Sizzlin’ Summer Seafood
Your Heart Will Love

Listen Up for Healthy Summer Legs

Exercise – Your Prescription for a Healthy Heart

Cardiac Rehab & Beyond
Welcome to this new Heart to Heart feature. We’ll take a few minutes to get to know a member of WakeMed’s exceptional Heart & Vascular team by asking them five questions.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got into nursing?
I feel right at home here at WakeMed. It’s not only where I was born, but also where I began my career as a cardiovascular nurse 24 years ago. I decided to become a nurse after witnessing the trust people put in my mother, who was also a cardiac nurse. When I’m not working, I love softball, handbells and watching my girls dance, especially clogging.

Q. What do you love about Heart to Heart – and why it is important for patients to read it?
What I love most about Heart to Heart is that it keeps us connected with our patients between visits – and we hope everyone reads it because it allows our physicians and staff to share useful information to help you manage what can be an overwhelming journey through cardiovascular disease. You’ll notice this issue feels a little different. We’re excited about the new design and new features. We welcome feedback, so please let us know what you think.

Q. Job description aside, what is your role at WakeMed?
My most important job is listening to our patients and ensuring every decision I make supports our goal of delivering the best outcomes and greatest experience possible. As a leader, I focus on being a resource for our providers and staff, making their jobs easier so they can focus on our patients. Finally, I work with other leaders to ensure we hire the most brilliant, compassionate staff so we can preserve the incredible culture of caring that our patients have come to expect from us for 50+ years.

Q. What are your favorite summer activities?
I enjoy spending time at the pool, the beach or the mountains with my family – or walking our dog Sadie Mae. For me, summer is about taking time to slow down, sit on the porch and read.

Q. What are your favorite summer foods?
I love fresh pineapple and watermelon! When it comes to seafood – I like flounder and shrimp, but crab cakes are my top choice. I hope you all enjoy the heart-healthy seafood feature you’ll find in this issue.

Our new app makes it easy for patients and visitors to:
• Get turn-by-turn directions – from home, to the parking deck, to a destination in the hospital and then back to your parking spot
• Find a doctor and make an appointment
• Check wait times at our Emergency Departments and Urgent Care locations
• Access WakeMed MyChart and WakeMed Virtual Urgent Care
• Easily and securely pay your bill
www.wakemed.org/allaccess

The WakeMed App is made possible by the WakeMed Foundation.
Summer is here – it’s time for sun, fun, travel and leisure. For patients with heart failure, it’s an important time to carefully manage your condition – following your provider’s care plan and guidance. Here are a few tips to get you through the summer feeling your best.

1. **Follow Your Fluid Intake** – Fluid restrictions are tough in the summer, but it’s important not to drink more than 64 ounces of fluid per day. Other ideas for cooling down or battling thirst include taking a swim or sucking on a hard candy or a piece of frozen fruit.

2. **Watch for Signs of Dehydration** – Make sure you and your family members are aware of the common signs and symptoms of dehydration, which include: dizziness, weakness or confusion.

3. **Log Your Weight Daily** – Don’t take a vacation from this important daily task. Because it’s such a critical indicator of your condition, it’s one of the easiest ways to maintain control of how you feel by catching any changes early.

4. **Don’t Miss Your Meds** – If you go on vacation, be sure to pack your medications. Also, be sure to bring your doctor’s contact information with you. If you don’t have one yet, establish a WakeMed MyChart account so you can easily message your provider using your mobile device or computer (for non-urgent messages).

5. **Keep It Cool** – People with heart failure are more susceptible to heat-related illness, so limit your time outdoors to short outings and try to avoid direct sunlight. Get your exercise indoors or walk in the early morning/evening hours.
Why Your Heart Loves Seafood

When it comes to food, few categories can rival the health benefits of seafood. That’s because most seafood is low in calories, cholesterol and saturated fat – and also provides a great source of protein. In addition, the greatest unique benefit of seafood is the omega-3 fatty acids that are prevalent in many varieties of fish and marine life. This “magic ingredient” is well known for its heart-protective benefits – as well as its ability to prevent chronic disease and inflammation. Specific health conditions that have seen improvement with omega-3s include: high cholesterol (specifically, triglycerides), rheumatoid arthritis, depression, asthma, Alzheimer’s/dementia and ADHD.

Two of the best types of omega-3s are EPA and DHA – both of which are common in most varieties of seafood. The American Heart Association recommends eating fatty fish at least twice a week – or getting 0.5 to 1.8 grams of omega-3 fatty acids per day. Tuna, salmon, mackerel, herring and bluefish are among the highest in omega-3s, but common NC seafoods such as catfish, blue crab, shrimp and snapper also provide a good source.

Local Catch – Hot Summer Seafoods in NC

Fresh seafood tastes so much better than frozen seafood – and buying what’s in season is a great way to get affordable seafood all summer. According to the NC Department of Agriculture, here’s what you’re most likely to find in fish markets and restaurants in the summer months in our area.

- Black Sea Bass
- Blue Crab
- Clams
- Grouper
- Spanish Mackerel
- Mahi-Mahi
- Oysters
- Shrimp
- Snapper
- Tilefish
- Triggerfish
- Yellowfin Tuna

As North Carolinians, we’re incredibly fortunate to live relatively close to the coast. Just two hours away, there is an ocean full of abundant, heart-healthy seafood that can offer a great change of pace for your summer diet. From North Carolina snapper to catfish, blue crab and clams, indulging in the wealth of seafood our NC coast has to offer is a great way to sizzle up your summer – and get a heart healthy source of protein. If you’re unfamiliar with seafood or overwhelmed by how to shop for or prepare it – not to fret. We’ve put together this “snappy” guide to NC summer seafood in hopes that our heart patients will be adventurous enough to try incorporating these nutrient-rich, heart-healthy foods into your diet.
At the Market (or Grocery Store) – Shopping Tips

Knowing how to shop for seafood can be overwhelming if you don’t know where to go or what to look for. Here are a few considerations to keep in mind when you head to the market.

• **Buy Local.** Always ask if the fish is caught locally. Summer in NC is a great time to buy freshly caught fish.

• **Smell Before You Buy.** Fresh fish should not smell “fishy.” It should smell like the ocean!

• **Check the Texture.** When possible, feel the fish. It should be firm, yet springy enough to “bounce back” when you press on it. If it doesn’t, the fish is either old or has been frozen. The skin shouldn’t feel slimy to the touch.

• **Keep it Cool.** When you buy the fish, ensure it’s sealed in water-tight packaging and ideally, on ice. As soon as you get home, store it in the coldest part of your refrigerator – usually in the bottom toward the back.

• **Give it a Good Look.** Good fish should have a shiny flesh that’s uniformly colored. If it appears bruised or discolored, it may have been stored or handled improperly, which can impact the flavor.

In the Kitchen – Preparation Tips

There are so many heart healthy ways to prepare and serve seafood. While you may have been raised on calabash-style seafood, it’s best to stay away from anything deep fried. Using other cooking methods will actually allow you to appreciate the depth of flavor that the perfect blend of seafood and spices can provide. Here are some methods to try at home.

• **Saute/Pan Fry –** If you love the crunch of fried fish, this is a healthier alternative that lends itself to breaded fillets or salmon steaks. Get out your best non-stick pan and cooking spray, and be sure to get the pan nice and hot before you start.

• **Bake –** Baking is one of the heart healthiest and easiest ways to prepare fish – and works especially well for a thicker cut. To prevent drying, cover in foil.

• **Grill –** Summer is the perfect time for grilling fish, but save this method for fattier/meatier fish to prevent sticking. For best results, brush the grates with oil before you get started, and place the fish at least four inches above the heat source to avoid scorching and sticking.

• **Poach –** This simple cooking method involves cooking the fish in a heated liquid such as water/milk, cooking wine, stock and/or herbs. You’ll need just enough liquid to cover the fish, and keeping it at a low simmer will prevent crumbling/drying. You can use the leftover liquid to make a great, flavorful sauce.

• **Steam –** Steamed fish is great for a fast, flavorful meal. Using either a bamboo steamer or parchment paper in the oven, add your favorite spices, light sauces (think soy or citrus juice) and fast-cooking vegetables for great flavor. You’ll know it’s done when the center of the fish is warm.

• **Broil –** This speedy cooking method is great for fillets. Using a broiler rack coated in cooking spray, broil the fish for approximately five minutes or until it starts turning brown. Fish should flake easily with a fork. For a burst of flavor, drizzle with a blend of lemon juice, olive oil and your choice of spices.

• **Sous-Vide –** This French term teams “under vacuum,” and involves slow-cooking fish in a plastic pouch in a pot of water at a lower temperature. If you have a vacuum sealer, adding fresh herbs, a drizzle of olive oil and some lemon juice makes this an easy preparation method.

TIP

Heart Healthy Dining When Eating Out

If you prefer someone else do the cooking, it’s possible to enjoy heart healthy seafood in a restaurant. Your best bet is to stick to steamed, broiled or grilled options, but remember that restaurants tend to be heavy handed with butter, salt and olive oil. Stay away from cream sauces or anything fried. Talk to the chef or manager, and let them know you are a heart patient and need to hear about the healthiest options they have. “As a chef, I encourage patients not to shy away from asking for heart-healthy recipe modifications,” explains Adam Smith, CEC, CCA, WCEC, WakeMed Executive Chef. “Most chefs understand that food is medicine, and knowing we can help you stay healthy while enjoying a delicious meal is never an inconvenience.”

WakeMed Executive Chef
ADAM SMITH
Buy Local

Buying and preparing your own seafood allows you to control what goes into each meal so you can be 100% sure it’s heart healthy. Not sure where to get seafood locally? Here are a few great, local venues to buy fresh seafood.

Earp’s Seafood
1414 S. Saunders Street, Raleigh
(919) 833-3158

This historic Raleigh landmark has been providing fresh seafood from the NC coast for more than 50 years. Originally started by Mr. & Mrs. Herbert & Mary Earp, the market is still run by family today. They’re open from 8:30 am to 6 pm, Tuesday through Saturday (closed Sunday and Monday).

Madden’s Seafood
8401 Honeycutt Road, Raleigh
(910) 376-1900 | Maddenseafood.com

The pop-up style seafood market is just across from Lafayette Village in North Raleigh and is run by Raleigh local Scott Madden. Providing freshly-caught seafood from Surf City, NC on a weekly basis, they are open on Fridays and Saturdays and encourage you to pre-order to ensure you get what you’re looking for.

This seasonal summer recipe was created by WakeMed executive chef Adam C. Smith and takes advantage of one of our coast’s most plentiful and heart healthy fishes. flavored with cayenne pepper, the heat of the “snappy” dish can be easily adjusted by adding more or less cayenne.

“Snappy” North Carolina Red Snapper with Avocado Salsa

INGREDIENTS

Seasoning Rub for Snapper:

- 3 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 teaspoon fresh chopped thyme
- 1 teaspoon fresh chopped oregano
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

Avocado Salsa:

- 2 medium size ripe avocados, peeled and medium diced
- 1 jalapeño or serrano pepper, finely diced (optional)
- 1 tablespoon diced red onion
- 1 teaspoon rough chopped, fresh cilantro
- 1 Roma tomato, diced
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Red Snapper:

(4) 6-ounce, skin-on Red Snapper filets + 2 tablespoons olive oil for skillet

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Gently mix the ingredients for the avocado salsa together in a small mixing bowl, set in the refrigerator to chill while cooking the snapper.
2. Mix all of the seasoning rub ingredients in a small bowl.
3. Season the snapper by putting the rub on both sides.
4. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large, nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until hot (but not smoking).
5. Place snapper fillets, skin side down, in skillet, pressing on fish with a spatula for 1 minute to prevent curling. Cook until golden brown, typically about 5 minutes. Flip, and cook until opaque throughout, for two to three minutes more.
6. Serve with a small scoop of salsa on top. Enjoy!
Fighting Family History

Fuquay-Varina native Sammy Smith has known since a young age that when it comes to heart health, the odds were not in his favor. His father, Leon Samuel Smith, suffered a major heart attack at age 25 and from then on, had numerous other heart problems, including the need for a valve replacement. Years later, heart disease and cancer took a toll on his body. Sammy said goodbye to his father and best friend just after the birth of his own son – his dad was only 56 years old and never got to experience the joy of grandparenthood.

At this point, Sammy knew a heart healthy lifestyle was no longer optional and he worked tirelessly to ensure exercise became part of his everyday life. That’s why Sammy jumped into the fitness industry as the club owner of BodyWorx in 1991, which grew quickly. Years later, Sammy partnered with a local group of investors to open ClubWorx – a well-respected, large health and wellness center in Fuquay-Varina.

Even though he was an avid runner and workout fanatic for most of his life, Sammy began seeing a cardiologist in his 40s to keep close tabs on his heart health. Sammy chose Dr. Amarendra Reddy, the same cardiologist who had cared for his father – an exceptional physician who even attended his dad’s funeral. When Dr. Reddy retired after a long career as one of WakeMed’s most respected cardiologists in 2013, Sammy was fortunate to connect with one of his partners, Dr. Frances Wood. Dr. Wood continues to provide Sammy’s preventive checkups, routine care and interventions as needed.

Until 2015, it seemed that Sammy’s commitment to exercise was helping him beat the odds – until one day during his typical two-hour exercise routine, he started feeling some unusual twinges and pressure. Based on his family history, Sammy knew exactly what to do. He went straight to the WakeMed Heart Center for a stress test – one he failed pretty miserably due to a 99% blocked left anterior descending artery that is often dubbed the “widow maker” for its ability to cause a fatal heart attack. Fortunately for Sammy, an angioplasty and stent placement got him quickly back on his feet. He was exercising again in no time and feeling great. “Sammy was the perfect patient – he listened carefully to his body and didn’t delay when something felt amiss,” explains Dr. Wood. “Even so, with his family history, he is incredibly fortunate to have avoided a major heart attack.”

Four years passed without problems, until Sammy felt a familiar pressure in his chest during exercise – he just knew something wasn’t right. After a stress test and an EKG, it appeared things were OK, but Dr. Wood listened to Sammy’s concerns carefully and opted to perform an exploratory cath – just to be certain. Once again, Dr. Wood discovered that Sammy’s same artery was blocked a bit further down this time. Dr. Wood cleared the blockage and placed a stent – all using a transradial technique that allowed the procedure to be done through a simple incision in Sammy’s wrist. He was sent home the same day and felt immediate relief.

“When Sammy’s procedure was finished, I knew what his first question would be…”When can I exercise again?,” relayed Dr. Wood. “When you consider that Sammy’s relentless commitment to exercise is most likely what’s helped him fight heart disease thus far, I suggested he slowly ease back into it the next day. He was back to running his daily half marathon within a week.”

Sammy realizes how blessed he is to be here. “I am so fortunate to be alive and am enjoying every moment of being a new grandfather. It’s a privilege I couldn’t possibly take for granted.” Sammy’s sweet granddaughter, Nola is lucky to have him (and the WakeMed Heart Center) in the family.

“I am so grateful to have a great cardiology team on my side – listening to me and looking out for me, just like they did my father.”

SAMMY SMITH
Dr. Charles Helton Recognized for Philanthropy
At the 2019 WakeMed Foundation Appreciation Gala, held on April 13, William Charles Helton, MD, (WakeMed Heart & Vascular) was honored with the WakeMed Foundation’s Award for Philanthropic Leadership.

A founding member of a talented team of physicians who helped establish WakeMed’s world-class cardiovascular program, Dr. Helton’s commitment to helping people inspires his every action.

Welcome Dr. Ashish Patel
WakeMed Heart & Vascular welcomes Dr. Ashish Patel, who specializes in electrophysiology and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Patel joins us from Monmouth Cardiology Associates in Freehold, New Jersey, where he has been in private practice for more than a decade. Dr. Patel was very involved in clinical research efforts with Meridian Jersey Shore Medical Center, where he has served as principal investigator for nearly half a dozen clinical trials. Fellowship trained in both clinical cardiac electrophysiology and cardiovascular diseases at NYU Medical Center, Dr. Patel earned his medical degree and master’s degree in public health from New York Medical College. He recently served as a clinical assistant professor for the Seton Hall School of Medicine and as the director of emerging technology at Hackensack Meridian Jersey Shore University Medical Center. Dr. Patel sees patients in the WakeMed Heart Center. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Patel to the team.

New Vascular Surgery Office Now Open in Cary
WakeMed Heart & Vascular Physicians is pleased to announce a new vascular surgery office in Cary – located at 300 Ashville Avenue near WakeMed Cary Hospital. Here, Dr. Jacek Paszkowiak treats patients with a wide range of vascular conditions, including peripheral arterial disease (PAD) and venous disease/varicose veins. Dr. Paszkowiak performs procedures both in the office and at WakeMed Cary Hospital.

Heart Center Lobby Work Continues
Our work to renovate the Heart Center Lobby continues throughout the summer – thank you for your continued patience during construction. Portions of the lobby may be closed – please pay close attention to the signs and ask a member of our team if you need any assistance. The project should be completed this fall – stay tuned for more details!

SAVE THE DATE – 2019 Heart Walk
Sunday, September 22
2 pm, PNC Arena, Raleigh
Heart Failure Support Group – Upcoming Meetings

Sunday, July 28
WakeMed Heart Center Lobby; 3 pm
Topic: Exercise for a Healthy Heart

Sunday, November 3,
WakeMed Heart Center Lobby; 3 pm
Topic: Heart Healthy Holiday Cooking

WakeMed Receives Top Honors for Stroke & Heart Failure Care
In June, the WakeMed Raleigh Campus & WakeMed Cary Hospital earned the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines® Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes our commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence. This honor also recognizes WakeMed for being speedy, which is critical since every second treatment is delayed could result in long-term damage to the brain.

Similarly, both the Raleigh Campus and Cary Hospital were recognized for their commitment to exceptional heart failure care for adhering to the latest scientific treatment guidelines. The Raleigh Campus earned the Get With the Guidelines® Heart Failure Gold Plus designation, which recognizes 24+ months of consecutive achievement; and Cary Hospital earned the Silver Plus designation, which recognizes 12+ months of consecutive achievement.

Congratulations to our heart failure and stroke teams!

Mended Hearts of the Triangle – Upcoming Events
While the Mended Hearts of the Triangle typically meets monthly, we take a break in the summer due to travel and vacation schedules. We'll resume our meetings in September where we will continue to offer support, education and activities for heart disease patients, their families and medical professionals in the cardiology field. Upcoming meetings include:

Monday, September 16
WakeMed Heart Center Conference Center (3rd Floor)
11:30 am to 1 pm
(Heart healthy cooking demo/sampling experience)

Sunday, September 22
Heart Walk, PNC Arena
2 pm
Join the Mended Hearts walk team by contacting Hazel Covington at (919) 350-6888 or hcovington@wakemed.org.

Monday, October 21
WakeMed Heart Center Conference Center (3rd Floor)
11:30 am to 1 pm
Topic: Fall Sprawl Open House – Join us to learn all about Mended Hearts. All are welcome to attend, talk with members or just enjoy a listening ear.

Saturday, November 16
Nantucket Grill, 1145 Falls River Ave., Raleigh
6:30 pm
Topic: We Give Thanks! Celebration of Being Alive & Helping Others

Monday, December 16
WakeMed Heart Center Conference Center (3rd Floor)
11:30 am to 1 pm
Topic: Celebrating Those Who Have Helped Us
(We’ll be distributing holiday cards and candy to the nursing units)
Our legs do a really good job of signaling potential health problems – but too often, we're not listening. The vascular surgeons and peripheral vascular specialists at WakeMed Heart & Vascular encourage you to take inventory of your legs – how they look, when and where they ache or get sore – and when they feel just fine. Listen to your legs “talk” to you, as they can be a key indicator of your overall health.

"While many assume leg pain is a normal part of aging – in truth, it’s a symptom you should take very seriously."

JACEK PASZKOWIAK, MD, FACS
WakeMed Heart & Vascular
Vascular Surgeon

“While many assume leg pain is a normal part of aging – in truth, it’s a symptom you should take very seriously,” explains Dr. Jacek Paszkowiak, WakeMed Heart & Vascular. “Some health conditions that cause leg pain can be life-threatening, but if identified early can be treated very effectively. Always talk to your doctor about any significant changes to your health – even if they come on gradually.”

**Listen to Your Legs – Vascular Disease Talks**

**Legs: “I hurt when I’m walking or standing – but feel completely fine when you let me rest.”**

Dr. P: This leg symptom is known to doctors as “claudication” and it’s the medical term for pain, discomfort, tiredness or numbness in the legs that occurs while you’re walking or standing, but the discomfort is better with rest. Both legs are typically affected in the same manner.

**Possible Diagnosis:** Peripheral arterial disease, otherwise known as PAD.

**Legs: “I’m on my feet a LOT, and I ache anytime I’m upright – whether it’s standing or walking. As soon as I am elevated, the discomfort is gone.”**

Dr. P: People with this leg symptom often claim their legs feel “tired” or “heavy” after a long day and just assume it’s normal. In most cases, the discomfort impacts both legs equally.

**Possible Diagnosis:** Venous disease and/or varicose veins

**Legs: “I just started feeling crampy and sore. I may be red or discolored and warm to the touch.”**

Dr. P: This leg symptom often comes on suddenly and typically affects only one leg. It may occur after long bouts of sitting or inactivity – such as while on a long flight, after surgery or while on bed rest.

**Possible Diagnosis:** Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

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**New Exercise Program for Peripheral Artery Disease Pain**

If you have been diagnosed with peripheral artery disease (PAD), you may be eligible for WakeMed Rehabilitation’s new Peripheral Artery Disease Structured Exercise Therapy (PAD SET), which can help improve your endurance, pain and the distance you can walk.

**The first PAD SET program begins Monday, July 15.**

**PAD SET Class Information**

- PAD SET classes are held Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 8 to 9:15 am at WakeMed Healthworks on the WakeMed Raleigh Campus, 3000 New Bern Avenue.
- 3 sessions a week for 12 weeks
- Come dressed to exercise!
- Currently, Medicare and Medicare MAPS cover PAD SET.

**Access to PAD SET**

You will need a referral from your physician to participate. You and your health care provider are welcome to call WakeMed Rehabilitation Certified Clinical Exercise Specialist Hope Choplin at 919-350-7068 for additional information and to register.
Leg Problems, Explained

Understanding PAD
Peripheral artery disease (PAD) is serious business. It’s a circulatory problem where narrowed arteries reduce blood flow to your limbs resulting in leg pain (due to lack of circulation). Oftentimes, it’s a sign of more widespread plaque build-up (atherosclerosis) throughout your body, and the narrowing of the vessels associated with PAD can result in reduced blood flow to the heart, brain and legs. The most serious health risks for those with PAD are stroke or heart attack.

There are multiple treatment options for PAD, starting with the most conservative approaches such as lifestyle modifications including diet, exercise and smoking cessation or medication therapy. If unsuccessful, treatment options include angioplasty and/or stenting – which can be performed either through open surgery or an endovascular (minimally-invasive) approach.

“For some reason, PAD doesn’t seem to get the attention that heart disease gets – but it’s every bit as serious,” explains Dr. Paszkowiak. “In fact, the five-year mortality rate is higher than it is for breast cancer. That’s why I tell patients to take leg pain seriously, and if diagnosed with PAD, finding a vascular surgeon who is trained in both open and endovascular techniques can provide you with all the treatment options available so you can make an informed decision.”

Understanding Venous Disease
Venous disease – also known as venous insufficiency, is most common in people who are on their feet for long periods of time for their work – so teachers, nurses, chefs/cooks, surgeons, etc., are most at risk. That’s because venous disease is mostly about gravity – the veins in the legs are under a great deal of pressure – especially for people who are on their feet the majority of the day.

Dr. Hemant Solomon, cardiologist and vascular specialist with WakeMed Heart & Vascular explains that while varicose veins and venous disease aren’t typically life-threatening, they can cause serious discomfort and have a real impact on quality of life. “While healthy veins have valves that function well to facilitate blood flow, over time these valves become damaged. It often starts with varicose veins, leg pain, and swelling – but can progress if left untreated. Nearly half the population suffer from some form of venous insufficiency, but many don’t realize there are many treatment options to help you get some relief.”

Dr. Solomon further explains there once was a painful therapy called “vein stripping” which has been replaced with simple techniques such as thermal ablation or microfoam ablation (also known as varithena) – both of which are done right in the office and cause very little to no pain. First-line conservative therapy includes the use of compression stockings, which can help slow the progression of venous disease. “Anyone who spends the majority of their day on their feet can benefit from wearing them – even before symptoms begin. Prevention is the best treatment of all.”

Understanding DVT
Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when there’s a blood clot in a deep vein. Because it’s life-threatening, it’s important to know if you’re at risk. Risk factors include family history of DVT, age (over 40+), pregnancy/recent childbirth, inactivity, overweight/obesity, or other health problems such as inflammatory bowel disease, heart or lung disease. Most providers start treating DVT with medication therapy and progress to surgery only if the clot doesn’t clear up on its own or gets worse.

“If you have DVT symptoms and any of the common risk factors, it’s critical to talk with your physician as soon as possible,” explains Dr. Paszkowiak. “A primary care or emergency room physician can evaluate you and order the diagnostic tests needed to check for DVT.”

HEMANT SOLOMON,
MD, FACC, RPVI
WakeMed Heart and Vascular
Cardiologist and Vascular Specialist

Leg Problems Not Associated with Vascular Disease
There are numerous other medical conditions that can cause pain or discomfort in the legs – which aren’t associated with vascular disease. Among the most common are:

• Back or Spine Problems
• Peripheral Neuropathy (nerve damage in the legs)
• Arthritis in the Bones and/or Joints

These problems can’t be addressed by a vascular surgeon, but shouldn’t be ignored. Start by talking with your primary care physician about any of these issues.
While science changes frequently when it comes to medicine, one fact remains undisputed: exercise is probably the single greatest thing you can do to enhance, improve or turn your health around – regardless of your age or health considerations. According to the Centers for Disease Prevention & Control, regular physical activity is vital for healthy aging and can reduce the burden of chronic diseases and prevent early death. The CDC also says that active people are not only at less risk for heart disease, but also for other serious health problems such as Type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers.

While most of us know that exercise is great for preventing heart disease, it’s equally great for people who have been diagnosed with heart disease. However, many heart patients express concern about how to exercise safely – especially those who have recently suffered from a cardiovascular event or have undergone a heart procedure.

“So often, I hear fear and apprehension in my patient’s voices when we talk about exercising,” explains cardiologist Dr. Bhavani Balaravi. “It can be overwhelming to start an exercise program when you’re worried about your heart health – particularly for patients who haven’t been active in the past. The truth is – in many cases, exercise works better to improve health than any combination of medications we can prescribe, so it’s worth fighting through the fear. Rather than avoid exercise, we encourage patients to make a plan with their physician for safe exercise.”

Recommendations for Adults
According to the American Heart Association

- Get at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity, or a combination of both, preferably spread throughout the week.
- Add moderate- to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity (such as resistance or weights) on at least two days per week.
- Spend less time sitting. Even light-intensity activity can offset some of the risks of being sedentary.
- Gain even more benefits by being active at least 300 minutes (five hours) per week.
- Increase amount and intensity gradually over time.
Cardiac Rehab

Cardiac Rehab is an excellent option for patients who have recently suffered a heart attack, those with heart failure, stable angina, or patients who have undergone a surgery or procedure such as cardiac bypass surgery, stent placement/angioplasty or valve repair or replacement. The program requires a physician’s order and for those who meet the criteria above, Cardiac Rehab is typically covered by Medicare and most insurance plans.

WakeMed’s Cardiac Rehab program includes a group of fellow heart patients exercising together with the support and supervision of nurses, exercise specialists, nutritionists, counselors and physician oversight. Most participants attend three times per week for up to 36 sessions. A full clinical assessment including an EKG, blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen are taken at the start of each class. The class also includes a combination of cardiovascular exercise and strength training, and each session is tailored to the specific needs and considerations of the individual.

While the physical activity portion of cardiac rehab is just what the doctor ordered, most patients appreciate the camaraderie and support they get by being surrounded by people who have similar health conditions and understand what they’re going through. After all, a diagnosis of heart disease can be really overwhelming and intimidating. That’s why sharing experiences, tips and even fears with fellow patients can help participants work through their diagnosis in a very supportive and healthy way.

“I’ve been very active for most of my life, but after you have a cardiac event, exercise can be scary,” explains two-time graduate of Cardiac Rehab Mary England. “Cardiac Rehab gives you the tools and supervision to be successful – and the camaraderie reminds you that you’re not alone.”

Safeway to Fitness

When patients complete their Cardiac Rehab program, many don’t have the confidence to continue an exercise program on their own.

WakeMed’s Safeway to Fitness program is an incredible (and affordable!) opportunity for any WakeMed heart patient to get the exercise they need without worrying about insurance coverage – all with the support of a structured program overseen by many of the same team members who lead our Cardiac Rehab programs.

“I absolutely love Safeway to Fitness – I’ve been coming three times a week for over a year. At one point, I left to join a gym closer to home, but was disappointed that there was no one available to help me. The structure and support of this program is what keeps me coming back – I call it my ‘Cardiac Breakfast Club,’ explains participant Don Iannucci.

For just $5 per class, participants can attend as often as they like (it’s offered three times per week). Each class includes warm-up, exercise and cool-down, as well as some of the comforting clinical elements of Cardiac Rehab, including evaluation of blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen.

Another great thing about Safeway to Fitness is that spouses or family members can join right alongside. This helps patients feel supported by their loved ones and have some accountability to attend.

The DIY Exercise Plan – Options to Consider

For patients who don’t need the structure that comes with Cardiac Rehab or Safeway to Fitness, you can create your own plan using any combination of these ideas.

Remember to talk with your physician before getting started on any exercise plan.

1. Visit a local gym and work out with a friend or family member.
2. Hire a personal trainer and develop an exercise program tailored to your needs.
3. If you’re tech-savvy, there are dozens of online exercise program options. Download an app, or just watch free YouTube exercise videos.
4. Invest in a treadmill, elliptical machine or exercise bike and get your exercise at home.
5. Join a team, troop or tribe! Whether you like tennis, basketball, golf, water aerobics or yoga – find a structured group activity you enjoy and get started!
TCAR for Treatment of Carotid Artery Disease

Patients with carotid artery disease who need a blockage removed but are at high risk for surgery have a new, minimally-invasive treatment option at WakeMed Raleigh Campus. TransCarotid Artery Revascularization (known as TCAR), is a newer treatment option that offers better outcomes and is less invasive than conventional treatments. In fact, the rate of stroke following the TCAR procedure is only 1.4% in high-risk patients, as compared with rates ranging from 2.3 to 4.1% for open surgical procedures such as carotid endarterectomy (CEA) or transfemoral carotid artery stenting.

The TCAR procedure uses an innovative device called the ENROUTE® Transcarotid Neuroprotection System, which isolates the blockage from forward blood flow (which can cause stroke) during stent placement by reversing blood flow away from the brain to protect against dangerous debris from reaching the brain during the procedure. More than 5,000 TCAR procedures have been performed across the country, with WakeMed being the first in Wake County to offer the treatment. The first case was performed in May at the WakeMed Raleigh Campus by vascular surgeon Dr. Joseph Salfity, WakeMed Heart & Vascular. The entire TCAR procedure takes less than half the time of a CEA, limiting stress on the heart and significantly decreasing the risk of the patient having a stroke or heart attack during the procedure.

“This procedure is another great option we now have for the treatment of carotid artery disease in high-risk patients.”

JOSEPH SALFITY, MD
WakeMed Heart & Vascular
Vascular Surgery

EVAR for Repair of Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

Historically, repairing an abdominal aortic aneurysm (which is an abnormal enlargement of the abdominal aorta) required a major open abdominal surgery – taking patients approximately a month to recover. Now, WakeMed is pleased to offer a new, minimally-invasive treatment option known as endovascular aortic repair (EVAR).

Using small incisions in the groin, vascular surgeons place a graft (a woven tube covered by a metal mesh support) to reinforce the walls of the aorta to prevent rupture.

In May, vascular surgeon Dr. Jacek Paszkowiak, WakeMed Heart & Vascular – Vascular Surgery, performed WakeMed’s first EVAR case at WakeMed Cary Hospital. “This procedure is another treatment option we’re pleased to offer to our patients who need treatment, but don’t want to or can’t withstand a major open surgical procedure,” explains Dr. Paszkowiak. “In research studies, EVAR patients recover more quickly and the data also suggests survival rates may be higher than with open surgery.”
Antibacterial “Envelope” to Prevent Infections of Cardiac Implantable Device

Dr. Marc Silver, WakeMed Heart & Vascular Physicians, participated in a clinical trial whose results were presented at the American College of Cardiology’s 68th Annual Scientific Sessions (ACC.19) and was a contributing author for the study’s results published in the March 17, 2019, New England Journal of Medicine.

The Worldwide Randomized Antibiotic Envelope Infection Prevention Trial (WRAP-IT), conducted by Medtronic, looked at patients who have cardiac implantable electronic devices (CIEDs) – such as pacemakers or implantable cardioverter defibrillators – who often contract major infections or infections at the site of the implant. The randomized, controlled trial studied an absorbable, antibiotic-coated “envelope” called TYRX that wraps the implantable device before placed inside the patient. The study found that the envelope, in addition to standard antibiotics prescribed by physicians, was significantly more effective at preventing infections in patients receiving implantable CIEDs than those patients who received the CIED and only peri-operative antibiotics. Dr. Silver and the WakeMed Heart & Vascular team enrolled and followed 100 patients as part of the (WRAP-IT) study.

JAMA Surgery Publishes ERAS Care Guidelines for Post-Surgical Patients

As featured in the Winter 2019 Heart to Heart, an innovative new protocol for heart surgery patients known as Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS Cardiac) is getting national notice. This protocol was pioneered by WakeMed’s Dr. Judson Williams (WakeMed Heart & Vascular Physicians – Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery) and Gina McConnell, BSN, RN, among numerous other leading heart surgeons, anesthesiologists and critical care specialists from across the world. This spring, the ERAS Cardiac care guidelines were published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Surgery – and quickly became the most viewed article on the JAMA website.

Excerpt from the JAMA Surgery News Release

The ERAS Society Guideline Recommendations were developed through a two-year formal process to provide cardiac surgical programs with evidence-based protocols to enhance patient recovery following heart surgery. The ERAS Cardiac group’s mission is to facilitate optimization of the perioperative care of cardiac surgical patients, through collaborative discovery, analysis, expert consensus, and dissemination of best practices that will improve both short and long-term outcomes and value and decrease complications and readmissions.

“This work was possible due to this extraordinary group of international experts who dedicated their valuable personal time away from clinical practice, families, and other commitments,” said Dr. Judson Williams, recipient of the first Center of Excellence Award and author of the first US-based ERAS Cardiac results. “This is a critical first step toward a systematic outline of evidence-based best practice, for perioperative cardiac surgical care. The next steps will be to collaboratively implement ERAS protocols, standardize the continuous audit, and set benchmarks for outcomes.”

Congratulations to Dr. Williams, Gina and the entire WakeMed ERAS Cardiac team for their incredible commitment to helping heart surgery patients recover with better outcomes.
Back to the land.
Roll up your sleeves, play in the dirt and see what grows.

You garden because it’s what you love to do and you want to share it with those you love. At WakeMed Orthopaedics, we diagnose and treat everything from aches and pains to knees, hips and more. We specialize in injury prevention. Our physical rehab team helps speed your recovery. And, before you know it, you’re back in the garden cultivating your relationship with your granddaughter. Learn more at ortho.wakemed.org.

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