

# Spirit of Halifax

The Community Newsletter of Halifax Regional



## Carotid Angiography Now Available

The Cardiac & Vascular Center now is providing diagnostic Carotid Angiography.

With our high tech equipment, the physicians from Raleigh Cardiology can determine if blockages are in your carotid arteries (two large blood vessels that supply oxygenated blood to the large front part of the brain) or to find an aneurysm. Their work helps determine the need for further treatment.

Carotid Artery disease occurs when a buildup of fatty substances and cholesterol deposits called plaque causes the arteries to narrow. When the arteries are obstructed, you are at increased risk of a stroke.

A carotid angiogram is an invasive procedure that involves inserting a catheter into a blood vessel in the arm or leg, and guiding it to the carotid arteries with the aid of a special x-ray machine. Contrast dye is injected through the catheter so that x-ray movies of your carotid arteries can be taken.

Your physician uses the images to evaluate the blockages. Symptoms of a blockage in

one or both of the carotid arteries can be dizziness, confusion or stroke.

Risk factors of carotid artery disease include:

- Age
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- Abnormal lipids or high cholesterol
- Diet high in saturated fats
- Insulin resistance
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Sedentary lifestyle and
- Family history.

Your physician generally checks your carotid arteries in your physical examination. If further examination is necessary, your physician will arrange tests in the Cardiac & Vascular Center.

## Pink Glove Fun

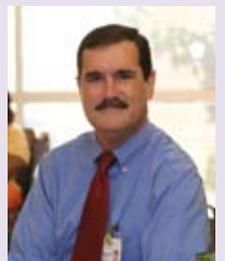


Employees have a little fun wearing the pink gloves that the Medical Center purchased as a visible reminder that early detection and prevention is the key to reducing breast cancer. Women 40 and older should have a mammogram annually.

## In My View

### We Value Our Mission.

"Halifax Regional Medical Center exists to meet the healthcare needs of our community by providing excellent and compassionate services – and always placing patients first."



That is the mission each of us here works hard every day to achieve, and it's very gratifying to hear from patients that we have succeeded. Following are excerpts of some written comments we've received recently:

*"I just want to take a few minutes to thank the staff at HRMC for all they did to care for my dad, James Parker. ... Every staff member we came in contact with was helpful, friendly, supportive and caring. ... I greatly appreciate everything that was done for Daddy and the manner in which it was done."*

- Margaret Dickens, Littleton

*"We just wanted to send this E-mail kudos to let you all know how incredibly \*wonderful\* Chris Arquilla was with us in regards to time spent, his patience with us in answering all of our questions and quelling our fears. ... Thank you to EVERYONE who helped us that evening...we \*sincerely\* appreciate it."*

- Brian and Meredith Schoepner, Fuquay Varina, NC

*"My son was seen in the ER on Friday for a really bad broken arm. From the time we entered the emergency department until the time we were discharged from ACU, we received exceptional care."*

- Courtney Slaughter, Roanoke Rapids

As always, we encourage and appreciate your feedback. At Halifax Regional, it's Patients First.

Will Mahone  
President

wmahone@halifaxregional.org

## Dr. Maradiaga New Chief of Staff



Gerardo Maradiaga, MD

Growing up in Honduras, Gerardo Maradiaga was close to his uncle, a physician who was the medical director for Dole, the famous company that employs thousands of Hondurans in producing fruits and vegetables.

"He was my mentor," said Dr. Maradiaga, who recently was elected Chief of the Medical Staff at Halifax Regional. "He encouraged me to come to the United States for part of my medical training.

After graduating first in his class at the University of Honduras Medical School, Dr. Maradiaga came to the United States and completed his residency at Deaconess Hospital, which is affiliated with the School of Medicine of St. Louis University.

Then, his mentor in Honduras told him about his friend, Marco Caceres, a retired surgeon in Roanoke Rapids. (After retiring from his medical practice, Dr. Caceres now is the Medical Director of the Wound Care Clinic at Halifax Regional.)

"Dr. Caceres encouraged me to move to Roanoke Rapids to practice medicine," Dr. Maradiaga recalls. "He told me that Roanoke Rapids is a wonderful community and a great place to rear children."

So Dr. Maradiaga came to Halifax Medical Specialists in 1994. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine. He also is Clinical Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine at the UNC School of Medicine. In addition, he is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians.

Today, he enjoys being a mentor himself. He works with UNC medical students who rotate through his office. "They learn the real world of medicine," he says.

Dr. Maradiaga's family includes his wife, Maria Malena, who is a nurse in the Intensive Care Unit at Halifax Regional and three children, all in college.

He recommends that residents of the Roanoke Valley use Halifax Regional when they need hospitalization. "The Medical Center provides excellent services and patients have good outcomes," he says. "Halifax Regional has invested millions in bringing excellent technology which benefits the community."

As Chief of the Medical Staff, Dr. Maradiaga works closely with Will Mahone, President of Halifax Regional, and the Board of Directors. "We have a common goal with the community," he says, "and that is to improve the health of the community. Our satisfaction comes when we make a difference."

## Medical Staff Officers

**CHIEF OF STAFF**  
Gerardo Maradiaga, MD

**VICE CHIEF OF STAFF**  
Natarajan Rajan, MD

**SECRETARY**  
Somasekhara Balla, MD

## Wound Care Center Scores Going Up



Titus Williams is treated for his wound.

Opened less than one year, Halifax Regional's Wound Care Center already is receiving strong marks.

The center has earned a 75% healing rate. "We are pleased with this score, since the center has been in business a short time," said Mick Olesnevich, RN, manager of special services at Halifax Regional. "But we are constantly striving to improve."

Lisa Clippard, RN, the clinical coordinator of the center, traces success to the ability to determine what is keeping the wound from healing. "Once we learn that, we move forward in a shorter period."

She says the healing rate also comes from the time the staff spends with patients to learn about their health. "We communicate with their doctors to let them know what we have found," Lisa explains. "Sometimes, their medication needs to be changed."

Lisa also reports that patients like the additional space in the clinic and parking at the new location on the Halifax Regional campus. "We have more exam rooms, so the wait times for patients are lowered, and there is increased privacy," Lisa says.

The Wound Care Clinic is located in Building C. The address is 244-C Smith Church Road. For information, call 252 535-2350.

# You Are Kidding!

## Record Broken at Joint Care Center



*Mick Olesnevich, RN, manager of the Joint Care Center, shows the names of Megan O'Brien and Pat Callahan at the top of the chart.*

The Joint Care Center is recognized for great outcomes when patients undergo hip, knee and shoulder replacements and especially for the fast healing.

Now, the center may be developing a reputation for competition.

It starts with the unique program in which patients walk after surgery. Their results are posted for other patients to see. Sometimes, that can cause friendly competition.

Take Megan O'Brien and James Callahan for instance. They are two Virginians who met at the Joint Center. A Roanoke resident, Megan came for a hip replacement, her second in eight weeks. James, a resident of Emporia, came for a knee replacement.

After their surgeries, they started walking together as prescribed for recovery.

"I noticed that whenever I walked 200 feet, James then walked 300," recalls Megan. "So, I walked 400."

Then, it really cranked up. "During the night, I walked some more to get ahead of James. I'd go back to sleep, and when I woke up, he was ahead of me again.

"We'd walk together during the day, but when I took a nap, all of a sudden, he had gone ahead of me on the chart. Finally, the nurses settled us down, and we agreed to call a truce."

"I saw them one day in front of the walking board with their canes upside down," said Mick Olesnevich, RN, who manages the Joint Care Center. "They were hitting a balled up surgical cap

back and forth to each other as if it was a golf ball. They had a lot of fun together and spurred each other and the rest of the patients that week to do their best."

Each had walked more than 34,000 feet, setting a new record for the Joint Center.

Today, they email occasionally, but the competition is over.

"The fabulous staff makes a huge difference," Megan says. "The walking is tough but it makes recovery so much faster."

Megan soon was sleeping on that hip. "I had no scar tissue after this surgery and was back at work in two weeks and resumed daily activities," she says.

"I had been in pain for 15 years and now I am pain free," Megan reports. "It is amazing."

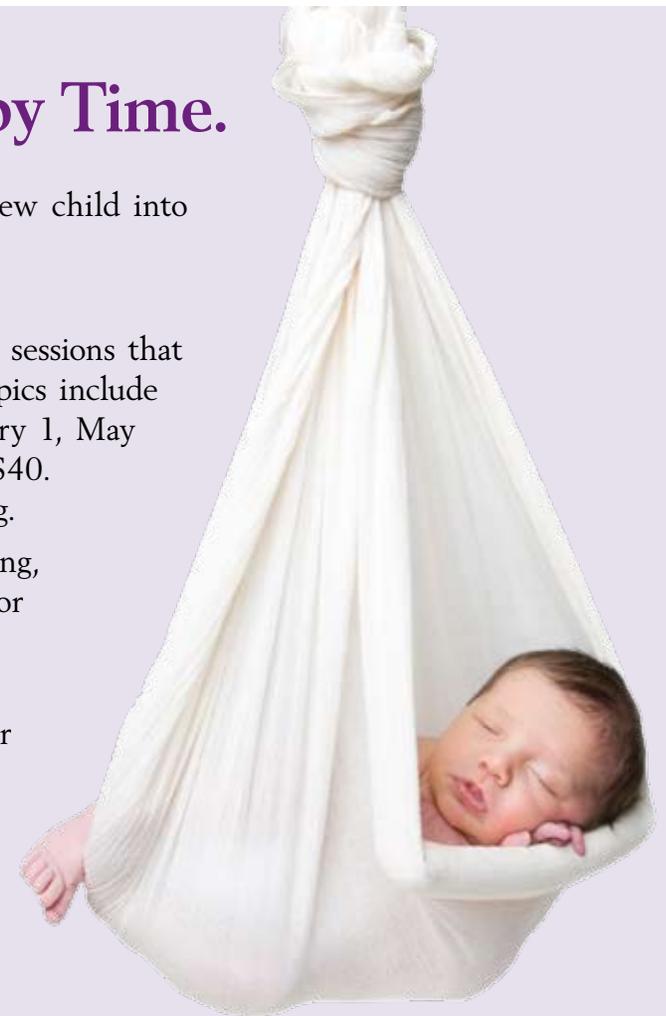
Megan and James are among thousands of people who have benefitted from the unique experience of the Joint Care Center. If hip or knee pain is getting to be more than you can take, call us at 252 535-8496. Watch out if you are the competitive type.

## Making Your Special Time a Safe and Happy Time.

The Birthing Center at Halifax Regional is more than a wonderful place to bring your new child into the world. It's a learning place, too.

In 2011, The Birthing Center again will offer several classes for expectant parents.

- **Prepared Childbirth** classes will be held throughout the year. They are four day class sessions that focus on the process of labor and delivery, post partum period and newborn care. Topics include relaxation and breathing techniques and comfort measures. The sessions begin February 1, May 3 and August 2. Weekend sessions are held on January 8, April 2 and July 23. Fee: \$40. Register by contacting Lori Moseley, RN at 252 535-8702 or [lmoseley@halifaxrhc.org](mailto:lmoseley@halifaxrhc.org).
- **Baby Care Class** covers skills needed for your baby. Topics include birthing, diapering, cord care and safety. Fee: \$10 per couple. Register by contacting Lori at 535-8702 or [lmoseley@halifaxrhc.org](mailto:lmoseley@halifaxrhc.org).
- **Sibling Class** is one hour long and is intended to help big brother or big sister prepare for a new family member. For children 2-7 years of age. No charge. Register by contacting Lori Moseley at 535-8702 or [lmoseley@halifaxrhc.org](mailto:lmoseley@halifaxrhc.org).
- **Healthy Pregnancy Class.** We help each prospective mother give birth to a healthy term baby and understand the changes her body makes during pregnancy. Breastfeeding is taught during each of the classes, which are held from 2 to 3 p.m. Mondays at The Birthing Center. Contact Cyndi Eaton, RN, at 252 535-8277 or [ceaton@halifaxrhc.org](mailto:ceaton@halifaxrhc.org) to register. No charge.
- **Breastfeeding Support Group** meets from 3 to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays at Halifax Medical Plaza (Conference Room 2) on the Halifax Regional campus.



# Do You Dream of a Good Night's Sleep?

Halifax Regional has updated the rooms in its Sleep Center for a modern, home-like appearance.

The rooms have new equipment, including flat-screen televisions. "Patients appreciate having a private room and the home-like environment," said Doris Ivey, coordinator of the sleep lab.

The Sleep Center is where people who have difficulty sleeping come for an analysis. They check into their private room, watch some television, and then sleep.

"During the night, we measure a number of conditions, including brain waves, oxygen level, snoring, heartbeat and eye movement," said N.C. Sekaran, MD, medical director of the Sleep Center. Dr. Sekaran is board certified in sleep medicine. Patients are discharged early the next morning.

Sleep apnea is a widespread disease, but is not diagnosed often enough and can be a serious risk to an individual's health. "Left untreated, snoring and sleep apnea are a contributing risk factor in high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, motor vehicle accidents, and poor work performance," said Dr. Sekaran.

Sleep apnea occurs when the upper airway becomes too narrow, causing breathing difficulties. "If the airway becomes completely blocked and the individual temporarily stops breathing, that

is called an 'obstructive apnea,' which can last for 10 seconds or longer and may happen frequently during the night," Dr. Sekaran explained.

Following are some signs of sleep apnea:

- Your partner has noticed that you gasp or stop breathing during sleep.
- You have severe snoring and are waking up frequently.
- You often wake up feeling tired.
- You sometimes feel excessively sleepy during the day.
- Your energy and motivation levels have decreased.
- You find it difficult to concentrate.

If you have sleep apnea, there is an effective treatment called continuous positive airway pressure therapy. A device at your bedside delivers pressurized air through a small mask or nasal pillows system. This pressure acts like an "air sprint" to keep your upper airway open and help prevent apneas. The device is available in different models and has many types of masks.

The treatment involves no drugs or surgery and helps you enjoy a healthier sleep and a healthier life, says Dr. Sekaran.

If you are having difficulty sleeping, call Doris Ivey at 252 535-8941.



Doris Ivey shows remodeled room to a patient of the sleep lab.

## Sign Up Today.

*Halifax Regional wants you to have more information about how to take care of your health. We are expanding our health education program and would like to send you information via email.*

*When you sign up for HealthEd, you'll receive emails with tips for a healthy lifestyle, information about special events at Halifax HealthLink and news about the services at Halifax Regional. PLUS, if you are not a member of HealthLink, you'll get a FREE one-month membership.*

*To sign up, go to [www.halifaxregional.org](http://www.halifaxregional.org) and click on the "Sign up for HealthEd" icon.*

**Seventeenth Edition.** *Spirit of Halifax* is the newsletter of Halifax Regional, published quarterly to inform residents of the Roanoke Valley about the advancements at the Medical Center. If you have questions or comments, please contact Gail Wade at 252 535-8111 or [gwade@halifaxrhc.org](mailto:gwade@halifaxrhc.org). © 2010, Halifax Regional Medical Center.

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