

# HOLY CROSS HEALTH

Winter 2021

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*Moving Life Ahead*<sup>SM</sup>

**HC** HOLY CROSS  
HEALTH

A Member of Trinity Health

# New & Noteworthy

## Holy Cross Health Partners Welcomes Four New Providers

The addition of four new providers to Holy Cross Health Partners brings additional expertise in primary care for seniors, and specialized lung and colorectal care, including screening, diagnostics and advanced minimally invasive robotic surgery.



**Riny Karras, MD, FACS**, is a fellowship-trained thoracic surgeon with more than 10 years of experience in minimally invasive robotic surgery, with a focus on lung and esophageal cancer and conditions of the chest. She has a passion for counseling patients through screening, diagnosis, treatment and recovery. Dr. Karras' practice is located with our medical director of Thoracic Surgery in the Capital Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery office in Rockville.

6001 Montrose Road, Suite 1040  
Rockville, Maryland 20852  
301-557-1425



**Matthew Skancke, MD**, is a fellowship-trained colon and rectal surgeon with a diverse practice that includes screening, malignancy, inflammatory bowel, pelvic floor and anorectal minimally invasive robotic surgery. Dr. Skancke is seeing patients alongside our Colorectal program director and team at Metro Colon and Rectal Surgery in Bethesda.

10215 Fernwood Road, Suite 102  
Bethesda, Maryland 20817  
301-557-1426



**Bharati Srivastava, MD**, has worked as a geriatrician for close to 25 years, and brings a wealth of experience, commitment and compassion to her work with seniors.

Holy Cross Health Partners at Asbury Methodist Village  
201 Russell Avenue  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877  
301-557-2110



**Renata Denton, CRNP**, joins Holy Cross Health Partners as a certified registered nurse practitioner with a passion for helping her patients achieve their maximum potential.

Holy Cross Health Partners in Kensington  
3720 Farragut Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Kensington, Maryland 20895  
301-949-4242

## Improving Our Community's Health With Free Flu Vaccines



Getting flu shots is a family affair at Daley Elementary School, Germantown.

Getting a flu shot this year is even more important than usual. Anything people can do to boost their immune system strengthens the fight against COVID-19. The Community Health Department of Holy Cross Health provided free flu vaccinations during several food distribution events held at churches, a synagogue and Maryland Public Schools.

Nurses from across Holy Cross Health came together to administer shots this fall, with the Holy Cross Health Foundation providing funds to distribute vaccines every other week at Galway Elementary School in Silver Spring.

"It was gratifying to see that entire families came out to be vaccinated together. Many adults who brought their children to be vaccinated had never been vaccinated themselves," said Kathleen Williams, LCSW-C, director, Healthy Communities. It's never too late to get your flu shot. Schedule yours today at Holy Cross Health:

[HolyCrossHealth.org/flu-shots](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/flu-shots).



# A Message from

## Norvell V. Coots, MD

President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Holy Cross Health



### Building for the Future of Cancer Care

Holy Cross Health is excited to announce our expansion of cancer services to meet our community's growing needs. Already the leader in providing inpatient care in the region, Holy Cross Health is about to break ground on a community-based Cancer Center that will offer integrated care in a convenient and welcoming environment with innovative technologies. Medical, surgical and radiation oncology services will be combined at one location with a full range of supportive programs that guide each patient every step of the way — from diagnosis through treatment, recovery and survivorship.

Our commitment to the future of cancer care will help ensure any person diagnosed with cancer in our community can turn to Holy Cross Health for the best possible outcome and quality of life. Learn about our award-winning Cancer Center at [HolyCrossHealth.org/cancer](http://HolyCrossHealth.org/cancer).

### Donate Today



Gifts from donors like you help us make a difference. Your support enables us to deliver quality and equitable healthcare to our community members. Thank you for your generosity!

### Our Commitment

Holy Cross has been a regional innovator in the delivery of health care for 57 years – and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic our focus and determination has only grown fiercer. With you in mind, we have evolved and reinvested in the many services you depend upon for good health to ensure they are here for you where and when you need them, now and into the future.



Your generosity during this challenging time has humbled and inspired us. On behalf of all of us at Holy Cross Health, thank you for your gifts, your kind words and for taking the pledge to protect yourselves – we continue to fight with you and for you, in the community and in all of our care settings.

As an organization, we have risen to the challenge posed by COVID-19. In the past year we have expanded our remote services, delivering primary care and other clinical services to you in the safety of your home, along with classes of every type. In the years ahead, we will have more services for you to access at home and in the community for wellness and care.

We continue to implement the best safety practices and lessons learned to keep you safe at our hospitals and medical practices. The stories you will read in this issue will remind you to get the care you need today and trust in Holy Cross Health to listen and partner with you to improve the quality of your life. Mike is walking pain free with his knee replacements, and Lyn's discomfort caused by pelvic prolapse is gone – both thanks to surgeries performed safely by our experts in recent months. Tyrone's experience with colon cancer is a powerful reminder to schedule that routine colonoscopy and all of your preventive screenings and care because early detection of cancer of any type dramatically increases your chances for a good outcome.

I am hopeful for a healthier year ahead and will communicate with you regularly, as your partner in health, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in support of you continuing to live your best life.

# With Two New Knees, Walking Is Easier

# And Life Is Better



*“I suffered for too long with painful knees. After surgery to replace both knees, I feel great,” Mike said.*

“Walking for me was slow and labored,” said Mike Rawe, 68. “My knees were noticeably bowed – each knee looked like the letter ‘S.’ My doctor told me I would know when it was time for knee replacement surgery, and he was right.”

“When it comes to treating joint pain, surgery is the last resort. We always explore all conservative treatment options first,” said **Zohair Alam, MD**, medical director, Joint Program, Holy



Cross Hospital. For Mike, that meant trying over-the-counter and prescription medications, as well as injections in

both knees to lubricate the joints and reduce inflammation. These treatments brought short-term relief, but Mike’s knees continued to hurt. Dr. Alam recommended that Mike have joint replacement surgery for both knees.

“Each knee had a lot of deformity due to osteoarthritis. It was best to replace one knee at a time,” said Dr. Alam.

Prior to surgery, Mike attended a Holy Cross joint replacement class. “The class was very informative and good for me because I didn’t know what to expect,” said Mike. He also continued to work out on his stationary bike at home to prepare for surgery by strengthening the muscles and supportive structures around his knees.

Originally scheduled for April, Mike’s first knee surgery was postponed until May due to the pandemic. “I felt completely comfortable having my surgery at Holy Cross Hospital. The day before my surgery I was tested for COVID-19 and after a negative result, when I arrived for surgery, the hospital has a dedicated path and care area so I wasn’t exposed to the virus,” said Mike.



We make it easy to get the information you need about joint care.

- ✓ **Download a joint guide:**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/jointguide](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/jointguide)
- ✓ **Take a pain quiz:**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/painquiz](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/painquiz)
- ✓ **Sign up for a virtual information session:**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/jointsession](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/jointsession)
- ✓ **Find an orthopedic surgeon:**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/jointteam](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/jointteam)
- ✓ **Read a blog post: When Osteoarthritis Calls for Surgery**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-osteoarthritis](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-osteoarthritis)
- ✓ **Learn about safety precautions for surgery patients.**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-elective-surgery](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-elective-surgery)
- ✓ **Watch a video:**  
[HolyCrossHealth.org/videos-treating-joint-pain](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/videos-treating-joint-pain)



- Holy Cross Hospital has earned **The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Hip and Knee Replacement.**

During Mike's surgery, after making the incision and exposing the joint, Dr. Alam removed just the arthritis, leaving as much bone as possible. The implant is sized and aligned and then placed on the end of the bones. Holy Cross Health has the expertise to correct deformities and optimize outcomes.

"The arthritis is gone the minute the surgery is done," said Dr. Alam. "Patients tell us that even while recovering, they can already feel that their knee is better because they don't have pain from arthritis."

Changes in how anesthesia is administered and how early physical therapy is started have led to significant improvement in patient comfort and shorter recovery. During surgery, a regional nerve block is given to minimize post-operative pain. Physical therapy

begins immediately after surgery, while the patient is still in the recovery room. Later that day, the patient is up and walking.

More than 85 percent of patients go directly home and receive physical therapy there as opposed to going to a skilled nursing facility. "Multiple scientific studies show that most patients do better and have fewer complications if they are discharged to go home the day of surgery or early the next day," said **Tariq Nayfeh, MD**, subsection chair,



Orthopedics, Holy Cross Germantown Hospital. "At both Holy Cross hospitals, our surgeons and nursing, anesthesiology and rehabilitation staff work to meet national and international standards of excellence for joint replacement surgery."

Mike went home the same day of his surgery and had a few weeks of in-home physical therapy. "My first knee healed nicely," he said. Within three weeks, he was able to walk on his own without a cane, drive and go grocery shopping. "I was ready to get the second surgery out of the way as soon as I could because Dr. Alam told me my bad knee could affect my good knee."

Everything went well with Mike's second knee replacement surgery in July — and his recovery was quicker.

"The care I received from Dr. Alam and the Holy Cross Hospital team was excellent," said Mike. "I appreciate how they shared information and were straightforward and focused on me. My knees are feeling great now. What I really like is that I can easily go up and down the two flights of stairs in my home."



# The Problems Women Don't Want To Talk About,

# But Should


One morning while showering, Lyn Orrell discovered she had a problem. She felt a bulge shaped like a plum between her legs that had not been there the day before. Understandably, her first thought was cancer. Fortunately, that was not the case.

“As women age, pelvic floor muscles get weaker and more relaxed, which can allow one or more of the pelvic organs to drop down (prolapse) through the vagina. This is a common condition: 4 out of 10 women will experience pelvic organ prolapse as they get older.

Some women may also notice tissue coming out of the rectum, which is called rectal prolapse. In Lyn's case, her cervix was coming out of the vagina, which is why she felt a bulge,” said **Shobha Sikka, MD**, a urogynecologist, who is board certified in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery.

Many factors can affect pelvic floor health throughout a woman's life, including vaginal childbirth, number of births, aging, loss of estrogen during menopause, chronic cough and chronic constipation. Treatments range from pelvic floor exercises and physical therapy, a pessary (a small silicone device inserted into the vagina to support prolapsed organs) or surgery. Pelvic floor conditions are not life threatening, but they can cause pain, discomfort, and urinary and fecal incontinence – and can have a profound effect on quality of life.

After meeting with Dr. Sikka, Lyn felt calm and reassured. “I took some time to think about my options and decided that surgery was the right choice for me,” she said. Her surgery was scheduled for August, and Lyn had no concerns about having surgery during the pandemic.



*“Women have to take care of other women,” said Lyn, who had surgery to repair pelvic organ prolapse. “I wanted to share my experience with other women who may be too embarrassed or self-conscious to get help.”*

"I told Lyn that having surgery and being hospitalized at Holy Cross is very safe. It is very important to continue to take care of your health issues during this time of COVID-19," said Dr. Sikka.

For Lyn, as with all her patients, Dr. Sikka uses sophisticated urodynamic testing to evaluate the bladder for leakage and the chance of developing leakage after surgery. How Dr. Sikka performs the surgery – whether vaginally, laparoscopically or robotically – depends on the type and location of the prolapse. "Almost all prolapse repair surgeries are minimally invasive," explained Dr. Sikka. "Most patients go home the same day or the next day after surgery."

Lyn's surgery was done using the *da Vinci*® robotic surgery system at Holy Cross Hospital. "Holy Cross Health's robotic surgery team is highly experienced in performing advanced pelvic floor surgery," said Dr. Sikka. "We are able to operate through very tiny incisions with less trauma to tissues and, therefore, less pain for the patient."

"Holy Cross Health's strong commitment to minimally invasive and robotic gynecologic surgery is reflected in our high volume of procedures; our expert, highly trained team of gynecologic oncology, urogynecology

and general gyn surgeons; and our access to the most advanced technology. These innovative surgical procedures result in fewer complications and better outcomes, getting women



back to work, their families and normal activities quickly," said **Albert Steren, MD**, medical director, Gynecologic Oncology, Holy Cross Health.

After surgery, Lyn recovered in her private room. "The nursing staff took such good care of me, I actually felt relaxed," she said. The next morning, Lyn was up at 6:00 a.m. sitting in a chair and then walking on the unit before going home that evening. "I had a little discomfort the first few days, took it easy for a while, and everything went well."

"All too often, women don't know to ask us for help," said Dr. Sikka. "Approximately 50 percent of older women have urinary incontinence, but only one-quarter to one-half of those women will seek care. They think it's just a normal part of aging and they're embarrassed to talk about it. Pelvic floor conditions can be easily addressed with a variety of non-surgical and surgical treatments – and it's never too late."

"When you have surgery, you want the whole process to be fine-tuned

and wonderful," said Lyn. "That's how my experience was. From the moment I walked in Dr. Sikka's office, through my surgery at Holy Cross Hospital and recovery at home, I felt comfortable and was not worried about anything."



### Trusted Care for Gyn Surgery

- Nearly every gynecologic surgery patient at Holy Cross Health is a candidate for minimally invasive and robotic gynecologic surgery.
- Holy Cross Health is a regional leader in gynecologic surgery, performing more inpatient gynecologic and gynecologic oncology surgeries than any other hospital or health system in Maryland.
- Holy Cross Health is designated as a **Center of Excellence in Minimally Invasive Gynecology (COEMIG) by the Surgical Review Corporation.**

### Pelvic Health

Holy Cross Health's pelvic floor experts offer individualized treatment options for conditions affecting the bladder, bowel and uterus such as prolapse and incontinence, using evidence-based, personalized care plans to restore function and quality of life for patients. A multidisciplinary team of pelvic floor experts includes specialty trained urogynecologists, urologists and colorectal surgeons, as well as physical therapists and other professionals who deliver personalized care and use minimally invasive surgical approaches.

### Pelvic Organ Prolapse Is More Common Than You Think



Read our blog about treatment options that can strengthen your pelvic muscles and improve your quality of life.

[HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-pelvic](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-pelvic)



Learn more about pelvic floor dysfunction treatment options.

[HolyCrossHealth.org/pelvicfloor](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/pelvicfloor)



Watch videos from Holy Cross Health pelvic health experts **Shobha Sikka, MD**, and **Kathleen Sterling, MD**, discuss pelvic organ prolapse and urinary incontinence.

[HolyCrossHealth.org/videos-treating-pelvic-health-conditions](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/videos-treating-pelvic-health-conditions)



"I would not be here today without the care I received at Holy Cross Health," said Tyrone.

# After Expert Cancer Care, Tyrone Is Cruising In His

## Classic Corvette

In 2017, 59-year-old Tyrone Henson was increasingly bothered by abdominal tenderness, back pain, constipation and bladder problems. He had sought medical advice, but had received differing diagnoses of irritable bowel syndrome and a hernia. His symptoms only continued to worsen. "I couldn't even sit for long periods of time and it got to the point where I could no longer work," the retired firefighter and K9 police officer said. "That's when I knew something serious was going on – and I needed answers."

A friend recommended Tyrone go to the Emergency Department at Holy Cross Hospital, even though other

facilities were closer to his Clinton, Md., home. After conducting a thorough medical history and physical exam, the ER team ordered a CT scan that revealed masses in his colon and liver.

Tyrone was referred to **Rahul Gilotra, MD**, Gastroenterology, who performed a



colonoscopy that showed he had stage IV metastatic colon cancer, which had spread to his liver. **Rami Makhoul, MD**,



Colorectal Surgery, and **James Xu, MD**, Hematology Oncology, were called in to lead Tyrone's cancer team. "After a meticulous evaluation, we designed an aggressive treatment approach," said Dr. Xu.

In 2018, Dr. Makhoul performed minimally invasive colorectal surgery on Tyrone using the *da Vinci*® Xi surgical system at Holy Cross Germantown



Hospital. The *da Vinci Xi* offers the surgeon unique advantages in terms of superior visualization, 3D depth perception and dexterity of the robotic arms. Dr. Makhoul said: “It is an excellent tool when operating in a narrow space to dissect a large colon tumor, as Tyrone had.”

Dr. Makhoul was able to remove the entire cancerous tumor and preserve normal digestive function without the need for a colostomy. Tyrone experienced minimal pain and went home a couple of days later. “The pain patients experience after robotic surgery is much less than when surgery is performed as an open or laparoscopic procedure. Robotic surgery causes less trauma to the abdominal wall, making the patient’s recovery much smoother,” said Dr. Makhoul.

“Not only is Dr. Makhoul an excellent surgeon, but he took his time, patiently explaining everything that was going on,” said Tyrone. “The modern, advanced medical care at Holy Cross is just unbelievable.”

After he fully recovered from surgery, Tyrone began a robust regimen of chemotherapy to shrink the tumors on his liver. Tyrone then had surgery to remove the liver tumors and he was able to achieve remission. “He had an exceptionally good outcome,” said Dr. Xu.

For the next two years, Tyrone was routinely monitored for any sign of cancer recurrence through the comprehensive cancer program at Holy Cross Health. In 2020, a scan detected a tumor in his lung, which was surgically removed. “The Holy Cross Cancer team are always clear with me about how my care is working. My plan is customized for my needs, and they are not afraid to make adjustments for the best results,” said Tyrone.

Holy Cross Health Cancer Center’s expert team, supported by leading-edge technology, have kept Tyrone feeling great for nearly three years. Today, Tyrone enjoys keeping healthy with exercise, spending time with his adult daughter, working on classic cars – and enjoying each day. He is grateful to Holy Cross Health for saving his life.



### Leading in Colorectal Cancer Surgery

- Our colorectal cancer team uses minimally invasive surgical techniques, including robotic-assisted surgery, to remove tumors while preserving colorectal function.
- 95 percent of colorectal surgery at Holy Cross Health is performed using robotic surgical systems, resulting in less pain, fewer complications and faster recovery for patients.
- Both Holy Cross Hospital and Holy Cross Germantown Hospital have the *da Vinci Xi* surgical system – the most advanced robotic surgery technology available.
- Holy Cross Health performs more robotic colorectal surgeries than any health system in Montgomery County.
- **U.S. News & World Report** recognized Holy Cross Hospital as “**high performing**” (the highest ranking) for colon cancer surgery in its **2020-21 Best Hospitals** rankings.

## EARLY DETECTION THROUGH COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES

Colorectal cancer begins as a benign growth – a polyp – in the colon or rectum before it becomes malignant. “Colonoscopy screening is extremely important,” said **Rahul Gilotra, MD**, Gastroenterology. “When we detect precancerous polyps during a colonoscopy, we can remove them, preventing the development of colon cancer.”



### Who needs colonoscopy screening?

In general, screening is recommended beginning at age 50 for people at average risk for colorectal cancer; the American Cancer Society recommends 45 as the age to begin screening. For those with certain risk factors, such as family history, screening should be begin at an earlier age. Additionally, African Americans are at higher risk for developing colorectal cancer. “On average the chance of having a polyp turn into cancer after age 50 is close to 40 percent in men; in women, the chance is 28 percent,” said Dr. Gilotra.

### Talk to your doctor if you are experiencing any of these symptoms:

- any change in regular bowel habits
- abnormal discomfort in your lower abdomen
- rectal pain
- rectal bleeding
- unexplained anemia

“But don’t wait for symptoms to occur before getting screened,” advised Dr. Gilotra. “Sometimes symptoms don’t show up until it’s too late. Colon cancer is preventable if you act in time.”



March 18, 2021

Tune into our Facebook Live event, **Colon Cancer Screening Saves Lives.**

See page 11 for details.

# 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.

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

### Diabetes Prevention Program

Free

Starts Tuesday, Jan. 12  
6 to 8 p.m.

Starts Tuesday, March 30  
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Starts Wednesday, March 31  
7 to 9 p.m.

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).

#### 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).

### NEW Diabetes Prevention: Working Together for Success

Free

Thursday, Jan. 14  
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: V

Join this yearlong, behavior modification program with a partner to reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Registrants must be pre-diabetic/non-diabetic and overweight (BMI value of 25 or higher) to join.

### Diabetes Self-Management Education

Tuesdays, Jan. 5 – Feb. 2 or  
March 30 – April 27

Noon to 2 p.m. / Location: V

Tuesdays, Feb. 16 – March 16  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m. / Location: V

This five-week class series, taught by a registered nurse, helps you self-manage diabetes on a daily basis. Physician referral required. Covered by many insurance plans. To register, call 301-754-8200.

### Living Well: Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop

Free

Thursdays, Jan. 14 – Feb. 25  
10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mondays, March 8 – April 19  
1 to 3:30 p.m.

Location: V

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 and other chronic conditions.

### Living Well: Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop

Free

Wednesdays, March 3 – April 14  
10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. / Location: V

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

Tuesdays, Feb. 23 – April 6

1:30 to 4 p.m. / Location: 

Mondays, March 15 – April 26

6:30 to 9 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.

## Programa de Manejo Personal de la Diabetes Gratis

Miércoles, 20 de enero hasta el 3 de marzo


2 to 4:30 p.m. / Lugar: 

Un curso GRATIS de seis semanas para los que quieren aprender cómo mantener una vida activa y manejar su salud mientras viven con diabetes tipo 2 o pre-diabetes. Este curso también es para las familias y las personas que cuidan a aquellos que son diabéticos.

Este programa está financiado con el apoyo de la Oficina de Salud de Minorías y de Disparidades de Salud del Departamento de Salud de Maryland. (Maryland Department of Health, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities.)

## NEW Lung Health Essentials

Tuesdays & Thursdays,  
March 2 – April 8

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 Kim Crilly at [kimberly.crilly@holycrosshealth.org](mailto:kimberly.crilly@holycrosshealth.org) for an intake assessment.

## Road to Health Diabetes Education Free

Thursdays, Jan. 21 – Feb. 25

4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays, Feb. 10 – March 17

Noon to 2 p.m.

The Road to Health workshop is a six-week diabetes education program to help you prevent or manage diabetes. Lifestyle coaching, meal planning and physical activity are covered in this interactive workshop to help you prevent diabetes while improving your health and wellbeing. 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.



## Facebook Live Event Free

### COLON CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES!

Thursday, March 18 at 1 p.m.

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

A colonoscopy is the most common screening test for detecting colon cancer in men and women. Join our colorectal surgery experts to learn about the importance of **colon screenings**, who should get one and when, and the latest screening and treatment options available at Holy Cross Health.

#### Meet our panel:



**Bradley Bennett, MD**

Medical Director, Colon Rectal Surgery, Holy Cross Health



**Matthew Skancke, MD**

Colon Rectal Surgery, Holy Cross Health Partners



**Moderator: Stephanie Heller**

Director, Cancer Programs and Women's Surgery  
Holy Cross Health

To receive event reminders, to submit a question, or to receive the video after the live event, visit [HolyCrossHealth.org/colorectal-live](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/colorectal-live).

## MORE RESOURCES FOR COLORECTAL CANCER



**Read our blog:** Colorectal Cancer Screenings Now Start at Age 45

[HolyCrossHealth.org/blog-colorectal-cancer](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/blog-colorectal-cancer)



Learn more about colorectal cancer diagnosis and treatment options.

[HolyCrossHealth.org/colorectal-cancer](https://www.holycrosshealth.org/colorectal-cancer)

## Cancer Support

### Cancer Education Series Free Managing Chemotherapy Side Effects Tuesday, Feb. 2

5 to 6 p.m. / Location: **V**

Learn tips for managing some of the common chemotherapy side effects during cancer treatment.

### Exercise at Home Starts with a Chair Tuesday, April 13

6 to 7 p.m. / Location: **V**

Chair exercise can be helpful during and after cancer treatment for stress management and optimal health.

### Grupo De Apoyo Para Latinas Con Cancer Gratis

El último miércoles de cada mes  
(**V** 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

Saturdays, Jan. 16 & April 17  
10 a.m. to Noon / Location: **V**

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.

## Information Sessions & Lectures

### Joint Replacement Pre-operative Class Free

Mondays, Jan. 4 & 18, Feb. 1 & 15,  
March 1 & 15, April 5 & 19

2 to 4 p.m. / Location: **V**

Tuesdays, Jan. 5 & 19, Feb. 2 & 16,  
March 2 & 16, April 6 & 20

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

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)

#### **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).

### **NEW** Spine Pre-operative Class Free

Wednesday, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 3  
or April 7

2 to 4 p.m. / Location: **V**

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)

### 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)

## Fitness

### Gentle Yoga

Thursdays, Jan. 7 – Feb. 18,  
Feb. 25 – April 8 or April 15 – May 20

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

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, Jan. 3 – Feb. 14 or  
Feb. 28 – April 11

6 to 7 p.m. / Location: **V**

7-week session \$40

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

### Pilates

Wednesdays, Jan. 13 – March 3 or  
March 17 – April 28

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

7-week session \$40/8-week session \$45

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

### Yoga I

Mondays, Jan. 4 – Feb. 15,  
Feb. 22 – March 29 or April 5 – May 10

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

Thursdays, Jan. 7 – Feb. 18,  
Feb. 25 – April 8 or April 15 – May 20

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

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

This physically active, meditative class develops flexibility and strength.

### Yoga II

Thursdays, Jan. 7 – Feb. 18,  
Feb. 25 – April 8 or April 15 – May 20

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

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, Jan. 4 – Feb. 15,  
Feb. 22 – March 29 or April 5 – May 10

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

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

Learn postures to increase bone strength, balance and longevity.

### Yoga for Women

Sundays, Jan. 3 – Feb. 14 or  
Feb. 28 – April 11

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

7-week session \$40

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

### Zumba

Wednesdays, Jan. 13 – March 3 or  
March 17 – April 28

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

7-week session \$40/8-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,  
Jan. 5 – Feb. 18 or March 4 – April 22

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

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

### Chair Exercise 55+

Tuesdays & Thursdays,  
Jan. 7 – Feb. 23 or March 9 – April 22

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

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



### Gentle Yoga 55+


Thursdays, Jan. 7 – Feb. 18 or  
March 4 – April 22  
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Mondays, Jan. 11 – Feb. 22 or  
March 8 – April 26

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, Jan. 27 – March 17  
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, Jan. 11 – Feb. 22 or  
March 8 – April 26

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, Jan. 5 – Feb. 16 \$25 or  
March 2 – April 20 \$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, email [seniorfit@holycrosshealth.org](mailto:seniorfit@holycrosshealth.org).

### Stay Active–Move 55+

Mondays & Wednesdays,  
Jan. 13 – Feb. 17 or March 10 – April 21  
1:15 to 2 p.m. / Location:  / \$10

Call 301-754-8800 for upcoming dates.

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

### Strength Training 101 55+

Tuesdays, Jan. 5 – Feb. 16 \$25 or  
March 2 – April 20 \$30

10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Thursdays, Jan. 7 – Feb. 18 \$25 or  
March 4 – April 22 \$30

10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Location: 

Strengthen muscles, joints and bones.

### Strength Training 102 55+


Fridays, Jan. 8 – Feb. 19 \$25 or  
March 5 – April 23 \$30

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

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

### Tai Chi – 24 Form 55+

Wednesdays, Jan. 6 – Feb. 24 or  
March 3 – April 21

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

For those who are new to Tai Chi.

### Tai Chi – 37 Form 55+


Wednesdays, Jan. 6 – Feb. 24 or  
March 3 – April 21

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

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

### Yoga 1/1.5 55+

Fridays, Jan. 8 – Feb. 19 \$25 or  
March 5 – April 23 \$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.

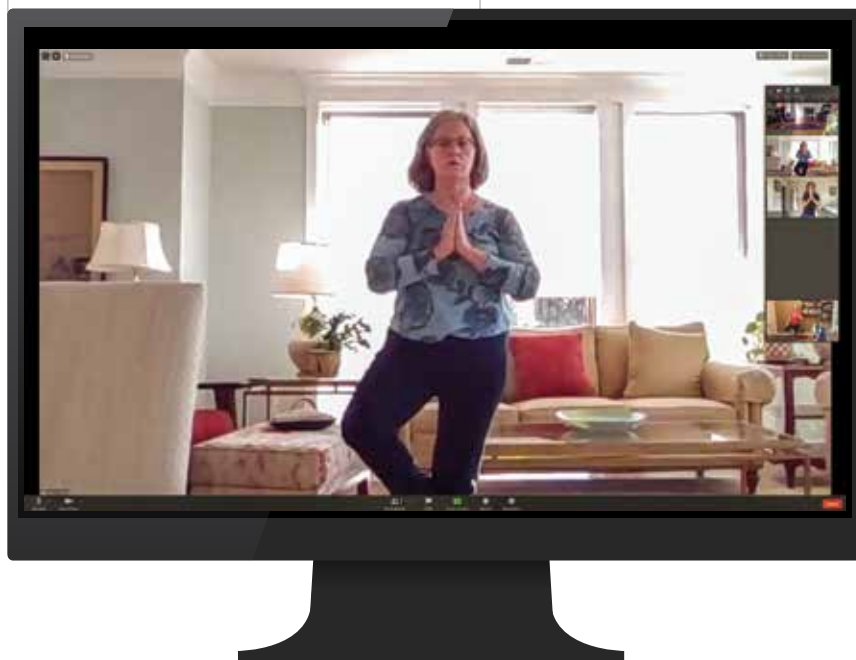
### Yoga for Bone Health 55+

Thursdays, Jan. 7 – Feb. 18 or  
March 4 – April 22

3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

Location:  / \$25

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



## Mary Wall Is Practicing Yoga No Matter Where She Is

I'm slowly recovering from major back surgery last year, and Yoga 1 is the kind of low impact exercise I can do. Our instructor is careful to modify the yoga moves based on our physical limitations. I'm able to move and stretch more now, giving me hope that I might be able to play golf again someday. While I'm in California for the next several months, I plan to tune in and keep up my progress through virtual Yoga 1."

## Yoga for Pelvic Health 55+

**Sundays, Jan. 10 – Feb. 21 or  
March 7 – April 25**

**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, Jan. 26 & Feb. 23  
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.

### Freedom from Smoking Free

**Mondays, Jan. 25 – March 8  
4:30 to 6 p.m.**


**Mondays, March 22 – May 3  
5 to 6:30 p.m.**

**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, Stacey.bisnette@holycrosshealth.org or call 301-754-8710.

## Support Groups

### Epilepsy Support Group Free

**Wednesdays, Feb. 17 & April 21  
6 to 7 p.m. / Location:** 

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

### Virtual Classes Online via Webex

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

## Weight Loss Surgery Support Group Free

**Mondays, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 8 &  
April 12**

**6 to 7 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](https://holycrosshealth.org/support).

## Wellness 55+

### Better Bones Free

**All locations:** 

Maintain bone density while improving strength, flexibility and balance. Some exercises are done seated. Classes are ongoing and a waiver is required to participate. For more information, availability and enrollment, contact seniorfit@holycrosshealth.org.

### Contemporary Issues Discussion Group 55+ Free

**Wednesdays, Jan. 13 & 27, Feb. 10 &  
24, March 10 & 24, April 14 & 28**

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

Exchange ideas on a variety of issues.

### Medication Review Free

**Friday, Jan. 22 or March 19**

**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+

**Wednesdays, Jan. 6 – Feb. 10  
10 a.m. to Noon**


**Thursdays, March 11 – April 15  
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

### **NEW** Powerful Tools for Caregivers

**Wednesdays, Jan. 13 – Feb. 24  
1:30 to 3:30 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.

### 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](mailto: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](https://holycrosshealth.org/caregiversupport).



The **Holy Cross Health Pulmonary Maintenance Program** is a supervised physical activity program for participants who have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or other chronic lung conditions. The staff includes an exercise physiologist, respiratory therapist and a registered nurse who help participants improve their activity level, better understand symptoms and learn new self-management techniques.



### Olai Cookson Is Breathing Easier With Virtual Exercise

I look forward to every Pulmonary Maintenance class. Our instructor helps us exercise safely and also teaches us about nutrition, allergies, falls prevention and more. While I miss going to class in person, I'm glad that we are able to continue virtually. The class has helped me get stronger and breathe better. It's like medicine for my body."

## Parenting Education

### **NEW** Infant and Child Safety: Ages Birth to 5 years

Saturday, Jan. 16, Feb. 27, March 20  
or April 24

10 a.m. to Noon

Thursday, Jan. 21 or March 4

6 to 8 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 25, Feb. 8 or April 19

6 to 8 p.m.

Sunday, April 11

1 to 3 p.m.

**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

Tuesday, Feb. 2

6 to 7 p.m.

Monday, March 15

6 to 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 1

6 to 7 p.m.

**Location:** 📍 / \$5 per registrant

Making memories, supporting the new parents and keeping your grand-baby 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.

## 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](http://HolyCrossHealth.org).

## Safe Sitter

Friday, March 5

5 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 6

10 a.m. to Noon

Sunday, March 7

10 a.m. to Noon

**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.

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

## Your Safety Is Our Priority



Don't put your health on hold during this pandemic. If you have chronic conditions that need ongoing treatment such as diabetes or high blood pressure, any physical symptoms that are of concern, or if you need to have a surgery that can improve your quality of life, we're here for you. We're taking extra steps to keep you safe. And, we are offering safe, convenient virtual care through our primary care practices. Learn about our commitment to keeping you safe: [HolyCrossHealth.org/safe-care](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/safe-care).

### STEPS WE'RE TAKING TO HELP KEEP YOU SAFE



#### Screening & Testing

Everyone entering our facilities goes through temperature and symptom screening. We test all patients prior to any elective procedures.



#### Limited Visitors

Visitors are not permitted, with a few exceptions for certain circumstances and compassionate care.



#### Masks Required

Everyone must wear a mask at all times in our facilities. For those who don't have a mask, we will gladly provide one.



#### Enhanced Cleaning

We have increased the frequency and intensity of cleaning, paying special attention to follow new CDC guidelines.



#### Patient Separation

We separate patients who do not have COVID-19 from any patients who do have COVID-19 or symptoms.



#### Virtual Care and Classes

Visit with your doctor or take a class (p.10), all from the safety of your home. Schedule or start your virtual visit today: [HolyCrossHealth.org/virtual-care](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/virtual-care).



#### Physical Distancing

We have made changes to our common areas and to our processes to ensure physical distancing is maintained.

**PLEDGE**  
**TO PROTECT**  
*The ones you love*

#### TAKE THE PLEDGE TO PROTECT

We invite you to join us in a pledge to do your part to keep your loved ones and our community safe, by wearing a mask, washing hands and practicing physical distancing. Go to [HolyCrossHealth.org/pledge](https://HolyCrossHealth.org/pledge) and sign the Pledge to Protect today.

For care location addresses and phone numbers, visit [HolyCrossHealth.org](https://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](mailto:mead.notkin@holycrosshealth.org).

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

