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Clinic receives highest level of Patient Centered Medical Home recognition
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New convenient location for Physical Therapy
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If you’re not yet a patient of ours, gaining the advantages of My Corvallis Clinic Connection is all the more reason to become one. Just call us at 541-758-2688 and we’ll help you make the connection to better health at The Corvallis Clinic.
Faye Wood recently went to her first physical therapy appointment in her life. “Guess I never had anything to go for,” the 80-year-old Albany resident said. To get treated for arthritis in her neck, Ms. Wood had to make the journey to The Corvallis Clinic’s Physical Therapy Department in Corvallis, something she did not want to continue to do.

“I don’t like the inconvenience of driving to Corvallis,” she said.

Fortunately, her sudden need for physical therapy coincides with the opening of physical therapy services at The Clinic’s Waverly Drive office in Albany, where she has been a longtime patient.

Ms. Wood first heard about the move from her primary care provider at the Waverly Office, Dr. Rachael Pakumpanya, who referred her for physical therapy. “I thought that it would be wonderful,” she said. “It’s a lot more convenient.”

The Waverly Drive office is now offering the same full-service care provided at Walnut Drive in Corvallis, just on a smaller scale, said Director of Physical Therapy Michael Gray, DPT, COMT.

“This is an exciting time for The Corvallis Clinic in Albany,” Mr. Gray said. “Currently the people of Albany are underserved in the area of physical therapy, and this new PT service will help fill in the gap for those individuals.”

For Rod Aust, Chief Operating Officer at The Clinic, it’s all about service. “For us it means that we are going to better serve our patients in Albany,” he said. “Right now if a patient needs physical therapy, we either have to refer them outside The Clinic or back to our PT facility in Corvallis. Neither one is as convenient as if they can get the physical therapy right where they are receiving their other care. We’re very excited about it.”

Physical Therapy at a Glance

The Corvallis Clinic’s physical therapists are experienced in therapeutic treatment as prescribed by your doctor for people recovering from an injury or surgery, or for relief from a chronic or disabling condition.

The Physical Therapy department is equipped with strengthening and aerobic equipment. Rehabilitative treatments are also available. Therapists evaluate and administer manual therapy directed by a physician and emphasize patient involvement in healing.

For more information, call 541-754-1265.
Time to “smell the roses” for longtime Clinic Neurologist

I had a project lined up in which I was going to use rats for research,” he said. “It turned out I wheezed when I was around rats, so I had to drop that project at the last minute. The only opening I could find was in the rehabilitation unit that was doing some other research.

And it was there where Dr. Lafrance found his medical calling. “I had not had any exposure to neurologic patients,” he said. “But I met people with brain injuries and others who had suffered strokes. I became fascinated by what was happening to them and what could be done to make them better. And that started me reading and learning about it and taking a few extra courses in medical school.” Dr. Lafrance’s career will not totally come to a halt. After about a month “couch surfing” in Florida, visiting his sister and friends from his high school, medical school and residency days, he will help clinical research and serve as a part-time neurohospitalist (taking care of neurology patients at the hospital) for about a year.

What are some of the other aspects of neurology that drew you to the specialty? One of the things that intrigued me about neurology versus internal medicine was the spectrum of ages that one can see. You see children, adolescents, and people up to 100 years of age. You see males and females, and people with critical illness and those with non-critical illness.

What types of changes have you seen in neurology since you began to practice medicine in the early 1970s? I was a resident when CT (computed tomography) scans first came out. I remember going to a meeting that was an add-on at the end of a three-day course on neuroradiology. They showed some CT scans, and it kind of blew everybody away. All of a sudden, the field changed.

There have been tremendous advances in both treatment and diagnosis. If you look back many years, neurology was a lonesome field. You could find everything at the rehabilitation unit that was doing some other research. I think I’ll get an RV this summer. Then, I’ll travel around the country and see what’s going on.

You have been involved in many Alzheimer’s disease studies. What do you see going forward in terms of treatment for it? In the past we’ve been focused on trying to get the injured brain to work a little faster, and that’s been more helpful than not. However, going forward scientists will be trying to find a way to reverse the biologic process that leads to Alzheimer’s disease and probably Parkinson’s disease. Both are neurodegenerative diseases where the brain cells die off at an accelerated rate. We don’t always know what’s behind it. But the real trick with any disease is trying to reverse the underlying tide of biology that is causing the cells to die. I think we are really at the cusp of being able to do that with at least a couple of the diseases.

What did you like about working at The Corvallis Clinic? I like the multi-specialty group. I think it’s always nice to have people who may look at the medical world a little differently than you do. I think you can learn from them. It’s a good relationship. And it’s important to have a little bit of the business side taken out of my day-to-day thought pattern.

Tell us about your experience with teaching neurology residents. That’s been fun. It’s a different way to challenge your brain. In teaching, you have to go back and re-examine things that sometimes you have taken for granted and be sure that you can explain it to other people. You have to explain to other professionals why you have proceeded along this avenue, rather than another avenue in regards to treatment or diagnosis.

What do you plan to do in your retirement? I don’t really have any hobbies. I’m just going to be interested in smelling the roses, I guess. There’s a lot I can potentially do in Corvallis, a lot of educational opportunities available through the university and the community at large. I like to learn about just about anything. I think I’ll get an RV this summer. Then, I’ll travel around the U.S. and see what’s going on.

Neurology Department welcomes two new providers; adding a third in June

Charmin Sagert, M.D.

Dr. Sagert comes from Loma Linda University in California, where she was an attending physician and assistant professor in neurology, neuromuscular medicine and clinical neurophysiology.

Dr. Lafrance retired last December after 36 years as a neurologist at The Corvallis Clinic, found out about this allergy at a summer job while a medical student at the University of Rochester in New York. “I had a project lined up in which I was going to use rats for research,” he said. “It turned out I wheezed when I was around rats, so I had to drop that project at the last minute. The only opening I could find was in the rehabilitation unit that was doing some other research.

And it was there where Dr. Lafrance found his medical calling. “I had not had any exposure to neurologic patients,” he said. “But I met people with brain injuries and others who had suffered strokes. I became fascinated by what was happening to them and what could be done to make them better. And that started me reading and learning about it and taking a few extra courses in medical school.” Dr. Lafrance’s career will not totally come to a halt. After about a month “couch surfing” in Florida, visiting his sister and friends from his high school, medical school and residency days, he will help clinical research and serve as a part-time neurohospitalist (taking care of neurology patients at the hospital) for about a year.

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Neurology Department welcomes two new providers; adding a third in June

Charmin Sagert, M.D.

Dr. Sagert comes from Loma Linda University in California, where she was an attending physician and assistant professor in neurology, neuromuscular medicine and clinical neurophysiology.

Dr. Sagert received her medical degree in 2006 from Loma Linda University School of Medicine where she received the Guy Hunt outstanding medical student award. She completed an internal medicine internship at Loma Linda in 2007, a residency in neurology there in 2010 and a residency in clinical neurophysiology in 2011.

Dr. Sagert is certified in neurology and neuromuscular medicine by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

Before becoming a physician, she worked as a physical therapist for six years after receiving a master’s of science degree in physical therapy in 1996 at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich.

Julie Solomon, ARNP-C

Nurse practitioner Julie Solomon brings nine years of professional experience, caring for neurology and oncology patients, most recently at St. Anthony’s Neurology Group in St. Petersburg, Fla. She will work directly with Clinic neurologists Cecilia Keller, Shelley Svoboda, and Charmin Sagert to provide follow-up care for patients.

In 2005, Ms. Solomon earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing with honors. In 2010-11, she earned dual master’s degrees in nursing and public health from the University of Florida. Ms. Solomon is a certified Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner in Adult.

Alex Wang, M.D.

Dr. Wang, who will join The Corvallis Clinic on June 2, is currently lead neurologist and senior partner at HealthCare Partner Medical Group in Torrance, Calif. He received his medical degree in 1984 from Bethune Medical University in Changchun, Jilin, People’s Republic of China, and completed his internship in internal medicine in 1995 and his neurology residency in 1998 at the University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle. Dr. Wang completed a neuromuscular fellowships in 1999 at the University of Southern California’s Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles.

Pictured below: The Corvallis Clinic Neurology Department consists of (lis to r) Shelley R. Svoboda, M.D., Cecilia A. Keller, M.D., Charmin K. Sagert, M.D. and Julie C. Solomon, ARNP-C.

Alex Wang, M.D. will join the group in June.

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Connect to Your World Easier with New Hearing Aid Accessories

by Diane Bach, Hearing Aid Specialist

As consumers, all of us receive daily messages about new technology and products, via television, newspapers, mail and email and even over the telephone. The world of hearing-aid technology is no different. New products are introduced each year with improvements to the previous model. I am frequently asked by patients if their hearing aids have become obsolete. However, if you take care of the hearing aids, they should continue to function for many years. Ultimately, the manufacturers might “retire” some of their older technology and replacement parts will eventually be unavailable for a repair.

So, what does all of this new technology mean to you? I’m sure you have seen the pictures of accessories to go with hearing aids - remote controls, TV streamers, cell-phone clips, and mini microphones. Full-page newspaper ads are filled with info about these devices.

One goal of these devices is to enable communication with friends and family more easily and effectively. If you can mute the aids, or change the volume, allows the user to easily switch programs in the hearing aids, or provide easier communication will be welcomed and embraced. Hearing aids will continue to operate as stand-alone electronic devices and many people will only want this. But as the world of technology expands, more and more people who are “tech savvy” and work and play in challenging listening environments will welcome these new accessories. Most hearing-aid manufacturers offer these accessories and all are affordable. I would be happy to introduce these to you and provide more information.

Hearing Instrument Specialist Diane Bach can be reached at The Corvallis Clinic Ear, Nose and Throat Department, 541-754-1251.

Cook for Cancer founded by Oregon Teen

Miss Oregon Teen USA Alexandra Perry, a junior at Santiam Christian, is one of The Corvallis Clinic’s Project H.E.R. and the Foundation that provides dinners for oncology patients and their families as they are undergoing cancer treatments. Perry’s mom is a breast-cancer survivor and so she created the program as a way to give back to cancer patients.

Perry and Miss Oregon USA Emma Pelett made a special appearance at the seventh annual Pink Out Breakfast and Silent Auction on Feb. 1. The event was hosted by Oregon State’s gymnastics program and raised more than $6,000 for The Corvallis Clinic Foundation’s Project H.E.R. (Help. Enlightenment. Resources.). If you would like to donate to Cook for Cancer, please contact Sarah Blanton, Project H.E.R. Coordinator at 541-768-2375.
The Bottom Line: Colonoscopy Saves Lives

Convincing someone to have a colonoscopy is no easy task. Just ask Gastroenterologist Sooyun Chun, M.D. (left), of The Corvallis Clinic.

"I could tell you a million reasons why you should get a colonoscopy, but the bottom line is, the reason has to speak to you," Dr. Chun said. "For my parents, it was a close friend being diagnosed with colon cancer that finally spoke the truth."

People shouldn’t feel scared about getting a colonoscopy, Dr. Chun said.

"Most often, you won’t have to repeat the inconvenience of going through the colonoscopy preparation for another 10 years," she said. "And after all, it is your life that you are saving." Below, Dr. Chun and Corvallis Clinic Gastroenterologist Hischao Chow, M.D., Ph.D., answer some of the most common questions they get from patients.

Q: What are my chances of having colon cancer?

Question: What are my chances of having colon cancer?

For men, colon cancer is the third-most common cancer diagnosed, and for women, it is the second-most common cancer in the world. Each year, more than 140,000 new cases of colon cancer are diagnosed in the United States.

Q: What is a colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is the visual examination of the large intestine (colon) using a lighted, flexible fiber optic video endoscope.

Q: Why do I need a colonoscopy?

One of the best ways to prevent colon cancer is to have a colonoscopy. The main goal of a colonoscopy is to find colon polyps and remove them before they are cancerous. Most colon cancer begins with the formation of polyps. Colon polyps are shaped like a mushroom or a dome-like button, and grow on the inside lining of the colon. They may be the size of a small pea or larger. Over time, they can grow and become cancerous.

Q: When do I need to start getting a colonoscopy?

As with most cancers, the risk of colon cancer increases with age. The average person has a 5 percent lifetime risk of developing colorectal cancer, with more than 90 percent of cases occurring in people after age 50. Therefore, the current recommendation is to get a colonoscopy starting at age 50, continuing every 10 years until age 75. Your doctor may recommend this screening sooner if you have a family history of colon cancer and for patients with inflammatory bowel disease.

Q: What should I expect in a colonoscopy?

In order to prepare for your exam, your colon must be clean and free of stool so that visualization is optimal. You will need to drink a solution that flushes the colon clean the day before the procedure, as well as keep a diet of clear liquids.

A colonoscopy is performed on an outpatient basis. You will receive a mild sedative before the procedure, although some patients choose to stay awake. An endoscope is moved gently around the bends of the colon. If a polyp is encountered, special equipment is passed through the channel of the scope to remove the polyp. Due to the mild sedation, you will need someone to drive you home after the procedure.

Q: Are there any side effects or complications with a colonoscopy?

It is very uncommon for there to be serious risks with a colonoscopy. Risks include excessive bleeding, especially with the removal of a large polyp, and in rare instances, a tear in the lining of the colon can occur. These complications may require hospitalization or surgery. Also uncommon, a diagnostic error or oversight may occur.

Dr. Chow and Dr. Chun are physicians in The Corvallis Clinic Gastroenterology Department. They can be reached at 541-754-1988.

New Oncology site set for completion in May

Work continues on a project to move oncology and hematology care at The Corvallis Clinic to the Aumann Building. Construction on the renovated space in the southeast corner of Aumann, previously used for mammography services, is expected to be completed in May.

The location chosen is much quieter than its current space in the Asbury Building, and there will be nearly twice as much room, with approximately 4,700 square-feet of space. Lab services will be located nearby, and there will be easier access to the building, including handicap-accessible parking.

Additional windows will allow more natural light in a new chemotherapy center that is part of the department and showcase a view of the Cascade Mountains and the beautiful plants and flowers that will surround the building.

The open design of the infusion area reflects patient feedback that many people enjoy the camaraderie of seeing other people during treatment. And for patients who are frail or seek greater privacy, there will also be a private infusion room. There will be places for people to keep their belongings nearby, and charger outlets for media devices.

Dermatology office undergoes remodeling, expansion

When Dr. Brad Yentzer joined Dr. Kyle Van De Graaff in The Corvallis Clinic Dermatology Department late last summer, it increased access for dermatology care for mid-Willamette Valley residents. Now, the dermatologists and their staff are accommodating these additional patients with an expanded and remodeled office.

A larger and refurbished waiting room and check-in desk along with a new exam room and nurses’ station await patients at the 444 NW Elks Drive office in Corvallis.

"The expansion of the waiting room necessitated eliminating an exam room adjacent to the waiting area," Dr. Van De Graaff said. "There was some unused space in the rear of the office, so that is where the replacement exam room and a new nurses’ station will be built."

Construction of the new walls, cabinetry, and floor coverings, plus application of fresh coats of paint, was completed in late February.

"With two dermatologists, you need room for more patients," Dr. Yentzer said. "We are excited that the (expansion and remodel) offers more space and comfort for our patients."
Diabetes Studies Continue

The Corvallis Clinic’s Clinical Research Center and its patient volunteers are continuing their longstanding roles in helping the FDA approve drugs that battle diabetes. The Research Center is currently participating in multiple diabetes studies.

“The clinic has worked on every new class of drug for diabetes treatment that has come on the market in the past 10 years,” said Pat Eshleman, Clinical Research Center manager. “Some of the drugs that our volunteers have helped study now on the market are Januvia and Bydureon.”

One study centers on people with type 2 diabetes who are taking the anti-diabetic drug metformin but still have a high average level of blood sugar over a period of time. Another study, for type 2 diabetes, is a comparison of a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week with that of another once-a-week injected drug that is a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week. Another study, also for type 2 diabetes, is a comparison of a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week with that of another once-a-week injected drug that is a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week. Another study, also for type 2 diabetes, is a comparison of a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week with that of another once-a-week injected drug that is a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week. Another study, also for type 2 diabetes, is a comparison of a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week with that of another once-a-week injected drug that is a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week. Another study, also for type 2 diabetes, is a comparison of a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week with that of another once-a-week injected drug that is a commercially available medicine that is injected once a week.

Later this winter, the Research Center will begin another diabetes trial on the subpopulation of patients with diabetes who also have cardiac and/or renal disease. In addition to the research medication, diabetes studies provide testing supplies and research physician visits to participants.

“These medications are mimicking the naturally produced protein in the body that helps with insulin production and release at the time the patient needs it,” said Internist Michael Chen, M.D., the principal investigator for both studies. Endocrinologists Susan Sanderson, M.D., and Lindsay Bromley, M.D., are also working on the trials. “And there’s some data to suggest,” Dr. Chen said, “that they probably help the pancreas maintain the ability to produce insulin for the long term.”

For more information on this study or to become a study volunteer, call Josh at the Clinical Research Center at 541-754-1398, option 7, or send an email to research@corvallisclinic.com.
INTERNAL MEDICINE Jodi Sorenson, FNP-C | 541-754-1260

Jodi Sorenson, FNP-C, joined The Corvallis Clinic Internal Medicine Department in December 2013. Ms. Sorenson received her master's degree in nursing in 2012 from Gonzaga University and completed a nurse practitioner fellowship in June of 2013 at Boise VA Medical Center. She is a certified family nurse practitioner. Prior to coming to The Clinic, she was a critical care nurse for 14 years at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center in Corvallis. Ms. Sorenson, originally from Minnesota, received an associate’s degree in nursing from Linn-Benton Community College in 1998 and a bachelor’s in psychology in 1989 from Bennington State University in Bennington, Minn.

CARE NOW Norma Soffa, ARNP-C

Norma Soffa, a Michigan native, joined The Corvallis Clinic on Feb. 17. She was a nurse practitioner for Southwest Medical Associates in Las Vegas, where she was responsible for adult primary care, chronic disease management, preventive medicine and sick visits. Prior to becoming a nurse practitioner in 2012, she was a registered nurse in cardiology and emergency care for various organizations in Las Vegas. Ms. Soffa earned a Master of Science in Nursing, Adult Primary Care, in 2012 from South University in Savannah, Ga. She received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1994 from Oakland University in Rochester, Mich., and a Bachelor in Health Sciences from Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Mich.

NEUROLOGY Charmin Sagert, M.D. | 541-754-1274

Charmin Sagert, M.D., will join The Corvallis Clinic Neurology Department in December. Dr. Sagert comes from Loma Linda University in California, where she is an attending physician and assistant professor of neurology, neuromuscular medicine and clinical neurophysiology. She received her medical degree in 2006 from Loma Linda and won the Guy Hunt outstanding medical student award. She completed a residency in neurology and clinical neurophysiology before becoming a doctor. She worked as a physical therapist for six years in Michigan. She is certified in neurology and neuromuscular medicine by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

CARE NOW Jennifer Betz King, FNP-C

Jennifer Betz King, who will be joining The Corvallis Clinic on April 1, has been a family nurse practitioner at Western Oregon University’s Student Health and Counseling Center in Monmouth since May 2013. She treats acute and chronic conditions with a focus on family planning, women’s health, laboratory diagnostics, mental health, sports physicals and general preventative care. Prior to joining Western Oregon University, Ms. King was a family nurse practitioner at Carolinas Medical Alliance, Lake City Medical Clinic in Lake City, S.C., providing women’s health care and preventative health care for rural health community clinics. She was a registered nurse from 2006 to 2012, working in emergency care, critical care, and surgical trauma intensive care for various providers in South Carolina. Ms. King earned a Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner in 2011 and Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2005 from the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

An Informed Mind is a Healthy Mind

To learn about classes and events offered on important health issues that matter to you and your family, see www.corvallisclinic.com.

Healthy Baby

Each Healthy Baby session features one of our expert pediatricians and lactation consultant. Pediatric topics include normal newborn appearance, crying, sleeping and bathing, development, medical care and problems, nutrition and breastfeeding.

7 p.m. Asbury Dining Room
Wednesday, April 2
Wednesday, June 4
Wednesday, Aug. 6
Wednesday, Oct. 1
Wednesday, Dec. 3

Register: 541-738-2075 or www.corvallisclinic.com/classes

Baby Bundle

Each Baby Bundle session features Clinic obstetricians discussing childbirth, including signs of labor, birthing options, pain relief, when to call your doctor, partner help during labor and choosing your baby’s doctor.

7 p.m. Asbury Dining Room
Wednesday, May 14
Wednesday, Aug. 13
Wednesday, Nov. 12

Register: 541-738-2075 or www.corvallisclinic.com/classes

Clinical Research currently enrolling studies:

Endocrine: Dr. Michael Chen
Diabetes

Neurology: Dr. Richard Lafrance
Alzheimer’s Disease

Women’s Health: Dr. Amey Lee
Uterine Fibroid Study

Allergy: Dr. Roland Solensky
Dust Mite Allergy Treatment

Cardiovascular: Dr. Michael Chen
Warfarin Dose Optimization

To learn more about ongoing and upcoming studies at The Corvallis Clinic Research Center, or to learn about becoming a study volunteer, see www.corvallisclinic.com/research or call James Bechtel at 541-754-1398 Option 6.