

# Epilepsy to be focus of upcoming 'Dinner With the Doctor'

Epilepsy will affect as many as 2 percent of the population at some point during their lifetime. New cases of epilepsy are most common among young children, with an increased incidence occurring after age 55 or 60 when people begin to develop strokes, brain tumors or cognitive disorders.

To discuss the causes and risk factors of epilepsy, and to take a look at the latest drug and surgical treatments, Dr. Evan Fertig, a board certified neurologist and epileptologist, and co-director of the new Epilepsy Center at Jersey City Medical Center, will speak at the next "Dinner with the Doctor" event,



## HEALTH SECTION

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scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 18, at 6:30 p.m., at Jersey City Medical Center, 355 Grand St.

"Dinner with the Doctor" gives area residents the chance to enjoy a light dinner and listen to leading physicians discuss their specialty and answer questions. There is no cost for the hour-long program.

### Epilepsy defined

Technically, when a person suffers at least two seizures – when abnormal electrical discharges create a "storm" of electrical activity in the brain – they have epilepsy.

Children may be born with a defect in the structure of their brain, or they may suffer a head injury or infection that causes their epilepsy. For young adults, severe head injury is the most common cause of epilepsy; for those who are middle age it is stroke, tumors and traumatic brain injuries; and for seniors it is often a result of stroke or a degenerative condition like Alzheimer's disease.

Seizures can occur once or twice in one's lifetime, or can completely incapacitate an individual because of their frequency. About 80 percent of those treated with seizure medication will remain free of seizures for at least two years and many will never have them again. Still others will depend on surgery to limit or reduce their incidence of

seizures after medication has failed. Dr. Fertig will discuss the most recent advances in both treatments.

"Our mission is 'enhancing life' and, this 'Dinner with the Doctor' event will certainly help accomplish this by answering many of the questions people in the community have regarding epilepsy," said Joseph F. Scott, FACHE, President and CEO of LibertyHealth, which operates and manages Jersey City Medical Center and Meadowlands Hospital in Secaucus. "We strongly encourage those individuals who have loved ones or friends with epilepsy, as well as educators and safety officials, to attend this important event."

Dr. Fertig, an epileptologist with the Northeast Regional Epilepsy Group, was recently appointed a co-director of the new Epilepsy Center at Jersey City Medical Center. He is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology at Yale University School of Medicine. He trained at Yale University School of Medicine and is a graduate of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and Grinnell College. He is a member of the Epilepsy Study Consortium.

"Dinner with the Doctor" is held in the first-floor cafeteria at Jersey City Medical Center (355 Grand Street, corner of Grand and Jersey). To register, call (201) 915-2305. This session is limited to 125 people. □