

Doctors correct myth of gluten allergy

On nearly every grocery store aisle, a plethora of gluten-free food is available. Shoppers are offered gluten-free pasta, gluten-free bread and gluten-free muffins. The checkout line has gluten-free cookbooks and gluten-free news articles.

Since the public has had so much exposure to gluten allergies, it would be easy to assume that the problem is very common. However, allergists insist that gluten allergies don't exist.

Dr. Alan DeJarnatt at the Asthma and Allergy Care Clinic helped to clear the muddy waters of this debate by pointing out that a person who is "allergic to gluten" actually has a disease called celiac.

This disease invokes an improper immune response to gluten. The body produces antibodies to fight the gluten and there is usually intestinal damage, which can lead to anemia, osteoporosis and cancer, according to celiac.org.

A gastroenterologist performs celiac testing on a sample of tissue in the small intestine to confirm the diagnosis.

However, Dr. DeJarnatt said that there are some people who do not test positive for celiac disease and yet they have symptoms when they eat gluten. These people have sensitivity to gluten.

When a body is sensitive to gluten, it does not produce the same type of antibodies as it would when it fights allergens, such as pollen or peanuts, said Dr. DeJarnatt.

Gluten sensitivity is not easy to diagnose, unlike other problems such as

respiratory conditions caused by allergies. Food sensitivity testing must be carefully performed.

"The process for identifying an allergy must be driven by history," said Dr. DeJarnatt. "If a patient has a history of stomach cramping after they eat, then it is logical to be suspicious of a food allergy, however sometimes patients will ask me to test them for gluten allergy because they have a headache or joint problems."

"If a person has headaches once a month and wants to be tested for a gluten allergy, I don't assume that they have an allergy problem," said Dr. DeJarnatt. "There are many reasons for having headaches, irritable bowels or foggiess."

People who overeat gluten and are also sensitive to gluten will have some damage in the lining in the gastrointestinal tract.

This type of intestinal damage isn't the same type of intestinal damage found in individuals with celiac disease, said Dr. DeJarnatt.

Dr. DeJarnatt said that sometimes people have celiac-like symptoms that go away after implementing a gluten-free diet. "Many of these people were eating too many carbohydrates and that can cause you to not feel well," said Dr. DeJarnatt.

"Gluten allergies don't exist," said Dr. David Stukus at Nationwide Children's Hospital who recently presented the topic at the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. "Wheat is a recognized allergy — but a lot of people misinterpret that as gluten."

"Gluten has been blamed for all



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Dr. Nord invents devices to make surgery easier

Dr. Keith Nord's interest in medicine began when he was a teenager and a lifeguard on Huntington Beach in Southern California. Rescuing people caught by high waves and riptides was a common occurrence on the busy beach, and he made more than 300 rescues.

After too many times of putting someone in an ambulance to be treated later at the hospital, Dr. Nord decided he wanted to be able to do the next step, "to take care of them on the other end."

He chose orthopedics because of his interest in sports and working with athletes and because it gave him the opportunity to "fix" things. "Many of the other specialties keep people going, whereas in orthopedics, you can fix the problem and allow people to return to their normal lives again."

The Jackson physician and founder of Sports, Orthopedics

and Spine, has used his interest in fixing things to create a dozen or more devices to make it easier for orthopedic surgeons to do arthroscopic surgery. Most of his inventions are used in repairing problems in the shoulder.

If Dr. Nord encounters a challenge during surgery, he'll often come up with a way to fix that challenge. He'll design a surgical device, get a company interested in his invention, get a patent for the device and then return to being an orthopedic surgeon while the company manufactures, markets and sells the device.

"I'm good with my hands," he says. "After I leave surgery, I'll think a lot about ways to do things better because of problems I've had in surgery."

During his training as an orthopedic surgeon, most shoulder surgery was done with open incisions. Arthroscopic surgery, on the other hand, uses small incisions where the surgeon can insert a tiny camera in one incision (or portal) and his surgical instruments in other incisions.

"When I went through training, I saw only two arthroscopic surgeries of the shoulder," Dr. Nord said. "Shoulder surgery was in its infancy. I came out of medical school thinking all of the great ideas have already been done."

Not so, he discovered once he started doing more surgeries himself. His first two inventions were the Penetrator and the Birdbeak, both manufactured by Arthrex for

arthroscopic shoulder repair of rotator cuff injuries. A locking mechanism on the angled head of the Penetrator, for example, keeps the jaws closed while the surgeon inserts and extracts sutures during rotator cuff repair. The Birdbeak is also used to make passing sutures easier in labral tear repairs.

The Penetrator has gone through four or five adaptations since Dr. Nord first invented it, and it is still widely used by surgeons.

One of his more recent inventions is a knotless suture anchor that is made out of a plastic-like material. "It holds the suture into the bone, which holds the rotator cuff against the bone so it can heal."

"A lot of the things I do are simple, making surgery easier."

Dr. Nord explained that he has the gift of being able to visualize a process, making it easier to develop his surgical inventions. "I like seeing things, making things and fixing things."

Through the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons and The Arthroscopy Association of North America, Dr. Nord also is helping to create videos and training exercises so would-be surgeons can develop certain skill sets, such as tying a knot in a suture, before they even step into an operating room and touch a patient.

"When you tie a knot during arthroscopic surgery, your hand is six inches away," he explained.

Through a program called Operation Arthroscopy, he has traveled throughout the world including Cuba, Peru and Honduras to teach other doctors.

"It's exciting all of the time," he says. "I like what I do. I enjoy medicine. I want to keep doing it to help other people."



Dr. Keith Nord



Dr. Nord practices with Dr. John Masterson, Dr. Brad Wright, Dr. David Yakin, Dr. Timothy Sweo and Dr. Scott Johnson at Sports Orthopedics and Spine, 569 Skyline Drive. For an appointment, call 731.427.7888.

Phototherapy effectively treats a variety of skin conditions

Dermatologists are turning to an enhanced form of phototherapy to treat a number of skin diseases, from psoriasis to certain types of skin cancer.

The therapy uses a narrow band of UVB rays that concentrates treatment on the epidermis or top layers of the skin.

“Narrowband UVB emits a safe light therapy and is more effective for a wide range of skin diseases as well as pruritic or itchy disorders,” said Dr. Mac Jones, a board-certified dermatologist at the Dermatology Clinic of Jackson. “Our clinic has the only phototherapy box for narrowband in Jackson.”

The treatment is effective on ...

- ▶ Moderate to severe psoriasis, a condition where the skin cells replace themselves three times faster than normal, causing the skin cells to pile up and create red scaly plaques on the skin.
- ▶ Atopic dermatitis, often called eczema, which causes itchy, red patches on the skin.
- ▶ Vitiligo, a condition where people lose pigment in their skin, causing complete loss of pigment or depigmentation.
- ▶ Early mycosis fungoides, a rare type of lymphoma (cancer) that affects the skin.
- ▶ Pruritic disorders, abnormally itchy skin, can occur, for example, when someone is on dialysis or from other causes.

The UVB narrowband rays decrease cell proliferation, cause immunosuppression and kill cancer-causing T-cells.

In the past, UVB phototherapy used a broadband wavelength, a spectrum from 280 to 320 nanometers. “Narrowband” refers to a specific wavelength of ultraviolet (UV) radiation, 311 to 312 nm. “We’re now able to focus on the narrowband UVB spectrum,” Dr. Jones said. This is less than 1 percent of total range of wavelengths from sunlight.

The UVB narrowband wavelengths are not



Dr. Mac Jones stands next to the phototherapy box at his clinic.

to be confused with the UVA wavelengths that are used in tanning beds. “UVA is a completely different wavelength,” Dr. Jones said. “It penetrates deeper into the skin and damages the collagen and elastic fibers in the dermis.”

Narrowband light therapy is better than broadband for several reasons ...

- ▶ Exposure times are shorter but more intense.
- ▶ The course of treatment is shorter.
- ▶ It is more likely to clear the skin condition.
- ▶ Longer periods of remission occur before it reappears.

Dr. Jones recommends that patients come in for narrowband UVB therapy two to five times a week. The patient puts on protective eye goggles, removes

clothing except for undergarments and steps into a cylinder lined with fluorescent light bulbs. This is performed in a special, private room.

The light therapy itself can range from a few seconds to several minutes. “Treatment length, which differs with each patient, his or her skin type, age, skin condition and other factors, is gradually increased until the patient reaches an optimal exposure time,” Dr. Jones said.

The amount of UVB is carefully monitored, he said. The goal is to give enough therapy until the patient’s skin is slightly pink when therapy is over. It’s called the MED, Minimal Erythema Dose.

“Treatment is continued until complete remission of the disease is achieved, or we reach the endpoint where no more improvement is occurring.”

One of the advantages of narrow band therapy, Dr. Jones said, is that it is 10 times less likely to make your skin turn red. He listed other advantages ...

- ▶ It can be used in conjunction with other therapies for psoriasis, such as oral medications, biologicals and topicals with only a few exceptions..
- ▶ It is covered by most insurance policies.

“Narrowband UVB therapy works very well,” he said. “Patients are absolutely happy with it.”

Dr. Mac Jones practices with Dr. Patrick Teer at the Dermatology Clinic of Jackson, 1320 Union University Drive. Dr. Jones graduated from Harvard and then did two years of research at Harvard Medical School. He then came to the University of Tennessee in Memphis for his medical training. For an appointment, visit dermjax.com or call 731.422.7999.

A photograph of a person in a white lab coat, likely a doctor, holding a burger in their right hand and a glass of beer in their left hand. The person is wearing a white lab coat over a light-colored shirt and a dark tie. The background is plain white.

Diabetes ...

When Dr. Elizabeth Londino moved to Jackson to practice medicine after medical school, she was surprised to discover that many Southern foods are fried and that a good number of people are not physically active.

She remembers going to a restaurant and seeing deep-fried Oreos and Twinkies on the menu. "These are two things I would hesitate to eat, period," she said. "But especially not deep fried."

She wasn't surprised, however, that a good part of her family medicine practice deals with treating diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol.

She diagnoses new cases of diabetes and pre-diabetes several times a week.

"Diabetes is rampant, at least in Tennessee," said Dr. Londino, who practices with Dr. Tim Hayden at Northside Medical Clinic. Both are board certified in family medicine and are primary care physicians who treat all ages.

Adult-onset diabetes, also called type 2 diabetes, is a problem with your body that causes blood glucose or sugar levels to rise higher than normal. Over time, your pancreas can't make enough insulin to keep your glucose at normal levels.

In many ways, the increase in diabetes is a symptom of our lifestyles: Too little physical activity, too many fried foods, too many sugary foods, too many bad choices.

"We recognize that controlling your sugar intake is more like a spectrum," Dr. Londino said. "Through your diet and exercise, you can move towards or away from sugar control."

The same problems that cause high cholesterol, blocked arteries and hypertension

also lead to diabetes. Many times, she said, diabetes is like the tip of the iceberg. It is diagnosed when it reaches a certain point, when some of its adverse effects already are present under the surface.

"Sometimes," she said, "people are diagnosed with diabetes because they already have developed neuropathy (tingling and pain in your extremities), coronary artery disease and peripheral artery disease."

Diabetes has become such a serious health problem that doctors now diagnose pre-diabetes, Dr. Londino said. This condition occurs when you are beginning to show signs of a sugar control problem. "The idea is to try to treat by addressing predominantly lifestyle and diet changes to halt the progression of the disease."

Even if you have been diagnosed with diabetes, you can make lifestyle changes to decrease blood sugar levels to non-diabetes levels.

Early detection and treatment of diabetes can decrease the risk of developing the complications of diabetes, she said. Type 2 diabetes can be controlled with lifestyle changes, oral medications and injectable medicines such as insulin.

With prolonged elevation of sugar levels, diabetes can become quite serious, Dr. Londino explained. Diabetes can lead to peripheral neuropathy and peripheral artery disease where you risk losing your toes or even your extremities, heart attack, stroke and blindness. Diabetes is a leading cause of blindness.

"Diabetes is not benign," Dr. Londino said.

"I have patients who wake up and are very attentive to my instructions on changing their bad lifestyle habits and can turn around their bad numbers in three months."

"Then, there are those who never accept the diagnosis or refuse to make the lifestyle changes."

Northside Medical Clinic is at 31 Hughes Drive. For an appointment call 731.668.2800. Visit www.diabetes.org for more information about diabetes, recipes for healthy eating and other information.

... is rampant in Tennessee

Did you know?

▶ Type 1 diabetes is predominantly inherited and not a result of lifestyle choices. It usually emerges during childhood, which is why it also is called juvenile diabetes.

▶ Gestational diabetes can occur in pregnant women who have never had diabetes before, but who have high blood glucose (sugar) levels during pregnancy. According to a 2014 analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of gestational diabetes is as high as 9.2 percent. Some 50 percent of people with gestational diabetes will eventually develop type 2 diabetes.

▶ Some groups have a higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes than others. Type 2 diabetes is more common in African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, as well as the elderly.

▶ Fried and fatty foods were an efficient energy source when people spent long days working in the fields. The higher fat diet was more tolerated by the body. Then when air conditioning allowed many people to work indoors, they didn't change their eating patterns or keep their activity levels up. The body couldn't keep up.

Primary care physicians

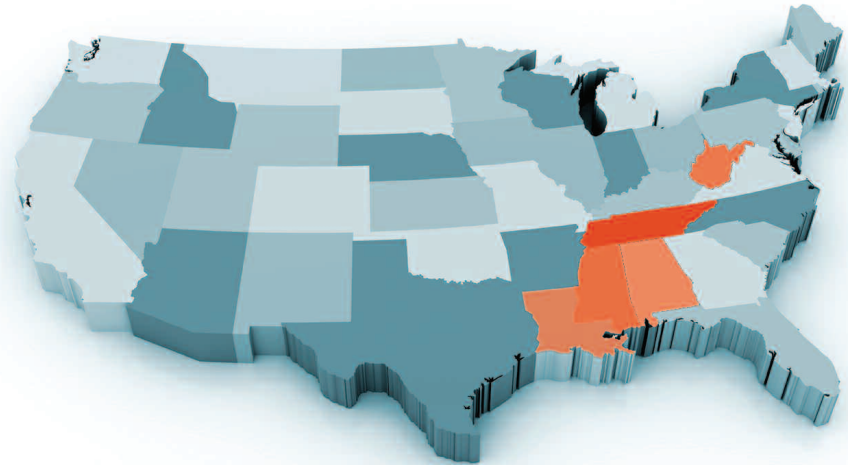


Dr. Elizabeth Londino

Dr. Elizabeth Londino is board certified in family medicine. She is a primary care physician who provides the first contact for a patient who has an undiagnosed medical concern. Primary care physicians also provide continuing care for many problems, unless the condition requires care by a specialist. Physicians who practice family medicine, internal medicine and

pediatrics are considered primary care physicians. Dr. Londino is a member of West Tennessee Primary Care, a sister organization to the West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance.

WEST TENNESSEE
Primary Care



States with the highest rates of diabetes

- ▶ Tennessee: 10.9
- ▶ Alabama: 11.1
- ▶ West Virginia: 11.1
- ▶ Louisiana: 11.5
- ▶ Mississippi: 11.7

Information was compiled by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention for diabetes that was diagnosed in 2012. Tennessee had the fifth highest rate of diabetes, surpassed only by Alabama, West Virginia, Louisiana and Mississippi.



Diabetes Symptoms

- ▶ Urinating often
- ▶ Feeling very thirsty
- ▶ Feeling very hungry — even though you are eating
- ▶ Extreme fatigue
- ▶ Fuzzy thinking
- ▶ Blurry vision
- ▶ Cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
- ▶ Tingling, pain or numbness in the hands and feet

(However, some people with type 2 diabetes have symptoms so mild that they go unnoticed.)

— Source: American Diabetes Association

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Podiatry Clinic: 427-5581

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Proactive health care and downtown opportunities

There are a million reasons to live in downtown Jackson — street festivals, multiple restaurants, a great coffee shop (where I may or may not be writing this article), and dozens of local businesses, all within a short walk of one another.

Downtown is clean, it's safe, and it reflects the diversity and variety that makes any small city a great place to live and to work. From my apartment window, I can see City Hall, Regions Bank, the Jackson Sun, the tower for WNWS 101.5 FM, and if I strain the truth just a little bit (in an NBC news anchor sorta way), I can even see downtown's outdoor amphitheater.

But this is a health care publication, not a brochure for the Chamber of Commerce. Aside from all of these businesses and commercial undertakings, downtown has also become a hub for healthy initiatives, businesses and activities.

During the coming warm months, and lingering cold months as well, 5Ks, 10Ks, runs, jogs and slow walks will wind through the streets on seemingly every Saturday morning.

The traffic and crowds will once again return to the Farmers' Market pavilion where West Tennessee growers will sell local produce,

By **Dustin Summers**
Executive Director,
West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance

freshly squeezed juices, organic soaps and an assortment of other goods and products from across the region.

The LIFT will remain an impressive and ambitious facility that houses a world-class fitness facility, instructional kitchen and a variety of other resources designed to instill and to maintain an overall healthy approach to life.

Yet the coming year brings even more healthy opportunities to downtown Jackson.

Bubba Gandy Seafood and Cajun Market, at the corner of Liberty and College Streets, opened in late January and features freshly harvested seafood from the gulf coast. According to the owner, Chuck Gandy, the red snapper that I bought one afternoon was "swimming around about 24 hours earlier." Smearred with olive oil and some "Slap Ya' Mama" seasoning, it made for a great, quick lunch.

Also, coming later this spring, Grubbs Grocery will be opening in the Jackson Walk shop-

ping center. The market will carry local, organic, nutritionally-rich foods and will feature a variety of products that serve as a great addition to Jackson's food options.

If you get the sense that I'm promoting things that will hopefully keep you out of the doctor's office, you'd be correct. Health does not simply begin and end in a clinical exam room. It must be a consistent practice that can be carried into everyday life.

Jackson is rich with resources to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle. However, if and when you or a family member needs to see a physician, I hope you will look to one of our Alliance members. With more than 100 physicians representing 24 medical specialties, I am confident that you will find the doctor you need.

In the meantime, venture downtown, take a walk and see what unexpected gems you can find.



Dustin Summers

Gluten allergies don't exist

... Continued from front page

that ails humanity," said Dr. Stukus. "But there are only three disorders that you can attribute to gluten on a scientific basis: celiac disease, wheat allergies and non-celiac gluten sensitivity."

"Talking to your doctor about your suspicions for celiac disease or gluten sensitivity is the best thing to do," said Dr. DeJarnatt.



Dr. Alan DeJarnatt, at left, practices at Allergy and Asthma Care, 464 North Parkway, Suite D. He is board certified in internal medicine and in allergy and immunology.

For an appointment, call 731.660.0138.

Dr. Shyamal Sharkar joins West TN Physicians' Alliance

Dr. Shyamal Sarkar, who is board certified in internal medicine, cardiology and nephrology, joined the West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance.

He graduated from North Bengal Medical College in India in 1981. He earned a post-graduate diploma in cardiology in 1984 and completed a cardiology fellowship in 1985 at the Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research in Calcutta, India.

He obtained board certification in internal medicine in 1985. Dr. Sarkar has practiced internal medicine in India, Bhutan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Dr. Sarkar began practicing

nephrology in 1983 in India and subsequently served as the sole nephrologist in Bhutan.

In the United States, he has served as the medical director for four dialysis units and as a faculty member for the University of Tennessee Family Practice Residency Program.

In 1998, Dr. Sarkar began Advanced Kidney Specialists, a successful solo nephrology practice in Jackson that continues to expand. He also sees patients at satellite clinics in Bolivar, Lexington and Humboldt.

Advanced Kidney Specialists is at 170 Murray Guard Drive.

For an appointment, call 731.984.8390.

Physicians' Alliance adds new board member

Dr. Kimberly Howerton, a family medicine physician, has joined the West Tennessee Physicians' Alliance Board of Directors. She practices at Patient Centered Care, 25 Security Drive, Suite A.



Dr. Kim Howerton

She replaces Dr. Jimmy Hoppers at Physicians Quality Care, who has rotated off the board.

Dr. David Villarreal, Jackson Surgical Associates, is beginning his second year of a two-year term as board president.

Other members of the Alliance board are Dr. Keith Micetich, Jackson Regional Women's Center; Dr. Todd Seabrook, Professional Anesthesia Associates; Dr. Jason Hutchison, West Tennessee Bone & Joint Clinic; Dr. David Yakin, Sports, Orthopedics and Spine; Karen Grace, office administrator at the Arthritis Clinic; and Dustin Summers, Alliance Executive Director.

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