

World-class care Our region

Integrating UPMC's heart, vascular, and cancer services in **Altoona**

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UPMC Altoona

Healthy Living

Healthy Living

MAGAZINE

UPMC Altoona's Healthy Living Magazine is published four times a year by the Marketing and Communications Department.

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If you are not receiving Healthy Living Magazine in the mail and would like to, be sure to join the Healthy Living Club. It's FREE, and the Magazine is just one of the many benefits!



Join online at UPMCAaltoona.org or call 814-889-2630 or 1-888-313-4665.

80% by 2018



Saving lives through COLON CANCER SCREENING

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. However, it's also one of the most preventable cancers.

UPMC Altoona has teamed up with Blair Gastroenterology Associates and the American Cancer Society to sign the "80% by 2018" pledge, aimed at eliminating colorectal cancer.

"In signing this pledge, we are making a commitment to have 80 percent of eligible patients screened for colorectal cancer by 2018," says Edmond Bouassaf, MD, of Blair Gastroenterology Associates, physician champion for the local initiative. "If we can achieve this goal across the country, we can prevent more than 20,000 colorectal cancer deaths per year in the United States."

Early detection

Most colorectal cancers develop first as polyps, abnormal growths inside the colon or rectum that may become cancerous if not removed. Dr. Bouassaf explains that colorectal cancer can be prevented or detected in the early stages. "Screening can help identify cancerous and precancerous changes before a patient even experiences any symptoms," he says. "When colorectal cancer is found early, it is often much easier to treat and can often be cured."

The American Cancer Society recommends that most people have their first colon cancer screening at age 50. Individuals with certain risk factors, such as colon problems or a family history of colon cancer, may need to start screening earlier and get tested more often. Talking to your doctor is the best way to find out about when to begin screening.

Screening tests for colorectal cancer include:

- Stool tests, which check your stool for signs of cancer
- Sigmoidoscopy, in which your doctor uses a lighted camera scope to view the lower part of your intestine
- Colonoscopy, in which your doctor uses a lighted camera scope to view the inside of your entire colon
- Computed tomographic colonography, also called a virtual colonoscopy, which allows your doctor to see pictures of the inside of your large intestine

During some screening tests, your doctor may look for polyps and remove them before they turn into cancer.

Nationwide effort

More than 1,000 organizations nationally have joined the "80% by 2018" movement, according to the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable.

Dr. Bouassaf urges all adults to talk with their doctor about colon cancer screening. "Let us work together as a community to prevent colorectal cancer," he says.

At the FOREFRONT of hope

Partnership provides Pathways to leading-edge cancer treatment

Comprehensive, world-class cancer care is now available right here at home. Cancer services at UPMC Altoona are now part of UPMC CancerCenter, partner with the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI), one of the largest integrated cancer care networks in the country.

"For 30 years, local patients have had access to quality cancer treatment by UPMC Altoona's caring medical professionals," says Jack Schocker, MD, radiation oncologist. "By integrating with UPMC CancerCenter, we have added guaranteed access to the extensive resources of a program that is at the forefront of cancer treatment."

UPMC CancerCenter at UPMC Altoona brings the renowned cancer services offered at the Hillman Cancer Center in Pittsburgh to Blair and surrounding counties. The program harnesses the expertise of medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons, and allied practitioners to deliver leading-edge diagnostics, individualized treatment plans, and ongoing education and support to patients and caregivers at every step of their journey.

Personalized strategies

The heart of the program is UPMC CancerCenter Pathways, evidenced-based cancer treatment protocols that assure that patients receive the same high standards of cancer care, no matter where they are treated in the network. Pathways helps guarantee that the best treatment is considered for each patient using treatment plans customized for each patient's particular type and stage of cancer and combining innovative and promising clinical trial options with the best standard-of-care therapies.

Doctors enter personalized patient information, such as disease state and stage, into the Web-based Pathways program. Based on those details and others unique to the patient's health, Pathways presents doctors with the most appropriate course of action for cancer treatment.

Pathways gives patients and their doctors access to the latest, most innovative therapies and more than 450 clinical trials. Together with UPCI, western Pennsylvania's only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, UPMC CancerCenter at UPMC Altoona translates the latest research advances to clinical applications throughout the region to provide more options to patients facing virtually all types of adult cancer.

Nurse navigator offers help

UPMC CancerCenter at UPMC Altoona combines state-of-the-art treatment with caring service to help patients benefit from the best care by their medical team.

"Receiving a cancer diagnosis is scary, and understanding the steps for treatment can be confusing," Dr. Schocker says. "Our oncology nurse navigator is dedicated to guiding patients through the cancer treatment process and helping to remove barriers to care."

UPMC CancerCenter UPMC Altoona

REGIONAL SERVICES

At UPMC CancerCenter at UPMC Altoona, our experts offer a full range of services for the prevention, detection, diagnosis, and treatment of all types of cancer, including:

Medical Oncology

- Biological therapy administration (BRMT)
- Chemotherapy administration
- Colony stimulating factors (CSF)
- Interferon (IFN)
- Interleukin
- Monoclonal antibodies (MoAb)

Radiation Oncology

- Elekta Infinity™ and Elekta Synergy™ linear accelerators
- Stereotactic radiation therapy
- Intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT)
- Volumetric modulated arc therapy (VMAT)
- Brachytherapy (including permanent prostate seeds)
- Three-dimensional treatment planning
- PET-CT imaging for evaluation and treatment planning

OUR EXPERTS

Medical oncologists

- Shabbir Ahmad, MD
- Mohammad Alkayem, MD
- Hasan Bit-Shawish, MD
- Mark Keating, MD
- Louann Zhang, MD

Radiation oncologists

- Jack Schocker, MD
- Joshua Siglin, MD

Advanced practice providers

- Brianne Baker, CRNP
- Meghan Drago, PA-C
- Cathy Miller, CRNP

OUR LOCATIONS

ALTOONA

Medical Oncology
814-946-1655

Radiation Oncology
814-889-2400

BEDFORD

Medical Oncology and
Radiation Oncology
814-623-3513

CLEARFIELD

Radiation Oncology
814-765-4151

HUNTINGDON

Medical Oncology
814-643-4010

*Transportation is available
in some locations, at no cost
to our patients.*

To learn more about the UPMC CancerCenter, visit UPMCCancerCenter.com/Altoona.



PROGRAM ALERT!

Free Program for Women in Cancer Treatment

See calendar insert for details, dates, and times

Doctor has a **HEART** for **HOME**

Cardiologist/advanced heart failure specialist returns to Altoona

Twelve years after heading off to medical school in Washington, D.C., Cambria County native Jonathan Holtz, MD, has returned home to raise a family and practice medicine as the area's only advanced heart failure and heart transplant specialist.

A change of heart

Growing up in rural Cambria County, Dr. Holtz always thought he'd go into business like other family members. He was pursuing a business degree at Penn State when his grandfather, Ralph Holtz, underwent a procedure to have a special pacemaker — a biventricular defibrillator — implanted in his chest.

Seeing how much his grandfather struggled with heart failure after two heart attacks and how much he improved after the procedure changed the undergraduate's life.

"My grandfather was my role model and mentor. I was saddened by how much heart failure adversely affected his

life, but I was also impressed at how much better he felt with this treatment," Dr. Holtz says. "It inspired me."

He switched majors, earning degrees in biology and English from Penn State and a medical degree from Georgetown University School of Medicine. He completed his residency in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. He spent another year working as a hospitalist with UCSF's advanced heart failure service before heading east to the University of Pittsburgh, where he completed fellowships in cardiovascular disease and advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology.

Returning to his roots

Dr. Holtz never expected to return home to central Pennsylvania. He was working in San Francisco when he married his high school sweetheart, Mackensie Ryan. But after the birth of their two sons, he says, "We wanted

to raise our boys in the country and be close to both of our families."

Last summer, Dr. Holtz joined the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute as a specialist in advanced heart failure at UPMC Altoona and UPMC Presbyterian. He'll spend 95 percent of his time at UPMC Altoona — where he was born in 1981.

Dr. Holtz, a clinical assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, serves on UPMC's Heart Transplant Selection Committee and spends one day a month at UPMC Presbyterian performing heart transplant biopsies and seeing patients at the heart transplant clinic and ventricular assist device clinic. He also provides in-patient heart failure services there several times a year.

"It's the best of both worlds," says Dr. Holtz. "I'm able to practice advanced heart failure treatment and care for people in my hometown."

A growing need

Dr. Holtz, whose patients include his 92-year-old grandmother and several other family members, is specially trained to recognize subtle signs of heart failure and care for patients with advanced heart failure, including those needing heart pumps and heart transplants.

According to the American Heart Association, nearly 6 million Americans are currently living with heart failure, and 1 in 5 are expected to develop heart failure. It's the leading cause of hospitalization — and readmission — in people older than age 65.

Patients living in rural areas like those UPMC Altoona serves are less likely to seek the specialty care they need because of the travel time and distance involved, says Dr. Holtz. "They hate driving into the city," he says. "I'm now seeing patients who used to travel to Pittsburgh and those who've never seen a specialist

because they refused to go there."

Huntingdon resident Eydie Miller, 74, says she is thrilled that Dr. Holtz moved to Altoona. She went to him for treatment of atrial fibrillation shortly after his arrival in August; in September, she underwent a cardioversion procedure at UPMC Altoona. Although she may need to undergo a cardiac ablation procedure at UPMC Presbyterian, she feels comforted knowing Dr. Holtz will manage her care every step of the way.

"Dr. Holtz is a wonderful asset," she says. "For a small community, we are so blessed to have someone with his expertise caring for us here. I have complete confidence in the care he provides."

To make an appointment with Dr. Holtz, contact:
UPMC Altoona Blair Medical Associates
1414 Ninth Ave., Altoona, PA 16602 • 814-946-1655

Dr. Jonathan Holtz discusses treatment plans with patient Eydie Miller of Huntingdon.

PROGRAM ALERT!
Heart Disease and
Congestive Heart Failure
See calendar insert for details, dates, and times



“Becoming a part of the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute is a step we’ve been working toward since affiliating with UPMC, and we are proud that our local programs have met all of the requirements and standards to join this nationally recognized group. The advancements in care that will now be available to patients here at home are a significant benefit that we are pleased to be able to bring to our community.”

— Jerry Murray
President
UPMC Altoona and UPMC Bedford Memorial

World-class HEART and VASCULAR services in Altoona

For decades, the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute (HVI) has been making significant contributions to the advancement of cardiovascular medicine:

- UPMC was the first hospital to successfully discharge a patient with a left ventricular assist device (LVAD).
- UPMC’s Cardiac Catheterization Program is one of the nation’s largest in terms of patient volume. Our experts perform more than 23,000 diagnostic and interventional procedures each year.
- Experts in the Division of Vascular Surgery helped to pioneer minimally invasive procedures for the treatment of the entire vascular system.

These are just a few of HVI’s cardiovascular milestones. Now, UPMC Altoona is expanding its heart program to deliver the same kind of comprehensive, high-end care, in partnership with the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute.

The newly expanded team of cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, vascular surgeons, and allied practitioners at the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Altoona offers local patients more cutting edge diagnostic services, evidence-based therapies, and patient education initiatives. Affiliation with the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute means that this community-based team has more access than ever to the most advanced treatment options, novel devices, and leading-edge clinical trials to meet a great range of patient needs.

LOCAL SERVICES

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

Cardiology Services

- Diagnostic services, including:
 - > Echocardiography — transesophageal, transthoracic, pediatric, intraoperative, and stress echocardiograms
 - > Electrocardiograms (EKGs)
 - > Holter monitoring
 - > Stress testing
- Cardiac catheterization diagnostic and therapeutic procedures
- Electrophysiology services, including:
 - > Cardioversion
 - > Medical management
 - > Implantable cardiac defibrillators (ICDs) and pacemakers
 - > Radiofrequency ablation
- Heart failure management
- Cardiac rehabilitation

Cardiac Surgery Services

- Coronary artery bypass grafting
- Aortic, mitral, and tricuspid valve replacement
- Mitral and tricuspid valve repair
- Antiarrhythmic surgery
- Thoracic aortic aneurysm surgery
- Ventricular aneurysm repair/resection
- Atrial/ventricular septal defect repair
- Cardiac tumor resection

Vascular Surgery Services

- Open and endovascular surgery of abdominal aortic aneurysms
- Endovascular repair of thoracic aortic aneurysms
- Percutaneous intervention on all peripheral arterial beds, including atherectomy, angioplasty, stenting, and drug elution technology
- Inferior vena cava filter placement and retrieval
- Traumatic vascular injury management
- Catheter-directed treatment for acute deep venous thrombosis, varicose veins, chronic venous insufficiency, and thrombophlebitis
- Laser and radiofrequency ablation for venous disorders
- Dialysis access



To learn more about the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute, visit UPMC.com/HVI.

OUR EXPERTS



Mukul Bhatnagar, MD
Board Certifications:
Cardiovascular Disease
Nuclear Cardiology
Internal Medicine
Interventional Cardiology



Arthur DeMarsico, DO
Board Certification:
Vascular Surgery



Jonathan Holtz, MD
Board Certifications:
Cardiovascular Disease
Internal Medicine
Echocardiography



George Jabbour, MD
Board Certifications:
Cardiovascular Disease
Echocardiography
Interventional Cardiology
Nuclear Cardiology



Vijay Janakiraman, MD
Board Certifications:
Cardiovascular Disease
Internal Medicine



Maryam Mohammadi, MD
Board Certifications:
Echocardiography
Internal Medicine
Nuclear Cardiology

OUR PRACTITIONERS

Melissa Hall, PA-C
Kimberly A. Koehle, CRNP
Katherine Montgomery, PA-C

Kristi Montrella, CRNP
Emily Tercek, PA-C
Stacey Yaworski, PA-C

UPMC | HEART AND VASCULAR INSTITUTE
UPMC Altoona

Solving the mysteries of **MOVEMENT** disorders



Roy Smuda at work in his home machine shop

UPMC Altoona's newest neurologist brings a research background to help patients with difficult-to-treat disorders

Sophie Cho, MD, likes to say that she recruited herself for her new job at UPMC Altoona. It all started when her husband, neurologist Changsoo Hahm, MD, joined the hospital's staff in 2015.

"At the time, I was a clinical fellow at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, which is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland," she explains.

"We were living a long-distance marriage, and I quickly fell in love with this community. I told the hospital that if it ever needed another neurologist, I was ready!" This summer, she joined Dr. Hahm at Blair Medical Associates, an affiliate of UPMC Altoona.

"My specialization is movement disorders," says Dr. Cho. "I treat conditions such as tremors, tics, Parkinson's disease, and walking and balance disorders." She also will continue to serve on several NIH research studies, including analyzing data on dystonia, a movement disorder that involves uncontrollable muscle spasms.

Her path to UPMC Altoona

Dr. Cho and Dr. Hahm met as medical students in Korea. Today, they're the proud parents of a 3-year-old son, Noel. "I can't think of a better place to raise our son than Altoona," says Dr. Cho. "The people are so warm and kind, and it's a beautiful place to live."

She brings impressive career credentials to her role at UPMC Altoona. In medical school, Dr. Cho was valedictorian of her graduating class. In 2009, she captured the Asian Pacific Society's Young Investigator Award for her research work.

Dr. Cho came to the United States in 2010 for a yearlong residency in internal medicine at UPMC Shadyside in Pittsburgh. She then began a three-year neurology residency at the State University of New York (SUNY) Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, where she received the Department of Neurology's Resident Professionalism Award three years in a row and served as chief resident her final year. She became board-certified in neurology in 2014.

Bringing research insights to patients

Ironically, one of Dr. Cho's first patients at UPMC Altoona is an area man who was turned down for one of the NIH research studies on which she was working.

Roy Smuda has lived with hand tremors since he was a child. "One of my teachers thought my hands shook because I was nervous," he explains. "In those days, no one knew anything about central nerve tremor." Central nerve tremor (also known as essential tremor) is a type of movement disorder that involves involuntary shaking. "It's become much worse over the last decade," he says.

A retired tool and die maker who specialized in injection molding and miniature welding, Roy uses that same craftsmanship to make intricate repairs on tools and machinery for family and neighbors in rural James Creek, near Altoona. "It's tedious and hard work, but I really enjoy using those skills," he adds.

As his condition worsened, Roy sought the help of Mark Lipitz, DO, a neurologist with UPMC Altoona. "I'm so grateful that he let me know that Dr. Cho was coming to the area," Roy says.

"Tremors like Roy's are very common, but it's often hard to identify the source of the problem to treat," says Dr. Cho. "Not all tremors are the same, and not all treatments work. We're hoping to resolve his problems with some promising medications."

"I'm excited that Dr. Cho is in Altoona. That's much more convenient than traveling to Bethesda," adds Roy.

"With her help, I have hope that I'll be able to use my skills to work on intricate projects again, for myself and for other folks in my community."



PROGRAM ALERT!

When Is a Tremor
More Than a Nuisance?

See calendar insert for details, dates, and times

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Cho, visit findadoc.upmc.com.

RECENT UPMC Altoona Foundation GRANTS include:

- **Catholic Charities**
\$5,000 to provide much-needed medicines to patients with no other means of obtaining them
- **UPMC Altoona Labor and Delivery Unit**
\$600 for the Cribs for Kids program, which provides families with education and equipment to ensure that newborns have a safe sleeping environment
- **UPMC Altoona Breast Health Center**
\$8,000 to support telemedicine consultation services from Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC for patients seeking genetic breast health services or second medical opinions

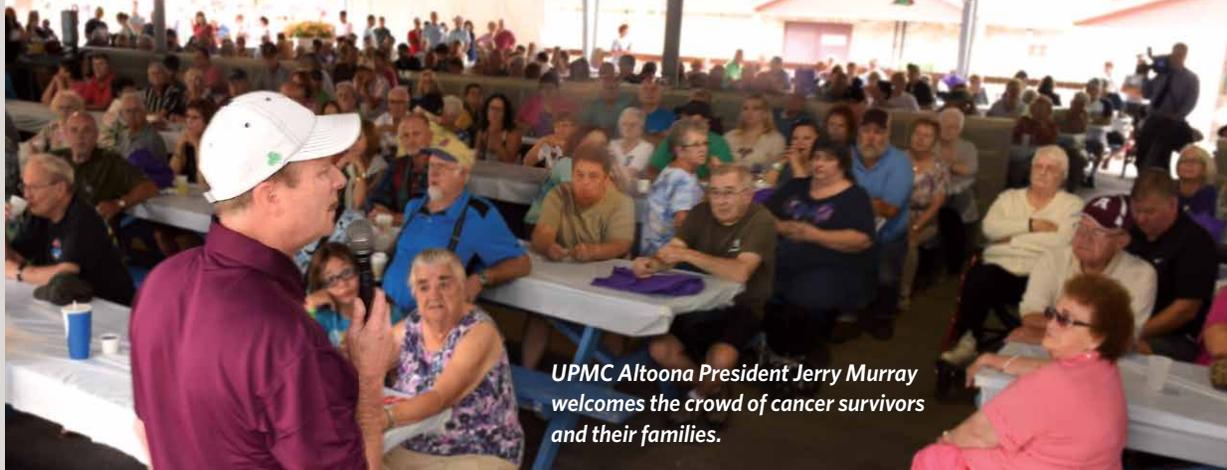
BREAST HEALTH CENTER campaign raises \$640,000



Construction of the new UPMC Altoona Breast Health Center at Station Medical Center is expected to be completed in February, thanks to significant support from the community.

"This marks an important milestone in the growth of the UPMC Altoona Breast Health Center," says Jerry Murray, president of UPMC Altoona and UPMC Bedford Memorial.

Karen Pfeffer, Breast Health Center capital campaign chair, notes that the campaign was recently strengthened by a \$100,000 gift from the Sheetz family. "The community has now raised more than \$640,000 in support of the Center," she says.



UPMC Altoona President Jerry Murray welcomes the crowd of cancer survivors and their families.

CANCER SURVIVORS celebrate at DelGrosso's

UPMC Altoona's second annual Cancer Survivors' Appreciation Picnic on Sept. 17 brought together more than 1,300 cancer survivors and family members — plus UPMC staff members and doctors from Altoona and Pittsburgh — to DelGrosso's Amusement Park in Tipton. The event is underwritten by the UPMC Altoona Foundation and is free to cancer survivors and their families.

Celebrity bingo was featured at the festive event, with physicians and staff from the UPMC CancerCenter at UPMC Altoona acting as bingo callers. Plans are underway for next year's event to be held again in September at DelGrosso's.

REAL MEN WEAR PINK raises \$10,000

Robert "Pink Bob" Strawser — the executive director of Mission and Patient Experience at UPMC Altoona — worked tirelessly during the month of October to raise more than \$5,000 to support the fight against breast cancer.

He wore pink every day in October and led numerous events at UPMC Altoona to help raise funds and awareness.

The UPMC Altoona Foundation was pleased to match the gifts of Bob's co-workers with a check for \$5,017.



I support REAL MEN WEAR PINK

Pink Bob

NEWS FROM THE UPMC Altoona Foundation

Winter Splendor

Get your TICKETS now!

UPMC Altoona Foundation's Winter Splendor event is Jan. 20 at the Blair County Convention Center, featuring the big-brass sounds of Dr. Zoot. This annual event is a fun-filled, relaxing evening to raise funds for patient care items at UPMC Altoona.

Attire is business casual. Tickets are \$45 per person and may be purchased online by visiting UPMCAaltoona.org and selecting "Give a Gift" and "Winter Splendor" from the menu options, or by calling Michelle Dodson at the Foundation office at 814-889-6740.



Cutting the ribbon are (from left) Bruce Wise, Justin Wise, Ron McConnell, Mario Lemieux, Nathalie Lemieux, Ryan Sheetz, Virginia Hazelet, and Dr. Arthur DeMarsico. At right, Macie and Colt Conner enjoy some of the toys.

Hospital dedicates AUSTIN'S PLAYROOM

UPMC Altoona celebrated the dedication of the fifth-floor Austin's Playroom on Sept. 12. Many local dignitaries, along with Mario and Nathalie Lemieux, attended the ceremony marking the opening of the Lemieux Foundation's 37th playroom. The playrooms are named in honor of the couple's son.

"The playroom provides a refuge from the hospital environment for children and their families visiting a hospitalized sibling or family member," says Tim Balconi, UPMC Altoona Foundation president.

Employees collect TODDLER COATS

As part of the UPMC Lend A Hand initiative, UPMC Altoona employees are encouraged to help other members of the community through efforts such as the Toasty Toddler program of Blair County United Way's Family Resource Center.

In recent months, UPMC Altoona employees and volunteers have strived to top 2015's generous donation of more than 200 new coats, plus hats (some hand-crocheted), gloves, scarves, and \$60 in cash. The Toasty Toddler program distributes the warm winter outerwear to needy area infants and toddlers.





Q
and
A

UPMC CENTERS FOR REHAB SERVICES

On Nov. 1, UPMC Altoona's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department became part of UPMC Centers for Rehab Services.

Q What is CRS?

A UPMC Centers for Rehab Services (CRS) is the physical, occupational, and speech therapy provider for UPMC. Our therapists live and work in every community that UPMC serves.

CRS therapists are located in many health care settings:

- CRS has 70 conveniently located community-based outpatient clinics, now including Altoona and Cresson
- CRS therapists work in UPMC hospitals, including UPMC Altoona and UPMC Bedford Memorial
- CRS therapists work in UPMC Senior Communities throughout western Pennsylvania

Q What are the benefits of becoming a part of CRS?

A CRS is dedicated to providing the highest quality patient experience possible. Our clinicians pursue continuing education and achieve advanced certifications in order to apply cutting-edge research and best practices for the benefit of our patients. We also work together, sharing knowledge and experience and consulting on challenging cases to assist patients in reaching their goals.

Q What changes and improvements will we see here at Altoona?

A You might see a different sign on the door, but the same friendly and knowledgeable staff will be here to provide the best for our patients, so the transition should be pretty seamless. Over time there may be some new treatment techniques utilized or new technology put in place.

Q What can I expect as a patient?

A We strive to make sure every patient is well-educated on their condition and understands how to safely progress. We believe addressing your questions and helping you grow in your ability to correctly perform a customized home exercise program will give you the knowledge and skills you need to reach your goals.

Q How can I make an appointment?

- A**
- Altoona: 814-889-3900
 - Cresson: 814-886-5097
 - You may also call 1-888-723-4277 and be connected to the most conveniently located clinic
 - Check out our website, UPMC.com/4CRS

Our ultimate goals are to help you decrease pain, increase function, reach your goals, and get back to doing the things that you want to do in your life. Call or stop in to learn how we can help or to schedule an appointment.



Dan Casillo, MPT, is the regional director for UPMC Centers for Rehab Services. An Altoona native, he earned both his bachelor's degree in biology and master's degree in physical therapy from Gannon University in Erie. He has professional experience in outpatient orthopaedics and sports medicine, as well as home care. He is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association.

ALTOONA
Station Medical Center
1516 Ninth Ave.
Altoona, PA 16602

CRESSON
794 Gallitzin Road
Cresson, PA 16630