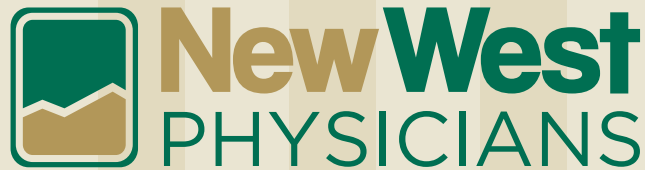


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Spring Edition 2016

New West Physicians' Pharmaceutical Representative and Sampling Policy

By Ken Cohen, MD, FACP
Chief Medical Officer



It has been estimated that 1/3 of the cost of a drug is related directly to marketing. Therefore, New West Physicians has decided that it will no longer be part of the problem, but rather part of the solution. As of February 1, 2016, every New West Physicians' office has adopted a new policy prohibiting any pharmaceutical advertising or marketing including the use of "free samples". Our goal is to reach 90% use of affordable medications, which will allow us to continue to provide our high quality of care while also improving the economic health of our patients, and secondarily help stem the increasing cost of both new drugs and health insurance premiums for everyone.

Below is a summary of the issue:

Although there have been some important pharmaceutical industry gains in biomedical research, pharmaceutical costs in the U.S. are escalating rapidly out of proportion to the rest of the healthcare sectors. The pharmaceutical portion of the entire United States healthcare budget will soon reach 20%. You have all undoubtedly heard the stories where a drug patent is purchased and the pharmaceutical company raises the cost by several orders of magnitude. Other sectors in healthcare are rapidly transitioning to "Value Based Care". This means that the magnitude of the improvement in one's overall health and wellbeing clearly justifies the cost of the physician visit, operation, procedure, etc. There is currently however, no value based proposition in pharmaceutical pricing. The cost of a medication quite simply is priced as high as the market will bear, regardless of the magnitude of the health benefit. The most outrageous example is a new topical medication for toenail fungus that has a cure rate of 18% and costs up to \$20,000 yearly. No wonder it is profitable enough to the pharmaceutical company to afford the \$4 million ads during the Superbowl.

A somewhat new development being used by the pharmaceutical companies is the "copay assistance program". This makes the drug appear free to the patient since patients are shielded from the true cost of their medications through the use of these "copay assistance programs". The truth however, is that free market economics just do not apply to pharmaceutical pricing. With these copay cards, the pharmaceutical company gets to "write off" the small patient copay and charge the rest of the full cost of the drug to the patient's insurance company. These costs then go to drive up healthcare premium costs for the patient as well as the rest of the healthcare system. One new medication released in 2015 that will be used only for a small group of patients is projected to increase the health insurance cost of every American by \$130 yearly. The sad truth is that for the majority of these medications, there are alternatives that are markedly less expensive.

Thank you for entrusting New West Physicians with your care and being part of the solution.

Palliative Care Can Provide Support, Choice, and Peace of Mind



When facing a serious diagnosis or illness, you may be anxious or confused. Whether you would like extra support for your medical care, a conversation about options and services, or an understanding professional to help you or your family in adjusting to new emotions or new situations – New West Physicians and Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers are here to help patients through our Palliative Care Program.

Our Palliative Care Liaison, Denise Bickel, PhD, MSW, LCSW, works in partnership with you, your family, and your healthcare team to maximize your autonomy and emotional well-being.

Palliative Care can be beneficial for all patients with life-limiting, chronic illness such as Congestive Heart Failure, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Heart Disease, Diabetes, and Cancer.

What is Palliative Care?

- Delivers supportive care that focuses on relief of pain, symptom management, and assistance/guidance in meeting your short-term goals.
- Provides assistance in developing the plan of care that you and your family choose.
- Helps assist you in navigating the healthcare system.
- Offers emotional and spiritual support to patients and caregivers.
- Provides "Advanced Care Planning" discussions to offer you the opportunity to express your values and long-term goals.
- Encourages caregivers and family members to share in discussions and treatment decisions.
- Palliative Care Consultations are an integral part of your treatment and are provided at no charge.

This partnership's goal is to provide patients and their families with exceptional, individualized care that recognizes and honors each patient's values and goals. If you are interested in a Palliative Care Consultation, please talk to your Primary Care Physician.

Welcome To Our New Providers



Eric J. Mogyoros, DO
Hospitalist



Travis Bellville, MD
Golden Central Family Practice



Erin Cornelius, PA-C
Applewood Internal Medicine

LEARNING LAB

The Power of Sleep

By **Scott Clemens, MD, Medical Director**
Arvada Internal Medicine

Are you getting enough sleep? Approximately 1/3 of adults in the United States have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep on a weekly basis. Productive sleep results in a healthy immune system, balanced appetite, improved mood, and supports daytime performance. While average sleep times vary by both age and gender, the National Sleep Foundation recommends 7-9 hours of sleep per night for most adults. Improving the length and quality of sleep is a challenge to patients as well as their physicians.

A myriad of health conditions and lifestyle choices can affect sleep quality. Up to 50% of individuals with a diagnosis of insomnia are also found to have a psychiatric diagnosis such as anxiety or depression. Complaints of poor sleep frequently predate a psychiatric diagnosis. Lifestyle choices—stimulants such as caffeinated beverages, alcohol and drugs, napping, and the ever present electronic devices that permeate our lives, are all linked to reductions in sleep quality.

So what can be done for those who are not getting enough sleep? Medications are frequently the first suggestion but have not proven to be more effective than Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Prescription benzodiazepine-like medications (lorazepam, zolpidem, etc.) reduce the time to sleep by about 20 minutes, reduce awake time after sleep onset by 13 minutes, and are associated with 22 minutes of improved total sleep time versus placebo. Those numbers are not terribly impressive. Frequent side effects of sleep medications are excessive daytime sleepiness, sleep walking, amnesia, and anticholinergic effects (constipation, urine retention, dry mouth). When taking into account the potential serious side effects of sleep medications and the cost of long term use, it is clear that safer alternatives are more ideal.



This is where CBT comes in. CBT addresses dysfunctional behaviors and beliefs about sleep that contribute to the perception of insomnia. The main components are sleep hygiene, relaxation, sleep restriction, stimulus control, and cognitive therapy. CBT produces very similar absolute outcomes with reduced time to sleep onset of 20 minutes, less time awake after sleep of 26 minutes, and a small increase in total sleep time. CBT programs have shown to be superior to medications (when compared head to head) at both 6 and 12 months after treatment discontinuation. Acceptance and adherence to CBT are commonly the biggest barriers to success or failure. Online programs are widely available at reasonable costs and provide a very convenient option for most patients. New West Physicians recommends the online CBT programs at sleepeasily.com and sleepio.com. Practical (CBT) suggestions for an improved night of sleep: 1) Stick to a schedule, even on weekends; 2) Come up with a relaxing bedtime ritual; 3) Daily exercise; 4) Turn off electronic devices (see article below for more about this topic); and 5) Create an ideal sleep environment in your bedroom with temperature, light, and sound control.

Electronic Devices and Sleep

By Linsey Harrison, MD
Psychiatrist

Sleep plays a vital role in health and well-being. A good night's sleep improves your ability to learn, pay attention, solve problems, make decisions, and be creative. Most of us use some type of electronic device within an hour of bedtime, and this can interfere with getting a good night's rest. Eighty-five percent of Americans report having trouble sleeping, and ongoing sleep deficiency is linked to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, and obesity.

Tablets, smartphones, laptops, e-readers, and LED monitors emit a certain type of light (blue light) which sends a signal to our brains that it's still daytime. This blue light promotes wakefulness by interfering with melatonin production and the sleep-wake cycle. Children and teenagers may be particularly susceptible to these effects. Avoidance of such devices for 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime can help improve sleep quality. Try reading from a printed book instead, or find another relaxing nighttime activity. If you find it hard to avoid using these devices at night, you can try an app that changes your screen's background so that instead of black letters on a white back-



ground, it shows white letters on a black background, reducing how much light is emitted. You can also purchase a special covering (such as a Sleep Shield) that reduces the amount of blue light emitted by your device, or try using a Kindle e-reader, which does not emit that blue light.

Quality sleep is imperative if you want to function at your best, so turn off these devices at least 30 minutes before bed for a better night's sleep.

Am I Losing My Memory?

By Scott London, MD
Neurologist

Where did I leave my car keys? Have you seen my wallet? Does this sound familiar - is this a new epidemic of dementia? A crisis in cognition?

According to the Centers for Disease Control now, more Americans than ever question their memory function and cognitive prowess and wonder if they are just experiencing the beginnings of Alzheimer's disease. Perhaps though the memory deficits we experience may not actually be an inability to recall but more of a difficulty to encode new information. We are surrounded daily by a barrage of information that vies for our attention: emails, texts, push notifications, phone calls, television media, and sports highlights that divide our focus and demand our response. With all of this stimulation, is it any surprise we are unsure of what we are doing from moment to moment? Maybe you can't remember what your spouse was saying about your daughter because the text from your boss chimed in at the critical point in the parenting dialogue.

Before questioning your brain's ability and ruminating about a neurodegenerative process, try to unplug and focus on yourself, your loved ones, and on your communication. According to MIT professor, Shirley Turkle, a cellphone on the table in front of you reduces interpersonal communication skill and efficacy by 30% (it tells the person you are with that the phone is more important than they are). Make eye contact, face the person you are interacting with, lean forward towards them, and ENGAGE! Take time to explore new social situations, book clubs,



dinner clubs, and/or hiking or ski or dance groups to keep your interpersonal skills honed. Social exercise is critical to sharpening your cognitive ability. It has been proven repeatedly that physical exercise, even as little as 25 minutes three times a week, is the best way to focus your mind, perhaps because one must be attentive to the exercise process. Use your smart phone when you need to but don't let this device interrupt your flow! Remember Alzheimer's disease is an inexorably progressive process defined as a global decline in neurologic function and if you are reading this, you probably don't have significant cognitive impairment. Don't sweat the small stuff.

Start Fresh This Spring

By Tatiana Tsvetkova, MD
Cardiologist

What comes to your mind when you think of spring? Is it warm weather, longer days, or spring cleaning?

I think of dry, old yellow grass that will turn green, daffodil sprouts bursting through the earth, and of renewal and rejuvenation. Every year, we get the opportunity to watch nature's fresh start.

Why not follow nature with something new and fresh by planting an herb or vegetable garden, spending more time with your loved ones, or eating more vegetables. It is important to see yourself as capable and resourceful in understanding your current heart health and what you can do for the prevention of cardiovascular disease, or what you can do to improve your current condition.

The American Heart Association guidelines suggest exercising daily to prevent heart disease. It is recommended that women have moderate



exercise at least 150 minutes per week or vigorous exercise at least 75 minutes per week.

Additional cardiovascular benefits to women are achieved by increasing moderate intensity aerobic activity to five hours (300 minutes) a week, or 2-½ hours per week of vigorous physical activity.

Adults in general, both men and women, are recommended to engage in aerobic activity three to four sessions per week, lasting on average 40 minutes per session, and involving moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

Positive lifestyle changes can lead to significant reduction of cardiovascular disease of up to 40%. Count your blessings and watch daffodils blossom.

Whatever you choose to do, think of your heart and take good care of it.

PATIENT NEWS

2015 Acclaim Award

New West Physicians is the recipient of the National 2015 Acclaim Award for groups with fewer than 150 physicians. This award honors the highest performing health systems in the nation.

Take a look at our video located on the Homepage of our Website.

www.nwphysicians.com



New Customer Support Hotline for Patient Portal!

It is now easier than ever to reap the benefits of joining the MyHealthConnection Patient Portal. The new customer service line gives patients the ability to call a phone number at no cost to them for assistance with technical issues. You will be able to:

- Correspond with your providers on non-urgent health issues
- Request appointments
- Request prescription renewals
- Review test results as soon as they are available
- Review medical history and keep your record up-to-date with allergies or other health information
- Update your address, phone number, or other personal information to save time during your next office visit

Contact Info:

Patient Portal Support
(888) 670-9775
support@followmyhealth.com
6am-6pm (MST) Monday thru Friday; closed all major holidays

Get started today by visiting our Website and clicking on Patients/Patient Portal. Download the MyHealthConnection Brochure, complete the "Request an Invitation to Join" section, and take it with you to your next visit so they can verify your information in person to protect your privacy.



***MyHealthConnection Patient Portal is meant for routine health management. The Patient Portal should not be used for emergencies or urgent health needs. For medical emergencies, always call 9-1-1 immediately.**

How Can the Diabetes & Nutrition Center Help You?

New West Physicians' Diabetes and Nutrition Center provides personal and group class support to individuals who wish to improve their overall health. Our staff will teach you the skills you need to learn about achieving optimal nutrition, weight, and how to improve your health when living with diabetes.

To view our group classes or for an individual session request, see our calendar located on our Website or call (303) 716-8039.

DIABETES CENTER STAFF (L TO R): Cynthia Foster, RD, CDE, Betsy Raube, RN, CDE, Reyna Perucca



DELICIOUS RECIPE

Eggplant Parmesan

Ingredients:

- 2 egg whites
- 2 tablespoons water
- 6 tablespoons bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan
- 1 large eggplant peeled and cut into 12 round slices
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cans "no salt added" diced tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ cup part skim, shredded mozzarella

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Spray a 15x10x1 inch baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray.

Whisk egg whites and water in shallow dish.

Combine bread crumbs and 2 tablespoons parmesan cheese in another shallow dish.

Dip eggplant slices in egg mixture and then in bread crumbs.



Place eggplant slices in single layer in prepared pan.

Bake 25-30 minutes until brown, then turn slices and bake another 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat, add onion, cook for 5 minutes until soft, then add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Stir in tomatoes, basil, and oregano and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes stirring occasionally.

Pour sauce into the baking dish; arrange cooked eggplant over the sauce, sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and ¼ cup parmesan, and bake for another 15-20 minutes until cheese is melted and golden.

Makes 4 servings

Compliments of Diabetes Self-Management

PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

For the Love of Bicycling!

By Hal Richardson, MD
Golden View Family Medicine

I live near Sloans Lake on the west edge of Denver, and I work in Golden, about 10 miles away. It's not a bad drive against the traffic, but since starting to work at New West in 1998, I have made commuting by bicycle a priority. Depending on the temperature, the condition of the roads, and the vagaries of my schedule, I will be up before my sleeping family and on the bike to Golden from one to three times a week, throughout the year.

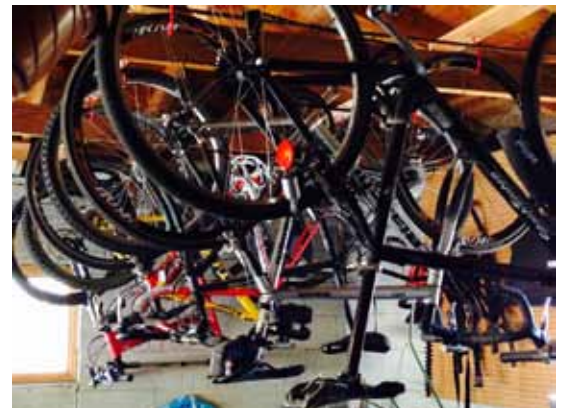
I've gone through a series of bikes over the years. I made that first ride into Golden in 1998 on a classic red Trek 660. I bought it from a fellow medical student who happened to be a junior road racer at the same time as Lance Armstrong, future dubious 7-time Tour De France winner, and he had raced against Lance on this bike. That whiff of glory could not make up for the frame being a little small for me, so I moved on. My next road bike, an 18 pound Bianchi, didn't seem substantial enough for the rough nature of commuting, so I started using my retired mountain bikes; first a black Specialized Stumpjumper (another classic), and then a blue and orange (Broncos!) carbon Trek soft-tail. I now ride a sturdy, heavy, dependable Breezer, built for commuting, with fenders, an induction light system, a rack, and a nice leather saddle. The twenty miles out and back keeps me in shape for skiing and for mountain-biking season.

Having biked in a few other cities, I feel grateful to live in a bike-friendly community. I have dedicated lanes to use for a large part of my ride, lots of other bikers on the road, and drivers (mostly) willing to make room for me to stay safe. I have a shower and a clothes closet in the office restroom; patients and coworkers can feel grateful for that.



Finding the heart to continue this routine can be hard when I'm going home in the dark in winter, when I get a flat or another mechanical problem, or when drivers or their passengers behave rudely or dangerously. I've been caught in bad weather, had to make repairs with freezing hands, attempt repairs when I've forgotten to put the right tools in my bag, and been nearly hit many times. I have seen friends and patients injured on their commutes and it's difficult not to think about that with the traffic whizzing by.

I love bike commuting because by the time I'm home from work, I've already exercised and don't have to try to squeeze in a run or trip to the gym. I love that mine is one fewer car on the road that day. I love the camaraderie among riders, a friendly wave across the road, a nod, or a chance to draft behind someone going my way. I love that the time on the bike gives me a chance to get lost in my thoughts or put in earbuds and listen to the news on CPR, a continuing education lecture, or an audiobook. I love that I can ask my patients about their exercise routines without feeling hypocritical. I hope to see you out there!



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Spring Flowers Word Search



Spring Flowers



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