

# VALLEY

## health & life

PRIORITIZING  
**QUALITY**  
CARE

A LIFETIME  
OF **GIVING**



# MEN'S HEALTH SCREENINGS

## DEAR READERS,

The snow is melting and our Valley will soon be swinging into the Spring season: a time of rebirth, renewal, growth, light and the promise of warmer days ahead. There's nothing like the warmer, fresh air of Spring to cure cabin fever.

At Valley Health Systems, we have been busy over the winter months. We have recruited many talented providers who are joining us to expand the growing number of excellent professionals practicing at our various locations.

Speaking of locations, in this issue we are highlighting our new walk-in services at our latest location in Chicopee. The feedback has been very positive, and we will be looking to replicate this model in other areas.

Holyoke Medical Center officially earned its ISO 9001 certification. Some of you may have heard about this certification as it is a global quality system standard that a number of excellent businesses in the Valley have achieved. It takes dedication to quality and a lot of hard work to obtain this distinction. We did the hard work and earned it, which gives you, our community, the peace of mind that we are operating under an excellent quality system that focuses on safety and reliability.

One of my favorite sections of our magazine is the donor profile section. There we have the opportunity to introduce you to some of our many friends and benefactors and thank them publicly for their support. In this issue, we are featuring one of Holyoke Medical Center's longest-standing supporters and someone I consider a personal friend, Barbara Bernard. From all of us, a great thank you to Barbara and her family for a lifelong commitment to the Medical Center.

As we, too, look forward to Spring, best wishes for a beautiful season.

Sincerely,

**SPIROS HATIRAS**  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
Holyoke Medical Center & Valley Health  
Systems, Inc.



**On the Cover:**  
Dr. Kartik Viswanathan  
with patient Tony White.



**Certified for  
consistent  
high quality care**

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## Valley Health Systems, Inc.

- **HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER**  
575 Beech Street, Holyoke | 413.534.2500
- **HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
10 Hospital Drive, Suite 301, Holyoke | 413.535.4714
- **HOLYOKE VNA HOSPICE LIFE CARE**  
575 Beech Street, Holyoke | 413.534.5691
- **RIVER VALLEY COUNSELING CENTER**  
319 Beech Street, Holyoke | 413.540.1100



# HEALTHY HABITS

FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



## TAKE A (WINDOW) SEAT

You're less likely to catch a cold by booking a window seat on an airplane. Researchers found that travelers sitting in aisle seats were more likely to pick up a bug than their seat neighbors.

—*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*

# 37

The percentage of adults who take prescription medications—including certain heart and blood pressure meds—experiencing depression as a side effect. Risk of depression increases when patients take multiple medications.

—*University of Illinois at Chicago*

# 10

The number of years the HPV vaccine can protect against the virus's four most dangerous strains.

—*The Journal of Pediatrics*



## TIP TO STAY FOCUSED

If you need to be laser sharp, consider leaving your phone in another room. Why? On average, we check our phones 221 times per day.

—*Journal of the Association for Consumer Research*



## PICK THE RIGHT PROTEIN

People who used nuts and seeds to satisfy their protein intake were 40 percent less likely to develop heart disease than those in a control group, according to a recent study. So skip the meat when you can.

—*International Journal of Epidemiology*

## WELLNESS EVENTS

### FIGHTING DEPRESSION WITH TMS

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

Join us for an informational session about the new Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) therapy available at Holyoke Medical Center. This service provides a targeted treatment option for patients diagnosed with major depressive disorder who have not responded to medications and psychotherapy. The TMS team, including Dr. Tedd Ackerman, Dr. Alice Graham-Brown, Dr. Piyush Johari and Kirsten Lindgren, TMS Coordinator, will cover patient selection, criteria for approval, insurance coverage and the course of treatment.

### CATCHING YOUR BREATH: COPD

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, is actually a group of conditions that all block airflow to your lungs. Come learn about COPD as Holyoke Medical Center Pulmonologist Dr. M. Saleem Bajwa discusses the different causes of COPD, and the different treatments available to help control it.

### MEN'S HEALTH SEMINAR

Tuesday, June 4, 2019

June is Men's Health Month, and Dr. Alexander Berry, Urologist, will be hosting a discussion on a very common condition that affects over 3 million men in the U.S. Come learn about testosterone, erectile dysfunction and what can be done to treat it. Dr. Berry also will answer any questions about other urological issues you may have.

### WEIGHT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SESSION

Thursday, June 6, 2019

Learn about the medical and surgical weight-loss options available at Holyoke Medical Center. Members of the Weight Management team will discuss this comprehensive and multidisciplinary weight-loss program that has helped members of our community lose thousands of pounds, and keep them off!

All programs will take place in the Holyoke Medical Center Auxiliary Conference Center at 5:30 p.m. To register, visit [HolyokeHealth.com/Events](http://HolyokeHealth.com/Events), or call 413.534.2789.



## HEALTH SCREENINGS

# A GUIDE FOR MEN

EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT OF  
COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS SAVES LIVES.

**REGULAR MEDICAL EXAMS** help find problems early, when they're most treatable. Yet research conducted for the American Academy of Family Physicians found that while 93 percent of U.S. men have had a complete physical exam, only 54 percent have had an exam in the last year.

"When you come in for a physical, we like to know your body mass index (BMI) and baseline vital signs like blood pressure," says Kartik Viswanathan, MD, Director, Holyoke Medical Group. "And we like to check up on your immunizations and cholesterol screening. We'll also ask about diet and exercise. We recommend a balanced diet low in processed food, and exercise five days for a minimum of 90 minutes a week."



“Testing blood pressure is really important. Often, people can have slightly elevated blood pressure and not have any symptoms.”

Kartik Viswanathan, MD

By getting the right health services and screenings, men can improve their chances of living longer, healthier lives. The guidelines below are from several national health organizations, including the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force and the American Heart Association. Physicians might modify or add to these guidelines based on an individual's medical history and personal risk factors.



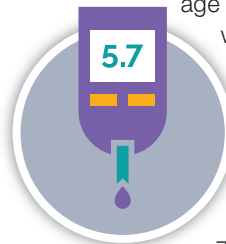
### COLON HEALTH

- **Cancer screening:**

Colonoscopy every 10 years, or stool-based test (can be done at home and

requires no bowel preparation)

every year. Talk to your physician about which option is best for you. For those at average risk, colon cancer screening should occur from age 50 to 75. However, a recent guideline from the American Cancer Society recommends that screening begin at age 45. Ask your doctor what he or she recommends.



### DIABETES

- **Glucose screening:**

Every three years for men ages 40 to 70 years old, and for

younger men with a BMI greater than 25 plus at least one diabetes risk factor, such as high blood pressure or a family history of the disease.



### HEART HEALTH

- **Blood pressure**

**test:** At least every two years. High blood pressure can lead to a

variety of health problems, including heart attack, heart failure, stroke, kidney disease and dementia.

“Testing blood pressure is really important,” says Dr. Viswanathan. “Often, people can have slightly elevated blood pressure and not have any symptoms. At this point, we can recommend diet and lifestyle changes that will frequently lower blood pressure without the use of medication. However, if high blood pressure isn't identified until later, or when it's very high, then the patient needs to go on medication.”

- **Cholesterol panel:** The American Heart Association recommends cholesterol testing (total cholesterol, LDL, HDL and triglycerides) every four to six years to assess heart-disease risk. Your doctor may recommend more frequent

testing (for example, if you have diabetes, kidney problems or certain other conditions).



### MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health screening recommendations vary depending on an individual's family and medical

history. However, six million men suffer from depression each year, over 3 million men have a panic disorder, agoraphobia or other phobia, and over 90 percent of people diagnosed with schizophrenia by age 30 are men, according to Mental Health America. Despite this, men are less likely than women to seek professional help for depression, substance abuse and stress. It's important for men to speak with their physicians if they feel they're having a mental health issue so they can get the proper treatment.

“We do a basic screening on everyone,” says Dr. Viswanathan. “If results are positive on this basic screening, we do more advanced testing to see if the



patient is a candidate for therapy or medication to help.”

### ONETIME SCREENINGS

- **Hepatitis C (HCV):** Men

born between 1945 and 1965 should talk to their doctor about this test.

- **Osteoporosis:** The U.S. Preventative Services Task Force does not have a current recommendation for osteoporosis screening in men. However, men should talk to their doctor to assess whether they may be at increased risk due to family history, long-term steroid use, low body weight, smoking, excessive alcohol use or

having a fracture after age 50.



### REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- **Prostate cancer**

**screening:** A prostate specific antigen (PSA)

test can detect prostate cancer earlier than no screening at all. But testing is not universally recommended because there are questions about whether the benefits of testing outweigh the risks for most men. Current guidelines from the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force advise men age 55 to 69 to discuss with their physicians whether screening makes sense for them based on family history and other risk factors.

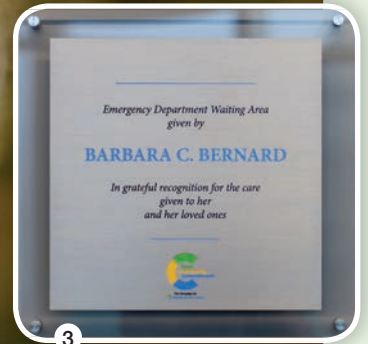
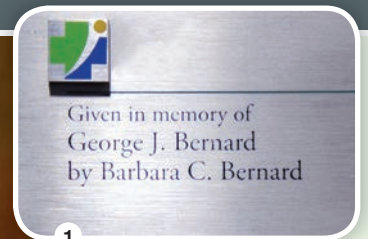
“We recommend PSA testing if there is a family history of prostate cancer or if a patient requests it,” says Dr. Viswanathan.

- **Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) tests:**

Throughout life, before sexual intercourse with a new partner both partners should be tested for STIs, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

✳ To make an appointment with Holyoke Medical Group Primary Care, call **413.535.4800**.





# A LIFETIME OF GIVING

FOR ONE LONGTIME DONOR, THE CENTRAL  
ROLE HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER PLAYS  
IN HER LIFE—AND IN THE LIFE OF THE  
COMMUNITY—MAKES SUPPORTING THE  
HOSPITAL AN EASY CHOICE.

Barbara's generosity can be seen on several donor recognition plaques, located throughout the Medical Center campus:

1. In the patient registration area in memory of George J. Bernard
2. In the main lobby of the hospital
3. In the Emergency Department
4. At the flag pole, given in her honor by her daughters

**BARBARA BERNARD**, a longtime Holyoke resident and a career journalist, has many stories to tell about how her life has intertwined with visits to Holyoke Medical Center. So ever since she first found herself in a position to give back financially to her community, it was the obvious choice.

"Through the years, our immediate family was so grateful to have the hospital right here, a few minutes from our home," says Barbara, who will be 92 in July. From ailing parents to her own children, Holyoke Medical Center has provided exceptional medical care and emotional support.

### COMPASSIONATE CARE

The experience that really cemented her love of Holyoke Medical Center was her husband's cancer treatment. One night, during a snowstorm, Barbara returned to the hospital because her husband didn't think he was going to make it. The nurses made sure she had a bed to sleep in, and over the next two-and-a-half weeks, she bonded with the nurses and other staff who cared for her husband while she was there around the clock to be with him. Her husband received the best treatment available right in their hometown.

"The hospital was wonderful," recalls Barbara. "We knew my husband wasn't going to make it, but they gave him extra time, and that was invaluable."

### A GENEROUS SUPPORTER

Over the past 30 years, Barbara has made 186 donations to Holyoke Medical Center. Many of those donations were given in memory or in honor of family and friends. She was excited to be part of the *Yours for Life* campaign, in which she sponsored the main entrance and patient registration area. More recently, she sponsored the new Emergency Department waiting room for the *Care. Community. Commitment.* campaign. In addition to her own contributions, Barbara is

proud that her two daughters have also caught the "spirit of giving." Not only did they donate the new flagpole to Holyoke Medical Center in their mother's honor but they are both extremely generous to the communities where they reside.

Like Barbara's donations, her career has been regionally focused. After graduating from Mount Holyoke College, she worked as a reporter for the former *Holyoke Transcript-Telegram* newspaper. Ultimately, she hosted "The Barbara Bernard Show" on WHYN-TV (forerunner of ABC 40), which gave her the opportunity to interview many interesting subjects, including the likes of Nat King Cole and Robert Goulet.

The show brought Barbara opportunities to speak at various organizations over the years. "Because of my longtime affection for the hospital," says Barbara, "whenever I received an honorarium for speaking somewhere, I'd send it to the hospital."

Barbara says she can't pinpoint a favorite project. "Each has been special and impactful. The admitting room was very important, but then the campaign for the new ED came along, and that struck me as being needed, too."

### A TRUE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Barbara is passionate about the role Holyoke Medical Center plays in the community, both as a quality medical care provider and as the largest employer in Holyoke. "I view my contributions as not just for the hospital, but for the community," says Barbara. "It's a financial asset to the city. And I love the idea that we have a good hospital right here."

Barbara notes that although many of the hospital's patients are on Medicare or Medicaid, Holyoke Medical Center is a top provider, frequently earning national awards and recognition. "In order to maintain the quality of care and equipment needed, the hospital needs financial backing," she says. "It's all for the good of the community."



### MANY WAYS TO HELP

Holyoke Medical Center can offer the best in medical care in large part because of its generous donors.

Giving, however, is not a one-size-fits-all situation. There are a number of different ways in which the community can invest in Holyoke Medical Center, including:

- Gifts of cash
- Memorial or tribute gifts
- Sustainable giving
- Planned giving
- Corporate sponsorships

"As a non-profit, we rely heavily on our donors because their dollars go to work right away in providing support for our most urgent needs," says Christina Reynolds, Manager of Development.

And while monetary donations have the greatest dollar-for-dollar impact, did you know there are many other options that help support Holyoke Medical Center?

Innovative and easy ways to support the hospital are being developed all the time. For example, when you shop on Amazon using the website [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), Amazon will contribute to your charity of choice with every purchase, and Holyoke Medical Center is one of your options. Big Y supermarket gives \$1 to the hospital for every purchase of a reusable bag. Even Facebook is getting in on the trend, enabling you to ask friends and family to help celebrate your birthday by donating to your organization of choice.

"If you have something specific you'd like to contribute to, or a way in which you'd like to give, we're here to work with anyone who would like to support us," says Reynolds. "We want to work with donors to find the giving vehicle that best suits them."

✳ To learn more or to make a donation, call the HMC Development Office at 413.534.2579, or visit [HolyokeHealth.com/Give-Now](https://HolyokeHealth.com/Give-Now).





**Certified for  
consistent  
high quality care**



**Holyoke Medical Center**

*A member of Valley Health Systems*



# MAKING QUALITY CARE A PRIORITY

HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER IS THE ONLY MASSACHUSETTS HOSPITAL TO RECEIVE ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFICATION, THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR QUALITY.

**FOR YEARS,** The Joint Commission was the only accreditation organization for hospitals in the United States. This changed in 2008 when DNV GL, a Norway-based accrediting body that has 150 years of experience working with industries worldwide to improve quality, began offering a complete program for healthcare. Being certified helps hospitals reach their goals for quality care and patient safety. More than 500 hospitals in 49 states have moved to DNV GL, making it the nation's fastest-growing accrediting body.

"Prior to making the decision to switch to DNV GL in 2015, we did extensive research into the benefits of adopting its accreditation program, NIAHO (National Integrated Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations), and the ISO 9001 quality management standards that are part of it," says Spiros Hatiras, President and CEO of Holyoke Medical Center and Valley Health Systems. "We interviewed a number of hospitals accredited by DNV GL and were impressed with the improvements they accomplished under those standards."

Hatiras said DNV GL's intensive survey process, done annually instead of every three years to maintain a more consistent level of quality, challenges Holyoke Medical Center staff to

continuously raise the bar in patient care and safety, transparency and customer satisfaction.

## FIRST IN THE STATE

ISO 9001 is the most widely used quality management standard for businesses across the globe, from manufacturing to healthcare. The 2015 version—the most current—is the result of input from business and technical experts around the world and better reflects modern business challenges than previous versions. ISO 9001:2015 is based on seven principles: Customer Focus, Leadership, Engagement of People, Process Approach, Improvement, Evidence-Based Decision-Making and Relationship Management.

In 2018, surveyors from DNV GL conducted an intense assessment at Holyoke Medical Center before awarding the hospital ISO 9001:2015 certification. Holyoke Medical Center is the only hospital in Massachusetts to obtain this prestigious accomplishment. For patients, accreditation offers assurance that Holyoke Medical Center provides the highest quality care.

## LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Though the unannounced three-day audit was rigorous, the staff at Holyoke Medical Center was prepared. "ISO 9001:2015 is a quality management system that looks at every aspect of how a business is run," says Avadhoot Gokhale, Chief Quality Officer at Holyoke Medical Center. "In healthcare, the goal is to make sure we consistently improve our standards and processes to achieve best outcomes for our patients."

To do this, Gokhale assembled a team of employees to serve as objective third-party internal ISO auditors. "We brought in DNV experts to train staff from departments across the hospital about key processes that impact patient care," he says.

Using medication disbursement as an example, Gokhale explains that protocols are in place requiring staff to double-check certain high-risk drugs before administering them to patients. "Staff auditors spent time on the units observing nurses to ensure they complied with procedures. If they noticed a gap or steps that could be modified, they alerted our central ISO committee," he says.

The committee routinely reviews all audit information and identifies areas where the hospital can make improvements. "We're constantly making strides at all levels of the organization—from the top down and the bottom up," says Gokhale.

## HARD WORK REWARDED

When the professional survey team from DNV GL showed up for its review, Gokhale says Holyoke Medical Center was more than ready. "Our employees saw the auditors as an external set of eyes meant to evaluate their work and help them improve—for the benefit of our patients."

Their collective hard work was rewarded with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 certification, valid for three years. "At the end of the day," says Gokhale, "everyone at Holyoke Medical Center shares the same objective: to make sure each person walking through our doors gets the best care."



Avadhoot Gokhale,  
Chief Quality Officer

Group photo: Members of the internal ISO audit team. Front row: Andrea Garon, Mary O'Connor, Jennifer Wilson, Ann Chalue. Middle row: Beth Clark, Kim Lussier, Pam Diemand, Michele Lavallee-Specht, Cindy Crosby. Back row: Carlo Saruca, Stanley Konieczny,Carolynn Del Signore, Jim King, Kristin Morin.



# MAKING IT EASIER TO SEE A DOCTOR

HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP  
WALK-IN CARE MAKES  
QUALITY HEALTHCARE MORE  
CONVENIENT THAN EVER.





**CHICOPEE RECENTLY** gained a convenient new healthcare option that increases the accessibility of quality medical services in the area. Offering same-day treatment for routine illnesses such as sore throat and fever, as well as physicals for work, school and sports, Holyoke Medical Group Walk-In Care is open late on weeknights and for six hours on Saturdays.

In an increasingly complex medical world, the team at the walk-in clinic understands that having a primary care provider who knows your health history is key. "I'll often call other providers outside of the Holyoke Medical Group if something needs to be addressed, in addition to the electronic medical records that are sent over after we see a patient," says Medical Director Kevin Snow, MD.

Anne Coffey, Office Manager at the walk-in clinic, also prioritizes this type of communication. "We try to work with community providers to get referrals so services will be covered for patients coming in. We also make sure there's continuity of care between community providers and their walk-in patients."

So how do you know when to go where for care? This guide explains which choice—your primary care provider, a walk-in clinic or the Emergency Department—works best for specific medical situations.

## CHOOSE PRIMARY CARE

Patients should try to get a same-day appointment with their primary care physician, if possible, for non-emergency situations, including minor illness and flu-like symptoms. If an appointment isn't available, then care through the walk-in clinic is a good option.



Kevin Snow, MD

In addition, explains Dr. Snow, "Patients should seek care from their primary care physician for chronic issues when symptoms have been building for a

while, or when they're being managed for a condition that requires medication."

## OPT FOR WALK-IN CARE

The National Center for Health Statistics found that 48 percent of patients went to the emergency room because their doctor's office was not open, and they didn't know there was another option for care. This is where walk-in clinics can help. They're best for conditions that are not chronic—issues that are out of the mainstream of a patient's health. "Conditions like bronchitis, sprains, strains, fractures, cuts that need suturing and abscesses are all examples of things we treat frequently in the walk-in clinic," says Dr. Snow. "If possible, we always want patients to check with their primary care physicians first in any non-emergent situation."

The purpose of the walk-in clinic is to provide same-day care for minor acute medical issues that can't be addressed by a patient's primary care physician at the time care is needed. Conditions that can be treated at the walk-in clinic include:

- Allergies
- Acute asthma attacks
- Back, knee or joint pain
- Cough/cold
- Diarrhea
- Ear infection
- Fever without a rash
- Headaches
- Minor burns
- Nausea
- Pink eye
- Rash or skin irritations
- Sore throat
- Vomiting

## SEEK EMERGENCY CARE

Dr. Snow emphasizes that there are times when a trip to the Emergency Department (ED) is warranted, and even if someone shows up to the walk-in clinic, they'll be referred to the ED if necessary. "Any heart condition will be sent to the hospital; severe pain, chest pain, rapid heart rate and anyone with a known cardiac condition should go to the ED," he says.

Other symptoms that should be addressed in the ED:

- Change in mental status



## HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP WALK-IN CARE

The clinic sees patients age 12 and over. Most insurances are accepted. Patients do not need to be part of the Holyoke Medical Group to seek care at the walk-in clinic.

### WALK-IN HOURS:

Monday–Friday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
and Saturday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### LAB HOURS:

Monday–Friday 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Saturday 6 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### X-RAY SERVICES:

Available during business hours.

- Choking
- Chest pain
- Coughing or vomiting blood
- Fever with a rash
- Head or spinal injury
- Loss of consciousness
- Major trauma or burn
- Risk of poisoning
- Seizures
- Slurred speech
- Stroke symptoms
- Sudden dizziness, weakness or change in vision

"Our walk-in patients have access to the full complement of services available at Holyoke Medical Center," says Coffey. "We're available and willing to work with our community providers to offer back-up when they're not able to see their patients. We keep primary care providers apprised of the situation and help direct follow-up care." Dr. Snow enjoys his work at the walk-in clinic. "It's really great to have things like X-ray available right away, so I can make a diagnosis and have it confirmed by a radiologist within a short amount of time."

**\* If you need a new PCP, call 413.535.4800. For questions regarding the HMG Walk-In Care, call 413.535.4995.**

# MEET OUR NEW MEDICAL PROVIDERS

## OUTPATIENT PROVIDERS



**Ghouisia Mariam Alikhan, MD**  
**HMC RHEUMATOLOGY**  
575 Beech Street, Suite 402,  
Holyoke & 75 Springfield Road,  
Suite 3, Westfield  
**413.534.2682**



**M. Saleem Bajwa, MD**  
**HMC PULMONOLOGY**  
10 Hospital Drive, Suite 310,  
Holyoke  
**413.534.2582**



**Marilyn Cabral, CNM**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**WOMEN'S SERVICES**  
575 Beech Street, Suite 501,  
Holyoke & 230 Maple Street,  
Suite 200, Holyoke  
**413.534.2826 & 413.535.4700**



**Amy DeSorgher, CNM**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**WOMEN'S SERVICES**  
575 Beech Street, Suite 501,  
Holyoke & 230 Maple Street,  
Suite 200, Holyoke  
**413.534.2826 & 413.535.4700**



**Tuiyab Hassan, MD**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER**  
**GASTROENTEROLOGY**  
11 Hospital Drive, 3rd Floor,  
Holyoke  
**413.540.5048**



**Jessica Menard, NP**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**WALK-IN CARE**  
1962 Memorial Drive, Chicopee  
**413.535.4995**



**Gina O'Brien, MD**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**PEDIATRIC CARE**  
10 Hospital Drive, Suite 201,  
Holyoke  
**413.534.2800**



**Pamela Ohri Zizzamia, DO**  
**HMC ENDOCRINOLOGY**  
8 Isabella Street, Holyoke  
**413.534.2820**



**Kelly Ostrowski, CNM**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**WOMEN'S SERVICES**  
575 Beech Street, Suite 501,  
Holyoke & 230 Maple Street,  
Suite 200, Holyoke  
**413.534.2826 & 413.535.4700**



**Deborah Pisciotta, PA-C**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**FAMILY MEDICINE**  
10 Hospital Drive, Suite 104,  
Holyoke  
**413.535.4800**



**Catherine Ruell, CNM**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
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Suite 200, Holyoke  
**413.534.2826 & 413.535.4700**



**Brian Toole, MD**  
**HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP**  
**WOMEN'S SERVICES**  
575 Beech Street, Suite 501,  
Holyoke  
**413.534.2826**



DURING LATE 2018 AND EARLY 2019, 23 NEW PROVIDERS BECAME PART OF THE HOLYOKE MEDICAL CENTER TEAM. PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING THESE SKILLED CLINICIANS.



**Tylor Vaillancourt, FNP**  
HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP  
ADULT PRIMARY CARE  
2 Hospital Drive, Suite 101,  
Holyoke  
413.535.4800



**Kartik Viswanathan, MD**  
HOLYOKE MEDICAL GROUP  
ADULT PRIMARY CARE  
2 Hospital Drive, Suite 101,  
Holyoke  
413.535.4800



## HOSPITAL PROVIDERS



**Neil Auguste, PA**  
EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT



**Thomas Buck, MD**  
PATHOLOGY



**Bela Horvath, MD, Ph.D.**  
PATHOLOGY



**Natalie Peters, MD**  
EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT



**Ronald Rice, MD**  
PATHOLOGY



**Elizabeth Marie  
Rinehart, MD**  
PATHOLOGY



**Eva Sovago-Tamas, MD**  
ANESTHESIA



**Leo Stemp, MD**  
ANESTHESIA



**Endre Tamas, MD**  
ANESTHESIA



# HERNIAS:

## What You Need to Know

READ ON TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HERNIAS,  
INCLUDING HOW BEST TO AVOID THEM.

**HERNIA REPAIR** is one of the most frequently performed surgeries in the U.S., so most of us are aware of this common medical problem. But what exactly is a hernia? Francis Martinez, MD, a surgeon at Holyoke Medical Center, explains: "A hernia is when fatty tissue or a loop of bowel protrudes through a weak spot on the wall of the abdomen

causing a 'bump,' often with pain and discomfort."

A hernia can develop because of increased pressure in the abdomen straining while using the toilet, strenuous

activity, pregnancy, a weak spot in the abdomen, or chronic coughing or sneezing. Hernias can develop at birth from weak abdominal wall development or later in life when muscles weaken for a variety of reasons.

### RISK OF COMPLICATIONS

Hernias may or may not cause complications. The risks of a hernia include pressure on the surrounding tissue that can produce pain and swelling, bowel obstruction, and strangulation of affected bowel tissue causing it to die—a life-threatening condition.

Because they can lead to problems down the line, if you think you may have a hernia it's best to seek medical care, even if it isn't painful or bothersome. "For healthy patients, treatment is recommended early because of

### WHO'S AT RISK?

Some of the risk factors for hernias include:

- being pregnant
- premature birth
- low birth weight
- previous hernia or hernia repair surgery
- being older
- being male
- family history
- chronic constipation
- chronic cough

the risks of future complications if the hernia isn't repaired," explains Dr. Martinez.

"For older, less healthy individuals," he continues, "treatment is often considered as soon as the hernia causes significant pain and discomfort."

Two types of surgery can be done for hernias, open hernia repair or laparoscopic surgery. In an open hernia repair, the surgeon pushes the protruding tissue back into the abdomen and often reinforces the area with a synthetic mesh. In laparoscopic surgery, the surgeon makes several small incisions and uses a small camera to guide the operation. This option normally results in faster healing because it's minimally invasive.

### AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

A hernia caused by a congenital defect—in other words, if you were born predisposed to having hernias—is a difficult condition to avoid. However, hernias caused by other issues may be prevented.

"Many hernias can be prevented by maintaining a healthy body weight, and by avoiding heavy lifting and constipation," says Dr. Martinez. "Smoking may cause hernias because of chronic coughing, so this should be avoided as well."

These good health habits are well worth cultivating: They'll help to protect you not only from hernias, but also from many other common diseases and conditions.



Francis Martinez, MD

✳ To make an appointment for a hernia screening, please call HMC General & Specialty Surgeons at 413.532.1411.



# A GREEN GODDESS

MOVE OVER, KALE. WITH ITS DISTINCT FLAVOR AND NUTRITIONAL GIFTS, BROCCOLI RABE IS THE KITCHEN'S NEXT RISING STAR.

First thing's first: Broccoli rabe is not a type of broccoli. Also called rapini, this leafy green is—like broccoli—a cruciferous vegetable, but it's more closely related to turnips. In fact, in some parts of Italy, broccoli rabe is called cime della rapa, or “tops of the turnip.” Its large leafy stems do somewhat resemble the heads of turnips and other leafy greens, but its buds have clusters of broccoli-like florets. (Note: Broccoli rabe should not be confused with broccolini, which resembles long broccoli stalks.) Known for its bitter yet nutty taste, rapini is a staple in many southern Italian dishes—and is a main ingredient in the country's “most popular sandwich.” (Soppressata and rapini, anyone?) And it has an array of health benefits to boot.

## POWER UP

One cup of raw broccoli rabe has only about nine calories and .2 grams of fat (this, of course, doesn't take into account the olive oil or heavy Italian sauces that the

vegetable is often cooked in). But the pièce de résistance is the nutrients it contains: notably, almost 90 milligrams of vitamin K (or more than 100 percent of the daily recommended value), which promotes blood and bone health.

It also has generous amounts of immune-boosting vitamins A (21 percent) and C (13 percent), iron (5 percent) and lutein, which is beneficial for eyesight. It also works to cleanse the body: 33.2 micrograms (8 percent) of folate help with liver function, and 1 gram of fiber promotes digestion. Finally, the vegetable contains a small amount (45.2 mg) of omega-3 fatty acids, useful for brain function.

## BUY/STORE/SERVE

Though broccoli rabe is in season through the end of June, it can be found in the produce section of most supermarkets all year long. Look near the other bitter greens, like kale and mustard greens, and select a bundle that is crisp,

sturdy and a vibrant green color, without any browning or yellowing. It can be stored in a refrigerator wrapped in plastic for about five days.

The major hurdle in cooking this vegetable is overcoming its acrid flavor. Chefs offer several solutions: Blanching it in boiling water followed by an ice bath brings out its sweetness, and a splash of lemon or apple cider vinegar also works well to counterbalance the bitterness. Chef Steve Dunn wrote in *Cooks Illustrated* that after experimenting, he found that keeping the leafy tops intact while cutting the stems into bite-size pieces before blanching or roasting also did the trick.

Broccoli rabe is a common ingredient in a diverse range of cuisines, from Chinese to Italian. It can be used in place of spinach in recipes, or as a side dish, topped with olive oil and garlic. It pairs well with pasta or Italian sausage, and can be used in sauces, on pizza, and even in lasagna.

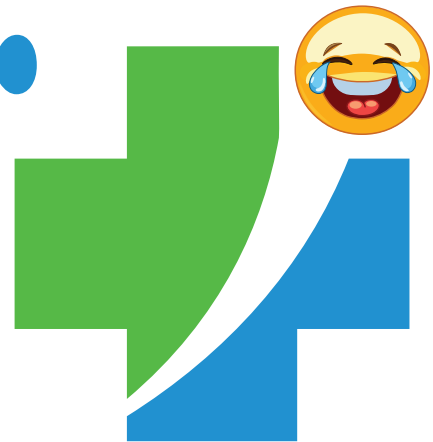
## DID YOU KNOW?

» Broccoli rabe is usually harvested before the flowering season to prevent unwanted changes in the taste of leaves, which start to accumulate bitter compounds during the flowering season. +



1st Annual

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- Ticket Includes: dessert/coffee & fun photo booth
- Doors Open: 6:30PM
- Comedy Band: 8:00-9:30PM
- Cash Bar

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