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Fall Edition 2014

*Urgent Care vs. the Emergency Room,
Influenza Symptoms, and Recipe Contest*

Urgent Care or Emergency Room (ER)?



When an accident, injury or illness occurs, it is important to quickly decide what type of care you need and where to go for treatment. Recent trends in building free-standing ER's make your decision more challenging!

What You Need to Know:

If It's Not Life Threatening, Call Your Primary Care Doctor

- A New West physician is 'On Call' 24/7 365 days a year to assist you.
- Our offices have same-day appointments for acute illness, minor injuries, and other urgent care services.
- The cost of an Office or Urgent Care visit ranges from \$30 - \$150.

- Most people really need less-intense, less-expensive Urgent Care Centers.

Free-Standing ER's – Don't Be Fooled!

It used to be a safe assumption that the free-standing clinics in your neighborhood were Urgent Care Centers, but that is no longer the case.

- Free-standing ER's are being built at a rapid rate and look very similar to Urgent Care Centers.
- These clinics charge ER rates that are double or triple what is charged at Urgent Care Centers.
- The average bill in the ER will be \$1,500 - You may not know until you get ready to pay!
- In case of real emergencies, either dial 911 or choose a hospital based ER. These are fully integrated systems with all the necessary equipment and specialists under one roof.
- If convenient, choose one of our preferred hospitals that have New West Physicians hospitalists who will continue

to guide your care: Lutheran Medical Center, St. Anthony Hospital, St. Anthony North, Porter Adventist, and Littleton Hospital.

Urgent Care Centers – Helping You Navigate

- On average, costs will be one-third the cost of ER – ranging from \$30-\$150.
- Where possible, utilize an Urgent Care Center on our Preferred Urgent Care Center List. Please visit the link below and print a copy.
- This information will be posted on our Website, on the Location page for each of our 17 offices.
- If you choose another, do your homework to make sure it is not a free-standing ER!

New West Physicians' goal is to work with you to determine the best possible care. When faced with a crisis, it is important to have someone you can count on for guidance – your primary care physician (PCP).

For a listing of Preferred Urgent Care Centers by New West Physicians office location, visit www.nwphysicians.com, click on **Services**, then **Urgent or Emergency Care**.

Influenza: Symptoms - The Vaccine, and How to Treat It

Influenza season is upon us. This is a highly contagious disease, caused by influenza A or B viruses that are spread easily from person to person by coughing or sneezing. You will usually have to be in close contact (within six feet) of someone who is ill to become infected. It occurs more in the winter months due to more time spent in close contact (indoors) with contaminated people.

Flu symptoms usually include a fever higher than 100°F, intense headaches, severe muscle aches, fatigue, non-productive cough, nasal discharge, and sore throat, after an incubation period of one to four days. These symptoms may last from five days to a week or more. Some people will develop post influenza weakness and fatigue which may last several weeks. This is different from a viral



upper respiratory infection or common cold which rarely is associated with high fever, headache, or exhaustion. A common cold can be associated with a mild to moderate cough whereas influenza is usually associated with a very severe dry cough and chest congestion.

You should seek medical attention if you have shortness of breath or trouble breathing, pressure in your chest or stomach, dizziness when standing, confusion, uncontrollable vomiting or inability to stay hydrated.

Treat flu symptoms with rest, fluids, and acetaminophen to relieve the fever, headache, and muscle aches. Antiviral medications like oseltamivir (Tamiflu) can be used to treat or prevent the flu if you are seen within the first 48 hours of your flu

symptoms. This may reduce your flu symptoms by about one day. Antibiotics are generally not useful for treating viral illnesses like influenza unless you have a complication such as pneumonia, ear infection or sinusitis. Complications are more likely in those considered at high risk, such as those with chronic medical problems or who are immune compromised.

When in doubt, see a medical professional. Most importantly, remember to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with antibacterial soaps or use gel hand sanitizers to prevent the spread

of influenza, and get your flu shot every year. The quadrivalent influenza vaccine is now available in our New West Physicians' clinics. The standard trivalent vaccine, used in previous years, was effective 60-70% of the time. The quadrivalent vaccine which includes two strains of influenza A and two strains of influenza B should decrease the cases of influenza for the upcoming season.

Theresa A.V. Donati, MD
Evergreen Internal Medicine

HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to four of our physicians who earned the 5280 Top Doc Award for 2014!



Dr. Steve Stahl, Hospitalist,
Dr. Scott Clemens, Hospitalist,
Dr. Tatiana Tsvetkova, Cardiologist,
and Dr. Jonathan Zonca, Family Medicine Physician

Introducing Our New Providers



Laura Walls, PA-C
Golden Central Family Practice



Sara Buros, FNP, BC
**Denver West Family Practice
& Internal Medicine**

Patient Satisfaction Survey Results for 2014 Are In!

We would like to thank all of you who participated in our recent patient satisfaction survey. Your comments, thoughts and opinions are very much appreciated and the information that we gained from your input is invaluable to helping us continue our journey of providing "Excellent Service, Every Patient, Every Time".

For the past several years, we have conducted the survey with the assistance of SullivanLuallin, Inc., one of the premier healthcare customer service consulting firms in the nation.

Of the 7,700 surveys distributed, we received an astonishing 6,500 response – an 84% return rate as compared to the national average of 45-50%. The survey compared our results against a national data base of 141,400 respondents in like practices of similar size. New West Physicians scored higher than the National Benchmark in all categories including *Satisfaction with your Provider, Staff, Appointments, Billing and Quality of Care Received*. We were pleased to see that over 98% of respondents felt comfortable referring their provider – thank you for trusting us with your friends and family.

We are well aware that patient satisfaction does not end after the survey is completed. We will continue to strive to exceed your expectations as we care for you, your loved ones, and the communities that we serve.

DID YOU KNOW?

A Helping Hand for the Children of Guatemala

For the last five years, Dr. Strohecker, a Hospitalist for New West Physicians, has participated in a medical mission to Guatemala. The group, comprised of physicians, nurses, MA's, area churches, and volunteers, have gone twice a year for the past 13 years and are dedicated to clean water (each hut gets a water filter) and to the treatment of their daily problems such as lice, malaria, chronic diarrhea, and other similar conditions. When they arrive in Guatemala, Kairos Ministries provides the guides and translation services.

"The organization travels twice a year to remote mountainous villages to help the children and the community. There is no running water, no electricity. The people practice subsistence farming, growing enough food to feed themselves and their families, and are mostly untouched by the outside world. Over time, we have seen the villages improve. In addition to providing medical help, our team usually brings high school kids; oftentimes the sons or daughters of the physicians and nurses, to play with the village kids and, in some cases, provide education assistance.

Every year it is a rewarding experience for me and even though we make small changes each year, the local people appreciate it."

If you are a medical professional and would like to volunteer, please contact me at drjoel@nwphysicians.com.

Joel Strohecker, MD
Hospitalist



A school house, erected by the government, becomes the place from which the doctors work each day while in the village. Unfortunately, the kids only go to school sporadically as they are needed to work in the fields.



A typical hut that the people of the village live in.



A nurse is reading to the kids while they wait for their checkups. Children have very little exposure to books or anything from the outside world.

Flying High

"Flying like a bird around your neighborhood is a dream of many children and my interest in flying was no different as a boy. My fascination with flying was encouraged by my father who was a combat pilot in the Pacific during World War II, and was still in the Air National Guard actively flying everything from transports to jet fighters to helicopters when I was young. He would occasionally fly an aircraft to our local airport where I could sit in the cockpit and dream. We did not have the resources to own a plane, but family friends did, and I was able at times to fly with them and my father. The view from a small plane is better, and the sensation of flying is nothing like the flight on a commercial airliner. The wonder of watching the earth fall away as we climbed above the earth resonated with me then and still does today.

As so often happens, life gets in the way of dreams and it would be many years before I pursued a private pilot license, even though my wife gave me a gift lesson with a flight instructor. As I neared completion of the license, we adopted special needs children, and with the birth of a son as well, the family finances once again forced a suspension of the dream. Later as our own son was maturing, he and I decided to pursue pilot licenses as a father-son project. Several years ago we obtained a small, 1965 Piper Cherokee 140 airplane, and the two of us flew it home on a long cross-country flight. Flying now is primarily in Colorado enjoying the beautiful sights of this wonderful state. My now 10 year old granddaughter is often my co-pilot. She has been flying with me since she was sitting in her car seat. Now quite comfortable at the controls, she frequently puts us in a steeply banked turn so she has a better view of the ground out the side window. She too, dreams of flying like a bird."

David Glasscock, MD
Arvada Family Practice



A Photographer in our Midst

"Although I've enjoyed taking pictures since high school, my interest in photography took a more serious turn in 2003 when I bought a medium format film camera and then a digital camera in 2010. During these past 10 years or so, I've focused mainly on landscape photography, but in the past few years have also expanded into wildlife photography. The biggest thrill for me is capturing that special image in just the right light, which usually happens just around sunrise or sunset. Unfortunately, that frequently means getting up in the cold and dark, so I can be in position by the time the sun comes up. But once the sun rises and lights up the scene, I quickly remember why I love doing this so much. As a fellow photographer said, it's "a matter of mind over mattress".

In the past few years I've set up a website so that I can share my images with others; [click here to view my website](#). So far I have not pursued selling my photos as a business, but if someone is interested, they can always contact me at drwerner@nwphysicians.com.

Werner Baumgartner, MD
Lakewood Internal Medicine



What is Shared Decision Making?

Evidence suggests that if patients actively take part in managing their healthcare, they will have better outcomes than people who don't.

New West Physicians embraces Shared Decision Making because our providers feel that when they work with you to manage your healthcare, and jointly select tests and treatments based on clinical evidence as well as your personal values and preferences, better outcomes are achieved.

The providers at New West Physicians want you to make informed decisions so that you are not just saying 'yes' or 'no' to a particular test or treatment, but rather reaching decisions about your care together through shared understanding.

Good shared decision making brings both you and your healthcare professional's expert opinions together. Explore this interactive health tool online by visiting our website at www.nwphysicians.com and clicking on **Your Health Guide**.

Want to Slim Down?



Have you been trying to lose weight? Consider the New West Physicians Weight Loss Program, New You Wellness and Weight Loss, offered at the Diabetes and Nutrition Center. We have known success.

Our next class will be held starting in January 2015, just in time to take off those holiday pounds!

For more information, call (303) 716-8039 or visit us online at the **Diabetes and Nutrition Center**.

Follow us on Facebook

Stay up to date on area happenings at New West Physicians, health topics, and provider information. Take a moment to "Like" us today at

www.facebook.com/newwestphysiciansgolden



Communicate With Your Physician Online

***Attention Ascent Family Medicine Patients - the New West Physicians Patient Portal will be available to you in July of 2015.**

MyHealthConnection is a state-of-the-art, secure health management tool you can use anywhere you have access to the Internet. All messages are encrypted to ensure security and your health record is password protected.



It is easier than ever to sign-up for New West Physicians' Patient Portal where you can:

- 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

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.**

Visit our website at www.nwphysicians.com and click on the **MyHealth-Connection** image to begin.

A Patient Advocate to Help You Navigate Medicare

With all of the changes that happen in Medicare, it is challenging for any individual to know the facts and determine what decisions are best for them. At New West Physicians, we understand that navigating Medicare is not easy and oftentimes confusing. That's why we have a dedicated staff person to answer all your questions, explain benefits of various options, and to help you make the best decision for yourself.

If you are nearing the age of 65 or retiring soon and will be enrolling in Medicare, we continue to see our Medicare eligible patients through the two options listed below.

- AARP MedicareComplete insured by UnitedHealthcare
- Medicare Cost Plans through Rocky Mountain Health Plans

NOTE: New West Physicians does NOT accept traditional Medicare insurance.

Patients can make changes to their current Medicare plans during the Annual Open Enrollment Period which is October 15 through December 7, 2015.

If you have questions about Medicare, the process of enrolling in Medicare, or are looking for information on the plans that we accept, please contact our Patient Advocate, Sharron Metz at (303) 716-8044, or visit our Website. Sharron is ready to help you make the best health care insurance decision based on your individual situation.

The Choosing Wisely Campaign ...Could Too Much Care Be a Bad Thing?

On the surface, it would seem that more care is better care; however, nothing could be farther from the truth.

Let me begin with a story that occurred yesterday - A relative of mine called panic stricken. She has had migraines for 30 years and just started with a new neurologist who recommended that she have an MRI of the brain, despite documented medical evidence that this is not necessary in patients with uncomplicated migraine. The MRI showed a small cyst in her brain that had likely been there her whole life, but was told this might need to come out. She was then referred to a neurosurgeon. She will spend the next several years seeing the neurosurgeon whose protocol will be serial MRI scans. Aside from the ongoing anxiety, she will now incur yearly costs in excess of \$1,000 to follow an insignificant abnormality that did not require treatment.

It is estimated that one third of the healthcare delivered in this country, totaling \$670 billion annually, is wasted care. This equates to over \$2,000 annually for every person in the United States. Wasted care is defined as care that does not improve health outcomes or quality of life. Too frequently, this care poses a danger when it leads to unnecessary surgeries such as numerous back operations or invasive diagnostic tests such as unnecessary heart catheterizations.

How can we begin to bring value to our healthcare system?

In 2012, a joint venture of the American Board of Internal Medicine and Consumer Reports launched Choosing Wisely, an initiative of ABIM. This bold venture challenged 40 medical specialty societies to each create a list of five tests or procedures that were over utilized and oftentimes unnecessary. These lists were created by physicians - not health plans or politicians. How the various societies responded to the challenge spoke to how invested the societies and their physicians are to the elimination of wasted care in our healthcare system. Some societies, such as the American College of Medicine, went right to the heart of the issue with very valuable input such as not doing unnecessary MRI's of the back or brain, or cardiac stress tests. Others, such as the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons skirted the importance of this project by offering fairly meaningless suggestions such as, not using over the counter supplements for arthritis and not doing some rarely performed surgeries. They unfortunately missed the opportunity to talk about the unnecessary knee arthroscopies and joint replacements that occur.

The cost of health care in the United States is not affordable for many people or for the nation. The US spends more than 20 times what comparable countries spend on healthcare, but has lower health outcomes. Choosing Wisely is the beginning of a critical dialogue between patients and their physicians. The responsibility of improving the value of healthcare delivered in this country is a shared responsibility of both physicians and patients. The decisions made by physicians account for most of a patient's expenses. Physicians need to become accountable for delivering the right care, to the right patient, at the right time. Patients, for their part, can utilize the Choosing Wisely website to help manage their expectations when thinking about requesting a test or procedure. Together, we can help reshape the habitual patterns that have led to the overuse of healthcare.

It is important to be clear that this is not health care rationing. Remember we are only talking about the elimination of care that does not improve health outcomes or quality of life, and care that is potentially dangerous.

The solution to the health care crisis lies in the hands of physicians and patients, and we applaud the efforts of the Choosing Wisely initiative in taking this first major step forward.

Ken Cohen, MD, F.A.C.P.
Evergreen Internal Medicine
Chief Medical Officer, New West Physicians

Healthy Recipe Contest!

Do you have a recipe that you'd like to share? If so, the New West Physicians Diabetes and Nutrition Center is holding a recipe contest and is looking forward to your participation! We have three categories to choose from – entrée, side dish, or dessert and the winner in each category will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Whole Foods.

Recipes will be judged based on the integration of the following criteria:

- Low in fat
- Use of whole grains (whole wheat flour, oats, quinoa, etc.)
- Incorporation of fruits and veggies (fresh or frozen ok)
- Contain no processed ingredients (such as canned soups or processed meats and cheese)
- Use of lean meats

The Scoop!

- Submit one recipe per person no later than November 3, 2014.
 - Email recipe: newwestrecipes@gmail.com
 OR
 - Mail recipe: DNC/Recipe Contest, 1697 Cole Blvd., Suite 125, Golden, CO 80401.
- Three winners, one from each category, will receive a \$50.00 gift card from Whole Foods.
- Winners will be notified by December 1, 2014.
- The winning recipes in each category will be published in the January E-newsletter.

When you submit your recipe, take a moment to tell us why you think this recipe is healthy, where it came from, did you make it up or is it an old family secret?, and anything fun that you would like to share.

Get creative! For questions call 303-716-8039.

SOME FUN

S

Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.

A

Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.

F

Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.

E

Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.

H

Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you. Always WALK and don't run from house to house.

A

Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent possible skin and eye irritation.

L

Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.

L

Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses- may cause damage to eyes

O

Only walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.

W

Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.

E

Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers.

E

Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Only visit well-lit houses. Don't stop at dark houses. Never accept rides from strangers.

N

Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.



Compliments of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention