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Frederick Arthritis Specialist Speaks to Maryland Nurse Practitioners

Dr. Nathan Wei presented a talk entitled “Current and Emerging Therapies in Rheumatoid Arthritis” at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference for Nurse Practitioners in College Park, Maryland on Saturday, April 21, 2007. Nurse practitioners from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland were in attendance.

“Twenty-six years ago when I first started practice, our treatment of rheumatoid arthritis was tremendously limited as far as medications we could offer patients. If we got a 20 percent improvement, we felt lucky. To talk about “remission” was out of the question,” states Dr. Wei. “Now... achieving remission in rheumatoid arthritis is the norm,” adds Dr. Wei.

“Our whole approach to rheumatoid arthritis is very different now as well. We used to have a pyramid approach where we started with the least aggressive medicines and slowly went up the pyramid. Today we turn the pyramid upside down and incorporate an aggressive approach right from the start.”

“Rheumatoid arthritis is a systemic disease that is responsible for disability as well as early death from accelerated hardening of the arteries and lymphoma. Since significant damage and disability can occur within the first six months of disease onset, rheumatoid arthritis is considered a medical emergency,” Dr. Wei concludes.

Rheumatoid arthritis is the most common inflammatory form of arthritis and affects more than 2.1 million Americans. It is a leading cause of disability and early death.

Dr. Nathan Wei is a board-certified rheumatologist and clinical director of the Arthritis and Osteoporosis Center of Maryland, a nationally respected arthritis research facility located in Frederick, Maryland.

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