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The Newsletter for Lexington Clinic Patients

Do You Need A Primary Care Physician?

Having a primary care physician is important to your health. A primary care physician can follow your health over time and is aware of your previous and current medical condition. With this knowledge, a primary care physician can provide better care to you and to your family.

Primary care physicians are trained in a variety of medical areas rather than specializing in just one area. Primary care physicians are trained in the specialties of family practice, internal medicine or pediatrics. Like other specialists, primary care physicians complete an extensive three-year residency program after graduation from medical school.

As an adult, you can choose to have an internist or family practitioner. An internist is a doctor specializing in internal medicine who generally treats patients age 16 and over. Internists treat both common and complex illnesses and are generally knowledgeable in the areas

of cardiology, endocrinology, gastroenterology, hematology, infectious disease, oncology and pulmonary medicine.

Pediatricians provide care from birth to early adulthood and play a vital role in your child's development. Pediatricians specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of ailments specific to young people and track their growth and development until adulthood.

Family practitioners treat the entire family, from childhood through geriatrics, and are specialty trained in family medicine. They are skilled at handling general and minor surgical problems.

Your primary care physician can also refer you to a specialist if your medical condition requires it.

To find a primary care physician, contact our physician referral service at (859) 258-4362.



**Timothy
Brammell, M.D.
Internist**



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Lexington Clinic Performs First Spinal Artificial Disc Surgery in Lexington

On February 16, 2005, Dr. Alexis Norelle, Lexington Clinic Neurosurgeon, performed the first artificial lumbar disc surgery in Lexington. The surgery, lasting less than two hours, was performed on a relatively young patient, just over age 30, whose comfort will be enhanced by this revolutionary procedure.

Dr. Alexis Norelle and Dr. Leon J. Ravvin, Lexington Clinic Neurosurgeons, are among a select number of U.S. physicians designated to perform the revolutionary artificial disc surgery that was FDA approved on October 26, 2004. CHARITE artificial disc is the first to be FDA approved in the United States. It has been implanted in over 8,000 patients in 30 countries over the past 15 years.



Roughly 75% of all adults suffer from back pain and 1-2% undergo surgery due to degenerative discs in the neck or back. Many patients are improved with traditional spinal fusion; however, an alternative procedure is available for certain patients using the CHARITE lumbar artificial disc implant. The main goals of total disc replacement are to restore the normal range of motion in the spine, to reestablish stability in the spine and to minimize the painful effects of disc degeneration.

"Spine surgery is always the last option to correct a patient's back or neck pain," explained Dr. Alexis Norelle. "But, when it is necessary, today's technology of the artificial disc allows for quicker recovery time and less discomfort for the patient."

Spinal fusion has been the gold standard in spine surgery for years, but the loss of mobility from the fusion can cause wear and tear on the surrounding discs, which often leads to additional surgery.

CHARITE Artificial Disc

The artificial disc preserves motion, restores disc height, reduces pain from the damaged disc and reduces further deterioration of adjacent discs. With the artificial disc, most patients can return to normal activities and full motion within six to twelve weeks,

compared to three to six months after a fusion.

For more information about the revolutionary technology of the artificial disc replacement, please contact Lexington Clinic Neurosurgery at (859) 258-6760.

Physicians Recently Joining The Lexington Clinic Team

Dr. Alexis Norelle, Neurosurgery, (859) 258-6760

Dr. Susan Liddle, Hematology/Oncology, (859) 258-6520

Dr. Leonel Vasquez, Radiology, (859) 258-4181

Dr. Timothy Averion-Mahloch, Radiology, (859) 258-4181

Travel Tips Before You Hit The Trail

With people traveling abroad and venturing into countries and continents that present a variety of health concerns, the office of Dr. Gregory Snider, Occupational Medicine Department, is one destination travelers might want to visit before hitting the trail.

Dr. Snider administers vaccinations and provides consultation for Travel Medicine Services. Now is the time to schedule for both vacation and business travel, as well as groups going on mission trips.

"With any destination, the requirements for entering the country vary. The continents of Africa and Asia present the greatest health concerns and risks," said Dr. Snider

Consultation and examination costs are just \$40. The consultation involves a review of health history, immunization history, travel itinerary, and the traveler's wishes for trip preparation. Dr. Snider advises patients about vaccines, discusses travel safety, provides necessary prescriptions, and schedules follow-up visits to complete any immunization series. Every visit is individualized in detail.

Lexington Clinic has a stock of vaccines for most short-notice visits, in addition to carrying the hard-to-find Yellow Fever vaccine. The Japanese Encephalitis vaccine must be ordered in advance.

"Many vaccines offer lifelong immunity, while others are long-term," said Dr.

Snider. Seasoned travelers often need very little as their immunization status becomes more complete. Some travel agencies are offering discounted rates for their travelers, so check with your travel agent to see if anything is offered. Vaccination before you travel is highly recommended to avoid costly and unplanned medical care while you travel.

Dr. Snider can see travel patients on relatively short notice, but scheduling your appointment four to six weeks before the planned trip is recommended in case services need to occur over several weeks.

For more information on travel medicine services, please contact the Department of Occupational Medicine at (859) 258-8530.

