

# HealthWise

**Weight no more!**

**Introducing  
Spirit of Women**

**Breast center  
accreditation**



# Cold sores, canker sores, oh my!

**Y**ou can feel it coming. That tingling on your lip lets you know that a painful, unsightly cold sore is on its way. Cold sores and canker sores can ruin your day, as well as your polished appearance. Here's what you can do about them.

## > COLD SORES

They're red or purple fluid-filled blisters that typically appear on the lips or in the vicinity of the mouth.

Cold sores are caused by the herpes simplex type 1 virus. Once you've been exposed, the virus remains in your body for the rest of your life. The virus is often dormant but flares periodically, causing the uncomfortable sores, which are also called fever blisters.

Without treatment, cold sores tend to disappear in about one to two weeks. To reduce their burning discomfort and pain, you may opt for an over-the-counter (OTC) topical anesthetic or a pain reliever like acetaminophen. See your doctor if your cold sores persist, your symptoms are very severe, your eyes are affected or you have a compromised immune system. Your doctor may prescribe antiviral drugs that can preventively reduce the recurrence of sores as well as lower the severity and duration of symptoms. Don't touch or pick at them because you can spread the virus to other parts of your body. It's best to avoid kissing or sharing food or beverages with anyone infected with a cold sore because the virus that causes them is extremely contagious.



## > CANKER SORES

Although they're often confused for cold sores, canker sores are quite different. These grayish, whitish bumps with red edges only appear inside the mouth, alone or in groups.

Canker sores are believed to be caused by bacteria or viruses, but their exact cause is unknown. Experts think that stress, intestinal diseases or injuries to the inside of the mouth (biting your cheek, for example) may raise your chances of developing canker sores. Fortunately, they aren't contagious, and they usually disappear in a week or two. Topical oral pain relievers or OTC antimicrobial mouthwashes may relieve some discomfort, as can avoiding spicy foods while you have sores in your mouth. ●

# Hair loss: Causes and cures

**Y**ou have the telltale signs. Errant strands of hair on your pillow and in your shower drain; a receding hairline; a bald dad or grandfather. Everything points to baldness. So is it possible to stop hair loss in its tracks?

Hereditary hair loss is the most common cause of baldness, affecting 80 million people nationwide. Although it may seem to be a male problem, millions of American women suffer from hereditary hair loss, too, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. Male-pattern baldness causes a receding hairline and a bald spot on top of the scalp. Female-pattern baldness causes thinning on the top of the scalp but typically doesn't affect the hairline. (For women, a common medical problem, polycystic ovarian syndrome or PCOS, is often associated with female-pattern hair loss.) Hair loss sometimes occurs as a symptom of certain illnesses, including autoimmune diseases, or as a side effect of a variety of medications, including blood thinners. Extended periods of stress, rapid weight loss, excess vitamin A consumption or a diet too low in protein or iron can also lead to balding. Even treating your hair too roughly—whether by blow-drying, dyeing or curling in excess or wearing tight ponytails daily—may affect your hairline.

Fortunately, dermatologists are often able to treat hair loss, so you may not need to hide your problem beneath a baseball cap. To figure out the cause, your doctor will take a full medical history. Sometimes, changing your hair-care routine, switching your

prescription drugs or getting treatment for an underlying medical condition can reverse hair loss.

When hair loss is hereditary, prescription medication can often slow, stop or even reverse the condition. Some drugs are rubbed onto the scalp, while others are taken orally. Note that not all medications are safe for women.

Surgery is another option. During a hair transplant, a doctor removes small strips of scalp from the back of the head, where the hair grows thickly, and grafts small sections where hair growth is needed; the transplanted scalp continues to grow hair in its new location. Scalp reduction surgery is another surgical option; during the procedure, large areas of bald scalp are removed, and the hair-bearing regions of the scalp are shifted so hair grows atop the head. Patients may need to wear tissue expanders beneath the scalp for several weeks before the surgery to stretch the skin, allowing hair-bearing regions of scalp to sufficiently cover the head. ●

Hereditary hair loss is the most common cause of baldness, affecting 80 million people nationwide.

—American Academy of Dermatology



# A word from our president



**John M. Murphy, M.D.**  
President and CEO,  
Western Connecticut  
Healthcare

## Dear Community Residents,

Spring is the time to let go of old habits and step into better ways of maintaining and improving your health. Whether your goal is to eat healthier, lose weight or stop smoking, New Milford Hospital remains committed to providing the education, support and care to help you. Now that the Hospital is a partner

with Danbury Hospital in a new health system, we're looking forward to offering you more locations and choices to meet your health needs.

Our goal is to improve access to medical services in western Connecticut and nearby New York communities by coordinating a regional network that delivers a higher level of service and care close to home. From Roxbury to Pawling and Kent to Brookfield, our physicians and staff in New Milford and Danbury are committed to seeing you through everything from an annual wellness examination to a more serious health concern with expertise, support and compassion that will exceed your expectations.

In this issue of *HealthWise*, you'll find helpful information about self-care for many health concerns, as well as news about physicians, the Hospital's achievement as an accredited breast center and options for weight control in children and adults.

Sincerely,

John M. Murphy, M.D.  
President and CEO  
Western Connecticut Healthcare

# WELCOME >

## Western Connecticut Healthcare appoints

**J**ohn M. Murphy, M.D., President and CEO of Western Connecticut Healthcare, appointed Deborah Weymouth as Senior Vice President of Operations and Executive Director of New Milford Hospital in January. She succeeded Richard J. Henley, who served as Interim President and CEO since September 2009.

Dr. Murphy praised Henley's strong leadership, which helped the Hospital through historic milestones and some tough financial times. "Richard has a special skill in communicating that promoted consensus and optimism. He developed important relationships with the team and the community that led to a stronger, more profitable organization and a successful affiliation between Danbury and New Milford hospitals. We're grateful for his many contributions."

### ABOUT DEBORAH WEYMOUTH

Deborah Weymouth is a seasoned executive with more than 20 years of experience. She comes to the Hospital from Thompson Health in Canandaigua, N.Y., a 400-plus bed, six-member nonprofit corporation, where she served in various senior positions since 1995, most recently as Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer of Thompson Health.

Weymouth's track record of achievements at Thompson Health is extensive. She restored the system to profitable operations for the first time in six years, expanded service lines through innovative initiatives, implemented a program that improved patient satisfaction and employee productivity, dramatically decreased emergency department length of stay and measurably increased employee satisfaction. She successfully managed daily business operations for Thompson Hospital, seven off-site primary care physician practices and two urgent care centers, including inpatient and outpatient, clinical and support services.

"Deborah brings a tremendous background in operations and finance that will promote quality and

# Deborah Weymouth



Deborah Weymouth

## New Milford Hospital leader

efficiency in patient care. She has a full complement of skills, and her approach aligns well with our organizational values of excellence, teamwork and integrity,” says Dr. Murphy.

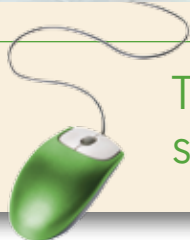
Weymouth has a Master of Business Administration from Thunderbird Global Management School in Phoenix and a Bachelor of Science from Springfield College in Massachusetts. She is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, a reviewer for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program and a national speaker on quality and process management.

Weymouth is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Hospital. “I’m delighted to be joining this organization and excited to be working with such a high caliber of physicians, nurses, staff and volunteer leadership. The Hospital is known for its high-quality and high-touch care with a strong patient-centered culture in place. I’m pleased to be working with the staff and community to further its vision as the region’s premier patient-centered system of care,” says Weymouth. ●

## Health system launches website



**W**hen Danbury Hospital and New Milford Hospital combined efforts to better serve the community last year, the resulting health system known as Western Connecticut Healthcare presented many opportunities to further improve the quality and accessibility of health services in Fairfield and Litchfield counties and beyond. As a system with many “moving parts,” Western Connecticut Healthcare has launched a new corporate website, **WesternConnecticutHealthcare.org**, to introduce the various members—which now include both hospitals, New Milford and Danbury Visiting Nurse associations, outpatient centers, a retail pharmacy and more. The site links directly to each affiliate, where you can find more specific information about doctors, programs or services to meet your needs. Log on for better health! ●



To get more specific information about doctors, programs or services, visit **WesternConnecticutHealthcare.org**.

>> To find a doctor, call **1-877-786-0638** or visit **NewMilfordHospital.org**. <<

# Alcohol: What's too much?

**D**o you need more alcohol than usual to get a buzz? Do you have blackouts or miss work because of your drinking? Do you ever drink alone? If so, you may be alcohol dependent or suffer from alcoholism.

You may not realize that you have a drinking problem because your habits are ingrained, but your loved ones probably know. In fact, they may be trying to figure out how to broach the subject. Or perhaps you're the friend or relative of someone who's abusing liquor. How do you know when someone drinks too heavily? And how can you get help for someone in need?

Problem drinkers tend to have:

- an increased tolerance for alcohol, needing more drinks to feel drunk as time passes
- blackouts or memory lapses after a night of drinking
- violent behavior while drinking
- regular instances of drinking alone
- a lack of control or willpower regarding alcohol
- absences from work or a decrease in job quality
- hostility when anyone brings up the problem

In the past, it was widely believed that confronting

someone about an alcohol problem was the best way to get him or her to seek treatment. These so-called “interventions,” where friends and family would gather to talk to someone about his or her drinking en masse have even been depicted in movies and on TV. But today, experts believe that friends and family are most effective in getting problem drinkers to seek help when they privately discuss the matter with empathy and compassion. Gently explain how you've noticed that your friend or relative's drinking gets in the way of relationships and personal or professional goals.

## GETTING SUPPORT

Once someone decides to seek treatment for a drinking problem, a variety of places offer support. Many people go to detoxification centers to withdraw from alcohol surrounded by trained medical professionals who can prescribe medications to alleviate symptoms. Rehab centers offer in- and outpatient therapy. If rehab isn't a good fit, counseling from a psychologist or psychiatrist can help.

Support groups offer long-term aid to problem drinkers who want to reduce or eliminate their connection with alcohol. Check the Yellow Pages under “Alcoholism” or visit the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's “Rethinking Drinking” website at [rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov](http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov) for groups in your area. ●



You may not realize that you have a drinking problem because your habits are ingrained.



# Your embarrassing health questions, answered



**Y**ou should be able to discuss anything with your doctor, but some topics may make you more squeamish than others. To help, here are answers to common embarrassing questions.

**Q:** My arms and legs are hairier than those of my female friends. Could there be a medical reason for this? How can I get rid of unwanted hair?

**A:** There are many reasons why some women have excess body hair. All women produce some male hormones, but those who produce higher levels may be hairier. The tendency may be inherited or caused by conditions like polycystic ovarian syndrome or PCOS. Whatever the cause, hair can be removed without a physician's care. You may shave, tweeze or wax at home, or at a salon or spa, although shaven hair that grows back may appear thicker, and plucking or waxing may cause scarring. Bleaching the hair or removing it with chemicals are two other options. For a long-term solution, consider laser hair removal, which permanently damages individual hair follicles and prevents them from sprouting new hairs. Laser hair removal may be painful and expensive, but it can be effective, and it's available without a doctor's prescription.



**Q:** My feet always sweat and smell, which makes it embarrassing to take my shoes off when other people are around. Is there a treatment?

**A:** Sweat itself doesn't have an odor; the bacteria on your skin contact your perspiration and make it smell. To combat this, dry your feet thoroughly after bathing to reduce the chances of bacteria thriving on your feet. Try foot powder to absorb excess moisture. Wear only cotton or wool socks, which absorb moisture and help keep your feet dry; change them once or twice a day as needed, drying your feet before you put on new ones. Put on moisture-wicking athletic socks when you exercise. Rotate the shoes you wear daily to allow your footwear to dry out thoroughly. You might even consider applying an antiperspirant to the soles of your feet before bedtime. Prescription medications may be prescribed if needed.



# Regional Cancer Center earns breast center accreditation

The Regional Cancer Center at New Milford Hospital has been granted a full three-year accreditation designation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC). The Hospital is one of 10 such medical facilities in Connecticut—and the only one locally—to receive the prestigious designation by the NAPBC.

Accreditation by the NAPBC is administered by the American College of Surgeons (ACS). A breast center that achieves NAPBC accreditation has demonstrated expertise and a firm commitment to offer the highest level of quality breast care and undergo a rigorous evaluation of performance. The center must comply with standards established by the NAPBC for treating women who are diagnosed with breast disease, including proficiency in leadership, clinical management, research, community outreach, professional education and quality improvement. It also focuses on each hospital's overall performance, from prevention and screening to needle biopsy, breast-conserving surgery and sentinel node biopsy.

## QUALITY CARE

The Hospital provides its patients with access to the latest and most advanced medical technology in a warm and compassionate environment. Its breast center is co-chaired by Courtney Chambers, M.D., FACS, a general surgeon with a particular interest in breast care who serves as the Hospital's physician liaison to the ACS, Commission on Cancer, and Andrea Crowley, M.D., Chairman of the Radiology Department.

"We're deeply honored and pleased to have earned this important national designation. Achieving this goal is the result of many years of hard work by our dedicated staff," says Dr. Chambers. "We thank the Hospital staff for their

encouragement and support and look forward to continuing our lifesaving work."

Barbara Davies, R.N., Nurse Manager of the Regional Cancer Center, says, "Overall breast care in the United States has been observed as good, but there is still room for improvement in every institution. The survey process allows us to take an objective look at the delivery of our multidisciplinary breast care, including everyone involved in the day-to-day operations of the breast center."

Physicians and surgeons, oncology-certified nurses, technologists and a breast health navigator are key members of the team.

In addition to high-resolution ultrasound and digital mammography, the Hospital recently acquired a new linear accelerator, an Open Bore MRI and a low-dose CT scanner that reduces radiation exposure by 40 percent. ●

## INTRODUCING Spirit of Women at New Milford Hospital

Free membership program with many perks including:

- Quarterly *Spirit of Women* magazine
- VIP treatment at signature events
- Early invitations to fun programs & social events
- Healthcare & wellness information

Spirit of Women Screening & Assessment Day  
(for women and men)

**Thursday, April 14, 9 a.m.–noon**

in New Milford Hospital Main Lobby

Free heart/stroke risk assessment & breast health demonstrations

*Spirit of*  
**Women**

Event pre-registration  
is requested by calling

**800-517-2042** or visiting  
**NewMilfordHospital.org**



Schedule your screening  
mammography now

For appointments, call **860-350-7350**.

>> To find a doctor, call **1-877-786-0638** or visit **NewMilfordHospital.org**. <<

# The “art” of healing

Giving the Hospital a new look and feel

With the advances hospitals are making today, nowhere is the impact felt more immediately than in patient rooms and waiting areas. In facilities where patient-centered care is the priority, room decor is now becoming cozier and more homelike, helping patients heal and encouraging loved ones to spend more time with patients.

## A NEW LOOK

New Milford Hospital has transformed more of its interior, closely following the Planetree model of patient care. The color palette features hues, textures and materials that reflect the area’s natural beauty. The palette has guided the interior design of the new MRI Center, the remodeling of the Cancer Center waiting area and the construction of ‘Main Street,’ the Hospital’s new entrance and lobby.

Last spring, the Hospital’s Planetree Steering Council formed an Arts & Aesthetics Committee with members representing Hospital staff and local artists and designers. For the first few months, the Committee became oriented with the Planetree philosophy. Then, they created a policy to guide the artwork and other interior decorations from donors.

Local artist Hugh Kepets and retired marketing executive Dave Tabasco inventoried all the Hospital’s artwork and, because of their careful work, the Committee found that most of what was displayed in the building’s public spaces didn’t fulfill the Planetree model. At the Committee’s recommendation, the Hospital is removing framed work from walls and has been painting the walls. Member artists feel that ‘less is more’ would be better until they can get the proper décor.



Generous donors attended a February reception thanking them for facilitating the renovation of the New Milford Hospital cafeteria (from left): Josh Hubbard, COO, and Steve Lentz, Division Vice President, both of Unidine Corporation; Dale and Quentin Ryan of Litchfield; and Frederick Browne, M.D., VP and Chief Medical Officer, New Milford Hospital.

## RENOVATION PROJECTS

The Arts & Aesthetics Committee has been coordinating a few modest renovation projects throughout the Hospital over the last few months. One Committee volunteer, interior designer John Michael Murphy, has been involved in the renovation of the Hospital’s cafeteria. He wants to transform the cafeteria into a ‘light, airy and bistrolike’ place to relax and eat, and suggested more sophisticated furnishings.

The newly renovated cafeteria delivers on that description. Employees and visitors have commented that the new design is very inviting and complements the award-winning cuisine that has set a new standard for fresh, healthy food at the Hospital.

Lee Buttala and Richard Rossiello, landscape designers, have volunteered to develop a comprehensive master plan for the Hospital’s exterior landscapes. “We believe the Hospital would benefit from a unified plan,” says Buttala, “based on a plant palette that is low maintenance and eco-friendly, and offers both public and contemplative spaces.”

When completed, the plan will be submitted for approval and the Foundation will seek the charitable gifts to implement it. ●

>> Be a part of it all

To make a contribution to these efforts, call **860-350-7345** or visit **NewMilfordHospital.org**.

>> To find a doctor, call **1-877-786-0638** or visit **NewMilfordHospital.org**. <<

# Weight no more

Hospital programs fight obesity

**N**early every family has one or more members who've battled with weight at some point. New Milford Hospital continues to enhance its offerings for those seeking help with weight loss, with a stronger focus on children and families. The Hospital sponsors fun and upbeat programs to prevent and decrease obesity in all ages.

## EAT SMART, PLAY HARD, HAVE FUN

Designed specifically for families, this eight-week program educates and intervenes on issues that may lead to overweight children. It's based on the premise that nutrition, exercise and healthy habits drive weight control—not dieting. A registered dietitian, chef, nurse practitioner, fitness trainer and behavioral health counselor emphasize combining interactive, experiential learning such as cooking, supermarket visits and fitness sessions with instruction on nutrition.

Together, parents and children exercise and learn about nutrition while keeping weekly activity logs and discovering outdoor family-friendly locations that promote exercise. Each child receives a pedometer to measure progress and record daily activity. Programs are planned for July and October.

## SUMMER CAMP NUTRITION EDUCATION

This nutrition education program for school-age children uses interactive methods to reinforce wise food choices and exercise as keys to good health. Taught by the Hospital's registered dietitians, each class is geared for a specific age group and helps children understand how food and behaviors promote a healthy life. Children learn about food colors and their implications for nutritional value in fruits and vegetables, the food pyramid and food and beverage choices that help people and the environment. The program will be held during New Milford Parks and Recreation Summer Day Camp this summer.

## A NEW WEIGH TO A HEALTHIER YOU

Adults looking for weight management support will benefit from this affordable instruction using evidence-based behavioral strategies. Working collaboratively, the Hospital's registered dietitian and cardiac nurse specialists conduct four 90-minute sessions on key principles of healthy weight management, helping participants identify their health goals and develop an action plan. Each participant gets a pedometer to measure progress and record daily activity. The program will be held in June and October. ●



> Lose weight and have fun!

For information, call **1-877-786-0638**, or visit us online at **NewMilfordHospital.org**.

>> To find a doctor, call **1-877-786-0638** or visit **NewMilfordHospital.org**. <<

# When diet and exercise aren't enough

Center for Weight Loss Surgery can help

**N**ew Milford Hospital joined forces with Danbury Hospital as a new health system to improve quality and access to care. The formal affiliation began in October to offer people throughout the region more choices for medical expertise, programs and technology. Both hospitals are committed to providing activities focused on nutrition, exercise and weight control. But, for those people who are more than 100 pounds overweight and with a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher (or a BMI of 35 or higher with obesity-related medical conditions), the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Danbury Hospital also provides surgical tools for long-term weight loss.

As the only weight-loss center in Connecticut to earn the top "1A" accreditation from the American College of Surgeons Bariatric Surgery Network, Danbury Hospital brings an accessible program to the area that exceeds national standards for excellence and safety. Led by Medical Director Laura Choi, M.D., who is also the Fred and Irmi Bering Chair in Laparoscopic Surgery, the Center offers comprehensive and personalized bariatric care and necessary support.

"Obesity affects more than half of American adults," says Dr. Choi. "The condition is life-threatening, and our team of surgeons and specialists can help improve many health problems and prolong life if patients commit to maintaining or reducing many of these conditions that impact quality of life and shorten their lifespan."

## BARIATRIC SURGERY OPTIONS

When traditional weight-loss methods have failed, bariatric surgery can promote weight loss by restricting



> Let us help you lose weight!

Join us for a free patient information seminar near you or learn more about the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Danbury Hospital. Visit [DanburyHospital.org](http://DanburyHospital.org) or call **866-374-0007**.

food intake and, in some cases, altering the digestive process to prevent calorie absorption. Danbury Hospital's bariatric surgeons tailor each surgical experience to meet the unique medical and emotional needs of every individual. Most procedures use minimally invasive laparoscopic techniques involving miniscule incisions that have minimal scarring, less pain and a quicker recovery. This patient-focused center has put thousands of patients on a path to wellness, reducing or eliminating obesity-related conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer, high blood pressure, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, gastroesophageal reflux and depression.

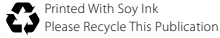
"Although not without risk, surgery is the most effective long-term treatment for extreme obesity when all other interventions have failed," says Dr. Choi. "We believe patients who know what to expect before and after bariatric surgery are more likely to succeed. We're on hand every step of the way with follow-up care, support groups, exercise programs and more to help them make lasting lifestyle changes."

If you think you may be a candidate for weight-loss surgery, speak with your primary care physician about the potential benefits and complications associated with bariatric surgery. ●

>> To find a doctor, call **1-877-786-0638** or visit [NewMilfordHospital.org](http://NewMilfordHospital.org). <<

A Planetree hospital dedicated to nurturing mind, body and spirit  
Centers of excellence for cancer, cardiovascular care,  
emergency medicine, family birthing, one-day surgery, joint  
replacement, sleep medicine and women's imaging  
Physician Referral: **1-877-786-0638**  
**NewMilfordHospital.org**

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# Partners in health

## You and your primary care physician

New Milford Hospital, together with Danbury Hospital as one new health system, continues to build a strong affiliation that will provide families with many choices and locations to find a doctor and establish relationships to help maintain their health. The first step should be selecting a primary care physician (PCP), who will help you prevent illness and injury, because he or she will be familiar with the physical, psychological and lifestyle factors affecting your health. With the help of a PCP, you and your family will have a medical home where your medical information will be centrally located. To find a doctor, call **1-877-786-0638** or visit **NewMilfordHospital.org**.

### > FAMILY MEDICINE (adults and pediatrics)

**Henry Allen, M.D.**  
**George Barth, M.D.**  
Associated Family Physicians  
146 Danbury Road  
New Milford, CT 06776  
**860-350-4000**

**Peter Anderson, M.D.**  
New Milford Family Practice  
1 Old Park Lane  
New Milford, CT 06776  
**860-355-3728**

**Jonathan Beck, M.D.**  
New Milford Medical Group  
11 Old Park Lane  
New Milford, CT 06776  
**860-355-6963**

**Cristina Blejan, M.D.**  
CB Family Medicine  
93 West St., Suite 7  
Danbury, CT 06810  
**203-205-0607**

**Robert Fitton, M.D.**  
246 Federal Road, Unit C-31  
Brookfield, CT 06804  
**203-740-5111**

**Christie Garb, M.D.**  
Kent Med-Peds  
38 North Main St.  
Kent, CT 06757  
**860-927-4365**

**Rocco Russo, M.D.**  
36 Charles Colman Blvd.  
Pawling, NY 12564  
**845-855-5923**

### > INTERNAL MEDICINE

**Alphonse Altorelli, M.D.**  
125 New Milford Turnpike  
New Preston, CT 06777  
**860-868-7318**

**Harold Kamm, M.D.**  
**Doreen Konik, M.D.**  
**Christian Leonardi, D.O.**  
**Pacey Pet, M.D.**  
**Jeffrey Tyler, M.D.**  
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**845-855-5923**

### > PEDIATRICS

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**Kristi Beck, M.D.**  
**Wendy Drost, M.D.**  
**Frank Fanella, M.D.**  
**Evan Hack, M.D.**  
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