the journey to open heart

award-winning critical care

donors help make better health possible

will power

no special effects here. will smith's strong physique is the result of hard work and dedication

Gwinnett Medical Center

HEALTHY LIVING FOR THE GWINNETT COMMUNITY

10 WAYS GMC TRANSFORMED HEALTHCARE IN 2009

HEAL THY LIVING FOR THE GWINNETT COMMUNITY

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56 best-kept secret A new kind of injection therapy, now at GMC, has the body healing itself.
When Gwinnett Medical Center held the ribbon cutting for the new north tower on our Lawrenceville campus, we released 1,000 live butterflies to commemorate the occasion. It was magical to see them rise up, past the smiling faces of the children holding the boxes that just moments earlier had held them.

The transformation from larva to butterfly is not a comfortable journey, but the end result is magnificent to see. This is a perfect comparison to the construction of the north tower over the last couple of years on our Lawrenceville campus. It has not always been the most convenient process, because of the construction noise and detours, but the final result was definitely worth the wait.

GMC’s nationally renowned physicians and medical professionals are now delivering quality care in a facility with the latest technology that includes countless amenities for patients and their families.

Just before the north tower opened, we received the good news that the legal hurdles blocking us in moving forward with open heart surgery had been removed. Gwinnett Medical Center is now moving forward to establish an advanced cardiology program in Gwinnett.

And finally, our Foundation is well on its way to securing its $8 million campaign goal, which will ensure that we are able to continue our progression toward the dynamic services our community needs in the coming year.

Thank you for your continued support of our efforts, and be sure to keep watching our transformation of healthcare.

Philip R. Wolfe, FACHE
President and CEO
what a year!

GMC looks back at 2009

Feb. 28 / Foundation Gala
The Foundation’s inaugural Cornerstone Society Donor Appreciation Gala was held to recognize donors of $1,000 or more in 2008 and featured guest speakers Mary Matalin and James Carville.

April 17 / Gwinnett Braves first home game
Gwinnett Medical Center is proud to be the official healthcare provider of the G-Braves, who had a great inaugural season and made it to the AAA playoffs.

May 7 / Breast Diagnostic Center opening
The Breast Diagnostic Center at GMC – Duluth helps women fight breast cancer through the latest technology in early detection.

June 18 / Interventional Radiology Suite opening in Duluth
The Interventional Radiology Suite at GMC – Duluth provides inpatient and outpatient minimally invasive services.

July 17 / First da Vinci surgery
GMC – Duluth hosted the first robotic surgery in Gwinnett using the da Vinci surgical robot, named Leo. The surgery was performed by Stephen Salmieri, M.D., a specialist in gynecologic oncology.

Sept. 23 / New MRI suite
GMC opened a new MRI suite with a short bore magnet, spa atmosphere and tranquil sky detail on the ceiling to enhance the experience for all GMC patients.

Sept. 25 / Open heart finally approved!
After oppositions from multiple Atlanta hospitals, open heart surgery was finally cleared to begin at GMC. Having been the largest county in the nation without an open heart facility, Gwinnett gratefully welcomed the approval, which would not have been possible without community support.

Sept. 29 / Hollywood at GMC
GMC transformed into North Metro Dallas General Hospital for the filming of the Warner Bros. movie Due Date, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx. The movie is expected to be released November 2010.

Sept. 30 / North tower opening
With the addition of 185 beds to the Lawrenceville campus, GMC opened the north tower to patients: “eight stories of the latest technology.”

Dec. 29 / 25th anniversary
December marked the silver anniversary of the GMC – Lawrenceville campus. With the addition of DaySurgery, the Women’s Pavilion, medical office buildings and the north tower, GMC – Lawrenceville has spent 25 years serving Gwinnett and is looking forward to many more.
W
inning an award for clinical excellence is hard. Winning it three times in a row is nearly impossible, especially in a highly competitive field.
But that’s exactly what Gwinnett Medical Center – Lawrenceville’s intensive care unit has accomplished, winning the coveted Beacon Award for an unprecedented third consecutive year. According to the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) website, “Beacon Award units have met rigid criteria for excellence, exhibiting high-quality standards, and exceptional care of patients and patients’ families.”

Adds Jeff Nowlin, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Gwinnett Health Members of the intensive care unit at Gwinnett Medical Center – Lawrenceville are proud of their three consecutive Beacon Awards.
System and president of GMC – Lawrenceville: “We strive for excellence in all areas here at GMC. We are all proud of what this unit has accomplished, as it exemplifies what we are here to do as a hospital, as well as sets the bar high for our other departments.”

**setting the standard**
The Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence was created by the AACN in 2003 to challenge acute care and critical care nurses to improve the care provided to acutely and critically ill patients. “This award provides a means for critical care units to measure their systems, outcomes and environments against national criteria for excellence,” says Joanne Culvern, R.N., clinical manager of the GMC – Lawrenceville intensive care unit. “We’re very proud to be setting the standard for intensive care both in Atlanta and across the country.”

Only three other hospitals in Georgia have won this award, and none of them has won it more than once. “Our ICU is thrilled to receive the Beacon Award for the third straight year,” Culvern says. “But we realize that the real winners are our patients and their families. They are the whole reason we do what we do every day.”

**validation for nurses, patients**
The Beacon Award validates that GMC’s patients are receiving the most effective nursing care, as outlined by national best-practice standards, and that the hospital is producing quality patient results in an environment that maximizes the health and well-being of its nurses.

“We have a great team that is committed to the exceptional care of patients and families,” Culvern says. “We are extremely fortunate here at GMC to work in an environment that is conducive to administering top-rate care.”

Gwinnett Medical Center’s intensive care units are extremely progressive, always evaluating their services to make sure they are of the highest quality for patients. “The nurses in these units have embraced change and are always willing to adapt their practices to provide the best care possible to meet the needs of our patients,” Culvern says. “Our staff is truly committed to patient-centered care, and we strive for the best patient outcomes.”

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Since fall 2007, Gwinnett Medical Center has worked to ensure that patients with advanced cardiology needs could be cared for with the addition of an open heart program on its campus.

On Sept. 25, the last of the groups that held up development of our open heart program backed down. We appreciate the willingness of Piedmont Hospital and Emory Healthcare to do the right thing for the citizens of Gwinnett.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude to the citizens and leaders of Gwinnett County for their continued support through this process—it has made all the difference. Going forward, we will now focus on building the comprehensive cardiac care program that this community needs and has rallied around for years.

To know where we are going, it pays to review the milestones, setbacks and victories that we have experienced along the way. Thanks to you, we now have the green light to move forward. Thanks to you, open heart is in our hands!
April 2008: GMC and Saint Joseph’s Health System join forces to create Gwinnett Cardiovascular Services, a collaborative arrangement designed to ensure that the most advanced cardiac services, including open heart surgery services, are available in Gwinnett County quickly.

Spring 2008: The GMC Foundation receives a $750,000 lead gift from The Brand Banking Co. and a $750,000 lead gift from Wayne and Ann Mason for the open heart campaign.

June 5, 2008: The Georgia Department of Community Health approves Gwinnett Medical Center’s certificate of need application for a $33 million cardiovascular center.

Summer 2008: The GMC Foundation receives a $250,000 lead gift from Cisco Systems Inc. for the open heart campaign.

July 2008: Piedmont Hospital, Emory University Hospital and Emory Crawford Long Hospital—all Atlanta-based—file appeals with the Georgia Department of Community Health asking the state agency to reverse its earlier decision that cleared the way for GMC to establish an open heart surgery program at its main campus in Lawrenceville.

January 2009: The Gwinnett County House of Representatives spends its first meeting of the year signing a letter of support for the Gwinnett Medical Center certificate of need, which faces appeals from Piedmont Hospital and Emory Healthcare in February. “Why would there be opposition?” said Rep. Toney Collins. Added Rep. Clay Cox, “[For a county with] 800,000 to have no heart center, it’s ridiculous.”

May 20, 2009: A certificate of need appeal panel hearing officer sides with opposing hospitals. Gwinnett Medical Center prepares an appeal requesting that the Department of Community Health commissioner reinstate the department’s original approval of the Gwinnett Medical Center open heart surgery program.

May-June 2009: Community support builds as community leaders respond to the open heart need in Gwinnett. Editorials and letters to the editor appear in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and The Gwinnett Daily Post supporting the original decision of the Department of Community Health to approve GMC’s open heart program. The Gwinnett Chamber leads the way and purchases a billboard on Interstate 85.

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continued
June 2009: Emory CEO John Fox submits a letter to the editor, which is published in The Gwinnett Daily Post, explaining Emory’s opposition to GMC’s open heart program.

July 15, 2009: More than 150 Emory-trained physicians now practicing at Gwinnett Medical Center submit a letter to the editor to The Gwinnett Daily Post. The letter states: “As Emory alumni, we are disappointed, disturbed and embarrassed that Emory would oppose a needed service that will permit us, as physicians, to provide the best care for our patients. We are all too familiar with the problems of transporting our seriously ill patients out of the community down very congested roads for critical cardiac care. In short, we are outraged. The column by Mr. Fox shows a lack of consideration for patient care. Shame on Emory.”

July 17, 2009: The certificate of need for GMC’s open heart program is reinstated, as the state Department of Community Health commissioner reverses the earlier decision of a hearing officer that halted GMC’s plans to institute an open heart program.

Aug. 18, 2009: A lawsuit is filed to block open heart at GMC. Piedmont Hospital and Emory Healthcare turn to Fulton County Superior Court in their latest bid to keep vital open heart surgical services from being offered within Gwinnett County, the largest county in the nation without its own open heart program.

Summer 2009: The GMC Foundation announces $5.6 million in charitable contributions toward the $8 million goal for the open heart campaign.

Sept. 9, 2009: Piedmont resigns to open heart in Gwinnett, leaving Emory as the only voice of opposition.

Sept. 14, 2009: A public hearing is held at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center in Lawrenceville, where the Gwinnett County legislative delegation hears from the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, Gwinnett Medical Center, Manfred Sandler, M.D., and several Gwinnett heart patients. Emory Healthcare, which owns Emory University Hospital, was invited to participate in the hearing but refused.

Sept. 25, 2009: Emory University Hospital drops its lawsuit to block Gwinnett Medical Center’s plan to perform open heart surgery, ending a two-year fight over the open heart program. “Emory Healthcare and the legislative leaders have all acknowledged that by working more closely together, patient care for the entire region will be advanced in the most effective and efficient manner,” Emory said in a prepared statement.

2010 and beyond
To keep up-to-date with the latest progress in open heart surgery in Gwinnett, or to see how you can get involved, visit openheartgwinnett.org.
DON’T CHOOSE JUST A DOCTOR.
Choose one who’s nationally renowned.

Any hospital can claim to have the best doctors. We back it up. Whether you visit our Lawrenceville or Duluth campus or any of our outpatient facilities, our well-respected and nationally acclaimed doctors are among the region’s medical elite.

Put simply, you won’t find a bigger or better group of forward-thinking pioneers committed to transforming healthcare and every life they touch. In fact, many are among the nation’s first physicians to incorporate and demonstrate the latest procedures and advancements in medicine.

All this means one thing for the patient—the most advanced and complete care possible not just in Atlanta, but in the nation.

For a physician referral, call 678-442-5000 or visit us on the Web at gwinnettmedicalcenter.org.
through their generosity and leadership, donors have placed a high value on one of the most important quality-of-life issues for any community: the availability of the highest-quality healthcare. Gwinnett Medical Center thanks the following donors for helping reach $6 million toward an $8 million goal for its open heart campaign.

**$1,000,000**
Clyde and Sandra Strickland – 1
Gwinnett Medical Center Associates (STARS) – 2

**$750,000**
The Brand Banking Company – 3
Wayne and Ann Mason – 4
Physician Partners – 5

**$250,000**
Cisco Systems Inc. – 6

**$150,000**
Gwinnett Medical Center Auxiliary – 7
SunTrust Foundation – 8

**$100,000**
Lawrence and Irene Garrett – 9
Bill and Sherry Russell – 10
Phil and Mary Jane Wolfe – 11

**$50,000**
Tom and Ethel Andersen – 12
Dr. Manfred and Fiona Sandler – 13
Wayne and Beth Sikes – 14
John D. and Beverly Stephens – 15
Terri Jondahl and Richard Drye – 16
E.R. Snell Contractors – 17
Rick and Nancy Chandler – 18
Greg and Tammy Shumate – 19

**$30,000**
Perkins + Will Architects – 20
Bill and Rosemary Drake – 21

**$25,000**
Dr. Jim and Beth Elsey – 22
Wayne and Carolyn Hill – 23
Barbara Howard – 24

**$15,000**
Frederick and Dorothy Rainey – 25
Bruce and Ann Still – 26
Charles and Glenda Bannister – 27
Dr. Keith and Lori Carnes – 28
Greg and Renita Hayes – 29
Joe and Nancy McCart – 30

**$10,000**
Dr. Alan and Liz Bier – 31
Coca-Cola Bottling Company – 32
Bill and Carole Head – 33
Dan and Karen King – 34
Jim and Billie Ellis – 35
Georgia Power – 36

**Special Opportunity**
Donors who make charitable contributions of $15,000 or more to the open heart campaign will receive a naming opportunity in the new patient tower. Call **678-312-8500** or visit [openheartgwinnett.org](http://openheartgwinnett.org) for more information.

truly blessed

Gwinnett native Mathew Pombo, M.D., is fulfilled by family and motorsports.

Gwinnett Medical Center orthopedic surgeon Mathew Pombo, M.D., is a Gwinnett native and former star soccer player at Duluth High School. These days, he can usually be found in the operating room repairing ACLs and rotator cuffs or racing and repairing cars. The 32-year-old motorsports enthusiast is fellowship-trained in sports medicine, shoulder surgery and arthroscopy.

A picture he drew at age 3 hangs framed on his office wall and reads: “I want to be a doctor. I want to help people and I want to keep them safe and happy.”

After spending three years at Georgia Tech, Dr. Pombo took the medical college admission test early and enrolled in the Medical College of Georgia. He continued with a residency at Wake Forest and a fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Dr. Pombo has also served as team physician for the Pittsburgh Steelers, Pittsburgh Penguins and other professional and collegiate sports teams. Since arriving in Gwinnett, he has played a vital role in implementing the ImPACT concussion prevention program for Gwinnett County athletes. He is the only orthopedic surgeon in Georgia who is fellowship-trained in concussion injuries and the ImPACT program.

Dr. Pombo and his wife, Beth, met at medical school where Beth was studying to become a nurse. The couple welcomed their first child, Eli, into the world on May 6, 2009, and celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary last fall.

Mathew Pombo, M.D., has been team physician for the Pittsburgh Penguins (below) and Steelers (bottom right).
1. My first job was as a bag boy in the Bruno’s supermarket in Peachtree Corners.

2. To unwind after a long day I do one of two things: I go home and play with my 5-month-old son, Eli, or go to my family’s race shop and work on my race cars.

3. Right now on my iPod I’m listening to Kings of Leon.

4. My inspiration is my family. I’m so blessed to have the best parents a kid could ask for, the coolest and most loving brother ever, and to have found my soulmate in my wife, Beth, who has given me the best thing to ever happen to me, my son Eli.

5. My favorite thing about Gwinnett is how much this county has given to me growing up. I grew up here, and there are many things that the community and its people have given to me over the years. It’s pretty cool to be able to come back and give a small portion back.

6. My favorite restaurant is anything Japanese or fondue.

7. The next big thing in my medical specialty is gene therapy. It is going to unlock the secrets to arthritis and how to grow cartilage back, as well as help in the treatment of inherited orthopedic disorders and spine injuries.

8. My favorite medical television show is Scrubs.

9. The best health tip I give patients is to never eat yellow snow. Just kidding.

10. If I could be any character in literature or entertainment, I would be Cole Trickle from Days of Thunder.
What is urinary incontinence?
Urinary incontinence, or the loss of bladder control, affects more than 13 million Americans, 85 percent of whom are women. Women of all ages are at risk, and one in four between the ages of 30 and 59 has experienced an episode of incontinence.

Urinary incontinence is most often classified into four categories:
- **Stress.** The release of urine during day-to-day activities such as coughing, sneezing, laughing, exercising or any other movement that puts stress on the bladder. This is the most common type of urinary incontinence.
- **Urge.** An abrupt and uncontrollable desire to void.
- **Mixed.** A combination of stress and urge urinary incontinence.
- **Overflow.** The loss of urine resulting from an overfilled bladder without any corresponding feeling or urge to void.

What causes stress urinary incontinence?
Stress urinary incontinence occurs when pelvic muscles supporting the bladder and urethra have been damaged or weakened. Weakened pelvic muscles cannot hold the urethra in its correct position, causing the urethra to lose its seal and allow urine to escape with any movement from the diaphragm that puts pressure on the bladder, such as a sneeze.

“Although so many women experience sudden urine loss, most women are not aware that it is a treatable condition,” says Audrey Ludwig-Arona, M.D., a Gwinnett Medical Center physician. “Women may suffer in silence and put off activities that they enjoy.”

Is it treatable?
Many cases are. In fact, 80 percent of women affected by urinary incontinence can have their conditions improved. Treatment options for stress urinary incontinence include:
- Doing Kegel exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. It is one of the best ways to improve stress incontinence.
- Using a removable device called a pessary, which is placed inside the vagina. It can help reduce stress incontinence by putting pressure on the urethra.
living with incontinence

People with urinary incontinence may find the following tips helpful:

1. **Check your diet.** Some foods trigger uncontrolled bowel or urinary activity. Foods high in fat and containing sugar that is poorly digested by the intestine cause intestinal discomfort and cramps, thereby inducing diarrhea or uncontrolled bowel or urine leaks.

2. **Manage your medications.** Other forms of incontinence are caused either by a certain medical infirmity or specific medication for certain illnesses. Diuretic drugs and sedatives, for example, may cause temporary urinary incontinence. Tranquilizers also may relax the muscles of the bladder and may cause uncontrolled urination.

3. **Stay hydrated.** People exhibiting early symptoms of urinary incontinence should not stop taking fluids for the purpose of controlling wetting. In fact, dehydration gives microorganisms the chance to multiply, which could result in urinary tract infections or bladder infections.

4. **Avoid psychological stress.** Incontinence is mostly seen in people who are mentally excited. This mental stimulation is brought about by various activities such as laughing, anger or surprise.

5. **Never hold your urine for too long.** Holding your urine until it becomes unbearable can cause incontinence.

6. **Expect the unexpected.** If you are suffering from frequent episodes of bowel or urinary incontinence, you may want to plan ahead. Keep a portable commode or urinal to serve you whenever it strikes.

7. **Get a physical regularly.** A doctor can help provide you with vital information and recommendations through an evaluation of your condition.

Although these tips are useful for the general population, the range of severity of urinary incontinence may vary from person to person. The help of a medical expert is essential to individualize treatment.
Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injection therapy is an emerging nonsurgical procedure—now available at Gwinnett Medical Center—that has shown to harness the body’s natural ability to heal itself. PRP is used to treat wounds, tendons, ligaments and osteoarthritis and has the potential to revolutionize sports medicine and all aspects of orthopedic surgery.

The PRP treatment consists of injecting the platelets from a patient’s own blood directly into an injured area, which stimulates the body’s instincts to repair damaged tissue. Platelet-rich plasma is captured by using a centrifuge that rotates at high speed and isolates the platelets from the other parts of the blood. These platelets release proteins and other particles involved in the body’s self-healing process. Finally, a teaspoon or two of the extracted substance is injected into the damaged area, with the help of ultrasound guidance.

The entire PRP injection therapy takes less than 15 minutes and increases the concentration of platelets up to 500 percent.

Experts have never been completely successful in re-creating the body’s biology of healing, despite advances in medicine and rehabilitation. But, “I believe that PRP injection is a very promising therapy for treatment of many acute and chronic injuries to the ligaments and tendons,” says Val Phillips, M.D., a radiologist at GMC. “Several of our patients have reported marked improvement after months of failed conservative treatment.”

Val Phillips, M.D., and ultrasound technician Genevieve Knight, B.S., RDMS, prepare to give Molly Gay the first platelet-rich plasma injection at Gwinnett Medical Center.

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The first PRP patient at GMC was seen by Dr. Phillips in October 2009. A basketball and volleyball player from Lakeview Academy, 16-year-old Molly Gay had been struggling with the common sports injury patellar tendinitis, or “jumper’s knee.” Her inflamed ligaments had pained her for six months, forcing her to sit out half of the 2009 volleyball season. “Playing sports makes her high school experience whole,” says her mother, Dana. “And after trying everything but surgery, it made sense to us to give a procedure with no bad side effects a try.” Molly left the hospital minutes after her procedure and was excited about her prognosis. In a few short weeks, she would be ready to train for the upcoming basketball season.
TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE IN EVERY DIRECTION.
For the health and healing of every patient.

Gwinnett Medical Center is transforming healthcare and the way you think of it. With two hospitals and numerous conveniently located surgical, imaging and rehabilitation facilities in Gwinnett County, you’re never far from award-winning healthcare.

Every aspect of our healthcare system has been redesigned with the patient in mind. From our new eight-story tower on our Lawrenceville campus, to our breakthrough hospital in Duluth, to the latest technology and treatments, to our well-respected and nationally acclaimed doctors.

All this means the most advanced and complete care possible—not just in Atlanta or Gwinnett, but in the nation.

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