

C NORTH OAKS Community

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NORTH
OAKS **SPORTS
PERFORMANCE:**

**A DIFFERENT
APPROACH**

TO HEALTHCARE

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A MESSAGE FROM NORTH OAKS HEALTH SYSTEM CEO

Fall is a season synonymous with reflection and embracing change. How fitting that North Oaks enters this season of transformation by growing in numerous and exciting ways to expand access to care and support better health outcomes!

With great excitement, we recently announced a strengthened affiliation with Children's Hospital New Orleans. We intend to build upon our existing relationship to enhance our pediatric services through the addition of pediatric subspecialists and development of new pediatric services at North Oaks Medical Center and in the surrounding communities across multiple phases. We are honored that Children's Hospital New Orleans believes in the quality of care our team provides and that they are doubling down on their commitment to provide a healthy future for Louisiana's children with us as a partner.

Still another partnership with the North Oaks Foundation, First Guaranty Bank and other donors endeavors to place our first Mobile Health Unit into service! This project represents a substantial investment in our ability to take health care services on the road beyond the brick and mortar of our facilities. We count ourselves fortunate to serve a community that shares our sense of social responsibility that is attuned to the fact that the health of our region is dependent upon the health of its citizens.

To that end, we continue to expand our multispecialty clinic network and attract new providers like Hammond native Dr. Rose DePaula-Cox, who joins Magnolia Obstetrics & Gynecology, and Dr. Michelle Sliva, a sports medicine physician who joins North Oaks Orthopaedic Specialty Center. Recent additions also include fellowship-trained Cardiovascular Thoracic Surgeon Jose Mena, M.D., FACS, to North Oaks Cardiovascular Services and the opening of North Oaks Hematology & Oncology Clinic, staffed by fellowship-trained Hematologist and Oncologist Georges Tanios, M.D.

North Oaks also is making a significant investment in the providers of the future. By welcoming 10 third-year medical students from Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Monroe to our campus for clinical rotations this year, we took a first crucial step toward becoming a teaching hospital and establishing a graduate medical education program with the goal of attracting more providers to our medically underserved region.

There are many more examples of our mission to improve lives in action contained within the pages of this newsletter. For example, more and more young athletes are turning to our Sports Performance program to receive motivation, inspiration and support in becoming the best version of themselves beyond their chosen sport. Geriatrician Abir Abdo, M.D., imparts strategies that older adults can use to remain independent as they age, while our Shock Trauma team is offering free training courses to empower people to assist in a bleeding emergency when minutes count.

You can have every confidence that our efforts to best care for you and your loved ones in every season of life is as important to us now as it was in 1960.

Our course is set on improving lives, and our purpose is you!

Sincerely,

Michele K. Sutton, FACHE



How to Keep Your

Being independent and aging is not an easy task. When your aging loved one starts to slow down, it can be tempting for the caregiver to take over and do too much for them. Taking away your aging loved one's independence can make them feel hopeless and depressed. It is crucial to provide the care they need while maintaining as much independence as possible. Nurturing your aging loved one to stay independent provides dignity and respect, contributing to their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Here are a few tips to help your aging loved one remain independent:



- **Take Care of Their Dietary Habits** -

A healthy diet is the key to healthy aging and can prevent an array of lifestyle diseases. Focus on the intake of carbohydrates while limiting the amount of sugar and processed foods they consume. Adequate fluid intake is also essential.

- **Encourage Exercise** - Exercising regularly encourages your loved one to become physically active and improves cognitive functioning. Staying active is important for good health and independence.



- **Keep Their Brain Busy** - Not only should their bodies be moving regularly, but also their minds. Play along and encourage whatever activities they enjoy doing! Motivate them to play cards, board games, sudoku, a crossword puzzle or play along to a TV game show.



Aging Loved Ones **INDEPENDENT**

- **Safety at Home and Outside** -

Prepare their home to make them feel confident and safe to move around. Rugs are a major reason for accidental falls. Be sure to remove rugs and toys lying on the floor. Water on the floor can cause loved ones to slip and fall. Install rails and grab bars in hallways and bathrooms for support. Shower benches are also another necessity you can provide in bathrooms. Consider getting a personal emergency response system if they are alone for lengths of time, so they can easily call for help.



- **Involve Them in Your Day-To-Day Lives** -

Ask them to participate in daily chores and errands. Asking for their help in making a grocery list, folding laundry, or stirring a pot requires small physical labor that makes them feel involved and special.



As loved ones age, they develop unique medical concerns that caregivers tend to focus on to care for them. Suppose their care goes beyond their caregivers' abilities and appears to be putting them in danger or causing severe distress and discomfort. In this case, the best thing to do is make an appointment to speak to a board-certified geriatrician. A geriatrician will be familiar with their medical history and prescriptions and can recommend the best way to treat the problem.



Dr. Abir Abdo is a board-certified geriatrician with Northshore Internal Medicine Associates at North Oaks.

 **NORTHSHORE**
Internal Medicine Associates

www.northoaks.org
(985) 230-2778

Walking Down the Aisle to Recovery

"I'm fine."

"I'm too young for this."

"Everyone is overreacting."

"I just need to change up my lifestyle."

These are the phrases that 33-year-old Kristin Clemons continued to play in her mind as her medical condition worsened by the day.

Clemons started having what she thought were seizures. Her symptoms consisted of body tremors and the loss of motor functions and speech.

With her fairytale wedding less than a month away and five children to consider, Clemons convinced herself that her symptoms came from a lack of nutrition in her diet.

On February 22, 2021, Clemons had three seizure-like episodes that left her family in shock so they rushed her to the emergency room. As a former case management employee, Clemons was no stranger to North Oaks Health System, so she prepared her fiancé for the multiple tests she would possibly be subjected to in the emergency room.

"I mentally prepared myself for something to be wrong, but never in a million years did I expect it to be something like this," Clemons stated.

"When the emergency room physician told me it was a mass, I had my moment of screaming and crying. But the first thing that came to my mind was my kids; I knew they wouldn't be ready for this kind of news."

"Her MRI scan showed a bleeding area deep within her brain, a vascular malformation that would require surgery.

There was just one problem: she was getting married in four weeks. I attempted to convince her to delay the wedding, but the young bride-to-be would not hear of it," her neurosurgeon, Dr. Alexander, shared.

A CAT scan confirmed a cavernoma (a cluster of abnormal blood vessels) on Clemons's brain and the blood vessels surrounding it ruptured, causing her seizure-like activity. With thoughts of her family, upcoming wedding and future, the mention of undergoing brain surgery was terrifying.

"With all of my options laid out for me by Dr. Alexander, I felt the decision was easy. I know that might sound crazy because choosing brain surgery cannot be an easy decision to make, but he made me feel comfortable that I was making the best decision for myself and my family. He had confidence I would be able to walk down the aisle to my husband in time for our wedding," expressed Clemons.

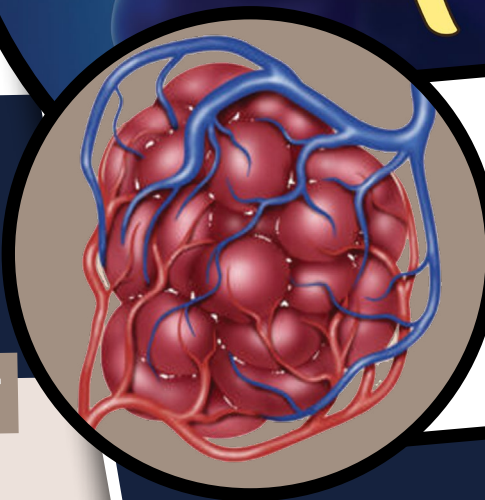
Clemons underwent a craniotomy on March 11, 2021, where the goal was to remove the cavernoma and stop the bleeding.



What is a CAVERNOMA?



A **cavernoma** is a cluster of abnormal blood vessels, usually found in the brain and spinal cord.



"I attempted to convince her to delay the wedding, but the young bride-to-be would not hear of it."

- Dr. Lon Alexander

"Of course, I was worried, but I was not worried for myself. I was worried for my family. I went into this surgery knowing there was a possibility that I could never wake up, but I had faith. I had faith in God, and I had faith in my surgeon," exclaimed Clemons.

After a successful procedure, Clemons took the time to heal and do physical therapy. Her motivation was to walk down the aisle on March 28 without any medical assistance...and she did just that.

"I was married that day and walked down the aisle with my daddy holding me tight. It was a struggle, but the strength and bond of my family got me through this entire experience," noted Clemons.

"My whole life, I have used North Oaks," shared Clemons. "I was born here, and so were my kids. I knew I could trust North Oaks with my life! Thank God I did because I do not think I would have received the same care anywhere else."

A typical cavernoma looks like a raspberry. It's filled with blood that flows slowly through vessels that are like "caverns".

Problems can occur if the cavernoma bleeds or presses on certain areas of the brain. In most cases, bleeding is small and may not cause other symptoms.

For more information on North Oaks Surgical Services or if you are in need of a physician, visit our website at www.northoaks.org.



NORTH OAKS ***SPORTS PERFORMANCE.***

A DIFFERENT APPROACH

TO HEALTHCARE

***HELPING TO STRENGTHEN OUR
COMMUNITY'S STUDENT-ATHLETES—***

PHYSICALLY

AND

MENTALLY

"Everything we do is DIFFERENT,"

explains Akeem Robinson. Robinson is the supervisor of North Oaks Sports Performance, an innovative community health initiative for student-athletes designed to improve athleticism, reduce injuries and focus on character development.

Robinson, a nationally Certified Strength and Conditioning Coach, took the helm of the sports performance program last year as part of North Oaks' orthopedic service line. Since then, he and his team have strived to strengthen student-athletes—physically and mentally—throughout Tangipahoa and Livingston Parishes.

North Oaks Sports Performance works with local high school athletic programs free of charge. They work hand-in-hand with coaching and training staff to enhance their team's athletic performance in the areas of agility, durability, flexibility, mobility, power, strength and speed, as well as critical thinking and coping skills.

The sports performance team also trains student-athletes in recreational sports through a partnership with Chappapeela Sports Park (CSP) and recently developed a new sports performance facility to reach even more young athletes.

The North Oaks Sports Performance team has tripled in size since its inception in 2020. Currently, they work with 11 local high schools—including the Ponchatoula Lady Wave state basketball champions—and train more than 30 members at CSP.

Robinson notes, "The biggest takeaway we hope to instill in our athletes is to be better men and women. Sports is the platform we use to help improve their physical abilities and teach invaluable life skills applicable to every age and skill level."

Our approach to the mind and body helps students build a healthy foundation. We incorporate lessons from leadership skills to teamwork, proper nutrition and hydration and how to communicate. It's easy to pick up a weight, but teaching them the proper way and why they are doing it, that's where the actual learning and understanding happens."



CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"My daughter, Mary-Kate, has enjoyed sports since a young age. She's been active in competitive gymnastics and, more recently, in basketball and soccer. We enrolled her in North Oaks Sports Performance when she expressed interest in strength and weight training."

Being she was young, we felt it was important she learn proper form and technique. Derek, her trainer, set individualized goals for her each week based on her progress and ability. She was always excited when she reached new goals. She loves being pushed to new levels, and this program does just that!

I would absolutely recommend North Oaks Sports Performance to any student-athlete interested in strength training. It's a great place to start or further develop."

-Gina McAndrew

If you or your team is interested in learning more about North Oaks Sports Performance, visit www.northoaks.org/sportsp performance.



STOP THE BLEED®

EMERGENCY TRAINING COURSE

NORTH OAKS HEALTH SYSTEM TEACHES LIFE-SAVING SKILLS TO THE COMMUNITY

North Oaks Health System's Shock Trauma Team recently hosted its first public Stop the Bleed: Emergency Training Course on August 16. The event was free of charge and open to all interested community members.

In addition to North Oaks medical staff, more than 25 members of the public showed up to the event—from as far away as Baton Rouge—to learn life-saving skills.

Stop the Bleed aims to empower people to assist in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives.

"A person who is bleeding can die from blood loss in minutes, so learning how to stop an arterial bleed and get a patient help as quickly as possible is vital," noted Jodi Gennusa, MSN, BSN, RN, Shock/Trauma Program Manager. "We want to prepare people for the unexpected. This is a valuable course for anyone, regardless of occupation or age."

As part of North Oaks Health System's distinguished Level II Trauma Center status, the health system continuously works to support and spread trauma awareness by providing community resources and educational opportunities.



This class was well worth the time to save a life if necessary. Thank you for offering these classes that serve the community." - **James Rice** (right)



"I'm not only a mom but also a wife to an active outdoorsman, so I'm always eager to learn anything that could potentially protect a loved one. Anything can happen to anyone at ANY time, so why not know how to help when a situation arises?" - **Allison Portier**

Anyone interested in scheduling a **Stop the Bleed** class for local schools, churches or community/civic groups (free of charge), please contact

Jodi Gennusa at (985) 230-2480
or **Ashley Simmons** at (985) 230-2474.





To schedule an appointment
or learn more, call (985) 230-7730
or visit
www.northoaks.org/cancercare.

Expert Care, Closer to Home. Introducing North Oaks Hematology & Oncology Clinic

North Oaks Health System is pleased to announce its new Hematology & Oncology Clinic in Hammond. Double fellowship-trained Hematologist and Oncologist **Georges Tanios, M.D.**, will staff the clinic and provide patients with access to expert hematology and oncology services.

As a medical oncologist, Dr. Tanios is committed to the compassionate diagnosis and care of patients with cancer, including but not limited to those affecting the breast, colon, lung and prostate. As a hematologist, Dr. Tanios is skilled in diagnosing and caring for patients with medical conditions and cancers affecting blood and its components, such as anemia, clotting disorders, lymphoma, multiple myeloma and leukemia.

Dr. Tanios is certified by the American Board of Hematology, American Board of Internal Medicine and American Board of Oncology. He comes to North Oaks from Southern Illinois Healthcare's Cancer Institute based in Carterville, Illinois, where he has practiced since 2018 and was the recipient of the institute's "Patient Experience Award" in 2019.

Dr. Tanios takes special interest in clinical research to advance standards of care and has presented findings to his peers on numerous occasions for the Society of General Internal Medicine, American Society of Hematology, American College of Physicians and Southern Society of Clinical Investigation. In addition, he has co-authored numerous peer review journal pieces for national healthcare publications.

North Oaks Hematology & Oncology Clinic accepts new patients aged 18 and older.

Specialized Pediatric Services to Expand at North Oaks through Affiliation with Children's Hospital New Orleans

North Oaks and Children's Hospital New Orleans are working together to expand healthcare services for children and families across Tangipahoa Parish and the Northshore Region.

"Together, we will work to improve access to services and health outcomes for children across the Northshore region through enhancements to North Oaks' pediatric service line," affirms Michele Kidd Sutton, FACHE, President and Chief Executive Officer of North Oaks Health System.

The clinical affiliation builds upon existing services, which are provided by Children's Hospital New Orleans at North Oaks Medical Center today, which include neonatology, pediatric hospitalist coverage and pediatric cardiology services. It will also lead to enhancements through the addition of pediatric subspecialists and the development of new pediatric services at North Oaks Medical Center and in the surrounding communities.

"As the leading provider of pediatric healthcare for Louisiana, Children's Hospital is proud to work with North Oaks to improve the health and wellbeing of children with one high standard of care," said John R. Nickens IV, President and Chief Executive Officer of Children's Hospital New Orleans. "Our growing affiliation enhances our shared ability to deliver a healthier future for children."

Planning work will continue over the coming months.



Announcement participants pictured above include: (first row, from left) North Oaks Board of Commissioners Vice Chairman **Ann Carruth** and Commissioner **Joycelyn Lee**; North Oaks President and Chief Executive Officer **Michele Kidd Sutton**; North Oaks Commissioner **Angelique Richardson**; (second row, from left) North Oaks Commissioner **Terry Harper**; Children's Hospital of New Orleans President and Chief Executive Officer **John R. Nickens IV**; LCMC Health Chief Executive Officer **Greg Feirn**; and North Oaks Commissioners **Ron Orsi** and **Mark Mobley**. Not pictured is North Oaks Board of Commissioners Chairman **Ron Macaluso**.

North Oaks Welcomes VCOM Medical Students

North Oaks Health System recently welcomed 10 third-year medical students to campus from the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) at the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

According to **Dr. Lauren Baumgarten**, director of student medical education at North Oaks, the students will be in Hammond the majority of the academic year performing 4-week clinical rotations under the guidance of members of the health system's medical staff. Under the terms of North Oaks' cooperative endeavor agreement with VCOM, the students will explore medical specialties, such as family medicine, general surgery, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, and psychiatry to name only a few.



From left are: North Oaks Vice President of Strategy and Outreach **Kiley Cedotal** and Vice President, Assistant Chief Medical Officer **Jherie Ducombs, M.D.**; VCOM medical students **Julie Gaudin, Kaitlin Crum, Matthew Spano** and **Alexis Smith**; Physician Services Director and Clinical Site Coordinator **Stephanie Kropog**; VCOM medical students **Shelby Deynzer** and **Paige Wilson**; and North Oaks Chief Medical Officer **Robert Peltier, M.D.** Not pictured is North Oaks Director of Student Medical Education **Lauren Baumgarten, M.D.**, and VCOM medical students **Claude Pertuit, Nathaniel Stansbury, Shantasia Thomas Jackson** and **Kayla Watson**.

VCOM is a private, 501(c)(3) non-profit osteopathic medical school in Blacksburg, Virginia (VCOM-Virginia) with campuses in Spartanburg, South Carolina, Auburn, Alabama and Monroe, Louisiana. The college was founded in 2001, and its mission is to alleviate the critical shortage of physicians in Appalachia and the Delta Region by training medical students to become patient-centered physicians who focus on evidence-based medicine.

"Studies show that more than 60% of VCOM graduates choose to practice in a rural or medically underserved area," shares **Stephanie Kropog**, physician services director and clinical site coordinator at North Oaks. "The establishment of a medical student program at North Oaks is an important investment toward attracting future providers to our community. It also presents a unique opportunity to showcase how special the quality of life is here."

Student-Athletes Win With Free North Oaks Sports Medicine Physical Days

With 31 years of service to student-athletes in Tangipahoa and Livingston parishes, the North Oaks Sports Medicine team continues to provide on-site physical exams for local schools and their athletes to complete the Louisiana High School Athletic Association requirements.

This year, a team of North Oaks health care providers, athletic trainers and employee volunteers traveled to 12 schools across two parishes to complete 1,455 physical exams.



The North Oaks Sports Medicine program is led by board-certified primary care sports medicine physician **Michelle Sliva, MD**, along with a team of athletic trainers and performance coaches. The team's

priority is providing education for coaches, athletes and families, onsite emergency acute care at practices and games, and rehabilitation to help severely injured players safely return to the playing field.

Landmark Gift from First Guaranty Bank Leads North Oaks Foundation's Annual Giving Campaign for 2022

A \$200,000 gift from First Guaranty Bank to the North Oaks Foundation's 2022 Annual Fund has made history.

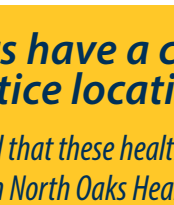
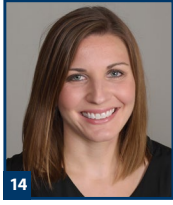
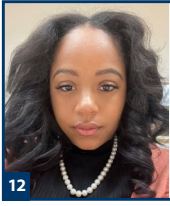
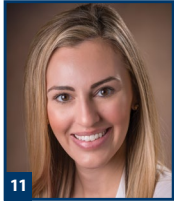
"To date, First Guaranty Bank's generous gift is the largest the Foundation has ever received and catapults funds raised overall beyond the \$1 million mark," shares Volunteer Services/Foundation Director **Staci Arceneaux**. "More importantly, the bank's gift puts the foundation halfway to its \$400,000 goal to help North Oaks Health System purchase a mobile health unit. We are beyond grateful to have First Guaranty Bank's partnership."

With the goal of improving access to health services in underserved populations throughout the community, the nearly 40-foot, wheelchair-accessible mobile health unit will feature a waiting area and two exam rooms. As a health clinic on wheels, it will enable North Oaks to take a variety of health screenings, immunizations, primary care and diagnostic services out in to the community. It also can be deployed in conjunction with occupational health partnerships and for emergency response purposes to name only a few possibilities.

"When presented with the opportunity to assist North Oaks with the ability to give our community an easier, quicker means to primary care, health screenings and other much needed medical services, we jumped at the opportunity," affirms First Guaranty Bank President and Chief Executive Officer **Alton Lewis** (pictured second from left). "We understand a healthy community thrives when our residents are healthy. We're privileged to support the mobile health unit."



To learn more about ways to give to the North Oaks Foundation, visit www.northoaks.org/foundation.



Providers have a choice in practice locations.

We are delighted that these health care providers have chosen North Oaks Health System. Join us in welcoming them to our region.

- Rachel Aaron, MD***
Hospital Medicine
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- W. Taylor Allen, MD***
Emergency Medicine
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- Craig Conard, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Amber DeLaSalle, PMHNP-BC***
Psychiatry
New Leaf Psychiatry & Counseling Center
(985) 230-7495
- Hannah Fugarino, AGACNP-BC***
Urology
Northshore Urological Associates
(985) 230-2778
- Lauren G. Davis, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Brittany Fussell, FNP**
Cardiology
Louisiana Heart Center
(985) 340-1966
- George Hescok, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Richard S. Hill, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Lisa Jaubert, MD***
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
North Oaks Rehabilitation Hospital
(985) 542-7777
- Andrea Legendre, PA-C***
Orthopedics
North Oaks Orthopaedic Specialty Center
(985) 230-2663
- Brittany Leverette, NP, CCRN***
Shock Trauma
North Oaks Shock Trauma
(985) 345-2778
- Timothy Marcus, MD***
Emergency Medicine
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- Anne Martin, MD**
Neonatology
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- Amanda Messer, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Ashley Meyn, MD***
Anesthesiology
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- Lacey Miller, AGACNP-BC***
Cardiology
North Oaks Cardiology Clinic
(985) 230-7350
- Shannon Palombo, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Leo Pei, MD***
Pathology
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- Anna Price, FNP**
Nephrology
Kidney & Hypertension Associates
(985) 893-0911
- Amy Prudhomme, DO**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Leslie Reilly, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Caroline Roth, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Children's Hospital
(504) 894-6929
- Jennifer Russell, FNP**
Cardiology
Louisiana Heart Center
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- Shubho Sarkar, MD**
Pediatric Hospital Medicine
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(504) 894-6929
- Heather Shultz, AGACNP/FNP-BC***
Hospital Medicine
North Oaks Medical Center
(985) 345-2700
- Michelle Sliva, MD***
Family/Sports Medicine/Ortho
North Oaks Orthopaedic Specialty Center
(985) 230-2663
- Georges Tanios, MD***
Hematology/Oncology
North Oaks Hematology & Oncology Clinic
(985) 230-7730
- Rebecca Whittemore, MD***
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The information in this newsletter is meant to complement the advice of your health care providers, not to replace it. Before making any major changes in your medications, diet or exercise, talk to your health care provider.

The North Oaks Health System mission is to improve lives, every time and with every touch.

     www.northoaks.org

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 **MAGNOLIA**
Obstetrics and Gynecology

At **Magnolia OB/GYN at North Oaks**, we listen and provide expert medical care to navigate all of womanhood's milestones. We're in this together - for puberty, childbirth, menopause - **for life.**

Schedule an appointment.

Call: (985) 230-2778 [APPT]

Visit: www.northoaks.org/realtalk

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