A Hole in His Heart
His life saved at Tufts MC, a Boston man gives back.

Take 5: Sleep Apnea
Tips for dealing with this potentially serious condition.

Gotta Go?
Botox can help with that!

Also, enjoy our healthy Ratatouille recipe!
Have an urgent health need?
Wait at home, not in the ER waiting room.

Sometimes an illness or injury isn’t life-threatening but needs hospital ER care. At Tufts Medical Center and Floating Hospital for Children, we’ve got an online app to make waiting easier.

If you or a family member has an urgent—but not life-threatening—medical need, such as a possible broken bone or a fever spiking in the middle of the night, use our new online service to check in for an estimated treatment time. Then simply wait in the comfort of your own home and come to the ER at your scheduled time.

**It’s this easy:**
- Go to tuftsmedicalcenter.org/faster-boston-ER-wait.
- Select a projected treatment time for an adult or child.
- Complete a simple online form.
- Arrive at Tufts Medical Center’s Emergency Department, 830 Washington Street, Boston. We will be waiting for you.

For life- and limb-threatening conditions, do not use this service. Call 9-1-1 or go to your nearest hospital emergency room.

This service launched in the spring, and patients say they love the convenience. Patients can expect to be seen within 15 minutes of their scheduled time, but most are seen as soon as they arrive. If there is a delay, they’ll be notified by phone or email so they can continue waiting at home. One patient wrote us, “Excellent, thorough, attentive, quick. All-around impressed with the hospital staff and system. Would never visit the ER (for a non-life-threatening condition) again without it.”

**A space just for kids 24/7**

When your child needs to be seen in the emergency room, Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center is making sure the visit is as comfortable as possible. Our separate space dedicated to children in the ER is now open 24/7 so kids can be in a child-friendly place. In addition to our excellent doctors and nurses, we have Child Life specialists who use age-specific play and comforting techniques to help children through the traumatic experience of emergencies, big or little. Our Child Life professionals are available from 10 am until 2 am. There’s even a playroom where children and families can occupy themselves between tests or while waiting for a sibling, regardless of the hour.

With some of the shortest wait times to be found anywhere, the Emergency Department at Floating Hospital begins treating children on average within 23 minutes. You can also use our online app to pick your time.
Primary care at night or the weekend? No problem.

A visit with your primary care doctor—whether for an annual physical or to check out that nagging ache—can be tough to sandwich in between business meetings and a busy social or family life. But now Tufts Medical Center Primary Care offers extended hours: Monday through Thursday from 8 am to 8 pm, and Saturday from 8 am to noon.

“We know that people who live and work in Boston lead busy lives, and they need the ability to see their physician on their schedule, not the traditional doctor’s office schedule,” says Deborah Blazey-Martin, MD, MPH, Chief of Adult Internal Medicine and Primary Care at Tufts MC. “So we’ve expanded our hours to meet the demands of their lifestyles.”

It’s hard to know who’s busier—parents or their kids—and fortunately the general pediatricians at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center can also see kids after school, practice or games. Appointments—including both sick and well visits—can be scheduled from 8 am to 8 pm Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 5 pm Friday, and with sick visits available from 9 am to 12:30 pm on Saturday. No more excuses for skipping that flu shot (sorry, kids).

Learn more about Tufts Medical Center’s Primary Care extended hours at tuftsmedicalcenter.org/primarycare, or to schedule an appointment, call 617-636-5400. Make an appointment with a Floating Hospital pediatrician at 617-636-5255 or go to floatinghospital.org/pediatric_appointment.
JACK CREEHAN WAS A HEALTHY 25-YEAR-OLD RUNNING A HALF-MARATHON through Downtown Crossing until, suddenly, he collapsed of heatstroke. Jack was rushed to Tufts Medical Center, thrust into an ice bath and placed in a medical-induced coma. A breathing tube kept him alive as a team of specialists figured out what went wrong—and his family waited helplessly. Awakened two weeks later, Jack learned his diagnosis: a hole in his heart.

Q: What happened after the doctors woke you up?
A: Well, the first week was pretty foggy. I could process what the doctors told me, but the significance of it didn’t sink in until later. Over the next few weeks, they weaned me off the drugs and kidney dialysis, which was 24/7 at one point. I did leg exercises to prep for rehab and rebuild my strength. I give credit to the nurses for encouraging me to fight and get going again. That made a big difference.

Q: How did the hole in your heart impact your health?
A: The doctors discovered the atrial septal defect when I was in intensive care. I never noticed any symptoms before, but it was probably a factor in the heatstroke. I returned to Tufts Medical Center a year later to repair the hole, and it was as simple as heart surgery could possibly be. Minimally invasive through my femoral artery. Went home the next day.

Q: Four years later, how are you doing?
A: I’ve made a full recovery. I had several follow-up appointments, but everything looks great for my heart and kidney function. I’m conscious not to overexert myself with cardio, but I go to the gym several times a week.

Q: You spent several weeks at the hospital—and now you come back voluntarily?
A: I had a unique experience because I was so uninvolved in my care early on. But I was lucky to be at Tufts Medical Center. The way the staff communicated with my parents and wife, Kara, was impressive. The team was clearly integrated, from ER to ICU to the heart and kidney specialists. So I wanted to give back by joining the Patient and Family Advisory Council. We meet once a month to discuss what it’s like to be a patient here at Tufts Medical Center. It’s a great forum to give feedback to the medical community and try to make things even better.
Gotta Go?

Botox can help with that! Botox has a reputation as a wrinkle-eraser, but it has important medical applications as well.

Pelvic floor disorder specialists are using Botox as a noninvasive way to help women with incontinence. Tanaz Ferzandi, MD, Tufts Medical Center’s Director of the Division of Urogynecology and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery, explains how it is helping many of her overactive bladder patients regain their quality of life:

“Overactive bladder is very common, even though most women don’t talk about it. Many women think that incontinence is a normal consequence of aging or childbirth, but that isn’t true.

“Botox works by causing temporary muscle paralysis. When the bladder muscle is overactive, it wants to contract and release urine too often, even if it isn’t full. By injecting Botox into the bladder muscle, we induce a temporary paralysis that helps quiet the feeling of having to go urgently or frequently. Botox allows the bladder to fill to a higher capacity so women can hold urine for longer periods of time.

“It’s an effective treatment option between lifestyle modifications (like limiting caffeine and alcohol) and the more invasive procedures—and it can be performed in the office. There’s no recovery time, and patients go home the same day. Research has shown that Botox treatments are more cost-effective than medication, and they can last up to 10 months.

“It’s really about improving your quality of life. Women with an overactive bladder should talk with their physician, who can help sort out the best treatment options for them.”

To book an appointment with Dr. Ferzandi or her colleague Danielle Patterson, MD, MSc, call 617-636-5890. For more information on treatments for an overactive bladder, please visit www.tuftsmedicalcenter.org/botoxforbladders.
In our always-on-the-go world, few of us get enough sleep. Yet many people also suffer from a serious condition called sleep apnea. According to Khalid Ismail, MD, Director of the Center for Sleep Medicine at Tufts Medical Center, sleep is as critical to healthy living as diet and exercise. Lack of sleep affects your mood and memory, and can lead to depression and cardiovascular issues. Here are five things you should know about sleep apnea:

1. **DON’T SLEEP ON THE WARNING SIGNS** The main symptom of sleep apnea is hard to miss: loud snoring. But there are others to watch for. Do you have trouble falling asleep? Do you stop breathing for a few seconds overnight, suddenly choking or gasping for air? Are you tired even after a full night’s rest? Do you fall asleep at odd times—in meetings, in class, on the train—and feel fatigued all day? If you or your partner notice these signs, talk to a doctor.

2. **YOUR THROAT IS TO BLAME** As you go into deep sleep, your jaw and tongue muscles relax. But if your throat isn’t wide enough, those muscles block your breathing airway and limit oxygen intake, which wakes you up.

3. **IT’S MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK** If 42 million Americans have some form of disordered sleep breathing, maybe there’s a reason everyone is so tired all the time. Among US adults between the ages of 30 and 70, 26 percent are estimated to have obstructive sleep apnea, and 75 percent of cases go undiagnosed. And the numbers are rising due to increasing obesity rates.

4. **THE TREATMENTS WORK** The most common—and most successful—treatment is called CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure), a device that blows air under pressure and pushes soft tissues aside during sleep. For those with mild sleep apnea, a dental device can be used to open the airway. Some patients may also be candidates for surgery, where more space is created in the back of the throat to help you breathe.

5. **OBESITY IS A CONCERN** Weight gain can exacerbate symptoms as an increase in fat around the throat makes the airway that much smaller. In fact, the majority of sleep apnea patients are overweight, making weight loss an important part of the treatment plan.

**WAKE UP TO BETTER HEALTH**
You deserve a good night’s rest. Our Center for Sleep Medicine takes a multidisciplinary approach to sleep apnea, bringing together a team of pulmonologists, neurologists, dentists and psychologists specializing in sleep disorders to form a comprehensive plan for your health. To make an appointment, call 617-636-6377 or visit tuftsmedicalcenter.org/sleep.
Ratatouille

Ratatouille is a classic Provençal vegetable stew made in the late summer or early fall. The best texture is achieved by cooking the vegetables separately, and the dish keeps well for a few days, improving with time. Ratatouille tastes great with a piece of grilled fish, meat or crumbled goat cheese. Fold leftovers into an omelet for breakfast.

**INGREDIENTS**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 cup</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>zucchini, diced</td>
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<td>1 cup</td>
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<td>1 tsp</td>
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<tr>
<td>½ tsp</td>
<td>black pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opt.</td>
<td>goat cheese</td>
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**INSTRUCTIONS**

Heat a wide, heavy skillet with a layer of olive oil. Once hot, add zucchini in an even layer. Cook for 2 minutes. Drain in a colander. Repeat with the remaining zucchini, squash and eggplant and reserve. (It’s important to cook the vegetables in small batches so they don’t become soggy.)

Once all the eggplant, zucchini and squash are cooked, heat a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Start cooking the garlic in olive oil. Once the garlic is fragrant, add the onions and cook for a few minutes. Add the peppers next and cook for a few more minutes, 10–15 minutes total.

Next add the tomatoes and cook down until thick and sauce-like. Add all the reserved, drained vegetables, sherry vinegar, thyme, salt and pepper and stir to combine.

Yield: 8 servings

**NUTRITION**

Calories: 274; Fat: 28g (23g unsaturated); Protein: 2g; Carbs: 8g; Fiber: 2g; Vitamins: High in vitamin C and vitamin A

**ABOUT THE CHEF**

Mike Zentner is Chef de Cuisine of Gaslight Brasserie du Coin, a French brasserie in the South End. For more about Gaslight and Chef Zentner, visit www.gaslight560.com and follow @ChefMikeZ.