

# HealthPlus

## News

SERVING THE  
SYLVESTER  
COMMUNITY

## Sylvester Family Practice: Quality Primary Care for Children, Adults, and Elders

Located at HealthPlus, Sylvester Family Practice offers full-time primary care with family physician Louise Wilder, MD, and family nurse practitioner Todd McDonald, FNP-C. Dr. Wilder and McDonald deliver a range of acute, chronic, and preventive medical care services for family members of all ages.

Along with diagnosing and treating illness, they provide routine checkups, health-risk assessments, immunizations, screening tests, and personalized counseling on maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They are also available to manage chronic illness, often coordinating care provided by specialists. In addition to family medicine services, Sylvester Family Practice also offers a weight-loss clinic and spirometry lung function testing.

### Dr. Louise Wilder

Dr. Wilder is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine. After earning her medical degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Dr. Wilder completed an internship and residency in family practice at Florida Hospital in Orlando. Before joining Sylvester Family Practice in 2006, Dr. Wilder practiced medicine for nine years in New Port Richey, Florida.



Louise Wilder, MD,  
Family Practice



Todd McDonald,  
Family Nurse Practitioner

### Todd McDonald

McDonald, a Worth County native who has worked with Sylvester Family Practice since 2002, is a family nurse practitioner certified by the American Nurses

Credentialing Center. McDonald earned his nurse practitioner degree from Troy University after receiving a bachelor's degree in nursing from Valdosta State University and a master's degree in health services administration from Columbia Southern University. McDonald has more than 16 years of experience as a healthcare provider.

*Appointments are requested at Sylvester Family Practice, but not required. Walk-in patients are accepted. To make an appointment or for more information, call (229) 776-3500. Sylvester Family Practice is located at HealthPlus, 1010 W. Franklin Street, Sylvester.*

SYLVESTER  
FAMILY  
PRACTICE

Louise Wilder, M.D.  
Todd McDonald, FNP-C



## Comprehensive Services

Sylvester Family Practice offers a range of services, including:

**Family medicine:** Our practice offers primary care for family members of all ages, including management of chronic diseases; injections for allergy, flu, and pneumonia; routine gynecology; complete physical exams; health and wellness education; and pre-employment and Department of Transportation physicals.

**Weight loss:** Sylvester Family Practice can develop individualized weight-loss and wellness plans to help get patients back in shape. This personalized program utilizes nutritional guidance, realistic exercise routines, supplement recommendations, weight-loss prescription medications, and more.

**Spirometry lung function testing:** Spirometry is a simple test that measures how much (volume) and how fast (flow) air is moved into and out of the lungs. Through routine spirometry, lung diseases can often be diagnosed in the early stages when treatment is most effective.



## Complete Defense

Gray skies, post-holiday blues, and chilly weather are usually paired with the sniffles. This winter, help prevent colds, infections, and influenza (flu) by supplementing a balanced diet with a few immunity-boosting foods.

Try switching out your afternoon cup of coffee for green tea. Packed with polyphenols—natural antioxidants—green tea may keep viruses like the flu from replicating. Studies show that catechins, the polyphenols in tea, may help enhance our immune response.

Probiotics, considered “good bacteria,” promote a balance of healthful bacteria in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Adding probiotics to your diet through yogurt and other fermented dairy products can help prevent GI distress that occurs from an imbalance of bad bacteria, which can weaken the immune system. Check the label to see how many active cultures a product contains.

## Keeping Your Spine **IN LINE**

An estimated 80 percent of Americans suffer from back pain at some point in their lives. Fortunately, there is relief.

Through the Total Spine Treatment Program at Tift Regional Medical Center, patients have access to both operative and nonoperative spinal care. TRMC has two fellowship-trained orthopedic spine surgeons on its medical staff: Mac Sims, MD, and Edward Hellman, MD. In addition, TRMC offers an outpatient spine therapy center with a physical therapist, Melanie Peavy, MPT, RN, BSN.

“If you suffer from degenerative spine disease or other chronic back problems, we have experts who can treat you and help manage your symptoms,” says Chris Efaw, director of Outreach and Development at TRMC. “Our experienced staff remains on the leading edge of spinal procedures so patients can receive the best care close to home.”

*For more information about the TRMC Total Spine Treatment Program, visit [www.tiftregional.com](http://www.tiftregional.com).*



## West Campus Offers Open MRI

Open magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) service is available at Tift Regional Medical Center’s West Campus location, giving TRMC a total of three MRI options, including a high-field-strength MRI and open-bore MRI located at the hospital’s main campus.

“With these three units, we are able to provide patients and referring physicians with more options and greater convenience,” says Jerry Flannery, director of Radiology at TRMC. “The

Magnetom C! open MRI is located in a warm and welcoming suite within the West Campus.”

MRI is a noninvasive imaging modality that provides physicians with detailed images of internal organs and tissues. Traditional MRI units are closed and tunnel-shaped, while an open MRI is open on three sides, making it ideal for small children, larger patients, and those who suffer from claustrophobia or anxiety.

# Laser Therapy Relieves Pain

Tift Regional Medical Center's Outpatient Therapy Services offers a therapeutic laser system called LaserPrism for pain relief. A super-pulsed laser, LaserPrism delivers a pulse at billionths of a second. This results in a higher concentration of light energy—or photons—driven deeper into the targeted tissue, without the risk of damaging heat build-up.

LaserPrism helps physical and occupational therapists reduce pain and promote healing in patients recovering from injury or suffering from chronic disease.

"LaserPrism laser therapy has proved to be effective in relieving pain caused by injuries and arthritis," says Vance Bryant, MPT, director of Outpatient Therapy Services at TRMC. "It can speed relief of shoulder, back, and joint pain, as well as pain associated with carpal tunnel, arthritis, tendonitis, fibromyalgia, and more."

*TRMC's Outpatient Therapy Services is located in Tifton at 1641 Madison Avenue. For more information, call (229) 353-6188.*



## The Best Medicine

Need a quick, easy, and (best of all) free mood booster? Try laughter. The Mayo Clinic reports that laughter may boost the brain's production of endorphins, which relieve pain and calm the mind. Here are some tips to help you add a dose of humor—and an antidote for stress—to your life:

- **Tape a favorite comic strip to your refrigerator.** This can provide countless chuckles to brighten your day.
- **Make note of especially funny jokes and tell them to friends.** Increasing the happiness of others can add to your own happiness.
- **Try to see the humor in your difficulties.** Almost every situation has a positive side. Laughing at life's tough experiences can help you relax and give you a new, more balanced perspective.

## Get Your *Health* Groove On

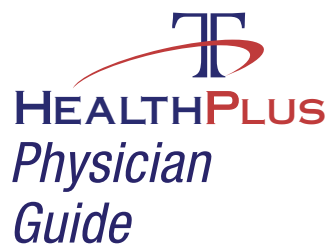
Meeting deadlines at work, caring for loved ones, and making time for friends can leave little time for women to take care of themselves, much less put their health first.

Sensing this need, the Tift Regional Medical Center Women's Imaging Center held a Girls' Night Out last October, providing women with a perfect opportunity to get up to date on their mammogram screenings as well as take time out to relax. The Women's Imaging Center expanded its hours and allowed patients to come in for an evening filled with music and hors d'oeuvres. Women were also treated to pampering massages and hand treatments while they waited to undergo their annual screening mammograms.

*Did you miss out on the fun the first time around? For more information about an upcoming Girls' Night Out or to schedule your mammogram, call (229) 353-7899.*



1010 West Franklin Street  
Sylvester, GA 31791  
[www.discoverhealthplus.com](http://www.discoverhealthplus.com)



**HEALTHPLUS**  
*Physician  
Guide*

**Louise Wilder, MD, Family Medicine**  
Available Monday through Thursday,  
8 a.m.–5 p.m., and Fridays,  
8 a.m.–1 p.m.

**Todd McDonald, FNP-C,  
Family Medicine**  
Available Monday through Thursday,  
8 a.m.–5 p.m., and Fridays,  
8 a.m.–1 p.m.

**Weight-Loss Clinic**  
Appointments are available  
on Wednesdays.

**Sandra Brickman, MD,  
Obstetrics/Gynecology**  
Available every second Tuesday,  
noon–4:30 p.m.

**Anthony Giatras, MD, Neurology**  
Available the second Thursday of  
every other month,  
9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**Eric Massa, DPM, Podiatrist**  
Available every second Wednesday  
and fourth Monday, 8 a.m.–noon.


**Bret Wagenhorst, MD,  
Ophthalmology**  
Available every first Wednesday,  
2–4:30 p.m.  
To make an appointment, please  
call (229) 386-2181.

**Diabetes Education**  
Available the first and third  
Thursday, 8:30 a.m.–noon.

**HealthPlus is located in  
Sylvester at 1010 W. Franklin  
Street. To make an appointment,  
please call (229) 776-3500.  
Visit the HealthPlus web site at  
[www.discoverhealthplus.com](http://www.discoverhealthplus.com).**

Please note: Specialists are  
independent contractors who  
lease space from HealthPlus on a  
weekly or monthly basis and are  
not employees of Tift Regional  
Medical Center.

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



## Improving the Outlook for Glaucoma Patients

**Glaucoma is the term for a group of conditions that cause damage to the optic nerve, resulting in vision problems.**



**Bret Wagenhorst, MD,  
Ophthalmologist**

**G**laucoma is the second most common cause of blindness in the United States and is caused by increased pressure in the eye. Patients are at a higher risk of developing glaucoma if they:

- are older than 40
- have African-American, Hispanic, Irish, Russian, Scandinavian, or Japanese heritage
- have a family history of glaucoma
- have diabetes
- have poor vision
- take steroids, such as prednisone

### Treatment Options

Today, patients who are diagnosed with glaucoma have a variety of treatment options. Popular treatment methods include eye drops, laser surgery, and microsurgery.

While vision loss due to glaucoma is irreversible, treatments that work to lower pressure in the eye can successfully prevent further vision loss. Most patients who receive treatment for glaucoma do not experience blindness.

If you're having vision problems or are at increased risk for developing glaucoma, it's important to meet with an ophthalmologist who can monitor your vision.

***Bret Wagenhorst, MD, ophthalmologist at Tift Regional Medical Center, is available to see patients the first Wednesday of each month at the Sylvester HealthPlus Clinic. To make an appointment, please call (229) 386-2181.***