Microbiome and Your Health

Excerpted from Healing Arthritis, by Susan S. Blum, MD, MPH

The human intestine harbors an estimated hundred trillion microbes, and even though there are up to an estimated thousand different species of bacteria, only about a hundred of them make up 99 percent of the population. The number of bacteria progressively increases farther down the small intestine, and they also begin shifting from aerobic (meaning they thrive in the air) to anaerobic (meaning they die in the air). In the colon, it is mostly anaerobes, and you can get a sense of how many bacteria are in there when you realize that your feces are 60 percent bacteria! With recent advances in our ability to easily read the genes of different organisms, we can identify all these bacteria instead of relying only on what grew out in culture. According to a 2016 study published in the medical journal *Digestion*, greater bacterial diversity seemed to correspond with better nutritional intake and greater overall health in a group of elderly people.

What influences the health of your flora? Antibiotics can destroy the good bacteria in the gut, and evidence suggests that the gut bacteria may never fully recover after even one course of treatment. Your early life after birth is also important, and it appears that babies inherit their microbiota from their mother during labor, as they pass through the birth canal in the vagina. Studies have shown that babies born by Cesarean section—removed surgically from the womb—have a delay of gut colonization. At six months of age, they have less of the bacteria *Bacteroides fragilis* and *Clostridia* than children born vaginally. These differences in microbiota, still present even seven years later, are associated with an above-average risk of developing type 1 diabetes and allergic diseases such as asthma and food allergies.

A lot of communication takes place between your gut bacteria and the rest of your body. Your immune system recognizes the bacteria’s surface molecules and DNA, so that it knows these are friendly flora. This cross communication enables the bacteria and your cells to recognize one
another. This is very important for maintaining balance in both the gut and the immune system. The bacteria also communicate by making molecules called metabolites; these are end products of diet-dependent bacterial metabolism, which is why diet affects your health in such a big way. The bacteria convert nutrients into these metabolites, which then exert a direct effect on the immune system in your gut and on your health via the gut.

For example, a very important group of metabolites made by your good flora, called short-chain fatty acids (SCFA), are estimated to provide 10 percent of the energy supply in humans. The process goes like this: indigestible carbohydrates (such as the almost woody, fibrous cellulose in vegetables like celery) that escape digestion in the small intestine make their way to the colon. There, bacteria called Firmicutes, Bacteroidetes, and Bifidobacterium make short-chain fatty acids—specifically the three most important ones: butyrate, the primary energy source for colonic epithelial cells, as well as propionate and acetate.

The amounts and types of short-chain fatty acids are determined by the kinds of bacteria in the gut and the food you eat. For example, in the uppermost part of the colon, the bacteria ferment the carbs in the diet. But if carbs are depleted, the bacteria metabolize protein instead and make potentially harmful compounds such as ammonia. This can build up and cause symptoms like fatigue, nausea, headache, and muscle weakness. Some of these compounds may also be involved in colon cancer or inflammatory bowel disease. A diet high in animal protein and processed flour products and low in produce (which is the standard American diet) would not provide enough fiber to feed the bacteria sufficiently to support your gut health and overall wellness. The large amount of protein could also be processed into toxic levels of ammonia.

High levels of short-chain fatty acids also inhibit Escherichia coli (E. coli) and Salmonella and create a favorable environment in the colon for bacterial growth and healthy immune function. Butyrate and propionate are key players in regulating intestinal permeability and can help fill the holes in a leaky gut by repairing the tight junctions and stimulating production of a compound that strengthens the barrier. Butyrate can also help reduce inflammation by directly affecting the gut lining and by triggering an increase in T regulator cells, which help reduce inflammation.

T regulator cells are a subgroup of white blood cells known as T cells, the body’s foot soldiers against infection. They are tasked with regulating the various populations of T cells and preventing your immune system from attacking your own tissues, a situation that leads to autoimmune disease. As a result, they need to help create and maintain something
Healing Arthritis: Your 3-Step Guide to Conquering Arthritis Naturally
by Susan S. Blum, MD, MPH (Author), Mark Hyman (Foreword)

Author of the bestselling The Immune System Recovery Plan shares her science-based, drug-free treatment plan for the almost fifty million people who suffer from arthritis: an amazing 3-step guide to eliminate the disease naturally.

Conventional medicine tends to treat arthritis with strong, gut-damaging, immune-suppressing pain medications, temporarily relieving the symptoms of the disease without addressing its root causes. Now, in her groundbreaking new book, Dr. Susan Blum, a leading expert in functional medicine, offers a three-step protocol designed to address the underlying causes of the condition and heal the body permanently by:

- Treating Rheumatoid Arthritis, Osteoarthritis, and more
- Healing your gut to heal your joints
- Reducing inflammation without medication

Dr. Blum's innovative method includes a two-week plan to quickly reduce pain through anti-inflammatory foods and supplements; followed by an intensive gut repair to rid the body of bad bacteria and strengthen the gastrointestinal system for a dramatic improvement in arthritis symptoms and inflammation; and then addresses the emotional issues that contribute to inflammation, and eating a simple, Mediterranean inspired diet to maintain a healthy gut.

Featuring detailed case studies, including Dr. Blum's own inspiring personal story, Healing Arthritis offers a revolutionary way to heal your gut, repair your immune system, control inflammation, and live a happier, healthier life… arthritis-free.

The Immune System Recovery Plan: A Doctor’s 4-Step Program to Treat Autoimmune Disease
by Susan Blum, MD, MPH (Author), Mark Hyman, MD (Foreword), Michele Bender (Contributor)

Dr. Susan Blum, one of the most sought-after experts in the field of functional medicine, shares the four-step program she used to treat her own serious autoimmune condition and help countless patients reverse their symptoms, heal their immune systems, and prevent future illness.

Dr. Blum’s Method Focuses on:
- Using food as medicine
- Healing your gut and digestive system
- Understanding the stress connection
- Optimizing liver function

Each of these sections includes an interactive workbook to help you determine and create your own personal treatment program. Also included are recipes for simple, easy-to-prepare dishes to jump-start the healing process.
called tolerance, which is when your body can decipher what is foreign and what isn’t. And in this role, they can help turn off autoimmune responses. I dedicated a whole section of my last book to explaining the role and importance of T regulator cells. For more details on this subject, I refer you to that book, The Immune System Recovery Plan.

Here, I want to share the importance of these T regulator cells in modulating all the activity of the immune system, in their role in autoimmunity, and in the importance of the gut flora in helping them develop and work properly in an ongoing way. You will not have well-functioning T regulators unless your gut bacteria and intestinal barrier are functioning well, too. Period. This underlying mechanism is extremely important when you have a systemic inflammatory condition or autoimmune disease such as rheumatoid arthritis, Lupus or Sjogrens.

Studies have shown that in mice with no gut flora, low short-chain fatty acids are accompanied by impaired development of T regulators. And then when the mice were given butyrate or had their bacteria restored, both situations resulted in restoring the number of T regulators. This again highlights the importance of having good amounts of short-chain fatty acid producing bacteria in the gut. And remember, in order to make the short-chain fatty acids, you need both to have these bacteria present in good numbers and to feed them properly. A Mediterranean-style diet, which is high in fruit, vegetables, and legumes (the seed from a leguminous plant like peas, beans, and peanuts), and low in meat and saturated fats, has been shown to increase the levels of fecal SCFA. Eating this way will support your microbiome and the health of your immune system.

In addition to making short-chain fatty acids to support the immune system, the intestinal flora makes other compounds, including vitamins. Each species of bacteria appears to colonize a specific niche and has a potential different purpose. Although we are just beginning to understand this, we do know that we have a mutually beneficial relationship. We provide nourishment to the bacteria, and they help us digest and assimilate our food, while also producing vitamins and nutrients that we need. For example, one study found that a specific species of Bacteroides help digest lettuce and onions, nutrients that would otherwise be indigestible. In addition, both Bifidobacteria and Lactobacilli can make folate (also known as vitamin B9).

Vitamins are also needed for the health of the gut immune system. A deficiency of vitamin A and its activated form, retinoic acid, cause a susceptibility to infections and increased mortality because of impaired immunity in the intestinal mucosa. Retinoic acid helps to improve microbiota diversity and to increase T regulators. Vitamins D, B12, and folate also support T regulator cells in the gut.

And finally, the beneficial bacteria in your gut have several other very important immune functions. They provide direct antibacterial action against disease-causing pathogens and they stimulate epithelial and immune cells to increase production of the antibody immunoglobulin A (IgA), which helps protect against pathogens, too. IgA is the main type of antibody in the gut, mouth, and lungs. It is considered a major player in the gut immune system and binds to viruses and bacteria to prevent or inhibit their attachment and invasion into the body. IgA also reduces inflammation in the intestinal mucosa, and, in all these ways, helps prevent a leaky gut. Gut bacteria are key players in helping the B lymphocyte plasma cells that make IgA mature and function properly. Peyer’s patches are areas in the gut where plasma cells live and where most of IgA is manufactured, although it is also made through-
Meet the SSF Team
An Interview with Kathy Ivory
Vice President of Field Services

Q  When did you start at the SSF and where were you working before coming here?

A  My entire career has been in non-profit management and patient education. Prior to joining the SSF in November 2003, I was employed with the American Heart Association (AHA) for 28 years. During my tenure with Heart, I was involved with direct patient programs, support group activities, as well as, serving as the lead for many corporate contacts.

Q  What brought you to the SSF?

A  Having had the privilege of working with Steve Taylor for over two years at the AHA, observing his energy and dedication to any job he was passionate about and the support he gave his staff were key factors in my decision to make a career change. Additionally, after learning so much about the Foundation and the health challenges of Sjögren’s patients from Steve, I was honored and excited to have the opportunity of working for an organization dedicated to supporting patients, raising awareness, and educating the general public and the medical community about Sjögren’s.

Q  What is your role?

A  I love my job! I manage certain aspects of Field Services for the SSF and have the great opportunity of working with our Field Services Volunteers all around the country. When the Foundation began over 35 years ago, we started with one support group in Long Island, New York. Today, we have 65 support groups nationwide who serve as resources to people with Sjögren’s.

Also, I work with the SSF Education Committee in coordinating the Foundation’s National Patient Conference annually. This exciting and informative two-day program brings together patients and family members to hear an array of presentations from leading Sjögren’s experts who discuss various topics important to our members. As part of the SSF’s mission to educate patients and their family members, the Education Committee takes planning this Conference very seriously – recruiting wonderful speakers from around the country to discuss the most pressing topics to cover the complexity of Sjögren’s.

Q  What do you enjoy most about your job?

A  It is a joy to work with our support group leaders all across the country. These dedicated individuals are providing a whole circle of care for Sjögren’s patients.
out the gut lining. In mice that don’t have any IgA, their gut bacteria expands a hundredfold in all areas of the small intestine! This highlights the role of IgA in keeping your good flora in check, because too much of a good thing can be harmful. Because probiotics have been shown to increase IgA, it may be one of the ways that probiotics help treat dysbiosis.

You can see why a healthy gut is ground zero for having a healthy immune system. To insure that your gut microbiome is robust and in balance, focus on a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating plenty of colorful whole plants, getting a good night sleep, and making sure to relax and bring joy into your life every day.

They are doing an amazing job – providing support, advice, and day-to-day coping strategies for patients and family members.

Each support group is led by a volunteer, usually a Sjögren’s patient, who is well-versed in the disease. They donate their time to run several meetings a year and also act as advocates for the Foundation, welcoming the newly diagnosed and talking with other patients over the phone and at the meetings they organize. Most importantly, Support Group Leaders are an extension of the Foundation – reaching out to others with Sjögren’s and letting them know that they are not alone!

Q
What do you hope to accomplish this year?

A
The entire Foundation team is very proud of the current 65 active support groups, however; we will continue to do everything we can to increase other avenues to help educate patients and their families. The SSF is continuously looking at new and innovative ways to help patients navigate their Sjögren’s diagnosis.

Additionally, we are also very excited about our 2018 National Patient Conference – “Exploring Sjögren’s” - that will be held on April 13th and 14th, in Aurora, Colorado (just outside of Denver). During the two-day program, attendees will have the opportunity to hear many intriguing lectures and learn more about managing key aspects of Sjögren’s. Over the years, SSF patient conferences have helped thousands gain a better understanding of Sjögren’s while also giving them an opportunity to meet fellow Sjögren’s patients.

It has been an honor for me to be a part of this wonderful organization for over 14 years. I sincerely look forward to the great programs and exciting breakthroughs that are on the horizon for Sjögren’s!

A Note
From Your CEO

Dear Friends,

I am excited to announce that the SSF National Office has moved just over 10 miles away to Reston, Virginia. Our phone number, (301) 530-4420, is the same but our new address will be:

10701 Parkridge Blvd., Suite 170
Reston, VA 20191

Thank you for your support of the SSF as we move into this next chapter and continue to fight for all Sjögren’s patients!

Sincerely,

Steven Taylor, SSF CEO
At the 10th Annual Sjögren’s Atlanta Event, Tastefully Georgia, on April 30, 2017, the SSF celebrated two local Sjögren’s Champions: Heather Burgess and Dr. Theresa Lawrence Ford. Below Heather talks about her journey with Sjögren’s.

I became interested in Sjögren’s about nine years ago, not by choice, but because my mom never started feeling better after having Epstein Barr. Five doctors and seventeen months after her bout of mononucleosis, she was diagnosed with Sjögren’s. We spent all our time reading up on the disease but still really didn’t know where to turn for help.

In September of that year we met Kim Vaughn, who encouraged me to enter pageants to win scholarship money for college. When Kim sent us her bio, there it was. We had met someone else with the disease who was heavily involved in the Sjögren’s Syndrome Foundation (SSF). I immediately told Kim I wanted to be involved in the Foundation because I wanted to see others diagnosed sooner and not have to suffer like my mom. Through the last seven years, I addressed thousands of
Listed below are SSF Support Group Leaders and the areas where meetings are held.

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<th>State</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Decatur</td>
<td>Candace Burnham</td>
<td>(256) 686-4790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Phoenix Area</td>
<td>Sonja Kramer</td>
<td>(480) 380-1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Inland Empire</td>
<td>Susan Barajas</td>
<td>(909) 210-4477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long Beach</td>
<td>Dodi Palmer</td>
<td>(562) 305-9811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Los Angeles Torrance Area</td>
<td>Yvonne Hacker</td>
<td>(916) 205-1311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>Madaline Pike</td>
<td>(858) 775-2059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Francisco Bay</td>
<td>Nancy Crabbe</td>
<td>(650) 593-9022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
<td>Laura Strom</td>
<td>(707) 889-9168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Denver/Englewood</td>
<td>Maurine Daniels</td>
<td>(303) 721-0241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ft. Collins/Loveland</td>
<td>Eunice Krivonak</td>
<td>(970) 292-8133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Farmington</td>
<td>Mary Beth Walter</td>
<td>(860) 569-6933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Ft. Lauderdale</td>
<td>Yvonne Wind-Vazquez</td>
<td>(954) 675-9592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacksonville</td>
<td>Mary Kovacs</td>
<td>(904) 262-1695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lady Lake</td>
<td>Karen M. Marshall</td>
<td>(352) 259-1309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orlando Area</td>
<td>Danette Rae Carter</td>
<td>(407) 656-4786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tampa/Clearwater</td>
<td>Michelle Wallace</td>
<td>(727) 791-0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Athens Area</td>
<td>Terry Rundooff</td>
<td>(706) 769-8461</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atlanta Area</td>
<td>Dorothy Wade</td>
<td>(706) 769-9795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gwinnett County</td>
<td>Suzi Wixson</td>
<td>(770) 642-0323</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Patti Stafford</td>
<td>(770) 822-6885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karen Hubbard</td>
<td>(404) 606-0658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>Boise</td>
<td>Richard Bliss</td>
<td>(208) 816-3686</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kathy Ellis</td>
<td>(208) 921-0613</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Winther</td>
<td>(208) 874-2345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Chicago Area</td>
<td>Lynn Chesters</td>
<td>(708) 478-6009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Indianapolis</td>
<td>Vivian Kistler</td>
<td>(317) 408-2844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newburgh</td>
<td>Sally Dekarske</td>
<td>(812) 490-6580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>Paula</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sjgdbq@gmail.com">sjgdbq@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>Lenexa/Overland Park</td>
<td>Janine Bensman</td>
<td>(913) 897-2441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Linda Stephenson</td>
<td>(913) 608-7948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Bel Air</td>
<td>Eva L. Plude</td>
<td>(443) 526-6989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:bigevap@gmail.com">bigevap@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frederick</td>
<td>Sharon Duke</td>
<td>(301) 829-2460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Montgomery County</td>
<td>Bonnie Schneider</td>
<td>(301) 774-4662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prince George’s &amp;</td>
<td>Barbara Straub</td>
<td>(804) 529-5287</td>
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<td></td>
<td>South Maryland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Dr. Mabi Singh</td>
<td>(617) 636-3932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>Cynthia Neubecker</td>
<td>(612) 327-0169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Danni Dugger</td>
<td>(314) 662-0585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>Big Arm/Kalispell</td>
<td>Tedi Schilling</td>
<td>(406) 849-5537</td>
</tr>
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In a survey of 1168 dentists about effectiveness of dry mouth remedies, dentists who had experience with OraCoat XyliMelts for dry mouth rated it as more effective than any other non-prescription remedy for dry mouth.*

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<th>State</th>
<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW HAMPSHIRE</td>
<td>Newington</td>
<td>Teresa Callahan</td>
<td>(603) 493-1463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW JERSEY</td>
<td>Central/South New Jersey</td>
<td>Ann Kiesling</td>
<td>(732) 996-7952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW MEXICO</td>
<td>Albuquerque</td>
<td>Shawn CDeBaca</td>
<td>(505) 898-5620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW YORK</td>
<td>Albany</td>
<td>Gianna Honor</td>
<td>(518) 858-6433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Huntington/Long Island</td>
<td>Sandy Leon</td>
<td>(516) 367-4104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mt. Vernon</td>
<td>Defny Gamboa</td>
<td>(518) 253-9474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NYC Area</td>
<td>Susan Needles</td>
<td>(212) 724-7110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20's &amp; 30's with Sjögren’s:</td>
<td>Paula Sosin</td>
<td>(301) 538-3422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH CAROLINA</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>SS and Salivary Disorders Ctr at Carolinas Medical Center</td>
<td>(704) 355-4197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>Nancy Carter</td>
<td>(919) 544-4577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHIO</td>
<td>Northeast Area</td>
<td>Mary McNeil</td>
<td>(330) 342-7870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toledo Area</td>
<td>Judi Furlong, MD</td>
<td>(419) 824-1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OKLAHOMA</td>
<td>Edmond</td>
<td>Sharon Abrams</td>
<td>(405) 330-2356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OREGON</td>
<td>Canby/Portland</td>
<td>Linda Shields</td>
<td>(503) 266-6718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PENNSYLVANIA</td>
<td>Harrisburg</td>
<td>Kathy Boyd</td>
<td>(717) 737-3890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Kathi Burden</td>
<td>(610) 348-8723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Sandy Burkett</td>
<td>(412) 726-3159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH CAROLINA</td>
<td>Greenville</td>
<td>Debbie Brown</td>
<td>(302) 419-6565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENNESSEE</td>
<td>Nashville</td>
<td>Vicki Baldwin</td>
<td>(615) 243-4560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEXAS</td>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>Linda Frost</td>
<td>(512) 255-6049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>Heidi Syndegraard</td>
<td>(817) 575-7588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roanoke Area</td>
<td>Shirley Stone</td>
<td>(682) 502-4910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTAH</td>
<td>Salt Lake City</td>
<td>Dr. Kathie Coopersmith</td>
<td>(801) 814-8024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:kathie.coopersmith@gmail.com">kathie.coopersmith@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>VIRGINIA</td>
<td>Harrisonburg/</td>
<td>Teresa C. May</td>
<td>(540) 433-5638</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shenandoah Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Norfolk/Hampton Roads</td>
<td>Bonnie Everum</td>
<td>(757) 268-4928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Virginia</td>
<td>Kim Shouse</td>
<td>(703) 757-5259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>Carol Watson, RN</td>
<td>(540) 389-7503</td>
</tr>
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*Survey of 1168 dentists, March 2016 Clinicians Report®, an independent, non-profit, dental education and product testing foundation. Results are not evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

‡In people with dry mouth who use 2 discs while sleeping and 4 more during the day.
“You Stood Up” continued from page 7

Miss Georgia Pageant attendees about Sjögren’s, discussing the disease onstage as part of my question and answer segment. I served as an Awareness Ambassador distributing information to doctors offices about Sjögren’s and inviting physicians to our annual Sip for Sjögren’s Atlanta event, which is now called Tastefully Georgia. I secured silent auction items and served as a water captain at the event. In 2015 and 2016 I served as the Georgia Sips Volunteer Coordinator, assisting Kim Vaughn and training all of the event volunteers.

You don’t have to be that involved to make a difference, however. I challenge all of us to talk more about the disease on a daily basis. We can all discuss symptoms with friends and family, our primary care doctors, dentists and other physicians. Informing just one person about Sjögren’s might mean earlier diagnosis for someone suffering with the disease.

The SSF thanks Heather for being a Sjögren’s Champion for not only her mother, but for all patients! We hope to see you at the 2018 SSF 11th Annual Sjögren’s Atlanta Event:

April 29, 2018
An afternoon of Food, Wine & Friends
Nelson Mullins at Atlantic Station
Atlanta, Georgia

What is a Sjögren’s flare?
by Nancy Carteron MD, FACR

A flare-up, often referred to as a “flare,” is a sudden, severe onset of symptoms. As example, you’ve been managing well, your symptoms have lessened and, having momentarily forgotten the pain and dryness, you’ve been living ‘full out’ as you used to. Then, suddenly, those angry symptoms are back!

Several points are worth keeping in mind. First, the symptoms of flares are usually very similar to the symptoms you had when your disease began. If a headache signaled the beginning of your disorder before, the recurrence of a headache may indicate the beginning of a disease flare. If a vague feeling of having flu presaged your going to the doctor when you were diagnosed, and this feeling returns, it is likely to be a flare.

It is for this reason that you must constantly check in and know your body and how it reacts. A certain way of avoiding flares is to write a diary of symptoms whenever you feel them. Linking them to whatever might have triggered them. If, for example, you worked over-long hours, or had an argument with your son’s soccer coach, write it down. In the case of the workload it will

continued page 11 ▼

SSF Calendar Upcoming 2018 Events

The Sjögren’s Syndrome Foundation is proud to kick off 2018 Walk season. This year, we are proud to celebrate and recognize the personal strength of Sjögren’s patients and those that support them every day.

If you have questions or interested in volunteering, please contact Kisha James kjames@sjogrens.org or (301) 530-4420, ext. 218.

Phoenix Walk for Sjögren’s
Saturday, March 10, 2018
Paradise Valley Mall

2018 SSF National Patient Conference
April 13-14, 2018
Hyatt Regency Aurora- Denver Conference Center

Denver Walk for Sjögren’s
Saturday, April 14, 2018
Hyatt Regency Aurora- Denver Conference Center

Philadelphia Tri-State Area Walk for Sjögren’s
Saturday, May 5, 2018
Philadelphia Zoo, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Greater Washington Walk for Sjögren’s
Saturday, May 19, 2018
Lake Fairfax, Reston, Virginia

Dallas Walk for Sjögren’s
June 9, 2018
The Parks Mall at Arlington, Arlington, Texas
Kick Off Summer by Joining Team Sjögren’s in Sunny San Diego!

We’re looking for runners or walkers to join our Team Sjögren’s Training Program for the Rock ‘n’ Roll series San Diego Half Marathon and Half Marathon Relay. Follow our program and we will prepare you to WALK or RUN either the Half Marathon or 2-person Half Marathon relay event on Sunday, June 3, 2018 in San Diego!

The SSF has a limited number of spots for this epic summer event and we hope you’ll be one of them! By taking part, you will get to enjoy the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon Series oldest event as we participate alongside 20,000 other walkers/ runners from all over the world! These events start at Balboa Park and take you on a city tour through San Diego to a downhill finish in Waterfront Park. Those individuals completing the Half Marathon will run 13.1 miles. Those who choose to grab a friend and sign up as a 2 person relay team will split the mileage - runner 1 completes the first 6.3 miles and runner 2 completes the second 6.8 miles. Whichever you choose, you will be cheered on by bands, cheerleaders and supportive spectators throughout the route!

As a Team Sjögren’s member, you will not only receive world-class training from our Team Trainer, but also leadership and mentorship from past runners and staff. The staff of the SSF will help guide you through the entire process and ensure you are ready to participate in June! Our team is always full of walkers and runners – so don’t fret if you aren’t a runner – Team Sjögren’s was designed for you! Our plan takes people from the couch to the course!

In addition, you will be increasing awareness for Sjögren’s, as well as, helping raise crucial funds for Sjögren’s research and education. Mark your calendars and plan to kick off your summer with us on June 3rd! If you don’t feel you can walk or run in this event, do what so many other patients have done and recruit someone else – your husband, wife, sister, cousin, daughter, son or friend – and have them walk or run in your honor.

Make this your best summer yet and join us in sunny San Diego!
To learn more about Team Sjögren’s, contact Steven Taylor at (800) 475-6473 or staylor@sjogrens.org

“Flare” continued from page 10 ▼

be clear that you need to discuss with your employer your need to arrange your work hours to allow for a rest, and in the case of that soccer blowout, it will be clear that such activities are bad for your health. Also, this is the time to report to your doctor and talk about new feelings or pains that are unusual. New symptoms may not only indicate a flare, they may also herald complications of treatment.

Treating a flare with attention and care will help you have fewer of them. Step back, take care of yourself, rest more often or make inroads to arranging your work day to allow such things, and you will go a long way towards having fewer occasions of “flare-ups.”

In Memory of Abby Swanson
Juliette and Andreas Johnson

In Memory of Agnes S. Files
Belva Sinclair and Eric Hoppe

In Memory of Bob and Joan Ogden
Karen Ogden

In Memory of Darlene Kissel
Your FCA Family

In Memory of Donna J. DesChenes
Don and Mary Schock

In Memory of Galina Fridberg
Elaine and Larry Levin

In Memory of Jack Wilder Beam,
infant son of Chad and Elizabeth Beam
Linda K. Haynes

In Memory of Janice Bain
Pat Brantley

In Memory of Jerry Wasserman
Ellen and Jerry Reibstein

In Memory of Laura Lotknowicz
Margaret and Earnie White

In Memory of LeNoir “Checkers” Parry Giessner
Kathi and Alan Drew
William and Betty Stoltenberg
Maura Fulton
Melissa Mendonca

In Memory of Leona H. Diamond
Ruth Lehr
Dorothy and Ed Sawyer
Hogs and Honeys
Vince and Kathy Small

In Memory of Martha C. Hernandez
Maria-Eugenia Hernandez

In Memory of Mazelle Baird
Emily Borden

In Memory of Michael Goldman
Shirley Gluckstein

In Memory of Nancy J. Vetare
Sharon and Dan Faust
Roberta Dorsee
Kelly and Astrid Smith
Frank and Joan Vetare

In Memory of Judith Bureau
The Monty Family

In Memory of Pat
Laurence S. and Ann M. Brown

In Memory of Patricia Pineau
Katherine Pineau

In Memory of Phyllis June Mace Taylor
“Your Loving Daughters”

In Memory of Randall Pineau
Katherine Pineau

In Memory of Ruth Welch
Bill Welch

In Memory of Shirley Dailey
Dorothy L. Daly

In Memory of Theresa Ann Duxbury
ABJ and PAM Providers/Staff
Global Patent Solutions
kglobal
Pamela and Paul Macri
The Hague Family
Bruce and Judy Cassady
Debra and Charles Kiefer
Jack and Jill Seifer

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Bruce and Judy Cassady
Debra and Charles Kiefer
Jack and Jill Seifer

In Memory of All of Us Who Have Sjögren’s
Richard L. Bliss

In Honor of Carol M. Watson
Susan Horst

In Honor of Catherine Claiborne
Kerry Moore

In Honor of Chris, Teri, and Dakota
Dave, Ann, Ethan, and Sara

In Honor of Clarenda Jordan
Allison Jordan

In Honor of Cynthia Lopynski
Patti Everett

In Honor of Donna Frosio
Sarah Tinter

In Honor of Dona Frosio
Sarah Tinter

In Honor of Esta Jo Schifter
Heidi Finkelberg

In Honor of Florence Fox
The Fox Corns

In Honor of Hanna Pawlus
Danie and Bill Pawlus

In Honor of Helen Heumann
Elias Abudlayeh

In Honor of Jane Korman
Roz Schurr

In Honor of Joy Greer
Cathy Hill

In Honor of Judy Hadley
The Triplett Family

In Honor of Kathryn Donnelly
Elvira Albert

In Honor of Kathy and John Matter
Catherine and Bob Gumlock

In Honor of Kathy Hammitt
Jean Kahan

In Honor of Lari Lopp
Isabelle and Steve

In Honor of Linda and Dennis Howard
Lawrence and Muff Costa

In Honor of Linda Vogel
Danielle Korn

In Honor of Lindsey Hatfield
Ruth Lehr
Louise N. Lohmeyer-Bile

In Honor of LynnAnne Spitzer
Steve & Ira

In Honor of Margaret Mondlak
Doreen Mondlak
C.D. Spangler Foundation

In Honor of Nancy D. Morse
Barbara Rothstein
Sue and Alan Liebman

In Honor of Pamela Mackiewicz
Damien and Cynthia Graeff

In Honor of Paula Sosin
Lori Wasserman

In Honor of Stefanie Campbell
Ellen Campbell
2018 National Patient Conference

Exploring Sjögren’s

April 13-14, 2018
Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center
13200 East 14th Place, Aurora, Colorado
Sjögren’s Overview
Chadwick R. Johr, MD, is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Division of Rheumatology at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also the Co-Director of the Penn Sjögren’s Center and has a special interest in caring for patients with Sjögren’s. Dr. Johr will present a comprehensive explanation of the range of symptoms that Sjögren’s patients experience, explain their causes, and offer treatment options and practical tips for managing them.

Sjögren’s and Dry Eyes: What’s new?
Stephen Cohen, OD, a private practice optometrist in Scottsdale, Arizona, since 1985, will describe the latest dry eye therapeutic treatments, covering the extensive range of options – from artificial tears to silicone plugs to systemic drugs that are available for managing the ocular complications of Sjögren’s. Dr. Cohen is a past-president of the Arizona Optometric Association and is the current Chairman of the SSF Board of Directors.

The State of Sjögren’s: Transforming the Future
Steven Taylor, SSF Chief Executive Officer
The Sjögren’s Syndrome Foundation (SSF) has been embarking on new initiatives that are realizing huge advancements for Sjögren’s patients. From clinical trials for new therapies, to research to unlock the mystery of Sjögren’s, Steven Taylor, CEO of the SSF, will share with us what is on the horizon for Sjögren’s patients.

Following his talk, Mr. Taylor will lead a panel discussion with:
Janet Church, SSF Chairman-Elect
Stephen Cohen, OD, SSF Chairman of the Board
Ken Economou, SSF Immediate Past Chairman

The panelists will discuss the leadership of the SSF, talking about where we have been, where we are now, and where we plan to go in the future!

Product Showcase
Sjögren’s patients use a number of over-the-counter products to treat their various complications. During this session, we will highlight the vast array of products that are available for Sjögren’s patients. You won’t want to miss this informative and helpful talk!

Banquet Awards Dinner and Keynote Speaker
Darlene F. Cross, MS, LMFT, is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Henderson, Nevada, with 20 years in private practice. Darlene is also the author of the Amazon Best Seller, A New Normal: Learning to Live with Grief and Loss. Additionally, she is the author of Reinvigarting Normal: How Choice and Change Shape Our Lives.

We are delighted to have Darlene Cross as our 2018 Keynote Speaker – who will speak as a clinician who works with people coping with an array of losses, including loss through chronic illness, a subject she knows well being a Sjögren’s patient herself.

In addition, join us for this inspirational evening as we present our National Awards to volunteers, groups and organizations that have helped to further the mission of the Sjögren’s Syndrome Foundation.

How the Central Nervous System Can Impact Sjögren’s
Edward Maitz, PhD, is a Diplomate in Clinical Neuropsychology and is also Board Certified in cognitive rehabilitation and biofeedback training. Dr. Maitz is in full time private practice in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and has faculty appointments at Drexel University College and Widener University. He has a special interest in Sjögren’s and has published articles in the field, and is a member of the SSF Clinical Practice Guidelines Committee. Dr. Maitz will share his vast knowledge about the physical, cognitive (“brain fog”), and psychological manifestations of Sjögren’s.

Lymphoma: Risk, Treatment and Prognosis
Richard F. Ambinder, MD, PhD, currently serves as the James B. Murphy Professor of Oncology and the Director of the Division of Hematologic Malignancies at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center. Dr. Ambinder is active in the treatment of lymphoma and is the Co-Leader of the SSF’s Lymphoma Clinical Practice Guidelines. Dr. Ambinder will clear away the confusion surrounding lymphoma and Sjögren’s, defining the risks to Sjögren’s patients and outlining the symptoms, treatment, and prognosis.

Tips for Comfortable Living
Do you have a tip for living with Sjögren’s? Have you found a great way to cope with your Sjögren’s? Bring your ideas to our conference and be ready to share them! We will be asking a few patients to join us on stage to share some practical tips for coping with the day-to-day symptoms of this chronic illness.

Joint Pain and Sjögren’s
Donald E. Thomas, Jr., MD, has a special interest in systemic autoimmune diseases, especially Sjögren’s and lupus. He is in private practice in Maryland, but he also enjoys teaching health care providers about Sjögren’s. He is passionate about empowering patients, and he is the author of the patient education book, “The Lupus Encyclopedia: A Comprehensive Guide for Patients and Families.” Dr. Thomas will add to your understanding of the many causes of joint pain and will offer tips to help you cope as well as treatment regimens.

Oral Manifestations of Sjögren’s
Ava J. Wu, DDS, is Clinical Professor, Department of Orofacial Sciences, School of Dentistry, University of California, San Francisco, where she is Director of the Sjögren’s Syndrome Clinic. Dr. Wu’s presentation will provide insights into how Sjögren’s impacts your oral health as well as information to help manage and minimize the effects of dry mouth issues. After seeing thousands of patients in her career, Dr. Wu will deliver the answers that you have been waiting to hear.

Clinical Trials Update
Every day research is being conducted to unveil new medications, therapies and diagnostic tools for Sjögren’s. Join us for this informative presentation about how clinical trials add to our medical knowledge and, most importantly, the result of these trials can make a difference in the care and treatment of Sjögren’s patients.

Dermatological Issues and Sjögren’s
Natalie Wright, MD, is a board certified dermatologist practicing in Dallas, Texas, who specializes in the diagnosis and management of autoimmune conditions of the skin. She manages the skin manifestations of lupus, Sjögren’s, dermatomyositis, systemic sclerosis, sarcoidosis, and psoriasis, in addition to skin cancer and general dermatologic conditions. She completed specialized training in these disorders at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston. Sjögren’s patients can present with a variety of skin disorders that Dr. Wright takes special interest in diagnosing and managing.
Space is limited. Please register early!

Registration Form

Registration fees include: Friday evening dinner, Saturday’s lunch, hand-out material from speakers and entrance to exhibit area on Friday and Saturday.

2018 NATIONAL PATIENT CONFERENCE
Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center, Colorado
April 13 – 14, 2018

1 ATTENDEE – complete for each registrant

Attendee Name(s) ____________________________________________________________
Attendee Name(s) ____________________________________________________________
Street Address ______________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ___________ Zip _______________
Telephone ___________________ E-mail _________________________________________

2 FEES – please circle appropriate fee(s) (Note: Early Bird Deadline is March 21, 2018)

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<td>SSF Members &amp; Guests</td>
<td>$170 per person</td>
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<td>Non-Members</td>
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3 PAYMENT – Mail to SSF, c/o BB&T Bank · PO Box 890612 · Charlotte, NC 28289-0612 or Fax to: 301-530-4415

☐ Enclosed is a check or money order (in U.S. funds only, drawn on a U.S. bank, net of all bank charges) payable to SSF.

☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ Discover ☐ AmEx Card Number ___________________________ Exp. Date ________________
Signature ____________________________________________________________ CC Security Code ________________

• Refund requests must be made in writing. Registrants whose written requests are received by March 26th will receive a 75% refund. After that time, we are sorry that no refunds can be made.

• Dietary Requests: Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate all special dietary requirements. We can accommodate vegetarian or gluten-free dietary requests.

• I would like a vegetarian meal ☐
• I would like a gluten-free meal ☐

• A limited number of rooms are available, on a first-come basis, at the Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center (13200 East 14th Place, Aurora, Colorado 80011) at the SSF rate of $132 per night plus tax if reservations are made by March 22, 2018. Call the toll-free hotel Central Reservations number at 1-888-591-1234 or call the Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center directly at 1-303-365-1234 and refer to the group name “Sjögren’s Syndrome Foundation” for the discounted rate.

• The Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center is approximately 16 miles from the Denver International Airport.

QUESTIONS? Call 800-475-6473 or visit www.sjogrens.org
Darlene F. Cross, MS, LMFT, is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Henderson, Nevada, with 20 years in private practice. Darlene is also the author of the Amazon Best Seller, *A New Normal: Learning to Live with Grief and Loss*. Additionally, she is the author of *Reinventing Normal: How Choice and Change Shape Our Lives*.

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