

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's health and wellness show where we feature news and information you could use to live a healthier life. I am Katie Johnson, your host and my guest today is Dr. Sunnah Doesken. She is a new primary care provider at our Barnesville area clinic and we are excited to welcome her to the Lake Region Healthcare team and to the Barnesville community and introduce you to her on today's show. Good morning, Dr. Doesken.

Dr. Doesken: Greetings.

Katie Johnson: Well, let's help our listeners get to know you a little bit better. Tell us about your background leading up to joining Lake Region Healthcare.

Dr. Doesken: I grew up in the middle of Minnesota, in McGregor, Minnesota and graduated there in the largest class in over a decade with 42 graduates. Then I went to Duluth, Minnesota and I stayed there for over 10 years going to college at St. Scholastica and attending the University of Minnesota-Duluth campus med school, which focuses with primary care, so I've pretty much always known I wanted to be in primary care. Then I had the fortunate accident of going to Sioux City, Iowa for my residency training. It is the best fit that I could have had and it was an accident I ended up there. I stayed with the program and taught for two years and then we decided that we would like to go back home because we missed fishing and we missed the Minnesotan ice and the drivers here.

Katie Johnson: Ah, interesting.

Dr. Doesken: Yes. So we started looking around and Barnesville came up on the radar and I fell in love the moment I saw it.

Katie Johnson: Oh that's great to hear. So you said that you've always known you wanted to be in primary care. What led you to medicine in general and then primary care specifically? Were there specific things that made that a calling for you?

Dr. Doesken: Yeah, I actually grew up in a low income family and my mother was injured permanently when I was four years old. Then when I ... Just before turned 10 my brother was born with cerebral palsy. I saw lots and lots of doctors with them and overall I didn't like how they were treated. So I thought that I really like the medicine part. I find it challenging and I'd like to treat people better than my family was treated. So I decided to go into primary care to help people, especially those that don't like doctors.

Katie Johnson: Oh, what a great mission. You mentioned you fell in love with Barnesville right away. What was it about Lake Region Healthcare or about Barnesville that really made you know this was the right fit for you?

Dr. Doesken: So having worked at the residency and then searched all over, I found many different ways of running things and I particularly like to take time with my

patients. If you only need 10 minutes, all right, let's get it done in 10 and get you out. But if you need an hour, I liked the fact that this was the only location that I could arrange for an hour if someone need it.

Katie Johnson: That's huge.

Dr. Doesken: Yes, that is a very big deal, especially to provide quality care and answer questions and actually get input from the patient on what they want to do instead of just telling them what to do.

Katie Johnson: Sure. What about the Barnesville community in general? I don't know how much you've kind of gotten to to get a flavor for that. What are you most looking forward to about being in the community itself and working with that fantastic team? Dr. Thompson has been there forever, so many of them have been. It's really kind of a special place because of that too.

Dr. Doesken: Yeah, he and I hit it off right away. I really enjoyed his company. The thing I thought that was really neat is the demographics of the area. It's about my age, which means that I'd be able to possibly see infants all the way to a lot of young people where you can influence their health before it gets bad and that's the most important thing of all is stop it from happening instead of having to try and deal with it after it's occurred.

Katie Johnson: Right. That's a great perspective. When you talk about that and the time that you like to spend with patients, I think you've already shed a lot of light on it, but what is it that's most important to you when you think about providing a really great patient experience and the kind of experience you wished your family would have had?

Dr. Doesken: The best thing that I like to provide would be the opportunity to work as a team with the patient instead of being that patriarchal figure that tells you what to do and tells you this is the only way. I'd much rather have that discussion and let the patient know why I would like to do something and talk about it to figure out what's important to them because if quality of life is better than quantity, well, we can always shift focus and do things a little differently.

Katie Johnson: That's really powerful. We're heading into the holidays. We're heading into cold and flu season. When you talk about prevention, what kinds of tips do you have for our listeners about how they can be proactive about being healthy this time of year when it seems like such a challenge?

Dr. Doesken: It's kind of the basic things that you're taught from when you're young, good hand hygiene. You can't have enough of washing hands or disinfecting, because the moment that it gets one thing on your hand and you touch your eye, you touch your face, you're going to be infected and seven days later, you're not going to be feeling too well. Another thing that's actually very important is to stay hydrated. If you stay hydrated, then your immune system has the best

opportunity to work and defend you. Whereas if you're even lightly dehydrated, it can open up that passageway to get ill.

Katie Johnson: Oh, that's a really good tip and a reminder for me that drinking a lot of coffee all day isn't staying hydrated.

Dr. Doesken: That's correct. Or soda.

Katie Johnson: Right, right.

Dr. Doesken: Then probably the last thing for a trio of things would be a flu shot. If you are capable of having a flu shot and don't have any adverse reactions, it actually does do a lot of good and not necessarily for this year. It's in my mind, I'm young, I'm healthy, I can fight off the flu. But when I start getting into my sixties, seventies, eighties each flu shot I've gotten throughout my life is still in my body and that's when I really would need it to fight it off. So I see it as the true preventative, not for this year, not for next year, but for many years to come when I'm going to need it.

Katie Johnson: Oh, for sure. Not to mention we're protecting those around us when we get a flu shot, right?

Dr. Doesken: Exactly. Yeah. Especially, grandma, grandpa or those that are fortunate enough to have great grandparents. They don't have the flu shots. They didn't have him for how long and they don't have the immune system to fight it off. So you can carry the flu virus even when you don't get sick, you can have it on you, you can have it in you. You may have seen it before, had a vaccine last year or this year that is preventing you from getting sick, but you can still give it to your loved ones.

Katie Johnson: Yeah, absolutely. How about areas of professional interest? Are there any particular areas that you like to focus on or have a special interest in?

Dr. Doesken: I adore women's health and delivering babies. It's something I truly enjoy and something I would actually say I'm good at.

Katie Johnson: Awesome.

Dr. Doesken: Some of the other key things that I enjoy doing would be mental health and chronic disease care. Just to kind of help people get where they need to be once they already have like three, four diseases or conditions going on, trying to make those people more comfortable, decrease their burden of pills, et cetera, so.

Katie Johnson: That longterm management.

Dr. Doesken: Yeah.

Katie Johnson: What about when you're not working, what are your hobbies? What do you enjoy doing?

Dr. Doesken: My daughter and I have nine fainting goats and we truly enjoy raising them and our chickens.

Katie Johnson: Wow.

Dr. Doesken: Then we do a lot of art projects and outdoor explorations.

Katie Johnson: Sounds fun. Well, Dr. Sunnah Doesken, we are so excited to have you as part of the team at Lake Region Healthcare and the team at the Barnesville area clinic. We know that along with Dr. Thompson and Carrie Affield and Cathy Martin joining at the same time, you're going to make a fantastic team and the community of Barnesville is lucky to have all of you there. So welcome. Welcome to Barnesville and to Lake Region Healthcare.

Dr. Doesken: Thank you very much. We'll have lots of fun.

Katie Johnson: Absolutely. Dr. Sunnah Doesken, my guest today on Apple a Day, new provider in primary care at the Barnesville area clinic for Lake Region Healthcare. Dr. Doesken and Katie Johnson reminds you there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.