

AED...It's Easy as 1-2-3

Portable automated external defibrillators have increased the survival rate of sudden cardiac arrest victims.

According to the American Heart Association, approximately 350,000 Americans die each year from sudden cardiac arrest. In sudden cardiac arrest cases, abnormal heart rhythms cause the heart to cease pumping blood effectively. Sudden cardiac arrest can strike anyone at any time, and many victims have no warning signs.

You Never Know...

Two years ago, Ed Gashlin of Manasquan, almost became another victim of that scary statistic. While working out at LIFE Fitness in Point Pleasant, Ed went into sudden cardiac arrest. Two LIFE staff members performed CPR on Ed, but it was not until Point Pleasant police officers arrived and used an *automated external defibrillator* (AED) that Ed began to breathe on his own.

"I was very lucky that there were people at LIFE who were able to start CPR immediately, and that the Point Pleasant Police carry AEDs," explains Ed. "I am convinced that the combination of CPR and the AED is why I am here, today."

An AED is a portable device that is used to analyze a heart's rhythm for abnormalities. Then, if necessary, the device directs the rescuer using voice commands to deliver an electrical shock to the victim by placing two electrodes on the chest. This shock, called *defibrillation*, can help to reestablish a normal heart rhythm.

In most cases AEDs are used by first responders like EMTs, police, and firefighters. However, more and more trained laypersons, such as security guards, lifeguards, and flight attendants, now use AEDs successfully. AEDs can now be found in airports, casinos,



Medical Center of Ocean County's maintenance and security departments have been trained on AEDs. From left, Mickey Coles, R.N., and AED trainer, D.J. Sickler, manager of Respiratory Therapy and Jack Eisner, manager of Security.

airplanes, malls, supermarkets, golf courses, and fitness centers like LIFE.

New AEDs Donated to Medical Center of Ocean County
Recently, the Brick Hospital Association donated two AEDs to be placed in the Ambulatory Care Center and at the security desk at Medical Center of Ocean County.

Continued on page 10

CPR/AED Training

Meridian Health Line 1-800-560-9990

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Meridian
Health System
08901

This free community bi-monthly magazine is prepared by the Communications Team of Meridian Health System. Please call 1-800-560-9990 with any questions or comments. Inquiries or ideas can also be addressed in writing to:

Chrisie Scott *Editor*
Meridian Health System
1350 Campus Parkway
Neptune, NJ 07753

Gordon N. Litwin, Esq. *Chairman*

John K. Lloyd, FACHE *President*

Guy J. Miller *Vice President, Corporate Communications and Marketing*

Chrisie Scott *Director of Communications*

Christine Burke *Director of Public Affairs*

Felice Mikelberg *Publications Coordinator*

Meridian HealthViews™ and Health Lineup™ are designed by Creative Strategy Group, Inc., prepress by Innovation Printing & Lithography, PA and printed by Martin Printing Inc., CT © 2003 Meridian Health System.

The material provided in this newsletter is intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual care.

Visit us on the Web at www.meridianhealth.com

Meridian HealthViews™

Jan/Feb 2003 • Vol. 7, No. 1

JERSEY SHORE
MEDICAL CENTER
1945 State Route 33, Neptune

MEDICAL CENTER
OF OCEAN COUNTY
425 Jack Martin Boulevard, Brick

RIVERVIEW
MEDICAL CENTER
1 Riverview Plaza, Red Bank

Scan that Saves Lives

Safe, revolutionary imaging technology is now available through Meridian that can detect heart problems before symptoms develop.

Page 2

Inside

- 4 Sinus Pain Relief
- 8 Are You at Risk for Alzheimer's?
- 11 The Healing Power of Animals



Meridian
Health System®
www.meridianhealth.com

A Scan that Can Save Your Life

Meridian cardiologists work with InteCardia LifeCare Imaging to give patients the edge in early detection of coronary artery disease.

What if there was a way to find out just how healthy your heart is that's quick, painless, affordable, and highly accurate?

Electron Beam Tomography (EBT), the newest and most precise diagnostic technology available, is quickly emerging as a powerful weapon in the battle against heart disease. An EBT heart scan does something that other tests, such as cholesterol screening and stress tests, can't do. It can see calcium

deposits in the coronary arteries. And it's now available at InteCardia LifeCare Imaging, which is affiliated with Meridian Health System, and the only center of its kind in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

InteCardia LifeCare Imaging, which opened late last year in Tinton Falls, houses the G.E. Imatron C-300 Scanner (Electron Beam Tomography Imaging System), the only FDA-approved imaging method for the early detection of coronary artery calcification. According to Linda

Koretic, the center's manager who has many years of cardiac diagnostic experience, this same scanner is used at prestigious medical centers such as The Mayo Clinic and Johns Hopkins.

Barbara Sulkowski, 62, of Hazlet, decided to have a heart scan because her family has a strong history of

heart disease. Her mother and three uncles died of heart complications. The condition of her heart was something she really wanted to know about. "I have high blood pressure, and I've had an echocardiogram and an EKG, but I still wondered about what was going on with my heart," she explains. "The scan was so easy, and best of all, my results were normal."

Speed Makes the Difference

The EBT, referred to as the "gold standard" in coronary imaging, works by focusing and then accelerating an electron beam and channeling it precisely to take images of organs at 1/10th of a second — much faster than traditional CT scanners, MRIs, and other imaging equipment.

"Because your heart is in constant motion, only the fastest possible technology can capture a clear image of the heart including the coronary arteries," notes Linda. "The speed of the technology decreases the length of the test."

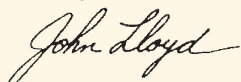
Message to the Community

I would like to take the start of this New Year as an opportunity to thank you for being a part of Meridian's family. Through your trust in our physicians and facilities, your support of our community initiatives, your participation in our health programs, and your loyal readership of this magazine, you have validated one of our tag lines — *The finest health care anywhere, right here at home.* Many of you take the time to write to us about topics you would like us to feature in upcoming issues. We appreciate this feedback, and we always do our best to bring you the uplifting and informational articles you request. And, in keeping with the month-long observance of American Heart Month in February, you'll notice several articles in this issue tied to keeping your heart healthy.

Last month, we relaunched our Web site, www.meridianhealth.com. We greatly enhanced the health content and we made it easier for you to learn more about our services and facilities. We have even bigger plans for this year, so I encourage you to visit the site often.

Wishing you the best of health in 2003.

Sincerely,



John K. Lloyd, FACHE

President, Meridian Health System



At InteCardia LifeCare Imaging's recent Open House, Steven Littleton, president of Jersey Shore Medical Center (shown here with Darlene Bartlow, R.T., the EBT technician at the Center), shows how easy it is to have an EBT heart scan.



An EBT scan takes about 35 seconds, and you stay fully clothed while the scan takes place. Each heart scan is analyzed and interpreted by a Meridian board-certified cardiologist and given a “score” that measures the amount of calcified plaque in the coronary arteries (if any). A radiologist reads the lung and full body scan. Total scores range from 0 to above 400 and are classified from low risk to high risk for *coronary stenosis* (narrowing of a blood vessel giving blood to the heart). Patients are then referred to their primary care physicians for follow-up.

“By using the EBT technology, we can be medically more accurate in identifying patients with high- and low-risk of having heart attacks,” according to Dale Edlin, M.D., medical director of InteCardia LifeCare Imaging and a cardiologist affiliated with Riverview Medical Center and Jersey Shore Medical Center. “This technology can also be used to detect early lesions in the lung and colon and to monitor the progress of patients who take cholesterol-lowering drugs to help reduce their coronary disease.”

Call Today for an Appointment

“We read in the newspapers all the time about athletes (fit but at risk) who collapse on the field or a young police officer who dies of a heart attack, and they never knew they had heart problems,” notes Linda. “Having an EBT Heart Scan can now provide vital information for early detection. Finding out if your heart is healthy or if you are at risk of a coronary event is key when considering your overall quality of life.”

To learn more or to make an appointment, call Meridian Health Line at 1-800-560-9990.

 Pati Caldwell

Is Your Heart at Risk?

A new screening called SCORE can help prevent unexpected stroke and heart attacks.

To look at Elaine Goodrich is to see the picture of good health. The 32-year-old Tinton Falls resident keeps pace with her 8-year-old daughter, works full-time as a business systems analyst, and still finds the time to work out in her company’s gym five days a week. Few people would ever guess that beneath Elaine’s exterior of well being was a major heart attack waiting to happen.

According to the American Heart Association, about 1.1 million Americans suffer from a heart attack each year. And almost 500,000 people die from them. The fact is, heart attacks claim more lives of women and men than any single cause of death.

Physical Exam Reveals Problem

“With my strong family history of heart disease, I was resigned to living with a dangerously high cholesterol level,” explains Elaine. “Although I was taking appropriate medication, my cholesterol level remained extremely high, and I just thought that this was where I was going to be for the rest of my life. Ironically, it wasn’t until I was trying to sign up for a new gym that my primary care physician noticed an irregular pulse and referred me to ‘Dr. Scott,’ as I like to call him. This referral might have saved my life.”

Scott Eisenberg, M.D., an invasive and interventional cardiologist who is affiliated with Jersey Shore Medical Center and Medical Center of Ocean County, diagnosed Elaine with *mitrovalve prolapse*, a common heart condition in women. He also told Elaine that her heart was enlarged and that her poorly functioning valve would eventually need to be repaired.



Photo: Chris Gahler

Elaine Goodrich of Tinton Falls is grateful that her heart condition was detected and treated thanks to the SCORE screening program.

Dr. Eisenberg identified Elaine’s heart complications using a new screening program called SCORE (Screening Clinic for Coronary Risk and Events). Joseph Guarino, M.D., an invasive cardiologist and one of Dr. Eisenberg’s partners, also conducts SCORE screenings in conjunction with him.

“The basis for this program,” says Dr. Eisenberg, “is that up to 50 percent of all patients who have heart attacks have normal cholesterol and do not have other strong indicators of possible attacks. But there are many

Continued on page 9

SCORE Test for Coronary Examinations

Meridian Health Line

1-800-560-9990

Sinus Surgery Ends 10 Years of Problems

Sinus problems and sleep apnea won't slow down this politician anymore, thanks to Riverview Medical Center's new infrared image-guided computer system.



Photo: Tom Van Dyke

Assemblyman Joseph Azzolina of Middletown (here with Frank Scaccia, M.D., at Riverview Medical Center) is sleeping better and breathing easier following sinus surgery.

There are plenty of things that can keep a busy executive and legislator up nights. But Joseph Azzolina's problem wasn't on his mind, but rather in his head — literally. The District 13 Assemblyman and president of Food Circus Supermarkets (Foodtown) had been plagued by chronic sinus problems for over 10 years. Coping with a persistent cough, postnasal drip, facial pressure, and breathing difficulties had become a way of life for him, and previous surgeries to correct the problems were only partially successful. Even aggressive medical therapy did not work.

In recent years, Joe also began to experience an increase in snoring at night and fatigue during the day. "I was coughing constantly — all day and night — and I couldn't get rid of it," he says. "It was really keeping me up at night." Eventually, he underwent a sleep study, where a technician monitored him during his sleep to help identify the cause of his symptoms. The results indicated that he had *obstructive sleep apnea*.

A Common Sleep Disorder

Sleep apnea is the most common sleep disorder, affecting over 12 million Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health. Many people feel that an inability to get a good night's sleep is a problem they just have to live with, but sleep apnea can cause far more serious health problems, such as high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, memory problems, weight gain, and headaches. Accurately diagnosing the sleep apnea and undergoing appropriate treatment is extremely important.

Apnea, which is a Greek word meaning "without breath," is a fairly accurate description of the condition because it causes a cessation of breathing for brief periods of time during sleep. Although there are three types of apnea — obstructive, central, and mixed — the most common is obstructive sleep apnea, which occurs when soft tissue at the back of the throat collapses and closes during sleep. The result is a blockage in the airway, which causes interrupted breathing and a poor quality of sleep. Over time, a continuing lack of sleep starts to affect a person's ability to concentrate and stay awake during the day. Sleep apnea has even been linked to motor vehicle and on-the-job accidents.

The sleep study revealed that Joe had a dangerously high apnea index value of 56, meaning that while he slept, he was not breathing or, at most, breathing very shallowly, for at least 10 seconds, 56 times per hour. Frank Scaccia, M.D., an otolaryngologist (ear, nose, and throat specialist) affiliated with Riverview Medical Center, evaluated Joe and ordered a CT scan to determine the severity of Joe's sinus condition. The scan confirmed that Joe also had persistent and significant disease with polyps and infection involving almost all of his major sinuses.

New Technology, Greater Accuracy

"Unfortunately, whenever there is scar tissue the risks of surgery become higher and the outcome becomes more unpredictable," says Dr. Scaccia. "However, using Riverview's new infrared image-guided computer system as a complement to our endoscopic approach, I was able to safely and effectively navigate through Joe's sinuses and thoroughly clean out the disease."

The entire sinus operation was done through Joe's nose with no external incisions or post-operative swelling. In addition, specially designed straws were placed through the nose packing so that Joe could breathe through his nose right after surgery, even while the packing was in. In order to treat his snoring and sleep apnea, Dr. Scaccia also simultaneously performed an *uvulopalatopharyngoplasty* (UPPP), removing some of the excessive tissue in the back of Joe's throat.

"What was great was that both the sinus problem and coughing were fixed during one successful surgery," says Joe. "Dr. Scaccia and his surgical team made sure it was done right the first time, so I didn't have to come back. And I can't say enough about how wonderful the nurses were."

After two days, the packing and straws were removed from Joe's nose, and he was feeling much better. So much better, in fact, that he was immediately able to resume his legislative duties and made an appearance at the annual Middletown Firemen's Picnic.

Now Sleeping Soundly

Six weeks later, Joe was almost totally healed and noted significant improvement in all of his previous symptoms, which included nasal congestion, daytime fatigue, coughing, snoring, and post-nasal drip. "Now I fall to sleep right away, and even if I have to get up for some reason, I can go back to sleep right away and sleep soundly," adds Joe. "I'm very satisfied."

To find an ear, nose, and throat specialist, call Meridian Physician Referral at 1-800-560-9990 or log onto Meridian's Web site at www.meridianhealth.com.

 Diane Gribbin

Relief for Sinus Pain

Image-guided surgery now brings sinus pain relief for patients at Medical Center of Ocean County.

If you suffer from severe sinus conditions, you may not have to endure the pain much longer.

"Two years ago, my right frontal sinuses were totally plugged — when I sneezed, I thought my head would come off," explains Fred Barbatschi, 68, of Lanoka Harbor. Fred, a former scientist, went to see Thomas E.

"Surgeons can now reach all of the sinuses and improve their drainage by operating through the nose, avoiding scars on the face," explains Dr. Brandeisky. "The system helps the surgeon accurately identify the patient's anatomy and the extent of disease, greatly reducing the risks involved, and helping to improve the



Thomas Brandeisky, D.O., performed image-guided surgery to end sinus pain for Fred Barbatschi of Lanoka Harbor.

Brandeisky, D.O., who recommended sinus surgery using the *InstaTrak System*, a computer-aided, navigational system that helps surgeons perform safer and more accurate sinus procedures.

According to Dr. Brandeisky, an otolaryngologist affiliated with Medical Center of Ocean County, this image-guided technology uses data from a patient's CT scans to direct the surgical procedure. The technology has been around since the early 1990s, but has been used more frequently in the past few years.

procedure's accuracy. So, this technology can reduce the number of procedures needed to improve sinus conditions, through less invasive approaches."

Here's How It Works

Before surgery, the patient wears a specially designed headset while CT scans are taken to develop a

Continued on page 11

Sinus Surgery Procedures

Meridian Physician Referral

1-800-560-9990

Photo: Tom Van Dyle

Less Invasive Surgery Means Less Pain, Shorter Stay

Surgeons use laparoscopic-assisted surgery for conditions of the small intestine with far better results than traditional surgery.

By the time Point Pleasant resident Jane Cholminsky came to Walter Hayne, M.D., she had already undergone a series of diagnostic tests. “I was on a cruise in the Caribbean when I started having problems,” says Jane. “I wasn’t feeling well and was extremely fatigued. Even though I was out in the sun, I wasn’t getting tan — I was actually beginning to look a little yellow. But all I thought I had was a touch of the flu.”

When Jane passed out in a taxi and was rushed to a St. Marteen hospital, they gave her a blood transfusion. “All I wanted was to get home so I could find out what was really wrong,” she says. Once she returned home, Jane underwent diagnostic tests that showed severe gastrointestinal bleeding, but the source of the problem was unclear.

“What makes laparoscopic procedures so amazing is that physicians can visualize problems and their locations quickly and easily, limiting the size of the incision and decreasing the pain and recovery time.”

— Donald Cugini, M.D.,
Riverview Medical Center

Going in With the ‘Scope

When Jane came home and saw Dr. Hayne, who is affiliated with Riverview Medical Center, he recommended a *laparoscopy*. During this procedure, a laparoscope — a small video camera — is attached to a wire that is inserted into the bellybutton

through a very small incision, and then through the abdominal wall and into the abdominal cavity. The camera allows surgeons to precisely locate problems within the body without having to perform major exploratory surgery. This means that problems can usually be found and treated more quickly, with less pain, and a shorter hospital stay.

“The laparoscopy allowed us to see both the tumor and the *intussusception* before we even operated,” says Dr. Hayne.

In Jane’s situation, a laparoscope was inserted into a tiny incision and down into her small intestine. “In addition to a small, benign tumor,” says Dr. Hayne, “we found that Jane also had a condition called *intussusception*, where her intestine had actually folded back on itself, like a sock. The presence of two problems instead of one made surgery more complicated and the use of a laparoscope extremely helpful.”

Once the two problems were precisely located, small incisions were made in Jane’s abdomen to remove the tumor and six inches of the small bowel. The healthy intestine was then reconnected with surgical staples and placed back in its normal position.

Jane was out of bed and back on her feet the next day, with minimal pain.

Helpful for Many Conditions

Donald Cugini, M.D., who is Dr. Hayne’s partner, finds much success as well using laparoscopic-assisted surgery to treat patients suffering from serious medical conditions affecting the small intestine.

Dr. Cugini recently performed a laparoscopic procedure to correct a case of *Meckel’s diverticulum*. This congenital condition causes an abnormal loop to occur in the small intestine that is lined with *gastric mucosa*, the same acid-producing substance found in the stomach during the normal growth of a fetus. When Meckel’s diverticulum forms in the intestine, the acid eats right through the bowel, causing severe *ulceration* (sores) and bleeding. The condition can lead to severe *anemia*, often requiring a blood transfusion. While it is estimated that Meckel’s diverticulum occurs in only two percent of the population, some physicians feel that it may occur more frequently.

To correct the condition, Dr. Cugini used a laparoscope. When the section was located, the bowel was pulled out, the abnormal loop with the acid producing lining was removed, and the healthy intestine was reconnected and placed back in the abdomen — all through only a one-and-a-half inch surgical incision.

Faster Recovery and Less Pain

“What makes laparoscopic procedures so amazing,” says Dr. Cugini, “is that physicians can visualize problems and their locations quickly and easily, limiting the size of the incision and decreasing both pain and recovery time. In this case, we were able to reduce what usually would have taken a week’s recovery to a four-day patient stay.”

 Diane Gribbin

Meridian Physician Referral

Meridian Health Line

1-800-560-9990

You Don't Have to Live With It

New procedure offered locally only at Jersey Shore brings fast, pain-free relief to hemorrhoid sufferers.

Hemorrhoids may be a joke to some, but if you're one of the millions of Americans who have experienced its debilitating pain each year, it's no laughing matter. A new procedure at Jersey Shore Medical Center treats this condition quickly and effectively with much less pain and discomfort than that caused by other treatments.

Hemorrhoids are a common condition involving itching and a painful mass of dilated veins in swollen anal tissue. A *stapled hemorrhoidectomy* treats the condition by reducing the prolapse, using a specialized surgical "stapler." The stapler was first developed in Italy in the early 1990s and achieved widespread acclaim throughout Europe. Newly introduced in the United States, only a small number of surgeons have been trained in the innovative procedure. Glenn Parker, M.D., colon and rectal surgeon affiliated with Jersey Shore Medical Center, is one of these physicians, and with his associate, Thomas Lake III, M.D., are the only physicians in Monmouth and Ocean counties certified in performing stapled hemorrhoidectomies.



Thomas Lake III, M.D., and Glenn Parker, M.D., perform an innovative hemorrhoid procedure that provides relief without the pain and discomfort of traditional treatments.

Dramatically Less Painful

"This new technique has many benefits," says Dr. Parker. "Now we can completely treat the condition with a fraction of the pain and side effects of traditional surgery. My patients are home the same day, and back to work and their lives in less than a week."

With the patient under anesthesia, the stapler works to halt the blood flow to the hemorrhoidal prolapse, eliminating the main factors that cause the most painful and serious symptoms. By interrupting the arteries surrounding the hemorrhoid, the symptoms are eliminated without the need for any additional surgery.

Dr. Parker is not only one of a few U.S. physicians trained in the procedure, but is also one of only a handful who are training others across the country. "The

traditional methods used in treating severe hemorrhoids were not very pleasant," says Dr. Parker. "As a physician, I personally did not enjoy doing a procedure that, while medically appropriate, I knew would be painful and uncomfortable to my patient. That is why there is so much interest in this new procedure from both surgeons and their patients."

One Local Success Story

Mina Kaneshiro, 76, of Neptune knows how horrible hemorrhoids can be. "I was absolutely miserable for over a year," says Mina. "When I finally decided to take charge and do something about it, I met Dr. Parker who told me about this new procedure that sounded very interesting."

Mina went into Jersey Shore last February first thing in the morning and was home that same night. "It was remarkable," explains Mina. "I experienced no pain at all — neither during nor after my procedure. I didn't even have to take any pain medication, which was marvelous."

Mina has been living pain-free and symptom-free for a year now and has not needed any additional treatments. "I am really happy living my life and doing what I want to do, for which I am very thankful."

Talk With Your Doctor

"I know this is a sensitive topic for a lot of people, but it shouldn't be," explains Dr. Parker. "This is a very common medical condition that, for whatever reason, people tend to secretly suffer through. However, it's important to know that you don't have to live with pain and can now find relief quickly and painlessly."

Michael Valentino

Hemorrhoid Treatment

Meridian Physician Referral 1-800-560-9990

Knowing Before You Forget

A local geriatrician is first to give area residents an opportunity to learn their probability of developing Alzheimer's, even while they are symptom-free.

Planning for the future is something we do all the time. We plan for vacations, for college, for marriage, and for retirement. Now, a generation of baby boomers may be planning for something they never imagined would happen — something that may be inevitable as life expectancy continues to rise: Alzheimer's disease.

Our Local Expert

Perhaps no primary care physician in Monmouth and Ocean counties has studied or lectured more about this disease than Joshua Shua Haim, M.D., a geriatrician affiliated with Medical Center of Ocean County and Jersey Shore Medical Center. In fact, he was one of only a few East Coast

But some specialists are hunting this disease on a new front. Armed with state-of-the-art PET scanners and MRIs, doctors are learning to spot and track the disease in people who have yet to suffer symptoms.

Dr. Shua Haim reports that there are primarily two types of individuals who most likely want to know whether a diagnosis of Alzheimer's awaits them: One is the concerned adult child whose parent is suffering from or who has died as a result of Alzheimer's; the other is the middle-aged person who is experiencing mild memory loss and is concerned about what this can progress into.

So We Know. Now What?

It's one thing to discover that the brain is deteriorating, and quite another to do something about it. But experts like Dr. Shua Haim are confident that breakthroughs in both areas are within reach and carry with them tremendous benefits to treatment and quality of life. "Finding early signs or indications of Alzheimer's in a person could have profound implications for the diagnosis and treatment of the disease before symptoms appear and open new doors for Alzheimer's research," claims Dr. Shua Haim, who envisions doctors one day monitoring the brain the way they monitor a patient's cholesterol or blood pressure.

There currently are no proven and effective drugs to cure or control the progression of Alzheimer's, although there are several candidates being tested. Some studies have suggested that folic acid and cholesterol controlling drugs can be beneficial, but research is still underway. Dr. Shua Haim says that early diagnostic tests would enable doctors to identify patients who need treatment and enable the testing and monitoring of new and promising medications. It is also important for a physician to



Photo: Tom Van Dyke

Joshua Shua Haim, M.D., (far right), works with Alzheimer's patients and their families like Marie Valvano (shown here with her family) about diagnosis and assistance with the disease.

Alzheimer's disease is one of several disorders that cause the gradual loss of brain cells. First affected are the parts of the brain that control memory and thinking, but as the disease progresses, cells die in other regions of the brain. Eventually, the loss of brain function itself causes death. Some four million Americans have Alzheimer's today, but the number could hit 14 million by 2050 as a large percentage of the population ages. Alzheimer's has emerged as one of the great mysteries in modern day medicine because there remains no cure.

physicians who presented at the International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease in Stockholm last May. "Aging is the number one risk factor for Alzheimer's, and Alzheimer's is the number one disease affecting those 65 and older," says Dr. Shua Haim.

Unfortunately, to find out for sure if you have, or rather had, the disease, you first have to die and then have your brain examined by a pathologist. Today, diagnosis in living patients is usually done through a process of elimination — with MRI scans, mental evaluations, and blood and urine tests that rule out other possible causes of dementia.

determine the cause of memory loss or other symptoms. Some dementia or dementia-like symptoms can be reversed if they are caused by treatable conditions, such as depression, drug interaction, thyroid problems, and certain vitamin deficiencies.

While researchers do not know exactly what causes the dreaded disease, protein deposits known as *amyloid plaques* found in the spaces between nerve cells of the brain are a hallmark of Alzheimer's. So researchers have been trying to develop brain-scanning technologies that could identify these plaques as a way to speed up the diagnosis.

For people with dementia and their families, an early diagnosis has many advantages, including time to make choices that maximize the quality of life, reduced anxiety about the unknown and, most important, a

better chance of benefiting from emerging treatments.

The Fear Is Real

Are people really worried about facing Alzheimer's disease? In a 2002 nationwide poll conducted by the Peter D. Hart Research Associates, an overwhelming number of Americans, 95 percent, say Alzheimer's disease is a serious problem facing our nation. One startling finding is that 64 percent of Americans age 35 to 49, the baby boomers, are concerned about getting the disease even though the prospect is, in all probability, several decades away.

By far the greatest fear of all surrounding Alzheimer's is not contracting the disease oneself, according to the poll, but watching someone close developing it. Women under 50 are the most concerned about the possi-

bility of someone in their family or a close friend developing Alzheimer's.

One way or another, many of us now seem destined to learn we have Alzheimer's disease while we're still of sound mind. The question is whether we, in conjunction with our doctors, will be able to do anything constructive about it. The treatment possibilities do seem hopeful. When facing a disease as insidious and devastating as Alzheimer's, Dr. Shua Haim believes most people would appreciate as many tools and as much intelligence as possible to help them ward off the slow cruelty of this disease. For more information about warning signs for Alzheimer's disease, log onto our Web site at www.meridianhealth.com.

 Christie Scott

Alzheimer's Disease Information

Meridian Institute for Aging 732-657-6100

Advanced Technology

Continued from page 3

other issues that come into play. Typical risk factors include family history, lifestyle issues like smoking, chronic diseases like diabetes, and fluctuating levels of cholesterol, protein, folic acid, and niacin. For women, additional issues need to be considered like those related to menopause."

Easy and Painless Screening

To participate in a SCORE screening, patients schedule a complimentary initial consultation to determine family history and other elements of the risk factor panel. Blood work is also taken as part of the SCORE panel.

Dr. Eisenberg and Dr. Guarino review each individual's outcomes during a follow-up visit and determine any necessary future treatment.

According to Dr. Guarino, the total impact of each person's risk factors,

not just a single isolated factor, determines that individual's total heart health and that steps can be taken to prevent a vascular attack from happening.


Elaine's high cholesterol level had led to the formation of dense particles that were clogging up her arteries. While this condition could have eventually led to an early heart attack, Elaine was basically symptom-free. "Without the SCORE screening, we may not have known her true condition until it was too late," says Dr. Eisenberg.

"Dr. Eisenberg did the risk test right away," recalls Elaine. "He spent a long time explaining what the risk factor panel indicated, how the heart muscle works, the effects of our genetic make-up, and the benefits of diet and exercise. As a woman in my 30s, even with a high cholesterol level, I just hadn't thought about seeing a cardiologist or about the long-term effects of heart

disease. I realize now that everything I do affects my heart."

Adding Years to Your Life

Luckily, Elaine's future improved once she took the SCORE test. Dr. Eisenberg began a new course of medication that dramatically reduced Elaine's cholesterol level. "My cholesterol level was in the mid-400s when I first saw Dr. Eisenberg, and now I'm at 180, thanks to the new medications," says Elaine. "Dr. Eisenberg ran additional tests and now he believes I can defer heart surgery for several more years. Who knows? By then, modern medicine may have improved so much that what would now be a risky procedure may be much less invasive.

"I am so thankful to have been referred to Dr. Eisenberg, and for the SCORE panel he ran on me," adds Elaine. "I will always be incredibly grateful for the years Dr. Eisenberg has added to my life."  Christine Burke

Protecting Life and Limb

Riverview's Advanced Wound Healing Center provides the latest treatments for patients with chronic, non-healing wounds.

Most wounds, like simple cuts, minor abrasions, or even torn hangnails, are simple to treat. You clean the wound and apply an antibiotic and a bandage. In a week or two the wound is gone and forgotten. However, in the most serious cases when, due to a person's specific condition, the wound does not heal within a four- to six-week time period, prompt and appropriate treatment can mean the difference between recovery and amputation.

Catching a Problem in Time

The importance of appropriate and skilled wound care is illustrated by the case of an 89-year-old resident of Red Bank who was admitted to Riverview Medical Center for breathing difficulties, weakness, and weight loss. It was soon discovered that he had an additional serious problem — a non-healing ulcer on his lower left ankle. A patient assessment was made by the specially trained wound care nurses of

Riverview's Advanced Wound Healing Center. First, the ulcer was treated with medication that was rubbed into the wound. Then a debridement was performed, removing non-living tissue from the wound. While debridement is not always necessary, it is often used to help speed the healing process.

"Eventually, I had a skin graft where a plastic surgeon took skin from my upper left leg and grafted it onto my lower left ankle," says the patient. "The whole thing was done beautifully, and I've been very pleased with the results."

Team Approach Works Best

Riverview's Advanced Wound Healing Center was developed to specifically address the needs of patients with chronic wounds. The Center's team of wound care specialists, including nurses and physicians certified in treating non-healing wounds, provides services on both an inpatient and outpatient basis. The team uses a

multi-disciplinary approach, utilizing the medical expertise of vascular and plastic surgeons, nurses, infection control and diabetes management experts, physical and recreational therapists, pharmacists, and clinical education and research specialists, to assist in healing when the body's natural healing process fails.

"The advantage of this collaborative, hospital-based effort is that we are able to provide services across the continuum of care, working with our patients here as well as with patients in our nursing homes and home care programs," says Irene Kelly, R.N.

Isabel Lozano, R.N., adds, "The Center's team is also able to provide important education and nutritional counseling to patients and families as well as appropriate referrals for podiatry, plastic surgery, vascular surgery, prosthetics, and for outpatients, a hospital admission, if necessary."

Diabetics Especially at Risk

People with diabetes are most at risk for chronic wounds, with up to 15 percent of an estimated 16 million Americans suffering from chronic wounds. Proper foot care is especially important for diabetics or those with insufficient circulation. When not treated properly, a blister, skin tear, ingrown toenail, or dry, cracked, peeling skin, can develop into a far more acute problem. But whether a non-healing wound is the result of diabetes, surgery, a burn, poor circulation, or any number of other causes, our Advanced Wound Healing Center is able to provide help.

 Diane Gribbin

Community Initiative

Continued from page 16

"We were pleased to donate something so important to the hospital," says Harvey Langer, president, Brick Hospital Association. "The Association is here to help make a difference in people's lives."

As part of the initiative started by D.J. Sickler, manager of Respiratory Therapy, all maintenance and security staff at the hospital have been trained to use the AED. And while people expect hospitals to have "trained life savers" in house, this is one more way to make sure no time is wasted during those critical first moments.

"Our Maintenance and Security staff are usually the first ones on the scene when something happens, so it made sense to train them first," explains Mickey Coles, R.N., and AED trainer. "Eventually, we would like to see all employees trained in CPR and AED use. This is just another opportunity for us to better serve the community."

Jack Eisner, manager of Security at Medical Center of Ocean County, says, "My staff was very receptive to the idea. Not only do they feel more prepared should something happen, but it was a rewarding experience for them to know they can save a life."

 Nicole Ocone

Meridian Wound Care Services

Riverview Medical Center	732-530-2535
Meridian Health Line	1-800-560-9990

Four-Legged Friends Offer Stress Relief

Shore Rehabilitation Institute now offers pet therapy to brighten their patients' days.

If you visit Shore Rehabilitation Institute, don't be surprised if you occasionally see a four-legged friend walking down the hall. This inpatient rehabilitation facility, a joint venture between Meridian and JFK Rehabilitation Institute, is one of the many health care facilities now offering pet therapy as a form of complementary medicine.

Animals Help Patients Relax

"It was so much fun interacting with the dogs, and it was a nice break in the everyday rehabilitation therapy,"


Surgical Advances

Continued from page 5

multi-dimensional road map for the surgeon. The scan can be performed the same day as surgery or several weeks or months in advance. The headset fits snugly on the head and across the bridge of the nose and has ear pieces that rest in the ear canal. The patient also wears the headset during surgery to align the computerized CT images with his or her anatomy.

This tracking system links the surgical instruments used during the procedure to the computer, and the instruments appear on the computer display screen as a set of cross hairs that move through the computerized model of the sinuses. This allows the surgeon to see the exact location of the surgical instruments in direct relation to the areas of the skull that cannot be seen through an endoscope.

"Two weeks after my second procedure, I felt fine," Fred says. "I would recommend the procedure to anyone with this condition."

 Felice Mikelberg

says Bernie Brugger of Brick. Bernie was an inpatient at Shore Rehab after having a total knee replacement at Medical Center of Ocean County. "I never had pet therapy before, so I didn't know what to expect. But the dogs were so gentle and obedient. It was a lot of fun and took my mind off of the therapy for a little while."

Pet therapy utilizes animals as a therapy to assist with the healing and rehabilitation of patients with acute or chronic illnesses. All dogs are tested and certified through a seven-week training course. In addition, veterinarians screen prospective therapy dogs for intestinal parasites, healthy teeth and gums, good coats and skin conditions, and any chronic diseases that may interfere with patient safety. Dogs must be between age one and 10 and have good temperaments, and owners must provide proof of current vaccinations.

"We are very excited to have pet therapy here," says Sandy Clemento, director of Shore Rehab. "It provides another therapeutic activity for our patients to help them recover while enjoying themselves. It's also admirable


to see Meridian employees actively involved and giving so freely of their personal time."

It's Going to the Dogs

Jeter, a two-and-a-half-year-old male boxer, and Porter, a two-and-a-half-year-old male mastiff, are two of the therapy dogs participating in the Pet Therapy program. Both dogs graduated from the program's seven-week training course, became close buddies, and now make their visits to Shore Rehab together.

"When we bring in Jeter and Porter, staff and patients' faces light up immediately," says Jill Marmo, manager of Inpatient Rehabilitation at Medical Center of Ocean County and owner of Jeter. "Having that interaction with the dogs gives the patients something to smile and talk about, forgetting about their pain or illness for a few minutes."

Christy Grosso, a business associate at LIFE Fitness and Rehabilitation and owner of Porter, says, "The dogs really help the patients reduce some of the stress and anxiety they may be experiencing with their rehabilitation or life situations."

 Beth Reiprich

Pet Therapy

Shore Rehabilitation Institute 732-295-6500

Bernie Brugger of Brick especially enjoyed the pet therapy portion of his visit at Shore Rehabilitation Institute (shown here with dogs Porter, right, and Jeter, left, and Jill Marmo, a Meridian employee who owns Jeter).



Photo: Tom Van Dyke

New Hope for Cancer Patients

Thanks to community support, Riverview's new Booker Radiation Oncology Center opens its doors to cancer patients.



Photo: Russ Seuffert

Edmund Kwong, M.D., a radiation oncologist, and Joyce McNulty, manager of Radiation Oncology, are working with new linear accelerators at the Booker Radiation Oncology Center.

Riverview Medical Center supporter and donor Carol Stillwell simply characterizes her involvement with the hospital: “There is not a life that has not been touched by cancer, either through their own personal battle or that of a loved one,” she says. “This is what drives me to offer my support to the Booker Radiation Oncology Center.”

One of the newest phases of a “New View of Riverview” expansion and renovation project, the Booker Radiation Oncology Center offers the latest cancer treatment technology in an environment that is comfortable, easily accessible, and close to home. The concept, design, and construction of the new facility evolved over a 16-month period, with input from Riverview’s cancer treatment experts, including radiation oncologists and radiation therapists, and generous support from a community that chooses to embrace and fund the war against cancer right in its own backyard.

Take a Peek Inside

The new Center includes two new state-of-the-art linear accelerators with Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) capability, allowing physicians to more precisely define tumors and deliver a radiation dose directly to the tumor site with less radiation to surrounding healthy tissue. There is also a new CT Simulator that allows both CT scanning and pre-treatment planning to be performed using a single piece of equipment.

Even from a patient care perspective, every effort has been made to ensure the utmost in comfort and privacy, with a private reception area, patient exam rooms, and private areas for patients who are awaiting treatment. And there has also been an emphasis on increasing parking accommodations, with a dedicated patient parking area and entrance for easy accessibility.

World-Class Facility Has Arrived
According to Nathan Kaufman, M.D., medical director of Radiation Oncology for Meridian, the new Booker Radiation Oncology Center is an outstanding and welcome addition to the comprehensive inpatient and outpatient cancer services already provided by Riverview. “This is a world-class radiation oncology facility, especially when one considers that IMRT technology is available in only a few centers across the country,” says Dr. Kaufman, a Memorial Sloan-Kettering trained radiation oncologist.

Riverview radiation oncologist Edmund Kwong, M.D., says that providing the community with sophisticated radiation technology was a key factor in the design of the Booker Radiation Oncology Center. “Our new facility gives patients the option of seeking hi-tech care right in their own community without the stress of traveling long distances to other facilities and with the confidence that they are accessing the finest technology and treatment available today,” says Dr. Kwong. “Most important, it provides patients with the best possible chance for recovery.”

It Takes A Community

The Booker Radiation Oncology Center was made possible thanks to the generous members of the community who share Riverview’s vision of creating outstanding oncology services. Built through leadership gifts from The Jane H. Booker Charitable Foundation; Mr. and Mrs. Louis J. Carr, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. J. Hugh Devlin, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. George Harms; Riverview Medical Center Auxiliary; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Stillwell; Ye Olde Thrift Shop; and even a special friend who wishes to remain anonymous, the new Radiation Oncology facility truly matches the proven quality of care delivered by

Cancer Treatment Close to Home

Prostate cancer patient makes a significant donation to the Radiation Oncology Department at Medical Center of Ocean County.

Seventy-five-year-old William R. Walsh Jr. (known as “Walsh”) of Brielle was not prepared at all for the news his physician gave him — that he has prostate cancer.

As the founding chairman of the Cancer Institute of New Jersey, Walsh knows all too well how deadly this disease can be. “When my physician told me I had prostate cancer, I was very apprehensive,” says Walsh. “I knew the facts and figures and what could happen if it’s not caught in time.”

Treatment Close to Home

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men, exceeded only by lung cancer. Nathan Kaufman, M.D., medical director of Radiation Oncology at Medical Center of Ocean County (MCOC), says the key is early detection. “When prostate cancer is caught in its early stages, there are several options that we can pursue for a patient, most notably surgery and radiation therapy, which are essentially equivalent in terms of cure rates,” says Dr. Kaufman.



Photo: Russ Seuffert

William Walsh, Jr., of Brielle, showed his appreciation for his surgery by donating funds to the Radiation Oncology Department at Medical Center of Ocean County.

Dr. Kaufman and Walsh’s urologist agreed that in his case, *Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy* (IMRT) was the way to go. Dr. Kaufman explains that this type of radiation therapy very specifically and precisely delivers the radiation dose to the prostate and significantly minimizes radiation to surrounding tissues such as the rectum and the bladder. Dr. Kaufman adds that IMRT can also be used for treatment of breast, head, and neck cancer as well as other sites.

For nine weeks, Walsh went to Medical Center of Ocean County for

his therapy. “I chose Medical Center of Ocean County because they have the latest in technology, and they are close to my home,” remarks Walsh. “They have a friendly, caring atmosphere and I even got reacquainted with one of the therapists who happened to be an old friend of my family.”

A Wonderful Gift

After Walsh’s therapy was completed, Dr. Kaufman received a letter from him stating how happy he was with the care he received and how impressed he was with the facility. The letter concluded with an unexpected surprise: Walsh, a trustee emeritus of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) where he served as their chief financial officer for 20 years, was donating \$2,000 to the MCOC Foundation along with a \$10,000 “matching gift” from RWJ Foundation earmarked to the Radiation Oncology Department at MCOC.

“It was truly gratifying to receive this type of donation,” says Dr. Kaufman. “To have a person of Mr. Walsh’s stature express his appreciation in such a way is very meaningful. This is exactly the kind of department we were hoping to build — one that delivers the latest technology in a caring environment.”

Walsh received his first evaluation after therapy and his PSA levels (prostate-specific antigen) were low, and he has not had any side effects from the treatment. “I even played golf almost every day while I was receiving therapy,” he boasts.

Robin Krippa

Cancer Care

the experts who work there and who consistently score high in patient satisfaction.

Carol Stillwell adds, “We all have a responsibility to support our community, and it is my privilege and honor to be associated with Riverview.”

For more information about the new Booker Radiation Oncology Center at Riverview Medical Center or to make a contribution to Riverview Foundation, call Meridian Health Line at 1-800-560-9990 or log onto Meridian’s Web site at www.meridianhealth.com.

Diane Gribbin

Radiation Oncology

Meridian Health Line

1-800-560-9990

“I chose Medical Center of Ocean County because they have the latest in technology and they are close to my home.”

— William R. Walsh, Jr., of Brielle

Local Surgeons on the Leading Edge

New prostate cancer microsurgery reduces side effects and improves patients' quality of life.

Do you know someone who has prostate cancer? Chances are the answer is “yes.” That’s because 80 percent of the men who reach age 80 have had prostate cancer. More than 180,000 men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year, and more than 40,000 will die of the disease.

The good news is that although the statistics remain high, the survival rate is also improving. Even better news is



Matthew Tobin, M.D., a urologist, and Andrew Elkwood, M.D., a plastic reconstructive microsurgeon, perform new prostate cancer microsurgery that reduces the risk of side effects from prostate surgery.

that a new procedure available at Jersey Shore Medical Center helps reduce the risk of side effects from the removal of the prostate gland.

Lowering Risk of Impotence and More
Matthew S. Tobin, M.D., a urologist, and Andrew I. Elkwood, M.D., a plastic reconstructive microsurgeon, both affiliated with Jersey Shore Medical Center, are performing *radical retropubic prostatectomy with sural nerve graft*. This new procedure removes the cancerous area and then reestablishes nerves severed by the surgery, allowing the body to function normally without any of the traditional side effects.

Radical prostatectomy involves removing the prostate gland and some of the surrounding tissue, either through a surgical incision in the lower abdomen or, less commonly, in the space between the scrotum and the rectum. Prostatectomy is the most common treatment for localized cancer of the prostate in men under age 70 who do not have other health complications. However, following surgery, some patients have historically been left with side effects such as urinary incontinence (leaking urine) and impotence (the inability to achieve an erection). The new procedure reduces or eliminates these effects.

“The after effects of surgery can be a serious quality of life issue for the patient, who is already dealing with prostate cancer,” explains Dr. Tobin, who is co-director of Urologic Oncology at Jersey Shore Medical Center. “A radical prostatectomy with a sural nerve graft — a procedure being performed at only a few select hospitals like Baylor Medical Center in Texas, Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, and now at Jersey Shore Medical Center — can help reduce certain patients’ risk of becoming impotent by 50 percent.”

Nerves Are Taken From Ankle

Those odds were good enough to convince Stephen Roberts, 61, of Neptune that he should have the new procedure after he was diagnosed with prostate cancer this past spring. Stephen underwent a mandatory annual physical, which revealed an elevated PSA (prostate-specific antigen) level. An examination and biopsy confirmed that Stephen had prostate cancer. Dr. Tobin discussed with Stephen how he could remove

the prostate gland and then use a nerve from his ankle to bridge the nerves on either side of where the gland had been, maintaining the ability to achieve an erection.

“I felt completely comfortable with having the new procedure after Dr. Tobin explained everything to me,” says the father of six. “I knew I wanted to have surgery to treat the prostate cancer, and it turned out I was a good candidate for the way Dr. Tobin suggested it could be done.”

This past April, Stephen became Drs. Tobin and Elkwood’s first patient to undergo the radical prostatectomy with a sural nerve graft. After the prostate gland is removed, the sural nerve is taken from the outside of the ankle. Then it’s surgically grafted onto the existing nerves in the prostate region. This re-establishes conduction to the severed nerves, resulting in normal bodily functions. The nerve grafting, performed by Dr. Elkwood, took about an hour to complete.

More Challenging Than Most

“Due to the sensitive location of the prostate region, the procedure is extremely delicate and complex,” says Dr. Elkwood, who performs on average 100 microsurgeries, such as the sural nerve graft, each year. “With prostate surgery, we are working deep in the body and using a very small opening, which while technically challenging, has produced remarkable results.”

Three months after his operation, Stephen had already regained erectile function. “His future looks excellent, and his most recent tests revealed that he is clear of prostate cancer,” says Dr. Tobin.

Michael Valentino

Prostate Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment

Meridian Physician Referral

1-800-560-9990

Taking Back Control of Your Life

If you or someone you love needs help with a drug or drinking problem, Meridian gives you somewhere to turn.



Photo: Russ Seuffert

Thanks to the help of Meridian's Addiction Recovery Program, Art Salvesen has his life back on track.

When Art Salvesen went to college, he and his friends often drank at parties and while they were just hanging out. Art says as he and his friends got older, most of his friends grew up and out of the heavy drinking stage, but Art didn't. "For some reason, I never gave it up — I became an alcoholic," says Art. "Of course, at that time, I didn't think I was. It just progressed from there. I never thought I had a problem."

Time to Make a Change

Art's family and friends couldn't handle his drinking and asked him to go for help, and he did, for their sake. However, a few months after the rehabilitation program ended, he was back to where he started. "I wasn't ready to do it for myself," says Art. "That's why I think I wasn't successful."

Art says he finally realized his life was a mess and knew he couldn't go on living like this anymore. "I lived each day wondering how I was going to get alcohol," says Art. "And at the rate I was going, drinking was my full-time job."

Meridian HealthViews Jan/Feb 2003

Art was unemployed and he was subconsciously killing himself with the amount of alcohol he was consuming. "I finally called the only person I could think of who would help me, my old counselor from the first time I went through rehab, who said, 'We have a bed open, just for you.' That was March 13, 1994, and I have been sober since then."

You Can't Do it Alone

More than 12 million Americans are estimated to have an alcohol and/or drug dependency, and of those 12 million, young adults aged 21 to 25 are among the highest addicted.

That's why Meridian's Addiction Recovery Program is here to help. This service, offered through Meridian Behavioral Health Services, provides assessment and treatment for alcoholics and drug addicted persons, as well as for their families and/or significant others. When patients enter the program, certified alcohol and drug counselors give them thorough assessments. Each case is then discussed with a physician and the medical director of

behavioral health services. A treatment plan is then developed by the entire team to address the unique needs and problems of each patient.

Family involvement is strongly encouraged by all members of the team. "Addiction is a family disease," says Mary Anne Ruane, manager of Addiction Services at Meridian Behavioral Health Services. "Living with an alcoholic or drug addict causes pain and problems. The family needs help as much as the patient does."

Treatment options range from individual counseling to family education and therapy to intensive outpatient treatment. A program for DWI offenders is also offered. Involvement in 12 step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, and NarAnon is strongly recommended.

Taking One Day at a Time

After being addicted for almost 30 years, Art has now been sober for eight. He says it's hard to gain control with so many outside factors that can make your life stressful. Art also says it's so important for young adults to be aware of the dangers of alcohol and other substance abuse. "You don't think it could happen to you, but trust me, it can," he says. "You need to know when to ask for help." Art continually attends A.A. meetings for group support and to help him continue on his path of sobriety.

"My life is completely refocused. Going through a program and getting help saved my life. The path I was on would've eventually killed me," says Art. "Now I face life on life's terms, taking one day at a time. Getting help has allowed me to have the drive to live again."

 Beth Reiprich

Meridian Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral Health Line 1-800-822-8905

Meridian Health Line 1-800-560-9990