

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



New ACOFP Resources for CME, Education and Patients

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2019 - 2020 ACOFP President

Over the past year, the ACOFP has created several new resources to help educate osteopathic family physicians, residents and students, as well as patients. In the eLearning Center, we recently posted the 2019 Intensive Update & Board Review Online videos, which provide CME opportunities and help you prepare for Board exams. Also, we are launching the all-new OMTotal and OMTeaching Video Libraries, featuring 150 videos searchable by anatomy, symptom and manipulation type, available for individual and program purchases.

In addition to the on-going patient education handouts published in this journal, ACOFP Board task forces have created policies and guidelines around public health topics that are important to family medicine, such as disaster preparedness and management, outreach programs, medical cannabis, sexual health and gun safety.

Here are highlights of a few policies and resources the ACOFP has recently published. See the resources pages of ACOFP.org for full information and website links.

POLICY ON SEXUAL HEALTH IN TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

The ACOFP adopts the World Health Organization definition of sexual health as the state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.

The ACOFP recognizes the integral part the family physician plays in working with teens, young adults and their families in addressing these issues and recommends the following.

1. Comprehensive sexual education should begin in early childhood and continue through a person's lifespan with emphasis on anticipatory guidance in the adolescent patient.
2. Family physicians should provide counseling and guidance about responsible sexual behavior to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
3. Family physicians should educate on the signs and symptoms of STIs and the need for testing when appropriate.
4. Family physicians should be aware that teens and young adults are exploring their sexual orientation and gender identity, which can greatly impact their emotional and physical well-being.

5. Family physicians should educate their patients on the concept of consent to sexual activity and what to do if they feel sexual activity has occurred without consent.

6. Family physicians should educate about the risks of sexting and the use of social media in a sexual manner, including the negative emotional impact.

7. Family physicians should encourage adolescents to have open dialogue with their parents or other trusted adults about their sexuality and/or gender identity, while assuring the confidentiality that is apparent in the physician-patient relationship.

8. Family physicians should make information available to patients through patient education handouts or referrals to available community services.

9. If a family physician feels uncomfortable in having these discussions with their adolescent patient, they should refer the patient to another provider.

The ACOFP also created patient education handouts for physicians on sexual health, birth control, gender identity and STIs.

ACOFP POLICY ON GUN SAFETY

The ACOFP declares that gun violence has become a public health emergency and calls on local, state and federal legislators, our nation's governors and the President to enact legislation supporting the following policies.

1. The ACOFP supports lifting the restrictions and the restoration of funding for gun violence research at the CDC and NIH that can develop policies to help decrease gun violence and promote gun safety.
2. The ACOFP supports the development of evidence-based strategies and supporting educational materials to be used by physicians and health care professionals during wellness screenings for adults and children.
3. The ACOFP supports the repair and re-enactment of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) for all handgun purchases.

4. The ACOFP supports increased funding at the federal, state and local levels for mental health services.

5. The ACOFP calls for the implementation and continued funding of the 2018 Bipartisan School Security Funding Bill, which proposed and temporarily funded evidence-based safety programs in our nation's schools.

6. The ACOFP supports the establishment of federal laws allowing various persons to petition a court for the removal of a firearm when there is a high or imminent risk for violence.

7. The ACOFP supports increasing the legal age to purchase ammunition and firearms from 18 to 21 nationally.

8. The ACOFP supports legislative efforts to extend the definition of domestic violence to include violence against a current or former dating partner and surrender policies with firearm purchase and possession prohibition for persons under a domestic violence restraining order or anyone convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence, stalking and ex parte protective orders.

9. The ACOFP supports the implementation and enforcement of the ban of bump stocks and similar devices that enable the rapid fire of ammunition.

10. The ACOFP supports federal legislation requiring gun purchasers to complete a gun safety course or live fire exercise with a range instructor prior to purchasing a gun.

LGBTQI+ RESOURCES

The ACOFP provides links to numerous resources for minority and LGBTQI communities on its website, including a new section regarding PrEP for HIV prevention.

What is PrEP?

PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, is a medication (tenofovir and emtricitabine) prescribed daily to prevent HIV infection.

Who should take PrEP?

PrEP is recommended for patients without HIV who are at high risk of becoming infected via injection drug use or unprotected sex.

How effective is PrEP?

When taken consistently, PrEP reduces the risk of contracting HIV through sex by 99% and reduces the risk of contracting HIV through injection drug use by 74%.

How safe is PrEP?

Studies have shown no significant health effects in HIV-negative people who have taken PrEP for up to five years. Some patients have reported nausea, diarrhea, headache, dizziness and fatigue when taking PrEP.

The ACOFP aims to continue adding useful resources to the website for members. If you would like to suggest resources to be added or provide documents with information that would benefit your fellow osteopathic family physicians, please feel free to contact ACOFP staff.

Osteopathically yours,



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