Comprehensive Breast Care, Close to Home

Joint Replacement Surgery with Less Pain, Faster Recovery

Families Come First At The Birthplace

Health and Wellness Programs For a New You
Dear Friends,

As we set forth on a new year, we are provided the opportunity to wipe the slate and set new goals. I believe this will be a big year for Circle Health as we continue to bring healthcare beyond the walls of Lowell General Hospital and our affiliated centers and practices, and into the communities we serve.

What does the new year hold for you and your health? If you have been waiting to renew your own health and wellness journey, the time to start is now. Inside the pages of this edition of For Your Health, we hope to show you how Circle Health can be your partner on that journey.

A key part of this issue focuses on the outstanding breast care we are able to provide to women in this community. This year alone, more than 250,000 women in the United States are expected to receive a diagnosis of breast cancer. These are our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters, and they deserve the best possible care we can give them. In 2017, Lowell General Hospital earned recognition as an Accredited Breast Center by the American College of Surgeons, which signifies that we are dedicated to providing the highest level of patient-centered care and offer women every significant advantage in their treatment against breast disease.

Attention to detail is extremely important to us, and that means taking care of you and your family when you need us. A perfect example of this approach is found at The Birthplace at Lowell General Hospital, where expecting parents are provided a private, comfortable setting that allows them to focus on the birth of their child.

Inside you will read about many of the ways we are working to support Merrimack Valley residents on their path to better health, and share stories of how individuals facing significant health challenges are able to return to doing the things they love.

At Circle Health, we have made a promise – to provide Complete connected care to this community. In the new year, we will continue to grow our services so we can provide you with the best possible care, close to home.

Be well,

Joseph (Jody) White
Chief Executive Officer, Circle Health

Circle Health Invests in Health Center Expansion, Services

In early December, Circle Health announced a major investment to support Lowell Community Health Center’s ongoing expansion and renovation to add dental and vision care and expand primary care in early 2018.

The Health Center is in the midst of a $3 million Building Bridges capital campaign to renovate 65,000 square feet of additional space to expand services at its Jackson Street facility. The project significantly expands the health center’s role as “the family doctor” for more than 50,000 people in Greater Lowell.

Circle Health’s investment in the project is designed to strengthen the two institutions’ collaborative commitment to ensuring that everyone in Greater Lowell has access to healthcare.

“If we are truly going to improve health in Greater Lowell and the Merrimack Valley, we know we need to make healthcare more convenient and more accessible,” said Jody White, CEO of Circle Health and Lowell General Hospital. “This expansion and the care that will be provided is going to have an incredible impact on our community. Circle Health is honored to partner with Lowell Community Health Center to make it happen.”

Susan West Levine, CEO of Lowell CHC, said that the decision to expand services comes in response to an overwhelming need cited by patients and a shortage of providers who accept Mass Health. The nearest community health centers offering dental and vision care are the Edward M. Kennedy Health Center in Worcester and Lynn Community Health Center.

“We are grateful to Circle Health for this most generous support, which assures the success of the project and brings vital healthcare services to our community,” she said. “This investment further strengthens our long-standing collaboration, and we look forward to our continued work with Circle Health.”
Welcoming New Providers to Circle Health

At Circle Health, we’re dedicated to meeting the growing needs of our communities. That means expanding our network of physicians who are committed to keeping you healthy, providing expert care and treating you with the attention you deserve. With more physicians, we can accept new patients and maintain the Complete connected care™ that is the promise of Circle Health. All of the following physicians are accepting new patients.

Maureen Cook, MD
Specialist
Obstetrics and Gynecology, Board Certified
OB/GYN Associates of the Merrimack Valley
Lowell
978-452-2121

Elisabeth Gennis, MD, MPH
Specialist
Orthopaedics
Orthopaedic Surgical Associates
North Chelmsford
978-454-0706

Paul Georges, DPM
Specialist
Podiatric Surgery
Prime Foot and Ankle Care
Lowell
978-452-0657

David Gruenberg, MD
Specialist
Allergy and Immunology, Board Certified
Allergy & Asthma Specialists
Chelmsford
978-256-4537

Lauren Miller, DO
Primary Care Physician, Pediatrics, Board Certified
DrumHill Pediatrics
North Chelmsford
978-256-2828

Jessica Olson, DPM
Specialist
Pediatric Medicine and Surgery
New England Foot and Ankle
Chelmsford
978-441-9241

Lerna Ozcan, MD
Specialist
Surgery, Board Certified
Breast Surgical Oncology
Riverside Surgical Associates
Lowell
978-458-4300

Anita Patel, MD
Primary Care Physician, Pediatrics, Board Certified
Office of Drs. Gilchrist, Sevigny & Galvin
Chelmsford
978-250-4081

Poornima Vanguri, MD
Specialist
General Surgery
Riverside Surgical Associates
Lowell
978-458-4300

Yixia Ye, MD, PhD
Specialist
Rheumatology
Merrimack Valley Rheumatology Associates
Westford
978-937-1840

Need a physician?

For information on more than 700 physicians in over 30 specialties, call an advisor 24/7 at 1-877-LGH-WELL (1-800-544-9355) or visit www.lowellgeneral.org/findaphysician.

To learn more about our new primary care physicians, visit circle-health.org/newPCPs. To learn more about our new specialists, visit circle-health.org/newspecialists.
Touring Italy is known for many things – viewing ancient architecture, enjoying incredible cuisine and walking the many stairs that line the narrow streets.

Catherine Albano wants to do it all, but knee pain kept forcing her to postpone her trip. Knee pain had plagued her for the last couple of years, and a surgery on her meniscus provided only temporary relief.

“I just wanted it to feel better,” Catherine says. “Walking was painful. Sitting for long periods was painful. It got to the point I just wanted something done.”

That’s when Catherine consulted with Lowell General Hospital orthopedic surgeon Dr. Scott Sigman, who had good news for her – not only could he get her knee ready for Italy, he could get her back on her feet just hours after surgery with minimal pain.

Lowell General Hospital’s joint replacement program offers a full spectrum of joint care for total hip and total knee replacement patients — from diagnosis and treatment to education, surgery and recovery. Some of the area’s most experienced physicians and clinicians in the treatment of joint pain have dedicated their expertise to create an Orthopedic Center of Excellence here in the Merrimack Valley.

A key to Lowell General’s patient-centered approach involves education about the procedure and recovery. Catherine attended a joint replacement class at the hospital that answered all her questions about the day of surgery and on through recovery. She also got to see one of the private rooms where she'd be staying after surgery.

But when Dr. Sigman said she'd stand up almost right away, she was skeptical. Relatives who had undergone a similar joint replacement procedure warned her there was quite a bit of pain in the days and weeks afterward.

To minimize this post-operative pain and reduce a patient’s need for opioid-based pain control, Dr. Sigman uses an injectable medication that works to numb the surgical site from 24 to 72 hours.

Hours after undergoing the surgery, a physical therapist came to her room and explained to her what she'd need to do before she could go home, which included getting out of bed and to a physical therapy session. The therapist then tested Catherine's knee's flexibility before she got her up and had her walk down the hall with the help of a walker.

“I had no pain at all,” Catherine recalls. “I was really surprised and pleased I was able to walk so far.”

The next day, Catherine was able to go home, where she would continue to get care as she recovered. Circle Home, a member of Circle Health, sent a visiting nurse as well as occupational and physical therapists to her home to help her get moving again.

Three months after surgery, Catherine says her mobility is back. “Before, going up and down stairs was a lot of pain,” Catherine says. “Now with the surgery, stairs are not a problem.”

This spring she plans to go to Italy. “It will be good to have two good knees over there,” she says.

To learn more about total joint replacement or to register for one of our weekly information sessions, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/joint-replacement.
For people needing to lose 100 pounds or more, the decision to have weight loss surgery is a very personal one. It is not just about numbers on the scale – it’s a complete lifestyle change. One must develop new eating habits, learn a whole new way to cook, and make the necessary emotional and behavioral changes to achieve long-term success.

At Lowell General Hospital’s Center for Weight Management and Bariatric Surgery (CWMBS), patients have a multidisciplinary team of professionals that take care of all of these complex needs. Well before a surgery date is established, individuals meet with registered dietitians, a behavioral psychologist, clinical specialists and patient ambassadors and get access to classes, workshops, and group support to prepare them for their new life after surgery.

“Patients that come to us are so very brave. They don’t want to be unhealthy, and have tried so many ways to lose excess weight,” says Christine LaBrecque, RN, BSN, CBN, Director of the CWMBS. “It’s up to us to peel back the layers of the hows and whys – how they got to all of this point in their lives, and why they need to change. We celebrate their efforts, their successes, and give them a whole team with decades of combined experience in managing obesity.”

LaBrecque credits workshops like My Hungry Head, which gets behind the science of binge eating; body movement groups; and the power of peer support that not only keeps patients on track, but coming back. “Our patients are like family to us,” LaBrecque says. “Evidence shows that the most successful programs have patients that consistently come for follow-up for four years after surgery. At the CWMBS, we’ve done over 4,000 surgeries and have one of the most successful follow-up rates in the country.”

It’s also the small touches that make a difference, like a special invitation to a “surgi-versary” event celebrating patients one year after surgery, or a holiday festival with a pants parade so patients can show off their before and after clothes. One of LaBrecque’s favorite celebrations is called A New You, an event held in the spring where patients are treated to head-to-toe makeovers and a professional photo shoot.

Bette Jo Toppin lost over 150 pounds after having gastric bypass surgery in 2011. For her, giving back to the Center by facilitating the women’s support group has given her life even more purpose.

“I was given the confidence to pursue my dreams, and received my master’s degree in both social work and psychology. Now I help patients by giving them a different take on weight loss and give them tools to help them cope and anticipate changes they may not have expected.”

Women in her support group have diverse experiences – some had surgery a few months ago, some 10 years ago. Here, Toppin says they are able to socialize, discuss concerns around their behaviors, share ideas and recipes, and feel a level of freedom to be themselves while in transition.

Offering a variety of workshops and support groups allows participants to focus on topics like relaxation techniques, everyday speed bumps, mindful eating, holiday eating, plastic surgery, boosting beauty self-esteem, and more.

Most importantly, the women really enjoy the activities and the connection they receive from one another.

“I hear laughter, joy, and tears,” says Toppin. “But most of all I see growth, hope, a sense of freedom and belonging. I look forward to meeting new members in 2018.”

See patient success stories and learn more about the support groups and programs at lowellgeneral.org/weightloss.
New Technology, Top Physicians Bring Advanced GI Care to Endoscopy Center

Endoscopy is the standard of care for the diagnosis of many gastrointestinal (GI) conditions. Using a camera attached to a tube, physicians can get a close-up view of a patient’s digestive system to evaluate stomach pain, changes in bowel habits, abnormal weight loss and other symptoms.

But advances in technology are now allowing these physicians to do much more. Using the digestive tract as a pathway inside the body, gastroenterologists can diagnose, treat and prevent an increasingly wider range of conditions, even cancers.

Dr. Allen Hwang has brought these advanced endoscopy techniques to The Endoscopy Center at Lowell General Hospital, and in the process is providing hundreds of patients each year the opportunity to receive state-of-the-art GI care that only a couple of years ago required a trip into Boston or beyond.

Dr. Hwang is a board-certified gastroenterologist who performed his advanced training in endoscopy at the combined Advanced Therapeutic Endoscopy Fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Brigham & Women’s Hospital in Boston. Working in close conjunction with Circle Health oncologists, surgeons, radiologists and pathologists, Dr. Hwang is able to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of several potentially serious conditions without the need for open surgery.

Using advanced endoscopic techniques, Dr. Hwang can identify pancreatic cysts, which often lead to pancreatic cancer; diagnose and eradicate Barrett’s esophagus, which can become esophageal cancer; remove large polyps in the colon; and even control chronic acid reflux.

One of the most impactful new technologies is endoscopic ultrasound, which allows physicians to discover and gather information on cancers. With ultrasound, Dr. Hwang can get an ultrasound image beyond the lining of the stomach and intestines to look for tumors and even gather tissue samples for biopsy, without the need for surgery.

“With endoscopic ultrasound, we are able to less invasively, more conveniently, and more efficiently diagnose a number of conditions related to the intestines, liver, and pancreas,” he says.

The information gathered through these endoscopic techniques can make a big difference in identifying the best course of treatment.

“Surgeons are asking us for this piece of information – whether someone can be cured from cancer from surgery or needs prior chemotherapy or radiation,” Dr. Hwang says. “This helps us provide the appropriate care for their cancer or other conditions.”

The ability to gather vital information non-invasively and quickly means cancers are caught earlier.

“The bottom line is it’s better for the patients,” Hwang says. “When you are facing a potentially life-changing diagnosis, you want to get answers as soon as you can.”

For more information about advanced GI care at Lowell General Hospital, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/endoscopycenter.
When a patient is facing a possible cancer diagnosis, the physician studying blood and tissue samples to make that determination typically goes unseen.

Pathologists are often referred to as “the doctor’s doctor.” Working in the lab, they are the unsung heroes of medicine, peering through microscopes at slides full of cells to make the most accurate diagnosis so the best course of treatment can be determined. But rarely, if ever, do they meet the person they are trying to help.

To the excitement of many pathologists, that is beginning to change. Lowell General Hospital is one of the first hospitals in the country to bring the practice of pathology out of the shadows. Dr. Lija Joseph, Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Lowell General, is receiving national attention for her Patient Pathology Consult Program, a groundbreaking initiative that allows patients into the lab to see their slides and understand how their disease is affecting their body. As one patient told Dr. Joseph, “I want to see the dragon I am about to slay.”

To the excitement of many pathologists, that is beginning to change. Lowell General Hospital is one of the first hospitals in the country to bring the practice of pathology out of the shadows. Dr. Lija Joseph, Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Lowell General, is receiving national attention for her Patient Pathology Consult Program, a groundbreaking initiative that allows patients into the lab to see their slides and understand how their disease is affecting their body. As one patient told Dr. Joseph, “I want to see the dragon I am about to slay.”

When Dr. Joseph received support from Lowell General’s administration to start the free program in the spring of 2017, she expected only a few patients might take advantage. To her surprise, she has met with more than two dozen patients, ranging in age from 13 to 83.

Dr. Anasuya Gunturi, a medical oncologist at the Lowell General Hospital Cancer Center, has referred a number of her patients to Dr. Joseph’s program and says the response has been nothing but positive. She said while it may be too much to process for some individuals battling cancer, others are eager to understand their disease at a microscopic level.

“Lija does such a great job explaining it that anyone can understand what’s going on,” Dr. Gunturi says. “For those people, it really adds to their overall satisfaction about their care at the Cancer Center.”

Because there was no template to work from, Dr. Joseph created the program from scratch to ensure it was done the right way. A big part of that process was making sure patients would have a safe, comfortable space that was secure and private, where they can look at their biopsies under a microscope or on a computer screen.

For Joellen Scannell, who underwent successful treatment for breast cancer at the Cancer Center in 2017 (see page 9 for Joellen’s story), the experience was eye-opening. A former science teacher who went on to become a principal, she had a natural curiosity to learn more about her disease.

“It made it so real,” she says. “It really helps you understand that the treatment you are getting is the right treatment.”

Dr. Joseph says she is now hearing from pathologists around the country who are hoping to learn more, and thanking her for bringing pathology directly to the patients they care for but rarely see.

“We all started in the journey in medicine to help the patient,” Dr. Joseph says. “Even though I know as a pathologist I am helping these people, we’ve always been invisible. It’s been very exciting to meet the patients in person.”

To learn more about the patient-centered care provided at Lowell General Hospital’s Cancer Center, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/cancer.
Surgical Advances Provide More Options in Breast Cancer Treatment

Dr. Lerna Ozcan, a fellowship trained breast surgeon at Lowell General Hospital and Medical Director of the hospital’s Breast Care Center of Excellence, answers common questions about breast cancer, your risk for the disease, and discusses the latest surgical advances in treatment.

What is breast cancer?
Breast cancer occurs as a result of abnormal changes in the genes responsible for regulating the growth of cells in the breast tissue. This results in an uncontrolled growth of these cells, which can form a tumor. Tumors can be benign and not pose a danger, or malignant, where they can invade nearby tissues or spread to other areas of the body. Breast cancer is a malignant tumor that arises most commonly in the milk ducts, which drain milk from the lobules to the nipple. Milk lobules are milk producing glands, and tumors arising in these tissues are the second most common form of breast cancer. Other forms of breast cancer also exist and make up the minority of cases.

What is the recommended treatment?
Breast cancer treatment consists of local and systemic therapies. Local treatments include surgery and radiation. Systemic therapies travel through the blood stream and include hormonal therapy, chemotherapy drugs and immunotherapy, depending on the type of breast cancer. Surgery includes removal of the malignant tumor in the breast as well as lymph node surgery to evaluate for possible spread to the lymph nodes.

Does the entire breast always need to be removed?
No, the overall goal of surgery is to remove the cancer as well as some surrounding normal tissue. There are two surgical treatment options: breast conserving surgery (also called a lumpectomy) or a mastectomy in which the entire breast or both breasts are removed with or without lymph node surgery.

Is it risky to not to remove the whole breast?
Long-term research shows that lumpectomy followed by radiation is an appropriate option for the majority of patients with early-stage breast cancer and does not have worse outcomes. Surgeons are therefore able to offer lumpectomy safely to patients who are candidates for breast conservation. It’s important to know your options so you can talk about them with your doctor.

Are many women choosing preventive mastectomy?
It has certainly been more in the spotlight due to celebrities coming forward and is strongly considered and recommended for women with a high lifetime risk of breast cancer. These are patients with genetic mutations, such as BRCA gene mutations as seen in Angeline Jolie. It is generally not recommended for women of average risk of breast cancer.

What about reconstruction of the breast?
For patients having a mastectomy, a plastic surgeon can reconstruct the breast at the same time, or you may choose to do it at a later time. Advanced surgical options include nipple-sparing mastectomy in appropriately selected patients or nipple reconstruction with very authentic looking nipple tattoos. For lumpectomy patients, rearrangement of your own breast tissue at the time of surgery or fat-grafting at a later date can result in great cosmetic outcomes.

To learn more about breast health and services available, visit lowellgeneral.org/breasthealth.
When Joellen Scannell of Lowell went for her annual screening mammogram this past May, she remembers thinking to herself — do I really have to keep doing this?

The retired school principal convinced herself she did; with three young grandchildren who depended on her, health always had to be top priority.

When she got called back a few days later to come in for a follow-up, life as she knew it turned upside down. “I tried not to make a big deal about it, but I was pretty scared,” Scannell says. “I did have a family history — a maternal grandmother and a cousin with breast cancer. Knowing that put me at higher risk, I was always very careful, and very vocal to friends and family about the importance of yearly mammograms.”

A biopsy confirmed her worst fear — she had a small tumor that proved to be invasive ductal carcinoma, the most common type of breast cancer.

Fortunately, it was caught early, and at Stage 1 was very treatable.

What made a huge difference in her confidence was the amount of information provided to her from the very first interaction, Scannell says. Immediately after her diagnostic mammogram and ultrasound, the breast imaging radiologist showed her the area that looked suspicious, and compared it to her last mammogram. Breast health navigators guided her through the process and kept a smooth flow of communication.

In addition, the team approach from many different specialties – radiology, oncology, surgery, radiation, pathology, and more – gave her great comfort amidst all the ups and downs of her cancer diagnosis. “I was so confident in having all these eyes on my case, I didn’t feel the need to get a second opinion anywhere else,” she says.

Due to the type of cancer, location, and early stage, she was a candidate for breast-conserving surgery, or lumpectomy. She says her surgery in mid-June proved to be one of her least stressful days – all she wanted was that tumor to be gone.

After surgery, she followed up with six weeks of radiation. She said the orientation process was so thorough before radiation that the treatments easily became part of her morning routine.

“The whole team in radiation oncology was so respectful of my time, and my life,” she says. “They were so quick in getting me in and out, and having my treatments right here in Lowell was crucial to my busy schedule. I could swing in early in the morning and still get down to watch my grandkids during the week.”

Now, she is back to her regular 3-mile walks, watching her grandkids, and anxiously awaiting the arrival of her fourth grandchild. She is continuing with medication and has yearly follow-up appointments with her physicians, and her next mammogram has already been scheduled.

“My oncologist said we’d be best friends for the next 10 years, and that works for me,” said Scannell. “When you feel well cared for, involved, and respected, it makes such a difference. I’m so glad I’m on the other side, but couldn’t have asked for a better team to get me here.”

For more information, visit lowellgeneral.org/breasthealth.
At The Birthplace at Lowell General Hospital, Families Come First

Inside The Birthplace at Lowell General Hospital, where more than 2,300 babies are born each year, there is a common theme, according to Kari Hoddeson, Clinical Manager of the Labor and Delivery Unit. Every day, she says, there is a focus on family.

“We treat our patients like family. Staff and providers treat each other like family,” Hoddeson says. “I think patients sense that close, trusting relationship and the joy and humor we have here as well. And in critical situations, we work like a well-oiled machine.”

When Lowell General Hospital had the opportunity to create a new labor and delivery unit as part of the Legacy Project to build the new Dahod Building, which opened in 2012, the goal was to provide the best possible care for mother and child, while considering many of the smaller things facing families in these life-changing moments.

Features of this state-of-the-art unit include some of the latest advances in maternity care, including spacious early labor rooms, a soothing whirlpool tub for laboring moms, a modern infant security system and two surgical suites for Cesarean section deliveries.

But for Matt and Stephanie Dineen, who gave birth to a healthy daughter named Paige on September 3, it was the staff’s attention to detail that stood out most.

“They took care of the little details and allowed me to focus on my wife and newborn child,” Matt says.

The Dineens had their first son, Brett, at another hospital three years ago, but chose Lowell General to have their second child after a job change and move to Chelmsford. The care was great at both hospitals, Matt says; the difference was how Lowell General focused on their whole family.

The Dineens say staff went out of their way to make sure 3-year-old Brett, the new big brother, didn’t feel left out. But one of the biggest differences was the way the staff took care of dad.

“As a dad, I received a guest meal, so I didn’t have to leave my wife and newborn child and go to the cafeteria,” he says. “But most importantly from a dad’s perspective were the sleeping arrangements. Lowell General had good sized, comfortable pullout beds in every room.”

Along with additional sleeping accommodations, The Birthplace has modern, spacious Labor and Delivery rooms to make room for family and visitors, along with separate flat screen televisions for the mother and guests, and a large bathroom that is easy to navigate.

Matt also praised the caring staff, who followed through on Lowell General Hospital’s mission to put Patients First In Everything We Do.

“Lowell General Hospital went the extra mile in every way,” Matt says. “Their focus on the details was incredible. From the doctor who delivered my daughter, to the nurses who cared for us and even the housekeeping staff, everyone was extremely helpful and focused on my family’s needs.”

To learn more about services provided at The Birthplace at Lowell General Hospital, or to take a video tour of the unit, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/birthplace.
A Full Circle of Maternity Care

Having a baby may be the most important decision you’ll ever make. That’s why you need a hospital that is attentive to your individual choices for your baby’s birth, where doctors and nurses support your family in developing a birthing plan to create your own special childbirth experience. You’ll find that — and a whole lot more — at Lowell General Hospital.

Comprehensive Services

Lowell General Hospital is committed to supporting you through every step of your childbirth experience. Our services include:

- A group of expert, community-based OB/GYNs that provide prenatal care for over 2,000 women each year.
- Lactation Support by Certified Lactation Consultants, available 7 days a week.
- A Level IIB Special Care Nursery affiliated with the Regional Center for Maternal and Pediatric Care in partnership with Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center
- A wide range of programs to support you before, during and after the birth of your child. (Listings on page 14)

Family-centered Comfort and Care

The Birthplace is designed to provide a soothing, gracious environment for expecting moms. Features include:

- Early labor rooms that offer spacious, private soothing areas
- Hydrotherapy tub room with spa-like atmosphere
- State-of-the-art infant security system
- Large Labor and Delivery rooms with separate flat-screen televisions for mom and family
- Fold-out couches provide a comfortable sleeping area for dads or family

To make an appointment with a Circle Health OB/GYN near you, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/find-a-doctor.

The Birthplace at Lowell General Hospital has been designated a Blue Distinction Center+ for Maternity Care. Hospitals that achieve this designation demonstrate better quality and improved outcomes for patients, while proving to be more cost efficient.
Getting Ready for Baby

ABCs of Babies for New Parents
Tuesday, February 27, 7:00-9:00pm, FREE
Get started as a parent with everything you need to know about infant care, feeding, development and achieving good sleep.

Birthplace Tours
Monthly tours, Times vary, FREE
Your guide will answer questions as you visit The Birthplace, including our labor and delivery area, mother and infant area, nursery and special care nursery.

Boot Camp for New Dads®
Saturday, March 3, 9:00am-12:00pm, $25
This nationally-recognized workshop is taught by fathers and is for men only. Rookie dads (men expecting their first baby) are oriented to the joys and challenges of fatherhood with the help of a coach and veteran dads with their newborns.

Breastfeeding Class
Monthly classes, Times vary, FREE
Learn the art of breastfeeding. Discover the benefits for mom and baby, valuable tips and more.

Dogs & Storks®
Monday, April 9, 6:00-8:00pm, FREE
Learn how to prepare with your dog for life with baby. Ease into the transition from being a Pet Parent to a Parent with Pets in this internationally acclaimed educational presentation from Family Paws Parent Education.

Prenatal Wellness Package
$149.99/6-week session
Develop your body for the changes it will experience during pregnancy through strength training. Presented in partnership with SLS Fitness in Lowell.

Quit Smoking for Your Baby Webinar
To view, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/health, FREE
Learn the facts about the dangers of smoking while pregnant, second hand smoke, the importance of having everyone in the family quit and strategies for quitting.

Tdap Vaccine Drop-In Clinic
Monday, March 12, 5:00-7:00pm, FREE
This drop-in clinic is open to expecting mothers, spouses or significant others, grandparents, babysitters, aunts and uncles as well as friends of the family who are in close contact with infants.

Did you know that many insurance companies cover the cost of Childbirth Education? Financial assistance may also be available by contacting Community Health and Wellness at 978-788-7224.

Lowell General Hospital offers a variety of classes to help you prepare for the birth of your child. Space is limited and registration is required. **Birthplace tours included.**

Call 1-877-LGH-WELL or visit lowellgeneral.org/health for full descriptions, dates, times and cost. Insurance reimbursement and financial assistance may be available.

For a full description or to register for these and other programs, classes and support groups, please visit www.lowellgeneral.org/health or call 1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355).
Parenting

**Active Parenting 1, 2, 3, 4**
Fridays, March 2, 9 and 16, 11:30am-1:00pm, FREE
This series helps participants understand their children developmentally and gives them skills for dealing with these important early years. Open to caregivers with children ages 0-4. Presented in partnership with NFI Family Resource Center.

**Baby-Wearing 101**
Saturday, February 24, 10:00-11:30am, FREE
Learn basic carrier types and general safety information as well as receive small group instruction on babywearing. Bring a carrier with you or try on different carriers that will be available. Presented in partnership with Babywearing International of Greater Boston.

**Basic Child Passenger Safety**
Monday, February 12, 6:30-8:30pm, FREE
Learn how to keep children safe in a moving motor vehicle. Topics include Massachusetts’ Child Passenger Safety Laws, types of child car seats and how to properly install them.

**Family and Friends CPR**
Second Monday of the month, 6:30-8:30pm, $20
Learn CPR skills for infants, children and adults. This program is designed for parents, family members and those who want to learn lifesaving skills. Presented in partnership with Trinity EMS.

**Grandparents as Parents Support Group**
Tuesdays, February 27, March 20 and April 24, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
Join other grandparents and caregivers to discuss the challenges and joys of raising children and receive resources and support. This is a drop-in group; no registration required.

**Infant Massage**
Tuesday, March 20, 12:30-1:30pm, $15 per family
Infant massage is a centuries-old tradition that offers benefits such as bonding, better sleep, improved colic, relaxation and better digestion.

**Itsy-Bitsy Movin’ and Groovin’**
Fridays, 10:00-11:15am, FREE
Explore new and different ways for parents and babies to utilize music and movement to benefit development and attachment. Infant sign language will be introduced and used in the songs each week.

**New Moms Support Group**
Tuesdays, 10:00am-12:00pm, FREE
A drop-in support group for new mothers and their babies. This group, lead by Registered Nurses/Lactation Consultants, provides a place to come with your questions and concerns or just to meet other new mothers. It is open to all mothers and their babies regardless of feeding preference.

Parents Wanted! Looking for Parents to Host Table Talk Events
The Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative in Greater Lowell is looking for parents of tweens and teens to host a “Table Talk” event. All events are led by a professional facilitator. Invite fellow parents to your home to discuss underage drinking and drug use in your community. Attendees at events will:
- Learn new information about underage drinking and other drugs
- Share challenges and hear ideas for prevention
- Get practical tips to use at home and to share with others

Contact Maria Ruggiero, 978-851-7373, ext. 352, for more information or to set up an event in your community.

**Youth Mental Health First Aid Training**
Friday, February 9 or April 13, 7:45am-4:30pm, FREE
This training is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.

**Kids and Teens**

**Babysitting Basics Plus CPR**
Saturday, February 10, March 10 or April 14, 9:00am-1:00pm, $60
Boys and girls ages 10 and older will learn babysitting skills, CPR and receive a CPR Anytime Kit to practice at home.

**Big Dreams, Big Intentions - For Girls**
Saturday, March 31, 9:00am-11:30am, FREE
This interactive program gives girls, ages 9-11, the opportunity to create a visual representation of their goals and a fun way to discover their dreams. All vision-board materials are included.

**Comprehensive Weight Management Program for Teens**
Join this fun and interactive wellness program that supports teens in becoming balanced, active and mindful young people. In a group setting, 11-18 year-olds learn how a balanced lifestyle can lead to improved health, weight and self-confidence over a 10-week period. Two assessment visits are included. Presented in partnership with Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center.

**Personal Safety and Self Defense for Teens**
Saturday, March 31, 8:45am-1:00pm, FREE
Teens will learn about safety awareness, risk reduction and how to react to an attack with basic self-defense skills. This workshop includes a safety lecture followed by an array of personal safety techniques and self-defense skills.

**Youth Six-Week Wellness Package**
$99.99/6-week session
Children ages 7 and up can increase physical activity by trying a combination of surfing, boxing and boot camp classes in this wellness package. Classes are held three days per week. Presented in partnership with SLS Fitness in Lowell.

**Teddy Bear Clinic**
Saturday, March 24, 11:00am-2:00pm, FREE
Lowell General Hospital and the Pheasant Lane Mall are teaming up to offer a FREE Teddy Bear Clinic! Kids, bring your favorite stuffed animal or doll to the Pheasant Lane Mall for a checkup, to learn tips to stay healthy, participate in fun activities and learn valuable health information for the whole family.

**Gift Shop**
Can’t visit our gift shop in person?
Call us at 978-937-6373 (Main Campus)
or 978-934-8499 (Saints Campus)
or place an order online at www.lowellgeneral.org/giftshop
Managing Disease

Are You at Risk for Prediabetes?
Monday, April 9, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
People with prediabetes have higher than normal blood glucose levels. These elevated levels also increase the risk for serious health problems, such as stroke and heart attack. Learn about risk factors, benefits of diagnosis and how to prevent and/or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program
Wednesdays, April 11-May 16, 1:00-3:30pm, FREE
Adults of any age who are living with the challenge of one or more persistent health conditions will learn ways to set and meet personal goals, identify techniques that can improve quality of life and more.

COPD Education Seminar
Wednesday, May 9, 5:00-8:00pm, FREE
Join Dr. Irwin Buchwald and Lowell General Hospital’s Respiratory Department to learn about the disease process, medication administration and technique and how to control symptoms and exacerbations of COPD. Screenings for oxygen saturation, simple lung function, and spacer usage and technique will be offered.

Parkinson’s Disease Wellness
Visit www.lowellgeneral.org/health for dates
Classes are designed for people with Parkinson’s Disease who want to improve their mobility and strength in a supportive environment. Presented in partnership with SLS Fitness in Lowell.

Education Classes and Certifications

Heartsaver® First Aid CPR AED
First Saturday of every month, 9:00am-5:00pm, $100
Become certified in Basic CPR for infants, children and adults, as well as AED and First Aid. Presented in partnership with Trinity EMS. *Fee includes workbook, face mask and certification card.

Introduction to Personal Safety & Self Defense for Women
Saturday, April 7, 9:00am-1:00pm, FREE
This women’s only workshop teaches safety awareness, risk reduction and how to react to an attack with basic self-defense skills.

Joint Replacement Education
Weekly, Mondays, 11:00am-12:00pm, FREE
Monthly, Mondays, 4:00-5:00pm, FREE
Are you having your hip or knee replaced? Attend one of our education classes to learn what to do before surgery, what will happen on the day of your surgery, what will happen during recovery and tools for case management and discharge planning. Seats are limited. Call 978-942-2253 to register.

Self Defense for Women
March 26, 28 and 30, 5:30-9:30pm, $25
This three-day course utilizes RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) approach to provide self-defense education for women, focusing on awareness, risk reduction and options for physical self-defense.

SIDS Prevention Workshop: A Certification Course for Childcare Providers
Monday, February 26, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
This workshop will define Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, discuss risk factors and identify safe sleeping positions and environments.

Support Groups
Lowell General Hospital offers a variety of support groups for both the public and patients. Our support groups include a range of areas, from diabetes and sleep disorders, to cancer, heart disease, stroke and more! For more information, visit www.lowellgeneral.org/supportgroups.

Heart Health

Blood Pressure Checks
For a schedule of dates and locations, email Community@CircleHomeHealth.org or call 978-459-9343.
Stop in for a free blood pressure check to monitor your own blood pressure or help an older family member. The walk-in visit is conducted by a registered nurse; no appointments or documents are needed.

Heart and Soles Mall Walking Program
Daily, 8:00-11:00am, FREE
This program provides a climate-controlled atmosphere for walking. Free blood pressure screenings are offered on the third Thursday of every month. Presented in partnership with Simon Pheasant Lane Mall.
Fitness

Gentle/Moderate Yoga
Tuesdays, January 16-February 27 or March 6-April 24*, 5:00-6:00pm, $85
Wednesdays, January 17-February 28 or March 7-April 25*, 5:00-6:00pm, $85
Learn to create breath awareness, enhance balance, increase flexibility and bring about inner peace. Classes include basic breathing practices, as well as a variety of standing, sitting and lying postures. *No class on March 20 or March 21.

PiYo™
Mondays, February 19-April 2*, 5:30-6:30pm, $50
Mondays, April 9-May 21*, 5:30-6:30pm, $50
PiYo is designed to build strength and gain flexibility with intense choreography that’s fun, challenging and will make you sweat. *No class March 19 or May 7.

Qigong - YangTaoSM Introduction to Qigong and Tai Chi
Tuesdays, April 3-May 22, 6:15-7:15pm, $70
Thursdays, February 1-March 22, 7:00-8:00pm, $70
Originating from China, Qigong and Tai Chi are healing arts more than 2,500 years old. These moving meditations help reduce stress, improve balance (physical, mental, spiritual), expand range of motion, and strengthen the immune system. Movements can be done seated or standing.

RX Relax Therapeutic Yoga for the Cancer Survivor
Mondays, April 16-May 21, 6:45-7:45pm, $10*
Thursdays, April 19-May 24, 6:45-7:45pm, $10*
This simple yoga practice is for cancer survivors. This class exercise is done in a chair and includes gentle movement, breathing exercises, meditation and relaxation. No prior experience, special clothing or gear is necessary. All fitness levels are welcome. *Discounted class fee made possible through grant funding by TeamWalk for CancerCare.

Strength and Movement Matter
Thursday, March 22, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
Learn simple exercises you can do every day to help your body move the way it was supposed to. Find relief from aches and pains through easy strength building stretches and exercises. Presented in partnership with SLS Fitness.

Tai Chi – YangTaoSM Long Form (Part One)
Thursdays, April 12-May 31, 6:00-7:00pm, $70
YangTao Tai Chi is a unique blend of two popular Tai Chi forms to enhance the healing qualities of this moving meditation. It can help you reduce stress, improve balance (physical, mental, spiritual), regain lost range-of-motion, slow the aging process and enhance quality of life.

Tai Chi – YangTaoSM Short Form
Thursdays, February 15-April 5, 6:00-7:00pm, $70
YangTao Tai Chi Short Form is a series of 13 movements done in a circular pattern in five directions. By synchronizing slow flowing movements, deep rhythmic breathing and a calm meditative state-of-mind, this tai chi style can help reduce stress, improve balance, expand range of motion, and enhance quality of life.

Zumba®
Thursdays, April 5-May 17*, 5:30-6:30pm, $50
Interval training sessions are combined with fast and slow rhythms and resistance training to sculpt your body while burning fat. People of all ages can enjoy fun music, easy-to-follow dance moves and body-beautifying benefits. *No class April 19.

Mental Well-Being

Anxiety Relief
Thursday, May 3, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
We all experience stress and anxiety in life, but we don’t have to view them as bad things. In this workshop, you will discover the critical steps needed to face your fears head-on, learn how to get comfortable stepping outside of your comfort zone, as well as learn how to make stress and anxiety one of your most powerful allies.

Bereavement Support Groups
Second Wednesday of each month, 10:00am
Fourth Thursday of each month, 7:00pm, FREE
Bereavement support groups are available to anyone who is grieving the death of a loved one. Email Whitney.Hall@CircleHomeHealth.org or call 978-459-9343 for more details.

Caregiver Burnout
Thursday, April 5, 5:30-7:00pm, FREE
Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. Learn to stay physically and emotionally healthy while caring for loved ones.

Let’s Meditate: Going Within to Your Peaceful Space
Thursday, March 29, 6:00-8:00pm, FREE
Nourish your body, mind and spirit by exploring meditation through sound and vibration, and enhance your own peace and relaxation.

Meditation: A Three-Part Series
Thursdays, April 5-19, 6:00-8:00pm, $40
Expand your awareness with meditation practice and experience meditation through the means of sound and vibration. Practice breathing meditation, mindful meditation, Metta meditation (love and kindness practice), mantra meditation and walking meditation.

Nutrition

Brain Health: Learn How to Keep Your Brain Healthy
Wednesday, March 7, 6:00-7:00pm, FREE
This informative, fun and tasty presentation will discuss the top ten brain healthy foods, common brain cell killers, how to improve your brain function level and boost your brain power! Samples of brain healthy food will be available too. Presented in partnership with Senior Helpers.

Healthy Nutrition for the Busy Person On-the-Go
Wednesday, February 21, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
Learn how to food prep for your work week using quick and easy recipes and discover some great healthy snack ideas. Presented in partnership with SLS Fitness.

How Diet Affects Your Blood Pressure
Thursday, March 8, 6:30-8:00pm, FREE
Join Liz Dahlgren, Dietitian, and Alicia Habeshian, Heart Health Nurse, to discuss how your daily diet affects your health, what foods may help lower your blood pressure and new guidelines on hypertension.

New Year, New You — Exercise, Food and Fat Loss
Thursday, March 29, 6:00-7:30pm, FREE
Learn the principles of exercise and nutrition for fat loss, hear common fat-loss myths and discover how hormones affect fat loss. Eating the right foods at the right frequency works with the body’s natural physiology to help control hunger, raise energy, reduce cravings and improve disease prevention, as well as burn fat as fuel.

See Yourself to Success Workshop
Thursdays, March 4-28, 6:30-8:00pm, FREE
Discover simple, yet effective steps to creating a goal-setting action plan that will leave you feeling happier, more self-confident and fulfilled.

Understanding Mental Health
Thursday, May 10, 7:00-8:00pm, FREE
Mental health problems are common in at least one out of every five people. In most cases, they are manageable and with the right kind of help, most people who experience these difficulties are able to live happy and successful lives. Join us to learn the basics of mental health-signs and symptoms, differences between common mental illnesses, how to communicate and work with those in crisis.

Visit www.lowellgeneral.org/health or call 1-877-LGH-WELL (1-877-544-9355) for more details.
Circle Health Urgent Care

Circle Health outpatient centers in Westford and Billerica, and coming soon to Dracut and Tewksbury, offer care you can trust with the convenience you need – seven days a week, 8:00am-8:00pm.

Services include:

- Urgent care for most non-life threatening conditions
- Online scheduling for added convenience
- Lowell General Hospital Patient Service Center
- Primary Care Physician Practice

WESTFORD – Cornerstone Square, 198 Littleton Road – 978-323-0302
BILLERICA – Treble Cove Plaza, 199 Boston Road – 978-323-2850
To learn more, visit www.circle-health.org/urgentcare.