LEONARDTOWN, Md. – The Wound Healing Center at MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital is helping raise awareness of chronic wounds during the second annual Wound Care Awareness Week being held June 1-5. The MedStar St. Mary’s Wound Center offers advanced therapies to patients suffering from chronic wounds which are often associated with diabetes, pressure sores, burns, post surgical, venous stasis and other non-healing wounds.

Chronic wounds affect an estimated 6.7 million people in the United States and the incidence is rising, fueled by an aging population and increasing rates of diseases and conditions such as diabetes, obesity and the late effects of radiation therapy. Untreated, chronic wounds can lead to diminished quality of life and possible amputation of the affected limb.

“Education of wound care helps with so many more aspects of a person’s healthcare,” said Olivia Sartain, Operations Specialist for MedStar St. Mary’s Wound Healing Center. “There has to be a reason why a patient’s wounds aren’t healing.”

In an effort to uncover the cause of a patient’s chronic wound, the Wound Healing Center’s team uses a multi-disciplinary approach which employs the latest assessment and therapeutic methods. Each patient receives a customized wound care plan, proper medication plan and nutrition plan, in addition to consistent care and collaboration with their primary care physician.

“We are here to help,” said Sartain. “By sending patients to us to heal their wounds, it allows the physicians in the community to focus on their specialties. We collaborate with the physicians to keep them up to date on their patient’s status and how they are healing, and send them back when healed. We have had very positive feedback since our center opened from physicians and other healthcare providers in the community.”

MedStar St. Mary’s Wound Healing Center is equipped with two state-of-the-art hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) chambers, which use a combination of high pressure and pure oxygen to help patients heal at a quicker rate than traditional treatments.

“Before we opened in December of 2012, the patients in our community had to travel to D.C. or Baltimore for this therapy,” said Sartain.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy could mean a two-hour, Monday through Friday commitment, and the additional four hours of travel time meant the therapy was not possible for some patients.

“Having this progressive therapy available close to home makes it more accessible and convenient for our patients,” said Sartain.

Wound Care Week is sponsored by Healogics, the nation’s largest provider of advance wound care services. The Wound Healing Center at MedStar St. Mary’s is one of nearly 800 Healogics-managed centers in the nation.

People with wounds that have not improved with traditional methods of treatment may benefit from a visit to MedStar St. Mary’s Wound Healing Center. For more information about the Wound Healing Center, visit the hospital’s web site at MedStarStMarys.org. To schedule an appointment, call 240-434-7670.

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