

# *Discover* Health

West Chester Campus  
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# Leave No Trace: Remarkable Cosmetic Surgery Advancements Are Enhancing Outcomes for Patients

In December 2020, Pamela Blom noticed a lesion on her nose, but assumed it was just a small wound.

When it continued to grow, she knew it was time to see a doctor. Her dermatologist biopsied the lesion, and she was diagnosed with basal cell skin cancer. Because it was the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was more challenging to receive care, and it meant that her cancer had progressed further along.

“It happened all of a sudden, and we were dealing with it in the middle of the pandemic,” Pam says. “It was uncomfortable at times, but I knew I had a wonderful surgeon to handle it. I can’t say enough about him.”

At UC Health, facial plastic surgeons are constantly developing new techniques and performing procedures that significantly advance cosmetic surgery options for patients.

“Facial plastic surgery is a constantly evolving field,” Yen Hsieh, MD, UC Health facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon and assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine says. “We stay up to date with the latest surgical technologies and techniques in order to provide a higher level of care for our patients who need it most. As the region’s only adult academic health system, facial cosmetic and reconstructive care is a step ahead because surgeons have advanced skills tailored to treat surgically complex and medically complex patients.”

By the time doctors finished resecting the cancer, most of Pam’s nose was gone.

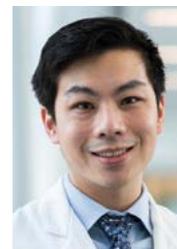
“The challenge for me was building a new nose for her that would look like her unique nose,” Dr. Hsieh said.

Dr. Hsieh performs a range of non-invasive and surgical procedures, including functional and cosmetic rhinoplasty, functional and cosmetic eyelid surgery, congenital facial deformity repair, facial and chin implants, facial and chin liposuction, and facial trauma repair.

For Pam, these advancements led to a functional and aesthetic restoration after the skin cancer was removed. Because the treatment requires multiple surgeries and extensive wound care, the process can be overwhelming for patients.

While the treatment timeframe was longer, Pam is very pleased with her outcome.

“Things just got better and better as the days went by,” she says. “It helps to be positive. There can be ups and downs, but overall it has worked out very well for me. I can’t say enough about having a surgeon as caring and compassionate as Dr. Hsieh has been. He wants to do the best for his patients.”



**Yen Hsieh, MD**  
Facial Plastic and  
Reconstructive Surgeon



Pam was so pleased with the result of her surgery, that she decided to become a patient advocate for skin cancer awareness. Dr. Hsieh said her involvement was completely unprompted, and she now spends time providing support to others who are going through similar health conditions and surgical procedures.

“When Pam speaks to other patients, she really eases their fears,” Dr. Hsieh says. “To have her on our side as a positive influence for others has been a game changer and a huge help. We are incredibly grateful.”

## Discover More

To receive the name of a facial cosmetic surgeon on the UC Health West Chester Campus, please call 513-298-DOCS (3627). To learn more, visit [uchealth.com/en/otolaryngology/facial-plastics](https://www.uchealth.com/en/otolaryngology/facial-plastics).

*After the skin cancer was removed, Pam Blom’s nose was completely gone. Today, she looks like herself again thanks to her surgeon, Dr. Yen Hsieh.*

# Pain, Pain Go Away: Innovations in Pain Control

After undergoing multiple surgeries for spinal issues caused by Paget's disease—which affects tissue generation within the bones and causes constant, dull bone pain, joint pain, stiffness and swelling—Gerald “Jerry” Crossman lived with excruciating pain that required high doses of opioids and other pain medications for an extended period of time.

Because of his injuries and the steady dose of opioids, Jerry was unable to do the things he loved, including spending time with his grandchildren. Unable to maintain a reasonable quality of life, he sought a consultation with Harsh Sachdeva, MD, chief of the UC Health pain management division and associate professor for the UC College of Medicine.

“I was on 175 milligrams of Fentanyl and other medications including oxycodone acetaminophen,” Jerry says. “I would go through my days feeling groggy and like I was in a fog, but even with the medication, I was still in a lot of pain.”

Dr. Sachdeva was able to place an intrathecal drug delivery system that has enabled Jerry to get off the opioid medication. Intrathecal drug delivery, regularly referred to as the pain pump, uses a small pump to deliver pain medication directly to the spinal cord. At UC Health, pain specialists use Morphine, Baclofen and Ziconotide intrathecal infusions to treat chronic pain with medication delivered directly into the cerebrospinal fluid, using an implanted pump.

“Jerry is no longer using oral opioids and his quality of life has improved so much,” Dr. Sachdeva says. “He is more awake and more in control. He has more energy and can do more than he ever could have imagined before.”

Jerry says before the procedure, he could walk for a maximum of 10 minutes. Now, he can walk on the Little Miami trails near his house for 45 minutes before resting, and he's back to enjoying his favorite activities, including cast fishing.

“Just the ability to do regular things, like walk again and play with my grandchildren, has been such a positive change for me and my family,” he says.

UC Health's innovation in pain management—like the intrathecal drug delivery system—is changing how patients can tolerate short-term and long-term pain. With the UC Health Pain Medicine

Center, specialists can treat a wide variety of conditions to help people get back to living their fullest lives.

“We provide a wide range of services from basic to complex procedures,” Dr. Sachdeva says. “UC Health pain management specialists use surgical, psychological and interventional techniques in addition to physical therapy and medication management. Other innovative pain management procedures utilized include the surgical implantation of spinal cord stimulators to treat chronic pain in the spine and in other areas of the body.”

The basics of patient care are critically important as well, stresses Dr. Sachdeva.

“Chronic pain is difficult to treat because it is so subjective. There is no objectivity to it,” he adds. “With this in mind, it is important to set the right expectations with patients.”

## Discover More

For the name of a pain management specialist on the UC Health West Chester Campus, please call 513-298-DOCS (3627).



**Harsh Sachdeva, MD**  
Anesthesiologist/  
Pain Management  
Specialist



*Jerry Crossman has regained the ability to do the things he loves including cast fishing and walking on the Little Miami Trail.*

# Baby Brain: What New Moms Need to Know

When Kim Lux entered her second trimester of pregnancy, she noticed she felt a little less like herself. She started to feel uncharacteristically forgetful and absentminded—at work, she had to increasingly take notes to remember what was discussed in meetings and be extra careful when composing email responses.

“There was the time where I accidentally put our TV remote in my purse instead of my car’s keyless entry remote, then spent a good 10 minutes trying to figure out why my car wouldn’t start,” she says. “That was the moment where I remember saying to myself, ‘What is wrong with me?’”

Heather Boyd, UC Health OB/GYN and assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, says Kim’s experience is so common among pregnant and recently pregnant women, that it’s been coined as “baby brain.” The term usually refers to poor concentration, cognitive dysfunction, memory issues and absent-mindedness reported by women during pregnancy and early motherhood.

Studies have shown that baby brain is a regular occurrence among many new mothers. Dr. Boyd says the science behind it has not been studied enough to give a definitive reason as to why it happens or how to prevent it; however, hormones related to childbirth, pregnancy and breastfeeding have been proven to impact a woman’s brain and cognitive function.

“Eating well, getting rest and sleeping as much as feasible is really important,” Dr. Boyd says. “It’s OK to feel frustrated if you experience some of these symptoms.”

Kim echoes Dr. Boyd’s advice to pregnant women and new moms—it’s important that they are patient with themselves.

“To alleviate the symptoms, I tried to make sure I was getting enough sleep. I kept as active as I could, even if that meant just a short walk down the street, and I did my best to minimize the stress and anxiety that I was feeling from the pregnancy,” Kim says. “I’d tell other new moms to give themselves grace. When you’re pregnant, your body is going through a lot, and that includes the brain. You’re growing a tiny human, so protecting and nurturing that baby is your body’s top priority—if you feel a little off, it’s OK.”

Abigail Lux was born on April 18, 2022, at West Chester Hospital. According to proud mom Kim, Abby has brought more love to her family than she ever thought possible, especially when it comes to her big brother, Henry.

“When I see Henry and Abby interact, and they look at each other with pure joy and happiness, my heart just about explodes. It is the absolute best feeling,” Kim beams.

## Discover More

To receive the name of an OB/GYN on the UC Health West Chester Campus, please call 513-298-DOCS (3627). To learn more about West Chester Hospital Maternity Services, visit [uchealth.com/westchesterhospital/services/](https://www.uchealth.com/westchesterhospital/services/).



**Heather Boyd, MD**  
OB/GYN



*Kim Lux is the mother of two and attests to the reality of “baby brain.”*

# Childbirth Education Classes Provide Much-Needed Support and Education

Childbirth education provides new moms and parents with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to prepare them for pregnancy, labor and delivery, and early postpartum days.

## **Educational offerings include:**

- Preparing for Successful Breastfeeding
- Infant Safety, CPR and Financial Planning
- Baby Care Basics and Postpartum Care
- Prepared for Labor and Delivery

To learn more about classes or tours at West Chester Hospital, please call 513-298-8687.

## **Baby Café, Free Breastfeeding Support and Encouragement Group**

Baby Café provides the valuable opportunity to meet other breastfeeding mothers to share tips and socialize in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Baby Café also provides professional lactation specialists who assist mothers with latching, pumping and increasing or maintaining breast milk supply. They also provide personalized education on a variety of topics.

Baby Café is hosted at two locations at West Chester Hospital and the Primary Health Solutions Journey Wellness Center in Hamilton. To learn more, visit [uhealth.com/westchesterhospital/services](http://uhealth.com/westchesterhospital/services) or call 513-298-3310.



*Big brother Henry Lux loves spending time with his little sister, Abby.*

# The Sneaky Symptoms of Urinary Tract Infections

If you have ever felt a burning pain during urination, you might be concerned that you have a urinary tract infection (UTI). Most people, however, do not realize that the sneaky symptoms of UTIs can go far beyond frequent urination and pain.

A UTI occurs when bacteria finds its way into your urinary tract and travels up to your bladder. UTIs affect the kidneys, bladder and the connecting tubes between them, and are experienced by 60% of women and 12% of men, each having at least one UTI during their lifetime.

It's important to be able to identify the various symptoms of a urinary tract infection, says Hayley Barnes, MD, UC Health urogynecologist and assistant professor for the UC College of Medicine. The most-common symptoms of a typical UTI are pain during urination, having to urinate often (frequency), difficulty starting a stream when you urinate, the sudden and strong urge to urinate, and sometimes even blood in the urine. These symptoms tend to come on quickly and can be quite uncomfortable.

“Less common symptoms of a UTI include fever, chills, nausea, vomiting and/or back pain,” Dr. Barnes says. “Further, these are signs that your UTI might extend beyond the bladder and be more severe, possibly involving your kidneys. Therefore, it is important to not ignore these symptoms.”

Women are much more likely to have a UTI than men, due to differences between the female and male anatomy. The urethra—the tube that connects the bladder to the outside world—is much longer in men than it is in women, which makes it more difficult for the bacteria to travel all the way to the bladder. Since that distance is shorter in women, the bacteria can more easily work their way up to the bladder and cause infection. Pregnancy and going through menopause are also risk factors that are unique to women.

In premenopausal women, UTIs can often be associated with having sex. If this happens too often, your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic to take after you have sex to help prevent a UTI from developing. In postmenopausal women, using vaginal estrogen cream has been shown to help prevent UTIs by increasing the amount of good bacteria in and around the vagina restoring tissue health, and helping to prevent bacteria from getting up into the bladder.

“For women of all ages, certain supplements such as d-mannose, cranberry extract and probiotics have some evidence to support them helping to prevent UTIs,” Dr. Barnes says. “For certain patients who continue to have

UTIs despite non-antibiotic preventive measures, their doctor may consider placing them on a daily antibiotic.”

UTIs can improve without treatment in about 20% of women, but most UTIs are treated with antibiotics, usually after just a few days. Women who have recurrent UTIs, or more than two UTIs in six months or more than three in one year, should see a specialist such as a urogynecologist or urologist to discuss treatment options.

## Discover More

To receive the name of a urogynecologist or urologist on the UC Health West Chester Campus, please call 513-298-DOCS (3627). Learn more at [uhealth.com/urogynecology](http://uhealth.com/urogynecology).



**Hayley Barnes, MD**  
Urogynecologist



*Less common symptoms could be a sign that your UTI might extend beyond the bladder and potentially involve your kidneys.*

# Clinical Trials Powerhouse Is Improving and Lengthening Lives

If you're looking for world-class clinical research trials, you might think that it would require a trip to a major metropolitan area like New York City. But here at home in Cincinnati, patients can access hundreds of cutting-edge clinical trials that are available within our community through UC Health.

UC Health doctors and scientists—in partnership with the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine—conduct research and provide advanced care and treatment that improves the quality of care in the community, the nation and the world. As the region's only academic medical center, UC Health creates and implements comprehensive and collaborative approaches to improving patient health.

Brett Kissela, MD, executive vice dean at the UC College of Medicine, senior associate dean of clinical research, chief of research services for UC Health and Albert Barnes Voorheis endowed chair and professor of the Department of Neurology and Rehabilitation Medicine, says clinical trials are crucial in developing new ways to understand, prevent and treat health problems. They can help doctors and scientists fundamentally understand how specific diseases work.

“UC Health and the UC College of Medicine are truly leaders in clinical research and trials in the region,” Dr. Kissela says. He adds that UC Health and the UC College of Medicine

have investigators with broad clinical research expertise in all therapeutic areas. Clinical research is performed across more than 30 medical specialties, including cancer, infectious diseases, neurology, emergency medicine and more.



**Brett Kissela, MD, MS**  
Chief, Research Services

“We led the way in COVID-19 research within the region and we continue to conduct research to better understand how to treat cases of COVID-19,” Dr. Kissela adds.

Research studies, or clinical trials, depend on volunteers who agree to be part of carefully controlled tests that measure the effects of medications, medical treatments or devices. Volunteers help researchers and physicians gain medical knowledge and potentially help others, but finding new clinical research trials can be a difficult process to navigate, says Maria Stivers, senior director of clinical research for the Office of Clinical Research at the UC College of Medicine.

## Discover More

Stivers says patients interested in entering a clinical trial at UC Health should consult their doctor for options or visit [uchealth.com/research/](http://uchealth.com/research/) to search current clinical trial options.



*Clinical trials at UC Health are helping develop new ways to understand, prevent and treat health conditions and diseases.*



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IN SCIENCE LIVES HOPE.

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