



When it is April, and your favorite trailhead looks like this, you might be suffering from spring fever. Special to MDP and DCI/ Mark Rackay

Health Tips From The Posse

Do you have spring fever?

By Mark Rackay

According to the poet, Alfred Lord Tennyson, "In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." Well, sorry to disappoint you Al, but not this guy. Spring is the time for getting back outdoors and doing what is fun, like hunting and fishing.

As a youngster, spring was a tough time. I drove my grandmother crazy after being imprisoned indoors for so many months. Between school and too much snow and cold outside, I had to entertain myself inside. We did not have television or video games, we had books and magazines, and chores, endless

chores.

Gram would say, "Land sakes, that boy is ricocheting off the walls. This weather needs to break so he can go run around outside." And she spoke the truth.

It was casually referred to as spring fever. You get one warm, nice day and go for a walk. That is when it hits me. I notice buds and leaves forming, birds becoming more active, farm fields showing life, and all is almost right with the world. You wake up tomorrow morning to 6 inches of wet snow.

Webster's Dictionary defines spring fever as "a lazy or restless feeling often associated with the onset of spring."

That does not even begin to describe the feeling of being caged up inside, staring out the window, wishing you could be outside doing something else.

Several centuries ago, spring fever was a disabling, and oftentimes, fatal disease. Spring disease, as it was affectionately called, was an illness that occurred in the springtime, bringing with it fatigue, malaise, bruising, severe bone pain, bleeding on the scalp and gums, and poor wound healing.

If left untreated, spring disease led to jaundice, seizures, neuropathy, and eventually death. After a run with those symptoms, death probably was a welcome exit. Thousands of people died from spring disease in the 1700s before the disease was identified and a cure was found.

as the old-time disease. I searched the internet for cures and anything that could be symptomatic and found hundreds of ideas, most of which sounded ridiculous to me.

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Top 5 reasons to establish with a Primary Care Provider:

- Insurance covers 100% of an annual preventive or wellness visit which may include a physical.
- Better management and/or prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart failure.
- Easier management of specialty care.
- More cost effective than other types of care including urgent care or emergency room.
- Studies have shown people with a primary care are generally healthier.



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A Scottish physician by the name of Dr. James Lind discovered the terrible illness could be treated with the ingestion of oranges, lemons and limes. Spring disease, at the time, was referred to as scurvy. Ascorbic acid, or vitamin C, had not been discovered yet and no one knew why these fruits worked to cure this disease.

The illness, land scurvy, usually occurred in the spring of the year in the urban areas of the country. These areas were usually devoid of fruit and vegetables during the winter months. The rural and farming areas of the country had better access to fruit and vegetables over the winter months because they stockpiled it during the warm months, to be consumed over the winter. Transportation of food to the urban areas was a particular problem back then. Because of this, these urban folks had a higher incidence of developing spring disease because their vitamin C levels had depleted in their bodies over the winter months.

Sea scurvy was the same ailment but not discovered to be at that time. Sailors made long voyages, many months at a time, at sea during this time period. The sailor's diet on board the ship rarely included fruits and vegetables, and after many months at sea without vitamin C, they developed sea scurvy. Thousands of sailors died from this disease prior to Dr. Lind's discovery.

After Dr. Lind's discovery, British ships were fully stocked with limes for the sailors to eat while they were at sea in order to prevent this disease. Because of this, British sailors were often called "limeys" because of the barrels of limes on board their ships.

Land scurvy and sea scurvy (and spring disease) were eventually found to be the same disease. The exact cause of the disease, vitamin C deficiency, would not be discovered until 1932 when ascorbic acid (vitamin C) was discovered simultaneously by scientists in the United States and Hungary.

The spring fever we have this time of year is not nearly as life threatening

malaise, bruising, severe bone pain, bleeding on the scalp and gums, and poor wound healing.

Some doctors suggested adding vitamin supplements to our diet, while others recommend an increase of fruit and vegetable. I eat mountains of fruit and vegetables all year long and still have the fever.

A Michigan doctor feels that spring fever is caused by a thinning of the blood, forcing us to wear lighter clothes. His cure was to wear heavy winter clothes, even though it is warmer outside. I did not get on the bandwagon with that idea. Colorado has a drastic weather pattern which could provide a nice, warm spring day today, followed by a blizzard tomorrow.

The Farmer's Almanac suggested going on a picnic. If you can't go outdoors, have the picnic in your living room on the floor. They suggested making picnic foods like hamburgers and hot dogs, potato salad and ice cream. If I suggested this idea to my wife, she would cart me off in a straight jacket to the funny farm.

Probably the best thing is to just go outside and soak up some sunlight. Getting some fresh air and exercise in the outdoors will probably help you overcome spring fever. Remember that fun-filled summer days are just a few short months away.

My wife says I need to go find something to do outdoors because I am driving her crazy as I ricochet off the walls. Where have I heard that before?

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press and the Delta County Independent and is avid hunter who travels across North and South America in search of adventure and serves as a Director for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. For information about the Posse call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email info@mcspi.org.

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