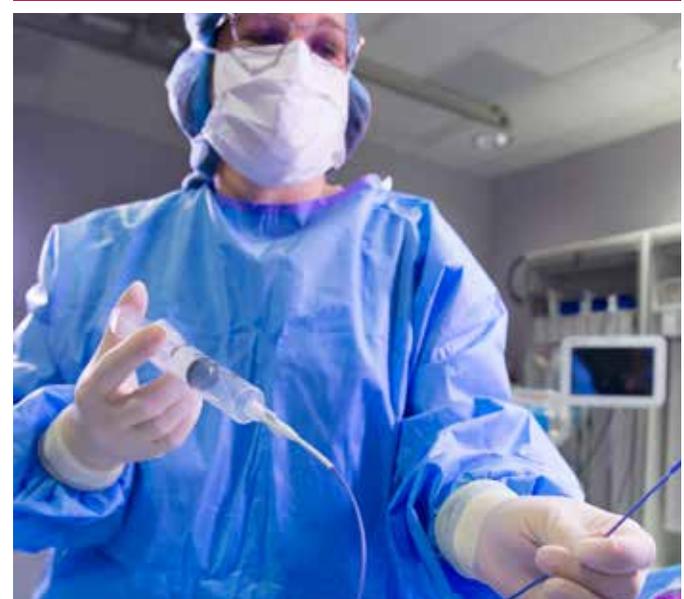


## Cardiac Services Available

At the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Altoona, experts offer a full range of services for the diagnosis, treatment, management, and prevention of heart and vascular disease.

Interventional cardiology procedures include angioplasty and stenting, as well as the implantation of pacemakers and defibrillators, electrophysiology studies, and radiofrequency ablation. In January, the hospital began using the Impella® device — an innovative new intervention in which a tiny pump is inserted during a heart catheterization procedure to provide temporary support by keeping blood circulating in patients with seriously weakened hearts.

To learn more about cardiac care at UPMC Altoona, visit [UPMC.com/HVIAaltoona](http://UPMC.com/HVIAaltoona).



Jen Hatajik (right and below) always knew she had a risk of developing breast cancer. Jen was 25 when her own mother died 2 years after being diagnosed with breast cancer.

Her gynecologist suggested genetic testing, but the young mother instead relied on self-examinations and regular mammograms. "I guess I was afraid," says Jen, senior human resource consultant at UPMC Altoona.



## Navigating Breast Cancer *with* Genetic Counseling and Testing

Last year, the Duncansville resident found a lump in her breast. She was referred to breast surgeon **Dianna Craig, MD**, at Magee-Womens Specialty Center at UPMC Altoona and learned she had metastatic breast cancer, which had spread to her lymph nodes.

This time, Jen didn't hesitate when Dr. Craig recommended genetic counseling and testing to determine the best treatment.

"I had to do it. I wanted to know why I got cancer and how to treat it," says Jen, 41, a mother of 3. "I needed to know if my children were at risk."

### Counseling via videoconferencing

There are no genetic counselors in the Altoona area. Instead, Jen went to the UPMC Teleconsult Center at Station Medical Center for an online face-to-face meeting with a specialist at Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC. Her father flew in from Florida to help answer questions.

"It was great. We met with the genetic counselor via videoconferencing and went through my entire family history," says Jen.

"Being able to talk to an expert face-to-face is important. We could see her and she could see us — and we didn't have to drive to Pittsburgh for that expertise."

Also in the room was **Cheryl Litzinger, RN, BSN**, UPMC Altoona's oncology nurse navigator. She assists women with the necessary questionnaires and paperwork, and arranges their meeting with the genetic counselor.

"It's important for patients to talk to the genetic counselor, go over their risk assessment, and discuss options for genetic testing and cancer risk reduction," says Cheryl. "That information helps patients and doctors determine the next step."

### Informed decision

Within a few weeks, Jen had the answers she needed: She tested positive for a BRCA 2 mutation passed down from her mother. "There was no longer any question — I was absolutely having both breasts removed," she says. "It was a relief to know why it happened and what needed to be done."

Ultimately, Jen underwent a bilateral mastectomy. Because she was also diagnosed as HER2 positive, which means her cancer feeds off estrogen, she had a total hysterectomy to prevent ovarian cancer.

Now cancer free, Jen continues to monitor her skin, eyes, and breast area for cancers that may develop. She has shared her information with other family members, including her children, who have a 50 percent chance of inheriting the mutation. And she's talked frankly with her daughter, who is 12.

"Knowledge is power. She has the power to control this," says Jen.



### Genetic Testing: Who Should Get It?

Genetic counseling and testing can help you understand your risk for breast or ovarian cancer. Talk to your doctor about genetic testing if:

- There is a known cancer gene mutation in your family
- You or a close family member (parents, siblings, or children) had breast cancer before age 50
- Two or more close family members have been diagnosed with the same or related cancers, such as breast and ovarian cancer
- A close family member has had cancer in both breasts
- You are of Eastern European Jewish heritage

Source: UPMC Altoona Cancer Genetics Program

# THE GUIDE

## to Healthy Living

### Pay Attention to Your Breasts

A healthy lifestyle that includes eating a proper diet, being physically active, and managing your weight is important to your overall health and well-being — and to good breast health. “Regardless of her age, a woman should know what her breasts look and feel like so she can spot changes and report them to her doctor,” says **Lauren Deur, MD**, a board-certified, fellowship-trained diagnostic radiologist at UPMC Altoona.

Here are a few tips to help keep your breasts healthy at any age.



#### YOUR 20s

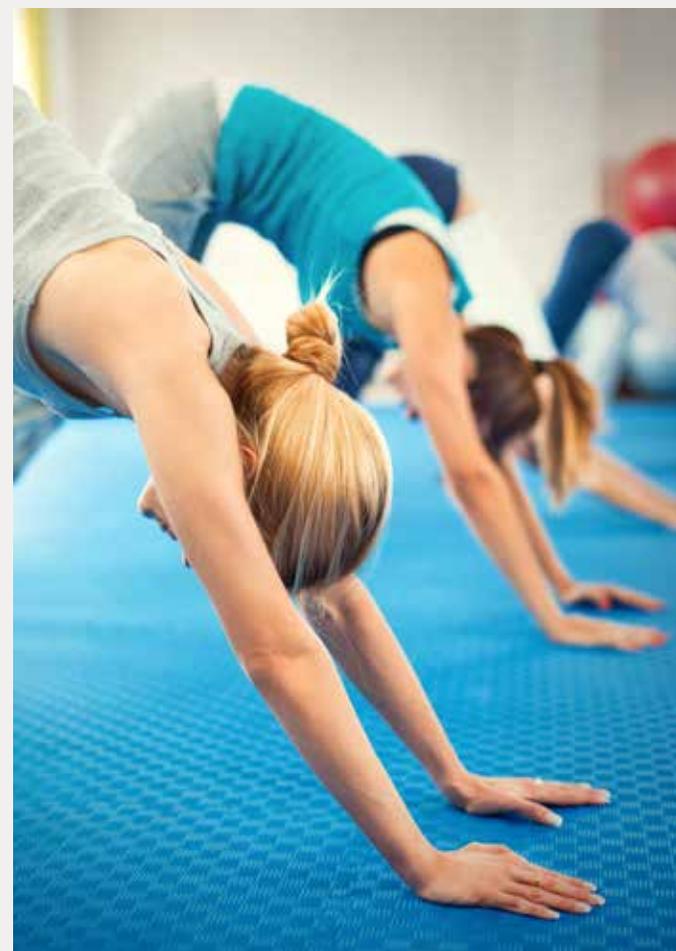
This is a good time to establish a relationship with a gynecologist. When a doctor is familiar with your health and family medical history, especially your risk factors for breast cancer and other diseases, it’s easier to find and treat problems earlier.

Younger women have denser breasts, so fibrocystic changes such as benign lumps are common. Although 80 percent of breast lumps are not cancerous, your doctor should check any major changes. “Most doctors recommend that women who carry the BRCA gene begin annual mammograms between the ages of 25 and 30,” says Dr. Deur. Women with a mother or sister who had premenopausal breast cancer also may need to start having mammograms at this age, she adds.

#### YOUR 30s AND 40s

Premenopausal women may experience changes and discomfort in their breasts, even if they’ve never had problems before. Since breast cancer rates increase with age, you should start talking with your doctor about recommended screening tests. The American College of Radiology and the Society of Breast Imaging recommend annual mammograms beginning at age 40.

Lifestyle changes have been shown to decrease the risk of breast cancer. In addition to eating right and staying active, you should limit your alcohol consumption, quit smoking, and avoid stress.



#### YOUR 50s, 60s, AND BEYOND

Aging affects every part of your body, including your breasts. Your skin becomes thinner and drier, causing itchiness and sensitivity. As hormones start to decrease through menopause, some women begin to experience breast changes and discomfort, including cysts and other benign abnormalities.

Because your breasts are becoming less dense, you may be more sensitive to these changes. Since the risk of breast cancer continues to increase as we age, you shouldn’t ignore new lumps or neglect those mammograms. “It’s recommended that women continue annual screening mammograms,” says Dr. Deur.

#### SCHEDULE A MAMMOGRAM TODAY!

Mammograms are the most effective, widely used screening tool to detect early breast cancer. A screening mammogram provides a baseline for future studies.

**Haven’t had your annual mammogram?** Schedule one today at UPMC Altoona. Just get a doctor’s order and call **814-889-4222** for an appointment.

David Troxell III knew he had to do something about his weight. At more than 600 pounds, walking to the bathroom left him breathless. A year after bariatric surgery, he's healthier, happier, and eager to tell his story.

"I've always been a big guy, but I carried my weight well," says Dave (right). But when his weight reached over 600 pounds, it was hard to walk, and his everyday life became more and more difficult. Always an outgoing, fun-loving guy, Dave would only leave his apartment for work or to do basic chores. "I had to use one of those electric carts to do my grocery shopping," he recalls.

An on-air personality and program director at radio station Hot 100 in Altoona, Dave is somewhat of a local celebrity. "Even though people can't see me, they recognize my voice," says the 35-year-old Altoona native. "If my story helps one other person see the positive results someone like me had with bariatric surgery, I am happy to share it."

#### Time to make a major change

A self-described food addict, Dave tried a number of diets but he always regained the weight, and more. It took a health scare and hospital stay in 2015 for him to get serious about losing weight. "My dad had a massive heart attack, so having chest pains, along with high cholesterol and high blood pressure, worried me," says Dave. But it was the diabetes diagnosis that spurred him into action. "I knew too many diabetics with serious health issues, including limb amputations," he says. "I did this for myself — to get my life and my health back — but I also did it for my dad."

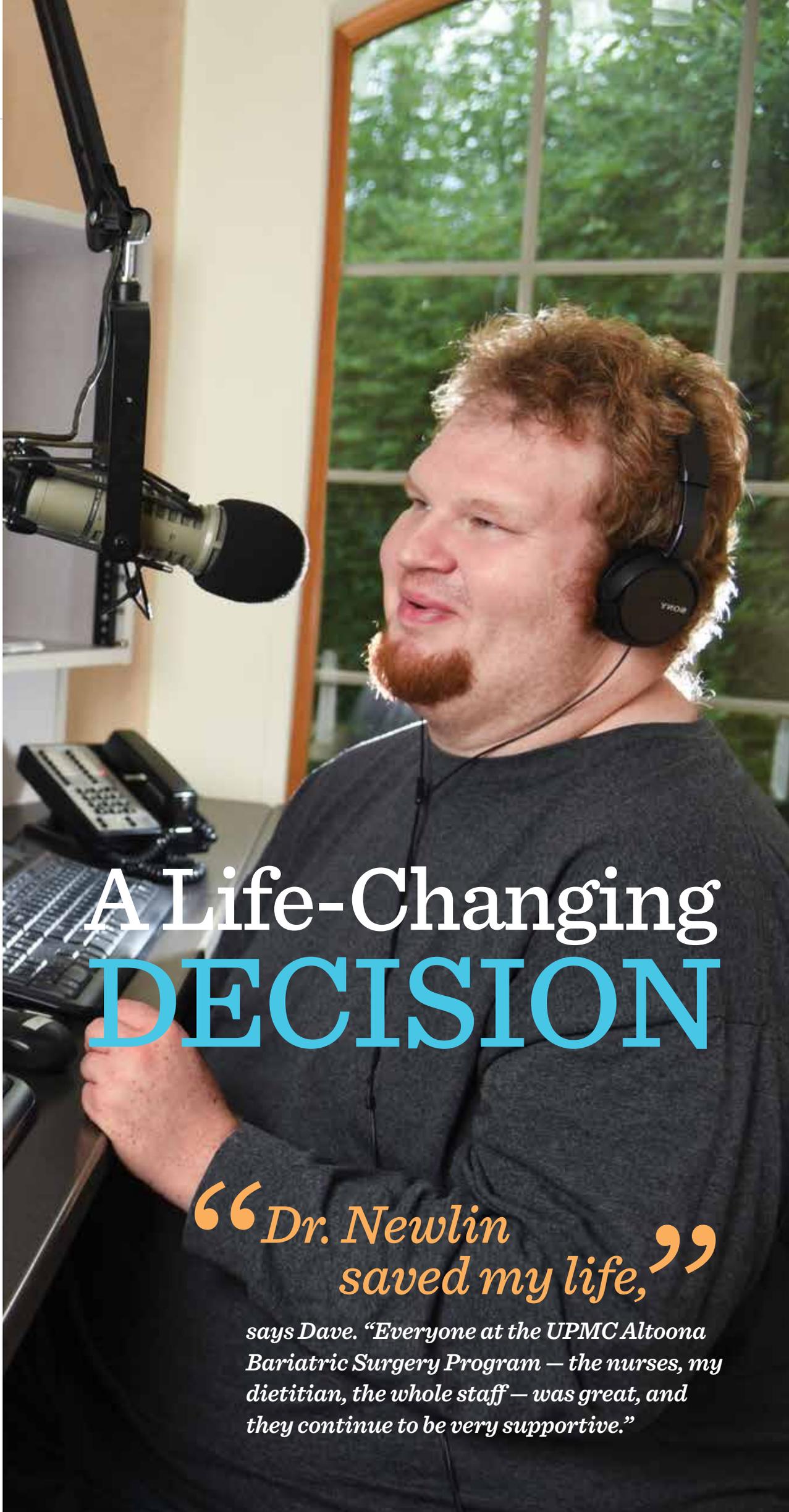
A friend's experience with bariatric surgery inspired Dave to find out if he was a candidate for the procedure. When he walked into the office of **Matthew Newlin, MD**, a board-certified surgeon with the UPMC Altoona Bariatric Surgery Center, in February 2016, Dave weighed 596 pounds. On March 8, 2016, he underwent a Roux-en-Y gastric bypass procedure at UPMC Altoona. Dave has since lost more than 235 pounds, and continues to lose weight. He's no longer considered a diabetic, his cholesterol and blood pressure numbers are good, and walking is now his favorite form of exercise.

#### Getting his life back

Dave gets great satisfaction knowing that he can now do things many of us don't think twice about — going to a Pittsburgh Penguins playoff game and actually fitting into the seat, wearing jeans, riding a roller coaster, and buying a new car. "Before the surgery, I could only drive a 2-door car because I couldn't fit behind the steering wheel in a 4-door," he explains.

"Dr. Newlin saved my life," says Dave. "Everyone at the UPMC Altoona Bariatric Surgery Program — the nurses, my dietitian, the whole staff — was great, and they continue to be very supportive. I still have a way to go on my weight loss journey, but I don't ever want to go back. My health is too important."

Attend a free bariatric surgery information session. Visit [UPMC.com/WeightLoss](http://UPMC.com/WeightLoss) or call 814-889-7500.



## A Life-Changing DECISION

*“Dr. Newlin saved my life.”*

*says Dave. “Everyone at the UPMC Altoona Bariatric Surgery Program — the nurses, my dietitian, the whole staff — was great, and they continue to be very supportive.”*

# News from the UPMC ALTOONA FOUNDATION

## Annual Foundation Update From the Chairman and President

The Foundation's donors and volunteers once again made an important impact on the health needs of UPMC Altoona patients and our community. Here are some of the past year's highlights:

- The generosity of our donors enabled us to raise more than \$800,000 last year. Thanks to each and every one of you! Our trustees, all of whom have strong and deep ties to this community, work to ensure that these funds are used to benefit our neighbors. Total Foundation holdings are now approximately \$15 million.
- We made grants and contributed financial support totaling \$328,000, including funds for advanced medical equipment and nursing scholarships.
- Drs. Manickam Sankaran and Vijay Janakiraman contributed \$100,000 to endow a scholarship for individuals training to be cardiology technicians. The first scholarship has already been awarded.
- Successful events are the result of the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers. Nearly 900 guests attended our Winter Splendor on Jan. 20, and our signature golf tournament on June 19 attracted 240 players. Together, these events raised more than \$120,000.
- The recently completed campaign in support of breast health for the Magee-Womens Specialty Center raised \$700,000. A new campaign — under the leadership of Gail Irwin — has been launched by the Foundation to renovate and refurbish the Birthing Center on Tower 9 (see story on this page).
- The Founders Club, our annual giving society, has grown to 123 members, each of whom contributes \$1,000 or more annually. Employee giving also continues to grow, with more than 300 employees now making donations each pay period.

We are profoundly grateful to our donors, Foundation board members, staff, and volunteers whose generosity allows us to continue making our dynamic community a healthier place in which to live and work.

Thank you for all you do to support the UPMC Altoona Foundation.



**Neil Port**  
Foundation  
Chairman



**Timothy Balconi**  
Foundation  
President

## Grant Highlights

UPMC Altoona Foundation recently made the following awards:

**Summer Student Assistance Program** received a \$10,000 grant to support recreational activities and behavioral health programs for at-risk youth.

**Nursing Scholarships** totaling \$14,000 were awarded to UPMC Altoona nurses (see photo below) who are pursuing advanced degrees, including the master of science in nursing (MSN).

**Penn State Altoona** was awarded a grant of \$17,414 to provide ongoing support for its Nursing Simulation Laboratory.

**Bob Perks Cancer Fund** received \$15,000 to help fund its program to support patients undergoing cancer treatment.



Nursing scholarship recipients, front row, from left: Misti Ickes, RN; Gabriel Peight, RN; and Tracy Kephart, BSN. Back row, from left: Nicholas Krajacic, RN; Timothy Balconi, president, UPMC Altoona Foundation; Steven Rusnak, MA; Katherine Ford, RN; Chris Rickens, BSN, MS, Senior Vice President of Nursing/Chief Nursing Officer, UPMC Altoona; and Phyllis Resch, nursing assistant.

## 8th Annual Golf Classic



A few morning showers did not dampen the spirits of 240 golfers, including Louisa Lobre-Riley (left), who participated in the 8th annual UPMC Altoona golf tournament at Scotch Valley Country Club on June 19. The event raised \$67,000 in support of patient care at the hospital.

## Campaign to Update Birthing Center



The Foundation recently launched a new fundraising effort to upgrade and refurbish UPMC Altoona's Birthing Center on Tower 9. Project upgrades include new birthing

beds for each of the 18 suites, surgical-style lighting, new wall and floor coverings, nursing station remodel, a new fetal telemetry monitoring system, and a visitor management system.

Gail Irwin (pictured above) chairs the Fundraising Committee, whose members include Rakesh R. Chopra, MD; Anita Grimes, RN, MSN; Kevin Hockenberry; Patricia Hoyne, MD; Ron McConnell; Jerry Murray; and Pamela O'Donnell, RN, MSN. Ann Benzel and Timothy Balconi serve as advisors to the committee.

## Keep a Child Warm This Winter



The Toasty Toddler Program is a great way for our staff and the community to lend a helping hand to those in need. Sponsored by UPMC Altoona, the program is accepting donations of new winter clothing for infants and children up to age 4. The drive runs through Nov. 30.

Collection barrels are available in the hospital's atrium, and at Station Medical Center, Blair Medical Associates, and Altoona Family Physicians. Donations also can be dropped off at the hospital's Community Education office (Tower 5) or the Foundation's office.

# Q & A

## Ask the Expert

### Plastic Surgery: Is It for You?

A positive self-image can help people feel more confident in their work and relationships, and has even been linked to an improved quality of life. Board-certified plastic surgeon **Jill Murphy, MD, PhD**, of UPMC Altoona Plastic Surgery, answers questions often asked by patients considering a cosmetic or plastic surgery procedure.

**Q.**

**What kinds of procedures does a plastic surgeon do?**

**A.** Plastic surgeons can perform both reconstructive and cosmetic surgery. Reconstructive surgery focuses on correcting a problem created by a birth defect, trauma, or a health problem like cancer. Examples include repairing a cleft palate, minimizing scars caused by an accident, or reconstructing a breast due to cancer. Cosmetic or aesthetic surgery is targeted at improving a person's appearance, such as nose reshaping, eyelid surgery, liposuction, and facelifts.

**Q.**

**Do plastic and cosmetic surgeons undergo the same training?**

**A.** No. Plastic surgeons must complete many additional years of residency and rigorous training after medical school

to develop the complex skills needed to do both reconstructive and cosmetic surgery. Board certification through the American Board of Plastic Surgeons is open only to surgeons who complete that rigorous training and pass the required tests. Only surgeons certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgeons can call themselves plastic surgeons.

**Q.**

**Will I need to be hospitalized for a plastic or cosmetic surgery procedure?**

**A.** The majority of plastic and cosmetic surgical procedures are done on an outpatient basis — and many use only sedation or a local anesthetic instead of general anesthesia. If a patient has an underlying medical condition or if a lengthy surgical procedure is involved, hospitalization may be needed.

**Q.**

**What kinds of procedures are covered by health insurance?**

**A.** In general, reconstructive surgery is covered by most health insurance plans, although coverage for specific procedures and levels of coverage can vary. Cosmetic surgery is elective and typically not covered by insurance.

**Q.**

**Are breast surgeries covered by health insurance?**

**A.** Many women who are considering breast reconstruction after breast cancer treatment are surprised to learn it is considered reconstructive surgery and is typically covered under most health insurance policies. Women have the option of having this surgery in the hospital immediately after a mastectomy or later on an outpatient basis. Insurance also may cover other breast procedures such as breast reduction surgery for women with large breasts that contribute to back and neck pain, or women who get rashes beneath their breasts.

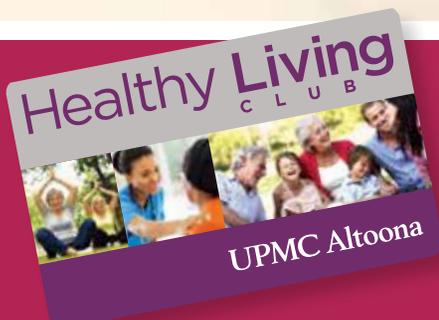
### MEET DR. MURPHY

Dr. Jill Murphy joined UPMC Altoona Plastic Surgery in spring 2017. She earned her medical degree at the University of Nebraska Medical Center while also pursuing a doctoral degree in breast cancer genetics. She completed a 6-year plastic surgery residency at the University of Kansas, where she gained broad research and clinical experience in both cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery.

Dr. Murphy specializes in a wide range of cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery procedures, including breast reduction and cosmetic breast surgery, breast reconstruction after mastectomy or lumpectomy, body contouring after massive weight loss, eyelid surgery, skin cancer excision, labiaplasty, Botox® for migraines and excessive sweating, scar revision, complex wound care and closure, nonsurgical facial rejuvenation, and cosmetic procedures.

She and her husband, Cameron — a family practice doctor specializing in sports medicine, concussion treatment, and acute care — enjoy spending time outdoors with their twin sons. Her other interests include astronomy and cooking.

**To schedule a consultation with Dr. Murphy, call UPMC Altoona Plastic Surgery at 814-947-5030.**



UPMC Altoona's *Healthy Living Magazine* is published 4 times a year. If you are not receiving the magazine by mail and would like to be added to our mailing list, join our Healthy Living Club. It's FREE, and the magazine is just one of many benefits!

Join online at [UPMCAaltoona.org](http://UPMCAaltoona.org) or call 814-889-2630 or 1-888-313-4665.

Looking for a doctor or specialty service?  
Visit [FindADoc.UPMC.com](http://FindADoc.UPMC.com) or call 1-800-258-4677.