Robots in surgery: fast healing, less pain
Spring is a time of renewal, hope and new beginnings.

In this issue of Healthy Living, we feature new advances in health care technology that are transforming people’s lives.

MultiCare is home to some of the most innovative technology available on the West Coast and across the country. For example, RapidArc technology, now available at our Tacoma and Gig Harbor locations, pinpoints cancer patients’ tumors, delivering precise, powerful radiation therapy in a few short minutes with less tissue damage than with traditional methods.

MultiCare is one of fewer than a dozen health systems in the world to offer RapidArc and the only one in the state of Washington.

For cancer, cardiac, stroke and neuroscience patients, and for high-risk pregnant women and fragile newborns, we have the technology and expertise to provide the most advanced treatment right here in our community. Our leading-edge robotic-assisted surgery program also offers less-invasive options for men and women facing urologic and gynecologic surgery.

And we are one of the few health care systems in the country to use a complete electronic health record for patients—which we use in all our clinics and three of our four hospitals. This secure system lets us provide safer, more streamlined and better coordinated care.

Technological advances are exciting, yet medicine is more than a science—it’s an art as well. That’s why we are equally focused on providing compassionate, personalized care to everyone we serve. Nothing gives me more pride than receiving letters from patients whose lives we’ve touched.

A mother whose 6-month-old baby was admitted to MultiCare Good Samaritan Hospital recently wrote: “The day-shift nurse who came every morning was like a ray of sunshine. And there was a very soothing nurse. Her demeanor was so comforting. Even the staff at the desk and the housekeepers—absolutely everyone we interacted with—were skilled and compassionate. I am so grateful for the care my family received.”

We are grateful for the opportunity to care for families in our community.

Diane Cecchettini, RN
President and CEO
MultiCare Health System
MultiCare climbs to No. 6 in new Top 100 list

MultiCare is now ranked No. 6 nationally on an annual list of integrated health networks (IHN) compiled by SDI (formerly Verispan). Five Pacific Northwest health systems made the list, with MultiCare earning the highest place of the five.

The 2009 Top 100 IHN list ranks local and regional networks across the United States that meet key success factors in eight categories: integration, integrated technology, services and access, financial stability, hospital utilization, outpatient utilization, physicians, and contractual capabilities.

This is the seventh consecutive year MultiCare has ranked in the top 100, more than any other integrated health network in Washington state.

Visit [www.sdihealth.com/IHN/main.aspx](http://www.sdihealth.com/IHN/main.aspx) for more information and the full Top 100 list.

New breast center benefits whole community

In a joint effort with Franciscan Health System and TRA Medical Imaging and with support and funding from the Gary E. Milgard Family Foundation, MultiCare has worked to create a new, independent and centralized state-of-the-art breast health imaging facility for our entire community's benefit.

The nonprofit Carol Milgard Breast Center, at 4525 S. 19th St. in Tacoma, is named in honor of Carol Milgard, a long-time Tacoma resident, philanthropist and 30-year breast cancer survivor. The center is uniquely positioned to deliver the highest quality diagnostic care while significantly decreasing screening-to-diagnosis times, and it offers a full suite of screening and diagnostic services, including digital mammography and bone density screening.

Schedule your appointment by calling 253.759.2622 or toll-free 866.758.2622.

MultiCare's Breast Health services in Tacoma, which was located in the Allenmore C building, is now closed. Records from all patients who received services at that location have been transferred to Tacoma General Hospital. You can request patient records by calling 253.403.2308. MultiCare Breast Health services are still available in Gig Harbor (screening only) and South King County.

For more information about the new Carol Milgard Breast Center, visit [www.carolmilgardbreastcenter.org](http://www.carolmilgardbreastcenter.org).
GIG HARBOR

Pediatric GI clinic expands

The Mary Bridge Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition Clinic has expanded its team and outpatient clinic locations to include Gig Harbor, offering services for families closer to home. Our team provides consultation to referring physicians and comprehensive care for children with a broad range of gastrointestinal, liver and nutritional problems, including:

- Abdominal pain
- Constipation
- Failure to thrive
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Acute and chronic liver disease

Families benefit from the skills and expertise of our entire multidisciplinary team, which includes pediatric gastroenterologists, dietitians, social workers and GI technicians, all dedicated to delivering the best possible care.

Pediatric GI clinic services are also available in Tacoma, Covington, Olympia, Puyallup and Silverdale. Call 253.403.3131 for more information.

GOOD SAMARITAN

Robotics program takes off

Good Samaritan Hospital has improved East Pierce County residents’ access to robotic-assisted surgical procedures. The hospital’s robotics program officially launched in February with the introduction of the hospital’s new da Vinci Robotic Surgical System.

The da Vinci system was brought to Good Samaritan Hospital with the help of philanthropy and specific funding from The Campaign for Good Samaritan, which will also fund a series of technologic, clinical and environment-of-care enhancements to the hospital’s new Patient Care Tower scheduled to open early in 2011.

For more information about The Campaign for Good Samaritan, please contact Good Samaritan Foundation Executive Director Barb Herbert at 253.697.2830. To learn more about robotic-assisted surgery, see page 8.

SOUTH KING COUNTY

MultiCare Regional Cancer Center opens new Auburn clinic

MultiCare Regional Cancer Center has expanded its cancer care services in South King County. Our new clinic, located at 925 Auburn Way N. in Auburn, offers easily accessible cancer treatment options to the community.

The new Auburn clinic features seven chemotherapy treatment stations that include amenities such as in-chair DVD players. Radiation consultations will be available weekly, which can be a gateway for patients to access the region’s best radiation treatment technology.

MultiCare Regional Cancer Center’s affiliation with the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance also helps connect our patients to world-renowned expertise and some of the latest clinical trials.

For more information about MultiCare Regional Cancer Center’s services throughout Pierce and South King counties, visit multicare.org/cancer.
Healthy Reflections Medical & Day Spa, with locations in Gig Harbor and Covington, has launched new services:

- **Velashape™** (Gig Harbor only)—the only nonsurgical treatment cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that contours, shapes and slims the body by improving cellulite and reducing circumference. Velashape treats the deeper tissue, offering a measurable reduction in fat layers, circumference and the upper layers of the skin, resulting in cellulite reduction.

- **Wellness treatment** (both locations)—Stay healthy with our rejuvenating wellness treatment from Elizabeth Essentials. Pure, organic essential oil blends reduce the amount of harmful toxins in the body and boost the immune system.

To schedule an appointment call:
- **Covington:** 253.372.7008
- **Gig Harbor:** 253.530.8005

Visit [multicare.org/spa](http://multicare.org/spa) for a full list of spa services and current specials.
A GENERATION OR two ago, it was considered sound medical advice for pregnant women to eat whatever they wanted and avoid physical activity as much as possible. But today we know that watching your weight and keeping active shouldn’t stop just because you are pregnant.

Eat for one

Long gone are the days when the idea of a pregnant woman “eating for two” had any kind of validity.

“Pregnant women need additional nutrients to keep themselves and their babies healthy,” says Janice Agen, ARNP, with the Women’s Health and Wellness Center at MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park. “However, according to the American Dietetic Association, a pregnant woman needs only 300 calories a day more than she did pre-pregnancy.”

While weight gain is inevitable with pregnancy, a good rule of thumb to follow is to gain about half a pound a week, says James Majors, MD, an OB/GYN with MultiCare’s Fairview Women’s Center.

The types of foods women eat when they’re pregnant are also extra important.

“Eating a balanced diet in the appropriate distribution of the basic food pyramid groups is especially important in pregnancy,” says Monica Abbi, MD, with MultiCare OB/GYN Associates in Tacoma.

A good daily guideline, Agen says, is for pregnant women to try to eat seven or more servings of fruits and vegetables (total); six to nine servings of whole-grain or enriched breads and/or cereals; four or more servings of low-fat or nonfat milk, yogurt, cheese or other dairy products; and 60 grams of protein.

Taking 400 micrograms of folic acid, a B vitamin, each day can also help prevent birth defects. Taking a daily prenatal vitamin is recommended as well.

A not-so-delicate condition

When it comes to getting physical, modern thinking has also dropped the idea that a pregnant woman is a delicate creature. “Pregnancy is not a time to get in shape,” Dr. Majors says. “But it’s a time to stay in shape.”

“Thirty minutes or more of moderate exercise per day on most, if not all, days of the week is recommended for pregnant women,” Dr. Abbi says.

While contact sports and extreme physical activity, such as SCUBA or sky diving, should be ruled out for the duration of your pregnancy, you can do nearly any other activity that you participated in before pregnancy, as long as you are otherwise healthy and your provider hasn’t advised against it.

Besides helping keep moms-to-be fit, exercising regularly while pregnant can have other benefits.

“Exercise can help reduce backache, constipation, bloating and swelling,” Agen says. “It increases energy, improves mood and posture, and promotes muscle tone, sleep, strength and endurance.”

For information about the range of services for women and newborns we offer throughout the South Sound region, visit multicare.org/womens-health.
Health care 2.0
Our patients are plugged in. We are too.

YOUR COMPUTER LETS you shop at home, pay bills and even video conference with your friends around the globe. Staying connected around the clock is easy, and you expect the same hands-on convenience in a safe and secure environment from your health care provider.

A national survey indicated that more than 80 percent of Internet users consult online sources to research medical symptoms and conditions. A majority of consumers also want to make appointments, see test results and read electronic medical records using their own computers.

MultiCare knows how important it is to stay connected to the information you need, which is why wireless Internet access and patient computer kiosks are available at all our hospitals. MultiCare has also launched several online tools to help you organize some of your health needs at home.

Get started at multicare.org. Click on “Health information” to access MultiCare’s range of online health resources. (See below.)

In addition, patients who have a primary care doctor at MultiCare* can click “MyMultiCare” to sign up for online access to their doctor’s office.

Once you’re registered, you can:
• Schedule, cancel or confirm appointments
• Request prescription renewals
• Access results from medical tests
• Request referrals to specialists
• Print a health information wallet card
• See information about your recent medical visits

“People are busy and their time is important,” says Mark Murphy, MD, a board-certified family medicine specialist with MultiCare. “When they wonder, ‘When was my last tetanus shot?’ they can go right online and find out.

“The tools are user-friendly,” he says. “You don’t have to be computer-savvy to master them or benefit from them.”

All personal and medical information is private and carefully protected. That’s why you’ll need to register before accessing private information. Your MultiCare provider can give you the personal access code that you’ll need. Or you can request your code by visiting multicare.org and clicking on “MyMultiCare.”

*My MultiCare is not yet available in East Pierce County clinics.

MultiCare’s online tools can help you stay healthy.

MultiCare’s online health services include:
• A health library to research medical conditions, tests and medications
• KidsHealth, a site dedicated to kids’ health topics
• CarePages, free, private web pages to share information, photos and messages about loved ones in the hospital
• Healthy Connections, audio files of MultiCare’s weekly radio show
• Online enrollment for classes and events
• Online bill-pay option

Visit multicare.org to get started!

Partnering with patients
“GOOD MORNING,” reads the computer screen on the daVinci Robotic Surgical System.

This mechanical greeting is one of the first things patients see when they are wheeled into the operating suite for robotic-assisted surgery. Though robotic-assisted surgery has been around for a while now, its uses are growing, and so is the number of patients who will encounter the robot.

Of course, the screen welcome really comes from the surgical team, not the machine. “We have gotten in the habit of writing the patient’s name on the screen, so when they are brought into surgery, it appears the robot is greeting them,” says John Lenihan, MD, Medical Director of Robotics and Minimally Invasive Surgery at MultiCare.

This is just one of the ways Dr. Lenihan and others at MultiCare are working to make patients more comfortable with robotic-assisted surgery. There are also educational materials available on the MultiCare website and “meet the robot” events organized by MultiCare.

For the most part, people warm to the robot quickly, Dr. Lenihan says.

However, he reminds patients, “The surgeon is still doing the surgery. The robot is just a device that helps us do it better.”

The robot provides clearer vision and more precision, but MultiCare surgeons believe it is their years of experience that lead to positive surgical outcomes.

“We have very experienced and advanced surgeons doing really interesting surgery that no one else in our area is doing,” Dr. Lenihan says.

The reason for pushing the boundaries of robotic-assisted surgery: patients, of course.

“Robotic surgery gives us the opportunity to provide the same long-term outcomes as traditional open surgeries, but the patients have a much better experience with less pain and much faster healing,” Dr. Lenihan says. “This is clearly the direction that we as surgeons want to go.”
The surgeon is still doing the surgery. The robot is just a device that helps us do it better.” —John Lenihan, MD

MultiCare surgeons say, in fact, that patients experience less blood loss, shorter hospital stays and fewer complications with robotic-assisted surgery than patients having traditional open surgery. Patients often get back to their normal activities sooner and usually face fewer physical limitations.

Robotic-assisted surgery at MultiCare
By acquiring a daVinci robot in June 2005, MultiCare moved to the forefront of robotic-assisted surgery in the South Sound. Dr. Lenihan was the first surgeon in the Northwest to offer robotic hysterectomies and other gynecologic procedures. Today, MultiCare continues to be a leader in gynecologic and urologic robotic-assisted surgery and is expanding the use of the robot into the realm of cardiothoracic surgery.

While use of the robot has become common in prostate surgery, David “Champ” Weeks, MD, and Douglas Sutherland, MD, partners in MultiCare Urology of Tacoma, use the robot for a variety of other urologic procedures.

“Frankly, we think the robot gives us a better chance to do a better surgery for our patients, so we don’t think it is right to reserve the robot for prostate surgery,” Dr. Sutherland says. They have used the robot to reconstruct a kidney, remove a kidney tumor and remove a cancerous bladder.

In fact, Dr. Weeks was the first surgeon in the state of Washington to use the robot to perform a bladder removal for invasive cancer. The partners have also performed more than 50 robotic partial nephrectomies, a surgery in which a cancerous tumor is removed from a kidney. “By using the robot, we can preserve many kidneys that patients might otherwise lose,” Dr. Weeks says.

Charles Anderson, MD, of MultiCare Cardiothoracic Surgical Associates, has been performing thoracic surgery with the robot for about a year and a half. “We have done lung biopsies, removed lymph nodes, and evaluated and treated masses of the chest wall. We are also operating on the pericardium, the sac that surrounds the heart,” Dr. Anderson says. The hope is to expand the program and move on to more complex cardiac operations, especially mitral valve repair. This is being done in a way that ensures patient safety always comes first.

Dr. Lenihan has a last word of advice for people who must undergo surgery. “Make sure to explore all the options. There are a multitude of brand-new minimally invasive surgeries, including robotic surgery, that can offer a lot of advantages if you can find the doctors and hospitals that can provide them to you,” he says.

Robotic-assisted surgery comes to Good Samaritan
The MultiCare Robotic-Assisted Surgery program has expanded with the acquisition of a robot for use at Good Samaritan Hospital.

Now robotic prostate cancer surgeries will be available at Good Samaritan as well as Tacoma General and Allenmore.

Kenneth Berger, MD, a urologist in Puyallup, is excited to be one of the first doctors to perform robotic-assisted surgery at Good Samaritan. “We will begin using it for prostate surgery, but then will add gynecologic procedures,” he says.

Dr. Berger and others have been working hard to bring a robot to Good Samaritan. Since robotic surgery has become so prevalent, both patients and doctors have been asking for it, he says.

“With the addition of the robot at Good Samaritan, we now have the equipment and capability to treat every type of urologic problem,” Dr. Berger says.

You can learn more about robotic-assisted surgery at MultiCare by going to multiCare.org/home/robotic-technology-2/.
CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS (CHDs) are the most common birth defects worldwide, affecting around one in every 100 newborns.

“Heart defects are the leading cause of newborn and infant death,” says Ronald Woods, MD, PhD, Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital & Health Center.

In some cases, babies are diagnosed with a CHD before or at birth, but sometimes the diagnosis is not made until days, weeks, months or even years later because a cost-effective, reliable screening for CHDs has not been available.

In February 2008, however, the Mary Bridge Pediatric Heart Program launched a new CHD screening study of babies born at Tacoma General Hospital, supported in part by a grant from the Fraternal Order of the Eagles. The study, led by Dr. Woods, uses pulse oximetry to screen newborns for heart defects before they go home from the hospital.

Pulse oximetry monitoring uses a light source and sensor to measure oxygen in the blood. A sensor is wrapped around the baby’s foot, and light passing through the foot measures the amount of oxygen in the blood. The test is quick—lasting three to five minutes—painless, and free to families.

The study is the only screening program of its kind in the state, and so far results have been promising. In 2008, nearly 2,200 babies were screened at Tacoma General. Two of those newborns were found to have heart defects at one day old. Both infants underwent surgery to repair their defects, are doing well and are being monitored closely.

“The goal of this effort is to diagnose and treat children with heart defects early,” Dr. Woods says. “Early detection and treatment lead to better outcomes through surgery, interventional cardiology procedures and medication.”

For more information about the CHD screening program or the Mary Bridge Pediatric Heart Program, call 253.403.3527 or visit multicare.org/marybridge/heart.

Heart defects: What to watch for

If a child has two or more of the following symptoms, parents should talk to their pediatrician about a referral to a pediatric cardiologist.

Infants (up to age 1)

Does your baby:
- Tire easily during feeding (for example, falls asleep before feeding finishes)?
- Sweat around the head, especially during feeding?
- Breathe rapidly when resting or sleeping?
- Have pale or bluish skin?
- Experience poor weight gain?
- Sleep a lot—not act playful or curious for any length of time?
- Have puffy face, hands and/or feet?
- Often act irritable or seem to be difficult to console?

Children (ages 1 to 17)

Some children with CHDs may not have any symptoms until later in childhood.

Does your child:
- Get out of breath during play (for example, crouching or squatting to catch breath)?
- Have difficulty keeping up with playmates?
- Tire easily or sleep a lot?
- Look pale or have a bluish tint around mouth and nose during active play or sports?
- Catch frequent colds and respiratory illnesses?
- Display slow growth and weight gain or poor appetite?
- Complain of chest pain and/or heart pounding?

GARY PEDERSON’S BOUT with rheumatic fever as a child left him with a damaged aortic valve, one of the valves on the left side of the heart. What began as a heart murmur worsened as he grew older until chronic chest pain and shortness of breath seriously restricted his life.

“I couldn’t hike, I couldn’t dance. It was difficult to do anything,” Pederson says.

As an elementary school teacher with a classroom full of busy second graders, Pederson’s heart valve disease even threatened his profession.

Pederson’s cardiologist recommended that he meet with Allen Graeve, MD, MultiCare’s senior cardiothoracic surgeon, in the fall of 2006, giving Pederson the opportunity to change his health—and his life—for the better.

Risks and rewards

Heart valve disease develops for many reasons. Typically the only way to correct it is by surgically replacing the valve. Valve replacements can either be tissue—usually a valve from a pig’s heart—or mechanical.

“With a tissue valve your risk of bleeding is less, but you would likely need the valve replaced if you lived more than 10 to 15 years,” Dr. Graeve says. “With a mechanical valve your risk of bleeding is greater because of the need for lifelong Coumadin, but the valve does not wear out.”

Coumadin prevents the clotting that can happen as blood moves past the mechanical valve’s parts. Patients taking Coumadin have to get their blood tested weekly and their dosages re-evaluated constantly.

A 2006 Mayo Clinic study found that patients between the ages of 50 and 70 had a better life expectancy with a mechanical valve. But taking Coumadin can still be a hassle—and a health risk.

The best of both worlds

In 2006 On-X Life Technologies, Inc.—the developers of On-X mechanical heart valves—received government approval for the PROACT On-X low-dose anticoagulation trial, a multiyear study to determine if using On-X valves can significantly reduce or eliminate the need for Coumadin.

Many cardiac specialists already consider the On-X valve to be the best valve available today.

“The On-X valve took the best from previous valve designs and I think improved on them,” says Dennis Nichols, MD, cardiothoracic surgeon at MultiCare.

MultiCare, one of the first health systems to join the trial, is the only system in Washington involved in this important research, and remains the most active trial site in the country. All patients who come to MultiCare for a mechanical valve replacement are screened for participation; study participants are closely monitored and evaluated for five years from the date of their surgery.

“I’m a happy camper,” Pederson says. “I can do everything that I want to do.”

“The study may prove that you can have your cake and eat it too, that you can have a high performance valve which never wears out, but with no greater risk of bleeding than the average person has without a valve in place,” Dr. Graeve says.

Pederson’s valve replacement surgery was in November 2006, and he was back to work by February. More than two years later, he couldn’t be happier.
Cancer care in 90 seconds

RapidArc technology

THE VARIAN TRILOGY® linear accelerator with RapidArc is the latest advancement in cancer treatment.

It’s a technology so precise that it can deliver an entire session of radiation therapy in as few as 90 seconds—destroying cancerous cells with minimal damage to nearby normal tissue.

Last year RapidArc was available in only seven medical centers in the world. In August, MultiCare’s Tacoma General Hospital became the eighth.

How RapidArc works

The RapidArc system builds on an innovation called intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT). IMRT feeds information from CT scanners and other imaging machines into a computer. A team of radiation specialists then maps out exactly what the radiation beams will target—and at what dose.

Because RapidArc revolves around the body, it delivers a multitude of radiation beams in one full motion, says John Rieke, MD, Medical Director of Oncology Services at MultiCare Regional Cancer Center.

“It makes a faster, computer-controlled sweep of the targeted tumor,” he says.

The result? “Treatments that once took over 30 minutes can now be completed in as little as 90 seconds,” says Suraj Singh, MD, radiation oncologist at both Tacoma General and MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park.

What the patient can expect

RapidArc’s high-speed treatment sessions are a culmination of high-tech planning, Dr. Rieke says.

A patient can expect to first receive a CT scan. Depending on the tumor, additional images—such as PET scans or MRIs—might be needed, Dr. Rieke says.

The patient also might be fitted for a customized mask or body cushion to help hold his or her position during treatment.

About a week before radiation therapy begins, the patient and a specialized treatment team will meet for a simulation—a sort of rehearsal to make sure things go smoothly.

“All this planning helps minimize the time spent in radiation treatment,” Dr. Rieke says.

Benefit to the community

The RapidArc system is a huge benefit for everyone needing radiation treatment.

“For patients, it means faster, more accurate treatment with fewer side effects,” Dr. Singh says.

It also offers options to people who previously couldn’t undergo radiation therapy, Dr. Rieke says. That includes children and others who might have had difficulty remaining motionless for 30 minutes or more.

“We can even use it to treat people who have previously undergone radiation treatment, since it won’t add damage to normal tissue,” he says.

He sums up the RapidArc advantage this way: “We now have the best in our own backyard.”

South Sound treatment options

The Good Samaritan Infusion Center (in the Richard Ostenson Cancer Center) celebrated its first birthday in January. The center, ranked No. 1 in the nation in a patient satisfaction survey last year, offers a large, attractive suite with comfortable chairs where people can receive intravenous medications for cancer, arthritis and other conditions. Call 253.697.4210 for more information.

The MultiCare Regional Cancer Center at Tacoma General Hospital offers compassionate care and lifesaving treatments like the RapidArc radiotherapy system. Call 253.403.1677.

MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park offers the first comprehensive cancer care facility in the area. The RapidArc system is now part of its radiation oncology services. Call 253.530.8060 to learn more.

The cancer center also offers services at multiple locations. Call 253.403.6834 to find out more, or visit multicare.org/cancer.
STROKE IS THE third leading cause of death in the United States. But until recently, there was little to nothing doctors could do to treat a stroke while it was happening.

“Five years ago—even three years ago—we could only watch as a stroke developed, wait to see how severe it would be and then plan a physical therapy regimen to address its effects,” says Kathy Scheffer, Nurse Manager for MultiCare’s Imaging Services. But thanks in part to the development of a new medical specialty, neuro-interventional radiology, exciting new treatment options are available to patients who have a stroke.

Elite specialty, local connections

Neuro-interventional radiology focuses exclusively on procedures inside the blood vessels of the brain and spine. Neuro-interventional surgeons perform these procedures using image-guided technology and have special training in both neuro-interventional and diagnostic radiology.

It’s an elite specialty, with fewer than 250 neuro-interventional surgeons currently practicing in the United States. Two of those specialists, Brian R. Kott, MD, and Alison Nohara, MD, perform procedures here at Tacoma General Hospital.

A delicate job, aided by technology

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts, preventing a portion of the brain from getting the blood and oxygen it needs. Neuro-interventional surgeons actually remove these clots or repair burst vessels from inside the brain, using catheters and other small devices that are threaded through the patient’s arteries into the brain.

It’s delicate, precise work that simply couldn’t be done without the help of sophisticated vascular x-ray machines. These devices provide extremely accurate three-dimensional images that allow the radiologists to see what’s going on inside the patient’s brain so they can quickly and precisely target clots and injured vessels to repair the damage.

A return to a normal life

Neuro-interventional procedures may significantly reduce or eliminate the damaging effects of a stroke if done soon enough. So what may have, in the past, been a life-altering event can now, in the best cases, be a mere blip on the radar.

“In the past there was no intervention to try and stop the damage,” Scheffer says. “Now our goal is to get the patient as close to 100 percent as possible.”

TACOMA GENERAL HOSPITAL

New neuro-interventional suite

When it comes to a life-threatening event like a stroke, local access to the most advanced technologies can make all the difference in the world. MultiCare was the first to bring neuro-interventional technology to the region and now we’ve added a new neuro-interventional radiology suite at Tacoma General dedicated exclusively to treating stroke patients.

The suite’s new Toshiba Infinix VF-i/BP Vascular Bi-plane system provides the latest updates in vascular x-ray technology, giving Tacoma’s neuro-interventional radiologists the capability to perform procedures more quickly and accurately.

For more information about MultiCare’s award-winning stroke treatment program, visit multicare.org/stroke.

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Act FAST!

May is Stroke Awareness Month. Do you know how to identify the signs of stroke? Follow this guide to learn how to act FAST if you or someone you know may be having a stroke.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACE</th>
<th>Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?</th>
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<tr>
<td>ARMS</td>
<td>Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one drift downward?</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPEECH</td>
<td>Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Are the words slurred? Was it repeated correctly?</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>If the person shows any of these symptoms, time is important. Call 911 or get to the hospital fast. Brain cells are dying.</td>
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### April to July

**smart steps**

for a healthy life

Unless otherwise noted, visit [multicare.org/class](http://multicare.org/class) or call 800.342.9919 for information or to register.

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**Take control**

**Education and support for managing your health and safety**

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<th>Aquatic Therapy Rehabilitation</th>
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<td>MultiCare Rehabilitation Specialists</td>
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<th>QuitSmart™</th>
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<td>Designed to take you through the first year of quitting tobacco.</td>
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<td>Fee: $25 (reduced fee, includes workbook)</td>
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<td>One-day weekend classes, 9:30am to 3:30pm</td>
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<td>Allenmore Hospital: April 11</td>
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<td>Good Samaritan Hospital: May 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Call 800.342.9919 to register.</td>
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<td>For more information on quitting tobacco, call 800.QUIT.NOW (800.784.8669) or visit <a href="http://www.quitline.com">www.quitline.com</a>.</td>
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<th>Cardiac Health &amp; Rehabilitation Program</th>
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<td>Medically monitored exercise therapy and lifestyle education on risk-factor reduction, medications, nutrition and stress reduction for patients who have had a heart attack, cardiac bypass surgery, angioplasty/stents, heart valve surgery or angina. Requires a physician referral.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tacoma General Hospital</td>
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<td>• MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park</td>
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<td>• Good Samaritan South Hill Clinic</td>
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<th>Diabetes Education</th>
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<td>A variety of education programs and individual appointments available. Program costs may be covered by most insurance plans. Doctor referral needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tacoma, Gig Harbor, South King County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.372.7010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• East Pierce County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.770.2300</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on Healing Dance Movement Class</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An exercise class specifically designed to address concerns of lymphedema for breast cancer survivors. Mondays (except holidays), 5:15 to 6:15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Samaritan East Main Campus conference room, 1317 E. Main, Safeway plaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preregistration required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call 253.332.6154 to sign up or 253.697.4899 for more information.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yoga for Cancer Survivors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designed for those who have faced cancer. Appropriate for beginning participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.403.1073</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surya Sun Yoga and Gentle Chair Yoga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This unique yoga class works “in and around” a chair to make yoga safe and comfortable. Registration is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call 253.697.4899 to register.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart Healthy Eating Class</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfect for anyone with a personal or family history of heart disease or high cholesterol. Learn how fats, cholesterol, carbohydrates and salt affect heart health, plus how to look out for your heart at the grocery store and in restaurants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.697.8141</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staying Safe: First Aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand standard first aid and adult CPR. Certification requires written and skills exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.474.0600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Insulin Pump Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual education. Cost covered by most insurance plans. Doctor referral needed.</td>
</tr>
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<td>253.372.7010</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living With Heart Failure Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For patients and families. A comprehensive approach to treatment, medications, nutrition and exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.403.4590</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Look Good ... Feel Better</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offered in partnership with the American Cancer Society, the National Cosmetology Association, and the Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association Foundation. Trained volunteer cosmetologists teach women how to cope with skin changes and hair loss as a result of cancer treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253.697.4899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**The Power of Nutrition**

Monthly nutrition class offered for before, during and after cancer. 3rd Wednesday of the month, 2:30 to 3:30pm at the Dr. Richard C. Ostenson Cancer Center, Puyallup. Call 253.697.4899 for more information and to register.
Our healthy community

Programs and activities to help build a healthier community

**Gig Harbor Street Scramble**
Join us for this annual family fitness event! Don't know what a street scramble is? It is an urban orienteering event where you search for landmarks in a specific time period. **Saturday, May 23, 9:30am** Skansie Brothers Park To learn more, visit [www.street scramble.com](http://www.streetscramble.com).

**MultiCare Center For Healthy Living**
Education and programs for community members and corporations. We promote health and wellness with exercise, nutrition, weight loss, life balance and tobacco cessation. This community resource is made possible by generous gifts donated through the MultiCare Health Foundation. **253.403.1519**

**Healthy@Work**
Boost productivity and reduce absenteeism with this work-site wellness program. Program offerings include health screenings and health education programs and classes, all taught on-site for both large and small companies. **253.403.7895**

**Power Cook: A Month of Healthy Meals**
Looking for a way to save time and make healthy family meals on a budget? Learn to Power Cook! Fix and freeze 30 nutritious meals and sample a few finished products. Class taught by a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator from MultiCare Health System. Fee: $35; $25 for YMCA members and MultiCare employees. For upcoming class locations and dates, visit [www.piercecountygetsfit.org](http://www.piercecountygetsfit.org).

**Resting Metabolic Rate Screening**
Get the exact measurements you need to successfully lose weight. The comprehensive target calorie report will show you how to eat the maximum amount of food and still lose weight. Fee: $50
- Gig Harbor 253.530.8974
- Lakewood 253.403.6344
- Puyallup 253.403.7897
- South King County 253.403.2780
- Tacoma 253.403.1503

**Breast Health**
Everything you need for breast health: mammography, ultrasound, stereotactic biopsy, clinical breast exams and education. • Auburn MultiCare Clinic 253.876.8190 • Covington MultiCare Clinic 253.372.7240 • MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park (screening only) 253.530.8083

**Personal Wellness Profile**
Find out where your health stands with a wellness profile to analyze your nutrition, fitness, stress and heart health. Includes cholesterol and glucose screenings. (Not a replacement for physician exams.) Fee: $45 253.403.6340

**Bone Density Screening**
Comprehensive DEXA screening for osteoporosis. • Auburn MultiCare Clinic 253.876.8190 • Covington MultiCare Clinic 253.372.7240 • MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park 253.530.8083

**Men’s and Women’s Heart Advantage Screening**
A personalized consultation, risk assessment and basic lab tests. Fee: Starts at $55 Tacoma General Hospital, MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park 800.342.9919

**Good Samaritan Mobile Health Services**
Health screenings and immunizations for adults and children. **253.697.4010**

**The Cruzin’ Covington Passport Program**
The Cruzin’ Covington Passport is a summer program for the entire community, running from June 1 to Aug. 31. Passports will be distributed to Covington elementary school children, and will also be available starting the end of May at the Covington MultiCare Clinic.

The Passport provides opportunities for children and adults to visit three types of locations all summer long and get Eat Smart, Play Hard or Learn stamps in their passports. The more stamps participants get, the more prizes they are eligible to win.

Call 253.372.7245 for more information.

**Covington’s Coalition for a Healthy Community**
Become a volunteer for CHC and help make a difference in the health of your community. **Monthly meetings** Covington MultiCare Clinic Call 253.372.7245 for more information.
Family health and safety

**Water Babies**
In-pool exercise class for new moms and their babies ages 3 to 12 months. Fee: $72/six-week session
To register, call Glenda at 253.697.2775.

**Kids Cooking and Nutrition Class**
Focusing on basic cooking and basic nutrition concepts for upper elementary and middle school-aged children. Sample healthy snacks, prepare a meal, play games and earn prizes. Tuesday, April 28 4 to 6pm
Fee: $20
Covington MultiCare Clinic, Classroom 2
Class also available by appointment.
Contact denisehenke@multicare.org.

**Children’s Diabetes Education and Clinic**
Individual education for children newly diagnosed with diabetes and for their families. By appointment for those who need further education or review. Classes, camps and support groups also available.
Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital
253.403.3131

**Car Seat Inspections**
Car seat inspections and phone consultations by certified technicians.
Kent, Silverdale, Tacoma
multicare.org/childhoodsafety
253.403.1234

**Children’s Asthma Education**
Education for children with asthma and their families.
Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital
253.403.3131

**Custom-Fit Helmet Sales**
Get custom-fit bike and skateboard helmets, available in both child and adult sizes, to use with bikes, scooters, skateboards and skates. Wearer must be present.
• Covington, Kent, Silverdale, Tacoma
253.403.1234;
multicare.org/childhoodsafety
• Puyallup: Good Samaritan Celebrate Seniority Office, 1401 E. Main, Puyallup
253.697.7385
Call for prices and times.

**Life Jacket Sales and Loans**
Free life jacket loans available year-round. Loaned for up to one week, limited quantities. Custom-fitted life jackets sold from April to September. Wearer must be present.
• Kent, Silverdale, Tacoma
253.403.1234;
multicare.org/childhoodsafety
• Puyallup (sales and fittings only; no loans): Good Samaritan Celebrate Seniority Office, 1401 E. Main, Puyallup
253.697.7385
Call for prices and times.

**Medical Explorers**
Medical Explorers is an exciting program sponsored by MultiCare Health System. This program invites high school-age students to explore health careers through monthly (September to June) hands-on activities in the hospitals and interaction with health care providers working in many different health professions. Students explore their interest in medical careers, helping them discover or decide on a career path, provide community service and outreach, and develop leadership skills.
Applications for the 2009–2010 school year are due no later than June 15, 2009, and are available at multicare.org/medicalexplorers or by calling 253.403.1519.

**Pierce County Families Get Fit & Healthy**
MultiCare’s Center For Healthy Living, the YMCA of Tacoma–Pierce County and the Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department have teamed up to bring this fun program for families. This six-week program includes family and child activity sessions, nutrition classes and lifestyle management, helping families live healthier lives. Children participating must be 7 to 12 years old.
For upcoming class information and dates, please log onto www.piercecountygetsfit.org.

**Get Fit & Healthy for kids**
Pierce County Gets Fit & Healthy offers healthy meals for kids through our newest program, Kids Get Fit & Healthy Dining! More than 25 restaurants in Pierce County have signed up to offer one or more healthy kids’ meals on their menu.

This program is brought to you by MultiCare Center For Healthy Living, the YMCA of Tacoma–Pierce County, Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department, Washington State Restaurant Association and Pierce County Council.

The kids’ dining program advertises healthy kids’ meals on fun place mats. Each place mat offers a free three-day guest pass to any Pierce County YMCA. Kids who order a Get Fit meal receive a fun prize.

For a list of participating restaurants, visit www.piercecountygetsfit.org.
Your healthy pregnancy

Bates Technical College, in cooperation with Tacoma General Hospital’s Family Birth Center, offers a variety of childbirth and related classes at Tacoma General. To register, visit [www.bates.ctc.edu/registration](http://www.bates.ctc.edu/registration) or call 253.680.7500.

**Parenting: Love and Logic**

Based on the parenting philosophy that allows children to live with the consequences of their choices, while giving guidance and support with love.

Offered in partnership with Bates Technical College.

Fee: $65/person

Six-week class, 6:30 to 8:30pm

Bates Technical College

253.680.7500

**Breastfeeding Classes**

Choose the best feeding option for mom and baby with current information.

Fee: $15/couple; free with childbirth class

**Childbirth Preparation**

Five-week weeknight series or intensive weekend classes. Includes a tour of the Tacoma General Family Birth Center.

Fee: $78-93/couple

**Kangaroo Kapers**

Children ages 3 through 7 who are about to become big brothers or sisters will love this! The one-hour class provides nonmedical, nontechnical information about childbirth.

Fee: $15/family

253.687.5300

**Massage for Pregnancy and Labor Class**

Massage techniques for labor support partner and mom.

Fee: $33/couple

**Mary Bridge Mobile Immunization Clinic**

For children 0 to 18 years old in Southwest Washington.

Available at various locations.

253.403.1767 or 800.552.1419, ext. 1767

**Prepared Childbirth at Good Samaritan**

Five-week sessions as well as some weekend and one-day sessions for first-time parents-to-be.

Fee: $85 or medical coupon; $75 for one-day class

253.697.5300

**Tour the Good Samaritan Family Birth Center**

Saturdays, 1pm

No registration required.

253.697.5300

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**Raising Safe Kids: One Stage at a Time**

Saturday, May 2, 10am to 2pm

Save the date for the annual Kids Safety & Health Fair! The event will be held at Foss High School in Tacoma and is presented by Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital & Health Center, the Tacoma Fire Department and Safe Kids Pierce County. This year’s theme from Safe Kids USA, “Raising Safe Kids: One Stage at a Time,” focuses on helping families understand the “why” behind safety recommendations and how a child’s development can affect their risk of injury.
Get moving with classes at the YMCA

Join the YMCA and receive $50 off the joining fee. For first-time members only; must be age 15 or older to join. For more information, branch schedules or to register, call 253.534.7820 or visit www.tacomaymca.org.

12-Week Personal Fitness Program
Supervised exercise program for the adult fitness beginner. A great way to get started.

Active Older Adult Fitness
A fun, low-impact aerobic class for people 55+.

Yoga/Pilates
Combines stretching with strengthening movements for a low-impact, high-result workout.

ZUMBA
The new trend in cardio fitness...Latin dance! Appropriate for all fitness levels.

Get moving with classes at the YMCA

Stay healthy
Resources to help adults stay active

Celebrate Seniority
MultiCare Celebrate Seniority is a membership program for people 55 and better. This senior membership program consists of people like you who are interested in maintaining good health and vitality throughout life, regardless of age. This program provides access to health education, information, discounts, socialization and volunteer opportunities. Call 253.697.7385 for more information.

Enhance Fitness
An ongoing senior exercise class offered by the Good Samaritan Celebrate Seniority program designed to improve strength, flexibility and balance, as well as improve your cardiorespiratory system. Call Sarita Stotler, certified instructor, at 253.697.7380 for more information.

Adult Day Health
Promoting independence for older (and disabled younger) adults in Tacoma. 253.459.7222

Water Aerobics
Cardio workout in the water. Great for all levels.

Home Health Resources
Comprehensive in-home services provide nursing, therapy, social work and aide care to help people manage their illness and recovery at home. 253.301.6400 or 888.516.4504

Gentle Yoga for Seniors
Three-week series offered by the Good Samaritan Celebrate Seniority program. Learn about strength, stretching, balance, relaxation and more efficient breathing. Fee: $15 per series 253.697.7385

Ali Vincent at Sound to Narrows!

Put your walking or running shoes on and head to Vassaut Park in Tacoma on Saturday, June 13, for the Roman Meal® Sound to Narrows™ 2009 fundraising event. The 37th annual Sound to Narrows is a wonderful Tacoma tradition and a great morning of healthy fun for people from all walks of life. A highlight of the day is announcing the winner of the third annual Pierce County’s Biggest Winner contest—a 14-week, team-based weight-loss competition sponsored by the MultiCare Center For Healthy Living, the YMCA of Tacoma–Pierce County and the Tacoma–Pierce County Health Department. This year, Ali Vincent, the first female winner on television’s The Biggest Loser, and Bette-Sue Burklund, Ali’s mom, will be there to crown the winning couple and winning team. Sound to Narrows is a MultiCare Center For Healthy Living event benefiting health and wellness in our community. For more information about the event or to register to participate, visit www.soundtonarrows.org.
Come to Healthy Reflections Medical & Day Spa in Gig Harbor or Covington to learn more about the range of gentle, affordable laser procedures available for hair removal, anti-aging treatments and more. The evening will include presentations by laser treatment experts and demonstrations of some of the laser technology we use in our spas.

- **MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park**, 4545 Pt. Fosdick Dr. NW, Gig Harbor
- **Covington MultiCare Clinic**, 17700 SE 272nd St., Covington

**Tuesday, May 19**
5:30 to 7:30pm
Call 800.342.9919 to reserve your place.

### Groups and services to give you the support you need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Man-to-Man Prostate Cancer Support Group</strong></td>
<td>Facilitated by trained volunteers who have recovered from prostate cancer. First Wednesday of each month, 7 to 9pm Good Samaritan (call for room location) Call Weldon Plett at 253.691.2267.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hospice Bereavement Services</strong></td>
<td>Newly bereaved education groups and ongoing support groups are available to help you. Call 253.301.6400 or 888.516.4504 for information regarding support groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discoveries Support Group</strong></td>
<td>Discoveries support groups for families with children 4 to 18 who are coping with a family member’s serious illness. Concurrent groups for parents and children. Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital 253.272.8266</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Support Group</strong></td>
<td>Support group for people with CHF and their families. Please call for class availability. 253.403.4590</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women's Cancer Support Group</strong></td>
<td>For patients, caregivers, adult family members and friends. First Thursday of each month, 1 to 3pm Dr. Richard C. Ostenson Cancer Center at Good Samaritan 253.697.4899</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lymphedema Networking Group</strong></td>
<td>Facilitated by Julie Venn, LMP, MLD/CDT Second Thursday each month, 7pm Dr. Richard C. Ostenson Cancer Center 253.697.4899</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRIDES: A Center for Grieving Children</strong></td>
<td>Grief support groups for children 4 to 18 years old who have experienced the loss of a parent or sibling. Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital 253.272.8266</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asthma and Food Allergy Support Group</strong></td>
<td>Shares knowledge, ideas and expertise with families dealing with allergies, food allergies and asthma. 253.403.3131</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alzheimer’s Support Group</strong></td>
<td>A support group for people who are caring for a loved one with dementia. Third Tuesday of the month, 5 to 6:30pm Good Samaritan Behavioral Health, 325 E. Pioneer, Puyallup 253.697.8400</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parkinson’s Support Group</strong></td>
<td>For individuals who have been diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease and their support partners. Third Thursday of the month, 1:30 to 3pm The United Methodist Church, 1919 W. Pioneer, Puyallup 253.697.8400</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mom and Baby Support Group</strong></td>
<td>New moms find opportunities to meet other new moms and discuss the joys and challenges of adjusting to parenthood. Separate one-hour sessions for newborns to 6-month-olds and for 6- to 12-month-olds. Fee: $3/session 253.697.5300</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s Cancer Support Group</strong></td>
<td>Open to anyone in the community who is providing physical or emotional care or financial assistance to an older or disabled person. Second Monday of the month, 1:30 to 3pm Good Samaritan Behavioral Health, 325 E. Pioneer, Puyallup 253.697.8400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caregiver Support Group</strong></td>
<td>Open to anyone in the community who is providing physical or emotional care or financial assistance to an older or disabled person. Second Monday of the month, 1:30 to 3pm Good Samaritan Behavioral Health, 325 E. Pioneer, Puyallup 253.697.8400</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Puyallup Cancer Support Group</strong></td>
<td>For patients, caregivers, adult family members and friends. First Thursday of each month, 1 to 3pm Dr. Richard C. Ostenson Cancer Center at Good Samaritan 253.697.4899</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cancer Care Support at Good Samaritan</strong></td>
<td>A wide range of cancer support services. 253.697.4899</td>
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### Uncover a more beautiful you with laser technology

Come to Healthy Reflections Medical & Day Spa in Gig Harbor or Covington to learn more about the range of gentle, affordable laser procedures available for hair removal, anti-aging treatments and more. The evening will include presentations by laser treatment experts and demonstrations of some of the laser technology we use in our spas.

- **MultiCare Gig Harbor Medical Park**, 4545 Pt. Fosdick Dr. NW, Gig Harbor
- **Covington MultiCare Clinic**, 17700 SE 272nd St., Covington

**Tuesday, May 19**
5:30 to 7:30pm
Call 800.342.9919 to reserve your place.

### Biggest Winner Series

This 12-week program includes before and after health assessments, individual sessions with a MultiCare registered dietitian and YMCA health and wellness coach, nutrition and fitness classes, a 12-week exercise program at the YMCA, and a lot of encouragement along the way. Books and materials are provided and prizes are awarded for Biggest Winners. Classes will be starting this summer in Lakewood and Gig Harbor.

For more information on this program, log onto [www.piercecountygetsfit.org](http://www.piercecountygetsfit.org).
We wouldn’t dream of treating children like grown-ups. Our pediatric specialists and child health care experts know exactly how to treat the unique needs of children, including those with the most serious or life-threatening conditions. As the only dedicated pediatric hospital in Southwest Washington, we connect families to expert physicians, the latest technology and 24-hour emergency care provided by board-certified pediatric emergency specialists. Mary Bridge offers convenient locations in Covington, Gig Harbor, Olympia, Tacoma, Puyallup, and Silverdale closer to home. And that can help everyone feel better faster. Learn more at multicare.org.