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Happy summer! We're immersed in the heart of the heat of summer and if you are like me you love the cool, early mornings and brilliant, blue sunshine. I feel there is nothing more beautiful than a Colorado summer with the mountains as a background. This summer is especially unique in that I am growing my practice and adding Mindy Willits who is an OB-GYN nurse practitioner with 28 years of experience in Obstetrics and Gynecology.



Mindy grew up in Eustis, Nebraska and completed her undergraduate studies in nursing and women's health care at the University of Nebraska. She received her advanced practice nurse practitioner degree at the University of Colorado, School of Nursing here in Denver, Colorado. She worked for 23 years with Dr. Peter Vargas,

a solo practitioner Ob-Gyn in the central Denver area. Unfortunately Dr. Vargas died tragically from a heart attack at 60 and Mindy went to work with a large group of Ob-Gyn Dr.s in Denver. Mindy, like me, realized that while she loved the physicians she worked with, she wanted a smaller practice with more individualized and attentive care for her patients. She wanted to return to the solo practitioner model of work in which she thrived for 23 years. Mindy and I plan on creating this atmosphere in our office and want to work together as a team to provide you, the patient, with the best possible care available in a warm and friendly environment.

Mindy's lengthy and vast experience in Ob-Gyn enables her to handle all the office responsibilities that I can. She is especially interested in contraceptive management for young women and menopausal and peri-menopausal issues for us older folks. Mindy is extremely knowledgeable about the gynecologic complications of peri-menopause such as abnormal uterine bleeding, increases in premenstrual syndrome and menstrual cramps, and urinary incontinence. She also has extensive experience with ultrasonography and Obstetrics. Mindy has taken advanced courses in office surgery and she, like me, can perform hysteroscopy, endometrial biopsies, LEEP cervical excisions, and colposcopy in the office. **(Continued on back...)**

Summer 2007

In this issue:

MEET OUR NEW PRACTITIONER!

Mindy Willits will begin seeing patients in late August. Learn more about how Mindy will enhance our ability to take care of all your women's health needs.

HPV AND PAP SMEARS

A combination of tests predicts pre-cancerous, cervical changes more accurately.



Quote of the Day:

"A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers..."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

She is the perfect person to provide your daughter or any young woman, who feels more comfortable with a female practitioner, obstetric and gynecologic care.

Mindy will begin seeing patients in our Swedish office in late August 2007. Currently she will see patients only at the Swedish office but we hope to have space in the future for Mindy to see patients at our Sky Ridge office. Please call our office after August 1 to schedule an appointment with Mindy or call any time to schedule an appointment with me.

Life is full of constant change and so too is the practice of medicine. In this newsletter is an article about new screening techniques for cervical cancer and its precursors based on new knowledge about how cervical cancer starts and what causes it. - Bob Gore

HPV and PAP SMEARS

The Pap smear was invented by George Papanicolaou for the early detection of precancerous and cancerous changes in a woman's cervix. It came into wide spread use in the 1950s and since that time cervical cancer has decreased from the number one cause of cancer mortality in women to the 15th cause of cancer death in women. Things have remained relatively constant in cervical screening for the past 50 years except for refining the collection techniques for the cervical cells into a liquid based medium.

In the past ten years our understanding of abnormal tissue growth on the cervix caused by the HPV (Human Papillomavirus) virus has grown exponentially. We know realize that significant cervical abnormalities and cancers of the cervix are caused by the High Risk Strains of the HPV virus. We are now also aware that 50-75% of women will clear an HPV infection within 18 months and that it takes more than ten years for an initial HPV infection to progress into a significant precancerous or cancerous abnormality. Based on these new scientific understandings our professional organizations have made the following recommendations.

Adolescent girls who become sexually active should definitely be seen by an OB-GYN or other practitioner for a pelvic exam and screening for sexually transmitted diseases such as Gonorrhea and Chlamydia. However a Pap smear should not be performed until 3 years after initiation of intercourse

since the vast majority of High Risk HPV infections will be cleared spontaneously by the woman. This will avoid the often disfiguring and deforming cervical surgeries that many young women undergo by their doctors for an HPV infection that will often clear itself.

For women over 30 the combined use of a traditional Pap smear looking for abnormal cervical cells and a cervical HPV virus assay can markedly increase the sensitivity of the test looking for significant precancerous cervical changes. A Pap smear alone can miss 20-30% of precancerous cervical changes whereas a combined HPV/Pap will miss only 1/1,000 significant precancerous changes. If a woman is negative for both abnormal cervical cells and the High Risk HPV virus, she still needs to come in for a yearly pelvic and breast exam but she only needs a Pap smear every three years. If a woman tests persistently positive for the High Risk HPV virus even with normal cervical cells, she needs to be evaluated just as if she had abnormal cervical cells.

Like so many things in medicine, our new understandings must initiate new protocols for their diagnosis and management. It is imperative to stay current and up to date. For more information you can search the following web sites: www.asccp.org or www.cdc.gov/cancer. If you have any further questions please feel free to call my office.

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