



CALVERTHEALTH



Warm Welcome

Plans for Birth Center Redesign Delivers Better Experience for Parents

The Duke Difference
Relationship transforming local cancer care
Page 4

Game Plan
Take action to prevent type 2 diabetes in kids
Page 8

Winter Checklist
What to do before the sniffles even start
Page 10

Bringing Our Vision to Life

As we continue to navigate the evolving landscape of health care, our commitment to you remains steadfast. At CalvertHealth, our vision is to be the trusted healthcare leader in our region, providing you and your loved ones with the highest quality care close to home. We are deeply committed to ensuring you have access to the latest advances in medical care, compassionate service and state-of-the-art facilities right here in our community.

One of the ways we are bringing this vision to life is through our ongoing relationship with Duke Health for cancer care, which allows us to offer clinical trials that were once only accessible at large, academic institutions. This collaboration is a testament to our dedication to providing cutting-edge care and advancing cancer treatment options in our community. We are incredibly proud to share how “The Duke Difference” is making a profound impact on our patients’ lives.

In addition to expanding our medical offerings, we are also deeply invested in improving our facilities to better serve you. Our upcoming renovation of the Family Birth Center is a significant step forward in our commitment to enhancing patient care. This project will modernize and expand our birthing facilities, ensuring families have access to the most advanced and comfortable environment possible during one of life’s most precious moments. We are excited to begin this journey and look forward to welcoming families into the newly renovated space.

At the same time, we are creating a 14,581-square-foot Women’s Health Suite in the Calvert Medical Office Building. The new space will combine all women’s health services into one centralized location, providing greater convenience and continuity of care.

We are also pleased to celebrate two major milestones. Recently, we completed our 100th robotic surgery, a significant achievement that highlights our commitment to innovative care and advanced technology. Additionally, we have received national recognition from *Becker’s Hospital Review* as one of a small number of great community hospitals for the second year in a row. These accomplishments are a testament to the hard work of our team and demonstrate how we are working to be your trusted health leader.

These efforts reflect our unwavering dedication to being more than just a healthcare provider – we strive to be a trusted partner in your health and wellness journey. We are here for you, committed to advancing our services and continuously investing in the future of health care in our community.

Thank you for trusting us with your care. We are honored to serve you and look forward to continuing to grow and innovate together.

ON THE COVER At CalvertHealth, we believe exceptional care begins at birth. We are excited to announce plans to renovate the medical center’s Family Birth Center, transforming the existing space into a modern, patient-centered environment.

See story page 18.



Jeremy Bradford, MBA
President & CEO
Calvert Health System

BOARD of DIRECTORS

Rev. David G. Showers
Chair

Wilson Parran
Vice Chair

Barbara Gardner
Secretary

Scott Reeves
Treasurer

Jeremy Bradford, MBA
President and CEO

Samuel Foster, MD
Chief of Medical Staff

Stephanie A. Dabulis, MD
Vice Chief of Medical Staff

Anthony Butters

Chang B. Choi, MD

The Honorable Marjorie Claggett

Gerald Clark

Mike Cox

Kathy Dickinson

Rev. Christopher Garcia

Lisa Harford

Karen O'Brien

Uday R. Patel, MD

Sally Showalter

Yolanda Wilson, Ed.D

YOUR CALVERTHEALTH

4 **The Duke Difference: Enhancing Cancer Care at CalvertHealth**

Local Patients Benefit from Access to Clinical Trials

LIVE WELL

8 **Steps Families Can Take to Help Kids Prevent Type 2 Diabetes**

10 **BRRR...Prepare Your Family for a Healthy Winter**

14 **Is Lung Cancer Screening Right for You?**

ASK THE SPECIALIST

12 **Managing Common GI Problems**

When It's Important to See a Specialist

JUST FOR YOU

16 **What Every Man Needs to Know About Vasectomies**

IN EVERY ISSUE

3 **Highlights & Happenings**

7 **New Faces**

18 **Making a Difference**

Birth Center Project Prioritizes Modernized Facilities, Comfort, Family Approach to Care

CalvertHealth Medical Center does not discriminate with regard to patient admissions, room assignment, patient services, visitation privileges or employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, religion, culture, language, ability to pay or socioeconomic status. Scan the QR Code for more information. >



CalvertHealth Named **Great Community Hospital**

CalvertHealth Medical Center was recently named one of Becker's Hospital Reviews "100 Great Community Hospitals" for 2024. Many of these hospitals have been recognized by rankings and ratings organizations for their excellent clinical care, outstanding patient outcomes and high performance in specialty services.

"This accolade is a testament to the dedication of our entire team and medical staff that goes above and beyond to ensure our patients receive the best possible care," said CalvertHealth President and CEO **Jeremy Bradford**.

CalvertHealth Celebrates 100th Robotic Surgery

On Aug. 29, the surgical robotics team at CalvertHealth Medical Center completed its 100th robotic surgery. The robotics program is the latest step in the medical center's multi-faceted strategy to grow its surgical program to provide area residents with enhanced access to advanced surgical options.

The advanced technology offers several important benefits to patients including less pain, shorter hospital stays, quicker recovery, smaller scars and improved patient satisfaction. While general and bariatric cases have dominated so far, there are plans to expand its use in cancer-related surgeries particularly prostate cancer.



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 14 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.



"Providing safe, quality care is paramount to our commitment to the community," said CalvertHealth President and CEO **Jeremy Bradford**. Across the health system, there is an ongoing focus on clinical and environmental safety, rigorously monitoring processes and outcomes, looking for opportunities to improve.

Recently, CalvertHealth was awarded a "B" Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, a national patient safety ratings organization. Leapfrog assigns a grade to nearly 3,000 general hospitals across the country based on how well they prevent medical errors, accidents and infections.

Editor-In-Chief
Theresa Johnson

Managing Editor
Amy Lutz

Contributing Writers
Sarah Fallin
Judy Lundmark

Layout & Art Direction
Sue Dippel

Medical Editorial Director
Dr. Theodore Tsangaris

Medical Contributors
Dr. Kenneth Abbott
Dr. Bilal Ahmed
Dr. John Cooper
Dr. Hamna Fahad
Dr. Arati Patel
Darleen Reinking, RDN,
LDN, CDCES



The Duke Difference: Enhancing Cancer Care at CalvertHealth ●●●

Local Patients Benefit from Access to Clinical Trials

For more than two years now, CalvertHealth's relationship with Duke Health has been transforming cancer care in our community—bringing world-class expertise, cutting-edge treatments, and now, clinical trials, directly to Southern Maryland—ensuring our patients receive the highest standard of care without having to leave the region.

An Affiliation Rooted in Excellence

“Our affiliation with Duke Health represents excellence in every aspect of cancer care,” said **Dr. Theodore Tsangaris**, CalvertHealth's Cancer Program Director. “For the past two years, this relationship has allowed us to elevate the level of care we provide, giving our patients access to Duke's renowned cancer services right here in our community.”

The relationship has been the cornerstone of CalvertHealth's commitment to bringing the best in oncology care to our patients. The Duke Cancer Network, backed by the resources of the Duke Cancer Institute—ranked among the top four percent of U.S. centers designated as a National Cancer Institute Comprehensive Cancer Center—has been instrumental in this effort.





“They are a leader in their field,” Dr. Tsangaris emphasized. “Their focus on developing new and better approaches to cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment has had a direct impact on our ability to deliver top-tier care. This collaboration has enabled us to keep our staff trained and educated on the latest advancements, and now, it’s allowing us to offer clinical trials to our community.”

Continued Access to Leading Cancer Experts

Over the past two years, our affiliation with Duke Health has also provided our providers with easy access to second opinions from cancer subspecialists working at the academic level. These specialists collaborate with our exceptional oncology team during tumor boards and cancer conferences where treatment plans for local patients are discussed. “In our community, we see all kinds of cancers,” said **Dr. Bilal Ahmed**, medical oncologist at CalvertHealth. “Having easy access to cancer experts at this level has been a

“Clinical trials remain the gold standard for the treatment of cancer in patients.”
– **Dr. Kenneth Abbott, Medical Oncologist**

game-changer. It allows us to collaborate closely with specialists who are deeply immersed in specific cancer types, ensuring that our patients receive the most informed and effective treatment plans.”

Learning from the Best

“Access to the educational resources of the Duke Cancer Network has been an incredible opportunity for our entire team,” said CalvertHealth medical oncologist Dr. Arati Patel. “Oncology is a rapidly evolving field, and being able to learn from some of the country’s top researchers has had a direct impact on the quality of care we provide.”

“Cancer is not just one disease,” she continued. “It’s many different diseases, each unique to the patient. Our
continued on next page

The Power of Clinical Trials



One of the most exciting aspects of this collaboration is the ability to offer clinical trials right here at CalvertHealth. Clinical trials are essential in the development of new cancer treatments, offering hope to patients who may have exhausted other options. These trials test the effectiveness and safety of new drugs, therapies, and treatment approaches, providing access to the latest medical innovations.

Previously, patients in our community who wanted to participate in a clinical trial often had to travel long distances to major research hospitals. This could be a significant burden, especially for those already facing the physical, emotional, and financial challenges of a cancer diagnosis. “Clinical trials remain the gold standard for the treatment of cancer patients,” said **Dr. Kenneth Abbott**, medical oncologist at CalvertHealth. “Being able to offer these trials locally means our patients can now participate in groundbreaking research that was previously only available at the nation’s leading cancer hospitals.”

Dr. Arati Patel, another medical oncologist at CalvertHealth, added, “Clinical trials cover every aspect of patient care, and having access to these innovative strategies gives our patients opportunities that we haven’t had before in a community setting.”

Duke Cancer Network has been pivotal in guiding the development of CalvertHealth’s clinical trials program, ensuring that we follow best practices derived from 50 years of research. This collaboration means our patients can now benefit from treatments that are still in the experimental stages, giving them access to therapies that may be more effective than standard options.

continued from pg 5

ongoing affiliation with Duke Cancer Network has enabled us to continually advance, adapt, and accelerate our efforts to give each patient exactly what they need.”

Why Duke Health?

The Duke Cancer Network’s unmatched expertise in collaborating with community hospitals across the country makes them the ideal choice for CalvertHealth. As one of the top 25 comprehensive cancer networks, Duke Health shares our commitment to patient care, fostering an exchange of knowledge, insights, and experience that benefits everyone involved.

For our patients, this longstanding affiliation means continued 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

““ Having easy access to cancer experts at this level has been a game-changer.” – Dr. Bilal Ahmed, Medical Oncologist

A Future of Hope

At CalvertHealth, we understand that a cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming, but our relationship with Duke Health continues to offer hope. By bringing clinical trials and cutting-edge treatments to our community, we are not just treating cancer—we are transforming cancer care in Southern Maryland. This collaboration ensures that our patients receive the best possible care, close to home, with access to the latest advancements in the fight against cancer.

With “The Duke Difference,” CalvertHealth is revolutionizing cancer care, offering our patients a brighter future and the best chance at beating the disease.



Celebrating 15 Years of Comprehensive Breast Care in Southern Maryland

Since the CalvertHealth Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care opened its doors in 2010, it has changed the landscape of how breast care is provided in Southern Maryland. Our goal is to provide comprehensive, coordinated care tailored to the needs of each patient. And as the women and men who have been screened, diagnosed and treated here can tell you – ***the right care makes all the difference!***



CalvertHealth[®]
Sheldon E. Goldberg
Center for Breast Care

To learn more, call
410.414.4700 or
scan the QR Code.



WE OFFER:

- Multidisciplinary Breast Care Team
- Designated Breast Care Navigator
- Latest Imaging Technology
- Genetic Risk Assessments
- High-Risk Clinic
- Resource Center and more...



Brinkley Named Chief Nursing Officer

Laural Brinkley, RN, BSN, NEA-BC, has been selected as Chief Nursing Officer at CalvertHealth Medical Center. She is an advanced nursing executive with nearly 20 years of experience, leading teams, improving performance and fostering teamwork and collaboration. Brinkley is noted for her abilities to deliver high quality, cost-effective, best-in-class care.

“I believe strongly in patient-centered care that honors and respects each individual by delivering excellent outcomes through clear communication,” Brinkley said. “From the moment a patient arrives, I want to ensure they feel welcome and confident in their care. When they leave our care, they should feel empowered, reassured and connected to a supportive community.”

She has held numerous nursing leadership positions at University of Maryland Charles Regional as well as MedStar Washington Hospital where she worked for 16 years. At CalvertHealth she will oversee surgical services, the intensive care unit, family birth center, behavioral health and the emergency department in addition to wound care, med-surg units, case management, clinical education and guest services.



“I want to ensure patients feel confident in their care.”

Foundation Board Welcomes Tremaglio

The CalvertHealth Foundation is pleased to welcome new trustee, **Tamika Tremaglio, Esq., MBA**, of Dunkirk. The Southern Maryland native brings expertise in finance, law and leadership to her new role. Currently, managing partner of TA Sports Ventures, she was formerly executive director of the National Basketball Players Association.



“I thrive to live a life in service to others.”

“I’ve seen firsthand how strategic decision-making and financial stewardship can transform organizations, especially in health care, where lives and well-being are at stake,” said Tremaglio, who has served on several organizations, globally, nationally and regionally including chairman of the Board of the University of Maryland School of Law, Tuskegee University, Mt. St. Mary’s University and Lady Gaga’s *Born this Way Foundation*.

She went on to add, “I see this as an opportunity to directly impact change to a broader population in my local community. I am excited about several things – being involved in fundraising efforts that engage the community, working toward reducing healthcare disparities and leveraging technology and innovation to improve patient outcomes. Overall, I’m excited to be a part of initiatives that will leave a lasting impact on the community’s overall health and well-being.”

Harford Joins CalvertHealth Board

Chesapeake Beach resident, **Lisa Harford**, has joined the Calvert Health System Board of Directors. Harford, a retired software engineer, has volunteered at the hospital more than 18 years and currently chairs the 148-member auxiliary.

“I have continued to volunteer all these years because I honestly love this hospital,” said Harford. “There are so many good, dedicated people here. I’m honored to be on the CalvertHealth board.”

She went on to add, “I have served in so many areas of our hospital, I do feel I have a good grasp of everything our hospital provides for our community.

“I am most excited about the Cancer Center and our affiliation with Duke. We are lucky to have Dr. Tsangaris and his team. It’s comforting to know we don’t have to travel far to get great care.”



“CalvertHealth is an epicenter of the community.”

Helping Kids Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

Simple Steps to Make in Your Family Routine ●●●

Risk of type 2 diabetes and prediabetes is a growing concern as one in three American children are obese and one in five children ages 12-18 are prediabetic. Every family has steps they can take together to help their children grow up as healthy as they can.

People with type 2 diabetes either have too little insulin or their insulin does not work well, so they have high blood sugar levels that must be controlled with oral medications, insulin, and incorporating healthy lifestyle behaviors including healthy eating and regular exercise.

Type 2 diabetes can lead to serious health problems for children, which develop gradually throughout many years. Complications can include high cholesterol, heart and blood vessel disease, stroke, nerve damage, kidney disease and eye disease.

Take Action Family Style

A healthy diet and exercise is key for overall health for the whole family, and for type 2 diabetes prevention. There are a few simple steps most families can make in their routines to make a big difference.

“It is important for families to reward their children with something other than food,” said **Darleen Reinking, RDN, LDN CDCES**. A registered dietitian and certified diabetic education specialist for more than 30 years, Reinking teaches and provides medical nutritional therapy at CalvertHealth Medical Center where she treats all ages. For young children, stickers and sticker charts can be highly motivating for positive reinforcement.



“It is important for families to reward their children with something other than food.”
– Darleen Reinking, Registered Dietitian & Certified Diabetic Education Specialist

For older children, working toward the goal of a bigger purchase that is more tangible could be an option for some families.

Consider ways to get the whole family moving. After dinner walks, bike rides, or scooter rides as a family can be a great habit to move and spend more time together as a family. Some families can have a family hobby or activity they learn together like pickleball or hiking. When signing up children for sports, consider having one or both parents volunteer to help with the team so the rest of the family gets extra physical activity.

Next, model healthy eating in your own life. Strive to have as many meals together as a family, away from screens as much as possible. Try challenging your family to have 20 dinners together in one month with an incentive like a day at a local festival or holiday event. Encouraging healthy eating in children can be a challenge with various preferences, schedules, or factors such as neurodivergence, which can make children sensitive to certain tastes and textures. If you have concerns about your child's nutrition health, contact your local registered dietitian at CalvertHealth Community Wellness 410-535-8233.

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

It's important to speak positively about food and body image even while encouraging changes in health habits.

“Eating disorders are complex medical issues that have serious physical, mental, and psychosocial consequences with high mortality rates,” said Reinking.

Eating disorders have been on the rise since the pandemic, so it's important to encourage positive behaviors and know the risk signs including: your child won't eat any foods from one or more food groups, your child losing or not gaining enough weight, weight fluctuations, strained family relationships related to what your child will or will not eat, restrictive or regimented eating, expressing unhappiness about their body or weight, exercising much more than usual and spending a lot of time in the bathroom.

“If you have concerns talk to your child and talk to their primary medical care provider. Even if you are wrong, it can lead to an important conversation about healthy eating and body image that could help prevent future eating disorder. If you are right, then it will get the help your child needs sooner,” Reinking said.

Diabetes Prevention

TIPS for PICKY EATERS



Encouraging healthy habits in children who are picky eaters can be a special challenge. Try these tips. If your child's picky eating is a concern, talk to their doctor.

- Offer new foods alongside preferred food
- Offer a new food several times; don't give up after the first attempt
- To replace sugary drinks with more water, infuse the water with fresh fruit or try using crystalized citrus packets such as True Lime® to flavor the water without any additional sugar
- Snack on freeze-dried fruit to get in more fruits and vegetables
- Make nutritious smoothies with frozen fruit, plain yogurt, and a handful of greens to boost fruit and vegetable intake
- Involve children in food preparation by borrowing cookbooks from the library to select healthy meals they would like to try
- Enlist the help of children in preparing fruits and vegetables for the week: have children pick grapes off their stems, portion out berries, and chop vegetables. Even preschool-aged children can help with kid-safe plastic chopping knives available from many retailers.
- Practice the “add one good thing” rule. Even when eating favorites like chicken nuggets or pizza, encourage children to add in at least one colorful produce item
- Make a “yes bin” in the refrigerator filled with healthy choices children can always have, no questions asked
- Make vegetables more appealing with a favorite dip, like yogurt-based ranch (combine a ranch seasoning packet with plain yogurt) or hummus
- Take your child to the grocery store produce department and allow them to pick out a few types of fruits and vegetable they haven't had before, then set up a taste test at home. Offer each food in several ways. For fruits, offer it sliced, mashed, or with a dip. For vegetables, offer it roasted, sauteed, boiled, or raw, with or without a dip.

BRRRR...

Prepare Your Family for a Healthy Winter

The most wonderful time of the year filled with fall and winter festivities also brings an increase in illnesses, ailments and isolation. Now is a great time to think about the steps you need to take to protect yourself and others.

Tackling Respiratory Illnesses

Respiratory illnesses or colds are one of the most common reasons why people miss work or school, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Adults average two to three colds a year, while children get more.

The symptoms of a cold typically peak two to three days after infection and include runny nose or nasal congestion, cough, sneezing, headache, mild body aches, and low-grade fevers. For adults, colds can usually be managed with over-the-counter pain

and fever reducers to provide temporary relief. In children, cough and cold medicines are not recommended for those younger than 6 years old due to serious side effects. However, younger children can still have pain/fever reducers.

In addition to over-the-counter medications to manage symptoms, you can also help your body by getting plenty of rest, drinking plenty of fluids, using a humidifier or cool mist vaporizer, using saline nasal spray/drops, using suction to clear mucus in children, breathing in steam from a bowl of hot water or a shower, using throat lozenges (or throat lozenge lollipops for children)

With such a wide range of potential cold symptoms and the potential for complications including ear infections, sinus infections, bronchitis, and pneumonia, it can sometimes be difficult to tell when a cold turns into something more that requires medical attention.

For adults and children with higher risk factors for severe illness, your doctor likely wants to see you sooner than the average patient. Those with higher risk factors should discuss with their doctor when they should seek medical attention for cold/flu symptoms.

For those without risk factors, seek medical attention if you have trouble breathing or breathe too quickly, for dehydration, a fever lasting longer than four days, symptoms lasting more than 10 days without getting better, if symptoms improve then return or worsen, or if chronic medical conditions get worse.



Maintaining Mental Health

With fewer hours of sunlight and fewer opportunities to get out of the house after the holiday festivities are over, many people struggle with loneliness in the winter season. Loneliness and isolation are huge contributors to mental health challenges which can include depression, seasonal affective disorder (SAD), and others, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Further, the department reports that the physical health consequences of poor or insufficient connection include a 29% increased risk of heart disease, a 32% increased risk of stroke, and a 50% increased risk of developing dementia for older adults. Lacking social connection increases risk of premature death by more than 60%.

If you experienced difficult winter seasons in the past for your mental health, talk to your doctor before the cold weather hits to discuss your plan for this winter. Also, consider coming up with your winter loneliness plan now. Scan the QR code below to read another loneliness story with other ideas on how to stay connected for your health.



BUSTING THE MYTHS of Cold Prevention

Some cold remedies/prevention techniques have become more popular online and on social media in recent years, but have varying degrees of effectiveness and safety.

Elderberry: Preliminary research suggests the dark purple berry may relieve cold or flu symptoms. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) state there's not enough evidence to support its use with a small number of studies. There are no studies for use for COVID-19. Raw unripe berries may cause serious illness and little is known about its safety for use while pregnant or breastfeeding.

Vitamin C supplements: Vitamin C supplements can shorten the duration of illnesses, but won't have any impact if you start to take the supplements once you're already sick, according to the NIH. Most people get enough Vitamin C in their daily diets, so supplements aren't necessary.

Honey: The CDC recommends use of honey in people over the age of 12 months for relieving coughs. Honey can cause serious illness in infants under the age of 12 months.



The number one way to protect against the flu is to get your flu vaccine!

Getting an annual flu shot will lower your risk of getting sick by 40-60% and if you do get the flu, it is often less severe. You can get your flu shot at your primary care provider's office or at your local pharmacy.



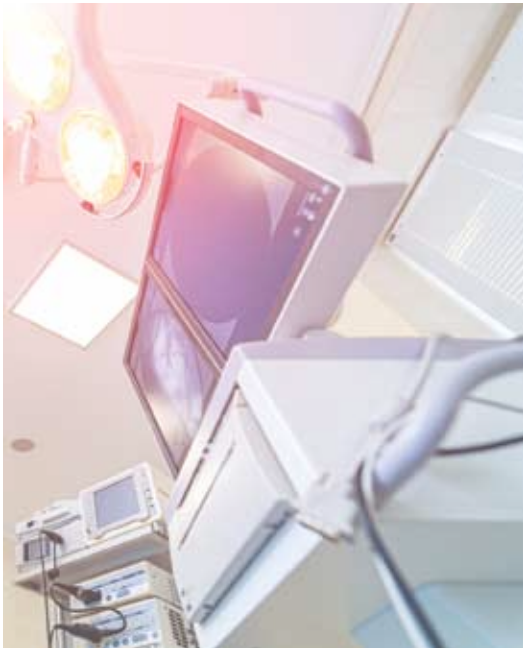
FALL HEALTH TIPS FOR ENTIRE FAMILY:

What to do before the sniffles even start

- Keep up to date on immunizations
- Teach all household members how to cover their nose and mouth when they cough or sneeze
- Start a routine of disinfecting highly touched surfaces like doorknobs, countertops and handrails
- Teach proper handwashing techniques to all family members
- Set family handwashing routines including washing before meals, washing when coming home, and after using the bathroom
- Regularly change your HVAC filters
- Consider purchasing a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaner
- Bring fresh air into your home as often as you can

Managing Common GI Problems ●●●

When It's Important to See a Specialist



As a hepatologist and gastroenterologist, **Dr. Hamna 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. She has a special interest in Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and liver disease.

Fatty Liver Disease on the Rise

Fatty liver disease is one of Dr. Fahad's top concerns as a hepatologist and gastroenterologist. For those with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), fat builds up in your liver. The disease is commonly missed because it has few or no symptoms. Some conditions such as obesity, metabolic syndrome, and type 2 diabetes are risk factors for NAFLD.

"If not managed timely, a potentially reversible condition can become a chronic illness, leading to end-stage liver disease and formation of liver cancer," Dr. Fahad said.

Having a hepatologist on staff, such as Dr. Fahad, is a unique asset for our community, allowing patients to receive expert care for liver diseases that might otherwise require referral to specialists outside the region. Dr. Fahad encourages her patients to seek care for liver disease as soon as they find out about it. Initial steps may seem unnecessary or burdensome to patients, but the steps can save them from more serious complications in the future. Often, the initial steps include a liver ultrasound every six months and regular blood work.

Weight loss is also commonly recommended for those with a NAFLD diagnosis. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, weight loss can reduce fat, inflammation and fibrosis in the liver. No medicines have been approved to treat NAFLD. Prevention of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease may be possible by eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight.

"If you have been diagnosed with fatty liver disease due to metabolic syndrome, weight loss, among other things, is essential," Dr. Fahad said. "At CalvertHealth, we can offer nutrition support and weight management resources to help you manage your condition better."

Dr. Fahad emphasizes the importance of early detection and treatment in liver diseases. Her proactive approach not only helps prevent the progression to more severe conditions but also empowers patients to take control of their health with the support of a multidisciplinary team.

Targeting Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is the third most common type of non-skin cancer in both men and women. According to the National Cancer Institute, it is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States after lung cancer. Colon cancer screening is key for early detection. The most recent statistics show the colorectal cancer incidence rate (2017-2021) for Calvert (35.0) is slightly less than the state (35.2) and national average (36.4). It is the fourth most common cancer among CalvertHealth patients.

Colon cancer screening is recommended for everyone after the age of 45, and sooner for those with circumstances such as family history. Screening tests can find precancerous polyps so they can be removed before they turn into cancer. Screening tests can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment works best.

Adequate preparation is essential to a successful colonoscopy. If your colon isn't clear, your healthcare provider won't be able to see properly inside. Some people dread the preparation for colonoscopy more than the procedure itself. But when you know what to expect, it doesn't need to be an ordeal. With so many different types of bowel prep kits to choose from, your healthcare provider

can help you choose the best formula for you. Also, other options for colon cancer screenings have become more widely available via stool testing.

"While colonoscopy remains the best screening tool to prevent colon cancer, I believe that the best screening tool is the one that gets done! So, if you are hesitant about getting your first colonoscopy, please explore the option of Cologuard® (*stool-based colon cancer screening*) with your primary care provider," Dr. Fahad said.

Stool-based colon cancer screenings aren't a good fit for everyone, and positive results require following up with a colonoscopy. People who are not candidates for Cologuard® include those with "new" symptoms of diarrhea, constipation, or blood in stool; people with family history of colon cancer of polyps; those with family history of colon cancer syndromes including Lynch syndrome, Peutz-Jeghers syndrome, MYH-associated polyposis and others; and those who have a personal history of ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease or otherwise at a higher risk of getting colon cancer.

Dr. Fahad stresses the importance of consulting with a healthcare provider to determine if Cologuard® is the right fit. "It's crucial that patients understand their individual risk factors and work with their provider to choose the most effective screening method for them," she notes.

MEET THE SPECIALIST

CalvertHealth hepatologist and gastroenterologist, **Dr. Hamna Fahad**, also treats ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, hepatitis C, hepatitis B and liver cirrhosis. She trained in internal medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, consistently ranked as one of the top three hospitals in the country. Dr. Fahad 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.



COLONOSCOPY PREP TIPS



Here are some tips for making your colonoscopy prep easier:

- Stay well hydrated for at least a few days before preparation starts.
- Adjust your diet days before your colonoscopy by eating less and choosing low-fiber foods can make the prep go smoother and easier.
- Refrigerate the prep at least 24 hours ahead of time. A cold prep goes down much easier. Using a straw can help with the taste.
- During the clear liquid diet phase of preparation, lack of calories may contribute to brain fog. If you know you are prone to this, consider taking the day off work or school for both your prep day and your procedure day.
- Make a variety of gelatin flavors (*without red or purple dyes*) a few days before your prep.
- You cannot chew gum or have hard candies during the clear liquid portion of your prep.
- Many compliant drinks for the clear liquid diet are sweet. Ensure you also have some savory options like clear broths.
- Stock up on soft toilet paper. And blot, rather than wipe too hard to reduce irritation.
- Set up a station the day beforehand with baby wipes, disinfectant wipes, the portable bidet, water bottles, sports drink bottles, and entertainment on a table or audiobook, and a few changes of clothes including a sweater (*in case of chills from the intense medication*).

Is Lung Cancer Screening Right for You?

Early Diagnosis Plays Major Role in Improving Outcomes ●●●

Lung cancer is the second most common cancer in both men and women in the United States, excluding skin cancer. For men, prostate cancer is more prevalent, while for women, breast cancer is more common, according to the American Cancer Society. However, lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide.

Early detection is crucial in the fight against lung cancer, and screenings can save lives. Dr. Arati Patel, a board-certified medical oncologist and director of the Lung Health Program at CalvertHealth, discusses the latest lung screening protocols and preventive measures available at CalvertHealth.

Q: What is lung cancer?

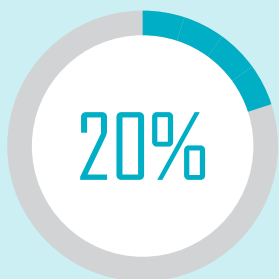
Lung cancer begins when abnormal cells grow in the lungs, which are the organs responsible for breathing. The two main types of lung cancer are non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and small cell lung cancer (SCLC). NSCLC accounts for about 80-85% of lung cancers, while SCLC makes up about 10-15%. SCLC tends to grow more quickly and is more commonly found in non-smokers. Early detection is essential to prevent further damage to the lungs, the key organs in the respiratory system.

Q: Why is early lung cancer screening vital?

Lung cancer often develops silently, with symptoms like a persistent cough, chest pain, or shortness of breath appearing only in the later stages. By the time these symptoms show up, the cancer may already be advanced, making treatment more challenging. That's why screening before symptoms start is crucial. Early detection through lung cancer screening can catch the disease in its earliest stages, when it's most treatable, significantly improving survival rates. Don't wait for symptoms—get screened early to protect your lung health and increase the chances of successful treatment.

Symptoms can vary from person to person, and some individuals may not experience symptoms in the early stages. "Detecting lung cancer early not only saves lives but also enhances the effectiveness of our treatments," says Dr. Patel, emphasizing the importance of early detection for long-term lung health.

EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES



If lung cancer is detected at an advanced stage, the five-year survival rate is roughly 20%.



If lung cancer is detected early, the survival rate increases dramatically to 60-90%.

Q: How does lung cancer screening improve survival?

Historically, most lung cancer cases have been diagnosed at later stages. “If lung cancer is detected at an advanced stage, the five-year survival rate is roughly 20%,” explains Dr. Patel. “However, if detected early, the survival rate increases dramatically to 60-90%. This is why early screening for high-risk individuals is so critical.”

In 2021, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) updated its guidelines for lung cancer screening using low-dose computed tomography (CT). Dr. Patel highlights that the goal is to identify lung cancer at earlier stages when treatment is more likely to be successful.

“We are dedicated to supporting individuals throughout the screening process,” says Dr. Patel. The program includes a nurse navigator to guide patients, a high-risk clinic for education and counseling, and a multidisciplinary thoracic team to create personalized care plans.

Q: Who should get screened?

Lung cancer screening is recommended for people who currently smoke or have smoked in the past. The American Cancer Society advises annual screening with a low-dose CT (LDCT) scan for individuals aged 50 to 80 with a history of smoking equivalent to at least 20 pack-years. For eligible patients, LDCT scanning is covered by Medicare and most private insurance companies. Patients are advised to check with their insurance providers to determine coverage. The screenings are part of a comprehensive effort

LUNG CANCER SCREENING



Are You Eligible? Take the Quiz

The USPSTF recommends annual screening for lung cancer with low-dose CT in adults aged 50 to 80 who have a 20 pack per year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years. Use the camera app on your cell phone or tablet to scan the QR code and take the quiz to see if you meet the screening guidelines for lung cancer.



To learn more about the lung health program at CalvertHealth, call 410.414.4575 to speak with our nurse navigator.

by CalvertHealth Medical Center, in collaboration with American Radiology Services | Calvert Medical Imaging Center and Chesapeake Potomac Regional Cancer Center.

“The screening is quick, painless, and covered by insurance,” says Dr. Patel. “Additionally, the health department offers grant funding for lung cancer screenings at no cost to qualifying individuals.”

Q: I’m a non-smoker. Am I still at risk?

While smokers are at the highest risk for lung cancer, quitting smoking significantly reduces the risk, even after years of smoking. However, lung cancer can still occur in non-smokers, though less frequently.

According to the CDC, about 10% to 20% of lung cancer cases (20,000 to 40,000 cases annually) occur in people who have never smoked or have smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime. Secondhand smoke is estimated to contribute to around 7,300 of these cases, and radon exposure to approximately 2,900.

RISK FACTORS You Can Change

AT RISK? Here’s some factors you can change, according to the American Cancer Society:

- ✓ **Smoking** is by far the leading risk factor for lung cancer. About **80%** of lung cancer deaths are thought to result from smoking. For assistance with quitting smoking, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit smokingstopshere.com.
- ✓ **Secondhand smoke** (*breathing in smoke from others*) can increase your risk of developing lung cancer. Secondhand smoke exposure is the third most common cause of lung cancer in the US.
- ✓ **People working with asbestos** (*in mines, mills, textile plants, shipyards, and insulation exposure*) are several times more likely to die of lung cancer.



What Every Man Needs to Know About Vasectomies ●●●

Deciding to have a vasectomy is a big step in any man's life, often accompanied by a lot of questions and concerns. Recently, we spoke with CalvertHealth board-certified urologist Dr. John "Jack" Cooper about the top vasectomy myths. Here, he provides expert insight into what men can expect before, during and after a vasectomy.

Q: What exactly is a vasectomy, and how does it work?

A vasectomy is a simple, outpatient surgical procedure that serves as a permanent method of birth control for men. During the procedure, we cut or block the vas deferens, the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles to the urethra. By doing this, we prevent sperm from mixing with semen during ejaculation, which means fertilization cannot occur.

Q: How long does the procedure take, and what is the recovery like?

The procedure itself usually takes about 20 to 30 minutes and is done under local anesthesia. Most men can return to work and normal activities within a few days, though we recommend avoiding heavy lifting or strenuous exercise for two weeks to allow proper healing. Some discomfort, swelling, or bruising is normal but typically resolves quickly.

Q: How effective is a vasectomy, and is it immediately effective?

A vasectomy is one of the most effective forms of birth control, with a failure rate of less than 1%. However, it's important to note it's not immediately effective. Sperm can remain in the vas deferens for several weeks or even

months after the procedure. We recommend using another form of birth control until post-vasectomy semen analysis confirms your semen is free of sperm. This usually requires about 20 ejaculations or three months after the procedure.

Q: Why is post-vasectomy testing necessary, and what does it involve?

Post-vasectomy testing is crucial to ensure the procedure was successful. The test involves analyzing a semen sample under a microscope to check for the presence of sperm. We typically ask for one or two samples after the procedure. Once the tests confirm there are no sperm, the vasectomy is considered effective. Until then, we advise continuing to use another method of birth control.

Q: There are many myths about vasectomies. Can you address some of the most common ones?

Absolutely. One of the biggest myths is that a vasectomy will affect your sexual performance or libido. The truth is, a vasectomy does not interfere with the production of testosterone, which is responsible for your sex drive. You should not notice any change in your ability to have an erection, your sex drive, or your ability to enjoy sex.

Q: What about the concern that vasectomies might increase the risk of cancer?

This is a common concern, but research has shown there is no increased risk of either prostate or testicular cancer after a vasectomy.

“ One of the biggest myths is that a vasectomy will affect your sexual performance or libido. The truth is, a vasectomy does not interfere with the production of testosterone, which is responsible for your sex drive.

– Urologist Dr. John Cooper

Earlier studies raised some questions, but more recent, well-conducted studies have definitively shown there is no link between vasectomy and cancer.

Q: How should someone decide if a vasectomy is right for them?

A vasectomy is a personal decision that should be made after careful consideration. It's a permanent form of birth control, so it's important to be certain you don't want to father any more children in the future. I always encourage patients to discuss this decision with their partner and consider their long-term family planning goals. We can also discuss any concerns or questions during a consultation to ensure you're making the best decision for your situation.

Q: What if someone changes their mind after getting a vasectomy?


While a vasectomy is considered permanent, there are options for reversal, though they are not always successful, and the procedure can be complex and costly. This is why it's so important to be sure of your decision before undergoing a vasectomy. There are also sperm banking options for those who may want to preserve their ability to father children in the future.

Q: What can men expect in terms of their health and lifestyle after a vasectomy?

After a vasectomy, most men return to their normal lifestyle with minimal disruption. You'll continue to produce the same amount of semen, just without sperm. Your testosterone levels and sexual function remain unchanged. The primary difference is you won't need to worry about unintended pregnancy, which many men and their partners find to be a significant benefit. As with any procedure, it's important to follow post-operative care instructions and attend any follow-up appointments to ensure everything has healed properly.

Q: Are there any long-term health effects of having a vasectomy?

The long-term health effects of a vasectomy are generally very positive, especially when it comes to family planning. There are no significant risks associated with the procedure beyond the typical surgical risks, which are minimal. Some men report minor discomfort or a feeling of heaviness in the scrotum for a short period after the procedure, but this typically resolves. Overall, a vasectomy is a safe, effective, and low-maintenance option for permanent birth control.



2025

VASECTOMY MADNESS

Schedule Your Vasectomy
to coincide with the NCAA college basketball tournaments in March 2025

CALL 410.535.8359
to learn more or schedule an appointment today!

MEET THE DOCTOR

Board-certified urologist, **John "Jack" Cooper, MD**, sees patients at CalvertHealth Urology, located in Prince Frederick. Dr. Cooper joined the CalvertHealth team in 2021 after earning his medical degree from The Johns Hopkins University and completing his surgical residency at The Ohio State University Medical Center, where he trained with leaders in the fields of urologic oncology and endourology.



Birth Center Project

Prioritizes Modernized Facilities, Comfort, Family Approach to Care ●●●

An ambitious renovation of the Family Birth Center at CalvertHealth Medical Center, the first major update since 1999, is slated to begin in 2025. The project will renovate 15,000 square feet of existing space and set a new standard of care for mothers and newborns in our community.

A Commitment to Exceptional Care

“At CalvertHealth, we believe exceptional care begins at birth,” said President & CEO Jeremy Bradford. He continued, “Our Family Birth Center is a cornerstone of this commitment, and this renovation will ensure our facility continues to offer the best possible start for our littlest patients. The 15,000-square-foot renovation will transform our existing space into a modern, patient-centered environment that reflects our dedication to the families we serve.”

Modernizing for the Future

The renovation will bring significant updates to our Family Birth Center. This includes the modernization of 12 postpartum rooms and five labor rooms, designed to provide comfort and safety for both

mother and baby. The project will also add a new consultation room for breastfeeding support or patient follow-up, ensuring new mothers receive the guidance and care they need during this crucial time.

A key feature of the renovation is the addition of four Labor, Delivery, Recovery and Postpartum (LDRP) rooms. These rooms allow mothers to experience the entire birthing process—labor, delivery, recovery, and postpartum care – in one location, enhancing comfort and convenience for both the patient and her family. This is a standard of care that is currently not available at the center, but one the organization is proud to offer in the near future.

Enhancing Efficiency and Safety

In addition to these patient-centered enhancements, the renovation will



PATIENT CARE FEATURES

- ✓ Modernize postpartum & labor rooms
- ✓ Comfort and safety key focus of design
- ✓ Four new LDRP rooms promote bonding
- ✓ New consultation room for breastfeeding support & patient follow-up

include a reconfiguration of the nurse station and other work areas. These changes are designed to improve the efficiency of patient care with better lines of sight and a safer environment for newborns. This focus on safety and efficiency aligns with CalvertHealth's strategic plan to continuously improve the quality of care provided to the community.

Insights from the Community: Survey Results

CalvertHealth's commitment to this renovation is informed by the voices of the community. In 2023, CalvertHealth conducted a comprehensive survey to understand what services and amenities community members desire in a Family Birth Center. The survey, launched on Mother's Day and conducted over a month, gathered feedback from women who were either currently pregnant or had delivered within the past five years.

The survey results were illuminating. The top priorities identified by respondents included the need for modernized facilities, more comfortable postpartum rooms, and a more family-inclusive approach to care. Many respondents emphasized the importance of having access to a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), a feature CalvertHealth leadership is evaluating as part of our long-term strategic planning.

Expanding Women's Health Services

In tandem with the renovation of the Family Birth Center, CalvertHealth is also investing an additional \$3 million to enhance women's health services by creating a new Women's Health Suite in the Calvert Medical Office Building.

Currently, CalvertHealth Obstetrics & Gynecology sees patients in three separate suites, with specialty care often taking place in yet another suite or even off-site. This new 14,581-square-foot suite will combine many women's health services into one centralized location, providing greater convenience and continuity of care.

This new suite will also offer rotating access to specialized care in maternal fetal medicine, gynecologic urology, gynecologic oncology and primary care. This consolidation is part of the health system's ongoing commitment to providing comprehensive, accessible care for women at every stage of life. In recent focus groups, participants highlighted the need for local access to maternal fetal medicine. Many expectant mothers currently drive to Annapolis or Brandywine one to two times per week for this specialized care. By providing these services locally, CalvertHealth aims to reduce the burden on patients and ensure they receive the care they need close to home.

Investing in Local Care

At a time when many rural hospitals across the U.S. have scaled back or eliminated their obstetrical services,

CalvertHealth is committed to maintaining and enhancing these vital services. With over 200 rural hospitals ceasing to deliver babies in the past decade and more than half of rural hospitals not offering labor and delivery services as of 2023, CalvertHealth is taking proactive steps to ensure that mothers in Southern Maryland have access to high-quality local obstetrical care.

CalvertHealth's vision to be the trusted healthcare leader, delivering a lifetime of exceptional care is at the heart of this renovation. The team is dedicated to making sure every family receives the best possible care, starting from the very beginning of life.

Looking Ahead

As CalvertHealth embarks on this exciting project, we are grateful for the support of our community and partners. The renovation of the Family Birth Center is a critical step in ongoing efforts to provide outstanding healthcare services to Calvert County. Bradford concluded, "we look forward to welcoming the next generation of Calvert County residents in a facility that reflects our commitment to excellence."

BIRTH CENTER PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

First major update since 1999

Start date: 2025

Renovation: 15,000 square feet





CalvertHealth[®]

100 Hospital Road, Prince Frederick, MD 20678
CalvertHealthMedicine.org

For questions about physician referral,
class registration or support groups, call:

Physician Referral Line: 888-906-8773
Maryland Relay Service: 800-735-2258

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Baltimore, MD
Permit No.269

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER



CalvertHealth[®]

Our Mission: Your Health and Well-Being

Being your community hospital means we look out for you – from expanding access to investing in cutting-edge technology and services important to those we serve.



COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITY AREAS:

● Cancer

- Promote accessible screenings
- Create awareness through community education

● Diabetes

- Create educational resources
- Improve awareness through community outreach

● Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders

- Increase local access to behavioral health resources
- Educate community about what's available here

● Nutrition and Healthy Eating

- Enhance community collaboration for resource coordination & sharing
- Help foster healthy food and nutrition education

Together, with our partners, we are tackling some of the region's most pressing health challenges – to create a community where everyone has the resources and support they need to live their healthiest lives.

To learn more, go to: healthycalvert.org

