



Phyllis M. Shuhler, M.D.

MEET DR. SHUHLER

Dr. Phyllis M. Shuhler of the Upper Perkiomen Office has been a member of TriValley Primary Care for two years and has over 20 years of medical experience in both the Quakertown/Pennsburg area as well as internationally.

Having received her medical training from Michigan State University School of Human Medicine, Dr. Shuhler went on to complete her family practice training in Somerset, NJ and then spent a year at the East Coast Migrant Health Project in NC. Her international experience consists of specialized training at the University of London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene; Holy Family Hospital, Berekum and Holy Family Hospital, Techiman, Ghana, West Africa.

Continued on Page 2

How to Prevent Skin Cancer

We all get out into the sun for one reason or another; some of us even enjoy it! Sunlight is vital for life, it boosts our moods, but it is one of our skin's worst enemies.

What causes skin cancer?

The most likely causes include repeated exposure to bright sunlight, especially when reflected off snow and water; sunburn, especially blistering sunburns during childhood; skin creams that contain tar (used for conditions such as psoriasis); exposure to organic arsenic (in pesticides and other chemicals) and radiation or chemotherapy for cancer.

Risk factors for skin cancer include having a close relative that has had malignant melanoma or a premalignant lesion, or having freckles or fair skin that does not tan easily.

Continued on Page 2

Meningococcal Disease

What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an infection of the fluid that surrounds the spinal cord and the brain. Sometimes it is called spinal meningitis. It can be either a bacterial or a viral infection. This difference is important because of the severity of the illness and its treatment.

If the disease is caused by a virus, it is generally less severe and usually resolves without specific treatment. If the meningitis is caused by bacteria, it can be quite severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss, learning disabilities, or even death.

For bacterial meningitis, it is important to know which type of bacteria is causing the infection because antibiotics can prevent some types of bacterial infection from infecting other people.

What are the signs and symptoms of meningitis?

High fever, headache, and stiff neck are common symptoms of meningitis in anyone over the age of two years. These symptoms can develop over several hours, or up to two days. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking at lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In newborns and small infants, the classic signs of fever, headache, and neck stiffness may be difficult to detect, and the infant may only appear slow or inactive, may be irritable or vomiting, or be feeding poorly.

Continued on Page 2

TriValley Primary Care Office Locations

Lower Salford Office
484 Harleysville Pike
Harleysville, PA 19438
215-256-8040

R Lawrence Derstine, MD
Richard J Pierotti, MD
Joseph T Ulasewicz, MD
Susan K Underwood, MD
Curt C. Carlier, MD
Karen Pavlick, CRNP

Pennridge Office
1301 N. Fifth Street
Perkasie, PA 18944
215-257-5128

Richard T Price, MD
James L Conrad, MD
David C Moll, MD
Michael J. Naunczek, MD

Upper Perk Office
101 W. 7th St., Ste 2C
Pennsburg, PA 18073
215-679-9321

Priscilla J. Kistler, MD
Henry J. Kneidinger, DO
Norbert W. Leska, MD
Phyllis M. Shuhler, MD

Franconia Office
211 Telford Pike
Telford, PA 18969
215-723-7833

Jeffrey D Thatcher, MD
Hal D Cohan, MD
Rebekah M. Haggard, MD
Debra J Carroll, CRNP

Western Bucks Office
256 Trumbauersville Rd.
Quakertown, PA 18951
215-536-0655

James B Albrecht, MD
Robert J Motley, MD
Kevin G Reinold, MD
Mary Beth Roadarmel, CRNP

Indian Valley Office
777 Route 113
Souderton, PA 18964
215-723-3280

Steven S Bimson, MD
Lori E. Rousche, MD
Heather K. Hart, MD
Daniel C. Cochran, DO

Continued from Page 1

Her international experience has provided her with experiences in medicine not typical for a family physician. All aspects of medicine interest Dr. Shuhler, but her forte is in travel medicine due to her unique training and international endeavors.

Dr. Shuhler is genuinely interested in the welfare of her patients and community. She has participated in many aspects of medicine from working as an Emergency Room physician to practicing with both group and solo practices until joining TriValley Primary Care. All the while, choosing to remain situated in the Pennsburg/Quakertown area.

Dr. Shuhler continues to be active in the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, American Academy of Family Physicians, Lehigh Valley Women's Medical Assoc., Who's Who of American Women, Montgomery County Medical society and others. She maintains active staff privileges at both Grandview Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital, Quakertown, and is a licensed physician in PA, NJ, NC, and Ghana, Africa. Family is important to her. When she gets a "breather" from her office responsibilities and societal affiliations, Dr. Shuhler enjoys playing guitar, reading, gardening and walking within her community. She is married to John Schwarz who is owner/operator of American Billiards Enterprises at Rte. 313 and 309 in Quakertown. They have one son who is active in fencing with saber and soccer.

TriValley is pleased to have such a diversified and complex physician in our group.

Continued from Page 1

To reduce your risk of skin cancer, limit your time in bright sunlight, wear cool clothing that covers as much of your body as possible when you are outside, apply a protective sunblock with an SPF of at least 15, wear sunglasses to protect your eyes and eyelids, wear lip balm with sun protection, go indoors at the first hint of reddening skin, don't use tanning booths, be aware of the risks of tar products, and avoid exposure to chemicals that contain arsenic.

You should check your skin every six months and have a family member check the hard to see places. If you have freckles or a family member with skin cancer, have a doctor check your skin yearly. Look for rough or red bumpy areas that are bigger than a match head and don't clear up. Be aware of any area that stays irritated or inflamed (red and itchy) or any ulcer (sore) that doesn't heal in two weeks. Be concerned about any area that keeps cracking or bleeding and any colored spot that enlarges. If you have a brown or black spot that is wider than a pencil eraser or is changing in color or size, inform your physician.

Remember - asymmetry (uneven shape), borders (if not clearly defined), color (if uneven), and diameter (if bigger than a pencil eraser).

If you are concerned about any spot you find on your skin, visit your doctor to determine if it is harmless or something that needs to be removed and checked for cancer.

Continued from Page 1

How is meningitis diagnosed and treated?

Early diagnosis and treatment are very important. If symptoms occur, see a doctor immediately. The diagnosis is usually made by growing bacteria from a sample of spinal fluid. This sample is obtained by performing a spinal tap in which a needle is inserted into an area in the lower back where the spinal fluid is readily accessible. Since bacterial meningitis can be treated with a number of effective antibiotics, identification of the type of bacteria is important for determining the correct antibiotics to be used.

Is meningitis contagious?

Yes, some forms of bacterial meningitis are contagious. The bacteria are spread through the exchange of respiratory and throat secretions (i.e. coughing, kissing). Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as the common cold or the flu, and are not spread by casual contact or simply by breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been.

However, sometimes the bacteria are spread to other people who have had close contact with a person with meningitis. People in the same household or day-care center, or anyone with direct contact with a patient's oral secretions would be considered at increased risk of acquiring the infection. These people may qualify to receive antibiotics to prevent them from getting the disease.

Are there vaccines against meningitis?

Yes, there are vaccines against some of the bacteria that can cause meningitis. Consult your doctor to see if you are a candidate for these vaccines.

Comments?

If you have comments or ideas for other topics, write:

Editor, *Primarily You*
c/o TriValley Primary Care Corporate Office
519 S. Fifth St.—Suite 130
Perkasie, PA 18944
Email: marketing@trivalleypc.com

Visit us at
www.trivalleypc.com