

PFCA

Wellness Update

PRINCETON FAMILY CARE ASSOCIATES, LLC

SUMMER 2021



Welcome to the first issue of our quarterly newsletter and what we hope will be an opportunity to share information with our patients and community. Each season we will share topics our practice recognizes as timely and relevant to psychiatric care in general and more specifically to Princeton Family Care Associates patients. Please contact us at reception@drfernandez.org with ideas of interest for future issues!

Message from Dr. Fernandez

Dear PFCA Patients,

I personally welcome you to the first issue of our new quarterly newsletter. I hope you will find it informative and beneficial in your ongoing care.

As I get older (and hopefully wiser), in preserving my vision for this practice of “Not just Better... Well” and in extending the longevity of my clinical care, I have decided to decrease my days at the practice to three days a week while still being actively involved in the complete oversight of clinical decisions made at Princeton Family Care Associates.

To accomplish this mission, we now have two part-time Advanced Practice Nurses (APN) and a full-time Registered Nurse (RN) here to coordinate your clinical treatment.

Evaluations are still mostly done by me. Some are referred to the APNs when I deem them to be clinically appropriate or at the request of the referring clinician or patient seeking psychiatric help. APN evaluations and follow ups are always reviewed by me within 1-2 days of the patient visit and will see me the visit following the evaluation.

Besides handling routine clinician concerns that may arise in between patient appointments, the RN functions as my Clinical Coordinator (CC) on complicated cases with complex diagnostic and treatment needs. These cases are discussed in thrice daily treatment meetings with the clinician. Clinical advice is always based on my understanding of the case and

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What you Need to Know About Psychiatric Medications & Summer Heat

As the warm weather returns, the risk of heat related side effects rises, especially for those on psychiatric medications. During hot humid weather, psychiatric medications may lead to excessive body temperature and may impair the body’s ability to regulate its own temperature. In particular, patients taking certain mood stabilizers need to be more careful during the hot weather. Notably, Lithium can cause lithium toxicity if the individual loses a lot of fluid quickly through perspiration. Lithium toxicity may lead to heat exhaustion or stroke. Individuals may be at higher risk if they have an underlying chronic medical condition (ie., heart and pulmonary disease, diabetes, alcoholism).

To avoid a heat-related illness, there are simple preventative measures you can take, such as, avoid over-exertion, especially during mid-day hours, apply sunscreen as needed, keep windows and drapes shut during the hotter part of the day, and drink plenty of

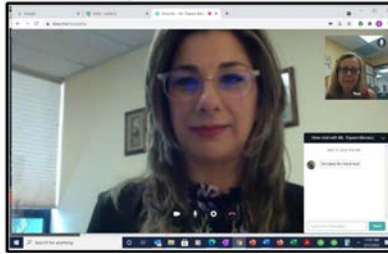
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How to Maximize Your Telemedicine Appointment



Telemedicine has become a viable solution for psychiatric treatment born out of necessity during these challenging times. At PFCA, we have adapted procedures to accommodate psychiatric treatment via telemedicine. To make the most of your telemedicine appointment, please plan accordingly:

- We continue to remind patients of their upcoming appointment at least 4 days in advance via voice, email and sometimes text. Our email message includes the appointment time, the secure URL link and any forms and clinical scales that need completion before the appointment. We request that all forms be completed and emailed back the evening prior so that everything is ready for the day of the appointment.
- Clinical scales have always been an essential tool for clinicians to accurately assess your symptoms. We



have converted these forms into fillable PDF files. To save your responses you must open the file in the FREE Adobe Reader app. You can also complete the forms in your browser window and take a screenshot of each page, then email each page. A certain level of technology knowledge is needed. Otherwise, patients can also print the file, complete, then scan and email back.

- A good internet connection is essential. Complete the “Pre-Call Check” on the Doxy.me platform when checking in to insure that the audio and video devices are operat-

ing properly. Ideally, do your appointment indoors using ethernet connection. If using WIFI, be near your router.

In order to continue to deliver the same level of quality of care through telemedicine, our administrative and operating costs have greatly increased. As such, we have implemented an increase in our fees to cover these additional expenses. To help offset this increase, we are offering a discount for patients who pay by check or cash within one week of the date of service. Please call the office if you would like more information about this discount.

We appreciate your continued confidence in our practice in attending to your psychiatric health and wellness. We hope you value the high level of professional care provided not only by our clinicians, but also by our administrative staff.



Make sure to check out our Facebook page for the latest information on psychiatric issues and our practice!

Message from Dr. F.

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my extensive knowledge of diagnosis and complex psychiatric management.

Please rest assured that all clinical matters, whether care rendered by the APN or the RN, are closely reviewed by me at all phases of patient care.

It is my hope that in this manner I can keep my dream alive of “Wellness”, while allowing me some time to “recharge my battery” and carry on just a bit longer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Fernandez

Psychiatric Medications & Summer Heat

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fluids. Also, use sports drinks and salty snacks to replace salt lost through sweat, and dress in loose fitting, light-colored clothing.

Review first aid for heat related illnesses below and click on this link to learn more.

HEAT EXHAUSTION is the most common heat-related condition, and normally occurs when an individual is involved in outdoor physical activity.

Symptoms include:

- Irritability
- Low temperature
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid heartbeat
- Cold, pale skin
- Profuse perspiration
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Cramping in the abdomen or extremities.

If a person displays symptoms of heat exhaustion, the individual should be moved to a cool place as soon as possible, should be given water immediately, and should stop all activity to rest.

HEAT STROKE is the most serious heat-related condition, due to dehydration and salt depletion.

Symptoms include:

- Agitation and confusion
- Seizures, lethargy, or coma
- High body temperature (104 degrees and above)
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Hot, dry, flushed skin

If a person displays symptoms of heat stroke, call 911 immediately, loosen or remove outer layers of clothing, move individual to a cool place, immerse individual in ice water, use CPR if needed, and replace fluids and sodium (only under medical orders).