Staying Healthy for Spring

Spring is here and so is that cold! There is nothing worse than looking outside, seeing sunshine, crocus and tulips popping up through the ground, people are out and about enjoying the warmer spring temperatures but you are miserable with a cold. How can we avoid these springtime colds? Realistically, there are no fool-proof ways, but you reduce your risk by following these steps.

- **Wash your hands frequently.** If no sink is available, rub your hands together very hard for a minute or so. That also helps break up most of the cold germs. Or rub an alcohol-based hand sanitizer onto your hands.
- **Don’t cover your sneezes or coughs with your hands.** Use a tissue if you feel a sneeze or cough coming on. If you don’t have a tissue, use the inside of your elbow.
- **Don’t touch your face.** Especially children who touch their face pass colds to parents.
- **Do aerobic exercises regularly.** These exercises help increase the body’s natural virus-killing cells.
- **Eat foods containing phytochemicals.** Eat dark green, red, and yellow vegetables and fruits.
- **Eat yogurt.** Researchers think the beneficial bacteria in yogurt may stimulate production of immune system substances that fight disease & studies show it reduces colds by 25%.
- **Don’t smoke.** Statistics show heavy smokers get more severe colds and more frequently.
- **Cut alcohol consumption.** Heavier drinkers are more prone to initial infections as well as secondary complications. Alcohol also dehydrates the body -- it actually causes more fluid loss from your system than it puts in.
- **Relax.** If you can teach yourself to relax, you can activate your immune system on demand. There’s evidence that when you put your relaxation skills into action, your interleukins -- leaders in the immune system response against cold and flu viruses -- increase in the bloodstream.

Source: WebMD
Match Week Produces New Residents

New Residents start July 1, 2012

What is Match Week? In 1952, the National Resident Matching Program was established provide a uniform date of appointment to positions in graduate medical education (GME) in the United States. The Northeast Iowa Family Medicine Residency Program has utilized this program since we were established in 1978. The education department begins receiving applications early in September and start interviews through December each year for new residents who begin on July 1st. Each March, our residency program waits during that 2nd week of March in great anticipation hoping that those names they chose to come to our program “match” with the prospective residents who chose us as their first place pick to come to us for their family medicine residency training. If we do not match all the names, then we go into a ‘scramble’. This is a process we have to go through to fill out the remaining positions not filled. We always remain hopeful each year that we fill them the first time around. This year we were fortunate to fill the six out of six spots first time.

The new first year residents who will be joining us on July 1, 2012 are:

- Dr. Issac Engholm, Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific
- Dr. Orietta Girard, Ross University School of Medicine
- Dr. Eric Miller, Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Dr. Sarojini Naidu, Ross University School of Medicine
- Dr. Maria Nguyen, St. George’s University
- Dr. Rahil Shaikh, St. George’s University

Research Website: Our new research website will be going live soon. This website will have the most up-to-date information on the current studies we are conducting along with registering for a study; information on BMI (Body Mass Index); as well as healthy cardiac, low sodium and diabetic recipes for you and your family to enjoy. You can also read about the Research staff and the history of how long the Northeast Iowa Medical Education Foundation has had the research program in our Cedar Valley area. We will publish the website address in the next newsletter, so look for us!
Refer a friend cards: Refer a family member, friend, or neighbor to our office and receive a $25.00 gift card to Hy-Vee or Target. Here is how it works: Reception has **Refer A Friend** cards available. Fill in your name, address, and date of birth on the back of the card and hand it to a friend or family member. They bring the card to their new patient appointment and you will receive a $25.00 gift card to Hy-Vee or Target. Refer us to your friend or family member to help us grow today! Encourage our patients to refer their friends too!
Patient Centered Medical Home Update

In our last newsletter, we introduced to you the latest buzz words: Patient Centered Medical Home which is a more effective and efficient quality model to improve our patient care.

As technology improves in the world today, health care organizations try to improve the way they communicate with their patients. One of the ways we are trying to do that is through better utilization of our electronic health records, which we have been using since 2002. This was long before many other organizations in the state. We are proud to be pioneers in this technological advancement. We are now providing Web View Charts for patients to view their charts on a secured online site. These changes may bring about some fears and barriers to change but we believe your increased access to your medical information will improve your ability to participate actively in your own care. This also encourages patients to take better control of their own health management.

Huddle: It is not the football huddle most people would think of but this refers to your physician and healthcare team who meet each morning and afternoon before seeing their patients. They plan what the needs, tasks, priorities are and try to avoid road blocks by meeting in a ‘huddle’. This also encourages them all to stay on time with your appointments. With all our physicians ‘huddling’, this should improve the timeliness of your appointments & the communication of information between the physician, our healthcare team and you.

Patient Instructions Summary:
You have now seen your physician. After each appointment, you will be given a written summary of your patient instructions. This summary will include your medication list, vitals, any new problems from current visit, maintenance list, and patient instructions as discussed from your physician. This instruction sheet will be for your self-review and your files. This change in the way we view your care will improve your understanding & maintenance of your health. Together, we can promote a healthier you.

We are ‘building blocks’ for a better improved Patient Center Medical Home. It is all about Family and You!