



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FITNESS FOCUS

Kombucha

The Claims, The Evidence

Continued from "Health Tip"..... As for kombucha, there are concerns about people getting sick when non-beneficial bacteria grow in the tea in place of the beneficial bugs. For this reason, even the Mayo Clinic's Complimentary and Integrative Medicine Program Director Dr. Brent Bauer advises against kombucha as a general health supplement.

Dr. Bauer writes,

"Proponents claim kombucha tea helps prevent and manage serious health conditions, from blood pressure to cancer. These claims are not backed by science. Limited evidence suggests kombucha tea may offer benefits similar to probiotic supplements, including promoting a healthy immune system and preventing constipation. At present, however, valid medical studies of kombucha tea's role in human health are very limited — and there are risks to consider.

There have been reports of adverse effects, such as stomach upset, infections and allergic reactions in kombucha tea drinkers. Kombucha tea is often brewed in homes under nonsterile conditions, making contamination likely. When improperly manufactured ceramic pots have been used for brewing, lead poisoning has occurred — the acids in the tea can leach lead from the ceramic glaze.

In short, there isn't enough evidence that kombucha tea delivers on its health claims. At the same time, several cases of harm have been reported."

For Dr. Bauer's full statement on kombucha tea, click here -

[Mayo Clinic - Kombucha Tea Use](#)

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HEALTH TIP



PROBIOTICS – DOES EVIDENCE SUPPORT THEIR USE?

Staying educated on new, non-traditional health treatments is important. With an eye towards the holistic/integrative approach to medicine, we try to view trends in non-traditional care through the lens of our evidence-based training. Why? Because over-the-counter treatments not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) can be costly and potentially dangerous.

The use of dietary probiotics is one of these increasingly popular treatments. In theory, the ingestion of probiotics introduces a "good" or beneficial bacteria/fungus into the gastrointestinal system for the benefit of the human body. The belief is that the "good" bugs help to crowd out "bad" bugs in the gut. These "good" bugs are believed to then excrete beneficial proteins and enzymes and stimulate the body to release additional beneficial proteins and enzymes.

Probiotics can be found in yogurt, capsule form, and even in a fermented tea-drink called kombucha. Are there benefits to probiotics...yes, there are some benefits as evidenced by the medical treatment of fecal transplant for C. difficile infection, but more research is needed to confirm the claims of regular probiotic use.

The good news – while there appears to be little harm in probiotic supplements, a good, balanced diet generally should provide you with enough good bacteria in your gut without supplementation. (Mayo Clinic, "Natural Healing" p. 58, 2017 MFMER)



DOCTOR'S NOTE

CLOSING THE LOOP – YOU CAN HELP US

The dysfunction of the current medical system to communicate between doctors - be that from office-to-office or even hospital-to-hospital - has been well-documented in the medical literature and written about in this newsletter over the past 3 years. This problem persists in the healthcare world even as technology tools multiply.

We are looking at internal office methods to help "close the loop" on physician communications - specifically when we refer you – our patient - to a doctor outside of our clinic. There are multiple moving pieces with these referrals - from 307Health getting your information to the specialist, to the specialist reaching you to schedule an appointment, to you keeping or rescheduling the appointment, and – finally - to the specialist sending a notation of the visit back to us as the referring doctor. With so many steps, there are multiple pieces of communication via different methods where a simple breakdown of information flow can stop the whole process.

Here is where you can help. If we have sent a referral to a specialist on your behalf, we would appreciate a note from you to us via text or email with these two important information pieces – 1) your appointment date when scheduled, and 2) your impressions of the visit after you have completed the appointment. These two important steps will help us know to watch for a clinical note back to us from the specialist, which then allows us to move forward with you in your plan of care.

Thanks for helping us to "close the loop" in this important aspect of your healthcare – a truly collaborative process requiring our mutual engagement.

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BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.

PRACTICE NEWS

IS HEALTH INSURANCE COMPATIBLE WITH 307HEALTH?

Yes. Absolutely. In fact, 307Health strongly recommends all our members have health insurance coverage. As an employer, 307Health offers medical, dental, vision, and life insurance to its employees – all whom are 307Health members. Page two of the 307Health Patient Agreement to which every adult member agrees at enrollment states this:

“....307Health has advised Patient to obtain or keep in full force health insurance policy(ies) or plans to cover Patient for the costs of healthcare services not provided by 307Health and/or its Physician(s).”

307Health membership covers a wide variety of healthcare-related needs within the context of a personal relationship with a board-certified physician. The doctors of 307Health help our members manage their everyday health maintenance needs, identify a plan of action toward reaching their wellness goals, meet many urgent care needs, and are available to help members navigate and understand the broader healthcare system if specialty care or studies are required.

Health insurance, health cooperatives, and/or health savings plans are important to have as a back-up resource for the times when high-dollar healthcare expenses arise in the course of unexpected and sometimes catastrophic situations which often negatively impact health and quality of life. Examples of such times include - but are not limited to – car accidents, sporting injuries, cancer, heart disease, joint injury, spine degeneration, blood disorders, lung disorders, congenital disorders, etc.

307Health's central focus is to help you take good care of yourself. When the unexpected health crisis requires extra medical and specialized care, health insurance, cooperatives, and savings plans can all be valuable and important resources that back-up your 307Health Direct Primary Care membership.



MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS

AUTOMATED PAYMENTS – BANK TRANSFER OR CARD CHARGE?

Not all payment methods are created equal. While the same term - “automatic payment” - is used to describe the convenience of a repeating payment, different processes & fees apply to different payment methods. Here is a brief break-down of the differences.

- **Bank Bill Pay** – A recurring, check-based bill-pay service option offered by some banks to their account holders with little or no fee to the customer or merchant.
- **Bank Transfer** – Using the federal banking system's “automated clearing house” (ACH), electronic fund transfers (EFTs) or “bank transfers” move funds directly between the customer's and merchant's bank accounts independent of an intermediary processor with little or no processing fee.
- **Debit Card** – Funds are credited to the merchant for the charge amount, less a transaction fee of anywhere from 1.5 – 3.5% of purchase depending on the card processor(s). These funds are directly taken from the card holder's bank account at time of purchase and run through the processing bank. Debit cards are vulnerable to fraud and often require replacement.
- **Credit Card** – Like debit cards, funds are credited to the merchant for the charge amount, less a transaction fee of anywhere from 1.5 – 3.5% of purchase depending on the card processor(s). Purchase charges go on the account of the card holder, who is then billed directly by their bank for cash payment after the charge is processed. Card holders may accrue reward points for purchases and may incur interest fees for unpaid balances. These cards are vulnerable to fraud and often require replacement.

Stop by our front desk to learn more about automated payment options.

HEALTHCARE CONSUMER NEWS

TELEHEALTH ACCESS

& TELEMEDICINE SERVICES

Wyoming news has recently focused on steps made by the Wyoming state government to implement a state-wide telehealth system. The system's purpose is to improve healthcare access for rural residents who face long-distance travel barriers to the healthcare resources available at larger population centers.

307Health is a strong supporter of the state's efforts to improve citizen access to quality healthcare services. It is important to be clear, however, on the difference between telehealth access and telemedicine contract services.

Telehealth access means that patients and healthcare providers around the state have access to secure and private communication lines that meet HIPAA regulatory guidelines. Telehealth access can allow Wyoming citizens to talk remotely with their Wyoming-based health-care provider in another town from a secure site close their home – or even from home.

Telemedicine services, on the other hand, allow customers to purchase remote consultation from a licensed healthcare provider. In the field of telemedicine, TELEDOC is the most familiar name. It is important to know that the service scope of nationalized telemedicine services may be limited. Some services restrict consecutive access to the same provider.

A local primary care physician who knows the patient in the context of his/her life over time brings a depth and breadth of compassion and care that a one-time remote visit through a national service cannot provide. Local doctors have first-hand experience with helping patients navigate the Wyoming healthcare landscape and are the best care investment for Wyoming individuals and communities.