

Livonia Family News

Hours and Locations:

Winter 2008

LFP 1

17800 Newburgh #103
 Livonia, MI 48152
 734-464-9540
 Mon-Thurs 7A-8P
 Friday 7A-5P
 Saturday 8A-3P
 Sunday 9A-12P
 (urgent care, walk-in,
 and appt.)

LFP 2

27513 Grand River
 Livonia, MI 48152
 248-474-2275
 Monday 8A-5P
 Tuesday 8A-5P
 Wednesday 8A-5P
 Thursday 8A-8P
 Friday 8A-5P
 Saturday 8A-2P(2/mo)

LFP 3

28275 Five Mile Rd.
 Livonia, MI 48154
 734-261-1740
 Monday 8A-8P
 Tuesday 8A-5P
 Wednesday 8A-8P
 Thursday 8A-5P
 Friday 8A-5P
 Sat 8A-2P



Behind the Scenes

By Karen Bilbia - Practice Administrator

You come into the office and sign in; sit down and the wait begins. What are they doing? What could possibly be taking so long? This question is asked all the time and our patients want to know why they have to wait so long.

There are several people who handle your medical records in preparation of your appointment.

- The file personnel prep the chart and make sure all diagnostic studies are filed so they are immediately available to your provider.
- The receptionist prints out the billing router the day before your appointment.
- Upon signing in for your appointment, your chart is then reviewed with you to make sure all demographic information is current.
- Your insurance card is copied and verified.
- If you have an HMO insurance the receptionist must access the insurance company web site and check for any pending services that may be necessary. If any changes are needed, they are changed in the billing system and the appropriate forms are printed and placed on your chart.
- If you have a co-pay, the receptionist is instructed to collect that upon signing in as well as any balance due. Billing issues may be discussed as well.
- Your chart is then given to the sign in receptionist to post any co-pays into the computer, add your name to our day sheet. Your chart is then ready for the MA to bring you into the office.

We have several receptionists working simultaneously to keep the flow organized and on time. There are instances that arise which may delay a patient check in, i.e. insurance verification and billing issues. Some patients may take longer than others. Please be patient. We are here to help and assist you and want your visit to be as pleasant as possible.

LFP welcomes a new provider to the team:
 Nicole Grange, P.A.C.

You may have noticed a new face at the 6 Mile and Newburgh office. Livonia Family Physicians welcomes Nicole Grange, P.A.C. to the practice.

Nicole graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelors of Science degree in Nutritional Sciences. She then went on to attend the Physician Assistant program at Wayne State University and graduated with her Masters degree this past May.

She has special interests in pediatrics, gynecology and type 2 diabetes.

Nicole was recently married and resides in Canton. She is now accepting new patients at the 1st office on Newburgh and 6 mile. Call 734-464-9540.



THE TRUTH ABOUT *MRSA*:

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) is a specific bacterial infection known commonly as "staph" which causes a host of various infections, ranging from minor skin infections to more serious infections such as pneumonia or those affecting the blood stream. Specifically, these infections are resistant to some of the commonly used antibiotics generally used for "staph" infections. While this infection is not new, much recent media attention has placed this potentially harmful disease into the national spotlight following several outbreaks in schools around the country. In most of these cases, the infections presented as "pimple-like" red bumps or boils on the skin, which often resembled spider bites.

Here's what you need to know:

How is MRSA spread? Risk factors for MRSA:

- Inadequate personal hygiene
- Usually from person to person through hands or crowded living facilities
- Close skin-to-skin contact.
- Cuts or abrasions on skin
- Hospitalization/surgery/dialysis

How to avoid infection?

- Proper hand washing with soap and water
- Cover wounds with dry bandage
- Dispose of soiled bandages
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds
- Seek medical care at initial onset of infection
- Wash clothes, towels and sheets at hottest appropriate temperature

Signs of infection:

- Pimple-like or "spider-bite-like" wound that is red, especially after touching wounds/bandages
- Swollen, warm to the touch or draining pus.

There are antibiotics available to treat MRSA, so it is necessary to see your physician immediately at the first signs of infection to help avoid spreading this increasingly common disease.

Generic Drugs: What's the Deal?

What is a generic? Is it as effective as the brand name? Is it safe? Is it really that much cheaper?

A generic drug is a drug which is produced and distributed without patent protection. A patent is what protected the brand name for 7-12 years. Without it, a drug is able to be produced generically by multiple companies for a much lower cost. This means the medicine is available to you, the patient, at a much cheaper price.

But is it safe? Generics are assumed to be identical in dose, strength and safety to the original brand name. In addition, the FDA (federal drug administration) must approve generic drugs just as they do with new drugs. It is possible that small differences may exist, however, these differences are small and not common with most generic drugs. The generic drug may look different. This is due to trademark laws that require that the generic medicine look different than its brand name.

Will it cost less? Most insurances offer generic medicines at a lower co-pay for patients. This, in turn, will save the patient money, and in addition save the insurance company money. This may help to keep insurance costs down and make insurance more affordable to patients and employers.

At your next doctor's visit, ask your health care provider how you can save money by switching to a generic medicine.



Antibiotics: When They Can and Can't Help

What are Antibiotics? They are strong medicines that can stop some infections and save lives. But antibiotics can cause more harm than good when they aren't used the right way. You can protect yourself and your family by knowing when you should use antibiotics and when you shouldn't.

Do Antibiotics work against all infections? No. Antibiotics only work against infections caused by bacteria. They do not work against infections caused by viruses. Viruses cause colds, the flu, and most coughs and sore throats.

What is "bacterial resistance"? Usually antibiotics kill bacteria or stop them from growing. However, some bacteria have become resistant to specific antibiotics. This means that the antibiotics don't work against them anymore. Bacteria become resistant more quickly when antibiotics are used too often or are not used correctly.

What can I do to help myself and my family? Don't expect antibiotics to cure every illness. Don't take antibiotics for viral illnesses like colds or the flu. Often, the best thing you can do is let colds and the flu run their course. Sometimes this can take 2 weeks or more. If your illness gets worse after 2 weeks, talk to your health care provider. He or she can also give you advice on what you can do to ease your symptoms while your body fights off the virus.

How do I know when I need antibiotics? That depends on what is causing your infection.

Colds and flu: Viruses cause these illnesses. They cannot be cured with antibiotics.

Cough or bronchitis: Viruses almost always cause these. However, if you have a problem with your lungs or an illness that lasts a long time, bacteria may actually be the cause. Your health care provider may decide to use an antibiotic.

Sore throat: Most are caused by viruses and don't need antibiotics. However, strep throat is caused by bacteria, and usually diagnosed by a throat swab before antibiotics are prescribed.

Ear infections: There are several types of ear infections. Antibiotics are used for some, but not all ear infections.

Sinus infections: Antibiotics are often used to treat sinus infections. However, a runny nose and yellow or green mucus do not necessarily mean you need an antibiotic.

Information from article obtained from familydoctor.org

stay safe this Winter

With the onset of winter, we find ourselves battling the often dreaded snow and ice and the hazards which these can bring. Here are some tips to stay safe this season.

1 SAFE SNOW SHOVELING:

-Obtain clearance from your physician if you have a personal history of heart trouble

-Stretch arms, legs, and back to warm up these muscles first to avoid straining them

- Use small, light-weight shovel that suits your size

-Avoid caffeine or nicotine prior to shoveling, as these increase heart rate, putting extra stress on the heart

-Push snow, rather than lifting it

-If you must lift snow, bend your knees and lift with your legs, not your back

-Start shoveling soon after newly fallen snow as this is lighter than wet snow

******Stop immediately if chest tightness or chest pain develops and notify your physician or call 9-1-1***

2 FROSTBITE BASICS:

-Damage to skin and tissues from prolonged exposure to extreme cold temperatures

-Hands, feet, nose and ears most vulnerable sites

-Be aware of early warning symptoms: initial numbness with throbbing or aching in affected areas, followed by loss of feeling

-Look for skin that is initially pale and cold, and then becomes red and painful after thawing

-Avoid alcohol and nicotine prior to cold exposure, as these cause constriction of blood vessels, limiting blood flow

-Wear suitable clothing in cold temperatures (mittens, socks, hat, and scarf at a minimum)

-Seek immediate medical attention if you experience any of the above

3 AVOIDING FALLS:

-Wear appropriate snow boots with rubber soles that provide adequate traction

-Salt all walkways/driveways as needed

-Ask for assistance in entering/exiting vehicles

-Utilize stable outdoor railings if available when moving about outdoors



FIGHTING THE FLU...HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

It's that time of the year again that we need to prepare ourselves for a very unwelcome winter visitor...the flu. Influenza (also known as the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The peak flu season lasts roughly from October through April.

Flu Symptoms:

- Fever (usually high)
- Body aches
- Dry cough
- Extreme fatigue
- Headache
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Sore throat

The key to prevention is to get immunized!! The flu vaccine is an **inactivated vaccine** (contains killed viral particles) and therefore, **does not cause the flu virus**, contrary to what some still believe.

Who Should Be Vaccinated?

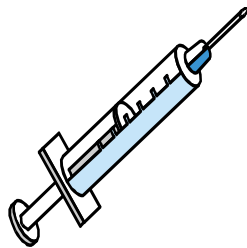
- All children aged 6 months - 4 years of age
- All persons aged 50 years and older
- Women who will be pregnant during the flu season
- Children and adults with chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, renal, hepatic, hematologic or metabolic disorders, including asthma, diabetes, and heart disease
- Healthcare workers
- Residents of nursing homes/long term care facilities
- Healthy household contacts and caregivers of children <5 and adults >50 years old and contacts of those with chronic medical
- conditions which put them at risk (see above)

Contraindications to Vaccination:

- Allergy to eggs
- History of Guillain-Barre syndrome

Side Effects of Vaccine:

- Soreness, redness, swelling at site of administration
- Low-grade fever
- Aches



This newsletter is for general purposes only and cannot take the place of advice from your health care practitioner.

This newsletter was written and edited specifically for Livonia Family Physicians by Dr Sherri Rosenfeld and Dr. Kristen West.