

# No Bones About It

*A Quarterly Patient Newsletter from Orthopaedic Surgery Associates of Marquette, P.C.*

## Physician Extenders

*Who are these professionals?*

*By Robert Rutkowski, PA-C*

As a patient of Orthopaedic Surgery Associates of Marquette, you may have seen, or are scheduled to see, one of our physician assistants (PAs) or nurse practitioners (NPs), collectively known as physician extenders. You may be wondering who these clinicians are, how they are trained, and what services they provide.

Physician extenders are part of your health care team including the physicians, nurses, physical therapists, x-ray technicians, and clerical staff. They are all working towards the same goal: a commitment to providing you excellent patient care. All PAs and NPs are trained to diagnose injuries/illness, interpret diagnostic tests, create treatment plans, and prescribe medications in collaboration with their supervising physicians. Although there are differences in their education, the extenders at OSAM fill similar roles.

Nurse Practitioners are registered nurses who have completed additional education and training in patient focused programs and have earned their master's degree. To become licensed practitioners, NPs take a national certification exam in an area of specialty, recertify every five years, and complete annual continuing education requirements. They are licensed through State nursing boards.

Physician assistants are educated as generalists. They must attend a nationally accredited program, typically 2-3 years in duration beyond their

initial college degree. Physician assistant programs were initially bachelor's degree, but now most programs are master's degree level. Physician assistant education is based on the same medical model taught in medical schools. Like NPs, PAs must also take a national certification exam, recertify every six years and complete annual continuing education requirements. Physician assistants are licensed by State medical boards and are required to work under the supervision of a licensed physician.

Physician assistants and nurse practitioners are more similar than different. As OSAM, our physician extenders all perform new patient evaluations, acute fracture treatment, and pre-operative history and physical exams. They see patients for post-operative care, assist their supervising physician in surgery, and see patients daily who are admitted to the hospital for injuries or recovering from surgery. They also perform minor procedures in our office such as joint and spine injections. Physician extenders communicate and collaborate daily with their supervising physicians. Also, like the OSAM physicians, they are on-call 24/7 for orthopaedic emergencies.

The physician extenders at OSAM all practice general orthopaedics, but also have specialty responsibilities within the realm of their supervising physician. Collectively, they have over sixty years of experience in orthopaedics and look forward to caring for the orthopaedic needs of you or your loved ones.

### PROVIDER STAFF

**Kenneth A. Davenport, M.D.**

*General Orthopaedics*

**Matthew N. Songer, M.D.**

*Spine*

**Wallace G. Pearson II, M.D.**

*General Orthopaedics*

**Robert H. Blotter, M.D.**

*General Orthopaedics*

**Matthew B. Colligan, D.O.**

*Total Joints*

**Edward P. Southern, M.D.**

*Spine & Pediatric Orthopaedics*

**Clayton A. Peimer, M.D.**

*Hand Surgery  
MGHS-Employed*

**J. Bryan Dixon, M.D.**

*Family Practice/Sports Medicine  
MGHS-Employed*

**Robert Rutkowski, PA-C**

*Physician Assistant*

**Brian R. Weatherdon, PA-C**

*Physician Assistant*

**Victoria N. Asmus, PA-C**

*Physician Assistant*

**Sandra Pritchett, FNP-C**

*Nurse Practitioner*

**Kimberly A. McLain, NP-C**

*Nurse Practitioner*

**Jo Foley, PA-C**

*Physician Assistant  
MGHS-Employed*

**Diane J. Reetz, PT**

*Physical Therapist/Manager*

**Cathy A. Ruprecht, PT**

*Physical Therapist*

**Joe Lewis, PTA**

*Physical Therapy Assistant*

**For Appointments Call:**

**906-225-1321**

**800-462-6367**

*Conveniently located in  
Suite 190 of the Upper  
Peninsula Medical Center  
1414 W. Fair Avenue  
Marquette MI 49855*

# Exercise For Those Winter Blues

By Cathy A. Ruprecht, MSPT

We know how effective exercise can be to help fight disease and improve the strength of our heart, muscle, and bones. In addition to these physical health benefits, regular exercise can also improve your mental health, especially during the winter months.

Getting more exercise pumps blood through the whole body system including your brain and releasing endorphins helps to improve self-esteem. According to the Mayo Clinic's web page, "Depression and Anxiety: Exercise Eases Symptoms" getting more exercise and less couch time can help enhance your sense of well-being. Building-up exercise movement over time to 30 minutes, 3-5 days per week, is recommended.

Winter brings the opportunity for cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing, walks with your dog, ice skating, and everyone's favorite—snow shoveling. If the great outdoors aren't for you, there are local fitness centers; basketball, hockey, and bowling leagues; and aerobic classes to try from kick-boxing to Zumba. Home exercise equipment and electronic forms of fitness such as the Wi Fit can get the whole family involved.

Look for activities you enjoy doing and involve family and friends to improve the social aspect of exercising. Start slowly and record your activities on paper to track progress. As always, please consult with your physician before beginning an exercise program.

Resource: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/depression-and-exercise/MH00043>

## FOR YOUR PROTECTION

Requests for medications & refills are **NOT** available outside of business hours. After-hours emergencies are evaluated in-person at the Marquette General Health System Emergency Room or your local emergency room.

## Business Corner

### Healthcare Reform & You

Many of the provisions of the healthcare reform law or "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act" are becoming a reality. Below is a short summary of some of the provisions that may impact you and your private insurance company.

- People who have pre-existing conditions and have been uninsured for at least 6-months can get coverage from high-risk insurance plans. The government will subsidize the premiums.
- Insurance companies cannot deny coverage for children because of pre-existing conditions.
- Beginning in 2014, payers cannot deny coverage for adults because of pre-existing conditions.
- Payers have to accept every employer and every individual in the state who applies for coverage, regardless of medical condition, past claims, or genetic information.
- Payers can't set rates based on health status. Rates can differ only on a basis of type of coverage, rating area, age, and tobacco use.
- By 2014, payers will have to cover maternity care at the same level they cover other medical procedures.
- Unmarried dependent children can stay on their parents' plan until age 26.
- Payers can't end coverage because a beneficiary gets sick. They can only end it for fraud or intentional misrepresentation of facts.
- Beginning in 2014 there can be no annual or life-time limit on coverage.

Check with your employer or insurance agent for more details regarding your specific health insurance coverage and benefits.

Excerpt taken from *Medical Office Manager*, Vol .XXIV, No. 4, April 2010