

Healthy Living

M A G A Z I N E



**EVERY
WOMAN
SHOULD GET
SCREENED.**



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What's Your Flu Plan?

Don't wait for the flu to strike your home or workplace this coming flu season.

Stacey Bowser, DO, a primary care doctor with Saxton Family Practice-UPMC, personally knows the havoc flu can bring. "Our whole family got sick in January, and it wasn't pretty!" she says. "Thankfully, we all had flu shots, so we didn't get nearly as sick as many others did."

When her patients ask what they can do to beat the flu, Dr. Bowser offers these practical and proactive tips:

Get a flu shot – sooner than later

Getting an annual vaccination remains your most effective defense in avoiding, or at least minimizing, the flu. "Get your shot early so your body can build immunity before the start of flu season," says Dr. Bowser. "October is a perfect time." It takes about two weeks for the vaccine to protect you from the virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older.

Know the difference between the flu and a cold

A cold generally involves a runny nose or congestion while flu symptoms tend to be more severe and happen rapidly, often starting with fatigue and body aches. "A high fever is also a telltale sign of the flu," says Dr. Bowser. "We look for fevers of 101 degrees in adults and 104 degrees in children."

Other symptoms include headache and sore throat; children also are more prone to experience nausea and vomiting.

Don't wait to get medical help

If your flu is mild, you can take over-the-counter pain relievers to reduce fever and ease body aches. Remember that acetaminophen or ibuprofen are preferred for children under age 18. Aspirin or other products with salicylate can result in a rare and potentially deadly condition known as Reye's syndrome.

"For more severe cases of the flu, antiviral medicines can help reduce the severity and length of symptoms if taken within the first 48 hours," says Dr. Bowser. Antiviral medicines are prescription drugs and are especially helpful for individuals who may be at risk of flu-related complications. High-risk groups include adults over age 65, pregnant women, toddlers under age 2, and people with compromised immune systems, such as cancer patients.

Stay home!

Typically, you're contagious a day before showing flu symptoms — and up to seven days after becoming sick. Children can pass the virus on for an even longer period.

"Drink extra fluids to stay hydrated, get plenty of rest, and avoid close contact with others," advises Dr. Bowser. "Wait at least 24 hours after your fever has broken before returning to school or work. You'll want to pace yourself, too. It can take weeks for your energy to fully return."

To find a UPMC doctor in your area, call **1-800-533-UPMC (8762)** or visit **FindADoc.UPMC.com**.

Being Breast Aware Is Good Care

Breast self-exams are no longer recommended by the American Cancer Society as a screening tool for early breast cancer detection. But **Tyshaun James-Hart, MD**, a fellowship-trained surgical oncologist experienced in treating breast disease who is new to UPMC Altoona, advises that women should still be “breast aware”.

“Being breast aware means knowing what’s normal — and what’s not — for your breasts,” she explains. Visual changes can be the first sign of a potential problem, so it’s important to know how your breasts normally look and feel so you can report any changes to your doctor.

Dr. James-Hart, who earned her medical degree at West Virginia’s Marshall University School of Medicine, is a vocal advocate for women’s breast health.

When breast cancer is detected at its earliest stages, the survival rate is more than 90 percent. “Women who are breast aware can play a critical role in early detection,” says Dr. James-Hart.

The UPMC Magee difference

Dr. James-Hart says the Magee-Womens Specialty Center, located at Station Medical Center in Altoona, “is a perfect fit for our patients. Everything is right here, and we offer the same high-quality standard of care as you’d find in Pittsburgh.”

Her practice includes a high-risk genetics clinic and genetic testing to identify those who may have a greater chance of developing breast cancer. “Genetic testing results help us understand why you’re at risk and what we can do to help you,” she explains.

“With Dr. James-Hart on staff, we’re able to schedule patients sooner for expert care and treatment,” says **Dianna Craig, MD**, also a breast surgeon at UPMC Altoona. “That’s crucial, whether a patient had an abnormal mammogram, found a breast lump, or was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. It allows us to help give women peace of mind at a time when they need it most.”



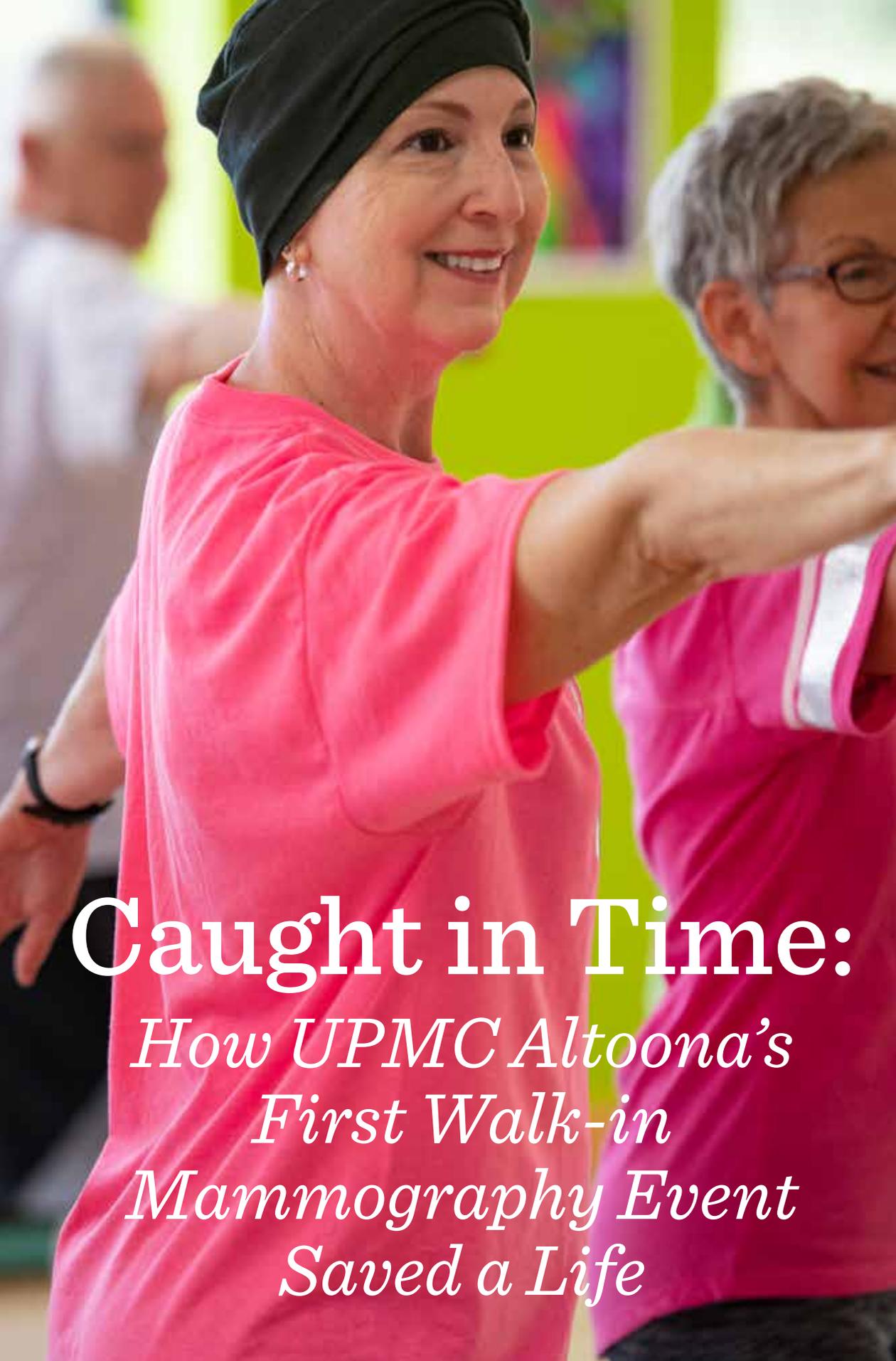
Dr. James-Hart (left) and Dr. Craig

Breast health services at Magee-Womens Specialty Center

The Magee-Womens Specialty Center — located at Station Medical Center, 1516 Ninth Ave., Altoona — offers comprehensive breast health services, including:

- 3D mammograms
- Seated mammograms
- Minimally invasive breast biopsies
- Stereotactic biopsies (a low-dose, x-ray guided procedure used to precisely target an abnormality)
- Mastectomy (with the option of same-day breast reconstruction at the UPMC Altoona Surgery Center)
- Referrals for lymphedema services and support groups
- Prosthesis referrals
- Genetic testing and consultation for women with a family history of breast, ovarian, pancreatic, and prostate cancers, and melanoma

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call **814-889-4100**.



Caught in Time:

How UPMC Altoona's First Walk-in Mammography Event Saved a Life

After working for years at the American Cancer Society, **Lisa Koncz** understood the importance of breast cancer screening. For 19 years, she faithfully scheduled annual mammograms.

But when her job ended unexpectedly two years ago, the Duncansville resident postponed her mammogram to care for her ailing mother in Texas. Returning home months after her mother's death, Lisa discovered she had missed the national deadline to enroll for medical insurance.

Falling through the cracks

"Like a lot of women, I pushed my own care to the side, thinking I'd wait until things settled down," says Lisa. "I fell through the cracks."

Ultimately, she purchased catastrophic health insurance, but her \$12,500 deductible intimidated her. "I kept putting off my mammogram, worrying that I couldn't afford treatment if something showed up," says Lisa.

During a routine visit two years after her last mammogram, her primary care doctor urged Lisa to take advantage of UPMC Altoona's first-ever walk-in mammography day at Station Medical Center last October during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She also qualified for a free mammogram through the Susan G. Komen Pittsburgh Mammogram Voucher Program.

A "lucky" find

Thirty women showed up for UPMC Altoona's walk-in mammography day in 2018; Lisa was the only one diagnosed with cancer — invasive lobular carcinoma. Thankfully, it hadn't spread. But she was also triple positive with the HER2-positive gene — indicating a more aggressive type of breast cancer.



"I was lucky," says Lisa. "If I had waited any longer, it could have spread to my lymph nodes."

In December, Lisa began hormone-blocking therapy, followed by chemotherapy,

a lumpectomy, and radiation — all at the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at UPMC Altoona. An MRI taken prior to her final chemo treatment showed a dramatic reduction in cancer cells.

To Lisa's relief, the voucher program covered her diagnostic mammogram, ultrasound, biopsy, and other care for 60 days. In addition, her oncologist, **Yuanjue-Louann Zhang, MD**, and breast surgeon, **Dianna Craig, MD**, referred her to a state program that continued coverage until her new insurance took effect in January 2019.

"With walk-in programs like UPMC Altoona's, there's really no excuse for women not to get a mammogram," says Lisa. "When you're diagnosed early, you usually have less invasive treatment and a better outcome. I'm living proof of that."

Walk-in screening mammograms are now available on a regular basis at **Station Medical Center in Altoona**, the **UPMC Outpatient Center in Ebensburg**, and at **UPMC Bedford in Everett**. See page 5 for more information.

THE GUIDE

to Healthy Living

Take Charge of Your Health With a Breast Cancer Screening

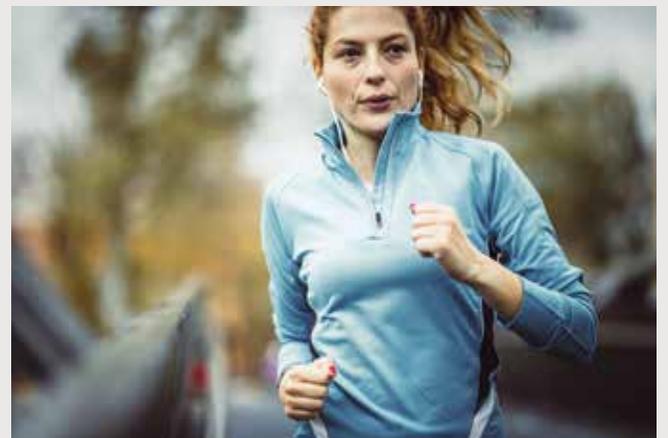
Regular screenings offer women protection against breast cancer, the most common cancer in women except for skin cancers. “Mammograms are the most effective screening tool for detecting breast cancer early — when it’s most treatable,” says **Lauren Deur, MD**, a board-certified, fellowship-trained diagnostic radiologist at UPMC Altoona. “The 15 minutes it takes to get a mammogram just once a year can save your life.” Here’s what you need to know.



LOWER YOUR RISK

You can’t change factors like family history and aging, but you can help lower your risk by:

- Limiting your alcohol consumption
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Eating right and exercising regularly
- Breastfeeding your children, if possible
- Avoiding postmenopausal hormone therapy



UNDERSTAND YOUR RISK

Two Main Risk Factors

- **Being a woman:** You have a 1 in 8 chance of getting breast cancer during your lifetime
- **Aging:** Most breast cancers are found in women age 50 and older

More Risk Factors You CAN’T Control
You may have an elevated risk if you have:

- **A BRCA gene mutation**
- **A family history of breast cancer** (mother, sister, daughter, or other first-degree relative or multiple family members on either side)
- **Longer exposure to hormones** (menstruating before age 12 or starting menopause after age 55)
- **High breast density**
- **Received radiation therapy to the chest before age 30**

DID YOU KNOW?

- Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death among women
- Early detection reduces your risk of dying from the disease by 25 to 30 percent
- Mammography has helped reduce breast cancer deaths nationwide by nearly 40 percent since 1990

WHEN TO START — AND STOP — BREAST SCREENINGS

Dr. Deur suggests women follow these expert guidelines:

- **Begin annual mammograms at age 40** if you are at average risk — and, in some instances, earlier based on your risk and family history (Source: American College of Radiology and Society of Breast Imaging)
- **Continue screening mammography as long as your overall health is good and your life expectancy is 10 years or longer** (Source: American Cancer Society)



OCTOBER

Is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Take advantage of UPMC’s October Walk-In Mammogram Screening Day events. No insurance? Not a problem! Vouchers are available to cover the cost of screening for those who have no insurance.

UPMC Altoona • Station Medical Center **814-889-4222**

Walk-ins welcome
Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Or join us for a special screening event on Thursday, Oct. 10, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

UPMC Outpatient Center in Ebensburg **814-471-2238**

Walk-ins welcome
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Or join us for a special screening event on Wednesday, Oct. 16, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

UPMC Bedford **814-623-3797**

Walk-in days scheduled monthly; call for future dates. Join us for a special screening event on Tuesday, Oct. 22, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration is in the hospital lobby.

Prefer an appointment? To schedule a mammogram, call any of our three regional locations at the numbers provided above.

An Alternative to Blood Thinners



UPMC Altoona now offers the WATCHMAN™, an innovative heart procedure that reduces the risk of stroke — and major bleeding, too.

Blood thinners save thousands of lives every year by reducing the risk of blood clots. They're widely prescribed to people with atrial fibrillation (AFib) — the most common type of heart arrhythmia. But these drugs come with certain risks, especially as we age.

“Over time, people on blood thinners have a much higher chance of major bleeding after a fall or accident,” explains **George Jabbour, MD**, medical director of the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at UPMC Altoona's Heart and Vascular Institute.

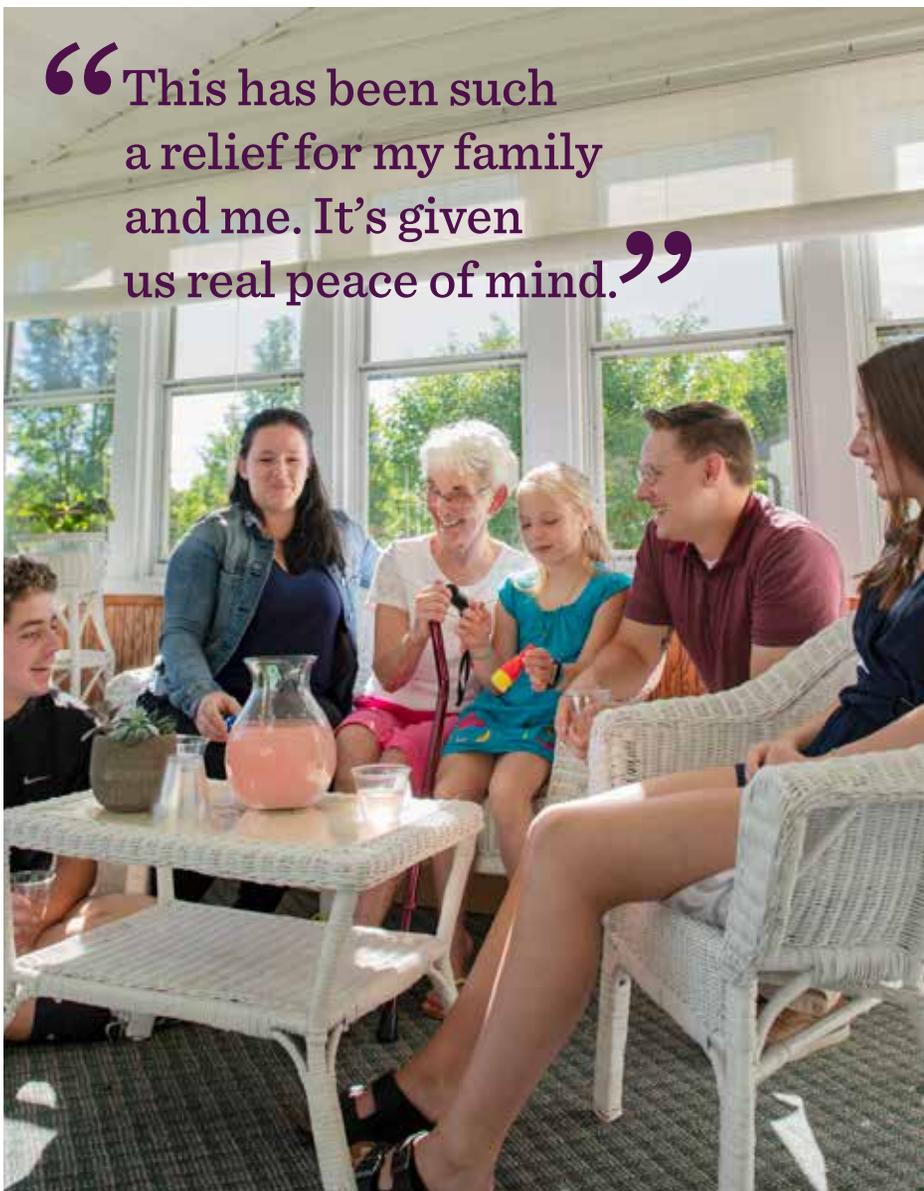


Blood thinners prevent clots from forming, but they can cause problems. “A minor injury for most people can pose a serious threat to people on blood thinners,” says Dr. Jabbour. “And for older adults who are at a much greater risk of falling, such bleeding can be life threatening.”

In 2015, the Federal Drug Administration approved the use of the WATCHMAN™, an implantable device proven to reduce stroke risk in people with AFib that is not caused by a heart valve problem.

“In addition to protecting the heart from clots, WATCHMAN offers this valuable benefit: once implanted, patients no longer need to take blood thinners,” explains Dr. Jabbour. “This one-time procedure eliminates the increased risk of bleeding — along with the potential dizziness and physical weakness — that accompanies the long-term use of these drugs.”

“This has been such a relief for my family and me. It's given us real peace of mind.”



One patient's story

Barbara Kyle is a believer. In addition to AFib, the 79-year-old great-grandmother from Altoona suffers from Charcot-Marie-Tooth, a hereditary disease that affects her balance and gait. “I worry about falling. Outside our home, I always walk with a cane,” she says.

Eager to reduce her dependency on blood thinners, in March 2019 Barbara became the 10th patient at UPMC Altoona to receive a WATCHMAN implant from Dr. Jabbour. He has now performed nearly 200 procedures.

The hour-long surgery, performed under general anesthesia, uses a catheter to place the small, parachute-shaped device inside the heart. Much like in a stent procedure, a small incision is made in the upper leg. The surgeon then uses a narrow tube to guide the WATCHMAN into the heart's left atrial appendage, assisted by x-ray and ultrasound.

“After an overnight stay at UPMC Altoona, I was able to go home with very minor restrictions,” says Barbara. “It was very simple and painless.”

“In about 45 days, the heart tissue grows over the WATCHMAN device and seals it,” says Dr. Jabbour. Once that happens, patients replace their primary blood thinner with aspirin and Plavix®. And after six months, most patients take only a reduced dose of aspirin.

“This has been such a relief for my family and me,” says Barbara. “It's given us real peace of mind.”

WATCHMAN™ is a trademark of Boston Scientific Corp.

News from the UPMC ALTOONA FOUNDATION

Foundation Grants Roundup

The Foundation recently awarded grants totaling \$176,500 to:

- **Home Nursing Agency's Healing Patch**, a grief support program for children affected by the loss of a loved one, including a parent, sibling, grandparent, or close family member.
- The **Student Summer Assistance Program**, making behavior-based summer activities available to at-risk youth.
- **Bob Perks Cancer Assistance Fund**, to help ease the financial burden for patients and their families who are dealing with a cancer diagnosis and receiving treatment at UPMC Altoona.
- **Penn State Altoona Nursing Lab**, recipient of funds to support equipment and technology upgrades in the nursing simulation laboratory.
- Provide the **UPMC Altoona Trauma Center** with the TraumaMan® system, a surgical simulator manikin to teach trauma center staff how to treat chest injuries.
- Enable the **UPMC Altoona Intensive Care Unit (ICU)** to purchase a LIVENGOOD Pace ICU Walker to encourage early mobility for ICU patients. Studies show that early mobility increases muscle strength and improves quality of life and physical function in ICU patients.
- **The Donald and Nancy Devorris Nursing Scholarship Fund**, which provided scholarships to area students enrolled in a nursing degree program at a local college or university.



From left: **Stacey-Ann Okoth**, chief nursing officer and vice president of patient care services at UPMC Altoona, **Nancy Devorris**, and Nancy's daughter **Andrea Cohen** (far right), presented nursing scholarships to **Kaitlyn Fluke**, **Madison Flaugh**, and **Kaitlyn Kieta**.

Benzel Family Establishes Cancer Fund



Bill and Ann Benzel

Ann and Bill Benzel of Hollidaysburg recently donated \$100,000 in the name of the William P. Benzel Family Cancer Fund to the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at UPMC Altoona. "We are most grateful for the

compassionate care a member of our family received recently when a cancer diagnosis was made," says Ann.

The fund will help provide equipment like Thor, a low level laser therapy to enhance healing in patients receiving head and neck radiation to recover faster, as well as financial support for other cancer-related projects.

Ann and Bill, owners of Benzel's Bretzel Bakery Inc., are long-time supporters of the UPMC Altoona Foundation. Ann, who has served for many years as a board member and officer with UPMC Altoona and the UPMC Altoona Foundation, also is a past chairperson of the Foundation board.

Founders Club Reception

More than 100 Founders Club members and their guests enjoyed this year's reception in June at HomeWaters Club in Spruce Creek. The Founders Club, the Foundation's leadership giving society, has 130 member donors who make annual contributions of \$1,000 or more to the UPMC Altoona Foundation.



Guests enjoy a dog agility demonstration at the Founders Club reception.

Donna Jean Hospitality House



Donna Jean House Signage

New signage and other upgrades welcome visitors at the guest entrances to the Donna Jean Hospitality House. The facility provides overnight lodging for families with loved ones hospitalized at UPMC Altoona. Cost is \$35 per night. To make arrangements at Donna Jean Hospitality House, call the hospital police at **814-889-2121**.

Lions Club Donates Brady Buggy®



Dennis Clark and Leanna Calhoun show off the new Brady Buggy Wagon.

Thanks to the Lions Club of Blair County, children hospitalized at UPMC Altoona have the Brady Buggy Wagon to get around. The animal-shaped buggy has a trailer hitch kids can use to tow their intravenous equipment to receive treatment while on the go.

SAVE THE DATE

Winter Splendor

Friday, January 17, 2020
Blair County Convention Center
6 to 10:30 p.m.

For more information, visit
UPMCAltoonaFoundation.org.

UPMC Altoona Foundation

UPMC Altoona

620 Howard Ave.
Altoona, PA 16601

Q & A

Ask the Experts



We asked UPMC Altoona's **Mike Corso**, vice president of operations, to share details about the UPMC Outpatient Center in Ebensburg — the hospital's newest clinical facility.

Q.

Why did you locate the center in Ebensburg?

A. "Our research showed that many UPMC patients in the Ebensburg area were traveling to Altoona or Pittsburgh for key services," says Mike. "We realized that bringing those services closer to where patients live and work meant significant savings in time and travel expenses for them."

Q.

What services are available at the center?

A. **Laboratory and imaging services** are housed on the first floor of the modern, three-story, 45,000-square-foot facility. "It's a terrific one-stop care option, giving area residents fast and easy access to routine procedures," says Mike.

Some lab and imaging tests are available as walk-in services.

The second floor houses a **specialty care suite** where a variety of specialists (see list at right) are available to serve patients on different days. "Bringing these experts directly to the community offers patients great care close to home and work," Mike explains.

Family medicine and behavioral health services are available on the third floor through Primary Health Network. "UPMC Altoona has partnered with Primary Health Network for many years to offer quality, low-cost health care options. We're pleased their services are now available in Ebensburg, too," says Mike. The third floor houses a retail pharmacy that offers a federal 340(b) drug discount program for even greater patient savings.

OPEN HOUSE

Join us Monday, Oct. 28 for tours of the facility. See calendar insert for details.



The **UPMC Outpatient Center in Ebensburg** is conveniently located at 152 Zeman Drive (just off Route 22 near the Route 219 interchange) and offers ample parking.

Let us serve you!

For information or to schedule an appointment, use the contact numbers provided below.

UPMC Laboratory & Imaging Services

Laboratory

Monday–Friday,
6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
814-471-2221

Walk-in services include blood draws, urine sample collection, specimen drop off, EKG testing, and throat culture/strep screen

Imaging

Monday–Friday,
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
814-471-2238

Walk-in services include x-ray and mammography. Ultrasound by appointment.

Primary Care

Family Medicine
Primary Health Network
814-846-5060

Specialty Care

Behavioral Health

Primary Health Network
814-846-5060

Cardiology

UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute – Blair Medical Associates Cardiology
814-946-1655

Concussion Treatment

UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program
814-889-3600

Dermatology

UPMC Altoona Blair Medical Associates
814-946-1655

Gastroenterology

Blair Gastroenterology Associates of Altoona
814-946-5469

Neurology

UPMC Altoona Blair Medical Associates
814-946-1655

Obstetrics and Gynecology

Magee-Womens Specialty Services
814-889-2626

Orthopaedics

UPMC Altoona Elite Orthopaedics
814-889-3600

Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy

UPMC Centers for Rehab Services
814-889-3900

Surgery (preoperative and postoperative office visits)

UPMC Altoona Cove Surgical Associates
814-943-4937