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✧ ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS! ✧

3440 DePaul Lane, Suite 113, Bridgeton, MO 63044, US | Phone: (314) 942-6464 Fax: (314) 492-4636

## *Arthritis Center*



### **Hello, Friends!**

Happy New Year! Wishing you lots of love, laughter, and good health this year!

Be sure to update your insurance information, complete/ update all required forms, and complete any lab work or x-ray orders your physician may have ordered to avoid any delays in care! If you are currently getting infusion therapy in our suite be sure to provide/update your insurance information with our infusion team.

### **The Importance of Scheduling Your Next Appointment:**

Patient scheduling may appear to be a

straightforward process, but it actually requires considerable planning, experience, and skill. Follow up appointments are just as important to a patient as they are to a doctor. At your follow up visit we will have the results to any lab orders or imaging we may have ordered to make sure all results are uploaded in your chart and you have been informed of your results. This allows you to ask any questions you may have forgotten to ask at your first visit. This also ensures that your treatment plan is best suited for your diagnosis and symptoms. Some medications could potentially cause adverse effects to your health therefore we routinely draw labs to ensure the medication is not causing you any harm. You will also have the chance to speak with your physician and let them know if the medication you've been prescribed is beneficial or if we need to make some changes to your treatment plan.



Follow-up cancellations disrupt the medications and can potentially cause a delay in care. Dr. Baak prescribes medication at your initial office visit

### Schedule Your Office Visit



### Preparing For Infusion Therapy:

Starting new medications can seem stressful and intimidating. Staff at the Arthritis Center aim to make this transition as simple as possible for our patients. Infusion is a common route used to conveniently administer drugs, all while being monitored for safety.

**We would like to offer suggestions to help prepare for your infusion visits.**

Get plenty of rest and hydrate. Adequate rest and water intake helps tremendously with IV placement for infusion.

Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. You get to enjoy the comfort of our cinema-style chairs during your appointment.

Report any changes to medical history (recent immunizations, antibiotic use, new medications, new health diagnoses, etc). It is important to keep us updated, as we want to maintain your health.

Come with questions and concerns. Staff are always eager to teach you about the infusion process. The goal is to make you comfortable with your treatment plan.

- Connie  
V  
(Infusion  
Therapy  
RN)



## **New Infusion Therapy Medications:**

ILUMYA® is a biologic treatment administered in our infusion therapy suite. This medication is used for moderate-to-severe plaque psoriasis. It's an injection that is administered in our infusion therapy suite. ILUMYA® works within

the body to balance an overactive immune system, addressing the symptoms at the source. ILUMYA is a medicine that may lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. We will order bloodwork to check you for any infections and tuberculosis (TB) before starting treatment with ILUMYA.

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## **How To Prepare For Getting Your Labs Drawn for Bloodwork:**

**Drink plenty of water before your blood test.** Staying hydrated helps increase your blood volume. And it plumps up your veins for an easier draw. But avoid coffee and other caffeinated drinks, which can dehydrate you.

**Eat well.** Unless you need to fast for your test. To feel your best, consider doing these things before your bloodwork:

- Avoid alcohol
- Stay away from fatty or rich foods
- Eat plenty of protein

**Mention any blood thinners.**

If you take blood-thinning medications before they draw your blood. They'll want to check that you've stopped bleeding before you leave the lab.

**Think you might faint?** If you've fainted during blood draws in the past, be sure to inform your phlebotomist so they can position you differently to reduce your risk of falling.

**Take a deep breath and relax.** If you're anxious about your test, take deep breaths. You can also ask the person drawing your blood to explain what they're doing. Uncertainty can be stressful.

**Don't look.** If getting blood taken makes you queasy, don't look at the needle during your draw. Read, look at your phone — or chat with your phlebotomist. Most professionals who draw blood understand that it can be difficult for some people.

*You can remove your bandage in about an hour after you've had your blood drawn. If you begin bleeding again, apply slight pressure until it stops and put on another bandage. Don't worry if some bruising happens. It's normal and should go away after a few days.*

- Carmalitta A (Phlebotomist)



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## Pawsitive Support of the Month

Ms. Bunny Baak is obviously our first pawsitive pal to receive recognition. Valedictorian of her class in 2020 she is a trained, seasoned professional whose only weakness is whatever treat she thinks you may have for her. Don't



be alarmed when she greets you as you walk in. When she is not working her favorite activity is to ride in the golf cart with mom and dad or swimming with her boyfriend. Bunny works Monday through Thursday.

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## Patient Advocacy News

"Often the rationale for such step therapy policies is that these "steps" result in the lowest cost. Unfortunately, it is the lowest cost for the insurance company, as a result of the highest rebate, not for the patient. This does not lower costs for patients and in fact such policies have been shown to increase out of pocket costs for patients from lack of disease control and non-adherence. "

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Kind regards,  
Arthritis Center

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