

Emerald City Clinic

Summer Newsletter

July 2002

Pros/Cons of Sunscreen

Although sunscreens help prevent squamous cell carcinoma and other skin disorders, sunscreens do not appear to provide protection against melanoma and some basal cell cancers. In fact, some studies have reported a higher association with sunscreen use and these skin malignancies. The reasons for this are unclear and, furthermore, not all studies have reported such negative results. Some theories for these higher cancer rates include the following:

1. Many people may be choosing sunscreens with high SPFs but which contain ingredients that only or predominantly block UVB rays and not UVA, the deeper penetrating rays now known to be dangerous. Currently SPF ratings apply only to blocking UVB and do not yet describe protection against UVA. And sunscreens with the same SPF may have different UVA protection factors depending on their ingredients. FDA labeling requirements for both UVA and UVB are scheduled by 2002. It should be noted that it is still not known if even blocking UVA will protect against melanoma and basal cell cancers. People who apply sunscreens may stay out longer during high sun-exposure hours than is safe. It should be strongly noted that even if a person doesn't sunburn, UVA rays can still penetrate the skin and do harm.

2. People do not put on enough sunscreen. In fact, according to one survey most apply about one quarter of the amount needed to meet standard recommendations for sun protection.

3. Some sunscreen products, notably those containing PABA, may actually break down in the presence of UV exposure and release the harmful oxygen-free radical particles, which theoretically could increase the risk for cancer.

Products that only contain inorganic formulas are referred to as sunblocks, although this term is disappearing as sunscreen products increasingly contain mixtures of ingredients. Zinc and titanium oxides lie on top of the skin and are not absorbed. They prevent nearly all UVA and UVB rays from reaching the skin. Older sunblocks are white, pasty, and unattractive, but recent products called microfine oxides, either zinc (Z-

Cote) or titanium, are transparent and nearly as protective as the older types. Microfine zinc oxide may be more protective and less pasty-colored than microfine titanium oxide. Some experts warn that the skin absorbs the micronized or encapsulated forms and the consequences of long-term use of this agent are unknown. Some brands that have the micronize titanium dioxide and zinc oxide were: Absolutely natural (http://www.nattan.com/ntf_suns.htm) Drs4kids(<http://www.drs4kids.com/kidstuff.html>) Carribean blue - <http://caribbeanblue.bigstep.com/generic.html>
found on MD Consult website

Clinic Closures

The clinic will be closed this summer on the following dates:

- June 21st for inventory
- July 4th
- July 12th for software training
- August 2nd for a staff retreat.

Additionally, the reception desk will be closed from June 24th through June 28th for rug installation. Patients should use the 1411 entrance on the east side of our "west wing" for appointments. Refills can be picked up during this time, however, we ask that you call in the prescription request to avoid additional delay.

Fractionated Pectin

I wanted to reiterate to all my clients the importance of letting your Naturopathic Physician know when you are possibly having any surgery or biopsy done on a possible cancerous lesion. These include going into a routine mammogram for a lump, removal of a mole, biopsy of tissue, etc. If these diagnostic procedures are being done I would suggest you begin taking Fractionated Pectin. This product has been researched to prevent metastases. The dosage is ¼ tsp. 3x/day starting the day before the procedure and to continue until you get the report back. If the report is benign than you are to discontinue use. If it is not benign you would continue use and discuss the further immune support with your Naturopathic Physician.

Homeopathic Drainage

I am really excited to share with you the approach of homeopathic drainage, an old therapeutic approach that is new to us at Emerald City Clinic. As most of you know, we have our detox center up and running and have been helping clients with liver cleaning and heavy metal detoxification this past year. Our basic cleanse lasts three weeks and involves sweats, exercise, colon irrigation, herbs, supplements, castor oil packs, emotional processing and anything else we can think of to help open the emunctories. What are emunctories, besides my favorite new word? The emunctories are the channels of elimination that need to be opened to allow toxins to leave the body.

So how does homeopathic drainage work? We need to start with the concept of homeopathy in general. Most of you have had the opportunity to take those little sugar pellets given to you from one of us or taken on your own as a home remedy. We, at ECN, most often use homeopathy acutely. The prime example is taking homeopathic Arnica for a stained muscle or a knock to the head. Arnica in a homeopathic form is known to reduce swelling and bruising. Some of you are also familiar with the use of homeopathy constitutionally, also known as classical homeopathy. A constitutional remedy is a bit more difficult to determine and requires a long interview covering physical complaints, emotional states and general information. We then match your constitution, as gleaned from the interview, with the characteristics of a homeopathic remedy.

Back to the concept of drainage with a little help from Shrek. We are like onions. The homeopath in us would like to see our patient's core, but layer upon layer of onion covers it. Homeopathic drainage can peel off these layers one by one by addressing our most distracting complaints first.

I'll give you a fictitious example to help illustrate how this works. If you come in complaining of a headache and insomnia, we choose a combination remedy that addresses just those complaints. In a month we re-assess and find that you are sleeping well, but that the headaches are still a problem and that now you also notice some gas and bloating. We make a new remedy addressing where you are that month and continue peeling off the layers.

While it may look like you have traded one symptom for a new one, we believe that one of two things may be occurring. One, you always had gas and bloating but didn't notice it because the insomnia was a bigger issue. In a sense we have turned up the volume on

the gas and bloating by quieting the insomnia. Two, you are moving backwards through your symptoms by re-experiencing an old complaint. This is a basic homeopathic concept in which old complaints reemerge as we move toward a healthier state. We pass through these old symptoms and then peel that layer off as well.

For those of you who have experienced constitutional homeopathy all this peeling may sound a bit backward. Classical homeopathy works from the core, from the inside out and addresses all planes of a person's health. As a trained classical homeopath, I tend to agree. However, as a naturopath I also really appreciate having a variety of tools to help my clients move towards optimal health.

To sum up, we appreciate the healing nature of detoxification and we embrace the power of homeopathy in any and all manifestations. We are excited about homeopathic drainage because it interacts so perfectly with liver detoxification. For more specifics, set up a first detox appointment with one of us.

Bonnie Nedrow, ND



Regence Refe

Most visits to other plans or therapists require a referral from your PCP (primary care physician). Your PCP must first assess the condition before making the referral. If the condition is ongoing your PCP needs to reassess every 6 months to a year.

Referrals are usually made for a 6 month period and it is the patient's responsibility to be aware of the start and end date. When a referral is made Regence sends letters to the PCP, the patient, and to the doctor to whom the referral is made. We advise patients to keep the referral letter so that if an extension of the referral is necessary you can request it from your PCP in a timely manner.

Many of the Regence programs have limits on "physical medicine" visits, including saunas, steam showers, physical therapy, constitutional hydrotherapy, chiropractic, etc. Such therapies are limited either in number or monetary value and we advise you to call your carrier or review your plan since you are responsible for all charges when the limit is reached. Our office is always happy to answer any questions you may have.

As of July of this year most plans will allow patients to self refer for chiropractic care. Please consult with your carrier to assess if your plan makes this allowance.

REVIEW OF OFFICE POLICIES

Payment Policy

Payment is due in full at the time you receive service. Dr. Linton decides when there is an extraordinary circumstance which merits a payment plan, and then Roberta arranges the details with you.

In all cases pharmacy items must be paid for at the time of purchase.

Patient responsibility amounts due after your insurance has paid its portion must be paid within 30 days of our notice to you that payment is due.

We only keep your visa or mastercard information when you specifically request it. However, we prefer that you provide the credit card number with each transaction. If you leave us a message to charge a purchase or balance to your credit card, you will need to give: the credit card number including the 3 digits on the back in the signature frame; the expiration date; and the name on the card.

Charges for Missed/Late Appt.

We advise you at your first visit, in our Client Fees, that we require 24 hours notice to cancel or reschedule an appointment without a fee. We have a full schedule, with patients often eager to get in sooner than we have an opening. Therefore when you give us the requested notice we can easily fill that spot. Less than 24 hours notice incurs a fee of approximately half the value of the scheduled appointment. If you do not notify us and miss an appointment, you will be billed for the full fee.



Premara Coverage

Some Premara Blue Cross individual plans will begin reimbursing for non-network naturopathic services, effective this July 1st. Call the number on your card to see if this applies to your plan. If you have this coverage, ask us for a superbill at every visit so you can submit it to Premara for reimbursement.

Pager Service

Except for pregnant patients whose global fee includes this service, there is always a fee for paging the doctor. You will receive a bill for the pager fee; insurance does not cover this fee.

We request that you only page if you have a truly urgent medical situation.

Phone Consultations

Phone consultations are only scheduled when approved by the doctor, due to special circumstances.

Scheduled Phone Consultations always incur a charge, except for birth clients whose global fee includes this service. More specifics are included on our "Client Fees" form that you signed at your first visit.

We will ask you for a credit card before you speak with the doctor and mail you the receipt.

FYI – phone consultations do not save you money as a substitute for an office visit! They cannot be billed to insurance so you have to pay the full fee, and they are not cheaper than an office visit. The best medical care can be given in person.

Insurance Information

We directly bill insurance if you have a Regence Blue Shield policy or if you are a birth patient. Some Regence policies do not cover naturopathic care, such as Boeing Traditional. If you have insurance other than Regence which covers naturopathic care, remember to ask for a superbill at each visit. You will need to mail in the superbill to receive reimbursement for your visit cost. Producing superbills for past dates costs \$3.00 per date.

When your plan pays only a percentage of the allowed charge, we bill you for the remainder (your patient responsibility). This amount is based on your contract. We send you a statement of the amount due and the date of the service. If we have not received payment after 3 requests we do send these accounts to collections. Please call us right away if you have a question about an invoice you receive.

Unfortunately, we do not know the details of your plan. It is your responsibility to know the limitations of your coverage.

Detox Update

Here are a few things you should know before starting your hyperthermia treatment:

All of our treatments are 45 minutes. This allows staff time to take your vitals and time for you to shower and change after your treatment.

The morning of your hyperthermia appointment make sure to eat a good protein breakfast and drink plenty of water. If your appointment is in the afternoon, eat a good lunch too! And drink more water.

If you have scheduled a sauna, please bring a bathing suit or a t-shirt and shorts to wear. Although the sauna is not scheduled co-ed, we have male and female medical students who may be assisting you.

If you have scheduled a steam shower, you may wear a bathing suit. The steam shower is private; however both male and female medical students may be assisting you.

When you arrive one of our medical staff will take your vital signs (temperature, pulse, blood pressure and weight). During the treatment we take your temperature every 10-15 minutes. You will be given water and an electrolyte beverage. Each time we take your temperature we should be offering you more water --let us know when you need it. More water = cleaner system. Remember while on the detox protocol we advise you drink half your body weight in ounces of water.

If at any time during the treatment you experience lightheadedness, dizziness, tingling in your fingers or toes, or anything that does not feel "right," press the red alert button and open the door of the sauna/steam shower to let cooler air in. Please do not stand up!! One of us will be in immediately to instruct you on the best way to cool down

If you are experiencing any new symptoms or if you have any specific questions, you need to schedule an ap-

pointment to check in with a doctor. You should be checking in with a doctor every 1 to 2 weeks, depending on the intensity of your detox.

Detoxification is a new and different experience for your body: keep in touch with what your body is telling you and ask questions. It is better to ask questions and learn than assume what you are experiencing is "normal."

FYI:

Vaccinations - require brief ROC to check that child is well . Tetanus will not be available until 2003.

Lab results by phone —only given by doctors unless doctor designates to staff; resident calls with pap results; HIV & STD results require 15 minute visit for doctor to discuss results.

Minor Surgery —Dr. Linton and Dr. Nedrow will remove the following when not on face or hands, and when deemed safe for in office surgery: moles, skin tags, cysts. Patient must schedule an ROC to determine if appropriate.

New data System —In response to billing and scheduling errors we purchased a new billing and scheduling software, Lytech Systems! YEA!! The staff will be training on this software July 12th and 13th, and we hope to be operating smoothly with it by the end of July.

We ask for your patience while we go through this transition. In preparation, we have been reconciling accounts with unpaid balances. Some of you may receive a letter from us, explaining details of balances that our records show as unpaid, and requesting payment.

Some of the changes you can expect : computerized patient responsibility bills, as well as requests for updated patient information. Please call Roberta or Anna if you have any questions.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*Emerald City Clinic
1409 NW 85th Street
Seattle, WA 98117*