

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Care

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Managing Vitamin D Deficiency

By Kristi Farrell

Recently, there has been a lot of buzz about vitamin D. Nurse practitioners understand the importance of vitamin D in bone health but many of us may not appreciate the larger role vitamin D plays in our bodies. New research shows that vitamin D plays a role in reducing the risk of many chronic illnesses. In several studies individuals with optimal vitamin D levels had a lower risk of colon cancer, diabetes, periodontal disease, and multiple sclerosis. Patients have experienced decreased muscle aches and arthritic symptoms when vitamin D levels were restored. We shouldn't look to vitamin D to completely prevent these diseases, but it is important to acknowledge the role Vitamin D plays in health and the importance for primary care providers to monitor vitamin D levels periodically.

The primary means of measuring vitamin D levels is to draw a serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25OHD) level. According to most experts the optimal 25OHD level is 32ng/ml-100ng/ml. Different laboratories may have different ranges. In general, vitamin D deficiency is diagnosed when 25OHD is less than 20ng/ml, vitamin D insufficiency is diagnosed when 25OHD is 21-31ng/ml, vitamin D intoxication occurs when 25OHD is greater than 150ng/ml.

There are several ways to treat vitamin D deficiency. Individuals can obtain vitamin D through natural food sources (salmon, tuna, egg yolks) or fortified food sources (milk, orange juice, cereal), sunlight and supplements. Unfortunately most individuals do not obtain sufficient vitamin D through their diet and should be cautious about sun exposure; thus, supplements represent a safe, solid source. Vitamin D supplements are available in two forms: D₂ (ergocalciferol) which is available by prescription at high doses and OTC at very low doses, and D₃ (cholecalciferol) which is available OTC.

In order to maintain vitamin D at the optimal level, nurse practitioners should recommend 1,000 IU/day of D₃ or 50,000 IU once every 2-4 weeks of D₂. In order to treat low vitamin D levels, experts recommend 2,000 IU/day of D₃ or 50,000 IU/wk of D₂ for 2-8 weeks depending on deficiency level. Studies have shown that individuals taking 10,000 IU/day of vitamin D for 20 weeks did not experience any adverse effects.

There are many exciting ways that vitamin D benefits our bodies. It is time to start making vitamin D monitoring and treatment a routine part of patient care.

Sources:

Holick, M. (2007). Vitamin D Deficiency. New England Journal of Medicine, (357)3, 266-281.

Moore, N., & Kiebzak, G. (2007). Suboptimal Vitamin D Status is a Highly Preventable but Treatable Condition in Both Hospitalized Patients and the General Population. Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, 19,642-651.

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Kristi Farrell is a family nurse practitioner providing urgent and primary care at Lake Serene Clinic in Lynnwood and a recent graduate of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. She is a new Board of Directors member as of January 2008.

A Student's Day At the Capitol

By Kathryn Austin

What began as the fulfillment of my Health Policy class project (I am in a CNM/ARNP Masters Program at the Midwifery Institute of Philadelphia) ended with a new awareness and appreciation for a topic I typically have avoided if at all possible – POLITICS! I was to pick a bill to either help support or defeat, whichever I felt the strongest about, and focus on women's and/or children's health care. It was up to me how I went about doing this and being that I was completely clueless about this venue, I turned to the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) website for guidance, where I found Heather Bradford's name connected to the word "legislative". I emailed her with my problem and within a few days, I was rewarded with a reply and suggestions. Bradford is the Legislative Chair for AUWS; she explained the 72 hour bill, and recommended that I attend Nurse Legislative Day in Olympia on February 4th and help support this bill. With a big gulp, I said "sure, I would attend." My main focus of the day was to meet with AUWS members, learn more about the 72 hour bill, learn how to meet with legislators about this, and then do just that.

The ARNPs break-out session was led by AUWS. It was a great feeling to be included in a room of 100 ARNPs and I was quite surprised to learn that there were about 25 other students there as well. After Bradford updated us on our 72 hour bill, she and ex-Legislative Chair Marty Couret did a role play for us about how to meet with a legislator and ask for support of a bill. Their excellent acting skills were a great help to those of us who had never before lobbied for a bill. After the breakout

session, we all walked up to the Capitol to have lunch. There was no one area to sit and eat, which meant there were hundreds of nurses and nurse practitioners (approximately 800 in total attendance) sitting everywhere within the Capitol, lined up and down on all the marble stairways and hallways, eating out of white cardboard boxes. It was a very curious sight for someone who had never even been to the Capitol before!

After lunch, I met with Bradford and was able to sit in on one of her visits with her Representative. I was impressed with how fast the legislator could skim the material Bradford presented, listen to what she was saying, ask some excellent questions about the issue/bill, and then have a good understanding of what really was going on and what should be done about it. This took a whole 10 minutes and we were done. Seemed easy enough; I was ready for my own appointments with the three legislators from my district.

Realizing that I was still feeling a bit nervous as my first appointment approached with Senator Hewitt, I tried to remember that he started out as just a regular guy from my home town. Senator Hewitt's office is directly outside the Senate Chamber and as I had been sitting outside his office waiting, I was privileged to view the chamber. It was at this moment that I became dumb-struck with the enormity of where I was and what I was seeing, and that it was here and in the House, where all the major decisions about what happens in our state are decided. Senator Hewitt's aide had been helping me before our meeting, but now the Senator himself came out to greet me. He was warm and engaging and very interested in why I was there. He was very curious about the difference between a nurse, an ARNP, the different types of ARNPs, and a Physicians Assistant, and how the 72 hour bill came into play.

This was a good visit. I felt that I gave good information and answered his questions appropriately. Overall, I left feeling positive about Senator Hewitt's support of this bill. The next two visits also went well. I was struck at how nice everyone was, the door men, the aides, the secretaries, and the legislators; everyone was there to help in one fashion or another, and I was never made to feel as if as if I didn't belong there; a lot of serious work being done here in an air of genuine cordiality and respectfulness – impressive!

A great side-kick of this experience was meeting and networking with several nurse-midwives who have worked hard for years for the rights of ARNPs in Washington State. I was struck by their diligence and passion, which I found very inspiring for this "new kid on the block." It's nice to know that I already have some midwife-friends on the other side of the state to stay connected with as I venture out in my new career.

My day at the Capitol was a "shoe-in" for an "A" in my Health Policy class, but what became more important and genuine, was being able to see our course work "in action" – this was a true privilege and a great day.

Meet the Board of Directors

Robyn Choffel, FNP joined the AUWS Board of Directors on January 1, 2008. She currently owns and staffs the "Quick Care Clinic" in Sedro-Woolley in northwest Washington state. The clinic serves patients with episodic problems on a cash basis and does not bill private or public insurance.

She graduated from Oregon Health Sciences University in 1991 and from the University of Washington in 1996. For the past 11 years she has worked in Family Practice/Internal Medicine.

Choffel chose family practice in order to provide holistic, comprehensive care to families. She became disillusioned with her prior practice because traditional business demands compromised her ideals. In her current practice environment she can better control how her patients are treated. Providing inexpensive care at her "Quick Care Clinic" allows her to serve a population that would otherwise go without health care.

She volunteered for the AUWS board because she sees ARNPs as the cornerstone for changing our healthcare system, not only in Washington State but also throughout the U.S. Through AUWS, she would like to be even more involved in helping ARNPs take the forefront in providing cost effective health care to underserved people. Her goal is to see the cost of health care brought down so that those without insurance can afford care, and insurance companies are utilized for catastrophic coverage only.

Ultimately, Choffel hopes that ARNPs United will be a recognized, respected force that will change the cost and delivery of health care for the underserved.

Spotlight on a Member

JoAnne C. Yost has been a Family Nurse Practitioner in Elma since she finished her NP Program at the University of Washington Continuing Education Program in 1974-75. Following graduation, she and a classmate moved to Elma and shared two jobs in the East Grays Harbor area. One job was to set up an out patient primary care clinic at Mark Reed Hospital; the second was to work with Dr. S.A. McCool in his clinic in Elma. The first year her time was split between the two clinics until the hospital clinic closed.

Yost continued to work in the Elma clinic until 1991, when she was asked to open a rural health clinic, now known as Capital Medical Center. Her clinic started in

a small 3-room office space with herself and an office manager. Over the years the clinic has moved to a larger space and the staff has grown to 1 full time and 3 part time family nurse practitioners, 2 back office positions and 3 office staff positions. The team serves patients of all ages, with many health issues and diverse cultural backgrounds.

Yost chose family practice because she preferred to be able to serve a variety of clients and focus on prevention of illness. She has participated in two collaborative projects to improve the care of those with chronic diseases. Yost is a true advocate for the ARNP profession and for her community. She has precepted nursing students since the early 1990's, has been a member of the ANA and state nursing organizations since the 1960's, and a loyal member of ARNPs United since its inception. She is currently on the Board of Directors of the Children's Advocacy Center of Grays Harbor.

Yost has enjoyed watching the growth and evolution of the nurse practitioner profession. She is happy to see nurses getting involved in political issues that focus on improving access to health care, and hopes all nurses will continue to raise awareness for their profession and the health care needs of their clients. She feels her success is related to having a strong mentor (Dr. McCool), the support of her staff, and above all, the trust bestowed by the community of Eastern Grays Harbor, who, says Yost, "were willing to entrust their health care to an unknown nurse."

Classified Ads

Tacoma, WA – Cardiothoracic Surgery ARNP

Fantastic opportunity! Seeking full time cardiothoracic surgical ARNP to become an integral member of our adult cardiothoracic surgery team. Responsibilities include first assist in the operating room as well as pre and postoperative patient care in hospital and office. Ideal candidate will have 3+ years of cardiothoracic surgical experience including cardiothoracic first assistant experience. Endoscopic vessel harvesting experience preferred. Guaranteed salary, a full array of benefits and a great location makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org. Please reference opportunity #616-780

Full and Part-time FNP - Tacoma, WA

MultiCare Express, a part of MultiCare Health System, is a retail based practice located in area pharmacies. The express clinic will offer high quality care for simple illnesses such as sore throats, URI, UTI, sinusitis with point of care testing and some common immunizations. This is a great opportunity to practice autonomously in a unique setting. Master of Science degree in nursing and national certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner is required. MultiCare Health System offers competitive compensation/benefits as well as flexible full-time and part-time schedules. For more information please contact Provider Services @ 800-621-0301 or send CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please reference opportunity #643-798-800

Tacoma, WA – ARNP – Adult Medicine

Internal Medicine group seeks a full-time Adult Nurse Practitioner to work in a collaborative practice providing comprehensive primary healthcare in all aspects of internal medicine. Position offers a great opportunity for the NP to provide care in nursing homes and assisted living facilities if desired. Candidates must be eligible for licensure & certification in Washington State. Excellent compensation, benefits, and group stability makes this an ideal choice for the provider who is looking to experience the best of Northwest living; from big city amenities to the pristine beauty and recreational opportunities of the great outdoors. For more information regarding this fantastic opportunity, contact Provider Services @ 800.621.0301 or send your CV to blazenewtrails@multicare.org.

Please reference opportunity #680-840

Nurse Practitioners Wanted

Support the mission of Planned Parenthood of Western Washington (PPWW) by joining our talented & dedicated medical team. You may be eligible for a sign on bonus!

Seeking **Clinician** candidates to provide comprehensive reproductive health & family planning services.

WA State NP/CNM/PA-C w/prescriptive authority, current certification & CPR card required.

FT **Marysville** (M-F)

PT **Float** (N Region - Marysville/Monroe/Everett/Lynnwood/Kenmore);

PT **Bremerton** (Th & every other W)

PT **Tacoma** (M, F, Sa)

PT **University Place** (Tu, W, F)

PT **Everett** (Sa)

Please submit cover ltr/resume to jobs@ppww.org; fax: 206.328.6818; or Mail: PPWW/HR, 2001 E. Madison, Seattle, WA 98122
www.ppww.org EOE

CE Opportunities

Clinical Pharmacology Series 2008

May 7 – Women's Health Drug Therapy
May 21 – Adult/Geriatric Drug Therapy
June 8 – Neuropsychotropic Drug Therapy
Times: 8:00 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

Location: Shoreline Conference Center, Seattle

For a brochure or more information:

Sheila Keener - 206.543.1047 or our website: uwcne.org

Fifteenth Annual AAPPN Spring Conference April 25 and 26, 2008 Hilton Conference Center SeaTac

Monitoring Medical Co-Morbidities: Primary Care Update for the Psychiatric ARNP

Keynote Speaker: Margaret A. Fitzgerald, DNP, FNP-BC, NP-C, FAANP, CSP on Now What? Where you and your APN profession are going?

Followed by:

Diabetes, Dyslipidemia and Hypertension: Assessing and treating the "deadly trio" in the presence of mental health challenges Part I and Part II

Asthma and COPD: Commonly Used Herbal Remedies, Vitamin and Mineral Therapies: Issues of efficacy and safety

Mary D. Moller, DNP, ARNP, BC, CPRP

The Role of Thyroid Hormones in the Management of Mood Disorders
Susan Caverly, PhD, ARNP

Live Literacy for Psychiatric Practice

Sharon K. Jung, ARNP, CNRN Traumatic Head Injury

Register before April 1 to save on registration fees.

Contact: Connie Huffine conhfox@comcast.net or www.aappn.org

10th Annual NW Washington OB/GYN Conference

Friday, April 18, 2008; Hotel 1000

7.8 CEU's available/Mid-Wife Accreditation Pending

\$120 includes breakfast/lunch and syllabus

For further information go to www.providence.org/everett go

to physicians - full/half day CME listing

Jeri.Sackett@Providence.org

Practicing Clinicians Exchange (PCE)

Up to 13.5 FREE CME/CE Credits

June 21, 2008. Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport

PCE is a national CME/CE program designed to meet the specific educational needs of nurse practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants (PAs). New topics in primary care include HPV vaccine, herpes zoster, dyslipidemia, type 2 diabetes, restless legs syndrome, and more. Earn up to 13.5 complimentary CME/CE credits by participating in a 1-day live symposium and completing the home study activity. Breakfast, lunch, and parking will also be provided FREE OF CHARGE. Visit our Web site at www.practicingclinicians.com to register for an interactive symposium near you. Reserve your seat today as space is limited.

Ad Information

Copy deadline is the second Tuesday of the month prior to publication. Ads may be accepted later than this on a space-available basis. Position Available Ads of less than 66 words are \$45, of 66 to 130 words are \$75, and greater than 130 words are \$105. Position Available Ads

are priced per insertion. Continuing Education Announcements of less than 65 words are \$70, of 66 to 130 words are \$105, or 131 words or greater are \$130. Continuing Education Announcements are per offering for up to three (3) consecutive insertions. New Product Announcements per product for one insertion of 130 words or less are \$75. Ad Inserts are \$550 for one issue. All ads are subject to space limitations and editing. Call for detailed rate information. Mail copy to ARNP Care, 10024 SE 240th St, #102, Kent, WA 98031. Phone 253.852.9042. Fax 253.852.7725. Email care@nurse.net.

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