

HEALTH NEWS *from*

Spring 2018

# wellington

REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

## Cardiac *comeback*

How specialty care  
helped Steve Calia

### *Also inside:*

#### **Weight-loss surgery success**

Two patients share  
their stories

#### **A stroke at age 24**

Jessica Serrano's  
important message

Steve and Jill Calia,  
pictured here with their  
five dogs, celebrate  
Steve's amazing recovery.

*Compliments of*



**Wellington Regional**  
**Medical Center**

## FROM THE **CEO**



Here at Wellington Regional Medical Center, we've worked hard to build and enhance our services so you and your loved ones can receive specialized care close to home. In this issue, we bring you stories from our patients about how advanced treatments have impacted their lives.

On our cover, we introduce you to Steve Calia, who is now back at home with his family and his dogs after experiencing sudden cardiac arrest.

A key component of his care was hypothermia treatment, which we are specially equipped to provide as an accredited Chest Pain Center with Primary Percutaneous Cardiac Intervention and Resuscitation. You can read more about this treatment and Steve's amazing recovery on page 4.

Also in this issue, you'll meet Jessica Serrano, who received advanced stroke treatment at the young age of 24, as well as Rebecca Massey and William Tozer, who underwent life-changing weight-loss surgery at Wellington Regional. Additionally, we celebrate a special milestone with NICU-grad Finleigh Weber.

Looking ahead, we continue to strive for the highest possible standards. We're excited to announce that we've acquired the da Vinci® Xi™ Surgical System, which brings advanced capabilities to physicians like OB/GYN doctor Samuel Falzone, MD, who performed his 500th robotic surgery last September.

It truly is an honor to share and celebrate our patients' successes. Here's to more great achievements together in 2018!

**Robbin Lee**  
Chief Executive Officer

### IN THIS ISSUE

#### **4 HYPOTHERMIA ADVANTAGE**

The specialty care that helped save Steve Calia

#### **6 LIFE 100-PLUS POUNDS LIGHTER**

How two patients found a fresh start with surgery

#### **10 "I WOULD HAVE BEEN PARALYZED"**

A young stroke survivor shares her story

## ***Para su comodidad, EN ESPAÑOL***

Le damos la bienvenida a Wellington Regional Medical Center. Estamos felices de anunciar que nuestro sitio web fue actualizado para ayudar a nuestra población de pacientes hispanohablantes. Ahora puede navegar a través de todo nuestro sitio web tanto en inglés como en español. **Visitar [wellingtonregional.com/es](http://wellingtonregional.com/es).**





# *“She was a miracle”*

Celebrating a milestone with the Wellington Regional NICU staff



*The Weber family at a Wellington Regional NICU reunion event.*

**She came into the world weighing just 1 pound, 12 ounces. But with love and specialized care from her family and the Level III NICU team at Wellington Regional, Finleigh Weber is thriving at age one.**

“Going back was emotional,” says her mom, Natalie Weber, who brought cupcakes to the NICU staff to celebrate Finleigh’s first birthday. “It was scary, we didn’t know if she was going to make it,” she recalls of having an emergency C-section when she was just under 24 weeks pregnant. “She was a miracle,” she says of Finleigh.

NICU Director Kimberley Masterson, RN, MSN, notes that Finleigh needed life-saving care and was unable to breathe on her own in those earliest days. “Because our NICU is a Level III, which is the highest level possible in Florida, we were able to provide her with the respiratory support and comprehensive care that was required to nurture Finleigh until she was strong enough to go home,” she says. The NICU nurses and staff members not only provide critical care for their tiny patients, but also help parents and families through this stressful time. “We want families to feel comfortable, and we often form strong bonds with both the babies and families,” Masterson notes.

Having the support of the NICU team made a big difference, says Weber. “They were like friends there to help you.” She recalls that she wanted to be at the hospital as much as possible, while also taking care of her family at home with her husband during the three months that Finleigh was in the NICU. Nurses updated her each day she arrived at the hospital and they helped with feeding and caring for Finleigh as she was getting stronger. “They were very hands on,” Weber says.

She notes that Finleigh now wants to get into everything and be a part of everything. “Every couple of weeks, she’s doing something new,” she says.

She says she thinks about the NICU team when she drives by the hospital and wanted them to be a part of her daughter’s first birthday. “We would absolutely recommend Wellington Regional,” she says. “We feel so blessed.” ■

**To learn more about Level III NICU care at Wellington Regional, visit [wellingtonregional.com/NICU](http://wellingtonregional.com/NICU).**



# Hypothermia *in Florida?*

Specialty treatment at  
Wellington Regional  
makes a big difference  
in cardiac care

Steve Calia, 63, had just returned from a walk with his dogs, when he collapsed to the floor. His wife, Jill, and their son, Kevin, rushed to help him.

Kevin was the hero, says Jill, recalling how the 911 operator helped coach him through providing CPR, as they waited for the ambulance to arrive. Also, the 911 operator was excellent,

Jill notes, describing how she provided detailed instructions as she listened to everything through the speakerphone. If it weren't for her help, they might have had a different outcome, Jill says. ►

Paramedics took Steve to Wellington Regional Medical Center – an accredited Chest Pain Center with Primary PCI and Resuscitation. This means that the hospital is equipped to deal with cardiac cases and administer specialty hypothermia care for select patients.

“Mr. Calia was very critical at the time he arrived,” explains Sreedhar Chintala, MD, medical director of critical care services. He says that the CPR was key to his emergency treatment and helped keep his brain alive, but he had not had enough blood supply and oxygen to his brain. He had two major blockages and very low heart function, Dr. Chintala says. Also, he had suffered from ventricular fibrillation, which is a serious disturbance in the heart rhythm. This led to cardiac arrest – an extremely dangerous condition that causes the heart to stop beating (see sidebar).

For select patients, cooling the body temperature with hypothermia therapy can offer effective treatment. Patients whose heartbeat has returned, but who are still unconscious, may be candidates for this therapy.

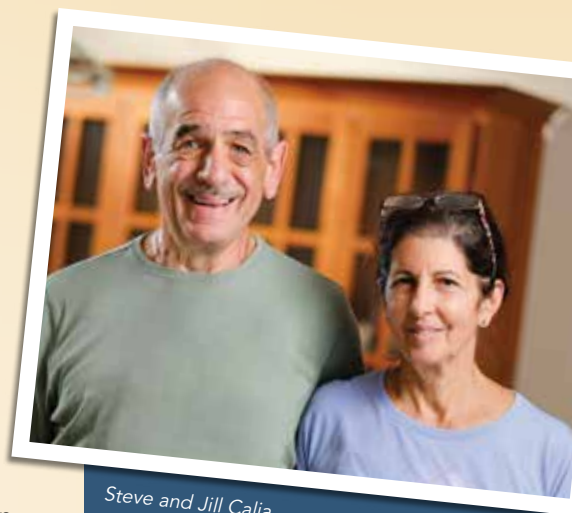
The brain has a high metabolism and needs a lot of oxygen, Dr. Chintala explains. Cooling the body slows the brain’s metabolism and can help to reduce neurological damage. It can also increase the chance that the patient will wake up.

Jill recalls waiting anxiously with their three sons for Steve to regain consciousness. Then while she was standing by his bedside with their son, Tommy, he opened his eyes.

“The first thing I remember was my son telling me to squeeze his finger,” recalls Steve. “I still didn’t really grasp the situation. In my mind it wasn’t real.” He then got to know the hospital team that had been supporting and caring for him. “The staff was great,” he says. “It’s not just being good with the patient, they were also very helpful to the family,” says Jill.

Dr. Chintala notes that Steve also received antioxidant therapy to support his recovery. This involved providing a combination of vitamin C, vitamin E and coenzyme Q10 (or CoQ10) to help protect the neurons in his brain from getting damaged. Steve improved significantly, Dr. Chintala says. After 20 days in the hospital, he returned home, with a plan to begin outpatient rehabilitation. Rehab after cardiac arrest, such as mind stimulating exercises, can have significant long-term benefits, Dr. Chintala says.

Today, Steve continues to work on getting better. He was able to celebrate his granddaughter’s birthday in August and is excited about soon being a grandfather for the second time. Also, he and Jill, who breed Goldendoodle puppies, welcomed a new litter this past year. “I’m grateful that I’m alive,” he says. ■



Steve and Jill Calia.

## What is cardiac arrest?

Cardiac arrest is different from a heart attack and occurs when there is a malfunction in the heart’s electrical system. Death occurs within minutes if the victim does not receive treatment, the American Heart Association (AHA) says.

### Signs of cardiac arrest, per the AHA, may include:

- Sudden loss of responsiveness (no response to tapping on shoulders).
- No normal breathing (victim is not breathing or is only gasping).

**To learn more, visit the AHA website at [heart.org](http://heart.org).**

**Learn about our emergency services for cardiac and other issues at [wellingtonregional.com/cardiac](http://wellingtonregional.com/cardiac).**



# Taking control of their weight ...

## "Food is not my priority now"

**Rebecca Massey, 60, battled her weight all her life. She loves to cook, but remembers spending holidays with a chair pulled up to the kitchen counter because she couldn't stand for long periods of time or move around easily.**

The breaking point came when her grandson asked her to take him to the park, and she couldn't. She has six kids, 10 grandchildren, three step-grandchildren and one great grandchild, and wants to be an active part of their lives. Determined to turn her health around, she underwent gastric bypass surgery at Wellington Regional on October 28, 2016.

She initially lost 60 pounds before taking a trip out west with her brother and sister-in-law, where her weight continued to drop. In the weeks she was away, she spent days walking and sightseeing. "By the time I was back from my trip, I'd lost another 60 pounds," she says.

Today, she is down 145 pounds from her starting weight. She's been able to cut way back on the medicine she takes to control her diabetes, and she no longer needs insulin. She has also changed her eating habits and committed to a healthy lifestyle. "Weight-loss surgery has taught me that I can eat a little bit of food, and I'm good," she says. "I go back for vegetables. They are what I eat."

One of the most fun things has been buying clothes. She says she couldn't wear bell bottom pants when they were in style years ago, but now she can wear them and she feels really good. Also, instead of spending most of her time at home, she now gets out frequently for shopping and other activities, and she's thinking about joining a water aerobics class.

"I would tell anybody to do it," she says of weight-loss surgery at Wellington Regional. "The hospital was great, the people there with me were great. I feel like a whole new person," she says. "You have no idea how happy I am." ■

Rebecca Massey  
then and now.



*Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.*

# AND THEIR LIVES!

## "I felt so good after the surgery"

**For William Tozer, 58, the decision to get serious about weight loss started when he saw a picture of himself on the beach, weighing 100-plus more pounds than he did at his retirement.**

He is a military veteran who was injured in the service, and then worked as a police officer for 18 years. "It just sneaks up on you," he says of the excess weight.

When he found out that the laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy procedure was available at Wellington Regional, he wanted to do it. This operation involves removing a large portion of the stomach and leaving a narrow gastric tube or "sleeve." This increases the feeling of fullness and reduces appetite.

After following a regimented pre-surgical diet, he had the procedure on March 31, 2016. "It was great," he says. "The pain level was so low."

Since then, he's gone from size 46 pants to size 32, and from 341 pounds to 195 pounds. "If you follow the rules, you can't help but lose the weight," he says.

Having the surgery has also improved his health. "I used to be on a CPAP machine (for sleep apnea) that I no longer need," he says. He walks five miles every day, rain or shine, and is dancing again with his wife, who has gotten healthy and lost weight with him.

He recalls how supportive the hospital staff was, noting how Amy Noe, manager of the weight and wellness program, gave him her cell phone number from the very beginning. Now he is giving back by sharing his experience with others, and he is a regular at the bariatric support group meetings. The group is welcoming and friendly, and it's motivating for him as well, he says. "It's like Rocky Balboa coming back into the ring," he says. "To see other people losing the weight, it's just a big boost." ■

**LEARN MORE ABOUT WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY ON PAGE 8.**

William Tozer's transformation.



# Are you considering weight-loss surgery?

Weight-loss surgery can provide an effective option for select patients who have been unable to lose weight with other methods. In order to maintain long-term results, it involves making a lifelong commitment to healthy eating habits and behaviors.



Srinivas Kaza,  
MD, FACS

Bariatric procedures at Wellington Regional are performed by Srinivas Kaza, MD, FACS, a board-certified general surgeon and director of robotic, bariatric and minimally invasive surgery. An important thing to keep in mind, he says, is the harmful effect of repeatedly losing and regaining weight.

This cycle of "yo-yo dieting" can alter the body's metabolic rate (how it burns calories) and make people more susceptible to co-morbidities such as hypertension and diabetes.

The Bariatric Program at Wellington Regional has been accredited by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program, which is the governing body for bariatric surgery. Several surgical options are available to help patients find what's best for them.

A number of different factors are considered in determining who may be a candidate for weight-loss surgery, such as age, BMI (body mass index) and obesity-related co-morbidities. Free weight-loss seminars provide an opportunity to learn more. ■



To find out about upcoming weight-loss seminars and whether surgery may be right for you, visit our website at [wellingtonregional.com/moreinfo](http://wellingtonregional.com/moreinfo), or call 561-798-8587.



**FOR TIPS ON DIET, EXERCISE  
AND MORE TO STAY HEALTHY**  
*visit our wellness portal at*  
[wellingtonregional.com/healthylife](http://wellingtonregional.com/healthylife).

## Not a candidate for surgery?

Wellington Regional also offers a non-surgical weight-loss management program at its Weight Management Center, where patients can receive individualized support and motivation to help stay on track. Programs offered include a four-week, physician-directed Behavior and Lifestyle Program and a 12-week Weight and Wellness Program.

To learn more, call 561-798-8587 or visit [wellingtonregional.com/takecontrol](http://wellingtonregional.com/takecontrol).

*Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.*





## *Struggling with a cold, fever,* **minor injury or illness?**

**Wellington Physicians Urgent Care can help ... open seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

Quality, convenient walk-in services are provided for the whole family at Wellington Physicians Urgent Care. This includes treatment for non-life-threatening conditions such as respiratory infections, fever, contusions and sprains, says nurse practitioner Reginald Perard, ARNP-C. The facility is also equipped to support the equestrian community and is affiliated with an orthopedic surgeon and emergency room physician who can provide specialized treatment, if needed.

An advantage of going to Wellington Physicians Urgent Care is they have the full resources and backup of Wellington Regional Medical Center if further care is needed. Admission can be arranged to Wellington Regional or a hospital of the patient's choice.

A challenge for many patients is knowing where to go when sudden medical symptoms arise, especially if problems occur after normal doctors' hours. Many times, people go to the emergency room for non-life-threatening medical conditions that can be treated faster and more efficiently in urgent care, Perard says.

For serious or potentially life-threatening issues, such as chest pain or signs of a possible stroke (see page 11), immediate ER care is needed, and people should call 911 right away, he says. Otherwise, less-serious and non-life-threatening conditions can be seen and treated in urgent care. ■

**Medicare and most insurances are accepted.**

**For more information, visit [wellingtonregional.com/urgentcare](http://wellingtonregional.com/urgentcare) or call 561-440-1616.**



**Wellington  
Physicians**  
**URGENT CARE**

**13421 South Shore Boulevard  
Suite 101, Wellington**

### **WELLINGTON PHYSICIANS URGENT CARE** *also provides:*

- Lab testing, including cholesterol and blood screening
- Digital X-rays and EKGs
- School, work and sports physicals, and drug testing
- An in-house pharmacy and short-term medication refills
- Flu shots and other vaccines
- Breathing treatments for allergies and asthma
- Sutures and splinting



A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a floral top and blue jeans, holding a young girl in a black jacket. Another girl in a grey jacket stands to the left. They are outdoors near a body of water with trees in the background.

## HER *stroke* *recovery* AT AGE 24

*A young mom is  
back to her busy life  
with her two daughters,  
thanks to swift action  
and advanced  
medical care.*

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Jessica Serrano left work early one day last May to take her seven-year-old daughter to an appointment, and nothing was out of the ordinary. "I was fine the whole day," she says. She was filling out paperwork, and her right arm felt heavy. "I tried to raise my hand and it kept falling," she says. "My daughter noticed my mouth was tilted to the side and I was talking funny. The moment I stood up to get help, I collapsed." ➤





**Juan Gomez,  
MD**

In the ambulance, she reassured her daughter that everything was going to be okay, as paramedics took her to Wellington Regional Medical Center's Comprehensive Stroke Center. When she arrived, neurointerventionalist Juan Gomez, MD, explained that she had a stroke and needed surgery right away.

As the nursing staff comforted her daughter and arranged to have her 18-month-old baby picked up at daycare, Dr. Gomez performed a minimally invasive procedure, called a thrombectomy, to remove blood clots from the right side of her brain. The procedure involved making a small incision in the groin and feeding a catheter up through the artery to the site of the clot, explains Alice Cruikshank, RN, MSN, CNRN, stroke program coordinator. A retrieval device was then passed through the catheter and used to pull the clot out and restore blood flow to the brain.

Serrano spent five days in the hospital. The hospital staff were "awesome," she says, recalling how they were always there for her and helped her get back to walking normally by the fourth day. "I actually went back to the normal me really quickly," she says. "I have no side effects or disabilities."

"Dr. Gomez explained that the paramedics arrived at the perfect time," she adds.

"I would have been paralyzed on my left side if I didn't get treatment when I did."

She notes that she experienced similar but less severe symptoms several years earlier, but they went away on their own and she never found out what caused them. "It was a shock," she says of having a stroke at just 24 years old.

"Some people think stroke is an older person's disease, but it isn't," says Cruikshank. "It doesn't discriminate against age." It's important for people to recognize the warning signs and call 911 right away if they think they may be having a possible stroke.

Today Serrano takes precautions, especially when driving. "If I feel any part of my body heavy or tingling, I am concerned that it could be a sign of stroke," she explains. "In case I were to experience those symptoms again, I know what to do, and my daughter knows to call 911."

"The advice I have is that if you don't feel comfortable within your body and feel like something is weird, don't ignore it," she adds. "Ask for help before it goes any further."

She is now back to her usual routine and spends as much time as she can with her family and her daughters. "It was like a new beginning for me," she says. "It's a miracle that I'm back to normal." ■



*Jessica Serrano and her girls enjoy a day out.*

## *Do you know the symptoms of a possible STROKE?*

Recognizing the symptoms can help save your life or someone else's life. Just think **F.A.S.T.**



**FACE:** Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?



**ARMS:** Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?



**SPEECH:** Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is it slurred or strange?



**TIME:** is critical! If you see any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

**If these symptoms appear, DON'T WAIT! Call 9-1-1 immediately. The sooner you get help, the better your chances for a good outcome.**

**To learn more about stroke care at Wellington Regional, visit [wellingtonregional.com/strokecare](http://wellingtonregional.com/strokecare).**



## calendar of events

### Preoperative Joint Replacement Class

Learn how to prepare for a hip, knee or shoulder replacement at our hospital.

**When:** Every Wednesday, 1:30 to 3 p.m., and the fourth Thursday of each month, from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

**Where:** Wellington Regional Medical Center (WRMC), Community Room

**Register at:** [wellingtonregional.com/jrc](http://wellingtonregional.com/jrc).

### Weight-loss Surgery Seminars

Meet our Weight Management Center staff and learn about bariatric options.

**When:** Mondays April 9, May 7, June 4, at 6 p.m.

**Where:** WRMC Weight Management Center, 10111 Forest Hill Blvd., Ste. 230

**To register, call 561-798-8587.**

### Weight-loss Support Group

For individuals who have had weight-loss surgery or are considering it.

**When:** April 23, May 21, June 11, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** WRMC Weight Management Center (see address above)

**To register, call 561-798-8587.**

### Quit Smoking Now Classes

**When/Where:** Most Wednesdays at 6 p.m. at WRMC.

**For more information, call 877-848-6696 or visit [tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway).**

### NEW! American Lung Association Better Breathers Club®

A free support group for people with COPD or other chronic lung diseases.

**When:** April 24, June 26, from 2 to 3 p.m.

**Where:** WRMC, First Floor Community Room

**For more information, call Chris Apergis, RRT, MHA, MBA, Director of Cardiopulmonary Services, at 561-472-2522.**

### The Birthing Center Tour

Come see everything we offer to help get your family's new addition off to a great start.

**When:** Sundays at 9:30 and 11 a.m., and Tuesdays at 5:30 and 7 p.m.

**Register (based on day) at:**  
[wellingtonregional.com/Sunday](http://wellingtonregional.com/Sunday) or  
[wellingtonregional.com/Tuesday](http://wellingtonregional.com/Tuesday).

### Childbirth and Parenting Classes

Lamaze, infant CPR, breastfeeding, daddy and siblings classes, and more!

**Register at [wellingtonregional.com/edu](http://wellingtonregional.com/edu).**

### Prenatal Yoga

Free to expectant mothers who are registered to deliver at WRMC. Bring a mat, blanket, towel and water bottle.

**When:** Mondays at 7 p.m.

**Where:** WRMC, Conference Room A

**Register at:** [wellingtonregional.com/yoga](http://wellingtonregional.com/yoga).

**If you'd prefer to register by phone, call 561-798-9880, unless otherwise noted.**

## Connect WITH US!



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**561-798-8500**

HEALTH NEWS FROM  
WELLINGTON REGIONAL  
MEDICAL CENTER

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