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Maimonides Creates Bariatric Center, Adds Non-Surgical Weight Management



Patients Can Access Comprehensive, Personalized Obesity Care in Brooklyn

According to [the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey](#), more than 2 out of 5 American adults are obese. And that number is only expected to rise.

Because obesity is a major contributing factor to chronic and life-threatening conditions like cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke, finding ways to help people reduce body weight is critical—not only for improving quality of life, but also for [reducing health care risks](#).

Dieting, counting calories, and exercising are some of the classic methods many turn to when they want to lose weight. But the realities of bariatric medicine show that it's often not nearly as simple as calories in and calories out.

“We used to think of weight as the accumulation of calories,” said [Mert Eroglu, MD](#), medical bariatrician at Maimonides Medical Center. “If you eat more calories than you expend through exercise, you gain weight., you gain weight. But if you expend more calories than you eat, you lose weight. So according to this way of thinking, people just don't have the willpower to decrease their intake or exercise more.

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The modern understanding of obesity is very different. Now, we see it as a chronic disease of weight dysregulation where the physiologic set point has been changed.”

For those who are looking for a change, medical therapies, surgical solutions, and professional guidance from doctors, nutritionists, therapists, and other care professionals can be extremely effective in overcoming obesity.

[Maimonides Health's new Bariatric Center](#) offers patients a multidisciplinary, comprehensive program designed to help patients lose weight and maintain weight loss in a healthy way, incorporating both surgical and nonsurgical treatment options on an individualized basis. The Center emphasizes medical excellence and comprehensive patient support, using the latest operative and postoperative equipment to make procedures and care as safe and comfortable as possible.

Medical Weight Management Can Provide Effective Solutions Without Surgery

Maimonides Bariatric Center's medical weight management program offers a personalized approach to weight loss without surgery. The Center's team - including Elana Gluzman, PA-C, bariatric physician assistant and coordinator, and Nina Dahan, registered dietician - work one on one with each person to identify health needs and goals and develop an individualized weight loss plan. The team combines nutrition education, psychological assessment and support, lifestyle changes, and, in some cases, medications to reach these patient weight loss outcomes.

“Diet, sleep and exercise are obviously the pillars, the three most important things,” Dr. Erogul said. “But once you take into account the [metabolic set point](#), you have to use either medications or surgery. That's sort of the common wisdom now that we've arrived at in obesity medicine.”

As soon as patients call the office or are referred, they are given an appointment for an individualized consultation along with a link to a monthly new patient education seminar that takes place on the second Monday of each month. These initial services allow patients to learn more about medically supervised weight loss, along with the benefits, risks, and efficacy of the options available to them.

Safe, Effective Surgical Weight Management From Highly Experienced Surgeons


The Bariatric Center's surgical weight management program offers safe and effective bariatric treatments for obesity. This part of the Bariatric Center is a long-standing program at Maimonides. In fact, it has been accredited by the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP) for 10 years in a row.

“The most long-lasting treatment is [bariatric surgery](#). It is a safe procedure and most insurance will pay for it,” said Dr. Erogul. “Depending on how much you weigh, there are medical and weight criteria. And let's say you do a gastric sleeve, which is the most popular procedure currently. You'll often achieve about 30% body weight loss. And it's a life-changing procedure for people.”

Bariatric Center surgeons [Sergey Terushkin, MD, FACS](#), and [Alexander Abdurakhmanov, MD](#), are experts in surgical treatments including:

- Gastric bypass
- Intra-gastric weight loss balloon
- Laparoscopic gastric banding
- Revision bariatric surgery
- Single-anastomosis duodenal switch (SIPS)
- Sleeve gastrectomy

“There is no singular approach to weight loss,” said Dr. Erogul. “People need access to a full spectrum of options to find what works for them. At Maimonides, we've developed a comprehensive program to meet each person's needs so they can achieve success and improve their health.”

For more information or to refer a patient to Maimonides Bariatric Center, call (718) 283-7403 or visit <https://maimo.org/treatments-care/general-surgery/bariatric-surgery/>. 



Supportive Services are Key to Maimonides' Integrated Approach to Cancer Care

[More than 5,200 people](#) receive a cancer diagnosis in the United States every single day. It's a life-altering event that can shake even the calmest patients. There's nothing they can do to predict or prepare for how it affects them or their families physically, mentally, or emotionally.

Dedicated healthcare professionals at Maimonides Cancer Center see patients processing these complex experiences and emotions. They developed the [Cancer Supportive Services](#) team to better serve them. [Jeremy Winell, MD](#), leads this invaluable team as Director of Behavioral Services. Together, they have dramatically improved cancer patients' experiences by prioritizing mental health, nutrition, and supportive care.

Multidisciplinary Teams Collaborate to Provide Each Cancer Patient with Comprehensive Care.

In addition to oncologists, surgeons, and other healthcare providers who focus on treating cancer, each patient also has access to the Maimonides' Cancer Supportive Services team if they need it.

"This team works collectively to help patients and families as they cope with the challenges caused by cancer," explained Dr. Winell. "Team members include a psychiatrist, psychologist, two social workers, a dietitian, and a supportive care physician for pain and palliative care."

Referrals to the Cancer Supportive Services team are reserved for patients [experiencing undue distress during or after their cancer treatment](#). "The oncology teams are good

at recognizing some of the signs and symptoms of distress," said Dr. Winell. "And every patient has a formal distress screening questionnaire at the beginning of their treatment. If the screening indicates a moderate to high level of distress, they're referred to Cancer Supportive Services."

Integrated cancer services are beneficial for patients of all ages, as well as their families.


Both adults and children receive support from Maimonides' Cancer Support Services team. There's also a level of [support for families of cancer patients](#) through family counseling in some cases. "Our social workers help families and caretakers access resources to help their loved ones," Dr. Winell said.

This 360-degree approach to cancer care is beneficial because it helps cancer patients process their experience, while also giving them the tools they need to make it through their treatment. And including family members helps them process difficult feelings as they work toward the road to remission and recovery.

Integrated Cancer Services Are Beneficial for Patients and Families of All Ages.

Dr. Winell and his team are always looking into [services and programs](#) that will help patients make it through their cancer treatment. Between a newly launched quarterly virtual lecture series for patients, in-person, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy support group sessions, and plans for in-person yoga classes, there are supportive services for each and every cancer patient that walks through Maimonides' doors.

"Each patient's cancer journey is different," Dr. Winell said. "What is a crisis for one patient, may not be one for another patient facing the same situation." And Maimonides' Cancer Support Services team is capable of helping them through it all.

Cancer Support Services are accessible by referral for Maimonides Cancer Center patients. For more information on Cancer Center and for cancer screenings, visit <https://maimo.org/treatments-care/cancer-center/> or call (718) 765-2500. 

Maimonides Heart & Vascular Institute Recognized for Excellence in PCI Outcomes

We are proud to announce that [Maimonides Heart & Vascular Institute](#) has achieved excellent patient outcomes again this year, according to recent data released by the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH).

We are New York's only hospital to achieve a mortality rate lower than the statewide rate for percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) with [superior patient outcomes in both emergency and non-emergency coronary interventions](#) and our heart attack survival rate is significantly better than the statewide rate. Maimonides has one of the lowest post-heart attack readmission rates in the state.

Our Interventional Cardiologists were top performers for all categories of coronary interventions (all cases, emergent, and non-emergent) for the seventh consecutive reporting period.

Latest Achievements are Part of a Record of Superior Heart Care

Our Heart & Vascular Institute has a long history of excellence. We are in the top 1% in the U.S. for heart attack survival, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, and *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Maimonides as High Performing for Heart Attack and Heart Failure Care (2022/2023). For three years in a row, Maimonides has been among Healthgrades' America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery (2023) and received the Healthgrades Coronary Intervention Excellence Award eight years running (2015-2022).

Our team are constantly striving for improved outcomes for patients, whether it be our cardiologists and surgeons performing the most advanced techniques. Our hospital is expanding facilities to meet our patients' needs, like our recently updated Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit.

For more information on Maimonides Heart & Vascular Institute and our cardiovascular services, visit maimo.org/heart or call (718) HRT-BEAT (718-478-2328). ■■■



A Guide to the Multidisciplinary Care Available at Maimonides' LGBTQIA+ Mental Health Clinic

June is LGBTQIA+ Pride Month! While celebrations are underway across New York City, it's important for members of the community to remember that resources are in place to support them. Higher risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide, lack of acceptance, social stigma, isolation, and discrimination are among the challenges LGBTQIA+ individuals may face at any age.

For any of these challenges and many more, Maimonides' LGBTQIA+ Mental Health Clinic offers comprehensive, personalized support for all members of this diverse community. Its professional team of providers, including doctors and social workers, has extensive experience and expertise in the area of LGBTQIA+ mental health care.

"Many of our clinicians have lived experience within the community," said [Deepan Singh, MD](#), Vice Chair of Ambulatory Psychiatry Services at Maimonides. "This diversity of backgrounds and perspectives enables the clinic to offer a comprehensive approach that understands and addresses the unique challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals."

Comprehensive, Collaborative Care Improves Patient Outcomes

The provides care Clinic to patients of all ages, including pediatric, adult, and geriatric, as well as families, partners, and loved ones of LGBTQIA+ individuals. Services include individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, psychiatric evaluations, medication management, and referrals to other resources within the medical center or the broader community. Particularly, the Clinic works closely with Maimonides' endocrinology department and the Life Forward Program, allowing seamless referrals and collaboration between experts for specialized care for LGBTQIA+ individuals.



"For transgender and nonbinary individuals, access to gender-affirming healthcare is crucial," said Dr. Singh. "Collaborating closely with the endocrinology clinic allows for integrated care in providing hormone therapy, monitoring hormone levels, and addressing any physical health concerns related to gender transition while the mental health needs that may arise during the process of transition are being addressed."

Together with the [Life Forward Program](#), the Clinic provides LGBTQIA+ patients living with HIV the support they need to cope with or overcome the mental health challenges of this condition, like anxiety, depression, and stigma-related stress.

A Welcoming, Inclusive Environment

For many patients who require a space where their unique identity and experiences are fully recognized and respected, the LGBTQIA+ Clinic is a place that can provide affirming, professional care, especially for LGBTQIA+ youth who may be seeking this kind of care for the first time.

"The staff is knowledgeable about LGBTQIA+ issues, including the intersections of gender identity, sexual orientation, and cultural backgrounds, said Dr. Singh. "Affirming language, inclusive forms, and gender-neutral facilities are utilized to ensure a safe space for all patients. The clinic demonstrates cultural competence by understanding and addressing the diverse needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.

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FEATURED STORIES

This includes sensitivity to the experiences of different sexual orientations, gender identities, ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic backgrounds.”

Operating with a community mindset is key to the Clinic. Opportunities like attending group therapy are great ways for individuals to connect with peers and support each other, fostering a sense of belonging. Family therapy allows loved ones of LGBTQIA+ individuals to gain a better understanding and acceptance of identity, improving family relationships and strengthening support systems in a culturally competent way.


“Both group and family therapy can empower LGBTQIA+ individuals to become advocates for themselves and others,” Dr. Singh said. “Through therapy, individuals can develop a stronger sense of self, confidence, and assertiveness. They can gain the tools and skills necessary to navigate systems, advocate for their rights, and educate others about LGBTQIA+ issues, ultimately contributing to broader societal change.”

The clinic also actively engages with the LGBTQIA+ community, participating in community events and advocating for LGBTQIA+ mental health issues.

Health Equity Plan Will Allow Providers to Better Understand Care and Needs of LGBTQIA+ Community

As an organization, Maimonides is constantly advancing to provide better, more equitable care to all patients, and this requires an understanding of the unique needs of all communities, whether they be geographical, ethnic, racial or based around gender and sexual identity. Maimonides' Health Equity Program supports its vision to be accessible and compassionate, and strives to perform at the highest possible level, representing its values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, among others.

Maimonides is improving the way it cares for the LGBTQIA+ community by implementing demographic data collection in order to better identify and understand this population's health disparities. As part of Maimonides' 2023-2025 Health Equity Plan, sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex assigned at birth can all be included in electronic health records. This data collection will always be optional and voluntary to ensure protection of individual privacy.

To make an appointment or refer a patient to the Maimonides LGBTQIA+ Mental Health Clinic, visit <https://maimo.org/treatments-care/mental-and-behavioral-health/maimonides-lgbtqia-mental-health-services/> or call (718) 283-2727. 

NEW PROVIDERS

June 2023

Benjamin Cunningham, MD, Neurology, 718-283-7470

Varsha Sinha, MD, Urology, 718-283-7770



Event Recap: Maimonides Hosts 7th Annual Evening of Research

Last month, members of the Maimonides Health community came together at the Dyker Heights Golf Club for the annual Maimonides Evening of Research. Co-sponsored by Maimonides Health and the Maimonides Research and Development Foundation, the event is a showcase of the latest cutting-edge scholarship from Maimonides fellows, nurses, residents, and staff.

The 95 abstracts submitted for the event this year underscore Maimonides' commitment to fostering a culture of innovative research. Since the event was founded in 2014, the number of abstracts submitted - all focused on improving patient care through research or performance improvement - has increased yearly. All those who submitted were invited to post their abstracts at the event and answer questions.

Winners Displayed Excellence in Investigating Improvements to Patient Care and Processes

Five abstracts were chosen as winners - one from each of the categories of Fellow, Nurse, Performance Improvement, Resident and Staff - and the winners had the opportunity to give an oral presentation of their research to the members of the Maimonides community gathered for the event.

The five winners were:

- David Guernsey III, DO, MPH (Fellow): "The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Pediatric Mental Health: A Pediatric Emergency Department's Perspective."



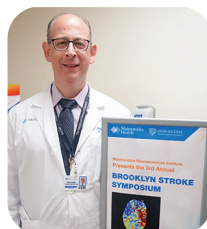
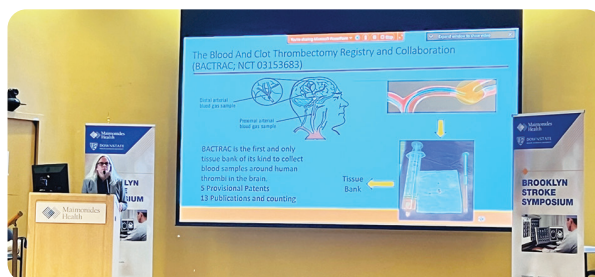
- Kris-Angelo Natividad, DNP, NP-BC (Nurse): "Improving the Discharge Process of Heart Failure Patients Discharged to Skilled Nursing Facilities Utilizing a Multidisciplinary Approach to Reduce 30-day Readmissions Rate."
- Ridhima Ghei, MD (Performance Improvement): "Impact of Specific Resident-Driven Virtual Recruitment Sessions on Residency Applications and Match Preferences."
- Qi Zhang, MMed (Resident): "Minimally Invasive Surgery is Associated with Improved Survival in Patients with Type II Endometrial Cancer: An Analysis of the National Cancer Database."
- Otuwe Anya, BA (Staff): "A Randomized Controlled Trial of Guanfacine Extended-Release for the Reduction of Aggression and Self-Injurious Behavior Associated with Prader-Willi Syndrome."

Afshin E. Razi, MD, Vice Chair of Operations, Research and Education at Maimonides, was presented with the Austin A. Schlecker Academic Achievement Award at the reception in recognition of a career dedicated to medical research, education, and scholarship.

For more information on submissions and winners, visit <https://maimonidesevents.org/maimonides-evening-of-research/>



Event Recap: 3rd Annual Brooklyn Stroke Symposium



The [3rd Annual Brooklyn Stroke Symposium](#) took place on Thursday, May 25, jointly presented by the [Jaffe Comprehensive Stroke Center](#) at Maimonides, [Maimonides Neurosciences Institute](#), and [SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Department of Neurology](#).

The symposium was an exciting day of discussion of the most cutting-edge new research and clinical paradigms in acute ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke care. Almost 500 people attended the hybrid event either in person at Maimonides Medical Center or virtually, including multidisciplinary physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and first responders, along with members of the public.

Speakers from Maimonides Health included [Daniel Rosenbaum, MD](#), Regional Chair of Neurology; [Q. Tony Wang, MD, PhD](#), Director of the Jaffe Comprehensive Stroke Center; [Ilya Levin, DO](#), Director of Neurocritical Care; and [Benjamin Youdelman, MD](#), Director of Thoracic Aortic Surgery. [Nikolaos Papamitsakis, MD](#), and Steven Sparr, MD, of SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University were also featured speakers, along with other stroke specialists from institutions like NYU Langone Health, Montefiore Medical Center, and the University of Kentucky College of Medicine.

The Jaffe Comprehensive Stroke Center and Maimonides Neuroscience Institute are proud to host this symposium to bring together some of the best stroke experts from New York City and beyond. The Stroke Center is among the elite few hospitals designated as a Comprehensive Stroke Center by the Joint Commission, and has been ranked as a 'Best Regional Hospital' and High Performing for Stroke Care by U.S. News and World Report (2022/23), along with other significant recognitions for clinical excellence. For the last 14 years, we've been on the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Gold Plus Honor Roll – meaning we've met rigorous guidelines for rapid, appropriate treatment.

At Maimonides, we strive for the absolute best stroke care possible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, utilizing state-of-the-art procedures, facilities and technology. The Brooklyn Stroke Symposium is just one way our care teams remain at the forefront of stroke care, constantly improving processes for our patients.

For more information on the Brooklyn Stroke Symposium, visit <https://maimo.org/treatments-care/stroke-and-neurosciences/brooklynstroke2023/>. For more information on the The Jaffe Comprehensive Stroke Center at Maimonides or to make an appointment, visit <https://maimo.org/treatments-care/stroke-and-neurosciences/stroke/> or call (718) 283-7670. 🌟



Maimonides Pediatrics Team Takes First Place in NYC Sim Olympics

This year, Maimonides' Pediatrics team emerged with a first-place victory at the [annual Sim Olympics](#). This event challenges teams from nine top pediatric programs around the New York metro area to test their clinical skills, medical knowledge, and teamwork in a series of simulation-based events. Scores are judged by a panel of faculty, fellows, and chief residents from each of the represented residency programs. 🏆



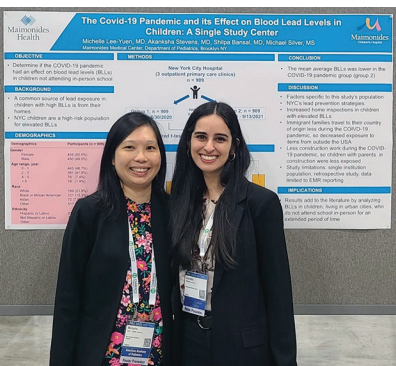
Maimonides President Ken Gibbs Recognized for Health Care Leadership

Last month, [Crain's New York Business](#) published its annual list of [Notable Leaders in Health Care](#). Ken Gibbs, President and CEO of Maimonides Health, was recognized among leaders from across New York's health care system for his leadership at Maimonides since 2016, guiding the institution through a period of significant growth and clinical excellence. Read more: <https://www.crainsnewyork.com/awards/kenneth-d-gibbs-notable-leaders-health-care-2023> 🏆



Dr. Mert Eroglu Discusses Medical Weight Loss Treatments on NY1

[Mert Eroglu, MD](#), Medical Bariatrician at the Maimonides Bariatric Center, recently appeared on NY1 to help educate the public on semaglutides like Ozempic, Wegovy, and Mounjaro, drugs developed for diabetes treatment and repurposed more recently as an emerging therapy for obesity. While these drugs are effective for weight loss, all patients should be aware of their side effects, risks, and long-term results, and take them only under medical supervision. 🏆



Pediatrics Department Showcases Research at National Meetings

Maimonides' Pediatric Department attended the [2023 Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting](#) in Washington, D.C., where physicians and residents presented a combined 12 posters and abstracts in a variety of research areas, including pediatric assessment, social needs screening, lactation support, and the effects of Covid-19, among others. At the [American Thoracic Society Annual Meeting](#), which took place in May, James Kimpo, DO, MPH; Linda Chen, DO; and Sara Abu-Ghanem, MD, MMedSc presented a case report titled "New Onset Dyspnea in Patient with Urbach-Wiethe Disease." 🏆