



Tillicum Tidbits

Primary Care Edition

A compendium of fun facts and helpful information



Testing whether laughter *is* the best medicine

Please Take One!

June 2023- Volume 1

Did You Know?

The Tillicum Lelum Primary Care Team can examine, diagnose and help manage skin concerns! During the summer season we all bare our skin a little more in an effort to stay cool, but it can be harder to do so if you have a mole, cyst, lump, rash, or other skin condition giving you health concerns or making you self-conscious. Come see our health care team for guidance and relief!

Did You Know?

A tick cannot transmit Lyme disease unless it has been under your skin for 48 hours. So, act quickly if you are bitten by a tick: do NOT throw the bug in the garbage! Get your bite examined by a health care practitioner as soon as possible, and bring the tick along: it can be sent in for testing.

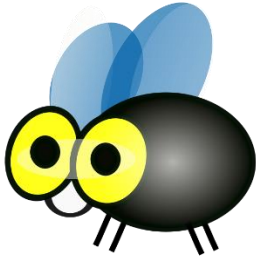
Did You Know?

Having a Nurse Practitioner (NP) provides the same service as a family doctor: a NP can diagnose, refer, prescribe, and help you and your family pro-actively manage your health over the course of your lifespan.

The Tillicum Lelum Health Centre is open Mon to Fri from 9 am - 5 pm. We are closed for lunch from 12 – 1 pm.

Our Community Health Nurse is available on a walk-in basis during the week. She offers wound care, pregnancy tests, appointments for TB screening, immunizations and healthcare education.

NP Diana White is available by appointment Monday through Thursday, and on a limited basis for same-day. Please call 250-753-6578.



Take the Itch Out of Mosquito Bites

Canada is famous for two seasons: winter and construction. Alongside the sounds of road repair and robins, however, come the familiar whine of mosquitoes. So how best to treat the almost inevitable summertime bites that result in red itchy bumps?

There are a multitude of options....

- After washing the area with soap and water apply an ice pack for 10 minutes to reduce swelling and itching. Reapply ice pack as needed
- Apply a mixture of baking soda and water which can help reduce the itch response
- Use an over-the-counter anti-itch or antihistamine cream to help relieve itching
- A dab of toothpaste on the bite will act as an astringent, drawing itchy venom from the wound as it dries. Menthol in the toothpaste will provide a 'cooling' sensation that will occupy the nerves in the same way ice does, relieving discomfort
- Honey is an antiseptic and antibacterial ingredient that can reduce inflammation and prevent infection. Don't wear it outside though because the sugar in the honey can attract more mosquitoes!
- Aloe vera gel has anti-inflammatory properties for wound healing and calming infections, and the cool feeling of the gel may also soothe any itchiness

Finally, if you can avoid being outdoors during peak mosquito times, between dusk and dawn, you may avoid being bitten altogether.





Take the Bite Out of Pet Dander

The beginning of June is Pet Appreciation Week in Canada. The benefits to our health of living with pets is undeniable: they can increase opportunities to exercise, get outside, and socialize. Regular walking or playing with pets can decrease blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels. And pets can help manage loneliness and depression by giving us companionship.

The flip side of all that positivity, however, is pet dander.

Pet dander refers to the dead skin cells shed by mammals like cats and dogs, guinea pigs, rabbits and hamsters. Dander lingers in the air longer than other allergens because of its microscopic, jagged shape: it sticks to furniture, bedding and fabrics and can even be carried on items into and out of the home. For those with pet allergies, this can lead to swollen nasal passages, a stuffy or runny nose, sneezing, itchy or watery eyes and shortness of breath. Physical contact with pet dander can cause contact dermatitis or a skin rash, hives, or even trigger a person's asthma.

So what can people do to minimize dander and their exposure to it?

- **Cleaning your home regularly reduces the accumulation of pet dander, and decluttering reduces the surfaces to which it can stick.**
- **Bathing and brushing your pet regularly can help. So too can using a hard flooring material, or, if you do have rugs, using a vacuum with a hepa filter.**
- **Exposure to pet dander can also be reduced by restricting the pet from accessing certain areas, for instance like the bedroom.**

In conclusion, a bit of precaution and some elbow grease can help those with allergies to pet dander enjoy the companionship of the Fluffy's and Buddy's of the world.



Keep Your Cool

The sudden arrival of summer heat caught many by surprise this year. Most people know to drink extra water, keep to the shade, wear protective clothing or sunscreen, and avoid strenuous activity during the warmest hours of the day. Despite our best efforts, however, heat exhaustion and heat stroke can still occur. What are the symptoms of each and what must we do in response when we see them?

Heat Exhaustion vs Heat Stroke

Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses excess amounts of water and salt, typically from sweating. Symptoms can include dizziness, headache, nausea, weakness, unsteady gait, muscle cramps and fatigue. The core body temperature is elevated but remains below 104 F.

Treat heat exhaustion promptly: rest in a cool place, drink cool fluids such as water or sports drinks, apply a cold compress to the back of the neck and, if possible, take a cool shower or bath. Recovering from heat exhaustion usually takes 24 to 48 hours. Depending on the severity of heat exhaustion, you may be hospitalized so doctors can monitor your fluid and electrolyte levels to avoid complications.

Heat stroke is a serious medical emergency that occurs when your body is unable to control its internal temperature. Symptoms include a change in mental status such as confusion, delirium, combativeness, seizures, loss of consciousness and a core body temperature above 104 F. Home treatment isn't enough for heatstroke: emergency medical help is required. Others should take steps to cool you off while waiting for medical assistance to arrive.



HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!

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