

November  
2023



# SAINT PETER'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

*Treating you better...for life.*

*Sharmin Khan and Mainul Haque eagerly awaited the arrival of their third child, their anticipation and joy rising as each month passed. The couple was calm throughout the pregnancy—everything seemed normal, and they had every reason to believe that this experience would be as smooth as their past two pregnancies. On a crisp January morning at Saint Peter's University Hospital, the couple welcomed a baby boy they named Hamza, which means "lion" in Arabic.*



## *In Every Breath, a Little Hope: Hamza's Story*

**W**e were so excited to welcome Hamza to the world. My family came to our home in Edison to watch after our two older daughters, and they were so eager for us to bring Hamza home so they could meet him," said Khan.

Amidst the initial joy, however, a shadow of concern fell upon the room. Hamza was turning blue, and Saint Peter's clinical staff noticed that the newborn's blood oxygen levels were falling below the safe threshold of 90 percent. The nurses hooked Hamza up to oxygen to stabilize his levels, but the levels would plummet whenever the oxygen was removed.

"Two hours after Hamza was born, Saint Peter's staff was able to get him a chest X-ray so they could see why his oxygen levels were dropping. I was scared for my son, but I appreciated how quickly they worked together to find the cause of his distress. They immediately knew something was wrong and started working to fix it," said Haque.

The X-ray results showed that Hamza's intestines were in his ribcage. He had a congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH), which occurs when the diaphragm fails to close during prenatal development, allowing contents of the abdomen (stomach, intestines and/or liver) to move into the chest cavity. The organs then grow within the chest and impact lung development. CDH affects about 1 in every 4,000 babies and can be caught during routine prenatal ultrasounds.

Babies born with a CDH will need surgery within a few days or weeks after birth. Typically, a CDH is repaired through a large open abdominal incision. However, thoracoscopic surgery is a minimally invasive surgical procedure that is used to repair a CDH when the baby is stable.

"In thoracoscopy, a surgeon makes several small incisions in the chest and uses a laparoscope to see inside. The surgeon then uses long instruments inserted through these incisions to move the organs to their proper locations and repair the diaphragm. Thoracoscopic surgery has several advantages over traditional open surgery, including a faster recovery time, and less pain and



*Dr. L. Grier Arthur III speaks with Khan and Haque in the NICU.*

scarring," said L. Grier Arthur III, MD, FACS, FAAP, chair of the Department of Surgery at Saint Peter's University Hospital and surgeon-in-chief at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital.

Three days after Hamza was born, Dr. Arthur performed the two-hour surgery to repair his diaphragm.

"I was worried when I heard Hamza needed to have surgery, but Dr. Arthur kept us informed throughout the whole process. While I was still recovering from my C-section, Dr. Arthur personally came into my room to give us updates on Hamza's condition. He also called us right after the surgery was done so we knew that it went well. We were touched that he took the initiative to keep us informed, especially by taking the time to deliver updates in-person," said Khan.

Hamza was monitored in Saint Peter's award-winning Level IV neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for 11 days before being discharged. Khan and Haque would visit him twice every day.

"I wasn't able to hold my baby until a week after his surgery, which was difficult, but the NICU nurses made sure I was the one who gave him his bottle of milk. They made sure I felt connected with him," Khan said.

Almost a year after the surgery, Hamza is thriving.

"He's filled with so much energy! He will be able to do anything when he grows up—maybe just not become an Olympic swimmer," laughed Haque. "Looking back, I think my wife and I knew just how strong Hamza would be when we named him."

Dr. Arthur will continue to follow up with him every year until he reaches his adult size, which is when his diaphragm will stop growing.



To learn more about pediatric surgery services at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital, visit [saintpetershcs.com/pedsurgery](http://saintpetershcs.com/pedsurgery).

# Saint Peter's University Hospital Launches "TeamBirth"



*National Model's Focus: Enhancing the Labor & Delivery Experience*

Saint Peter's has launched TeamBirth, an evidence-based, national model for better provider and patient communication during the birthing experience. The goal is to empower all members of the care team, including the patient, to play an active role in shared decision-making as it has been shown to significantly improve safety, quality of care, and overall birthing outcomes. The New Jersey Department of Health is a TeamBirth NJ partner and is providing funding, ensuring that lessons learned will be shared statewide.

Improving maternal health outcomes is currently a statewide priority in New Jersey. First Lady Tammy Murphy previously launched NurtureNJ, a program aimed to reduce the state's maternal mortality by 50 percent over the next five years, while eliminating racial disparities in birth outcomes. New Jersey Department of Health data shows that pregnancy-related deaths in the state, measured per 100,000 live births, have been increasing from 12.8 (2011–2013) to 15.0 (2014–2016). In addition, figures show that Black and Hispanic women in New Jersey are seven times more likely to die in childbirth, according to data from 2014-2016 (46.9 per 100,000 live births) than White, Non-Hispanic women (6.5 per 100,000 live births).



Items documented on the whiteboard include:

- Promoting the roles of the laboring patient, nurse, and delivering provider as members of the care team with equally valuable input for decision-making
- Eliciting the patient's preferences, symptoms, and subjective experiences and integrate with clinical data to inform patient care plans
- Distinguishing maternal, fetal, and labor progress statuses and care plans
- Setting shared expectations for next the planned evaluation

TeamBirth has now been implemented in more than 60 hospitals around the country, collectively involving more than 1,500 clinicians and more than 67,000 mothers and babies. Many other practices and procedures implemented at Saint Peter's have become standard protocol in maternal health and neonatal care statewide.

**TeamBirth is offered to patients delivering at Saint Peter's University Hospital and at the Mary V. O'Shea Birth Center. To learn more about Saint Peter's maternity services, visit [saintpetershcs.com/maternity](http://saintpetershcs.com/maternity).**

"We have already received positive feedback from patients and our team members. At the core of the program are team huddles comprised of expectant mothers, nurses, and other active members of the clinical care team including certified nurse-midwives," said Pamela Harmon, DNP, MSN, RNC-NIC, director of the Women and Children's Division at Saint Peter's University Hospital, and administrative director of the Mary V. O'Shea Birth Center at Saint Peter's University Hospital. "Using a whiteboard that is present in labor and delivery rooms, the patient's care plan is updated as the labor process progresses. This simple visual ensures that there is clear communication and shared decision-making across all participants during every phase of the birthing process."

## Community Calendar

For more information or to register for a program, call the contact number listed or visit [saintpetershcs.com/events](http://saintpetershcs.com/events). Most programs are FREE unless noted; please call for information.

### Cancer Support

**Bone Marrow Transplant**  
For patients who have had an allogeneic transplant  
Call for information: 732.235.8522

**Breast Cancer**  
Call for information: 732.235.7011

**Gynecologic Cancer**  
In partnership with the Cancer Support Community Central New Jersey  
Call for information: 732.235.6792

**Living with Cancer**  
Call for information: 732.235.7557

**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 and registration: 732.339.7772

### Parent Education

Some parenting classes are being held online. Register at [saintpetershcs.com/ParentEducation](http://saintpetershcs.com/ParentEducation). Once registered for a class, access information will be provided to you. For information about the following classes, please call Parent Education at 732.745.8579.

**Baby Care**  
**Birth Center Class** (for moms under midwifery care)  
**Breastfeeding Class**  
**Breastfeeding Support Group**  
**Grandparents Class**  
**Hypnobirthing**  
**Marvelous Multiples**

**New Daddy Class**  
**New Mom Support Group**  
**Prenatal Yoga & Exercise Class**  
**Prepared Childbirth/Lamaze Classes**  
**Sibling Class**  
**Spinning Babies**

### Saint Peter's Virtual Urgent Care

Monday – Friday • 5 to 10 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday • 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



[saintpetershcs.com/virtualurgentcare](http://saintpetershcs.com/virtualurgentcare)

### Support Groups

**Bariatric Nutrition Support Group**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month  
Next meeting: November 9 • 6 – 7 pm  
Call 732.339.7450 for Zoom meeting information

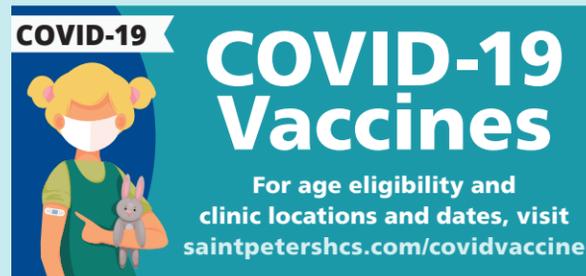
**Bereavement**  
Call Pastoral Care for information: 732.745.8565

**Craniofacial Teen Girls**  
Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8113

**MyGoal Autism Family**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month  
Next meeting: November 12 • 3 pm  
Call 877.886.9462 or email [info@mygoalautism.org](mailto:info@mygoalautism.org) for virtual meeting details

**SHARE**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month  
Next meeting: November 16 • 7 – 9 pm  
Call 732.745.8522 or email [imariano@saintpetersuh.com](mailto:imariano@saintpetersuh.com) for Zoom link

**Spouse/Partner Caregiver Support Group**  
Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8653



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.



Sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Metuchen  
State-designated children's hospital and regional perinatal center

