



CalvertHealth

Real Rewards

Why Feeling Valued,
Respected and
Useful is So Amazing
See Story Page 4



A Message from the President



Navigating a New Normal

It's hard to believe it has been more than a year since we first heard the term COVID-19. In 2020, the team at CalvertHealth has come together in extraordinary ways to prepare for – and respond to – what is now a global pandemic. COVID-19 has changed how we live, how we work and has touched every part of our lives, both personally and professionally. I want to remind everyone

in our community to be diligent. Wear your mask. Wash your hands. Maintain that social distance. I know it may not seem like much, but I promise you, you are saving lives.

I also want to reaffirm to our readers that CalvertHealth is safe, ready and waiting to care for you and your loved ones. When you turn to us for your care, know that every decision we make is with the health and safety of our community in mind. Simply put, being your community hospital means we look out for you – from constantly improving our quality and safety to investing in programs and services important to those we serve (see story on page 3).

In fact, in the last three years alone, we've invested nearly \$54-million for community benefit activities including charity care, mission-driven services, health screenings and outreach programs like the community mobile health center (see story on page 8).

Being your community hospital also means we work hard to provide competitive salaries and generous benefits to attract the best and the brightest to care for you and yours (see story on page 4). We are always looking to improve upon the care we provide – especially during a pandemic – and recently started a new multidisciplinary breast care clinic where our patients can see multiple providers in just one visit (see story page 7).

This issue is jam-packed with helpful hints to build a healthy diet for your family to practical tips for getting a good night's sleep, because now more than ever, we also need to take care of ourselves.

With great appreciation,

Dean Teague, FACHE
President & CEO

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2020 Year in Review

Every day the team at CalvertHealth focuses on making a difference in every life we touch. For more than a century, our guiding philosophy has been to ensure the services we provide to our patients are of the highest quality. This commitment to quality and safety is evidenced by the numerous accolades achieved for positive patient outcomes.

As your community hospital, we invest in programs and services that are important to those we serve. Over the past five years, CalvertHealth has spent more than \$82 million to add cutting-edge technology, improve facilities and expand services. Additionally, in the past three years, we invested an average of \$17.9 million per year for community benefit activities including charity care, mission-driven services, health screenings, outreach programs and more.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Earned the **American Heart Association's highest honor for outstanding stroke care**, the Gold Plus Achievement Award, for the eighth year in a row.
- Achieved the **highest performance among all Maryland hospitals for clinical care, patient safety and patient perception** based on 2019 data released by the Hospital Services Cost Review Commission.
- Completed a **\$51-million renovation and expansion project** to convert to private patient rooms.
- Launched a **\$5.2-million renovation to the medical center's Behavioral Health Unit**. Once complete, the unit will contain two unique and separate areas for youth and adults.

Calvert Health System, Inc. and Subsidiaries Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Fiscal Year 2020: July 1, 2019- June 30, 2020*

INCOME:

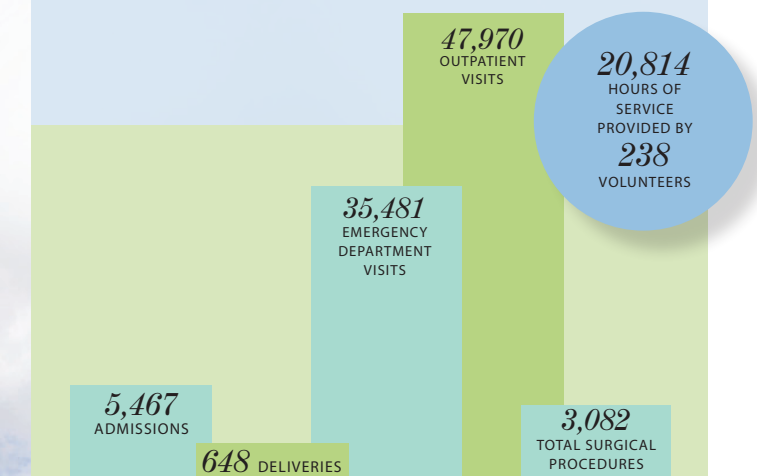
Gross patient service revenue	\$ 197,352,298
Income from other sources	\$ 3,126,789
CARES Act provider relief funding	\$ 4,329,084
Less uncollectible expenses and charity care	\$ (46,985,685)
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$ 157,822,486

EXPENSES:

Salaries, wages and employee fringe benefits	\$ 80,716,132
Operating supplies and services	\$ 61,981,512
Depreciation and interest expense	\$ 14,331,562
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 157,029,206

INCOME (LOSS) FROM OPERATIONS	\$ 793,280
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*Suspension of elective, non-emergent surgical services, outpatient services and volunteer services in March 2020 due to the pandemic.



ON THE COVER

"It makes me excited to come to work knowing I'm going to help someone and make them feel better," said CalvertHealth registered nurse Shante Jones.

See story page 4.

This facility is accredited by The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. If you would like to report a concern about the quality of care you received here, you can contact The Joint Commission at **1.800.994.6610**.

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.

El Centro Médico de CalvertHealth no discrimina con respecto a la admisión de pacientes, asignación de habitaciones, servicios para pacientes, privilegios de visitación o empleo sobre la base de raza, color, nacionalidad, etnicidad, edad, sexo, orientación sexual, identidad o expresión de género, discapacidad física o mental, religión, cultura, idioma, capacidad de pago o nivel socioeconómico.

Trung Tâm Y Khoa CalvertHealth không phân biệt đối xử trong việc tiếp nhận bệnh nhân, phân phòng bệnh, các dịch vụ phục vụ bệnh nhân, đặc quyền thăm người bệnh hay tuyển dụng vì lý do chủng tộc, màu da, quốc gia xuất thân, dân tộc, độ tuổi, giới tính, xu hướng tình dục, nhận diện hoặc thể hiện giới tính, khuyết tật cơ thể hay tâm thần, tôn giáo, văn hóa, ngôn ngữ, khả năng chi trả hay tình trạng kinh tế xã hội.

INSPIRING STORIES of EMPLOYEES MAKING a DIFFERENCE

Smart, Collaborative People Challenge Each Other Every Day at CalvertHealth

“It makes me excited to come to work knowing I’m going to help someone and make them feel better,” said Shante Jones, who has been a registered nurse at CalvertHealth Medical Center (CHMC) since 2013. “At the end of the day, making our patients feel good is what makes me feel good.”

Eight years ago, the 42-year-old mother of three was a recent nursing graduate from the College of Southern Maryland starting a second career. Today, she is a valued peer who works side-by-side with her colleagues on one of the medical/surgical floors to care for medical-surgical patients.

“At first, I was very shy and nervous,” said Jones. “But the people here are encouraging and it has made me stronger and more confident. My skill set has grown as a result.” In July 2017, she was recognized for her exceptional patient care with the “*You’ve Made a Difference*” award, CalvertHealth’s monthly employee recognition program.

She went on to add, “I feel valued at CalvertHealth. Members of leadership walk the floors and they actually know your name and talk to you. You don’t feel like a number. You feel like a person because they know who their staff is and that makes you feel good.”

Workplace of Choice

“We do offer competitive salaries and exceptional benefits, but I believe what sets CalvertHealth apart is that we do think of each other as family,” said Vice President for Human Resources **Lisa Broome**. She said this was never more evident than during the coronavirus pandemic.

This sentiment was echoed by registered respiratory therapist **Sharon Pitts Short**. “In my 30+ years of health care, there have been many memorable experiences,” said Short. “But COVID has risen to the top for many reasons. It has been an emotional roller coaster, but the way the CalvertHealth team pulled together to support and protect each other through the uncertainties has been inspiring.”

Allie Hummel, RN, L2, agrees. The relationships she has built over the years with co-workers is her number one reason why she enjoys working at CalvertHealth. “We are like a family,” she said. “We may not be the biggest hospital around but I would argue we have the biggest heart.”

A sense of teamwork and camaraderie

permeates the culture at CHMC. Broome believes this supportive environment plays a major factor in the longevity of employees at CalvertHealth. “I am truly amazed how many employees we have with 20-plus years with the organization,” she said. “To me, that’s just impressive.”

Opportunity to Grow

“We know we need to attract good people,” said Broome, “so we also have professional development and growth opportunities.” CalvertHealth offers special training programs to enhance employee skills, which in turn facilitates advancement. There is also an emerging leaders group who collaborate on specific projects to make recommendations to the leadership team at CalvertHealth.

“There is definitely a strong focus on growth in the organization,” said **Faye Scott**, who started her career as a food service worker in the cafeteria and then transitioned to the coffee bar.

Her most memorable experience was when she won the “*You’ve Made a Difference*” award in January 2017. “I felt like all my hard work and my ideas to increase sales were noticed. More importantly, what my co-workers said about me touched my heart,” said Scott.

According to **Wendi Thompson**, Human Resources Business Partner, CalvertHealth’s outstanding reputation for quality care and patient safety has been significant in attracting applicants. CalvertHealth Medical Center

What sets CalvertHealth apart?

- ✓ Rewarding Work
- ✓ Competitive Salaries
- ✓ Generous Benefits
- ✓ Supportive Environment
- ✓ Learning Culture
- ✓ Focus on Recognition
- ✓ Continued Growth & Advancement

achieved the highest performance among all Maryland hospitals for clinical care, patient safety and patient perception based on 2019 data released by the Hospital Services Cost Review Commission.

“We literally have people reaching out to us from other states who are moving here and because of our reputation, want to find employment with us,” said Thompson.

Making a Difference

“I just love to feel like I can make a difference, however small, every day,” said Community Wellness Manager **Erin Farley**, “whether it’s helping people navigate the hospital’s services, listening when someone needs an ear or helping co-workers assist students with professional development.”

Andy Cooksey, who has worked in plant operations since 1994, went above and beyond to design a computer stand for an OB patient who was on bed rest, allowing her to work.

“Seeing my ideas put into action, teams pulling together to help someone

out, and the miles of smiles means everything to me,” said Cooksey.

For others, it’s providing much-needed support during a difficult loss. Farley still remembers holding the hand of the sweet, elderly lady as she said good-bye to her husband of many years. “She was so appreciative as I sat with her time and time again.”

Behavioral Health Clinical Coordinator **Susan Mattingly, RN**, will never forget the family who lost their young child in the ER in 1996. “It meant a lot to me to be able to help them get through that difficult time,” she said. “They sent a peace lily a week later to say thank you for all that I had done for them.”

“One year later, on the anniversary of their loss, I received another peace lily from the same family,” recalls Mattingly, who has worked at CalvertHealth for 24 years. “They thanked me again for what I had done for them and wanted me to know they hadn’t forgotten and that they were doing okay.”

WANT TO
KNOW MORE?



Follow this link to learn more about careers at CalvertHealth.



The people here are encouraging and it has made me stronger and more confident.”
– Shante Jones, RN



“There is nothing like walking into work and feeling so welcomed, accepted and appreciated.”
– Allie Hummel, RN, Observation Unit



“Seeing my ideas take off proves the path to growth is always open here.”
– Faye Scott, Coffee Bar Attendant



“Helping our patients means everything to me.”
– Andrew Cooksey, Stationery Engineer

Simple Ways to Build Your Cancer-Prevention Diet

What you eat – and don't eat – can make a big difference in your health, including your risk for cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. A good place to start, they advise, is to take a hard look at what you typically eat each day, and try to build a healthy diet for yourself and your family.



Chicken & White Bean Soup

A store-bought rotisserie chicken makes a quick and flavorful soup. Instead of noodles, this version is made with protein-packed beans. For a burst of green, add a few handfuls of baby spinach right before serving.

INGREDIENTS

1 rotisserie chicken breast section or 3 cups of chopped white chicken meat (choose one with mild seasoning – plain and lemon-pepper work well)
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 onion, chopped
3 carrots, sliced
2 celery stalks, sliced
2 cups water
6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 (15-ounce) can Great Northern beans, rinsed and drained
Salt and freshly ground pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Remove wings from chicken and reserve. Remove skin from breast and discard. Shred the meat from the breast and break off the breast bones.
2. In a stockpot over medium heat, add oil. Sauté the carrots, celery, onion, chicken wings and breast bones for 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables soften.
3. Add water and chicken broth and bring to a boil, stirring to combine. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Add beans and chicken meat and cook for 5 minutes. If too thick, add more broth or water. Discard wings and bones before serving. Season with salt and pepper. *Makes 8 servings.*

NUTRITION FACTS

Per 1-cup serving: 235 calories, 28 grams protein, 17 grams carbohydrates, 5 grams fiber and 5 grams sugar
– Source: American Cancer Society



A healthy diet, according to the ACS, should include a variety of antioxidant-rich fruit and vegetables, nuts, beans, whole grains and healthy fats like olive oil. At the same time, you should try to limit the amount of processed and fried foods, unhealthy fats, sugars and refined carbs you eat.

CalvertHealth registered dietitian **Karen Mohn, RDN, LDN, CDCES**, describes what a healthy diet looks like. “This is the A+ diet,” she said, “and something we should all try to strive for.”

- Eat a minimum of five servings of fruit and vegetables a day
- Choose 100 percent whole grains (*foods rich in fiber are going to give you energy*)
- Choose lean protein sources (*like chicken, fish and beans, which are going to help your immune system*)
- Add beans and legumes to your diet
- Enjoy nuts and seeds (*which are healthy fats*)
- Choose low fat dairy products (*provide important vitamins and minerals such as calcium and Vitamin D*)
- Drink plenty of fluids and water (*should be at least 70 percent of daily hydration*)
- Limit your alcohol consumption (*not more than one serving per day for a female and not more than two per day for a male*)

Focus on adding “whole foods” as close to their natural state as possible. For example, eat an unpeeled apple instead of drinking apple juice. Look for ways to add more fruit and veggies throughout the day. Add fresh fruit to your whole grain, low-sugar breakfast cereal (*like oatmeal*).

Dip carrots, celery and peppers into hummus for a snack. For dinner, top a baked potato with broccoli, sautéed veggies or salsa. The fiber found in fruit, vegetables and whole grains plays a key role in keeping your digestive system clean and healthy.

More Healthy Eating Tips

The ACS recommends baking, broiling or poaching poultry and fish instead of frying and charbroiling. Don't supersize your plate – and yourself! If you enjoy some high-calorie foods once in a while, eat smaller portions.

Be a savvy consumer: Pay attention to food labels in the grocery stores and on restaurant menus. Limit your use of creamy sauces, dressings and dips. Don't be afraid of frozen vegetables and fruit (*not in sauce or juice*).

One more tip: Shop the outer edges of the grocery store. The perimeter has less processed food.

Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Clinic Enhances Personalized Care

“Being told you have breast cancer is very difficult to hear,” said **Wendy Bosley, MSN, CRNP**, oncology nurse practitioner at CalvertHealth. “We want to make the next steps easier by bringing the experts to you in one convenient location.”

The CalvertHealth Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care has opened a multidisciplinary clinic, which gives newly diagnosed breast cancer patients the opportunity to meet their care team with less waiting so a personalized care plan can be developed quickly, alleviating anxiety and added travel.

“Our goal is to get patients in to see our breast team faster,” said Bosley, “and to provide the answers they need to make informed choices about their treatment options.”

She went on to add, “Every breast cancer is different and many factors go into deciding what treatment is right for you.” Bosley said it's natural for newly diagnosed patients to have a lot of questions.

At the first appointment, patients and family members will meet with breast surgeon **Dr. Theodore Tsangaris** and radiation oncologist **Dr. Kathleen Settle** along with the oncology nurse navigators and nurse practitioner. Breast imager **Dr. Chandra Baker** will be available to review diagnostic imaging studies or answer questions, as needed.

“Patients should expect this visit to be a long day,” said Bosley. “A schedule will be provided ahead of time with a break allotted for lunch. During this time, our team will meet to discuss your case and together develop a treatment plan, which they will then go over with you in detail. Before you leave, you will have your next appointment in hand whether that is surgery, radiation or medical oncology.”

The clinic operates on Tuesdays and is located in Suite 201 of the CalvertHealth Medical Arts Building on the main campus in Prince Frederick. To make an appointment, please call **410.414.4700**.

“Our goal is to get patients in to see our breast team faster,” said Bosley, “and to provide the answers they need to make informed choices about their treatment options.”

Study Identifies Calvert County's TOP HEALTH CONCERNS

Mobile Health Center Is Helping Break Barriers to Access

Cancer, heart disease and stroke along with mental health, exercise, nutrition and weight (including obesity) once again topped the list of health concerns for Calvert County residents as reported in the 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), according to Erin Farley, MSN, RN, who manages community wellness at CalvertHealth.

CalvertHealth conducts the needs assessment every three years to identify the most pressing health needs in the community. The findings help the organization prioritize health care strategies to address the most pressing needs for our community. Farley stressed that special attention is given to the needs of vulnerable populations and unmet health needs or gaps in service.

"The survey gives us insight into the areas where we and our community partners need to focus our resources to make the most meaningful impact," said Farley.

To prepare the 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment, CalvertHealth gathered data on demographics, health outcomes, health behaviors, social and environmental conditions as well as key community leader interviews and feedback from community surveys.

Even though the county was in the midst of dealing with the COVID pandemic while the survey was being conducted, Farley said they received nearly 800 responses, representative of the overall demographics of Calvert County.

She went on to add, "We're already working on our implementation strategy to address the priorities identified. The plan will include clear goals that can be monitored, reported on and revised over the next three-year period."

Making Progress On Priorities

Equally important," said Farley, "is ongoing evaluation of our progress from our last assessment in 2017." Highlights are listed below and are also included in the most recent 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment.



Cancer – To improve early detection of cancer and help reduce the prevalence of cancer in the community, an emphasis was placed on education and screenings for skin, breast, lung and oral cancers. Several events were held throughout the county, which drew more than 700 community members.



Heart Disease & Stroke – CalvertHealth focused on educating the community in understanding what contributes to heart disease and stroke. In collaboration with local senior centers, an Ask-the-Expert program was implemented, bringing weekly health education services. Additionally, the Senior Life Center was started in three senior centers, focusing on chronic disease management and healthy lifestyle changes.



"When you see the mobile health center, you know you have a safe place to obtain care and to go for resources and information," said Erin Farley, who manages community wellness at CalvertHealth.



Mental Health – In early 2019, CalvertHealth Medical Center launched a \$5.2-million renovation to its behavioral health unit. When complete, it will be the largest mental health center in Southern Maryland.



Exercise, Nutrition & Weight – Several programs were developed to increase the importance of healthy eating to reduce the onset of diseases. These programs focused on strategies for weight loss and increasing physical activity among participants and will be an important component within the 2020 action plan objectives.

Mobile Health Center Extends Outreach

"Our mobile health center gives county residents easy access to the health care they need by meeting people where they are," said Farley. Since 2016, the mobile health center has traveled thousands of miles to visit hundreds of stops from farmer's markets and senior centers to food pantries and Head Start programs.

CalvertHealth's Mobile Health Center is helping to address the lack of transportation which was identified as an obstacle for some residents seeking care.

According to Farley, the mobile health center is part of a broader effort where the long-term strategy is to provide people with the resources they need – like regular screenings – so they can take action to prevent chronic disease.

She said the mobile health center has also played a critical role by scheduling appointments for follow-up care, filling out paperwork for insurance and researching payment options.

"A big part of what we do is patient education and empowerment," said Farley. "Many of the people we see are just feeling overwhelmed and don't know how to navigate the healthcare system.

"Our goal is to help you figure out your individual path to wellness," she said, "and to help you overcome any barriers to get the care you need."



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For the most up-to-date schedule including inclement weather and other cancellations, visit: CalvertHealthMedicine.org/MobileHealthCenter or call 410.535.8233.

Calvert OB/GYN Welcomes New Provider



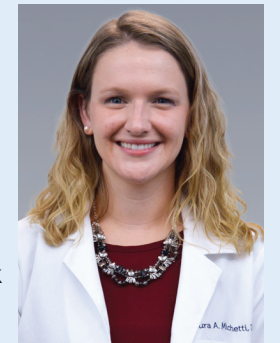
Board-certified obstetrician and gynecologist **Dr. Katreena Settle** brings a wealth of experience to her new role at CalvertHealth OB/GYN from teaching residents at Jacobi Medical Center in New York to chairing the OB/GYN department at UM Charles Regional Medical Center.

Noted for her compassionate and knowledgeable care, Dr. Settle said she wants her patients to feel safe and confident in the treatment they receive at CalvertHealth OB/GYN.

In private practice for seven years, Dr. Settle has expertise in minimally invasive surgery and a special interest in preventive health and family planning. A native Washingtonian, she earned her medical degree at Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, DC.

She went on to complete her specialty training at Jacobi Medical Center, where she later joined the hospital faculty and practiced for more than three years. Dr. Settle then moved to the Southern Maryland area where she began working for a private practice and joining the UM Charles Regional Medical Center in 2017.

Michetti Joins Dunkirk Foot & Ankle Care Center

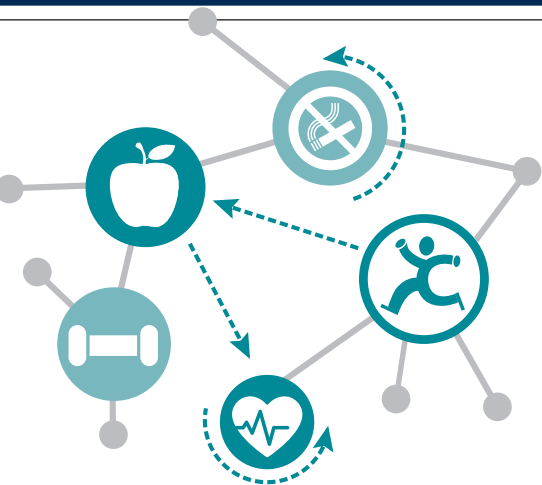


Podiatrist **Dr. Laura Michetti** has joined Dunkirk Foot and Ankle Care Center. She cares for patients of all ages from pediatric to geriatric.

The practice provides comprehensive treatment for a wide range of foot issues from diabetic foot care, wound care and orthotics to ingrown toenails, warts and toenail fungus.

"I believe in treating the whole body, not just the foot and ankle," said Dr. Michetti. "It's important to me to take the time to get to know my patients. I want them to feel comfortable and to understand their treatment plans."

Her training was completed at multiple large healthcare institutions with many patient interactions. Dr. Michetti graduated from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in Philadelphia in 2017. She went on to complete her residency at the DVA Maryland/Rubin Institute for Advanced Orthopedics of Sinai Hospital in Baltimore in 2020 where she was the chief resident in her final year of residency.



CalvertHealth is proud to bring you classes, wellness programs, health screenings and events to help you live a healthier life. Many classes and events are offered virtually so you can explore from the comfort of your home! For more information about the events listed here, please contact the CalvertHealth Community Wellness Office at 410.535.8233.

DIABETES EDUCATION

Diabetes Self-Management Class

Taught by certified diabetic educators, this comprehensive three-part series includes individual meal planning, meter training, health assessment and goal setting by a registered nurse and certified diabetic educator. Physician referral required, covered by most insurance plans. To register, call 410.414.2778.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Weight Loss for Life

This eight-week session blends nutritional education with a registered dietitian and group fitness instruction to help you learn how to lose weight and be healthy.

Healthy4Life

Healthy4Life is a healthy lifestyle program for boys and girls ages 10-14 years-old. Course topics include learning healthy eating, portion sizes and label reading as well as exercising with a health coach.

Virtual Fitness Classes

Kickboxing for All Ages • Rock Steady Boxing for Parkinson's • Fit for Life • Mom and Me Yoga • Barre Yoga • Pre-and-Postnatal Yoga

HEALTHWISE

Personal Nutrition Counseling

Meet one-on-one with a registered dietitian to find out the best nutritional program for you. Call 410.535.8233 to make an appointment.

Personal Nutrition Counseling for Oncology Patients

Meet one-on-one with a registered dietitian to find out the best nutritional program for your treatment and recovery. Call 410.535.8233 to make an appointment.

Red Cross Blood Drives

CalvertHealth is sponsoring blood drives at St. Nicholas Lutheran Church in Huntingtown on Feb. 5, April 2 and June 4. Visit redcrossblood.org to make an appointment.

MATERNITY & FAMILY EDUCATION

Baby Care Basics

This class for new and expectant parents offers a comprehensive overview of baby care basics (*grandparents are invited, too*).

Understanding Childbirth

This interactive online course covers essential information on labor and highlights ways partners can help throughout the process. You'll also get a sense of what labor is really like as you watch several birth stories. You'll even have an opportunity to create your own birth plan! Allow 4-6 hours to complete.

Understanding Breastfeeding

This interactive online course covers the essentials of breastfeeding, including clear animation and plenty of video examples.

It lets you know when to call for help and includes partner tips. You will also have the opportunity to track feedings with an easy-to-use tracker! Allow 2-3 hours to complete.

Safe Sitter

Safe Sitter is a life and safety skills program that teaches boys and girls grades 6-8 how to handle emergencies when caring for children or when home alone.

Safe@Home by Safe Sitter

Safe@Home is a life and safety skills program designed for students in grades 4-6 to prepare them to be safe when they are home alone. Students learn how to practice safe habits, how to prevent unsafe situations and what to do when faced with dangers.

CANCER SCREENINGS

CCHD Colorectal Cancer Screenings

You may be eligible for no-cost screenings if: You are age 50 or older, you have no health insurance, your health insurance does not fully cover the cost of the screening or if you are under 50 with a family history or symptoms. Call the Calvert County Health Department at 410.535.5400 x 343 to determine eligibility. *Program funded by the Maryland Cigarette Restitution Fund Program.*

CCHD Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings - You may be eligible for no-cost screenings if:

You are a woman age 40-64, 65 and older with Medicare Part A only, you have no health insurance, your health insurance doesn't fully cover the cost of screening or you are under 40 with an abnormal exam. Call the Calvert County Health Department at 410.535.5400 x 343 to determine eligibility. *Program funded by Maryland Department of Health and CDC.*

SUPPORT GROUPS

A variety of virtual support groups are available for diabetes, Parkinson's disease, breast cancer and stroke. Call 410.535.8233 for times and links to access the groups.



Give the Gift of Life.

Did you know that a single unit of donated blood can save up to three lives?

CalvertHealth Blood Drives

Hosted by St. Nicholas Lutheran Church in Huntingtown, MD

Upcoming Dates:

February 5, April 2, June 4 and July 2

Schedule an appointment at redcrossblood.org



Do you need to obtain or maintain your CPR certification?

While in-person CPR classes are not running at this time due to COVID-19 restrictions, we can connect you with an American Heart Association online course as well as assist with your in-person return demonstration.

Contact CalvertHealth CPR Coordinator Wendy Cox at wendy.cox@calverthealthmed.org for more information.

Due to changing guidance and restrictions related to COVID-19, all classes and events are subject to change and/or cancellation.



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For a complete listing of classes and events, please visit our website at: CalvertHealthMedicine.org/Classes.

Check back frequently as classes and events are added regularly.

SAVE THE DATE Monday, MAY 3



The **2021 Benefit Golf Classic** is tentatively scheduled for May 3, 2021 at The Cannon Club.

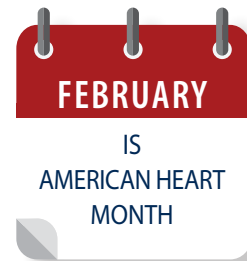
Updates and details to come in 2021.

COPING WITH CHRONIC STRESS

Taking Control of the Things You Can

Behaviors that increase blood pressure and other heart health risks—and how to change them

During these extraordinary times, more people across all demographics are feeling the effects of stress. Higher levels of hypertension and greater risks of heart attack can be traced back to long-term, chronic stress. To help make sense of the relationship between chronic stress, high blood pressure and heart health, we asked CalvertHealth Cardiology Department Chair Dr. Cassius Belfonte to answer questions about stress, how some of the behaviors we use to cope with stress can lead to long-term health problems, and to give us better ways to alleviate stress.



Q *How does stress affect my heart?*
Stress has been known to raise blood pressure by raising cortisol levels and adrenaline levels. It has also been associated with cardiac arrhythmias such as atrial fibrillation (A-fib). Stress also increases behaviors that can harm the heart indirectly, such as binge eating, increased alcohol use and lack of sleep. Managing stress is key to good heart health.

Q *What if the stress doesn't seem to go away?*
In the short term, stress may not harm the heart. Long-term exposure to stress is a critical concern and should be dealt with as soon as possible by minimizing unhealthy behaviors that may have been triggered by the stress. Adaptation to long-term stress is essential and some people adapt to stress quicker than others.

“CalvertHealth has put protocols in place to reduce exposure of patients to COVID-19 so you should not postpone calling 911 if you have concerning symptoms such as chest pain or shortness of breath. Delays in receiving treatment could have serious consequences.” –Dr. Cassius Belfonte

Q *Many people feel that there is little they can do to avoid the stress of these times. Wouldn't it be better to have a cocktail every night or eat comfort food than to be stressed all the time?*

When the pandemic first began affecting our lives, many people turned to whatever they could to help cope. Along with drinking more alcohol, people who were confined to their homes were not exercising and not keeping to a healthy diet. I do fear the pandemic could result in a higher incidence of cardiac conditions – not only coronary artery disease but atrial fibrillation in particular.

Q *How does drinking alcohol affect my heart health?*
There is still a lot we need to understand about how alcohol interacts with our cardiovascular system—what levels are safe or even beneficial. We

Binge Drinking

For women, 4 or more drinks consumed on one occasion

For men, 5 or more drinks consumed on one occasion

Heavy Drinking

For women, 8 or more drinks per week

For men, 15 or more drinks per week

try to generalize by drinks per day etc., but we are well aware each drink has a different concentration and volume of alcohol. It has been shown there is a strong correlation between alcohol use and atrial fibrillation. People who are binge, or heavy drinkers, over weeks and months can also expect long-term increases in their blood pressure.

Binge drinking is considered:
4+ drinks consumed in one occasion for women
5+ drinks consumed in one occasion for men

Heavy drinking is considered:
8+ drinks consumed in one week for women
15+ drinks consumed in one week for men

Q *How does inactivity affect my overall health?*
It's good to relax after a long, active day. There is nothing wrong with unwinding with a good book or a movie. However, if you have a very sedentary job, you should seek ways to be more active at home. Your body needs to be active in order to maintain fitness and to maintain a healthy weight. Exercise lowers blood pressure, strengthens muscles, reduces inflammation and reduces risk of developing diabetes. Exercise improves your immune system and respiratory function, thus increasing your chance of successfully fighting off respiratory viruses.

Q *How does what I eat affect my overall health?*
The recommended daily calorie intake is 2,000 for women and 2,500 for men. Ideally, those calories should be packed with vitamins and nutrients, not sodium, simple carbohydrates and sugars. In stressful times, people tend to take shortcuts to cooking healthy meals or treating themselves to cookies and candy. As the pandemic has stretched on into summer and fall, and then the holidays, it is important to break those unhealthy habits. We are going to eventually get through this pandemic and what I don't want to see as a cardiologist, is an epidemic of heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

Q *If stress is bad for me, and all the things I do to try to alleviate stress are bad for me, what am I supposed to do?*
The best advice I can give to help people who are experiencing long-term, chronic stress, is to try to build a new, healthy routine. Set a schedule for exercise and consider exercising while watching television. Limit the time you spend following news and current events. You want to stay informed, of course, but tuning in excessively can elevate stress. Consider new hobbies such as adult coloring or learning to play a new instrument. Listen to relaxing music or consider meditation. Most importantly, make time to contact your family and friends.

The underlying causes of stress often cannot be fixed, but how we act and react to stress can make a difference in our heart health, in our general physical health and in our mental wellbeing. For more on how stress affects your sleep, see related story on page 16.

TIPS TO ALLEVIATE STRESS

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

- ✓ Wear a mask, social distance and wash your hands
- ✓ Get an annual physical with health screenings. Talk to your doctor about health concerns, including stress management
- ✓ Limit or end use of alcohol. Drinking alcohol does not protect you from COVID-19
- ✓ End use of tobacco and nicotine products
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet
- ✓ Exercise wherever and whenever you can
- ✓ Follow healthy sleep recommendations of 7-8 hours per night (See pages 16-17)
- ✓ Limit exposure to media
- ✓ Silence your phone whenever possible
- ✓ Tune out negative social media
- ✓ Reach out to family and friends to provide or receive emotional support
- ✓ Use down time to explore a hobby or learn a new skill
- ✓ Look for ways to volunteer in your community

MEET THE DOCTOR

Cassius Belfonte, MD is a board-certified cardiologist with Calvert Internal Medicine Group in Prince Frederick. He also holds board-certifications in internal medicine and cardiovascular imaging. For more information on Dr. Belfonte or any of the cardiologists affiliated with CalvertHealth, go to: CalvertHealthMedicine.org.



Senior Independence Means Living Life on Your Terms



“There are many programs to assist seniors, but it is really about people helping people.”

– Dr. Jonathan Lowenthal

According to the Maryland Department on Aging, in 2015, more than 18,000 residents of Calvert County were over the age of 60. In 2030, that number is expected to increase 63 percent to nearly 30,000 residents.

Remaining independent as one ages is the number one concern for seniors—with the goal being to stay in their own homes. We asked Calvert Internal Medicine Group’s geriatric specialist Dr. Jonathan Lowenthal for advice on what actions individuals can take to maintain their independence.

There are two very obvious things that people need in order to be independent: mental capacity and physical capacity.

Mental Capacity

“The mental capacity needed for independence is, for most of us, out of our control. We can develop dementia, or we can develop other health issues that affect mental capacity. Unless affected by alcoholism or substance abuse, our mental capacity to live independently is not really under our control,” said Dr. Lowenthal.

The difference between age-related memory loss and forms of dementia in part, relates to an individual’s capacity and awareness of problems with memory. In the former, individuals are aware and tend to worry about memory; in the latter one lacks insight of the problem.

“If, as an adult, you can’t remember why you walked into a room, or you lose your keys, those things are not usually indicative of dementia,” said Dr. Lowenthal, adding, “with dementia, a person can get very angry if a family member brings up problems with memory.” When a patient doesn’t sense they have a memory problem, it is more difficult because it is usually a more serious problem.

A meaningful connection to the people who live nearby or sense of community is crucial in determining a senior’s ability to remain independent and stay in their home.

According to Dr. Lowenthal, there are four pillars when it comes to fitness:

- 1 Cardiovascular Fitness.** You don’t have to run a marathon, but you have to be able to walk, ride a bicycle or garden or do something where your heart rate goes up. You need to do physical activity that stimulates your heart.
- 2 Muscle Strength.** People don’t concentrate on it enough, but it is equally important. If your muscles become weak, you are more apt to fall. More than 30 percent of all adults over the age of 65 fall in a given year, and falls can be catastrophic.
- 3 Flexibility.** Stretching and keeping muscles limber is important. Our bodies can’t make more muscle after the age of around 40, so protecting the muscles we have and keeping them flexible is important.
- 4 Balance.** Most people don’t talk about balance training, but it is vital. When people fall it is usually due to losing their balance. As we age, we lose our ability to navigate tight areas or climb or move around quickly—especially in the dark.



Strength training, such as working with light, hand-held weights, helps to keep muscles strong. To learn more about exercise classes such as Fit For Life and Yoga, visit CalvertHealthMedicine.org.

Physical Capacity

Although many people have limitations or disabilities as we age, in most cases we have some control of our physical capacity.

“You really have to have a physical capability in order to live independently, and in order to have the physical capability the human body has to stay active,” said Dr. Lowenthal. “I tell all of my patients, even if they have a disability of some kind, they will have the ability to remain physically fit.”

Transportation

The 2020 Calvert County Health Needs Assessment indicated the Baby Boomer generation is the largest demographic in the county with nearly 50 percent of those surveyed for the assessment noting transportation for seniors is a top community issue.

“As physicians we cannot tell a patient ‘You cannot drive,’” said Dr. Lowenthal. Physicians can make recommendations, but if someone refuses to hang up their keys, and there is no family around or anyone to help prevent them from driving, the only recourse is to contact the motor vehicle administration to assess a person’s ability to drive.

“We’ve all seen an elderly driver do certain things that make you cringe, but there are a lot of young people who do things that make you cringe, too,” said Dr. Lowenthal.

Community

Living independently also requires some level of community or family support, which can be a problem for people who live in a rural area. According to Pew research, older people are more likely to live alone in the U.S. than elsewhere in the world. Nearly 30 percent of adults in the U.S., age 60 and older live alone, nearly half in that age group share a home with only one other person—a partner or a spouse. Even before the pandemic, loneliness among seniors was a problem.

Loneliness affects up to 60 percent of older Americans and puts millions of Americans age 50 and over at risk of poor health from prolonged loneliness, according to a recent Harvard study.

“Loneliness has become a huge problem for the elderly. When you are 80 years old and you live by yourself and you can’t get out, your quality of life and health really suffers,” said Dr. Lowenthal.

“People can live independently if they have lost a little bit of memory, a little bit of mobility or a little bit of hearing or a little bit of vision, but if they have lost a lot of all of those, plus they have no financial resources, and they have no community or family support, that’s when things start to fall apart pretty rapidly,” said Dr. Lowenthal. “Maintaining your cardiovascular health, your strength, balance and social connections will not only aid seniors in living independently, but ensure a greater quality of life.”

MEET THE DOCTOR

Jonathan D. Lowenthal, MD, is board-certified in internal medicine and geriatric medicine with Calvert Internal Medicine Group in Prince Frederick. For more information on Dr. Lowenthal or any of the physicians affiliated with CalvertHealth, go to: CalvertHealthMedicine.org.



The Health Benefits of Getting a Good Night's

SLEEP

Practical tips for overcoming what keeps us awake

“Don’t feel you have to wait to discuss sleep problems with your doctor until your next physical. Sleep is as important to a person’s health as diet and exercise. Getting the right amount of sleep can prevent many illnesses and can boost your immunity to disease,” said Dr. Sylvia Batong of CalvertHealth Primary Care.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, a third of adults report that they usually get less than the recommended amount of sleep.

A lot of people underestimate the amount of sleep they need. Adults need between 7-8 hours of sleep a night and if they are not getting those hours it means they have a sleep debt.

“Some people think they can go through the week getting five hours of sleep a night because they are going to make up for it on the weekend by sleeping 12 hours—but it doesn’t work that way,” said Dr. Batong, who is board certified in family medicine.

“A chronic sleep debt can lead to lots of problems: weakened immune system, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, obesity, high levels of stress hormone cortisol, depression and suicidal thoughts.” Plus, not getting enough sleep can lead to motor vehicle crashes and mistakes at work.

“Sleep is a very active time for the brain. While you are sleeping, your brain is consolidating things you’ve learned during the day, and moving things from short- to long-term memory,” said Dr. Batong.

Getting enough sleep is not a luxury—it is something people need for good health.

What Keeps Us Up

According to Dr. Batong, there are many factors that can interrupt sleep or cause insomnia, and adjusting one or more of these can make a difference in the quality of sleep you get.

Alcohol is a depressant, meaning that it depresses the central nervous system, and although initially after you drink you may feel sleepy, later in the night when alcohol wears off, sleep can be disrupted.

Caffeine takes many hours before it is no longer in your system—up to 10 hours for some people.

Chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer and arthritis by themselves do not cause sleeplessness, but many illnesses can cause pain, and medications can have side effects, which also contribute to not getting a restful night’s sleep.

Hormones such as testosterone and estrogen fluctuate throughout your lifetime. Sleep disruption is the most annoying symptom of perimenopause brought up by my patients.

Mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety affect sleep. For some people, antidepressant medications make them sleepy, for others these medications make them unable to sleep. So, time these medications accordingly.

Nicotine addiction can cause people to wake during the night due to withdrawal symptoms—this is true of tobacco products as well as e-cigarettes with added nicotine.

Pain is another common complaint of those who have trouble sleeping. Arthritis pain in shoulders, knees and other joints can disrupt sleep.

Prescription medications can affect sleep in many ways and it is best to consult your physician or pharmacist to ensure you are taking medications at the optimal time of day. Some asthma medications like albuterol can have a caffeine effect. Diuretics that cause

frequent urination also can play a part in not getting a good night’s sleep.

Untreated depression/anxiety could account for a person’s inability to fall asleep, inability to stay asleep or sleeping too much over a long period of time.

The Downside to Sleep Aids

“Our bodies produce melatonin naturally, and although it doesn’t make us sleep it helps to prepare our bodies for sleep,” said Dr. Batong. If people want to supplement their natural melatonin, they should not take more than 3 mg at bedtime, and only on a short-term basis, according to Dr. Batong.

“Over-the-counter (OTC) products such as Tylenol®PM, Advil®PM and Unisom® can alter sleep architecture and they can mess up the tasks that the brain needs to be doing when sleeping,” Dr. Batong said. Any prescription meds for acute sleep problems should not be a long-term solution. Prescription medications, benzodiazepines, such as Valium and Xanax are particularly bad for the elderly because they hasten cognitive decline.

“Sleeping pills are a really bad way to deal with insomnia,” said Dr. Batong. “People that want to be healthy and invest in their health should not rely on sleeping pills as a solution to sleeplessness.”

Overcoming Poor Sleep Habits

“Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the single best way to deal with poor sleep habits,” said Dr. Batong. Finding a trained therapist, who can consult with you in person or via tele-visit or video conferencing, is extremely easy—you can find someone who you can relate to and who can provide the service that you think will work, it’s private and it is on your schedule.”

There are also free apps that you can download to help you map out a healthy way to deal with insomnia; search for CBT or CBTI.

HOW TO Train Your Brain for Sleep

Dr. Batong advises against watching TV, reading, eating or working on your laptop in bed. Instead, she recommends developing a bedtime routine that works for you: maybe a cup of non-caffeinated herbal tea at bedtime or taking a hot bath.

BEFORE BEDTIME



Avoid drinking caffeinated drinks **UP TO 10 HOURS** before bedtime



Avoid exercise **3 HOURS** before bedtime



Know how your prescription and OTC medications affect sleep – talk to your doctor or pharmacist to find out when is the best time to take them



Turn off all cellphones, laptops and electronics **1 HOUR** before bedtime



Know how alcohol affects you and avoid drinking more than one drink

AT BEDTIME



Make sure your room is dark, quiet and cool, which helps sleep



Turn your clock so you don’t see the time if you wake during the night



If you have anxiety or feel anxious at bedtime, keep a pad and pen at your bedside and write down what you are worried about for the next day—this frees your subconscious to do the work it needs to do while you sleep.



Avoid sleeping pills—they are not the solution and are a bad way to deal with insomnia

DURING BEDTIME



If you have trouble falling asleep or you wake up during the night—don’t stay in bed, go to a different dimly lit room and do something calming until your brain is ready to sleep.

If your sleeplessness has gotten to the point where none of the tips work, make an appointment to see your doctor to rule out sleep apnea or other medical conditions.

MEET THE DOCTOR

Sylvia B. Batong, MD, is board certified in family medicine with CalvertHealth Medical Group and has experience in both primary care and urgent care. For more information on Dr. Batong, or any of the primary care doctors affiliated with CalvertHealth, go to CalvertHealthMedicine.org.



What Legacy Will You Create?

A bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. With the help of an attorney, you can include language in your will or trust specifying a gift to be made to family, friends or charity as part of your estate plan.

A Planned Gift May Be Made in Several Ways:

- ✓ Gift of a **percentage of your estate**
- ✓ Gift of a **specific asset**
- ✓ Gift of the **remaining part of your estate**
- ✓ Gift from your **individual retirement account**

For many of us, there is a compelling need to make a difference – to leave a lasting impact on the people who are dear to us and the world in which we live. “Planned giving allows you to create your legacy while helping your community,” said CalvertHealth Foundation Board Member **Bill Gaines**.

A bequest is perhaps the easiest and most tangible way to have a lasting impact on the people and organizations that mean the most to you. A bequest may also be an effective way to make a gift to charity and to lessen the burden of taxes on your family and estate.

An Easy Gift to Make

A charitable bequest is written into a will or trust that directs a gift to be made to a qualified exempt charity when you pass away. Leaving a gift in your will is a wonderful way to make a lasting gift and provide for your favorite charity into the future. Better yet, a charitable bequest can help you save estate taxes by providing your estate with a charitable deduction for the value of the gift. With careful planning, your family can also avoid paying income taxes on the assets they receive from your estate.

Giftng a Specific Asset

A retirement asset like an IRA account makes an excellent bequest to charity. By designating a charity as the beneficiary of part or all of your IRA, the full value of the gift is transferred tax free at your death and your estate receives a charitable deduction. If you wish to leave your IRA to your spouse at your death, you may also designate a charity as the secondary beneficiary of your account. Contact your IRA or retirement account custodian to obtain a beneficiary designation form to make a bequest from your IRA.

An insurance policy makes a nice bequest to charity. As an asset of your estate, an insurance policy is taxable at your death. However, if the policy is gifted to charity, your estate avoids paying tax on the value of the policy and receives a charitable deduction for the gift. You may generally name anyone as beneficiary of your insurance policy and change your designation at any time by contacting your insurance company.

“Another option,” said Gaines, “is to consider making a gift now through a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA*, which offers tax benefits and may satisfy your required minimum distribution.”

**We always recommend you talk to your tax professional for advice.*

For more information please visit the CalvertHealth Foundation Planned Giving website at: www.calverthealthlegacy.org

For a copy of our Estate Planning Guide and workbook, please email foundation@calverthealthmed.org or call 410.535.8348.

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Reverend David Showers

Reverend David Showers is a member of the CalvertHealth Foundation Board of Trustees and also serves as Treasurer of the Calvert Health System Board of Directors. Rev. Showers has been a supporter of the Foundation since 2010 and has been a supporter and attendee of the Foundation’s premier benefit event, the CalvertHealth Gala, since 2016. “CalvertHealth Medical Center is a place very near and dear to my heart,” shares David. “Our community is so blessed to have such a fine facility that constantly strives to innovate and serve the needs of our neighbors. Every member of the CalvertHealth team has the most dedicated and uplifting spirit; they truly live out their mission of making a difference in every life they touch.”

In 2016, the CalvertHealth Foundation launched their largest-ever capital campaign, *Building on a Century of Care*. With a stretch goal of \$4 million, the health system and foundation board members were the first to be invited to support the campaign. “As I prepared for my lunch visit with the foundation, I remember placing my checkbook in my jacket pocket as I felt our visit would include an ask of my leadership support of the campaign. I was honored and willing to support this important project for our hospital.”

“During our lunch visit, the topic of the campaign arose. I reached for my checkbook and was prepared to make a gift of \$1,000. However, the opportunity to make a planned gift was shared. I was in the midst of preparing an estate plan, but I had not thought of using my will as the mechanism for making my campaign gift. After learning more about planned giving opportunities, along with the simplicity of making a planned gift, I chose to make my gift to the campaign in the form of a beneficiary designation in my will. I was able to make my contribution a five-figure gift as opposed to the \$1,000 cash gift I would have been capable of making on the spot, and this provided an option for me to make a gift at the level I truly wanted to make.”

David lives in St. Leonard with his husband, Bruce. After 40 years of ordained ministry, he recently retired as the Rector of Middleham and St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Lusby.

“After learning more about planned giving opportunities, I chose to make my gift in the form of a beneficiary designation in my will.”

- Reverend Showers





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