Watson Clinic Healthscene WINTER 2019

Nurturing women’s health
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Protect your vision
Keep an eye on five common problems
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A community health education magazine made possible by generous donations from Watson Clinic Foundation’s supporters.
Get a flu shot every year. Public health officials urge almost everyone 6 months and older to get vaccinated, ideally in the fall. Why? It's the best way to lower your risk of the flu.

Wash your hands often. Clean hands are especially important during flu season. Use soap and water or, in a pinch, an alcohol-based hand rub.

Don’t stand so close. Try to avoid close contact with sick people and their flu germs.

Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. It’s a simple trick to avoid transferring any germs you might have gotten from door handles or other surfaces to your eyes, nose or mouth.

Boost your immunity. Help your immune system fight off the flu with plenty of rest, exercise and healthy foods.

Take this next step
If you do get the flu, taking a prescription antiviral drug (ideally within two days of feeling sick) may make your illness milder and shorter. Your doctor may prescribe an antiviral if your age or other health problems put you at risk for serious complications from the flu.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Need your flu shot? Established Watson Clinic patients can get their immunizations during regularly scheduled appointments with their primary care physician. In addition to the standard flu vaccine, we also provide the high-dose flu vaccine for patients who are age 65 or older, as well as both forms of the pneumonia vaccine—Prevnar and Pneumovax—for those who qualify.

For the latest updates on flu vaccine availability, visit WatsonClinic.com/Flu or call our Flu Information Line at 863-680-7FLU (7358).
Staying ahead of the curve

FROM THE DESK OF
DR. STEVEN G. ACHINGER

PATIENTS and families are drawn to Watson Clinic because of the convenience of our locations, the diversity of our specialties and—above all else—the compassion and personalized attention they receive from our team of expert physicians and other care team members.

What they may not see are the efforts taking place behind the scenes to ensure a smooth, efficient and fulfilling healthcare experience for all. Our motto is simple: We always put our patients first.

To accomplish this, our clinic partners and administrators are consistently brainstorming ideas on how we can improve quality, enhance patient satisfaction and strengthen the structure of healthcare delivery that we’ve fostered since 1941.

These crucial decisions aren’t made by faceless bureaucrats. Watson Clinic is owned and operated by the physicians themselves. Their keen understanding of a patient’s needs informs everything we do.

In recent months, our leadership roster has expanded. We’ve appointed physician directors to oversee our efforts in quality improvement, recruitment and value-based services. These appointments will help us stay ahead of the curve in this rapidly evolving healthcare landscape, and the decisions they make will enhance the caliber and convenience of care for all of our patients.

Speaking of decisions, this issue of Health Scene focuses on a demographic that makes 80 percent of all healthcare decisions in the United States: women. Within these pages, you’ll find a series of informative articles on health-related topics that greatly impact the female population, including pregnancy and childbirth education, heart disease, diabetes, lung cancer, and breast care.

We hope you feel empowered from the insights contained in this issue, and we invite you to email us at HealthScene@WatsonClinic.com with any feedback you might have.

Yours in good health,

Steven G. Achinger, MD, FASN
Watson Clinic Managing Partner

Watson Clinic
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WINTER 2019

President, Watson Clinic Foundation, Inc.
Richard J. Cardosi, MD

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Information in HEALTH SCENE comes from a wide range of medical experts. Models may be used in photos and illustrations. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your Watson Clinic healthcare provider at 863-680-7190.

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Schedule your next appointment with ease

In the hectic rush of everyday life, a doctor’s appointment might slip your mind. That’s why Watson Clinic now offers appointment reminders sent directly to your phone via text. Visit WatsonClinic.com/Text for more information and to sign up in minutes!

Patients are also able to choose their own appointment dates and times directly through the MyChart patient portal. From the scheduling page, you can find your doctor, note your symptoms and reserve an appointment time that works best for your schedule. Appointment scheduling through the portal is limited to participating physicians and providers, but it is available across a majority of our departments, including Priority Care.

Visit WatsonClinic.com/PatientPortal for more details.

Leading-edge heart care

WATSON CLINIC CARDIOLOGIST PERFORMS FIRST MITRACLIP® PROCEDURE IN POLK COUNTY

Watson Clinic interventional cardiologist Dr. Douglas G. Ebersole is among the first specialists in Polk County to implant the innovative MitraClip device, a minimally invasive tool used to treat patients with a leaking mitral valve. Dr. Ebersole recently performed the first two procedures at Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center alongside Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center cardiovascular surgeon Dr. Andres Medina.

“The MitraClip is a safe and effective way to repair mitral valve disease in older adults,” says Dr. Ebersole. “It is a highly precise and accurate alternative to surgery, particularly with patients who have more complex or advanced valve disease.”

A leaking mitral valve, known as mitral regurgitation, is a serious, progressive heart condition in which the flaps of the mitral valve do not close properly and allow blood to flow backward into the heart.

Open-heart surgery has been the standard procedure to treat mitral regurgitation, but many patients are not eligible for the procedure because of advanced age, frailty, or other chronic diseases or complicating factors. Before MitraClip, people who were not eligible for open-heart surgery could only manage their symptoms with medications, which doesn’t stop the progression of the disease.

The MitraClip is inserted via a catheter through a blood vessel in the leg. Because it is a minimally invasive procedure, MitraClip is a safe and effective alternative to traditional surgery.

For more information and to schedule an appointment with Dr. Ebersole, call 863-680-7490.

Douglas G. Ebersole, MD
New parents-to-be: Education is key

Not sure what to expect when you’re expecting? From childbirth to breastfeeding, the learning curve for first-time parents-to-be can feel overwhelming. That’s where Watson Clinic’s OB-GYN department can come to the rescue. Headed by registered nurses with years of experience in providing expert obstetrics care, the department’s trilogy of educational classes can ease the trepidation and put you on the path to success. Check these out:

**Pregnancy & Childbirth**
This class is designed to prepare couples for the miracle of childbirth and to address concerns experienced during pregnancy, labor and delivery. Includes a tour of the hospital OB area, as well as information on breathing techniques, labor pains and medication options during delivery.

**Thursdays:** 6:30 to 8:30 pm  
**Select Saturdays:** 9 am to 5 pm  
$50 per couple  
(workbook included)

**Caring for Your Newborn**
This three-hour class, taught by a registered nurse, is designed for expectant parents and will cover basic newborn care including:
- Feeding your baby  
- Changing your baby  
- Bathing your baby  
- Newborn behavior  
- New baby well-care  
- Plus much more

**Select Saturdays:** 9 am to noon
$25 per couple  
(workbook included)

**Breastfeeding Basics**
This three-hour class is taught by a registered nurse (RN) and certified breastfeeding educator. Topics to be covered include:
- Why breastfeed?  
- Best positions and latching on  
- Milk production and pumping  
- Schedules vs. feeding on demand  
- Are they getting enough?  
- Answers to common questions

**Select Saturdays:** 1 to 4 pm
$25 per couple  
(workbook included)

To participate in these three classes, you must be a Watson Clinic patient. It is also recommended that you be at least 28 weeks pregnant. To register for these classes and to make your payment online, visit WatsonClinic.com/events.

You will not be confirmed as a class participant until payment has been received by a member of our Patient Financial Services department. To make your payment or for questions related to billing, call 863-904-6229 or 863-904-6226. For non-payment related questions, please call 863-393-9475.
Say ‘hello’ to our new physicians and providers

THE FOLLOWING PHYSICIANS AND PROVIDERS are the latest additions to our team. Each nurse practitioner works alongside the physicians listed in their credential information. Appointments with each of these specialists are now available.

TAREK BAKDASH, MD
NEUROLOGY
Medical school: University of Aleppo, Aleppo, Syria
Residency: Neurology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
Fellowship: Clinical Neurophysiology and Neuromuscular Medicine, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
Board-certification: Psychiatry, Neurology and Clinical Neurophysiology
Location: Watson Clinic Main
Appointments: 863-680-7300

SAMANTHA J. CURTIS, MD
OB-GYN/ FEMALE PELVIC MEDICINE & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY
Medical school: Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, GA
Internship and Residency: OB-GYN, Winnie Palmer Hospital for Women and Babies, Orlando, FL
Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building
Appointments: 863-680-7243

MONTE F. ZARLINGO, MD
RADIOLOGY
Medical school: University of California, School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA
Internship and Residency: Diagnostic Radiology, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
Fellowship: MRI, Long Beach Memorial MRI Center, Long Beach, CA; Breast/Body Imaging, William Beaumont Medical Center, Detroit, MI
Board-certification: Radiology
Location: Watson Clinic Main

JOSEPH J. COLUMBUS, APRN, DNP
FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY/OTOLARYNGOLOGY (ENT)
Education: MSN, Florida Southern College, Lakeland, FL; Doctor of Nursing Practice, Rush University, Chicago, IL
Memberships: American Nurses Credentialing Center, Adult Nurse Practitioner Board Certification, Aesthetic Certifications from Esthetic Skin Institute
Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building and Watson Clinic Highlands
Appointments: 863-680-7486 (ENT), 863-802-6557 (Facial Plastic Surgery)

CHRIS B. REIFENSTEIN, PA
OTOLARYNGOLOGY (ENT)
Education: AS, Physician Assistant, Miami Dade College, Miami, FL
Memberships: National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants; National Certification for Surgical Technology
Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building and Watson Clinic Highlands
Appointments: 863-680-7486

JUDITH J. SAINTANGE, AUD, CCC-A
AUDIOLOGY
Education: AuD, Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Memberships: Certificate of Clinical Competence in Audiology
Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building and Watson Clinic Highlands
Appointments: 863-680-7486

Watson Clinic Highlands expands pediatric care
Board-certified pediatricians Dr. Tamara Pistoria and Dr. Sheena Tonkin have moved their offices to the expanded campus at Watson Clinic Highlands.
Both of these popular specialists have relocated from Watson Clinic South. In their new home, they treat both new and established pediatric patients and offer walk-in care for sick visits. Meanwhile, pediatrician Dr. Cynthia Hutto remains at Watson Clinic South where she continues to provide exceptional care.
For more information and to schedule an appointment with Dr. Pistoria or Dr. Tonkin, please call 863-607-3346

For more information on these or any of Watson Clinic’s more than 300 physicians and providers, visit WatsonClinic.com/Physician-Search
What is rosacea and how can it be treated?

As many as 14 million people in the U.S. are living with rosacea, a skin disorder affecting the face. Rosacea often starts as a redness that looks like a blush across the nose, cheeks, chin or forehead. In time, red pimples and bumps may appear. Small, red blood vessels may become visible under your skin, which might burn or feel warm too.

Rosacea may also irritate and inflame your eyelids and the white part of your eye. Some people may develop a swollen, bumpy nose.

Most people who have rosacea are fair-skinned. Women are slightly more likely than men to have rosacea, but men are at higher risk for severe cases.

Rosacea can’t be cured, but treatment can reduce flare-ups. Your doctor may suggest antibiotic medicines applied directly to your skin. Enlarged blood vessels can sometimes be removed with laser surgery. Eye treatments might include steroid eye drops. If your nose is bumpy and swollen, you may be able to have extra skin removed.

Watch for things that make your rosacea worse, including sun exposure, hot drinks, spicy foods, stress, and very hot or cold temperatures.

Use mild skin care products and apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher before going out.

What are the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer?

Endometrial cancer is the most common cancer of the female reproductive organs. It develops in the lining of the uterus—the endometrium. When cells in the endometrium grow too rapidly, the endometrium can thicken in certain places and eventually form a tumor.

Age raises your risk. And women who are overweight or obese are 10 times more likely to develop endometrial cancer than women at a healthy weight.

Women who still have a uterus and use estrogen-only hormone therapy to treat menopause symptoms, use the medicine tamoxifen to treat or prevent breast cancer, or have polycystic ovary syndrome are also at a higher risk.

Most women have early signs or symptoms. The most common symptom is abnormal vaginal bleeding.

About 90 percent of women with endometrial cancer experience it. If you’re premenopausal, this includes periods that are heavier or longer than usual, bleeding between periods, or spotting. If you’re past menopause, any bleeding is abnormal.

Tell your doctor right away about any abnormal bleeding, especially if you’re postmenopausal. Sometimes a thin, white or clear vaginal discharge after menopause is also a symptom.

Which vaccines should I get during my pregnancy?

When you’re expecting, vaccines do double duty: They keep both you and your baby safe from serious and avoidable diseases. Here are two vaccines that all women should get every time they’re pregnant:

**A flu shot.** This is a must because pregnancy makes it more likely that you’ll get seriously ill if you get the flu. Getting vaccinated also makes it less likely that your baby will get the flu for several months after birth. That’s crucial since the flu can be severe in babies. And babies can’t get vaccinated until they’re six months old. You can get the flu shot during any trimester of your pregnancy.

**The whooping cough vaccine.** This infection can be serious for anyone, but it’s especially serious for babies. About half of all babies younger than 1 year old who get whooping cough need to be hospitalized—and some won’t survive. Like the flu vaccine, this one also helps protect babies from a dangerous disease until they’re old enough to be vaccinated.

As a mom-to-be you may wonder about the safety of anything you put in your body. Be assured that these vaccines, or any others your doctor might advise during pregnancy, are very safe for you and your baby. Side effects are usually mild.

Luke M. Miller, MD, is a board-certified dermatologist at Watson Clinic Highlands. Call 863-680-7267 to schedule an appointment.

Richard J. Cardosi, MD, is a board-certified gynecologic oncologist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Call 863-680-7578 to schedule an appointment.

Samantha J. Curtis, MD, is an OB-GYN and female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgeon at Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building. Call 863-680-7243 to schedule an appointment.
WOMEN FACE health challenges throughout their lives that are unique to them. At Watson Clinic, our specialists have long made strides to advance the cause of women’s health.

Gynecologic oncologist Dr. Richard J. Cardosi was the first surgeon in Polk County to perform a robot-assisted hysterectomy using a single-site incision.

Since it opened in 2006, our Women’s Center has set the standard for early detection and breast cancer treatment, offering powerful 3D mammography capabilities and a team of expert breast-specific radiologists, breast surgeons and highly skilled plastic and reconstructive surgeons who have assisted countless women in restoring their confidence following a mastectomy.

In 2009, Dr. John G. Canto, a board-certified cardiologist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland, received international recognition for his influential research study on women, heart attack risks and mortality rates.

Efforts like these are complemented by a devotion to community service and advocacy, as evidenced by our sponsorships and participation in events such as the American Cancer Society’s Making Strides Against Breast Cancer and Relay for Life, our monthly pregnancy and childbirth education classes, and much more.

In keeping with our quest to share crucial information on women’s health matters, here are a few topics that we believe deserve more attention:

Heart disease
Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women. For generations, the medical community has too often dismissed women’s heart attack symptoms by blaming them on the flu, stress or simply feeling under the weather.

“Recently, much has been done to clarify the misunderstandings regarding women and heart attack symptoms,” says Dr. Canto.

To schedule an appointment with any of these departments, please call the following:
- Cardiology: 863-680-7490
- OB-GYN: 863-680-7243
- Oncology-hematology: 863-603-4770
- Gynecologic oncology: 863-680-7578
While it’s true that the most common red flag of a heart attack in both men and women is chest pain or discomfort that lasts for more than a few minutes—or goes away and comes back—women are more likely to experience other symptoms. These include:

- Shortness of breath.
- Pain in the jaw or upper or lower back.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Cold sweat.
- Dizziness or light-headedness.

Some of these symptoms may occur before an actual heart attack. For instance, women may struggle to breathe for several weeks before a heart attack happens.

If there’s any chance you’re having a heart attack, call 911 right away. Don’t try to drive yourself to a hospital—or have someone else drive you. Reacting quickly to signs of a heart attack could save your life.

**Diabetes**

Approximately 15 million women in the United States have diabetes. That’s 1 in every 9 adult females.

A common and dangerous disease brought on by high levels of blood sugar—or glucose—in the body, diabet es can hit women especially hard. It results in a higher risk for heart disease, blindness and depression, compared to men.

You’ve likely heard of type 1 and the more common type 2 diabetes. Both result from a lack of insulin production in the body. There’s another type of diabetes that’s exclusive to women: gestational diabetes.

“This condition occurs only during pregnancy and can have negative health impacts on both the mother and baby if left unmanaged,” says **Dr. Megan B. Luciano**, an OB-GYN and female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgeon at Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building. “The condition typically ceases after birth, but it can raise the risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.”

Gestational diabetes is normally managed through a healthy diet and increased physical activity. If these steps are not sufficient in lowering blood glucose levels, then insulin might be required.

**Lung cancer**

The American Cancer Society estimates that over 112,000 women will be diagnosed with lung cancer this year. While smoking is the major culprit behind the disease, women who have never smoked are still twice as likely to get the disease than men who have never smoked.

The sooner lung cancer is diagnosed, the better the chances for survival. Doctors now have a screening test that can catch lung cancer early: low-dose computed tomography (LDCT).

“Anyone at high risk for lung cancer should get annual LDCT lung cancer screenings,” asserts **Dr. Shalini Mulaparthi**, a board-certified oncologist-hematologist at the Watson Clinic Cancer & Research Center.

You are at high risk if all three of these things are true for you:

1. You have a pack-year smoking history of 30 years or more. The number of packs of cigarettes you smoked per day multiplied by the number of years you smoked equals your pack years. For example: 1.5 packs a day multiplied by 20 years equals 30 pack years.
2. You smoke now, or you quit within the past 15 years.
3. You’re between 55 and 80 years old.

“The biggest benefit of LDCT is that it can find lung cancer in its beginning stages, which helps lower the risk of dying from the disease,” says Dr. Mulaparthi.

Early diagnosis also means that doctors can often use minimally invasive surgery to remove the cancer and preserve more lung tissue. If you think you’re at high risk for lung cancer, ask your doctor about getting screened with LDCT.

John G. Canto, MD, MPH, FACC
Richard J. Cardosi, MD
Megan B. Luciano, MD
Shalini Mulaparthi, MD
IF a mammogram or ultrasound shows something unusual in your breast—such as a suspicious mass or cluster of calcifications—the doctor reading those images may recommend a biopsy.

Needle biopsies performed by a breast radiologist are less invasive and less costly than a surgical biopsy, without the risks of general anesthesia or the downtime. They are performed in the office and only require an hour to do. Patients can drive themselves to and from the appointments without any issues.

“Breast biopsies involve sampling the area that is considered suspicious by taking a small piece of tissue with a hollow needle,” says Dr. Rachel Burke, a board-certified breast-imaging radiologist at the Watson Clinic Women’s Center. “We do this after numbing the area with local anesthetic. These procedures are very quick, and the actual biopsy portion takes a few minutes. You leave with a Band-Aid, not stitches.”

When adequately numbed, the biopsy should not be painful.

To schedule an appointment for a mammogram at Watson Clinic Women’s Center or Watson Clinic Highlands location, call 863-680-7755, option 3.
Addressing common & concerns

Ultrasound biopsy
Assisted by the ultrasound technician, the doctor will find the area that needs to be biopsied, clean and numb your breast, and then take multiple samples of the area with a needle. Once the area has been sampled, a small metallic clip made of titanium will be placed at the biopsy site to demonstrate the location of your biopsy.

Stereotactic biopsy
This procedure may be performed upright in a chair or lying down on a table. The breast will be placed in compression, similar to a mammogram. The mammography technician will proceed to take pictures to find the area for biopsy. This process may take a few tries, and you may need to be repositioned before beginning the actual procedure. Once the area is found, the radiologist will clean and numb your breast and advance the biopsy needle to the target. The samples are obtained and often x-rayed to confirm they contain calcifications. Once the radiologist knows that the sample is adequate, a metallic clip is placed at the biopsy site.

What are the clips for?
Biopsy clips are a way of marking a mass or calcifications as having already been sampled. If the pathology shows the area is benign or not worrisome, then the clip will remain in the breast. If the area is abnormal or cancerous, then the clip will be removed by the surgeon. Biopsy clips cannot be felt, do not set off metal detectors at the airport or interfere with MRI examinations. They are very helpful to the radiologist. “I call them my metallic breadcrumbs,” says Dr. Burke. “So we know where we have already been.”

Post-biopsy care
Minor bruising and swelling after a biopsy are not uncommon. The area will be sore, and you should avoid strenuous activity for at least 24 hours after the biopsy. You should take Tylenol as needed (if no issues), avoid aspirin products and use ice. The small incision from the biopsy needle is about the size of a grain of rice and should be kept clean and dry for 48 hours to prevent infection.

What’s next?
Immediately following your biopsy, the tissue samples are sent to a laboratory for analysis. This process may take up to one week for final results.

At Watson Clinic, you will receive a phone call regarding your pathology results as soon as they are received. “It’s important to keep in mind that having a biopsy doesn’t automatically mean you have breast cancer,” says Dr. Burke. “In fact, most biopsy results are not cancer.”
SLEEP: We all do it, but we don’t always understand it. In fact, sleep can even seem a little mysterious. Maybe that’s one reason why some myths persist when it comes to this vital part of our lives. Have you ever heard of these three?

MYTH: Snoring may be annoying, but it’s not a health concern.

FACT: While snoring is usually harmless, it does have a potentially serious side. It can warn of a condition called obstructive sleep apnea, in which breathing temporarily stops several times a night. People with sleep apnea may wake up choking or gasping for air.

Sleep apnea can leave you worn-out the next day. Worse, it may raise the risk of heart disease. Fortunately, treatment—including continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy—can help.

MYTH: You can get by on very little sleep.

FACT: Skimping on shuteye can sink your mood and leave you unproductive, irritable and accident-prone. There’s more: Sleeping too little may be a serious health risk. It’s linked to everything from high blood pressure to obesity, diabetes and depression.

Getting enough sleep regularly will help you feel and perform your best. For most adults, that’s at least seven hours a night.

MYTH: If you wake up and can’t get back to sleep, it’s best just to lie there until you can.

FACT: Actually, if you can’t fall asleep after about 15 minutes, don’t stare at the clock. Get up and go to another room to do something relaxing. Listen to some soft, soothing music. Or read a book. When you feel sleepy, come back to bed.

Keep in mind that waking up and having trouble getting back to sleep can signal insomnia. Other signs include frequently waking up during the night or often feeling groggy the next day. If you have concerns about your sleep habits, let your doctor know.

Sources: American Academy of Sleep Medicine; National Sleep Foundation

Sleep specialists are here to help

Researchers estimate that as many as 70 million people have a sleep disorder. Watson Clinic’s Sleep Disorders Center was one of the first sleep labs established in Florida and is the only sleep center in the Lakeland area that is accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

Headed by three board-certified specialists—neurologist Dr. Daniel Traviesa and pulmonologists Dr. Eric Lipson and Dr. Naem Shahrour—the Sleep Disorders Center treats a range of disorders including:

- Respiratory disorders
- Cardiovascular and stress-related sleep disorders
- Seizures
- Sleepwalking
- Restless leg syndrome
- Insomnia
- Sleep apnea
- Narcolepsy

Call 863-680-7627 to schedule an appointment or visit WatsonClinic.com/Sleep.
YOU have the power to enrich the health of your community.

Since 1960, the Watson Clinic Foundation has worked tirelessly to promote the cause of wellness. Along the way, we’ve served as a conduit between the people in our community who want to make a difference and those who most benefit from their generous outreach.

None of the Foundation’s many initiatives—from helping people quit smoking to providing free preventive screenings to empowering the next generation of healthcare excellence through nursing scholarships—would be possible without the generous support of donors just like you.

Here for our community
Together, we’ve raised awareness of chronic disease and provided residents with the lifesaving benefits of early detection. We’ve provided healing comfort to patients and families who undergo the most dire health challenges. With an eye firmly fixed on the future of healthcare, we’ve invested in the medical breakthroughs of tomorrow and the hope of a future free of disease.

Here are just a few of the Foundation’s most consequential efforts—and examples of how your support has transformed lives in our community:

- **A monthly Tools to Quit class** has empowered many residents in our community to kick the smoking habit once and for all. The class includes information on various types of nicotine replacements, product samples and much more. Visit WatsonClinic.com/Events for the most current schedule of available classes.

- **The Arts in Medicine program** enhances the lives of patients and their families at the Watson Clinic Cancer & Research Center as they participate in artistic endeavors that reduce stress and facilitate an environment more conducive to healing. The program touched the lives of over 500 patients and caregivers in 2017 and over 900 in 2018.

- **A series of free community health screenings** helps residents stay on top of issues like blood pressure; breast, skin and prostate cancer risks; and many more.

- **A Speakers Bureau** offers healthcare professionals who share up-to-date wellness information to community groups, businesses, churches and other organizations.

- We’ve worked with state legislators to provide **cardiac defibrillators** in ambulances and other emergency vehicles statewide, and we’ve provided defibrillators and related education to local police departments, county sports complexes and other popular public attractions throughout Polk County. Over the past four years, we’ve donated nine of these defibrillators to other nonprofit organizations in our area.

How you can make a difference
When you support the Foundation, you support a range of other philanthropic organizations as well. We actively collaborate with other nonprofits that work to improve the health of our community.

To learn more about all of the Foundation’s offerings and how you can contribute, visit WatsonClinic.com/WCF or call 863-904-2656.
WATSON CLINIC’S OPTOMETRY department provides comprehensive eye exams, vision tests and much more for patients 5 years and older. These expert eye specialists carefully measure and fit contact lens and eyeglass prescriptions for maximum comfort, visual acuity and health. Services include:

• Routine eye exams.
• Family eye exams.
• Diabetic eye exams.
• Prescribing eyeglasses or contact lenses.
• Evaluation and treatment of glaucoma and dry eye syndrome.
• Evaluation and monitoring of cataracts and macular degeneration.
• Evaluation of acute eye problems.

The department works to diagnose a host of diseases and common concerns related to the eye, and makes referrals to our Ophthalmology department when eye surgery might be needed.

For more information and to schedule an appointment with a member of the department at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland, call 863-680-7486.
Eye problems can impact anyone. Some common issues are just minor annoyances. But others can lead to blindness.

**PINK EYE**

**What it is:** Tissue inside the eyelid and covering the eye gets inflamed. Blood vessels become more visible, so eyes look pink. The condition is most often caused by a bacterial or viral infection.

**Who’s at risk:** Children and adults. About 3 million cases of pink eye occur in the U.S. each year.

**Symptoms:** Eyes may be painful or itchy. A discharge can make eyes stick shut. It can feel like there’s something in your eye too.

**Treatment:** Mild pink eye can clear up with artificial tears and cold compresses. “You should see your doctor if you have pain, vision problems or intense redness,” Dr. Dwyer says.

**CATARACTS**

**What it is:** A cataract clouds the lens, which is the part of the eye that helps focus light.

**Who’s at risk:** The chance of developing cataracts increases as we age. Smokers and people with diabetes have a higher risk.

**Symptoms:** Vision may be blurry, and colors can fade. Glare from sunlight or lamps and poor night vision can be symptoms too.

**Treatment:** Early signs of cataracts can be improved with new glasses, brighter lighting and anti-glare sunglasses. If these don’t help, surgery may be needed to replace the lens with an artificial one.

**GLAUCOMA**

**What it is:** Glaucoma is really a group of diseases that cause pressure to build inside the eyeball,” Dr. Faynberg says. “This pressure damages the optic nerve.” Glaucoma can trigger vision loss or blindness.

**Who’s at risk:** The risk is highest for African Americans over age 40, anyone over 60 and people with a family history of glaucoma.

**Symptoms:** Glaucoma usually doesn’t have early symptoms, but it slowly destroys side vision. Eventually, all vision can disappear.

**Treatment:** There’s no cure, and once vision is gone, it can’t be restored. However, medications, laser treatments and surgery may save the vision that remains.

**Sources:** American Academy of Ophthalmology; National Eye Institute

Focus on your risk factors and know what symptoms to look for. Good habits and prompt treatment can help keep your eyes healthy and bright.
The Medical Spa at Watson Clinic offers advanced skin rejuvenation treatments including BOTOX®, Juvederm® and other facial fillers, laser therapies for blemish removal, microneedling with radiofrequency, skin contouring, permanent makeup, stimulating hydrafacials and much more!

TWO CONVENIENT LAKELAND LOCATIONS:
Medical Spa at Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building • 1755 N. Florida Avenue
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