

House CALLS



A Publication of Houston Healthcare

April-May-June 2020

Upcoming EVENTS

Senior Camp 2020: Fire up Your Health

Fire up Your Health at this year's Senior Camp. Sound the alarm and bring a friend to learn more about foods that support wellness, exercises every BODY needs, and how to manage it all without your finances going up in smoke! Cost is \$10 per person which includes lunch and a gift.

📅 **Tuesday, April 21**

8:30 – 9:30 am: Registration and visit vendors

9:30 am – 1 pm: Program & lunch

Cary W. Martin Conference Center

Houston Health Pavilion - W3 Entrance

233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins

Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Sensational Summer Salads

Join us as we create delightful salad dishes that will make mealtime easier and nutritious. All participants will receive recipes from the cooking demonstration and enjoy tasting these delicious salads. Seating is limited. Pre-registration is required.

📅 **Thursday, May 14**

10 am – 12 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare

233 North Houston Road, Warner F

Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

You Are What You Eat

Living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease means you need to take steps to make daily activities easier. We will discuss what questions to talk with your physician about, how to approach difficult topics, and other relevant issues. Lunch provided for those who pre-register.

📅 **Tuesday, June 2**

11:30 am – 12 pm: FREE spirometry and blood pressure screenings

12 – 1 pm: Lunch and Learn program

Perry Hospital Cafeteria

Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Caregiver Conference

Caring for a family member or friend can be a rewarding yet challenging experience. Successful caregiving requires special skills, information and resources. If you are presently a caregiver, even a long distance caregiver or preparing to be a caregiver, this one-day conference is for you. Speakers with expertise will provide topics such as fall prevention, care for the caregiver, legal issues, and more. In addition, local agencies will be on-site to share resource information. Pre-registration is required and lunch will be provided.

📅 **Thursday, June 25**

10 am – 2 pm

Cary W. Martin Conference Center

Houston Health Pavilion - W3 Entrance

233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins

Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Stroke Education Know the Signs and Symptoms

May is Stroke Awareness Month

When a stroke occurs millions of brain cells die with every passing minute. Our community is fortunate to be able to receive specialized stroke care close to home. The **Houston Healthcare Stroke Program** uses advanced telemedicine services to connect our patients to highly trained Stroke Specialists in the Marcus Stroke Network, affiliated with Grady Health System, for rapid evaluation and treatment of acute stroke.

By participating in the Georgia Coverdell Acute Stroke Registry and the American Stroke Association's "Get with the Guidelines" program, Houston Healthcare ensures high quality stroke care from rapid evaluation and treatment to

inpatient management, rehabilitation and prevention. Knowing what to do could save your life or the life of someone you love.

According to the American Stroke Association, stroke is the number five cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States; however, 80 percent of strokes are preventable. It's important to know your family history and the risk factors – both uncontrolled and manageable – so you can be the most prepared. Knowledge is power and in the case of a stroke, it's very crucial to be familiar with the signs and symptoms of stroke and call 911 immediately.

10 SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STROKE

A **SUDDEN ONSET** of the following may indicate stroke*

| | | SYMPTOMS A LOVED ONE MAY EXPERIENCE | SIGNS YOU MAY NOTICE | | SYMPTOMS A LOVED ONE MAY EXPERIENCE | SIGNS YOU MAY NOTICE |
|----|--------------------------|--|---|-----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | CONFUSION | Unable to understand what is happening, can't think clearly or feel thrown off | A puzzled look, a hard time focusing, trouble making decisions | 6. | SEVERE HEADACHE | Pain or discomfort in the head, scalp, or neck with no known cause |
| 2. | DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING | Unable to comprehend speech or language | Raised or wrinkled eyebrows, shaking their head "no" | 7. | TROUBLE SPEAKING | Unable to speak or slurred speech |
| 3. | DIZZINESS | Feeling faint, lightheaded, or like the room is spinning | Unsteady movements (like they have motion sickness), like they are drunk (without having any alcohol) | 8. | TROUBLE WALKING | Stumbling or unable to walk straight |
| 4. | LOSS OF BALANCE | Unstable with less coordination | Wobbling around, grabbing onto a stationary object | 9. | VISION CHANGES | Blurred vision or trouble with eyesight in one or both eyes |
| 5. | NUMBNESS | A tingling feeling in the body (ie, face, arm, or leg), like pins and needles | Constant touching, massaging, or shaking of the numb areas | 10. | WEAKNESS | Lack of strength in the face, arm, or leg—especially on one side of the body |

*Note that these symptoms or a combination of them are not unique to stroke, but if they are sudden and out of the ordinary, they may indicate a sign of stroke and require immediate attention.

SEE THE 10 SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STROKE COME TO LIFE AND DOWNLOAD THIS LIST AT

[overreact2stroke.com](https://www.overreact2stroke.com)

If you suspect **STROKE, CALL 911** immediately

Understanding Hernias

A hernia is when an organ or tissue pushes through a weak area in the belly (abdominal) wall. This weak area may be present at birth, or it may be caused by abdominal strain over time. If not treated, a hernia can get worse with time and physical stress.

When there is a weak area in the abdominal wall, an organ or tissue can push outward. This often causes a bulge that you can see under your skin. The bulge may get bigger when you stand up. It may go away when you lie down. You may also feel some pressure or mild pain when lifting, coughing, urinating, or doing other activities.

The type of hernia you have depends on its location. Most hernias form in the groin at or near the internal ring. This is the entrance to a canal between the abdomen and groin. Hernias can also occur in the abdomen, thigh, or genitals. Other hernias include:

- **Incisional:** occurs at the site of a previous surgical incision
- **Umbilical:** occurs at the navel
- **Indirect inguinal:** occurs in the groin at the internal ring
- **Direct inguinal:** occurs in the groin near the internal ring
- **Femoral hernia:** occurs just below the groin
- **Epigastric:** occurs in the upper abdomen at the midline.



In most cases, your healthcare provider can diagnose a hernia by doing a physical exam. However, there may be cases that it might not be clear why you have swelling in your belly wall. In this case, you may need additional testing such as an ultrasound, CT or MRI.

“Hernias are formed due to several reasons. The patient may have a job that requires frequent heavy lifting, could have had a prior abdominal surgery, is obese and the increased weight places pressure on the abdominal

muscles, or as we age, our muscles become weaker and more susceptible to hernias,” says Kerry Rodgers, MD and general surgeon on the medical staff at Houston Medical Center. “If you are having any issues, it’s best to go ahead and make an appointment with your physician. Waiting could lead to more pain, physical discomfort, and the possibility that it will increase in size.”

Symptoms of a hernia can include:

Pain in the abdomen, pelvis or groin
Abdominal discomfort or swelling

Groin discomfort or tenderness
Outward bulging of the skin

Join Houston Healthcare for Hernia Screenings

🕒 **Monday, April 20**
3 – 7 pm
Houston Health Pavilion
W3 Entrance

🕒 **Tuesday, April 21**
8 – 12 noon
Houston Health Pavilion
W3 Entrance

hhc.staywellknowledgebase.com

“Hernias will not heal on their own and surgery is needed to fix the weak spot in the abdominal wall. With the new robotic equipment now available at Houston Medical Center, we are able to go in and repair these hernias leaving the patient with a smaller incision, decreased risk of infection and a faster recovery time. The goal is to return the patient to their previous level of activity, and by using the robot, we are able to accomplish that in a more timely manner.”

Kerry Rodgers, MD and general surgeon on the medical staff at Houston Medical Center

Specialty Care. Closer To Home.

Houston Healthcare's Physician Practices

www.hhcphysicians.com

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Houston Behavioral Health Associates

Dr. John Bocoock, Dr. Sheldon Brown, and Dr. Dan Ioanitorescu

233 North Houston Road, Suite 103
E3 Entrance
Warner Robins | (478) 352-7001

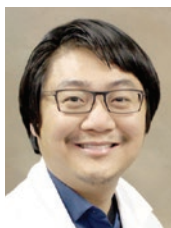
PRIMARY CARE



Houston Family Care Associates

Dr. Juan Velazquez (Bilingual/Bilingüe)

233 North Houston Road, Suite 140F
S1 Entrance
Warner Robins | (478) 352-7070



Perry Family Medicine Associates

Dr. Andrew Wang

1019 Keith Drive, Suite A
Perry | (478) 218-1801

EAR, NOSE & THROAT



Houston ENT Associates

Dr. Nancy Butler

233 North Houston Road, Suite 171
W3 Entrance
Warner Robins | (478) 352-7050

UROLOGY



Houston Urology Associates

Dr. Victor Andress

233 North Houston Road, Suite 100
E3 Entrance
Warner Robins | (478) 293-1580

ENDOCRINOLOGY



Houston Diabetes & Endocrine Associates

Dr. Olena Klindukhova

233 North Houston Road, Suite 101
E3 Entrance
Warner Robins | (478) 352-7010

VASCULAR



Houston Vascular Associates

Dr. Todd Jenkins

233 North Houston Road, Suite 173
W3 Entrance
Warner Robins | (478) 352-7040

GASTROENTEROLOGY



Houston Gastroenterology Associates

Dr. Fredrick Oni

1700 Watson Boulevard
Warner Robins | (478) 922-2930



HOUSTON HEALTHCARE

Serving Houston County and surrounding areas since 1960

EduCare CALENDAR

Your health is important to us at Houston Healthcare. It is our desire to meet your healthcare needs through our outpatient educational programs with the goal to improve or maintain your health. Research shows that people who receive education and support for their illness and practice healthy habits improve their overall health and reduce their healthcare costs. EduCare offers a variety of classes, seminars and support groups tailored to meet your healthcare needs, along with the needs of your caregiver or family members. Our classes are free or low cost as a service for you. If you have any questions regarding classes or services provided by Houston Healthcare, please do not hesitate to call us at (478) 923-9771. You may also sign up for our classes online at www.hhc.org/calendar.

GENERAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Managing Your Blood Pressure

Persons with elevated blood pressure have a higher risk of heart disease and stroke. This educational program is taught by a Registered Nurse and is designed to educate participants to better manage their blood pressure.

📅 **Monday, April 6, June 1**
4 – 5 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Cholesterol Management Tools

Understand your cholesterol results, risk factors and complications associated with these results, and how to reduce your numbers. Taught by a Registered Nurse.

📅 **Thursday, April 9, June 11**
5 – 6 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Help for the Heart: Heart Failure Education

An education program designed to improve the quality of life for persons with Heart Failure. Taught by a multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals, educational topics include Understanding Heart Failure, Nutrition, and Medications. Join us for this free, informative and beneficial program to become a more active part of improving your heart health. Caregivers or support persons are also encouraged to attend. Weight scales and pill dispensers will be given to those who need them. Program includes lunch for those who pre-register.

📅 **Wednesday, May 20**
11 am – 2 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

After Hours: Heart To Heart

Join us for light hors d'oeuvres and an opportunity to increase your knowledge about heart attacks. This class includes education on prevention, recognizing signs and symptoms, and an understanding of procedures and treatments for a heart attack. If you or a family member have experienced a heart attack or have a history of heart disease, this class is for you! Pre-registration is required.

📅 **Thursday, June 4**
5:30 – 6:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Healthy Living for Life

Weight control, healthy eating, exercise, and stress reduction are the most effective ways to reduce your risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. This ongoing class will teach you healthy habits for life with a different

topic each week. You are encouraged to weigh-in weekly and follow your progress for improving weight management, nutrition, exercise, and stress reduction.

📅 **Tuesdays**

Weigh-in: 4 pm

Class: 4:30 – 5:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Advance Directives

Do your loved ones know what your wishes are at the end of life? Having a family conversation is the most loving thing you can do to make your wishes known. Call our Life Choices Team for free assistance in preparing an Advance Directive, (478) 975-5346 at Houston Medical Center or (478) 218-1626 at Perry Hospital.

Georgia Tobacco Quit Line

Call the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line Today for a free and effective service that provides assistance to help quit smoking and using tobacco. Tobacco increases the risk of developing several chronic conditions and health problems. Tobacco cessation assistance is provided by highly trained coaches. The services are available at no-cost to Georgia adults, pregnant women and teens (ages 13 and older). To learn more about the Georgia Tobacco Quit Line, please call the toll-free number or visit the website: <https://dph.georgia.gov/ready-quit>. 1-877-270-7867 (English) 1-855-DEJELO-YA (Spanish) For Hearing Impaired: TTY services: 1-877-777-6534

MATERNAL/CHILD

Breastfeeding Made Simple – Part 1

Breastfeeding is the best and ideal way of feeding your baby. Your breast milk is perfectly matched to meet your baby's needs for proper growth and development. This class provides expectant moms with all the information needed to be successful in breastfeeding your newborn. Learn about the proper latch, various feeding positions, infant feeding cues, guidelines for frequency and duration of feedings, and much more!

📅 **Thursday, April 2, May 7, June 4**
6:30 – 8:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Baby Care Boot Camp

A newborn means new training! This class covers a variety of topics from infant health and safety to caring for fussy babies. Participants will learn newborn baby care essentials including bathing, diapering, feeding, healthy sleeping, cord care, and much more. The class provides education as well as an opportunity to ask questions or discuss concerns.

📅 **Tuesday, April 7**
6:30 – 8:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Breastfeeding Made Simple – Part 2

Join this class to learn about milk production, pumping, safe milk storage and handling, and much more. This class provides answers to these major concerns and serves as a follow up to the initial Breastfeeding Made Simple class.

📅 **Thursday, April 9, May 14, June 11**
6:30 – 8:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Grandparenting 101

Grandparents play a special and important role in the family. This class focuses on infant through

toddler and includes information on home safety issues and poison control. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), infant development, along with a car seat overview. If you are new or soon-to-be grandparents or are currently raising your grandchildren, this class is for you.

📅 **Thursday, April 16**
6:30 – 8:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Prepared Childbirth Series

These classes are designed for the expectant family to make informed decisions about their birth experience. Topics include stages of labor and birth, potential medical interventions, options for pain management, and maternal care after delivery. A tour of The Women's Center at Houston Medical Center is included. This series meets one night a week for five weeks. Class is free. For more information or to register, call 923-9771.

📅 **Tuesday: begins April 28 or June 30 - 5-week series**

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Super Sibling Class

An exciting way for brothers and sisters to prepare for a new baby's arrival. The class includes a "Super Sibling" video, tour of The Women's Center, basic baby care safety and refreshments. For children ages 3 to 10. A parent is required to attend with their children.

📅 **Saturday, May 16**
10 – 11:30 am

The Women's Center at Houston Medical Center
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Gestational Diabetes Education Program

Gestational Diabetes can be a very serious condition of pregnancy if not controlled. The goal of the program is to work collaboratively with the patient's physician and staff to ensure a good outcome for both mother and baby. The program includes a detailed initial assessment with a Registered Nurse and nutritional instruction with a Registered Dietitian, either on a one-on-one basis or as part of a small group and monthly follow-up phone calls through early post-partum. For more information, call 923-9771. Physician referral required.

ASTHMA EDUCATION

Asthma can be a frightening and serious condition. Knowing how to prevent, as well as how to treat, asthma in an emergency is important. Houston Healthcare is providing one-on-one asthma education. Call for an appointment. Houston Medical Center: Respiratory Department – 975-5228

Perry Hospital: Respiratory Department – 218-1688

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSING

Houston Healthcare supports Faith Community Nurses that provide health screenings and health education to their faith communities. Members meet once a month to learn specific health related concerns and find connection to community resources. Houston Healthcare serves as a resource center for area churches wanting a health ministry by providing health educational materials and training for nurses in the church family who are willing to provide this service. Call 923-9771 for more information.

SENIORCARE

Promoting wellness of mind, body and spirit for senior adults in the Houston County area.

Monthly blood pressure screenings are provided. All exercise participants must have a signed Physician Referral Form from their personal physician. Forms are available by calling 923-9771.

Perry SeniorCare

Each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (10 am) at Rozar Park includes an exercise class featuring strength, flexibility and stretching, led by a certified instructor.

Health Education Sessions – Monthly health education seminars listed below. Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Advance Directives

Do your loved ones know what your wishes are at the end of life? Having a family conversation is the most loving thing you can do to make your wishes known. By planning in advance, you can get the medical care you desire while relieving loved ones of making major medical decisions during moments of grief or crisis. Join us to find out how Advance Directives help reduce confusion and disagreements about medical care.

📍 **Friday, May 8**

11 am – 12 noon
Rozar Park, 1060 Keith Drive, Perry
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Oral Health

A window to your overall health. Your oral health is more important than you might realize. Join us to learn about good dental and oral care and how important it is in maintaining your overall health.

📍 **Friday, June 12**

11 am – 12 noon
Rozar Park, 1060 Keith Drive, Perry
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Centerville SeniorCare

Each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at Centerville City Hall includes an exercise class featuring strength and flexibility stretching led by a certified instructor. Call 923-9771 for times and more detail

ACCIDENT PREVENTION

AARP Driver Safety Program

A comprehensive driving course designed to update drivers 18 and older on the knowledge and skills of driving. Upon course completion, you may be eligible to receive an insurance discount. Contact your insurance agent for details. Cost is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members, check or money order payable to AARP. Must provide a valid Georgia Driver's license.

Perry:

📍 **Tuesday, June 9**

9 am – 4 pm
Perry Hospital Dining Conference Room
1120 Morningside Drive, Perry
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

Warner Robins:

📍 **Wednesday, May 13**

9 am – 4 pm
Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins
Call 923-9771 to pre-register.

DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Diabetes Exercise Program

An exercise program designed specifically for adults with diabetes who would like to learn more about the correct times and methods for exercising in relation to nutrition and medication.

📍 **Monday, Wednesday and Thursday**

Between the hours of 8 am and 6 pm

*Health Connections – located inside Houston Medical Center
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins
Call 322-5143 for more information and program fees.*

Diabetes Management: “Steps to Success” Course

Houston Healthcare’s Diabetes Management Program is an award winning program that has earned National Recognition by the American Diabetes Association. The course is designed to improve blood sugar control and decrease complications from diabetes. It includes a one-on-one session with a Registered Nurse, nutrition class and two comprehensive skill classes. For more information, call 923-9771. A physician referral is required.

Diabetes Nutrition and Meal Planning Class

For individuals with pre-diabetes or diabetes who need education regarding their dietary choices to better manage their diabetes. A physician referral is required. Call 923-9771 for the schedule of classes and to register.

Diabetes Prevention Program: You Can Make a Change for Life

Have you ever been told by a health care provider that you are at risk of getting diabetes, have pre-diabetes, have high blood sugar or glucose, have borderline diabetes, or have gestational diabetes? If so, you may be at high risk for Type 2 diabetes, but there is something you can do about it. The National Diabetes Prevention Program, led by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, can help you make changes for life. This free program helps you learn how to change your lifestyle to prevent Type 2 diabetes. Groups meet for 16 weekly sessions and six monthly follow-up sessions with a trained Lifestyle Coach. For more information, please call 923-9771.

EDUCATION/SUPPORT GROUPS

Alzheimer’s Education and Support Group

Sponsored by the Alzheimer’s Association – Central Georgia Chapter, this program is for families, caregivers and friends dealing with Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders.

📍 **Tuesday, April 28, May 26, June 23**

7 pm
Houston Medical Center, Northwest Tower Lower Lobby
Classroom 3
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins

A.W.A.K.E Sleep Disorder

A.W.A.K.E. (Alert, Well, and Keep Energetic) is a free education and support group for people affected by sleep disorders, their family, or anyone with questions about sleep disorders or CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) treatment. Sleep is not just resting or taking a break from busy routines – it is essential to physical and emotional health. Adequate sleep may also play a role in helping the body recover from illness and injury. Inadequate sleep over a period of time can be associated with obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and depression.

Topic: Blood Pressure and Sleep Disorders

CPAP Equipment Support (If you are having trouble with your CPAP mask, please bring it with you to this class and a trained technologist will work one-on-one with you to ensure proper fit and use.)

📍 **Wednesday, May 13**

12 noon
Houston Medical Center, Lobby Conference Room
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins
Call 542-7805 to sign up.

Better Breathers Club

Better Breathers provides methods to cope with lung diseases such as COPD and Adult Asthma. The group includes discussions of ways to face the challenges of lung disease while improving your quality of life. The program is affiliated with the American Lung Association.

📍 **Thursday, April 2** – Managing Breathlessness
May 7 – New Approach for Treating IPF

June 4 – You Are What You Eat

12 pm
Houston Medical Center, Lobby Conference Room
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins

Diabetes Support Group

For adults with diabetes and their support system. Meetings are led by a Diabetes Educator with Houston Healthcare. Caregivers and support persons are encouraged to attend.

Warner Robins:

📍 **Wednesday, April 1, May 6, June 3**

1 pm
Houston Health Pavilion EduCare Center
233 North Houston Road, Warner Robins

Perry:

📍 **Tuesday, April 28, May 26, June 23**

12 noon
Perry Hospital Cafeteria
1120 Morningside Drive, Perry

Multiple Sclerosis Support Group

This program is dedicated to educating, motivating, and supporting those coping with MS and their families and friends. Call 396-9702 for more information.

📍 **Tuesday, April 14, May 12, June 9**

6:30 pm
Houston Medical Center, Northwest Tower Lower Lobby
Classroom 2
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins

Pediatric Multiple Sclerosis Support Group

This program is for kids and teens with MS. This educational support group will allow young people to know they are not alone in their journey through life by sharing hope, experiences and information. Call 318-8195 or email suerob27@yahoo.com for more information.

📍 **Monday, April 7, May 5, June 2**

6:30 pm
Houston Medical Center, Northwest Tower Lower Lobby
Classroom 2
1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins

Join the
Conversation at ...



Advance Care Planning

What you Should Know

Advance care planning is not about age; it's about preparation and making your end-of-life wishes known ahead of time. A common misconception is that advance care planning is something only the elderly, sick or dying should consider. As unpleasant as it is to think about, healthy young people and middle-aged adults can, and do, have life-changing accidents or illnesses that leave them unable to make their own health care decisions.

Houston Healthcare's Life Choices Team – a group of nurses and other personnel – serve as resources for patients and families wanting more information about end-of-life health care decisions. Advance directives are written documents, such as a durable healthcare power of attorney and living will, which allow you to document your end-of-life wishes, putting you in control of your healthcare in the event that you are terminally ill or critically injured and unable to talk or communicate.

“The goal of advance care planning is to save your family and/or friends from the pain and guilt of having to make tough decisions for you if you are unable,” says **Traci Haye**, CHPN, RN and Palliative Care Coordinator for **Houston Healthcare**. “By having these conversations and making the time to plan how you want your care provided at the end of your life, a crucial step in the process is already completed. How you want to live or die is an important discussion that every family member should have. Your choice of care cannot be honored if it's not known.”

Members of **Houston Healthcare's Life Choices Team** are also available to meet individually with patients and their families. For free assistance in preparing an advance directive, please contact the **Life Choices Team** at **Houston Medical Center** by calling 975-5346, or **Perry Hospital** by calling 218-1626.

Advance Care Planning Q & A

What is a living will?

A living will allows you to state which types – if any – life-sustaining treatments, such as breathing machines, feeding tubes, resuscitation efforts, and medications you would want. You can also document your wishes about organ or tissue donation and the specific conditions under which the terms of your living will go into effect.

What is a durable health care power of attorney?

This allows you to designate a family member or friend to serve as your health care spokesperson in the event that you are unable to communicate. This person will discuss your current health situation with your physician and other health care providers, and be allowed to make appropriate treatment decisions for you based on your wishes stated in your living will.

When does an advance directive go into effect?

Your advance directive goes into effect only when you are unable to communicate for yourself. Up until that point, you are still the one making the decisions about your health care.

What if I want to make changes to my advance directive?

You are able to make changes to your advance directive at any time.

Where is the best place to keep a copy of an advance directive?

It's a good idea to keep several copies of your advance directive at home, as well as give a copy to the person you designated as your health care spokesperson in case of an emergency. Make sure you let your family members know where to find copies and whom you have chosen to be your health care spokesperson. Your primary care physician should also have a current copy of your advance directive.



National Healthcare Decisions Day Thursday, April 16

Houston Healthcare is joining other national, state and community organizations by participating in the annual National Healthcare Decisions Day. The goal of this nationwide initiative is to ensure that all adults with decision-making capacity in America have both the information and the opportunity to communicate and document their future healthcare decisions.

On April 16, join Americans across the country and discuss with your family your future health care decisions. Having a family conversation is the most loving thing you can do to make your wishes known. **Houston Healthcare** offers the Five Wishes® planning guide as a tool to help make these conversations easier. Drop by **Houston Medical Center** or **Perry Hospital** on Thursday, April 16 to pick up your free planning guide.

➔ Thursday, April 16

10 am – 2 pm

Houston Medical Center, Northwest Tower Lobby
(1601 Watson Boulevard, Warner Robins)

11:30 am – 1 pm

Perry Hospital Cafeteria
(1120 Morningside Drive, Perry)

Houston Healthcare Recognizes Hospital, Nurses, and Volunteer Weeks

Improving the healthcare of the communities we serve is the heart of our mission. During National Hospital Week, National Nurses Week, and National Volunteer Week, we recognize the commitment and dedication of our staff members and volunteers – more than 2,400 of your family, neighbors, and friends who provide quality care and impact the overall patient experience.

“Our people are what make **Houston Healthcare** such a special place to work,” states **Charles Briscoe**, Chief Executive Officer for **Houston Healthcare**. “They give of themselves – often tirelessly – to make sure our patients and their family member are cared for with compassion and respect. We are thankful for each employee and volunteer who help ensure our community is taken care of while they are in our facilities.”



National Volunteer Week was established by President Richard Nixon in 1974, with an executive order, as a way to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers. Every sitting United States President since Nixon has issued a proclamation during National

Volunteer Week, which has now become a nationwide effort to urge people to volunteer in their community.

May 6th is known as National Nurse Recognition Day and kicks off National Nurses Week each year. The week ends on May 12th, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, whom many consider the founder of

modern nursing. National Hospital Day

began on May 12, 1921 to celebrate the vital roles hospitals and health care workers play in the communities they serve. The nation’s most traditional health care event was later expanded to a week-long celebration in 1953.

National Volunteer Week
April 19 – 25

National Nurses Week
May 6 – 12

National Hospital Week
May 10 – 16

How Well Do You Breathe?

May is Asthma Awareness Month

According to the American Lung Association, over 26 million people – including 6.1 million children – in the United States live with asthma, a chronic lung disease that affects the airways in the lungs. During an asthma attack, airways become inflamed, making it hard to breathe. Asthma attacks can be mild, moderate, or serious – and even life-threatening. The cause for asthma is unknown and there is no cure. Besides allergens, attacks are sometimes triggered by:

- Exercise
- Occupational hazards
- Tobacco smoke
- Air pollution
- Airway infections

Asthma affects everyone differently, so no two people will have the same triggers.



“People with asthma need proper medical care to manage their disease. When their asthma is managed with routine care and education, they are less likely to visit emergency departments and urgent care centers for asthma-related treatments,” said **Anne Cofield**, Director of Respiratory Care and Neurology Services for **Houston Medical Center**.

“If you think you or a family member may have asthma, talk to your doctor. The doctor may conduct one or more breathing tests to help determine if you have asthma. If treated properly, asthma can be successfully managed and you can live a normal, healthy life.”

Anne Cofield, Director of Respiratory Care and Neurology Services for Houston Medical Center

Houston Healthcare offers one-on-one asthma education classes in two locations. Call for more information and to make an appointment.

- **Houston Medical Center** – Respiratory Department: 975-5228
- **Perry Hospital** – Respiratory Department: 218-1688

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Houston Healthcare complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATTENTION: Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 478-975-5662 (Houston Medical Center) or 478-218-1635 (Perry Hospital).

Spanish: ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llamen al 478-975-5662 (Centro Médico de Houston) o 478-218-1635 (Hospital de Perry).
Korean: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 478-975-5662 (Houston Medical Center), 478-218-1635 (Perry Hospital) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.



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- To the community, confidence knowing the hospital is here when you need it with qualified staff and advanced technology – close and convenient

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