



# STAY healthy

FALL 2013

## Less Is More

New and safer  
minimally invasive  
gynecologic  
procedures

## Close Call in the Country

UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital  
reduces turnaround times for heart  
attack victims

## Primary Concerns

Enhanced and expanded primary care  
services key into patient needs



UHS WILSON MEDICAL CENTER

UHS CHENANGO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

UHS HOME CARE

UHS PRIMARY CARE

UHS FOUNDATION

UHS BINGHAMTON GENERAL HOSPITAL

UHS DELAWARE VALLEY HOSPITAL

UHS SENIOR LIVING AT IDEAL

UHS SPECIALTY CARE

UHS MEDICAL GROUP



## Home Addition

### UHS Home Care to expand to three more counties

UHS Home Care will soon be bringing its Broome County-based home health services to the residents of Chenango, Delaware and Tioga counties. The home care agency has won approval from the New York State Department of Health to expand into the three counties, each of which borders Broome.

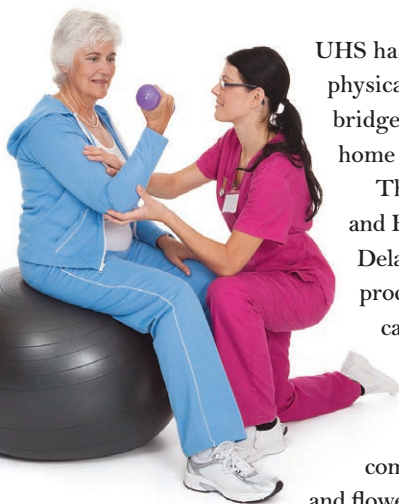
“Operating from newly renovated offices at 601 Riverside Drive in Johnson City, the agency will send professional caregivers to patients’ homes in the three additional counties, and will partner with UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital, UHS Delaware Valley Hospital and the UHS-affiliated physician offices,” says Greg Rittenhouse, vice president and chief operating officer of UHS Home Care.

UHS Home Care is a combination of Professional Home Care, Twin Tier Home Health and the Ideal Long Term Home Health Care program. It is one of the top 100 home care agencies in the United States, and the only top-100 agency in New York State, according to the 2012 Home Care Elite Program of the National Research Corp. The agency provides such home health services as nursing and home health aide care; physical, occupational and speech therapies; nutritional and companion services; respiratory therapy and oxygen; medical social services; and a home alarm response service.

>> **RIGHT AT HOME** Call **800-637-6561** to arrange home care anywhere in the UHS Home Care service area.

## Get Well Soon

Inpatient physical rehabilitation available close to home



UHS has four conveniently located, full-service inpatient physical therapy and rehabilitation facilities, designed to bridge the gap between a hospital stay and a safe transition home or to a nursing facility.

The newest inpatient beds are at UHS Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Services Walton, located at UHS Delaware Valley Hospital. There, patients recovering from procedures or illnesses that require specialized recovery care, such as joint replacement or a bout of pneumonia, can remain close to family and friends while under the care of highly-trained physical and rehabilitation therapists. The two brand-new private rooms are comfortable and have amenities including beautiful views and flowers in every window.

Each inpatient receives a personalized care plan developed by the facility’s expert physicians, nurses and staff, says AnnMarie Henry, RN, nurse manager of the unit. “We care for the whole patient, helping them to manage follow-up care, providing award-winning social work when needed and much more,” she says. “Our family takes excellent care of your family here in Walton. We are able to provide a truly personal touch, and in return, many of our patients say that recovering here from surgery or illness is like being at home.”

>> **IN MOTION** Inpatient units are available at all four UHS hospitals. Outpatient physical therapy and rehabilitation is also available at eight locations throughout the region. Learn more at [www.uhs.net/rehabilitation-therapy](http://www.uhs.net/rehabilitation-therapy).

## After-School Snacks

### Peanut butter banana roll-ups recipe



With back-to-school comes after-school snacks. This healthy option from the folks at UHS Stay Healthy Kids provides a perfect combination of protein, fat and carbohydrates to keep kids fueled through afternoon sports, homework or play.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 6-inch whole wheat tortilla
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 small banana

#### DIRECTIONS

Spread peanut butter onto whole wheat tortilla. Lay banana on top of peanut butter and roll tortilla.

**Nutrition Facts (per serving):** 270 calories, 9g fat, 2g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 186mg sodium, 40g carbohydrates, 6g fiber, 13.5g sugar, 7g protein





## Have a Safe Fall

The UHS Concussion Center can help

While a concussion can occur from falls or impacts of any type, seasonal contact sports like football and hockey bring a rise in the number of concussions seen at hospitals. The UHS Concussion Center takes a multidisciplinary approach to concussions, bringing together in one location the experts needed to diagnose, treat and rehabilitate those who have sustained a concussion.

According to Rick Boland, unit coordinator, UHS Concussion Center, the center offers comprehensive services for any patient who has sustained a concussion. "What we offer is unique to the area. A doctor and other specialists administer neuropsychology tests, an ImpACT test, return-to-play test, physical therapy exam and other tests in order to diagnose and individually treat each case," Mr. Boland says. Brian Wood, MD, directs the team of healthcare professionals.

Mr. Boland adds that the center maintains working relationships with most of the area schools and offers sports team or group baseline testing. Baseline testing for athletes consists of a

**>> USE YOUR HEAD** Whether mild or severe, concussion requires prompt treatment. If you think you may have a concussion, seek treatment immediately.

should the athlete become concussed during his or her sport. If you would like the Concussion Center to participate in an event for your group or sports team, call **772-8120**.

### Concussion Awareness Night

For more information about concussion and youth sports, come to Concussion Awareness Night at the Binghamton Senators game on October 19. Center specialists will host a lecture for youth hockey coaches and parents followed by a Q&A session. Providers will be available at a booth on the concourse during the game for one-on-one questions about concussion and Center services.



## Among the Best

I am always pleased to find validation of the excellent work performed by the people who comprise UHS. Most recently, our organization has been recognized nationwide for the outstanding quality of its care and service. When that happens, the glow is something all of our employees, volunteers, medical staff, patients and community residents can bask in.




For the second year in a row, UHS has been named among the best hospitals in the country by *U.S. News & World Report*. The national news magazine's 2013–2014 "Best Hospitals" rankings list UHS as 31st among 248 New York State hospitals, up from 34th place last year. Of the 45 Central New York hospitals evaluated, UHS is one of only two meeting the publication's standards for strong performance, with UHS coming in with the best overall ranking in the region. Of New York State's hospitals, only 46 qualified. *U.S. News* particularly recognized UHS Hospitals for its orthopedic and gynecological services, two important specialties that impact the lives of thousands.

The annual "Best Hospitals" rankings, now in their 24th year, recognize hospitals and healthcare systems that excel in treating the most challenging patients. The magazine evaluates hospitals in 16 adult specialties. It ranks the nation's top 50 hospitals and recognizes other high-performing institutions that provide care at nearly the level of their nationally ranked peers. The latest rankings showcase 720 out of about 5,000 hospitals nationwide. The rankings have been published at [health.usnews.com/best-hospitals](http://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals).

All of us at UHS appreciate being counted among the top healthcare organizations in the United States. It is further validation that the quality of care we provide right here is on a par with that offered at some of the finest medical centers in the country. It means that the people we serve are being well-served — and well-cared-for. Avery Comarow, health rankings editor at *U.S. News & World Report*, said: "A hospital that emerges from our analysis as one of the best has much to be proud of. Only about 15 percent of hospitals are recognized for their high performance as among their region's best. Just 3 percent of all hospitals earn a national ranking in any specialty."

Among the best . . . we think it's a great place to be.

*Matthew J. Salanger*  
PRESIDENT & CEO OF UHS



**R**achel Corey, 38, liberally uses the word “amazing” to describe her life as full-time mom to two active children, 2-year-old Sofiah and 12-year-old James. Her favorite adjective is itself amazing, since barely a year ago her word of choice was “miserable.”

Shortly after her daughter’s birth, Ms. Corey, a resident of Binghamton, began suffering heavy menses. By 2013, the problem had escalated and she spent many days either dreading her period’s onset or in bed waiting for it to end. “One night the bleeding was so bad I ended up in the UHS Wilson ER. Something was very wrong,” Ms. Corey says.

The next morning, she saw her OB/GYN, Dhruv Agneshwar, MD, FACOG, of Santé Healthcare, a practicing OB/GYN at UHS and director of minimally invasive gynecologic surgery at UHS Wilson Medical Center. Tests showed that Ms. Corey had an enlarged uterus with uterine fibroids — noncancerous tumors in the uterine wall that affect as many as 8 in 10 women by the age of 50. Dr. Agneshwar recommended a laparoscopic hysterectomy to remove the uterus.

“I had the surgery on a Monday, went home the same day, and was up and around on Tuesday,” Ms. Corey recalls. “I may have neglected to tell my husband how amazing I felt until Wednesday.”

less is **MORE**

>> New and safer minimally invasive gynecologic procedures

## Moving Forward

Ms. Corey's laparoscopic hysterectomy falls into a category of sophisticated procedures called minimally invasive surgery (MIS). These procedures are performed through tiny half-inch incisions, rather than one large opening, and deliver significant patient benefits, including minimizing blood loss, post-operative pain and complications, and hastening recovery times. Just as Ms. Corey did, patients typically return home within 23 hours or less and are back to a normal routine within two weeks.

As a leader in state-of-the-art minimally invasive gynecologic procedures, UHS is able to offer women a range of techniques, with the final choice made between patient and surgeon on a case-by-case basis. For example, UHS offers three successful approaches to minimally invasive hysterectomy:

- A laparoscopic hysterectomy is performed by inserting a laparoscope (a tube with a camera at the end) and surgical tools into the patient through tiny incisions in the abdomen. Images from the laparoscope are projected onto a screen in the operating room, giving the surgeon a clear view of the uterus, which is removed through a tiny abdominal incision.
- A vaginal hysterectomy is performed entirely through the vagina. The surgeon makes a tiny incision in the vagina, inserts the surgical instruments, and removes the uterus through the vaginal cut.
- A laparoscopic-assisted vaginal hysterectomy involves inserting a laparoscope through the vaginal incision to view internal organs on screen.

"Technology is moving us forward in a positive direction that is much better for the patient, and this progress gives us MIS options to treat different women with different needs. It's to the point where we treat few gynecologic issues with a more traumatic open surgery," Dr. Agneshwar says.

## The Team Approach

In order to offer gynecologic patients a range of minimally invasive options, UHS brought an unparalleled surgical team on board. "It's difficult to achieve expertise in everything — for example both vaginal hysterectomy and laparoscopic hysterectomy," explains Nancy Shumeyko, MD, gynecologist with the UHS Medical Group. "It takes a team, with each surgeon an experienced specialist in his or her respective discipline. In this way we can identify the surgical route that most safely and cost-effectively serves each woman."

With this team in place, UHS is able to offer advanced minimally invasive gynecologic treatments for many conditions and problems, including:

- Ovarian cysts
- Pelvic pain
- Permanent birth control
- Uterine fibroids
- Abnormal uterine bleeding
- Ectopic pregnancy
- Urinary incontinence

Often these procedures are performed in the UHS Ambulatory Surgery Center at Wilson Place across from UHS Wilson Medical Center in Johnson City, where patients receive same-day surgical care without hospitalization. The ambulatory surgery center features four surgical suites and 16 bays for pre-operative and post-operative care.



Rachel Corey was back on her feet and with her family quickly after a minimally invasive hysterectomy.

## Experience Matters

While minimally invasive procedures are considerably easier on the patient, it's a different story for the surgeon, explains Dr. Shumeyko. "These procedures have a learning curve, since the surgeon can't work through a big, open cut. So you really want a surgeon with a lot of experience."

An unprecedented experience is precisely what UHS's world-class surgeons bring to the patient. "Because of our team and our reputation, we perform more minimally invasive gynecologic procedures than any other healthcare provider in the region," Dr. Agneshwar says. "Our experience allows us to take complicated cases and give more women the chance to live better lives." SH

>> **THE KINDEST CUT** Read more about MIS at UHS at *UHS Stay Healthy Magazine Online* at [www.uhsstayhealthymag.com](http://www.uhsstayhealthymag.com).

## Maximum Honors

The American Institute of Minimally Invasive Surgery (AIMIS) recently designated UHS Wilson Medical Center as a Gynecological Surgery Center of Excellence.

"This recognition means a great deal — especially to our patients," says Dr. Agneshwar. "To achieve this award meant collecting a lot of data that shows our higher level of experience and success. It says we're an organization where women can feel safe and know that only a highly experienced surgeon performs any minimally invasive gynecological procedure at UHS."

The AIMIS designation also recognizes UHS' focus on advanced solutions to convert open surgeries to minimally invasive approaches that offer patients shorter hospitalizations and faster returns to normal activities.

Gynecology at UHS was also recognized as "high performing" by *U.S. News & World Report* in its annual listing of the nation's top hospitals. Patient safety, nursing, patient volume and advanced technologies were among the factors the magazine examined in determining its rankings.

# CLOSE CALL

## in the country



William Hendricks makes time for golf after surviving a STEMI — a life-threatening heart attack.

>> UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital reduces turnaround times for heart attack victims

**A**fter the attacks of September 11, 2001, in New York City, William Hendricks bought a 277-acre farm near Smithville, N.Y., in Chenango County to get away from the “hustle and bustle.” However, getting away from “everything” included nearby emergency medical services.

“On the first weekend last June, I went to the farm with my cousin, Peter, to work on our vineyard,” recalls Mr. Hendricks, a 63-year-old mortgage loan officer, a native and resident of Middletown, N.J. “We worked hard for several days — repairing the tractor, digging big holes. On Wednesday, June 6, I had the worst heartburn ever, and antacids

only made it worse. Then it dawned on me I was having a heart attack.”

Mr. Hendricks was having a STEMI, an ST-elevation myocardial infarction, a particularly dangerous type of heart attack that requires immediate and aggressive treatment. It was a 30-minute drive to the closest hospital, UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital in Norwich, but that’s where

Mr. Hendricks and his cousin headed immediately.

### Turnaround Time

Although he didn't know it at the time, a new initiative at UHS Chenango Memorial would be of great benefit to Mr. Hendricks. Because of the hospital's rural location and distance to a hospital that can fully treat STEMIs, UHS Chenango Memorial has streamlined its internal processes to reduce the time it takes to identify, stabilize and transfer STEMI patients. Over the past year, the team has worked to squeeze every minute out of the turnaround time for these patients.

"Even with ambulance lights flashing and no traffic, it's 45 minutes to UHS Wilson Medical Center in Johnson City, where their advanced cardiac care center can perform the catheterization procedures required to treat STEMIs," says Peter E. Gordon, MD, FACEP, medical director of the Emergency Center at UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital. "So, once a suspected STEMI patient hits our door, several diagnostics, treatments and administrative activities need to happen quickly and simultaneously. In 2012, our emergency department staff and county emergency medical services started working to coordinate all these activities to reduce turnaround time for STEMI patients. Our results have been good, reducing times to under an hour."

Once Mr. Hendricks and his cousin reached UHS Chenango Memorial, things happened fast. "Almost immediately they started treatment," explains Mr. Hendricks. "They gave me drugs and worked seriously hard to get me stabilized."

Dr. Gordon told Mr. Hendricks that a helicopter would transfer him. "But a few minutes later, the doctor told me the helicopter couldn't make it, and I had to go by ambulance," recalls Mr. Hendricks. "At that point, I turned to my cousin, told him I loved him, and told him where important papers for my wife were located. I thought that was it for me."

### Just in Time

Fortunately for Mr. Hendricks, the efforts to reduce turnaround times paid off. However, the efforts are ongoing. "We know we can get our turnaround times down further, and every minute we shave off saves more heart muscle in our patients," explains Dr. Gordon.

Once in the ambulance on the way to UHS Wilson, Mr. Hendricks continued the drugs under close monitoring from the paramedics. "One paramedic later told me he had to restart my heart, but I don't remember that," says Mr. Hendricks. "In fact, my next clear memory was waking up in the cath lab, with people putting stents in my heart. So thanks to the people at UHS Chenango Memorial and the paramedics, I'm here today."

## Is It a Heart Attack?

You may think you are familiar with the symptoms of a heart attack, but did you know that women may have different symptoms from men? When should you call 911? When is it okay to drive?

Well, the answer to the last question is "never," especially if you are thinking of driving yourself. If you are in an area covered by 911 service, calling 911 is the fastest way to get immediate medical care. Paramedics can quickly determine if you're having a heart attack, start treatments immediately and call ahead to the hospital. They can even perform preliminary testing and transmit the results to the ED so treatment can begin as soon as you arrive at the hospital.

The classic symptoms of a heart attack for both genders include:

- Heavy pressure on the chest
- Sharp upper-body pain in the neck, back and jaw
- Severe shortness of breath
- Cold sweats
- Unfamiliar dizziness or lightheadedness

The following symptoms occur in both genders, but are more likely in women:

- Sudden and unusual tiredness or lack of energy
- Unexplained nausea and vomiting

>> If you have any of these symptoms, call **911** immediately.

The stents were a temporary fix, since Mr. Hendricks was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. A few weeks later, he required quadruple bypass surgery at home in New Jersey. But these days, the news is all good.

"Before the heart attack, I worked 80 hours a week," admits Mr. Hendricks. "I didn't get out much to play golf, or do things I enjoyed. But now, it's different. I leave earlier in the afternoon, and I worry less. I realize that it's important to enjoy life, and spend time with my family, my wife, Cathy, our four kids and my friends. Right now for me, it's a free ride." **SH**

>> **GET MORE** Read more about cardiac care at UHS at *UHS Stay Healthy Magazine Online* at [www.uhsstayhealthymag.com](http://www.uhsstayhealthymag.com).



“Thanks to the people at UHS Chenango Memorial and the paramedics, I'm here today.”

—William Hendricks



Alan Miller, MD, understands the importance of convenient and connected primary care.

# PRIMARY concerns

>>Enhanced and expanded primary care services key into patient needs

Let's face it. Scheduling a physician visit can come with a high hassle-factor. You're either feeling lousy and want to be seen today, which isn't always possible, or you need a physical exam, but the available times mean rescheduling your entire day. As a consequence, getting healthy and staying healthy may fall through the cracks.

To ensure that every patient can conveniently and easily make these vital appointments, UHS extended office hours, increased physician access and enhanced its medical home team approach to care. "Seeing patients when they need to be seen is top priority, so we're breaking out of the cookie cutter, 9-to-5 mindset at our primary care sites," stresses Alan Miller, MD, UHS Medical Group president and internist.

## Perfect Timing

"We're always listening to our patients," says Chris Kisacky, vice

## No Flu for You

It's fall, and that means it's time for your flu shot. The vaccine is recommended annually for everyone age 6 months and older. This year, there's no excuse not to get one, says Bob Schmidt, PharmD, system director of Pharmacy at UHS.

Dr. Schmidt explains that two new developments in the flu vaccine for the 2013-2014 season remove barriers that some people cite when choosing not to get vaccinated.

First, there is now a vaccine available that is safe for people with egg allergies.

Second, UHS has purchased a large supply of a new, more effective, quadrivalent vaccine that protects against four strains of the flu virus, as opposed to typical vaccines that only protect against three types. The quadrivalent vaccine will be available at all UHS locations.

"We think it offers the best protection for our patients and employees," says Dr. Schmidt. "There are no reasons not to get vaccinated now."

president of operations at UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital. "Lately, our patients have been asking for extended office hours, so now many UHS primary care sites open at 7 a.m. and close later into the evening."

Same-day appointments have also been expanded, and patients who phone their primary care office before 3 p.m. can be seen that day. "You may not see your physician but you will see a provider at your primary care site," Dr. Miller says. "And because we have a team approach to care — thought to be a much higher quality of care — your doctor is kept in the loop about your sick visit."

To accomplish this higher level of access, UHS added primary care centers and staff throughout the system. "We want to say yes when somebody needs an appointment, so we aggressively recruited about 25 new doctors and around

40 advanced practice providers," Dr. Miller says.

For those unsure if a same-day appointment is necessary, there are two patient-friendly links to guidance. The first is UHS Nurse Direct, which connects patients to a registered nurse by phone (**763-5555** or **800-295-8088**) or in-person at the UHS Stay Healthy Center in the Oakdale Mall. Nurses are available 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week. The second option is to phone your primary care site and ask that a registered nurse return your call. "We have a team of RNs taking these calls, and across the system messages are returned within 24 hours or earlier," Ms. Kisacky explains.

## On the Record

Further coordinating patient care, the UHS Electronic Health Record (EHR) system tracks the status of annual visits, alerts providers about a patient's need to schedule immunizations and medical tests and adds updates when a patient receives care from another UHS provider. "Having all this medical information at my fingertips facilitates communication between doctor and patient as well as physician to physician," Dr. Miller emphasizes. "Just as important, it significantly reduces the possibility of medical error and improves our quality of care."

Every best practice initiated to enhance physician access results in timely care as well as continuum of care. "It's important for patients to establish an ongoing relationship with a primary care provider," Ms. Kisacky says. "So we've made it as convenient and simple as possible for our patients to see their primary care team — whether today or in years to come." **SH**

>> **NEED TO FIND A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER?** Call Nurse Direct at **763-5555** or **800-295-8088** for help finding the right provider for you. You can also use the "Find-A-Doctor" feature at [www.uhs.net](http://www.uhs.net).