BACK IN THE ACTION

Minimally Invasive Surgery Brings Relief to Celebrated Outdoorsman
A Team Approach to Lung-Cancer Care

Multidisciplinary Team Collaborates in Care

St. Tammany Parish Hospital’s multidisciplinary team approach to the prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer is key to the best possible prognosis for patients facing a diagnosis at any stage.

The Lung Cancer Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) coordinates all aspects of lung cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment along with ensuring support and survivorship care after treatment. The team’s purpose is to develop and implement patient centered processes and needed clinical procedures, as well as review of patient treatment and outcomes to ensure the highest quality diagnosis and therapeutic care to the lung cancer patient.

Members of the Lung MDT reflect the array of treatment modalities available to patients and include thoracic surgeons, pulmonologists, medical and radiation oncologists, diagnostic radiologists, pathologists and palliative care.

Allderd health professionals contribute to the quality of life for patients during and after a cancer diagnosis and treatment. Oncology nurse navigators provide guidance and coordinate care for patients along with dieticians and social workers who collaborate with other team members at each phase of care, including early detection, survivorship care plans that guide a patient to life after a cancer diagnosis and treatment, and end-of-life care when appropriate.

The team is headed by Charles J. DiCerto MD, a thoracic surgeon for Ochsner Health Center, an innovative lung-cancer treatment center in the U.S., who states “The Lung MDT has had a significant impact on the way we diagnose and treat lung cancer. Most lung cancers are diagnosed in advanced stages, minimizing treatment options and limiting survival. Since the team’s inception in early 2014, it has been responsible for the implementation of low-dose computerized tomography screenings to diagnose lung cancer in its earliest stages when more treatment options, such as surgery, are available.

-Charles J. DiCerto MD, thoracic surgeon.

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New video cameras in St. Tammany Parish Hospital’s neonatal intensive care unit allow parents to see real-time images of their baby when they can’t be at their newborn’s bedside.

St. Tammany Hospital Foundation provided the hospital with funding to purchase 10 of these secure cameras, using a dedicated fund for pediatric advancement at STPH.

Small, wireless cameras mounted near the baby’s bed show only that infant. Parent-approved technology permits parents to log in any time to watch streaming video of their baby on any device with an Internet connection, including a smartphone.

Parents may choose to share the unique password with grandparents and friends to give them secure access to the images as well.

Being able to see their newborn in the NICU eases stress and promotes bonding for parents who don’t expect to leave the hospital without their baby and can’t be there all the time, said Nicole Norris, NICU department lead.

“It’s hard for moms to go home without their babies, so this is a big deal.”

- Nicole Norris, NICU department lead

LUNG DISTANCE LOVE for Babies in the NICU
Cameras Help Parents Feel Close To Newborns

“‘It’s hard for moms to go home without their babies, so this is a big deal,’ Norris said. Shannon Lewko of Bush used similar technology to watch her daughter after the baby, born at 28 weeks gestation, underwent surgery at Ochsner Health System in New Orleans. Although she drove every day to see her baby in New Orleans, Lewko returned to Bush each day to care for an older child.

‘The nights were hard, and it was reassuring to see her,’ Lewko said.

The NICU’s new cameras have special meaning for those STF Foundation Executive Director Cherley Strickland, whose twin spent almost the entire NICU at Ochsner Baptist after his birth last year.

‘It was truly exceptional for my daughter and son-in-law to have a watchful eye on their son, Colin, in the NICU while tending to their daughter, Charlie, in the hospital room,’ Strickland said.

The cameras are expected to be installed and in use in the STPH NICU this spring.
PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS

- Abita Roasting Co.
- Coffee Rani
- Copeland’s Restaurants
- The Dakota
- Fazzio’s
- Garcia’s Famous Mexican Food
- George’s Mexican Restaurant
- Gio’s Villa Vancheri
- La Carreta
- Live Fit Smoothies
- Rusty Pelican
- Sweet Daddy’s
- SWEGS Kitchen
- STPH Cafeteria
- Times Grill
- Trey Yuen Cuisine of China
- Zea Rotisserie & Grill

A St. Tammany Parish Hospital community initiative that kicked off in March expands nutritious menu options at Northshore restaurants.

Through Eat Fit Northshore, STPH partners with local restaurants to promote healthy entrees and other dishes that meet the program’s nutritional requirements. Participating eateries span traditions from Chinese to Italian, a range of prices and atmospheres from family-friendly to fine dining.

“The point is to give people more options for delicious foods that are also good for them,” said STPH Joey Skinner, the program’s coordinator.

Eat Fit Northshore items are generally established favorites that have been modified to boost their nutritional content. The idea is to substitute ingredients like fat and oils for healthier alternatives without sacrificing taste and texture. The process involves creativity on the part of local chefs. Chef Giovanni “Gio” Vancheri of Gio’s Villa Vancheri Italian restaurant in Mandeville switched to whole wheat flour and adjusted some of his dishes such as Pasta Norma to accommodate program requirements.

“Everything is still delicious,” said Sicilian-born Chef Vancheri. “The small changes don’t compromise the wonderful taste of the already healthy Mediterranean cuisine that we serve at my restaurant. It’s just better for you.”

Eat Fit Northshore is about good food, with the larger goal of better health. The program is one of five initiatives funded through a National WIC Association Community Partnerships for Healthy Mothers and Children grant to reduce chronic disease through improved local access to nutritious foods.

New community gardens and expanded STPH breastfeeding education for WIC recipients are other efforts supported through the national grant, which was secured for the Community Wellness Center by the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation.

Civic leaders from across the Northshore, including the mayors of Covington and Mandeville, worked with STPH and other stakeholders to develop ways to expand community access to healthier food options through Eat Fit Northshore.

“Eat Fit Northshore is designed to help people make healthier choices when they eat out, including for people with chronic diseases such as diabetes,” said Sandy Matthews, Community Wellness Center director.

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Don Dubuc’s Thursdays go something like this: Get up at 3 a.m. Feed dogs and horses. Drive to Grand Isle. Climb into a boat before daybreak and head into the Gulf of Mexico in search of fish and good footage.

And that’s only the beginning of a marathon workday that requires Dubuc to drive to a New Orleans television studio and write, edit and file a broadcast report by 6 p.m.

“It’s a hectic day,” said the longtime Northshore resident. Dubuc, 65, has been a fixture in Louisiana sports journalism for three decades, including 30-plus years in radio and more than 20 years in television. It’s a job that requires hunting and fishing every week throughout the year.

But severe lower back and leg pain once threatened to sideline Dubuc from the work he loves and destroy his quality of life. Successful, minimally invasive spine surgery at St. Tammany Parish Hospital corrected the source of pain and required Dubuc take only a brief hiatus from the woods and water.

A spinal disc is a cushion-like shock absorber between two vertebrae, the specialized bones of the spinal column. Discs lose elasticity and flexibility with normal aging, thereby becoming less effective “cushions” between the vertebrae. Injury to the discs or abnormal movement of the vertebrae can cause debilitating pain in the back and legs.

In Dubuc’s case, pain in his lower back was the result of a series of problems at the same point in his lower spine, including degenerative disc disease, spondylolisthesis (Greek for “slipping spine”), a herniated disc and a narrowing of the opening in the spine, a condition called stenosis.

Dubuc got some temporary relief from the pain by way of an outpatient procedure called a laminectomy that removed the portion of vertebral bone that was compressing the nerve roots.

But within a year, the pain had returned. An MRI revealed the cause: the same disc was again protruding from the space between his vertebrae and the bones were moving abnormally and slipping forward.

New Year’s Eve 2014, spine surgeon K. Samer Shamieh MD removed the damaged disc from Dubuc’s spinal column in a minimally invasive approach to a procedure known as lumbar fusion.

Using tiny surgical retractors, Dr. Shamieh first removed the damaged disc from Dubuc’s spinal column through a small incision. The Covington-based surgeon then replaced the disc with a cage-like support structure that stabilized the two vertebrae and eliminated the source of Dubuc’s pain.

Bone grows or “fuses” around and through the medical-grade plastic device in the months after the procedure. The procedure provided immediate relief for Dubuc, and got him back in the Louisiana marshes and forests in just a little more than a week.

Dr. Shamieh, a fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon who specializes in minimally invasive spine surgeries, noted that the smaller incisions required for minimally invasive procedures result in faster healing and less pain. Less bleeding and post-operative discomfort, shorter recovery and lower risk of infection are other advantages, he said.

Further, while a traditional lumbar fusion might also require a three to five-day stay in the hospital, Dr. Shamieh noted that Dubuc went home the day after his procedure.

Dubuc concurred that his down time for recovery was brief. He missed a single televised broadcast before his return to fishing, hunting and, before long, climbing trees. He said he kept himself on “light duty” for a couple of weeks, but was surprised by how good he felt.

“I avoided heavy lifting, but I wasn’t laid up in bed,” Dubuc said. “I was back outside in just over a week.”

Dubuc takes ibuprofen once in a while these days, but the pain in that part of his back has not returned.

“People talk about back pain, but until you’ve felt it, you don’t understand it. This was a real success for me. I feel great.”

- Don Dubuc
**New Waiting Areas and Treatment Rooms Complete**

In 2013 St. Tammany Hospital Foundation embarked on a capital campaign to support pediatric emergency care. The foundation’s Board of Trustees, led by capital campaign co-chairs Greg Pellegrini and Allyson Sanderson, spent the next 3 years sharing the vision of a dedicated pediatric emergency area within the hospital’s emergency department with the community. And the community responded.

As of April 2016, the foundation is pleased to announce that they have met and surpassed their goal of raising $3 million, presenting a check to Patti Ellish, STPH President & CEO and John Evans, STPH Board of Commissioners Chairman at the ribbon cutting for the newly expended emergency department.

“‘It never ceases to amaze me what combining time, talent, passion and dollars can accomplish. The new pediatric emergency room is truly a testament to that.”’ Nicole Suhre, Executive Director, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation.

Phase three of the $21 million expansion of inpatient and emergency services is now complete. This is the largest phase of the Emergency Department expansion, and includes a new waiting area, walk-in entrance and pediatric waiting and treatment areas. It also includes a new “results pending” area for patients who have received emergency care and are awaiting physicians’ orders, prescriptions or non-emergency test results. This ensures that beds are available sooner for other patients in need.

When completed, the Emergency Department will have a total of 30 beds, 10 more than prior to the project. It will include specialized care settings to accommodate, pediatric, geriatric and mental health emergencies.

On March 3, STPH held a ribbon cutting and open house for this phase of the Emergency Department to show the community the new space before it opens for patients. The final phase of construction will occur in interior portions of the new emergency department footprint and is scheduled to be completed at the end of 2016.

**Heart to Heart 98**

**Phase three of the $21 million expansion of inpatient and emergency services is now complete.**

**THE TYPE OF CARE YOUR CHILDREN DESERVE and the PEACE OF MIND PARENTS DESERVE**

Get your lucky clubs ready! This year’s Get Lucky! Golf Tournament benefitting St. Tammany Hospital Foundation is on Friday the 13th. The fifth anniversary of this not-to-miss day of fun on the course will be held on Friday, May 13 at Tchefuncta Country Club in Covington. The 2015 tournament raised over $45,000 for the foundation’s mission of supporting the healing work of the staff and physicians of St. Tammany Parish Hospital and the 2016 event is poised to raise the bar for fundraising. Highlights of this year’s tournament, sponsored by Canteen Vending Services, will include delicious food on the course, specialty drink stops, gifts for every golfer, raffle prizes and the chance to win a new car. Sponsorships, corporate foursomes and individual spots are available.

For more information, contact Nicole Suhre at 985-898-4171 or visit sthfoundation.org/golf.

**Golfers Can Get Lucky! on Friday the 13th**
Skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby a few minutes after delivery makes the new mother more likely to try breastfeeding and more likely to succeed at it.

Keeping the baby in a crib near her bed throughout her hospital stay, a practice called rooming in, likewise promotes breastfeeding success among new mothers by helping them quickly learn when their baby is hungry.

Highlighting such evidence-based best practices that promote breastfeeding is an increasingly visible element of prenatal education and breastfeeding classes at St. Tammany Parish Hospital through the New Family Center and Community Wellness Center.

A National WIC Association Community Partnerships for Healthy Mothers and Children grant enables the Community Wellness Center to provide additional education and support to local mothers about the significant health benefits of breastfeeding.

“The Healthy Mothers and Children grant will make a huge difference in the lives of mothers and children in our community,” said Charley Strickland, then executive director of the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation, which secured the grant.

Breastfeeding has been identified by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists as a best practice in the care of newborns. The goal of the expanded breastfeeding education initiative at STPH is to help more mothers try breastfeeding their babies and breastfeed as long as possible.

“We want mothers to be prepared and educated so they can make well-informed choices about caring for their babies,” said Sandy Matthews, director of community wellness.

Misinformation about breastfeeding and frustration with early attempts often discourage mothers from trying. Exploring best practices during prenatal and breastfeeding classes helps moms to develop a full understanding of them well before they head to the hospital for delivery.

For instance, skin-to-skin contact is about more than just bonding. Such contact stabilizes the baby’s breathing and heart rate and allows the mother to transfer illness-preventing antibodies to her baby, explained Jan Waddell RN, one of five internationally board certified lactation consultants at STPH.

Research also shows that extended, uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact must take place within the “magical hours” after birth to realize maximum benefit to mother and child, Waddell said.

Discussing best practices with expectant parents also provides the opportunity to counter misinformation about breastfeeding.

For example, mothers whose babies room in with them sleep as well or better than those who send their babies to the hospital nursery to sleep, Waddell noted.

During classes focused on preparation, Waddell encourages moms to recruit the baby’s father or a friend or relative to serve as a member of their “breastfeeding support team” before the baby’s arrival. The team member should attend prenatal and breastfeeding classes with the mother so he or she can provide meaningful support after the baby’s birth.

“It’s important for the mom to have someone who supports her decision,” Waddell said.

Stacey Dennis understands the role of support in breastfeeding success. She hoped to continue breastfeeding her baby after returning to school when he was four months old. Her decision would mean pumping breast milk and juggling commutes from Mandeville to a nursing program in New Orleans.

“People told me I shouldn’t even try,” she said. A visit to the Community Wellness Center gave Miss Dennis the shot of confidence she needed. Of course, she could succeed, lactation counselor Sharon Insalaco LPN told her. Insalaco talked the young mother through her worries, which included the fact that she had never used a breast pump.

“I walked in crying and then I walked out telling myself I was going to do this,” said Miss Dennis, who breastfed her younger son, Austin, almost exclusively until shortly before his first birthday. “There is support out there if you look for it.”

Visit stph.org/breastfeeding for more information.

**BEST PRACTICES for BREASTFEEDING SUCCESS**

**Educating Moms before Delivery is Key**

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STPH CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

As the Northshore’s community health network, St. Tammany Parish Hospital hosts events, meetings and opportunities for you to improve and maintain your physical and emotional well-being. We’ve provided a short sample of the many upcoming events below. Please check stph.org/calendar and your local newspaper for additional learning opportunities for individuals of all ages.

For New Parents

New Family Center Tours
New Family Center Tours
1st and 3rd Saturdays | 10 a.m. to noon
STPH New Family Center | Free
Learn about our private birthing suites, rooming in, skin-to-skin program and more.
985-898-4436

Prepared Childbirth
Tuesdays, June 7 and June 14 | 7-9 p.m.
STPH Conference Room | Free
Learn the physical and emotional changes that occur, how your baby develops throughout pregnancy, the signs and stages of labor, what to expect during childbirth and the breathing and relaxation techniques used during labor. Anesthesia options will be discussed.
985-898-4083

Baby Care Basics
Tuesdays, April 26, May 24 and June 28 | 7-9 p.m.
STPH Conference Room | Free
Learn helpful hints and what to expect when caring for your new baby.
985-898-4083

Boot Camp for New Dads
Saturday, May 7 and July 16 | 9 a.m. to noon
STPH Conference Room | $10
New dads learn from veteran dads about the realities of fatherhood, including caring for baby and mom.
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Art of Breastfeeding
Mondays, May 2 and 9 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.
STPH Parenting Center | Free
Discuss benefits of breastfeeding as well as common concerns of the early breastfeeding period to create a positive and successful breastfeeding experience.
985-898-4083

New Baby Support Group
Every Thursday | 11:15 a.m. to noon
STPH Parenting Center | Free
Join other mothers and their little ones to discuss child development and parenting tips with professionals as well as other parents.
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

For the Kids

Play and Learn
Tuesdays, May 10 and 17; June 7, 14 and 21; July 5, 12 and 26 | 9:30-10:15 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center | $15/members, $24/nonmembers
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Ballet
Wednesdays, May 4, 11 and 18; June 8, 15 and 22; July 6, 13 and 27 | 9:15-10 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center | Free
$21/members, $30/nonmembers
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Cuddle Buddies
May 5, 12 and 19; June 9, 16 and 23; July 7, 14 and 28 | 10:30-11 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center | Free
$6/members, $12/nonmembers
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Baby Chat for Siblings
Saturday, May 7 and July 16 | 10 a.m. to noon
STPH Conference Room | Free
985-898-4435

Children in the Middle
Mondays, June 13 and 20 | 10 a.m. to noon
STPH Parenting Center | Free
$10/per child
985-898-4435

Toddling Time
Wednesdays, May 11 & 18; June 8, 15 & 2; July 6, 13 & 27 | 10:30-11:15 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center | Free
$15/per child
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

For the Grown-Ups

Living Tobacco Free
Wednesdays, July 27 – August 31 | noon to 1 p.m. or 5:30-6:30 p.m.
STPH Conference Room | Free
Gain the tools and resources you need to quit smoking for good.
985-898-4468

Co-Parenting Classes
Mondays, June 13 and 20 | 6-8 p.m., STPH Parenting Center
$30/members, $35/nonmembers
For divorcing parents to learn methods and communication skills that help keep children out of a divorce. Children’s version available to help them as parents go through divorce.
ksupan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Sister Survivors Support Group
1st Tuesday of each month | 7 p.m.
Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center at St. Tammany Parish Hospital | Free
Support group open to any female cancer survivor, whether currently receiving treatment or has completed treatment for any cancer diagnosis.
jfreudenberger@marybird.com or 985-276-6832

Grief Support Group
1st Wednesday of each month | 3 p.m.
STPH Madisonville Conference Room
For adults who have suffered loss.
dvanek@stph.org

1 in 4 St. Tammany
2nd Tuesday of each month | 6 p.m.
STPH Women’s Pavilion Conference Room
Supports mothers, fathers and their families that have experienced a pregnancy or infant loss.
jsims@stph.org

FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2016
TCHEFUNCTA COUNTRY CLUB
11:30 am registration
12:30 pm shotgun start

Get Lucky! Golf Tournament

For more information, see page 9.