



Hackensack  
Meridian *Health*  
Hackensack University  
Medical Center

Joseph M. Sanzari  
Children's Hospital

## FRIENDS

Fall 2019



New Patient Pavilion  
(Artist's Rendition)





Hackensack  
Meridian *Health*  
Hackensack University  
Medical Center

30 Prospect Avenue • Hackensack, NJ 07601

NON PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SO. HACKENSACK, NJ  
PERMIT NO. 1041




Hackensack  
Meridian *Health*  
Hackensack University  
Medical Center

Find the best doctors at the best hospital  
[HackensackUMC.org](http://HackensackUMC.org) | 855-996-WELL (9355)



Dear Friend,

Welcome to the fall issue of the *Friends Magazine*. It has been a little over three years since Hackensack University Medical Center became part of the Hackensack Meridian *Health* network. During that time, Hackensack Meridian *Health* has become New Jersey's most comprehensive and truly integrated health network, enabling us to provide more opportunities and better care for our patients here at Hackensack University Medical Center and throughout the state.

There have been many exciting initiatives at Hackensack University Medical Center and this issue of the *Friends Magazine* provides with you an insider's view of the latest developments. I am proud to announce that n Theurer Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center received approval from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as a research consortium member of the NCI-approved

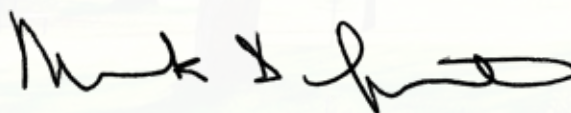
Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center Consortium. As one of just 16 NCI-recognized cancer consortia based at the nation's most prestigious institutions, we will continue our research at the highest level to deliver tomorrow's breakthroughs in cancer cures today.

We are transforming our Hackensack campus with a new state-of-the-art patient pavilion, which will become the medical center's largest building. The nine-floor pavilion, dedicated to improving patient care, will feature 24 new operating rooms, new and improved Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds, as well as three floors of private patient rooms. Projected to be open in 2022, the new pavilion will provide an enhanced patient experience, while preserving the privacy, respect and dignity our patients and families deserve.

Our patients are at the heart of the work we do, which is evidenced by our commitment to nursing excellence. Earlier this year, the American Nurses Credentialing Center awarded Hackensack University Medical Center its sixth Magnet<sup>®</sup> designation, making the medical center the only hospital in New Jersey and just one of two in the entire nation to earn this recognition. It represents the highest national honor for nursing excellence and is a true testament to the expertise of our nurses and the passion they bring to their work every day.

We are grateful to you – our Friends – for being an important part of our caring community. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event.

Sincerely,



Mark D. Sparta, FACHE  
President and Chief Hospital Executive,  
Hackensack University Medical Center  
Executive Vice President, Population Health  
Hackensack Meridian *Health*







Welcome to a special place and very special group of people! Welcome to the Friends of Hackensack University Medical Center!

Through gatherings, receptions and tours, the Friends brings the medical center, its physicians and senior leadership directly into your community. The Friends opens a new door to Hackensack University Medical Center, providing opportunities for members to meet, talk with, and come to know our accomplished physicians and leadership and to learn about the amazing works we are doing with our patients, in our labs and for our community.

As a bridge between the medical center and the people it serves, the Friends has become an important source of medical information for the community. Gatherings of the Friends feature talks and discussions with some of the leading medical experts in their fields keeping our members informed, engaged and up-to-date on a broad range of topics.

Joining the Friends is easy and there are no strings attached. We are not a fundraising organization, do not charge for events, and will never share your contact information with anyone.

Simply complete the card attached within the magazine or register online at [HackensackUMC.org/Friends](http://HackensackUMC.org/Friends). For additional information, please email [friends@hackensackmeridian.org](mailto:friends@hackensackmeridian.org).

The material provided in this magazine 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.




# News

**John Theurer Cancer Center Joins NCI-Approved Consortium.** John Theurer Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center received approval from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as a research consortium member of the NCI-approved Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center Consortium.

John Theurer Cancer Center is now a member of one of just 16 NCI-recognized cancer consortia based at the nation's most prestigious institutions including Harvard University, Dana-Farber/ Harvard Cancer Center; Cleveland Clinic, part of the NCI-designated Case Comprehensive Cancer Center, and the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center. The consortium plans to advance research and innovate treatment in four key areas: Breast Cancer, Cancer Prevention and Control, Experimental Therapeutics and Molecular Oncology.


"This NCI consortium approval was based on a rigorous process that began in 2013, and was made possible thanks to hard work and commitment across both teams at Georgetown Lombardi and John Theurer Cancer Center," said André Goy, M.D., M.S., chairman and executive director of John Theurer Cancer Center, professor of medicine at Georgetown University. "Through the consortium and its support, the National Cancer Institute seeks to expand its core mission of fostering cancer research and advancements that benefit patients across the country. Our work with Lombardi has already helped accelerate both programs particularly in bone marrow transplantation, cell therapy including CAR-T cell therapy, immunotherapy and new drugs development. As research partners, we also want to take advantage of technology and data/analytics, to improve patients' outcomes and reduce cancer burden across all communities."



**\$33.3 Million Grant To Combat Drug-Resistant Bacteria.** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded David S. Perlin, Ph.D., chief scientific officer of the Center for Discovery and Innovation (CDI) at Hackensack Meridian  \$33.3 million grant to develop new antibiotics to overcome deadly bacteria in hospitals that have



become resistant to current treatments. The newly-established Center for Discovery and Innovation, located at the campus of the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University in Clifton and Nutley, is an academic-based entrepreneurial center that harnesses innovation from a new renaissance in biomedical sciences to restore patient health. Comprised of three areas of research: cancer and infectious disease; multiple myeloma; and regenerative medicine, the CDI offers leading scientists and researchers an opportunity to advance their work and enables Hackensack Meridian *Health* and its hospitals to better serve their communities.

"We are proud to receive this record grant which will produce new therapies to tackle drug-resistant infections and save lives," said Robert C. Garrett, chief executive officer of Hackensack Meridian  This is exactly why we created our new Center for Discovery and Innovation – to deliver tomorrow's breakthroughs today."

With a five-year, \$33.3 million grant, Dr. Perlin will establish a Center of Excellence for Translational Research, a public-private partnership that brings together prominent scientists from the CDI, as well as other institutions and industry.

# News

**ROSA® the Knee Robot.** Hackensack University Medical Center is the first hospital in New Jersey and the first in the northeastern United States to perform total knee-replacement surgery utilizing the Zimmer Biomet's Knee Robot called the Robotic Surgical Assistant or ROSA®.



Harlan Levine, M.D. and Gregg Klein, M.D. are orthopedic surgeons at Hackensack University Medical Center and two of the developers of the ROSA Knee technology. "We are honored to be the first center in New Jersey and the tristate area to utilize this state-of-the-art technology," said Dr. Levine. "This is a very powerful tool which helps us to ensure that the areas where we make certain bone cuts is perfectly precise so that the implants are placed in just the right position to optimize the patient's total knee replacement."

"There are some very unique features to this technology, which offer a real advantage for patients in providing a potentially more precise total knee replacement," said Dr. Klein. "This device does not require the use of a CT scan, rather regular X-rays can be used to create a three dimensional model of the patient's knee. The robot provides a more personalized implant placement, to produce a more natural feeling knee and may even lessen the chance of additional surgery. This may also lead to a quicker and easier recovery."

**New Minimally Invasive Treatment for Aortic Dissection.** Hackensack University Medical Center offers patients a new treatment for a potentially fatal cardiovascular condition known as an aortic dissection, in which the inner layer of the aorta, the large blood vessel branching off the heart, tears. Following approval by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), surgeons at the Heart and Vascular Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center became one of the first hospitals in the United States to use Cook Medical's Zenith® Dissection Endovascular System to treat an emergent complicated Type B aortic dissection. This system provides physicians a less invasive alternative to open surgery for such an emergency.

The Zenith system is inserted via a catheter through the femoral artery in the groin and is carefully guided to the location in the aorta where the tear begins. Once in place, the device helps to prevent the aorta from rupturing and can reestablish vital blood supply to other areas of the body. It is less invasive than other treatment options for aortic dissection repair, and offers quicker recovery times for patients. Before it was approved by the FDA, the device underwent two multi-year clinical trials with multiple centers participating around the world, including Hackensack University Medical Center.



# News

**New Patient Pavilion in Hackensack.** Hackensack University Medical Center is transforming its campus with the construction of a new, state-of-the-art patient pavilion along Second Street in Hackensack. With a gross square footage of 530,000 square feet (438,000 usable sq. ft.), the building will feature nine floors of cutting-edge technology and a superior design to provide patients and families with world-class acute care, while enhancing comfort and privacy. Key features of the new patient pavilion, which is projected to open in 2022, include:

- [New](#) Second Street entrance and visitor lobby
- A visitor center
- 24 state-of-the-art operating rooms including an intraoperative MRI
- 50 ICU beds, with shell space for an additional 25 ICU beds
- 100 medical/surgical private patient rooms
- 50-bed private room Orthopedic Institute
- A new central sterile processing department



Artist's Rendition

**Award-winning Nursing Staff.** The American Nurses Credentialing Center has awarded Hackensack University Medical Center its sixth Magnet® designation, making the medical center the only hospital in New Jersey and just one of two in the entire nation to earn this recognition. Considered the gold standard of nursing, Magnet® designation is the ultimate credential for high-quality nursing and the leading source of successful nursing practices and strategies worldwide.

"We are proud to be recognized with a sixth Magnet® designation at Hackensack University Medical Center," said Mark Sparta, FACHE, president and chief hospital executive, Hackensack University Medical Center and executive vice president, Population Health, Hackensack Meridian Health. "We are committed to creating a culture of excellence and innovation in nursing because we know how critical nurses are to the overall patient experience and clinical outcomes."





# *Our Friends*

## Living Life on the Veg

A capacity crowd of Friends gathered for an informative talk on the benefits of a whole foods, plant-based diet. In addition to discussing improved health and other benefits, Leigh Ettinger, M.D., M.S., of the Division of Pediatric Nephrology and the Healthy Futures Pediatric Wellness Program at the Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center provided guidance and tips on the wide variety of foods that can be included in a plant-based diet. Following the talk, Dr. Ettinger answered a broad range of interesting questions.





# *Our Friends*

## Women's Health Night



Women from all across the county gathered for the second annual Women's Health Night -- the largest gathering of Friends to date!

Lisa A. Tank, M.D., FACP, chief medical officer of Hackensack University Medical Center, discussed the specialized women's health care services available at the medical center, followed by talks on women's urology, breast health and gynecological health, respectively, by Debra Fromer, M.D., chief of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center,

Leslie L. Montgomery, M.D., FACS, chief of the Division of Breast Surgery, Hackensack University Medical Center and co-director of the Breast Cancer Service, John Theurer Cancer Center, and Ami P. Vaidya, M.D., vice chair of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and director of Minimally Invasive and Robotic Gynecologic Surgery, Hackensack University Medical Center, and co-chief of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology, John Theurer Cancer Center. Following the talks, an informative and lively Q&A was held.



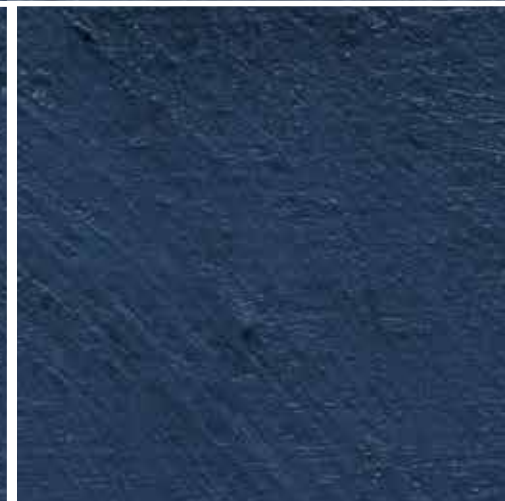


# Our Friends

## Summer Soiree

With the sparkling Franklin Lake as a backdrop, Friends gathered on a beautiful summer evening to learn about the innovative treatments for atrial fibrillation offered at the Heart and Vascular Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center. The crowd was welcomed by Mark D. Sparta, president and chief hospital executive of Hackensack University Medical Center, and executive vice president, Population Health of Hackensack Meridian *Health*, and Joseph E. Parrillo, M.D., Justice Marie L. Garibaldi Endowed Chair, chair of the Heart and Vascular Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center, and professor and founding chair of the Department of Cardiology, Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University.

Fascinating talks on cardiac ablation and the WATCHMAN™ device to prevent stroke were given, respectively, by John M. Zimmerman, M.D., chief of the Electrophysiology Program at the Heart and Vascular Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center and by Grant R. Simons, M.D., chief of Heart Rhythm Service at the Heart and Vascular Hospital at Hackensack University Medical Center.





# The Reflux Center at Hackensack University Medical Center

## Expert and comprehensive care for GERD and complications from GERD

If you suffer from gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), you are not alone. GERD is one of the most common digestive problems in the United States, affecting up to 28% of the population across all age groups.

While GERD can be very uncomfortable, it is usually not dangerous. However, if left untreated, GERD can lead to serious conditions such as Barrett's esophagus or even esophageal cancer. It is important that people suffering from GERD receive an accurate diagnosis and effective treatment from specialists who understand the condition and how to prevent further complications.

Hackensack University Medical Center's Reflux Center was established to provide expert multidisciplinary care to people suffering from GERD. Our team includes gastroenterologists, thoracic surgeons, general surgeons, surgical oncologists, nurses, and technicians, all of whom have expertise in diagnosing and treating reflux disease.

Regardless of the severity or cause of your GERD, our experts will diagnose your condition and provide you with a comprehensive treatment plan to alleviate your discomfort, manage your symptoms, and prevent further problems.

### What is GERD?

GERD occurs when acids in your stomach leak back, or "reflux," into your esophagus, causing irritation and pain. It most commonly develops when the muscle at the end of your esophagus (the esophageal sphincter) does not close properly.

### What are the symptoms of GERD?

You may feel heartburn and other discomfort in your chest and throat, which can interfere with your ability to eat, sleep, or work comfortably. Your heartburn may be worse at night.

Other symptoms may include:

- Hoarseness or laryngitis
- Difficulty swallowing
- Belching or burping.
- Tasting stomach/sour fluid in the back of your mouth
- Dry cough
- Asthma symptoms

Mild symptoms are defined as occurring two or more days a week, while severe symptoms are defined as occurring daily.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms you should consider being evaluated for GERD.



### Getting the Right Diagnosis

Heartburn can be caused by a number of different conditions. As a new patient at the Reflux Center you will be screened by a nurse navigator who will ask you about your symptoms, medical history, prior treatments and insurance and direct you to the appropriate GERD physician. Your comprehensive exam will include a physical exam and may include one or more of the following:

- **Upper GI (gastrointestinal) series (barium swallow).** You drink a special fluid that makes your digestive system visible on an x-ray.
- **Upper endoscopy or EGD (esophagogastroduodenoscopy).** This exam looks inside your esophagus, stomach, and duodenum using a thin, lighted tube (endoscope).
- **Esophageal manometry.** This exam checks the strength of your esophagus muscles to see if you have any problems with reflux or swallowing.
- **pH monitoring.** This test checks the pH (acid level) in your esophagus through a thin, plastic tube advanced into your esophagus.
- **Impedance testing.** This approach allows us to see the reflux of acid plus nonacid liquid and air in your esophagus. It is combined with pH monitoring.



### How is GERD treated?

Some patients can achieve relief of their GERD symptoms through lifestyle changes—such as altering their diet, sleeping with their head elevated, quitting smoking, and losing weight. Medication can also help, including proton pump inhibitors and H2-receptor blockers, which decrease the production of stomach acid.

However, these medications are not meant for long-term use. They relieve GERD symptoms, but not their cause. If you continue to have GERD symptoms after making lifestyle changes, or taking these drugs for six months or more, you may benefit from an endoscopic or surgical procedure performed by one of our experienced Reflux Center experts.

### Advanced Surgical Options for GERD

The surgeons at the Reflux Center are experienced in advanced minimally invasive reflux surgery. Surgical options for GERD include:

- **Laparoscopic Fundoplication.** During fundoplication the surgeon wraps the top portion of the stomach around the lower part of the esophagus to increase the pressure around the lower esophagus and block acid from entering the stomach. By strengthening this muscle, and allowing it to close, fundoplication prevents acid from bubbling up into the esophagus. This procedure is typically completed through several small abdominal incisions.
- **Endoscopic Fundoplication with EsophyX.** An even less invasive approach to fundoplication called the EsophyX TIF procedure is performed through a scope inserted through your mouth and into your esophagus. The entire procedure is completed from inside your esophagus and stomach, with no abdominal incisions. The TIF procedure is done in an outpatient setting and you can go home the same day.
- **LINX System.** This procedure uses a small flexible bracelet-like band of interlinked titanium magnetic beads. The band—which is just a bit larger than a quarter—is wrapped around the lower esophagus, just above the stomach, during laparoscopic surgery.

The magnetic attraction between the beads keeps the esophageal sphincter closed when you are not eating. When you swallow, the magnetic bond is temporarily broken, with the band expanding to allow food and liquid to pass into your stomach. The force of the magnets closes the sphincter again when you are done swallowing.

**Take control of  
GERD symptoms  
before they  
control you.**

### Preventing Esophageal Cancer

Inflammation from reflux can cause a condition known as Barrett's esophagus. This is a disorder in which the inner lining of the esophagus becomes abnormal and thickened, usually as a result of prolonged exposure to stomach acids in people with long-term GERD. If left untreated, Barrett's esophagus may progress to cancer. While esophageal cancer is rare, rates have been rising, and it is now one of the fastest growing cancers

in the United States. This rise has been associated with the increase of obesity which can cause GERD.

Our doctors monitor patients with Barrett's esophagus using periodic endoscopy. When caught early, Barrett's changes in the esophagus can be treated using radiofrequency ablation (the application of intense heat) or cryotherapy (intense cold) to destroy abnormal tissue, or by surgically removing superficial lesions (a procedure called endoscopic mucosal resection).

### A Multidisciplinary Approach

As specialists in the field, our multidisciplinary team is able to bring a high level of expertise to the treatment of all types of GERD. Our treatment team meets regularly in a multidisciplinary conference, combining that expertise to discuss the best care for each patient. The team collects data on all of our patients and tracks and analyzes outcomes, with the goal of continuously improving the care we provide.


This comprehensive approach is especially important in light of the recent uptick in rates of esophageal cancer.

If you think you have GERD let us help. Call the Reflux Center at **551-996-1770** for an appointment.



**Rosario Ligresti, M.D., FASGE**  
Co-Director, Reflux Center  
Division of Gastroenterology  
Hackensack University Medical Center



**Hans J. Schmidt, M.D., FACS**  
Co-Director, Reflux Center  
Director, Center for Bariatric Medicine and Surgery  
Chief, Division of Bariatric Surgery  
Hackensack University Medical Center 





**Joseph Underwood, M.D.**  
Chair, Emergency Medicine  
Hackensack University  
Medical Center

**Question:**

**Now that urgent care clinics have opened in our area, I am wondering when it is appropriate to go to urgent care instead of the emergency room (ER)?**

**Answer:**

If your condition isn't serious or life-threatening, your best choice may be to go to urgent care, where you will likely be seen faster. Examples of when it may be appropriate to go to urgent care are when you have a fever, vomiting or persistent diarrhea; abdominal pain; wheezing or shortness of breath; small cuts that require stitches; flu; sprains and strains.

If you have a true emergency, your best choice is still the ER. It is not always easy to know the difference between an emergency or non-emergency situation, but examples of a true emergency are a broken bone; chest pain or difficulty breathing; weakness/numbness on one side; head injury; serious burns; seizures; severe flu.

Hackensack University Medical Center has an emergency department located on our main campus. Additionally, Hackensack Meridian Health has partnered with CityMD to open urgent care centers in northern New Jersey. There are currently four such locations in Bergen County—two in Paramus, one in Ramsey and one in Teterboro.

**Question:**

**I am a 66-year-old woman who has recently been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation (Afib). I understand that Afib puts me at risk for stroke, and that I may need to take an anticoagulant. Is this true, and will I have to take this anticoagulant for the rest of my life?**

**Answer:**

Afib is a type of irregular heartbeat that can cause blood to pool in the heart and potentially form a clot, which can travel to the brain and cause a stroke. While anticoagulants can significantly reduce the risk of stroke associated with Afib, not all Afib patients share the same risk level, and not all patients have to take anticoagulants.

To determine if you should be taking an anticoagulant, your physician will use a scoring system called the CHA2DS2-VASc. This ranking system takes into account age, sex, and health status—including whether you have heart failure, high blood pressure, diabetes, vascular disease, or a history of stroke. Women have a higher risk of stroke from Afib than men. It is therefore recommended that women with Afib who are over 65 take an anticoagulant.

Taking anticoagulants for Afib is a lifetime regimen. However, some patients can benefit from having the [Watchman](#) device implanted, which reduces the stroke risk associated with Afib. The vast majority of patients who have the [Watchman](#) procedure are able to stop taking anticoagulants. You should ask your neurologist or cardiologist if this is an appropriate option for you.

For an appointment, **please call 551-996-2316.**



**Martin Gizzi, M.D.**  
Director,  
Division of Cerebrovascular Diseases  
Hackensack University Medical Center



**Nabil Rizk, M.D., M.S., MPH**  
Chief, Division of  
Thoracic Surgery  
Hackensack University  
Medical Center

**Question:**

**As a former smoker I know I should get a lung cancer screening, but I keep putting it off because I am scared of having lung surgery. Does a positive result always lead to a big and invasive surgery procedure?**

**Answer:**

Actually, one of the most important reasons to get screened for lung cancer is that regular screening can detect lung cancer at its earliest stages, when it usually can be successfully treated with surgery alone. If your screening detects a suspicious nodule, a biopsy will likely need to be done. If the biopsy shows early stage lung cancer, your surgery typically can be done using a minimally invasive procedure that avoids a large incision or spreading of your ribs.

During minimally invasive lung cancer surgery, the surgeon makes several small incisions that are used to insert a camera and special tools into the lung. Using the camera to visualize the lung cavity, the surgeon removes the cancerous section of the lung. This surgery is often done using robotic technology.

This minimally invasive approach means less pain, less use of narcotic pain medicine, a shorter hospital stay, a faster recovery, and less scarring. In fact, many patients are home within one to two days.

For an appointment, **please call 551-996-5960.**



# DID YOU *Know*

## AT THE CENTER FOR BARIATRIC MEDICINE AND SURGERY AT HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER:



- We are one of the leading bariatric surgery centers in the New York Metropolitan area. Our program is fully accredited and recognized as a Center of [Excellence](#).
- Our board-certified surgeons provide state-of-the-art treatment options, including minimally invasive surgical techniques, for eligible patients to manage their obesity and achieve outstanding results that exceed the national benchmarks.
- We perform almost 1,000 procedures annually, making our program one of the highest volume weight loss surgery centers in the United States.
- The surgical program is combined with a multidisciplinary medical weight loss program, including dietitians, counselors, advanced practice providers and nurses. We provide patients with comprehensive care before and after surgery to help them achieve their weight loss goals, maintain their health and well-being and keep the weight off. We also partner with the HackensackUMC Fitness and Wellness Center powered by the Giants to provide exercise programs tailored to our patient population.
- We hold free monthly seminars so you can learn about your various surgical options in a relaxed informational setting.





SAVE THE DATE

# STARRY NIGHT

*Soiree*

An Evening of Food, Music and Fun

---

BENEFITTING

**Tackle Kids Cancer**

AND THE

**Child Life Program**

---

NOVEMBER 21, 2019

— 7 p.m. —

FELINA  
RIDGEWOOD, NJ

---

For more information, please visit [TackleKidsCancer.org](http://TackleKidsCancer.org) or call 551-996-3720

**TACKLE**  
KIDS CANCER™



CHILDREN'S  
CANCER INSTITUTE  
Hackensack Meridian Health



WE'RE 1 OF ONLY 16  
CANCER CENTER CONSORTIA IN THE U.S.

APPROVED

BY THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

John Theurer Cancer Center is now a consortium member of the NCI-designated Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. Working together, our patients will have greater access to innovative clinical trials, which will help turn discovery into cures faster. John Theurer Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center – we're not just at the forefront of cancer, we're pioneering the possible.



Hackensack  
Meridian Health



John Theurer  
Cancer Center

*Consortium Member of*

Georgetown | Lombardi  
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER



Comprehensive  
Cancer Center

A Cancer Center Designated by the  
National Cancer Institute

To learn more visit [jtcancercenter.org](http://jtcancercenter.org)