

# HealthyLiving

CONNECTING WITH OUR PATIENTS AND OUR COMMUNITY

## A New Standard in Lung Care: Advanced Screening, and Early Diagnosis and Treatment at Saint Peter's

Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States, with an estimated 229,000 new cases diagnosed each year, according to the Lung Cancer Research Foundation. One of the biggest challenges is that most lung cancers are found at a later stage, when symptoms appear and treatment options are more limited. At Saint Peter's University Hospital, a focused approach to early detection, advanced diagnostics, and coordinated care is giving patients access to earlier diagnoses and more effective treatment options.

### The Importance of Screening

Early detection is one of the most powerful tools in the fight against lung cancer. A low-dose CT (LDCT) scan can detect lung cancer before symptoms develop, when it is most treatable. In fact, the five-year survival rate for lung cancer found at an early, localized stage is about 67 percent, compared to just 12 percent when diagnosed after it has spread.

LDCT screening is recommended for adults ages 50 to 80 with a significant smoking history, yet many eligible individuals are not screened.

#### Eligibility Criteria:

- Adults ages 50 to 80 years old (or 50 to 77 years old for Medicare patients)
- Current smoker OR quit within the past 15 years
- Have an over 20-pack-year smoking history

Not sure if you qualify for lung cancer screening? Call Saint Peter's Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at 732.745.8564. The team will guide you through eligibility and coordinate your screening.

### Low-Dose CT (LDCT) Scan Eligibility Criteria

AGE	DO YOU SMOKE?	
<p><b>50 to 80 YEARS OLD</b> <i>(50 to 77 years old for Medicare patients)</i></p>	 <p><b>CURRENT SMOKER</b></p>	<p><b>HAVE QUIT IN THE PAST 15 YEARS</b></p>
<b>20-PACK-YEAR SMOKING HISTORY</b>		
<b>CALCULATE YOUR HISTORY:</b>		
 NUMBER OF PACKS OF CIGARETTES SMOKED PER DAY	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">×</p> NUMBER OF YEARS YOU SMOKED	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">=</p> <p><b>PACK YEAR</b></p> <p><i>A person can have a 20-pack-year history by smoking 1 pack a day for 20 years, or by smoking 2 packs a day for 10 years.</i></p>

## A New Standard in Lung Care *(continued)*

### A Clearer Path to Diagnosis with Ion Technology

“More than 70 percent of lung cancers develop in the outer third of the lung—areas that are often hard to reach with traditional tools,” said Amar Bukhari, MD, chief of the Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at Saint Peter’s University Hospital. “Conventional bronchoscopy may have a diagnostic yield as low as 30 to 40 percent for small, peripheral nodules, sometimes leading to delays or the need for more invasive procedures.”



Ion robotic bronchoscopy is an advanced, minimally invasive technology that allows physicians to reach deep into the lungs with greater accuracy and stability. The procedure begins with a high-resolution CT scan that creates a detailed 3D map of the patient’s lungs. Using this map, physicians guide a thin, flexible catheter through complex airways directly to the target nodule.

For patients, the benefits are significant: the procedure is performed through the mouth without incisions, carries a lower risk of complications such as lung collapse compared to needle biopsy, and typically allows patients to return home the same day. Most importantly, it helps shorten the time to diagnosis, allowing treatment to begin sooner when needed.

### Advanced Thoracic Surgery for Lung Cancer

Surgery is often a key treatment for lung cancer, especially when it is detected early. Patients with a suspicious or confirmed lung nodule may be referred for a consultation with a thoracic surgeon at Saint Peter’s to determine the most appropriate treatment plan. Having access to highly specialized thoracic surgeons and advanced surgical techniques at Saint Peter’s while continuing their care close to home helps ensure a seamless and coordinated treatment experience.

If surgery is needed, minimally invasive techniques such as robotic surgery are used whenever possible. These approaches are designed to reduce pain, shorten hospital stays, and support a faster recovery compared to traditional open surgery.

### Guidance Every Step of the Way

Navigating lung cancer care can be complex, but patients do not have to do it alone. Saint Peter’s lung navigator serves as a central point of contact, helping coordinate screenings, diagnostic testing, specialist appointments, and follow-up care. This personalized support helps reduce delays, improve communication, and ensure a smoother experience from diagnosis through treatment.

“I’m here to walk alongside patients through every stage of their lung care, helping them navigate appointments, understand what’s happening, and feel confident about what comes next,” said Sara Baba, BSN, RN-BC, lung navigator, Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at Saint Peter’s University Hospital. “It’s really important to me that patients know they have someone in their corner who is keeping things connected and helping make the process as smooth as possible.”

### Comprehensive Treatment, Close to Home

“If lung cancer is diagnosed, patients at Saint Peter’s benefit from a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to care,” said Dr. Bukhari. “Treatment may include advanced pulmonology procedures, thoracic surgery, medical oncology, radiation therapy, and emerging treatments such as immunotherapy—all tailored to the patient’s specific diagnosis and overall health.”

Because early-stage lung cancer often causes no symptoms, screening is critical. With advanced tools like LDCT screening and Ion robotic bronchoscopy, along with a strong network of specialized care, Saint Peter’s is helping detect lung cancer earlier and treat it more effectively.

**Early detection starts with a simple phone call. To get more information or to see if you are eligible for an LDCT, contact Saint Peter’s Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at 732.745.8564.**

# Splash Safely: Enjoying Summer Without Swimmer's Ear

*With summer approaching, children are looking forward to more time at the pool, the lake, and down the Shore.*

"While swimming is a great way to stay active, it can also increase the risk of swimmer's ear, which is an infection of the outer ear canal," said Diana Traquina, MD, a pediatric otolaryngologist (also known as an ear, nose and throat specialist) at Saint Peter's Children's Hospital. "It develops when water becomes trapped, creating a warm, moist environment where bacteria can grow."

Children are especially susceptible during the summer months due to frequent water exposure and incomplete drying of the ears afterward. Symptoms can range from mild irritation to significant discomfort. There also can be swelling of the ear canal and outer ear.

Parents should watch for symptoms such as:

- A feeling of fullness or pressure in the ear
- Drainage from the ear
- Ear pain that worsens when the ear is touched or pulled
- Itching inside the ear
- Muffled hearing
- Redness or swelling of the outer ear

Parents should contact a healthcare provider if ear pain lasts more than a day, symptoms worsen, or there is any drainage from the ear.

Treatment for swimmer's ear is typically straightforward and may include prescription ear drops to clear the infection and reduce inflammation. More severe cases may require oral antibiotics. Most children begin to improve within a few days of treatment.

Prevention plays a key role in keeping kids comfortable all summer long. Helpful steps include gently drying ears with a towel after swimming, tilting the head to help water drain out, and avoiding cotton swabs, which can irritate the ear canal.

"For frequent swimmers, earplugs or swim caps may provide added protection, especially in lakes or non-chlorinated water," said Dr. Traquina. "With a few simple precautions, parents can help their children enjoy a fun, active summer."



Does your child need to see a pediatric ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist?

**To make an appointment with Dr. Traquina, visit [saintpetershcs.com/pedsENT](https://saintpetershcs.com/pedsENT).** She sees patients at Saint Peter's Health and Wellness Center in Somerset and at The Dr. Bipin Patel Pediatric Multispecialty Center in Hoboken.



*Stock photo posed by models.*

## Diabetes Education\*

For information about classes, call the numbers listed below.

### Diabetes Self-Management Education

Call for information: 732.339.7630

### Gestational Diabetes Self-Management Education

Call for information: 732.339.7630

**Prevent T2 Program**  
Call for information: 732.339.7772



## Parent Education

Some classes online. Access information will be provided after registration.

Register at [saintpetershcs.com/ParentEd](http://saintpetershcs.com/ParentEd). For more information, call 732.745.8579.

### Baby Care

**Birth Center Class**  
(for moms under midwifery care)

### Breastfeeding Class

**Childbirth Education**  
(in Spanish)

**Grandparents Class**

### Hypnobirthing™

**New Daddy Class**

**Prenatal Breastfeeding**  
(in Spanish)

**Prenatal Yoga/ Exercise Class**

**Prepared Childbirth/ Lamaze Classes**  
**Sibling Class**

## Parent Support

Registration is required. Visit [saintpetershcs.com/ParentEd](http://saintpetershcs.com/ParentEd) or call 732.745.8579.

### New Moms Support Group "Life Will Never Be The Same"

1st Tuesday of each month  
Next meeting: June 2 • 12 pm

### Breastfeeding Support Group

1st Tuesday of each month  
Next meeting: June 2 • 1 pm

## Support Groups

### Bariatric Nutrition Support

2nd Thursday of each month  
Next meeting: June 11 • 6 – 7 pm  
Call 732.339.7450 for Zoom meeting information

### Bereavement

Call Pastoral Care for information: 732.745.8565

### MyGoal Autism Family

2nd Sunday of each month  
Next meeting: June 7 • 3 pm  
Call 877.886.9462 or email [info@mygoalautism.org](mailto:info@mygoalautism.org) for virtual meeting information

### SHARE

3rd Thursday of each month  
Next meeting: June 18 • 7 – 9 pm  
Call 732.745.8522 or email [imariano@saintpetersuh.com](mailto:imariano@saintpetersuh.com) for Zoom link

### Spouse/Partner Caregiver Support

Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8653

### Stroke Survivors

First Wednesday of each month  
Next meeting: June 3 • 10 am  
To register, call 732.565.5455 or email [cknospe@saintpetersuh.com](mailto:cknospe@saintpetersuh.com)



## The Wound Care Center® and Hyperbaric Services treats conditions such as:

- Bone infections
- Compromised skin grafts
- Diabetic foot ulcers/wounds
- Pressure ulcers
- Reopened surgical wounds
- Tissue damage from radiation
- Venous and arterial ulcers

**New Brunswick: 732.846.6199**  
**Monroe: 609.860.0008**



## BREAST CANCER

### SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

#### Women 40 to 44

Option to start annual mammogram

#### Women 45 to 54

Annual mammogram recommended

#### Women 55+

Maintain annual mammogram or switch to a mammogram every other year

**Schedule a mammogram at Saint Peter's Women's Imaging Center by calling 732.339.7704.**

## June is Men's Health Month

To schedule an appointment with a physician near you, visit [SPPANJ.com](http://SPPANJ.com) or [saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician](http://saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician)



**Need a doctor? To find a Saint Peter's physician, visit [saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician](http://saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician). Online scheduling is also available with select Saint Peter's Healthcare System physicians via Zocdoc at [BookMySPDoc.com](http://BookMySPDoc.com)**

This calendar is for information only. Do not rely on it to make healthcare decisions on your own; instead, talk with your healthcare provider for advice and treatment. Do not ignore medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you read here. We do not suggest or endorse that you have any tests, use products, or use other information in this document without advice from your healthcare provider.



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