

What is Physicians' Primary Care?

Physicians' Primary Care is a physician-owned and operated medical practice that provides care in the following specialties. Medical services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Family Practice – Our physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners provide medical services to patients of all ages. Our focus is on prevention of disease, as well as treatment of chronic conditions, to achieve the highest quality of life possible.

Internal Medicine – Dr. Vincent Azzara specializes in internal medicine to adult patients, including senior citizens. He provides comprehensive health care with priority on prevention and treatment of chronic conditions.

Obstetrics and Gynecology – Our physicians and midwives provide services to female patients from adolescents to adults. We perform less invasive procedures such as supracervical hysterectomy and endometrial ablation. We also perform testing for urinary incontinence in our office. Saturday appointments are available in some locations for prenatal and gynecologic care.

Pediatrics – Helping infants and children remain healthy is the goal of the pediatrics division, which has three offices in Fort Myers, Cape Coral, and Lehigh Acres. In addition to Monday through Friday office hours, weekend and holiday hours are available for emergencies at our Fort Myers office.

Meet Our Family of Medical Professionals

FAMILY PRACTICE

Joanna C. Muller-Carioba, M.D.
Charles H. Curtis, M.D.
Paul B. Engel, M.D.
F. Richard Kirley, M.D.
Christine Mackie, M.D.
Alejandro N. Martinez, M.D.
Barry J. Sell, M.D.
Joseph A. Testa, M.D.
Jerry V. Thomas, M.D.
Dean S. Traiger, M.D.
Michael S. Verwest, M.D.
Scott E. Wiley, M.D.
Jeanne Abdou, A.R.N.P.
Jane Phillips, P.A.
Kevin Poelker, P.A.

OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

Heather V. Auld, M.D.
David H. Brown, M.D.
Randall P. Cowdin, M.D.
Sarah A. DiGiorgi, M.D.
Anita Del Bianco, M.D.
Ariel Figueredo, M.D.
Kevin M. Fleishman, M.D.
Paul J. Joslyn, M.D.
Blaise M. Kovaz, M.D.
Sarah H. Krauss, M.D.
Stuart Don Levy, M.D.
Rex E. Stubbs, Jr., M.D.
Mary C. Yankaskas, M.D.
Diane Byrd, C.N.M.
Denise Staerker, C.N.M.
Susan Yeomans, C.N.M.

INTERNAL MEDICINE/ FAMILY PRACTICE

Vincent A. Azzara, D.O.
Douglas S. Hughes, D.O.
Robert B. Maggiano, D.O.
Timothy J. Snodgrass, D.O.

PEDIATRICS

John W. Bartlett, M.D.
Bruce H. Berget, M.D.
Eleanor Crawford Blitzer, M.D.
Nuel Celebrado, M.D.
E. G. Guttery III, M.D.
R. Nathan Landefeld, M.D.
M. Annabelle Martin, M.D.
Avanee Master Lobo, M.D.
Manuel J. Mon, M.D., Ph.D.
John Ritrosky, Jr., M.D.
Georgia Rocha-Rodriguez, M.D.
Stanley L. Wiggins, M.D.
Susan Bengtsson, A.R.N.P.

Physicians'
Primary
Care***
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Let OUR Family
Take Care of YOUR Family

Physicians' Primary Care of Southwest Florida
NINE OFFICES TO SERVE YOU BETTER

Cape Coral Family Practice Office
1501 Viscaya Parkway • Cape Coral, FL 33990
(phone) 574-1988 • (fax) 574-1435

Cape Coral Family Practice Office
1304 S.E. 8th Terrace • Cape Coral, FL 33990
(phone) 574-7344 • (fax) 574-7765

Cape Coral OB/GYN Office
1265 Viscaya Parkway • Cape Coral, FL 33990
(phone) 574-2229 • (fax) 574-2762

Cape Coral Pediatric Office
1255-1 Viscaya Parkway, Suite 101 • Cape Coral, FL 33990
(phone) 573-7337 • (fax) 574-5883

Fort Myers Family Practice/Internal Medicine Office
6160 Winkler Road • Fort Myers, FL 33919
(phone) 482-1010 • (fax) 481-1481

Fort Myers Pediatric Office
9350 Camelot Drive • Fort Myers, FL 33919
(phone) 481-5437 • (fax) 481-0570

Lehigh OB/GYN Office
3507 Lee Blvd. • Lehigh Acres, FL 33971
(phone) 303-2328

Lehigh Pediatric Office
5624 8th Street W • Lehigh Acres, FL 33971
(phone) 368-7050 • (fax) 368-1331

Park Royal OB/GYN Office
9021 Park Royal Drive • Fort Myers, FL 33908
(phone) 432-5858 • (fax) 432-6297

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Physicians'
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OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Communicator

A semi-annual publication for patients and families of Physicians' Primary Care

Physicians' Primary Care Promotes Super Star Service



April
2007

Marian "Cookie" O'Hara
OB/GYN office – Cape Coral



May
2007

Donna Beckwith
Family Practice – Cape Coral



June
2007

Linda Debar
Family Practice – Cape Coral

Customer service may be a thing of the past at many businesses. But at Physicians' Primary Care, providing excellent customer service to patients as well as staff is a priority.

"We are continually striving to create a service culture within the organization," said Vincent A. Azzara, D.O., who heads up the customer service initiative.

One of the goals of Physicians' Primary Care is to analyze and improve, if necessary, any process that affects customer service.

Weekly and monthly meetings always include customer service as part of the agenda "so that we don't lose sight of our vision," Dr. Azzara said. "A smile on your face and respectful discourse go a long way in improving customer service."

Part of the process includes an employee recognition program. One employee is recognized monthly for providing outstanding customer service to either a patient or a co-worker. The winner is someone who went above and beyond their job duties or performed an exceptional act of kindness.

Physicians' Primary Care recognizes and honors our first three Super Stars: Marian "Cookie" O'Hara of the Cape Coral Obstetrics & Gynecology Office; Donna Beckwith of the Cape Coral Family Practice office; and Linda Debar of the Cape Coral Family Practice office.

"Our goal is to keep improving until everyone becomes a customer service Super Star," Dr. Azzara said. ■

Let OUR Family

Take Care of YOUR Family

Physicians' Primary Care of Southwest Florida is happy to accept new patients. If you have a family member or a friend who is looking for a physician, please ask him or her to call us at one of the locations listed on the back of this newsletter.

We would love to add them to our family of patients!

TWO New Physicians Join PPC



Dr. Sarah A. DiGiorgi



Dr. Avanee Master Lobo

Physicians' Primary Care of Southwest Florida is pleased to welcome two new physicians to our family. Sarah A. DiGiorgi, M.D., and Avanee Master-Lobo, M.D., are both accepting new patients.

Dr. DiGiorgi practices obstetrics and gynecology at the Park Royal office at 9021 Park Royal Drive near the HealthPark campus in Fort Myers and at the Lehigh OB/GYN Office at 3507 Lee Blvd. She received her Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Connecticut, where she also served her residency covering three hospitals. Prior to joining Physicians' Primary Care, Dr. DiGiorgi was Director of Medical Student Education in Obstetrics and Gynecology at St. Vincent's Hospital in Bridgeport, CT, where she also was a staff physician. She was honored as the Outstanding Laparoscopic Surgeon in 2005 by the Society of Laparoscopic Surgeons as well as several other awards for teaching excellence.

Dr. Master Lobo practices pediatrics at the Cape Coral office at 1255-1 Viscaya Parkway, Suite 101, and at the Lehigh office at 5624 8th St. W, Suite 108. She received her Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Miami, where she also served her residency. She is board-certified in pediatrics and is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Prior to joining Physicians' Primary Care, she was a pediatric emergency physician at Palmetto General Hospital in Miami. Dr. Master Lobo also is fluent in Indian languages, Hindi and Gujarati.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. DiGiorgi and Dr. Master Lobo. ■

Cape Coral Family Practice EXPANSION Underway

Construction is underway on an addition to the Cape Coral Family Practice Office that, when completed, will provide more room for examinations and patient services.

The 17,000 square foot addition at 1501 Viscaya Parkway will include 31 examination rooms and space for 11 physicians.

"The expansion will help us keep up with the growth in Cape Coral and accommodate the new patients we're seeing," said Diane Hoxey, Director of Special Operations.

The addition, due for completion in December, is being built by NuCape Construction Co., a division of Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.

This is the third major expansion of Physicians' Primary Care facilities in the past few months. A new medical office for obstetrics and gynecology opened in Fort Myers in April at 9021 Park Royal Drive just north of the HealthPark entrance on Summerlin Road in Fort Myers.

A new OB/GYN office opened in Lehigh Acres in September to serve the growing Lehigh Acres population.

TWO DRUGS Is Too Many *By John Ritrosky, Jr., M.D., F.A.A.P.*



Dr. John Ritrosky, Jr.

Both Tylenol and Motrin (Advil) are sometimes used in alternating fashion to combat fever in children.

Parental misconception about fever being a disease rather than a symptom is so common it has been termed "fever phobia." Most pediatricians do not consider a child feverish unless body temperature exceeds 100 degrees. Increased temperature is a defense mechanism to fight an infection, and can enhance immune responses. Fever, however, can make a patient feel uncomfortable and achy.

A significant fear is a possibility of seizures, and about one in 25 children under the age of 5 will have a febrile seizure. These are benign, last less than 10 to 15 minutes and produce no medical or brain damage. There is no evidence that fever reducers prevent febrile seizures.

The two most common anti-fever drugs are Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, others). Both are available over the counter, non-steroidal, safe, and equal in fever reducing

ability. They can be toxic if overdosed, and with prolonged chronic use.

Acetaminophen is given every four hours, with Ibuprofen, being longer acting, requiring a six-hour interval.

The main reason to use these drugs is to improve patient comfort, and not necessarily to reduce fever to normal. Reducing fever may affect the body's defense mechanism and some physicians wonder if fever should be reduced at all. However, fever frightens all parents so it needs to be emphasized that the main reason to use either drug is to provide comfort to the child.

Research has provided few studies that indicate better fever reduction with two alternating drugs compared with a single drug. Studies have been unable to establish safe and effective dosing and intervals using two drugs. Alternating drugs is confusing and has led to overdosing. Aggressive fever therapy is not necessary and promotes a parent's preoccupation with fever phobia.

The potential harm from dosing errors makes two alternating drugs risky and is not recommended. Only one medicine should be used. ■

New Birth Control Option Now Available



Dr. Kevin M. Fleishman

The first birth control pill meant to put a stop to women's monthly periods indefinitely is now available.

Called Lybrel, it's the first such pill to receive U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval for continuous use.

"Many women still like the 21-days-on, seven-days-off regimen, but it is like the Model T of birth control. You don't have to prescribe pills that way anymore. Seasonale and Seasonique also are available with four periods per year," said Kevin M. Fleishman, M.D., of the Cape Coral OB/GYN office.

Dr. Fleishman said Lybrel is the first low dose combination pill taken 365 days per year. It is intended for women who would like to put their menstrual cycle on hold. Lybrel does not delay a return to fertility and a return to menses when the pill is stopped.

But there are some potential disadvantages, according to Dr. Fleishman.

In clinical studies, breakthrough bleeding occurred in 21 percent of the women and spotting occurred in 20 percent of the women in the first six months of

therapy. This did not get better over time, according to Dr. Fleishman.

"If the convenience of having no regular menstrual periods is more than the inconvenience of unscheduled or unplanned breakthrough bleeding, you may want to give the new extended cycle regimen a try," he said.

Although a monthly cycle that repeats throughout a woman's adult life may seem normal, contemporary women actually experience far more periods than their hunter-gatherer ancestors did. Calculations taking into account a later age of period onset, a younger age at first birth, and a longer period of breast-feeding suggest that a hunter-gatherer woman experienced approximately 160 menstrual cycles in her lifetime, compared with contemporary women who experience about 450.

Dr. Fleishman said there is no scientific evidence that monthly periods are necessary for "cleansing the system," or because it is a "natural" state.

"There are many health benefits associated with medically regulating periods, including reductions in monthly blood loss, uterine fibroids, endometriosis, iron deficiency anemia, and PMS symptoms such as migraine headaches and, sometimes, seizures," Dr. Fleishman added. ■

SHINGLES Can Affect Anyone

Shingles can be a painful disease that can affect anyone who has had chickenpox, which is about 90 percent of the U.S. adult population.

"We're seeing more and more cases of Herpes Zoster (HZ) or shingles, as it is more commonly known. The number is increasing dramatically because of our aging population," said Paul B. Engel, M.D., a family practice physician in the Cape Coral office on Viscaya Parkway.

You are at risk for getting shingles if you have had chickenpox because the virus stays inactive in the nerves of the body. Conditions that weaken the body's immune system, such as aging, cancer, or certain drugs, increase the chance that the virus will become active again.

About half of the nearly one million shingles cases in the United States each year occur in people aged 60 years and older. Incidence in individuals 85 and older is as high as 50 percent, according to Dr. Engel.

The first signs of shingles are often felt and may not be seen. These can include itching, tingling, and burning. A few days later, a rash of fluid-filled blisters appears, usually on one side of the body or face.

The shingles rash can be painful. Shingles rashes usually last up to 30 days, and for most people the pain associated with the rash lessens as it heals. However, for some people, after the rash heals, shingles may lead to pain that can last for months or even years (a condition known as postherpetic neuralgia, or PHN).

"HZ is a potentially debilitating illness that can be successfully managed with timely treatments and appropriate vaccination," Dr. Engel said.

Antiviral medicines for shingles cannot prevent pain but have been shown to shorten the healing time. Antiviral medication should be initiated within the first 72 hours after an initial outbreak, Dr. Engel noted.

Persons who are over age 60 and have had chickenpox may benefit from a new vaccine for the prevention of shingles. Zostavax is given as a single dose intramuscularly or by injection. It cannot be used to treat shingles during an outbreak. It can be given about six weeks after the outbreak has resolved, however.

"Zostavax is available now and is strongly encouraged for our aging population," Dr. Engel said. ■



Dr. Paul B. Engel