

Spine West Providers:

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Dr. Michelle Pepper to Join Spine West

Spine West is pleased to announce that Dr. Michelle Pepper, M.D., will be joining our practice beginning this September. Dr. Pepper, a Colorado native returning from Utah, is board-certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and has completed a fellowship in Sports Medicine. She will be an excellent addition to our staff of providers. We look forward to welcoming her to our practice! More to come....

Have Spine West's newsletter emailed to you!

We strive to create a newsletter that will provide you with information relating directly to your health, our staff, and our clinic. If you would like to automatically receive the latest copy of the newsletter please submit your email address to: Newsletters@SpineWest.com

Have suggestions for the newsletter?

Feel free to send feedback or topics you are interested in to:

Newsletters@SpineWest.com



Pathways: The Importance of Sleep Hygiene

A good night's sleep is an important but often underestimated part of a healthy lifestyle.

Sleep hygiene refers to how healthy your sleep routine is. There are many things you can do to improve yours: begin by examining daily lifestyle choices that might affect sleep. Secondly, think about your before-bed routine. Lastly, take a look at your sleeping environment.

Choices you make during the day can have an effect on sleep later.

You can improve your sleep hygiene by:

- 1. avoiding caffeine** and other stimulants after lunchtime
- 2. avoiding naps**
- 3. avoiding alcohol** and strenuous exercise within six hours of bedtime
- 4. Not eating heavy meals** before bed, but also not going to bed hungry

Similarly, you can make changes in activities just before bed that will improve sleep quality:

1. Clear your mind of worries. Try meditation or a relaxing routine.

2. Use your bedroom for sleep and intimacy only. Avoid talking on the phone, watching TV, or reading in bed.

3. Go to sleep when you feel tired. If you cannot fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up and try a relaxing activity until you feel tired.

Finally, make sure that your bedroom is pleasant, quiet, dark, and cool. These tips will help you enjoy better sleep and improve your overall quality of life.

Spine West Physician Assistants and Medical Assistants

At Spine West, we are often asked: what is a physician assistant, and how does this differ from a medical assistant?

A physician assistant, or, P.A., is a health care professional licensed to practice medicine under the supervision of a physician. A P.A.-C. is a physician assistant-certified, meaning that he or she has taken the certification exam.

Physician assistants like Spine West's Vaheed Sevvom receive broad and intensive training, and are

thus qualified to practice a variety of diagnostic and therapeutic services. P.A.s work closely with their supervising physicians in managing patient care. In addition, P.A.s are authorized to prescribe medications.

One of the best things about physician assistants is that they enable patients to be seen much sooner, as physicians are often booked out far in advance.

The medical assistants (M.A.s) at Spine West are here to assist the medical providers (to include the

physicians, P.A.-C., and physical therapists) with facilitating patient care. Their tasks include checking in patients, taking vital signs, and even placing IVs. M.A.s also handle administrative tasks like obtaining prescription and imaging authorizations and preparing charts.

Most importantly, M.A.s are "communication facilitators." They are here to make sure the patient has a point of contact for all questions and concerns. The P.A.-C., M.D.s, and M.A.s at Spine West all work together to ensure top quality patient care.