

Focus on Health

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MAMMOGRAMS

Why the long wait for mammography appointments, and why are mammograms so difficult to schedule most places? Two reasons: Mammography is poorly reimbursed, and radiologists who specialize in this service are exposed to high professional liability. This same situation will likely surface in delivery services for pregnant women if central planning of health services continues.

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A study from Harvard indicates that an elevated level of iron in the blood as measured by serum ferritin levels triples the risk of developing type II diabetes. The ferritin level can be decreased by regular blood donations.

Gynecologic and colon cancers are the malignancies most often associated with breast cancer, both as preceding and second events. Lung cancers and thyroid cancer follow.

New Ovarian Cancer Test

At a recent presentation by Lab Corp, a new test to be used for ovarian cancer screening in high risk patients only was introduced. It is called Ovachek. Its practical applicability will not be known for several more months, or maybe longer.

As part of the professional services I feel should be provided by me to my patients, screening of the voluminous medical literature has become more and more important. Please read this now if you have time before I see you, so that we can further discuss whichever topic especially interests you.

Perhaps you have seen an item that I have not included in this list or have not seen myself. If so, feel free to bring it to my attention.

Definition

When locating a doctor for menopause, look for an endocrinologist (a hormone doctor). Most gynecologists do not know enough about bioidentical hormones. Therefore, seeking out a gynecologic endocrinologist could help you find the guidance you need.

Stroke Victims Require Fast Action

83% of strokes are caused by blocked blood vessels and are called ischemic strokes, 17% are known as hemorrhagic strokes, and are caused by a ruptured blood vessel. Those people over age 55 who have a family history of stroke or have high blood pressure are considered to be at high risk for stroke. Other factors that increase the risk are diabetes and coronary artery or heart disease. A fast acting drug called "tissue plasminogen activator", or TPA for short can dissolve clots in blood vessels of the brain rapidly, thereby preventing long term damage. The drug is only effective when given within three hours of the attack, and therefore only 3% of patients in this country receive it. Many people who are suffering a stroke do not even realize it at the time, and do not seek help in time to get the benefit of TPA, or lose valuable time in an emergency room waiting to be seen by a doctor.

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