



CALVERTHEALTH



Surgical Expertise

New CalvertHealth Center
for Orthopedics & Sports
Medicine Expands Access

Lighten Up

Shed those extra pounds
for good. *Page 4*

Cancer Risk

Why the numbers are rising
in young adults. *Page 14*

Incredible Impact

Donors bring cutting-edge
advances here. *Page 18*



Jeremy Bradford

Jeremy Bradford, MBA
President & CEO
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Expanding Care, Transforming Lives.

At CalvertHealth, our vision is to be the trusted healthcare leader for our community. A key part of realizing this vision is the thoughtful expansion of our services to ensure that every patient has access to high-quality, comprehensive care close to home.

As part of our strategic plan, we have focused on strengthening and growing essential service lines to better meet the evolving needs of our patients. In this issue, I am pleased to share how this focus is coming to fruition with the establishment of two key centers: the Center for Orthopedics & Sports Medicine and the Center for Digestive Diseases & Weight Management.

The Center for Orthopedics & Sports Medicine represents a major step forward in delivering specialized musculoskeletal care. Whether it's treating sports injuries, joint conditions or providing advanced surgical options, our goal is to help patients regain mobility, reduce pain and get back to doing what they love. Led by Dr. Uday Patel, this center brings together expert care and the latest treatment approaches to support patients at every stage of their recovery. *(See story page 12).*

Additionally, we are enhancing care for weight management with the formation of the Center for Digestive Diseases & Weight Management. By integrating gastroenterology, metabolic and bariatric surgery and non-surgical weight loss services, we are providing a comprehensive approach to care for individuals facing a wide range of digestive and weight-related health concerns. This center reflects our commitment to offering personalized, multidisciplinary care that improves both immediate health and long-term wellness. *(See story page 4).*

These expansions would not be possible without the outstanding physicians and advanced practice providers leading these programs. We are grateful to have some of the best specialists in their fields to CalvertHealth. Their expertise and dedication ensure that our patients receive exceptional care with access to the latest treatment options and a multidisciplinary approach tailored to their needs.

These centers are just the beginning. We remain focused on advancing our vision through strategic growth, innovation and an unwavering commitment to the patients and families we serve.

Thank you for trusting us with your care.

ON THE COVER Experienced orthopedic surgeon Dr. Uday Patel is leading the new CalvertHealth Center for Orthopedics & Sports Medicine. Located on the main campus, the center provides convenient access to comprehensive orthopedic care and physical therapy services. **See story page 12.**

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Donors Help Bring Cutting-Edge Advances Close to Home

CalvertHealth Medical Center does not discriminate with regards 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 Garner National Recognition for Critical Care

For the fourth consecutive year, CalvertHealth has been named one of the **100 Top Hospitals for Critical Care** by *Healthgrades*, as highlighted in *Becker's Hospital Review*. This recognition places us among an elite group of hospitals excelling in critical care, and we are proud to be one of only two hospitals in Maryland to achieve this distinction.



Healthgrades recognizes those hospitals that have proven their commitment to quality care and exceptional patient outcomes over time. This award in particular highlights those hospitals that demonstrated outstanding clinical performance in treating pulmonary embolism, respiratory system failure, sepsis and diabetic hospitalizations.

CalvertHealth Celebrates Robotic Milestones

2024 was a milestone year for the robotic surgery program at CalvertHealth Medical Center. In October, board-certified urologist **Dr. Rohit Patil** performed a robotic prostatectomy – *the first of its kind at CalvertHealth*. And in November, robotic surgical specialist **Dr. Gregory Dalencourt**, who is the medical director for the program, completed his 1,000th robotic surgery.

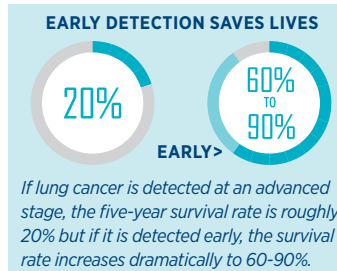
The advanced technology offers several important benefits to patients including less pain, shorter hospital stays, quicker recovery, smaller scars and improved patient satisfaction. Milestones like this highlight the positive impact we are making in the lives of our patients every day.



Leapfrog Hospital Safety

In November, CalvertHealth was awarded a "B" Hospital Safety Grade from the *Leapfrog Group*, a national patient safety ratings organization. CalvertHealth was one of only 15 hospitals in Maryland to earn a "B" rating, placing us among the 24% of US hospitals that earned this distinction.

"Providing safe, quality care is paramount to our commitment to the community," said CalvertHealth President & 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.



Lung Cancer Screenings Show 51% Hike

Recent statistics revealed CalvertHealth experienced a **51% increase** in active participants in its lung cancer screening program over the prior year. The program's growth enhances the potential for detecting more 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 to find out if you are at risk and what you can do.

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Healthy Weight, Healthy You ●●●

CalvertHealth Offers Personalized Approach to Weight Loss that Works

Obesity is a top health concern across the country, and particularly in Calvert County. CalvertHealth Weight Management is working with the community to provide a comprehensive and customized approach to weight management.

Obesity was one of the top health concerns identified by Calvert County residents in the 2023-2025 Calvert County Community Health Needs Assessment. Over 41% of survey respondents identified obesity as a top concern and Calvert County ranks in the bottom 50% of Maryland counties for adult obesity rates. Obesity is a risk factor for many other serious illnesses (*see sidebar on page 7*).

CalvertHealth's team of doctors, nurse practitioners and dietitians work with patients to determine the best course of treatment customized for each person's individual health needs. For some, this may mean weight loss surgery. For others, medication is the way. For both avenues, lifestyle changes are needed to ensure success.

"The patient that is well suited is the patient that is willing to make change in their lives," said **Dr. Gregory Dalencourt**, director of CalvertHealth's robotic surgery program.

A Customized Approach

There is no one-size-fits-all to weight management, so CalvertHealth provides surgical and non-surgical weight management treatment options. Dr. Dalencourt says that usually by the end of a patient's first appointment, the person will have a pretty good idea of which route they want to take after the providers understand the patient's symptoms, history and lifestyle.

The approach at CalvertHealth is to guide the patient through the entire process with

a team of doctors, nurse practitioners and dietitians as the patient navigates medication or surgery and the lifestyle changes that come with that.

"We don't need to refer them out. We refer them in," Dr. Dalencourt said.

Common concerns and hesitations that patients express often involve affordability, side effects and fear of dependence.

"I educate patients about potential risks and benefits, emphasize the importance of following a healthy diet and exercise regimen instead of focusing on the medication as a quick fix, and also provide clear information about costs and insurance coverage options," said nurse practitioner **Tobi Agbelusi, APRN, FNP-BC**.

Medicated Weight Management

The experience of medicated weight management is different for every individual. Some patients use weight loss medication for a short period of time, while others use it long term. The lifestyle changes required for successful medicated weight loss include dietary changes, hydration, sleep, and exercise. Managing these lifestyle changes is also different for everyone.

"This is why we have a team which includes a nurse practitioner and dietician to guide patients in meeting their goals," said nurse practitioner **Jessica Erisman, DNP, CRNP, FNP-C**.

A common hesitation to medicated weight management is medication side effects, which Erisman said varies depending on the drug and the person. Each patient is educated on potential side effects before being prescribed a medication and the providers ask about side effects at each visit.

"Often times we can recommend tips and tricks to make side effects manageable. Other times we may have to change to a different medication until

Ask the Provider: Weight Loss Medication

Jessica Erisman, DNP, CRNP, FNP-C

Q: Who is a good fit for surgery vs medication?

A: There is no one-size-fits-all set of prerequisites that would make someone a good candidate for weight loss medication, other than a BMI in the overweight or obese category (BMI over 25). There are some medical conditions that may make one medication a better option than another, so it is important to know the patient's medical history in making that decision. The decision between surgery and medication is often patient preference.

Q: What are the most common hesitations you see about going on weight loss medications and how do you address them?

A: The most common hesitations about going on weight loss medication I see are concerns about side effects, concerns about needing to stay on medication long term, and cost of medication. These, as well as any other concerns, should be discussed with the provider before a medication is prescribed so the patient knows what to expect.

Q: What options are there for patients to be able to afford weight loss medication?

A: Insurance coverage for weight loss medication is a benefit that employers have to opt in to. I always recommend patients call their insurance company to ask about coverage for weight loss medication or to contact their HR benefits administrator ahead of time. There are some weight loss medications that are more affordable out of pocket if insurance coverage is not an option and I use these often along with GoodRx and manufacturer coupons to help mitigate cost concerns.

Q: How do patients partner with the dietitians on staff?

A: Our dietitians are an invaluable resource for our patients. We encourage every patient to meet with the registered dietitian to come up with a plan for how and what they should be eating, which is very individualized depending on age, gender, height, starting weight and any chronic conditions. The dietitian will inform them of their calorie and macronutrient needs and also help them with meal planning, among any other dietary needs the patient may have.

Q: What is the one thing you wish everyone knew about weight loss through medication and/or the approach to weight loss treatment at CalvertHealth?

A: Weight loss is possible for everyone despite age, mobility level, chronic conditions or any other perceived barriers. The clinicians at CalvertHealth Weight Management have trained in this specialty to help patients overcome a variety of barriers and lose weight successfully. We view our relationship with patients as a partnership – we want you to feel like you have the support you need to be successful.



we find what works for the individual patient,” Erisman said.

Another way of managing side effects is to start patients with a lower dose and gradually increase the dose as tolerated, Agbelusi said. She also encourages patients to eat small frequent meals, avoid high-fat foods, sugary foods, stay hydrated, avoid triggers, and manage stress levels in order to mitigate the side effects. To learn more about medicated weight management see sidebar “Ask the Provider” on prior page.

Bariatric Surgery Options

The CalvertHealth Weight Management Team has two robotic surgeons on staff who specialize in minimally invasive bariatric surgery, also known as metabolic or weight loss surgery.

“Trying diet and exercise before seeing the weight management team is not a prerequisite to bariatric surgery,” said Dr. Dalencourt. During the treatment, the team will partner with the patient for the necessary lifestyle changes before and after surgery.

“You have to make changes in how you approach your daily life. You have to learn to eat right. The surgery will not change your life; you need to change your life so the surgery will

“The misconception is your life ends when you have weight loss surgery. You actually improve your life.”

– Dr. Dalencourt

help you meet your goals for your life,” Dr. Dalencourt said.

Each patient has a plan to follow with diet and exercise. This diet plan starts at the first appointment even before bariatric surgery. A typical post-surgical diet starts with fluids and advances slowly to more solid food over one to two months. Most importantly, the diet involves eating more healthy balanced meals with lean protein, fruits and vegetables, and healthy carbohydrates.

“Taking the big step of surgery helps patients take more healthy living steps more easily,” Dr. Dalencourt said. The surgery maximizes the efforts each patient makes.

“The most common myth is the minute you have weight loss surgery you can’t enjoy life. Actually, we want people to enjoy life. We just want you to eat well and have life to enjoy,” he said.

The types of surgeries offered fall under two types: sleeve and gastric bypass. Most of the time, patients are able to be back at work within two weeks of surgery. Robotic surgery reduces pain so there is less need for a long time off work and less time needed on pain medication. Both surgery types are considered metabolic surgery. A common misconception of these types of surgeries is that it makes the patient eat less. The surgeries do change the anatomy to make the stomach smaller, but this is a “training wheel” so people can re-learn their hunger needs and hunger cues. Reducing the stomach size resets the satiation cues.

The surgeries work to change a person’s anatomy to change the hormonal response of the body. Weight loss medication does the same thing to the body hormonally that weight loss surgery does. For example, gastric bypass surgery reroutes the direction of food which increases the amount of GLP1 hormone in the body which leads to increased metabolism and decreased hunger. Sleeve surgery removes 70% of the stomach, which removes 70% of the hunger hormone.

The lifestyle changes involved with metabolic surgeries come with huge benefits. Dr. Dalencourt said a patient with stage 3 kidney disease had surgery and saw better kidney function in less than six months and as a result, didn’t need to consider dialysis. Patients who enter the hospital on the day of surgery on insulin for type 2 diabetes can expect to leave the hospital without having type 2 diabetes due to the drastic changes in hormonal response that the surgeries can accomplish.

“The misconception is your life ends when you have weight loss surgery. You actually improve your life,” Dr. Dalencourt said.

Weight and Overall Health



Weight management isn’t only about looking and feeling a certain way in your body – it’s a crucial aspect to manage overall health. When you take steps to manage your weight and become healthier, you also reduce your risk for severe and often fatal conditions.

Obesity is associated with a higher risk of 13 types of cancers, which make up 40% of all cancer cases in the country. These include breast cancer, colon and rectal cancer, ovarian cancer, and pancreatic cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), risk of cancer increases with the more excess weight a person gains and the longer a person is overweight.

- ✓ Higher risk of high blood pressure and high cholesterol, which are risk factors for heart disease.
- ✓ Higher risk of Type 2 diabetes
- ✓ Risk of breathing problems including asthma and sleep apnea
- ✓ Risk of joint problems
- ✓ Risk of gallstones and gallbladder disease

The good news is with weight management, the risk is significantly reduced for many conditions and in some cases, can reduce or eliminate the need for treatment of other conditions.

My Story

“I realized it was my mind and not my stomach that made me want to eat...”

– Cindy Patterson



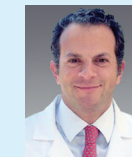
“I can walk through the zoo with my grandchildren where before I would maybe make the decision not to go,” said Cindy Patterson, who met her goal of longevity and health to be present for her children and grandchildren with the help of the team of CalvertHealth Weight Management. Impacted by the grief of losing her 19-year-old daughter, Cindy turned to food for comfort. Her weight loss and health journey centered on healing her relationship with food in conjunction with treatment through weight loss medication.

SCAN the QR CODE to read more of Cindy’s story. >



OUR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT TEAM

SURGICAL WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM



Ramzi Alami, MD, FACS, FASMBS
Medical Director, Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery Unit
“Our surgical approach is very individualized for each patient’s needs and aspirations.”



Gregory Dalencourt, MD
Medical Director, Robotic Surgery Program
“My favorite part of bariatric surgery is making a lasting impact on a patient’s life.”



Tracey Csillag, RN, MSN, CBN
Bariatric Coordinator and Nurse Navigator
“I believe having a familiar face who knows them helps our patients feel supported.”

NON-SURGICAL WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



Tobi Agbelusi, APRN, FNP-BC
“I treat each patient and their situation as unique.”



Chelsi Cox, MSN, CRNP, FNP
“I value close patient relationships and want to understand your story.”



Kia Elliott, APRN, FNP-C
“I am dedicated to helping our patients achieve healthier lifestyles.”



Jessica Erisman, DNP, CRNP, FNP-C
“I want patients to feel comfortable asking any questions.”

My Story

“The support of the CalvertHealth Weight Management team was crucial to my success...”

- Blair Scroggs



To learn more about what treatment option may be best for you, call **410.535.819**

Celebrating Success!

Nearly two years after their bariatric surgery, LaShawn and Tony continue to thrive. Scan the QR code to read their inspiring story and watch a video on how they've maintained their weight loss journey.



“Anytime I go there, it's like talking with a close friend,” said Blair Scroggs,

who lost 75 pounds with the help of CalvertHealth Weight Management and life-changing lifestyle changes. In 2022, Blair went on insulin for her Type 2 Diabetes and had a hysterectomy, which contributed to an 80-lb weight gain. She started working with Jessica Erisman, DNP, in September 2023. Throughout her weight loss journey, Blair relied on Dr. Erisman for expertise and support. Due to her determination and success, Blair no longer requires insulin to treat her Type 2 Diabetes and truly enjoys exercise, even traveling to New York City to take a live class with her favorite Peloton instructor.

SCAN the QR CODE to read more of Blair's story. >



Raising the Bar for Patient Care.

Duke Health affiliation brings expertise, education and experience to local cancer program.

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

For more information, visit CalvertHealthMedicine.org/CancerCare



CalvertHealth Cancer Center
DukeHealth AFFILIATE

Goganzer Named Senior VP for Operations

CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) has named accomplished healthcare executive Larisa Goganzer, MSN, RN, FACHE as senior vice president for operations. She brings more than 30 years of experience in operational leadership, most recently with AtlantiCare, the largest healthcare system in southern New Jersey with more than 6,500 staff and providers and 100 locations.



“I am passionate about patient-centered care.”

“CalvertHealth is extremely fortunate to attract someone with Ms. Goganzer's credentials,” said CalvertHealth President and CEO Jeremy Bradford. “She is a strategic and quality-driven leader with tremendous healthcare experience gained in a large system.”

He went on to add, “She brings a strong track record of building relationships with a collaborative leadership style focused on fostering a culture of innovation, accountability and continuous improvement.”

In her new role, she will be responsible for leading day-to-day operations of the health system and overseeing key service lines including nursing, professional and support services, clinical services, performance improvement, risk management and information services.

Goganzer is a nurse by trade and holds a master's in nursing. She has also earned her designation as a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. She said, “I was drawn to Calvert's focus on excellence in patient care, commitment to innovation and dedication to serving the needs of the community.”

Goganzer said, “I am most excited about bringing my background as a clinical nurse and years of experience in all areas of operations to the Calvert team. I believe every member of the organization has an impact on the care we provide.”

Johnson to Head Behavioral Health

CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) is pleased to announce Alisha Johnson, LCSW-C, LICSW, MSW, C-DBT as the new Executive Director of Behavioral Health in partnership with Sheppard Pratt Solutions.



“I am dedicated to empowering patients.”

Johnson brings 21 years of experience as a licensed social worker in a wide array of settings including the hospital, skilled nursing and long-term care facilities as well as child welfare and therapist for individuals three years and older, families and couples.

She has a master's degree in social work. Additionally, she has directed and managed outpatient mental health programs. Most recently, she was instrumental in obtaining a three-year CARF accreditation for three outpatient mental health centers in Southern Maryland. This rigorous evaluation assures the community the care they receive is top-notch.

“I believe my experience allows me to see the larger picture and offer guidance to staff, patients and families to promote high-quality care and performance,” said Johnson. She is noted for her abilities in building a culture of respect and fostering positive communication and teamwork.

She went on to add, “I am dedicated to empowering patients and helping them foster positive changes in their lives. CalvertHealth is my community hospital. It was important to me to be part of a healthcare system to help promote overall wellness.”

In her new role, Johnson will direct the inpatient adolescent and adult behavioral health units, the partial hospitalization program and emergency psychiatric services.

“It is an incredibly exciting time to be part of such an outstanding organization,” she said. “CalvertHealth's Behavioral Health programs are evolving and adapting to meet the needs of patients who are more medically fragile, mentally unstable and require services and levels of care that only CalvertHealth can offer in the area.”

Waggoner to Direct Emergency Services

CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) has chosen Yonnia Waggoner, MSN, RN, CEN as its new director of Emergency Services. She brings more than 20 years leadership experience working at nationally ranked hospitals and institutions with level 1 trauma centers.



“I have a great tenacity for making a difference.”

Waggoner comes to us from Children’s National Medical Center where she served as a clinical program coordinator in the ER. Her diverse background includes positions in med-surg, pediatric and adult ICUs and as a flight nurse. She has 30 years nursing experience and earned her master’s in nursing in 2021 from Regis University.

In her new role, Waggoner will direct the overall operations of the 31-bed department that treated 35,000 patients last year. “The key thing I embody is always providing excellent patient care in the safest way possible,” she said. “In a community setting, we feel an awesome responsibility to be taking care of a family member or neighbor of someone we know.”

Waggoner said she chose CalvertHealth because “It’s my hospital. It’s where my family would seek care. I feel a sense of duty to pour everything I’ve learned and experienced into taking care of my community. I definitely feel like I’m called to it. At the end of the day, there isn’t anything else I want to do.”

Orthopedic Group Adds Hand Specialist

Board-certified orthopedic surgeon Angela Jones, MD, FAAOS has joined The Centers for Advanced Orthopaedic, Calvert Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Division.



“I believe in treating the entire person.”

Dr. Jones brings 13 years of clinical practice and is fellowship-trained in hand surgery. She is experienced in treating children with fractures, adults with pain from injury or arthritis and patients of all ages with hand concerns. Her special interests include carpal tunnel, ulnar nerve surgery, treatment of trigger finger, Dupuytren’s disease and both surgical and non-operative fracture care.

“I chose to specialize in orthopedic surgery because I enjoy using my skills to help patients regain function and resume their activities, jobs and lives,” said Dr. Jones. “My early training took place at top-notch schools. Since that time, I have learned volumes from my patients and continue to do so to this day.”

She graduated from medical school at Washington University in St. Louis and completed her orthopedic surgical residency at George Washington University Hospital, followed by a fellowship in hand and microvascular surgery at the University of Virginia.

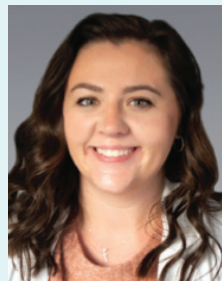
Bauer Joins CalvertHealth Primary Care

Board-certified family nurse practitioner Alexa Bauer, CRNP, has joined CalvertHealth Primary Care in Prince Frederick. The practice provides personalized health care for the whole family including health screenings, preventive medicine, complete physicals and well-woman exams.

“I chose family medicine because I love being able to take care of all ages,” said Bauer. “Being part of CalvertHealth Primary Care, means I get to take care of my community and that was extremely important to me.”

She went on to add, “I like to focus on prevention and emphasize routine screenings. Above all, I want my patients to feel they have a provider who listens to them and works with them to achieve a healthy lifestyle.”

A lot of her experience comes from being a nurse, first in the ICU at the University of Maryland from 2020-2022 and the emergency department at CalvertHealth Medical Center from 2022-2024. Bauer earned her bachelor’s in nursing in 2021 from Stevenson University and went on to obtain her nurse practitioner degree in 2024 from Regis College.



“I want to help my patients live a full, happy and healthy life.”

Foundation Board Welcomes Brooks, Day

The CalvertHealth Foundation is pleased to welcome new trustees Dr. J. Michael Brooks of St. Leonard, who recently retired after 35 years on the medical staff and St. Mary’s businessman Chad Day, who helped organize the Reelin’ 4 a Cause fishing tournament, which benefits cancer care at CalvertHealth.

“Serving on that committee gave me a much greater appreciation for CalvertHealth and their impact on the community,” said Day (pictured bottom right). The Southern Maryland native lives in Dameron with his wife and three children. He is the general manager of Servpro of St. Mary’s and Calvert counties.



“Supporting CHMC is an investment in the health and prosperity of the entire community.”

In the past, he has been a board member for both the Calvert County and St. Mary’s County Chamber of Commerce and served as board chair for St. Mary’s. He is currently a member of the St. Mary’s Youth Lacrosse club.

He went on to add, “I’ve been blessed in my lifetime to have worked with teams of people to achieve common goals. This is another of those opportunities and I can’t wait to get started. I’m really excited to see the growth that I’m sure the fishing tournament will experience.”

For his part, Dr. Brooks said, “My entire career has been centered on improving the health, well-being and sustainability of the community as a whole.” A member of the medical staff since 1990, Dr. Brooks has served in various leadership roles including the hospital’s Board of Directors and Medical Executive Committee.



“The strength of any organization is directly related to the people involved.”

He has been recognized and honored numerous times for his leadership and service to the community – including a physician leadership development program, his participation in the county’s athletic programs and as President of the Huntingtown High School Athletic Boosters.

“Although no longer in a clinical role, I continue to be invested in supporting CalvertHealth and the community to deliver the best health care for Calvert County,” said Dr. Brooks. “Supporting our local hospital helps ensure residents have access to quality health care.”

SUMMER MAKEOVER

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A New Lease on Life: What You Need to Know About Total Knee Replacement

For those suffering from chronic knee pain, total knee replacement surgery is often a life-changing solution, offering pain relief and restored mobility. Recently, we sat down with experienced orthopedic surgeon Dr. Uday Patel, who is leading the newly developed Center for Orthopedics & Sports Medicine at CalvertHealth, to discuss the procedure, recovery and what patients can expect from this transformative surgery.



Film X-ray knee radiograph showing degenerative osteoarthritis (OA knee disorder) treated by total knee replacement surgery.

Q: How do I know if I need a total knee replacement?

Dr. Patel: The knee contains cartilage that cushions the joint, but over time, this cartilage can wear down due to normal aging, injury, obesity or arthritis. When this happens, patients often experience pain, swelling and even deformity in the knee. While some discomfort is manageable, if knee pain begins to interfere with your daily activities—such as walking, climbing stairs, traveling or exercising—it may be time to consider knee replacement surgery.

Q: What are the risks associated with knee replacement surgery?

Dr. Patel: Like any major surgery, there are risks, but they are rare. The two biggest concerns are infection and deep vein thrombosis (DVT), also known as blood clots. Fortunately, advancements in surgical techniques and infection prevention—such as IV antibiotics, surgical spacesuits and specialized sterilization methods—have significantly reduced these risks. For blood clot prevention, most patients take aspirin after surgery, while higher-risk individuals may require a stronger anticoagulant.

Q: What makes your approach unique?

Dr. Patel: While IV antibiotics before, during and after surgery are standard practice, I take additional precautions to minimize infection risk. I use double-glove techniques, change gloves multiple times during surgery, apply antibiotic powder in the bone cement, wrap the knee with an antiseptic wrap during surgery and thoroughly wash the joint before closure. In my 23 years of performing joint replacements, I'm proud to say I have not experienced a single infection directly after knee replacement surgery.

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

Dr. Patel: The surgery itself takes about 90 minutes, with an additional three hours in recovery. Most patients can return

home the same day. Remarkably, patients are allowed full weight-bearing without the use of a brace immediately, meaning they can stand and walk with assistance right away. The most significant pain typically lasts about two weeks, but 90% of recovery occurs within the first three months. Many patients can return to office work in about six weeks.

Q: How is pain managed after surgery?

Dr. Patel: We use a combination of pain management strategies, including spinal anesthesia, localized injections that last 48-72 hours, and a mix of oral and IV medications. This multimodal approach allows patients to recover comfortably at home with reduced reliance on narcotic pain medications. Patients are advised to use ice as much as possible when resting, especially in the first few weeks after surgery.

Q: What kind of follow-up care can patients expect?

Dr. Patel: After surgery, patients receive physical therapy at home for the first three weeks. They also have follow-up appointments in the office at two and six weeks post-surgery. After that, most patients only require annual or biannual check-ins to monitor the knee's condition. As part of rehabilitation, most insurance providers approve a home exercise bicycle designed to improve knee flexibility. This specialized bike is delivered to the patient's home, and the company handles both drop-off and pick-up. The bike adjusts to accommodate limited movement initially and gradually increases range of motion over time. Additionally, it includes Bluetooth tracking, allowing me to monitor patient progress and provide guidance as needed. It's a key tool in ensuring a smooth recovery.

MEET THE EXPERT

Board-certified orthopedic surgeon **Dr. Uday R. Patel** has joined CalvertHealth Medical Group, bringing more than 20 years of experience in orthopedic surgery. He earned his medical degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine and completed his internship and residency at New England Medical Center.

Dr. Patel is now leading the newly established CalvertHealth Center for Orthopedics & Sports Medicine, located in the Calvert Medical Arts Building on the Medical Center campus. The center offers in-office X-rays and is adjacent to CalvertHealth Outpatient Rehabilitation, providing patients with convenient access to comprehensive orthopedic care and physical therapy services. To learn more or to schedule an appointment, please visit CalvertHealthMedicalGroup.org/Ortho or call 410.846.8800.

“In my 23 years of performing joint replacements, I'm proud to say I have not experienced a single infection directly after knee replacement surgery.”
— Dr. Uday Patel

Q: What are the long-term expectations for a knee replacement?

Dr. Patel: A knee replacement typically lasts between 15-20 years, depending on factors like patient weight and activity level. To maximize the lifespan of the implant, patients should avoid high-impact activities like running or prolonged kneeling.

Q: When can I resume normal activities, like driving or traveling?

Dr. Patel: If the surgery was on the left knee and you drive an automatic, you can resume driving in about two weeks, as long as you are off narcotic medications. If it was the right knee, you'll need to wait about six weeks to ensure you can safely perform emergency braking. For air travel, we recommend waiting at least four weeks due to the risk of blood clots associated with flying.

Q: What's your philosophy when it comes to patient care?

Dr. Patel: My goal is to provide meticulous surgical care and comprehensive follow-up to ensure the best outcomes. This is a journey, and I take pride in guiding my patients every step of the way. Through advanced techniques, personalized pain management and thorough post-surgical monitoring, I strive to make total knee replacement as seamless and successful as possible.

WANT MORE?

SCAN the QR CODE
to watch Dr. Patel's
video biography.



Take These Steps Today to Reduce Your Cancer Risk

Experts Studying Jump in Colorectal Cancer in Young Adults



“While we are increasingly encouraged by the growing numbers of cancer survivors who are living longer and better,” said board-

certified medical oncologist Dr. Arati Patel of CalvertHealth Hematology & Oncology, “there is cause for concern with the jump in young adults being diagnosed with cancer – especially with colorectal cancer.”

Experts aren't sure what's causing the jump in colorectal cancer among young adults. But researchers are exploring factors such as diet, obesity, lack of exercise, tobacco and alcohol use as well as environmental impacts such as exposure to chemicals.

Much of the discussion about the possible causes of early-onset disease have centered on three interrelated factors: diet, bacteria in the gut and inflammation. There's mounting evidence linking an unhealthy diet – in particular one high in processed meat and fat, and low in fruits and vegetables – to early-onset colorectal cancer.

Several studies have found that being overweight or obese may raise someone's chance of getting early-onset colorectal cancer. Unhealthy diets have become more common in past decades, the researchers pointed out. And the number of children and adults who are overweight or obese continues to climb.

In addition, Americans are spending more time sitting and less time being active. Other scientists have turned their focus to bacteria that live in the gut, also called the microbiome. Unhealthy diets and gut bacteria are connected in another way, too. Both can lead to inflammation –the body's reaction to injury, disease or irritation.

Check out our **new cancer podcast series** covering a wide range of topics and featuring members of our cancer team.



First, More Awareness is Needed

But for now, many have agreed there are several key steps to addressing this health crisis in our community – spreading awareness of the early warning signs of colon cancer in young adults, promoting evidence-based screening that is accessible to all eligible individuals, (*see guidelines at right*) and educating the community about healthy lifestyle habits for prevention. This is true in Calvert, where cancer once again topped the list of health concerns for local residents in the most recent Community Health Needs Assessment. CalvertHealth conducts the assessment every three years to identify the most pressing health needs in the community and then develops strategies for addressing each one.

While young adults often skip check-ups, Dr. Patel stressed the importance in proactively identifying potential health problems and addressing emerging issues early on. Young people – like everyone else – need to communicate with their healthcare provider if they notice rectal bleeding, unusual stools, changes in bowel movements or low energy or tiredness.

National Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Month serves as a reminder to everyone that they have the power to take charge of their health with lifestyle changes and routine screenings, because early detection equals better outcomes.

“It's important for everyone of all ages to know that cancer screenings are lifesaving,” said Dr. Patel, “and that early detection before symptoms develop can make all the difference in successfully beating these diseases.”

Lifestyle Changes That Can Really Help

“Eating healthy foods, staying active and managing stress can seem fairly simple but can be hard to do every day,” said Dr. Patel. “However, following a ‘clean diet’ can be a remarkably successful strategy/path to good health. This starts with eating foods in their most natural state such as fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meats, plant-based proteins, whole grains and healthy fats such as olive oil and nuts. At the same time, you want to cut back on cookies, candy, cake, chips, sodas, creamers, alcohol, fast-food and ultra-processed foods.

“The current guidelines recommend 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week, in addition to an active lifestyle. Maintaining physical fitness does not need to be a chore and does not need to be done all at once. Try a variety of exercises such as core, cardio, muscle strengthening and stretching.

“Finally, integrative health strategies can make a huge positive impact on your total well-being and ability to tackle health concerns and other difficulties.” Dr. Patel suggests trying journaling, yoga, meditation, breath work, spiritual support, improvements in sleep and self-awareness.”

MEET THE SPECIALIST

Arati Patel, MD is part of the cancer team at CalvertHealth Hematology & Oncology. She is board-certified in oncology and hematology and is medical director for hematology and oncology at CalvertHealth. The group also includes board-certified medical oncologists **Bilal Ahmed, MD**, **Kenneth Abbott, MD, FACP** and **Kerri Stallings, CRNP**.



CANCER SCREENING GUIDELINES

Cancer screening increases the chances of detecting certain cancers early, when they might be easier to treat. CalvertHealth generally recommends following the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines as a framework for decision making. The information below is for individuals with average risk of cancer. It's important to know if you may be at higher-than-average risk for certain cancers. Your doctor can help you decide what screening plan is right for you.

BREAST CANCER

For women over the age of 40, NCCN guidelines recommend an annual screening mammogram. 3D mammography may improve cancer detection in certain cases.

CERVICAL CANCER

Beginning at age 21, women should have a Pap test every 3 years. From age 30-65, women should have a Pap test and HPV test every 5 years.

COLON CANCER

For those at average risk, a screening colonoscopy is recommended beginning at age 45 and as needed thereafter – based on the finding of the first screening through the age of 75.

LUNG CANCER

Current smokers – or those who have quit within the past 15 years – who are ages 50-80 with a greater than 20 pack-year history may benefit from an annual low-dose CT scan.

PROSTATE CANCER

Men between the ages of 45 and 74 should have a conversation with their healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of prostate cancer screening.

SKIN CANCER

While there are no specific age guidelines, most skin cancers can be found early with regular exams. Talk to your doctor about your risk and how often you should have your skin examined.

In cooperation with our community partners, free and low-cost screenings are offered for colorectal, breast, cervical, lung, prostate and skin for those who meet eligibility criteria. Call 410.535.8233.

The Power of Giving.

The Impact of Our Generous Community

CalvertHealth has continued to innovate while addressing growing and diverse healthcare needs. This would not be possible without the philanthropic spirit and advocacy of the community.

At CalvertHealth, our vision is to be the trusted healthcare leader, delivering a lifetime of care to our community. Every day, this vision comes to life through the generosity of those who believe in our mission. Your support makes a lasting impact—enhancing patient care, advancing technology, expanding access to critical services, and ensuring that our community has the best possible health care, close to home.

We are deeply grateful for the individuals, families, businesses and organizations who have partnered with us in 2024 through their philanthropy. Their generosity strengthens the future of health care in our community and touches the lives of countless patients and families.

CalvertHealth's 2024 fundraising events were a resounding success! The Benefit Golf Classic on May 13 at The Cannon Club raised a record-breaking \$111,000 to support the growth of our Digestive Diseases and Weight Management program. Later in the year, the Breast Cancer 5K Run/Walk on October 19 brought together 1,037 participants on Solomons Island, generating \$180,000 in support of breast cancer care. Both events showcased the incredible generosity and commitment of our community to advancing healthcare at CalvertHealth!



The CalvertHealth Foundation sincerely thanks the Next Step Charitable Trust for their unwavering support of CalvertHealth Medical Center's cancer care program. In December, they presented a generous gift of \$40,246.02 from the 13th annual Pink & Blue Memorial Golf Classic at The Cannon Club, benefiting the Cancer Center's clinical trials program. Since its inception, this meaningful event has contributed an incredible \$365,041 to advancing cancer care at CalvertHealth.

Thank you to the members of our community who volunteered their time to serve on the CalvertHealth Foundation Board of Trustees in 2024:

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On June 30, 2024, the CalvertHealth Foundation proudly celebrated the successful completion of the United We Thrive: Transforming Cancer Care in Calvert County campaign, which raised an extraordinary \$6,148,838.55—the largest fundraising effort in the Foundation's 35-year history. These funds have supported advancements in robotic surgery, a cancer care endowment, MRI technology, and CalvertHealth's continued affiliation with Duke Health. Thanks to the generosity of campaign supporters, CalvertHealth purchased its first-ever da Vinci Surgical Robot, launching the surgical robotics program in March 2024. The medical center surgical waiting area was named in honor of Marianne Harms, chair of the Cancer Care Campaign, 2024 foundation board member, and faithful advisor, supporter and friend of the CalvertHealth Foundation.

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