Hedgespeth, DO joins pediatric staff at Spring View Hospital

Hospital is pleased to View Hospital. "Her expe-

announce the addition of Megan Hedgespeth, DO, to its medical staff as a pediatrician. Originally from Taylor County, Dr. Hedgespeth is excited to return to her hometown roots and will begin providing newborn and pediatric services

Hedgespeth

surrounding counties. Dr. Hedgespeth to our dedicated pediatric team, enhancing Spring View Hospital's services for our youngest patients, from neonates to adolescents," stated Vicki Parks, Chief undertook her internship at call 270.699.4638.



Megan

rience, in collaboration with Dr. Sarah Boltik and Erin Hodges, APRN, will ensure that our pediatric patients

receive exceptional and comprehensive care right here in Lebanon." Dr. Hedgespeth

earned her Bachelor throughout Lebanon and the of Science in Biology from the University of Pikeville "We are excited to welcome in 2018. Following this, she obtained her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree at the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine, completing her studies in 2022. Dr. Hedgespeth then

LEBANON - Spring View Executive Officer at Spring Orlando Health/Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children during the 2022-2023 program year, followed by her residency at the same institution.

> As a passionate member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Dr. Hedgespeth will be joining Dr. Sarah Boltik and Erin Hodges, APRN, at Spring View Women's and Children's Clinic, located at 330 Loretto Road, Lebanon, KY 40033. Her areas of interest include acute illnesses. well-child exams, immunizations, infant care, and allergy and asthma management.

> For further details about available pediatric services or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Hedgespeth, please

Cannabis-related emergency visits rising in Kentucky among youth

KENTUCKY HEALTH NEWS

Kentucky saw a steady increase in emergency department visits related to cannabis use among Kentucky residents between 2018 and 2024, with some of the steepest rises occurring among children and adolescents, according to a new report from the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center.

The report, produced by KIPRC, found that from 2023 to 2024, cannabis-related poisonings among Kentuckians under age 18 rose 43%, from 148 to 212 visits.

"That kind of jump raises concerns about unintentional exposures and increased household access to cannabis products," Mira Mirzaian, a KIPRC epidemiologist, said in a news release. "Many cannabis products, particularly gummies or edibles containing CBD or Delta-8, are packaged in ways that may be enticing or easily mistaken for candy by young children. This, to me, highlights the importance of public education and secure product storage in homes where these items are present."

one diagnosis, cannabis 2022, increasing to 70 hyperemesis syndrome (CHS), a condition involving severe repeated vomiting related to long-term cannabis use, saw a steep increase. Emergency department visits for CHS more than doubled statewide from 2021 to 2024. Among the 1,800 CHS diagnoses in 2024, 1,055 were among adults aged 25 and rather than a sudden to be the sole cause of death."

"The sharp rise in cases coded as cannabis hyperemesis syndrome over the past few years suggests growing clinical recognition of the condition," Mirzaian said. "At the same time, the increase could also reflect a true rise in incidence, especially as high-potency cannabis products become more widely available in the United States."

According to the release, Mirzaian and epidemiologist Lara Daniels used data from the Kentucky Outpatient Services Database, maintained by the Office of Data and Analytics within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. The report used an "any mention" approach, meaning cases were included if cannabis-related codes appeared anywhere in the medical record.

"This method is commonly used in public health surveillance to ensure we don't miss relevant encounters where cannabis may have been a contributing factor, but not the main reason for the visit," said Mirzaian.

The data also pointed to The report also found that cannabis poisoning since cannabis typically was not diagnoses in 2024, up from substances can produce unpredictable and sometimes severe effects.

> The increase we're seeing since 2022 may reflect provider awareness and documentation using the appropriate ICD-10 codes,

older, 604 were 18-24, and emergence of these subs-141 were in children. emergence of these subs-tances," she said.

ICD-10 stands for International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision, Clinical Modification, the standardized system used in the United States to classify and code all diagnoses, symptoms, and procedures related to inpatient and outpatient medical care.

Although males typically account for more cannabisrelated emergency department visits overall, the report shows that this difference is diminishing, suggesting a growing impact across both groups, according to Mirzaian.

The report also found racial and ethnic disparities.

"Non-Hispanic white Kentuckians represented the largest number of cannabisrelated ED visits," she said. "However, visits among Non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic residents also rose steadily over the seven-year period, indicating a broadening demographic impact that warrants continued attention."

The report found that cannabis was listed as a contributing cause of death in more than 60 fatalities annually in Kentucky from rising rates of synthetic 2018 to 2024, although the sole cause. "These fatalities should

43 in 2022. Mirzaian said these absolutely be interpreted with caution," Mirzaian said in the release. "In all identified cases, cannabis poisoning was listed as a contributing cause of death, not the underlying cause. In this context, cannabis may contribute to overall risk, but it is unlikely

The new generation of weight loss drugs: The pros and cons of GLP-1s

BY BROOKE HUDSPETH, PHARM.D UK COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

LEXINGTON - You've likely heard about glucagonlike peptide-1 agonists – usually referred to as GLP-1 medications, and more wildly recognized through pharmaceutical brand names like Ozempic and Mounjaro.

While those commonly known brands of these medications are relatively new, GLP-1 analogs have been around for 20 years. In 2005, the Food and Drug Administration approved the firstever GLP-1 agonist, exenatide (Byetta). Since then, several others have followed, dulaglutide including (Trulicity), liraglutide (Victoza, Saxenda), semaglutide (Ozempic, Wegovy), and the latest FDA-approved medication, tirzepatide (Mounjaro, Zepbound).

With semaglutide and tirzepatide gaining the most media attention and curiosity in recent years due to their high effectiveness, we'll focus on these two medications.

What do these medications do?

GLP-1 is a hormone that occurs naturally in your body — it's created by your own small intestine. It serves several functions, including:

Triggering your pancreas to release insulin, which lowers blood sugar

Suppressing glucagon, a hormone that raises blood sugar

Slowing down your digestion

Increasing your feelings of fullness after eating

GLP-1 medications mimic this natural hormone by binding to GLP-1 receptors in the body, and they are intended to be used alongside a healthy diet and exercise. By helping to nausea and vomiting, due

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medications support the management of Type 2 diabetes. Other effects of these medications often lead to weight loss.

What's the difference between these two drugs?

Ozempic is the namebrand version of weekly injectable semaglutide that is FDA-approved for diabetes treatment, while Wegovy is the same injectable approved for obesity treatment. A daily oral (pill) version of semaglutide, Rybelsus, was approved for type 2 diabetes treatment in 2019.

Mounjaro is the name brand of tirzepatide approved for diabetes treatment. Meanwhile, Zepbound is the same drug formulation for treatment of both obesity and/or obstructive sleep apnea. Tirzepatide is taken in a once-weekly injection. Additionally, tirzepatide actually mimics two hormones produced in the body – in addition to being a GLP-1 agonist, it also activates the glucosedependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) hormone receptors.

A recent New England Journal of Medicine study showed that while both these new drugs are highly effective, tirzepatide was shown to be more effective for weight loss, possibly because of the combination of these two hormone agonists when compared to the single hormone agonist in semaglutide.

What are the side effects of these drugs?

While GLP-1 agonists have many positive benefits, they do have a number of potential side effects.

The most common side effects include:

Gastrointestinal issues, like constipation, diarrhea,

On Wednesday September 10th

regulate blood sugar, these to the drugs' effect on digestion.

> Cosmetic changes, including hair loss, muscle loss, loose or sagging skin, and more pronounced wrinkles. The "Ozempic face" has been used to describe these changes, but the effects are due to rapid weight loss, not the medications themselves.

Increased heart rate. Several GLP-1s are beneficial to heart health, but some patients report a slightly elevated heart rate while on them.

Injection site reactions. Though not common, some side effects of these medications can be severe. These include:

Gallstones and gallbladder issues, thought to be caused by rapid weight loss

Pancreatitis — studies have shown a higher risk for this condition while taking GLP-1 medications compared to other weight loss medications

Gastroparesis (delayed stomach emptying) though these medications are designed to slow down digestion, if it slows down too much, it can lead to other symptoms and complications.

Kidney damage, typically resulting from dehydration caused by other side effects

A potential risk of thyroid cancer — animal studies have shown an increased risk for thyroid C-cell tumors, though that risk has not yet been confirmed in humans.

GLP-1 medications can be a powerful tool for people to improve their health, but they're not for everyone. They require a prescription, and it's important to speak with a trusted health care provider to discuss your personal goals, medical history and health risks before taking them.

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STAFF REPORT

LOUISVILLE - The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board approved \$533,249 for agricultural diversification and rural development projects across the Commonwealth Friday at its monthly board meeting.

"The Agricultural **Development Board invests** in projects that strengthen our ag community," Commissioner of Agriculture and Board Chair Jonathan Shell said. "These projects are helping to diversify our agricultural landscape and grow our economy, which is a benefit to all of Kentucky."

Among the awards was a Deceased Farm Animal Removal (DAR) to Marion County for \$15,000.

The Deceased Farm

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Animal Removal Program deceased livestock for serves as a measure to facilitate the coordination of environmentally sound and cost-effective disposal of the board.

Kentucky producers.

Three DARs, totaling \$34,400, were approved by



