

2024



12 **EMERGENCY
OB/GYN CARE
SAVES MOTHER
AND BABY**

2 **NURSING**
Earns Magnet
Distinction

3 **PRIMARY CARE**
14 Locations in
Northern Virginia

6 **PT SOLUTIONS**
VHC Health's
Partner in
Physical Therapy



VHC Health Nursing Earns Magnet® Designation—Again



The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) has awarded VHC Health its prestigious Magnet designation, making it one of only 612 medical facilities worldwide to currently hold the distinction. This is VHC Health’s third Magnet designation.

“VHC Health is so fortunate and proud to have such an exemplary and compassionate nursing team. This recognition represents the excellence in nursing care here at VHC Health,” says Christopher Lane, CEO & President, VHC Health.

Magnet certification recognizes organizations where nursing leaders successfully align their nursing strategic goals to improve patient outcomes.

“This credential is testament to the countless contributions your nurses, in collaboration with other team members, have made in their commitment to provide quality patient care through innovations in professional nursing practice,” ANCC wrote in its notification of the award to VHC Health. “During the site visit, the appraisal team found nursing at VHC Health is thriving and morale is exceptional.”

ANCC also highlighted VHC Health’s high nurse education rate—86% hold a bachelor’s degree or higher—and job satisfaction.



(Front row, center): Melody Dickerson, DNP, RN, CENP, CPHQ, FACHE, Senior Vice President, Hospital Operations & Chief Nursing Officer, leads VHC Health’s team of more than 1,000 nurses.

“VHC Health nurses, across sessions and units, consistently described a deeply rooted culture of collaboration, teamwork and a sense of belonging among their nursing colleagues and interprofessional team, frequently referencing the importance of community, warmth and respect as key drivers for their retention and commitment to the organization,” ANCC noted in their report.

Additionally, ANCC touted the leadership of Melody Dickerson, DNP, RN, CENP, CPHQ, FACHE, Senior Vice President of Hospital Operations & Chief Nursing Officer, recognizing her as “outcome-oriented and an energetic leader with proven ability to lead to operational targets, improve patient outcomes and enhance overall performance.”

I’M A NURSE AT VHC HEALTH BECAUSE...

OUR AMAZING NURSES SAY IT BEST!

“Nursing at VHC Health is very rewarding. I have management that supports me 100%. They back me up to help me be a better advocate for my patients.”



ALEXANDRA, BSN, RN

“I came to VHC Health because of the culture. I started here as student nurse and came back after graduating because VHC Health makes you feel like you’re part of the family.”



NIKKI, BSN, CPAN

“VHC Health is where I can have a career and have a family. I have the flexibility here where I don’t have to choose.”



ASHLEY, BSN, RN

JOIN OUR NURSING TEAM. SCAN THIS CODE.



What a Primary Care Physician Can Do for You

P rimary care physicians are typically the first point of contact for patients with a health concern, but they do so much more than diagnose and treat illnesses.

“Primary care physicians give patients an opportunity to understand their health and risk factors. Patients can rely on primary care physicians to coordinate their care when specialists are needed to treat acute and chronic conditions,” says **Christopher Walsh, MD, FACP**, Chief, Primary Care Division, VHC Health Physicians.

Dr. Walsh was drawn to internal medicine because of the ability to follow patients over time. “I like the puzzle aspect of primary care. A patient comes in with a concern, question or problem and it’s our job to figure it out. Many times, we find that their problems are related and must be organized to pull the thread that runs through them,” he says.

A TEAM-BASED APPROACH MAKES CARE ACCESSIBLE

At VHC Health, primary care is a team effort. To ensure that someone is always available to address your questions or treat an illness, your primary care provider has a three-person backup care team. This means if your provider is unavailable when you need an appointment, you still have access to top-notch care.

Nurse practitioners (NPs) are an integral part of your primary care team. Advanced practice nurses, NPs are qualified to assess, diagnose and treat patients, and write prescriptions. Some NPs are dedicated solely to working virtually, making them readily available to patients who have urgent concerns via same-day telehealth appointments.

“If I’m out, you should not have to wait for an appointment or a prescription refill,” Dr. Walsh says. “Your care team is familiar with your health history and is always available to cover for your primary provider.”

Coordinating care is simplified by the fact that all patient health information is stored in a single electronic record that

spans care at VHC Health. “A unified health record incorporates emergency, hospital, outpatient and imaging services, allowing all providers to connect for well-coordinated care,” Dr. Walsh says.

ACCESS IS A PRIORITY

Having a primary care provider is important to promote good health. Currently, VHC Health has 14 primary care offices throughout Northern Virginia. Scheduling appointments and contacting providers with quick questions is easy through the MyVHC patient portal or the VHC Health app.

“We meet you where you want to see us, whether you visit the emergency department, urgent care, your care team or a virtual provider,” says Dr. Walsh, who has practiced at VHC Health for more than 20 years. “This is an organization that allows doctors to be doctors and focus on the quality care we need to give in a supportive environment. Our patients are able to receive personalized care close to home because being part of VHC Health means having access to multiple subspecialty physician groups and a high-quality health system.”

That enables Dr. Walsh to closely monitor his patients. “I’m able to walk my patients along their journey, including when specialists and other providers are involved,” Dr. Walsh adds. “At VHC Health, we offer a network of experienced providers that I trust.”

Christopher Walsh, MD, FACP,
Chief, Primary Care Division,
VHC Health Physicians

THE FOUR PILLARS OF PRIMARY CARE

1. Diagnosing and treating acute problems
2. Managing chronic disease
3. Providing preventive care, including screening and lifestyle adjustment
4. Coordinating care with specialists



Get to Know Our New Primary Care Physicians



With 14 primary care offices located throughout Northern Virginia, it's easy to find a primary care provider for you and your family. Meet the latest primary care physicians to join VHC Health.

Primary Care Arlington

Jessica Saha, MD, MS

Special interests: Preventive medicine

Dr. Saha took a circuitous route to medicine: An art history and economics major, she worked at a D.C. law firm before turning to healthcare.

"I missed the person-to-person interactions," Dr. Saha says. "I wanted that personal connection to be part of my daily work, and I knew I would find that in the healthcare field."

She earned a medical degree from Georgetown University and completed her residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. During her training, she rotated through VHC Health and was struck by its community culture. "This was my first choice when applying for a primary care position," she says.

"Of all specialties, internal medicine is about building long-term, personal relationships," Dr. Saha says. "I like the preventive aspect of internal medicine. Having a primary care provider you can trust and rely on is important for overall health."



Albert Shu, MD

Special interests: Preventive medicine, diabetes prevention, peri-operative medicine

Dr. Shu earned his medical degree from the University of Louisville School of Medicine in Louisville, Kentucky. He then completed an internal medicine residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and spent some time training in peri-operative care and anesthesiology at the University of California San Francisco.

The patient relationships that develop through primary care drew him to the field. "I found primary care to be a special place," he says.

For Dr. Shu, building trust and rapport with the patients sets the foundation for a good relationship. "It's a balance of being open, honest and setting realistic expectations," he says. "I enjoy helping patients navigate their healthcare throughout their lives. When something serious comes up, we discuss treatments and prevention. We walk through it together."



Primary Care Falls Church

Meron Abreham, MD

Special interests: geriatrics, mental health, chronic disease management (Fluent in Amharic and Spanish)

As a child, Dr. Abreham promised her grandmother, who had diabetes, that she would one day treat people like her. "She encouraged me so much," Dr. Abreham says.

Born in Ethiopia, Dr. Abreham moved to Virginia at age 12. She earned her medical degree at Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine in Michigan and completed a family medicine residency at UCLA Health in California.

"As a family medicine physician, I enjoy building a rapport and connections with my patients over the long term," says Dr. Abreham who treats patients ages 6 and older. "I can help them understand their health and empower them to make decisions for themselves."

VHC Health became her first choice for practicing medicine after she shadowed Robert Christie, MD, oncologist, here when he treated a family member. "This is where I truly got my start in medicine," she says.



Allison Smith Greenberg, MD, DipABLM, NASM-CPT

Special interests: Lifestyle medicine

Dr. Smith Greenberg focuses on lifestyle medicine, which is based on making healthy changes around diet, exercise, sleep, substance use, social connections and stress.

"Lifestyle medicine can help with diabetes, high blood pressure, depression and anxiety," says Dr. Smith Greenberg. "This approach can be very empowering for my patients. We work together on a plan for better health. Patients are experts in their own lives, and they give me information to guide them."

A graduate of Ross University School of Medicine, she completed her family medicine residency at St. Joseph's Health Hospital in Syracuse, New York.

"I chose this field because I can treat the whole family," says Dr. Smith Greenberg, who is board certified in family medicine and sees patients ages 6 and older. "I love building relationships and helping people reach their goals. I also get to understand family units and dynamics, which is incredibly helpful."



Xiying Michelle Huang, DO

Musculoskeletal pain, mental health, preventive medicine

Dr. Huang earned a DO degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed a residency in Internal Medicine at Geisinger Medical Center. There, she gained experience treating adult patients with complex medical problems. Her philosophy is to treat the whole person rather than just the symptoms.

“If one part of the body is faulty, it affects everything else,” Dr. Huang says. “It is important to listen to the patient and to be not only competent but also caring. The patient knows their body better than anyone else.”

Dr. Huang has additional training in osteopathic manipulation therapy, used to diagnose and treat musculoskeletal dysfunction in muscles, fascia and bones. “OMT can be highly effective in alleviating headaches, back pain, sciatica and other types of chronic pain,” she says. “The therapy is individualized to meet the patient’s specific needs.”



Primary Care Kingstowne

Zainab Alobosi, MD

Special interests: Preventive medicine, mental health (Fluent in Arabic)

Dr. Alobosi has practiced in three countries—Iraq, Jordan and the United States—since 2000 and has worked with all ages, ranging from pediatrics to geriatrics. She is board certified in family medicine.

She received her medical degree from Baghdad University and completed her residency at Wayne State University in Michigan. After graduating, she spent 12 years with the Ohio State University Physician Group and Mount Carmel Medical Group.

“I love preventive medicine. That’s how we create healthier generations. Each patient’s treatment plan is designed to provide individualized care,” says Dr. Alobosi, who treats ages 6 and up. “I’m a people person and think of myself as a helpful person who wants to achieve a better lifestyle for patients.”

“Practicing in a rural area in Ohio, I gained a lot of experience in behavioral health, especially with teenagers,” Dr. Alobosi says. “This has become a special area of interest for me.”



Primary Care National Landing

Bradley Powers, MD

Special interests: Preventive medicine, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, weight management

After earning his medical degree from Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Dr. Powers completed an internal medicine residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.

The first medical doctor in his family, Dr. Powers grew up watching his grandfather practice dentistry at the same place for decades. “I saw the longitudinal relationships he had with



his patients, and that spurred me to become a physician,” he says. His interest in preventive medicine and treating chronic illnesses led him to choose internal medicine.

“When I see new patients, establishing their trust and building a relationship starts right from the beginning,” says Dr. Powers. “I want them to feel comfortable when we discuss sensitive issues, such as weight. I listen to the hurdles that occur in the real world in patients’ lives and help them maneuver around those obstacles to make progress.”

As of January 1, Dr. Powers will be practicing at Primary Care Shirlington.

Primary Care Old Town

Danielle Engskow, MD

Special interests: Preventive medicine, LGBTQ care, HIV care

Dr. Engskow had a blood disorder as a child, making her well-acquainted with the healthcare system. “I had amazing doctors who showed me the impact you could have on the world as a physician,” she says.

That inspired her to earn a medical degree from the University of South Florida and complete an internal medicine residency at George Washington University. Previously, she worked at Neighborhood Health in Alexandria, a local Federally Qualified Health Center providing primary care and HIV care to a diverse patient population.

“I gravitated toward primary care because patients can come to me with any problem. My job is to look at the whole picture to find next steps,” Dr. Engskow says. “I enjoy challenging clinical scenarios.”

Last year, she experienced care at VHC Health firsthand when she was briefly hospitalized. “The hospitalist said how great VHC Health is, so I began asking everyone I met what they thought. A few weeks later, I applied to work here,” she says.



Primary Care West Alexandria

Dominique Gagnon, MD, PhD

Special interests: Geriatrics, mental health, women’s health (Fluent in French and Spanish)

Early in her career, Dr. Gagnon studied physics and received a PhD in molecular physiology, but always felt the pull of medicine. She went on to earn her medical degree and complete a family medicine residency at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center’s School of Medicine.

“I grew up in a small town near Montreal where family medicine was all I knew of doctors,” Dr. Gagnon says. “They did everything: hospital care, prenatal care, deliveries, pediatrics, hospice care, rehab, nursing. Every day was a new challenge. They had to be ready for anything.”

Although she treats all ages, she’s partial to geriatrics. In addition to seeing patients at Primary Care West Alexandria, she also sees residents at Goodwin House Alexandria.

“I’m a problem-solver. If a patient hasn’t been able to figure out what’s wrong, I will go above and beyond to help,” Dr. Gagnon says.



For the Vonhartens, Physical Therapy

IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

After straining his hamstring, Joshua, 15, was the first in the family to see Brian Espinoza, PT, DPT, CSCS, a physical therapist at VHC Health partner [PT Solutions](#). His twin brother, Jacob, soon followed suit after anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) reconstruction from playing football in August 2023. Their mother Sarah, 50, also saw Brian for physical therapy after a partial knee replacement and a total knee replacement on the other leg a year later. The three Vonhartens often have overlapping schedules for their physical therapy appointments to improve the mobility and strength of their affected limbs.

“It’s fun working out with Mom, seeing us work hard and having the staff push us to our limits,” Jacob says.

“The staff is so attentive and motivating,” Joshua adds. “We’ve all had great results.”

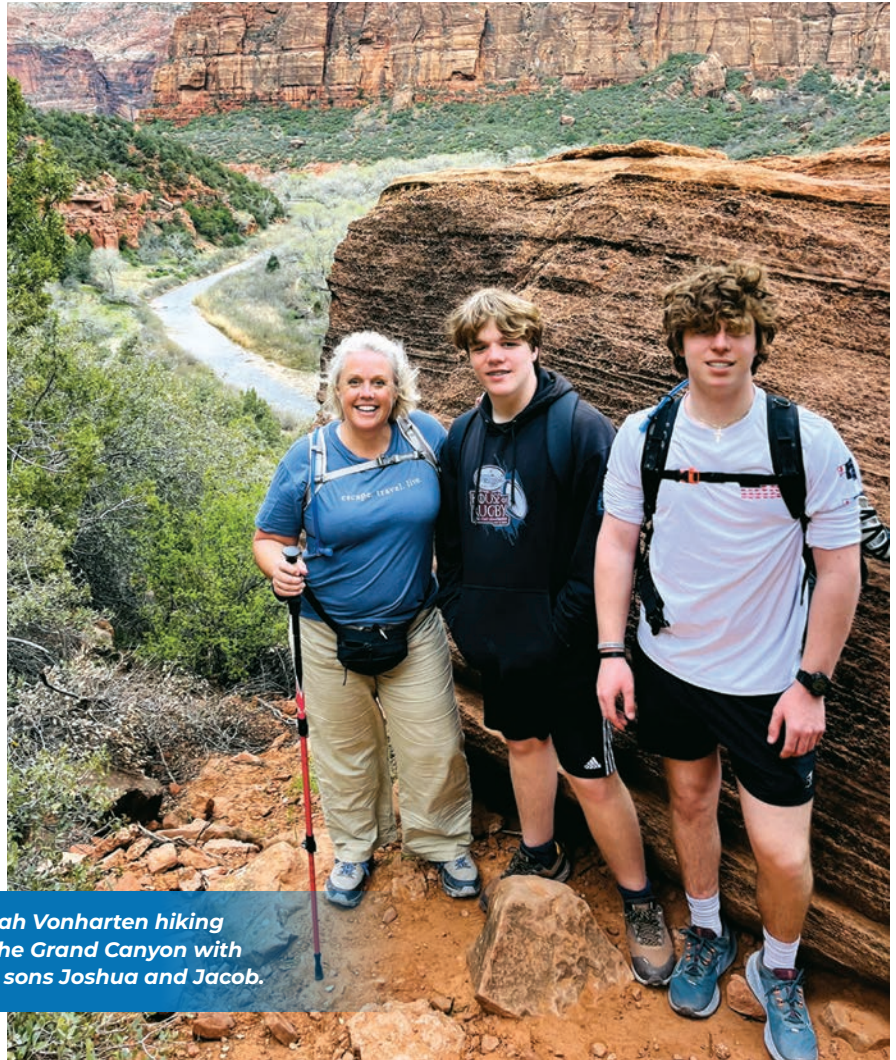
“At PT Solutions, treatment is evidence-based backed by strong clinical experience of the physical therapy team. I always ask my patients what their goals are for therapy and how we can help them achieve these goals,” Espinoza says.

For the twins, the goal was being able to play sports again. Today, Joshua is back to playing rugby and football and Jacob has been cleared to play football and lacrosse. The parameter for clearance is achieving at least 90% symmetry in the strength of both quadriceps to avoid risking injury.

“My job is to ensure that patients are rehabilitated properly and are stronger than before to minimize chances of reinjury,” says Espinoza. “We use objective tests and measures to ensure we’re meeting the standards for safely returning to sports.”

Sarah’s goal was different. “When I had surgery, we had already planned a trip to the Grand Canyon and Zion National Park, so my goal was being able to navigate rocks and keep up with my kids,” she says. “I was able to walk the famous Narrows hike through the Virgin River in Zion. It was so much fun. I could never have done it before.”

“What we all liked about PT Solutions is that we worked with the same therapist—on a one-to-one basis,” Sarah says. “I never dreaded going to physical therapy and neither did my boys. For them to want to come here three times a week was amazing.”



Sarah Vonharten hiking in the Grand Canyon with her sons Joshua and Jacob.



PT Solutions offers expert physical therapy services in partnership with VHC Health at ten locations throughout Northern Virginia.

REINSCH PIERCE FAMILY CENTER FOR BREAST HEALTH

Two breast surgeons have joined Molly Sebastian, MD, FACS, at the Center for Breast Health.

Alison Goldenberg, MD, FACS

Dr. Goldenberg is a graduate of Saint George's University School of Medicine. She completed her general surgery residency at SUNY Upstate Medical University and breast surgery oncology fellowship at Emory University.

"I always knew I wanted to be a surgeon," Dr. Goldenberg says. "I chose breast surgery because you get to develop great, long-lasting patient relationships. It is wonderful to be able to help guide patients through their decision-making."

Dr. Goldenberg was drawn to the Reinsch Pierce Family Center for Breast Health because of "its excellent care and strong focus on patient-centered treatment," she says. A recent example of this is the center's adoption of wire-free localization technology, which makes the day of surgery shorter and easier for patients. Wire-free localization uses magnetic markers instead of wires to pinpoint the exact location of tumors during surgery.

Previously, patients had to arrive early on their surgery day to have the wires inserted. Now, the markers can be placed any time in the days leading up to surgery. In the operating room, the surgeon finds the marker with a magnetic probe and is guided to the precise site of the tumor.

"It's a game-changer for the patient's experience," says Dr. Goldenberg.

"Breast cancer is different from other types of cancers. It's more likely to be non-life-threatening," she says. "Most people do really well with treatment. We want breast cancer treatment to feel like a blip in the road. We treat you and you move on with your life."



Heidi Gorsuch-Rafferty, MD, FACS

Dr. Gorsuch-Rafferty began her career as a nurse, becoming head nurse of the neurosurgery operating rooms at Johns Hopkins Hospital when she was 21. With her experience in the operating room, she saw the incredible impact surgeons had on their patients and decided to pursue her MD and become a surgeon. She earned her medical degree from the University of Maryland followed by a general surgery residency at New York Hospital—Cornell Medical Center. She also was a Resident Fellow in the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center Department of Surgery. Prior to joining the Reinsch Pierce Family Center for Breast Health, Dr. Gorsuch-Rafferty was instrumental in developing breast centers in Florida, California and Virginia.

"It is a privilege to be able to care for women when they are very vulnerable," Dr. Gorsuch-Rafferty says. She has a special interest treating breast cancer as well as helping patients manage high-risk breast tissue—those who have abnormal biopsies, family history of any cancer and dense breasts.

The Center for Breast Health offers comprehensive, state-of-the-art care in one location. "We perform skin- and nipple-sparing mastectomies with immediate

reconstruction by our plastic surgeons," says Dr. Gorsuch-Rafferty. "The mastectomy and breast reconstruction are done at the same time, almost always as an outpatient procedure. We use local anesthesia that lasts for several days, minimizing or eliminating the need for narcotics."

In addition to the center's three breast surgeons, the team includes a genetic counselor, breast imaging specialists, a breast health navigator, a dedicated breast nurse and medical assistants. "We all have in-depth education and keep up with the latest medical advances," says Dr. Gorsuch-Rafferty. "We work very tightly as a team."

That resonates with patients. "It's all women caring for women, supporting and holding each other up. Patients feel that. One of the most important things I tell my patients is 'I've got you,'" she says.



For more information about the Reinsch Pierce Family Center for Breast Health, scan this code.



PRIMARY CARE

Annandale

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

Arlington

1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 3B | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4282

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

Kingstowne

5971 Kingstowne Village Pkwy.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22315
703.717.7378

McLean

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

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

Tysons

1760 Old Meadow Rd.
Suite 305 | McLean, VA 22102
703.717.7278

Vienna

527 Maple Ave. E.
Suite 200 | Vienna, VA 22180
703.717.7284

West Alexandria

3475 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 201
Alexandria, VA 22302
703.717.4148

West Springfield

5803 Rolling Rd. | Suite 110
West Springfield, VA 22152
703.717.7375

SPECIALISTS

Breast Health

The Reinsch Pierce Family
Center for Breast Health
1851 N. George Mason Dr.
5th Floor | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4217

**Cardiac, Vascular
& Thoracic Surgery**

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

Cardiology

- 1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 3C | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.7780
- 700 S. Washington St.
Suite 330 | Alexandria, VA 22314
703.717.7780
- 5971 Kingstowne Village Pkwy.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22315
703.717.7378
- 1760 Old Meadow Rd.
Suite 305 | McLean, VA 22102
703.717.4281

Colorectal Surgery

- 1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 4D | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4180
- 3475 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 201 | Alexandria, VA 22302
703.717.4180

Digestive Center ♦ NEW

- 3025 Hamaker Court
Suite 250 | Fairfax, VA 22031
- Colorectal Surgery
703.717.4178
- Gastroenterology
703.717.4175
- General Surgery
703.717.4172
- Hepatobiliary & Pancreatic
703.717.4172

Executive Health

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

Gastroenterology

- 1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 3A | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4792
- 5971 Kingstowne Village Pkwy.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22315
703.717.7378
- 400 S. Maple Ave. | Suite 200
Falls Church, VA 22046
703.717.4795
- 1760 Old Meadow Rd.
Suite 305 | McLean, VA 22102
703.717.4277

**Hepatobiliary &
Pancreatic Surgery**

1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 4C | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4126

**Infectious
Diseases**

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

**VHC Health
Rehabilitation**

- 7611 Little River Tpke.
Suite 108B
Annandale, VA 22003
703.717.7262
- 3475 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 202
Alexandria, VA 22302
703.717.7112
- 700 S. Washington St.
Suite 214
Alexandria, VA 22314
703.717.7747

**Maternal Fetal
Medicine**

1851 N. George Mason Dr.
5th Floor | Arlington, VA 22207
703.558.6077

Neurology ♦ NEW

1715 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 107 | Arlington, VA 22205
703.717.4577

OB/GYN

- 1851 N. George Mason Dr.
5th Floor | Arlington, VA 22207
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
- 5971 Kingstowne Village Pkwy.
Suite 300 | Alexandria, VA 22315
703.717.4196
- 7611 Little River Tpke.
Suite 108 West
Annandale, VA 22003
703.717.7240
- 1760 Old Meadow Rd.
Suite 305 | McLean, VA 22102
703.717.4264
- 527 Maple Ave. E.
Suite 200 | Vienna, VA 22180
703.717.7288

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

1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 4B | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4296

Podiatry

3475 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 201 | Alexandria, VA 22302
703.940.3810

Surgery—General & Bariatric

1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 4C | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4250

Urogynecology & Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery

1851 N. George Mason Dr.
5th Floor | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4163

Urology

- 1851 N. George Mason Dr.
Suite 4A | Arlington, VA 22207
703.717.4200
- 3475 N. Beauregard St.
Suite 201 | Alexandria, VA 22302
703.506.8590
- 1760 Old Meadow Rd.
Suite 305 | McLean, VA 22102
703.717.4200

Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine

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

URGENT 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



RECOGNIZED FOR HIGH QUALITY & SAFETY

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICE'S QUALITY RATING: 5 STARS

The Overall Hospital Quality Star Rating summarizes various measures across five areas of quality, including safety of care, mortality, patient experience, readmission rates, and timely and effective care. VHC Health was one of only 381 hospitals nationwide to achieve the prestigious five-star rating.



LEAPFROG GROUP SPRING 2024 HOSPITAL SAFETY GRADE: A

The gold standard of patient safety, the Leapfrog twice-annual grades use up to 30 national performance measures to determine a hospital's overall ability to keep patients safe.

AMERICA'S BEST MATERNITY HOSPITALS

VHC Health was named to Newsweek and Statista's list of the 404 best maternity hospitals nationwide. What's more, VHC Health was one of 168 hospitals nationwide and seven in Virginia to receive the top ranking of five ribbons.

LEVEL II TRAUMA CENTER REDESIGNATION

The Commonwealth of Virginia has renewed VHC Health's 2021 accreditation as a Level II Trauma Center. This underscores the hospital's commitment to excellence as a community provider of comprehensive medical services and to acutely injured patients.

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS' COMMISSION ON CANCER ACCREDITATION

VHC Health's cancer program received Accreditation with Commendation. This recognition demonstrates VHC Health's dedication to providing our community with the highest quality cancer care.

BECKER'S HOSPITAL REVIEW

VHC Health has been named to the Becker's Hospital Review Great Hospitals in America for 2024. These hospitals are widely recognized for their clinical excellence, commitment to patient safety, innovative initiatives, research efforts, education and high levels of patient satisfaction. In addition, Becker's also listed VHC Health as one of 116 hospitals in the U.S. with the best readmission rates.

Move Your Delivery Along with Early Labor Walking Lanes

Research shows that movement during early labor is beneficial in many ways. It decreases the birthing person's perception of pain, encourages ideal fetal alignment and decreases the length of labor, while also reducing the need for a C-section. That's why VHC Health recently implemented Early Labor Walking Lanes.

The lanes are designated and marked paths for patients in early—not active—labor to use for walking. Along the way, patients will find numbered station decals with a QR code that links to educational videos by Labor & Delivery nurses demonstrating exercises to do at that spot. For instance, Station 5 is for side lunges, which help open the pelvis and allow the baby to get into the proper position for birth. Other stations focus on abdominal lifts and tucks, squats, and tips for partners on how to best support the birthing person.

The decals at each station also include a phone number to call should patients notice a change in their labor, such as an increase in the strength and frequency of contractions. Because that can happen at any time, it's important to have a support person with you at all times.

VHC Health has two lanes: one on the Labor & Delivery floor for admitted patients and one that winds through the hospital for those who are not yet in labor. Both lanes start in the Labor & Delivery Unit and end in the Early Labor Lounge, a space that fosters relaxation through mood lighting, spa music, massage tools and yoga mats.



To navigate the routes and get directions from station to station, download the VHC Health App.

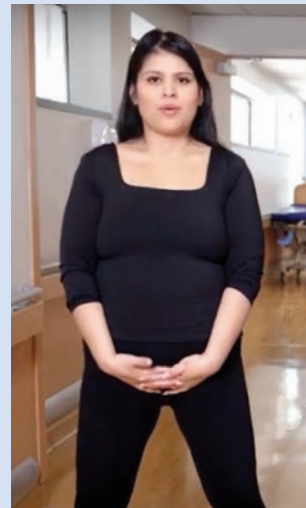
◀ [SCAN CODE HERE](#)



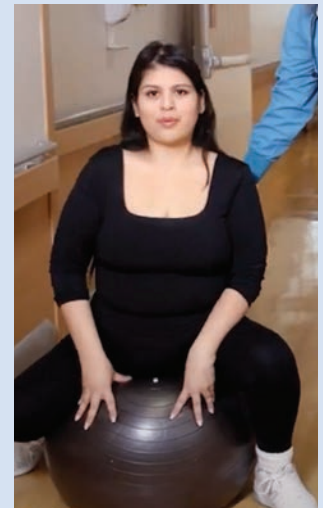
◀ *Station 5 signage: Side lunges help open the pelvis and allow the baby to get into the proper position for birth.*



Side lunge



Abdominal lift



Stretching

The Early Labor Walking Lanes have station stops along the route that focus on a variety of exercises for the birthing person to help decrease the length of labor.

VHC HEALTH IS THE FIRST HOSPITAL IN THE AREA TO SET UP EARLY LABOR WALKING LANES.



Oncology

ANNUAL BREAST CANCER CONFERENCE

THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 17
5:00 – 7:45 PM



Dr. Jean McGowan gives the keynote address, “Managing Menopausal Symptoms in Breast Cancer Prevention & Survivorship.” A certified menopause practitioner, Dr. McGowan works with the Menopause & Women’s Sexual Health Clinic at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN. Q&A with VHC Health providers follows the address.

To register, scan the QR code on this page or visit vhchealth.org/classes-events. For more information, call 703.558.5555. Conference location: John T. Hazel, MD Conference Center



All Dewberry Cancer Resource Center events & support groups are virtual via Zoom unless otherwise noted.

To register for these free programs, visit vhchealth.org & look for [classes & events](#), call 703.558.5555, or scan this code.

Weekly Yoga

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

Fridays, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Chair Yoga for Seniors & Beginners

If you’ve been curious about yoga but are worried you aren’t mobile enough, this is the class for you. A Certified Yoga for Cancer instructor walks you through everything you need to know from the comfort of a chair.

Fourth Thursdays, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Knitting with Friends

Spend time with fellow cancer patients, caregivers, survivors & staff while knitting. Bring your own knitting projects. Starter kits supplied for beginners.

Third Wednesdays, 3:30 – 4:30 pm
Outpatient Pavilion Main Lobby

Healing through Journaling

Learn how journaling can help you process difficult emotions, track symptoms & cope with challenges.

Monday, 10/7, 6:30 – 7:30 pm
Dewberry Cancer Resource Center Community Classroom

Equine (Horse) Facilitated Workshop for Cancer Patients

Experience equine psychotherapy in a lovely, wooded setting in Great Falls. With the assistance of four horses, a certified equine specialist blends therapy & mindfulness to promote healing. RSVP required.

Sat, 11/2, 12:00 – 2:00 pm

Painting with Affirmations

Incorporate positive thinking and mindfulness into art. Observe the facilitator paint an example piece or create your own original artwork. No art skills required.

Monday, 11/4, 6:30 – 7:30 pm
Dewberry Cancer Resource Center Community Classroom

Healthy Holiday Side Dishes

Cook with an oncology-certified dietitian & sample delicious nutritious recipes for your holiday dinner table.

Wed, 11/6, 5:00 – 6:30 pm
Outpatient Rehabilitation, Garden Level of the Outpatient Pavilion

Gardening with Gusto

Put some sparkle in your holidays! Plant an amaryllis (from the Greek “to sparkle”) & learn how nature-based activities can positively impact your physical & emotional health. Take it home & watch it grow!

Tues, 11/12, 3:00 – 4:30 pm
Dewberry Cancer Resource Center Community Classroom

Mindful Movement “Rest-ercise”

Perform stretches & gentle movements while lying down to relieve stiffness & irritation. A great way to exercise when you feel too sick or exhausted to get out of bed or do traditional exercise.

Monday, 12/2, 6:30 – 7:30 pm

SUPPORT GROUPS

Call 703.558.5555 or email cancersupport@vhchealth.org.

- **Breast Cancer** 3rd Tuesday, 5:00 – 6:30 pm
- **Prostate Cancer** 4th Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- **Young Adults with Cancer** 1st Wednesday, 7:00 – 8:30 pm
- **C.H.A.N.C.E. Head & Neck Cancer** 4th Wednesday, 6:00 – 7:30 pm
- **Breast Cancer Patients with Children** Call for more information.
- **Recurrent/Metastatic Cancer** Call to register & for information.
- **Write Away Group** Share writings about your cancer journey. Call for more information.
- **Reiki** Free virtual half-hour session. Appointment only.





Women & INFANT HEALTH

Expertise and Quick Action Save Mother, Baby

In 2020, Megan Mauk was in labor at VHC Health with her first child when she suddenly slumped over, stopped breathing and started bleeding profusely.

“I went into total cardiac collapse and was unconscious,” Megan recalls, adding that it happened in front of her husband, Michael, and mother. “They remember what happened clearly. I remember only bits and pieces.”

The labor and delivery team moved swiftly to save her and her baby’s life. “That team was a well-oiled machine. They knew their role and just acted,” she says.

After an uneventful pregnancy in which Megan had taken every precaution to be healthy, she experienced an Amniotic Fluid Embolism (AFE), a sudden and life-threatening complication that can affect both mother and baby.

“The nurses and doctors who cared for me are my real-life, actual heroes. They gave me the greatest gift of life—being a mom.”

—MEGAN MAUK

“AFE is poorly understood,” says Kelly Orzechowski, MD, FACOG, VHC Health Physicians Maternal Fetal Medicine. “Research suggests that when a small amount of amniotic fluid gets into the mother’s bloodstream, it’s foreign and the mother can have an exaggerated immune response.”

AFE is also unpredictable. It can happen during labor or right after delivery. Symptoms include an accelerated heart rate, nausea, shortness of breath and fetal distress. Patients can have heart failure and severe bleeding, which can affect other organs if not treated aggressively and can result in maternal death.

An extremely rare condition, AFE affects one in 40,000 births in the United States annually. Studies show that the survival rate for women is 20% to 60%. Where you deliver can have a significant impact on the outcome.

“The best place to be if you have AFE is a Level 3 or 4 tertiary care center with a high volume of deliveries, where specialists and anesthesiologists are available 24/7, and there is ongoing training for clinicians to be prepared to handle rare OB/GYN emergencies,” Dr. Orzechowski says.

“At VHC Health, we’re always prepared,” says Alexis Light, MD, FACOG, VHC Health Physicians OB/GYN. “Our multidisciplinary teams continually stay up to date on protocols and practice emergency drills to be ready for any scenario. AFE is one of the emergencies we prepare for but may never see in our career.”

“When an AFE occurs, we need to intubate the mother to allow us to move air into her lungs and start CPR right away,” Dr. Orzechowski says. “We want to deliver the baby as quickly as possible, which improves the CPR success rate.”

Six OB/GYNs were in the operating room with Megan the day she gave birth to her son, Nico, now 4. He was delivered within two minutes, while Megan was receiving CPR. Nico had to be intubated and was cared for in VHC Health’s Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. A few hours later, he was breathing on his own and had no repercussions from the delivery.

After her delivery, Megan spent four days in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), where lactation specialists taught Michael how to pump her breasts so she could produce milk. Being able to breastfeed my baby meant so much to me and I’m so grateful they made that possible,” she says.

Megan’s stay at VHC Health was only 10 days. “It was unbelievable how quickly I was able to rebound. If my team had not reacted immediately with such knowledge and skill, the outcome might have been different,” she says.

For her second pregnancy, Megan received care from Drs. Light and Orzechowski, who were careful to address her fears about going into labor. “There is nothing that leads us to believe



The Mauk family

BABY'S FIRST YEAR

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

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.

FREE SUPPORT GROUPS

Childbirth Experience • Discuss the effects of a difficult childbirth experience, emotions and coping skills—what it is like following a traumatic birth. Connect with others who may have similar experiences. We will not explore birth stories in detail as they could be triggering to others.

Postpartum • Group support for feeling anxious, angry, irritable or sad.

Breastfeeding • Get support & tips from others.

Breastfeeding for Working Moms • Learn breastfeeding & work-life balance strategies.

that there's a risk of recurrence for AFE," Dr. Light says. "We want patients to feel confident and supported about where they're delivering their baby. We always provide evidence-based patient care to reduce physical/emotional trauma."

"My role was to listen, support and understand how we could make Megan's delivery less anxiety-provoking," Dr. Orzechowski says. "We arranged for her to do a walkthrough of the Labor & Delivery and Postpartum Units in advance, so that the first time Megan saw these areas would not be when she was in labor. She was able to talk with some of the providers who cared for her and express her gratitude. And, in turn, it meant a lot to those providers to see her alive and well. This experience helped Megan process her memories in the weeks before delivery."

"My doctors made sure I felt comfortable with the plan, answered every question and addressed all my concerns," Megan says. "The level of care and reassurance they gave me can't be overstated."

Now a mom of two, Megan says she often thinks about that day four years ago. "The nurses and doctors who cared for me are my real-life, actual heroes. I still think about them all the time. They gave me the greatest gift of life—being a mom."



PREGNANCY & BIRTHING CLASSES

Plan to take childbirth classes in your second trimester. For times & to register, visit vhhealth.org/objourney. For questions, email childbirtheducation@vhhealth.org.

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 & Relaxation

Prepare for a natural, low-intervention birth that promotes comfort & support for you, 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

Full format childbirth preparation course offered over two evenings for your convenience. **\$115/couple**

Hypertension in Pregnancy

Hypertensive disorders are a common pregnancy and postpartum complication, affecting more than 16% of women. Learn why high blood pressure happens, ways to manage it, information to share with your physician & follow-up care after delivery. **\$40/person**

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 & Big Sisters

Prepare siblings-to-be two to five years of age to meet & interact safely with the new baby. **\$20/child**

Grandparenting

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



Fitness & HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

- Fall & Winter sessions begin the weeks of 9/9 & 11/4.
- Unless noted, classes run in 6-week sessions.
- For classes already underway, call for drop-in & pro-rated registration.

FOR MORE DETAILS & TO REGISTER

- vhchealth.org/healthy
- 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. \$46

- Mon, 5:30 – 6:15 pm **H**
- Tues, 5:30 – 6:15 pm **V**
- Wed, 8:00 – 8:45 am **V**
- Wed, 5:30 – 6:15 pm **H**

Cardio Kickboxing

Pump up your strength & stamina in this higher intensity class. \$46

- Tues, 5:30 – 6:15 pm **F**

Cardio Strength

Improve your stamina & muscle tone with a variety of exercises. \$46

- Thurs, 6:30 – 7:15 pm **H**
- Sat, 8:10 – 8:55 am **V**

Core Challenge

Strengthen your abs & back. \$46

- Thurs, 5:30 – 6:15 pm **V**

Power Pilates • **NEW!**

Total body workout that mixes strength and mat-based pilates to build core strength, balance & muscle endurance. \$46

- Tues, 6:30 – 7:15 pm **F**
- Thurs, 5:30 – 6:15 pm **H**

Zumba

Dance your way to fitness! \$46

- Mon, 6:30 – 7:15 pm **F**

Low-Impact Cardio

Safe & fun movement to music with balance & range of motion exercises. \$55

- Tues, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm **M**
- Thurs, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm **M**

Menopause Yoga • **NEW!**

For women currently going through perimenopause & menopause. Learn yoga poses & breathing exercises to help alleviate hot flashes, menopause rage & anxiety to make you feel stronger & empowered.

Four weeks. \$68

- Tues, 7:00 – 8:15 pm **H**

Prenatal Yoga

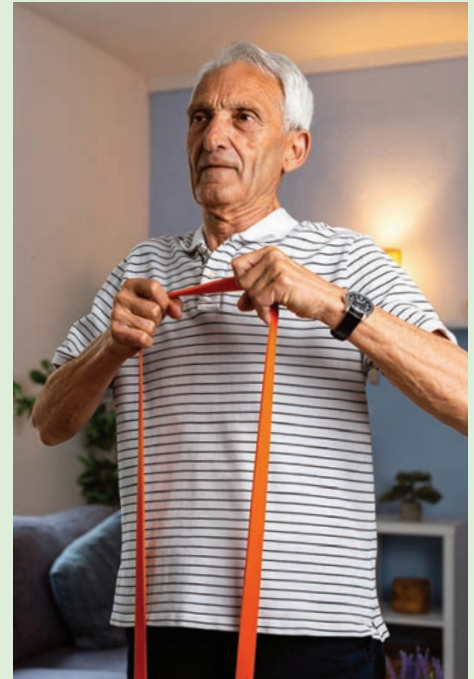
Stretch muscle groups essential for efficient labor & delivery. Physician approval required. \$73

- Mon, 7:00 – 8:00 pm **H**
- Wed, 7:00 – 8:00 pm **V**

Postpartum Yoga

Rebuild strength as you bond with baby (age 6 weeks to almost crawling). \$73

- Tues, 10:30 – 11:30 am **V/H**



Hatha Yoga

Classic yoga style combines postures & breathing techniques. \$73

- Mon, 5:00 – 6:00 pm **H**
- Tues, 12:00 – 1:00 pm **V/H**
- Thurs, 4:00 – 5:00 pm **V**

Gentle Yoga

Reduce stress as you increase strength & flexibility. \$86

- Tues, 9:30 – 10:45 am **V**

Adaptive/Seated Yoga

For those with limited mobility, chronic pain or neuropathy. All ages & ability levels welcome. \$73

- Mon, 10:00 – 11:00 am **M**
- Tues, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm **V**
- Thurs, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm **V**

Yin Yoga

Strengthen connective tissue for bone health, increased mobility & self-calming. \$73

- Tues, 2:00 – 3:00 pm **F NEW!**
- Fri, 6:00 – 7:00 pm **V**
- Sat, 10:00 – 11:00 am **V**



Gentle Pilates

A mat-based class with modifications to suit all abilities. \$73

Tues, 6:30 – 7:30 pm ▼
Sat, 11:15 am – 12:15 pm ▼

Pelvic Fitness

Learn to gently strengthen pelvic floor muscles. 2-week workshop led by a VHC Health physical therapist. \$40

Tues, 11/12 & 11/19, 6:00 – 7:00 pm H
Open to all ages/genders. Workshop will not focus on pre/postnatal issues.

Tai Chi

Class follows the 37-posture Yang short form. *10-week sessions begin in October & January. \$120

Level 1: Mon, 4:10 – 5:10 pm F
Fri, 2:00 – 3:00 pm F
Level 2: Mon, 5:15 – 6:15 pm F
Fri, 3:10 – 4:10 pm F **NEW!**

Boost Your Balance

Reduce your fall risk by improving balance & stability. \$55

Tuesdays, 2:00 – 3:00 pm ▼
Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:00 pm F

Feldenkrais for Self Care

Use playful movement to de-stress, ease pain & improve mobility. \$73

Tues, 12:15 – 1:15 pm ▼

Functional Fitness

Strength & cardio training to enhance stamina, mobility & bone health. \$46

Tues, 1:00 – 1:45 pm F
Wed, 10:00 – 10:45 am ▼
Sat, 9:00 – 9:45 am ▼

Seated Senior Fitness

Strengthen muscles & improve cardiovascular fitness while seated. \$84

Mon & Fri, 10:30 – 11:30 am ▼

Strength & Stretch for Seniors

Improve range of motion, muscle strength & bone health. \$46

Mon, 1:00 – 1:45 pm ▼
Tues, 10:30 – 11:15 am ▼
Thurs, 1:00 – 1:45 pm F

Seniorcise

Light cardio & exercises to maintain & regain strength & balance. *10-week sessions begin in September & January.

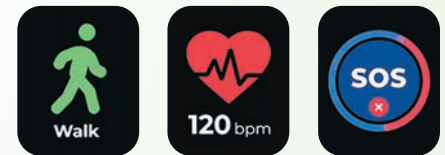
M/W/F with Azita. 9:00 – 10:00 am. \$210 ▼
T/Th with Robin. 9:00 – 10:00 am. \$140 ▼

With Lifeline Smartwatch, You're Never Alone

If you're looking for an on-the-go "help" system, the Lifeline Smartwatch is a compact, convenient option. The watch provides easy access to help at the press of a button while offering step tracking and heart rate measurement. Other features include:

- Bright touchscreen displays the date, time and battery status in a large, stacked format that is easy to read.
- GPS and Wi-Fi location technology sends assistance quickly wherever and whenever you need it.
- Built-in microphone and speaker allows direct communication with a trained care specialist when assistance is required.
- Fall detection option places a help call.
- Waterproof design with a battery life that is 2x more powerful than most smartwatch models on the market.
- 4G LTE keeps users connected without the need for a cellular contract or phone.

For more information, contact the Senior Health Department at seniorhealth@vhchealth.org or 703.558.6859.



Lifeline Smartwatch has step tracking, heart rate and SOS features.

SENIOR HEALTH

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

Alzheimer's & Dementia Caregiver Support Group

2nd Wednesday of every month
10:00 – 11:00 am

Senior Associates Program

Join today to take advantage of exclusive hospital benefits for adults 60 years and older. \$65/year for single; \$90/year for couple. Register at vhc.memberclicks.net or call 703.558.6970.

Lifeline Emergency Response

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

Walk-Fit

A free fitness program featuring walking, stretching & blood pressure checks.
Thurs, 8:30 – 9:30 am
Lubber Run Community Center

HEALTHY AGING LECTURE SERIES FREE

Falls Prevention Fair

Tues, 9/24, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Lubber Run Community Center
Fall risk assessment, exercises, medication review with pharmacist, blood pressure & vision screenings & more.

Supplements—To Take or Not to Take?

Fri, 10/11, 1:00 – 2:00 pm
Learn from a VHC Health Registered Dietician about myth vs. fact & some of the most common nutritional supplements. The presenter will discuss the role supplements may play in your overall health.

Self-Care & Caregiver Resilience Webinar

Fri, 11/22, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
A Certified Dementia Practitioner discusses how to develop a toolbox to stay resilient in the face of caregiver challenges.



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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

EXPANDING TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

VHC Health provides exceptional clinical services as our region's community health system. We are nationally recognized for the highest quality care and innovative technological advances.



VHC Health is the Official Women's Health Partner of the Washington Commanders.

