Twin Cities Occupational Health and Rehabilitation®

Back to Work,
Back to Play,
Back to Life

NEWS YOU CAN USE

8th Issue, November 2008

www.tcohr.com

Positive Results for Patient's and Employers!

U.S. DOT Direct Observation Rule is Delayed

An Administrative Stay was issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals concerning the Oct. 22 final rule for "direct observation" for all DOT-required return-to-duty and follow-up drug tests.

Now the U.S. DOT Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance has issued procedures for direct observation, now authorized and required only when 1) The employee attempts to tamper with his or her specimen at the collection site; 2) The Medical Review Officer (MRO) orders direct observation; or 3) The employer orders direct observation for a Follow-Up test or a Return-to-Duty test. To read the entire procedure, link to: http://www.dot.gov/ost/dapc/testingpubs/DOT_Direct_Observation_Procedures_08-08.pdf

Flu-Trends

The folks at the ubiquitous Google have found a close relationship between how many people search for flu-related topics and how many people actually have flu symptoms. Going to the link below enables you to scroll over states on the map to see flu activity.

Click on "How does this work?" and watch Google's data compared to reports to the Center for Disease Control. Google is able to accurately estimate current flu levels one to two weeks faster than published CDC reports.

What can we expect for Minnesota? Over the next week or two we can expect to see a dramatic spike in flu cases. Go do http://www.google.org/flutrends/

It's not too late to schedule on-site clinics, or to walk-in to either of our clinics for vaccinations. To schedule for a group, please contact Jim at (651)224-8264 or jsebesta@tcohr.com

Holiday Hours

	Mendota Hgts	Blaine
Nov 27th	Closed	Closed
Nov 28th	8 – 12	PT by Appt
Dec 24th	8 – 12	8 – 12
Dec 25th	Closed	Closed
Dec 26th	8 – 5	8 – 5
Dec 31st	8 – 12	8 – 12
Jan 1st	Closed	Closed

Tdap Vaccine

Tdap (**T**etanus, **D**iphtheria **A**nd **P**ertussis) vaccine can protect adolescents and adults against these three serious diseases; all caused by bacteria. Pertussis (also known as Whooping Cough) and Diphtheria are spread from person to person. Tetanus enters the body through cuts, scratches, or wounds. Patient's with a severe cut, puncture or burn might need protection against tetanus infection. Tdap may be used if the person has not had a previous dose.

Adults 19 through 64 years of age should substitute Tdap for one booster dose of Td (Tetanus / Diphtheria). Td should be used for later boosters.

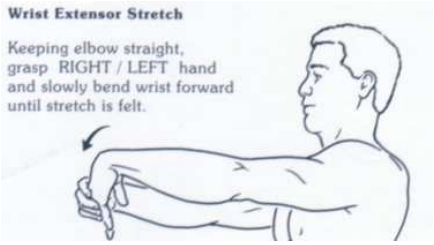
If vaccination is needed during pregnancy, Td usually is preferred over Tdap. Ask your doctor. To learn more, go to: www.cdc.gov/vaccines

Poster with Tear-Off Maps

Would you like a laminated poster with tear-off maps and phone numbers for both of our clinics? Let us know: (651) 224-8264 jsebesta@tcohr.com

Wrist Extensor Stretch

Do you or someone you know suffer from "tennis elbow?" Repetitive hand motions from keyboarding, working with tools or performing repeated fine motor skills can result in discomfort or pain. This simple stretch can help.



To view a video on this and other stretches, try: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXDTK42WtGs

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How do we define Quality?

TCOHR physicians consider factors such as:

- Progress towards returning a patient to pre-injury activity levels based upon symptoms, while not pushing a patient too quickly or too slowly
- Patient satisfaction
- Employer satisfaction

TCOHR Physical Therapy considers:

- Communication with patients and employers to achieve compliance
- Appropriate progression based upon things like functional ability, increasing range-of-motion and increasing strength

TCOHR Physician Assistant's consider:

- The quick and accurate diagnosis of treatable conditions
- Tailoring a plan to help patients reach as close to their previous level of functional capacity as quickly as possible
- Open and direct communication with employers and their employees, allowing for constant and instant feedback about work restrictions, job adaptations, treatment plans and prognosis

TCOHR Nursing Staff consider:

- Timeliness and compassion shown all patients;
- Accuracy in gathering, documenting and communicating health information.

ADA Amendments Act of 2008-09

Effective January 1, 2009, the ADA Amendments Act expands interpretations and applications of the Act including:

- Whether impairment constitutes a protected "disability" without regard to measures that mitigate the impact on "life activities;"
- The definitions of "major life activities" have been expanded;
- The EEOC and the courts now must lighten a claimant's burden to establish that an impairment "substantially limits" a major life activity;
- Impairments that are episodic or in remission now may constitute protected disabilities;
- An individual who does not have a "disability" may now be protected if discriminated against because of an actual or perceived impairment, even if that impairment does not affect the person's major life activities;
- The Amendments redefine "discrimination" to direct the courts and EEOC to focus less on the severity of an individual's impairment and more on how the employer responds to it.

One of the greatest impacts of the Amendment from a workers compensation perspective is the need to review and create more accurate job descriptions. Job descriptions should consider real criteria and abilities.

The Amendments Act will impact how employers respond to requests for accommodation, as well as decisions relating to the terms or conditions of employment for current or prospective employees who may be deemed or perceived as disabled.

Supervisor and manager training relating to potential disabilities will be critical, as will an employers' review of policies and practices to make sure that dealings with any employee or prospective employee with a physical or mental impairment is compliant.

Welcome Our New VP of Clinical Operations!

Effective this month, Penny Seeds, RN, BSN is now responsible for all TCOHR clinical operations. In her new role, Penny will initially be focusing on inventory management, standardizing processes and procedures of clinical support staff among the clinics, while expanding the range of continuing education for clinic staff.

While working as a part-time TCOHR trainer and supervisor for the past year, Penny also served as Clinical Data Analyst of Core Measures and Quality Manager for Pro-Healthcare in Waukesha, WI. Penny brings with her an extensive background in trauma and emergency nursing.