

Healthy Lifestyles

Five-star health and wellness news from LeConte Medical Center | 865.453.9355 | www.lecontemedicalcenter.org

LeConte Surgeon Glad to Be Back in the South

You've been told you need surgery, you're a bit nervous, and you have plenty of questions. The door opens, and you get your first look at the man whose care you'll be in.

"Hi, I'm William Ngo," he says, introducing himself. "I'll be the general surgeon taking care of you."

There's nothing extraordinary about the greeting, except for what's not there. William Ngo (pronounced "no") doesn't refer to himself as "Doctor."

"I avoid the term because some people find it intimidating," the LeConte Medical Center surgeon says. "I just try to make it a little easier for them to talk to me, like you're talking to a friend."

Dr. Ngo says that's the approach he takes with every patient and every case, keeping the patient first, opening the lines of communication for a partnership that can lead to resolved medical issues. Dr. Ngo's priority is making sure patients understand what's happening, in layman's terms that are easy to understand.

"I always try to treat patients with respect and kindness," Dr. Ngo says. "I'm always treating patients as if they were my friend or family."

Dr. Ngo's attitude and approach is a perfect fit for East Tennessee, where he says he's loved experiencing the friendliness of everyone he meets. Raised in Florida,

Dr. Ngo is no stranger to the warmth of southern hospitality.

Dr. Ngo was looking to relocate a little farther south, and had stopped in Knoxville several times as a halfway point between his work in Michigan and his family in Florida.

East Tennessee friends told him how much they loved living here. Dr. Ngo decided he could easily make a home here, too.

The career path that led to LeConte Medical Center started in his home state. After obtaining a degree in microbiology from the University of Florida, Dr. Ngo attended medical school at the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. From there, he did his residency at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital in Clinton Township, and practiced there until he accepted a position with LeConte Medical Center.

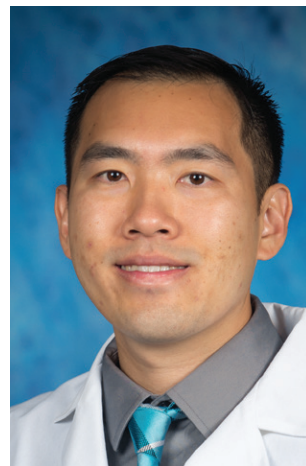
Dr. Ngo says he knew from an early age that he wanted to go into the field of medicine, as he watched his father, internal medicine physician Vinh Ngo, MD, interacting with patients. As the two would go about their small town together, patients would approach the elder Dr. Ngo and express gratitude, thankful for the treatment they'd received under his care.

"Hearing them express appreciation for the way my father had made a difference in their lives made me want

to do that as well," Dr. Ngo explains.

His original plan was to focus on internal medicine, just like his father. He switched his focus to surgery not long after entering medical school. "My very first day on my very first rotation in general surgery, I absolutely fell in love with it," he says.

What captivated his interest was the way a surgeon can go inside the human body to treat or even correct a problem at its root, rather than managing it from the outside. He remembers, for example, how rewarding it was to help a diverticulitis



William Ngo, DO

patient through the process of a colostomy, then later a reversal of the procedure when the patient's condition improved.

"Following him through the process and making sure he understood why we were doing things," Dr. Ngo recalls, "it was just a really

rewarding experience, being able to see him at his worst, and then later on with a restored quality of life."

Settling into his new home over the summer, Dr. Ngo didn't wait long before he began stepping out to enjoy all that the area has to offer. In addition to restaurants and attractions, he's traveled into the mountains to enjoy the natural beauty of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"It's absolutely gorgeous," he says, "I fell in love with it."

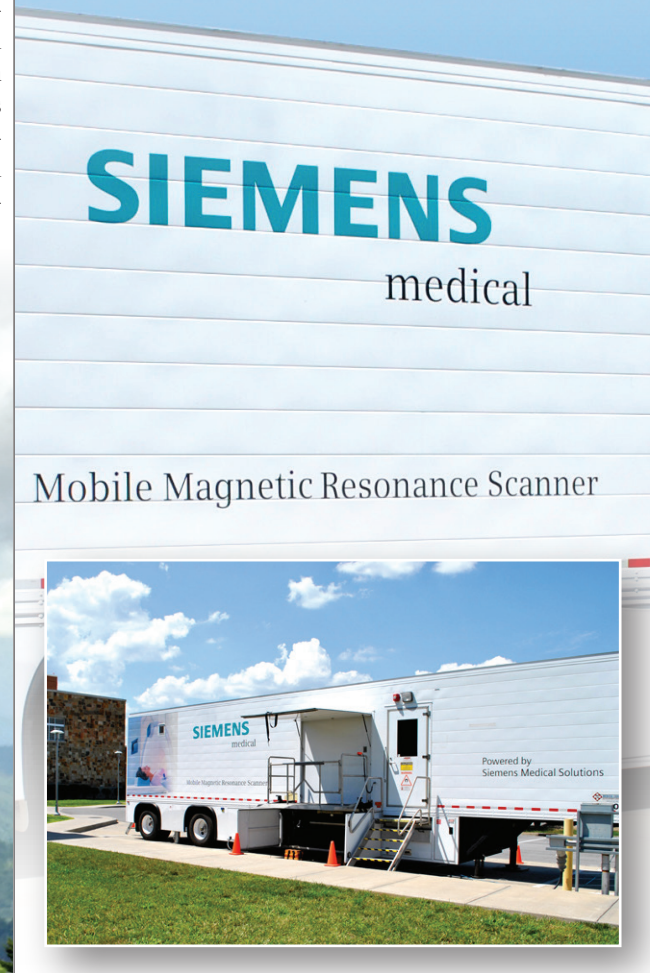
LeConte Medical Center is pleased that Dr. Ngo chose to practice in Sevier County and become part of our community healthcare team. Adding a third general surgeon means even better access to quality care for our community in both the outpatient and emergency setting. Dr. Ngo's clinical interests include: advanced laparoscopic techniques, complex hernias and colorectal disease.

Dr. Ngo joined Jeffrey S. King, MD, and Brian Pugh, DO, at LeConte Surgical Associates on August 1. LeConte Surgical Associates is located in the Dr. Robert F. Thomas Professional Building adjacent to LeConte Medical Center. For more information call (865) 446-9550.

LeConte Adds Mobile MRI Scanner

The most recent addition to the technology at LeConte Medical Center is a mobile MRI. The Siemens Magnetron 1.5 Symphony MRI unit provides the same excellent images as the hospital's original MRI, which is still in operation.

The hospital continues to see an increase in the MRIs ordered by area providers, and performed almost 5000 MRIs in 2015, averaging over 400 a month. So far in 2016 the hospital is averaging more than 420 MRIs a month. The addition of the mobile MRI unit will allow our staff to provide more efficient care to our MRI patients.



LMC surgeon William Ngo, DO, pauses to capture a moment on a hike to Clingman's Dome with girlfriend Lauren Christensen.



Volunteering May Be Good for Your Heart in More Ways than One

Anyone who has ever been a volunteer knows that it feels good to help others, but researchers have found a less obvious benefit: volunteering can help reduce older adults' risk of high blood pressure.

The study included more than 1,100 adults, ages 51 to 91, who were interviewed about their volunteering and had their blood pressure checked. All of them had normal blood pressure at the time of the first interview.

The investigators found that participants who said during the first interview that they volunteered for at least 200 hours per year were 40 percent less likely to have high blood pressure four years later than those who did not volunteer.

It didn't matter what type of activity the volunteers performed. Only the amount

of time spent helping others as a volunteer was associated with a reduced risk of high blood pressure, according to the study scheduled for publication in the journal *Psychology and Aging*.

The findings suggest that volunteering may be an effective, medicine-free option to help prevent high blood pressure, which is a major contributor to cardiovascular disease—the leading cause of death in the United States. High blood pressure, or hypertension, affects about 65 million Americans.

The results of the study give older adults an example of something that they can do to remain healthy and age successfully.

As people get older, social transitions like retirement, bereavement and the departure of children from

the home often leave older adults with fewer natural opportunities for social interaction. Participating in volunteer activities may provide older adults with social connections that they might not have otherwise.

Studies show that having good social connections promotes healthy aging and reduces risk for a number of negative health outcomes. While the study found an association between time spent volunteering and blood pressure levels, it did not prove a cause-and-effect relationship.

Do your heart some good. Join the LeConte Medical Center Volunteer organization. Volunteers of all ages and from all walks of life bring their unique skills and personalities to LeConte and fill roles such as front desk greeters, gift

shop sales, thrift shop sales, nursing home activities assistants, clerical support and more. Volunteering is a wonderful way to make a difference in the commu-

nity, meet new people, and learn new skills.

Join the LeConte Medical Volunteers and see what a difference volunteering can make. For more in-

formation or to become a volunteer, please call (865) 446-8406 or visit www.lecontemedicalcenter.com/volunteer to apply online.





A Healthy School Lunch ... It's in the Bag!

Children and teens can get their hands on plenty of junk food, fast food, and other treats throughout the day. By sending them off to school with a healthy lunch, you can help ensure that they have at least one chance to fuel their bodies with nutritious options.

The ground rules are simple. Healthy basics are protein, whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables, and low-fat milk or other dairy foods. Good sources of protein are lean meat, such as chicken breast; peanut butter; and beans, including soybeans in the form of fun-to-eat edamame.

Packing lunches with creativity

In addition to covering the basics, your kids will love surprises as well as being part of the planning. Try these ideas to pack a lunch that your young students will eat, rather than trade or toss out:

- **Get your children's input.** Kids are more likely to eat their lunch if they help prepare it. Ask your children what foods they prefer in each category, such as fruits and vegetables, and be sure to collect several ideas. Stock up so you'll have enough ingredients on hand at all times.
- **Bring in some novelty.** It's easy for children to get into a rut, eating the same foods over and over. Take your child with you when you go to the supermarket and make a habit of trying new foods. The produce department offers many kinds of fruits with appealing shapes and textures, like starfruit and pomegranates. Also venture down the international foods aisle, where you're likely to find unique beans, noo-

dles, sauces, and other options to expand your child's palate.

- **Prepare lunch with a creative flair.** When it comes to feeding your children, you're up against tough competition. Fast-food chains and snack makers know how to appeal to kids with brightly colored packaging and lots of added sugar. Counter these temptations by tossing fun options into their lunch bags or boxes to make mealtime more interesting:
 - Fill a small, reusable container with honey mustard, barbecue sauce, or ketchup for dipping pieces of chicken or with low-fat ranch dressing for dipping baby carrots.
 - Instead of always stacking sandwiches between two pieces of bread, roll up your fill-

ings in a wrap or dispense with the bread entirely and place shaved turkey breast in a deli-sized slice of cheddar cheese and a lettuce leaf. Instead of packing one large sandwich, consider making a handful of tiny sandwiches on whole-wheat crackers. For a snack, replace chips with apple slices and a small container of almond butter for dipping or popcorn sprinkled with flavorful herbs.

- **Make lunch healthy and safe.** Perishable items, such as meats and many cheeses, need to stay cold and shouldn't linger at room temperature for more than two hours. Place a reusable frozen gel pack or frozen juice box into an insulated lunch box or bag to help keep foods cold.

Kids Need Enough Sleep to Succeed at School

Although many kids stay up late on long summer days, once school starts this week they should return to their normal sleep routines, experts say. Adequate sleep is essential to a child's academic success and overall well-being. Researchers say that 3-to-5-year-olds need at 11 to 13 hours of shut-eye per night. Five to 12-year-olds need at least 10 or 11 hours a night.

From memory to judgment, attention span, emotional stability and even immunity, sleep deprivation negatively affects school-age children. As for adolescents, it's a common myth that they need less sleep and can handle only seven or eight hours. They actually need nine hours of sleep. Adolescents are typically the most sleep-deprived population in school. A poll by the National Sleep Foundation revealed that 60 percent of children under the age

of 18 complained of being tired during the day. Moreover, 15 percent admitted to falling asleep at school.

Since missed hours of sleep can add up and have detrimental effects on children, experts recommend that parents remove electronic devices from their child's room, making it as calm and peaceful as possible. On average, there are three or four electronic gadgets in a kid's room. It's been shown that even sleeping with a television on deprives them of 20 minutes of sleep per night, which may not sound like a lot, but adds up over a week's time. The LeConte Sleep Disorders Center offers specialized care for youth (age 13 and older) with sleep disorders. Call (865) 446-7625 for more information or visit www.lecontemedicalcenter.com/sleep.



Brain Food: Does Diet Matter Against Alzheimer's Disease?

Eating a healthy diet may help prevent many diseases. Two big ones are heart disease and cancer. But what about Alzheimer's disease? A recent study suggests certain foods may work against this disabling brain illness, too.

Diet and your brain

People with Alzheimer's disease slowly lose the ability to remember, think, and reason. In time, they may not be able to do even basic activities. A type of dementia, Alzheimer's disease can't be cured. That's a grim outlook for the growing number of older adults suffering from it.

As a result, experts are feverishly studying how and why a person develops Alzheimer's disease. Prospects for preventing it are still in their infancy. But one area of intense research is diet. One recent study looked at whether a specific eating pattern may help fend off the brain disease. It's called the MIND diet.

MIND stands for Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay. It blends parts of the well-known Mediterranean Diet and DASH—an eating pattern for people with high blood pressure. Like those two diets, MIND stresses

eating more plant-based foods and less red meat.

In the study, researchers asked nearly 1,000 older adults about the foods they ate over one year. They then tracked their health for an average of 4.5 years. Adults who ate the most foods in line with the MIND diet were about half as likely to develop Alzheimer's disease. Even those who sometimes ate MIND-based foods benefited. These results still stood after researchers ruled out the role of other healthy behaviors.

Better brain food

Much is still unknown about what causes Alzheimer's disease. And the MIND study doesn't prove that eating a specific way can protect you from it. But eating healthier overall may still be best for your brain. Past studies have linked certain foods to better cognitive health.

Even though more research is needed, the following dietary changes may help both your brain and your body, particularly your heart. Some studies point to poor vascular health

as a cause of dementia.

- Cut back on saturated fats and trans fats. These dietary no-nos lurk in high-fat dairy products, meats, pastries, and fried foods.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables. Produce is packed with vitamins and minerals. Leafy green veggies—like spinach and kale—may be truly good for the mind. They contain vitamin E. One more possible power food for the brain: berries.
- Choose olive oil when cooking. It's healthier than butter or margarine. It's a basic ingredient in the Mediterranean diet.
- Favor other low-fat, nutrient-rich foods. These include beans, nuts, fish, and whole grains.

You may be able to keep away Alzheimer's disease in other ways, too. Stay physically active. A lack of exercise may account for many cases of the disease. So, too, might sleep problems. Ongoing research also suggests activities, such as word puzzles, games, and intellectual pursuits, may boost brain health.



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

Our new site is easy to use on any device.



www.lecontemedicalcenter.com