Something Big,
SOMETHING SPECIAL
SAVANNAH’S BEN PATRICK FACES TOUGH PLAYS ON THE FIELD AND IN LIFE

To Sleep, PERCHANCE TO HEAL
THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD NIGHT’S REST GOES FAR BEYOND THE MORNING AFTER
**A Word from the President and CEO**

Though we don't see as much fall foliage in Savannah as our northern friends, we are still able to catch a few glimpses of the striking colors of autumn leaves. Their beauty reminds us that change can be a marvelous thing. In that spirit, we've made some changes to Smart Living. Ironically, readers will find that the new look reflects the one thing that hasn't changed—our commitment to keeping you informed about the innovative ideas, technologies, and medical practices that continue to evolve in this region.

Case in point: the Stroke NET-work, the latest tool in tele-medicine.

This technology's reach extends far beyond Savannah and into rural hospitals, where Savannah's neurologists can help treat stroke victims with clot-busting drugs from miles away.

We will also continue to introduce you to the people who help define our region. In this issue, we talk to Savannah native and pro football player Ben Patrick, who has faced some tough plays since becoming an Arizona Cardinal. Learn how keeping the focus on his dream took Patrick to the Super Bowl.

Please enjoy this edition of Smart Living, and feel free to share any comments you have with us.

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**The Discomfort of Mammograms May Cause Anxiety, But the Outcome May Also Save Your Life**

Some of these women experience anxiety about the discomfort they may face from the procedure itself, which involves compression of the breast. Compression helps to hold the breast still and positions the breast tissue in such a way that any small abnormalities that may be present are not hidden. Though women may be anxious about this aspect of the procedure, it is necessary to produce the best image. Krista Aliffi, an Oncology Patient Navigator at the Lewis Cancer & Research Pavilion, understands women's reluctance but notes that the benefit of early detection far outweighs the temporary discomfort of a mammogram.

“If we diagnose breast cancer at an early stage, we can provide more treatment options and your overall chances of survival are significantly increased,” she says.

Women who schedule a mammogram but still cannot alleviate their anxiety before their appointment should feel comfortable communicating their concerns to their caregiver.

“We encourage women who are especially nervous to talk with the radiology technologist before the mammogram,” she says. In some instances, a technologist can actually allow a patient to direct her own compression. This may help women feel less anxious and more in control. Aliffi also encourages women not to schedule their mammogram when their breasts may be tender or swollen, such as the week before their period.

The compression only lasts a few seconds, but the information it provides can affect a woman's life for years to come.
Ben Patrick wasn’t even supposed to be in Super Bowl XLIII. Yet he found himself in the end zone with a football flying his way, trying to reach higher than the opponent that leaped in front of him. He got to this pivotal moment as a tight end for the Arizona Cardinals, a team of underdogs that had been written off before the season started. It was an opportunity Patrick had been waiting for since he watched his older brother playing high school football.

“I wanted to follow in his footsteps,” he says. “I wanted to do something big, something special.”

At Jenkins High School in Savannah, Patrick was a letterman in football, baseball and basketball, but his exceptional talent on the yard lines was cemented when he was named Southeast Georgia Player of the Year by the Georgia High School Coaches Association in 2001. Still, Patrick did not seriously consider a career in pro football until his junior year of college.

Transferring from Duke to the University of Delaware, Patrick broke the school’s season-record for tight ends. Seeing the promise in him, the Cardinals drafted Patrick in the seventh round. But he still had to prove himself.

“T’ve had a lot of ups and downs,” Patrick recalls about his first year as a pro in 2007. He hit a downward slope when he was cut by the team following training camp in September. But less than a week later, he made a step up to the Cardinal’s practice squad, and by October he found himself back on the active roster.

“It’s been a blessing for me and my family,” he says. Having shown the Cardinals what he could do, it was now up to his team to show the world what they could do. They surprised the naysayers with a strong offense, and by the season’s halfway point they had sole possession of first place in their division for the first time since 1998. Then they won the first NFC Championship game in the team’s history when they defeated the Philadelphia Eagles in January. Finally, they faced the Pittsburgh Steelers in the Super Bowl.

When the Cardinals hit the 2-yard line in the second quarter, Patrick knew what play would be called. This was that something big that Patrick dreamed of, his chance at something special. What he didn’t know was that the quarterback would stumble as he threw the ball, arching it towards the Steeler that jumped in front of Patrick. His only hope was to jump higher, reach farther and snatch the ball from his opponent’s waiting arms, and that’s exactly what he did.

“I didn’t realize how tough the catch was until I saw it later on film,” Patrick recalls. “That’s just how fast everything goes. The body just takes over. It’s muscle memory.”

The Steelers walked away with the trophy, but Patrick and his teammates’ exceptional performance created one of the most suspenseful Super Bowl matches in years.

But Patrick still had one more valley to walk through. He made a misjudgment that is unfortunately a fairly common one—taking medication that was not prescribed to him. To help him through a long drive one night, Patrick took an Adderall that belonged to a friend to help him stay focused. Though it was not a narcotic or steroid, that one pill caused Patrick to fail a drug test and land him with a four-game suspension.

“It was an honest mistake, but I still have no excuse,” Patrick says. “It’s taught me about the consequence that every choice carries. Because I don’t want to be associated with athletes who have used drugs to cheat. That’s not who I am.”

Patrick hopes that his fans, both young and old, have learned from his mistake and will know never to take someone else’s medication. For himself, Patrick has vowed to bounce back as a smarter person as well as a smarter player. He is more determined than ever to make his family and friends proud.

“I really appreciate the support I get from Savannah,” Patrick says. “They support me when things are good and when things aren’t so good, so I love representing them. I can assure Savannah that I’ll give them everything I’ve got.”

Above: Ben Patrick of the Arizona Cardinals catches a touchdown pass during Super Bowl XLIII. Simon Bruty/Sports Illustrated/Getty Images
For those who are hit with a stroke, or brain attack, the care of a neurologist used to be dozens of miles, or even hours, away. But a new technology at St. Joseph’s/Candler can now bridge that distance in a fraction of the time.

"If I’m forty-five minutes away, but can make a treatment decision in five minutes, I’ve just saved forty minutes of that patient’s brain," says neurologist E. Frank Lafranchise, MD, Medical Director of the St. Joseph’s/Candler Stroke Program.

Dr. Lafranchise is able to make those quick decisions for rural patients through St. Joseph’s/Candler’s Stroke NET-work, the latest tool in tele-medicine. It allows hospital staff in distant towns to connect with neurologists in Savannah by bringing them into the rural emergency room virtually through a computer with internet video and uploaded brain scans. The “spoke” hospitals will be able to have their patients diagnosed by neurologists who simply log in to their computers in the Savannah “hub” of St. Joseph’s/Candler.

Every minute counts because the neurologist provides the expertise needed to make the decision about administering clot-busting drugs. These drugs must be administered within three hours of the onset of stroke symptoms to minimize patient disability.

"The southeast is in the ‘stroke belt’ of America and Georgia is in the buckle of that belt," says Lafranchise. Risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol are prevalent throughout the state, stretching the territory of potential stroke victims far and wide. "Our region will benefit greatly from the difference that the Stroke NET-work makes."

The Stroke NET-work makes the choice of any food they desire. Teaching children good snack habits now can help these future scholars make the smart choice.

"A" is for Apple,  “F” is for Donut

Report cards can fill a child with pride or with dread, depending on the student. While there are many factors to consider when Johnny’s grades start to drop, one place parents may forget to consider is the lunchbox.

Research has shown that students who eat healthy foods tend to receive better grades. In one recent study done through the University of Alberta, test scores of children whose ate moderate portions of a balanced diet were higher than their peers whose diet was less healthy. Though this may seem like common sense, it’s not always a high priority during the hustle and bustle of the school morning. Kids may ignore fruit if they get the same kind every day, but there are even more tantalizing options available for on-the-go parents. Grocery stores are making room next to the plastic trays of crackers and cheese for ready-made packs of wheat tortillas with grilled chicken. Items from peanut butter to juice boxes are being produced with less sugar and more natural ingredients. Granola bars are another crunchy favorite — just make sure they have a good amount of whole grains and fiber.

The theory works for older kids as well, including those entering college. One of the new found freedoms that freshman enjoy is the choice of any food they desire. Teaching children good snack habits now can help these future scholars make the smart choice.
The Importance of a Good Night’s Rest Goes Far Beyond the Morning After

To Sleep, Perchance to Heal

Research into the sleep habits of older women has linked proper sleep with healthy aging, while sleep disturbances predicted a discrepancy between a person’s perceived age and her actual age. The results are not surprising when one considers what the body is up to when it is resting.

“A lot of healing goes on during sleep,” says Julia L. Mikell, MD, Medical Director of Sleep Disorders Medicine at St. Joseph’s/Candler. “Typically patients with chronic insomnia really don’t heal well.”

Part of the restorative process of sleep comes from a hormone called melatonin, which not only has antioxidant effects but also may strengthen the immune system. This hormone is also available in an over-the-counter tablet form. Mikell prefers those tablets to sleeping pills.

“If you must take something, over-the-counter melatonin is the safest,” she says. “It’s a real temptation to get into sleeping pills, which are not a good idea. You can get desensitized to just about any sleeping pill.”

Mikell suggests that people talk with their doctor before using any kind of sleep aid and should not plan on using the tablets for an extended period of time.

“The long-term solution for getting proper sleep is practicing good sleep hygiene (see next page). This may involve sacrificing the pleasure of dozing off to David Letterman, but the payoff is a higher quality of life during the waking hours. As research has shown, learning good habits now will help prepare people for the challenges ahead as they age.

“As we get older, sleep quality disintegrates a little bit,” Mikell says. “But there are still lots of older people who sleep very well. We can do that too if we’re knowledgeable about what our body and mind needs.”

A Clean Sleep

A Clean Sleep

Tips for People of All Ages to Get the Best Out of Their Rest

Fix and restrict your time in the bedroom.

Make your bedroom for sleep or intimacy only, and then set a time for sleep every night. The body can learn to fall asleep at a certain time if the time for bed and the time for waking is consistent. Try to avoid daytime naps, but if you need one, do it before 3 p.m. and don’t sleep for over an hour.

Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and heavy foods before bed.

While caffeine is a no-brainer (don’t forget, most chocolate has caffeine), some people mistakenly believe that alcohol will help them sleep. It may help people doze off initially, but a few hours later the alcohol levels will have dropped and the withdrawal effect will disturb sleep. If you’re hungry, choose a light snack such as warm milk or turkey slices.

Don’t exercise in the moonlight.

Though regular exercise can actually help deepen sleep (research has shown that moderate aerobic exercise has helped patients with insomnia), it should be done during the day. The body needs time—at least a couple of hours—after strenuous exercise to cool down enough for sleep.

Keep your bedroom cool, quiet, and comfortable.

Being too hot or too cold can keep you awake. If you’ve had your mattress for several years, consider whether it needs to be replaced to maintain your comfort level.

Engage in relaxing activities before bed.

Reading, yoga, or a warm bath will summon the sandman more effectively than a television show. A TV in the bedroom is not recommended.

If You Wake Up

Don’t lie in bed for more than twenty minutes trying to fall back asleep.

You’ll have better chances of getting sleepy again if you get up and do more relaxing activities. Don’t touch that remote.
Walking Can Be a Workout

The Rolling Stones once sang “I’m gonna walk before they make me run.” They probably weren’t singing about high blood pressure or diabetes, but today’s doctors would approve of the white-collar rocker.

Recent research has shown that a good walk is not too light or simple to give significant health benefits, especially to the obese or those new to the idea of getting fit.

“Even though running can burn more calories in a shorter amount of time, walking is still a great form of exercise,” says Diane L. Donnelly, MD, of St. Joseph’s/Candler Medical Group-Rincon.

The key to intensity: Doctors recommend that people engage in 30 to 60 minutes of moderately intense exercise on most days of the week. Walking can see these requirements if it gets your heart pumping and your breathing rate up to the point where you can still have a conversation but take some effort to maintain.

“Studies have shown that those who walk at a higher intensity have greater levels of cardiovascular fitness and a lower incidence of hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol,” Donnelly says.

The longer the walk, the more the benefits. Even light or moderate walks can add up to the equivalent of moderate-intensity exercise. The half-hour or more walking is accumulated throughout the day, so it can be divided up into three or six 10-minute bouts during the day. Once you’ve put your time in, grab an apple. Donnelly warns against negating the benefits with a power snack.

“Randomly selected atambulatory subjects, those who walked for 30 minutes or more daily, showed a 20 percent reduction in the risk of stroke and heart disease,” she says.

To get the biggest benefit, ADHD children should have at least 60 minutes of exercise per day to reduce symptoms, suggests a 2006 study in the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Focusing on ADHD Quiz

Which of the following symptoms indicate hyperactivity?

A. Blowing out candles before questions have been completed.
B. Difficulty sitting still.
C. Interrupting or interrupting on other’s conversations or game.
D. None of the above.
E. None of the above. These symptoms are designated as inactivity.

Which of the following symptoms indicate inattention?

A. Does not seems to listen when spoken to directly.
B. Easily distracted.
C. Leaves seat when remaining seated is expected.
D. Often forgetful in daily activities.
E. Often forgetful in daily activities.

The symptoms must be present for at least six months, observable in two or more settings, such as at school or at home. To be diagnosed with ADHD, children should have at least one symptom of inattention or hyperactivity, or impulsivity, to a degree beyond what would be expected for children their age.

A. True
B. False
C. Both
D. None of the above. These symptoms are designated as inactivity.

False. There is little or no solid evidence for many remedies marketed to parents. Children who receive both behavioral treatment and medication show more improvement than those on treatment alone, which effects an estimated 3 to 5 percent of school-aged children.

“Live Stronger, Live Smart” Cancer Exercise Program

This program is designed to help people tolerate cancer treatment and regain the lost physical fitness treatments often affect, as well as improve emotional and mental levels. Costs vary depending on location and type of each session. For more information please call 819-6563.

New events are added every day. Please visit www.jpch.org and click “calendar” for other events and additional information.

October

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# Smart Living: Autumn can be the worst season for some asthma sufferers. Why?

**Jeffrey Jaudon, RN**

The fall means colder weather. For many people, cold weather itself is an asthma trigger, causing a bronchial spasm in the lungs, which can bring on an asthma attack. But cold weather also causes people to stay indoors more, where they encounter more allergens. Things like dander from pets and dusty curtains are potential triggers for asthma sufferers.

**JJ:** Does the fact that flu season usually starts in the fall make a difference?

**SL:** With asthma you have a greater tendency to plug up mucus in the bronchials anyway, so when you add secondary infection such as flu or pneumonia on top of that, it can result in a worse outcome such as a longer hospital stay. That being said, it's important for everyone to consider getting a flu shot, not just asthma patients.

**JJ:** If people know that their asthma is worse in the fall, is there anything they can do to lessen the impact before the season starts?

**SL:** There are things that asthma sufferers are exposed to in their homes in addition to the weather change. It’s important to keep your blinds and your curtains dust-free, keep your house vacuumed, and change the air filters in the house. We also teach every asthma patient to use their peak flow meters.

**JJ:** If an asthma patient goes down to the yellow zone, what should they do?

**SL:** When you add secondary infection such as flu or pneumonia on top of the asthma, it can result in a worse outcome such as a longer hospital stay. That being said, it's important for everyone to consider getting a flu shot, not just asthma patients.

**JJ:** Do people receive these meters at the time of their diagnosis?

**SL:** Typically, when people are diagnosed as children think they have childhood asthma that goes away. But if it flares up later in life whether through smoking or environmental hazards, it sometimes takes a hospital stay for them to get the tools and the knowledge they need to control their asthma.

**JJ:** What's a peak flow meter?

**SL:** It's a handheld device that measures a person's ability to push air out of their lungs. Patients are supposed to do this daily and evaluate their readings. There's a green, a yellow, and a red zone. Green is your personal best. If you reach the red zone, you're reaching an asthma attack. You need to talk to your doctor about adjusting your treatments. When you get down to the red zone, you're reaching an asthma attack and need to go to the hospital.

**SL:** People should use their peak flow meters every day and evaluate their readings.