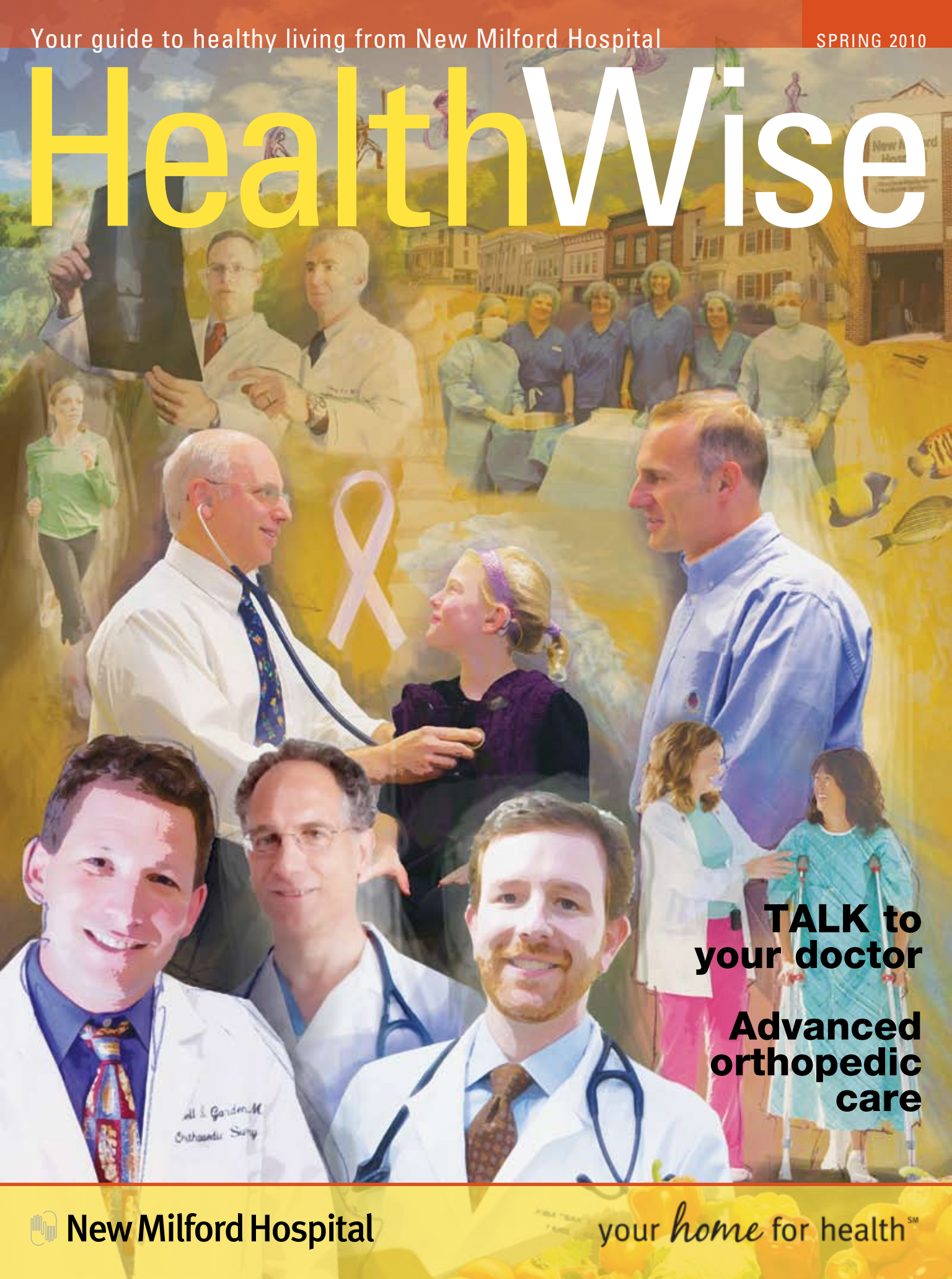


HealthWise



**TALK to
your doctor**

**Advanced
orthopedic
care**



New Milford Hospital

*your home for health*SM

Use as directed

Medicine do's and don'ts



When your healthcare provider prescribed a new medication, you took it faithfully at first. But now you want to stop, either because you've had side effects, you feel better, you're not feeling better, you can't afford a refill or you can't remember what to take and when. But if you abruptly quit, serious consequences can result.

No matter what your reasons, don't stop taking your medicine or skip doses until you check with your healthcare provider.

The chart below shows the risks of stopping common medicines too soon.

> 'Take two and call me in the morning'

Minimize side effects and get the most out of your medicine:

- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions and read the drug information sheet that comes in the package.
- Ask any questions before taking the medicine.
- Take your medicines for the entire length of time they're prescribed, even if you feel better.
- Know what your medicines look like if you're taking more than one.
- Keep your medicines organized. Use a chart like the one at www.fda.gov/downloads/AboutFDA/ReportsManualsForms/Forms/UCM095018.pdf.
- Store your medicines in their original containers.

> Know before you forgo

MEDICINE	WHY YOU TAKE IT	DANGERS OF STOPPING
▶ Antidepressants	To improve mood, sleep, appetite, emotional responses and concentration	Increased anxiety, feelings of sadness, irritability, fatigue, headaches, nausea, vomiting, dizziness and diarrhea
▶ Blood pressure medications	To regulate developing high blood pressure (prehypertension) or high blood pressure (hypertension)	Untreated hypertension can cause blood vessel damage, congestive heart failure, heart attack, kidney damage, vision loss and stroke.
▶ Antibiotics	To fight bacterial infections, such as ear infections, severe sinus infections, strep throat, urinary tract infections and many skin infections	An incomplete course of antibiotics doesn't kill resistant bacteria, which can lead to new and hard-to-treat infections or antibiotic resistance.
▶ Anti-anxiety medications	To treat anxiety disorders, such as panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and social phobia	Anxiety symptoms often return; you may also experience fatigue, nausea, dizziness, headache and flu-like symptoms.
▶ Oral hypoglycemic medications	To manage diabetes and regulate insulin and blood sugar levels	Blood sugar can rise quickly; if it remains high, you're at risk for heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, blindness and amputation.

Lotions, potions and ...warnings?

Look out before reaching over the counter

You have a bad case of acne, calves so sore it hurts to walk or an unsightly wart that won't go away, but you have no time for a doctor's visit, so you head to the drugstore for an over-the-counter (OTC) remedy. No big deal, right? Not always. Some of these are pretty powerful medications and can be poisonous—and not just if you swallow them—so you need to take caution, especially with the three lotions listed here:

Muscle-pain creams Methyl salicylate is a wintergreen-scented chemical that's found in deep-heating creams, such as BenGay and Icy Hot, which are used to

relieve sore muscles and joints. It works like aspirin and if you use too much, it can cause nausea, vomiting, breathing problems and kidney failure. To be safe, don't use methyl salicylate creams for more than a week, and never rub the stuff on cuts or damaged skin.

Acne creams Topical salicylic acid is used to help clear up and prevent acne. It can also help treat skin conditions such as psoriasis, dandruff, corns, calluses and warts. It comes in varying strengths, some only available by prescription. But even the OTC versions can be strong and may irritate your skin, so be sure to follow the directions on the package label. And if you're taking aspirin or water pills or are using products containing methyl salicylate, check with the pharmacist about possible precautions or interactions.

Anti-aging lotions Once available only by prescription, today you'll find many forms of vitamin A (retinol) on drugstore shelves. They're used for treating different skin conditions, such as sun spots and wrinkles. Retinol is a powerful antioxidant that fights free radicals—molecules that can break down your skin cells and cause wrinkles. However, retinol may cause skin irritation, rashes, burning or redness in some people. Pregnant women or women who may become pregnant should avoid vitamin A products because they can increase the risk of birth defects. ●



Apply with care:
Some over-the-counter
creams contain powerful
ingredients.

A word from our president



Richard J. Henley,
FACHE, FHFMA
Interim President
and CEO

In 2009, New Milford Hospital continued to build on its mission to deliver high-quality care and serve the community. We improved safety and clinical outcomes for patients and their families; achieved designation as a Primary Stroke Center by the State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health; and Approval with Commendation by the American

College of Surgeons, Commission on Cancer. Other milestones included:

- developing a hospitalist program to provide around-the-clock physician care for hospitalized patients
- recognition by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement for achieving a significant reduction in patient restraint use
- outstanding infection control and surveillance efforts, specifically the prevention of ventilator-associated infections in the intensive care unit for the last two and a half years
- improvements in the delivery of care for patients with pneumonia, stroke, joint conditions and medical emergencies such as chest pain and deep vein thrombosis
- provision of more than \$21 million in charity care, education, outreach and other community benefit services as a leading not-for-profit organization

We also made several key investments in facilities, technology and programs to maintain clinical excellence and support our community. We initiated:

- a Planetree steering committee to guide us as a leader in patient-centered care
- construction of a new building to house a permanent magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine and renovations to the operating rooms, kitchen and Regional Cancer Center
- work to upgrade information technology, improve food and nutrition services and adopt “green practices” for housekeeping and building services

Beginning in September, we began discussions toward an affiliation with Danbury Hospital. Throughout 2010,



we expect these conversations to lead to the creation of an integrated regional health care delivery system serving Fairfield and Litchfield counties and nearby New York communities. As we work to re-evaluate our services and reposition the Hospital for even higher levels of performance, we'll focus on preserving quality care, developing partnerships to strengthen our operations and securing the technology and support necessary to maintain a strong financial position. You may be assured that whatever is decided, NMH will continue to remain a strong acute care facility, providing a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services as “your home for health.” ●

Sincerely,



Richard J. Henley, FACHE, FHFMA
Interim President and CEO

Do heavy periods affect your life?

New procedure may help

For women with abnormally long or heavy periods, symptoms can present difficult challenges before the onset of menopause. This condition, which occurs in nearly 20 percent of all women, can be treated successfully with treatment that ranges from hormone therapy and use of an intrauterine device (IUD) to open or laparoscopic hysterectomy for more severe symptoms. Obstetrician/gynecologists at New Milford Hospital (NMH) have added NovaSure® endometrial ablation as an alternative treatment to help women reduce or eliminate the unpleasant and inconvenient symptoms of heavy periods—and avoid surgery.

NovaSure is an incisionless procedure in which an obstetrician/gynecologist gently removes the lining of the uterus. Performed on an outpatient basis, NovaSure provides a quick recovery time. Most women experience no pain after the procedure and can return to work and regular activities the next day. Candidates for the procedure are typically women in their 30s–50s who've completed childbearing.

With more than a half-million women treated, NovaSure is proven safe and successful. A clinical trial showed that more than nine out of 10 women returned to normal or lower-than-normal bleeding levels following treatment. For some women, their periods even stopped completely. Many women also experienced a reduction in PMS and painful periods, as well as other benefits such as less anxiety, greater self-confidence and a boost in energy. Many women find that this treatment allows them to enjoy more of what life has to offer. According to the NovaSure clinical trial post-treatment survey, four out of five women report spending more time at work and daily activities and missing fewer social and athletic events because of heavy bleeding.



> Fabulous at 50!

Each decade of a woman's life is a 10-year transition with opportunities for renewal, transformation and the pursuit of vibrant good health in mind, body and spirit. Women in their 50s typically find that life is full of changes. Much like a second adolescence (complete with hormones!), life now offers a chance to cultivate your vitality. To flourish in your 50s, focus every day on being:

- physically active
- nutritionally smart
- in-the-know about preventive screenings:
 - annual mammogram
 - bone density test
 - cholesterol panel follow-up (or baseline if not yet done)
 - periodic blood pressure checks
 - thyroid test (TSH), starting at age 35 and then every five years
 - diabetes check: fasting blood glucose
 - annual gynecological exam with Pap test and HPV screening
 - immunizations such as flu (every year) and tetanus (every 10 years)
 - vision and hearing exams based on individual needs
 - semi-annual dental visits for exam and cleaning

The NMH obstetrician/gynecologists listed below perform the NovaSure procedure. For more information or a referral, call **(877) 786-0638** or visit **newmilfordhospital.org**.

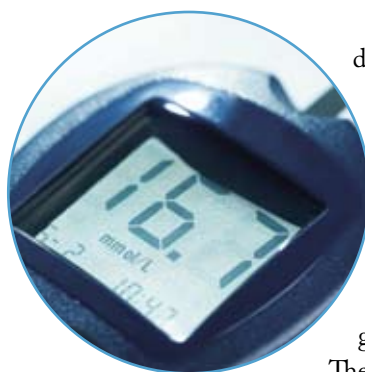
Claudia Johnson-Baxter, M.D.
Carol Papov, M.D.
John Sussman, M.D.

Orlito Trias, M.D.
Annette Wagner, M.D.

Get healthy at home

Self-monitoring tips to keep you in shape

Taking an active role in your healthcare makes the most positive impact on your health. And at-home monitoring allows you to detect potential problems early so your healthcare provider can make adjustments to your treatment to help ward off serious problems. Consider these doctor-approved do-it-yourself tests:



Tip! MEASURE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

Measuring your blood pressure at home can show you and your healthcare provider how much (or how little) your pressure varies during the day and can provide early detection if you're in the beginning stages of high blood pressure. Your provider uses the measurements to determine whether medicine is needed or how your current medication is working. You can pick up a blood pressure monitor without a prescription at your drugstore.

Blood pressure lower than 120/80 mm Hg is considered normal. High blood pressure is 140/90 mm Hg or higher. Most healthcare providers suggest that you check your blood pressure several times a day before they determine whether or not you have high blood pressure.

>> Call the doctor if: your blood pressure continually reads 140/90 mm Hg or higher or if you feel dizzy or have chest pain, confusion, ear noise or buzzing, an irregular heartbeat, a nosebleed, tiredness or vision changes. If your blood pressure spikes suddenly, you could be at risk of a stroke, and if your numbers reach 180 mm Hg or higher over 120 mm Hg or higher, your blood vessels can become

damaged and your heart won't be able to pump blood properly. If you experience a severe headache, anxiety or shortness of breath, get medical attention immediately.

Tip! CONTROL YOUR DIABETES

Checking your blood sugar with a glucose meter is essential to staying healthy. There's no "right" number of times a day to test. At certain times, such as when you're first diagnosed, you'll benefit from testing several times a day to help get your blood glucose in a healthy range.

You can use a blood glucose monitor to draw and test a drop of blood from your finger, hand, forearm or thigh. Different types of meters are available, including some with memory and others with easy-to-read displays for people with vision problems.

>> Call the doctor if: your blood sugar levels are either very high or very low, as this can be a sign of an underlying infection or trouble with certain medicines. If you feel nauseous, sluggish or shaky; have blurred vision; are feeling faint; or have stomach pain or vomiting, get immediate medical attention.

At-home monitoring gives you instant information about your body.



Dieters who step on the scale every day lose twice as much weight over a two-year period as those who weigh in less often.

—*Annals of Behavioral Medicine*

Tip! **MONITOR YOUR CHOLESTEROL**

Some cholesterol test kits measure your total cholesterol; others also measure HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. Even lab testing can show varying results, and there can be even more variations with tests done at home. Ideally, your total cholesterol should measure less than 200 mg/dL. Anything above this is considered borderline high or high.

>> Call the doctor if: you've made changes to your diet and are exercising at least 30 minutes a day and your cholesterol is still high. Your doctor can re-check your treatment and may prescribe medication or change your medicine to help get your numbers down. There are usually no physical symptoms of high cholesterol but sometimes it can cause chest pain; get immediate help if this is the case.

Tip! **WATCH YOUR WEIGHT**

Your bathroom scale is a powerful tool in achieving weight loss. Weigh yourself at least once a week if you're trying to lose weight. Remember to set a goal of slow and steady weight loss—1 to 2 pounds a week.

>> Call the doctor if: you've been reducing your food intake and have been exercising but you're not losing weight. Your medications could be interfering with weight loss, or you may have a condition that affects your metabolism, such as hypothyroidism.

Tip! **OBSERVE OVULATION**

If you're trying to get pregnant, ovulation is an exciting time. It usually takes place on the 14th day of the menstrual cycle. But for some women, ovulation can vary from month to month, so pinpointing "the" moment can be tricky. There are a few home tests you can take to give you a better idea of when conception is more likely.



Your basal body temperature, which rises during ovulation, could provide a good clue: Take your temperature every morning, using a digital thermometer. Jot down your readings and look for a pattern—you'll be most fertile two to three days before your temperature rises. You can also try an at-home ovulation kit, which tests your urine for hormonal peaks that happen prior to ovulation.

>> Call the doctor if: you've tried to get pregnant for at least one year without success. If you're 35 or older, see your healthcare provider if you've tried for six months; he or she can help you find out why you haven't conceived. ●



Regaining life

Surgery and sunshine do the trick for an active realtor with hip and knee pain

With winter breaking for warmer days and bluer skies, we could all use a little sunshine. For Mallie Mandel, solar inspiration comes in the form of walks with her husband, Robert, and their beloved 9-year-old golden retriever, Sunshine, near their Washington, Conn., home.

For someone who has endured years of progressive pain, the 67-year-old wife, mother, grandmother and real estate agent has stepped into a new chapter of her life—plotting her return to a more active lifestyle after hip and knee replacements in January 2009 and 2010, respectively. She chose orthopedic joint specialist Anthony Viola, M.D., for what she fondly calls “her bionic experience” at New Milford Hospital (NMH) because she wanted high-quality care close to her home and family.

“All of my four brothers have had hip replacements, and I knew I was headed in the same direction,” says Mandel. “I couldn’t walk well or for very long, and my daily life became increasingly less enjoyable. I heard some of the worst stories about pain after surgery, but I thought, ‘I already have pain. I am going to be open to this and do what I can.’ It was time to do something about it. I certainly felt soreness and stiffness, but it was nothing compared to what I felt before my operations. It was such a relief to feel the difference after surgery.”

A PREPARED PATIENT AND HOSPITAL TEAM

Mandel was a highly motivated patient. She prepared herself physically, mentally and spiritually, completing physical therapy before surgery with “a wonderful group of therapists,” says Mandel. “I tried to anticipate and

> Center for Orthopedics and Joint Replacement

New Milford Hospital offers highly experienced orthopedic specialists for joint and spine care with comprehensive services to treat and rehabilitate patients experiencing physical injury or disease causing pain and



limited mobility. Our board-certified orthopedic surgeons provide expertise in joint replacement of the hip and knee, shoulder resurfacing and other shoulder surgery, and procedures to minimize back and neck pain, including advanced techniques that minimize scarring and recovery time.

Whether you're an advanced athlete or someone looking to return to a more active lifestyle, our surgical team provides comprehensive education to prepare you for surgery and aftercare to ensure that your treatment and recovery present an experience that meets or exceeds your expectations. Our goal is to help you return confidently to the activities you most enjoy pain-free and with renewed strength and endurance.

For more information about our orthopedic specialists, call **(877) 786-0638** or visit **newmilfordhospital.org**.

Andrew Bazos, M.D.
Cameron Brown, M.D.
Mitchell Garden, M.D.
Daniel George, M.D.
John Keggi, M.D.

John Mullen, M.D.
Martin O'Malley, M.D.
Evan Rashkoff, M.D.
Anthony Viola, M.D.
Robert Yaghoubian, M.D.

visualize what would happen and what to expect. I had the right people and energy around me to move forward with confidence. I knew that I was in great hands.”

At NMH, Mandel found the same personal attention to keep her spirits high and her recovery on track. “Dr. Viola and his entire surgical team—from the office to the Hospital—were behind me all the way. They were professional, caring and full of good humor,” says Mandel. “The Hospital staff was also very accommodating to my special requests. I was able to make arrangements for my acupuncturist to treat me within a few hours after surgery. Even the dining staff called to make sure I had something special to eat. When I wanted grilled cheese for breakfast, I got it!”

Speaking on her third week anniversary from knee surgery, Mandel says she already feels 95 percent better. “I am eager to jump back into life, but I am trying to take it slow. Healing is a process that requires time and patience,” she says. “You have to be willing to do the work but also rely upon others when you need them.”

Dr. Viola agrees. “It takes a whole team to fully support the patient, and the results are often dramatic. My patients are an inspiration and they're what keeps me in this specialty,” he says. “My greatest satisfaction is seeing my patients return to enjoy more active schedules and activities that they only imagined. There is nothing better than to hear that you have restored someone's quality of life.” ●

“I am eager to jump back into life, but I am trying to take it slow. Healing is a process that requires time and patience.”

—Mallie Mandel



Make the most of your visit



Whether you're taking your child to the doctor for a regular exam or visiting your own health care provider for a specific problem, your family's total well-being is your doctor's primary concern. To make your office visit as thorough as possible, remember the acronym **T-A-L-K** before your visit. The letters stand for four steps that promote effective communication between you and your provider. They are:

Family physician Jonathan Beck, M.D. (top photo), and pediatrician Evan Hack, M.D. (pictured with Abigail Portelance and her father, Richard), are two of more than 20 primary care doctors at New Milford Hospital. Their collective experience in family practice, pediatrics, internal medicine and geriatrics provides a cornerstone for community health to support the needs of families throughout the region.

> **Need a doctor?**

For more information and a referral to a primary care physician, call **(877) 786-0638** or visit **newmilfordhospital.org**.

TELL your provider everything you feel he or she needs to know. That includes those "little things" you aren't sure are worth mentioning. They could be nothing or early symptoms of an illness or condition. Alerting your provider to them now will allow for prompt diagnosis and treatment.

ASK your provider about anything that concerns or confuses you. If you read something in a magazine or saw a news report on a particular study and are curious as to how this could affect you, feel free to ask. There are no "dumb" questions.

LIST your questions and concerns in advance of the visit so you won't forget to raise important issues. Similarly, you may want to jot down the information your provider conveys to you during the visit.

KNOW how your provider has assessed your health and what treatment he or she has prescribed. The visit shouldn't end until you're confident that you understand exactly what he or she has told you and that you know precisely what he or she wants you to do.

Be clear and concise in describing your concerns. If, for instance, you're bothered by a muscle spasm, explain not only where it is and how it feels but also whether it occurs after exertion or during periods of inactivity.

Talking with your provider ensures that you'll receive the best possible medical care. And if you leave your appointment and then think of a question only your provider can answer, don't hesitate to make a follow-up call. ●



Improving our environment

Charitable donations fund latest upgrades

The New Milford Hospital (NMH) Foundation Board of Directors has allocated \$3.1 million in charitable gift funds to the Hospital to support five construction, renovation and remodeling projects. “We’re delighted that services will be expanded and patient safety and comfort will be improved because of the enormous generosity of individuals and foundations who’ve made philanthropic commitments to the Hospital,” says Tom Rosenwald, Foundation board chairman.

- Construction of a 4,000-square-foot, two-story structure that will house a Siemens MAGNETOM Espree 1.5T Open Bore MRI began in October. Funded by The Diebold Foundation and the Diebold family, the MRI building is located at the north end of the Hospital campus; patients will enter the building from an inside location between cardiovascular testing and the Regional Cancer Center. The MRI opening is expected in the summer.

- The patient waiting room in the Cancer Center received new carpeting, furnishings and lighting last fall thanks to a grant from the Lawrence J. Portell and Natalie D. Portell Foundation.

- Renovations to offices and treatment areas in the

Cancer Center were made possible by the estate of Nancy Elwood.

- A capital gift from Agnes Gund is funding renovations in four operating suites, including upgrades in lighting, flooring, surgical carts and cabinetry, along with much-needed repairs of walls, floors and ceilings.

- Thanks to gifts from the Hettinger Foundation and The Hauser Foundation, the gateway to “Your Home for Health,” the Hospital’s main entrance, is undergoing a transformation that will be completed in May. The entry will have an expanded lobby and ambassador/reception desk, improved lighting, carpeting and signage, and a “water wall” to provide a warmer, more welcoming experience for patients and visitors.

“Every aspect of these capital projects is designed to enhance a patient’s experience,” says Richard J. Henley, interim president and CEO. “We’re grateful to the donors whose faith and confidence in NMH have made these improvements possible.” ●




Local photographer shows support for Family Birthing Center

Rich Pomerantz Photography recently donated \$600 to benefit New Milford Hospital’s Family Birthing Center after a special portrait benefit ran from September through December last year. In addition to offering a reduced-fee portrait sitting and signed print package, Rich Pomerantz donated \$50 from each sitting to the Family Birthing Center, where his work with children and families is currently on display. Rich is pictured at left with his wife, Celia (far left), and Maureen MacSweeney, R.N., former manager, Family Birthing Center. In addition to his portraits, Rich is known for his commercial and published work in “Hudson River Valley Farms,” “Great Gardens of the Berkshires” and “Wild Horses of the Dunes.” ●



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: (800) 350-1595
newmilfordhospital.org

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Spring 2010 education calendar

All programs are free, open to the public and held at New Milford Hospital, 21 Elm St., unless otherwise specified.
Preregister by calling **(877) 786-0638** or visiting newmilfordhospital.org unless otherwise indicated.

> **COMMUNITY CPR CLASS
(ADULT, CHILD, INFANT, AED)**

**Tuesdays, April 27, May 25 and June 22,
4–8 p.m.; Wednesdays, April 7, May 5 and
June 2, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.** Center for Clinical
Excellence, 6 Treadwell St., New Milford. **Fee:
\$75.** Preregister by calling **(860) 210-5010.**

> **PRE-DIABETES SCREENING**

**Fridays, April 9, May 7 and June 11, 7:30–
9:30 a.m.** Fasting required for at least eight
hours before screening; no registration required.

> **SWINGING INTO SPRING: GETTING
READY FOR GOLF, TENNIS AND OTHER
ACTIVITIES**

Monday, April 12, 6:45–8:30 p.m. Speakers:
Orthopedic surgeon Andrew Bazos, M.D.; chiro-
practor/certified golf conditioning specialist
Edward Geddis, D.C.; and physical therapist/
physician assistant Dimitri Ghecas, M.B.A., P.A.-C.

> **A NEW WEIGH TO A HEALTHIER YOU**

**Mondays, April 19 and 26, May 3 and 10,
2–3:30 p.m. Fee: \$30 for four-part series.**
Discussion will include basic principles of weight
management, including nutrition and exercise, to
help you reach and keep your ideal weight.

> **WE CAN: WAYS TO ENHANCE
CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY & NUTRITION**

**Mondays, April 19 and 26, May 3 and 10,
4–5 p.m. Fee: \$25 per family for four-part
series.** Discussion will guide parents to help
children ages 8 to 13 maintain a healthy weight
by improving food choices and increasing physical
activity.

> **FRESHSTART SMOKING CESSATION
PROGRAM**

**Mondays, April 19 and 26, May 3 and 10,
6:30–7:30 p.m. Fee: \$25 for series.**
\$5 refund for each session attended.

> **AN ANSWER TO HEAVY PERIODS:
LEARN ABOUT TREATMENT OPTIONS
TO HELP LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST**

Thursday, May 6, 6:45–8:30 p.m.
Speaker: Carol Papov, M.D., obstetrics/
gynecology. Door prizes provided by Hologic™.

> **STROKE ALERT (AND MORE!)**

Thursday, May 13, 9 a.m.–noon, main lobby.
No registration required. Free heart/stroke risk
assessment, pre-diabetes screening and breast
health demonstration.

> **Help us update
your records**

Are you looking for a “green”
option for keeping up with news
and information about New Milford
Hospital (NMH)?

Are you a NMH Foundation
donor who will see your name
listed in the 2009 Annual Report
and would prefer that, in the
future, we list your name in a more
formal or less formal way—for
example, Mr. and Mrs. John Doe
vs. John and Mary Doe, or Jane
Smith vs. Ms. Jane R. Smith?

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you'd prefer your name listed
in publications, please e-mail
acknowledgement@nmhct.org
or call **(860) 350-7345.**