



MEDICARE NEWS

July 2019 Edition

My goal with this newsletter is to:

1

KEEP YOU INFORMED

I will be sharing current articles about the changes in Medicare

2

ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS

I'm available to answer issues specific to you

3

STAY CONNECTED

I want to make Medicare coverage as simple as possible

858-935-9120

FDA Cleared vs. FDA Approved What's The Difference?

A few weeks ago, John Oliver, on his HBO show Last Week Tonight showcased the topic of Medical Devices and the difference between FDA-Cleared and FDA-Approved. It was fascinating to learn that the difference is HUGE! The industry constitutes a \$156 billion market in the United States. That's about 32 million Americans or one in ten that have at least ten medical devices implanted in their bodies.

You might assume that, based on that, every single device you see is FDA-approved. But in fact, far more are something called "FDA-Cleared" rather than "FDA-Approved." And there is a VERY distinct difference because "FDA-Cleared" is a much lower bar to clear.

Let's see what's going on here so we can become better informed and prepared when we discuss medical devices with our doctor. The FDA divides medical devices into three different categories - creatively listed as Class I (low risk - think bedpans), Class II (higher risk - think exercise equipment and pregnancy test kits), and Class III (highest risk - think pacemakers and artificial knees). In order to avoid stifling innovation, the FDA created a system called the 501(k) pathway, which allows companies to avoid thorough testing for devices that are 'substantially similar to one that had come before', but this also created a dangerous loophole: As of 2017 over 80 percent of medical devices are cleared through this system, including around 400 implanted devices per year. In this diluted process, products



Thanks for Your Referrals!

Heidi J referred
Sandy L

Joe D referred
Debbie W

Marty S referred
Laurie and Jerry P;
Renee T

Bill N referred
Maria V

Bob P referred Don S
Janean S referred
Barb L

*The greatest compliment
you pay us is the referral
of your family & friends.*

Birthdays!

July

John Mc
Gene A
Judy C
Shelley S
Pauline Mc
Barbara M
Richard S
Marianne L
Travis C
John D
Kathy R
Ervin D
Matthew Mc
Bill P
Doug B
Joe B
Kathleen B
Doug L
Morton L
Mick B
Chuck R
Earl H
Edmund P
Bernard K
Mark M
Lorie R

can be considered similar to other products, dating back for decades - to the point where the similarities become incredibly blurry.

The big question is, how can you know if a device is potentially harmful? And unfortunately, useful information is complicated to find.

A 2012, The New England Journal of Medicine study estimated that less than half of one percent of medical device failures are even reported to the FDA - which, when you think about it, is genuinely terrifying! In 2011, the Institute of Medicine of The National Academies concluded that the 501(k) clearance process should be replaced by a "new regulatory framework ... based on sound science." And most people agree that the new framework does not need to be so strict that it stifles innovation. It should just not be so lax that people are needlessly endangered. At the very least, most would hope that implanted devices would undergo clinical testing before being put inside of unsuspecting patients.

Until this current system is changed, we as patients are compelled to be our own advocates: researching products ourselves and asking thorough questions. Bridlewood recommends, if you have an upcoming surgery scheduled, please be sure to ask your doctor if the device(s) they will be implanting, are FDA-Approved not just FDA-Cleared.

California... It's A Great Place to Live

July Annual events—Some unusual and some worth revisiting.

Comic-Con International: The Largest Pop Culture Event in the United States, attracting thousands of artists, celebrities, and fans of comic books, movie memorabilia, and all things related to pop culture. Jul 18 - Jul 21, <https://www.comic-con.org/>

Del Mar Racing Season: Fans flock to this track each summer, to where the "turf meets the surf" at the Del Mar Racetrack. Jul 17 - Sep 2, 2019, Wednesday through Sunday, Gates Open: 11:30 AM First Post is 2:00 PM & On Fridays first post is 4:00 PM, <https://www.dmtc.com/>

Over The Line Tournament (OTL): Drawing over 1,000 teams from all over the world, the 66th Annual World Championship Over-the-Line Tournament will take place on July 13 - July 14, and July 20 - July 21, 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM, at Fiesta Island on Mission Bay. <http://www.ombac.org/over-the-line/otl-location-and-info/>



Time with the Grandkids or Maybe Just for the Kid in You

Open Cockpit Days at the Flying Leatherneck Museum: Experience a pilot's perspective! Kids and adults can strap into an ejection seat, try on a helmet and complete an "I Spy" activity. See 31 historical aircraft from World War II to present day, up close. Open Tues-Sun, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Free admission and parking. www.flyingleathernecks.org

Princess Tea Party at The Westgate Hotel: Make dreams come true with a magical afternoon of fairytale princess fun. Dress up, meet our favorite princesses and indulge the young royalty in your life with an enchanting afternoon of memorable fun complete with songs, princess oath, and special photo opportunity. We'll serve afternoon tea complete with signature fresh house-made pastries, desserts, premium teas, and delicious kid-friendly beverages. July 27, 2019, 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM <https://www.westgatehotel.com/activities/hotel-events/princess-tea-party-copy/>



[Purpose After Retirement](#)

Having a sense of purpose could add years to our lives, according to a study published in 2014 in Psychological Science. Researchers from Carleton University, Ontario, and the University of Rochester, New York, tracked the physical and mental health of more than 7,000 American adults for 14 years and found that those who felt they had a purpose or direction in life outlived those who did not.

Once we retire, it's easy to feel as though we have lost our compass. What was once an almost self-directed life, can now feel directionless. But we can still have purpose, just in a different way. And perhaps one of the following suggestions can head you in the right direction:

1. Continue Our Hobbies - What were our favorite pastimes before we retired — crocheting, gardening, dancing, or golf? Although we may need to alter our hobbies to fit our physical abilities, we can and should still do the things we enjoy most.
2. Become Politically Active - Now that we're retired, we have more time to attend city council meetings and share our wisdom, experience, and passion. Consider working on a campaign of a candidate whose views we admire. Also there are alternative ways to volunteer from home.
3. Go Back to School - Some colleges and universities allow seniors to audit courses at no charge. For in-person courses, check out Mira Costa College, Senior Program at <http://www.miracosta.edu/instruction/programsforseniors.html> If we're homebound, we can take classes online. Check out these two websites for some of the free courses we can find online <http://www.openculture.com/freeonlinecourses> & <https://www.coursera.org/collections/popular-free-courses>
5. Volunteer - The local food pantry, library, and many other non-profit organizations can use our help. Volunteering will get us out, interacting with people of all generations, and having to be somewhere to do something regularly will keep us feeling needed.

5. Immerse Ourselves in the Culture - Keeping intellectually active is as important as staying physically active. Plan trips to local art galleries, museums, and science centers to learn new things and see what we can recall. If we aren't mobile, we can visit many cultural institutions online.
6. Play Games - Look for neighbors, members of our church, or senior center who enjoy bridge, poker, or similar pursuits, and form a group that meets regularly to play or look for an established group.
7. Use Our Expertise or Become a Mentor - For example, if we were an accountant before retirement, we might volunteer our services at tax time to help other seniors. If we enjoy literature we could read to or record books, for the visually impaired. In addition, we've been down roads many haven't even thought of yet, let alone traveled. Family and friend, colleges and trade schools are loaded with people who need the expertise we've acquired the hard way.

[Rosemary Ranch Chicken Kabobs](#)



"This rosemary ranch chicken recipe is so delicious, tender, and juicy the chicken will melt in your mouth. Even the pickiest eater will be begging for the last piece."

1. In a medium bowl, stir together the olive oil, ranch dressing, Worcestershire sauce, rosemary, salt, lemon juice, white vinegar, pepper, and sugar. Let stand for 5 minutes. Place chicken in the bowl, and stir to coat completely. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Ingredients

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|------------------------------------|--|
| 1/2 cup olive oil | 1 teaspoon lemon juice |
| 1/2 cup ranch dressing | 1 teaspoon white vinegar |
| 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce | 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, or to taste |
| 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary | 1 tablespoon white sugar, or to taste (optional) |
| 2 teaspoons salt | 5 chicken breast halves - cut into 1 inch cubes |

2. Preheat the grill for medium-high heat. Thread chicken onto skewers and discard marinade.
3. Lightly oil the grill grate with a oil moistened cloth (do not use oil spray while grill is turned on.) Grill for 8 - 12 minutes, or until the chicken is no longer pink in the center.
4. For the original recipe and video go to <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/64513/rosemary-ranch-chicken-kabobs/>

[Medicare Made Easy](#)

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