

# MARYLAND'S

## HEALTH MATTERS



COVER STORY

### PUT YOUR HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE

PAGE 6

#### FALL 2024

**WHY LIFESTYLE  
CHOICES MATTER  
FOR YOUR  
HEALTH**

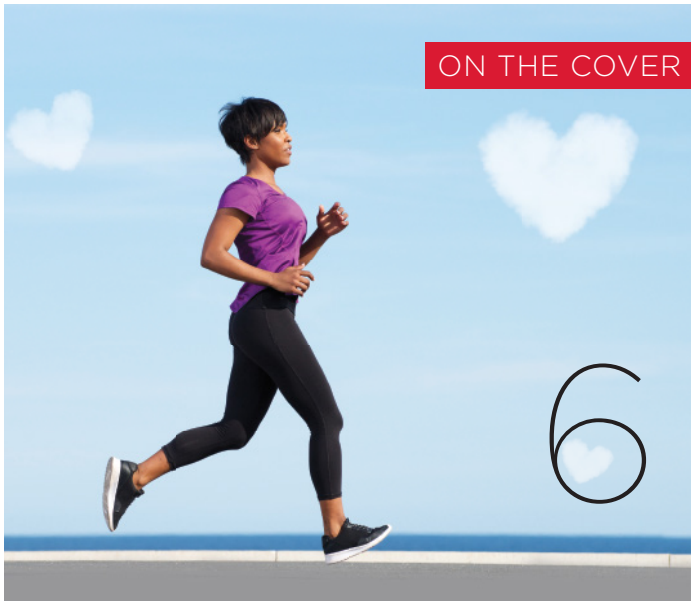
PAGE 8

**ACADEMIC MEDICINE AT WORK**  
LIVING DONOR CHAMPIONS:  
HOW POOL TOURNAMENT  
RIVALS BECAME KIDNEY  
BUDDIES FOR LIFE

PAGE 10



UNIVERSITY  
of MARYLAND  
MEDICAL  
SYSTEM



**PUT YOUR HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE**  
 High blood pressure can lead to heart disease, the No. 1 health danger for women. Let the women's health and cardiac specialists at UMMC Midtown Campus help you manage your heart health.



# 8

## HEALTHIER HABITS, LONGER LIFE

Making healthy changes can make a big difference to your overall health.

# 10

## ACADEMIC MEDICINE AT WORK:

An Answered Prayer, Right on Cue—When James Harris Jr. needed a kidney transplant, his one-time pool tournament rival Russ Redhead stepped up to be his living donor.



## STAY CONNECTED WITH UMMC MIDTOWN CAMPUS

**BERT O'MALLEY, MD**  
 President and CEO  
 University of Maryland Medical Center

*Maryland's Health Matters* is published by the Corporate Communications & Marketing office at UMMC Midtown Campus. This publication is not intended to provide professional medical advice. It is to provide general health and wellness information.

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### WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please send us your comments, information requests or change of address to:

**[midtown\\_communications@umm.edu](mailto:midtown_communications@umm.edu)**; or  
 UMMC Midtown Campus, c/o Marketing,

827 Linden Ave., Baltimore, MD 21201; or call **410-225-8000**.

# Exceeding Community

## HEALTH CARE NEEDS

EXCITING THINGS ARE  
HAPPENING AT UMMC  
MIDTOWN CAMPUS.



**THE TEAM AT UMMC Midtown Campus** always strives to make improvements, whether by enhancing access to services through new locations and expanded hours or working toward new professional certifications. Throughout 2024, several key changes have taken place.

### UMMC MIDTOWN CAMPUS'S FIRST MAGNET RECOGNITION

In addition to the UMMC Downtown Campus's fourth consecutive Magnet designation, UMMC Midtown Campus received this honor from the American Nurses Credentialing Center for the first time in 2024.

"Achieving this recognition means that we exemplify the highest standards of care for nursing," said Karen Doyle, DNP, MBA, senior vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer at UMMC. "We had to exceed the national benchmark for two entire years to achieve this designation."

UMMC is one of only nine organizations in the state of Maryland to earn Magnet recognition, a distinction achieved by fewer than 10% of hospitals nationwide.

"Patients and family members can feel very secure that they're receiving the highest level of care from extremely qualified and talented nurses," Doyle said. "Because of our strong interdisciplinary relationships, this designation also means all disciplines at our Downtown and Midtown campuses are dedicated to excellence."

### NEW INFUSION SUITE LOCATION

UMMS's second infusion suite opened in the Midtown Outpatient Tower in July. The first opened in summer of 2023 at UMMC Downtown Campus, and several more are planned over the next few years.

"The goal is to have five or six infusion suites dotted throughout the state of Maryland so that the majority of our patients are within a 20-minute drive of an infusion setting," said Chris White, senior director for infusion services at UMMC. "This will improve access to services by promoting a choice for patients seeking infusions in their home or onsite and provide convenience for patients with chronic diseases who receive infusions."

The new infusion suite offers infused medications and injection medications, along with routine lab draws. At the infusion suite, patients receive the same high standard of care as they would in the hospital, but often at a lower cost and in a more accessible setting.

### EXPANDED PHARMACY HOURS

To help fill a need in the community, the UMMC Pharmacy at Midtown recently expanded its weekend hours.

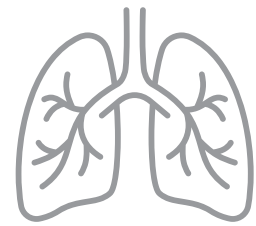
"After the recent closure of a chain drug store next to our campus, the community lost access to pharmacy services during certain times," said Ifeanyi G. Egbunike-Chukwuma, PharmD, BCPS, director of pharmacy services at UMMC Midtown Campus. "We wanted to ensure patients can receive prescription medications upon discharge from the hospital or emergency room."

The new hours are 10am to 6pm Saturday and Sunday, as well as 8:30am to 6pm Monday through Friday.



To learn more about pharmacy services, visit [umms.org/ummc/locations/midtown-pharmacy](https://umms.org/ummc/locations/midtown-pharmacy).

# Protect Your Family from



# PNEUMONIA

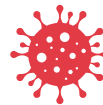
LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS SERIOUS LUNG INFECTION AND HOW TO AVOID IT.

## WHAT IS PNEUMONIA AND HOW DO YOU GET IT?

**Pneumonia**—an infection caused by viruses, bacteria or fungi:

- Causes inflammation and fluid buildup in the tiny branches of the lungs
- Prevents those areas from getting oxygen into your bloodstream
- Leads to coughing, shortness of breath and other symptoms

**Pneumonia can be contagious.** The most common way you can get pneumonia is by inhaling droplets from an infected person when they sneeze or cough. You can also get infected by touching a surface with pneumonia-causing germs and then touching your face.



## WHAT ARE COMMON SYMPTOMS?

In addition to symptoms such as coughing and chest pain, watch for:

- Chills
- Fatigue
- Fever
- Low appetite
- Reduced energy
- Shortness of breath



## GIVE PNEUMONIA YOUR BEST SHOT

Flu is the leading cause of viral pneumonia for all ages, but pneumococcus is the primary source of severe pneumonia in older adults. Staying up to date on adult vaccines, including pneumococcal, flu, and RSV, is one of the best preventive steps you can take. Vaccination can't prevent all pneumonia infections but can significantly reduce their severity.

## WHO IS MOST AT RISK TO GET PNEUMONIA?

Anyone can get pneumonia, but the following groups are the most vulnerable:

- Children younger than **2 years** old
- **Adults 65 years** old and older
- People with some **chronic illnesses** like COPD, diabetes or heart disease
- People who **smoke**

### Don't take pneumonia lightly.

It's highly treatable, but for some people who are high risk, it can lead to severe symptoms, hospitalization and even death. See your primary care provider as soon as possible, especially if you're in a high-risk group.

## FOR ADDITIONAL PROTECTION:

- Wash your hands often
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and other heart-healthy and immune system-boosting foods
- Exercise regularly to strengthen your immune system
- Get at least seven hours of sleep each night
- Kick the habit if you smoke



Find a primary care practice near you at [umms.org/health-services/primary-care](https://umms.org/health-services/primary-care).



## COOLER WEATHER? NO PROBLEM

FOLLOW THESE TIPS  
TO STAY ACTIVE IN AUTUMN.

**WHEN TEMPERATURES START** to dip, it's easy to lose your motivation to stick to your outdoor exercise routine. Being active year-round not only strengthens your heart, but it also helps you maintain a healthy weight, have better mental health and reduce your risk of diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

### EMBRACING AUTUMN

If you prefer to get your exercise outdoors instead of at the gym or in your living room, follow these tips when fall days get chilly:

- **Dress in layers.** Try sportswear made from moisture-wicking material for the first layer, followed by fleece and a thin waterproof layer.
- **Pick activities that keep you warm.** Walking, jogging and raking leaves are good autumn activities.
- **Don't forget the water.** Even when the weather is cool, it's important to stay hydrated while exercising.

Remember, heading outside after the summer heat has passed comes with benefits: The humidity is gone, which means you might be able to get in some extra minutes of exercise—and burn more calories.

Check with your provider about what kind of exercise is best for you. Find a primary care provider at [ummidtown.org/primarycare](http://ummidtown.org/primarycare).



# DEBUNKING Sugary Myths

GET THE REAL SCOOP ON SWEETS.



Griselda Funn

**SUGAR HAS GOTTEN** a bad rap in recent years, but don't believe everything you hear—including these two popular myths.

### 1. ALL SUGAR IS BAD FOR YOU

In fact, sugar is necessary for your body to function properly.

"Your body processes carbohydrates from food and turns them into glucose, which your cells pull from the bloodstream and use for fuel," said Griselda Funn, a certified community health worker at University of Maryland Medical Center. "You don't want to remove all sugar from your diet, because you will miss out on important nutrients found in foods like fruits, whole grains and dairy."

### 2. EATING TOO MUCH SUGAR CAUSES DIABETES

This is false, as sugar does not directly lead to diabetes.

"However, there is a link between obesity and Type 2 diabetes," Funn said. "Consuming too much added sugar can contribute to weight gain and indirectly increase your risk."

**The bottom line?** Choose whole foods that contain natural sugar and avoid foods with high amounts of added sugar, which contribute to health problems.

"You don't need to cut out sweet treats altogether," Funn said, "but gradually cutting back on added sugar can make a big difference for your health."



Learn about the weight management program at UMMC Midtown Campus at [ummidtown.org/weight](http://ummidtown.org/weight).



# Put Your Heart **IN THE RIGHT PLACE**

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE CAN LEAD TO HEART DISEASE, THE NO. 1 HEALTH DANGER FOR WOMEN. LET THE WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CARDIAC SPECIALISTS AT UMMC MIDTOWN CAMPUS HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR HEART HEALTH.



## **ONE STOP FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH**

The Midtown Outpatient Tower offers multiple specialties in one location, including cardiology and women's health. Specialists here can more easily take a team approach to care, and patients have the convenience of seeing more than one doctor in the same visit. Women with cardiology concerns can see heart specialists and women's health providers without driving to multiple locations.

To learn more or make an appointment visit [ummidtown.org/outpatienttower](http://ummidtown.org/outpatienttower).

**HEART DISEASE IS** the leading cause of death for women in the U.S. The encouraging news is that you have much more control over your cardiovascular health than you might realize, as most cardiovascular deaths can be prevented. By managing your blood pressure, you are taking a big step toward caring for your heart.

## UNIQUE RISKS FOR WOMEN

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a major risk factor for developing heart disease. A common misconception is that high blood pressure is primarily a men's health issue, but nearly 50% of adults who have hypertension are women.

Why is this concerning? When you have high blood pressure, your heart must work harder than usual to support the functions of your body. Without treatment, it can damage arteries and lead to heart attack, heart failure or stroke, as well as other conditions like kidney failure and eye damage.

Anyone can develop high blood pressure, and many risk factors apply to both men and women, including:

- **Age**—As you get older, your risk for hypertension increases.
- **Family history**—High blood pressure can run in families, so if you have a close relative with the condition, you are at higher risk.
- **Lifestyle**—Unhealthy habits, such as eating foods high in sodium, drinking too much caffeine or alcohol, smoking, and not getting enough exercise or sleep can lead to high blood pressure.
- **Other health conditions**—Diabetes, chronic kidney disease, thyroid disease and other conditions can cause high blood pressure.
- **Stress**—Having high levels of stress can lead to higher blood pressure.
- **Weight**—Being overweight or obese puts strain on your heart and circulatory system.

Women also have unique risk factors. Being pregnant, using certain types of birth control and going through menopause can all contribute to developing high blood pressure.

## KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Because hypertension often has no symptoms, it is sometimes called the “silent killer,” as people don't know they have it. That's why monitoring your blood pressure is so important.

Blood pressure is measured by two numbers. The top number is your systolic blood pressure, which measures pressure in the arteries during heart beats. The bottom number is the diastolic blood pressure, which measures the pressure in the arteries between your heart's beats. Your blood pressure fluctuates throughout the day according to factors like stress level, posture, exercise and sleep.

In general, a healthy blood pressure is less than 120/80 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg).

High blood pressure levels are divided into several categories:

- **Elevated:** 120–129 systolic; less than 80 diastolic
- **Hypertension Stage 1:** 130–139 systolic or 80–89 diastolic
- **Hypertension Stage 2:** 140 or higher systolic or 90 or higher diastolic
- **Hypertensive crisis:** Higher than 180 and/or higher than 120 diastolic

All adults should have blood pressure checked at least once per year. If you are at high risk or if you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, your doctor might recommend getting a home blood pressure monitor. Checking your blood pressure periodically at home can let you know whether your numbers are in the healthy range, as well as give your doctor an idea of how well medication or lifestyle changes are working.

## LOWERING BLOOD PRESSURE NATURALLY

If you have high blood pressure, or if you are at higher risk for developing it, your doctor may recommend healthy lifestyle changes. These include:

- Becoming more active, aiming to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every week while also engaging in muscle-building activities at least twice each week
- Eating a healthy diet, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean protein and healthy fats, as well as limiting sodium, added sugars and unhealthy fats
- Limiting alcohol intake to one drink per day for women (two drinks per day for men)
- Losing weight if you are overweight
- Managing stress by using relaxation and other techniques
- Quitting smoking
- Taking all medications as directed, including those for high blood pressure and other health conditions such as diabetes

Even if your blood pressure is in the healthy range, it's important to follow these healthy lifestyle tips to help prevent high blood pressure as you get older.



Questions about how to keep your blood pressure in check? Call **410-225-8301** to make an appointment with one of our cardiologists or visit [ummidtown.org/heart](http://ummidtown.org/heart).

# HEALTHIER HABITS, LONGER LIFE

MAKING HEALTHY  
CHANGES CAN  
**MAKE A BIG  
DIFFERENCE** TO  
YOUR OVERALL  
HEALTH.

**DOES YOUR LIFESTYLE** really make a difference when it comes to preventing conditions like diabetes and heart disease?

The answer is yes. In fact, researchers from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that people with healthy lifestyles can live up to 14 years longer. Making positive changes to your habits can help pave the way for a longer, healthier life.

## REACHING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Being overweight or having obesity can contribute to many different health conditions, including heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, kidney disease and other issues.

“Obesity is actually a chronic disease on its own,” said Sophia Ali, MD, endocrinologist and assistant professor at University of Maryland School of Medicine. “Instead of waiting until a patient has a complication of obesity, like diabetes, we can take an earlier approach and treat obesity as a disease.”

At the Weight Management Program located at UMMC Midtown Campus, an experienced team of endocrinologists, nutritionists, behavioral health specialists and diabetes educators collaborates to develop a personalized plan to help you learn how to lose weight and maintain your weight loss in a way that’s right for you.

“Seeing a provider who is specialized in weight loss can set you up for success,” Dr. Ali said. “We can address underlying issues and develop a treatment strategy.”

## GETTING TREATMENT FOR SMOKING

You probably know that smoking cigarettes is the leading cause of lung cancer. Smoking poses a risk for a host of other health conditions as well, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart attack, stroke and many other types of cancer.

At the Midtown Campus Tobacco Health Practice, a multidisciplinary team develops customized treatment plans to help patients stop smoking in a way that works best for them.

“If you simply tell people to stop smoking or use the word ‘quit,’ it is often nearly impossible for them,” said Janaki Deepak, MD, associate professor of critical care medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and director of the Tobacco Health Practice. “We talk to patients about the biology of nicotine addiction and how it requires treatment to change the pathways in the brain.”



Call **410-328-8141** to set up an appointment with the Tobacco Health Practice or **443-682-6800** for the Weight Loss and Management program.



## QUICK TIPS FOR GOOD HEALTH

- Eat nutritious food like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy, and limit added sugar, salt and unhealthy fats.
- Exercise for at least 150 minutes at a moderate intensity level every week.
- Get 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep per night.



# Leave No Stone UNTURNED

WITH THE RIGHT LIFESTYLE CHANGES, YOU CAN  
PREVENT KIDNEY STONES.

**IN RECENT DECADES**, the rate of people experiencing kidney stones has increased around the globe. In the U.S., about 10% of the population will have at least one kidney stone in their lifetime. While many of these stones will pass without you noticing, others will cause extreme pain. Each time you have a kidney stone, it increases your risk for it to happen again. However, for many people, kidney stones are preventable with the right lifestyle choices.

## WHAT CAUSES KIDNEY STONES?

The most common reasons people develop kidney stones include:

- **Poor hydration.** Not drinking enough fluids, especially water, can lead to kidney stones.
- **Excess sweating.** If you regularly sweat a lot due to working in the heat or intense exercise, your body may produce less urine, trapping stone-forming minerals in the kidneys.
- **High-sodium diets.** Although most kidney stones contain calcium, it's not the calcium in your diet that causes them. Too much salt prevents your body from absorbing and secreting calcium like it should.

- **Obesity.** If you are overweight, you are more likely to develop kidney stones.
- **Genetics.** A family history of kidney stones increases your risk. Certain medical conditions, such as Crohn's disease, and some medications can also increase your risk for kidney stones. Your primary care provider can tell you if you are at risk.

## HOW TO PREVENT KIDNEY STONES

What you need to do to prevent kidney stones will depend on the type of stones you have had in the past and their likely causes. While not all stones may be preventable, you can often prevent recurrence with lifestyle modifications such as:

- Avoiding food and drinks with high-fructose corn syrup
  - Drinking around 100 ounces of water daily
  - Eating a low-sodium diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables
  - Eating less meat
  - Limiting alcohol consumption
- Your doctor can help you determine which changes can help and whether you might need medications to help prevent kidney stones.



## KIDS AND KIDNEY STONES

Did you know kids as young as 5 can develop kidney stones? Rates of kidney stones in kids have jumped in recent years. Unlike in adults, girls are more likely to develop stones than boys.

Dehydration and salty foods are thought to be the two main causes of pediatric kidney stones. To limit their risk, make sure your kids drink plenty of water and limit salty sports drinks and snack foods.



If you're experiencing problems with kidney stones, a University of Maryland Medical System urologist can help. Learn more at [umm.edu/urology](http://umm.edu/urology).



*An Answered Prayer,*

# RIGHT ON CUE

WHEN JAMES HARRIS JR. NEEDED A KIDNEY TRANSPLANT, HIS ONE-TIME POOL TOURNAMENT RIVAL RUSS REDHEAD STEPPED UP TO BE HIS LIVING DONOR.

**A KIDNEY TRANSPLANT** was Harris' last option. Denise Epps-Harris, his wife, was his champion and, thankfully, a casual conversation at a pool tournament in November 2022 led to the break Harris desperately needed. Harris, an avid pool player, struggled with end-stage kidney disease and waited for a deceased donor two years on the national waitlist. None of Harris' family members were a match to be a living kidney donor, the most promising path forward.

In that moment of need, Epps-Harris encountered Russ Redhead, a Pennsylvania pool player who, years earlier, railed against Harris—and later apologized—after losing to him in a high-stakes tournament. During her conversation with Redhead, Epps-Harris, who works at University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC), mentioned her husband needed a kidney.

“Russ started asking me all these questions, and I just thought he was being curious,” Epps-Harris said. “And then he said, ‘I’ll do it.’ I said, ‘Do what?’ He responded, ‘I’ll be a donor.’ I started crying in the middle of the pool hall. He just gave me a hug and said, ‘It’s OK.’”

## THE GREATEST GIFT

As of March 2024, more than 89,000 people in the U.S. await a kidney from a deceased donor, according to the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network. Most wait three to five years, the American Kidney Fund reported, and some may die before receiving an organ. Living donation offers another option—and more reason to hope.

Although most humans come into the world with two kidneys, the body can function perfectly well with just one, which makes living donation possible. Typically, living donors either direct their donated organ to go to a specific recipient, such as a friend or family member, or a stranger based on medical need. Living donors must be an adult in good health and have a blood type compatible with the recipient.

UMMC, the academic medical center of University of Maryland Medical System, hosts the region's largest kidney transplant program, where around one-third of transplanted kidneys are living donations. Potential living donors complete a thorough evaluation process that includes meeting with a transplant surgeon, a transplant nephrologist and a nurse coordinator to learn more about the donation process. Most candidates learn whether they're approved to be a living donor within a week.

For Redhead, 42, the decision to be evaluated as a potential donor for Harris, 54, was “the right thing to do” and a manifestation of his long-held values.

“The way I was raised is that you put good out into the world, and it restores a little bit of hope in other people,” Redhead said. “No matter how small or big an impact you could have on someone, the more hope you put out in the world, hopefully, the world catches on.”

## ON THE SAME TEAM

In late 2023, following an extensive evaluation, Redhead learned he was a good match for Harris and eligible to donate. For Epps-Harris, who calls Redhead her “angel,” it represented the culmination of years of advocating for her husband as a UMMC Living Donor Transplant Champion. Champions can help speed the process of finding a living donor by sharing their loved one's story and spreading the word about their need for a new organ.

On Feb. 8, 2024, after spending the previous evening playing pool together in Harris' basement, Harris and Redhead shared a fist bump before their respective surgeries. Then, in an operating room, a transplant surgeon, controlling a surgical robot from a console, removed one of Redhead's kidneys using a minimally invasive technique. Harris reflected on Redhead's generosity moments before his surgery.

“I don't know how you thank someone for doing something like that,” Harris said. “I don't think he realizes how much it means to me to have a life back.”

With the kidney in a sterile bag, a physician delivered it to a different operating room, where a second team transplanted it into Harris.

The next day dawned as the first day of the rest of Harris' life. Both patients—old competitors now forever linked by an act of kindness—took a walk down a hospital hallway and relived old pool matches.

## LIFE, ENERGIZED

Harris followed up with his nephrologist at weekly clinic visits for the first month after the transplant before transitioning to monthly appointments. Before surgery, his need for frequent dialysis treatments led him to quit his job as a truck driver and sapped his energy. Now, he feels “tremendous” compared with how he felt before receiving a new kidney.

“I have much more energy and much less stress not having to deal with dialysis,” Harris said. “I was restricted to 32 ounces of fluid [per day] prior to the transplant. Now, I can drink as much as I want.”

With no restrictions on how much he can drink, Harris enjoys frequent milkshakes—one of the small joys the kidney transplant made possible.

“I can tell he's just content with his life,” Epps-Harris said of her husband. “It's a good sight to see.”



Looking for an expert who can help you figure out the path forward after a kidney disease diagnosis? Find a nephrologist by visiting [umms.org/find-a-doctor](https://umms.org/find-a-doctor).



## CELEBRATING PRICELESS GIFTS AND SELFLESS GIVERS

Donating an organ is an extraordinary act of generosity worth celebrating. Across University of Maryland Medical System, hospitals support and recognize organ donors in a variety of ways, including:

- Connecting potential organ donors and their families with Infinite Legacy—an organ procurement organization serving the DMV area—to assess organ systems for donation potential
- Holding flag-raising ceremonies and educational programs—often in partnership with Infinite Legacy—for National Donate Life Month each April
- Honoring organ donors with special visual displays
- Hosting honor walks for organ donors and their families on the day of organ procurement
- Procuring donor organs

Thank you to the organ donors who give hope and new life to recipients and to the clinicians and staff who help make the process possible.

Do you have a loved one in need of a kidney or liver transplant? Raise awareness of their story and help them find a living donor by becoming a University of Maryland Medical Center Living Donor Transplant Champion. For more information, visit [umm.edu/LDChampion](http://umm.edu/LDChampion).

## THE FACTS ABOUT

# CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

ARE YOU AT RISK FOR THIS SERIOUS CONDITION?

**AROUND 37 MILLION** Americans have chronic kidney disease (CKD), but as many as 2 in 5 people with severe disease still don't know they have it.

"It's a very common problem, but not getting treatment can have serious consequences," said Songul Onder, MD, associate professor of medicine at University of Maryland School of Medicine and nephrologist at UMMC Midtown Campus. "If you have high blood pressure, diabetes, HIV or a family history of kidney disease, you are likely at risk for chronic kidney disease."

### PREVENTING AND MANAGING CKD

If you have risk factors for CKD, you can lower your risk by:

- Eating a low-sodium diet
- Getting plenty of exercise
- Keeping your blood sugar and blood pressure in a healthy range
- Maintaining a healthy weight

Regular visits with a primary care provider or nephrologist are also essential to monitor your kidney function.

"Once kidney disease is diagnosed, we try to get it under control with medication and lifestyle modifications," Dr. Onder said. "Early treatment can help prevent or delay the need for dialysis or transplant."



For more information about kidney health, visit [ummiddtown.org/nephrology](http://ummiddtown.org/nephrology).

Help Give the

# GIFT OF LIFE

WHEN SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT NEEDS A KIDNEY OR LIVER TRANSPLANT, YOU WANT TO DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO HELP.



## WHAT IS A LIVING DONOR CHAMPION?

Someone who supports another person who is seeking a living kidney or liver donor and who acts as a spokesperson on the organ recipient's behalf

## WHAT DOES A LIVING DONOR CHAMPION DO?

Helps find a donor by sharing the recipient's story as widely as possible and asking people to be evaluated as a possible living donor

Provides emotional support and encouragement to the recipient and motivates him or her to stay hopeful and focus on healthy habits

## WHO CAN BE A LIVING DONOR CHAMPION?

Anyone in the recipient's life, such as a family member, friend or coworker

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING A LIVING DONOR CHAMPION?

A living donor champion gets the word out, which increases the chance of the recipient finding a living donor quickly

By helping to find a living donor, the champion allows the recipient to focus on his or her health

To learn more about becoming a living donor champion, visit [umm.edu/LDChampion](http://umm.edu/LDChampion) and download University of Maryland Medical Center's Living Donor Transplant Champion Guide.

# UPCOMING

# Events



## FREE EXERCISE AND LINE DANCING CLASSES

We invite community members to join our free line dancing classes at the UMMC Midtown Campus. Sessions are open to both community members and UMMC team members. No registration is required.

**Location:** UMMC Midtown Campus, Outpatient Tower, Lower Level, 800 Linden Ave., Baltimore, Maryland, 21201

**Time:** The 1st Tuesday and 4th Thursday of each month from 5–6pm

**Parking:** The Midtown Outpatient Tower is attached to the Madison Street Garage.

For more information, contact the Midtown Campus Community Health Education Center (CHEC) at [ummidtown.org/CHEC](http://ummidtown.org/CHEC) or **443-552-2432**.

## WORLD AIDS DAY

The UMMC Midtown Campus will observe World AIDS Day by offering HIV testing and educational resources on Dec. 4 from 9am–2pm.

**Location:** Midtown Lobby and Community Health Education Center

## GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT

The UMMC Midtown Campus will host the Great American Smokeout on November 21, 2024, from 10am–2pm in the Midtown Outpatient Center Lobby at 800 Linden Ave. This event will provide participants with the resources, support and information they need to quit smoking.

## FREE BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

UMMC Midtown Campus offers free blood pressure screenings on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month from 9am–12pm in the Midtown Outpatient Center Lobby.

## TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAM

Starting October 29, 2024, the UMMC Midtown Campus will offer free tobacco cessation sessions. These virtual sessions will be held on Tuesdays, Oct. 29, Nov. 5, 12, 19, 26, Dec. 3, and 10, as well as on Thursday, Nov. 21, from 12–1pm. A link will be sent a few days before Oct. 29.

In addition to the virtual sessions, in-person sessions will be held on Wednesdays, Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13 and 20, as well as on Friday, Nov. 1, from 3:30–4:30pm. These will take place at the Outpatient Tower Lower Level, conference room.

We will provide evidence-based strategies to support individuals in quitting smoking, along with snacks, survival kits and raffle opportunities.

Registration is required.

**Registration:** Scan the code to register.

**Time:** The first virtual session is on Oct. 29 from 12–1pm, with additional sessions to be announced.



*Scan the Code!*

If you have any questions, please contact the CHEC at **443-552-2432**.

## SENIOR UNIVERSITY: FREE LUNCHTIME EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS FOR SENIORS 60+

Join us for free health screenings, community resources, guest speakers and lunchtime presentations on the following topics:

- Those Achy Joints: Oct. 22
- Holiday Expectations and Coping with Reality: Oct. 29
- Everything You Need to Know About Diabetes: Nov. 5

**Location:** UMMC Midtown Campus, Outpatient Tower, Lower Level, 800 Linden Ave., Baltimore, MD 21201

**Time:** 11am–1:30pm

**Registration:** Seating is limited, and registration is required. Please call **443-552-2432** for more information.



# PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

MICHAEL BERGER, DPM, PODIATRIST WITH THE UM REHABILITATION & ORTHOPAEDIC INSTITUTE AND CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

## CAN YOU SHARE YOUR BACKGROUND AND MEDICAL TRAINING WITH US?

Interestingly enough, I am returning to the University of Maryland Medical System after working as an OR nurse at UMMC. I attended undergrad at the University of Maryland, College Park, and completed my studies in Baltimore at the School of Nursing in 2007. Before starting podiatry school at Temple University, I worked in the General OR from 2007-2009. I completed my training at Temple in 2019. For the past five years, I led an amputation prevention program for the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. I returned to the University of Maryland in April of this year.

## WHAT ROLE DOES PREVENTIVE CARE PLAY IN YOUR PRACTICE?

Preventive care plays a large role in my practice, as it allows us to address potential complications before they occur. It's much easier to treat an issue before it becomes a wound than to deal with the long-term effects or complications afterward. It's also a great opportunity to talk with patients and get a better understanding of who they are.

## DESCRIBE YOUR APPROACH TO PATIENT CARE?

My approach to patient care is to treat everyone as if they're a member of my family. I sit down with each patient and explain the entire treatment plan, whether it's for outpatient surgery or a newly diagnosed diabetic coming in for an initial assessment.

## WHAT SURPRISING FACTORS OR HABITS CAN LEAD TO FOOT AND ANKLE ISSUES THAT PEOPLE USUALLY DON'T CONSIDER?

A surprising factor would be the education around vaping and e-cigarettes. Studies have shown that e-cigarettes and vaping, while often perceived as safer alternatives, can still negatively affect circulation in the legs. This can lead to impaired wound healing if a wound occurs.

## WHAT DEVELOPMENTS IN PODIATRY ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

There are two key developments:

- New wound healing products and synthetic skin substitutes that aid in the healing process.
- Innovations in minimally invasive procedures. We can now perform certain procedures without the need for traditional large incisions, resulting in less scarring and faster recovery times.

## HOW DOES PODIATRY HELP MANAGE CHRONIC CONDITIONS SUCH AS DIABETES?

Podiatry is part of a larger multidisciplinary team that helps treat individuals with chronic conditions. We work closely with vascular surgeons, endocrinologists, infectious disease specialists, and internal medicine providers, among others, to help patients regain function. Our care runs from conservative including diabetic risk assessments and routine care, up to surgical management including surgical offloading and diabetic limb salvage and as a last resort, amputations. All of these efforts are aimed at helping our patients return to function.



To schedule an appointment with a specialist at the UM Rehabilitation & Orthopaedic Institute, call **410-448-6400**.

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