LEADING THE CHARGE FOR HEALTH CARE EQUALITY

ASK THE DOCTOR: Celiac Disease

The Dangers of Distracted Driving
DEAR FRIENDS,

The end of summer does not mean an end to outdoor sports. Remember to make sure that your children and adolescents always wear safety gear to avoid concussions and other injuries. While many injuries are obvious, concussion symptoms may not appear right away, so learn when to seek care (page 14).

Pain from an injury may be obvious, but other causes can sometimes be difficult to diagnose. You will be interested to read about our pediatric physicians and therapists who are trained to identify and treat a specific type of pain in children, called “chronic amplified pain,” explained on page 8. Our outpatient program is the only one of its type in New Jersey.

Speaking of leading the way, several of Atlantic Health System’s medical centers were named a “Leader in LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Healthcare Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign. Staff has received special training in health care issues faced by these youths, and Goryeb is one of only 27 children’s hospitals in the nation to receive this designation (page 6).

We always want to hear from our readers, so please contact us at well.aware@atlantichealth.org if you have a story idea or want to share a comment.

Walter D. Rosenfeld, MD
Chair of Pediatrics
Goryeb Children’s Hospital/Morristown Medical Center
Goryeb Children’s Center/Overlook Medical Center

Talk to us
Tell us what you want to read about in Well Aware Kids. Email us at well.aware@atlantichealth.org. Or write us at Atlantic Health System, Attn: Well Aware Kids, P.O. Box 1905, Morristown, NJ 07962.

Well Aware
Four times a year, Atlantic Health System publishes Well Aware, which includes informative articles on many different health-related topics. Issues are available online at atlantichealth.org/wellaware or email well.aware@atlantichealth.org to receive a hard copy.

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Follow us on Twitter: @AtlanticHealth

FEATURES

6 Atlantic Health System: A Leader in Health Care Equality
8 A Brighter Future for Long-Term Pain Patients
10 Back to Life: Treating Spinal Deformities in Pediatric and Adult Patients
12 A New Hope: Living with Cystic Fibrosis
TeenHealthFX: An Online Resource for Adolescents

Teens with questions about their health, relationships and other personal topics can turn to TeenHealthFX for help. The award-winning website, a project funded by Atlantic Health System’s Morristown Medical Center, is designed to empower teens about their bodies by giving them accurate information, so they can make responsible decisions about their health care.

Through the site, visitors are encouraged to ask questions and can do so anonymously to staff, which is made up of clinical social workers, health educators, pediatricians and other health care professionals. Aside from Q&As, readers can watch videos about health trends, take quizzes and learn more about health care careers.

Since starting in September 1999, the website has received a number of industry accolades, most recently a 2016 Digital Health Award.

For more information on TeenHealthFX, visit teenhealthfx.com.

New Campaign Stresses Importance of Mammograms

Mammograms save lives. Whether she’s a wife, mother, colleague or friend, chances are good that a woman in your life could use a reminder to make herself a priority. #AskHer to schedule an annual mammogram, and share your #AskHer photo or video and tag @AtlanticHealth on social media.

For more information, visit atlantichealth.org/askher. To make an appointment for a mammogram, call 844-343-3540.
WHAT IS CELIAC DISEASE?
Celiac disease is an autoimmune condition that occurs in genetically predisposed patients. Eating gluten, which is a protein found in rye, barley and wheat, causes an immune response that causes inflammation in the small intestines. This causes damage to the villi, small fingerlike projections that line the small intestine that promote nutrient absorption. When the villi get inflamed, nutrients cannot be absorbed properly.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CELIAC DISEASE?
Celiac disease is often known as the great masquerader because there’s not one set of symptoms found in all patients, and some patients do not have any symptoms at all. Some common symptoms include abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhea and/or weight loss. Other symptoms can include a rash known as dermatitis herpetiformis, arthritis, anemia, elevated liver enzymes and nutritional deficiencies.

WHO IS LIKELY TO DEVELOP CELIAC DISEASE?
You can develop celiac disease at any age. Children with chronic gastrointestinal symptoms should be screened with a blood test for celiac disease. In addition, children with a first-degree relative with celiac disease, type 1 diabetes, Down syndrome, autoimmune thyroid disease, Williams syndrome and Turner syndrome are at a higher risk of developing celiac disease.

HOW IS CELIAC DISEASE DIAGNOSED?
Blood work is done to test for specific antibodies in the blood. If these are elevated, a gastroenterologist will recommend performing an upper endoscopy to confirm the diagnosis. This involves inserting a flexible tube with a camera attached to it into the esophagus, stomach and duodenum. This allows the gastroenterologist to visualize the duodenum and obtain biopsies to confirm the diagnosis.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?
Patients with celiac disease need to be on a 100 percent gluten-free diet. A gluten-free diet is important to prevent long-term complications of celiac disease, some of which include nutritional deficiencies, low bone density and malignancy.

For more information on celiac disease or to make an appointment, call 973-971-5676.
At 55 miles per hour, the average text takes your eyes off the road long enough to cover a football field. This sobering statistic from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has implications for young drivers learning the ins and outs of the road. “Driving a car is a learned activity that involves decision making,” says K.J. Feury, coordinator for Safe Kids Northern New Jersey. “That’s where the novice driver gets in trouble.”

Distracted driving includes activities such as texting, using a cellphone, eating or drinking, talking to passengers, using a navigation system or adjusting a stereo. In addition to these in-the-car hazards, Feury says new drivers should be aware of tailgating and watching for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Feury says drivers should maintain a safe following distance to allow time to anticipate lane changes. The New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety recommends a two-second time delay between vehicles with an increased distance of four to five seconds, depending on road and weather conditions.

When it comes to pedestrians, “you need to be aware of the environment you’re driving in,” says Feury. “If you’re downtown or in a school zone, you need to drive slower to anticipate pedestrians.”

Feury notes that young drivers need to share the road with bicyclists. “They are considered a vehicle,” she says. “If we are going to pass, pass safely when appropriate.”

New Jersey’s Graduated Driver License (GDL) program has a learner’s permit (supervised practice) stage and a probationary license stage (may drive unsupervised but with restrictions). A teen may obtain a permit at age 16 with parental permission and the completion of at least six hours of behind-the-wheel driver training (driver training is not required for teens who wait until age 17 to be on the GDL program). Teens must then practice supervised driving for a minimum of six months and be at least 17 years of age in order to take the driving test to obtain a probationary license. During the 12-month probationary license stage, the teen may not drive between 11:00pm and 5:00am, with more than one passenger (unless accompanied by a parent or guardian), while using a wireless handheld or hands-free device, and unbelted. “I don’t think teens take advantage of the opportunity to drive with a licensed driver,” says Feury. “Drive as much as possible and get as many experiences as possible on different types of roads, weather patterns and times of day.”

For more information on driving safety, visit the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety website at njsaferoads.com.
Removing Barriers
Making Atlantic Health System a destination for all children
Long life, healthy life, good health care. To encourage people to reach out to Atlantic Health System and achieve these goals, staff members are taking deliberate steps to reach out to everyone – to make it both convenient and comfortable for all populations to access health care.

“When people don’t feel welcomed, they often don’t get the health care they need,” says Brian Matthew Lurie, MD, associate director of the pediatric residency program, Goryeb Children’s Hospital. “We spend a lot of time teaching staff the best way to help everyone feel comfortable and supported, so patients will come to us and share openly and honestly their symptoms and concerns.”

Recently, a specific effort to ensure everyone feels supported has led several of Atlantic Health System’s medical centers to be named a “Leader in LGBT [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender] Healthcare Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign. “It can be a big hurdle for a child to discuss sex of any kind, much less being transgender, for example,” says Daisy Chin, MD, an endocrinologist for Goryeb Children’s Hospital. “Our staff are great at making it easy, so we can give them the care they need.”

That openness leads to good health care. Without it, needs go unmet. “It takes training to learn how to approach this topic, how best to communicate with children,” says Dr. Lurie, who has been involved in developing staff training on the issue. Depression, suicidal thoughts, substance abuse and risky sexual behaviors are significantly higher in children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or even questioning themselves, for example. However, one national study found that even when pediatricians are aware of depression in a child, they often do not ask about sex and sexual orientation. This is true even when there has been an attempted suicide.

“That’s why we spend a lot of time on communication, and why we earned this award,” Dr. Lurie says. The award is part of a longer and broader trend for Atlantic Health System to break down barriers. Another obvious example is the welcoming, child-friendly design of Goryeb campuses. Translation services are another. As for the award, Morristown, Overlook and Newton medical centers and Goryeb Children’s Hospital all received this recognition from the Human Rights Campaign this past spring. This is the nation’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) civil rights organization. This is Morristown’s third year to earn it, Overlook’s and Newton’s second year, and Goryeb’s first year. A total of 568 hospitals applied, and almost 500 met the criteria. But Goryeb is one of only 27 children’s hospitals in the nation to receive it.

“We applied for this award because we want to make our patients, families and staff aware that we’re welcoming to all people,” Dr. Lurie says. “It’s a new set of barriers to care that we’re trying to break down, and we are pioneering the way through it.”
The source of pain can be hard to diagnose. Symptoms can be vague or unusual. Tests do not always lead to a cause or cure.

“Some children who come to us have been in pain for years,” says Simona Nativ, MD, pediatric rheumatology physician for Goryeb Children’s Hospital. “They have had many tests and visited specialist after specialist, without finding the cause. But we’re able to offer them hope: a type of care – and results – that they don’t expect.”

Over a year ago, Goryeb Children’s Hospital assembled a team of physicians and therapists trained to address a specific type of long-term pain in children, called “chronic amplified pain.” They’re part of Goryeb’s Amplified Musculoskeletal Pain Syndrome (AMPS) program. And the outpatient program is the only one of its type in all of New Jersey. The focus is on children with debilitating pain that cannot be diagnosed based on typical tests. Most kids with AMPS can no longer do regular activities, including going to school. They often rate their pain as being the highest, a 10 on a 10-point scale. And common pain medicines do not provide relief.

“We now know that for these children, the best care involves an intense, specialized program that includes a variety of specialists – and no pain medicines,” says Michelle Sirak, MD, a specialist in pediatric physical medicine and rehabilitation for Goryeb. Instead, the focus of Goryeb’s program is to retrain the brain, to help it change the way it interprets pain.

During the four-week outpatient program, the children have hours of physical and aquatic (pool) therapy plus occupational therapy to work their muscles and nerves. Through cognitive behavioral therapy, participants in the program are given tools to allow them to deal with the pain that they are experiencing. In one program of this type, exercise-focused therapy helped eight out of 10 children to have significant relief after one month, and most were able to return to regular activities. Furthermore, pain relief continues to improve over time.

“Because AMPS is so hard to diagnose, children often feel like no one understands that they are in real pain,” says Dr. Sirak. “But after explaining what Amplified Musculoskeletal Pain is, we can assure them that they are not making up the pain. We tell them directly, ‘I believe you. I know your pain is real.’”

That message gives the child and the family a great sense of relief. And it offers hope that, at long last, Goryeb’s pediatric pain management specialists will be able to improve their lives in significant ways.

The fact that Goryeb’s specialists are pediatricians is a key to both diagnosis and successful treatment, specialists say. “Whether they’re a young child or a teenager, we know how to talk to children about their pain and about how they can get better, even though they’ve had AMPS for years,” Dr. Nativ says. “We have a great group of therapists, and the kids have seen excellent results.”

For more information on pediatric pain management, call 973-971-6505.
Treating spinal deformities in pediatric and adult patients
When 12-year-old Abigail Nixon went for her checkup, her pediatrician noticed a slight curve in her spine and advised that they review it at her next annual visit. At her next visit, her spine had a 45-degree curve and she was referred to an orthopedic surgeon.

"It was pretty clear she was still growing, and the curve was progressing rapidly," says Abigail’s mother, Karin. "At that point, there was nothing else to do but surgery."

Abigail’s condition, known as scoliosis, is a disease of the spine with no known origin that affects children and adolescents. Instead of a straight line down the middle of the back, a spine with scoliosis curves, resembling a letter “C” or “S.”

“I’m pretty much the same physically now that I’m healed as I was before. Dr. Lowenstein says I’m going to have a perfectly normal life. I can do anything anybody else can do, if not more.”

– Abigail Nixon

THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY
Morristown Medical Center’s orthopedic program has been nationally recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a best-in-nation program and is one of just 13 hospitals across the country accredited as a Spine Center of Excellence by the JCAHO. “Our advanced technology allows the surgical team to see CT images in real time, ensuring we are guiding our hardware to the right location with pinpoint accuracy,” says Jason E. Lowenstein, MD, director of scoliosis and spinal deformity for the department of orthopedic surgery at Morristown Medical Center. “For patients dealing with scoliosis and complex spinal deformity, this technology is critical to allow the safe placement of our instrumentation, improving our patients’ deformities and clinical outcomes.”

While spine problems are frequently seen in adults, the most common form of scoliosis occurs in children and teenagers. According to Dr. Lowenstein, doctors also treat conditions such as kyphosis, a spinal curve that results in an abnormally rounded back; and spondylolisthesis, which is caused when a stress fracture weakens bones thus allowing the vertebrae to shift out of place.

BRIGHT FUTURES AHEAD
Abigail underwent spinal surgery in 2013. According to Karin, Abigail’s mom, "We decided to have Dr. Lowenstein perform Abigail’s surgery, partly because of his high level of compassion and support. And his team even discussed with Abigail about being a physician’s assistant as a potential career!" Now a 16-year-old, she says, "I’m pretty much the same physically now that I’m healed as I was before. Dr. Lowenstein says I’m going to have a perfectly normal life. I can do anything anybody else can do, if not more.”

For more information, call Atlantic Orthopedic Institute at 973-971-6895.
a new hope

Early diagnosis and better treatments extend life for cystic fibrosis patients
A little over 35 years ago, people with cystic fibrosis (CF) only lived to be 20 years old, at most. Today, patients are living longer with this inherited disorder that causes damage to the lungs and digestive system. “The median survival is now about 40, and our oldest patient is in his mid-60s,” says Stanley Fiel, MD, regional chairman of medicine for Atlantic Health System.

Arthur Atlas, MD, director of the Respiratory Center for Children at Goryeb Children’s Hospital and the center’s cystic fibrosis program, says doctors diagnose patients soon after birth, before they develop signs and symptoms. “That early diagnosis has improved outcomes,” says Dr. Atlas. “In the past, patients would be diagnosed after they had been ill and possibly malnourished.”

CF is a genetic disorder characterized by thick mucus that causes blockages in small tubes in the body. There are over 2,000 abnormalities of the gene associated with CF that have been described, according to Dr. Atlas. Symptoms of CF include chronic cough, recurrent pneumonias, poor weight gain, frequent diarrhea, sinusitis and pancreatitis.

“Until recently, all the therapies were aimed at treating symptoms,” says Dr. Atlas. “In the last few years, there have been two drugs that have come to market that treat the underlying cellular defect of the disease.”

The CF program, part of a network of Cystic Fibrosis Foundation-approved centers recognized for following best medical practices, uses a multidisciplinary approach that includes physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, nutritionists, social workers and exercise physiologists. “The goal of all these different caregivers is to make sure we are addressing the spectrum of needs of children and families with this illness,” says Dr. Atlas.

LIVING WITH CYSTIC FIBROSIS

Seventeen-year-old Kevin Pollison looks like any other high-achieving teenager. He’s a high school varsity athlete and is in the top 10 percent of his senior class. But what distinguishes Kevin from his classmates is the fact that at three months old, a doctor diagnosed him with cystic fibrosis (CF), a progressive genetic disorder that causes damage to the lungs and digestive system.

Kevin’s mother, Joyce, credits the team at Goryeb Children’s Hospital, along with his disciplined adherence to his treatment regimen, with his ability to live a full, active life. Joyce says the team, consisting of his primary doctor, David Cooper, MD, as well as a nurse, respiratory therapist, social worker and nutritionist, is the reason Kevin is as healthy as he is.

Kevin is also a swimmer, and she says his doctor thinks swimming is another aspect that keeps him healthy. “His lung function is probably better than all of ours.”

As far as how CF affects his life today, Kevin says his symptoms are “basically nonexistent. I don’t realize I have it most days.” He believes his lack of symptoms is due to “the repetition of the treatment and compliance with therapy,” which includes a series of daily medications.

Although Kevin’s schedule is challenging, between school, swimming and following his CF treatment plan, he says having the disease “makes you appreciate everything a little bit more. It’s the little moments in life that matter and that’s what CF teaches you, to not take life for granted.”

Because medical needs change as patients age, pediatric patients in their late teens transition to the adult program at the Cystic Fibrosis Center at Morristown Medical Center. “Most of our patients are going to be hospitalized a lot more because they’re sicker,” says Dr. Fiel. “The change in survival rate relates to new antibiotics and the focus on nutrition as the disease progresses.”
With fall sports heating up, preventing concussions remains a hot topic in the news. But what do you do after your student athlete gets hit hard in the head? What about the toddler who tumbles from a trampoline?

“For athletes, an impact that causes a head injury is often obvious,” says Shannon Babineau, MD, pediatric neurologist for Goryeb Children’s Hospital. “But a fall off a bike or playground slide can also cause a concussion. However, symptoms might not show up for a day or two. For parents and other adults, it’s important to know the signs of concussion, and when to seek care.”

A concussion is an injury to the brain that is serious enough to change the way the brain works. Headaches are a common symptom. Trouble with concentration, memory, balance and coordination are others. These symptoms usually go away with the right care.

Younger children cannot always describe their symptoms clearly, or even remember when or if they’ve had a fall. So diagnosing concussion in a child can be difficult, says Michelle Sirak, MD, pediatric physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist for Goryeb. Instead of saying they feel nauseous or sick, for example, younger children might say they feel “icky” or “funny.” Older children might not share much about how they’re feeling.

For diagnosis and care, Goryeb Children’s Hospital brings together a broad team of children’s specialists. That includes a pediatric physiatrist, or specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation for children. It also includes a pediatric neurologist, a children’s specialist in the brain, spinal cord and nerves. In addition, Goryeb’s team can easily connect with a range of other Atlantic Health System specialists.

No matter whom children see, their team at Goryeb keeps the big picture in mind. For children, that means being active, spending time with friends and keeping up in school. “We understand that,” Dr. Sirak says, “we have the experience and training to keep that balance while helping the brain heal.”

For more information, call 973-971-5975.
The Healing Power of the Arts:
YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The freedom to participate in artistic activities – like singing, painting and writing stories – can help revitalize brain and body, and can be an important component to improving health. Atlantic Health System’s Healing Arts program provides opportunities for art and music activities as well as creative art therapies for patients, staff and the communities we serve.

Healing Arts offers more than 30 programs and events throughout the year, featuring literary, performing and visual arts for patients, staff, family and community members.

The program’s goals include enhancing the healing culture of our facilities through the arts; facilitating and encouraging participation in the healing arts for those who are ill and their caregivers; and embracing and fostering artistic collaborations within Atlantic Health System and through community partnerships.

A new Creative Open Studio is a free space supervised by an artist or art therapist two days a week that’s open to anyone (16+) who wants to create art. The studio provides all supplies. Call 973-660-3533 for more information.

Join us in helping to bring the healing power of creative expression to our communities through your gift to the Atlantic Health System Healing Arts program by contacting one of our hospital foundations listed below.

**MORRISTOWN MEDICAL CENTER**, visit f4mmc.org and select “Donate Now,” or call 973-593-2400.

**OVERLOOK MEDICAL CENTER**, visit overlookfoundation.org and select “Donate Now,” or call 908-522-2840.

**NEWTON MEDICAL CENTER**, visit newtonmedicalcenterfoundation.org and select “Online Donation,” or call 973-579-8309.

**CHILTON MEDICAL CENTER**, visit atlantichealth.org/chiltonfoundation and select “Make A Gift,” or call 973-831-5165.

**HACKETTSTOWN MEDICAL CENTER**, visit hrmcnjfoundation.org and select the “Make a Contribution” button, or call 908-850-6876.

**Key Phone Numbers**

**Admissions** 973-971-6718  
**EEG** 973-971-5124  
**Emergency Room** 973-971-6102  
**Laboratory** 973-971-7805  
**Radiology** 973-971-4163
For a referral to a Goryeb Children’s Hospital doctor, call 1-800-247-9580 or visit atlantichealth.org/doctors.

Please call 973-971-5000 for information on all Goryeb Children’s Hospital locations and services and/or contact the specific department on the previous page.

Like us on Facebook /GoryebChildrensHospitalNJ
Follow us on Twitter @AtlanticHealth

Goryeb Children’s Hospital Locations

1. Goryeb Children’s Hospital at Morristown Medical Center
   100 Madison Avenue, Morristown, NJ 07960

2. Goryeb Children’s Center at Overlook Medical Center
   99 Beauvoir Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901

3. Newton Medical Center
   175 High Street, Newton, NJ 07860

4. Goryeb Children’s Hospital Subspecialty Office at Sparta Health & Wellness
   89 Sparta Avenue, Sparta, NJ 07871

5. Goryeb Children’s Hospital Subspecialty Office at Collins Pavilion, Chilton Medical Center
   97 West Parkway, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444

6. Goryeb Children’s Hospital Subspecialty Office at Flemington
   194 Route 31, Flemington, NJ 08822

7. Goryeb Children’s Hospital Subspecialty Office at East Brunswick
   579 Cranbury Road, Suite H, East Brunswick, NJ 08816

Please call 973-971-5000 for information on all Goryeb Children’s Hospital locations and services and/or contact the specific department on the previous page.