

DEDICATED CARE

Newsletter

Fall 2009

Improving
the way you experience

medicine.



OFFICE INFORMATION

Phone numbers:

After hours line -

(757) 388-1080

New patient enrollment -

(757) 388-1085

Dr. Clifford 388-1889, 388-1083
388-1066

Dr. Damman 388-1069, 388-1898

Dr. Jones 388-1852, 388-1093

Dr. Lisner 388-1871, 388-1084
388-1094

Dr. Weisman 388-1846, 388-1082
388-1130

Dispensary 388-1274

The Executive Evaluation Center -

(757) 388-1870

Location:

229 West Bute Street, Norfolk, VA 23510

Wainwright Building, Suites 700 and 910

Visit us on the web at

www.dedicatedcarecenter.com

and www.eecva.com

FACTS ABOUT SUN EXPOSURE

With summer and sun exposure, it is both tempting and traditional to correct that wintertime Eskimo look, and pursue that bronze tan that most everyone finds attractive. For those of us old enough to remember the days of cooking our skin with baby oil and iodine, the convenience of tanning booths seemed an attractive alternative until the dangers of that false sun were confirmed. Unfortunately, the public has now fallen for the premise that sun block makes prolonged exposure safe.

So here are a few facts for your consideration. First, you may be surprised to learn that the sun's rays striking our beaches or your backyard are different from those of fifty years ago. Gone, or strikingly diminished, is a very important component of the semi-protective filtration of the sun's rays as they pass through the earth's atmosphere. For reasons that have not been fully explained, the ozone layer of our atmosphere has been progressively compromised over the past few decades, and with it has diminished the atmosphere's ability to reflect or absorb the most damaging rays that strike the earth's surface.

The ozone deficiency is not uniform across the atmosphere, and in fact, appears to be at its maximum over Australia. There scientists have found a virtual hole in the ozone layer that allows the sun's damaging rays almost unrestricted access to those that avail themselves of that island nation's beaches. Unfortunately, that has led to a sad experiment that has virtually proven the theory of the sun's ability to devastate the skin of those exposed to its rays. That country is now experiencing an increase in deaths from malignant melanoma that justify the term "epidemic!" As if that were not tragic enough, the victims are frequently the young and beautiful of the population – those that are the most likely to pursue that tanned appearance!

It has long been recognized that sun damage was a precursor to malignant melanoma, but the public has been reluctant to accept the fact that a suntan is in itself proof of sun damage. An interesting fact is that 70% of people with malignant melanoma recall missing school for sunburn when in their teens, thus supporting the premise that the deadly chain of events leading to melanoma begins with sunburn years earlier!

So what can be done to diminish the risk of the cancers of sun exposure?

1. As parents, we must ensure that our children and grandchildren are protected from the sun when they are too young to understand the dangers.
2. Sunburn injury should be minimized by avoidance of sun exposure, protective clothing, and liberal use of sun block.
3. If you feel that you must go to the beach or pool, sun block should be SPF 30 or more, and it should be reapplied every two hours, or even more often if swimming.
4. At the time of your annual physical examination, be certain that a careful examination of the skin is performed. Melanoma can occur in very unusual places such as the sole of the foot, in the scalp or even on the back of the eye!
5. And perhaps most importantly, any pigmented skin lesion that is noted to either appear or change in appearance should be promptly evaluated by your physician, and ultimately a dermatologist. Do not trust yourself to decide which lesions are important! If a melanoma develops, time is very much of the essence, with cure expected to follow early confirmation and excision.

So if that golden bronze summer look is your goal, do what the movie stars do – stay out of the sun, and spray on your tan!

- A message from William M. Bethea, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.P.



William M. Bethea, Jr.
M.D., F.A.C.P.

What's Inside...

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- UpToDate For Patients
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UpToDate for Patients



By adding the UpToDate for Patients search widget to www.dedicated-carecenter.com, we have enabled our patients to find current, in-depth and unbiased information that will help them:

- Learn more about a medical condition
- Better understand management and treatment options

To get started, visit www.dedicated-carecenter.com. Once logged on to our website, click on the Resource tab, then type the condition you would like more information on in the search box.

As always, we here at the Dedicated Care Center continue to look for ways to keep our patients "up to date" and improve our current level of service.

STROKE PREVENTION

Stroke is a common and devastating disease that is the 3rd leading cause of death and the leading cause of permanent disability in US adults. Each year there are at least 750,000 strokes in the US. Approximately 15-20% of patients will not survive their stroke and of those who do survive, up to 50% will have some form of disability. Stroke costs approximately \$50 billion annually in the US alone.



Richard M. Zweifler, MD

Chief of Neurology,
Sentara Medical Group

Professor of Neurology, EVMS

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke occurs when there is a sudden interruption of blood flow to the brain. There are two major stroke subtypes: ischemic (or non-bloody), where there is a blockage of blood flow and hemorrhagic (or bloody), where a blood vessel breaks and causes bleeding within the brain (intracerebral hemorrhage) or around the brain (subarachnoid hemorrhage). Ischemic stroke accounts for 85% of all strokes and has many different causes. A transient ischemic attack (TIA) occurs when a patient has symptoms of a stroke but they resolve on their own within 24 hours.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF STROKE?

The symptoms of stroke occur suddenly, typically within seconds or minutes of the brain's deprivation of normal blood flow, and depend upon what part of the brain are affected. Most patients will have one or more of the following:

- Sudden numbness and/or weakness on one side of the body
- Sudden difficulty speaking or understanding
- Sudden double vision or loss of vision in one or both eyes
- Sudden loss of balance
- Sudden, severe headache

It is critical to be familiar with the above symptoms and to call 911 if you or someone you are with experience one or more of these symptoms. Rapid evaluation at a hospital is vital as available interventions are extremely time sensitive. In fact, with every passing minute, 2 billion neurons (brain cells) die during a stroke.

HOW CAN I PREVENT STROKE?

Despite the great promise of acute stroke intervention, the best treatment of stroke is prevention. Prevention strategies hinge around three major areas: 1) identification and modification of risk factors; 2) administration of antithrombotic (anti-clotting) therapy; and 3) interventional treatment of narrowing of large vessels (e.g., carotid endarterectomy or angioplasty and stenting).

Risk Factor Reduction

Identification and treatment of modifiable stroke risk factors is the cornerstone of stroke prevention. There are many modifiable stroke risk factors with the most important being previous stroke or TIA, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, atrial fibrillation, smoking, and elevated cholesterol. Patients who have had prior stroke or TIA are at high risk for subsequent stroke and should be evaluated by a neurologist. The single most important thing any one of us can do to prevent stroke is to be sure our blood pressure is controlled. For example, it has been estimated that nearly half of all strokes could be

prevented if hypertension was optimally diagnosed and treated, although the optimal blood pressure target remains unknown. Recently, clinical trials have supported the use of cholesterol medicines for stroke prevention. Recommendations for the management of behavioral risk factors are shown in the Table.

Antithrombotic Therapy

Patients who have had a stroke or TIA should take an antithrombotic medication unless they have a contraindication. Patients with atrial fibrillation are generally prescribed Coumadin which is an oral anticoagulant. Most other patients should take an antiplatelet agent (aspirin, Plavix or Aggrenox).

Risk Factor	Recommendation
Smoking	• Cessation
Alcohol	• Reduction or elimination for heavy drinkers • Consider ≤2 drinks/day for males and ≤1 drink/day for non-pregnant females
Obesity	• BMI 18.5-24.9 kg/m ² • Waist circumference <35" for females / <40" for males
Physical Activity	• ≥30min moderate-intensity most days

Interventions

One of the more common causes of ischemic stroke is atherosclerosis, which leads to narrowing of the large blood vessels supplying blood to the brain. If this narrowing occurs in the internal carotid artery in the neck, you may be a candidate for surgical removal of the plaque, known as a carotid endarterectomy. The benefit of endarterectomy is much greater for those who are symptomatic (i.e., have had a stroke or TIA) although there is modest benefit for selected asymptomatic patients. Angioplasty and stenting is undergoing evaluation as an alternative to endarterectomy and as an option for patients with stenosis of other arteries in the neck and head.

While stroke can be devastating, many are preventable so it is important to partner with your physician to ensure your stroke prevention regimen is optimized. Sentara Neurology Specialists has offices throughout the Hampton Roads region including Stroke Prevention Clinics at Sentara Heart Hospital and Sentara Princess Anne. In addition, we have an active clinical research program investigating novel strategies to prevent and treat stroke. To schedule a clinic appointment, please call 757 388-6133. For more information about our stroke prevention research program, including whether you may qualify for participation, please call Janet Rathbun, RN, CCRN at 757 388-6134.

Stroke Screening Available

Although not covered by insurance, carotid artery blockages can be detected years before symptoms occur. Ask your Patient Service Coordinator about the Health Check Vascular Screening offered at the Dedicated Care Center.

NEW FACES

You may have noticed some new faces during your most recent visit to the Dedicated Care Center. As a reflection of our ongoing efforts to maintain and improve our current level of service, we have again expanded our staff to better meet your needs.

Maggie Correa, has joined Dr. Julie L. Damman's team as her newest Patient Service Coordinator. Maggie has over 9 years experience focusing on patient care and customer service. In her free time, Maggie enjoys spending time with her husband Jonathan and her puppy Sasha. Maggie loves to travel and experience new cuisine and cultures. Maggie is a native of Puerto Rico and speaks fluent Spanish.

Meagan Stanford has joined our team as the Senior Patient Account Rep for the Dedicated Care Center as well as the Executive Evaluation Center. Meagan has just graduated from James Madison University where she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Health Services Administration and a minor in Business. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and soaking up the sunshine at the beach.

Shannon Witherspoon, LPN, has joined Dr. Glenn C. Jones' team. She has come to us from Sentara Leigh Hospital's Med Surg/Oncology floor. She is a native of Virginia and enjoys spending time with her family, shopping and reading.

Lindsay Rutherford has joined Dr. Gregg R. Clifford's team as a Patient Service Coordinator. Lindsay earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communications from Ferrum College in 2006. Lindsay is a native of Norfolk, VA and currently enjoys living in the downtown area, traveling, and spending time with friends and family.

We would also like to mention that Regina Schott, formerly Dr. Jones nurse, has taken a Patient Service Coordinator position with Dr. Lisner. Juliet Cleaves, formerly a Patient Service Coordinator with Dr. Clifford's team, has now joined Dr. Lisner's team. All of us at the Dedicated Care Center welcome our new team members, and look forward to continuing to expand our program in an effort to further improve your medical care and optimize your future health.



Maggie Correa



Meagan Stanford



Shannon Witherspoon



Lindsay Rutherford

The EEC Web Site Has A New Look!



The Executive Evaluation Center is pleased to announce the launch of our new web site, www.eecva.com!

Here at the Executive Evaluation Center, you will experience a uniquely comprehensive full day of advanced medical testing. Your day will include a complete medical history review and examination by not one, but a variety of specialists. Over a dozen high level tests and studies will be performed, all here, at this location on the day of your appointment. There is an emphasis on early detection and disease prevention, and in addition you will receive personalized exercise and nutrition counseling. All delivered with a level of detail, comfort and attention like you'll find nowhere else.

The experience culminates with a private and extensive consultation and review of your test results with a highly qualified physician. The result of which will be a clear picture of the state of your health and a bound report summarizing our findings and recommendations for staying healthy.

Recognizing that your time away from the office is valuable we have equipped each private room with telephones, voice mail and computers that allow you to conduct business during your visit.

While insurance does not cover this prevention and early detection-oriented health assessment, your well being is undoubtedly worth the investment. As always, we are committed to exceeding your expectations and thank you for your on-going trust and confidence. For more information or to set up an appointment call us at 757-388-1870. We look forward to hearing from you!

Now, Personal Physician Has A Whole New Meaning.

If you would like to learn more or schedule an appointment for a complimentary visit to meet one of our physicians, please call us at (757) 388-1085 or visit our website at

www.dedicatedcarecenter.com.



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