Patient Guide

Complimentary!

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CARE
7 Easy Steps

DESCRIBE YOUR PAIN
Tools Inside to Help

PREVENTING ESOPHAGEAL CANCER
Read how area experts treated John’s Barrett’s esophagus on p.31

Brought to you by: PatientPoint

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital
KEY INFORMATION FOR YOUR STAY
On Our Cover

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Take Charge of Your Care

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- Pay Attention to Your Care
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Thank You for Trusting Us

MedStar Georgetown associates – whether we are direct patient caregivers or staff who support our patient care mission – recognize not only the importance of expert care, but also compassionate care. We are committed to treating patients, families and visitors with respect. And, we pledge to do everything we can to provide you with the greatest comfort possible while you are here.

You may have read that we are a Magnet® hospital – the first one in Washington, D.C. This signifies that our nursing department has been recognized as among the top four percent in the nation. This translates directly into the best possible care and outcomes for you – our patients.

At MedStar Georgetown, we consider our patients to be part of the healthcare team. You are the most important member of this team, and we encourage you to ask your doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers questions about your care. To help ensure that your needs are met during your stay at MedStar Georgetown, this handbook is designed to inform you of the many services available to you.

After you return home, you may receive a telephone call or mail survey from Discovery Research asking you to share your experiences at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. We are very proud of our physicians and staff and rely on your comments to recognize deserving staff members. Your feedback is very important to us, so please take the time to talk to the surveyor or mail your completed survey.

Thank you for choosing to receive care at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.

With warmest wishes for your quick recovery,

Mike Sachtleben
President

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide physical and spiritual comfort to our patients and families in the Jesuit tradition of cura personalis, caring for the whole person.
You Can Feel Confident in Your Care

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital was founded in 1898 to promote health through education, research and patient care. This mission reflects Georgetown's Catholic, Jesuit identity and heritage. With a 609-licensed-bed hospital and 1,300 physicians, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital’s clinical services represent one of the largest healthcare delivery networks in the area.

MedStar Georgetown is consistently ranked among the best in the nation. The hospital first received Stroke Certification from The Joint Commission in 2006. The Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center is the only facility in the Washington, D.C. area designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as a Comprehensive Cancer Center.

MedStar Georgetown’s transplant program is the only program in the nation’s capital and one of only a handful of Medicare-approved centers nationwide performing liver, kidney, intestinal, pancreas and multi-organ transplants. The MedStar Georgetown Department of Neuroscience is the first on the East Coast to offer the CyberKnife®, the latest in stereotactic radiosurgery, to treat tumors and lesions of the brain, neck, spine and other organs.

CONTACT US: 202-444-2000 • 3800 Reservoir Rd., NW
Washington, D.C. 20007 • MedStarGeorgetown.org
Key Numbers

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital:
202-444-2000
Gift Shop: 202-444-4181
Billing: 703-558-1400 or 888-896-1400 (toll free)

Calling from INSIDE the hospital? Dial the last five digits only.

For more information on the resources available at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, visit: MedStarGeorgetown.org.

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* Five-digit numbers indicate extensions within the hospital. If calling from outside the hospital, dial 202-44 and proceed with the above extension.
Our Commitment to Care

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital actively encourages your involvement in your care. Please tune your television to the Patient Education channel as soon as you are settled and watch the MedStar Georgetown Safety video. It describes many of our patient safety practices and explains your role in ensuring a safe hospital stay.

Report any patient safety concerns related to care, treatment or services to your nurse or the nurse manager of the unit. If these concerns are not addressed to your satisfaction, please contact a patient advocate at ext. 4-3040 or page an advocate at ext. 4-CARE.

If the advocate cannot resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you may contact the D.C. Department of Health at 202-442-5833 or The Joint Commission at 800-994-6610 or via email at patientsafetyreport@jointcommission.org.

NO PASS ZONE

At MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, all of our associates work to create caring moments for patients by being mindful and responsible when present in patient care areas-NO PASS ZONES. When in need, any member of our team is willing to assist. By doing this, we will enhance our patients’ experiences and take our quality of care to the next level.

Want to Know How We Score?

You can review and compare the quality, care and safety ratings for different hospitals:

- Medicare Hospital Compare uses HCAHPS results and other data: www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare
- Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP): hfap.org
- Det Norske Veritas Healthcare (DNV): dnvaccreditation.com
- Joint Commission: qualitycheck.org

You can also find information on hospitals at:
If you or your loved one feels something is wrong, please notify your nurse immediately. He/she can notify the resource nurse to evaluate the situation.

**WHEN to Call the Resource Nurse**

*Call for help if you notice:*
- changes in breathing
- changes in talking or thinking
- seizures
- you are not sure what is wrong but something just doesn’t seem right

The resource nurse will evaluate the situation and help to transfer the patient to a higher level of care, if needed.

If you are unable to reach your nurse immediately, please approach any nurse on your unit to report your concern.

**VISITING THE HOSPITAL?**

Thanks for taking the time to support your loved one’s care and recovery. See page 13 for important visitor information.
An A-Z Guide to the Most Frequently Asked Questions

**Admitting and Registration**
The registration process is designed to validate past information or make changes. By checking your address, birth date and other relevant data each time you register, we are making sure that your medical records and bills are handled smoothly and that your safety and identity are protected through accurate record identification.

**ATMs**
Automated teller machines (ATMs) are located in the Main Building on the first floor, near the Café Espresso, and in the Pasquerilla Healthcare Center (PHC) on the ground floor by Cafe Georgetown.

**Bed Linens**
Your bedding will be changed on a regular basis and as necessary by a member of your clinical care team. Remember that it is very easy to misplace small personal items in your bedding. Please be careful to secure such belongings in your plastic bag or bedside table, or send them home with family or friends for safekeeping.

**Cashier’s Office**
The Cashier’s Office is located on the first floor of the Main Building across the hall from the concierge’s desk and is open Monday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

**Environmental Services**
Our environmental services associates seek to always provide you with very good care by keeping your room and the nursing unit clean and tidy. Your environmental service associates completely clean and sanitize your room before you are admitted into the room. Environmental services associates clean patient rooms daily between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. They will remove trash from your room at least once daily, wipe off table surfaces, chairs and heating units, dust the television and clean the floor. Your bathroom will also be cleaned and sanitized.

**Gift Shop**
The Gift Shop is located in the lobby of the Main Building, and it offers a variety of gift items: toiletries, magazines, books, cards and snacks. Also, you can choose from a selection of clothing and seasonal items. Hours are Mondays through Fridays from 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, please call 202-444-4181 or place an order at MedStarGeorgetown.org/GiftShop.
Guest Accommodations
Discounted accommodations for patients and family members are available at nearby hotels. All rates are subject to change and are based on availability.

Options for hotel stays include:
- The Georgetown Hotel and Conference Center is located on the university campus across from the hospital. Reservations should be made as early in advance as possible as discounted rates are limited. Contact the hotel directly at 202-687-3200 and ask for the Georgetown patient rate.
- Nearby hotels located in Washington, D.C., and Virginia also offer MedStar Georgetown University Hospital discounted rates and should be contacted directly. For a listing of hotels, visit the MedStar Georgetown website under Visitor Information and select Local Hotels. (MedStarGeorgetown.org)

Identification Bracelet
Be sure to wear your hospital identification bracelet during your entire visit.

If you receive a colored safety bracelet, keep that on as well. Colors used at Georgetown include red for allergies, yellow for patient at risk to fall, grey for obstructive sleep apnea, and pink for restricted extremity for venipuncture or blood pressure.

Interpreter Services — Sign and Spoken Languages
Interpreter services for both American Sign Language (ASL) and more than 175 spoken languages are available 24/7 to all patients and families for appointments, procedures and hospital stays. Interpretation is provided primarily by video and phone through the MedStar Interpreter Network (MIN), an on-demand, spoken and sign language interpretation system that provides immediate access to qualified medical interpreters. There is no cost to patients or families for interpretation at the hospital. MedStar Georgetown interpreters or language services advocates provide MIN and in-person interpretation, and also assist patients and families with any cultural or special needs. Dual handset telephones and/or mobile video units are placed at the bedside for on-demand connection to interpreter services through the MIN systems. Your physician or nurse may also use other telephone devices to ensure that all aspects of your care are communicated through a qualified interpreter. In-person interpreters are scheduled as needed.

Call Language Services Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., at ext. 4-8377, email asl@gunet.georgetown.edu or speak to your nurse about your language needs and preferences.

Assistive Devices for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Closed captioned televisions are in all patient rooms.

Amplified Phone Handsets:
Call the Language Services Department at ext. 4-8377.

Lost and Found
The Protective Services office operates the Lost and Found service. If you find or misplace an item, call ext. 4-3800.

Mail Delivery
Mail is delivered once daily in the afternoon. Mail received after discharge will be sent to your forwarding address. Stamped outgoing mail may be left with the nursing unit for mailing.
Mobile Website
From a medical encyclopedia and a drug information database to lecture videos and healthcare news stories, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital’s website contains a range of useful information. In addition to accessing this information on laptops, a mobile version of the website allows for optimal viewing on various smartphones. Please visit MedStarGeorgetown.org.

Newspaper Delivery
USA Today is delivered Monday through Friday to our patients with their breakfasts. The exceptions are in our pediatric and intensive care units. These and other daily newspapers are available in machines in the Lombardi entrance, outside of the PHC entrance, and in the CCC building near the elevators.

Dining Options for Your Invited Guests
Excellent nutritional care is essential to your speedy recovery. Your specific diet is ordered by your physician and depends on your medical condition. Our registered and licensed dietitians are available to evaluate your nutritional needs and provide nutrition counseling to individual patients. If you do not receive a menu or a visit from one of our catering associates, please ask your nurse to contact the Dietitian’s Office, and we will send a catering associate to take your order.

Guest meal trays are available for breakfast, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., lunch, noon to 2 p.m., and dinner, 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Guest meal trays may be ordered by going to the cashier’s window on the first floor of the Main Building, where you will place your order and pay for your meal before it is delivered. You must place your order at the Cashier’s Office before noon in order to be served.

Specialty meals are available to patients (dietary restrictions allowing) and their guests and visitors. They must be preordered and prepaid by noon. Dinners are served in the patient’s room between 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Please ask your nursing staff for the menu and order form. Menus are also available at the Cashier’s Office on the first floor of the Main Building. The Cashier’s Office is also where you will place your order and pay for your meal before it is delivered. You must place your order at the Cashier’s Office before noon in order to be served.

Other Dining Options
Visitors and guests can enjoy snacks and meals from Cafe Georgetown, Café Espresso, Scrubs & Grub, the Vending Express or the Leavey Conference Center. There is a brief description of each venue below.

Cafe Georgetown is located on the ground floor of the Pasquerilla Healthcare Center (PHC). It features a breakfast bar complete with hot and cold selections, soups as well as hot and cold entrees for lunch. You can also purchase snacks and beverages. It is open every day from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Café Espresso is located on the first floor of the Main building, near the Main entrance. It features Starbucks Coffee as well as hot and cold beverages made from Starbucks espresso. There are also a variety of pastries and danishes from our local Bread & Chocolate pastry shop. You may also purchase a freshly made sandwich or salad. It is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Scrubs & Grub is located on the second floor of the CCC building. It features items focused on overall wellness. You may purchase breakfast sandwiches and hot cereal, soups, sandwiches, salads, wellness snacks, cold beverages and Starbucks coffee. It is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Vending Express is located on the ground floor in the Gorman Building. A variety of hot and cold beverages, snacks and a refrigerated cold food
machine with soups, sandwiches, fruit and salads are available. It is open 24 hours a day, every day.

**Epicurean and Co.** is located across the parking lot from the Gorman and Bles buildings and offers a variety of cafeteria-style meals. It is open daily from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

**The Leavey Conference Center** is located across the courtyard from the entrance to the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and offers several options for restaurant meals. Hours and restaurants are subject to change and are as follows:

- The Faculty Club Restaurant, Breakfast: Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to noon. Lunch: Monday through Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- The Hoya Food Court (Elevation Burger, Subway, Salad Creations) Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Starbucks Coffee Bar Monday through Thursday: 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday: 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday: 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Cosi, Monday through Friday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We are pleased to offer discounted parking for our patients and visitors. Please pick up discounted parking stickers Monday through Friday until 9 p.m. at one of the following locations:

- Concierge desks, ground floor PHC Building, or first floor, Main Building
- Physician offices
- Outpatient registration areas

After 9 p.m. and all day Saturday and Sunday, discount stickers may be obtained from the security officer in the Emergency Department, on the ground floor of the CCC Building.

**Valet Parking**

Valet parking is available to all patients and visitors at the entrance to the Emergency Room and to the PHC Building. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. There is no additional charge for valet service. However, patients and visitors are reminded to pick up discount parking stickers before claiming a vehicle. After hours, pick up keys from the parking attendant at the parking booth in Lot A.

**Personal Safety**

During your hospital stay, we are committed to providing a safe environment for you and your family and friends. MedStar Georgetown Special Police officers will visit your unit routinely to patrol the area and provide security services.

**Taxi Service**

For your convenience, a direct line to a local taxicab service is located at our Concierge Desk in the main lobby, and at the PHC and Emergency Department entrances. Additionally, there is a taxi stand in front of the Leavey Conference Center, directly across the courtyard from the entrance to the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center.

**Telephones**

Patient phones: For your convenience, every room (except in ICUs, NICU and Behavioral Health) is equipped with a telephone. Your telephone number is noted on the large white information poster near your bed. Local calls may be made free of charge.

To place a call in area code (202), dial 9, wait for a second dial tone and then dial the desired number. To make local calls to area codes (703) or (301), dial 9, then 1, followed by the area code and number.

To make a long-distance call, dial 9, then 0 (in some cases you must dial 00), followed by the area code and number. An operator will intercept your call to obtain your credit card or home telephone number.

You may also forward calls coming to your room or choose not to have
the phone ring with our Call Forwarding and Do Not Disturb features. The instructions below will describe how to activate and deactivate these features. Please be aware that these features can be accidentally activated, and if so, the calls will automatically forward to the hospital operators.

**To Activate CALL FORWARDING**
- Pick up your phone.
- Get a dial tone.
- Dial #91.
- Follow recorded instructions to forward calls to alternate number.
- Hang up.

**To Cancel CALL FORWARDING**
- Pick up your phone.
- Get a dial tone.
- Dial ##91.
- Hang up.
- Test to see if calls come to the phone.

**To Activate DO NOT DISTURB**
- Pick up your phone.
- Get a dial tone.
- Dial #5.
- Hang up.

**To Cancel DO NOT DISTURB**
- Pick up your phone.
- Get a dial tone.
- Dial ##5.
- Hang up.
- Test to see if calls come to the phone.

If these steps do not correct the problem, it should be reported to the Help Desk at ext. 4-2111. As prompted, dial #2 for telecommunications, and stay on the line for a technician to answer the phone.

**Cell Phones:** To provide a safe patient-care environment, the use of cell phones is limited in designated patient care areas. Please obey signs. In other hospital areas, maintain a distance of at least six feet between your cellular phone and any medical equipment.

**Language Line® Dual Handset Telephones:** See Interpreter Services (page 8, Foreign Language).

**Tobacco/Smoke-Free Environment**
MedStar Georgetown University Hospital is a totally tobacco/smoke-free environment. Therefore, smoking and use of tobacco is not permitted anywhere on the hospital grounds, garages or satellite facilities owned or leased by the hospital. If you anticipate difficulty complying with these requirements, or would like to quit smoking, ask your doctor or nurse about educational materials for smoking cessation techniques or products and/or referral to community resources.

**Valuables**
We strongly encourage family members to take patient valuables home. When this is not possible, valuables can be secured in the hospital safe, which is located in the Protective Services Office on the Lower Level of the Gorman Building.

Some personal items will not be accepted, such as purses, items of clothing, paperwork and large items. A nurse can arrange for your belongings to be retrieved and secured by a Protective Services officer. Please immediately inform your nurse of any possessions brought into the hospital after admission so he/she can add them to your clothing list. Items not documented on your clothing list are considered nonexistent. When not in use, your eyeglasses, hearing aids and dentures should be safely stored in your bedside table. Please ask your nurse for a storage bag. Please remember patients are responsible for valuables left in their rooms.

**Vehicle Safety Services**
The Protective Services Department offers escorts to your vehicle after hours, upon request. Please call Protective Services at ext. 4-3800 when you are ready to leave and a security officer will assist you.

**Your Room**
We are committed to ensuring that you are as comfortable as possible during your stay with us. Your room assignment depends upon the type of care you require. Some services are
FAST FACTS ABOUT YOUR STAY continued

restricted to specific locations to ensure proper care is being provided. We will make every effort to provide the type of accommodations that you request.

Please be aware that we have a limited number of private rooms and they are assigned based on medical necessity and then on a first-come, first-served basis, as they are available.

Here are a few suggestions to make your stay as safe as possible:

- Keep the top two side rails raised while in bed to avoid rolling out while asleep or under sedation.

- Do not use electric appliances such as blow dryers and shavers (battery-operated razors are acceptable).

- Inform the nurse of any medications you brought from home. Your nurse will verify those medications with the orders from your physician and provide a secure space to hold your medications while you are in the hospital.

To call your nurse, a call button is attached to your pillow or bed linen. There is also a call button in each bathroom and shower. When you press the button, the nursing station is alerted that you need assistance and a light flashes above your door. A staff member will respond to your signal.

Visiting Hours

It is policy at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital to promote a patient- and family-centered approach to care by encouraging family support and visitation in an environment which fosters patient comfort, rest, recovery and safety.

Families are defined as any person(s) defined by the patient as playing a significant role in an individual’s life. This may include a person(s) not

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN

The staff of the inpatient Pediatric units takes great pride in offering your child excellent care.

Your Child’s Comfort

We realize that, as parents, you want your child to feel comfortable and secure while in the hospital. We encourage you to bring items from home that are familiar and reassuring to your child, such as a favorite toy and book; small blanket and pillow; pajamas, slippers, and pictures of family or pets.

Parents or primary adult caregivers are welcome to visit their child 24 hours a day. A sleeper cot or couch will be provided for one adult person to stay overnight. Guests and siblings are encouraged to visit depending on the status of the patient. The nursing staff as well as the Child Life team can assist with sibling visits as needed. As always, the patient’s safety and best interest is always taken into account with all visitation.

Preparing Your Child

Talk with your child about the hospital and what he/she might expect during the stay. There are many members of their healthcare team who will meet with them throughout the day, such as doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists and others.

To learn more about preparing your child, please visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/ChildLife.
legally related to the individual. Family members may include spouses, domestic partners and both different-sex and same-sex significant others. Family includes a minor patient’s parents, regardless of the gender of either parent. The concept of parenthood is to be liberally constructed without limitation as encompassing legal parents, foster parents, same sex parents, step parents, those serving in loco parentis, and other people operating in caretaker roles.

The patient or designated decision maker may choose to have the primary support person stay overnight if the presence of the individual does not interfere on the rights and safety of other patients and is not medically or therapeutically contraindicated.

**Medical and Surgical Floors**

Visiting hours are from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Visitors are limited to two at a time in semiprivate rooms out of consideration and courtesy to all patients. In private rooms, it is encouraged that no more than two visitors are present at the bedside.

**Adult Intensive Care Units**

Visiting hours are from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Visitors are limited to two at a time. The number of visitors may be adjusted (increased or decreased) at the discretion of the nurse leader of the unit based on the clinical condition of the patient and disease process.

**Pediatrics**

In the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and Pediatrics, parents may visit at any time. In the NICU, siblings under the age of 16 are permitted with a parent supervising at all times. In the Pediatric units, arrangements may be made through the patient’s nurse for sibling visits.

**Mental Health**

Due to the therapeutic environment, primary support people and visitors are not permitted to stay overnight. Visiting hours are:
- Monday through Friday noon to 2 p.m.
- Monday through Thursday 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Friday 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Holidays noon to 9 p.m.

**Maternity/Perinatal**

There are no restrictions on hours in Labor and Delivery, but the number of visitors is encouraged to be two other than the primary support person (husband or partner). Additional visitors may be permitted at the discretion of the nursing staff. Only the primary support person may be present in the recovery room.

On 2 North Postpartum Unit, the visiting hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Children, including siblings of the newborn, are permitted on the unit if accompanied and supervised by an adult. One primary support person is allowed to stay overnight to support the new mother and infant. No children are permitted to stay overnight.

**Visitor Waiting Rooms**

There are two waiting rooms available to surgical patients and their visitors: the Surgical Waiting Room on the second floor of the CCC Building or the Surgery Center Waiting Room on the ground floor of the CCC Building. Upon arrival for surgery, perioperative associates will direct you to the most appropriate waiting room for you. Surgical liaisons are available from 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. to answer your family’s questions, provide information as it becomes available during your surgery, and coordinate visitation in the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Visitation in the preoperative area is limited but permissible. Visitors are not permitted in the operating rooms at any time. Visitation in the PACU for brief periods may be allowed following surgery.
**TV Channel Listings**

Remote control color television sets are available for each patient. The MedStar Georgetown University Chapel channel with sacred music is available 24 hours a day in all patient rooms. If your TV needs repair, please inform your nurse. Private televisions are not permitted in the hospital. Available channels are listed below:

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<td>10</td>
<td>Guided Imagery</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>CW 50 DC</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>MY 20</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Hub</td>
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**Quick Quiz**

By the age of 65, how many years of the average American’s life is spent in front of the TV?  
- 2 years  
- 5 years  
- 9 years  
- 12 years  

*Answer: With 4 hours of viewing each day or 28 hours a week by age 65, TV-viewing time can equal roughly 9 years!*
Take Charge of Your Care

You are the center of your healthcare team. Let this special guide help you get the best results from your hospital stay.

7 KEY WAYS TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CARE

SPEAK UP. Ask questions and voice concerns. It’s your body, and you have the right to know (see page 20).

PAY ATTENTION. Always ask questions to ensure that you are getting the right treatments and medicines from the right hospital staff.

EDUCATE YOURSELF. Learn about your medical condition, tests and treatment options, so you know why following your care plan is so important.

FIND A SUPPORT PERSON. Pick someone to help speak up for your care and needs during your stay.

KNOW YOUR MEDS. Understand what your medicines treat, why you need them, and how to take them for the best results.

CHECK BEFORE YOU GO. Make an informed decision when selecting additional healthcare services. Choose only accredited providers who meet patient safety and quality standards. Go to qualitycheck.org to learn more.

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR CARE. You are the center of your healthcare team. Make sure you know what’s happening every step of the way—from admission through discharge.

Source: The content within the “Take Charge of Your Care” section reinforces the safety and quality care goals and standards issued by Joint Commission and other hospital accreditation organizations.
**CHECK IDENTIFICATION**

While you are here, many people will care for you (doctors, nurses, aides, orderlies), and these same people will care for many patients. To prevent errors in your care:

**Ask to see the ID of everyone who comes into your room, so you know the name and job of the person caring for you.** If you do not see an ID badge, contact your nurse immediately.

**Speak up if hospital staff does not check your ID.** Any time staff enters your room to give you medicine, transport you, or perform procedures or treatments, state your name and birth date.

This may seem repetitive at times, but it helps ensure you receive the correct care.

**MEDICATION SAFETY**

Medications are an important part of your treatment plan. You must tell your provider all medications as well as the doses you are taking, including prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, diet supplements, herbals and/or vitamins. This is very important because even the most common drugs can cause complications when taken with other medications or treatments.

Some patients find it helpful to bring in their medications so that the staff can be sure of the exact drug type and dosage you have been taking. (Your personal medications will then be sent home with your family.) It is also very important to inform your healthcare team of any allergies or adverse reactions to foods, drinks, medications or sensitivity to latex.

When a healthcare member enters your room to administer your medications, he or she will need to verify your identity by looking at your identification band and asking your name and date of birth. For your safety, all healthcare team members will ask you your name and date of birth to ensure your identity.

It is a good idea to carry a wallet-size information card (such as an index card) with your vital health history, including medications you are currently taking, as well as notation of any allergies to medications. If you would like a copy of the medications you are taking while in the hospital, please contact your nurse. You will receive a final list of medications at discharge. Remember to discard old medication lists and update your providers and pharmacies regarding your new medication list.

**Always double-check your name and date of birth with staff to avoid errors.**

![Image: A support person can help.]

**CHOOSE A SUPPORT PERSON**

A trusted friend or family member can be a big help during your hospital stay. Select one key person to be your healthcare advocate. If you become stressed or your ability to communicate changes, this person can stand in for you—and stand up for your care.

A support person can:
- ask questions you might not think of and write down information
- double-check your medicines and treatments
- watch for signs your condition is getting worse and ask for help

Don’t forget to tell the staff who you’ve picked to be your support person. A trusted friend or family member can be a big help during your hospital stay. Select one key person to be your healthcare advocate. If you become stressed or your ability to communicate changes, this person can stand in for you—and stand up for your care.
YOUR ROLE IN PREVENTING INFECTIONS

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital is committed to patient safety by doing everything possible to prevent the spread of infections among patients, healthcare workers and visitors.

The best way to prevent the spread of infection is through good handwashing with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer using the following simple guidelines:

**Hand Wash Procedure**
- Wet hands with warm water.
- Apply soap.
- Rub together fronts/backs for 15 seconds.
- Rinse thoroughly and dry completely.
- Use paper towel to turn off water.

**Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer Procedure:**
- Dispense hand sanitizer into one hand.
- Spread thoroughly over front/back hands.
- Rub until dry.

**When should you wash your hands?**
- After using the toilet, blowing your nose or sneezing.
- After handling dirty items.
- Before and after eating, drinking or handling food.
- When your hands look dirty.

Everyone should wash hands before and after entering your room. There is easily accessible alcohol-based hand sanitizer at the entrance to your room for this purpose. It is okay to ask anyone entering your room to wash their hands if you have not seen them do so.

Packages of hand hygiene cloths called “Sani-hands” will be provided to you upon admission. We encourage you to perform hand hygiene using these cloths if you are unable to access a sink. Hand hygiene is important to everyone, including patients, in the effort to reduce infection risk.

**Other ways to prevent infections include, but are not limited to:**
- Always use good personal hygiene.
- Don’t share patient care items such as creams, glassware or towels with your roommate if you have one.
- Take an active part in your care.
- Be aware of infection possibilities and early signs of infection (coughs, fever, rashes, redness, swelling).

There are times when patients can become infected with resistant forms of bacteria, such as MRSA or VRE. In these particular cases, we must place patients in contact isolation to prevent the spread of those bacteria to other patients and/or caregivers. When in isolation, all who enter the room will wear a gown and a set of gloves. This includes any visitors that may come to see the patient. In addition, very strict hand hygiene and cleaning must take place to prevent the spread of these germs. If you would like further information on this topic, please call the Infection Prevention Department at 4-3686.

Tell friends and family not to visit if they are sick. And make sure all your guests wash their hands when they enter your room.
PAIN MANAGEMENT

People used to think that severe pain was something they just have to put up with. With current treatments, that is no longer true. Today you can work with your doctors and nurses to help prevent and relieve pain.

Why should pain be controlled?

When your pain is controlled, you can prevent needless suffering as well as:

- Heal faster and feel better sooner.
- Start walking and doing your breathing exercises so you can get your strength back faster.
- Improve your results and avoid problems (such as pneumonia, blood clots and stress).

Pain Management Options

Both medication and non-medication treatments can be helpful in preventing and controlling pain. You and your doctors and nurses should discuss and decide which methods are best for you.

Pain Management Methods

We ask that you help the nurses and doctors to measure your pain. You will be asked routinely to rate your pain on a scale of 0 to 10 (0 means no pain and 10 means worst pain imaginable). Or, you may choose a “face” from the scale below which best describes your pain. You will also be asked if you are experiencing any side effects such as itching, hives, etc. Reporting your pain also helps the nurses and doctors know how well your pain management treatment is working and whether to make changes.

It is important that you report uncontrolled pain.

- Don’t worry about speaking up.
- Pain can be a sign of problems.
- The nurses and doctors want and need to know about it.
- Don’t automatically assume you need less pain medication because your pain is under control.

Be sure to:

- Talk with your nurses and doctors about pain control methods that have worked well or not so well for you in the past.
- Talk with your nurses and doctors about any concerns you may have about pain medication.
- Tell your nurses and doctors about any allergies or reactions to medications you have had in the past.
- Ask the nurse for pain medication when the pain starts. This is key to proper pain control.
- Take pain medication prior to getting out of bed, walking or doing breathing exercises. It is harder to ease pain once it has taken hold.

Let your doctors and nurses know if you are experiencing any problems such as itching, sickness to your stomach, constipation, or that you just don’t feel right.

Wong-Baker FACES® Pain Rating Scale

0 No Hurt
2 Hurts Little Bit
4 Hurts Little More
6 Hurts Even More
8 Hurts Whole Lot
10 Hurts Worst

PREVENT FALLS

While you are here, you may feel dizzy or weak. Illness, procedures, medicines or even just lying down for too long can make you less steady on your feet. To keep yourself safe:

- Use the call button for help getting out of bed.
- Ask for help going to the bathroom or walking around. (And use hospital handrails when they’re available.)
- Wear nonslip socks.
- Keep often-used items within easy reach (glasses, remote, tissues, etc.).
- Make sure your wheelchair is locked when you get in or out of it. Never step on the footrest.

Patients of all ages are at risk for falls. It’s better to be extra careful than risk another medical problem. Your clinical care team will implement what we call “fall precautions” for your safety. Your nurse will provide you with more information.

PREPARE FOR SURGERY

Before your procedure, make sure you and your surgical staff confirm:

- your name and birth date
- the type of surgery you are having
- the body part to be operated on—In fact, hospital staff will mark the correct spot on your body. Make sure you or your support person checks that it’s correct.

Take simple steps like these to help prevent medical mistakes.

Ask your surgeon to take a “time out” to check: you’re the right person, getting the right surgery, on the right body part.
PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR CARE

- Tell your nurse if something doesn’t seem right.
- Know what time you normally get medicine, and tell your nurse if you don’t get it.
- Request drawings or illustrations to help you learn about your condition.
- Read and understand all medical forms before signing. Ask if you need information explained.
- If your treatment involves medical equipment, practice using it with your nurse before you leave the hospital.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for a second opinion. The more information you have, the better you will feel about making decisions.
- Talk to your doctor and family about whether you want life-saving actions taken.

SPEAK UP

If you have questions or concerns, you have the right to ask and get a response from your doctor or nurse that makes sense to you. To help, share your answers to these questions with hospital staff.

- What language would you prefer to speak?
- Do you need glasses, hearing aids or other devices to help with talking to hospital staff?
- Do you prefer to hear, see or read health information?
- Do you have any cultural, ethnic or religious-based special needs?
- Who will be your support person who talks with hospital staff about your healthcare wishes? (see page 16)

And Remember, Take Charge of Your Communication:

Ask About Jargon: If you hear a medical term you don’t understand, ask what it means.

“Teach Back”: After you get instructions or an explanation, repeat back what you thought you heard so you can double-check that you understood.

Take Notes: Write down any key facts your doctor tells you so you won’t forget.
Please review the rights and responsibilities below to help us provide you with quality care.

**You Have the Right To:**
- Respectful and considerate care free from neglect, exploitation, abuse or harassment.
- Receive treatment without discrimination as to age, race, ethnicity, color, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status and with respect for your cultural and personal values, beliefs and preferences.
- Receive information in a manner in which you understand.
- Privacy and to receive a notice of our privacy practices and your privacy rights.
- Have your own physician notified of your admission to the hospital.
- A clear, complete and understandable description of your condition and treatment choices.
- Ask questions and expect answers about benefits, common risks and recognized alternatives before you give your permission for any procedure or research study.
- Refuse a diagnostic or therapeutic procedure, treatment or research study to the extent permitted by law, and to be informed of the medical consequences of refusal.
- Have your pain appropriately assessed and managed.
- Have a family member or person of your choice notified of admission to the hospital and have a family member or representative present for emotional support.
- Access, copy and update your medical record in accordance with the Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Contact Patient Advocacy with concerns or complaints about the care you receive or the privacy of your medical information.
- Request or refuse an interpreter and/or translation services.
- Give or refuse consent to the hospital to produce or use recordings, films or other images other than for your care.
- Ask healthcare workers to please wash their hands.
- Formulate Advance Directives and have hospital and medical staff comply with those directives to the extent permitted by law.
- Leave the hospital as soon as possible with instructions about caring for yourself at home.

**Advocacy and International Services Department**

If you have a question or concern, the first place to turn is to your doctor, nurse or another member of your healthcare team. When the staff does not help you to your satisfaction, or you have a special concern or need, call a patient advocate.

Patient advocates provide advocacy and assistance to patients/families and physicians in all care settings and act as liaisons between patients, physicians, hospital staff and departments to recognize and remove any obstacles to providing high-quality care.

Advocates can be contacted Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at ext. 4-3040 and by pager on the Patient Care Line at ext. 4-CARE (ext. 4-2273).
- Request a same-sex chaperone to be available for any outpatient visit.
- Respectful and considerate care and to be free from neglect, exploitation, abuse or harassment.

The patient has the responsibility to:
- Give your healthcare team the most complete and correct information about your health, health history, insurance and related issues.
- Tell your caregivers about changes in the way you feel when you are in the hospital, doctor’s office or after you leave.
- Follow your plan of care.
- Be considerate and respectful of other patients and hospital employees and others’ property and equipment.

- Keep noise to a minimum; use the telephone, TV and lights courteously.
- Pay attention to the care you are receiving.
- Speak up if you do not understand.
- Discuss your advance directive with your physician prior to admission, when admitted, and any time you make a change to the document.
- Help us maintain a healthy and healing environment and refrain from the use of tobacco products in adherence to the hospital’s tobacco-free policy.
- Meet financial commitments.

Please note that we always strive to provide high-quality care and service. If you have any concerns about your care or safety, please request to speak with the clinical manager. If this resolution is unsatisfactory, you may contact Patient Advocacy at 202-444-3040.

If your concern is still not satisfactorily addressed, you may contact the District of Columbia Department of Health at 202-442-5833 or Joint Commission at 1-800-994-6610.
ADVANCE DIRECTIVES
A Simple and Smart Way to Take Charge of Your Care

One of the most important decisions you can make about your care is to fill out advance directives in case you can no longer speak for yourself. Advance directives are documents that let others know your wishes about the type of care you want. And they will only be used if you become unconscious or too ill to communicate yourself.

Different states have different laws about advance directives. Check with your Admissions department or nurse if you have any questions. Directives can include:

**Living Will**
This set of instructions explains the type of life-prolonging medical care you wish to accept or refuse. It can include your wishes about the use of resuscitation (CPR) if your heart stops, a ventilator if you stop breathing, or feeding tubes or IVs if you cannot eat or drink.

**Durable Power of Attorney**
*For healthcare:* This is a legal document that names your healthcare proxy—someone who can make medical decisions for you if you’re unable to do so. An official healthcare proxy can represent your wishes on emergency care but also on other medical issues like potential treatment options, blood transfusions, kidney dialysis, etc. Choose someone you trust, discuss your medical wishes, and make sure the person agrees to represent you in this role.

*For finances:* You also have the right to appoint someone or the same person to help manage your finances if you cannot.

**Fill Out Your Forms**
Make sure you submit advance directives each time you go to the hospital, so your most current information and wishes are on file. You do not need a lawyer to fill these out. For more information and to obtain the forms you need, contact Social Services at ext. 4-3750, Pastoral Care at ext. 4-3030, or Patient Access at ext. 4-3180.
Try the teach-back method. Repeat back what you hear the discharge planner say to make sure you understand the details correctly.

**Before You Leave the Hospital**

A successful recovery after your stay starts with a solid plan before you go.

**GOING HOME**

Your doctor will tell you when you will likely be discharged. The actual time of departure is often contingent on test results and a last assessment of your physical status by your doctors. We are very sensitive to the inconvenience that this may cause, and we will make every effort to keep you informed on the progress of your hospital discharge.

After your physician has written your discharge orders, the nurse will review your discharge instructions with you and provide any prescriptions ordered by your physician. Be sure you understand these instructions and have contact names and phone numbers in the event you have questions or need to make follow-up appointments.

Unit personnel will escort you to the Main Lobby.

The Outpatient Pharmacy is located on the ground floor of the Pasquerilla Healthcare Center (PHC). Prescriptions and selected over-the-counter medications may be conveniently purchased there on your way home.

You may receive a phone call from one of our nurses in the days after you go home. We are very interested in how you are progressing in your recovery. Feel free to ask questions that may arise after your discharge.
After your stay at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, you may need additional follow-up care to help you reach your full potential for recovery and independence. Your case manager can provide a list of excellent options convenient to your home. Many patients benefit from medical rehabilitation, especially individuals with spinal cord injury, stroke, brain injury, cardiac conditions, or a variety of orthopedic conditions. MedStar Georgetown University Hospital provides excellent rehabilitation services on an outpatient basis if you are able to regularly come back to the hospital for therapy.

Among many options for inpatient rehabilitation, MedStar National Rehabilitation Network, a member of MedStar Health and rated as one of “American’s Best Hospitals” by *U.S. News & World Report*, offers a complete range of medical rehabilitation services at its inpatient hospital and at more than 35 NRH Regional Rehab outpatient locations throughout the area. National Rehabilitation Network offers physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, psychology services, prosthetics and assistive technologies, a team of doctors and nurses who specialize in medical rehabilitation and many other services. As a patient, you are at the center of this team as they work with you to reach goals that are individualized to meet your life. For more information, call 202-877-4NRH or ask your case manager for additional information.

**Is Home Care Right for You?**

Hospital stays are often very short today. Fortunately, home care can provide a continuation of the care you received in the hospital from nursing, therapy or aide services.

Home care can bring the services, technologies, therapies and equipment of a hospital into the comfort and privacy of your home. Again, your case manager can review with you the many options available.

Contact your health insurance, Medicare or Medicaid to find out what care and services are covered for you, and to obtain help with costs.
MedStar Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) has been providing home care since 1900. They can ease your transition from hospital to home because they have answers to many of your questions and concerns. The first step is knowing that you, a family member or your doctor can call 800-862-2166 to arrange for home care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

VNA works with you and your doctor to develop an individualized care plan. We then put together a home care team of skilled professionals who work with you and your family to understand your condition, determine how many visits are needed and what types of services you can expect to receive. The home care team may include a nurse, therapist, home health aide, social worker or nutritionist depending on your needs. The team may also include IV therapy to provide chemotherapy, antibiotic therapy, and pain control therapy or total parenteral nutrition.

**Saying Thanks**

Patients frequently ask how they can best express their gratitude for the compassionate care they receive at our hospital. Staff members are not permitted to accept tips or gratuities, and gifts are discouraged. However, if you feel that staff members have excelled in caring for you, we urge you to mention them by name in a letter to our hospital president (c/o Main Administration, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, 3800 Reservoir Road, Washington, D.C. 20007).

**Donations to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital**

For those patients who wish to express their gratitude by making a tax-deductible contribution to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, please contact the hospital philanthropy staff at 202-444-0721 and ask to speak with a member of our hospital philanthropy team.

Donors may make gifts to specific programs or departments. Wherever you choose to make your gift, we are grateful for your generosity. You are also welcome to make your gifts in honor or in memory of a loved one. If you wish to make your gift to a particular department or in someone’s name, please indicate the name in the memo portion of your check. If you wish to make a gift online, please go to MedStarGeorgetown.org/Giving.

Gifts can be sent to the following address:

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital
Office of Philanthropy
1 Main, Hospital Administration
3800 Reservoir Road, NW
Washington, D.C. 20007

**Our Patio Garden**, located at the Hospital’s front entrance, is a place for patients, families, volunteers and associates to share good news, take a break or simply have a quiet moment of reflection. Associates, grateful patients and families may enhance this beautiful area by honoring someone special with the purchase of an engraved brick, or be among a select few to engrave your message on a respite bench. **All proceeds benefit MedStar Georgetown’s patient care programs.**
Payment in full is expected upon receipt of our statement. To discuss payment of your balance or to inquire about financial assistance, please contact Patient Financial Services at 703-558-1400 or outside the Metro area (toll-free) at 888-896-1400.

Sometimes it is important that we contact you by telephone or mail. Please make sure that the hospital has your accurate telephone number and mailing address on file. If you are not sure your information is correct, please contact our Patient Financial Services at 703-558-1400 or outside the Metro area (toll-free) at 888-896-1400.

After your discharge, most patients will receive two bills from MedStar Georgetown University Hospital: one for hospital services and one for hospital-employed physician services. You also may receive other bills from non-Georgetown staff that are related to your stay at the hospital (see “Other Services” for additional details).

Billing Questions
Our Patient Financial Services handles and resolves patient telephone requests and inquiries concerning both hospital and physician billing issues. Patient Financial Services accepts calls from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday and Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. They can be reached at 703-558-1400 or outside the metro area (toll-free) at 888-896-1400 or via fax at 202-444-2878. On our web page you will find additional information about billing and samples of both our physician and hospital patient statements. You can also place a customer service inquiry regarding your hospital and/or physician account on our website: MedStarGeorgetown.org/Billing.

Financial Assistance
If you do not have insurance or lack comprehensive insurance coverage, please call the Pre-certification Department at 202-444-7226 to speak with our financial counselors about payment plans or eligibility for Medicaid or other financial assistance programs. There are several financial assistance options available to our patients. If you contact us, we will bring all the necessary information and forms to your hospital room for you to complete.

Other Services
If you receive services from non-MedStar Georgetown employed providers, outside labs, medical equipment suppliers, etc., you will receive a separate statement from them.

Need Help?
If you don’t understand something on your bill, or if you’re having trouble paying your bills, let us know. A patient representative can work with you and guide you to services that can help. If you have a concern about your insurance coverage, please discuss this with your case manager or social worker.
Mission and Pastoral Care
As a Catholic and Jesuit hospital, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital is committed to compassionate care of the whole person in the Jesuit tradition of *cura personalis*. The services provided to help meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of our patients are:

- Chaplains are available to all patients, family members, visitors and other loved ones, regardless of religious affiliation, for prayers, spiritual counseling or support.
- The chaplains represent a variety of denominations. The Department of Mission and Pastoral Care can help arrange visits from ministers of other religions and denominations. Patients are also welcome to invite ministers or clergy from their own denominations.
- A chaplain and/or a Catholic priest are always available on an on-call basis.
- The Sacraments of Anointing of the Sick, Communion and Reconciliation (Confessions) are available for patients upon request.
- The Hospital Chapel is available for personal prayer or meditation 24 hours a day. The chapel is located on the first floor of the Main Building near the front entrance facing Reservoir Road.
- Catholic Mass is offered each weekday at 7:30 a.m. and 12:05 p.m.; Saturdays at 4 p.m. (Sunday Vigil) and Sundays at noon and 4 p.m. in the Hospital Chapel. All are welcome.
- An Interfaith Prayer Service is celebrated at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and a Protestant Worship Service is celebrated on Thursdays at 1 p.m. in the Hospital Chapel. All are welcome to any of the services.
- All services are broadcast on closed-circuit TV throughout the hospital on Channel 2. At other times of day, scenes from the Chapel are broadcast with inspirational music.

To contact Pastoral Care, call ext. 4-3030 or contact the operator and ask for the chaplain.

Volunteer Services  Ext. 4-5545
MGUH volunteers are a unique group of individuals who provide extra care and support for our patients, families and visitors. During your stay you may meet one of our dedicated volunteers throughout the hospital at concierge desks, waiting rooms and units.

Interested in volunteering? If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming part of our volunteer community, please visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/Volunteer and click “Be A Volunteer!”
Blood Donor Service
Most patients who are transfused at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital receive blood units donated by volunteer donors.

Volunteers Donors
The American Red Cross and our other blood center donors are volunteers. None are paid for their donations. Donors are carefully screened by a questionnaire approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and each unit of blood is tested for infectious diseases by methods that meet all requirements for the FDA and the AABB (formerly the American Association of Blood Banks).

Some patients or their physicians prefer autologous (self-donated) blood when possible. Occasionally, patients request that they receive blood given by someone they know (directed donors). MedStar Georgetown University Hospital receives its blood supply for transfusions from the American Red Cross community blood center and other blood centers.

Autologous Donation (Self-Donated)
Patients who are scheduled for elective surgery have the option of donating their own blood, which is then, if necessary, transfused back to them during or after surgery. Please discuss this option with your physician.

Directed Donations (Family/Friends)
Some patients who are scheduled for surgery or other medical indications for transfusion may want a family member or friends to donate blood for their transfusions. We have no information that blood from family members or friends is safer. However, we understand the concerns that some people have about blood transfusions and will provide this special service for patients who request it. Directed donors must meet strict health requirements.

The ideal directed donors are people who have previously been volunteer blood donors.

For more information about our blood services, autologous or directed donor blood donation, please call the Clinical Laboratory Customer Service at 202-444-3500 and press option 6 from your telephone keypad or call directly to 202-444-4015 to speak with the coordinator of blood donations. The coordinator can help you schedule autologous or directed blood collections at a convenient blood donor service.

Georgetown MD Referral Service
Nurses assist callers in finding physicians and services within the MedStar Georgetown system that meet their personal and medical needs. Georgetown MD also informs patients about resources, registers callers for health education, parenting classes and clinical trials, and provides information on medical topics, prescription and over-the-counter medications. The nurses also assist in scheduling appointments with selected physicians. This free service is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Call 202-342-2400 or toll-free 866-745-2633.

Lombardi CancerLine
Experienced nurses address general questions and connect callers to oncology specialists with information about cancer research protocols, source information for patients from the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society and serve as a resource to identify risk factors and determine ways to reduce cancer risk. The nurses also provide physician referrals and assist with appointment scheduling. Lombardi CancerLine is available Monday through Friday. Call 202-444-4000.

YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM
MedStar Georgetown University Hospital is a world-renowned academic medical center, committed to providing the best, most up-to-date patient care available. To do this, we use the skills and expertise of a large healthcare team, and at the same time, educate the next generation of professionals. You may see students from many of the disciplines listed on the following pages. These students are under the direct supervision of a licensed professional. If you have additional questions about the role of students at MedStar Georgetown, please ask your nurse or doctor.

We encourage and depend on our patients and families to actively contribute to the process of planning and delivering care. Working together, we can offer excellent customized patient care.
Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program

At MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, we have a bloodless surgery team to provide this alternative option for our patients. Our highly skilled medical and professional staff is dedicated to meeting the individual needs of our patients by utilizing safe, state-of-the-art medical technologies designed to minimize blood loss and maximize the oxygen-carrying capabilities of blood during medical treatment.

Bloodless surgery techniques are used before, during and after surgery to avoid transfusions of donor blood entirely.

How do surgeons perform bloodless surgeries?

There are three points throughout the surgical process where doctors can use bloodless surgery techniques:

- **Pre-surgery** - using medication to increase the blood supply or storing the patient's own blood before surgery
- **During surgery** - using techniques, specialized equipment and other technologies to avoid blood loss
- **Post-surgery** - using techniques that eliminate the use for transfused blood or blood products

Can any surgeon perform bloodless surgery?

Bloodless surgery should be performed by a multidisciplinary team with individualized expertise in all aspects of pre-, intra- and post-operative care.

Access Your Health Information Online!

myMedStar is a free, secure patient portal where you can go online and keep track of your health information 24/7. You can review most laboratory test results, excluding biopsies, and view a summary of your hospital stay or office visit. To learn more and register, visit www.mymedstar.org or call 877-745-5656.

Connect with MedStar anywhere you are through myMedStar.

myMedStar is a FREE, secure patient portal where you can go online and keep track of your health information 24/7.

With myMedStar, you can:

- View most laboratory test results, excluding biopsies.
- View summaries of your visit(s) showing treatments and care/discharge plans from your visits.
- Exchange email messages securely with your MedStar physician if you have one.
- Request prescription renewals, appointments and physician referrals from your MedStar physician if you have one.

Sign up at myMedStar.org or call 877-745-5656
Ever since a potentially fatal bleeding ulcer blindsided John Freshman a decade ago, the government relations specialist has kept a wary eye on his health. An endoscopy became an integral part of John's annual checkups, giving his gastroenterologist a close look at John's upper digestive tract and reassuring him that he wouldn't again become an unwitting victim of his family's history of digestive disease.

That precaution was especially important because John already had Barrett's esophagus, also known as Barrett's disease, an uncommon, precancerous condition in which some of the cells lining the esophagus—the tube that connects the mouth to the stomach—morph into cells normally found only in the intestine.

Physicians aren't exactly sure what triggers the transformation, but constant irritation from gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) tops the list of suspects. Up to 15 percent of people with GERD will develop Barrett's disease but, without an endoscopy, most will never know it. Barrett's esophagus has no symptoms.

When Barrett's esophagus is stable, it poses a relatively low risk of turning into esophageal cancer. In many cases, though, Barrett's rogue cells mutate into a more menacing state called dysplasia. If dysplasia continues its downward path, esophageal cancer is a step away.

In 2011, John's annual endoscopy revealed distressing news: His condition had crossed the line from harmless to threatening. “After 15 years of living without a problem, all of a sudden, I was at great risk of getting the worst form of cancer I know of,” says 69-year-old John. “And I was damned scared. But my gastroenterologist reassured me, saying, 'I'm sending you to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and the best, most experienced Barrett's specialist around—John Carroll, MD.' ”

MedStar Georgetown is home to a highly respected Gastroenterology Department that treats the largest volume of patients with Barrett's esophagus in the region. In 2007, it became the first in the area to adopt the latest treatment for Barrett's—radiofrequency ablation (RFA)—which has been successfully used on more than 500 patients to date.
“RFA works by using heat to destroy Barrett’s precancerous cells,” explains Dr. Carroll, a gastroenterologist who specializes in endoscopic procedures. “It’s most effective against advanced dysplasia and/or when precancerous cells cover a large portion of the esophagus. Unfortunately for John, he met both criteria, with nearly 75 percent of his esophagus affected.”

A week after meeting Dr. Carroll, John began RFA treatment, which typically takes three sessions to burn away all aberrant cells. Performed under full anesthesia, each outpatient procedure lasts about 30 minutes and is repeated every three months, which allows the esophagus to heal between sessions.

Before RFA, doctors could do little more than watch and wait until dysplasia turned cancerous, and then they could act. But with few effective treatments, many patients faced major surgery to remove and reconstruct all or part of the esophagus. By targeting the dysplasia, RFA actually prevents the development of cancer.

That was certainly John’s experience.

“I can’t begin to tell you how lucky I feel,” he says today. “After four RFA treatments, my esophagus was totally clean and it’s remained that way ever since. Even better, no one expects the dysplasia to come back.

Dr. Carroll and MedStar Georgetown were just wonderful. They saved me from a bad cancer. I owe them my life.”

To learn more, visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/Gastro.

Notes