

# School has started and it is hard to believe in one month this weather will be COOLER!

We have survived a very hot summer. Dehydration from many sources has affected my patient population. The combination of above 100 ° F temperatures, suffocating humidity and an unrelenting lack of rain makes for a very dangerous environment.

So what to do?

Avoid the sun. Protect your skin. Don't think the heavy duty lotions and creams will do it. You need clothing, gloves, hats, and sunglasses. On a daily basis I am freezing premalignant skin lesions, excising basal cell, squamous cell skin cancer and even the rare but deadly melanoma from patients arms, necks, faces, scalps and chests.

Drink plenty of water. It is hard to say how much is enough. By now we have learned what it takes to be well hydrated. Yes, it could be up to several quarts per day and for some people, even more. Avoid alcohol, it will make you urinate, and the same goes for caffeine. Diuretics (fluid pills) also may leave you dry.

I have seen some of my patients, some over the age of sixty, stay out in the sun for hours. Some of them take more than five pills per day. Many of these medicines are extremely potent and they need very effective kidneys to clean up all of their by-products.

Even though I still see dehydrated patients with kidney failure, they are not as numerous as before. I have also seen less attacks of congestive heart failure. When I started my practice several decades ago in this area, we could predict a significant number of persons developing heart failure after a weekend of several outdoor picnics. Those attacks do not happen as often.

These observations go along with the studies presented in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, August 27<sup>th</sup> edition, page 780, where a team from Northwestern University found a decrease in cardiovascular deaths in the American population between 1999-2017.

As a group, you have figured out what it takes to keep healthy. In our younger years, we want to get rid of the load of pounds so we can go further. After the age of seventy-five, that "load" matters less. What matters more then is to live a happy, pain-free life. As we advance in years, genetics matter less, and lifestyle matters more. So congratulations to all of you!



*"During this summer; avoid the sun,  
protect your skin, and drink plenty  
of water."*

*Jorge Duchicela, M.D.*



## Now some housekeeping news:

1. The new flu vaccine will be ready for you in mid-September. Remember every year between 16 to 40 thousand will die in the United States from the flu.
2. Don't forget the new Shingles vaccine. It is a two step vaccine. It is not a disease you want to get.
3. Dr. Vemuri, a cardiologist with Austin Heart, is no longer with them, and will not be coming to our clinic. Austin Heart will have a replacement coming to our clinic soon. In the meantime, we will use their other cardiologists who have access to all your heart records.
4. We can prevent, and many times cure most of the common cancers. Please ask me how I can help you do that. I am thinking breast, colon, prostate, skin, and lung cancer.
5. Your insurance covers an ANNUAL WELLNESS VISIT, take advantage of it. They offer it because as a business they figured out it will cost them a lot less if they keep you healthy. It is a very nice alignment of incentives for you.
6. Since 1984 when I graduated from the University of Wisconsin as a physician, I have been on call for my patients. It is the same today. I am on call with my sister, Dr. Olga Duchicela. Know this number 979-725-8545.
7. Bring your medicine bottles to all physician visits. This ensures that we can keep your medical records up to date with how you take your medications.

Lastly, an article from *JAMA, August 27<sup>th</sup>, page 736, from the University of Calgary, Canada*, strongly suggests there is no benefit in high dose Vitamin D for the bones. Therefore I will start reducing the dose I recommend to 2,000 International Units daily.

Are You Ready For  
**Flu Season?**

