

# care

## CONNECTION

Jan 2023

BE THE  
*Healthiest*  
YOU CAN BE IN  
**2023**

Make your  
**health** a  
priority  
this year.

PT Paul Fauchaux  
engages in a throwing  
drill outside of the  
Therapy Center.

If pain is keeping you  
from the hobbies you  
love, it might be time  
to try Physical Therapy.

**PILL-FREE PAIN  
MANAGEMENT**

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## LOOKING BACK

Despite so many challenges in the last few years, our team faced adversity with *perseverance* and *resilience* for our community.

In 2022, we began offering ancillary services in our medical plaza in order for our urgent care, primary care and clinic patients to have x-rays and lab work done conveniently in one place. We expanded access through our patient portal which now offers direct appointment booking, video visits, and online bill pay. We resumed education—CPR, First Aid and Puberty Classes—and offered our \$10 screening event while also partnering for community health fairs.

Our work did not go unnoticed. In 2022, our team was recognized by the National Rural Health Association as a Top 20 Critical Access Hospital for Patient Satisfaction, earned 1 of 3 statewide Safety Star Awards from the Louisiana Hospital Association (LHA) Trust Funds and won a Chartis Performance Leadership Award for clinical outcomes and patient perspective scores. Additionally, our community support efforts earned us the “Going the Extra Mile” Award from the Capital Area United Way and recognition as a Relay for Life Top 10 Fundraising Team in Louisiana. *Proud is an understatement.*

My resolution for 2023 is perpetual—that we can continue caring for you in new and exciting ways.

*Cheers to 2023,*

*Mary Ellen Pratt*

Mary Ellen Pratt, FACHE, CEO

# Choose PT for Pain

Have you chosen to sit out of ball games to avoid pain? Is your back aching more while gardening? Is stiffness affecting your golf swing? If this sounds familiar, it might be time to consider Physical Therapy (PT).

Nearly 20 million Americans suffer from chronic pain that interferes with their daily activities, according to the CDC.

It's commonplace for patients to think about Physical Therapy following a surgery or serious injury, but Physical Therapy should also be proactive in order to manage pain, prevent further injury, and even perhaps help avoid the need for surgery. The positive impact of Physical Therapy has led to new recommendations and amended laws that increase accessibility for patients. The CDC recommends nondrug approaches such as Physical Therapy over long-term or high dosage use of prescription pain medications. Additionally, states across the US, including Louisiana, have changed legislation to support “Direct Access” for Physical Therapy patients. Direct Access simply means that state law no longer requires a physician referral or prescription for an evaluation.

### What does this mean for you?

It means that you no longer have to wait to see a Physical Therapist if your daily activities or hobbies are being affected by issues such as pain, ongoing stiffness, and reduced strength. Simply contact our therapy center to make an appointment. Our therapists will conduct an extensive evaluation, learn about your goals and work with you to create a customized treatment plan—which can even incorporate the hobbies and sports you want to return to.





### HEALTH TIP

**Direct Access allows you to start therapy without a physician's order**

**PT can prevent injuries**

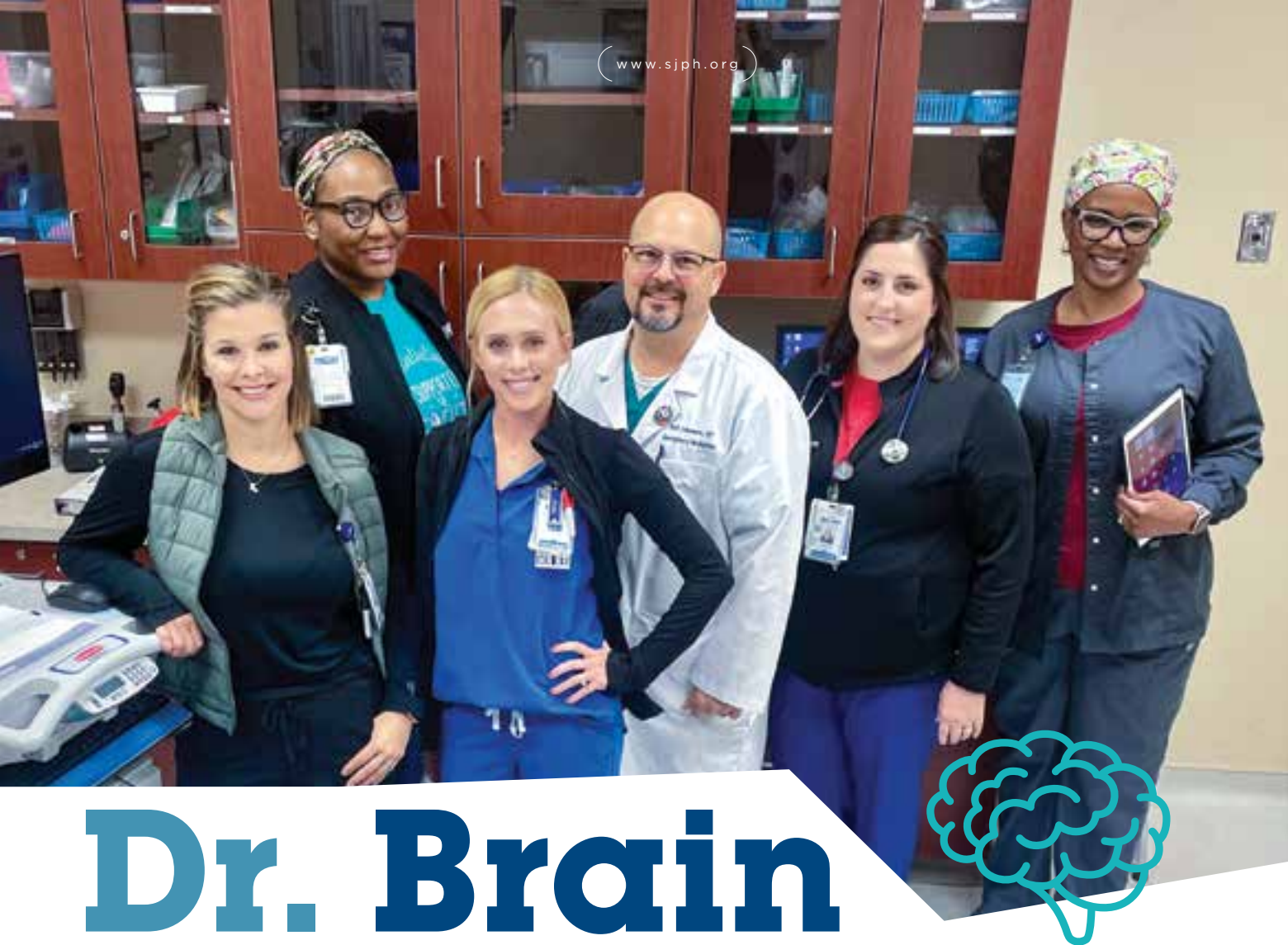
**PT can reduce the need for surgery**

**PT can improve strength, mobility, flexibility, and balance**

**PT can help you recover from injuries or surgeries faster**

Get started today. To schedule an evaluation, contact us at 225.258.5934.

After-hours appointments are available. St. James Parish Hospital Therapy Center is located in Lutchter inside the medical plaza next to the hospital.



# Dr. Brain

The words “Doctor Brain” can be heard over the loud speaker in our entire facility. Just two small words, but they hold much power and set in motion a sequence of events throughout the hospital. How quickly we respond is measured and monitored by state and national agencies, but what drives our team is the fact that our actions can have life-altering consequences for our patients and their families.

## What is Dr. Brain?

Dr. Brain is St. James Parish Hospital’s stroke code. It’s similar to a code-red fire alert but used to expedite care for possible stroke patients. Our ER physicians and nurses are trained to quickly recognize stroke symptoms and call the code to alert a multidisciplinary team to get ready—whether this means meeting a patient for blood work, clearing the CT table, or pulling necessary medications.

“A stroke code is common at hospitals, but Dr. Brain can be attributed to our ER Medical Director Dr. William Freeman,” says Rhonda Zeringue, RN, and Chief Nursing Officer. “Dr. Freeman was instrumental in helping us implement our telestroke program and wanted our code to emphasize the fact that we are working to save a patient’s brain. Time is brain after a stroke,” said Rhonda.

## Connect to a Neurologist in Minutes

Once stroke symptoms are verified by the on-site physician, the patient is sent immediately for a CT scan and a remote Neurology Team at Ochsner Medical Center is alerted. CT images are sent directly to the neurologist and both our local team and Ochsner prepare to initiate a telestroke consult. Our Telestroke Technology, initially funded through a federal grant in 2010 after our area was identified as a “hot spot” for strokes, allows our team to connect with a neurologist within minutes of determining a patient had a stroke.

Diagnostics are sent seamlessly to a neurologist who can connect immediately to a patient virtually via a large, high-definition monitor. With this technology, patients are given various commands and asked questions so the neurologist can see reaction time, tongue and eye movements, and





ER Medical Director Dr. William Freeman leads a "Dr. Brain" drill



### HEALTH TIP

Call **911** immediately if any of the following signs appear suddenly:

**Numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body**

**Facial drooping**

**Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding simple words/commands**

**Trouble seeing in one or both eyes/change in vision**

**Trouble walking, dizziness, balance issues**

**Headache with no known cause**

*"Last Known Normal"* is extremely important when determining treatment for a stroke. If you are with someone who starts acting different, make note of this exact time.

monitor vital signs in real time. From this assessment, a treatment plan is recommended and discussed with the patient and family. Treatment plans vary depending on the type of stroke, time elapsed since the onset of symptoms and interventions needed. Some patients are transferred for additional care, while others remain at the hospital to be monitored. Additionally, many patients return to St. James Parish Hospital for extensive skilled rehab services which work to help patients regain their strength and independence following a stroke.

### Quick and Quality Care

Our team partners with LERN (Louisiana Emergency Response Network) and Ochsner for training and education on how to recognize and quickly respond to strokes. Our stroke measures are monitored by state and national agencies to ensure that we are keeping certain standards. "We are so proud of the stroke services we can provide to our local community," says Kelli Randazzo, RN, ER Manager. "The work our team does is not only saving lives, but also saving quality of life because we are able to offer coordinated, quality care," says Kelli.

**PERCENTAGE OF PATIENTS WHO CAME TO THE ER WITH STROKE SYMPTOMS AND RECEIVED BRAIN SCAN RESULTS WITHIN 45 MINUTES OF ARRIVAL**

**OUR AVERAGE**  
(April 1st – Nov 1st):

**100%**

**STATE/NATIONAL AVERAGE**

(as of Nov 1st\*):

**70%**

\*medicare.gov/care-compare

A CT Scan is the "gold standard" for a stroke diagnosis. CMS (The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) measures timely and effective care to show how often or how quickly hospitals provide care that research shows gets the best results for patients with certain conditions, such as a stroke. The goal is to get patients scanned within 45 minutes of arrival in the ER, because a quick diagnosis means quicker treatment. 100% of the patients who arrived at St. James Parish Hospital's ER this fiscal year were scanned and had results within 45 minutes or less.

**At the first sign of a stroke, call 911, so we can initiate Dr. Brain to save yours.**

Kourtney Wingate,  
Director of  
Nutrition  
Services



# Good *Nutrition* Can Change Your Life

Health professionals agree that nutrition services are one of the first treatments that individuals should receive to improve conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension.

Strong bones, healthy skin, a well-functioning digestive system and a lower risk for serious medical conditions are just some of the benefits of good nutrition. If you have a chronic disease, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease or kidney disease, good nutrition is an essential part of management, but how can you start eating healthy and stick with it? A specially-certified registered dietitian at St. James Parish Hospital can guide you through Medical Nutrition Therapy.

## What is Medical Nutrition Therapy?

Available with a referral from your primary care provider, Medical Nutrition Therapy is designed to help you understand the importance of good nutrition, as well as teach you how to adopt personalized, healthier eating habits that work





### Make your health a priority.

This means making healthy choices and staying up-to-date with regular screenings. Those with underlying health issues or other risk factors should talk to their physician about recommended ages for screenings.



#### HEALTH TIP

Ask your doctor to have your screenings done locally at St. James Parish Hospital. We can send results to any ordering physician.



specifically for your needs and lifestyle. Medical Nutrition Therapy is covered by many insurances, including Medicare Parts B and C, and commercial plans for certain diagnoses.

### How does it work?

Before your first appointment, our dietician will review your medical history to get a sense of how better nutrition could improve your health. The dietician will assess your lifestyle and dietary habits, create a unique eating plan with personalized goals and answer any of your questions about nutrition. At follow-up appointments, you and the dietician will review your progress.

Medical Nutrition Therapy can help you get chronic conditions under control while reaping the rewards of healthier eating.

Most importantly, you'll have someone supporting you who understands your health, can provide accountability, and is always rooting for your success.



**Make an appointment with your primary care doctor to see if you qualify.**

Cut out and keep this checklist

## American Cancer Society *Recommendations:*

### ALL AGES

- ☐ Stay away from tobacco
- ☐ Get to and stay at a healthy weight
- ☐ Get moving
- ☐ Eat healthy
- ☐ Moderate alcohol

### 21-29

- ☐ Talk to your doctor if you have a family history of Colon Cancer or other genetic disorders
- ☐ Report changes in breasts to a doctor and discuss your risk level
- ☐ Cervical Cancer Testing (HPV) starting at 25

### 30-39

- ☐ Talk to your doctor if you have a family history of Colon Cancer or other genetic disorders
- ☐ Report changes in breasts to a doctor and discuss your risk level
- ☐ Cervical Cancer Testing (HPV) every 5 years

### 40-49

- ☐ Start Colon Cancer testing at age 45 if you are at average risk
- ☐ Start Annual Breast Cancer Screenings between ages 40-45 if you are at average risk
- ☐ Cervical Cancer Testing (HPV) every 5 years
- ☐ At 40-45, men at higher risk of Prostate Cancer should discuss testing with their doctor

### 50-64

- ☐ Start Colon Cancer testing if you haven't yet
- ☐ Women ages 50 to 54 should get mammograms every year, 55+ can choose every 2 years
- ☐ At 40-45, men at higher risk of Prostate Cancer should discuss screenings with their doctor
- ☐ At age 50, talk to your physician about a PSA Screening
- ☐ If you are 50+ and smoke or previously smoked, talk to your doctor about Lung Cancer Screenings

### 65+

- ☐ Colon Cancer testing is recommended through age 75. Discuss screenings after 75 with your physician.
- ☐ If you have a smoking history, talk to your doctor about Lung Cancer Screenings
- ☐ Mammograms are recommended (at least) every 2 years
- ☐ Men should talk to a healthcare provider to determine if a PSA Screening is recommended

*\*Summarized from the American Cancer Society*

**For complete details, visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) (screening recommendations by age).**



St. James Parish Hospital is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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## Provider Spotlight:

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

## Dr. Charles J. McGaff Jr., Certified Wound Specialist Physician

St. James Parish Hospital would like to congratulate Dr. Charles J. McGaff Jr. who was recently certified as a Wound Care Physician by the American Board of Wound Management (ABWM). Dr. McGaff took advantage of a slower time during the pandemic to apply and study for the certification exam in order to enhance his knowledge in caring for complex, non-healing wounds.

Dr. McGaff has been practicing medicine for 34 years and began offering wound care services 25 years ago. Dr. McGaff's interest in wound care began early during his residency which included time serving at an Army burn unit. Additionally, he says, part of General Surgery involves creating and healing both acute and chronic wounds.

St. James Parish Hospital's Wound Care Clinic offers a highly specialized team trained to utilize advanced wound care techniques.

"Without proper care, a wound can lead to further health issues or even amputation. A multifaceted, clinical approach to wound care can speed healing, increase comfort, and get people back to their lives," says Dr. McGaff.

"Healing wounds is a process. Most chronic wounds require weekly visits. Having to go to the city every week would be an added burden," said Dr. McGaff.

"It is extremely fulfilling to resolve wounds that have plagued a patient for a long time and even more gratifying that I can do this in our local community."

**Dr. McGaff sees patients at our Wound Care Center located in Lutchter, inside the Medical Plaza next to the Hospital. Our Wound Care Center is a department of St. James Parish Hospital. To schedule an appointment, call 1.877.295.2273.**



### HEALTH TIP

If you've had a wound for a few weeks and notice any of the following symptoms, contact our local wound care clinic.

**Excessive redness and swelling**

**Continued bleeding**

**Slow or no signs of healing**

**Pain that doesn't subside**

**Warm or hot skin**

**Yellow/Green discharge**

**Foul odor**



## UPCOMING Events

### 1.31.23 Stop the Bleed Class

- RSVP at [www.sjph.org/events](http://www.sjph.org/events)
- 1pm-2:30pm in the Medical Plaza

### 2.15.23 Heartsaver CPR & First Aid

- RSVP at [www.sjph.org/events](http://www.sjph.org/events)
- 8am-2pm in the Medical Plaza

### 2.17.23 Community Blood Drive

11am-4pm in the Medical Plaza

### 3.15.23 Healthcare Provider CPR/BLS Recertification

- RSVP at [www.sjph.org/events](http://www.sjph.org/events)
- 8am-12pm in the Medical Plaza

### Boys & Girls Puberty Classes

- Spring dates will be announced soon
- RSVP at [www.sjph.org/events](http://www.sjph.org/events)

\* Event info and schedules are subject to change.

*RSVP*

**Visit [www.sjph.org/events](http://www.sjph.org/events) for the latest information or to register online.**