

For you. For life.



FALL 2022



**THE REGION'S PREMIER
COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEM**



Earns National Certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center

In August, VHC Health earned The Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval® and the American Stroke Association’s Heart-Check mark for Advanced Certification for Comprehensive Stroke Centers (CSC). CSC certification is the most demanding rating given and designates those hospitals that have specific abilities to receive and treat complex stroke cases. With CSC certification, VHC Health joins an elite group of about 150 Comprehensive Stroke Centers nationwide that offer the highest

level of stroke care using advanced technology and multidisciplinary expertise.

“What CSC certification means is that we can care for every type of stroke patient,” says **Ashley McKinley, MSN, MBA, RN**, Stroke Program Coordinator. “It allows EMS teams to know which hospitals have the highest level of stroke care for the patients they are transporting.”

A CSC is comprised of an expert team of vascular neurologists, neuro-interventionalists, neurosurgeons, neuroradiologists, and specially trained nurses who provide 24-hour care and the ability to perform advanced procedures for multiple stroke patients at the same time.

With stroke, time is brain. When a patient arrives at VHC Health with stroke symptoms, rapid access to treatment begins with an Emergency Department trained to recognize and triage stroke patients. Neuroimaging is performed quickly upon arrival and the scans are assessed by radiologists and neurologists to determine if the patient



The Joint Commission



American Stroke Association

is a candidate for an IV clot buster medication or thrombectomy, which removes the clot from the brain.

“Certification as a CSC demonstrates VHC Health’s ability to provide exceptional stroke care to the region,” says **Zurab Nadareishvili, MD, PhD**, Medical Director of VHC Health’s Comprehensive Stroke Center, and Associate Professor, Department of Neurology and Rehabilitation, George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. “Most important is our ability to meet evidence-based stroke metrics that support improved patient outcomes. Our goal is to provide the highest quality care for the community.”

“Our recent certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center recognizes VHC Health as providing the highest level of stroke care.”

– Russell E. McWey, MD

F.A.S.T. WARNING SIGNS*

Remember F.A.S.T. to Spot a Stroke

F = FACE DROOPING: Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person’s smile uneven?

A = ARM WEAKNESS: Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S = SPEECH DIFFICULTY: Is speech slurred?

T = TIME TO CALL 911



STROKE RESEARCH AT VHC HEALTH

VHC Health is collaborating with the National Institutes of Health StrokeNet on a study related to statins in intracerebral hemorrhage. In addition, Dr. Zurab Nadareishvili’s research article, “Post-stroke cognitive impairment and the risk of stroke recurrence and death in patients with insulin resistance,” appears in the October 2022 issue of the *Journal of Stroke and Cerebrovascular Diseases*.



*American Stroke Association

“I Received the Best Stroke Care Imaginable.”

—SHEILA GALE

“The day before I had my stroke, I was exercising at my community pool. I’ve always been active and was in excellent health,” says Sheila Gale. But the next morning, she woke up with a loud booming in her ears. “When I got out of bed, I couldn’t stand, and my speech was slurred and garbled.” Her husband Steven immediately recognized Sheila was having a stroke and called 911. EMS arrived quickly and transported her to VHC Health.

Sheila was assessed by the Emergency Department staff, the neurology team was activated, and she quickly had multiple CT imaging scans immediately evaluated by the neuroradiology team. “All of this happened within minutes,” says **Benny Kim, MD**, Director of Neurointerventional Surgery.

The scans showed that Sheila had a clot in the artery supplying blood to the brain stem, one of the most serious types of stroke which has a 90 percent chance of mortality or major disability. Sheila was started on tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a clot-busting drug that works by dissolving blood clots that block blood flow to the brain.

“A large team of highly trained stroke specialists were working on Sheila simultaneously, with the goal of getting her to the interventional radiology (IR) suite as fast as possible,” says Dr. Kim.

Once in the IR suite, **Dr. Russell McWey** and Dr. Kim performed a thrombectomy, a minimally invasive procedure where a catheter is threaded through the arteries into the brain. Using a combination of devices, he was able to grab the clot, pulling it out of the brain and out of the body. “Thrombectomy can be lifesaving and reduces the chance of disability,” says Dr. Kim.

After the thrombectomy, Sheila went to the Intensive Care Unit to undergo an extensive stroke workup to determine the cause of the stroke and the appropriate treatment. In her case, she was placed on blood thinners.

“VHC Health is able to treat any stroke patient, regardless of the level



*Sheila Gale
with her
husband
Steven.*

of complexity,” says Dr. McWey, Chief of Medical Imaging and Interventional Radiology, who performs thrombectomy procedures for stroke patients.

Sheila’s son is well-acquainted with stroke procedures. Seth A. Gale, MD, is an associate neurologist, Center for Brain/Mind Medicine, Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Assistant Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School. “As a neurologist, I am keenly aware of the unpredictable variables that often impact stroke treatment and outcomes, such as the duration of time from symptom onset to treatment and the availability of thrombectomy and endovascular treatments. One major factor that can be controlled is the coordination, competence and efficiency of acute stroke management—the kind that my mother experienced at VHC Health,” says Dr. Gale. “I appreciated how her physicians called me to update

me and explain the results of her tests and procedure in detail. I am sure that my mother could not have received better care, anywhere.”

Sheila was in the Intensive Care Unit for two days, followed by two days on the Stroke Unit and eight days on the Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit, where she received intensive occupational therapy and physical therapy.

“When I left the hospital, I needed a walker to help with my balance, but not for very long,” she says. Once home, Sheila was diligent in doing her prescribed exercises for 30-40 minutes a day, combined with twice-weekly physical therapy sessions at VHC Health for eight weeks. Within a few months, she was fully recovered. Sheila is now back to the physically active lifestyle she enjoyed prior to her stroke and is thankful for all her care and support through VHC Health.

New Bariatric & Metabolic Health Center

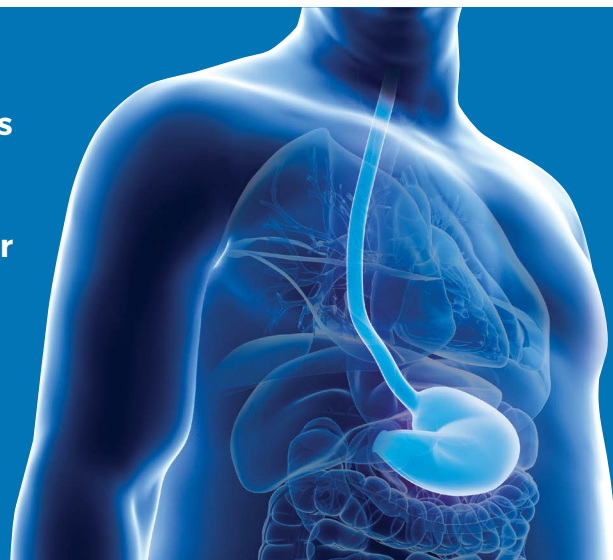
“Why can’t I lose weight and keep it off?” The new Bariatric & Metabolic Health Center can help answer that question.

VHC Health has been a nationally accredited comprehensive center by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP) for more than 10 years. This summer, VHC Health expanded its expert team to include obesity medicine specialists for the medical weight loss program and a neuropsychologist to provide counseling to patients.

“Unlike other bariatric centers where patients must travel to multiple offices for appointments with various specialists, we are the only center in our area to have all bariatric experts in one office. Whether you are considering weight loss surgery or are interested in medical weight loss management, we can help you find the right approach to achieve and sustain weight loss for better health,” says Dr. Salameh.

“We have options for anyone who wants to lose weight - whether that’s 30 or 300 pounds.”

▶ J. R. Salameh, MD, FACS, FASMB, Bariatric Surgeon



Excellent Outcomes

One year after bariatric surgery, patients reported:

Average % of total body weight lost | **33.5%**

Average reduction in excess Body Mass Index | **70.3%**

Reduction in blood pressure | **87%**

Remission of diabetes | **89%**

Remission of sleep apnea | **75%**

WHAT IS METABOLIC HEALTH?

There are hormones in the body that regulate metabolism, hunger, appetite and satiety. “While it is normal to gain a little weight as you age, it can go too far. Over time, the hormonal regulation of hunger can get out of balance. Lifestyle plays a major role. If you are sedentary and have a diet that is high in processed food, especially sugar and certain fats, this makes it harder for your body to regulate its weight. Conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol are linked to issues with weight regulation and how the body processes energy from food into fat stores,” says **Arshad Ali, DO**. “Our goal is to make people healthy metabolically to avoid the severe, long-term impact of these diseases.”

MEDICAL WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

For patients who either do not qualify for or do not want weight loss surgery, the Bariatric & Metabolic Health Center offers medical weight loss management. A board-certified obesity medicine specialist, Dr. Ali is experienced in managing complicated cases of obesity, ranging from patients with genetic issues to general environmental obesity.

A comprehensive plan for treating obesity includes reviewing prescription medications the patient is taking that might cause weight gain, prescribing medication to help lose weight, recommending lifestyle changes in dietary habits and physical activity, and managing stress.

“Changing to a low-caloric density, high-fiber, high-protein diet can be a radical change. Especially in the beginning, patients may feel hungry and crave things they used to eat. Medication can help modulate hunger and appetite,” says Dr. Ali.

Eric Thorn, MD, FACC, is also part of the Bariatric & Metabolic Health Center team. Board certified in both cardiology and obesity medicine, Dr. Thorn brings a valuable perspective and experience to patients in their medical weight loss journey.

Bariatric & Metabolic Health Center Team

All in one location for coordinated, expert care:

- Bariatric surgeons
- Obesity medicine specialists
- Neuropsychologist
- Dietitians
- Bariatric nurses

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED BARIATRIC SURGERY

Weight loss surgery is an effective tool for long-term resolution of obesity, leading to improved quality of life. The center offers a complete range of bariatric surgery options, including gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy and duodenal switch. All surgery is performed using minimally invasive techniques, which provide less risk of complications, shorter hospital stays and faster recovery. Preoperative classes educate patients about preparing for surgery, expectations for the hospital stay and what happens after surgery.

“VHC Health has maintained its accreditation as a Center of Excellence for Bariatric Surgery because we have very low complication rates,” says **Lynn Montague-Daddio, MSN, CNS, CBN**, Bariatric Nurse Coordinator. The center’s bariatric surgeons, **C. Steeve David, MD, FACS**, and **J. R. Salameh, MD, FACS, FASMBS**, have performed more than 2,500 weight loss surgeries.

A CONTINUUM OF CARE AND SUPPORT

Surgery is just a single point in time. What happens months before surgery and months afterward is essential to patient success. Weight loss surgery involves a continuum of care that includes psychological counseling, pre- and post-operative nutritional education, and support.

A psychological evaluation is an integral part of preparing for weight loss surgery. “Most of my patients have never talked with a psychologist before and don’t know what to expect,” says **Michele Coleman, PhD**, neuropsychologist, who recently joined the Bariatric & Metabolic Health Center. “My role is to look at a patient’s psychological history to see if there is underlying anxiety, depression or mood disorder, which may have contributed to their long-time struggles with obesity. We want to ensure the patient is in a good space emotionally, which drives behavior and contributes to their long-term success.”

Dr. Coleman completes the pre-surgical psychological evaluation and provides individual counseling to support patients throughout their weight loss journey. “I give patients the space to tell their story and in doing so, I highlight their courage, validate their shame and process any stigma they may have experienced around obesity,” she says. “I promote a positive mind-body relationship.”

Betsy Crisafulli, MS, RDN, LDN, dietitian, meets with patients before their surgery and multiple times throughout the first year following surgery. “We address when something is not working and look for ways that can help them move forward,” she says. “We want to prevent vitamin deficiencies, so I review their vitamin regimens after surgery.”

VHC Health offers monthly support groups where weight loss surgery patients can share their experiences and learn from each other.

“Weight loss is not just a physical change—it impacts your relationships with family and friends, especially during holidays and other events centered around food,” says Dr. Coleman. “We help patients come up with strategies to successfully navigate a wide range of situations.”

How to Get Started



Find out if weight loss surgery may be right for you.

Take our free, virtual weight loss surgery assessment at vhhealth.org/bariatricra.

Join us for “Succeeding at Weight Loss: Meet the Bariatrics Team” webinar,

November 1, 7:00 – 8:00 pm, to learn about our comprehensive medical and surgical weight loss services.

To register, visit vhhealth.org/bariatric.

Outpatient Pavilion Update



Progress continues on the new Outpatient Pavilion, scheduled to open in summer 2023. Construction of the \$250 million expansion adheres to green building design principles. Here are some examples:

- 279 trees will be planted as part of the project
- 224 new bike parking spaces are being added throughout the campus
- New garage will have 6 electric charging stations
- 90% of materials removed from the site are recycled
- Energy cost savings predicted to be 18-20%
- VHC Health will be pursuing USBGC LEED Silver Certification for the building

The New Patient Experience at VHC Health

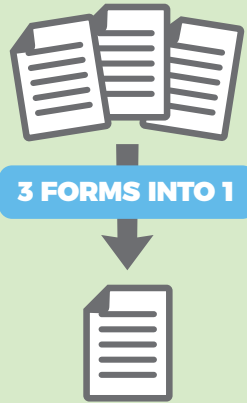
Easier Access. More Convenient. Timesaving.

ONE HEALTH SYSTEM. ONE FORM. ONCE A YEAR.

Filling out forms is a fact of life in healthcare, but VHC Health is working to streamline that process to make it easier and more convenient for you. Our new Annual Access and Authorization to Treat Form combines three forms—the Consent for Treatment, Notice of Privacy Practices, and Patient Rights & Responsibilities—into one. Previously, you had to sign each form every time you had a healthcare appointment, procedure or service, but no more. Now, when you sign the Annual Access and Authorization to Treat Form, you're good for a whole year. One patient access form, once a year and you're done.

Patients will continue to sign specific procedural and clinical informed consents.

For your convenience, this One Form is available via eCheck-in in your MyVHC Patient Portal. VHC Health requires your authorization to deliver services.



SIGN UP FOR THE MyVHC PATIENT PORTAL

View your medical information 24/7 from anywhere you are with MyVHC, our free, secure patient portal. With MyVHC, it's easy to manage all your healthcare needs—send messages to your doctor, view test results, renew prescriptions, schedule appointments, complete the check-in process in advance, and much more! Access MyVHC with the VHC Health App. (See back cover).

To activate your
MyVHC patient
portal, scan this
code or call
703.717.7800.



MEET THE NEW CHECK-IN KIOSKS

Starting this fall, you'll see new kiosks on the VHC Health campus that use biometric facial recognition to identify you and have special features to expedite your check in. VHC Health is the first health system in the region to deploy this technology, which offers advanced security and authentication. When you check in at a kiosk, your care team is alerted that you have arrived. The kiosk has many automated features that are easy to use and save you time, such as an ID scanner to copy your driver's license and insurance cards; a QR code reader that provides wayfinding to your appointment location; a workflow to complete your check-in and sign the Annual Access and Authorization to Treat Form; and, coming this winter, a credit card device to submit co-pays and balance payments. Radiology and cardiology services will be the first to implement the new kiosks, with more to be deployed throughout the campus over the next year.

Check-in ambassadors will be on hand to help you use the kiosks or check you in the traditional way. However you choose to check in, our new kiosks will give everyone more convenient, easier access to the services at VHC Health.



GASTROENTEROLOGY PRACTICE EXPANDS

Two board-certified gastroenterologists
have joined VHC Health Physicians



Celestine Maiki, MD

Originally from Nigeria, **Celestine Maiki, MD**, earned his medical degree from the College of Medicine, University of Lagos. He completed his internal medicine residency at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York and his fellowship training in gastroenterology and hepatology at the University of Connecticut Health Center. With more than 30 years of experience caring for patients in California, Arizona and, most recently, Georgia, Dr. Maiki treats all gastroenterology conditions. His special areas of interest include colon cancer screening, acid reflux, irritable bowel syndrome and abdominal pain.



As a child, Dr. Maiki suffered from gastrointestinal and infectious diseases common in Nigeria. "My decision to become a gastroenterologist stemmed from a desire to help other people experiencing these conditions. I treat my patients the way I would want to be treated—this is the most important part of medical care," says Dr. Maiki. He is fluent in the African languages of Edo and Yoruba.

Omer Shahab, MD

Omer Shahab, MD, was drawn to practice at VHC Health because of its strong culture and reputation in the community. "The ASGE recognition of our Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Center is the gold standard and attests to the excellent level of safe and quality care VHC Health provides," says Dr. Shahab.



After receiving his medical degree from the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at Florida International University, Miami, Dr. Shahab completed his internal medicine residency at Inova Fairfax Hospital and a fellowship in gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition at Virginia Commonwealth University Health, Richmond.

"I chose to specialize in gastroenterology because it encompasses conditions in several organs, including the esophagus, stomach, small bowel, colon, liver and pancreas. I enjoy the diversity of seeing patients in the office, performing procedures and providing acute care in the hospital," says Dr. Shahab.

Dr. Shahab has an added interest in using technology and digital health to improve access, outcomes and quality of care for patients. He serves on the Innovation & Technology Committee of the American College of Gastroenterology.

For more information, visit vhcphysiciangroup.com/gastroenterology.

ENDOSCOPY CENTER EARNS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

VHC Health's Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Center recently earned accreditation by the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE). This achievement signifies that VHC has met ASGE's rigorous criteria for quality assurance, infection control, endoscope reprocessing and staff competency.

"Through ongoing education and continued compliance with the ASGE requirements, our staff has demonstrated their dedication to delivering the highest-quality patient care," says **Deborah Craddock, BSN, RN, CGRN**, Patient Care Director.

VHC Health performs approximately 7,000 endoscopic procedures annually, including upper endoscopy, colonoscopy, endoscopic ultrasound and biliary procedures. In addition, bariatric surgeons perform upper endoscopies to assess candidates for bariatric surgery.

"We are diligent in assuring that patients have quality procedures that are done safely and in their entirety with strict adherence to all infection control measures," says Craddock. "Our physicians meet all the quality metrics that the ASGE puts forth. As a result, our complication rates are extremely low. We take excellent care of our patients."

VHC Health's GI Center is one of only 600 endoscopy units granted recognition by ASGE since 2009. Accreditation is an added measure of assurance that VHC Health is dedicated to providing high-quality care for endoscopies.





PRIMARY CARE

Alexandria

1600 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22311
703.717.4148

Annandale

7611 Little River Tpke.
Suite 108 West
Annandale, VA 22003
703.717.7215

Arlington

1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 475 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4245

Arlington North

1715 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 404 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.525.2898

Arlington South

950 S. George Mason Dr.
Suite 107 | Arlington, VA 22204
703.717.7311

Falls Church

400 S. Maple Ave. | Suite 200
Falls Church, VA 22046
703.532.5436

McLean

6862 Elm St.
Suite 600 | McLean, VA 22101
703.992.0649

Mount Vernon

7906 Andrus Rd.
Suite 8 | Alexandria, VA, 22306
703.780.7034

National Landing

764 23rd St. South
Arlington, VA 22202
703.717.7030

Old Town

700 S. Washington St.
Suite 330 | Alexandria, VA 22314
703.528.8260

Shirlington

2800 S. Shirlington Rd.
Suite 500 | Arlington, VA 22206
703.717.4245

IMMEDIATE CARE

764 23rd St. South
Arlington, VA 22202
Open 8:00 am – 8:00 pm
7 days a week
No appointment necessary
703.717.7000

More Locations

Coming Soon

Tysons

1760 Old Meadow Rd.
Tysons, VA 22102

Vienna

527 Maple Ave. E. | Suite 200
Vienna, VA 22180

West Alexandria

4600 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22302

West Springfield

5803 Rolling Rd.
West Springfield, VA 22152

vhcphysiciangroup.com

Jennifer DeJesus, MD Primary Care



Special interests:
older adults
Fluent in
Spanish

Before joining the Annandale office of VHC Health Physicians Primary Care, Dr. DeJesus was

in private practice in New Jersey for more than eight years. She received her medical degree from the American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine, with additional training at the New York Medical College at Hoboken University Medical Center.

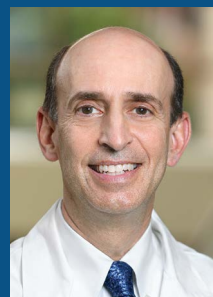
A board-certified family medicine physician, Dr. DeJesus addresses all aspects of a patient's health. "It's not just about medications and managing chronic conditions, but looking at their mental well-being, such as how stress at work can lead to anxiety," she says. "I enjoy caring for patients with complex medical issues, getting to know them and creating a lasting bond."

Robert Kruger, MD, FACP Primary Care

Special interests: pulmonary disease and prevention

Dr. Kruger began his practice in 1999 as both a primary care provider and a specialist in pulmonary and critical care medicine. That experience gave him a valuable perspective when he began focusing exclusively on primary care medicine in 2011. He is now part of the VHC Health Physicians Primary Care, Arlington office. "I educate my patients about their conditions and the importance of lifestyle modifications. Better understanding of their health helps patients be more engaged—and less afraid," says Dr. Kruger.

After earning his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Dr. Kruger completed a fellowship in pulmonary and critical care medicine at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.



Preya Simlote, MD Cardiology



Special interests:
women's heart health

Dr. Simlote received her medical degree from Sidney Kimmel Medical College in Philadelphia and

completed her fellowship in cardiovascular disease at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. She is board certified in internal medicine, nuclear cardiology and echocardiography. Her areas of clinical interest include echocardiography, lipid disorders, heart failure and women's heart health.

"Heart disease is an equal opportunity player for men and women, but women can have atypical symptoms," says Dr. Simlote. "In addition, there's a special role for cardiovascular care in pregnant women who either have congenital heart disease or develop cardiac symptoms during pregnancy. My approach to all patient care is shared decision-making—involving patient education and discussion."

SPECIALISTS

Breast Health

The Reinsch Pierce Family Center for Breast Health
1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 315 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4217

Cardiac, Vascular & Thoracic Surgery

1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 288 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.558.6491

Cardiology

▶ 1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 354 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.7780

▶ 1715 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 107 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.527.1400

▶ 700 S. Washington St.
Suite 330 | Alexandria, VA 22314
703.717.7780

Colorectal Surgery

▶ 1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 334 | Arlington, VA 22205

▶ 1600 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22311
703.717.4180

Executive Health

1635 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 130 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4700

Gastroenterology

▶ 1715 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 410 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.524.4792

▶ 400 S. Maple Ave. | Suite 200
Falls Church, VA 22046
703.717.4796

Infectious Diseases

1715 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 305 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.7851

Maternal Fetal Medicine

▶ 1635 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 190 | Arlington, VA 22205

▶ 1635 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 430 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.558.6077

OB/GYN

▶ 1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 325 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4600

▶ 950 S. George Mason Dr.
Suite 107 | Arlington, VA 22204
703.717.7313

▶ 700 S. Washington St.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22314
703.940.3364

▶ 7611 Little River Tpke.
Suite 108 West
Annandale, VA 22003
703.717.7240

Palliative Medicine

(Inpatient Only)
1635 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 115 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.558.5291

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

1715 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 305 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.248.0006

Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 315 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4217

Podiatry

1600 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22311
703.940.3810

Surgical Specialists

▶ 1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 334 | Arlington, VA 22205

▶ 1600 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22311
703.717.4250

Urology

▶ 1625 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 454 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4200

▶ 1600 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22311
703.506.8590

Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine

1701 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite G200 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.558.6600

Anna Matrachisia, MD, MPH, Colorectal Surgery



Special interests: robotic and minimally invasive surgery

“Colorectal cancer is very treatable, and I enjoy working with my patients over the long term with follow-up care after surgery,” says Dr. Matrachisia. For benign conditions like hemorrhoids, she encourages people not to be embarrassed. “Come in and we’ll

talk about it. We have treatments to make you feel better. There is no need to live in misery.”

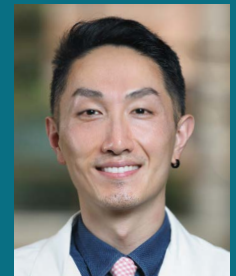
Dr. Matrachisia earned her medical degree as well as a degree in public health from Tufts University School of Medicine. She completed her general surgery residency at the Medical University of South Carolina and a fellowship in colon & rectal surgery at the Morsani College of Medicine at the University of South Florida.

Ping Song, MD, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

Special interests: breast reconstruction Fluent in Mandarin

Dr. Song earned his medical degree at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine and completed a fellowship in micro-surgery and breast reconstruction at the University of Washington in Seattle. In addition to all types of breast reconstruction, he is trained to perform reconstruction after skin cancer and sarcoma surgery.

“I believe reconstruction is very important for patients,” says Dr. Song. “Sometimes in the journey to beat cancer you lose a physical part of yourself, but you’re alive and a survivor. As a plastic and reconstructive surgeon, I find it rewarding to help patients regain what has been lost physically.”



Jason Levy, DO, MS, Urology



Special interests: men’s health, reconstructive surgery

Dr. Levy treats all urologic conditions, with special expertise in benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), erectile dysfunction and incontinence. He has advanced training in prosthetic urology, Peyronie’s Disease and minimally invasive robotic surgery. After

earning his medical degree from Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, Dr. Levy completed a residency in urology at Drexel/Hahnemann and Main Line Health, Philadelphia, and a fellowship in sexual medicine and reconstruction at the Johns Hopkins Brady Urological Institute.

“I particularly enjoy seeing patients in the office from initial diagnosis through their recovery after surgery,” says Dr. Levy. “I treat patients like my own family members and see a problem through in its entirety.”

NEW OB/GYN PROVIDERS JOIN VHC HEALTH PHYSICIANS

Alexis Panzer, MD



Special interests: gynecologic surgery, high-risk obstetrics

Dr. Panzer earned her medical degree at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine and completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center. She has co-authored peer-reviewed articles in the *American Journal of Perinatology* and *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Dr. Panzer enjoys the variety offered by the field of OB/GYN, and the ability to practice in different settings—office, surgery and inpatient. She is affiliated with the VHC Health Physicians OB/GYN office in Arlington on the VHC Health campus.

"I look forward to taking care of women throughout their entire lifespan," says Dr. Panzer. "It is exciting to build long relationships with my patients, providing continuity of care and getting to know them over time."

Charlotte Platner, MD



Special interests: managing complex care for OB/GYN patients

A native of Arlington, Dr. Platner is practicing at the VHC Health Physicians OB/GYN Arlington office on the VHC Health campus. She received her medical degree from University of Virginia School of Medicine and completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Virginia Tech

Carilion School of Medicine.

"During medical school I liked the continuity of care in my primary care rotations, but I also liked the hands-on, fast-paced experience of surgical rotations," says Dr. Platner. "OB/GYN offers a good combination of the two disciplines."

Dr. Platner has a passion for providing evidence-based care and ensuring patients have the information necessary to make informed decisions. "I want to make sure we're addressing all potential issues throughout a woman's pregnancy," she says.

Pouran Malekzadeh, MD



Special interests: prenatal care, abnormal uterine bleeding, minimally invasive gynecologic surgery

"Obstetrics is one of the most challenging specialties," says Dr. Malekzadeh, who recently joined the VHC Health Physicians OB/GYN Old Town Alexandria office. "That's because I'm caring for two patients at all times."

Dr. Malekzadeh received her medical degree from the University of Arizona College of Medicine and completed her residency at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. Her special areas of interest include polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), a hormonal disorder that is one of the most common causes of abnormal uterine bleeding.

"Ultimately my job is to educate my patients to make sure they understand their diagnosis and treatment options and then support their decision," says Dr. Malekzadeh. "Nothing is more important to me than to empower my patients with knowledge."

Courtney Marsh, MSN, CNM



Special interests: midwifery care

Courtney Marsh received her Master of Science in Nursing and Certificate in Nurse-Midwifery from Yale University. She brings more than 20 years of experience as a certified nurse-midwife to the VHC Health Physicians OB/GYN office in Old Town Alexandria. Marsh provides women's care from adolescence through menopause.

"Advanced practice nurses have a very holistic approach to healthcare," says Marsh. "We are trained to emphasize education and collaboration with patients to determine the best healthcare plan for them. Nurse midwives have empathy listening to women and hearing about their lives and concerns, all of which have an impact on how we feel about our bodies. Recognizing these connections helps us be true partners with our patients."

VHC OB
connect

PRENATAL CARE THAT
FITS YOUR SCHEDULE

Instead of coming to your OB/GYN's office for all of your prenatal care visits, OB Connect enables you to schedule some visits remotely by video with a dedicated OB Connect registered nurse. Virtual visits are supported by at-home remote monitoring equipment, including a fetal Doppler to check your baby's heart rate and an electronic blood pressure cuff.

Watch this video to see how OB Connect works: vhchealth.org/obconnect.





Oncology EVENTS

Nature as Healer



All Reva & Sid Dewberry Family Cancer Resource Center events & support groups are virtual via Zoom unless otherwise noted. To register for these free programs, go to vhchealth.org & look for classes & events or call 703.558.5555.

Weekly Yoga

A gentle class to teach cancer patients & survivors to safely build strength & flexibility.

Fridays, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Intro to Qigong

This ancient healing art combines gentle movement, deep breathing & meditation to promote vitality, calmness & relaxation. Can be done seated or standing.

Thurs, 10/20, 1:00 – 1:45 pm

Nature as Healer

Master gardeners discuss how gardening has been used throughout history to promote health & healing. Explore the physical, mental & social benefits of digging in the dirt.

Thurs, 10/20, 10:00 – 11:30 am

Hereditary Cancer Unraveled

Certain ethnic groups, such as those of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry, may be at increased risk to develop cancer. A genetic counselor addresses what a genetic predisposition to cancer means, genetic testing & ways to reduce risk through nutrition & exercise.

Tues, 10/25, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Mindful Eating

An oncology-certified dietitian explains how to gain control over eating habits through more awareness of snacking & meal-time.

Wed, 10/26, 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Power Snacking

Prepare healthy snacks that are easy, nutritious & delicious.

Wed, 11/9, 4:30 – 5:30 pm

Tips for Managing Neuropathy

A physical therapist demonstrates exercises to reduce the impact of neuropathy (nerve damage) after chemotherapy.

Tues, 11/15, 3:00 – 4:00 pm

Coping with Fear of Recurrence

Fear of cancer returning is normal but can become overwhelming for some. Learn strategies for managing anxiety around cancer recurrence.

Wed, 11/16, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Grieving Your Loved One's Cancer Diagnosis

Learn how to support someone with cancer while processing your own feelings. This workshop discusses anticipatory grief & coping strategies.

Thurs, 12/1, 3:00 – 4:00 pm

Advance Care Planning

Plan for future medical care, including questions to ask yourself & your family, what to consider regarding your wishes & how to complete an advance directive.

Thurs, 12/8, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Mindfulness

Experience the benefits of this healing & calming practice.

Wed, 12/14, 12:00 – 1:00 pm



BREAST HEALTH FAIR

This year's annual breast conference is a health fair with stations representing VHC Health's comprehensive breast program. Get the latest prevention & treatment information, see demonstrations & connect with resources. Our breast health experts from medical, radiation & surgical oncology; breast reconstruction; imaging; nutrition; genetics; massage; & more will be on hand to answer your questions.

Sat, Oct. 22, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

SUPPORT GROUPS

Call 703.558.5555 or email cancersupport@vhchealth.org

Opening Windows • For individuals with recurrent or metastatic cancer.
1st Thursday, 2:00 – 3:30 pm

Breast Cancer Patients with Children
2nd Friday, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Breast Cancer
3rd Tuesday, 5:00 – 6:30 pm

Prostate Cancer
4th Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

C.H.A.N.C.E. Head & Neck Cancer
4th Wednesday, 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Young Adults with Cancer
1st Wednesday, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Reiki • Free half-hour session for cancer patients.
3rd Wednesday, 7:00 – 9:00 pm.
Appointment only

Write Away Group • Patients share writings about their cancer journey.
Call for more information.



Women & INFANT HEALTH

New Volunteer Program for Labor Support

Women who receive additional social support during labor tend to have better pain control, improved birth outcomes and less need for medical intervention.* But some women don't have family members or partners available to provide that support. Recognizing this need, VHC Health has started a program for Labor Support Volunteers to enhance the experience and outcomes of patients during labor, with a special emphasis on underserved populations. If you are passionate about supporting women during childbirth, this is a great way to give back. **Megan Cole, MSN, BSN, RN, RN-MNN, CH-GCN**, Labor Delivery OR Service Line Coordinator, explains how the Labor Support Volunteer program works and why it's beneficial for both patients and volunteers.

WHAT IS A LABOR SUPPORT VOLUNTEER (LSV)?

LSVs serve in a supportive role to the patient and staff—like supportive friends or family members. They offer comfort measures, such as bringing more pillows or fluids, providing emotional support, and promoting a calm, peaceful environment for labor. LSVs do not provide any clinical or pharmacologic interventions. Everything they do is in collaboration with the VHC Health team taking care of the patient on the Labor & Delivery Unit.

WHO CAN BE AN LSV?

Anyone who wants to support women during the birthing experience can become an LSV. While no experience is necessary, it is helpful to have some knowledge of the birthing process,

either from personal experience or education. There is a screening process to make sure you're right for the program and training is provided. Being an LSV offers an excellent opportunity for newly trained doulas and students pursuing healthcare-related professions to gain more first-hand experience in the birthing process.

WHAT IS THE TRAINING LIKE?

Training is done at VHC Health, led by professional, experienced doulas on how to provide skillful, compassionate support during labor. Doulas are trained professionals who provide continuous physical, emotional and informational support to patients before, during and shortly after childbirth to help them



HOW DO I APPLY TO BE A LABOR SUPPORT VOLUNTEER?

Just scan this QR code. Join a supportive community of volunteers who are looking for ways to give back. You can make a difference in supporting the health and well-being of women during one of the most important moments of their lives.

For more information, email LSVprogram@vhchealth.org.



achieve the most satisfying experience possible. Training takes place both in the classroom setting as well as through orientation to the Labor & Delivery unit with a trained volunteer.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

Volunteers are asked to commit to one 12-hour shift per month on-site at VHC Health in the Labor & Delivery Unit. Patients receiving LSV services are prioritized to help those who would benefit most from additional support, such as teenagers or patients who are laboring alone, had minimal prenatal care or past traumatic birth experiences. The LSV coordinator, in collaboration with the nursing staff, identifies which patients would benefit most from having an LSV during their birth experience. LSV services are offered free of charge to patients.

** Counselling for Maternal and Newborn Health Care: A Handbook for Building Skills; Geneva, World Health Organization, 2013.*

BABY'S FIRST YEAR

All classes & support groups are online via Zoom. For class times & to register, visit vhhealth.org/pregnancy.



The First Year • Important information for first-time parents about parenting, safety, communication & sleep. **\$60/couple**

The Art of Pumping • Learn more about breast pumps & pumping strategies for the early weeks. **\$45/person**

Breast Pump Rentals • Rent a hospital-grade breast pump. For information & pricing, call 703.558.6744.

SUPPORT GROUPS FREE

(For dates and times of support groups, visit vhhealth.org/classes and click on Childbirth Support Groups.)

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding support & tips from others.

Breastfeeding for the Working Mom

Learn breastfeeding & work-life balance strategies.

Parenting During COVID-19

How are the stresses of COVID-19 affecting you? Get support & share strategies.

Postpartum

If you are feeling anxious, angry, irritable or sad, group support can help.

PREGNANCY & BIRTHING CLASSES

Plan to take childbirth classes in your second trimester. Most classes are online via Zoom, with a limited number of in-person classes (masks required). For times & to register, visit vhhealth.org/pregnancy.

Virtual Expectant Parent Tour

A virtual step-by-step guide to having your baby at VHC health. View it anytime at vhhealth.org/pregnancy. **FREE.**

What to Expect When Having a Baby at VHC Health

Engage in a live chat with former Labor & Delivery nurses who review what to expect from admission to discharge. **FREE.**

Advanced Comfort for Unmedicated Birth

Learn how to prepare for a natural, low-intervention birth that promotes your comfort & supports your connection to your partner & baby. **\$80/couple**

Childbirth Preparation: Full Format

This in-depth "Preparation for Childbirth" course is a great introduction for first-time parents or women planning for an unmedicated birth. 4 hours. **\$115/couple**

Childbirth Preparation: 2-Week Series

In-depth childbirth preparation course offered over two evenings for your convenience. **\$115/couple**

How to Prepare for Your C-Section

Starting with the third trimester, we explain how you can help your body prepare for delivery & recovery after Cesarean delivery. **\$75/couple**

Breastfeeding Basics

Get breastfeeding off to a good start, including making milk, positioning, latching & feeding. **FREE.**

Infant Care Skills

Caring for your newborn during the first two weeks, including infant safety, sleep, diapering & bathing. **\$80/couple**



Big Brothers & Sisters

Siblings two to five years of age will learn how to get ready for the new baby, meeting their new sibling & how to interact safely with the baby. **\$20/child**

Grandparenting

Learn the latest evidence-based infant care practices to prepare for caring for your new grandchild. **\$40/person**

Questions? If you have questions about class availability or what to expect when giving birth at VHC Health, email childbirtheeducation@vhhealth.org.



Fitness & HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

DETAILS & REGISTRATION

- Unless noted, sessions run for 7 weeks
- Dates listed are start dates for each session
- Visit www.vhchealth.org/healthy to register online
- Drop-ins & pro-rated registration available for classes that are underway
- Questions? Call 703.558.6740

LOCATION KEY

- V** = Virtual Class Online Via Zoom
- H** = VHC Health
- M** = McLean Baptist Church
- F** = Faith Lutheran Church

Body Sculpt

Tone & strengthen your upper, lower body & abs. All levels welcome. \$54

- Mon, 5:30 - 6:15 pm 11/7 H**
- Tues, 5:30 - 6:15 pm 11/8 V**
- Wed, 5:30 - 6:15 pm 11/9 V**
- Fri, 7:30 - 8:15 am 11/11 V**

Cardio Kickboxing

Pump up your strength & stamina in this higher intensity class. \$54

- Tues, 5:30 - 6:15 pm 11/8 F**
- Thurs, 5:30 - 6:15 pm 11/10 H NEW!**

Cardio Strength Circuit

Intermediate level class featuring faster paced cardio & strength exercises. \$54

- Sat, 8:10 - 8:55 am 11/12 V**

Core Challenge

Strengthen your abs & back. \$54

- Thurs, 5:30 - 6:15 pm 11/10 V**

Exercise Fundamentals

Learn how to build an effective exercise routine, including cardio & strength training. \$64

- Sat, 9:00 - 10:00 am 11/12 V**

Fitness Fusion

Combine cardio, strength & stretching. \$54

- Tues, 4:30 - 5:15 pm 11/8 F**
- Thurs, 4:30 - 5:15 pm 11/10 H NEW!**

Zumba / Zumba Gold

Dance your way to fitness! \$64

Zumba: Mon 6:30 - 7:30 pm 11/7 F

Zumba Gold (For Older Adults):

Tues, 11:00 - 11:45 am 11/8 M

Thurs, 11:00 - 11:45 am 11/10 M

Feldenkrais: Awareness Through Movement

Learn how directing attention to gentle movement can enhance functioning & provide better balance. \$85

Tues, 12:15 - 1:15 pm 11/8 V

Mindful Meditation New!

Start your week with calm & serenity. Learn how a regular meditation practice can retrain your brain to relax, let go & reduce stress. \$40

Mon, 12:00 - 12:30 pm 11/7 V

Gentle Yoga

Reduce stress as you increase strength & flexibility. \$100

Wed, 9:30 - 10:45 am 11/9 V

Thurs, 9:30 - 10:45 am 11/10 V

Sun, 4:15 - 5:30 pm 11/13 V

Beginner Yoga New!

Learn the basics of yoga & get a taste of different styles (Hatha, Yin, Vinyasa). \$85

Mon, 5:00 - 6:00 pm 11/7 H



ONE ON ONE ASSESSMENTS

To make an appointment, call 703.558.6740. Screenings are held at the VHC Health Shirlington Campus—Health Promotion Office.

Body Fat Analysis • Assess your percentage of fat, muscle & water. \$15

Bone Density Screening • Osteoporosis risk assessment screening using ultrasound of the heel bone. \$35

Resting Metabolic Rate Screening
This is an important measure in assessing nutritional needs & helping you achieve weight management goals. \$55

Dermascan • Non-invasive scanning examines head & neck for potential or existing sun damage. \$10

Cholesterol Screening*
Full Lipid Profile plus Glucose. \$25

A1-C Diabetes Screening* \$25

Hemoglobin* \$15

Thyroid Function (TSH)* (mailed results) \$35

Vitamin D* (mailed results) \$50

High Sensitivity C-Reactive Protein* (mailed results) \$35

**All blood tests are finger stick.*

Hatha Yoga

Improve mind/body connection with classic yoga postures & breathing. \$85

Tues, 12:00 - 1:00 pm 11/8 V

Thurs, 4:00 - 5:00 pm 11/10 V

Prenatal Yoga

Stretch muscle groups essential for efficient labor & delivery. Physician approval required. \$85

Mon, 7:00 - 8:00 pm 11/7 V

Wed, 7:00 - 8:00 pm 11/9 V

Postpartum Yoga

Rebuild strength as you bond with baby (age 6 weeks to almost crawling). \$85

Tues, 10:30 - 11:30 am 11/8 V

Pi-Yoga

Tone & energize with this blend of Pilates strengthening & Yoga movement. \$85

Thurs, 6:30 - 7:30 pm 11/10 V

Adaptive/Seated Yoga

For those with limited mobility, chronic pain or neuropathy. All ages & ability levels welcome. \$85

Wed, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm 11/9 V

Yin Yoga

A still & calm practice for body & mind. Postures are held for several minutes to strengthen connective tissue for bone health, increased mobility & self-calming. \$85

Fri, 6:00 - 7:00 pm 11/11 V

Sat, 10:15 - 11:15 am 11/12 V

Tai Chi

Class follows the 37-posture Yang short form. *10-week sessions begin 10/10. \$120

Level 1: Mon, 4:10 - 5:10 pm F

Level 2: Mon, 5:15 - 6:15 pm F

Gentle Pilates

A mat-based class with modifications to suit all abilities. \$85

Tues, 6:30 - 7:30 pm 11/8 V

Sat, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm 11/12 V

Sleep Like a Baby **New!**

Learn how to go to sleep & get back to sleep more easily while practicing stress reduction movements that will help you all day long! *4-week session. \$75

Thurs, 6:30 - 7:30 pm 10/6 V

Boost Your Balance

Reduce your fall risk by improving balance & stability. \$54.

Wed, 11:00 - 11:45 am 11/9 V

Thurs, 2:00 - 2:45 pm 11/10 F

Sat, 9:00 - 9:45 am 11/12 V **NEW!**

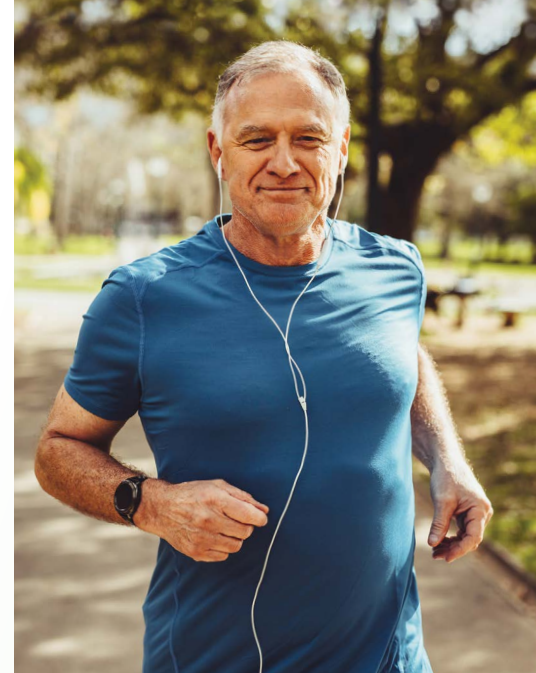
FALL SAFETY

Falls are the #1 reason older adults end up in the emergency department. They are not a normal part of aging and often can be prevented. Here's how to lower your risk:

- Be physically active to maintain muscle strength and promote balance.
- Check your vision so you can clearly see each step you're taking.
- Review medications with a pharmacist to avoid side effects that may lead to dizziness or poor mobility.
- Scan your home for loose rugs, uneven stairs or poor lighting and add grab bars in the bathroom.

Even with the best plans, falls still occur. VHC Health staff can set up a Lifeline medical alert system to ensure you can call for help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A fall detection button will automatically call for help if a fall is detected. VHC staff work directly with each person to install, test and maintain the system. Ask about our Senior Associate discounts on Lifeline.

For more information, contact seniorhealth@vhchealth.org or 703.558.6859.



SENIOR HEALTH

To register or for information, contact 703.558.6859 or seniorhealth@vhchealth.org.

Walk-Fit

A free fitness program featuring walking, stretching & blood pressure checks.

Tues, 8:30 - 9:30 am, Fashion Centre at

Pentagon City, 1st Floor by Nordstrom Café

Thurs, 8:30 - 9:30 am, Ballston Quarter,

Level M2

Alzheimer's & Dementia Caregiver Support Group

3rd Wed of every month 10:00 - 11:00 am

Lifeline Emergency Response

A 24-hour medical alert system personally overseen by VHC Health Senior Health Department staff.

Seated Senior Fitness

Strengthens muscles, improves cardiovascular fitness, & enhances overall physical function while seated on a sturdy chair. \$84

Mon & Fri, 10:30 - 11:30 am 11/7 V

Strength & Stretch for Seniors

Improve range of motion, muscle strength & bone health. \$54

Mon, 1:00 - 1:45 pm 11/7 V

Thurs, 1:05 - 1:50 pm 11/10 F

HEALTHY AGING LECTURE SERIES

Lectures are hosted online. Register to receive log-in information.

Oct. 28 | 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Stress and Inflammation as We Age
Christine Crawford, MSOT, OTR/L

Nov. 18 | 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Have an Urgent Medical Need?
Know Where to Go for Care.
Antonio Eppolito, MD

Seniorcise

Class includes light cardio & exercises to maintain & regain strength & balance. **10-week sessions begin week of 9/12**

M/W/F with Azita. 9:00 - 10:00 am (\$180) V

T/Th with Azita. 9:00 - 10:00 am (\$120) V

M/Th with Laura. 9:00 - 10:00 am (\$120) V

T/F with Dolcie. 9:00 - 10:00 am (\$120) F*

*begins 9/27



Arlington Health System
1701 N. George Mason Drive
Arlington, VA 22205-3610

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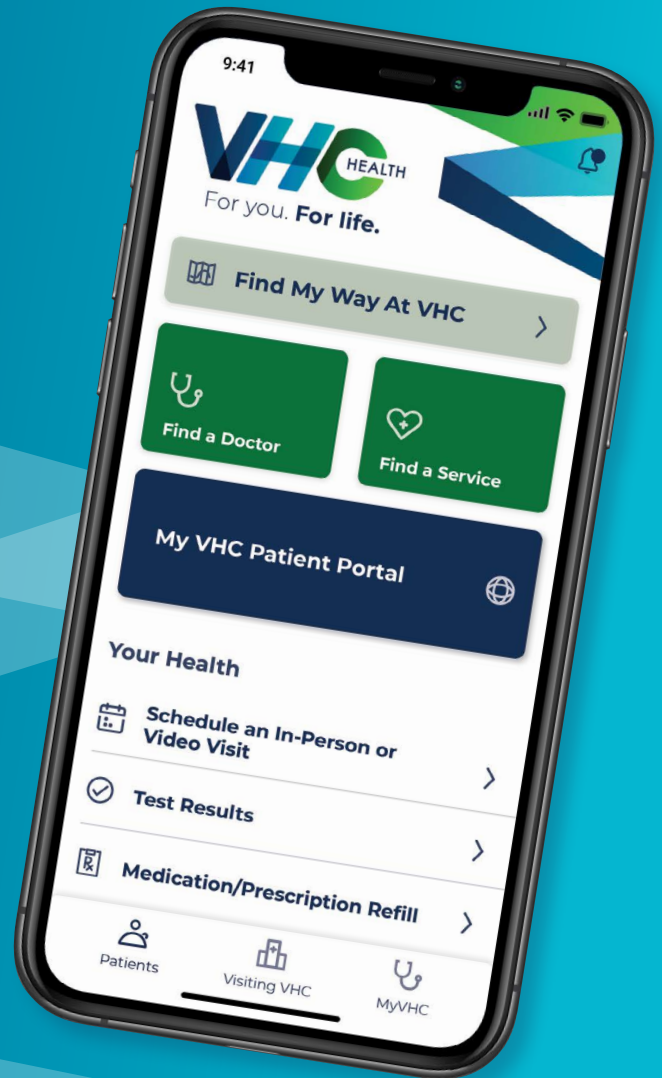
The information offered in this magazine is general in nature. Your personal healthcare provider is your best source of medical advice. To be added or removed from the mailing list, call 703.558.6595.

vhchealth.org

The VHC Health App Keeps Getting Better!

Think of it as the “easy button” for the information you need to navigate your way to better health.

- ▶ **Health Information** in the palm of your hand.
- ▶ **Completely Integrated** with your MyVHC patient portal.
- ▶ **Schedule Appointments.**
- ▶ **eCheck-In** can be used to register at home or when it is convenient for you.
- ▶ **Find Your Way Easily.** Step-by-step directions to anywhere on the VHC Health campus
- ▶ **Sign the New Annual Access and Authorization to Treat Form.** One form, once a year and you're done.
- ▶ **And More!**



To get the VHC Health App, scan the QR code (left).

vhchealth.org/app