

NEWS

Lifetime
Health
from medical group

We accept all
local health
insurance
plans.



ANTIBIOTICS
NOT ALWAYS

the Answer

Ear infections are one of the most common reasons for pediatric sick visits, and many parents expect that an antibiotic will be prescribed. In more than 80 percent of visits, this is true. During this time of antibiotic resistance, however, both parents and doctors need to use this resource more wisely. Few ear infections truly need to be treated with antibiotics, said **Mary Katherine Kolbert, MD**, family medicine physician at the Hamburg Health Center. Antibiotics can also be pricey and can cause stomach troubles and rashes in children.

The most common form of ear infection—and reason for antibiotic use—is a middle ear infection. These infections can be caused by a variety of viruses and bacteria, and symptoms include ear pain, fever, runny nose, decreased hearing and nausea or vomiting.

If your child has severe pain or a high fever, your doctor will look for an infection. He or she may call for an antibiotic; however, more than three-fourths of children usually improve without one.

Healthy children older than 6 months of age with mild ear pain and a fever of less than 102 degrees usually can safely be observed for a day or two to see if a doctor visit is necessary. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can be used for pain. Consult your doctor's office if you are not sure about the appropriate dose for your child. ■

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President's Message to You



Cynthia Ambres, MD

“I have never experienced the kind of teamwork and commitment I have seen at this organization.”

When I became President of Lifetime Health Medical Group three years ago, my vision was for our health centers to provide an unparalleled level of care and for every employee to feel honored to serve others. Much progress has been made toward these two goals, as well as in many other areas. It has been an incredible journey. I have never experienced the kind of teamwork and commitment I have seen at this organization.

At the start of the New Year, I will be opening a new chapter in my life, and relocating to the West Coast to spend time with family and

further my studies in alternative medicine. I do so with mixed emotions, as I must say farewell to the patients and staff of Lifetime Health Medical Group.

In January, Arthur Orlick, MD, will pick up the reins as President of Lifetime Health Medical Group. Dr. Orlick is a long-time colleague and friend, and someone whose passion for delivering high-quality health care is well known in our communities. We have worked together closely for many years, and his involvement in new programs and technologies has driven our success in those areas.

While Lifetime Health's leadership changes, our mis-

sion and daily work do not. Our staff remains committed to delivering care with courtesy, compassion and respect in an effort to provide you with a “medical home.” We continue to implement initiatives to enhance your care, such as electronic medical records and electronic prescribing. For the past three decades, we have pioneered ways to deliver accessible, innovative health care to Western New York and will keep finding new approaches to providing health care with a difference.

Thank you for the honor of serving you. I am proud to have been a part of this organization. ■

Seasonal SADness

If you start to feel sad as the days get shorter and winter wears on, as is the case with many other Americans, you could be experiencing seasonal affective disorder (SAD). The American Psychiatric Association estimates that 10 to 20 percent of the U.S. population is likely to suffer from SAD with the onset of fall and winter. Some common symptoms of SAD are fatigue, lack of interest in normal activities, social withdrawal and a change in appetite. If you think you are experiencing SAD, contact your doctor. Many strategies and therapies are available to help alleviate some of the symptoms.



Patient Rights and Responsibilities



As a patient of Lifetime Health Medical Group, you have certain rights and responsibilities, a few of which are listed below. For a full list, contact your health center. According to the New York State Department of Health,

Patients Have a Right To:

- Receive service(s) without regard to age, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, sex, national origin or sponsor.
- Be treated with consideration, respect and dignity including privacy in treatment.
- Be informed of the services available at the center.
- Be informed of the provisions for off-hour emergency coverage.
- Be informed of the charges for services, eligibility for third-party reimbursements and, when applicable, the availability of free or reduced-cost care.
- Receive an itemized copy of his/her account statement, upon request.

- Refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law and to be fully informed of the medical consequences of his/her action.
- Privacy and confidentiality of all information and records pertaining to the patient's treatment.
- Make known your wishes in regard to anatomical gifts. You may document your wishes in your health care proxy or on a donor card, available from the center.

Patients Have a Responsibility To:

- Provide complete and honest information regarding health and health concerns.
- Inform the doctor if there are changes in health status.
- Participate in care by following recommendations.
- Share with the medical staff or Center Relations staff any concerns about medical care or service.
- Keep appointments or notify the staff as soon as possible if unable to keep an appointment.
- Respect staff and other patients. ■

Lifetime Health Welcomes New Physicians

Rosann Lana, MD, and Ritu Sood, MD, have joined the physician team at Lifetime Health Medical Group. Both are accepting new patients.

Dr. Lana began seeing obstetrics/gynecology patients at the Amherst University and Empire Drive health centers in September.

Dr. Lana earned her medical degree from the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Dr. Sood began seeing primary care patients at the West Seneca Health Center in October. She earned her medical degree from Gajra Raja Medical College in India. **Dr. Sood** is board certified in internal medicine.





Food Allergy Awareness

According to the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN), one in 25 children younger than age 18 has a food allergy, making it a common classroom concern. The most common allergy-causing foods are peanuts, tree nuts such as walnuts and almonds, milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, wheat and soy.

When a person has a food allergy, his or her body's immune system overreacts to an ordinarily harmless food and creates anti-

bodies to that substance. Reactions to food allergies vary, and even the tiniest amount of allergic food can create a life-threatening situation. Common symptoms are hives, tingling in the mouth, swelling of the tongue and throat, difficulty breathing, stomach cramps, vomiting and diarrhea.

In a school situation, awareness is key. Strictly avoid the culprit food and have treatment available immediately. Parents of children with food allergies should:

- Openly communicate with school officials including teachers, food service staff, administration and the school nurse.
- Encourage their child to communicate with friends and classmates about the allergy, prevention and treatment.
- Have a detailed plan regarding prevention and treatment.
- Keep aware of field trips and school projects that may involve food.

Some schools have discouraged parents from bringing in

homemade food because of allergen risks, while others list "safe snacks." Perhaps the safest approach is for the allergic student to eat only snacks from the student's home. Families, school staff and students should work together to create awareness. Children with food allergies should not be singled out in any way.

FAAN's Protect a Life program recommends the following:

- Never take food allergies lightly.
- Don't share food.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Help friends avoid allergies.
- Get help immediately if a classmate has a reaction.

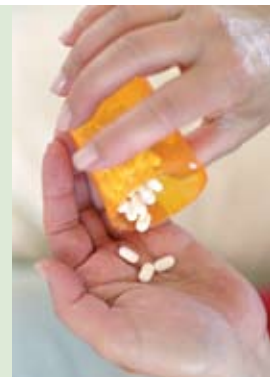
Reading the food label is key. In 2006, the Food and Drug Administration required food manufacturers to list common food allergens clearly on the label. ■

For more information visit: www.foodallergy.org
www.ific.org/publications/other/allergysheet.cfm

Visit the Pharmacy Before You Travel

When traveling during the height of cold season, you may want to think about taking some precautions to avoid getting sick in transit. Airborne®, a dietary supplement containing herbal extracts, antioxidants, vitamins and other nutrients, is available over the counter at Lifetime Health's Buffalo area pharmacies.

Airborne has not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, although many people believe it can help prevent sickness. Visit www.lifetimehealth.org for pharmacy locations and hours. Airborne is not recommended for pregnant women. Talk to your doctor before using Airborne.



Preparing Your Family for Emergencies

Upstate New York residents know that a snow shovel, ice scraper and car brush are absolutely essential to getting through the winter. But what should families have on hand for extreme weather conditions or other emergencies?

According to the Office of Homeland Security, families should include the following supplies in a basic kit for the home in the event of an emergency:

- Water: one gallon, per person, per day
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Filter mask or cotton T-shirt, to help filter the air
- Moist towelettes
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener



- Two weeks of food supply
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape: to shelter-in-place, and seal a room
- Garbage bags and plastic ties
- Copies of family members' insurance cards
- Cash (as ATMs may not work)
- Unique family needs: this may be prescription medications, infant formula or diapers and important family documents. ■



More general information can be found at www.nyhealth.gov or www.pandemicflu.gov.

Cover Your Cough

In the midst of cold season, it's important to help prevent the spread of germs. The best way to do this is to cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends coughing into your upper arm, instead of your hands. Wash your hands regularly, especially after blowing your nose or coughing.

Spicy Bean Soup

- 2 cans black beans, drained
- 1 can kidney beans, drained
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 c. water
- 1/3 tsp. cayenne
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/3 c. red wine (optional)
- 1 quart beef stock

1. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven or stock pot. Add carrots, onion, celery and garlic. Cook over low heat, stirring until softened, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in cumin, cayenne, oregano and salt.
2. Add wine, stock and water. Stir to mix. Add beans. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes. Stir occasionally.
3. Transfer half of the soup (including most of the solids) to a food processor or blender. Process until smooth. Return to the pot and stir to combine well.
4. Reheat the soup if necessary and taste for seasoning. Serve hot, garnish with light sour cream.

Serves: 6 to 8
Nutritional information per 8 oz serving: Calories: 160; monounsaturated fat: 3 grams; carbohydrates: 31 grams; dietary fiber: 11 grams
Recipe by the Nutrition and Diabetes Education Department, Lifetime Health Medical Group

Visit our Web site! www.lifetimehealth.org



Make a “Date” for Yourself in 2008

With a new year just around the corner, you may have many things you want to accomplish. Don't forget to take time out for you.

Lifetime Health Medical Group makes it easy to look and feel your best with services like massage therapy and teeth whitening.

Relax with Massage

Lifetime ComplementsSM, located in the West Seneca Health Center, offers complementary therapies to benefit mind and body. Our licensed practitioners provide massage therapy, acupuncture, yoga, Reiki, support programs and nutritional supplements, working in combination with traditional medicine. Massage services are delivered in a relaxing atmosphere, and many different types are available, including hot stone and pregnancy massage. The Amherst Health Center also offers massage. Call **716/656-4077** for more information or an appointment.

Brighten that Smile!

If you are thinking about whitening your teeth, stop by the Bertha S. Laury Dental Center, located in the Mosher Health Center. The center

offers competitive pricing on prescription-grade whitening strips as well as custom-fitted trays and whitening gel. The professional staff can help you decide which option is right for you. For appointments or more information, call **716/656-4270**. ■

NEWS Lifetime Health from medical group

NEWS from Lifetime Health Medical Group is published by the marketing and public relations department of Lifetime Health Medical Group. We welcome any comments or ideas you may have about the contents of this publication.

Cynthia Ambres, MD, MS, President

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Electronic Medical Records Update



Lifetime Health Medical Group continues to implement electronic medical records. At all centers, doctors are using laptops to update your medical history in your electronic record and write progress notes. Nurses enter vital signs and immunization records directly into your electronic chart. You can also have your prescriptions sent to a Lifetime Health pharmacy directly from the exam room.