

WINTER 2026

WATSON CLINIC

Health scene

Is it time for a
mammogram?

Inside this issue

- + Osteoarthritis
101
- + Check your
risk for heart
disease

Health Scene is a community health education magazine made possible by generous donations from Watson Clinic Foundation's supporters.

Convenient, cost-effective surgical care

Watson Clinic understands the wealth of benefits ambulatory surgery centers can offer patients. That's why we operate the **Watson Clinic Surgery Center** near our Main location in Lakeland, and we are currently constructing a second location—**Watson Clinic Surgery Center South**—that is scheduled to open in summer 2026.

Care you can count on

The Watson Clinic Surgery Center is a state-of-the-art facility that is used by our surgeons and their expert care teams for a great number of outpatient procedures, including:

- Breast surgery
- Gastroenterology/colonoscopy
- General surgery
- Gynecologic oncology
- Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedics
- Hand surgery
- Otolaryngology (ENT)
- Plastic and reconstructive surgery
- Podiatry (foot & ankle surgery)
- Urology

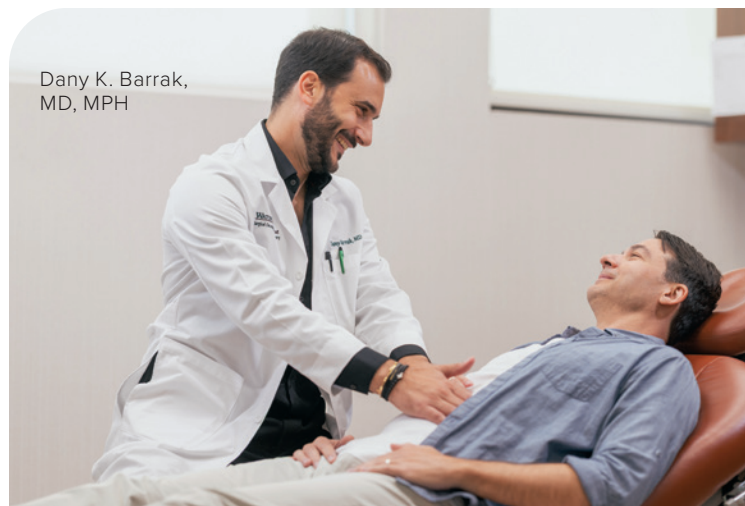
A streamlined admittance and discharge process makes the experience easier and more pleasant than patients typically find when undergoing a surgical procedure.

“What I appreciate most about the outpatient surgery center is the efficiency and patient-focused environment,” says **Dr. Dany K. Barrak**, a board-certified General Surgery and Surgical Oncology specialist who performs procedures such as port placements, minor excisions, diagnostic biopsies and select laparoscopic operations from the Watson Clinic Surgery Center. “Patients love the comfort, convenience and quicker recovery at home, which gives them a sense of control and reassurance.”

Looking ahead

Currently under construction in south Lakeland, Watson Clinic Surgery Center South will be a

Dany K. Barrak,
MD, MPH



30,000-square-foot facility with six operating rooms, six post-anesthesia care units and 20 pre- and post-surgery holding bays. A complete list of specialties and procedures offered at this new facility will be announced closer to the facility's opening in the summer of 2026.

Watson Clinic Surgery Center South will share a campus with a four-story medical office building, called Watson Clinic Parkway Medical Center, and the six-story Orlando Health Watson Clinic Lakeland Highlands Hospital. The entire campus represents a one-stop destination where nearly every medical need a patient might encounter can be met.

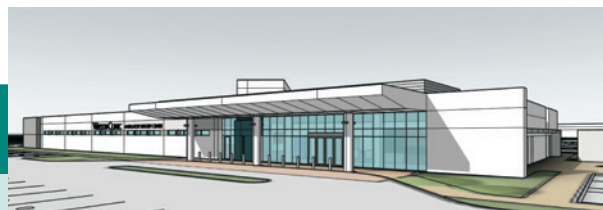


Watson Clinic Surgery Center

1315 N. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33805

863-683-2268

WatsonSurgeryCenter.com



Watson Clinic Surgery Center South (opening summer 2026)

4050 Lakeland Highlands Road
Lakeland, FL 33812

863-680-7000

WatsonClinic.com/SurgeryCenterSouth

FROM THE DESK OF DR. WILLIAM J. ROTH

Here's to a healthy 2026!

Have you made a resolution to improve your health in the new year? You're not alone. One recent study showed that 79% of New Year's resolutions involve health goals, but only 20% of the people who set those goals stick with them throughout the year.

Success is more assured if you have a team by your side who can offer sound guidance through every step of your journey. Whether your goal is to lose weight, exercise regularly, improve your diet, achieve a more peaceful state of mind or simply pay more attention to your general health needs, you'll find the motivation and empowerment you need to succeed by having Watson Clinic in your corner.

Arriving at your desired destination is only possible when you know exactly where you are. That's why a comprehensive wellness exam is the foundation for achieving all of your health goals. Our team of over 70 primary care physicians and providers make it easy by offering flexible appointment availability that works on your schedule from six convenient locations.

During the exam, your provider will establish the baseline from which they can help you structure an individualized wellness plan. This baseline includes:

- The construction of a detailed medical history.

- A precise reading of your vitals, including height, weight, blood pressure and heart rate.
- A complete lab workup that can indicate issues related to cholesterol, blood sugar levels, the potential for chronic disease and much more.
- An assessment of your individual preventive screening and immunization needs.

Based on this data, your provider can devise the most informed plan for achieving and maintaining your health goals. They can also provide easy referrals to other Watson Clinic specialists from departments as diverse as OB-GYN, dermatology, dietary counseling and medical nutrition therapy, and psychiatry.

So let's get started. To schedule an appointment with a member of our primary care team (which consists of specialists from our Family Medicine and Internal Medicine departments), call **863-680-7190** or visit **WatsonClinic.com**.

We look forward to helping you achieve the healthiest version of you.



Yours in good health,
William J. Roth, MD, PhD
Watson Clinic President,
Chair and Managing Partner

A quick look inside



5

MORE ACCESS

These providers offer same-day care and more.



12

NEW PROVIDERS

Meet the new specialists caring for our community.



Check out our website

WatsonClinic.com

Email us at
HealthScene@WatsonClinic.com



Winter 2026

HEALTH SCENE is published three times a year (this is issue 3 of 3) as a special service for the friends and neighbors of WATSON CLINIC. It is supported by generous contributions made to Watson Clinic Foundation, Inc. The Foundation's mission is to promote community wellness through education, research, service and collaboration.

If you wish to be added to or removed from the *Health Scene* mailing list, please write to **HealthScene@WatsonClinic.com** or Watson Clinic's Marketing Communications and Media Relations department at 4263 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33813, or call **863-904-4653**. We will facilitate your request before the next issue.

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Jenny Baker, Jamey DuVall, Nicole Longo

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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Be aware of spoofing scams

Cyber security attacks and scammers continue to pose a threat to many consumers. Watson Clinic remains vigilant in our attempts to identify and defeat these scammers and to empower our patients to do the same.

In a practice called “spoofing,” scammers can attempt to make contact with patients through email, text, social media or phone claiming to be associated with Watson Clinic. It’s important to know that Watson Clinic will never ask you for personal financial information under any circumstances on any online or social media forum. If you receive a correspondence you feel is suspicious, you can verify its authenticity by calling **863-680-7000** and asking to be connected with the department mentioned in that communication.

For additional tips on how to protect yourself, visit our blog at [WatsonClinic.com/Spoofing](https://www.watsonclinic.com/Spoofing).



Lending support on the field

SPORTS MEDICINE EXPERTS HELP LOCAL ATHLETES

Did you know that Watson Clinic’s Sports Medicine department is a frequent fixture at local high school football games? The department—along with additional specialists throughout the Clinic, from Urgent Care to Internal Medicine—provides expert care from the sidelines. The support of our doctors and additional physical therapy specialists has been instrumental in ensuring proper triage and athlete care during these games.

Our presence at these games is especially exciting this year, because we’ve joined forces with Orlando Health on a special Sports Medicine Initiative. This initiative provides crucial care and services to our athletic youth.

Watson Clinic works with

the athletic departments at a number of area high schools, including Auburndale, George Jenkins, Kathleen, Lake Gibson, McKeel, Mulberry, Sante Fe Catholic, Tenoroc and Victory Christian Academy, as well as Florida Southern Athletics, Polk State College and Southeastern University Athletics. And, of course, Watson Clinic remains immensely proud of our association with the Detroit Tigers Florida Operations and Lakeland Flying Tigers as their official medical provider.



For more information on our coverage and ongoing support of local teams, visit

[WatsonClinic.com/SportsMed](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/SportsMed).



Confirm your insurance coverage

Are you enrolled in Medicare or Medicare Advantage? Your coverage might have changed in the new year. To make sure your Watson Clinic physicians are still covered under your plan, check out the complete list of plans we honor at [WatsonClinic.com/Insurance](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/Insurance). If you don’t see your specific plan on our list, please contact your insurance representative.

Expanded access to meet your needs

THESE PROVIDERS ARE MAKING IT EASIER TO GET CARE



Internal Medicine

Internal Medicine specialist **Dr. Guillermo Vasquez** and his team—including registered nurse practitioners **Emily Beriswill, APRN**; **Brandi N. Plummer, APRN**; and **Jennifer Potts, APRN**—offer expanded appointment availability from their offices at **Watson Clinic South**, including:

- Weekdays, starting at 7 am or earlier.
- Extended weekday afternoons until 6 pm.
- Saturday morning hours.
- Same-day in-person or video appointments for more urgent healthcare concerns.

Two members of the team—Dr. Vasquez and Jennifer Potts, APRN—are also fluent in Spanish.

Appointments may be scheduled with Dr. Vasquez and each member of his care team by calling **863-680-7190** or by visiting **WatsonClinic.com/Vasquez**.



Jennifer Potts, APRN
Se habla español.

Emily Beriswill, APRN

Brandi N. Plummer, APRN

Guillermo Vasquez, MD
Se habla español.



Family Medicine

If **Watson Clinic Highlands** is more convenient to your home or place of work, then you can receive same-day or next-day primary care services courtesy of **Adilene Alvarado, APRN**, a registered nurse practitioner who works alongside board-certified Family Medicine specialist **Dr. Brett Widick**.

New and existing Watson Clinic patients can schedule their appointment by calling **863-680-7190** or visiting **WatsonClinic.com/AAlvarado**.



Adilene Alvarado, APRN



Ophthalmology and Optometry

Both located within Watson Clinic Main, our **Ophthalmology** and **Optometry** departments specialize in routine and diabetic eye exams, as well as the diagnosis, treatment and management of common eye disorders, including glaucoma, dry eye syndrome, cataracts and macular degeneration. Patients can also receive prescriptions for eyeglasses and contact lenses from our team of Optometrists, while our Ophthalmology specialists can conduct minimally invasive surgical efforts to correct cataracts, glaucoma, and more.

Same-day appointments with our Ophthalmology department are available, courtesy of board-certified specialist **Dr. Richard Harvey**. Meanwhile, our Optometry department also offers timely care, including same-day appointment availability for routine eye care needs.

Call **863-680-7486** to schedule an appointment with Optometry or Dr. Harvey. Visit **WatsonClinic.com/Vision** for more information on both departments.

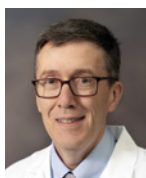


Nephrology

Whether you're seeking treatment or ongoing management for high blood pressure, chronic kidney disease or other related disorders, Watson Clinic's Nephrology department is a trusted leader in kidney care for countless patients.

Receiving the expert kidney care you rely on is easier than ever thanks to board-certified Nephrology specialists **Dr. Michael Achinger** and **Dr. Steven Achinger**, who have expanded their appointment availability to include select Saturdays from **Watson Clinic Main**.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call **863-680-7190** or visit **WatsonClinic.com/Nephrology**.



Michael Achinger, MD



Steven Achinger, MD

Get the facts about osteoarthritis

If you're living with osteoarthritis, joint pain and stiffness can complicate your life. As the most common type of arthritis, it affects 32.5 million adults in the United States.



Sandeep B. Viswanath, DO

"Osteoarthritis is a joint disease that causes tissues to break down over time," says **Dr. Sandeep B. Viswanath**, a board-certified

Rheumatology specialist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. "This leads to pain, stiffness and limited mobility in the hands, knees, hips, neck and lower back. It mostly affects older adults, but it can impact younger people too."

- Swelling in the joint, especially after prolonged use.
- Reduced range of motion and flexibility in the joint.
- A grinding noise when using the joint.

Diagnosis

Diagnosing osteoarthritis involves a review of your medical history, an exam and various other tests. Your healthcare provider will ask you about any past injuries and family history. During the physical examination, you'll be checked for joint tenderness, swelling and range of motion.

X-rays and MRIs can show joint damage and bone structure changes. Other lab tests, including

blood tests and joint fluid analysis, might be run to rule out other conditions that cause similar symptoms.

Treatments

"While there is no cure, effective treatments can help manage symptoms," says Dr. Viswanath.

Nonsurgical treatments include:

- Losing weight.
- Switching to low-impact exercise.
- Physical therapy.
- Over-the-counter pain relievers.
- Canes, braces or shoe inserts.

Sometimes nonsurgical options don't help enough. If that's the case, talk to your provider about surgical options, such as joint replacement.

Risk factors

Several factors contribute to the development of osteoarthritis. Women, especially those over 50, are more at risk than men. Other risk factors include:

- Aging.
- Injuries.
- Overuse.
- Obesity.
- Family history of osteoarthritis.

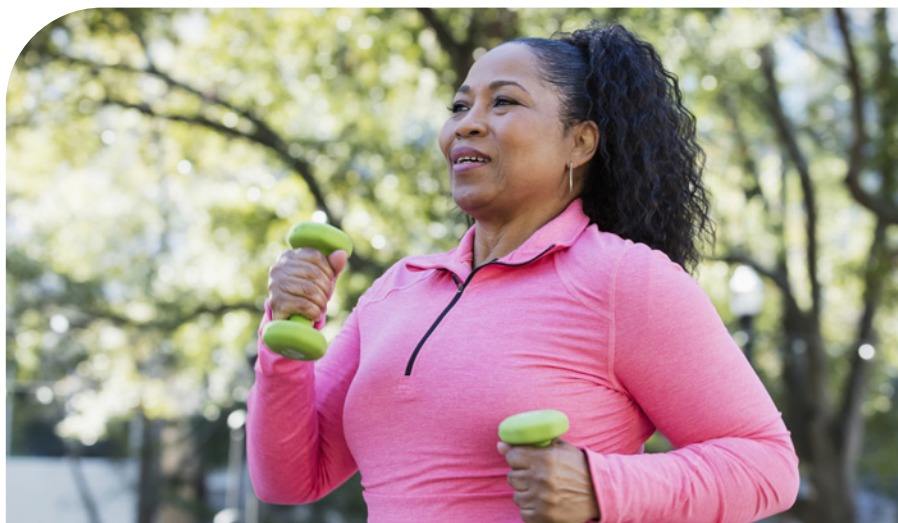
Symptoms of osteoarthritis

Everyone experiences this condition a little differently. Some people have only mild pain and stiffness, and it doesn't disrupt their lives. Other people have more severe symptoms.

"Symptoms can be subtle at first and worsen over time," says Dr. Viswanath.

These symptoms include:

- Joint pain during or after movement.
- Stiffness, especially in the morning or after inactivity.



Get moving again

Watson Clinic's Rheumatology department specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of osteoarthritis, inflammatory arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, fibromyalgia, gout, osteoporosis and many more conditions. Schedule an appointment with any member of our team—**Lilliam E. Ayala Garcia, MD**; **Spencer A. Motley, MD**; or **Sandeep B. Viswanath, DO**—at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland by calling **863-680-7486** or visiting **WatsonClinic.com/Rheumatology**.



QUESTIONS FOR THE EXPERTS

We asked members of our medical staff to answer some common health concerns.

How can I boost my bladder health?

If you have a bladder problem, there are several things you can do to help improve symptoms:

Hydrate. Drinking plenty of water helps dilute your urine and flush bacteria out of your bladder.

Embrace a healthy lifestyle. Maintain a healthy weight and get regular exercise. Adding more high-fiber foods to your diet—and avoiding bladder-stimulating foods—can also keep symptoms at bay.

Keep calm and Kegel on. Strengthen your pelvic floor muscles by doing Kegel exercises.

Be a quitter. If you smoke, make a plan to quit.

Try to wait. Using the bathroom at set times—and extending the time between trips over time—may help reduce symptoms.

Enjoy the go. When you go, sit in a relaxed, upright position on the toilet. Don't push or strain.

Kick back. In the hours before bedtime, try raising your legs and doing some gentle ankle pumps. This may help minimize nighttime bathroom runs.



Genesis Nieves, MD, is a board-certified Urology specialist who treats patients from Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Call **863-680-7300** or visit [WatsonClinic.com/Nieves](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/Nieves) to schedule an appointment.

What is celiac disease?

Celiac disease is a chronic autoimmune disorder with symptoms that are triggered by eating gluten, which causes the body to make antibodies that damage the small intestine. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley and rye. It can also be found in some supplements, medications and personal care items.

The most common symptoms are digestive symptoms like stomach pain, gas, bloating, constipation and diarrhea.

Genetics play a role in determining who has celiac disease. If one of your relatives has it, then you're more likely to be diagnosed. It's also more common in white Americans compared to other racial groups, and women are more likely to have it than men.

The condition can seriously damage the small intestine over time if left untreated, and it can also lead to infertility, anemia, osteoporosis, thyroid disease and certain cancers.

If you suspect that you might have it, schedule an examination with your primary care physician.



Melissa Ballengee, MD, is a board-certified Family Medicine specialist who treats patients from Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Call **863-680-7190** or visit [WatsonClinic.com/Ballengee](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/Ballengee) to schedule an appointment.

What are the good, the bad and the ugly when it comes to eyelid growths?

Do you have an eyelid growth that concerns you? As a board-certified Ophthalmologist and Oculoplastic and Reconstructive Surgeon, I see eyelid skin cancers on a weekly basis. Although most eyelid growths are benign, some can be cancerous in sun-aged skin; in particular, basal cell carcinoma is 40 times more common than other eyelid skin cancers.

Some of the common benign growths (the good) occur as we age and include seborrheic keratoses, squamous papillomas and eyelid cysts. The “bad” eyelid growths include skin cancers, such as basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and sebaceous cell carcinoma, all of which destroy tissue locally but can also spread to other areas, as in the case of squamous and sebaceous cell carcinomas.

The “ugly” growths that we occasionally see include malignant melanoma and Merkel cell carcinomas, which can spread and cause death in advanced cases. Some cases of eyelid skin cancer can be confused with common problems such as chalazion (stye). Also, a nonhealing sore on or around your eyelids can be a harbinger of skin cancer.

Schedule an appointment to have your eyelid growth examined as part of your annual or diabetic eye exam.



Richard R. Harvey, MD, is a board-certified Ophthalmology specialist who treats patients from Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Call **863-680-7486** or visit [WatsonClinic.com/Harvey](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/Harvey) to schedule an appointment.

Make time for a mammogram



When it comes to breast cancer, timely mammograms offer crucial protection. These low-dose x-ray exams can detect tiny breast lumps early, sometimes before you can even feel them. When breast cancer is caught at this stage, it is often easier to treat successfully.

What to expect

During a mammogram, each of your breasts will be pressed between plastic plates. A technologist will then take x-ray images of each breast to check for any abnormal areas.

Mammograms are so effective at saving lives that experts say most women should start having them at age 40. Unfortunately, some women put off having their mammograms. Among the given reasons: anxiety and concerns about discomfort.

“It’s true that breast compression during a mammogram can cause some discomfort,” says **Dr. Elisabeth L. Dupont**, a board-certified Breast Surgery specialist at the Watson Clinic Women’s Center and the Medical Director of Watson Clinic’s Breast Health Services department. “But any discomfort you might feel is usually brief—about 10 to 15 seconds for each image—and the protection gained from getting a mammogram is worth it!”

Tips for your comfort

- ✓ If you’re still having menstrual periods, try to avoid scheduling your mammogram for the week before or during your period. Your breasts are more likely to be swollen and tender during this time.
- ✓ Since you’ll need to undress from the waist up for the test, plan to wear a two-piece outfit, like a blouse and pants. That way, you’ll only have to remove your top.
- ✓ Take a few deep breaths before your mammogram to calm your mind and body.
- ✓ If you feel more than mild discomfort during the mammogram, tell the technologist. They may be able to adjust the compression to improve your comfort.



Breast cancer genes: What you should know

About 13% of women in the U.S. will get breast cancer during their lives. But some women have a much higher risk because of their genes.

Breast cancer develops when normal cells start to grow abnormally and form a tumor. Certain genes, including BRCA1 and BRCA2, help repair damaged DNA to keep cells from growing out of control. Everyone has these genes, but some people inherit harmful changes (called mutations) in BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes, which prevent the genes from working properly.

An inherited BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation raises your risk of developing breast cancer. The lifetime risk of a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene ranges from 45% to 80% by the age of 70. This is compared to about 13% for the general population. BRCA1-related breast cancers are more likely to be triple-negative, a type that is harder to treat. And these gene mutations also increase the risk for other kinds of cancer, including ovarian, pancreatic and prostate cancers.

Who should consider genetic testing?

Testing is often recommended if you have:



Elisabeth L.
Dupont, MD

Don't delay!

Hear more from Dr. Dupont on the importance and benefits of receiving an annual mammogram on the Watson Clinic Health Talk podcast. Scan the QR code or visit WatsonClinic.com/Podcast to access the episode.



When to get screened

Ask your doctor when and how often you should be screened. Watson Clinic offers highly advanced mammography technologies, supervised and read by dedicated breast-specific imagers. To schedule your annual mammogram, call **863-680-7755, option 3**.

- A family history of breast or ovarian cancer.
- Ashkenazi or Eastern European Jewish ancestry.
- A personal history of breast cancer.
- A personal history of ovarian, fallopian tube or peritoneal cancer.
- A BRCA gene mutation in your family.

Testing can be done before or after a cancer diagnosis. It can help you reduce your risk or guide treatment decisions. Results can also alert family members to their own potential risk. The genetic counselor can help you understand what the results mean for your health.

Possible results include:

- **Positive.** A known harmful mutation is found.
- **Negative.** No harmful change is found.
- **Uncertain.** A gene change is found, but its impact is unclear.

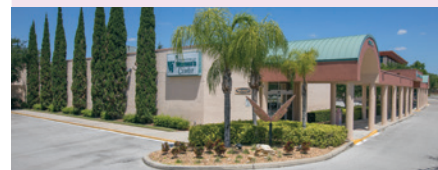
A positive result means you have a higher risk of developing certain cancers, but it doesn't mean you will definitely get cancer. And a negative result doesn't rule out all risk.

Managing cancer risk

If you are at a heightened risk for breast cancer or wish to discuss your history, the Watson Clinic Women's Center offers a nurse practitioner who is specially trained in breast diseases and can help you develop a personalized surveillance plan. Call **863-680-7638** to schedule an appointment with **Nichole Murphy, APRN**.

Comprehensive breast health services

Watson Clinic's Breast Health Services department offers state-of-the-art detection and treatment technologies from three convenient locations and a full team of highly experienced, cancer-fighting specialists who guide you through every step of your journey with compassion and expertise. Visit WatsonClinic.com/BreastHealth to learn more.



Watson Clinic Women's Center

1400 Lakeland Hills Blvd.
Suites A & B
Lakeland, FL 33805



Watson Clinic Cancer & Research Center

1730 Lakeland Hills Blvd.
Lakeland, FL 33805



Watson Clinic Highlands

2300 E. County Road 540A
Lakeland, FL 33813

Continuing a legacy of community health and outreach

Founded in 1960 as the philanthropic arm of Watson Clinic, the Watson Clinic Foundation has worked tirelessly to promote the wellness of our community through education, research, service and collaboration.

That legacy is thriving like never before, thanks to a series of recent events that have raised awareness, celebrated survivorship, invited widespread community involvement and awarded the future leaders of our healthcare landscape.



From left: Cancer survivors and gallery subjects Sara Durante, Tanisha McLachlan, Heather Specht and Doug Ballard stand under their portraits with Watson Clinic Foundation Arts in Medicine Program Director Tiffany Van Weiren and photographer Scott Audette.

Legacy Lane Project

This heartfelt photography exhibit, currently on display at the Watson Clinic Cancer & Research Center at 1730 Lakeland Hills Blvd. in Lakeland, honors the strength and resilience of cancer survivors.

Arts in Medicine partnered with a talented local photographer, Scott Audette, to capture the personal stories of five local survivors.

Also on display are a series of original artworks produced by local artists as a similar source of strength and inspiration for those undergoing their own cancer journey.

Legacy Lane is more than an exhibit—it's a tribute to resilience and a beacon of hope for all.

Circle of Care Initiative

This remarkable initiative is made possible through a meaningful, \$2 million grant gifted by a patient who wanted the money to be earmarked exclusively for the benefit of cancer patients throughout our community. The Foundation supplies a number of resources to patients and families in need who are undergoing cancer treatment, including overnight stays, equipment, food, gas and much more.





Former Lakeland Mayor Bill Mutz (center) stands alongside Watson Clinic Foundation Arts in Medicine Program Director Tiffany Van Weiren, Foundation Executive Director Kim Brunson, and members of the Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance after issuing an official proclamation recognizing Arts and Health Week.

Arts and Health Week

This week of special events, led by the Watson Clinic Foundation's Arts in Medicine program, shed light on the role the creative arts can play in uplifting our mental and physical well-being. Held from Nov. 3–9, 2025, Arts and Health Week brought out an impressive number of attendees from all sectors of our community, as well as active participation from many local businesses and organizations.

Just a few of the week's highlights included:

The Space Between: Creating Healing Environments through the Arts. Hosted at the Ashley Gibson Barnett Museum of Art, this opening night event offered moving live performances and master classes on how the arts can connect and heal us all.

Sound Bath at the Depot. The Lakeland Art Association transformed the local Depot Arts



District into a serene sanctuary of sound, open to all members of the community. Through the gentle resonance of crystal bowls and harmonic tones, participants were able to relieve stress, restore balance and reconnect to the world around them.

Little Beats, Big Benefits. An exploration of how music and movement can boost a child's health and happiness, this event enticed crowds of excited children and proud parents to the beautiful space occupied by the Carol Jenkins Barnett United Ways Children's Resource Center at Bonnet Springs Park in Lakeland.

Arts and Health Week was made possible through collaborations with valued local partners, Presenting Sponsor Orlando Health Watson Clinic Lakeland Highlands Hospital, and grant support from the Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance.



From left: Watson Clinic Foundation President and dermatologist Dr. William J. Roth, scholarship recipient Ashlee Tobias, Watson Clinic Foundation Executive Director Kim Brunson, scholarship recipient Michelle Harvey, and Watson Clinic Chief Executive Officer Jason Hirsbrunner.

Continuing Medical Education scholarships

A significant part of the Watson Clinic Foundation's strategic five-year plan involves the distribution of scholarship funds to worthy candidates throughout our community who wish to continue their medical education. Recently, thanks to a generous \$32,000 donation from a member of our community, an initial series of scholarships were awarded to four candidates who are pursuing advanced degrees in nursing.

You can find more information about the Foundation's efforts, make a monetary donation, and volunteer your time and talent at **WatsonClinic.com/WCF**.

Welcome, new physicians and providers

Join us in welcoming the latest additions to our team of expert physicians and providers. Appointments are available as listed. For more information on these and all of our highly qualified team members, visit WatsonClinic.com/physician-search.



Austin Bowyer, MD
Anesthesiology

Education: Virginia Commonwealth University School of

Medicine, Richmond, VA, MD

Residency: University of Tennessee Medical Center, Knoxville, TN, Anesthesiology

Location: Watson Clinic Surgery Center and Lakeland Regional Health



Yasmin Divine, MD
Urgent Care

Education: Ross University School of Medicine,

West Indies, MD

Residency: Boston University School of Medicine/Boston Medical Center, Boston, MA, Family Medicine

Fellowship: Harvard Medical School/Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA, Geriatric Medicine

Board certification: Family Medicine and Geriatric Medicine

Location: Watson Clinic Urgent Care South

Appointments: Walk-ins welcome, or reserve a time with On My Way at WatsonClinic.com/UCSouth



Mona El-Gayar, MD
OB-GYN

Education: University of South Dakota, Sanford School of Medicine,

Vermillion, SD, MD

Residency: University of Central Florida/HCA Consortium, Gainesville, FL, OB-GYN

Membership: American College of Obstetrics & Gynecology

Location: Watson Clinic Highlands

Appointments: 863-680-7243 or WatsonClinic.com/El-Gayar



Imran Gruhonjic, DO
Orthopaedic Surgery

Education: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic

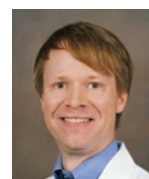
Medicine, Suwanee, GA, DO

Residency: Sisters of St. Mary Health/St. Anthony Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK, Orthopaedic Surgery

Fellowship: San Diego Arthroscopy and Sports Medicine, San Diego, CA, Orthopaedic Sports Medicine

Memberships: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics, American Medical Association, American Osteopathic Association

Location: Watson Clinic Main
Appointments: 863-680-7214 or WatsonClinic.com/Gruhonjic



John "Worth" Hopkins, DO
Psychiatry—child, adolescent and young adult

Education: William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Hattiesburg, MS, DO

Residency: University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS, Psychiatry

Fellowship: University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Board certifications: Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Location: Watson Clinic Main

Appointments: 863-680-7877 or WatsonClinic.com/Hopkins



Genesis Nieves, MD
Urology

Education: University of Illinois at Chicago,

Rockford, IL, MD

Residency: University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center, Memphis, TN, Urology

Memberships: American Urological Association, Society of Women in Urology

Location: Watson Clinic Main

Appointments: 863-680-7300 or WatsonClinic.com/Nieves



Israel Orta, MD
Neurology

Education: University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA,

BS, Biochemistry; Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, NY, MD

Residency: University of Central Florida, Kissimmee, FL, Neurology

Fellowship: Weill Cornell/New York Presbyterian Hospital, New York, NY, Clinical Neurophysiology

Location: Watson Clinic Main

Appointments: 863-680-7300 or WatsonClinic.com/Orta



**Bridget Anderson, APRN
Internal Medicine**

Education: Polk State College, Winter Haven, FL, BSN; Graceland University, Independence, MO, MSN, FNP

Membership: American Academy of

Nurse Practitioners

Supervising physicians: Steven J. Colucci, DO, and Geetha L. Krishnan, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Main

Appointments: 863-680-7190 or WatsonClinic.com/Anderson



**Hannah Montague, PA
Plastic & Reconstructive
Surgery**

Education: University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, BS; University of Tampa, Tampa, FL, MS

Memberships: American Academy of Physician Assistants, Florida Academy of Physician Assistants

Supervising physician: Faeza Kazmier, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Women's Center

Appointments: 863-680-7676 or WatsonClinic.com/Montague



**Taylor M. Novak, PA
Oncology-Hematology**

Education: University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, BSHS; Chamberlain University, Chicago, IL, MPAS

Memberships: National Commission

on Certification of Physician Assistants, American Academy of Physician Assistants, Florida Academy of Physician Assistants

Supervising physician: Leonard Gitter, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Cancer & Research Center

Appointments: 863-603-4770 or WatsonClinic.com/Novak



**Brenda O'Hair, PA
Dermatology**

Education: Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL, MPH; University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE, MPAS

Memberships: Society of Dermatology

Physician Assistants, American Academy of Physician Assistants, Florida Academy of Physician Assistants, National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

Supervising physician: William J. Roth, MD, PhD

Location: Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building

Appointments: 863-904-6201 or WatsonClinic.com/OHair



**Cristan Rios, APRN
Internal Medicine**

Education: Western Governor's University, Millcreek, UT, BSN; Chamberlain University, Addison, IL, MSN

Membership: American Academy of

Nurse Practitioners

Supervising physician: Lilliam S. Chiques, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Main

Appointments: 863-680-7190 or WatsonClinic.com/CristanRios



**Julian Rios, APRN
Urgent Care**

Education: Western Governor's University, Millcreek, UT, BSN; Chamberlain University, Addison, IL, MSN

Membership: American Academy of

Nurse Practitioners

Supervising physician: Rajendra Sawh, MD

Location: Watson Clinic Urgent Care Main

Appointments: Walk-ins welcome, or reserve an On My Way appointment at WatsonClinic.com/UCMain



**Ashley S. Rourk, APRN
OB-GYN**

Education: University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL, BSN, MSN

Memberships: American Nurses

Credentialing Center, The Menopause Society, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health

Supervising physician: Taylor Cook, DO

Location: Watson Clinic Highlands

Appointments: 863-680-7243 or WatsonClinic.com/Rourk

Cardiovascular disease: What's your risk?

The term *cardiovascular disease* refers to several conditions involving the heart and blood vessels. It's the No. 1 cause of death for U.S. adults.

Major types of cardiovascular disease

Atherosclerosis is the buildup of plaque inside the arteries. Plaque buildup narrows the arteries, which makes it harder for blood to flow through.

"Heart attacks happen when blood flow to the heart is cut off by a blood clot," says **Dr. Joseph Coffman**, a board-certified Cardiovascular Disease Specialist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. "When blood doesn't get to parts of the heart muscle, those parts begin to die."

Heart failure does not mean your heart has stopped beating. Your heart is still working, but it isn't doing its job—pumping oxygenated blood throughout your body—as well as it should.

Heart valve disease is caused by valves that bulge, sag, or don't open or close properly. As a result, your blood doesn't flow through your heart normally.

Arrhythmia is an abnormal heart rhythm. It can be too fast (known as tachycardia), too slow (bradycardia) or irregular. Arrhythmia affects your heart's blood-pumping ability.

Strokes can happen when blood flow to the brain is partly blocked or completely cut off, most often by blood clots. Without blood flow, brain cells begin to die. People who have strokes often lose some function, like talking, either temporarily or permanently.

Understanding your risk

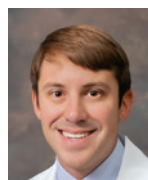
Many factors can raise your risk for cardiovascular disease. "Some factors you can't control, like your age, ethnicity or a family history of the disease," says

Dr. George Ghareeb, a board-certified Cardiology specialist at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. "Other risk factors may be within your power to change."

Risk factors you can change include:

- Being obese or overweight.
- High blood pressure.
- High cholesterol.
- Diabetes.
- A diet high in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.
- Tobacco and excessive alcohol use.
- Lack of physical activity.

The good news is that by taking steps to change the



Joseph
Coffman, MD



George
Ghareeb, DO

Watson Clinic's Cardiology department can help you plan additional methods for lowering your risk of cardiovascular disease. For more information on all the department has to offer and to schedule an appointment, call **863-680-7490** or visit **[WatsonClinic.com/Cardiology](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/Cardiology)**.

risk factors you can control, you can do a lot to lower your risk and improve your cardiovascular health. To start:

- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- If you smoke, plan to quit.
- Understand the risks of alcohol.
- Control your blood sugar.
- Maintain healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Sources: American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Could your child benefit from mental health help?

Children and teens can be sad, anxious, angry and irritable at times. In many cases, challenging behaviors and emotions are an expected part of growing up. But sometimes it's more serious.

"Mental health disorders can happen to people of all ages," says **Dr. John "Worth" Hopkins**, a board-certified Psychiatry specialist who treats children, adolescents and young adults from Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. "Some behaviors in children and teens may signal a more serious problem."

What's just a stage, and what's cause for concern? These signs, as identified by Dr. Hopkins, can help you know when your child or teen may benefit from a healthcare provider's attention.



What to watch for in young children

Children may:

- Have frequent tantrums or be intensely irritable much of the time.
- Talk frequently about fears or worries.
- Complain of headaches or stomachaches with no known medical cause.
- Be unable to sit quietly except when watching TV or playing video games.
- Struggle academically or have a recent decline in grades.
- Repeat actions or often check things out of fear bad things will happen.



What to watch for in tweens and teens

Older kids may:

- Show less interest in activities or interests they once enjoyed.
- Have low energy.
- Sleep too much or too little.
- Diet or exercise excessively or fear weight gain.
- Engage in self-harming behavior, such as cutting or burning their skin.
- Smoke, drink or use drugs.
- Engage in risky behavior alone or with friends.
- Have thoughts of suicide.
- Say they hear things others can't hear.

Mental health is an important part of your child's overall well-being. Seek help if your child's or teen's behavior lasts for a few weeks or longer. And seek help if the behavior is distressing for your child or your family or interferes with your child's ability to function at school, with friends or at home.

"If your child's behavior isn't safe, or if your child talks about hurting himself or herself or someone else, get help immediately," says Dr. Hopkins.

Help for all ages

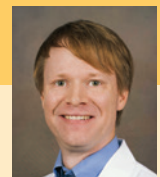
Watson Clinic's Psychiatry department features the expertise of three board-certified specialists who treat patients from Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland. Appointments may be scheduled by calling **863-680-7877** or visiting **[WatsonClinic.com/Psychiatry](https://www.WatsonClinic.com/Psychiatry)**.



Joachim A. Benitez, MD
Adult Psychiatry



Yahia Homs, MD
Adult Psychiatry



John "Worth" Hopkins, DO
Child, Adolescent and Young Adult Psychiatry

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