

HAPPENINGS

PRINCETON HEALTH

AUGUST 2019

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS:

Providing a Comfort Zone for Babies and New Parents



On a Wednesday morning in May, a dozen moms and their babies, ranging from a few weeks to just over a year old, gather in a private room at Princeton Fitness & Wellness in Montgomery, N.J. It is a regular weekly session of Bright Beginnings, a free, baby-friendly group hosted by Princeton Health Community Wellness.

Yet it is also a special occasion. Mother's Day being only days away, the attendees are in for an early celebration. Instead of sitting on floor mats with their babies, the moms are at tables, enjoying a buffet breakfast and sampling tea, which ties in nicely to the day's educational topic: the health benefits of tea, as presented by **Alyssa Luning**, a registered dietitian nutritionist with Princeton Health.

Part brunch social and part mommy masterclass, Bright Beginnings is a staple of Princeton Health's family education programming that dates back to 2005.

For the past 12 years, the group has been facilitated by **Bernadette Flynn-Kelton, RN**, a health educator and board certified lactation consultant.

A core group of mothers — along with some fathers — consistently attend, though the group changes over time as babies grow, Flynn-Kelton said. Each session includes an educational presentation. Topics have included breast health, lactation, nutrition, safe sleep, how to perform CPR, car seat laws, and vaccines. Guest speakers include nutritionists, therapists, physicians and other professionals who give information

on the most up-to-date, evidence-based parenting practices. Extended family members and nannies are welcome to attend each session.

The social gathering is just as important as the educational component.

"Many years ago, new parents were usually surrounded by extended family," Flynn-Kelton said. "But now families are often separated by distance because of employment opportunities, school, whatever the reason might be."

"So we are trying to create a welcoming, baby-friendly environment where parents can connect with other parents and fill a void from family and friends who are far away."

Engaging with new parents also can help ensure they are managing parenthood well. If Flynn-Kelton sees parents at Bright Beginnings who seem to be struggling, she can refer them to the postpartum adjustment support group that she also facilitates.

Flynn-Kelton still has friends she met in a moms' group 26 years ago, and she sees the same dynamic at Bright Beginnings. Families form play groups, plan day trips and nights out, and start social media groups. Long-term relationships are established.



Kristin Isaacs — who attended the pre-Mother's Day session along with her son **Ulysses**, now 8 months old — said all of her new friends are parents she met at either Bright Beginnings or the breastfeeding support group that Princeton Health offers twice weekly.

"I first went to Bright Beginnings when Ulysses was 3 weeks old," Isaacs said. "I was a half-hour late because it was so hard to get out of the house back then!"

Flynn-Kelton said late arrivals are common, particularly for families with newborns, and are accepted without judgment.

"Our group runs on 'baby time,'" she said. "We know how difficult it can be to get out of the house some days, and I always let families know they are free to join us whenever they can. I also let them know it gets easier as the baby gets older."

Isaacs said she and Ulysses attended Bright Beginnings regularly until recently, when she returned to work. Now, she said, they are able to attend perhaps once a month.

"I needed the social aspect and I was interested in many of the topics," she said. "But even if I wasn't particularly interested in a topic I would sometimes still attend because I know I'll see my friends there."

Ulysses, she added, loves seeing other babies and having room to crawl around at Bright Beginnings.

Flynn-Kelton said Bright Beginnings regularly incorporates play time and music, movement, and dance activities for the babies and toddlers, with assistance from local child development programs.

The educational portion can also be child-friendly, such as the times that nutritionists demonstrate recipes for homemade baby food and the kids get to sample the results.

"In my experience, babies get very bored of the four walls inside their homes," Flynn-Kelton said. "They love to see new things, new spaces, and new faces. It socializes them, and I think babies enjoy interacting with each other. It helps with their development."

Older siblings are welcome at Bright Beginnings, too. Most mothers in the group are first-timers, but moms occasionally return to the group with baby No. 2 — or even No. 3 and No. 4.

"It's so great when families return, because we get a chance to see how baby No. 1 has grown," Flynn-Kelton said. "We also get to see how much more confident the parents are, thanks to the knowledge we share and the support they get from others in the group. You see it happening with first-time parents, too, as we watch their babies literally grow up in the program. We get to see a lot of milestones — babies rolling, crawling, walking or talking for the first time."

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PMC Recognized for Achievements in Stroke Care

11th Annual Kids Marathon

We're Turning a Century!

Community Wellness Corner



Bright Beginnings:
Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:30 am,
at Princeton Fitness & Wellness,
1225 State Road, Princeton, NJ.

To learn more, visit
PrincetonHCS.org/Calendar
and search the keywords
Bright Beginnings.

PMC Recognized for Achievements in STROKE CARE



The Joint
Commission



American Heart
Association
American Stroke
Association

CERTIFICATION

Meets standards for

Primary Stroke Center



Congratulations to all the physicians, nurses, pharmacists, therapists, and other staff members at Princeton Medical Center (PMC) and throughout Princeton Health whose work supports the care of patients who experienced strokes.

PMC recently earned two notable quality recognitions:

- Advanced certification as a Primary Stroke Center by The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA); and
- AHA/ASA's Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award.

Primary Stroke Center

PMC earned advanced certification for Primary Stroke Centers following a rigorous, on-site review in late April. The certification became effective June 3 and will remain valid for two years.

Advanced certification is based on expert evaluation of the hospital's compliance with stroke-related standards

and requirements, including program management, the delivery of clinical care, and performance improvement.

"Primary Stroke Center designation recognizes our organizational commitment to meeting a higher standard of service and continuously working to improve and advance clinical care," said **Paul K. Kaiser, MD**, medical director of PMC's Stroke Program. "Thank you to all the physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physical and occupational therapists, and senior managers on the stroke committee for their dedication and leadership in pursuing excellence in stroke care."

Primary Stroke Center certification is separate from, and above, The Joint Commission accreditation held by PMC and other Princeton Health divisions. Princeton Health also holds advanced certifications for perinatal care and total hip and total knee replacements.

Get With The Guidelines-Stroke

The AHA/ASA Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Achievement Award recognizes the

hospital's commitment to ensuring patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence.

To receive the award, PMC met specific quality achievement measures for diagnosing and treating stroke patients at a set level for two consecutive years. The measures include evaluation of the proper use of medications and other stroke treatments aligned with the most up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines with the goal of speeding recovery and reducing death and disability. Before discharge, patients should also receive education on managing their health and schedule a follow-up visit as well as other transition interventions, which may include assessment for rehabilitation services.

"When someone might be having a stroke, every second counts," said **Philip Tran, RN**, PMC's stroke coordinator. "The Get With The Guidelines program helps to expedite diagnosis and treatment and supports excellent care every step of the way. We are giving our patients a better chance at recovering from a stroke."

COMMUNITY Wellness CORNER



► August Highlights

Princeton Health on Demand — Wai Yip Chau, MD

Wednesday, August 14

12 – 12:15 pm

www.ustream.tv/princetonhealth

The latest episode of Princeton Health on Demand features **Wai Yip Chau, MD** — a board certified surgeon who sees patients at the Center for Bariatric Surgery & Metabolic Medicine — discussing sleeve gastrectomy, one of several surgical options for individuals with obesity and related health issues who have not found success with other weight-loss solutions.

To register for the premiere, visit **PrincetonHCS.org/Calendar**. After the premiere, the video remains available for on-demand viewing at **www.ustream.tv/princetonhealth**.

Weight-Loss Surgery: Is It Right for Me?

Wednesday, August 21

6 – 6:30 pm

Hamilton Area YMCA, John K. Rafferty Branch,
1315 Whitehorse-Mercerville Road, Hamilton, N.J.

Lisa Dobruskin, MD, FACS, director of metabolic and bariatric surgery at Princeton Medical Center, will provide an overview of traditional and minimally invasive surgical weight-loss options, including laparoscopic gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, and laparoscopic stomach banding.

Events listed above are free, but registration is required.

Visit **PrincetonHCS.org/Calendar** for more information.



Kids Marathon

Thank you to the Princeton Health staff members and other volunteers who supported this year's Kids Marathon, the local vendors who added family fun to the day's activities, and our generous sponsors for making it all possible.

The marathon concluded Sunday, June 23 with a 1.2-mile fun run at Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, N.J. In the weeks before, participants strived to walk, run, or roll 25 miles on their own so that the 1.2 miles on race day completed the distance of a marathon.

The Kids Marathon was initiated in 2009 to promote regular physical activity for young people and raise awareness of the health risks associated with childhood obesity.

In addition to the fun run, festivities at ETS on June 23 included games, kids' crafts, a photo booth, face and body painting, prize drawings, music, and a visit from Rookie, the Trenton Thunder's bat dog. Princeton Health would like to acknowledge our sponsors:

- 94.5 WPST-FM
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- Magic 98.3 FM
- Trenton Thunder
- Princeton Fitness & Wellness
- Princeton Nassau Pediatrics
- The Princeton Health Medical Staff
- Hamilton Area YMCA
- The Home Depot
- Lori's Gifts
- Plainsboro Recreation & Community Services



WE'RE TURNING A CENTURY!

Scores of children and adolescents, a handful of adults and one golden retriever marked Princeton Health's upcoming centennial with an overhead portrait before the 2019 Kids Marathon on June 23.

Princeton Health will highlight the centennial at various community events this year leading up to celebrations in November to honor the November 24, 1919 opening of the original Princeton Hospital.



Visit **PrincetonHCS.org/100years** to learn more about the centennial.

► HAPPENINGS

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Penn Medicine