

health matters

OUR WEIGHT LOSS INSTITUTE EARNS TOP HONOR



Are you considering weight-loss, or bariatric, surgery? If so, it's important to find a program with a high level of expertise and experience. In addition, if you are a Medicaid beneficiary in New York City, you must be treated at a designated bariatric center to receive coverage. The Lutheran HealthCare Surgical Weight Loss Institute provides it all.

"The Surgical Weight Loss Institute was recently named one of only five Medicaid-designated centers in New York City," explains **George Ferzli, M.D.**, chairman of surgery for Lutheran Medical Center. "This is another honor that highlights the exceptional care, quality and outcomes we deliver."

Our Surgical Weight Loss Institute was also designated a center of excellence by the American Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgeons and by Aetna, CIGNA, Blue Cross Blue Shield and HIP Health Plan of New York.

Comprehensive Care

Bariatric surgery, which limits the amount of food a person can eat, leads to dramatic weight loss. However, it requires the patient to make healthy lifestyle changes, too. To help, the Surgical Weight Loss Institute provides pre- and postoperative support for each patient, including extensive health and medical screenings, as well as:

- Nutritional counseling
- Psychological support
- Physical therapy
- Support groups

Could You Be a Candidate?

Not every person is a candidate for bariatric surgery. It's for those who are considered obese — a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher — and are unable to reach a healthy weight through diet and exercise. Your doctor can help you calculate your BMI and determine if you are a candidate.

The good news is, even if you are not a candidate, we can help. "We focus on the needs of each individual," explains Dr. Ferzli. "If surgery is not the best option, we work with patients in other ways to help them lose weight and regain their health."

Questions about bariatric surgery? Call us today at **718-630-THIN (8446)**.

inside this issue:

- 2 Try Our Fresh, Low-Fat Salsa
- 3 Epilepsy: Does It Affect Women Differently?
- 4 A New Health Center Site Opens in Sunset Park



**Lutheran
HealthCare**

FROM THE KITCHEN AT
LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER

FRESH SALSA

Fresh herbs add flavor, so you can use less salt!

Ingredients

6 tomatoes — preferably Roma (or 3 large tomatoes)
½ medium onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely minced
2 serrano or jalapeño peppers, finely chopped
3 tbsp. chopped cilantro
½ tsp. finely crushed oregano
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. pepper
½ avocado, diced
Juice of 1 lime

Directions

Combine all the ingredients in a glass bowl. Serve immediately or refrigerate and serve within four to five hours.

Nutrition Information

Serves eight; serving size is ½ cup. Each serving provides: Calories 42, Total fat 2 g (Saturated fat less than 1 g), Sodium 44 mg.



MEET OUR NEW PHYSICIANS

LUTHERAN IS PROUD TO INTRODUCE THESE
TWO NEW **EPILEPSY** SPECIALISTS TO OUR STAFF.



Amit Ray, M.D., a board certified neurologist, joined Lutheran Medical Center in January. Originally from India, Dr. Ray earned his medical degree there before moving to the U.S. He performed his internship at Michigan State University. Dr. Ray trained in neurology during his residency at the University of Chicago and went on to complete two fellowship programs in epilepsy — one at the University of Chicago and the other at the Cleveland Clinic. “I am looking forward to providing the highest quality, world-class care in epilepsy treatment to patients in the Brooklyn community,” he says.



Blanca Vazquez, M.D., is a neurologist with a special interest in women and epilepsy (see page 3). Dr. Vazquez earned her medical degree from Universidad Central del Caribe School of Medicine in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. She conducted her internship in internal medicine at St. Michael’s Medical Center in Newark, N.J., and her residency in neurology at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She did a fellowship in epilepsy at the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at New York University Medical Center. This January, Dr. Vazquez joined the team at Lutheran HealthCare’s brand-new Epilepsy Center. “I am excited about bringing the latest technology in diagnosing and treating epilepsy to Lutheran,” she says. “Improving the lives of children and adults with epilepsy is extremely important in what I do.”

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!

These **free** social networking sites let you get Lutheran’s latest updates and need-to-know health news. You can find links to our Facebook and Twitter pages on www.LutheranHealthCare.org.



BATTLING BLOOD CLOTS? ANTICOAGULANT THERAPY IS AVAILABLE HERE

Anticoagulant service is available at the Lutheran HealthCare Medical Arts Pavilion, located at 8714 Fifth Avenue, in Bay Ridge. Anticoagulant therapy is often prescribed to people who are at high risk for dangerous blood clots, such as those with atrial fibrillation, or people who need to manage existing blood clots, such as those with deep vein thrombosis. Lutheran HealthCare provides long-term anticoagulation drug therapy testing, results and treatment to patients in a safe and convenient environment. To learn more, please call **718-630-8600**.

ASK THE EXPERT

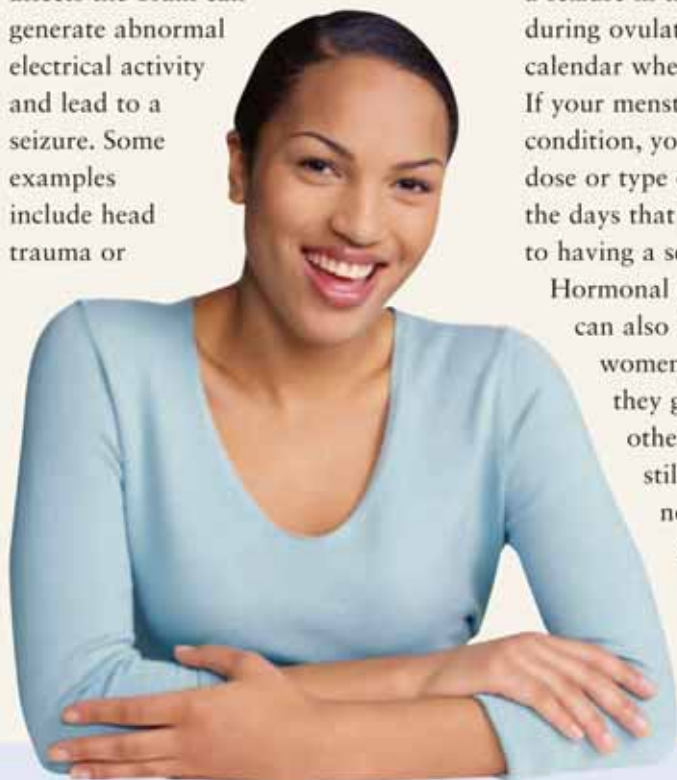
Blanca Vazquez, M.D., a neurologist at the Lutheran HealthCare Epilepsy Center, answers common questions about epilepsy and women.



Blanca Vazquez, M.D.

Q. What is epilepsy and what causes seizures?

A. Epilepsy is characterized by abnormal electrical activity in the brain. These changes can affect your behavior and cause seizures. A common misconception is that all seizures make the body convulse, but there are many different types of seizures. A person with epilepsy may stare, zone out, become confused or experience spontaneous movements in parts of the body. Anything that affects the brain can generate abnormal electrical activity and lead to a seizure. Some examples include head trauma or



injury, infection, developmental problems at birth and brain tumors.

Q. How does epilepsy affect women differently than men?

A. For women with epilepsy, hormonal changes associated with the menstrual cycle can increase the probability of having a seizure. This is known as catamenial epilepsy. Some women may have a seizure in the days right before their period. Other women may have a seizure in the middle of their cycle during ovulation. Always note on a calendar when you experience a seizure. If your menstrual cycle affects your condition, your doctor may adjust the dose or type of medication you take on the days that you are most susceptible to having a seizure.

Hormonal changes during menopause can also impact epilepsy. Some women have fewer seizures when they go through menopause, other women have more and still other women experience no change. Tell your doctor if you notice any difference. In addition, your physician

may suggest a bone density scan as you approach menopause because certain anticonvulsant medications, such as Tegretol and phenobarbital, can accelerate bone loss and cause osteoporosis.

Q. Can I still have a healthy pregnancy if I have epilepsy?

A. Yes. Every year, many healthy babies are born to mothers with epilepsy. The key is to use the right type of medication at the minimal dose that will control your seizures without harming the fetus. The only way to do this is to tell your doctor about your plan to become pregnant. Before conceiving and under your doctor's guidance, you will experiment with different medications to determine the type and dose that will work best for you during your pregnancy. Once you become pregnant, your doctor will test your blood every month to make sure levels of the medication are adequate. As you get bigger, you may need to adjust the dose to maintain healthy levels.

NEED HELP FINDING A PHYSICIAN?

To find a Lutheran-affiliated physician, call 718-630-RXRX (718-630-7979) or visit www.LutheranHealthCare.org. You can search for providers who are fluent in languages including Arabic, Chinese, English, Russian and Spanish. Our physicians participate in most major health insurance plans. For community residents without insurance, a sliding fee scale is available.



Wendy Z. Goldstein
President and CEO

Kathy Johannesen
Director of Marketing and Community
Relations

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SUNSET PARK GETS A NEW FAMILY HEALTH CENTER



This spring, Lutheran Family Health Center opened the doors to its brand-new location in Sunset Park. The new building is across the street (56th and 2nd) from the original Sunset Park Family Health Center site housed on the main floor of Lutheran Medical Center.

"We offer many of the same services, but we are able to see many more patients than before," says **Judy McLaughlin, R.N.**, the center's senior director. "The new clinic has more than double the number of exam rooms as the existing location, state-of-the-art diagnostic radiology equipment and it's a beautiful facility."

The new Family Health Center is home to both pediatric and women's health services. The **pediatric program** includes:

- preventive care, such as checkups, immunizations and health screenings
- primary care for infants and children up to 12 years of age
- treatment for acute and chronic

medical conditions
The **women's health program** includes:

- breast cancer screening
- gynecology
- obstetrics and perinatal care
- oncology
- treatment for uterine fibroids
- urology

The Family Health Center also features an **Urgent Care/Walk-In Center** that provides a new option for community members. "Before, patients would go to the emergency room for nonemergency visits," says McLaughlin. "Now, with the urgent care clinic, they have an alternative that they never had before."

As a result, patients who require stitches or have other nonemergency conditions — such as sprains, ear or throat infections, stomach flu or asthma — are able to receive rapid attention and treatment without going to the ER.

SCHEDULE YOUR NEXT CHECKUP HERE

To make an appointment for yourself or your child at the new Family Health Center, call **718-630-7208**. The center is located at the intersection of 56th Street and 2nd Avenue in Sunset Park.

HIS BIG HEART HELPS HIS NEIGHBORS' HEARTS

As a not-for-profit hospital, Lutheran relies on the support and generous efforts of our community. We are grateful to those who help us provide lifesaving care close to home for our friends and neighbors.

Vincent Rohan is one of those people we'd like to thank. He leads the May Ellen and Gerald Ritter Foundation, which donated \$1 million to support our efforts to bring advanced heart care to Brooklyn. This gift allowed us to open our state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization laboratory in 2004.

"It's important for community members to support their local hospital," explains Rohan. "It's the hospital that's going to serve you and your loved ones during a medical crisis."

And you don't have to be a millionaire to give back. Gifts of *all* sizes help us save lives. Rohan also notes that financial support isn't the only option. "A few hours of volunteer work is a great alternative," he says, "especially in these financially strapped times."



Vincent Rohan and his wife, Susan, share a dedication to supporting Lutheran.

If you're inspired by Vincent Rohan's message, visit www.LutheranHealthCare.org and choose "Giving Opportunities," or call **718-630-6245**. If you'd like to join our team of volunteers, visit "Community Programs" on our Web site, or call **718-630-7296**.