

HOLY CROSS HEALTH

Spring/Summer 2021

*Two Days After
Robotic Gyn Cancer
Surgery, Faith
Walked Her Usual
10,000 Steps / 6*

Driving from Florida for
Robotic Colorectal Surgery / 4

Life-Changing Diabetes
Prevention / 8

Moving Life AheadSM

HC HOLY CROSS
HEALTH

A Member of Trinity Health

New & Noteworthy

Partnering with Our Community to Vaccinate the Most Vulnerable

The dedicated women and men of Holy Cross Health Network are working hard to ensure seniors and members of our communities hardest hit by COVID-19 are able to access the vaccine as doses become available. Together with faith-based communities, Montgomery and Prince George's counties, the Maryland National Guard, the Department of Aging, the Housing Opportunities Commission and our trusted community partners, we are decreasing barriers for those in need through bringing vaccine clinics on site to vulnerable communities, hosting vaccine clinics in Holy Cross Health facilities and reserving protected slots for those who lack Internet access. "Our advice is the same to everyone who has not yet gotten the vaccine," said Kathleen Williams, LCSW-C, director, Healthy Communities. "Don't give up. Keep looking. All approved vaccines are effective at helping prevent serious illness or death from this virus whose impact is unpredictable and can be life-threatening."



Leonard and Elfreda Massie received their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine at a clinic hosted by the Kingdom Fellowship AME Church (KFAME) in February. Together, Holy Cross Health and KFAME provided COVID-19 vaccinations to more than 100 community members that day.

Nationally Recognized for Quality and Safety



Holy Cross Hospital received the 2021 America's 100 Best Hospitals Award™ from Healthgrades. This distinction places Holy Cross Hospital in the top two percent of nearly 4,500 hospitals assessed nationwide for its consistent, year-over-year superior clinical performance as measured by Healthgrades. Healthgrades also recognized Holy Cross Hospital with the 2021 Obstetrics and Gynecology Excellence Award™ as well as the Labor and Delivery Excellence Award™.

CareFirst BlueCross Blue Shield designated Holy Cross Hospital as a Blue Distinction® Center for Bariatric Surgery and designated Holy Cross Hospital and Holy Cross Germantown Hospital as Blue Distinction® Centers+ (BDC+) for Maternity Care. These awards show our commitment to delivering the highest quality in patient safety and health outcomes.

Holy Cross Germantown Hospital earned an "A" for the Spring 2021 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade for its strong commitment to patient safety. Leapfrog assigns a letter grade of A, B, C, D or F to hospitals across the nation to rate a hospital's overall performance in keeping patients safe from preventable harm and medical errors.

These accomplishments represent hard work every day by everyone on the Holy Cross Health team — even more notable because they were achieved while navigating the continuing challenges of COVID-19.

A Message from Norvell V. Coots, MD

President and Chief Executive Officer,
Holy Cross Health

Contributing \$54 Million to Improve Our Community's Health

Holy Cross Health's 2020 Annual Report: Leading, Innovating, Serving Through a Time of Crisis highlights our steadfast commitment to care, safety, clinical



excellence, innovation and partnership during a year that challenged all of us in new and difficult ways. Together, we safely met the challenges of COVID-19 and invested \$54,778,629 in a variety of activities that benefit the most vulnerable in our community. This money helps fund charity care in our hospitals and community-based sites. We also help all members of our community achieve optimal health through community health programs, health professions training and research — all of which support our mission to be your most trusted health partner for life. To read the stories that illustrate these commitments, and our many milestones along the way, visit: HolyCrossHealth.org/CommunityReport.

New, Expanded Location for Health Center in Aspen Hill

In April the Holy Cross Health Center in Aspen Hill moved to a larger office so we can better serve you and your family. The new center features spacious patient and consultation rooms; a large conference room for classes, screenings and diabetes prevention and management programs (for when in-person programs resume); and a comfortable waiting area with four intake stations for rapid and efficient patient registration. For more information, visit HolyCrossHealth.org/AspenHill.

13415 Connecticut Ave, Suite 100
Silver Spring, MD 20906
Tel: 301-557-1950

Welcoming the Season of Hope

With the return of spring, the season that brings new growth and renewal, I am filled with hope as more and more community members receive the COVID-19 vaccine. I am optimistic as the Holy Cross Health team launches new ways to reach community residents, and partners with county and state agencies and faith-based communities to stem the tide of COVID-19 through vaccination clinics and impactful education outreach.



Holy Cross Health is here with compassion and expert care for the most difficult moments in a patient's life – and the most beautiful. From extending life through advanced robotic surgery to remove cancer or correcting a painful disease of the digestive system, to helping someone reverse the progress of a preventable disease such as diabetes so that they might celebrate life's most precious milestones with their children, our physicians and clinicians extend a tender and healing touch so that together we may continue to move towards a safer and healthier future.

It fills me with pride to see how the caring spirit that motivates all of us at Holy Cross Health inspires people like Xiomara Metcalfe to give back through donating to our Foundation. We are strengthened by the support we receive in so many different forms from our dynamic and diverse community.

The outside toll the pandemic has had on communities of color has shone the spotlight on the tremendous work that needs to be done to achieve equity in health care. As a member of Trinity Health, we are a leader in the national movement to achieve equal access to high-quality health care.

We look forward with renewed energy to partnering with you, where, when and how you need us most. We are committed to ensuring top experts across Holy Cross advance clinical care, participate in groundbreaking research and use the latest technologies to provide the highest quality of care and the best experience for our patients. We stand with you, committed to your best possible life.

For Scott, Driving 1,000 Miles for Colorectal Surgery

Was Worth It



After robotic surgery, Scott is no longer living in fear of having another diverticulitis attack.

When his third episode of diverticulitis in three months landed him in the hospital for five days in Palm Beach, FL, Scott Pollard knew surgery was probably in his future. Scott trusted the physician who



cared for him in Maryland, and reached back out to **Faisal Bhinder, MD**, the gastroenterologist who had managed his diverticulitis for six years when he was living in Rockville. After telehealth visits with Dr. Bhinder



and **Matthew Skancke, MD**, colorectal surgeon, Scott was so impressed he made the extraordinary decision to drive 1,000 miles to be treated by Dr. Skancke because of his expertise in robotic colorectal surgery.

What is diverticulitis? Diverticula are small, bulging pouches that can form in the lining of your digestive system, are common especially after age 40, and seldom cause problems. When one or more of the pouches becomes inflamed

or in some cases infected, that condition is called diverticulitis, symptoms of which can include abdominal pain and tenderness, low grade fever, loose stools, and bleeding with bowel movements.

“I never knew when another flare-up was going to happen and I would have to put my life on hold. When diverticulitis is severe, it feels like being kicked in the belly by a mule,” said Scott. “Often my pain was so bad that I couldn’t take walks or do simple tasks like going to the grocery store.”

When pouches become inflamed, they often can be treated with liquid or soft diets and antibiotics. But, as in Scott's case when chronic inflammation occurs, there is a risk of perforation or abscess, and surgery to remove the affected part of the colon is indicated. "My job is to treat patients non-surgically, but then optimize their care when they need surgery," said Dr. Bhinder. "We refer our patients to colorectal surgeons based on their clinical



outcomes, excellent patient interactions and, most important, for their expertise in robotic surgery. This is



why we work closely with Dr. Skancke and his partners **Bradley Bennett, MD**, and **Rami Makhoul, MD**."

"Dr. Skancke took a lot of time with me, not only talking about what to expect before and after surgery, but getting to know me," said Scott. "I could tell that he was not just a surgeon. He's a caring person, too. Dr. Skancke was the reason I decided to come back to Holy Cross for my surgery."

For someone like Scott who has multiple diverticulitis attacks, each episode can last a week or so, but the treatment and recovery can take up to two months for the inflammation to

get better. "If you keep having frequent attacks, you can't go to work or do things you want to do," said Dr. Skancke. "If ignored, diverticulitis can lead to prolonged inflammation, which is destructive."

"It's better to choose surgery for diverticulitis at a time when it's an elective procedure, rather than putting it off until it becomes an emergency," added Dr. Bhinder. "After recovery from surgery, we recommend having a colonoscopy to exclude colon cancer, which can mimic diverticulitis symptoms."

Right before his robotic colorectal surgery at Holy Cross Hospital, Scott recalled, "Dr. Skancke was very encouraging when he came in to talk to me. He was totally focused on making sure I knew what was going on and what my side effects might be — that meant a lot. In the operating room as I was drifting off, a nurse held my hand and said, 'Just relax. Everything is going to be okay.' At Holy Cross Hospital everyone worked diligently to make sure I was comfortable." (Presurgical screening at Holy Cross Health includes testing for COVID-19).

Dr. Skancke performed the operation using the *da Vinci*® XI robotic surgical system, the most advanced robotic



platform available for colorectal surgery. Robotic surgery is minimally invasive, which results in less pain and faster recovery time for patients. Scott had five incisions the size of a dime and one 3 to 4 cm incision. Dr. Skancke removed the thickened portions of the colon that were most symptomatic and then reattached the colon to the rectum, maintaining normal bowel functioning.

Scott spent two days in the hospital and continued to stay in the area for a week to meet with Dr. Skancke for post-surgery evaluation. Within a couple days of surgery, Scott was able to eat regular food. "Previously after an attack, it would be weeks of not eating solid food," said Scott. "Plus, I was living in fear, not knowing when another attack might come. I've been released from my fear, thanks to Dr. Skancke."

MEETING THE HEALTHCARE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Holy Cross Health is proactively meeting the needs of our community by recruiting highly skilled surgeons like Dr. Matthew Skancke. Affiliated with Holy Cross Health Partners, Dr. Skancke is a fellowship-trained colon and rectal surgeon with special expertise in using the *da Vinci*® XI robotic surgery system. He sees patients alongside our colorectal program director and team at Metro Colon and Rectal Surgery in Bethesda.

"I'm impressed with how progressive Holy Cross Health is, staying at the leading edge of surgical technology and expanding colorectal surgery care throughout our community," said Dr. Skancke.

Ninety-five percent of colorectal surgery at Holy Cross is performed robotically, and together, Holy Cross Hospital and Holy Cross Germantown Hospital provide access to robotic

surgery for individuals from Prince George's County through Montgomery County and into Frederick County, and are happy to serve anyone from the surrounding region.

"Patient care at both Holy Cross Germantown Hospital and Holy Cross Hospital is a true team effort," said Dr. Skancke. "That makes a big difference in providing easier surgical experiences and quality outcomes for our patients."

Through ongoing studies on community healthcare needs, Holy Cross Health identified a shortage of colorectal surgeons in Montgomery County. The addition of Dr. Skancke to our team is just one example of what Holy Cross is doing to make sure you have the care you need today — and in the future when we open our new Holy Cross Health Cancer Center in spring 2022.

Faith. Hope.

And Robotic

The warning signs of cancer can be as small as a spot of blood in bed. That should have been a wake-up call for Faith Skordinski, Germantown, as she wondered if it could be just a normal postmenopausal occurrence.



“Except for that one incidence of a small amount of bleeding, Faith had no symptoms,” said **Albert J. Steren, MD**, Gynecologic Oncology.

“But even the tiniest amount of bleeding in the menopausal age group needs evaluation. For women in this group, there should be no bleeding or spotting at all.”

Fortunately, Faith had always been proactive in her own health. She had regular routine checkups with her gynecologist and during her visit in 2018 she requested a sonogram. It came back clear, but showed two benign polyps in her uterus. Since it was nothing urgent, Faith waited until her next checkup and then decided to have the polyps removed. That changed everything.

During the procedure to remove the polyps, Faith’s gynecologist saw a suspicious spot, likely cancer, on the uterus. She immediately referred Faith to Dr. Steren at Holy Cross Hospital.

“The first time I met Dr. Steren I was really anxious and fearful,” said Faith. “He was very kind and supportive as he explained that the kind of cancer I had was very serious and would require aggressive treatment.”

Faith had uterine serous carcinoma — an uncommon form of endometrial cancer that typically arises in postmenopausal women. Luckily, the cancer was found very early when it was still in stage 1A. If Faith had not had the polyps removed, the cancer could have gone undetected until it was much more

advanced. “Serous cancer has a very high rate of recurrence and progression of disease. That is why, even though her cancer was found early, Faith needed very aggressive treatment, including surgery, chemotherapy and radiation,” said Dr. Steren.

The first phase of Faith’s treatment began with cancer staging procedures, including cancer removal, a complete hysterectomy to remove the uterus, ovaries and other surrounding structures, as well as lymph node dissection. “In the past this was a big operation with a large incision,” said Dr. Steren, who performed Faith’s surgery through five very small incisions using the *da Vinci*® Xi robot at Holy Cross Hospital. “The benefits of robotic surgery are less pain, less loss of blood and faster recovery for our patients.”

“Holy Cross Health’s robotic surgery program has taken us so far forward in the surgical care of women for almost all gynecologic surgeries, especially for uterine and early ovarian cancer. With advanced robotic technology, we can perform major surgery in a more precise, minimally invasive approach, enabling most women to go home the same day of their procedure,” said Dr. Steren.

“I was home by 8:30 p.m. the same day as my surgery and had no pain whatsoever,” said Faith. “The next morning I expected to be in pain, but I wasn’t. I never needed to take any prescription narcotics. It may have helped that I was in good shape. I’m conscientious about doing 10,000 steps a day and working out at a gym. The day after surgery I did 5,000 steps. The second day I was back to doing 10,000.”

“Because her recovery was faster, Faith was able to start cancer treatment much sooner – a critical benefit of robotic surgery,” said Dr. Steren. “After traditional open surgery, her recovery would have been longer and she would have had to wait six weeks or more before beginning treatment.”

Dr. Steren teamed with **Paul Thambi, MD**, Oncology, for Faith’s treatment plan, which consisted of six sessions of



chemotherapy, followed by three sessions of radiation therapy. She continues to see Dr. Steren and Dr. Thambi on a regular basis for follow-up and monitoring.

“In retrospect, I would never have imagined how smoothly the surgery would go or that I would feel so well,” said Faith, who remains cancer-free a year after completing her treatment. “I am so thankful to have the brilliant physicians, nurses and staff who put me at ease through the whole process.”



Holy Cross Health is recognized as a Center of Excellence in Minimally Invasive Gynecology (COEMIG).

The COEMIG designation recognizes surgeons and medical facilities that demonstrate an unparalleled commitment and ability to deliver the safest and highest quality minimally invasive medical care. “Holy Cross Health sets the standard and is a regional leader in providing minimally invasive gynecologic surgery to the residents of Montgomery and Prince George’s counties and beyond,” said Dr. Steren.

Surgery.



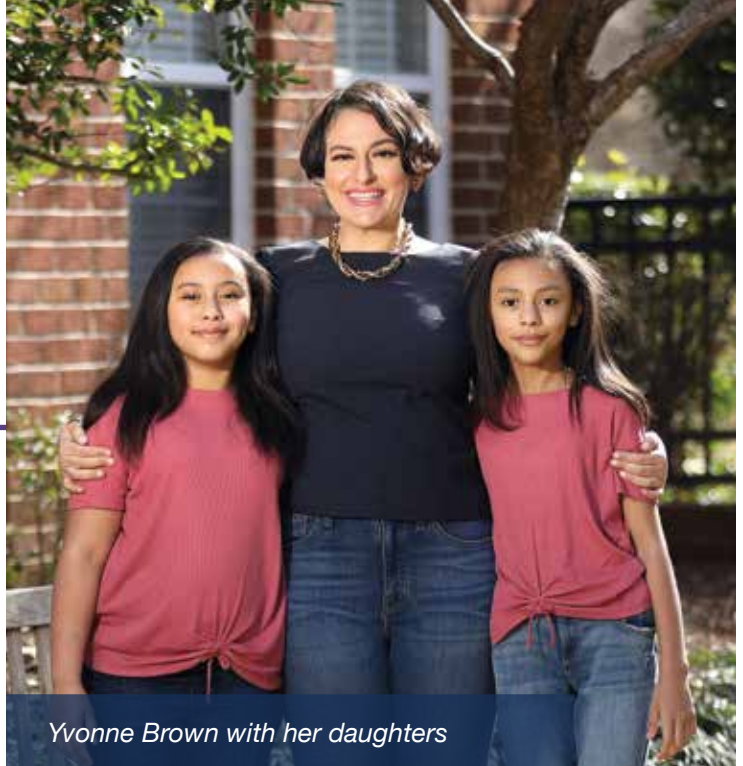
THE FUTURE OF ROBOTIC SURGERY IS AT HOLY CROSS HEALTH – NOW!

Holy Cross Health's commitment to the most advanced surgical techniques and technologies has made Holy Cross a regional hub for robotic thoracic, gynecologic, colorectal and bariatric surgery. As of April 14, our orthopedic surgeons at Holy Cross Hospital and Holy Cross Germantown Hospital are now equipped with the new ROSA® Knee System for robot-assisted total knee replacements. Continuous investments like this offer significant benefits to our patients and surgeons alike. Ongoing recruitment and training of more surgeons in our core specialties, as well as the addition of new specialties to our robotic surgical offerings, mean the ability to provide the highest quality surgical care so that our community members will be able to achieve their best quality of life now and long into the future.

Continuing to Expand Our Robotic Capabilities

- **Trumpf Medical TruSystem™ 7000dV Operating Room Table** designed for integrated motion with the *da Vinci*® Xi surgical robot for optimal access to the target anatomy for faster and more efficient procedures for our patients.
- **The Zimmer Biomet ROSA® Knee System** for total knee replacement offers less discomfort, less scarring, faster recovery times and optimal outcomes for each patient.
- Holy Cross Hospital was the first in Montgomery County to offer robotic surgery using the *da Vinci* surgical robot in 2008.
- In 2017, Holy Cross Germantown Hospital became the first community hospital in Montgomery County to offer robotic surgery using the latest, most advanced *da Vinci* Xi technology.

Yvonne Brown Has Never Been --- Healthier



Yvonne Brown with her daughters

“My mother had a long history of diabetes that led to heart failure, kidney dialysis and eventually a stroke. She died before she was 70 – that’s too young,” said Yvonne Brown, 43. “Over time, I saw how diabetes completely destroyed her health. I had been pre-diabetic for ten years and I vowed I wouldn’t go down that same path.”

Yvonne has two young daughters. “I want to live for me – and I want a higher quality of life for myself,” she said. In 2019, Yvonne made a positive decision to enroll in Holy Cross Health’s Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). DPP is a yearlong, lifestyle behavior modification program for non-diabetic or pre-diabetic overweight individuals at risk for developing type 2 diabetes (see page 10).

People tend to be more eager to participate in DPP when the recommendation comes from their healthcare professional. “DPP is an excellent resource that reinforces the advice I give to my patients about lowering their risk for diabetes,” said **Erik Rivera, MD**, senior lead physician,



Holy Cross Health Centers. “The program is taught by experienced instructors who are truly engaged in motivating patients to change their behavior.”

DPP provides education about diabetes combined with lots of practical advice for better nutrition, the role of exercise, stress management and problem solving. “Our class even did a field trip to the grocery store to help us learn to read nutrition labels and identify healthy foods,” said Yvonne.

“Ninety-five percent of obesity is the result of eating too much,” said Dr. Rivera. “Some people are aware they’re overeating; others might not do it intentionally. Changing the perception of what people understand about healthy diet and exercise is the core of the program. That’s why programs like DPP work.”

“Even during the pandemic, the program kept me motivated,” said Yvonne. She learned about portion control and had one-on-one consultations with the nutritionist. Yvonne walked a mile in place at home

by watching walking videos on the Internet. “We reported our weight every week. That weekly accountability kept me in check and helped me stick with my goals. By the time I completed the program, I had lost 100 pounds.”

Having a program that lasts a full year means extra time to encourage people to make meaningful changes. Some people might relapse, but there is time to get them motivated and back on track. “We know that people will lose weight if someone is watching,” said Dr. Rivera.

“I’m rewriting my future,” said Yvonne. “I was addicted to sugar and flour products and I had no concept of portion control. That all changed. Three months into the program I was no longer pre-diabetic.”

“We can treat diabetes with medication, but it may have side effects. Making changes to your diet and exercising regularly are a better choice,” said Dr. Rivera. “Permanent lifestyle changes can prevent or delay disease progression for years.”

“I used to be a plus-size model,” said Yvonne. “I was a happy plus-size person, but I wasn’t healthy. After taking the Diabetes Prevention Program, I’m healthier than I’ve ever been and it feels fantastic.”



WHAT IS PRE-DIABETES?

In pre-diabetes, blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but are not yet high enough to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. By losing 7 percent of your body weight and doing 30 minutes of regular exercise five days a week, you can lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. For more information, visit: HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-diabetes.

Giving Out of Gratitude

“Deciding to donate to support Holy Cross Health was very personal for me,” said Xiomara Metcalfe, Silver Spring. Between 2014 and 2018, Xiomara suffered three hemorrhagic strokes. Each time she received care at Holy Cross Hospital.

“At Holy Cross I found the kindnesses and mindfulness that made me appreciate the environment I was in,” said Xiomara. “It’s how everyone looked at me and, sometimes, held my hand. That might seem like little things, but I believe they helped me recover faster. I felt comforted.”

“While I was in the hospital, I was surrounded by people who cared and understood, and it was not just the doctors and nurses,” she said. “Even the man who came to clean the room and the person who brought the wheelchair seemed genuinely concerned about how I was. I have such an affection for all the people who work there.”

Holy Cross Health is committed to making high-quality medical care accessible to everyone. We provide a safety net for the uninsured and community members who are in financial need. “Organizations that give back are very important to me. Because Holy Cross is committed to giving back to our community, I am committed to helping them fulfill their mission,” said Xiomara. “And thanks to all the great care, I am fully recovered.”



Compassion. Hope. Resilience. Gratitude.

Ask our patients, clinicians, staff and volunteers and they will tell you these words sum up Holy Cross Health. More than any year before, 2020 challenged and changed all of us here at Holy Cross. But one thing remains the same – our commitment to high-quality, compassionate, and equitable care for everyone.

For nearly 60 years, we have provided unparalleled care in our community through our hospitals, first in Silver Spring, then in Germantown, and the Holy Cross Health Network, which operates primary care practices and affordable health centers offering a wide range of innovative, community-based health and wellness programs. Specialty care, home care and hospice services round out our high-quality and coordinated continuum of care that aims to improve health and move life ahead for people in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties.

Now, supported in part by the contributions of generous donors to the Holy Cross Health Foundation, we are poised to build the Holy Cross Health of the future. We invite you to join us in driving our mission forward as we make important

investments in our new outpatient Cancer Center, the renovation of the Holy Cross Hospital Labor & Delivery unit, and additional community initiatives to increase access to equitable health care.

For patients like Xiomara Metcalfe, who is featured here, giving back to Holy Cross is a way to show her gratitude for great care while making sure others have the same opportunity. She’s not alone. Patients and their families often wish to express their appreciation for the quality care and compassion they receive at Holy Cross Health. Please consider saying thank you by making a donation today.

Every generous donor helps transform the lives of all those cared for by Holy Cross Health. Gifts to the Foundation are investments in improving the health of our community through accessible and equitable care, new technologies and innovations, community health and wellness programs, and renovations and new construction.

Your donation makes a difference. To give, visit us online at [Giving.HolyCrossHealth.org](https://giving.holycrosshealth.org) or by calling (301) 557-GIVE (4483).

Take Time for Your Health with

Our All-Virtual Classes

Enjoy the same great instructors, programming and connections you love, all from the comfort of your home.

- ✓ Stay active with a fitness class.
- ✓ Attend a joint replacement info session.
- ✓ Participate in a support group.
- ✓ Get help to manage a chronic disease, including long-term complications from COVID-19.

To keep you and your family safe, all of our fitness classes, wellness and education sessions, support groups and events are currently virtual. Look for the orange V symbol (V). Many of our virtual classes are free.

It's easy to access virtual classes via Webex on your computer, tablet or phone. Once you have registered, you will receive an access link via email. For complete instructions on how to sign into your meeting, visit [HolyCrossHealth.org/classes-events](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/classes-events).

Class format, dates, instructors and fees are subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, visit [HolyCrossHealth.org/classes-events](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/classes-events).

Disease Prevention & Management

NEW COVID-19 RESOURCES

Go to the Holy Cross Health website, [HolyCrossHealth.org/coronavirus](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/coronavirus) for the latest information on COVID-19 including FAQs, scheduling vaccine appointments, testing, visitor policy and on-demand videos for fitness and resilience.

Register for a variety of classes for disease prevention and management, including post-COVID-19 issues: [HolyCrossHealth.org/classes-events](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/classes-events).


V Virtual Classes Online via Webex

For additional classes, more information or to register (unless noted otherwise), visit [HolyCrossHealth.org/classes-events](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/classes-events).

Diabetes Prevention Program Free

Location: V

This yearlong, lifestyle behavior modification program is for non-diabetic or pre-diabetic, overweight individuals at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. The program includes group classes, telephone support, access to a lifestyle coach, free exercise classes and more. To see if you qualify, call 301-557-1231. For more information, visit [HolyCrossHealth.org/diabetesprevention](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/diabetesprevention). Registrants are accepted on a rolling basis.

 **The Diabetes Prevention Program changed Yvonne's life — and it can change yours.**

See her story on page 8.

Diabetes Self-Management Education

Tuesdays, May 11 – June 8 or Aug. 3 – 31

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Location: V

Tuesdays, June 22 – July 20

Noon to 2 p.m.

Location: V

This five-week class series, taught by a registered nurse, helps you self-manage diabetes on a daily basis. Topics include: meal planning, blood glucose monitoring, understanding medications, physical activity and coping skills. Physician referral required. Covered by many insurance plans. To register, call 301-754-8200.

Living Well: Self-Management Workshop Free

Thursdays, May 6 – June 17

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Wednesdays, June 23 – Aug. 4

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mondays, Aug. 2 – Sept. 20

2 to 4:30 p.m.

Tuesdays, Aug. 17 – Sept. 28

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Location: 

Learn how to maximize your potential even when a long-term health condition may require you to alter your activities. This six-week program teaches adults self-management tools to live a healthy life with arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, Parkinson's disease, long-term complications from COVID-19 and other chronic conditions.

Living Well: Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop Free

Mondays, June 14 – July 26

6:30 to 9 p.m.

Tuesdays, June 29 – Aug. 10

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Wednesdays, Aug. 18 – Sept. 29

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Location: 


This six-week program helps people with chronic pain due to injury, fibromyalgia, post-stroke pain, neuropathic pain and other causes.

Living Well: Diabetes Self-Management Workshop Free

Thursdays, June 17 – July 29

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. / **Location:** 

Mondays, Aug. 9 – Sept. 27

6:30 to 9 p.m. / **Location:** 

Tuesdays, Aug. 17 – Sept. 28

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. / **Location:** 

This six-week workshop teaches you how to better manage your health and maintain an active lifestyle while living with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes.

Lung Health Essentials

Tuesdays & Thursdays,

June 15 – July 22

9:30 to 10:45 a.m.

Location:  / \$70

This six-week program includes supervised physical activity, ongoing education and peer support. If you have COPD, post COVID-19 complications or other chronic lung conditions, this program will help you improve your strength and endurance, as well as your overall lung health. Classes are held twice a week, and a health assessment and physician referral are required for participation. If you are interested, email Sarah McKechnie at mckecs@holycrosshealth.org for an intake assessment.



Facebook Live Event Free

OVERCOMING JOINT PAIN

May 26 at 1 p.m.

[FB.com/HolyCrossHospital](https://www.facebook.com/HolyCrossHospital)

If you're experiencing pain in your joints, engage with our orthopedic experts for a discussion about the causes of joint pain and your options for treatment, including advanced robotic surgery available at both Holy Cross hospitals. Learn how you can overcome joint pain and start doing the things you love again!

Panelists:



Zohair Alam, MD
Medical Director,
Joint Center



Laura Collins
Orthopedic Surgery
Program Coordinator

SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

June 9 at 1 p.m.

[FB.com/HolyCrossHospital](https://www.facebook.com/HolyCrossHospital)

Hear from Albert Steren, MD, Gynecologic Oncology, about important Women's Health topics including screening and treatments for gynecologic cancers. We'll also be discussing the benefits of minimally invasive and robotic surgery for gynecologic issues.

Panelist:



Albert Steren, MD
Medical Director,
Gynecologic Oncology

INNOVATIONS IN STROKE CARE

July 28 at 1 p.m.

[FB.com/HolyCrossHospital](https://www.facebook.com/HolyCrossHospital)

Knowing the signs of a stroke can save someone's life. Join our experts for an important discussion about stroke symptoms, risk factors, innovative medical and surgical treatments, and recovery. You'll also learn how the Holy Cross Stroke program is evolving to better serve the needs of our community.

Panelists:



David Herzig, MD
Neurosurgery



Sharon Harriston
Stroke Nurse Practitioner and
Stroke Program Coordinator

To register, to receive event reminders, to submit a question, or to receive the video after the live event, visit

Overcoming Joint Pain: [HolyCrossHealth.org/joint-live](https://www.HolyCrossHealth.org/joint-live)


Spotlight on Women's Health: [HolyCrossHealth.org/gyn-live](https://www.HolyCrossHealth.org/gyn-live)

Innovations in Stroke Care: [HolyCrossHealth.org/stroke-live](https://www.HolyCrossHealth.org/stroke-live)

Cancer Support

Cancer Education Series


Cancer: Thriving and Surviving Free
Wednesdays, Aug. 11 – Sept. 22

10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. / Location:  After a cancer diagnosis, learn how to adjust to a changed self and gain the confidence to self-manage cancer-related problems to promote recovery of well-being and successful transition to survivorship. This seven-week workshop is for individuals diagnosed with cancer to help them develop the tools to live a healthy and full life. Anyone living with cancer (newly diagnosed, in treatment or in remission) or providing care for someone with cancer is encouraged to attend.

Nutrition During and After Cancer Treatment

 Free


Tuesday, July 27

6 to 7 p.m. / Location: 

A well-balanced diet that includes nutritious foods is an important part of cancer treatment. Join us for an educational presentation on nutrition for cancer patients and survivors.

Grupo De Apoyo Para Latinas Con Cancer

 Gratis

El último miércoles de cada mes ( virtualmente).

6 to 8 p.m.

El grupo de apoyo se reúne mensualmente. Llame a Claudia Campos de Nueva Vida al 202-223-9100 para confirmar su participación.

Lymphedema Support Group

 Free

Saturday, July 24

10 a.m. to Noon / Location: 

Those with a lymphedema diagnosis and their caregivers, family and friends receive support and helpful resources. To register for your first meeting, call 301-754-7340.

Virtual Classes Online via Webex

For additional classes, more information or to register (unless noted otherwise), visit [HolyCrossHealth.org/classes-events](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/classes-events).

Information Sessions & Lectures

Surgical Weight Loss Information Meeting

 Free

Our in-person information sessions are temporarily paused due to COVID-19 precautions. Those interested in learning more may contact our bariatric surgeons. Visit: [HolyCrossHealth.org/bariatricsurgeryteam](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/bariatricsurgeryteam)

Thinking About Joint Replacement?

 Free

Mondays, May 3 & 17, June 7 & 21, July 19, Aug. 2 & 16

2 to 4 p.m. / Location: 

Tuesdays, May 4 & 18, June 1 & 22, July 6, Aug. 3 & 17

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. / Location: 

Our educational class prepares you for hip or knee replacement surgery and recovery with the opportunity to ask questions.

To view a pre-recorded version of this class, visit:

[HolyCrossHealth.org/preop-joint-class](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/preop-joint-class)

NEW Thinking About Spine Surgery?

 Free

Wednesday, May 5, June 2, July 7 or Aug. 4

2 to 4 p.m. / Location: 

Learn how to prepare for spine surgery and recovery, and ask your questions in our educational class.

To view a pre-recorded version of this class, visit:

[HolyCrossHealth.org/preop-spine-class](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/preop-spine-class)

Fitness

Gentle Yoga


Thursdays, May 27 – July 1 or July 8 – Aug. 19

6 to 7:15 p.m. / Location: 

6-week session \$35/7-week session \$40
This class is taught on the floor with modifications for people with movement limitations.

Guided Meditation/Yoga Nidra

Sundays, May 30 – July 4 or July 11 – Aug. 15

6 to 7 p.m. / Location: 

6-week session \$35

Help your body unwind and heal from deeply held stress. Beneficial for anxiety, PTSD, chronic pain, insomnia and more.

NEW Low Impact Gentle Workout Fusion

 Free

Mondays, May 3 – June 28 or July 5 – Aug. 30

6 to 6:55 p.m. / Location: 

For those seeking bariatric surgery, this class incorporates strength, cardio and stretching exercises specifically designed for a gentle, low-impact workout. Registration is limited to those with a referral from a Holy Cross Health-affiliated bariatric surgery practice.

Pilates

Wednesdays, May 5 – June 23

6:30 to 7:20 p.m. / Location: 

8-week session \$45

Improve flexibility, posture and core muscles using only a mat.

Yoga I

Mondays, May 17 – June 28 or July 5 – Aug. 16

6:15 to 7:30 p.m. / Location: 

Thursdays, May 27 – July 1 or July 8 – Aug. 19

9 to 10:15 a.m. / Location: 

6-week session \$35/7-week session \$40

This physically active, meditative class develops flexibility and strength.

Yoga II

Thursdays, May 27 – July 1 or July 8 – Aug. 19

7:30 to 8:45 p.m. / Location: 

6-week session \$35/7-week session \$40

For experienced yoga students or those with a minimum of 6 months of Yoga I.

Yoga for Osteoporosis

Mondays, May 17 – June 28 or July 5 – Aug. 16

7:45 to 8:45 p.m. / Location: 

7-week session \$40

Learn postures to increase bone strength, balance and longevity.

Yoga for Women

Sundays, May 30 – July 4 or July 11 – Aug. 15

4:30 to 5:45 p.m. / Location: 

6-week session \$35

For women age 30 and older, this class includes postures for hormone balance, strength and pelvic floor health.

Zumba

Wednesdays, May 5 – June 23

5:30 to 6:20 p.m. / Location: 

8-week session \$45

Use low-impact moves in a calorie-burning, Latin dance, fitness party.

Fitness 55+

Holy Cross Health — with the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, the Maryland Department of Aging and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services — offers health education and wellness classes, health screenings and intellectually stimulating programs and events for people age 55 and older.

Ballet Gold 55+

**Tuesdays & Thursdays,
May 4 – June 17 or June 22 – Aug. 5**

1 to 2 p.m. / Location:  / \$30

Whether an intermediate beginner or beyond, these senior ballet classes will challenge you. Ballet shoes are required.

Chair Exercise 55+

**Tuesdays & Thursdays,
May 4 – June 24 or July 6 – Aug. 24**

1 to 2 p.m. / Location:  / \$20

Get your body moving and heart pumping without even leaving your chair.

Gentle Yoga 55+

**Mondays, May 3 – June 21 or
July 5 – Aug. 16**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Thursdays, May 6 – June 24 or
July 1 – Aug. 19**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m. / Location:  / \$25

Reduce stress, improve balance, and build strength and movement. Ideal for people with chronic conditions or pain.

Meditation 55+

**Wednesdays, May 12 – June 23 or
July 28 – Aug. 18**

3 to 4 p.m. / Location:  / \$15

Join a mind-body practice group to harness meditation and enhance resilience through evidence-based approaches to build health and wellness.

Parkinson's Exercise 55+


**Mondays, May 10 – June 21 or
June 28 – Aug. 16**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m. / Location:  / \$20

For people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, this class is designed to increase range of motion, enhance endurance and strengthen muscles.

Pilates 55+

**Tuesdays, May 4 – June 15 \$25 or
June 29 – Aug. 17 \$30**

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. / Location: 

Tone, lengthen, stretch and improve posture and balance in this low-impact Pilates class. Safely strengthen the core muscles in the abdomen, lower back, hips and buttocks. The last 15 minutes of class focus on strengthening pelvic floor muscles. All levels welcome.

Senior Fit Free

All Locations: 

Holy Cross Health and Kaiser Permanente offer a 45-minute virtual exercise program designed for seniors age 55 and older. It focuses on increasing strength, flexibility, balance, coordination and cardiovascular endurance. Classes are ongoing and a waiver is required to participate.

For more information, availability and enrollment:

visit HolyCrossHealth.org/seniorfit or email seniorfit@holycrosshealth.org.

Stay Active—Move 55+

**Mondays & Wednesdays,
May 3 – June 16 or June 28 – Aug. 18**

1:15 to 2 p.m. / Location:  / \$10

Learn safe, simple exercises to help increase your level of endurance, boost energy and improve range of motion.

Strength Training 101 55+

**Tuesdays, May 4 – June 15 \$25 or
June 29 – Aug. 17 \$30**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Thursdays, May 6 – June 17 \$25 or
July 1 – Aug. 19 \$30**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Location: 

Strengthen muscles, joints and bones.

Strength Training 102 55+

**Fridays, May 7 – June 18 \$25 or
July 2 – Aug 20 \$30**

10:30 to 11:30 a.m. / Location: 

Prerequisite: Strength Training 101 and/or permission of instructor.

Tai Chi – 24 Form 55+

**Wednesdays, May 5 – June 23 or
July 7 – Aug. 25**

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. / Location:  / \$30

For those who are new to Tai Chi.



With Senior Fit, April Keyes Is Enjoying Exercise

When I started Senior Fit in January 2020, my goal was to make exercise a daily habit and stick with it – and I have! Not only is Senior Fit a great workout, our instructors keep it interesting with new routines all the time. I enjoy it so much that I take a virtual Senior Fit class five days a week. At my annual checkup last fall, my doctor was elated. All my numbers were perfect and I had lost 39 pounds.”

Tai Chi – 37 Form 55+


Wednesdays, May 5 – June 23 or
July 7 – Aug. 25

11 a.m. to Noon / Location:  / \$30

For those who want a more challenging form of Tai Chi.

Yoga 1/1.5 55+

Fridays, May 7 – June 18 \$25 or
July 2 – Aug. 20 \$30

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. / Location: 

Reboot with simple yoga poses and deep relaxation for all levels. Improve balance, posture and mindfulness.

Yoga for Bone Health 55+

Thursdays, May 6 – June 24 or
July 1 – Aug. 19

3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

Location:  / \$25

Increase bone density and improve strength and coordination. Moderate difficulty level.

Yoga for Pelvic Health 55+

Sundays, May 2 – June 20 or
July 4 – Aug. 15

3:15 to 4:15 p.m. / Location:  / \$20

Most of us know very little about this powerful area of our body. Learn how to use yogic tools to address urinary stress leaks, prolapse, physical discomfort and more.

Wellness

NEW Community Chats Free

Tuesday, May 25, June 22, July 27 &
Aug. 24

5 to 6 p.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a life-changer for many of us. The way we conduct business is no longer the same. Businesses are closing, people are losing jobs and unemployment is at an all-time high. Join us for a virtual community chat to discuss lifestyle changes and how to cope as we work to build healthier communities. For information and to register, call 301-754-8800.

Virtual Classes Online via Webex

For additional classes, more information or to register (unless noted otherwise), visit HolyCrossHealth.org/classes-events.

NEW Diabetes Education Free

Thursday, May 6, 13, 20 or 27

4 to 5 p.m.

Monday, May 10 or 24

Noon to 1 p.m.

Join us for a free educational session where you will learn ways to reduce your risk of diabetes and stay healthy, including exercise and nutrition information. Learn from the comfort of your home. For more information and to register, contact Stacey Bisnette at Stacey.bisnette@holycrosshealth.org or call 301-754-8710.

Virtual Freedom from Smoking Counseling Free


Location: 

Join Holy Cross Health and the American Lung Association for a free online, seven-week, eight-session Freedom from Smoking® Group Clinic to learn systematic approaches to quitting smoking, especially during these difficult times. For more information and to register, contact Stacey Bisnette at Stacey.bisnette@holycrosshealth.org or call 301-754-8710.

Support Groups

Epilepsy Support Group Free

Wednesdays, June 16 & Aug. 18

6 to 7 p.m. / Location: 

For people of all ages with epilepsy and their loved ones. Register in advance.

Weight Loss Surgery Support Group Free

Mondays, May 10, June 14, July 12 &
Aug. 9

7 to 8 p.m. / Location: 

This group is led by a registered dietitian and reviews a different post-surgery nutrition topic each month. The group provides a supportive space for individuals who have had weight loss surgery and their family members and friends to: learn more; connect with others; and share experiences, feelings, and questions. Anyone who is thinking about or planning to have weight loss surgery is also encouraged to attend.

More Support Groups

Holy Cross Health offers a variety of support groups. For more information, visit HolyCrossHealth.org/support.

Wellness 55+

Contemporary Issues Discussion Group 55+ Free

Wednesdays, May 12 & 26, June 9 &
23, July 14 & 28, Aug. 11 & 25

1:30 to 3:45 p.m. / Location: 

Exchange ideas on a variety of issues.

Medication Review Free

Friday, May 21 or July 23

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. / Location: 

Registration required for half-hour time slots.

Consult with a Holy Cross Health pharmacist about your medications and learn about drug interactions, proper dosing and side effects.

Memory Academy 55+

Tuesdays, May 4 – June 8

10 a.m. to Noon

Fridays, July 16 – Aug. 20

10 a.m. to Noon

Wednesdays, June 23 – July 28

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Thursdays, Aug. 5 – Sept. 9

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Location:  / \$5

This memory program teaches techniques that work for everyone. The seven-week course consists of four classes and three booster sessions.

Caregiver Resources

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Free

Tuesdays, June 8 – July 20

6 to 8 p.m. / Location: 

This seven-week workshop gives caregivers the tools to better care for your loved one and yourself. Learn how to reduce stress, improve caregiving confidence, manage time, make tough decisions and locate helpful resources. For information and to register, call 301-754-8800. This program is funded with grant support from the Maryland Department of Health, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities.



Jackie Martin Is Managing Her Pain

Painful arthritis in my lower back and hip prompted me to take the Living Well: Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop. It was exactly what I needed. I learned about breathing exercises, how to pace myself during the day and setting realistic goals. All helped put me on the right path to manage my pain. But, most important for me was hearing how others overcame their challenges and helping each other achieve our goals. We trusted each other and I felt supported."

See page 11 for information about the **Living Well: Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop**

Caregivers Support Groups Free

Location: 📍

Groups for Adult Children Caring for Aging Parents

Mondays, 6 to 8 p.m.

Tuesdays, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Thursdays, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Groups for Caregivers of Ill or Aging Spouses

Wednesdays, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Thursdays, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Fridays, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Groups for Caregivers of Spouses and Adult Children

Tuesdays, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

How to join a group: Send an email noting which group you would like to join to Sister Kathy Weber at weberk@holycrosshealth.org. You will receive an invitation via email on the day of the group meeting. It will contain all the information you need to join.

For more information: Call Sister Kathy Weber at 301-754-7152 or visit HolyCrossHealth.org/caregiversupport.

Parenting Education

Infant and Child Safety: Ages Birth to 5 years

Monday, May 17 or Thursday, June 10 6 to 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 23 or June 20 1 to 3 p.m.

Saturday, June 5 10 a.m. to Noon

Location: 📍 / \$25 per registrant

Whether you're preparing for a new baby or keeping up with a toddler, creating a safe environment for your little one is important for them to learn and grow. Baby proofing, car seat safety, injury prevention, and safety around vehicles and in your home are discussed in this two-hour course. Bring a doll or stuffed animal to participate in learning the necessary techniques to rescue a choking infant or child.

Grandparents-To-Be

Monday, May 3

6 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, June 19

10 to 11 a.m.

Location: 📍 / \$5 per registrant

Making memories, supporting the new parents and keeping your grandbaby safe are just a few of the topics discussed to explore your wonderful new role. Current trends in labor and delivery practices, infant care and feeding also are addressed. Registration is per email address. Visit HolyCrossHealth.org for class times.

Maternity Classes

Holy Cross Germantown Hospital and Holy Cross Hospital offer a variety of virtual classes, tours and exercise programs to help a family prepare for a new baby's arrival and beyond. For a complete list of classes, visit HolyCrossHealth.org.

Safe Sitter

Location: 📍 / \$70 per registrant

This comprehensive babysitting course for 11- to 14-year-olds is delivered via Webex in three two-hour sessions (six hours total). The class teaches the business of babysitting, safe and nurturing childcare techniques, behavior management skills, and appropriate response to medical emergencies. Registration is for anyone 11 to 14 years old who would like to attend. For times, visit HolyCrossHealth.org.

Norvell V. Coots, MD / President and CEO, Holy Cross Health
Louis Damiano, MD / President, Holy Cross Hospital
Doug Ryder / President, Holy Cross Germantown Hospital
Annice Cody / President, Holy Cross Health Network

I'm Going to Sing in the Church Choir



It Starts Here

Doctors and medical scientists agree that the vaccine is the quickest, safest, and most effective way to keep our communities safe from the virus. Getting vaccinated is a personal choice. We understand that you may have questions and concerns – and we're here to give you the facts so you can make a confident, informed decision for yourself.

We've been listening, and we hear your concerns. Here are the facts:

You're worried that the COVID-19 vaccine is dangerous.

FACT: The COVID-19 vaccine cannot and will not give you COVID-19; nor does it inject the live COVID-19 virus into your body.

You're concerned that the vaccine is not safe for people of color.

FACT: Clinical research overwhelmingly shows that COVID-19 vaccines are safe for people of color.

You're worried that the vaccine will be expensive.

FACT: The vaccine is offered at no cost.

You've heard that people who have already had COVID-19 and recovered do not need to get a vaccine.

FACT: For all individuals, the COVID-19 vaccine provides the best, most reliable protection against COVID-19.



To get more facts visit,
ITSTARTSHERE.ORG.



For care location addresses and phone numbers, visit [HolyCrossHealth.org](https://www.HolyCrossHealth.org).

This magazine is published for friends and patients of Holy Cross Health and is not meant to replace professional medical advice or service. Personal health problems should be brought to the attention of the appropriate health professionals. To be added or removed from this mailing list, call 301-754-7712. Submit comments to Mead Notkin, editor, at mead.notkin@holycrosshealth.org.

To find a physician,
call 301-754-8800 or visit
[HolyCrossHealth.org](https://www.HolyCrossHealth.org)
TTY 301-754-7406

