

HealthLines

Winter 2022



CGH Environmental Services Keeps Patients and Staff Safe

Maria Riggs and Kathy McCarty from the CGH Environmental Services department work diligently to keep the hospital clean and safe.



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From the Desk of Dr. Paul Steinke, President and CEO

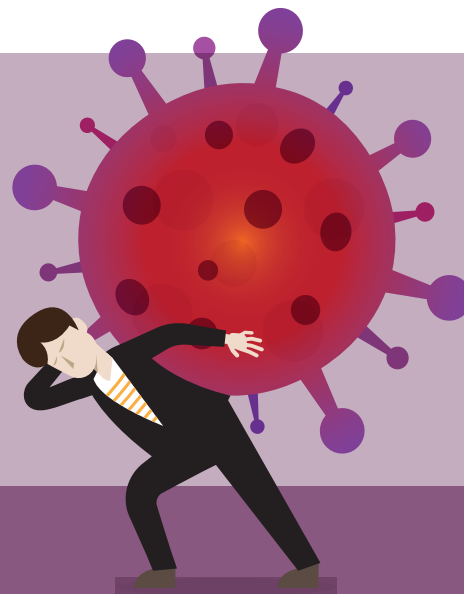


With the hustle and bustle of the busy holiday season behind us, you may find things are slowing down a bit through the remaining winter months. As we begin this new year of hope and resolutions, I hope you have been able to take some time to reflect on the many blessings in your life while looking for ways to embrace the seasons to come in 2022.

I also hope that you continue to appreciate the strength, dedication and commitment of our local healthcare workers. When considering hospitals, important groups such as doctors, nurses, X-ray technicians, pharmacists, EMTs and phlebotomists quickly come to mind. But there are many others that make CGH run smoothly. We are like a small city, working together just as you would in a community — electricians, plumbers, carpenters, cooks, accountants, purchasers, delivery drivers and many other positions too numerous to name. Together, they are all vital in helping us take excellent care of our patients, both directly and indirectly.

In this issue of *HealthLines*, we highlight one very important group of our unsung heroes at CGH — our Environmental Services (EVS) staff. COVID-19 has brought increased attention to this group, but they've been instrumental in keeping our hospital safe well before any pandemic. Their jobs are not just basic “housekeeping” — yes, it's true that they keep the floors clean, windows washed and take out the trash — but they also receive additional training to adhere to higher levels of cleaning and disinfecting. This added layer of protection ensures CGH is safe from any potential pathogens throughout the organization. Their jobs are very important, detailed and demanding, and our EVS staff works tirelessly, often going unnoticed, to make sure this high level of cleanliness exists every single day. I want to take this opportunity to recognize our more than 50-member EVS team and the important job they do. Thank you!

Dr. Paul Steinke
CGH President and CEO



Concern with Long-haul COVID

It's been nearly two years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, but today it's still important to stay vigilant and protect yourself from the virus. While many who have contracted COVID-19 have made a full recovery, others have not been as lucky, with symptoms lingering weeks or months after infection, often referred to as long-haul COVID.

According to a white paper published in 2021 by FAIR Health, 23.2% of patients diagnosed with COVID-19 have symptoms that continue for more than four weeks after the initial diagnosis.

“What is lost in the frequently cited ‘99% survival rate’ are those who are still unwell long after the initial COVID diagnosis,” said Eric Kuhns, MD, CGH COVID Task Force Chair. “Long-haul COVID can range from inconvenient side effects to life-changing health conditions, but it is often significant. These symptoms appear in about a quarter of patients, especially those who were hospitalized for COVID, which is typically around 10%–15% of cases.”

The most common long-haul COVID symptoms include:

- + Difficulty breathing
- + Fatigue
- + Pain
- + Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- + Hyperlipidemia (excess fats in your blood)

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and still are feeling its effects weeks or months after your initial diagnosis, see your primary care physician to receive proper follow-up medical care.

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HealthLines is offered as a service of CGH Medical Center and is distributed to residents in the CGH service area. The information is intended to inform and educate about subjects pertinent to health, not as a substitute for consultation with your physician. Questions or comments may be directed to Marketing at **815-625-0400, ext. 4580**. © 2022 Printed in U.S.A. Developed by GLC — a marketing communications agency.

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Living with Arthritis

Joint inflammation and pain can be debilitating, especially during the colder winter months. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 23% of U.S. adults — more than 54 million people — are living with arthritis. While arthritis isn't curable, there are many ways to help manage the symptoms. Keep your arthritis in check with these tips:

- 1. Get physical** — The best way to relieve joint inflammation and pain from arthritis is to stay active. Choose exercises that put less strain on your joints, and be sure to monitor your pain levels. If your joints begin to hurt, it's OK to slow down.
- 2. Watch your weight** — Maintaining a healthy weight can be beneficial for those dealing with arthritis. The more you weigh, the more physical stress is being put on your joints.
- 3. See your physician** — While you can do a lot on your own to help manage joint pain, regular appointments with your physician are recommended. From suggesting exercise routines to prescribing medication, trust your doctor to help make dealing with arthritis easier for you.

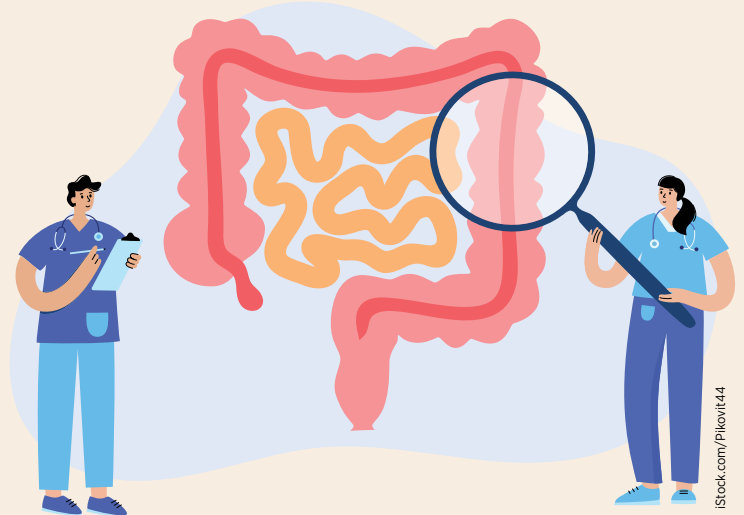
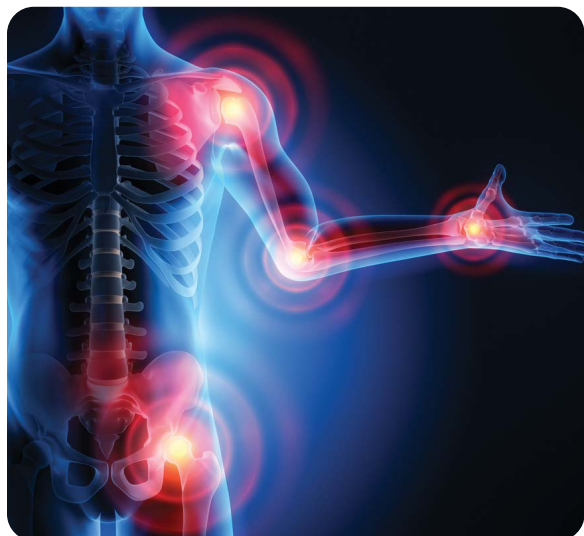
If arthritis and joint pain are chronic issues for you, contact our orthopedic surgeon, Jeffrey Thormeyer, MD, or Ethan Brooks, DSC, PA-C, in our Orthopedics department at 815-625-4790 to set up an appointment today!



Jeffrey Thormeyer, MD



Ethan Brooks, DSC, PA-C



Stay on Top of Colon Health

According to the American Cancer Society, colorectal cancer will affect about 4% of American women and 4.3% of American men at some point in their life. However, due to increased screenings and improvements in treatment, the total number of deaths attributed to colorectal cancer has steadily decreased over the past few decades.

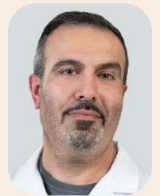
You should always be aware of the potential signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer, including:

- ✦ A noticeable change in your regular bowel movements
- ✦ Rectal bleeding or blood in your stool
- ✦ Discomfort or cramps in your abdomen
- ✦ Unexplained weight loss
- ✦ General weakness or fatigue

Family history, particularly if there is a first- or second-degree relative with history of colon cancer, significantly increases the risk of cancer. Smoking and eating a low-fiber diet consisting of a lot of red meat can increase your risk, as well. However, even if you don't have these risk factors in your life, everyone is susceptible to colon cancer. "For those at average risk, it's recommended that you begin colon screenings at age 50," said Ayman Alzubi, MD, gastroenterologist at CGH. "If no issues are found, you should have your next screening 10 years later. Those between ages 76–85 should consult their physician about how frequent their exams should be."

For some, colon screening comes with preconceptions about the procedure or even stigmas. The biggest fear many people have with colonoscopies is the preparation. However, preparations are much gentler now compared to what some have experienced in the past, including less discomfort from the liquid patients must drink prior to the procedure. And for the actual procedure, patients are sedated, so they feel no pain. "Liquid bowel-cleansing procedures have become simplified and much easier in recent years," Dr. Alzubi said. "Several better-tasting and lower-volume prep solutions are now being used, which improves your comfort and colonoscopy experience. There is no reason to be nervous!"

All physicians can agree that preventing colon cancer should be top of mind for everyone. How can you reduce your risk of colon cancer? There are three simple ways to stay on top of your colon health: eat healthy, don't smoke and get screened.



Ayman Alzubi, MD

To schedule your screening colonoscopy at CGH today, call 815-625-4790, ext. 6885.

Environmental Services Keeps CGH Safe

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic are many unsung heroes, including more than 50 Environmental Services (EVS) staff members at CGH Medical Center. As they continue to be on the front line of infection control, the responsibilities that rest on their shoulders are more important now than ever before.

“Over the past year, COVID-19 has put a spotlight on our EVS team,” said Jim DuBois, CGH EVS Director. “Our patients and families want to be sure the hospital is clean and safe, and staff members need to feel good about their work environment. We are proud to say that our EVS staff had well-established training, cleaning and disinfecting protocols prior to the pandemic. Together, they were led by our team of EVS supervisors that are all certified as Healthcare Environmental Services Technicians through the American Hospital Association’s Association for the Health Care Environment. All of this really put our team — and our hospital — ahead of the game when the pandemic hit.”



Sonia Johnson, EVS Supervisor (left), and Lori Cantu, EVS Technician (right), diligently clean and disinfect a patient room. According to Johnson, the EVS motto is: “We clean and disinfect each room like your favorite grandmother is going to be the next patient.”

Proper protocol

EVS team members manage several responsibilities during any given shift, focusing on hospital disinfection and sanitation. Following a strict three-tier cleaning process, disinfecting patient rooms, surgery and procedure areas, isolation rooms, the Emergency Department, public bathrooms and waiting rooms are just some of the many important responsibilities EVS has.

“Once a patient is discharged, we let the room stay closed for 30 minutes until the appropriate air exchanges have cleaned the air for the safety of our EVS staff,” DuBois said. “The air is cleaned by ultraviolet [UV] light, which kills any airborne pathogens in the room. Then, our team is able to safely enter and begin the next levels of cleaning.”

“We always start with a detailed soap and water cleaning,” continued Maria Riggs, who has been on the EVS staff for 26 years. “This is followed by a high-level, accelerated hydrogen peroxide disinfectant on all surfaces, especially high-touch areas such as doorknobs, light switches, handrails, remotes and call buttons. This disinfectant has a one-minute kill time, meaning we must leave all surfaces wet for one minute to kill any germs. Once dry, one of two disinfecting robots are then brought into the room.” The XENEX Full Spectrum Disinfection robots create an additional level of safety by cleaning the room with pulsed xenon, or UV rays, during three five-minute cycles.

“The goal is to flip a discharged patient’s room within one hour to allow minimal time between new admissions,” added DuBois.



Maria Riggs and Kathy McCarty from the CGH Environmental Services department are pictured with “GUS,” the Full Spectrum Disinfection robot.

Full-service operation

For other public areas, such as the lobbies, bathrooms and entrances, EVS staff members utilize top-of-the-line electrostatic disinfectant sprayers that positively charge the disinfectant spray droplets. These positively charged droplets are attracted to, and wrap around, the negatively charged pathogens on all surfaces.

In addition to maintaining cleanliness and infection control measures, EVS is responsible for cleaning, buffering and shining floors, and disposing of trash in all areas, including biohazardous waste and chemicals. Special procedures are followed, and staff are properly trained to dispose of medical waste.

“EVS is not just a janitorial service,” DuBois said. “We’re involved in every level of the hospital, including emergency management and disaster situations. Our job is very detailed and is not easy. We work tirelessly each day to ensure every patient, visitor and staff member that comes through our doors is safe. Without the EVS staff’s immense dedication, our hospital would not be as strong and as fortunate as it is today.”

CAP Lab Accreditation

The CGH Medical Center Laboratory Department is accredited by the Accreditation Committee of the College of American Pathologists (CAP). The CGH Laboratory is one of more than 8,000 CAP-accredited facilities worldwide.

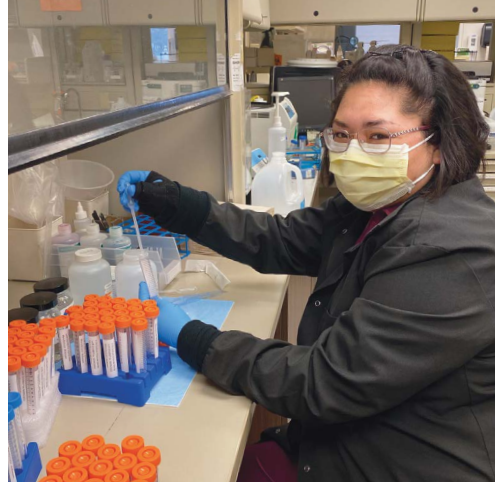
Approximately 60%–70% of all medical decisions are based on laboratory results. On average, CGH sees 73,000 outpatients a year at the hospital and clinic labs. Services performed in our laboratories include, but are not limited to, blood typing, blood transfusions, glucose tests, urine analysis, throat cultures, tissue blocks and more.

“We’re very proud of this certification, as it emphasizes our commitment to provide the highest level of care for our patients,” said Farzan Eskandari, MD, FCAP, CGH Laboratory Medical Director.

The U.S. federal government recognizes the CAP Laboratory Accreditation Program, started in the early 1960s, as being equal to or more stringent than the government’s own inspection program.

During the CAP accreditation process, inspectors examine the laboratory’s records and quality control of procedures for the preceding two years. CAP inspectors also examine laboratory staff qualifications, equipment, facilities, safety program and record, and overall management.

For more information on CGH Laboratories, visit cghmc.com/services/laboratory.



Yolanda Ramos, CGH Phlebotomist, prepares COVID-19 collection containers.

Defining Different COVID Tests

There are three types of testing done for COVID-19: antigen diagnostic, molecular diagnostic and antibody.

- + **Antigen diagnostic** — Known as a rapid test, these are administered with a nose swab for diagnosing active COVID-19 infections. Results are available in 15 minutes but are considered less accurate.
- + **Molecular diagnostic** — Known as a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, these are administered with a nose swab or saliva sample and are used for diagnosing active COVID-19 infections. Results are available from between one to 72 hours and are considered highly accurate.
- + **Antibody** — Antibody tests are used to determine whether you have previously been infected with COVID-19. They are administered through blood sampling measures and are not used to determine active COVID-19 infections, nor should they be used to assess your need for vaccination.

What’s Cooking

With the CGH Health Foundation and certifiable foodie Sherry DeWalt, Healthy Lifestyles Coordinator

One Pan Asian Quinoa

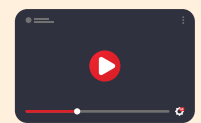
Ingredients

1 cup uncooked quinoa
14 oz bag frozen stir fry vegetables
1 cup diced pineapple
1 cup frozen shelled edamame
2 cups low sodium vegetable broth
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
(or ¼ teaspoon powdered ginger)
2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
(or ½ teaspoon garlic powder)
1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar
¼ cup low sodium soy sauce

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Sprinkle quinoa in the bottom of a 9"x13" baking dish. Add frozen vegetables, pineapple and edamame evenly over the quinoa. Combine the remaining ingredients together in a small bowl and whisk. Pour liquid slowly over the ingredients in the baking dish. Cover the dish with aluminum foil and place in oven. Bake for 45–50 minutes, or until the quinoa has absorbed all of the liquid, and serve.

Optional garnishes: sliced green onion, sesame seeds, squeeze of lime juice.



Watch the video for this recipe on our “What’s Cooking CGH” Blog at whatscookingcgh.com.

istock.com/vamtiw, Alexy Yakovenko

Quinoa (keen-wah) has become increasingly popular among health-conscious consumers. Although technically a seed, it can be used in cooking in place of grains like rice and barley. Quinoa boasts more protein, fiber, B vitamins and minerals than most grains. It can be found near rice and dried beans in the grocery store.





Because of the generosity of the late Hugh and Betty Miller, well-known Rock Falls residents, the CGH Health Foundation will embark on a new dementia awareness education initiative.

Helping Patients with Alzheimer's and Dementia

The CGH Health Foundation will embark on a new effort this year to raise awareness about and to provide resources for Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

The educational focus is being made possible through a bequest given in July 2021 from the late Hugh and Betty Miller, well-known Rock Falls residents. The couple established the Hugh F. Miller Insurance Agency in 1985, which is still being operated by second- and third-generation family members.

"My dear mom suffered from dementia for almost 10 years. It was very painful to watch as she progressed in the disease," said Joan Hermes, Executive Director of the Foundation and daughter of the Millers. "She had been so active in the community with my dad. Their agency motto was, 'Here, family matters,' and they thrived on caring for their extended circle of 'families.'"

In true community spirit, it was Mr. Miller's wish before his death in June 2021 that the Foundation and the hospital work together to help area families. "He hoped the Foundation can help families more easily navigate finding existing resources as well as potentially provide new types of assistance," said Hermes. "We will spend

the next year planning and creating local support for those impacted by dementia and Alzheimer's."

The Foundation and CGH Medical Center will partner with the Alzheimer's Association to offer a variety of resources to individuals living with the disease and their caregivers. Potential plans include:

- ✦ Creating a support group at the hospital.
- ✦ Hosting a community forum to learn from those impacted by dementia on what resources are lacking in the area.
- ✦ Providing professional staff education on diagnosis and treatment of the disease.
- ✦ Providing educational programs and promoting community awareness of the disease.

More than 5 million Americans are living with dementia, and the number is projected to reach nearly 14 million by 2050. Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for 60%–80% of all dementia cases.

For more information, go to cghmc.com/foundation or call Executive Director Joan Hermes at 815-625-0400, ext. 5672.



Did you know ...

- ✦ Women are twice as likely than men to have dementia or Alzheimer's
- ✦ After age 65, the risk of developing Alzheimer's doubles every five years
- ✦ 32% of people ages 85 or older have Alzheimer's

iStock.com/ThitareeSarnkasat

Welcome Our New Digestive Health Services Provider



Ayman Alzubi, MD

We are pleased to welcome Ayman Alzubi, MD, to the CGH Digestive Health Center. Dr. Alzubi joins Jorge Monteagudo, MD, Jaziel Chavira, FNP-C, Cara Firch, PA-C, MS, and Concha Sitter, MS, FPA-APRN, FNP-BC, CGRN.

Dr. Alzubi received his MD from the University of Jordan Faculty of Medicine in Amman. He completed an Internal Medicine internship at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago and

an Internal Medicine residency at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. In addition, Dr. Alzubi completed a Transplant Hepatology fellowship at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and a Gastroenterology and Hepatology fellowship at the University of Missouri School of Medicine in Columbia.

Dr. Alzubi is currently accepting new patients at CGH Main Clinic at 101 E. Miller Road in Sterling. To make an appointment, please call (815) 625-4790.

See page 8 for details on how to join Dr. Alzubi for our Facebook Live event on March 17!

Award Winners Go Above and Beyond

DAISY Award Winner Cindy Fargher, RN

Cindy Fargher, RN, in the CGH Digestive Health Center, was recently recognized as a recipient of the prestigious DAISY Award for extraordinary nurses. An international program, the award is presented to nurses around the world who go above and beyond for their patients and demonstrate extraordinary, compassionate care.

Stephanie Waller, RN, Digestive Health Center, and DAISY Award Coordinator, read the nomination as the award was presented: "Cindy always takes the time to listen and educate her patients, family, neighbors and acquaintances. Currently, I am struggling with a breast cancer diagnosis, and Cindy, despite working full-time and having a family of her own, always finds the time to check on me and explain anything I am confused about. She is my biggest cheerleader. She does everything in her power to get you pointed in the right direction or connected to the appropriate medical or social staff. It does not matter who you are — she will lend a helping hand. Cindy is compassionate but firm. She tells me to do my part: Eat well, exercise and drink water. Cindy gave a year of her life to become a family member's primary caregiver when he was diagnosed with a life-altering illness. She attended every appointment and bathed and fed him. She educated the family concerning the diagnosis and needs. Although the patient was resistant, she managed to get him into a support group, and in the end, he was grateful she did. Cindy is our hero."

If you would like to submit a nomination for extraordinary nursing care that you or a family member have received at CGH Medical Center, please visit cghmc.com/daisy.

Sunshine Award Winner Lilian Gaulrapp, CNA

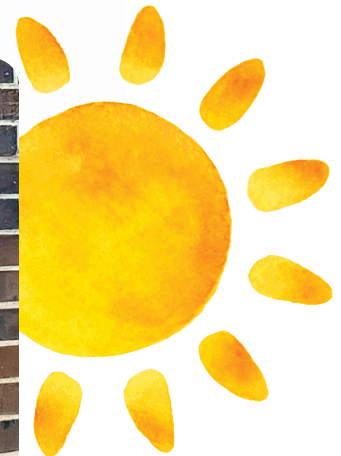
Lilian Gaulrapp, CNA, was recently recognized as a recipient of the Sunshine Award for extraordinary service given to a patient on CGH Medical Center's Medical Floor. The Sunshine Award was created to honor and recognize outstanding service and compassionate care by those in non-nursing roles, such as CNAs, CMAs or CMTs.

Stephanie Waller, RN, Digestive Health Center, Sunshine Award Coordinator, read the nomination as the award was presented: "She is just so awesome. She lights up your day when she walks into the room with her superior attitude toward her job, patients, life, everything. She's an awesome young lady!"

If you would like to submit a nomination for extraordinary service that you or a family member have received at CGH Medical Center by a staff member in a non-nursing role, please visit cghmc.com/sunshine.



Cindy Fargher, an RN in the Digestive Health Center, is a recipient of the prestigious DAISY Award for extraordinary nurses.



Lilian Gaulrapp, a CNA on the Medical Floor, received the Sunshine Award for extraordinary service given to a patient.

Careers at CGH

Don't prepare for just another job — find the career you love at CGH Medical Center. If you have ever considered joining the CGH team, now is the time!

Benefits of joining the CGH team include on-the-job training, comprehensive day-one benefits, competitive wages, flexible scheduling, tuition reimbursement and more.

CGH currently has openings for all entry-level positions with on-the-job training, as well as clinical and technical positions such as RNs, lab technicians and radiology technicians.

Go online today to cghmc.com/careers and find your place at CGH Medical Center — One Mission, One Vision, One Team.

Calendar of Events

WINTER 2022

For a full list of CGH events visit cghmc.com/calendar.

BLOOD DRIVE

Thursday, February 3

9:30 AM-7 PM

CGH Ryberg Auditorium

100 E. LeFevre Road, Sterling, IL

To schedule an appointment, call

815-625-0400, ext. 6879 (Michelle)

or **ext. 1057** (Bryan). Or log on to

bloodcenterimpact.org and use code 3591.

CHOLESTEROL AND GLUCOSE SCREENINGS

Friday, January 14; Tuesday, February 15;

Thursday, March 24

6-9:20 AM

12-hour fast and appointment are required.

Cost is \$30.

Call **815-625-0400, ext. 5716**

PREPARING FOR BABY

Classes are held via Zoom until further

notice. Please sign up at reception in

the CGH Main Clinic OB/Gynecology

Department or call **815-625-0400,**

ext. 5504.

SPINNING BABIES CLASS — COMING SOON!

Call **815-625-0400, ext. 5504** for more information.

BIRTHING AND BABY BASICS

Fridays, January 7, February 4, March 11

5-8 PM

Instructor: Marcela Sproul, RN, IBCLC

Designed for moms in the second half of pregnancy and their coaches, these classes

focus on everything you need to know

about the labor and delivery process.

BREASTFEEDING CLASS

Fridays, January 14, February 11, March 18

5-7 PM

Instructor: Marcela Sproul, RN, IBCLC

Taught by our Lactation Consultant, this

class shares everything you need to know

about beginning breastfeeding.

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HeartCheck Available at CGH

If you're not certain of your heart disease risk, HeartCheck may be for you! HeartCheck uses a LightSpeed CT scanner to give doctors fast, clear pictures of clogged arteries to examine the cause of chest pain, high blood pressure, cholesterol and other cardiovascular concerns. This enables early detection and more precise treatment of heart disease.

Physicians recommend you get a HeartCheck if you:

- + Are between ages 50 and 65
- + Are a smoker
- + Have high blood pressure
- + Have elevated cholesterol
- + Have a family history of heart disease
- + Are overweight

HeartCheck is available year round. For more information or to make an appointment, call **815-625-0400, ext. 5550.**



Growing Healthier

SPEAKER SERIES



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Health Foundation
Your partner in good health

Join us for FREE programs featuring speakers on important health topics. All of our Growing Healthier programs will be available via the CGH Facebook page in Facebook Live format and hosted by William Bird, MD, VP and Chief Medical Officer. LIKE our Facebook page, and sign up for notifications! For more information, call **815-625-0400, ext. 5716** or visit cghmc.com/growinghealthier.



January – Cancer Care on Thursday, January 20, with Alhareth Alsayed, MD. Dr. Alsayed will discuss the latest advances in cancer treatment and the newly expanded oncology space at CGH.



February – Here's to Your Heart on Thursday, February 17, with Hassan Kieso, MD. Dr. Kieso will talk about heart disease risk, prevention and treatment.



March – Too Young for Colon Cancer? on Thursday, March 17, with Ayman Alzubi, MD. Colorectal cancer is becoming more common in younger adults. Learn about new screening guidelines and preventive measures to reduce your risk for this disease.