



Newsletter #3

<http://www.mcmasterfamilypractice.ca>

Fall/Winter 2011/2012

You are our most valued teacher—thank you

McMaster Family Practice is one of two family practice teaching units in the Department of Family Medicine at McMaster University. As a clinical teaching site, our emphasis is on educating the Family Medicine Resident for the health care systems of today and tomorrow. A Family Medicine Resident is a medical school graduate who is completing two extra years at McMaster University to become a family physician. The educational goal is to provide an appropriate environment for the education of Residents in Family Medicine, as well as students of other health disciplines who are interested in working in primary care settings. The goal for patient care is to meet an exemplary standard within the framework of the Family Medicine model. Our medical residents work directly with your Family Doctor and other team members.

All of our exam rooms are equipped with a video camera which allows the monitoring Doctor or Nurse Practitioner to view your visit. The Resident is able to discuss and review each case on an individual basis with their supervisor, helping them to develop better interviewing, examination, and diagnostic skills. From time to time Residents may ask you for permission to videotape a visit for teaching purposes. They are required to review some of their work with their supervisor. They may not videotape without your permission and you should feel comfortable to decline their request if you wish. Recordings are as confidential as all of your other health information and are erased after being reviewed with the supervisor.

We would like to thank our patients at McMaster Family Practice for their valuable help in educating future healthcare professionals. The skills they learn here are essential for becoming competent practitioners in the community.

McMaster Family Health Team

McMaster Family Health Team (FHT) continues to grow and expand. The interprofessional team, from the clinical to the administrative staff, works to support primary health care delivery and educational opportunities for all patients and learners. In the past year, this team met patients over 112,000 times. Team members work together to provide health care to the patients and to support the learning for students, patients and each other.

The year ahead will be exciting and challenging. We are very proud of the McMaster FHT. In October, many of our staff showcased the excellent work they do at the Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario (AFHTO) conference. Improving the care and health of our patients is our priority. McMaster FHT will continue to expand the boundaries of primary health care delivery in education and in patient care.

Note About Appointments

As of November 1, 2011:

Invalid Health Card?

If your Ontario Health Card is not valid, you will be seen for that day's appointment, but will not be eligible for future appointments until you have an updated health card, or arrange in advance to pay for your visit with us.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, through Service Ontario, can provide assistance with this:

[1-800-267-8097](tel:1-800-267-8097) or www.serviceontario.ca.

Missed a Same Day Appointment?

If you do not show up for an appointment made the same day, *and you do not call to cancel your appointment*, we will be charging you \$30.

Need medical attention after regular office hours?

Because we all know that the need for medical care does not end at 5:00 pm, McMaster Family Practice is committed to providing several options for increasing your family's access to your health care team after regular office hours.

Each doctor and team offers some evening appointments to their patients. Some of these appointments can be booked ahead of time; we save other spots for the calls that come in that day. To find out about these extended hours, check with your health care team to see when these appointments are available with your usual care provider.

In addition, McMaster Family Practice also has a doctor on call, 24 hours, seven days a week. The on-call doctor is available to discuss more urgent health concerns, and may give you telephone advice, including the suggestion to go to the Emergency Room or call an ambulance. Depending on your concern, the doctor may arrange to see you in the clinic.

To reach the doctor on call, please call the regular telephone number for your doctor and Press 1. This will connect you with our answering service. After you have given your name, contact number and a bit of information about your concerns, the on-call doctor will be contact to give you a call back.

Call your own doctor's number. Press the number below as soon as you hear the recording start—you do not have to wait to hear all of the options.

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|---------|---|
| Press 1 | After hours—you will get Answering Service and they will page the doctor on-call (evenings after clinic is closed). |
| Press 2 | For Telehealth nurse or 1-866-553-7205. |
| Press 3 | To leave a non-urgent message in the mailbox, e.g. cancelling an appointment. |

In addition to our on-call services, you also have the option to call Telehealth, a provincial service of nurses who are available by telephone, to help answer health-related questions and guide you with respect to the urgency of a concern. If you would like to access this option, you can call the regular telephone number for your doctor and Press 2, or you can call directly at the following toll-free number: 1-866-553-7205.

On weekends and holidays, patients who call are usually booked into the weekend clinic. This clinic is generally held at the Stonechurch Family Health Centre site. Depending on the question or concern that you have, you can also be given the same kind of advice you receive on week nights. You can get connected to the weekend clinic by calling the usual telephone number for your doctor and then Press 1, or you can call directly to (905) 574-1444.

Here are a few tips about how to make the best use of the on-call service.

If you feel your situation is urgent, please let the answering service know. If you are in a situation that you feel might be life threatening, please call 911 immediately.

If you speak to the answering service and don't hear back from the doctor within 20 minutes, please call again. There are rare technical problems with pagers or phone numbers.

If you have a concern after regular office hours, call as early as you can. During the week, our on-call doctors can see people early in the evenings. We generally do not ask our on-call doctors to make house calls or see people in the clinic after 10:00 pm. As well, the on-call doctor has to work the next day. If you have a question that can wait until working hours, please call then.

On the weekend, if you know that you or a family member may need to be seen, please contact the weekend clinic as early in the day as possible. A receptionist is available to book your appointment after 9:00 am, and the clinic generally runs from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.

Finally, please **do not use** walk-in clinics. Call the doctors who know you—and who will keep records of your on-call treatment plans and medications. Walk-in service is fragmented and isolated from your usual care. As well, when you visit a walk-in clinic, your doctor will be charged the fee for that visit.

We are there for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please call us first!

Annual Flu Shots

The influenza (flu) vaccine will be administered this fall as usual. Every year, the vaccine is changed so that you can get better protection.

Remember: you can't get the flu from the vaccine. The vaccine is made of inactivated (thoroughly killed) flu virus.

Our clinic usually receives the flu vaccine in October or November. As in other years, we are running flu vaccine clinics. Call for more information. You can also speak to your health care provider about the vaccine.



Prevention Reminders

- Keep your children's **Immunizations** up to date. You can contact our office if you are unsure of the immunization schedule. Parents should notify Public Health at (905) 540-5250 each time your child receives an immunization.
- If you are female, and are due for your **Pap test**, please call to book an appointment. If you are unsure whether you need a pap, please discuss this with your health care provider.
- If you are female, 50 years and older, and have not had a **Mammogram** in the past two years, please call the Ontario Breast Screening Program directly at 1-800-668-9304 for a location near you, or you can call the Hamilton number directly at (905) 389-0101.

Exercise—not just about losing weight!

What are the benefits of exercise?

1. **SLEEP:** People who exercise sleep longer, fall asleep more easily, and overall have better sleep quality than those who don't exercise.
2. **MOOD:** Exercise helps depression or low mood. Exercise is thought to improve mood by distracting from negative thoughts and providing a social outlet for participation. It may also be involved in regulating chemicals in the brain, including stress hormones!
3. **ARTHRITIS:** People who exercise have been shown to have reduced PAIN and Improved physical function, compared to those who don't exercise. That's pretty amazing!
4. **QUALITY OF LIFE:** Studies have shown that people who exercise score higher in physical and mental aspects essential to quality of life, compared to those who don't exercise.

So what are the recommendations on exercise that I should be doing?

In Canada, we recommend 150min of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10min or more. (Don't get scared by the number; you can do it in stages!)

That sounds like a lot! Do I get benefits even if I don't achieve the recommended amount of exercise?

Absolutely! People who do the recommended amount of exercise can decrease their risk of mortality by 32%,

but even people who just do a little bit can decrease their mortality by 19%! Even a little bit is better than nothing.

What if I've been unfit all my life? Will exercise improve anything?

Absolutely! It has been shown that people who change from not exercising to exercising significantly reduce their risk of mortality.

What type of exercise do I have to do? Does it have to be intense?

It's not just about the type of exercise. Walking has been shown to have the same effect as running (or other vigorous exercise), if the amount of ENERGY you spend on it is the same. So do the exercises you like to do!

What other suggestions do you have that could motivate me to exercise a bit more?

Think about getting a pedometer. Studies have shown that people with pedometers walk on average 2000 more steps a day!

Also, ask your doctor to write you out an exercise plan.

Most of all have fun! Exercise is about feeling better, and being healthy. And you can get all the benefits just by doing a little bit.



What is too much alcohol?

It is not unusual for health care providers to hear questions like: how much is too much alcohol?

Current recommendations for alcohol intake suggest the following guidelines:

- If you do not drink alcohol, don't start.
- If you choose to drink alcohol, daily intake should be limited to two drinks for adult men and one drink for adult women.
- Heavy alcohol drinkers (more than three drinks daily) are strongly advised to reduce the amount of alcohol they drink.

Risks of alcohol overuse:

- Affects judgment
- Damage to brain, liver, heart, and nerves
- Increases the risk of depression or aggression
- Affects relationships




Introducing the new pharmacist

I'm very excited to join the McMaster Family Practice Team. My name is Kiska Colwill and I am a clinical pharmacist. You may be wondering why I'm here and not at your local pharmacy? My role at MFP is to be part of the INR clinic, diabetic clinic and patient medication reviews. I work with both Team A and Team B and look forward to working with you.



Wishing You and Your Family a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Quantities below are equal to one drink:

Beer		360 mL (12 fl.oz) of regular strength beer (5% alcohol)
Wine		150 mL (5 fl.oz) of wine (12% alcohol)
Spirits		45 mL (1.5 fl.oz) of spirits (40% alcohol)

If you feel your drinking is affecting your life, please discuss it with your health care provider. He/she will help you identify strategies and resources to help you to make some changes.

On your next appointment

Make sure that you keep your team updated with any changes to your address, phone number or a renewed health card.

If you have an email address, ask the Business Clerk to add it to your demographic. Help us save a tree!

Watch for "What's Happening at MFP" in our waiting room for monthly updates of what is new.

Closure Dates Due to Holiday

2011:	Monday, November 14	Hospital Holiday
	Friday, December 23	Christmas Day
	Friday, December 26	Boxing Day
2012	Monday, January 2	New Year's Day
	Monday, February 20	Family Day
	Friday, April 6	Good Friday
	Monday, April 9	Easter Monday
	Monday, May 21	Victoria Day

There is an on-call clinic on Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The receptionist is available starting at 9:00 am to book your appointment.

Call your own doctor's number (...5016 or ...5015) and Press 7 for the weekend clinic, or call (905) 574-1444.

SAVE TREES! To receive future issues of the McMaster Family Practice Newsletter electronically, please email your request to: newsfrommfp@gmail.com