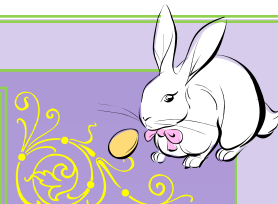


Happy Spring! Happy Easter!



GVFP NEWS & VIEWS

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Psoriasis

There's never been a better time than now to be diagnosed with psoriasis. That's because much has changed in recent years about how we understand the disease and its effects on the body. Medical research is rapidly improving treatment options. That being said, having psoriasis can at times feel embarrassing. Unlike other diseases that people can't see (like heart disease or diabetes), having psoriasis can mean that your health problems are on display for others to notice. But don't give up! Partner with your doctor, who can work with you to try new medications and treatments that can help you look healthier.



More than 7 million people in the United States have psoriasis, and it affects men and women about equally. It often appears between the ages of 15 and 35, but can affect people of all ages and races. Psoriasis is a chronic disease that will require lifelong treatment. There is no cure, but the good news is that there are a number of treatment options that can reduce the severity of the disease.

Although it appears on the skin, psoriasis is an *autoimmune* disease. It happens when skin cells are produced too rapidly and pile up on the surface of the skin before they have a chance to mature. Psoriasis is caused by a faulty immune system, often involving a type of white blood cell called a *T cell*. T cells should work to protect your body against infection. In people with psoriasis, however, T cells become so active that they trigger other immune responses, which lead to the overproduction of skin cells.

There are a number of other factors that increase a person's risk of psoriasis. Some of these include:

- **Obesity:** If you carry extra weight, your chance of developing *inverse psoriasis* increases. Plaques associated with all types of psoriasis can develop in skin folds. Talk to your doctor about weight-loss and exercise goals.
- **Smoking:** People with a family history of psoriasis who also smoke are more likely to develop the disease and have a more severe form of it.
- **Alcohol:** Heavy drinking can cause flare-ups and interfere with the effectiveness of medications.
- **Stress:** For some people, stressful events can worsen their psoriasis.

Psoriasis most commonly affects the knees and elbows, but it can show up anywhere on your body, including the scalp, nails and genitals. It can look like patches of thick, red skin covered with silvery scales. The inflamed patches (called **plaques**) can itch or feel sore. Your treatment will be based on a number of factors, such as:

- The type of psoriasis you have
- How severe your psoriasis is
- Where your psoriasis is located (is it very noticeable to you and others?)
- What kinds of treatments have failed or worked for you in the past

Topical Treatments

Mild to moderate cases of psoriasis can respond to *topical* (applied to the skin) treatments such as medicated lotions, ointments, creams, gels or shampoos. They may be *corticosteroids* (anti-inflammatory agents), vitamin D-based treatments, or *retinoids* (a synthetic vitamin A).

Phototherapy

For moderate to severe psoriasis, phototherapy uses ultraviolet light to slow skin cell production.

Body-Wide Treatments

Systemic and *biologic* medications work to slow skin cell production. These medications can be taken orally, by injection or by IV infusion. They can *inhibit* or *suppress* the immune system signals that are telling your body to create more skin cells. Continue with each treatment until your doctor tells you to stop. Be sure to tell your doctor about how psoriasis is affecting your life, and what you expect from any new treatments you may try. Your healthcare provider is the best resource for advice on how to best manage your psoriasis and continue to live a safe and healthy lifestyle.

How to Save on Prescription Drugs

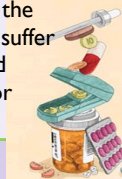
The cost of many leading brand-name medicines went up by nearly double digits last year, according to a new AARP survey. Here's your antidote to higher prices. (REALSIMPLE.COM)

Opt for mail order. Most employers' prescription-drug plans offer access to mail-order suppliers, such as Express Scripts and Medco, but not all participants take advantage of the services. For people who regularly take medications (like birth-control pills or drugs for high cholesterol or allergies), these programs can yield substantial savings, since you get a long-term supply. A 90-day supply of some brand-name medicines can cost as much as \$100 less than three separate 30-day prescriptions at the corner pharmacy.

Be cautious about free samples. Samples are often available for only the most expensive brand-name prescriptions used to treat chronic conditions. Ask your doctor if they would consider generics or a more established (and less expensive) brand-name alternative.

Split your pills (as long as your doctor approves). If you're taking 20 milligrams of a cholesterol medicine, for example, ask your family physician to prescribe the 40 milligram dose, and then use an inexpensive pill-splitting device from the drugstore to cut each pill in half. Most of the time, you'll pay the same price but get double the doses. Note: This doesn't work with gel caps, time-release medications, or capsules.

Check out assistance programs. Discounted or no-cost medicine may be available from government programs, nonprofits, and other entities. Go to the clearinghouse website of the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (pparx.org), where you can search by the name of the drug or the company that manufactures it. If you suffer from certain ailments, such as cancer, seek out disease-related associations (like the American Cancer Society; cancer.org) for additional resources.



Skillet Gnocchi with Chard & White Beans

6 servings | Prep Time: 30 min | Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 16-ounce package shelf-stable gnocchi, (see Tip)
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup water
- 6 cups chopped chard leaves, (about 1 small bunch) or spinach
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes with Italian seasonings
- 1 15-ounce can white beans, rinsed
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup finely shredded Parmesan cheese

Preparation

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add gnocchi and cook, stirring often, until plumped and starting to brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to a bowl.

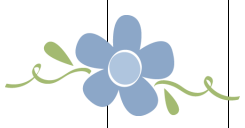
Add the remaining 1 teaspoon oil and onion to the pan and cook, stirring, over medium heat, for 2 minutes. Stir in garlic and water. Cover and cook until the onion is soft, 4 to 6 minutes. Add chard (or spinach) and cook, stirring, until starting to wilt, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, beans and pepper and bring to a simmer. Stir in the gnocchi and sprinkle with mozzarella and Parmesan. Cover and cook until the cheese is melted and the sauce is bubbling, about 3 minutes.



Tip: Look for shelf-stable gnocchi near other pasta in the Italian section of most supermarkets.

APRIL 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9-12 Sat. Clinic
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 9-12 Sat. Clinic
10	11	12 	13	14	15	16 9-12 Sat. Clinic
17	18	19	20	21	22 Good Friday	23 Closed
24 	25	26 Girls Sports Physicals	27	28	29	30 9-12 Sat. Clinic

Reminder -

Office
Copays are
due at time of
service

National Humor Month!

LAUGH LONG AND LOUD. A robust rib-rattler improves not only your mood, but also your health. The physical act of laughing helps you stay alert, makes it easier to cope and lets you maintain your sanity when the world gets a little crazy.

ADMIT YOU'RE HUMAN... laugh at yourself. People who have mastered Living-101 take their work seriously but not themselves. Knowing the difference gives you the keys to the kingdom.

UP YOUR LAUGHTER QUOTIENT.

Nothing may be more important to your health and happiness. It has been said the average American laughs 15 times daily. SO eat your broccoli and get a megadose of Vitamin L every day.

REMEMBER THAT LAUGHTER and longevity go hand in hand. Grumps don't live longer—it just seems like it. A buoyant outlook may be more important than oat bran and pushups, and it's a lot easier to take. So get in the zone: **Love life, laugh a lot, last longer!**

April is . . .

International Guitar Month, Keep America Beautiful Month, National Anxiety Month, National Humor Month, National Welding Month, National Garden Month, National Poetry Month, National Child Abuse Prevention Month, Physical Wellness Month, Testicular Cancer Awareness Month and Alcohol Awareness Month

Physical Wellness Month!

Time to get in shape for summer! Shed those winter clothes and extra pounds, and rejuvenate your body with healthy eating, restful sleep, vigorous exercise and a new look. Jog, swim, bike, roller-skate, play tennis, go hiking or backpacking. Spend time daily outdoors breathing in fresh air, and take time to relax. **Retire** to bed early for restful sleep and wake up early feeling refreshed and energized.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



This is a new section in our newsletter specifically designated to update our patients on happenings or changes within our office...

We are not currently doing evening clinic. However, we are re-evaluating the impact and would love to hear from our patients if evening clinic was beneficial to you. Please call or send us a note.

We are also working on a website for the practice. Watch for further details in coming issues.

In an effort to correctly bill your insurance and reduce errors in our billing department we will be asking you and your family for billing address and a copy of your insurance care each time you are seen in the clinic.

REMINDER: Co-pay's are due at time of service.

If you have questions concerning a specific change, please feel free to contact Barb Rider, our Office Manager.

