New Knee, No Overnight Hospital Stay

- How to Help Kids Eat Healthier
- Health First Volunteers Help Ensure No One Dies Alone
- Tips On Caregiving for Seniors
Discover a New You with NewFit:

A Weight-Loss Symposium

Health First NewFit is the only nationally accredited MBSAQIP® Bariatric program in Brevard County. Meet our NewFit surgeons and hear from past patients at our free New You with NewFit symposium on Saturday, March 9, 2019 to see if bariatric surgery is right for you.

All attendees will have a chance to win raffle items such as a Fitbit, Health First Pro-Health & Fitness membership and more.

Attend our free symposium:

Saturday, March 9, 2019
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Hilton Melbourne Rialto
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne

Lunch provided

Call to RSVP
321.434.6730

“I’ve Lost 142 Lbs

“Within 6 weeks of having surgery, I no longer had sleep apnea or type 2 diabetes. I feel like I hit the reset button on life.” - Ty, NewFit Patient
Childhood obesity is a serious threat to our younger generation – and numbers show it’s an especially pressing issue in Brevard County.

Children are considered overweight or obese if they are well above the normal or healthy weight based on their age and height. Statistics show that nationally, 31.1 percent of school-age children ages 5 to 17 are overweight, or in the 85th percentile. Of those, 14.4 percent are in the 95th percentile, which is considered obese.

In Brevard, the numbers are even higher. According to a 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment – in a survey conducted by Professional Research Consultants Inc. for Health First – 40.3 percent of children in Brevard are overweight and 26 percent are obese.

Plenty of factors play into this epidemic. Genetics and behaviors – such as dietary patterns, physical inactivity and medication use – certainly contribute. Consider these factors:

- 30 to 40 percent of children and adolescents eat fast food on a given day
- 80 percent of youth drink sugar-sweetened beverages on a typical day
- More than 7.5 hours are devoted to media or screen time by older children and adolescents each day

Addressing childhood obesity is imperative to the community’s future health. Helping children adopt a healthy diet and maintaining a normal weight early in life are important for long-term health benefits and prevention of chronic diseases, such as hypertension, diabetes and depression. These diseases can reduce productivity and shorten life expectancy.

Suggestions to Help Kids Eat Better

Healthy diet guidelines from the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommend the “My Plate Plan.” This plan emphasizes eating whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean protein, low-fat or fat-free dairy products and drinking water.

If you have a picky eater, here are some suggestions to help kids eat better:

- Offer choices
- Eat well and exercise, too – be a good role model
- Don’t prepare separate meals for individuals – offer the same healthy foods for the whole family
- Encourage children to be “produce pickers” during shopping trips
- Get children involved in preparing meals

Squeezing in fitness is essential to maintaining a healthy weight as well. For several years, Health First has supported several local not-for-profit organizations dedicated to reducing childhood obesity, poor nutrition and/or lack of physical activity.

HELPING CHILDREN ADOPT a healthy diet and maintaining a normal weight early in life are important for long-term health benefits and prevention of chronic diseases.

‘Family BeFit’ Program Assists Underserved

Since 2013, Health First has partnered with the University of Florida Extension Service in Brevard County to offer the “Family BeFit” program to underserved families. Classes are held at local organizations during the school year, as well as at summer camps. Some fast facts about the program:

- A “Cooking Matters” curriculum is utilized
- A healthy meal or snack is prepared during each class, and families are provided ingredients from the recipe to prepare at home
- A physical activity or game is also included as part of the after-school program
- For the summer camp program, the focus is on physical fitness, with each child using a pedometer to measure his or her activities. A nutrition lesson is also incorporated into the summer camp program.
- In 2018, Health First’s “Family BeFit” program had 372 participants.

The community as a whole can also make a difference in fighting childhood obesity by:

- Strengthening schools as the heart of health
- Marketing what matters for a healthy life – eating well
- Making fresh produce more readily available and increasing supermarket access
- Integrating physical activity into every day
- Activating employers and healthcare professionals by adopting wellness policies
- Using licensing regulations to ensure that childcare facilities encourage more healthful eating and physical activity
- Reducing portion sizes of less-healthy foods and beverages at restaurants, grocery stores and vending machines
- Increasing support of breastfeeding

Learn more about how Health First is helping to build a healthier community at HF.org/givesback
Q&A with Julie Newhouse, Nurse Manager

**QUESTION:** What services do you provide?
**NEWHOUSE:** Emergency and Trauma Care.

**QUESTION:** What makes this area of medicine fulfilling for you?
If anyone has ever had to come to the emergency department as a patient, it can be very stressful and scary. Being an ED nurse, I want to make a connection with my patients, help them through these stressful times, provide excellent care, and reassure them that we understand and we are there to help ease their minds. In the emergency department, we are a family, and we hold a strong bond among us and are proud of the care we provide to our community.

**QUESTION:** When did you realize this was the right medical career path for you?
**NEWHOUSE:** On July 28, 2000, my family was in Melbourne preparing a funeral for my mother-in-law, who had passed away that morning from ovarian cancer, when my daughters were involved in a motor vehicle collision. My daughters were critically injured and were both transported to Holmes Regional Medical Center Emergency Department as trauma alerts. As I waited for what seemed to be hours for someone to come talk to me about my children, that was the most terrifying feeling a parent can have. I am so grateful for the ED staff, trauma physicians and the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU) staff that cared for my daughters and the support that the hospital provided my family. My oldest daughter passed away from her injuries four days later; however, through her passing, she was able to donate life to others. My youngest daughter made a complete recovery. Through this experience, I knew that I wanted to be a part of the ED and trauma team at Holmes Regional Medical Center because I want to help and support patients and families who are going through these situations, assure them they are not alone and that we will help them get through this together.

**QUESTION:** What’s the latest advancement in your field that will benefit patients?
**NEWHOUSE:** The latest advancement that I feel will greatly benefit patients and their families is the possibility of a thrombectomy for stroke patients being expanded to reach patients that are within 24 hours of onset of symptoms. This will allow an interventional neuroradiologist to be able to remove a life-altering clot within the brain so that the patient may experience relief of stroke-like symptoms and rapid improvement long-term. Previously, an ideal candidate was within six hours of onset of symptoms, now we are able to potentially save four times as many patients.

**QUESTION:** What’s your best advice for current and potential patients?
**NEWHOUSE:** I really want to stress the importance of follow-up care within the community after being discharged. In our emergency department alone, we serve more than 85,000 patients per year, and the importance of continuing care outside of the hospital is imperative to preventing serious health complications. Many illnesses can be tackled through a community physician to keep you in your home, as you may combat a disease process through outpatient therapies. However, we are always more than happy to serve our community members should they ever need us.

**NURSE MANAGER JULIE NEWHOUSE** is based at Health First’s Holmes Regional Medical Center Emergency Department. She earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing from Grand Canyon University as a Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN). Newhouse started her nursing career in 1995 as a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) nurse in Fort Lauderdale and was a charge nurse and a member of the Neonatal Transport Team. After moving back to Brevard County, she joined the Holmes Regional Medical Center Emergency Department in 2004. Holmes Regional Medical Center is located at 1350 S. Hickory Street in Melbourne, Florida, and for more information, log on to HF.org or call 321.434.3024.
Call them the silent heroes behind closed doors.

That's how Health First's System Laboratory Director Cathy Rodriguez describes the associates working inside the Space Coast's largest clinical laboratory.

“People don't realize how involved we are in their health care, playing an important role in the prevention and diagnosis of disease,” said Rodriguez. “Our lab results guide more than 70 percent of medical decisions.”

An impressive operation that she has overseen for years, Rodriguez was born at Health First's Holmes Regional Medical Center and grew up always wanting to become a Health First healthcare hero.

Since she oversees and is responsible for all of the Integrated Delivery Network's (IDN) laboratory functions, “I know the ins and outs,” she said.

It's the “outs,” however, that make the IDN's network of laboratories cutting edge – and the largest on the Space Coast, embracing robotics and modern technology to deliver high-quality and reliable results.

The IDN laboratories pump out more than 4 million tests per year, and the main laboratory at Holmes Regional, located on the first floor, performs more than 2 million tests per year, Rodriguez explained.

Holmes Regional's laboratory is a full-service lab, consisting of the following:

- **CORE Lab:** This entails chemistry, hematology, urinalysis, coagulation and toxicology
- **Microbiology:** Only one for the entire IDN and is housed at Holmes Regional
- **Blood Bank:** Supplies blood for the entire IDN
- **Pathology/Histology/Cytology and Transcription

The other laboratories are located at Health First Medical Group, Health First Cancer Institute, Health First's Cape Canaveral Hospital, Health First's Palm Bay Hospital and Health First's Viera Hospital.

It's a workload that more than 300 associates service 24/7, supporting both in-house and community outpatient needs.

“I don't think people realize just how much your health diagnosis the laboratory is responsible for,” said Rodriguez.

### Top Turnaround Times

It's the lab's turnaround time that scored it national benchmark recognition in 2018. Rodriguez said Holmes Regional's laboratory recently won accolades for ranking in the top decile of 99.1 for turnaround times. This is based on the time a specimen is received in the lab until the time it is verified. This success is attributed to the associates' hard work and dedication to their profession.

So, how does this impact quality of care for our customers? It means “accurate and timely results so that they can be treated, recover and get home to their loved ones,” said Rodriguez.

While it's a process that isn't performed out in the open or on the front end, it's a vitally important one. Instead, it's tucked away and considered the quiet CSI of the IDN – and the associates who work there embrace their roles in caring for their customers.

“Oh, we love it,” said Rodriguez. “We absolutely love doing it.”

To learn more, visit HF.org

Network of Laboratories Cutting Edge

Holmes Regional’s Facility Recently Won Accolades For Quick Turnaround
Knee-replacement surgery used to guarantee a week’s stay in the hospital. Now, enhanced pain management has made the procedure an outpatient one.

Dale Adamson is not only a family practice physician with Health First, but he's now the first patient to undergo a knee replacement and be discharged home the very same day. Once he was awake post-surgery, he got up and walked immediately, said Dr. Scott Miller, Adamson's Health First Medical Group orthopedic surgeon.

“I had packed a bag to stay overnight, and I kept nudging people in the office to let me go home,” Adamson said of his September operation at Health First's Viera Hospital.

Once he was awake post-surgery, he got up and walked immediately, said Dr. Scott Miller, Adamson’s Health First Medical Group orthopedic surgeon.

“We try to get everybody up on the first day, but he got up faster than everybody else did,” Miller said.

“Watching him walk that first 300 feet within five hours of surgery was enough to say, ‘Yep, he’s fine to go home whenever he’s ready.’”

Adamson, 62, did just that, becoming the community healthcare system’s first outpatient knee replacement patient – a trend sure to build as effective post-surgical pain management solutions continue to improve, Miller said. Historically – 15 years ago or so – a joint-replacement procedure came with a three- to seven-day hospital stay. Now, patients have the ability to go home the same day as their procedure, when appropriate.

Seamless Machine

The key to helping patients is proper preparation, multimodal therapy – including nerve blocks that last about 60 hours, as well as oral pain medications – and a personal coach.

“I think that that goes a long way,” Miller said.

“Patients who have a desire to stay in their home are far more
comfortable in their house than they are in the hospital.”

Patients are also able to communicate with their surgeon through an app that allows them to ask questions and send photos of their surgery site, for example.

“We used to send patients to rehab centers,” Miller said.

“Clearly, we don’t need that. You need a coach, you need attention, you need good therapy, and we have all of those things set up. It’s a pretty seamless machine.”

In Adamson’s case, Miller had been encouraging him for some time to have the replacement done. Regular hyaluronic acid (Euflexxa) and steroid injections provided little relief for his arthritic knees. Adamson’s new knee allows him a wider range of motion and is the only anterior cruciate ligament-substituting knee replacement, Miller said.

“It hurts to walk up stairs – or it did. It hurt to walk down stairs, it hurt to go dancing,” Adamson said.

“Dancing’s important in (my wife) Mary’s life, so it’s important. Most patients tell me when they need to have the surgery done,” Adamson said, then turning to Miller. “He’s been telling me for almost a year.”

Support System Important

Two weeks after his surgery, Adamson was at Viera Hospital Medical Plaza for a follow-up, walking the halls with a cane and well into his physical therapy.

“The pain control is really good, and the physical therapy exercises are illustrated really well,” Adamson said, who took a class about replacement joints and communicated with his care team prior to the procedure.

“If you have major medical problems, we want to keep a closer eye on you in the hospital. You’ve got to have motivation and a good support system.”

To learn more, visit HF.org/ortho

TWO WEEKS AFTER HIS SURGERY, outpatient knee replacement patient Dale Adamson was at Viera Hospital Medical Plaza for a follow-up, walking the halls with a cane and well into his physical therapy.

JOINT REPLACEMENTS of today can allow for a wider range of motion and serve as substitutes for the anterior cruciate ligament.
Health First Volunteers Help Ensure No One Dies Alone

‘No One Dies Alone’ Program Provides Compassion, Comfort for Dying Patients Whose Families, Loved Ones are Not Able to Be Present

The Rev. Chaplain Derly Foerste said it’s simple: People don’t come into this world alone – and they shouldn’t leave it alone, either.

“Why should there not be someone there with us when we die?” said Foerste, Manager of Pastoral and Spiritual Care at Health First.

That’s exactly why he brought the No One Dies Alone (NODA) program to the community healthcare system. The whole purpose is to provide dignity for the dying, as well as comfort.

Introduced to Health First’s four hospitals in June 2016, there are more than 85 active volunteers for NODA who have held close to 80 vigils for patients who would have otherwise died with no one at their bedside, Foerste said. While about 90 percent of volunteers are Health First associates, the program accepts civilian volunteers. Most vigils take place at Health First’s Holmes Regional Medical Center.

Volunteer Kathleen Pfaff described NODA as an opportunity that not only provides a compassionate companion for the dying, but even more for the living.

“Death is just a natural progression – we’re all going to do it,” the Palm Bay woman said, dispelling notions her volunteer role is a noble one.

“It’s very worthwhile. It’s not noble. We are better for it. We get more out of it, truthfully. At least I do as a volunteer.”

Once a volunteer passes the required background check and completes training, they are alerted of vigils via text message. Those who want to participate sign up for two-hour slots online.

Foerste puts NODA into action when a care team requests it for patients with no family or friends present, as well as for respite purposes. Vigils can last anywhere from an hour to a few weeks.

“Each one of us, we’re all so different emotionally,” Foerste said. “And it’s all about how we interact with that person. Some people are able to hold off their emotions. … there is no right or wrong.”

Going Someplace Better

While the majority of NODA patients are incapacitated and unable to respond, Foerste encourages volunteers to talk to them, perhaps even hold their hand. It is widely believed hearing is the last sense to go, so volunteers are encouraged to speak often.

“You talk to that patient, and you’d like to think they’re hearing good words and good thoughts,” Pfaff said, who tries to find out about the patient’s religious background beforehand.

“I read to them, talk to them. I always say, ‘I wish you could talk back to me. I’d like to have known you before all this happened to you.’ And I’m a firm believer that they’re going someplace better.”

Marcia Phillips, Manager of Volunteer Services and Customer Experience at Holmes Regional, said serving in a hospital allows associates the privilege of being a part of the full spectrum of patients’ life stories.

“As someone who was fortunate enough to be with both my parents as they transitioned from this life, I have become more acutely aware of the importance of providing this service to our customers whose families are not able to be present,” Phillips said.

“This service provides comfort not only to the dying but to families who can be at peace knowing that their loved ones was not alone.”

Father Bob Bruckart, Director of Pastoral Care, has seen NODA’s value since its inception.

“Though we would wish a different outcome for those actively dying, we are grateful to be able to offer this presence to those who are failing and do not have family or friends to be present with them,” Bruckart said.

“We seek to honor and remember them, even to the end of all things in this world.”

To learn more about NODA, call 321.434.3126
Caregiving for Seniors Annual Conference
*Embrace the Power of Positivity*

Please join us for our **15th Annual Caregiving for Seniors Conference**, tailored to family caregivers providing care and support for their loved ones. This day will be filled with information and community connections to help you continue to provide quality care and find support. This day is for you – relax, enjoy, learn and connect.

**Conference Caregiver Sessions will Include:**

*Speaker: Alexis McKenzie*

Second Session: Ten Commandments: Dealing with a loved one with memory loss can sometimes be challenging. The 10 commandments are suggestions that can help you on your caregiving journey.  
*Speaker: Visa Srinivasan, MD*

Afternoon Session: “The Power and Many Forms of Music and Creativity”  
*Speaker: Alexis McKenzie*

Exhibitors Resource Fair: **“Ask the Experts”**

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**Our 2019 Keynote Speaker:**  
**Alexis McKenzie**

Alexis McKenzie holds a doctorate degree in Metaphysical Science. She is a master trainer in the Brief Cognitive Assessment Tool (www.thebcat.com), a certified Dementia Care Practitioner and a clinical hypnotherapist.

*HF.org/aging*

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**Saturday, March 16, 2019**  
8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place  
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne, FL 32901

*For early registration, call 321.434.4335*

Complimentary lunch, door prize and much more!  
**Free Valet Parking**  
**Sponsored by Viera Company**

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If you need care for your loved one in order to attend the conference, please call SarahCare at **321.676.3460** after you register for our conference. **They will kindly provide respite for your loved one for a nominal fee. SarahCare.com/Melbourne**
Health First Brings Cheer to Children Hospitalized at Holmes Regional Medical Center

In November and December 2018, Health First brought some cheer to children hospitalized at Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne.

In November, Health First partnered with the University of Central Florida’s College of Nursing School to distribute sponsored Knight Nurse Bears to pediatric patients. These limited-edition bears – dressed in scrubs similar to those worn by UCF nursing students – were donated to help support the college's main areas of nursing that increase the student experience. The Knight Nurse Bears were given out by UCF nursing students at six Central Florida hospitals, including Holmes Regional.

In December, some “superheroes,” with the help of the Melbourne Police Department, visited Health First’s Holmes Regional Medical Center Pediatrics Unit and Health First’s Center for Child Development. Alongside Santa Claus, Aquaman and Wonder Woman made several children smile and were able to spread some holiday cheer.

ALONGSIDE SANTA CLAUS, Aquaman and Wonder Woman visited Health First’s Holmes Regional Medical Center Pediatrics Unit and Health First’s Center for Child Development.
Now more than ever, families are taking on the task of providing long-term care for loved ones who aren’t able to perform duties independently. It’s a responsibility that can be even more difficult, stressful and challenging if the family caregiver is caring for a loved one who has Alzheimer’s disease or other dementia, said Dr. Visa Srinivasan, Health First Aging Services Medical Director.

Currently in the U.S., there are 5.7 million Americans with Alzheimer’s disease and 16.1 million Americans who provide unpaid care for their loved ones with dementia, said Srinivasan.

“In Brevard County, 35,000 people have been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, but many others are undiagnosed,” said Srinivasan, who is also Medical Director of East Central Florida Memory Clinic, which is funded through the State of Florida Department of Elder Affairs. “We all need to be aware of the warning signs of caregiver burnout. Life comes with challenges, but it’s up to us to find positive ways to overcome those challenges.”

It’s projected that between 2016 and 2025, there will be a 40 percent increase in the number of Floridians with Alzheimer’s disease, said Srinivasan. This means many in the state are going to be caregivers.

**Caregiving efforts, and keep them well while they care for others.**

On Saturday, March 16, 2019, Aging Services will host its 15th Annual Health First Caregiving for Seniors Conference at the Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place. The theme, “Embrace the Power of Positivity,” focuses on helping caregivers create a more positive approach, attitude and caregiving experience – which can lead to a greater degree of fulfillment.

Highlights of the conference include tips for caregivers:

- **CAREGIVER EDUCATION:** Understand the warning signs, causes, symptoms and course of dementia, including challenging behaviors, advance directives and future planning.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Always agree – never argue. For example, it is common for a senior with Alzheimer’s dementia to have increased confusion in the evenings, which is called “sundowning.” During these episodes, caregivers have a hard time calming their loved one. During the conference, experts will discuss specific strategies and use examples that will educate caregivers on ways to manage these challenging situations.
- **IDENTIFY CAREGIVER STRESS:** Many caregivers are from the “sandwich” generation, trying to balance their career, children and caring for their aging parents. Srinivasan’s job, along with her team of social workers and dementia educators, is to help empower the caregiver to detect the warning signs of caregiver stress. Look for the red flags and know how to manage them.
- **SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE:** At the Center for Family Caregivers, there are caregiver support groups where people can share their experiences, as well as learn from others and take comfort in the fact they are not alone.
- **SELF-CARE:** Taking care of yourself is the most important and prominent aspect of caregiving. Some caregivers are focused so much on their loved one that they don’t make time for their own health or keep their own doctors’ appointments. Understand the need to take care of your own physical and emotional health so that you can be available for your loved one.
- **ACCESS TO RESOURCES:** The Exhibitor Resource Fair will provide connections to Health First and local community resources for the caregiving journey. Never be too shy or afraid to ask for help – asking for help is a sign of strength.

To learn more about family caregiving, visit HF.org/aging.
Know Your Heart

Join us during the month of February for our free Heart Smart lecture series. Seminar topics cover a variety of heart-health topics and are located throughout Brevard County. Lectures will be led by Health First Heart & Vascular world-class physicians, who remain up-to-date on cardiovascular technology, research and innovations.

For more information about the Heart Smart lecture series, including locations, dates and times, visit HF.org/events or call 321.978.0161.