

PUSHING FORWARD THROUGH A PANDEMIC

by Nora K. Wallace, LVMC Public Relations Coordinator

Those of us who are so graciously given the opportunity to contribute to the Lompoc Vision provide our columns in the final week of the month prior to publication. As someone who spent a career in journalism, I fully understand how quickly a "news cycle" can change. But with the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapidity of the change in understanding the virus, as well as evolving healthcare rules, regulations and policies, has been nothing short of mind-boggling. That's a long way of saying that we hope you'll bear with us as the rules at our facilities may change from day-to-day, depending on virus transmission rates. This can be really frustrating for people, especially when it involves being able to visit (or not) a hospitalized person or having to wait in line to enter the hospital while getting your temperature



checked.

At this writing, the cases in Santa Barbara County are on increasing again, and the state itself recently logged its highest number of positive cases since the pandemic began. Because of those increasing numbers, the Santa Barbara Public Health Officer issued an order regarding visitation at hospitals. These orders can change from week-to-week, so we advise you to please check our website at lompocvmc.com. We understand that this may be upsetting and hope you'll understand that we're doing our utmost to keep you, our patients and our staff, healthy and safe.

Welcome: We would like to introduce you to LVMC's new director of Perioperative Services, Sandra Pulido. For those who may not know the jargon, Perioperative Services is generally called the "OR" department by those outside of healthcare. Sandra began working at LVMC in July and is currently working to obtain her Doctor of Nursing Practice from Western University of Health Sciences. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing, with an emphasis on Nursing Administration, from Liberty University in Virginia.

Sandra has worked at Community Memorial Health System Ventura main hospital as an operating room manager.



She is also certified as a Public Health Nurse. She has served on a number of medical missions in El Salvador, Honduras, Madagascar and Mexico.

Safe care: We understand that the pandemic may make some people fearful of coming to the hospital or our North H Center and North Third Center clinics. We have created TeleVisits for those appointments that may be accomplished on the computer or telephone. We encourage you not to delay any necessary check-ups, immunizations or procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your physician or healthcare provider.

New Faces: Lompoc Health has a new physician as of mid-July. Dr. Randall Caldron is an internal medicine physician and is treating patients in Urgent Care and primary care at Lompoc Health – North H Center. At North Third Center, we ask you to welcome Physician Assistants Jessica Denton and Emily Liebo. Soon, we'll also be able to announce a new oncologist who will work alongside Dr. Donna Walker at our Lompoc Health – Hematology/Oncology.

Interestingly, the body's physiological activities function best at a pH of 7.365. (Remember high school chemistry?) I find that many, if not most, patients are functioning in an acidic state (pH less than 7.365), and therefore have impaired immunity and more inflammation. Simple ways to correct this are to drink alkaline water (pH greater than 8) and also to use diluted apple cider vinegar before meals. The latter may seem counterintuitive since it is a natural acid, but the theory is this: One Tablespoon of apple cider vinegar 30 minutes before a meal (diluted in 8 oz. of water) allows your body to make less HCl (Hydrochloric acid) to digest your food. The overall effect is to decrease the overall acidity of your body. There is also evidence that this simple intervention allows people to LOSE AN AVERAGE OF 8-10 POUNDS per year - without changing anything else in their lifestyle or diet.

Additionally, it is now an accepted medical fact that patients who take strong acid reducers called PPIs (proton pump inhibitors) are at risk for more gastrointestinal (GI) infections - probably due to the protective effect of the stomach acid against infectious organisms. This is also true with Covid-19 as noted in a recently published article in the American Journal of Gastroenterology (July 7, 2020). Patients on PPIs were TWO times more likely to test positive for Covid-19. PPIs are necessary to treat GERD and prevent esophageal disease and cancer in many patients, but it is worth reviewing this with your prescribing doctor if you are on one of these medications.

I am excited to offer my patients more personalized and preventative care in a new model of medical practice! The above are just a few of the many items that I address with my patients, and I love to counsel and discuss "WELLNESS" in detail as it pertains to each patient rather than waiting for illness and disease (disease) to drive the patient into the doctor's office.

For more information about Dr. Ekstrum's NEW medical practice, located at 217 W. Central Avenue, Suite A, please call (805) 741-5999 or visit...

DaleEkstrumMD.com.

OPTIMIZING IMMUNITY FOR HEALTH IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

by Dale Ekstrum, M.D.

In my new medical practice model, I am able to spend time with patients and come up with a "Plan for Wellness." This is exciting for me because in traditional practices where patients are rushed through their visits and have to wait months for their appointments, illness and sickness are what drive the patient into the doctor's office.

With this new approach, I have found that every single one of my patients benefit from optimizing their immune function and digestive health. I want to share a few simple and low-cost vitamin and dietary supplements that will help your immune system function at optimal levels, especially important during the present Covid-19 pandemic crisis. It is becoming clear that people who have life-threatening complications from Covid-19 either have impaired immune systems or an OVER-REACTION and extreme inflammatory response to the infection. There are simple ways to make sure that your immune system has what it needs to fight and defend against infections that we all encounter every day, not just Covid-19.



I rely on the Linus Pauling Institute (L.P.I.) at Oregon State University for much of my information and as a reference in formulating my recommendations. They have an extremely comprehensive and applicable body of knowledge and data as it relates to vitamins and human nutrition and physiology. I recommend to all of my patients that they take the following: Vitamin C, Vitamin D, Omega 3 fatty acids, and Zinc unless they have a contraindication (a reason not to take them). The doses, purity and bioavailability (how a vitamin or supplement enters the circulation to have an active effect) vary widely and is beyond the scope of this update. You can refer to the free information on the Oregon State University (L.P.I.), and I am always happy to discuss further in depth with patients enrolled in my practice. Since supplements DO have physiologic effects, and therefore, risk of allergic reactions or side effects, I always recommend starting one vitamin or supplement at a time to make sure the patient tolerates it well.