



# CalvertHealth



## Marathon Man

Heart Attack Survivor  
Gets Confidence to  
Run Again.

*See Story Page 6*





A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeremy Bradford".

**Jeremy Bradford, MBA**  
President & CEO  
Calvert Health System

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## *Our Commitment for 2024*

This past September marked the one-year anniversary of CalvertHealth's affiliation with Duke Health for cancer care. That's one year of bringing innovative and leading-edge treatments to our patients and making sure our providers and staff have access to the latest thinking in cancer treatment. It also means we are one year closer to bringing clinical trials to our community.

As we expand our efforts for our Cancer Center here at CalvertHealth, I am proud of the progress we've made with Duke Health. Out of all the NCI-Designated Centers we considered to affiliate with, Duke outpaced all the others when it came to collaborating with community hospitals. Duke is also among the top 25 comprehensive cancer networks in the nation, and that is no small feat.

Our patients are already reaping the benefits from this affiliation, and so are our providers. Chief Medical Officer and Director of CalvertHealth's Cancer Program **Dr. Theodore Tsangaris**, was recently appointed as an Associate Consulting Professor in the Department of Surgery at Duke University School of Medicine. This appointment serves as a bridge to providing academic and research excellence at CalvertHealth. And **Drs. Kenneth Abbott and Arati Patel** were invited to speak as guest faculty at the Duke Cancer Network's Duke Cancer Review. This year's theme was Dynamic Partnerships: Bridging Rural and Urban Access to Cancer Care.

As we finalize our strategic plan for 2024 and beyond, cancer care will continue to be one of our top priorities. Cancer is challenging and it's different for each patient. CalvertHealth's affiliation with Duke Cancer Network has enabled us to advance, adapt and accelerate our efforts to give each patient the individualized care they need.

Our cancer mission is to build a cutting-edge cancer program for all patients in and around the region, and I am happy to report, we are well on our way.

We are known for a lot of things – the most important of which is our commitment to our community. Please take a moment to check out the highlights and happenings (*see page 3*) as well as a full list of CalvertHealth's most recent achievements on the back cover of this issue.

Every day, I am reminded how special CalvertHealth is when patients or family members stop me in passing to let me know about the excellent care they received. We are grateful to have been a part of your story and want to celebrate your success with you. Jim Morelli (*see story page 4*) and Frank Holiday (*see story page 6*) are two that come to mind. You can check out additional stories on our website by scanning the QR Code on page 5.

*A great community hospital is in your back yard. Get to know us.*

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**ON THE COVER:** Heart attack survivor Frank Holiday, 49, of Lusby training to run his first-ever marathon after completing cardiac rehab at CalvertHealth Medical Center. *See story page 6.*

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## CalvertHealth Garners 4-Star Rating from CMS

CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) has achieved a 4-star overall hospital quality rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS), placing it among the top 12 hospitals in the state. The CMS ratings are widely considered a key indicator of quality.

The CMS Care Compare website ranks quality of care at Medicare-certified hospitals across the country. The website ranks hospitals against 48 measures of quality including mortality, safety of care, readmission, patient experience, and timely and effective care.

## Lung Cancer Screenings Show 46% Hike

CalvertHealth experienced a 46% increase in active participants in its lung cancer screening program in 2022 over the prior year. The program's growth enhances the potential for detecting more lung cancers in earlier stages when treatment options have a better chance to produce positive outcomes.

This is of particular concern in Calvert, with its high rate of smoking. Prior to the introduction of low-dose CT, most lung cancer cases have historically been found at later stages.

**Visit [calverthealthmedicine.org/Lung](https://calverthealthmedicine.org/Lung) to find out if you are at risk and what you can do.**



## CalvertHealth Receives Health Care Heroes Award



CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) has received *The Daily Record's* Health Care Heroes – COVID 19 Organizational Award for its outstanding response to the pandemic. Each year, the statewide newspaper recognizes those in Maryland who go above and beyond to make an impact on the quality of health care within the state.

"Over the past few years, these health care heroes have adapted to face numerous challenges and rapidly changing needs," said Suzanne Fisher-Huettner, managing director. "The Daily Record thanks them for their leadership, expertise and care."

## CalvertHealth Recertified as Primary Stroke Center

CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) has once again been designated as a Primary Stroke Center, signifying its ongoing commitment to quality patient care. This is the fourth time the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems has designated CHMC as a Primary Stroke Center since 2008.

This designation assures stroke patients CalvertHealth is using the latest and best therapies and treatments to ensure the best possible outcomes. Stroke is a leading cause of death and disability in the U.S. Early detection and treatment are key to improving survival, minimizing disability and speeding recovery times.

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# READY TO GIVE UP— Man Finds Hope & Healing at Wound Center

After 21 surgeries in three months following a life-threatening rupture of his abdominal aorta, James Morelli left Ohio and came home to Calvert ready to give up. At the Center for Wound Care at CalvertHealth, he found healing and perhaps, more importantly, he found hope.

“In the winter of 2022, I was pushed into the wound center in a wheelchair, attached to drainage tubes, anticipating an early end to my once active life,” said Morelli. “Six months later, I walked out on the strength of my own rehabilitated legs, free from tubes and cords, with a hope for the future that I thought was permanently lost. They truly helped to save my life.”

The 62-year-old father of three girls was working on a solar farm construction project in Ohio when the rupture (*which involved many blood vessels in his stomach and abdomen*) occurred. “I was in so much pain all the time, I pleaded with the doctors there to let me die.” Desperate after all the surgeries, he called a lifelong friend to drive him home against medical advice where he planned to die peacefully in his Chesapeake Bay home.

*When you fall in life, your family catches you and stands you back up.*

In a very real sense, Morelli said he found family at CalvertHealth’s wound center. “They provided me with warmth and caring ... a sense of security and comfort ... and the support I needed to get back on my feet. They treated me like family.”

## Wound Team’s Upbeat Spirit Encouraged Recovery

“Greeting our patients with a smiling face, a confident manner and a calming voice is a critical part of what we do,” said nurse practitioner **Aldene Doyle-Colvin, DNP, WCC, EDS-C**, who directs the wound center. “When they come to us, they are scared and in pain.

“We do everything we can to make them feel more comfortable and secure,” she added. “If there is a smile on the patient’s face when they arrive or I hear laughter coming from the treatment rooms, I know we have made a difference. This gives me purpose.”



*James Morelli shown with Diann Parran (left) and Dr. Aldene Doyle-Colvin, who encouraged him and provided the resources needed on his road to recovery.*



Morelli clearly recalls his first visit. “I did not have a positive outlook and I certainly did not look good. But from day one, I felt more encouraged when Dr. Doyle and Diann put their arms around me and said: ‘You are our family now.’

“They approached my care with an intelligence and compassion that I will never forget. Their consistently upbeat personalities, reassuring language and earnest investment in my care helped reframe my outlook on possibilities for a fulfilling life after this medical nightmare.”

## Wound Care Plan Tailored to Patient’s Unique Needs

“Wound care management is holistic and must be tailored to each patient,” stressed Dr. Doyle. “Mr. Morelli’s wound was complex and required specialized equipment and coordinated care involving skilled nursing, home health, physical therapy and later on, plastic surgery.”

Because of the size and severity of his wound, Morelli initially had a wound vac, a negative pressure device used on patients with chronic wounds. It helps promote healing by draining excess fluid, reducing swelling, increasing blood flow to the wound and drawing together wound edges. His treatment involved a thorough cleaning, debridement (*removal of damaged tissue*) and dressing change twice a week.

*“They made me want to get better.”*

*– Jim Morelli,  
Wound Care Patient*

“It was a painstaking process, but they were always so kind and caring and positive,” said Morelli. “They would take measurements and say: ‘It’s getting smaller. It looks good.’”

When needed, the wound center connects patients with nutritional counseling, diabetic education and financial counselors. They also provide resources for diabetic foot care and assistance with ordering supplies and durable medical equipment as well as family and caregiver education.

Morelli went on to add, “The entire wound care team was very friendly. They took a genuine interest in my story and made lasting connections with visiting family. They repeatedly recalled details of my interests and my loved ones. They laughed with me.”

Today, his wound is closed and he has been discharged but Dr. Doyle said, “He knows that the wound center is here if and when he needs us.” For his part, Morelli said he is once again looking forward to life.

## Free Preventive Vascular Screening Offered

The most common forms of vascular disease are abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA), carotid artery disease and peripheral vascular disease (PAD) – all serious and life-threatening, often occurring “silently” without any symptoms. For this reason, early detection and treatment are crucial.

CalvertHealth offers a free preventive vascular screening for those 50 and older with one or more of the following risk factors: smoking, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, high cholesterol or a family history of vascular disease.

### Three simple tests are performed:

- ✓ **Carotid Artery Screening** – An ultrasound to evaluate narrowed arteries and plaque build-up, which can increase the risk of stroke.
- ✓ **Abdominal Aorta Aneurysm (AAA) Screening** – An ultrasound to screen for dilation or enlargement of the abdominal aorta.
- ✓ **Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI) – Screening** to check for PAD, which may pose a threat to the health of the legs and is often a sign of heart disease.

The screening is available to those persons who are not currently being followed by a vascular doctor or had any vascular screening performed. Pre-registration is required. Please call **410.414.4539** to make an appointment.



## WANT MORE?

SCAN the QR CODE for more stories about celebrating success.



## MEET THE SPECIALIST

Certified wound care specialist **Aldene Doyle-Colvin, DNP, WCC, EDS-C**, oversees the Center for Wound Care at CalvertHealth. She has 20 years of nursing experience with 14 years in caring for wounds and ostomy. She specializes in treating complex wounds and is also a certified excisional debridement specialist.





# Heart Attack Survivor Gets Confidence to Run Again

*One year after suffering a devastating heart attack that left him without a pulse for 31 minutes, 49-year-old Frank Holiday of Lusby is poised to run his first-ever marathon after completing the cardiac rehabilitation program at CalvertHealth Medical Center.*

“The most important thing I learned in cardiac rehab is how resilient the body is,” said Holiday. “With the correct instruction, and a willingness to keep at it and not quit ... it is amazing how your body can recover. I would never have believed it.”

The North Point High School welding teacher was playing basketball with some students when he collapsed last fall. Later he learned he suffered a heart attack known as a widow-maker, which is almost impossible to survive. But thanks to fast-thinking students and persistent teachers who performed CPR, he is around to tell his story.

**“There were definitely warning signs.”**

“I had some shortness of breath and chest pain under exertion,” said Holiday, who has a small landscaping business. “I would walk up a hill and be gasping ... it would be so tight. I chalked it up to age and being hot and humid.

“I was 48 ... I would never have thought in a million years that something was cooking in there,” he said. Holiday was transported by ambulance to MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center in Clinton and then flown by helicopter to MedStar Washington Hospital Center, where he had double bypass surgery.

Statistics tell us there is a heart attack every 40 seconds in the U.S. It is the #1 killer of men and women. For this reason, it is important to know the warning signs and to take them seriously. *(See box at right).*

**“They gave me the confidence to believe.”**

“I was at Washington Hospital Center for two weeks,” Holiday said. “I couldn’t walk for weeks afterward. Getting up off the couch to go to the coffeemaker was draining and depressing.

“I thought cardiac rehab would be a great way to build a habit of exercising again and see what I could do,” he said. “I was actually looking forward to it.”

One of cardiac rehab’s main goals is to teach patients who have suffered a heart attack or heart surgery how to exercise safely and confidently so they will continue on their own after they leave the program.

“For me, the program was empowering and hugely informational,” Holiday said. “I learned a tremendous amount about how blood pressure works; oxygen saturation, what an EKG is tracking, how far you can push yourself and when you’re in the danger zone.”





## “It is a revolutionary change in my lifestyle.”

“The last time I ran, I was 21 years old,” he said during our interview in July. “Last month, I logged 127 miles, even with one week off for vacation. I do a 30-minute stretching routine, ab work, weights and calisthenics ... then running and training for long distance.”

Holiday said he is filled with gratitude for the cardiac rehab team. “You can tell how much they genuinely care.”

After completing the cardiac rehab program, he joined a local fitness center. “I had the habit built, so I wanted to keep it going. Now, I wake up at 4:30, work out from 5-6, drive to Waldorf for school and cut four to five lawns in the evening.”

He has made other changes, as well. “I am tracking calories. I’ve switched to a heart-healthy eating plan... I eat a lot more fruits and vegetables (and rice). I track my blood pressure daily, measure my oxygen. I pray every morning. I try to sleep 7-8 hours.

I exercise every day and go to church on Sunday.”

He went on to add, “This type of event has the potential to wake you up to life. It has brought me to a razor-sharp focus to what is right in front of me. I know I am blessed and I am grateful. I live with the reality that it could be yanked away at any second. I live with this big, giant scar. It is a part of me.

“Don’t get lost in what-ifs. Ask yourself: Am I going to sit around and eat a bag of potato chips and watch TV or am I going to do something? There is no shortcut to running a marathon ... it is one step after another.”



**WANT MORE?**

SCAN the QR CODE > for more stories about celebrating success.



## Cardiac Rehab Program

### Nationally Accredited

The cardiac rehabilitation program at CalvertHealth Medical Center is certified by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. AACVPR-certified programs are recognized as leaders in the field because they offer the most advanced practices available.

“This certification demonstrates that the highest level of cardiac rehab services is available in our community,” said **Holly Dooley, MSN, RN, CCRP, NEA-BC**, who coordinates CalvertHealth’s program. “Our cardiac rehab team is dedicated to providing our patients with the tools they need to get healthy and stay healthy.”

If you have had a heart attack or heart surgery, cardiac rehab is an important part of your recovery. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cardiac rehab can help prevent another, perhaps more serious heart attack and can help you build heart-healthy habits.

CalvertHealth’s cardiac rehab program, which began in 2002, has steadily grown and last year logged 2,546 patient visits. The 12-week program, which is covered by most insurance, includes monitored exercise three days a week and is designed around each patient’s personal needs and physical condition. Nutrition counseling is offered along with education about how to modify risk factors.

## How to Recognize a Heart Attack

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but others start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort.

Pay attention to your body and call 911 if you experience:

- Pain or discomfort in the chest
- Lightheadedness, nausea or vomiting
- Jaw, neck or back pain
- Discomfort or pain in the shoulder
- Shortness of breath

Symptoms can vary between men and women. The most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women may experience other symptoms that are typically less associated with heart attack, such as shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Even if you’re not sure it’s a heart attack, have it checked out.

**Don’t hesitate to call 911.**

**Minutes matter. Fast action can save lives – maybe your own.**

Learn more at: [Heart.org/HeartAttack](http://Heart.org/HeartAttack)

Source: American Heart Association





# TURNING 40?

## *It's Time to Get Your First Mammogram*

A mammogram may not be at the top of your to-do list when you turn 40, but it should be! The American Cancer Society estimates approximately 297,790 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in U.S. women in 2023. What's more, 9% of all new cases of breast cancer in the United States are diagnosed in women under the age of 45 and 85% of breast cancers happen to those with no family history of it.

### **Why Your First Mammogram at 40 is a Vital Health Priority**

You may think you're too young to get breast cancer, but that's not true. While breast cancer in younger women is rare, it is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women ages 15-39.

"Mammograms continue to be the gold standard of care for breast health," said **Dr. Arati Patel**, board-certified medical oncologist with CalvertHealth Hematology & Oncology. "And the earlier we detect cancer, the easier it is to treat. Simply put, early detection saves lives."

With advances in technology, a 3D mammogram can show changes in the breast more than a year before detection through a self or clinical exam. Studies show women whose breast cancers are diagnosed in the earliest stages, at stage 0 or stage 1 – have a nearly 100% five-year survival rate. It's important to establish a baseline





(or screening) mammogram early on so that radiographers will recognize when changes occur. “The baseline mammogram will serve as a comparison point for all future mammograms,” said Patel.

## Be Your Own Breast Friend

Don’t skip your annual mammograms beyond 40. Remember, mammography is detection, not prevention. Having a normal mammogram is excellent but does not guarantee that future mammograms won’t pick up early signs of breast cancer. And if you are older than 40 and haven’t yet had a screening mammogram – go online or call today to schedule an appointment (*see information at right*).

In addition to getting a screening mammogram at 40, it is essential to complete a monthly self-exam to check for lumps, as breast cancers are often found during routine self-exams. “The biggest gift you can give yourself is to be self-aware because the moment you notice developing symptoms is the moment you need to reach out to a healthcare provider,” said Patel. She went on to emphasize that you

*“Simply put,  
early detection  
saves lives.”*

*– Dr. Arati Patel*

shouldn’t wait until your next screening if you notice changes. Reach out to your healthcare provider immediately.

## It’s time to schedule your first annual screening mammogram. *Where Can I Go to Get Screened?*

Contact American Radiology Services | Calvert Medical Imaging Center or American Radiology Services | Patuxent Imaging at 410.535.4111 to schedule your 3D mammogram today! Remember, a referral is not needed for a screening mammogram. If you are not insured or underinsured, no- or low-cost screening options are available. Contact the Calvert County Health Department at 410.535.5400 x 334 for more information.

## MEET THE DOCTOR

**Dr. Arati Patel** is a board-certified medical oncologist with CalvertHealth Hematology & Oncology and has been practicing in Calvert County for more than 20 years. Dr. Patel serves as the medical director for the Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care, which she was instrumental in establishing in 2010. Most recently, Dr. Patel has been excited to share an even more individualized treatment experience with her patients due to CalvertHealth’s affiliation with **Duke Health** in cancer. “Cancer is not just one disease. It is many different diseases and different for each patient,” she explained. “Our affiliation with Duke Cancer Network has enabled us to advance, adapt and accelerate our efforts to give each patient what they really need.”



## Health System Foundation Welcomes New Member

Solomons resident **Judy Switick** has been named to the CalvertHealth Foundation Board of Trustees. She joins 14 other community members who are currently serving.



“I spent 15 years as a nurse and have now entered a new phase in my career as a Health and Life Coach. My experience practicing in these healing professions gives me some knowledge and also perspective,” said Switick. She continued, “I believe strongly in health as a foundation of our lives. While this means different things to each of us, and different things at different stages in our existence, I believe we all have right to receive the best care and attain the best level of health we can.”

Switick is most excited about CalvertHealth’s Cancer Care initiatives. “CalvertHealth has some really big, audacious goals for cancer care – and to see that they are coming to fruition is so impressive.” She previously volunteered and is still a board member for a small charitable organization called *In the Pink*, which provides cancer support services to those living in her former community of Jacksonville, Florida.

“With her corporate background and prior healthcare experience, Judy brings a wealth of knowledge and understanding to our work,” said **Theresa Johnson**, Vice President for Brand Strategy and Philanthropy. “Knowing that she is especially passionate about cancer care, Judy will be a valuable asset in helping us grow the program and realizing our cancer mission to build a cutting edge cancer center right here in our region.”

Switick and her husband Kevin have been married for nearly 40 years. They love to travel and spend time with family, including their three children and five grandsons.

# Aging Gracefully

The Path to Aging Well Can Start at Any Time

*No matter which decade you start, it's never too late to start practicing healthy habits to ensure an active and independent future.*

"It's never too late to start. There are small things we can do on a day-to-day basis that will lead to health benefits not just now but down the line," said board-certified family medicine physician **Dr. Michelle Folsom-Elder**.

Dr. Folsom-Elder's philosophy of health as we age is divided into two components: *somatic health*, which includes physical health such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer risk – and *behavioral health*, including anxiety, depression and grief. It's important as we deal with aging to respond to both aspects.

Making positive changes to your health can be difficult, but it helps to have longer-range thinking to the adjustments. Start with just one thing you want to be successful at and include your entire family. Combatting smoking and obesity are great first places to start. Name what matters to you as you age and live your life now to support that. If being able to be active with grandchildren matters, stay physically active. If reading matters, keep your brain sharp.

"Whenever you are doing something difficult, it's important to recognize the why. Being healthy and happy as you age is a great reason," Dr. Folsom-Elder said.

## Physical Activity & Aging

"Prevention of disease is one of the most important things that we can do for ourselves," said Dr. Folsom-Elder.

A huge part of disease prevention is physical activity. It's best to start physical activity young doing moderate exercise five days a week for 30 minutes, but if that time has passed it's never too late.

For people ages 65 and over, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends at least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity activity, at least two days a week of strength activities, as well as balance activities. For adults 18-64 years old, the recommendation is 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity





activity and two days a week of strength activities. For all age groups for those with disabilities or physical conditions, the CDC recommends as much activity as one is physically able to do in order to avoid inactivity.

Start small and work up to getting more activity in – it can even include gardening or walking. Consider smaller “micro workouts” too.

For example, Dr. Folsom-Elder said a patient would go into work 10 minutes early to do the stairs, then do 10 minutes of stairs during lunch, and stay 10 minutes late after clocking out to do stairs or walking and they were able to get a better control on blood sugar levels and their weight.

Don't forget about non-aerobic exercise. Many Americans have issues with flexibility and balance and often programs focusing on agility and balance training can help. Feeling strong helps reduce fall risk and maintain bone density. *Continued on next page*

## CalvertHealth: Helping You Make Positive Changes

CalvertHealth is proud to join with our community partners to bring you classes, wellness programs, health screenings and events to help you be your healthiest!

**Diabetes Education & Self-Management** – Our certified diabetes care & education specialists are helping to improve the lives of patients and their families through ongoing free workshops, one-on-one counseling and special classes for pregnant women.

**Fitness Offerings** – Go online to learn more about the variety of options for staying active such as Rock Steady Boxing for Parkinson's, Gentle Yoga, Tai Chi, Fit for Life and Early Riser Fit for Life.

**Cancer Screening Programs** – Funding is available through the Calvert County Health Department (CCHD) for free colorectal, breast, cervical and lung screening and diagnostic testing for eligible residents.

**Tobacco Cessation Classes** – Free day and evening individual and group quit smoking classes are offered by the CCHD. The one-hour class is taught for eight weeks in person and virtually. Free cessation products are provided for those who attend.

**Support Groups** – Support groups are available for breast cancer, cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's and stroke.

### **More resources for getting engaged:**

<https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/113/Office-on-Aging>

<https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/>

# Raising the Bar for Patient Care.

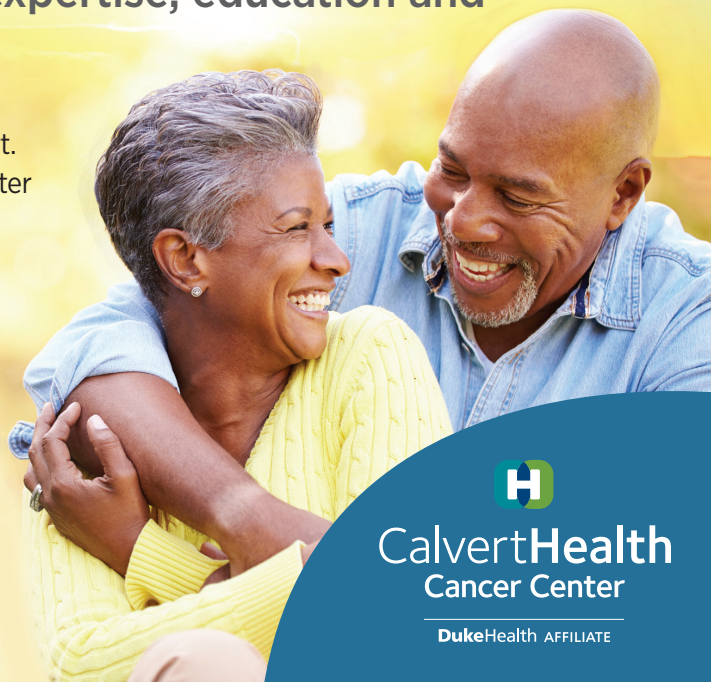
CalvertHealth and Duke Health - bringing expertise, education and experience to local cancer center.

CalvertHealth's affiliation with Duke Cancer Network is an important and exciting step in bringing the best oncology care available today to Calvert. They are a true leader in their field – focused on developing new and better approaches to preventing, diagnosing and treating cancer.

## Here's why this is good news for you.

*This affiliation provides local patients with access to:*

- ✓ The resources of an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center
- ✓ The latest cancer research and leading-edge treatment advances
- ✓ Clinical trials only available at the best cancer hospitals in the country
- ✓ Second opinions from all types of cancer experts for treatment planning



CalvertHealth  
Cancer Center

DukeHealth AFFILIATE

*Continued from page 11*

## Your Mind & Aging

Surrounding yourself with other people is important at all stages of life particularly as you age. Local senior centers provide important community and resources for seniors, even behavioral health services.

Dr. Folsom-Elder said some seniors can get worried about health conditions worsening, are fearful of aging, or are grieving the loss of loved ones. Even the run-of-the mill adjustment to a new stage of life is plenty reason to seek behavioral health services to help you age gracefully.

Aside from senior centers, Dr. Folsom-Elder challenges seniors to look for ways to engage in community in meaningful ways, especially if you can get some physical activity in at the same time. For example, take a walk at a park with a church group.

One particular concern many have about aging is memory loss. Unfortunately, there is no silver bullet to avoid it, but you can stave off worsening to a degree. Physical

activity and a healthy diet as well as refraining from smoking and all nicotine products. Staying mentally and socially active also impacts memory loss. Activities such as reading and word games like crossword puzzles can mitigate the onset or worsening of memory loss.

Once someone starts showing signs of memory loss, it's time to be seen by a doctor, Dr. Folsom-Elder said. It's important to determine or rule out other factors like vitamin deficiency and thyroid problems. Sometimes what seems like memory loss is actually another condition.

"There's a lot of shame around memory loss. There are sometimes modifiable reasons behind memory loss like partial deafness that appears to be memory loss but you're not hearing well. The same goes for worsening vision."

*Surrounding yourself with other people is important at all stages of life particularly as you age.*

## CALVERTHEALTH METABOLIC & BARIATRIC SURGERY PROGRAM

# The Weight is Over.

*Helping patients create a brighter future for themselves.*

***Losing weight rarely comes easy. But for some it's a lifelong struggle that remains out of reach no matter how hard you try.*** Find out if it's time to explore surgical weight loss options from our Bariatric & Metabolic Surgery team.

Let our highly skilled team directed by leading weight loss authority Dr. Ramzi Alami guide you through every step of the process ... and cheer you on as you finally start to see results. Dr. Alami has performed more than 2,000 procedures in the past 17 years and has taught other surgeons in the field.

**For more information, call 410.535.8195 or visit:  
CalvertHealthMedicine.org/Bariatric**



**CalvertHealth**  
Surgical Specialists  
of Southern Maryland

COMING NEXT ISSUE:  
**100 Lives Changed**



## New GI Specialist Joins CalvertHealth Medical Group

Gastroenterologist **Hamna Fahad, MD** has joined CalvertHealth Medical Group. Dr. Fahad, who is board certified in internal medicine, diagnoses and treats the full spectrum of GI conditions, from routine visits for heartburn and indigestion to colon cancer screenings.



*“I strongly believe in shared decision-making with my patients.”*

She has a special interest in inflammatory bowel disease and liver disease.

Dr. Fahad trained in internal medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, consistently ranked as one of the top three hospitals in the country. “While there, I was fortunate to learn from world-renowned specialists and published numerous research articles in the field of gastroenterology that furthered my interest in the specialty.”

She went on to pursue a fellowship at Henry Ford Hospital in Michigan, one of the largest gastroenterology and hepatology tertiary care referral centers in the state. “This gave me the unique opportunity to treat some of the sickest patients and learn about some of the rarest diseases.”

Dr. Fahad said, “I strongly believe in shared decision-making with my patients.” She went on to add, “When patients better understand their disease and why they are feeling a certain way, it promotes compliance and allows for better patient satisfaction.” She sees patients in Suite 101 of the Medical Office Building.

## New Surgical Services Director Named

CalvertHealth welcomes **Sherry Walker, MSN, CNOR, CSSM** as director of surgical services. She is an experienced healthcare professional who brings 15 years of nursing experience – almost all of that in perioperative services to her new role.

After starting her career as a registered nurse in a level 1 trauma center in 2008, Walker gained clinical expertise and a reputation as a leader in her positions at City of Hope, a comprehensive cancer center in California, BridgePoint Healthcare in Washington, DC and University of Virginia Health, where she assisted with heart and lung transplants.

“I am passionate about employee engagement and fostering a workplace that people want to stay in,” said Walker. “CalvertHealth is a family. You can feel it when you walk in the doors. I have never worked somewhere that had such a strong community connection and everyone genuinely cares about each other.”

She went on to add, “CalvertHealth is small but mighty. We don’t have an endless bench of providers, but the providers we have are outstanding. My priority for the coming year is to ensure CalvertHealth is aligned with best practices that support excellent and safe patient care.”



*“CalvertHealth is a family. You can feel it when you walk in the doors.”*

## Sorochty Chosen VP for Human Resources

Calvert Health System (CHS) has named **Christian Sorochty, MBA, SPHR, SHRM-SCP** as vice president for Human Resources. He is a seasoned human resources executive with broad-based leadership experience in regional and national organizations over the past 17 years.

Most recently, he served as vice president for a regional health system, supporting three hospitals, multiple ambulatory sites and 6,800 employees. While there, he restructured recruiting and developed strategies to retain clinical staff, which enabled the organization to successfully open a 16-bed behavioral health hospital and new cardiac program during the pandemic.

Upon joining CalvertHealth, Sorochty said, “I enjoy the sense of community CalvertHealth embodies as a community hospital. I am aligned with the CEO’s philosophy on how to take care of the workforce as well as the community. I believe I can make a real difference here. I know my input will put us in a better place moving forward.”

He has a master’s degree in business administration in human resources management. Additionally, he is a Senior Certified Professional by the Society for Human Resources Management, which recognizes the extensive knowledge he has attained during his career.



*“I enjoy the sense of community CalvertHealth embodies as a community hospital.”*

# TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR Cholesterol

## Lower Your Heart Disease Risk with Simple Swaps

One of the top risk factors of heart disease – high cholesterol – is something you can take charge of reducing with these simple diet changes – today!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 46% of Americans live with at least one of the top three risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking. Locally, heart disease and stroke were identified as top health priorities for residents in the 2020 Calvert County Community Health Needs Assessment. In many cases, high cholesterol can be controlled with dietary changes.

*Recently, we sat down with board-certified cardiologist Dr. Cassius Belfonte of Calvert Internal Medicine Group to learn more about how high cholesterol increases our risk for heart disease and how we can control it by eating healthier.*

“Avoid fast food and processed foods, avoid food that is heavy in cheese and butter – but definitely the fast foods,” said Dr. Belfonte.

High cholesterol leads to plaque buildup on the arteries over time, which can lead to a heart attack. High cholesterol increases the risk for heart disease and stroke, according to the CDC. Most healthy adults should get their cholesterol checked every 4-6 years, but those with risk factors will need to be tested more often.

Dr. Belfonte recommends that individuals with high cholesterol eat more (unsalted) nuts, seafood, vegetables, and fruits. For protein sources, stay away from pork and beef.

The simplest changes to help lower cholesterol can be to switch regular butter for low-fat and cholesterol friendly versions, substituting vegetable oil for more cholesterol-friendly oils like avocado oil and olive oil, and swapping whole milk for almond milk or skim milk for whole milk.

Managing cholesterol with diet doesn't totally mean removal of foods, either. Some foods can raise your “good” or high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol





such as fish and seafood, unsalted nuts, and avocados. You don't have to give up all cheese, Dr. Belfonte said, but focus more on lower fat cheeses like mozzarella and low-fat cottage cheese.

Breakfast could be a challenge for those with high cholesterol, since many favorite American breakfast foods like bacon and sausage have high amounts of it. Dr. Belfonte said one egg a day is usually fine for cholesterol levels, but more than that could contribute to high cholesterol.

"For breakfasts, I encourage patients to focus on fruit, oatmeal and nuts," Dr. Belfonte said. Personally, he's a fan of simple breakfasts like toast and bananas.

## Cholesterol-friendly Breakfast Ideas

Many common breakfast foods are also big cholesterol culprits. Try these satisfying breakfast combinations that will help keep your cholesterol in check:



- **Yogurt parfait** with low-fat Greek yogurt and fresh fruit
- **Banana split yogurt parfait:** Slice a banana lengthwise, serve with low-fat Greek yogurt, fruit, and chopped unsalted nuts
- **Alaskan avocado toast:** Mash half an avocado onto a slice of whole grain toast, layer smoked salmon on top
- **Chocolate strawberry protein oats:** Prepare one serving of oatmeal according to package instructions. Remove from heat and add one scoop of chocolate protein powder and sliced strawberries
- **Peanut butter cup protein oats:** Prepare one serving of oatmeal according to package instructions. Remove from heat and add one scoop of chocolate protein powder and one tablespoon of peanut butter powder (such as PB2)
- **Green smoothie:** Combine one single-serve container of Greek yogurt, one cup of almond milk, one half avocado, and one cup of fruit into a blender and blend until smooth
- **Breakfast caprese toast:** On a slice of whole grain toast, spread a layer of ricotta cheese, drizzle with olive oil, and top with tomatoes, basil, and a drizzle of balsamic vinegar



## Cardiac Care at CalvertHealth

CalvertHealth offers leading-edge diagnostic imaging services coupled with robust rehabilitation programs for our cardiac patients. Our anti-coagulation clinic helps those on blood thinners better manage their medications. While our wellness classes and screening programs will help you learn to eat healthy, exercise, quit smoking and successfully manage your personal heart disease risk factors.

**Cardiac rehabilitation** at CalvertHealth is a medically supervised, monitored, patient-centered program in a progressive training environment. A provider referral is required to schedule an appointment. Most insurance is accepted. *(Learn more on page 7.)*

At CalvertHealth's **Anti-Coagulation Clinic**, patients can have their blood drawn, get their results immediately and a pharmacist or nurse practitioner can adjust the dosage if necessary and answer any questions. Most insurance plans cover this service and a physician referral is required.

By living a healthy lifestyle, you can help keep your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels normal and lower your risk for heart disease and heart attack. Our **Community Wellness** team is here to help you make the lifestyle changes that can have a big impact in preventing cardiovascular problems. *(Learn more on page 11.)*

*The sophisticated interventional system at CalvertHealth Medical Center produces high-quality images enabling our staff to perform even the most delicate procedures with accuracy and confidence.*





CalvertHealth®

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CalvertHealth  
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# We are known for a lot of things – the most important is our commitment to our community.

### ● Known for Exceptional Quality.

**2023** – Named one of *Becker's Hospital Review's* Great Community Hospitals.

**2023** – Achieved The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Hospital Accreditation for delivering quality, safe patient care.

**2022** – Received American Heart Association's highest honor for stroke care – Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award – *11 years in a row.*

### ● Known for Clinical Excellence.

**2023** – Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as high performer for heart failure, kidney failure, hip fracture, back surgery (*spinal fusion*) and COPD.

**2022** – Affiliated with Duke Health to increase local access to advanced cancer care.

**2020** – Achieved the highest performance among all Maryland hospitals for clinical care, patient safety and patient perception (*based on 2019 data*) released by the Hospital Services Cost Review Commission.

### ● Known for Outstanding Patient Safety.

**2023** – Garnered 4-star overall hospital quality rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services .

**2023** – Earned a “B” from Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade recognizing our commitment to patient safety.

**2023** – Honored by the Maryland Perinatal-Neonatal Quality Collaborative for our hypertension initiatives.

### ● Known for Excellent Patient Care.

**2023** – Received *The Daily Record's* Health Care Heroes Award for our outstanding response to the pandemic.

**2019** – Attained Accreditation with Commendation from American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer – placing us among top community cancer programs in the country.

**2019** – Completed \$51-million expansion to convert to all private patient rooms.

### ● Known for Meeting Vital Community Needs.

**2023** – Designated a Primary Stroke Center by the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services.

**2022** – Added \$76 million (*over the past five years*) in cutting-edge technology, renovated facilities and expanded services to attract the best and brightest to CalvertHealth.

**2021** – Partnered with Sheppard Pratt Health and invested \$3.8 million to renovate behavioral health unit to expand mental health services.

**2021** – Created bariatric surgery program to target widespread obesity in the region.

A great community  
hospital is in  
your back yard.

GET TO KNOW US.