

# Healthy

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COMMUNITY

**This Issue:**  
**Focus on**  
**Wellness**

**Forever Young:**  
How Dr. Pablo Prichard is  
Changing the Way America  
Thinks About Aging

*Dr. Pablo  
Prichard*



Host of NBC's *Forever Young*

 **Powers**  
HEALTH<sup>SM</sup>



# Forever Young

## How Dr. Pablo Prichard is Changing the Way America Thinks About Aging

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**O**n weekend mornings, viewers across the country are tuning in to Forever Young with Dr. Pablo Prichard, an NBC series that explores one powerful idea: aging is not just about getting older. It is about how well your body's systems are functioning over time.

Hosted by Dr. Pablo Prichard, the show blends advanced science, real-world stories and practical health strategies to help viewers understand what's happening inside their bodies and what they can do to protect their health span, not just their lifespan.

Each episode tackles topics that affect everyday Americans, from sleep and stress to inflammation, hormones and environmental exposures, breaking down complex medical concepts into insights people can actually use.

### **Why Longevity Is the Focus of Forever Young**

On Forever Young, Dr. Prichard draws from decades of experience as a reconstructive surgeon to explain why two people of the same age can look, feel and function so differently.

"Aging isn't just wrinkles," he often explains on the show. "It's what's happening at the cellular level."

Through patient stories and expert interviews, episodes explore how damage accumulates over time and how factors like poor sleep, chronic stress, toxins and inflammation can accelerate aging long before symptoms appear. The show emphasizes that aging is not a single process, but a cascade of interconnected systems breaking down together.



### **What Viewers Learn Each Episode**

Rather than focusing on quick fixes, Forever Young educates viewers on the drivers of aging and how lifestyle choices affect them. Topics frequently covered include:

- How chronic stress and trauma age the body
- Why sleep quality is foundational to longevity

- The role of inflammation in chronic disease
- How toxins and environmental exposures impact cellular health
- Why relationships and mental well-being matter as much as diet and exercise

Dr. Prichard uses relatable analogies, such as comparing aging cells to rust in machinery, to make science approachable. The message is consistent: the body has powerful repair systems, but modern life often overwhelms them.

### **The DecathLife Approach on Screen**

A central theme of the show is Dr. Prichard's DecathLife model, which frames longevity like training for a decathlon. Viewers learn that you can't focus on just one area of health and ignore the rest.

Episodes highlight 10 key pillars, including movement, nutrition, sleep, stress management, hormones, toxin exposure and social connection, showing how imbalance in

even one area can affect the whole system.

"You can eat perfectly and still age quickly if you're exhausted and isolated," he notes in one episode.

### **Why the Show Resonates**

What sets *Forever Young* apart is its relevance to people outside elite wellness circles. The show frequently highlights everyday Americans, including people from underserved communities, who face barriers like limited access to specialists, long work hours and environmental stressors.

Dr. Prichard emphasizes that longevity isn't about expensive treatments. It's about understanding what harms your cells and making informed, sustainable changes wherever you live.

### **A New Conversation About Aging**

At its core, *Forever Young* is about reframing aging from something to fear into something to understand.

"Longevity isn't about living forever," Dr. Prichard says on the show. "It's about living better with strength, energy and purpose."

*Forever Young* with Dr. Pablo Prichard airs on NBC weekend mornings and also is available for streaming on Peacock, inviting viewers everywhere to rethink what it truly means to grow older and how to do it well. ■



## Community Hospital earns numerous distinctions from Healthgrades

**Community Hospital** has achieved numerous distinctions for exceptional clinical performance from Healthgrades. For the third year in a row, the Powers Health hospital is recognized as being among America's 100 Best Hospitals for Stroke Care and as a recipient of the Healthgrades Neurosciences Excellence Award and the Cranial Neurosurgery Excellence Award.

"These achievements further affirm Community Hospital's status as a premier destination for neuroscience care," said Randy Neiswonger, CEO of Community Hospital. "Our hospital and clinical team are honored to be recognized for our longstanding commitment to providing excellent patient care."

As a Comprehensive Stroke Center, Community Hospital cares for complex stroke cases, including patients arriving from northern Indiana's Primary Stroke Centers. Community Hospital is supported by the certified Primary Stroke Centers at St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart.



Community Hospital's achievements are based solely on what matters most: patient outcomes. Each year, Healthgrades evaluates risk-adjusted mortality and complication rates for over 30 common conditions and procedures at approximately 4,500 hospitals nationwide to identify the top hospitals in key specialty areas. Through easy-to-understand, objective measures of hospital performance, Healthgrades empowers patients with the information they need to find a hospital that excels in their procedure or condition.

**For more information about Neuroscience Services at the hospitals of Powers Health, visit [PowersHealth.org/stroke-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/stroke-HC-spring26).**



# What your Mammogram

## Might Reveal About Your Heart Health



**During a mammogram,** radiologists sometimes notice calcium buildup not only in breast tissue, but in the arteries of the breast — known as breast arterial calcification (BAC).

While BAC is harmless in the breast itself, studies show it may be a warning sign of calcium deposits in the heart's arteries, which can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease — the leading cause of death among women. Because mammograms are often done years before most women undergo heart screenings, this incidental finding can provide a valuable early alert.

Experts say that women whose mammograms reveal BAC should talk with their doctor about further heart evaluation, including blood pressure, cholesterol and lifestyle factors. It's another example of how preventive screenings can uncover more than what they were originally designed to detect. ■

## Colorectal Cancer:

**PREVENTION STARTS WITH EARLY DETECTION**



**Colorectal cancer** remains one of the most common cancers in the United States, but it's also one of the most preventable. Experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American Cancer Society agree that regular screening is the most effective way to detect the disease early, when treatment is most successful.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force now recommends that adults begin routine screening at age 45, earlier if they have a family history or risk factors, such as inflammatory bowel disease, obesity or smoking. Colonoscopies remain the standard for screening, but other options — including stool-based tests — can also

detect signs of cancer or precancerous polyps.

Diet and lifestyle play a major role, too. Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains, while limiting red and processed meats, can help lower risk. Staying active, maintaining a healthy weight and avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol also are powerful steps toward prevention.

Advances in screening technology and personalized treatment continue to improve outcomes. The message is clear: Get screened, stay active and don't wait. Early detection saves lives. ■

**Sources:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Heart Association (AHA), Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins Medicine

# National Nutrition Month

## Mastering Healthy Choices for Every Meal

**March is National Nutrition Month** — a perfect time to focus on the foods we eat, how we eat them and how those choices shape our long-term health. Nutrition plays a vital role in preventing chronic diseases, such as heart diseases, diabetes and obesity. This year's theme centers around three practical goals: reading food labels, making healthy swaps and practicing portion control.

### Reading Food Labels: Knowledge is Power

Food labels can feel overwhelming, but they're one of the best tools for making informed decisions. Always start with the serving size — every number on the label is based on that portion. Then, look for calories, saturated fat, added sugars and sodium.

Nutrients like fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals support your body's long-term health. The American Heart Association recommends limiting added sugars to 25 grams per day for women and 36 grams for men, while the CDC notes that excessive sodium intake is a major contributor to high blood pressure. Understanding labels helps you choose foods that align with your goals and protect your heart health.

### Healthy Swaps: Small Changes, Big Impact

You don't have to overhaul your entire diet to see results. Small swaps make a big difference. Replace sugary drinks with water or unsweetened tea. Choose whole grains over refined ones. Pick lean protein sources like fish, poultry or beans instead of processed meats.

According to the Mayo Clinic, sustainable swaps are more effective than strict diets. Gradual, realistic changes create long-lasting habits that improve both physical health and your relationship with food.

### Portion Control: Eat Smart

Portion sizes have grown dramatically over the past few decades. Johns Hopkins Medicine suggests using simple

visual cues — a serving of protein should be about the size of a deck of cards, grains the size of a fist and fats the size of a thumb.

Practicing mindful eating — slowing down, enjoying your meal and tuning into hunger cues — helps prevent overeating. NIH research shows that mindfulness and portion awareness reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

### Expert Insight: Tips from a Registered Dietitian

#### What should we focus on when reading food labels?

"First and foremost, it is important to remember that there is more to an item than calories. The nutrients listed below also are important. Make sure to check serving sizes. My go-to example is a toaster pastry. The serving size is generally one pastry, but two come in a nonsealable pack, so you're likely going to eat both. Consumers should be aware of this when calculating the nutritional value. Make sure there is little to no saturated fat (<10% daily value), cholesterol (<100mg/serving), sodium (<20% DV) and added sugar (<20% DV). Any item containing >20% DV of fiber, potassium, iron, calcium, vitamins D and C and/or phosphorus is a better choice."

#### What simple swaps help reduce sugar and unhealthy fat?

"For baking, substitutions for both added sugars and items high in saturated fat are mashed bananas and unsweetened apple sauce. Other substitutions for saturated fats are unsaturated fats (olive oil, avocado oil), low-fat unsweetened yogurt and low-fat cottage cheese."

#### How can portion control feel easier?

"Practicing mindful eating helps eaters be in tune with their hunger and fullness cues. Mindful eating can be practiced by slowing down and savoring foods. When eating out, other practices like washing your hands after ordering to avoid mindless appetizer snacking and asking for a to-go box when the meal comes can be helpful to reduce large portion sizes."

### The Takeaway

National Nutrition Month reminds us that every meal is an opportunity to fuel our bodies wisely. By reading labels, swapping smartly and eating mindfully, you can build habits that last all year long. Small, consistent choices today can lead to a stronger, healthier tomorrow. ■

For more information, visit [PowersHealth.org/health-services-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/health-services-HC-spring26).

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Heart Association (AHA), Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins Medicine



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# Rest Easy:

## How Better Sleep Supports a Healthier Heart

**When you drift off at night**, your body begins one of its most important jobs — restoring energy, repairing cells and supporting heart health. But for many adults across the country, that restoration doesn't always happen as it should. One common reason is Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), a condition in which breathing pauses repeatedly or becomes shallow during sleep.

OSA is more common than many people realize. National estimates suggest that up to one-third of adult men and nearly one in five adult women may be living with sleep apnea and as many as 80% of moderate to severe cases remain undiagnosed. Left untreated, OSA has been linked to a significantly higher risk of heart failure, stroke and coronary heart disease.

The encouraging news is this: sleep apnea is both detectable and treatable. Addressing sleep issues early can make a meaningful difference not only in how you feel each day, but also in your long-term heart health.

### **Sleep Health**

Busy work schedules, long commutes and family responsibilities are part of daily life; sleep often takes a back seat. Conditions such as high blood pressure, excess weight, diabetes and stress are common risk factors for both heart disease and sleep apnea.

Unlike years past, diagnosing sleep apnea no longer always requires an overnight stay in a sleep lab. Today, many patients can begin with convenient home sleep testing, followed by personalized care plans guided by local providers. This means high-quality sleep care can happen close to home, without adding unnecessary disruption to already full schedules.

### **The Sleep–Heart Connection**

During untreated sleep apnea, repeated drops in oxygen levels place stress on the heart and blood vessels. The body responds by raising blood pressure and triggering inflammation, which over time can contribute to hypertension, irregular heart rhythms and damage to the arteries.

### **Seasonal Changes and Sleep Disruptions**

Seasonal shifts also can affect sleep quality. Shorter days, less sunlight and time changes in the fall and winter months can disrupt circadian rhythms, leading to fatigue, mood changes and inconsistent sleep patterns. For individuals with undiagnosed sleep apnea, these disruptions may worsen symptoms.

Maintaining consistent bedtimes, limiting screen use before sleep and getting exposure to natural light earlier in the day can help stabilize sleep routines, especially during the colder months common to our region.

### **Better Sleep, Better Health: One Night at a Time**

Improving sleep is a powerful step toward protecting heart health. Through routine screenings, sleep studies and individualized treatment plans, patients in our community have more options than ever before to address sleep concerns early. ■

For more information, visit [PowersHealth.org/sleep-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/sleep-HC-spring26).

# Progress, one step at a time

Patient benefits from technology, family support



by Vanessa Negrete

**D**RIVEN BY DETERMINATION and supported by her medical team and family, a 90-year-old Highland woman had one goal: to walk again. LaVerne Broviak, a mother and grandmother, had both legs amputated 6 inches below her knees in recent years and was fitted with prosthetic legs. Her left leg was amputated in January 2022 and her right leg in April 2023. LaVerne had undergone 17 procedures over a short period of time to treat peripheral artery disease. Her medical team recommended the amputation.

“The treatments got to be too much,” she said. “When this happened, I wasn’t happy, but I thought, ‘Why sit and cry? That’s not going to do anything. This is just a setback. I’m going to walk. I will.’”

With the help of Powers Health Therapy Services, she’s back on her feet and looking forward to the day she can walk with only a cane. A major part of her therapy involves the Ovation Interactive Treadmill System.

The advanced physical therapy technology supports patients while protecting them from falls during their therapy sessions. Ovation, which features a launchpad that raises and lowers for wheelchair and walker access, uses a treadmill outfitted with a harness and railings to support physical therapy patients.

Ovation is able to unload up to 300 pounds of body weight, meaning patients feel much lighter as they use the treadmill. The technology also features settings that detect when patients are losing their balance and need more support to avoid falling.

Ovation is a great tool to assist patients in maximizing their independence and safety when wearing prosthetic legs. The system allows them to practice balance and gait training.

**With the help of Powers Health Therapy Services, she’s back on her feet and looking forward to the day she can walk with only a cane.**

As they walk on the body weight support treadmill, patients face an “infotainment” screen that displays several health metrics as well as a high-resolution image of different scenery. With just a tap, patients can pretend they’re navigating a wooded, snowy forest or a sandy beach.

The technology monitors metrics, such as heart rate, calories burned and intervals, and displays that data on a second screen, allowing the physical therapist to adjust settings based on the patient’s needs.



**Left and above:** Powers Health Physical Therapist Brett Fulka works with LaVerne Broviak as she uses the Ovation Interactive Treadmill System in Munster.

“She’s little, but she’s got fight in her,” he said. “A lot of patients who have lost both legs give up; the compliance with therapy is not good. But, she’s amazing, and it helps that she has an amazing support system.”

LaVerne says her family, which includes four sons, one daughter and five grandchildren, is very supportive. Her children have worked out a schedule so someone is always with LaVerne at home. They also have ensured the inside of her house is outfitted for safety and accessibility.

She also is grateful to Fulka and the Powers Health Therapy Services team.

“Brett is nothing but the best,” she said.

LaVerne, who has Afib and has experienced two strokes, is driven by strong willpower and grit to meet her goals. She keeps her mind and hands busy by creating needlepoint pieces.

“In between, I do my exercises,” she said.

LaVerne entered her nineties with the confidence she will walk with little to no assistance. ■

Consistency is key in LaVerne’s progress. Aside from her on-site therapy, her family ensures she follows up at home.

Powers Health Physical Therapist Brett Fulka jokes that LaVerne’s oldest son is an honorary member of the Therapy Services team because he is at her side for sessions and tries to re-create the movements at home.

Compliance with therapy “homework” leads to better outcomes.

“Those are the patients that do the best,” Fulka said. “The ones who say, ‘We worked on that in therapy last time and I started practicing that at home.’”

Fulka said LaVerne’s commitment to her progress is commendable.

**For more information about Therapy Services at [PowersHealth.org/services/therapy-services-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/services/therapy-services-HC-spring26).**

# Meet Raquel Gonzalez Heredia

Powers Health breast surgeon's approach  
combines compassion, expertise

**A** **BREAST CANCER DIAGNOSIS** can scare and overwhelm you. Having a compassionate, skilled healthcare team may ease your concerns and lead to the best possible outcomes. At Powers Health, one of those team members is Raquel Gonzalez Heredia, MD, PhD, a board-certified, fellowship-trained breast surgeon.

**Q** **What inspired you to become a breast surgeon?**

**A** I was drawn to breast surgery because it combines technical precision with long-term, meaningful relationships with patients. Receiving a breast cancer diagnosis is one of the most vulnerable moments in a person's life, and I was inspired by the opportunity to guide patients through that journey, not just performing surgery, but helping them understand their options and feel supported throughout treatment and recovery. The multidisciplinary nature of breast care, the ability to individualize treatment and the chance to make a lasting impact on outcomes and quality of life ultimately solidified my decision to become a breast surgeon.

**Q** **What drew you to Powers Health?**

**A** Powers Health is known for its strong commitment to community-based, high-quality care. It has built a reputation for combining advanced medical services with a very personal, compassionate approach, which is especially important in breast care. Trust, communication and compassion are the foundation of good medicine. I am proud to work at Powers Health, a healthcare system that shares these values and is deeply connected to the community it serves. As a Hispanic doctor, I was also impressed by the collaborative culture and the focus on serving a diverse community with patient-centered care that supports patients and their families.

**“My goal is to deliver excellent cancer care while supporting patients and their families throughout the process.”**



**Q. What is the most important piece of breast health advice you would give to women in Northwest Indiana?**

**A.** The most important advice I would give is to prioritize routine screenings and to listen to your body. Annual screening mammograms save lives, and early detection often means less aggressive treatment and better outcomes. If you notice any changes, such as a lump or skin change, it's important to seek care promptly and feel comfortable asking questions. Advocate for your own health. This is especially important in communities where women may put their family's needs ahead of their own.

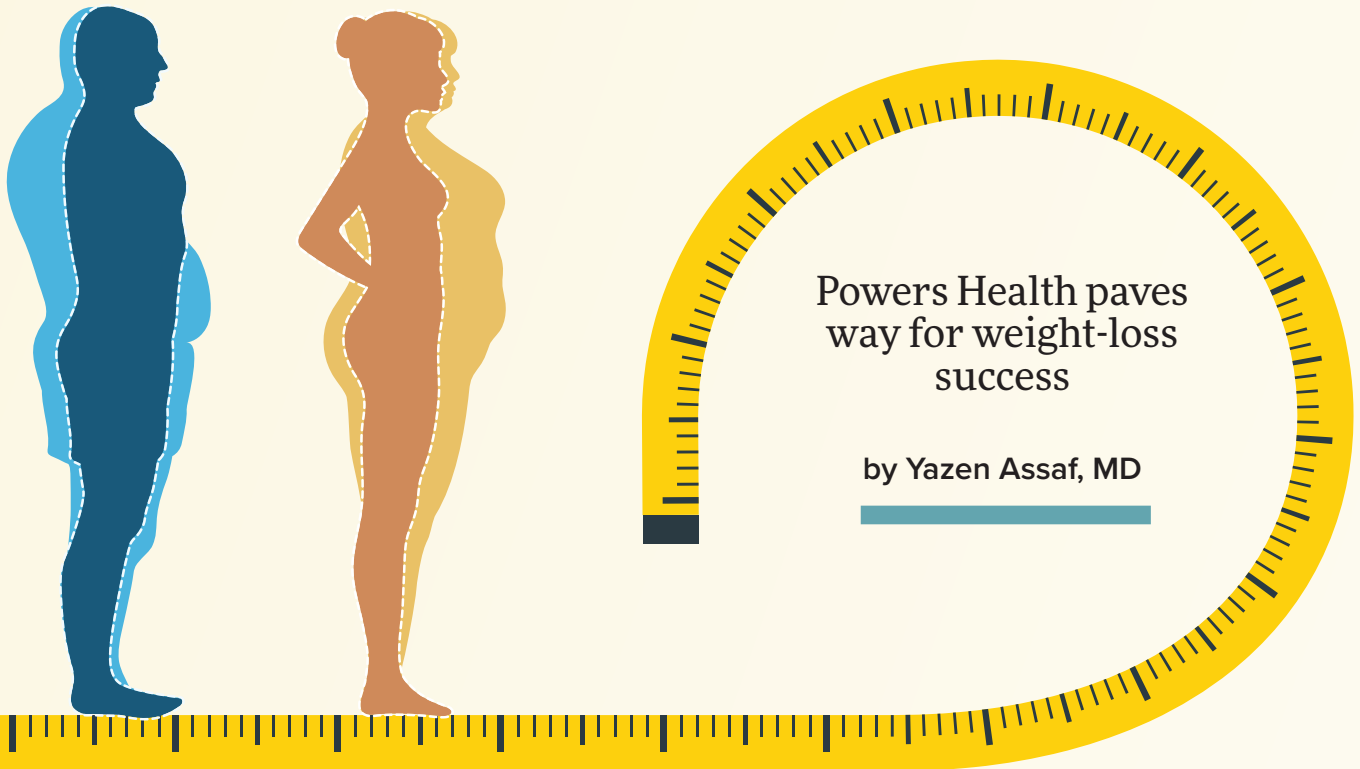
**Q. What is your approach when treating patients with breast cancer?**

**A.** My approach is thoughtful, individualized and team-based. I focus on evidence-based care, clear communication and shared decision-making, while also respecting each patient's values and preferences. Working closely with a multidisciplinary team, my goal is to deliver excellent cancer care while supporting patients and their families throughout the process. My commitment is to provide high-quality, patient-focused breast care and to be a reliable source of guidance for patients at every stage of their journey. ■

**Left:** Raquel Gonzalez Heredia is a Powers Health Medical Group breast surgeon affiliated with Community Hospital in Munster.

Dr. Raquel Gonzalez Heredia's office is located at 1020 Donald S. Powers Drive, Munster, and can be reached at 219-703-2434. For more information about the Cancer Care services offered at Powers Health, visit [PowersHealth.org/cancer-care-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/cancer-care-HC-spring26).

# Winning the obesity fight



**O**BESITY HAS BECOME one of the biggest public health concerns. As much as 39% of Americans in 2022 were considered obese, and these numbers continue to increase, especially among children. Weight loss can be very challenging; through evolutionary adaptations, our bodies are highly resistant to losing weight.

Numerous studies have shown that diets often fail. Most people regain weight once diets are stopped, and many are unable to lose enough weight through dietary changes alone. As our understanding of obesity as a chronic disease grows, an increasing number of surgical and medical weight-loss options are becoming more accessible to patients.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the use of GLP-1 agonists, such as semaglutide (Ozempic, Wegovy) and tirzepatide (Zepbound, Mounjaro). It is estimated that as many as 1 in 3 Americans has tried one of these medications in the

past year. These medications work by decreasing food cravings and increasing feelings of satiety. When combined with diet and exercise, they can result in total body weight loss of 7-20%, depending on the medication, duration of use and patient comorbidities.

GLP-1 agonists have helped many patients make sustainable, long-term changes in their diets and maintain weight loss. However, these medications have their downsides. They can be expensive; insurance coverage may be limited; and serious adverse side effects can occur. Additionally, many patients experience a weight-loss plateau or even weight regain, especially when the medication is stopped. The long-term maintenance of weight loss often is dependent on continuing the medication. Once the medication is discontinued, most patients regain a significant portion of the lost weight.

**“Most people regain weight once diets are stopped, and many are unable to lose enough weight through dietary changes alone.”**

What are your options if you have experienced adverse effects have reached a weight plateau or experienced weight regain with GLP-1 medications? Weight-loss surgery remains the gold standard for treating obesity. It provides the best and most sustainable long-term weight-loss outcomes. Patients can lose anywhere from 28 to 50% of their total body weight within one year after surgery. Research shows that most bariatric surgery patients maintain the majority of their weight loss even 10 years after the procedure. Bariatric surgery also is more affordable over the long term. It is a one-time upfront cost, compared to the recurring monthly expenses of weight-loss medications, which must be maintained long term.



**Above:** Yazan Assaf, MD, is a board-certified general and bariatric surgeon with Powers Health.

With advances in minimally invasive and robotic techniques, bariatric surgery has low complication rates and hospital stays often as short as one night. Recovery is typically fast, with the majority of patients able to return to daily activities within a few days and to work within two weeks after surgery. ■

**Is weight-loss surgery an option for you? Visit Powers Health Bariatric Services to meet with our team of weight-loss specialists, who can discuss with you different weight-loss options, including surgery and GLP-1 medications. For more information about Powers Health Bariatric Services, visit [PowersHealth.org/services/bariatric-medicine-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/services/bariatric-medicine-HC-spring26).**

# Heart Milestones

Powers Health cardiovascular experts lead the way  
in minimally invasive advancements

by Karin Saltanovitz



**P**OWERS HEALTH HAS established itself as a leader in cardiovascular innovation in Northwest Indiana and in the state, frequently introducing minimally invasive procedures and advanced technologies.

Here is a look at some of the groundbreaking procedures and firsts at Powers Health:

## Structural Heart

### Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR)

TAVR is a less invasive option for the treatment of aortic stenosis. It saves patients from the rigors of a complex open-heart procedure and provides quicker recovery.

The Powers Health Structural Heart and Valve team was a pioneer of the TAVR program and is one of the most experienced in the Chicagoland area. During the procedure, a new valve is delivered through a small incision in the groin area or chest

and passed through an artery to the heart. The new valve takes over the job of regulating blood flow.

TAVR is performed in Community Hospital's state-of-the-art hybrid operating room equipped with advanced video integration technology that aids the team in real-time imaging and continual medical assessment.

Community Hospital has been awarded the American College of Cardiology's Transcatheter Valve Certification based on evaluation of the staff's ability to meet standards for multidisciplinary teams, formalized training, shared decision-making and registry performance.



### **Tricuspid Edge-to-Edge Repair (TEER)**

TEER is an option for people with often debilitating tricuspid regurgitation, where the valve between the right ventricle and right atrium does not close properly, allowing blood to flow backward into the right atrium. This forces the heart to work harder to move blood to the body. Symptoms of the disease may include abnormal heart rhythms, fatigue, shortness of breath and swelling in the abdomen, legs and neck veins. Left untreated, tricuspid regurgitation may lead to other conditions, such as atrial fibrillation (AFib) or heart failure. During the procedure, the TriClip device is delivered to the heart via the femoral vein. Once in place, it clips together a portion of tricuspid valve leaflets to reduce backward blood flow.

### **Tricuspid Valve Replacement (TTVR)**

The Structural Heart team at Powers Health continues to offer groundbreaking heart valve replacement procedures for patients with severe symptomatic tricuspid regurgitation. The EVOQUE system is the world's first TTVR device, designed to improve the quality of life in these patients without the need for open heart surgery. The device is threaded through the femoral vein to the heart and deployed in the valve, fully replacing the weakened area without removing the valve to eliminate the backflow of blood.

## **Heart Failure**

### **Cordella Heart Failure System Implant**

In January 2026, Powers Health completed its first Cordella Heart Failure System implant. The implant, by Edwards Lifesciences, helps patients who have heart failure by measuring their pulmonary artery pressure and vital signs from the comfort of home and allowing clinicians to access that data remotely.

## **Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)**

### **Percutaneous Transluminal Arterial Bypass (PTAB)**

PTAB is an effective option for patients with lower extremity PAD. This is geared for PAD patients who have not improved with other interventions, such as a stent, or are not good candidates for open surgical bypass.

The PTAB procedure creates a new pathway for blood flow using the patient's femoral vein to bypass long, complex blockages in the arteries of the leg. It carries a lower rate of complications and infection

than open surgical bypass, and patients typically spend one day in the hospital.

Left untreated, PAD may cause pain or loss of mobility and may increase a person's risk for stroke, heart attack and coronary artery disease.

### **Transcarotid Artery Revascularization (TCAR)**

TCAR treats carotid artery disease and prevents future strokes. This direct transcarotid stent placement option provides best-in-class neuroprotection in a more-efficient and less-invasive approach compared to traditional carotid endarterectomy (CEA).

Like CEA, the TCAR procedure involves direct access to the carotid artery, but through a much smaller incision – creating just enough room to place a stent directly into the carotid artery to stabilize the blockage. This clinically proven procedure is unique in that blood flow is temporarily reversed so any plaque debris that may break off is diverted away from the brain, preventing a stroke.

## **Atrial Fibrillation (AFib)**

### **Pulsed Field Ablation**

Pulsed field ablation delivers targeted electrical pulses to treat areas of heart tissue that cause AFib. In a traditional ablation, extreme heat or cold is applied via catheter to areas of the heart associated with abnormal heart rhythms. The new approach uses electric fields to treat those areas of the heart. This non-thermal approach is proven to be an effective option for patients while minimizing the risk of damaging surrounding tissue, compared to traditional ablation.

### **Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion (LAAO) – WATCHMAN FLX**

People diagnosed with non-valvular AFib are at higher risk for stroke. These patients typically are prescribed blood thinners to reduce that risk. WATCHMAN FLX is an alternative to reduce the risk of stroke while reducing the risks associated with taking blood thinners. WATCHMAN FLX is a one-time, minimally invasive implant that blocks the left atrial appendage to eliminate the source of most AFib-related clots. ■

For more information about cardiovascular care at Powers Health, visit [PowersHealth.org/heart-HC-spring26](https://PowersHealth.org/heart-HC-spring26).

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Dr. Pablo Prichard



Mammograms and Heart Health



Mastering Healthy Choices



Rest Easy!

# Spring Cleaning Isn't Just for Closets: REFRESH YOUR HEALTH WITH DOCTOR VISITS



### A Season for a Fresh Start

Spring is a season of renewal. As homes are decluttered and routines refreshed, it's also the perfect time to take stock of your health. Just like spring cleaning your closets or garage, scheduling routine doctor visits can help clear out potential health concerns before they grow into bigger problems.

### Why Spring Is the Right Time for Preventive Care

For many people, healthcare often takes a back seat during the winter months. Harsh weather and full schedules can delay checkups, screenings and follow-up appointments. Spring brings better road conditions and more flexibility, making it an ideal time to reconnect with your healthcare provider.

### The Importance of Annual Wellness Visits

Annual wellness visits are a cornerstone of good health. These appointments give your provider the opportunity to review medications, monitor blood pressure and cholesterol, discuss nutrition and activity and identify early signs of conditions such as heart disease or diabetes. Even if you feel healthy, preventive visits help you stay that way.

### Catching Up on Screenings and Tests

Spring is a good time to schedule recommended screenings. Depending on your age and health history, this may include blood work, mammograms, colon cancer screenings, bone density tests or other routine exams. Addressing these needs early in the year can provide peace of mind as warmer months approach.

### Don't Forget Your Whole Health

Spring cleaning your health goes beyond physical checkups. Dental, vision and mental health visits are important pieces of overall wellness. Regular eye exams and dental care can catch issues early, while mental health check-ins support emotional well-being year-round.

### One Step at a Time

Spring cleaning your health doesn't require perfection, just intention. By scheduling one appointment at a time, you can set the foundation for a healthier, more confident year ahead. This season, refresh more than your home; refresh your health. ■

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Heart Association, Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins Medicine*