

HEALTH NEWS *from*

gw hospital

FALL 2019



Elevating **CRITICAL SERVICES**

**THE HELIPAD IS
NOW OPEN!**

“Best Hospital”
ranking from
U.S. News &
World Report!

*See the back page
to learn more*



INSIDE:

Nurturing your inner athlete

Sports medicine for any age
and activity level

Could it be a heart attack?

Need-to-know symptoms and facts

Compliments of



**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL**



Taqwa before surgery.

GW DEFINING Moments

GW Hospital patients share their life-changing experiences

“I actively chose health.”

- Taqwa Pope

Taqwa Pope struggled for years with her weight, and at age 33, she felt like she'd exhausted every dieting option. She was worried about how her health and her future might be affected. "I want to live a healthy, happy, able-bodied lifestyle," she says.

Inspired by a co-worker who had weight-loss surgery, she met with bariatric surgeon Juliet Lee, MD, at the GW Weight Loss and Surgery Center to learn more. "Dr. Lee did not make me feel judged," she says. "She was very informative and made me feel very comfortable." After considering her options, she chose to have the Roux-en-Y gastric bypass procedure in October 2015.

What stood out throughout her journey was the thorough, personalized support she received. She recalls how Dr. Lee sat down with her and went through every hour of her day to get her through side effects and to recovery.

With a healthy diet and regular exercise, and the support of her GW team, she lost 85 pounds and went from a size 18-20 to a size 8. "I began to notice what I call the small things, like the fact that I was able to cross my legs or stand on one leg and tie my shoe. If I forgot something, I could quickly run up the stairs to get it," she says. **Defining moments** like these captured how profoundly her surgery affected her everyday life. "It allowed my inner light to shine and others to witness."

Staying healthy is a lifelong commitment, and she continues to keep in contact with Dr. Lee and the program for support. "After three years, I'm still met with professionalism," she says. "I'm still met with enthusiasm to assist me if I have any questions."



The GW Weight Loss and Surgery Center offers a comprehensive program with certified bariatric surgeons who have successfully performed more than 7,000 procedures, as well as registered dietitians, psychologists and personal trainers. It is designated as a Comprehensive Center by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation Quality Improvement Program® and a Blue Distinction® Center for bariatric surgery by CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield.

To learn more, visit gwhospital.com/weightloss.

Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.





THE GEORGE WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

DEFINING MEDICINE

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2 STAYING ACTIVE AT ANY AGE**
How sports medicine can help
- 4 MARKING MILESTONES**
The helipad and other key developments
- 6 NEW AND COMING**
More expansion at GW Hospital
- 7 A STROKE AT AGE 27**
Rachel Rasp shares her story
- 8 ASK THE DOCTOR**
Heart attack signs, risk factors and more
- 9 INNOVATIVE CANCER CARE**
A patient's oral cancer treatment success



AIMING HIGHER. Minutes saved can mean the difference between life and death when transporting patients for emergency care. As we open the new helipad at the George Washington University Hospital, we're excited about the opportunity it offers to expand access to our Level I Trauma Center and Comprehensive Stroke Center. This major

undertaking could not have been possible without the support of local residents and city officials. On behalf of the entire hospital, I extend a sincere thank you to everyone who helped us make this vision a reality.

Our mission to provide world-class care challenges doctors and staff at GW Hospital to continually push the boundaries – from trialing new cancer treatments to pursuing advances in stroke care to providing life-changing therapy that can help people live longer, more active lives. Accomplishing difficult goals requires passion and determination. Our patients demonstrate this every day, and we're honored to share their stories of success and healing.

The many milestones that have been achieved throughout the George Washington University Hospital's century-long history speak to a rich tradition of innovation, research, service and expansion. As medical advances continue, the next life-changing treatments and technologies are just around the corner. Our team is committed to bringing them to you and defining medicine for the community.

Kimberly Russo
Chief Executive Officer

SCREENING IS THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW HOW WELL YOUR KIDNEYS ARE WORKING.

It involves a simple urine test. You'll have the results before you leave.

Diabetes?
Heart Failure?
High Blood Pressure?
You're considered
high risk.
Get screened.

Your **FREE** appointment takes about 30 minutes.
Call 1-833-Kidney-3 (1-833-543-6393).



Transplant Institute
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

**Ron and Joy Paul
Kidney Center**

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Keeping your body *in play*

Being sidelined by an athletic injury or joint condition can be frustrating, whether you compete in sports or just enjoy being active in your everyday life. The Sports Medicine Program at GW Hospital can help you get back in the game with comprehensive services for treating and preventing a broad range of conditions.



Rajeev Pandarinath, MD



Teresa Doerre, MD

Some of the most common sports-related injuries treated include rotator cuff and meniscus injuries, ACL tears, concussion management, tennis elbow, and neck and back injuries.

Additionally, the GW Sports

Medicine Program offers specialized care for cartilage restoration, hip preservation and instability of the shoulder and knee. The program is led by orthopedic surgeons Rajeev Pandarinath, MD, Director of Sports Medicine, and Teresa Doerre, MD. ►

Cyclist Tony Abate, also pictured on the next page.

"If you're having persistent pain and it's not responding to symptomatic management, then being evaluated and finding the correct diagnosis is important," says Dr. Doerre.

In many cases, problems can be resolved non-operatively, for instance with physical therapy and sometimes by modifying activities for a period of time, says Dr. Pandarinath, who specializes in shoulder and knee surgery, arthroscopic surgery and orthopedic sports medicine. "The focus is largely on finding ways to prolong the function of joints and help patients avoid problems later on," he says. One way to do this is with hip preservation.

Hip preservation – an innovative approach

For certain patients with hip pain, **GW Hospital's Hip Preservation Program** can help relieve immediate symptoms and potentially prevent or postpone a joint replacement later in life. It is the only program of its kind in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area and can be beneficial in treating patients before significant arthritis occurs.

People may be recommended to the program for different reasons, including hip impingement

(also known as femoroacetabular impingement or FAI). This condition may develop when structural problems in the hip joint cause bones to rub together and cause friction. If surgery is needed, the focus is on providing minimally invasive care whenever possible, along with highly customized physical therapy.

"We're not just focusing on range of motion, we're also focusing on a lot of strengthening and targeting any muscle imbalances around the hip," says Dr. Doerre. A whole-team approach brings doctors, therapists and other providers together to keep patients engaged every step of the way and also teaches them how to manage their hip for the long term.

Care for every stage of life

Comprehensive care at GW Hospital is not just for athletes but for people of all ages and fitness levels – from kids competing on school sports teams to older adults seeking to stay active. "We really strive to make sure that we're doing the best we can to help patients through a difficult time so they can get back to doing the things they want to do," says Dr. Doerre. ■



"I didn't want to throw in the towel at just age 35."

Tony Abate is a competitive cyclist who suffered from severe hip pain that bothered him while riding his bike and even while sitting for long periods. His immediate goal was to get back to cycling, and he also wanted treatment that would help preserve his hip joint for the long term. He found his answer in the Hip Preservation Program at GW Hospital.

To correct a structural problem with his hip joint, he had a minimally invasive, arthroscopic procedure with orthopedic surgeon **Scott C. Faucett, MD, MS**. As an integral part of his treatment and recovery, he also participated in a highly customized therapy plan with physical therapist, **Keesha Vaughn, PT, DPT, OCS** – who helped him get back to a high level of performance.

Today he's cycling again with his amateur team, District Velocity Racing. "In my experience, it's been the real deal and completely changed my ability to get back to my active life."

To read more about Tony's story, visit gwhospital.com/tony.

To learn more about the Sports Medicine Program, visit gwhospital.com/sports.



Sports Medicine

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Taking lifesaving care to

It's been years in the making, and the new helipad at GW Hospital is now open for use, marking a tremendous step forward for the delivery of emergency care in the region. Realizing this vision and getting the project off the ground required an unwavering commitment centered around one goal: saving lives.



Babak Sarani, MD, FACS, FCCM

The new helipad enables patients with the most serious, life-threatening conditions to be airlifted directly to GW Hospital's Level I Center for Trauma and Critical Care, saving precious time and giving them access to the most advanced emergency services and resources needed to treat any illness or injury.

GW Hospital has the highest trauma designation attainable from the American College of Surgeons. It is also part of an elite group of U.S. hospitals to be designated a Comprehensive Stroke Center, the highest level possible, by The Joint Commission. ►

The GW Hospital Story – Our History

1824: GWU School of Medicine and Health Sciences founded as Columbian College. First medical school in D.C. and 11th in the nation.

1840: The first GW medical department was located in downtown Washington, D.C., on 10th and E Streets near Ford's Theatre.

1844: GW Infirmary built at 1335 H St. - first general hospital in D.C.

1859: GW Infirmary becomes one of the first colleges in the nation to teach clinical medicine.

1884: First female student enrolls. The school was distinguished for decades as one of the only in the nation to admit women.

1948: GW Hospital opens in Foggy Bottom.

1997

Universal Health Services enters partnership with GWU.

2002

New GW Hospital facility opens in current location – first new hospital in D.C. in more than 25 years!

2006

Opens Ambulatory Surgery Center with three operating rooms (ORs) and two procedure rooms.

2011

Acquires Diagnostic Imaging Center at 2121 K Street; opens two new ORs to meet the community's growing needs and enhance access to surgical treatment; expands Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) to support increased surgical volume.

2013

Receives verification as Level I Trauma Center; enhances to Regional Transfer Center to support surrounding hospitals in the care and management of severely injured or critically ill patients; designated a level 4 Epilepsy Center by National Association of Epilepsy Centers (NAEC).

2014

Opens GW Comprehensive Breast Center and GW Radiation Oncology Center.

NEW HEIGHTS

“Without direct helipad access, the only air transport route to GW Hospital requires an airlift to another heliport and then an ambulance ride across the city that can be up to 45 minutes in each direction depending on traffic,” says Babak Sarani, MD, FACS, FCCM, Director of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery and Co-Medical Director of Critical Care.

Having the helipad at GW Hospital enables swifter care for time-sensitive events like possible stroke and heart attack, and can benefit the region in other ways as well, he says. “It will make inter-hospital transfers of critically ill patients (such as septic shock or trauma cases) much safer by avoiding both the time delay and need to transfer the patient mid-route with all of their pumps, ventilator and other equipment.”

Also, in the event of a mass casualty event, it will markedly improve the medical community’s capability to serve citizens in the region. “A great example is the Navy Yard shooting a few years ago,” says Dr. Sarani.

“In that event, all roads were blocked, making air transport the only option for expeditious patient delivery.”

During an air transport, care is provided by a skilled medical team supported by ICU-level equipment, including ventilators, a balloon pump for patients in severe heart failure, blood transfusion capabilities and other critical resources that can help keep patients’ vital systems functioning until they reach the trauma center for specialized treatment.

From the earliest discussions about the helipad, Dr. Sarani has worked closely with hospital CEO Kimberly Russo, who was chief operating officer when the idea originated. He says the mission of serving critically ill patients has always been the driving force. “Whether you are an individual who has been shot, or injured or had a stroke, the job of this hospital is to care for the sickest human beings, and the helipad is a means to that end.” ■

[Learn more at gwhospital.com.](http://gwhospital.com)

Critical transfers by ground, as well

As GW Hospital unveils its new helipad, it continues to work on other ways to help patients get access to essential treatment in the event of a medical emergency. One of those is the Critical Care Transport Unit, which began serving the region in January 2018.

This specialized ground transport team provides lifesaving medical transfers to critically ill or injured patients, and covers an area that encompasses about a 90-mile radius from the hospital. Through a collaboration with a local service, patients are transported to GW Hospital in an ambulance with ICU-level equipment and specialty medical personnel. Having this resource answers a vital need for patients in the region who are suffering from life-threatening conditions and need swift, skilled medical care.

2015

Opens GW Transplant Institute; receives Certification as Comprehensive Stroke Center; earns ACS NSQIP® recognition for achieving meritorious outcomes for surgical patient care; opens two additional ORs to meet growing surgical demand and expands Intensive Care Unit (ICU); launches Hip Preservation Program, the first of its kind in D.C.

2016

Opens GW Imaging Center at 19th Street; opens GW Spine and Pain Center; opens new GW Cancer Center.

2017

First in the world to perform colorectal surgery with the Medrobotics Flex® Robotic System.

2018

First in the region to use virtual reality (VR) technology for neurosurgery and first in the world to trial VR for thoracic surgery.

2019

Completes Neuro-trauma ICU expansion; opens helipad; 5,000th baby born with GW Midwifery; first in the U.S. to use OpenSight® Augmented Reality for pre-operative surgical cases; expands Outpatient Rehab Center.

2020

Intraoperative MRI planned to arrive and more expansion in the community to come.

Building on our **COMMITMENT** *to the community*

#1

Sixth floor expansion complete

A brand-new patient area for trauma and neurosciences services has been constructed in a vacated space on the sixth floor of the hospital. The newly completed 32,000 square foot unit includes 42 all-private rooms with freshly installed equipment and furniture, along with space to add intraoperative magnetic resonance imaging (iMRI) technology to support patients needing neurological treatment and other specialized services (see related story below). Modern finishes and a streamlined design support high-level care in a restful, healing environment, with more beds to better serve the growing needs of the community. The project is part of an ongoing patient care expansion initiative.



#3

Major rehab expansion underway

GW Hospital's Outpatient Rehabilitation Center located at 2131 K Street has begun a 10,000-square-foot expansion that will double the footprint of the department, expand services and improve access to care. Significant investments are being made in the neurological physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology programming. Also, orthopedic physical therapy programs will expand. The many advanced technological additions to the new space will include a body-weight supported overhead track system to enhance gait training. Stay tuned for updates on this project, planned for completion in the fourth quarter of 2019.

#2

Slated to arrive in 2020: Intraoperative MRI

Plans are moving ahead at GW Hospital to acquire intraoperative magnetic resonance imaging (iMRI) technology that will support physicians in performing complex brain surgeries and other procedures. The iMRI uses a magnetic field and radio waves to create highly detailed images, allowing doctors to see how the brain is responding in real time to minimally invasive treatment for brain tumors, epilepsy and other neurological conditions. It can also be used to capture images of other organs and tissues in the body, enabling greater precision for specialized treatment. The iMRI will be located on the recently expanded sixth floor, next to the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit.

For the latest news and updates, follow us on Facebook and visit us online at gwhospital.com.

A young attorney shares her stroke story: “I am *super fortunate*”

“I was at work, doing my job, and suddenly I couldn’t type what I wanted to type,” recalls Rachel Rasp, who was just 27 at the time. “I tried to get up and walk out of my office and I couldn’t navigate my way out ... I managed to stumble over to my assistant. I tried to say, ‘Help, something’s wrong,’ and nothing came out.”



Dimitri Sigounas, MD

Her assistant immediately called 9-1-1, and shortly after, doctors at GW Hospital confirmed she had a stroke. Neurosurgeon and interventional neuroradiologist **Dimitri Sigounas, MD**, explains that a scan showed blockages in her neck and the left side of her brain related to a potentially life-threatening condition called a carotid artery dissection. As a designated Comprehensive Stroke Center – the highest level of certification attainable from The Joint Commission® and American Heart Association®/American Stroke Association® – GW Hospital is specially equipped to provide lifesaving care.

Rachel was taken to the interventional neuroradiology suite, where Dr. Sigounas performed a thrombectomy and stenting procedure, using X-ray guided imaging to thread a catheter through the blood vessels, retrieve the clots and keep the vessels open. Providing critical support behind the scenes were radiation technologists, nurses, the anesthesiologist and other staff. “It takes a lot of people who are all highly trained and prepared to operate at a very high level,” says physician assistant Michael Johnson, PA-C.

Just hours after waking up, Rachel was able to talk and function normally, and she has recovered fully. “It is not typical, I think, what happened to me and how I recovered, and I have to attribute that largely to GW Hospital,” she says. “I was very fortunate that they took me straight to GW.” ■



GW Hospital is the first hospital in Washington, D.C., to offer the **RAPID® CT Perfusion software**, which can make potentially lifesaving stroke care accessible to even more patients. Previously, there was a six-hour period after a stroke occurred to provide surgical intervention; but with the new software, doctors can determine if patients beyond that window would benefit from a procedure to remove a blockage in the brain. This can enable vital treatment for patients who previously may not have been candidates.

Use **FAST** to remember the warning signs of a possible stroke.
Face drooping | Arm weakness | Speech difficulty | Time to call 9-1-1.
If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Rachel Rasp after
her recovery.

Could I be having a *heart attack*?



Heart attack symptoms can be different and surprising for different

people, and it's important to spot them early in order to get medical treatment right away.

Here to discuss this topic is the Director of Noninvasive Cardiology and Director of the GW Women's Health Center

Jannet Lewis, MD, FACC.

Are women's symptoms different from men's?

A heart attack can be characterized by chest pain, often a dull heaviness in the chest, but it's not the only symptom. Any pain in the upper part of the body, including the arms, the neck, the jaw, the upper abdomen and sometimes the back may be signs. Women are more likely to have symptoms other than chest pain; often they feel nauseated, profound fatigue, shortness of breath or lightheadedness, and not the typical chest heaviness radiating down the left arm that men typically have.

What factors might put me at risk?

The big ones are smoking, elevated LDL (bad) cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. Also, obesity, poor diet and physical inactivity can increase risk. Family history plays a significant role, especially if heart attack occurred at a relatively young age. It's important to remember there are things you can do to modify your risk factors.

What if I think I'm having a heart attack, but I'm not sure?

Call 911 right away. The outcome after a heart attack is directly related to how quickly you get to the hospital. Having access to a hospital with a team approach to managing a heart attack is very important. GW University Hospital has a very refined mechanism in place to move patients quickly to the cath lab to open blocked vessels that cause a heart attack.

What other specialty cardiac care does GW Hospital provide?

Within the comprehensive GW Heart program, we see a number of patients with heart failure, and the hospital now offers a program to treat patients with left ventricular assisted device (LVAD) technology. The hospital also has a very successful program for transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). These are two examples of advanced care that can meaningfully improve patients' lives. ■

WOMEN AND HEART DISEASE

Heart disease does not discriminate based on gender. One in three women will die from cardiovascular disease, according to the American Heart Association®. Also, heart attacks are increasingly occurring in younger people, especially women, according to new research.*

Talk with your doctor about your risks and how to stay healthy. For help finding a doctor, visit gwhospital.com/find.

*American Heart Association



Back to his full life

thanks to innovative cancer treatment



Joel Hinzman with his wife, Jennifer, and their daughter.



Arjun Joshi, MD, FACS, FRCS(C)



Robert Siegel, MD

Joel Hinzman is a busy dad, husband and lobbyist who never expected to be diagnosed with tonsil cancer at age 46. The first sign of a problem was swelling on the left side of his neck that got worse and more painful, despite taking antibiotics. In seeking cancer treatment, one option that is part of a clinical study at GW Hospital stood out, based on Joel's research. "It looked like it had great long-term outcomes and the best chance for minimum side effects over the long term," he says. Maintaining his quality of life was important to him,

and he wanted to enjoy healthy oral functioning when his treatment was done.

Game-changing care. The type of cancer Joel had was associated with the human papillomavirus (HPV). Traditionally, treatment in these cases has involved chemotherapy and radiation, says Director of Head and Neck Oncologic and Microvascular Reconstructive Surgery Arjun Joshi, MD, FACS, FRCS(C). However, patients in the clinical study receive chemotherapy and then robotic surgery, avoiding radiation and its potential lifelong side effects, such as dry mouth, changes in taste, dental disease and others.

Within 48 hours of his first dose of chemotherapy, Joel noticed that the tumor on his neck was significantly smaller. By the end of the third treatment, the cancer

was hard to find. He then underwent surgery to remove what tumor remained at the tonsil and in the lymph nodes in his neck. Pathology showed that the tumor at both sites had disappeared. He remains cancer-free more than two years after surgery. Also, he has no problems with taste or swallowing, and is grateful to have his normal oral functioning intact. "I had great care at GW Hospital and as an outpatient," he says of his treatment led by Dr. Joshi and medical oncologist Robert Siegel, MD, Director of the Clinical Cancer Center. "I appreciated the fact that I was at a teaching hospital, with great residents coming in and checking on me regularly."

Dr. Joshi says the clinical study is providing key evidence on a way to provide treatment with minimal side effects. "GW Hospital is at the forefront of changing the way we treat these HPV-related oropharyngeal cancers," he says. ■

Learn more at gwhospital.com/cancercenter.

To treat head and neck cancers, GW Hospital offers the Medrobotics Flex® Robotic System.

This innovative technology is designed to navigate the body's twists and turns and can provide a compelling resource for treating other conditions as well.

DID YOU KNOW it is estimated that about 3,400 new cases of HPV-associated oropharyngeal cancers are diagnosed in women and about 14,800 are diagnosed in men each year in the U.S.?^{*}

^{*}cdc.gov/cancer/hpv/statistics/headneck.htm



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

900 23rd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 322
PONTIAC, IL

U.S. News & World Report has recognized the George Washington University Hospital (GW Hospital) as one of the **Best Hospitals** in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region for 2019-2020, ranking it among the top 10 percent of hospitals in the area. GW Hospital achieved fifth place out of more than 50 hospitals in the region, which includes facilities in D.C. along with parts of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia.



U.S. News & World Report has rated GW Hospital as **“high performing”** in five specialty areas for 2019-2020, including:



“High Performing” represents hospitals rated in the top 10% for this area of care and recognizes specialties where the facility performed significantly better than the national average. Fewer than a third of all U.S. hospitals received any high-performing rating.

**Connect
WITH US!**

Find us on

English: gwhospital.com | Spanish: gwhospital.com/es
202-715-4000

**HEALTH NEWS FROM THE GEORGE WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL**

Kimberly Russo
Chief Executive Officer/
Managing Director

Christine Searight
Director, Marketing and
Business Development

Bruno Petinaux, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Courtney Clarke
Marketing Manager

Information in *Health News* comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health please contact your healthcare provider. Models may be used in photos or illustrations. Any opinion expressed by an author whose article appears in this publication is solely the opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the views of the George Washington University Hospital or Universal Health Services, Inc. Physicians are on the medical staff of the George Washington University Hospital, but, with limited exceptions, are not employees or agents of the George Washington University Hospital. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the non-discrimination notice, visit our website. ©2019. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.