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Virtual Flight Surgeons® Inc.

“Our Physicians...Your Solution”

Quarterly Aeromedical Newsletter

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FAA Aeromedical Certification- Policy Update



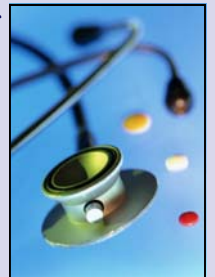
New FAA Administrator - Senate confirms J. Randolph “Randy” Babbitt as the new FAA Administrator. Several of the VFS physicians have a long history of working with Mr. Babbitt through their work with the Air Line Pilots Association Aeromedical Office. His experience as a line pilot will likely bring exciting changes.

Dr. Ben Zwart - VFS welcomes Dr. Ben Zwart who recently joined the Aeromedical certification staff at CAMI in Oklahoma City. Dr. Zwart was a career USAF flight surgeon and has a great deal of experience with hyperbaric medicine as well.

New Publication released - The FAA Aerospace Medical Education Division recently released a new publication, *Fit for Flight*, about the benefits of physical conditioning. This and other pilot safety brochures can be found at <http://www.faa.gov/pilots/safety/pilotsafetybrochures/>.

Medication Update

Rapaflo (silodosin) is a relatively new “selective alpha-blocker” used to treat the symptoms of benign prostatic hypertrophy or enlargement. Because of it’s selective effects, Rapaflo is thought to have less risk of orthostatic effects (e.g. less risk of lightheadedness when getting out of a chair too quickly or performing an aerial loop!) This medication is acceptable after one week ground trial as long as no side effects are noted and the underlying condition is controlled so as not to be distracting.



Sanctura (trospium) is another medication to treat urinary problems. It is typically used for overactive bladder and is acceptable after a two week period with no side effects. Typically an airman would be expected to provide a clinical note at the time of the next medical documenting no side effects and control of the bladder problems.

Use of **Astelin** (azelastin), an antihistamine used for allergies, continues to be a source of common confusion for airmen and controllers alike. At high dosages, this product has a potential for sedation and therefore is not allowed as a nasal spray. However, Astelin eye drops, such as found in Optivar, are allowed since there isn’t significant systemic absorption.

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President's Corner



Disability Does Not Mean Disqualification Quay C. Snyder, MD, MSPH

The VFS staff has received numerous inquiries from pilots and controllers regarding the implications of Question 18y on the revised FAA Form 8500-8, Application for Airman Medical Certificate. The question asks "Have you ever in your life been diagnosed with, had or do you presently have any of the following?" Question 18y refers to Medical Disability Benefits.

Most fear that listing a disability will automatically result in a medical disqualification. This is not the case. Other concerns are whether the condition should have been reported previously to the FAA under a different category. This may be true, but not always.

The most common example is a pilot who is retired from the military and receiving VA medical disability benefits. In many cases, benefits are awarded for hearing losses, x-ray findings prior to discharge, back pain, or injuries received not requiring hospitalization or surgery. As these conditions are not specifically asked for in other questions in question 18 and may not have been treated in the three years prior to completing the FAA Form 8500-8, this report may be the initial notification to the FAA. Simply provide a copy of the VA disability rating to the AME and indicate in the remarks section the paperwork is attached.

The AME should issue a medical certificate if the applicant is otherwise qualified.

Other conditions awarded disability by the VA or from short-term and long-term disability insurance carriers or employers should be reported as **YES** not only on question 18y, but under another question as well. Examples include high blood pressure, post-traumatic stress disorder, surgeries, kidney stones or cancer. Hopefully, these conditions were reported on previous FAA medical applications. If so, indicate "Previously Reported, no change" after listing the diagnosis if there has been no change in status. If not previously reported to the FAA, the applicant should provide the appropriate records and a "current status report" to the AME. A status report is current if it has been completed in the previous 60 days in most cases.

Other sources of disability that require a **YES** response on 18y include Social Security Administration and state disability payments. VFS strongly recommends that pilots do not falsify their medical applications for fear of losing their medical certification. For questions on appropriately reporting these conditions, please consult with your AME or our staff for assistance. Do it right the first time!

Take care of your health first! - Dr. Quay Snyder



VFS News

George Schafer Award - Dr. Snyder was recently recognized by the Society of USAF Flight Surgeons with the Schafer Award for lifetime achievement. The George Schafer Award was approved by the Society's Board of Governors in 1978 to recognize outstanding contributions of Air Force flight surgeons to the health, welfare, safety and mission effectiveness of USAF aircrew as well as to the vitality of the specialty of Aerospace Medicine over an extended period of time.

ASMA Annual Scientific meeting - Dr. Parker was elected as a Fellow of the Aerospace Medicine Association at the 2009 scientific meeting. The Fellows of the Aerospace Medical Association are members who

have distinguished themselves through their activities and devotion to the association. They have made outstanding contributions to aerospace medicine, aeronautics, astronautics, or undersea medicine, either in research, in the practical usage of research, or by precept and example.

Corporate Aviation Safety Seminar (CASS) - Dr. Snyder gave a presentation on "Still Have the Right Stuff? - Assessing the Aging or Failing Aviator" at the National Business Aircraft Association and Flight Safety Foundation's annual Corporate Aviation Safety Seminar in Orlando FL. Dr. Snyder also participated in the NBAA Safety Committee meeting following the seminar.



Ask the Doc

Question: My manager approved my use of Astelin drops for minor eye allergies in the past. However, recently a friend told me Astelin is not allowed?

Answer: Actually you both are partially right. Astelin nasal spray if used in large enough dosages, can result in some potential sedation and therefore isn't allowable in the aviation environment. Astelin eye drops generally are not absorbed in large enough quantities to result in sedation and therefore are generally acceptable once cleared by your supervisor or the Regional Flight Surgeon.

Question: This Spring my allergies are really flaring up. Am I allowed to take any over the counter medications and still control?

Answer: You probably won't be surprised to find that you are not alone. Allergies are estimated to affect up to 40 million people in the United States annually. The manifestations of allergies range from annoying symptoms of a runny nose and sneezing to life threatening obstruction of breathing. Many people may only have allergy symptoms for a few weeks out of the year, while others are bothered by repeated sinus infections or asthma. For controllers and airmen, there are effective treatments for almost the entire spectrum of allergic symptoms. Most simply require a ground trial to rule out adverse side effects. Airmen are able to report the use of medications at the time of the next FAA medical, but controllers are required to clear any prescription or over the counter medications with their supervisor or the Regional Flight Surgeon before return to the tower cab.



For those interested in a more in-depth look at allergies, there is a related article on our website www.AviationMedicine.com that can be found by using the keyword search feature. When it comes to treating routine allergy symptoms, most people treat the symptoms, try to prevent the symptoms, or use a combination of both. When using over the counter medications, keep in mind

that only non-sedating antihistamines, such as Loratadine found in Claritin, and decongestants, such as pseudoephedrine, are allowed. Zyrtec, a commonly marketed over the counter antihistamine, is not allowed.

If your symptoms are not controlled appropriately with these over the counter medications, I suggest you speak to your family provider about other available prescription treatments. A prescription antihistamine called Allegra is allowed. Nasal steroids are often used to prevent allergy symptoms from occurring. There are oral medications such as Singulair, non steroidal nasal sprays, and even immunotherapy (allergy shots), all of which are acceptable to the FAA. Hopefully you'll find the right combination to allow you to enjoy the great outdoors this Summer.



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Spotlight: Your VFS Staff

To better acquaint you with the physician and administrative team that serves you, VFS will profile a staff member or special event each quarter. This quarter's spotlight is on Dr. Quay Snyder's Master Instructor Renewal.



Dr. Snyder is pictured above providing a check ride.

Congratulations Dr. Snyder Master CFI (Certified Flight Instructor) Renewal

The Master Instructors LLC takes pride in announcing a significant aviation accomplishment on the part of Quay Snyder. While there are approximately 92,000 CFI's in the United States, Quay is one of only 31 Colorado teachers of flight to earn this prestigious "Master" Title. Recently, Quay's accreditation as a Master CFI was renewed by Master Instructors LLC, the international accrediting authority for the Master Instructor designation as well as the FAA-approved "Master Instructor Continuing Education Program." He has held this professional accreditation continuously since 2003.

The Master Instruction designation is a national accreditation recognized by the FAA that is earned by candidates demonstrating an ongoing commitment to the excellence, professional growth, and service to the aviation community. Designees are recognized as outstanding aviation educators for not only their excellence in teaching, but for their engagement in the continuous process of learning both through their own and their students.

Your VFS Newsletter



Our services are provided to you as a benefit from your company flight department or a membership benefit from your union or aviation association. VFS stands ready as the only board certified Aerospace medicine physician group available to provide you the assistance you need. Our physicians are always

a telephone call or email click away. We can respond to your medical questions and provide advice on any potential impact on your FAA Airman's Medical Certificate for medical conditions you might develop. All client discussions with our staff members are completely confidential and risk free. VFS is proud to be your one source for Aeromedical advice and FAA medical certification waiver assistance!

Our goal is to make this newsletter useful and informative for all our clients. If you have an idea for a topic you would like covered or have a comment, please contact our Director of Operations, Lawan Adkins via e-mail at ladkins@aviationmedicine.com.

VFS Welcomes Our Newest Corporate Clients:

- Pfizer, Inc.**
- Hewlett-Packard Aviation**

OPT-OUT: If you do not wish to continue receiving the quarterly VFS Aeromedical electronic newsletter, please reply to this e-mail and type "REMOVE" in the subject line. We will remove your e-mail address from our mailing list.

We welcome your comments and suggestions!

THE VFS GOAL IS TO KEEP OUR CLIENTS HEALTHY, SAFE & MEDICALLY CERTIFIED!

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