

**FLASH:** check out our website  
[www.heritagefamilymedicine.com](http://www.heritagefamilymedicine.com)  
for an amazing performance by our  
staff - click on "Christmas Message."

To the patients of HFM,

Subject: General Letter #2

In our last letter to HFM patients, we (among other things) announced our revised, on-line appointment system, our association with Pat Davis, Family Nurse Practitioner, and the availability of e-consults. We are very pleased with how the first two are doing. E-appointments work. Pat Davis is competent, compassionate and should be sought out without hesitation by our patients. E-consults are awkward, under-utilized, and often the patient forgets that a credit card entry is required. But we will keep working on the concept. Remember, you can use this system rather than a phone call to make inquiries about a recent visit (yes, you need to enter a credit or debit card, but HFM will not make a charge for such follow-up questions). The starting place for all e-services is the HFM website: [\*\*HeritageFamilyMedicine.com\*\*](http://HeritageFamilyMedicine.com).

**GREAT NEWS!** Jan Soloy, ARNP has joined HFM to do Adolescent and Adult Family Medicine. She has years of experience and excellent training, including a recent two-year fellowship in **Integrative Medicine** at the University of Arizona (with Andrew Weil, MD, among others). Please use her with confidence.

**Thank you for telling your friends.** Your recommendation of HFM has helped us grow and add more choices of providers for you (as above). We are now actively recruiting a second Family Practice Physician.

**Nutrition.** It is no secret that most of us, this physician included, need regular exercise, regular relaxation, a prudent diet (low fat, high fiber, more fruits and vegetables), weight control, and for some, smoking cessation and reduced alcohol intake (men: 1-2 beverages max per day, women: should probably eliminate - recent data showed substantial increased cancer risk proportionate to use).

Many patients, however, are looking for more. Most "supplements" are a waste of money. The science is rapidly changing and all recommendations are quite tentative. If you wish to supplement, these *may* be useful:

1. A multivitamin (including iron for menstruating women, but none or low iron for men). Maybe.
2. 1000 – 1200 mg of elemental calcium (Tums is lowest cost, CitraCal is among the best tolerated)
3. Vitamin D (D3 is best) 400 – 1200 units per day
4. Vitamin K (K2 is best) about 100 mcg per day
5. Glucosamine 1500 mg daily (with or without Chondroitin or MSM) may be helpful for maturing joints
6. Co-Q 10 in oil capsules 50 – 100 mg, if taking a "statin" cholesterol lowering medication.
7. AREDS (C, E, Zinc, Copper, and b-carotene if not a smoker) for Macular Degeneration prevention.

**Nutrient Testing.** HFM offers a more precise way to assess your own specific nutritional needs – a **SpectraCell** test (see enclosed flyer). This test measures the function of selected vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and other essential micronutrients within your living white blood cells. We have found 0 – 8 deficiencies in those tested.

Insured patients pay \$80 up front and any amount beyond that their insurance does not pay (usually 0 or a "modest amount" – depending on deductibles, co-insurance, etc.) or \$160 up front with nothing more to pay (not avail for Cigna). Medicare patients pay \$62.00 at the time of blood draw. Self pay is \$320.00. HFM makes nothing doing this test; we provide it as a service to our patients. We review the results with you during an office visit. If interested, please call our staff to arrange a **SpectraCell**.

**Acacia Acupuncture** has taken over the space beside us. Dan Dingle, MAc, LAc does remarkable work (especially for migraines and muscle-skeletal pains) using both very fine needles (usually painless) **and laser**.

**Carotid Intimal Thickness Measurement:** an ultrasonic measurement of how much crud is already fouling your arteries, is a relatively new and, I believe, a **very valuable study** --especially if it is unclear how hard we ought to push lifestyle or medications or if a little bad news would *really* make you live more prudently. This test is most often covered by insurance, but if rejected (or deductible not met yet – we may do this again late in the year, also) you will be billed \$240.00 (\$156 with immediate payment, no billing). HFM must bring in a technician and equipment for this and staff will notify those interested of available time(s). Please note the response card.

**Changing recommendations. PSA (prostate cancer screening test):** Should probably NOT be done in the absence of a family history of men dying *from* the disease. As many or more men die or have significant complications from our treatment, as from the usually very slow growing disease, itself. But, we remain happy to do the test from 40 – 65, if desired. **ASA (aspirin)** is probably NOT useful to prevent heart attack or stroke, but may pose a small risk to stomach. It remains useful *after* having had a heart attack – and in the moment of one.

**Stay out of hospital Emergency Rooms.** The expense of maintaining these facilities is very high – as are the charges. Serious cases should not have to compete with minor illnesses or those seeking off hours care for convenience.

1. CALL US – we are open Tues and Thurs evenings until 8:00 pm, and have a “24/7” on-call doctor available if your concern can not wait until the next business day. We do guarantee “same or next day” appointments, if you are acutely ill or injured (so calls *should* be few).

2. Go to an Urgent Care for minor events that can not wait – they are much cheaper, usually faster, and you are less exposed to potentially infectious patients. Our recommended sites are WestCare Clinic 3000 Limited Lane NW, Olympia, 360-357-9392 and Pacific Walk-in. 3928 Pacific Ave SE. Lacey, 360-455-1350

**ObamaCare / DirectCareMD.** We may soon see health care legislation passed. It is by no means reform. It adds a lot of government control and expense with no fundamental changes. HFM has had its own “reform” for 3 years, initially promoted only to employers, but now available to families with no insurance or those with high deductibles or HSA plans. A flat rate of \$30 to \$45 per month per person covers *all* professional services within our office. Basic lab and in-house x-rays are available for another \$10.00 per month. Check out our web-site: [www.DirectCareMD.com](http://www.DirectCareMD.com) or call 360.740.0888 for more details.

**We really want your e-mail address.** It is costly to do mailings like this. We promise no spam and no sharing, not even routine health tips (those things take more time than we have to produce). But we do want to announce new practitioners, changes in hours, significant new services or important new warnings or drug recalls. Please provide your e-mail address on the response card or the next time you come in. Thanks.

**Depressed??** An excellent, serious, depression recovery course, facilitated by Edward Case, MD, psychiatrist, with several other local professionals (including Dr. Faiola), has its **introductory meeting 8 February 2010, 7:00 pm.** Cost is \$99.00 for materials (textbook, workbook, etc) for all 8 weekly sessions (no charge for intro meeting). **Tuttle Hall 5831 Mullen Rd SE, Lacey 98503** (beside the church building). For more info contact Ron Case, MD at 360.789.2441. This is truly a great opportunity to handle your own illness, often without medications.

**The Truly “Good News”.** In our last General Letter, we acknowledged that both Pat Davis, ARNP and I are active members of our own Christian communities and would welcome the opportunity to share with our patients that which has given added meaning and fuller joy to our lives. To that end, I am considering leading a study of the Bible on a recurring basis with interested individuals. Your help in assessing that, as a good (or bad) idea, would be appreciated. Be assured, this practice will never tolerate anyone “preaching” to patients who have not invited such. It is just sometimes hard to keep silent about something so good.

**BEST WAY TO RESPOND:** Go to our website, [www.heritagefamilymedicine.com](http://www.heritagefamilymedicine.com) , click on SECOND General Letter Questionnaire and respond on-line. Second best way: fill out the yellow questionnaire, place in the envelope provided, put on a stamp and return it to us. Or bring it in.

Sincerely,  
Richard Faiola, MD