

S O U T H W E S T F L O R I D A ' S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

February 2023

Collier Edition - Monthly

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AT THE RIGHT
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**STRATEGIES
TO IMPROVE
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WELCOMES:**

Emilio Garrido Sanabria, M.D., PhD
Psychiatry and Neurology

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**COVID-19 AND
ITS POTENTIAL
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AACD ACCREDITATION

What is it and Who has it?

By Long Huynh, DMD

The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) is dedicated to advancing excellence in the art and science of comprehensive cosmetic dentistry and encouraging the highest standards of ethical conduct and responsible patient care.

With the formation of the Accreditation (AAACD) and Fellowship programs, the AACD began offering the most stringent and respected postgraduate certification in cosmetic dentistry to both dentists and laboratory technicians. Accreditation, the Journal of Cosmetic Dentistry, and the AACD's cutting-edge Annual Scientific Session have solidified the Academy's position as the leading cosmetic dental organization in the world.

Accreditation vs. Membership in the AACD

Numerous dentists in the US advertise themselves as cosmetic dentists and "members" of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. However, there is a HUGE difference between paying annual dues to become a member and achieving full Accredited status (AAACD). Accreditation with the AACD is one of the highest honors that a cosmetic dentist can achieve. The Accreditation process includes rigorous written and oral exams, accreditation workshops, and the submission of specific cosmetic casework to be closely evaluated and scrutinized by an expert AACD panel. Only the most skillful cosmetic cases, those that truly represent the mission and exceptionally high standards of the AACD, can pass the test for Accreditation.

Dr. Long Huynh Achieves Accredited Member Status in the AACD

Dr. Long Huynh achieved Accredited Member status in the AACD - the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. The AACD Accreditation process serves to set the standard for excellence in cosmetic dentistry.

Dr. Long Huynh is one of 426 current accredited members worldwide and the only accredited member of the AACD in Southwest Florida.

It's difficult, and it's life-changing, but Long Huynh, DMD, can tell you that completing the Accreditation process in the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) is worth all of the hard work.



Dr. Huynh has earned Accredited status in the AACD-an accomplishment completed by only 426 dental professionals in the history of the association, showcasing his commitment to excellence in the dental profession.

He reached this achievement after completing a rigorous credentialing process including a written examination, the submission of clinical cases for examination and an oral examination.

Dr. Huynh graduated from the Medical University of South Carolina. Before studying dentistry, he received a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from Georgia State University, Atlanta. After one year of advanced training in General Dentistry from University of Florida, School of Dentistry, Dr. Long Huynh has undergone extensive postgraduate training from many renowned cosmetic, implant, and general dentistry programs throughout the country. He is bilingual in English and Vietnamese.

His current memberships include the American Dental Association, the Florida Dental Association, the West Coast Dental Association, the Florida Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, and the International Congress of Oral Implantologists.

His outside interests include his family, charity work, fishing, gardening, and watching soccer. He and his wife, Dr Mai Huynh-Le, have two sons Dawson and Daniel, and a daughter, Katie. He is bilingual in English and Vietnamese.

The AACD Accreditation process serves to set the standard for excellence in cosmetic dentistry. The process encourages further education, interaction with like-minded colleagues, and the opportunity for professional growth. Accreditation requires dedication to continuing education and responsible patient care.

"We congratulate Dr. Huynh for achieving AACD Accreditation," said Mr. Nelson Rego, CDT, chairperson for AACD Accreditation. "While the Accreditation process is rigorous, it's the ultimate display of one's skills and commitment to the field of cosmetic dentistry."

Dr. Long was awarded AACD Accreditation Candidacy in 2012, and as of 2023, Dr. Long is the only dentist in the Naples area to hold the AACD Accreditation.

When you're ready to experience excellence in dentistry and begin the process of designing your perfect smile, contact us, or set up your appointment online. It's easier than you think - and you'll be surprised at how life changing that can be. Don't wait until it's too late - contact us today.

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LOVE YOURSELF

By Sharla Gayle Patterson, MD, MBA

February may be the shortest month but it's full of love around every corner. Valentine's Day gives us a dedicated day to shower those we love with attention and gifts. The name Valentine comes from a Latin word meaning "strength." When we think of valentines we think of hearts. The heart is our strongest muscle in our body. It works around the clock to keep our bodies healthy. But heart disease continues to be the number one cause of death in American women. How can we better take care of our hearts?

Our body is in a constant state of balance. As insults come to our bodies in the form of toxins, chemicals, and sometimes medical therapies that balance is tipped. The body then goes into overtime working hard to restore the balance. This effort can be hard on the body causing stress in the form of inflammation. This inflammation weakens our body and creates opportunity for harm.

Diet is your first defense. While all the chocolate hearts and candies will be prominently displayed this month, that's not really gonna give you the fuel to power your body. Balance is key so maybe a few here and there but the majority of your food should be healthy. Minimizing fat intake has been shown to decrease your risk of breast cancer. Post menopausal weight gain is the leading cause of breast cancer so making healthy food choices has benefits beyond your waistline.

Exercise is your next line of defense. Daily activity allows your heart to show off. Pumping blood full of oxygen and nutrients around to all your amazing organs - thank you heart! Start slow and increase slowly. Living in beautiful Naples, we have so many places to walk. Pick one and make a date. Put it on your calendar as an appointment. Find an accountability buddy and keep each other accountable.

Finally, it may be hard to swallow but some medical therapies can cause damage to your heart. If you have had certain chemotherapy treatment, radiation therapy, or decreased your physical activity because of medical treatments you may be at higher risk for heart disease. Knowing that these treatments are life saving, it's important to keep your heart as healthy before and after therapy.

Take time this month to love yourself - your heart will thank you.



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DELIVERING HEART CARE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Seconds count, especially during a heart attack. The risk of damage to the heart increases as time passes without treatment. Naples area residents can now find around-the-clock treatment for heart attacks at two Physicians Regional Health System hospitals.

"Providing cardiac access for our community, whether North Naples or Marco Island, is vital," said Mary Minix, service line administrator for cardiac services at Physicians Regional. "Now that we offer around-the-clock heart attack care, patients no longer need to experience extended transport times when seconds count. Physicians Regional is now your nearest heart attack receiving facility."

Physicians Regional - Pine Ridge opened the Heart Center in July 2020 which allows patients to receive a full range of cardiology procedures. The Heart Center, a 24/7 heart attack receiving facility, includes a dedicated cardiovascular intensive care unit for open heart surgery patients and a new recovery space for cardiac and interventional patients. Located in the hospitals newly renovated second floor, the center contains two operating rooms, three cardiac catheterization labs, five intensive-care beds and 15 beds for pre- and postoperative care.

Physicians Regional Heart Center services include:

- Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery
- Balloon Valvuloplasty
- Thoracic Surgery
- Valve Surgery
- Cardiac Catheterization
- Internal Cardiac Defibrillator Placement
- Pacemaker Implantation
- Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI)
- High-risk Electrophysiology Ablations
- Structural Heart Program: Watchman and TAVR

Physicians Regional Collier Blvd. and Physicians Regional Pine Ridge campus are now a 24/7 heart attack receiving facility. This means both campuses will be providing around-the-clock treatment for patients experiencing chest pain and other cardiac emergencies. Working in coordination with Collier County EMS and local first responders, the physicians and staff at Physicians Regional will expedite the diagnosis and treatment of all cardiac emergencies.



The goal is to have a patient receiving comprehensive treatment within 90 minutes of paramedics' arrival - a timeframe known as the Door-to-Balloon Golden Rule, for restoring blood flow in the blocked arteries.

You are never too young, or too old, to take care of your heart. Preventing heart disease is one of the key factors to keeping your heart healthy, and with February being Heart Health Awareness Month, now more than ever, it is vital to raise awareness and be informed about heart health.



Physicians Regional Cardiologist, **Dr. Sarah deLeon Mansson** says, "The foundation of cardiovascular treatment is exercise and adopting a more heart healthy diet. By incorporating stress reduction techniques such as yoga & meditation, along with the latest diagnostic and therapeutic regimens if necessary, my office provides a space for patients, both men and women, to be treated with this whole person approach."

Some of these healthy habits include maintaining a healthy weight, sustaining healthy sleep habits, and refraining from smoking. Additionally, eating a healthy diet that is low in saturated fat, cholesterol, and salt, staying away from refined carbohydrates, and exercising 30 to 60 minutes most days of the week, can be beneficial as well.

According to the American Heart Association the facts below are key to keeping a healthy heart:

- **Watch your numbers closely:** With age comes increased risk for heart disease, and your blood pressure, cholesterol, and other heart-related numbers tend to rise.
- **Watch your weight:** As you grow older your body needs less calories. Excess weight will strain your

heart because it is working harder to keep up, this increases your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol. Exercising regularly and eating smaller portions of nutrient rich foods can help maintain a healthy weight.

- **Know the signs:** Heart attack symptoms in women can be differ from those in men. Knowing the signs of a heart attack or stroke makes it more likely you will receive care in a timely manner. Acting fast can save your life and prevent serious disability.
- **Manage your stress:** We all have stressors in our lives. Whether it be at work, home, or in our day to day interactions in life, stress is inevitable. However there are many ways to combat and manage stress in your life.
- **Count to 10 before you speak or react.** Taking the time to think through your response to a stressful situation can help you make an informed decision about what you want to say and even help find a resolution
- **Take a break.** Going for a walk, walking the dog, listening to music or a podcast can help take your mind off of stress
- **Exercise.** Working out your aggression or stress is not only great for your mental health, but for your physical health as well
- **Take time for a quick meditation** or mindful moment
- **Sleep on it,** if it is not urgent it can be very helpful to take a beat and make a decision after a good night's rest
- **Remove yourself from the stressful situation.** Physically removing yourself from a situation that is causing stress can help reduce stress immediately and help prevent further tension/conflict

The heart is one of the most important muscles in the body, yet over 84 million Americans suffer from a form of cardiovascular disease. You could be one of them if you don't seek care fast. Whether you need acute emergency treatment due to a heart attack or have a chronic heart condition that requires continued care, Physicians Regional Healthcare System has cardiologists close to your home.

To schedule an appointment with a cardiologist please call (855) 85- GREAT or visit [PhysiciansRegionalHeartCare.com](https://www.PhysiciansRegionalHeartCare.com).



Purple Tea

For Women of Color... Every Color!



Accounting for an estimated 30 percent of new cancer cases in women each year, breast cancer has impacted more than 3.8 million women in the United States. Those who have not been diagnosed are considered at average risk, about 13 percent or 1 out of 8 women. However, family history, race, ethnicity, and genetics can increase your risk of breast cancer.

Women come in all colors, shapes, and sizes, but when it comes to breast cancer – we are united! The upcoming Purple Tea is an opportunity for all women to gather together to receive the most up-to-date information on the latest advancements in breast cancer prevention, screening, and treatment. A free community event led by renowned local breast health experts, women will learn more about their health and the disparities that affect their race and ethnicity in a supportive and inspiring environment.



The afternoon event will feature keynote speaker **Dr. Alan Brown** who has been recognized nationally for his community involvement and cancer research efforts. Currently serving as chairman of the Lee Health Regional Cancer Center

Multidisciplinary Breast Clinic, Dr. Brown is a radiation oncologist whose contributions have been highlighted in multiple publications. Additionally, he's been honored with several awards and grants, including the National Center on Minority Health & Health Disparities (NIMHD) Loan Repayment Program, which is awarded to clinicians and researchers who are making an effort to reduce health disparities and increase the participation of disadvantaged communities in clinical research activities.

Other speakers include Dr. Magali Van de Bergh, MD, a principal investigator with Florida Cancer Specialists who has led multiple clinical research studies with a focus on lymphomas, chronic leukemias, and lymphoproliferative disorders; Dr. Natalia Spinelli, a board-certified breast surgical oncologist who specializes in benign and malignant diseases of the breast and is trained in the latest surgical approaches in breast cancer care; and Debra Wilson, MSN, RN, OCN, who serves as the Vice President of Oncology Services at Lee Health.

Purple Tea attendees will also have an opportunity to hear from Honorary Chair Geraldine "Gerri" Ware, who earned a nursing degree from Florida A&M University before returning to Fort Myers, where she served as a hospital nurse, a public health nurse, and school nurse, as well as teaching Nursing at Collier County Schools for 15 years.

Knowledge is power, and cancer prevention begins with education and awareness. All women are invited to dress in their favorite purple and unite in the fight against breast cancer at the upcoming Purple Tea on February 23.

Purple Tea is a free event on Thursday, February 23. Held at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre in Fort Myers, tickets can be reserved by calling 239.839.6015 or visiting www.eventbrite.com/e/purple-tea-tickets-503552447927.



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Hold Tight on Those Resolutions Give Up Artificial Sweeteners



INSPIRE
EXERCISE MEDICINE

By Colin E. Champ, MD, CSCS - Radiation Oncologist

Sugar substitutes are what many turn to this time of year. For a quick rundown, aspartame, acesulfame, neotame, and saccharin are considered closer to manufactured chemicals when it comes to sweeteners. The sugar alcohols and sucralose are essentially sugars with a chemical added to hinder absorption or block the body's ability to break it down. They maintain their sweet taste but can pass through us untouched. Erythritol, for instance, gets absorbed into the blood stream from the intestines but leaves the body intact through the kidneys with urine; 10% can get passed into the colon, which can cause a laxative effect. Along these lines, xylitol, maltitol, and some of the other unabsorbed sugar alcohols pass into the bowels undigested, causing potential issues. Stevia is a very popular "natural" sweetener, but that doesn't necessarily make it a wise option.

The main reason we use artificial sweeteners is to supply our taste buds and brain with that sweet sensation without the insulin-stimulating and fat-promoting effect of excess sugars and carbohydrates. As described in the figure below, if carbohydrates turn to sugar in our blood and cause the release of insulin to combat this rise in blood glucose, simply removing the carbohydrates – but not the sweetness – will in theory eliminate this problem. In this sense, artificial sweeteners are basically viewed as empty calories; they are not a food, but rather a pleasure-inducing chemical.

Along with regular sugar, many artificial sweeteners are known to increase hunger, cause weight gain, disrupt the microbiome, spike glucose, and create inflammation.



Artificially Feeding Our Addiction

Both sweet foods and addictive drugs stimulate the ventral striatum of our brain via dopamine signaling. This pathway involves both the processing of rewards and learning. Our brain can actually change when we consume pleasurable and addictive substances. For instance, rats that drink a sweet sucrose cocktail for just three weeks experience changes in neuronal activity in the emotion and pleasure center of the brain, known as the limbic area.

Further supporting the connection between the addictive areas our brains and the sweet taste of sugar are studies revealing opioid-like dependence and withdrawal in mice forced to abstain from sugar. Severe withdrawal is experienced by mice provided sweet glucose and then the drug naloxone – the same drug given in the emergency room after heroin overdoses. The similarities to a withdrawing heroin addict are uncanny, interesting, and most of all, frightening.

Perhaps the most alarming study was one where scientists tested the effect of saccharine on morphine tolerance in mice. As a person takes more and more narcotic pain medications, their tolerance generally increases as the body adjusts to the opioid, requiring higher doses for the narcotic to be effective at fighting pain. When mice were given a daily saccharin solution for 28 consecutive days, morphine no longer resulted in its typical analgesia. In other words, the tolerance of opioids in the mice was increased from the sweet taste of saccharine, necessitating larger doses of opioid drugs to achieve similar analgesic effects. The scientists suggested that chronically elevated saccharin intake may cause the release of opioids within our body, resulting in raised tolerance to external morphine. This worrisome finding suggests that saccharin may elicit similar physiologic effects as heroine.

Elimination is Optimal

Artificial sweeteners are bad for your body's glucose control, offsetting the main reason most people use them instead of sugar and defeating the purpose of using them in the first place. The damage they impart to our bowel bacteria adds

Source:
<https://colinchamp.com/artificial-sweeteners-this-is-your-brain-on-drugs/>

fuel to the unhealthy fire of these little packets of chemicals. Acting on our brain much like cocaine or heroin is perhaps the most concerning of all and leaving us craving more sweets afterwards once again defeats the purpose of artificial sweeteners.

If we are turning to sweetened beverages and foods for pleasure, satisfaction, or to deal with stressful and difficult situations, this may signify deeper issues in our lives that need addressed. Turning towards more healthful behaviors for reward, and especially those that provide long-standing gratification, such as taking a walk or hike with friends and loved ones, or weight training instead is rewarding to the brain and body. Exercise stimulates the same reward areas of the brain as these addictive and sweet drugs. Leave the chemicals to science experiments and feed your body the foods that we thrived on for millions of years.

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Dr. Colin Champ, MD, CSCS

Dr. Colin Champ, MD, is a radiation oncologist with board certifications in radiation oncology and integrative and holistic medicine. Dr. Champ's research interests include the prevention and treatment of cancer with lifestyle modification, including exercise and dietary modification

PHYSICIANS REGIONAL MEDICAL GROUP *Welcomes* EMILIO GARRIDO, MD PHD

Physicians Regional Medical Group Welcomes *Emilio Garrido, MD PhD*, Board Certified in Psychiatry and Neurology. He speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese and specializes in the management of neurological conditions including epilepsy, peripheral neuropathy, headaches and botulin toxin, movement disorders including Parkinson's disease, cognitive impairments/dementia, and neurological autoimmune disorders including multiple sclerosis.

His main areas of specialization is Epilepsy and seizures (as noted below). Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological problems. About 1.2% of the US population has active epilepsy. Seizures can occur at any age in life but onset is more prevalent during childhood and in elderly people. There are several types of seizures, from brief episodes of staring, losing awareness, problems with speech to convulsive seizures and it is very important to establish an accurate diagnosis to implement an effective and safe treatment plan. Most people with epilepsy can live a normal life with some limitations as soon as seizures are well controlled.

Every three seconds, someone in the world is diagnosed with a type of dementia, which is the general term for the loss of memory, language and ability to make decisions enough that it impacts everyday life. Caused by damage to brain cells, dementia is becoming increasingly more common and a leading cause of disability and dependency among older Americans. However, evidence suggests living a healthy lifestyle could help prevent severe cognitive decline and a dementia diagnosis.

"Today, there's no cure for dementia so our best course of action is to prevent the condition from developing," says Dr. Emilio Garrido, M.D., PhD, a physician with Physicians Regional Medical Group. "Making a lifelong commitment to healthy living is our best bet for reducing the risk of dementia and increasing our quality of life."

Dr. Garrido completed his M.D. at the Institute of Medical Sciences of Havana in 1994. Then received his Ph.D. in Neurology/Neurosciences at Universidade Federal de Sao Paulo-Escola in 1999. He pursued his Epilepsy Fellowship at Department of Neurology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN and his Neurology Residency at Stony Brook Hospital Stony Brook, NY.

After his training, Dr. Garrido was the Senior Associate Consultant in Neurology and Director EEG Lab at La Crosse Mayo Clinic Health System, WI. He obtains a license to practice medicine in Florida, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Texas and is a member of the American Epilepsy Society and American Academy of Neurology.

Dr. Garrido recommends these lifestyle changes for preventing dementia and living a healthier life:

- **Eat fresh food:** A regular diet of processed and packaged foods is associated with a higher risk of dementia according to the American Academy of Neurology. Keep your brain and body healthy with whole fruits, vegetables, nuts and lean protein.
- **Learn new things:** Continuously challenge your mind with new activities and hobbies. Mental exercises like puzzles, card games or painting can help maintain cognitive function.
- **Manage blood pressure levels:** High blood pressure, or hypertension, can damage blood vessels in the brain, and if left unchecked could also lead to serious conditions like heart attack and Stroke.
- **Remain social:** Keep up with family, friends or get involved in your community through clubs and other organizations. Maintaining a social life can greatly benefit memory, ward off loneliness and improve mental health.
- **Stay active:** Cardiovascular exercise increases blood flow and oxygen to the brain and reduces the risk of cognitive decline. Just 30 minutes a day, five times a week of moderate exercise helps to maintain mental sharpness and improve overall health.

Dr. Garrido says, "I have found that many patients with hearing loss are not compliant with using hearing aids due to a stigma, or other reason, but recent studies have linked development of dementia and/or worsening of cognitive function to not using hearing aids. I also found patients that are clearly experiencing hearing problems, but they have never seen an audiologist or ENT." According to these studies, with limited hearing, your brain has limited opportunity to process language, and it appears that you forgot something that you never hear in the first place, but also chronically the decrease input of information (via auditory channels, and processing) will cause some cognitive decline (use it or lose it).

Physicians Regional Medical Group offers a range of care for brain, spinal cord and nervous system conditions. Our care includes extensive diagnostic capabilities, advanced treatment and rehabilitation and recovery services. Our doctors treat a wide range of neurological conditions, including everything from headaches and sleep disorders to stroke, seizures, multiple sclerosis and other disorders of the brain, spine and nervous system.

Also discuss with a primary provider to screen for any possibility of depression, as this can also cause a cognitive problem, and, in some cases, patients with depression have been misdiagnosed with dementia (pseudodementia).

Maintaining good and healthy sleep hygiene, new studies show that you need at least a minimum of six hours of healthy, and refreshing sleep. Problems like insomnia, sleep deprivation, obstructive sleep apnea may affect quality of sleep and lead to cognitive difficulties including memory problems, poor attention and concentration, headaches, etc.

An extreme deterioration in cognitive abilities is not a normal part of the aging process. If you or a loved one are experiencing memory issues, schedule an appointment now.

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UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

By Danielle Pasquale, PT, DPT

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), also known as heart disease, is the leading cause of death worldwide, according to the Center for Disease Control. CVD includes conditions such as hypertension, stroke, peripheral artery disease, and more.

Prevention is an important strategy to reduce death and suffering from CVD, and it relies on managing risk factors and starting preventive medications for those with elevated risk.

At the top of the CDC's list of primary risk factors for all chronic diseases are: smoking, poor nutrition, and sedentary lifestyle.

You may be more likely to develop cardiovascular disease if you have risk factors such as:

- High blood pressure (hypertension).
- High cholesterol (hyperlipidemia).
- Tobacco use (including vaping).
- Type 2 diabetes.
- Family history of heart disease.
- Lack of physical activity.
- Having excess weight or obesity.
- Diet high in sodium, sugar and fat.
- Overuse of alcohol.
- Misuse of prescription or recreational drugs.
- Preeclampsia or toxemia.
- Gestational diabetes.
- Chronic inflammatory or autoimmune conditions.
- Chronic kidney disease.

Living a healthier lifestyle can help prevent heart disease. This includes:

- Eliminating all tobacco use
- Eating a heart-healthy diet
- Following an appropriate exercise program
- Managing your weight
- Eliminating as much stress as possible

What are the signs and symptoms suggestive of cardiovascular, pulmonary, or metabolic disease?

- Pain, discomfort in the chest, neck, jaw, arms or other areas that may result from ischemia
- Shortness of breath at rest or with mild exertion
- Dizziness or syncope

- Orthopnea or paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea
- Ankle edema
- Palpitations or tachycardia
- Intermittent claudication
- Known heart murmur
- Unusual fatigue or shortness of breath with usual activity

FAQs ABOUT CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Q: Who is most at risk?

A: Individuals with two or more risk factors or individuals who are symptomatic are most at risk. Looking at preventative measures, those who are predisposed to CVD are those with a strong family history of CVD.

Q: How can one prevent heart disease?

A: Preventative measures include a heart healthy diet such as the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), which is my recommendation which is used nationally by cardiologists through the American Heart Association. A healthy diet, in combination with aerobic, continuous exercise which incorporates large muscle groups, will mitigate your risk factors for CVD. These exercises include dancing, swimming, cycling/spinning, rowing, and running.

Medication can be utilized, but consult with your doctor before taking any drug.

Q: What role do nutrition, stress, and exercise play in CVD?

For modifiable risk factors, some measures can be taken to help reduce a person's risk of developing CVD:

DIET: DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, and it is designed to help treat or prevent high blood pressure (hypertension).

The DASH diet includes foods that are high in potassium, calcium and magnesium, but limits foods that are high in sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

Studies have shown that the DASH diet can lower blood pressure in as little as two weeks, and it can



lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL or "bad") cholesterol levels. Hypertension and high LDL cholesterol levels are two major risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

EXERCISE: While not everyone has the same ability to exercise, getting some form of exercise for those who are able has immense heart health benefits. If you have angina or have had a heart attack, you may benefit from cardiac rehabilitation, which is a structured program that incorporates exercise, counseling, and education. Ask your healthcare provider for more information or a referral, if possible.

STRESS: Stress is another contributor to CVD, and managing it can improve quality of life. Affordable ways to relieve stress include meditation, breathing exercises, journaling, exercise, time in nature, and connection with others.

At Performance Optimal Health we use comprehensive research and the latest technology to incorporate the four pillars of optimal health (exercise, recovery, nutrition, stress management) into your care. Each pillar plays a significant role in your optimal health journey, and using tools and services from each of the pillars can greatly enhance and expedite your path to success.



Danielle Pasquale, PT, DPT, is a physical therapist and North Naples site lead who is certified in women's pelvic health, dry needling and pre/post-natal fitness.



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Stop Overlooking Signs of Incontinence

By Rolando Rivera, MD, FACS

Urinary incontinence is a common medical condition that affects over 40 million Americans, yet it often goes untreated or unrecognized. The reason for this trend is multifactorial, spanning from embarrassment to speak about this topic to dealing with more acute or morbid conditions that require focused attention.

Nevertheless, it is a treatable condition that frequently affects the quality of life of patients. Incontinence is classified as stress, urge, mixed and overflow.

In this article we will address some particular issues about urge incontinence.

Urinary urge incontinence (UUI) is defined as a sudden uncontrollable urge to urinate with or without frequent urination and associated leakage of urine. With urge incontinence, the bladder contracts and squeezes out urine involuntarily. Accidental urination can be triggered by

- sudden change in position or activity
- hearing or touching running water
- drinking a small amount of liquid

Patients with overactive bladder symptoms, such as urinary urgency, frequency and nocturia, may have associated incontinence over 60% of the time. Though more common in women than men overall, after the age of 70 the prevalence in both sexes is about equal.

There are two bladder abnormalities that are associated to UUI: neurogenic overactivity and detrusor overactivity (DO).

Neurogenic bladder occurs when there is interruption in the normal nerve conduction from the brain or spinal cord above the sacrum to the bladder, and results in loss of bladder sensation and motor control. Conditions associated with neurogenic bladder include the following:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- Parkinson's disease
- Intervertebral disk disease
- Cerebrovascular events
- Diabetes
- Traumatic brain or upper spinal cord injury
- Brain or spinal cord tumors



DO can occur due to multiple conditions, and many times as a sequelae of others; frequently, it may be idiopathic. Dysfunctions of the detrusor muscle or nerve pathways are the culprits for the bladder over-activity. Conditions that can lead to DO include:

- Bladder polyps and tumors
- Urinary tract infections
- Bladder calculi
- Bladder outlet obstruction from BPH or stricture disease

Medications, such as diuretics, increase the urgency and frequency of urination in some people, especially the elderly and bedridden. Dosage modification may ameliorate the bothersome symptoms. Dietary habits may lead to significant voiding symptoms. Caffeine (e.g., in coffee, tea, chocolate), carbonated beverages, spicy foods and tomato-based foods can irritate the bladder and cause detrusor instability, resulting in urge incontinence.

The treatment and management of urge incontinence includes nonsurgical and surgical modalities. An important factor, however, is identifying the potentially morbid or life-threatening conditions that may lead to incontinence, such as bladder cancer, recurrent UTI or neurogenic disorders.

Anticholinergics have been shown to be very effective in the treatment of both neurogenic and idiopathic cause of UUI. As a class, side effects include confusion, dry mouth, constipation, dizziness, visual changes and urinary retention to name a few. Beyond medications there are simple yet effective treatments.

Advanced treatment modalities for refractory patients to conservative therapy and anticholinergics are available in the urologic armamentarium. Urological evaluation of these patients will most likely

include a cystoscopy, urine cultures and urine cytology to rule out bladder pathology and bladder malignancies. As well, a detailed, computerized assessment study of bladder function called urodynamics may help the clinician in establishing the best treatment option.

Neuromodulation, either via sacral nerve pathways (Interstim) or peripheral nerve pathways (Urgent PC), have been shown to be very effective in the treatment of UUI in patients with refractory disease. These modalities are safe, FDA approved, minimally invasive and provide, through neural pathways, improvement in bladder function. Urgent PC is an outpatient, office-based, nonsurgical therapy that affects the sacral nerve plexus through retrograde pathways (posterior tibial nerve). Interstim utilizes the sacral nerve S3 to provide parasympathetic inhibition, thereby decreasing bladder over-activity. It is based on pacemaker technology, and effective in about 70% of refractory patients.

Injection of botulinum toxin (Botox) into the bladder muscle (intravesical injection) is an experimental treatment for refractory urge incontinence. This treatment has been shown to successfully reduce the instability that leads to urgency in both idiopathic and neurogenic patients.

Surgical urinary diversion is an invasive therapy used mostly for severe patients refractory to all other therapies.

Urinary incontinence is a common but overlooked problem. Urologic evaluation is warranted in refractory patients, or in patients in whom underlying bladder pathology or anatomic abnormalities, such as prolapsed, need to be addressed as well. Intervention beyond medications will significantly improve the quality of life of these patients.


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We Are Energy

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

I searched for God and found only myself. I searched for myself and found only God.
Rumi

The hints that we are one with Mother Nature's energy lurk wherever you turn your inquisitive gaze. The Bible says that in the beginning there was Light. Could 'light' be a reference to the visible light or the explosion of the Big Bang, or some other form of energy of the universe? Early Buddhist writings state that in the beginning wind created *gyatams*, the first worldly forms, by a spinning movement. This movement of the wind was melodious and it was this kind of sound that combined the form and the matter of the *gyatams* to form a whole. Could it be that both the Bible and the Buddhist texts were right? That the *light* and the *wind* (energy movements) worked in unison to put together first living forms on our planet? Do we even have a form or is this an illusion? This is open to discussion, but one thing is certain – there are energies in and around us which animate our earthly bodies.

In 1892 Nicola Tesla, a Serbian-born visionary inventor, decided to reveal the presence of some of these energies. He developed a method picture taking using high frequency currents to capture the "aura" around objects and people. In a dark room, Tesla would turn on the generator of his own design. He would stand on the platform-electrode, and his body would get wrapped in the glow. His hair would stand on end, while the glowing rays of light would radiate into the space surrounding him. Nobody should be trying to repeat this dangerous experiment.

Inspired by both Tesla, in the 1930'es Russian husband and wife team Semyon and Valentina Kirlian have developed a method of picture-taking which confirmed with meticulous precision that the living things are being of energy.

This visionary couple had assembled a Tesla generator in their own tiny apartment and ran hundreds of experiments on capturing energy imprints on film. Kirlians discovered that human skin is a repository of complex bio-mechanisms which are connected via nervous system with the internal organs. Another fascinating fact discovered by the Kirlians was that the electric picture of the person's "energetic aura" depends not only on their state of health but also on their mood and emotional state.



While the Kirlians were toiling away on the visual aspects of demonstrating the energetic potential of living things, many intuitive researchers of the human energy in the West were also working

towards the same goal. Upton Sinclair, for example, a famous American writer has published a book called *Mental Radio* in the 1930. In this book his wife, Mary, intrigued by telepathy, talked about having trained herself in guessing what was portrayed in the pictures drawn by her husband or someone else in the family. Of 290 pictures obstructed from her view, she has correctly described 65. This was significant statistical result, far superior to a random chance.

Here is what the great Albert Einstein said after reading Sinclair's book: "I read the book by Upton Sinclair with great interest and I am convinced that his subject deserves careful consideration, not only from amateurs, but professional psychologists. The results of the *telepathic* experiments carefully and clearly presented in this book are far superior to the ideas that a researcher of nature considers possible. On the other hand, in case of such sincere observer as Upton Sinclair, there is no doubt in accuracy of his presentation; his faith and reliability causes no doubt." In case you are wondering how to classify the research conducted by Mary and Upton Sinclair, it is a very straightforward telepathic experiment. Telepathy is not a weird notion. Derived from the Greek *tele*, which means 'distant' and *pathe*, which means 'experience', telepathy implies transmission of information from one person to another without using any of our known sensory channels or physical interaction. Pretty cool, huh?

In 1929 German scientist Hans Berger was experimenting with weather telepathy can be explained by a certain pattern of brainwaves, he eventually wound up inventing a first EEG (electroencephalographic) machine, which measures brainwaves and traces them out on paper, just like an EKG machine.



When I was in my 20-ies most people would smirk at the mention of telepathic experiments. Not today. Experiments like Sinclair's and Berger's helped to pave the way for Brain Computer Interface Research for paralyzed stroke victims of today. Teams of computer scientists, neuroscientists, and engineers all over the world are working in teams to decode the link between thought and movement. As a result of brain-computer interface research, many people who have been completely paralyzed can now have a tiny implant in the motor cortex of their brain detect their thoughts about moving the computer cursor and thus operate a computer like an able person would. Research is under way to extend the application of the Brain Computer Interface to operating robotic arms.

We are living in exciting and disturbing times when our capacity for producing and processing energy is evident and undeniable. It would be prudent to get acquainted with this built-in potential and learn how to protect it and nourish it. By doing so we will be one step ahead of the human tendency for self-destruction.



Svetlana Kogan, M.D. is a Board Certified Medical Doctor with 20 years of experience. She has appeared as a health expert on FOX, ABC, CBS, and NBC prime time TV, and has authored hundreds of publications for internet and print. She moved her Concierge Internal

Medicine practice from Manhattan NYC to Naples, where her focus is on fusing traditional medicine with holistic approach to illness and prevention.

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STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE HEART HEALTH

Jose M. Baez, M.D., F.A.C.P., Board Certified by American Board of Internal Medicine

You probably don't spend much time thinking about your heart throughout the day. If it is working properly, you probably don't think about it at all. However, the heart is the most important muscle in your body and deserves a little thought to assure that it is pumping blood and oxygen to all of your organs.

When your heart doesn't get the care it needs, serious problems can develop in the lining of the arteries, which then lead to plaque formation. Plaque is what leads to heart attacks and blockage of blood flow in the arteries. It is important to understand the conditions that affect your heart and the habits that can help prevent or manage them. Taking action will help you keep your ticker in top shape.

As you may already know, eating certain foods can increase (or decrease) your risk of heart disease. However, changing our well-established eating habits can be difficult. Learning how to eat properly shouldn't be just a New Year's resolution that gets thrown out by Valentine's Day. Once you learn which foods to eat more of and which ones to limit, you will be well on your way to a heart-healthy diet. Strategies for a heart-healthy diet

1. Control portion sizes

Believe it or not, how much you eat can be as important as what you eat. Overloading at mealtime can leave you not only feeling stuffed, but it also leaves you way over the normal number of calories you should be taking in. This is especially difficult when we eat out. When we head to our favorite restaurant, we can be caught in a guilt trap. We feel guilty that we've paid all of that money and didn't clean our plate, but if we eat it all and feel stuffed and guilty. It can feel like a no-win situation. That is why eating at home is really our best bet.

Here are 3 simple things we can do to help control our portion size:

- Use a small plate or bowl to help control your portions.
- Eat more low-calorie, nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables
- Eat smaller amounts of high-calorie, high-sodium foods, such as refined, processed or fast foods.



2. Increase your fruits and vegetables intake

Your parents were right: Eat your fruits and veggies! These provide a variety of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber — all things known to help prevent disease. If you have high blood pressure, a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and grains is especially recommended.¹

How to increase fruits and vegetables in your diet:

- Buy pre-cut vegetables and fruit (fresh or frozen), and then bag them up for a snack or to add to a dish.
- Have a vegetable-based soup or garden salad with light dressing with your usual sandwich at lunch.
- Make a fruit and veggie smoothie with produce that needs to be eaten quickly.

3. Choose whole grains

Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health. You can increase the number of whole grains in a heart-healthy diet by making simple substitutions for refined grain products. Or try a new whole grain, such as quinoa or barley, if you haven't already. And just to be clear, white flour isn't a whole grain and since it is used in white bread, noodles, cakes, and a plethora of other things, think twice before reaching for any of those.

1. 8 steps to a heart-healthy diet (2022) Mayo Clinic. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Available at: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/in-depth/heart-healthy-diet/art-20047702>.

2. Zaleska (2023) How to create a heart-healthy diet plan, Cleveland Clinic. Cleveland Clinic. Available at: <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/heart-healthy-diet>.

4. Limit saturated fats and trans fats

Not all fat is bad. There is actually "good fat" that we need in our diets. However, trans fats and saturated fats are not among those. These fats raise your LDL cholesterol which can cause plaque buildup in your arteries.

A better choice is consuming good fats, or mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. You'll find these in nuts, seeds, avocados, olives, flaxseed, soy and fatty fish. Red meat is high in saturated fat, as are certain kinds of cheese. So those should be avoided or at least limited.²

There are simple ways to cut back on saturated and trans fats:

- Trim fat off meat or choose lean meats with less than 10% fat.
- Use less butter, margarine and shortening when cooking and serving.
- Use low-fat substitutions, when possible, for a heart-healthy diet. For example, top a baked potato with low-sodium salsa or low-fat yogurt rather than butter, or use sliced whole fruit or low-sugar fruit spread on toast instead of margarine.

About Dr. Baez

José M Baez MD, FACP is a Board-certified Internal Medicine specialist with over 30 years of experience in both inpatient and outpatient settings. He is a Graduate of Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in NY. As a Ward Attending at Harlem Hospital, affiliate of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, he served the Greater NYC community. Subsequently, he established a private practice in Fairfield County, CT. He was also Assistant Clinical Professor at University of Connecticut, School of Medicine. Dr. Baez has been a stable member of the Naples community for 10 years, a member in good standing with the Collier County Medical Society and voted Naples Illustrated Top Physician 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

If you'd like to speak to a professional about how to eat heart-healthy, contact Dr. Jose Baez, MD. Dr. Baez is a Board-certified physician with more than 30 years' experience. He can be contacted via email at info@JoseMBaezMD.com or by calling his office at 239.777.0663. His website (www.josembaezmd.com) includes information about concierge medicine and how it can work for you.



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LASIK - All You Ever Wanted to Know

LASIK is a quick and painless procedure that can give you long-lasting vision without glasses or contact lenses. That's why, since its introduction more than 25 years ago, millions of Americans have turned LASIK for correcting nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism and giving them visual freedom.

The LASIK team at Quigley Eye Specialists consist of a dedicated LASIK staff as well as LASIK surgeons Jeffrey Robin, MD, Duane Wiggins, MD and Emmanuel Kai-Lewis, MD. Drs. Robin, Wiggins and Kai-Lewis are all Board-certified ophthalmologists who have undergone fellowship training in LASIK and other types of refractive surgery and have decades of LASIK surgical experience and combined conducted tens of thousands of successful LASIK procedures. Beyond experienced and skilled surgeons, Quigley Eye Specialists has state-of-the-art diagnostic and laser technologies to help achieve the best possible LASIK results.

"LASIK is one of the most studied – and most successful – elective surgical procedures in all of medicine. At Quigley Eye Specialists, we realize that the keys to getting consistently great results with LASIK include proper patient selection, highly experienced staff and surgeons, and the most advanced laser technologies. My colleagues and I believe that at Quigley we have the best available, FDA-approved, diagnostic and laser technologies, including the Zeiss Visumax and Wavelight Allegretto lasers, and we are capable of producing great LASIK results with a quick, painless and bladeless procedure. And, we are committed to providing not only great vision results but also a concierge type of customer experience for our LASIK patients," explains Dr. Robin.

LASIK FAQs:

What does "LASIK" stand for?

LASIK is an abbreviation for "laser in-situ keratomileusis"; which translates to using a laser to reshape the cornea. The cornea is the clear window on the front of the eye and is a very powerful focusing element for the eye. By changing the curvature of the cornea, the laser can – in an extremely precise and computer-controlled method – change the focusing power and improve vision without glasses or contact lenses.



What is nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism?

The eye is like a camera and has lenses (including the cornea) which work to focus incoming light rays on the visually sensitive retina which lines the inside of the back of the eye. For many people, incoming light rays aren't focused precisely on the retina; this is called a "refractive error". The most common refractive error is nearsightedness (also called "myopia"); in this condition vision is blurred at distance while up-close vision is usually good; nearsighted patients usually start wearing glasses or contact lenses at a young age. In farsightedness (also called "hyperopia"), patients frequently can have excellent distance vision but begin to develop reading difficulty at a younger than normal age; people with high degrees of farsightedness may have both blurry near and distance vision even at a young age. The causes of nearsightedness and farsightedness usually have to do with abnormalities in the length of the eye. In astigmatism, the cornea is not symmetric, meaning that one axis has a different curvature than the other axis; astigmatism commonly accompanies nearsightedness and farsightedness. Advanced LASIK lasers are usually capable of accurately correcting all of these refractive errors.

How does the LASIK procedure work?

Modern LASIK is completely bladeless and utilizes 2 lasers. The first laser creates an ultra-thin section on the front of the cornea (called the "flap"). The second laser – which provides the actual reshaping and vision correction – is applied under the flap. Both laser applications involve usually less than 30 seconds.

Will I feel discomfort?

Numbing drops – like those used in routine eye exams – provide excellent anesthesia during LASIK. The vast majority of patients experience no discomfort.

How long does the procedure take?

In most cases, both eyes can be treated in less than 20 minutes.

How soon do the eyes recover?

At the close of the procedure, you can expect vision to be improved although foggy. Usually within 24-36 hours, patients note vision similar to when they were wearing their glasses or contacts.

What about patient safety?

Thorough and careful preoperative evaluation is one of the keys to LASIK success. At Quigley Eye Specialists, we realize that not everyone is a good candidate for LASIK; in some cases, other types of refractive surgery may be offered and – uncommonly – we may advise that it is in the patient's best interest not to have refractive surgery. In addition to performing a complete eye health evaluation and utilizing state-of-the-art diagnostic technology, at Quigley Eye Specialists your surgeon will be actively involved in your preoperative evaluation and recommendation process.

Who is a good candidate for LASIK?

The best candidates for LASIK are between the ages of 18 and 50 and have refractive errors (nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism) that are in the low-to-moderate ranges. Patients also need to have good general health and no active eye diseases as well as having stable eyeglass/contact lens prescriptions. Specific candidacy determination, of course, will require thorough eye health evaluation with appropriate diagnostic testing and evaluation by your surgeon.

Who should not have LASIK?

People who might not be good candidates for LASIK include those who: are outside of the 18-50 age range, have changing prescriptions, have certain medical health issues, have active eye diseases or disorders. In some cases, patients' lifestyles, activities or job needs may also be factors. At Quigley Eye Specialists, we recognize that not everyone is a good candidate for LASIK and that a thorough preoperative evaluation is the key to determining good candidacy. For some patients, we may recommend refractive procedures other than LASIK and for others we may recommend no refractive surgery at all.

Has LASIK technology become more advanced over the years?

Yes. Over nearly 3 decades, LASIK technology has advanced to enable to procedure now to be completely bladeless ("all laser") and to have superlative accuracy and predictability. At Quigley Eye Specialists, our LASIK lasers (Zeiss Visumax and Wavelight Allegretto) enable our LASIK patients to have extremely comfortable procedures with accurate vision results.

Are there other options than LASIK?

Yes. Dr. Robin, Dr. Wiggins and Dr. Kai utilize other procedures to correct refractive errors and will make procedure recommendations based on their preoperative evaluation in discussion with the patients. Alternative procedures to LASIK include PRK, SMILE and ICL.

Are patients satisfied with results?

Yes. Scores of published studies, including those sponsored by the FDA and Dept of Defense, have demonstrated extremely high patient satisfaction results following LASIK (even more than 95%). It is not uncommon with modern LASIK for patients to achieve vision as good as or even better than they had with their best pair of glasses or contact lenses. Most Americans know family members, friends and/or co-workers who have had excellent LASIK results. We frequently hear from people that having LASIK was "the best thing I ever did!".

What is the next step?

If you are considering LASIK, the first step is a complete eye health evaluation. After the evaluation, the specialists at Quigley Eye will discuss your vision goals and develop a customized treatment plan designed specifically for you.



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(239) 466-2020 | www.QuigleyEye.com

Quigley Eye Specialists, founded in 1988, consists of more than 100 medical professionals, including surgeons, optometrists, retina specialists and technicians. Offices are conveniently located throughout Southwest Florida in Sarasota, Venice, North Port, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Cape Coral, Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres, Bonita Springs, Naples and Coral Gables.

For more information, call (239) 466-2020 or visit www.QuigleyEye.com.



Call now for a COMPLIMENTARY LASIK consultation at 239-466-2020.

**Dr. Jeffrey B. Robin**

Board certified Ophthalmologist and fellowship-trained Advanced Refractive Surgery Specialist with more than 30 years of LASIK and refractive surgery experience. Dr. Robin has devoted his professional career to refractive corneal surgery including LASIK, PRK, SMILE and related procedures. He completed medical school at Jefferson Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University and his ophthalmology residency at Georgetown University Medical Center where he served as Chief Resident. In addition, he completed two fellowships, first in corneal and refractive surgery at The University of Southern California and the second in corneal virology and immunology at Louisiana State University. Dr. Robin has extensive experience in the research, teaching and clinical practice of LASIK and has performed tens of thousands of LASIK and other refractive surgery procedures (including many family members). Additionally, Dr. Robin was one of the first eye doctors in the world to have laser vision correction for his own nearsightedness (1992!). His extensive qualifications place him among the top refractive surgeons in the United States.

**Dr. Emmanuel Kai-Lewis**

Board certified and fellowship trained cornea and refractive surgeon with more than a decade of experience, Dr. Kai is an ophthalmologist at Quigley Eye Specialists, one of the nation's leading multispecialty ophthalmology practices. He earned his medical degree at Howard University, completed a residency at West Virginia University Eye Institute and a Cornea Fellowship at the University of Minnesota Eye Clinic, becoming an expert in cornea/external disease and refractive surgery.

**Dr. Duane Wiggins**

Board certified ophthalmologist and fellowship trained LASIK surgeon, Dr. Wiggins has more than 20 years of experience in LASIK and refractive surgery. Dr. Wiggins earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. After completing his residency at the Scott and White Hospital and Clinic in Temple, Texas, Dr. Wiggins became fellowship trained in laser refractive surgery at the International Eyecare Laser Center in Houston. He is also the proud recipient of the TLC Laser Vision Milestone Award.

6 Tips for Achieving a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle

By Diana Macian, M.D. - WellcomeMD - Naples

Heat disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States. The good news is we are able to significantly change our cardiometabolic risk by focusing on the following healthy lifestyle choices.

1. Nutrition. To reduce cardiometabolic risk you want a diet rich in antioxidants. This will help decrease inflammation, manage blood sugar levels, and decrease oxidation. Sounds like a tall order, but it's not as difficult as it sounds. While eating, make sure half of your plate is fruit and vegetables and your daily diet includes plenty of nuts (unsalted), fiber (beans/peas), and omega-3s which are found in fish, edamame/soybeans, seaweed, or flax, and chia seeds. Work on decreasing your intake of red meat, refined carbohydrates (white flour, pasta, pastries), and simple sugars (soda, fruit juice).

2. Movement / Exercise. Exercise has great benefits outside of cardiometabolic improvements such as improving brain health, losing weight, decreasing cancer risk, and balancing your hormones. Daily exercise is more likely to occur if it is scheduled.

Since sedentary behavior puts you at higher risk, try to avoid sitting for prolonged periods. Set your Apple Watch or Fitbit to remind you to move hourly or consider a standing desk.

3. Stress management / Mindfulness. Stress will kill you, literally. It increases your blood pressure, can cause arrhythmias and heart attacks, increase fat deposition, and increase insulin resistance to name just a few of its effects. Mindfulness will help improve your heart rate variability, lower your cortisol levels, help your brain to focus, decrease anxiety and depression, and help you better deal with curveballs life throws at you. There are many ways to incorporate it in your life, like meditation, breathing techniques, yoga, tapping and walking in nature. Try them all and stick to what works best for you.



4. Losing weight. This takes work and is a lifelong journey to maintain the weight loss. If you need additional assistance, use an app that counts your calories such as Lose It! or My Fitness Pal. It takes 3,500 calories to burn off one pound, so either you must burn it off with exercise, eating less, or a combination of both. If you don't need to count calories try using a smaller plate for meals to reduce portion size and clean out your pantry of junk foods or foods that are your downfall. Try to limit your favorite unhealthy snacks to individual portion sizes or only when you eat out.

5. Quitting smoking. Make an appointment with your doctor to discuss options for helping you quit.

6. Limiting your alcohol intake. Let's face it, alcohol is a toxin, an enjoyable one at times, but still a toxin. It can impair the brain's ability to function, raise your blood pressure, cause cardiomyopathy (heart enlargement) and arrhythmias, increase cancer risk, cause liver damage, ulcers, worsen depression and anxiety, and the list goes on. The potential benefits of alcohol are relatively small and may not apply to all individuals. Current recommendations are for moderate drinking, which is no more than two drinks for men, and one for women per day.

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ASK THE EXPERT

Hearing Loss and Cardiovascular Disorders

Dr. Sarah Sessler, Au.D

Greater emphasis is being placed on hearing health now than ever before. Anyone over the age of 55 should have a baseline hearing test performed by a licensed audiologist. It is important to understand the risks you take if hearing loss and tinnitus are ignored.

"A growing body of research shows that a person's hearing health and cardiovascular health frequently correspond."¹

Studies have shown that a healthy cardiovascular system has a positive effect on hearing.

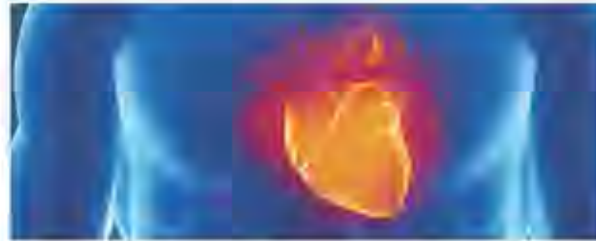
A study of our Brigham and Women's Hospital published online in The American Journal of Medicine found that a higher level of physical activity is associated with the lower risk of hearing loss in women. At the same time, the study found that a higher body mass index (BMI) and larger waist circumference are each associated with higher risk of hearing loss.²

The heart and hearing connection.

Poor cardiovascular health causes inadequate blood flow and blood vessel trauma to the inner ear. The inner ear is so sensitive to blood flow that disorders such as hearing loss, particularly at the lower frequencies, may be an early warning sign of cardiovascular disease.

The two-part Framingham Study³ hypothesized that low-frequency hearing loss was associated with cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular status was determined for approximately 1,000 patients of the audiology department. Associations between their audiogram patterns and cardiovascular variables were tested and controlled for age and gender. Logistic regression models were used to calculate cardiovascular risk factors from audiogram pattern. The models were applied to a separate group of 90 subjects recruited from cardiology and geriatric medicine clinics, who were also given audiograms.

Results indicated a significant association between low-frequency hearing loss and cardiovascular disease risk factors. When controlling for age, hypertension, diabetes, smoking and hyperlipidemia, low-frequency hearing loss was significantly associated with the following cardiovascular disorders:



- Intracranial vascular pathology (stroke and transient ischemic attacks)
- Peripheral vascular disease
- Coronary artery disease
- Myocardial infarction

Ipsa facto, low-frequency hearing loss may be considered a marker indicating the presence or potential development of cardiovascular disease.

"We conclude there is a significant relationship between cardiovascular status and audiometric pattern."⁴

"(There is) significant evidence that impaired cardiovascular health negatively impacts hearing ... improved cardiovascular health may contribute to healthier ears, particularly among older adults."⁵

Researchers concluded individuals with cardiovascular disorders may be more prone to hearing loss and therefore in need of hearing evaluations. They also found an association between low-frequency hearing loss and numerous cardiovascular disease events.

The negative influence of impaired cardiovascular health on both the peripheral and central auditory system, and the potential positive influence of improved cardiovascular health on these same systems, has been found through a sizable body of research conducted over more than six decades. The most significant positive relationship between improved cardiovascular health and improvements in those auditory systems has been found in older adults. If that relationship continues to be confirmed, then a potential new avenue for auditory rehabilitation on behalf of adults who possess impaired auditory function may be discovered.

Certain audiogram patterns have been found to correlate strongly with cerebrovascular and peripheral arterial disease. Because of this, audiograms represent a screening test for those at-risk. Patients with low-frequency hearing loss should be regarded as at-risk for cardio or cerebrovascular events, and appropriate referrals should be considered.

Cardiovascular disorder and tinnitus

Another hearing disorder associated with cardiovascular health is pulsatile tinnitus. Due to the number of major blood vessels close by the ear, disorders that affect them sometimes manifest as pulsatile tinnitus that closely matches the heartbeat. Some of these disorders include:

- atherosclerosis
- high blood pressure
- head or neck tumors that press on blood vessels
- turbulent blood flow caused by a narrowing or kinking of the jugular vein or carotid artery
- malformation of capillaries.⁶

Certain medication also causes tinnitus as a side effect. Therefore, patients who are on medication for cardiovascular disorders may also be at higher risk for tinnitus. A recent study found that that hypertension treatment with diuretics, ACE inhibitors, and calcium channel blockers were more prevalent in tinnitus patients, suggesting that an eventual ototoxicity of these drugs may be involved in tinnitus pathophysiology.⁷

If a patient has been diagnosed with a cardio or cerebrovascular disorder, it is important to advise them to have their hearing evaluated regularly and to get any hearing loss treated with hearing aids early, in order to preserve hearing levels and improve quality of life. Older patients should routinely be made aware of how important it is to keep their primary physicians informed of any hearing loss or tinnitus because it could be a harbinger of an as of yet undiagnosed cardiovascular disease.

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We Rang in the New Year Weeks Ago... **WHY ARE MY EARS STILL RINGING?**

By Florida Gulf Coast Ear, Nose & Throat

Tinnitus is a condition where one perceives a ringing sound in one or both ears in the absence of external auditory stimulation. It is most commonly described as “ringing in my ears”. Tinnitus can be caused by a variety of conditions such as ear infections, Meniere’s disease, vascular diseases, neurological disorders, structural dysfunction within the inner ear, and by musculoskeletal disorders. It is also highly influenced by the presence of mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders. Tinnitus is a symptom of a variety of diagnoses but is not considered an independent diagnosis by itself.

Tinnitus Stats

- 90 percent of tinnitus cases occur with an underlying hearing loss.
- 25 million American adults report experiencing tinnitus for five or more continuous minutes in the past year.
- 16 million people seek medical attention for tinnitus annually.
- Tinnitus repeatedly ranks as the number one disability among returning military service members, just ahead of hearing loss.
- There are no documented cures for tinnitus, but many treatments can help.

Noise Puts Us at Tremendous Risk for Hearing Loss and Tinnitus

- 26 million people in U.S. between ages 20-69 have a hearing loss.
- 22 million U.S. workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels annually.
- Nearly 50% of persons aged 12-35 years could be exposed to unsafe noise from personal listening devices, and 40% in this age group could be exposed to potentially damaging levels of sound at entertainment venues.
- Musicians are 400% more likely to have a hearing loss and 57% more likely to have tinnitus than the general public.

So, what do you do when the noise won’t stop? Determining the cause of your tinnitus is the first step to solving the problem. Using advanced hearing tests, a doctor or hearing professional will rule out serious causes of tinnitus, like tumors.



The evaluations also allow them to discover if the tinnitus is being caused by a treatable medical condition, which could mean that your head noise can be stopped altogether. If the ringing is not caused by a medical condition, but instead by hearing loss, they’ll want to explore which tinnitus therapy option is best for you.

Florida Gulf Coast Hearing Center can provide a medical evaluation as well as an audiometric evaluation if you suffer from tinnitus in Naples and Estero, FL. We’ll help to rule out certain causes and find a treatment option that works for you.

Treatments available at our two hearing centers include:

MASKERS - These sound-generating devices are worn on the ears and used to “mask” the perceived head noise caused by tinnitus.

COMBINATION HEARING DEVICES - These devices combine hearing aids and maskers in one, amplifying sound and masking head noise at the same time.

HEARING AIDS - Using a hearing aid to treat tinnitus is a very successful option. The increased sound input from the hearing aid naturally masks tinnitus noise.

FRACTAL TECHNOLOGY & PROPRIETARY SOUND PROGRAMS - This is a relatively new solution incorporating chime-like tones to induce relaxation and reduce tinnitus awareness.

NEUROMONICS - A breakthrough tinnitus treatment, neuromonics helps to train the brain to filter out tinnitus disturbance. The device is paired with headphones and delivers spectrally modified music that is embedded with acoustic neural stimulus. The sounds are precisely designed and customized to match each user’s audiological and tinnitus profile. This new treatment can provide long-term relief from symptoms.

TINNITUS RETRAINING THERAPY (TRT) - Using a combination of counseling and sound therapy, TRT is a form of habituation therapy. The therapy is designed to end negative reactions to tinnitus perception, first reducing and eventually ending the conscious recognition of the head noise.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AT OUR HEARING CENTER If you believe you’re suffering from tinnitus, our Naples and Estero hearing centers are here to help. Make an appointment with us today. We’ll complete a thorough evaluation to determine what treatment option is best for you.



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EXPERTS RANK THE **TOP 3** DIETS FOR HEART HEALTH

We've all heard the term "heart-healthy," but what does it mean in practice? How do you shop, cook, and share heart-healthy meals with your loved ones? The experts at *U.S. News & World Report* offer a handy ranking of heart-healthy diets, starting with a three-way tie for first place with the *DASH Diet*, the *Mediterranean Diet*, and the *Ornish Diet*. Here's a brief overview of each:



DASH Diet

DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. Since nutrients like potassium, calcium, protein, and fiber are crucial to fending off or fighting high blood pressure, the DASH diet promotes foods with these nutrients. It's fairly straightforward in that it promotes what you may know as common-sense good eating habits: eating fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat dairy, while limiting foods that are high in saturated fat, such as fatty meats, full-fat dairy foods, sugar-sweetened beverages, and sweets and also cutting back on salt.



Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet continues to be heralded as one of the best heart-healthy eating plans, based on research that indicates people living in countries on the Mediterranean Sea live longer than most Americans and suffer less from cancer and cardiovascular ailments. The diet is low in red meat, sugar, and saturated fat and high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, legumes, olive oil, and flavorful herbs and spices. Fish and seafood consumption is encouraged a couple of times a week, with poultry, eggs, cheese, and yogurt in moderation. Sweets and red meat should be saved for special occasions, though this diet allows a splash of red wine!

Ornish Diet

Dean Ornish, a clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and founder of the Preventive Medicine Research Institute, introduced this diet decades ago, based on his landmark heart disease reversal trials. The study stipulates that only 10 percent of daily calories can come from fat, and very little of it can be saturated. Foods with any cholesterol or refined carbohydrates, oils, excessive caffeine, and nearly all animal products are banned. Egg whites and one cup per day of nonfat milk or yogurt are an exception. Fiber and lots of complex carbohydrates are encouraged and up to 2 ounces of alcohol are permitted a day. (This diet also involves a regimen with stress-management techniques, exercise, social support, and no smoking.)

Living a heart healthy lifestyle

Nutrition along with daily exercise, and engagement in activities that add meaning and purpose to your life are all key to improving heart health. As you age at home, professional caregivers can help launch and maintain a healthy lifestyle to help prevent heart disease or provide comfort and safety to people living with heart disease. Home care isn't just about surviving, it's about thriving. A holistic approach to care can help older adults regain strength, develop healthier eating and exercise habits and improve quality of life.

You don't need to fight heart disease alone. Caregivers are trained to support clients as they develop new, healthier behaviors. In-home caregivers can provide heart-healthy meals to help prevent future cardiac events, encourage exercise to control blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and since high levels of stress are linked to heart issues, they can also work with clients on techniques to promote a sense of calm and wellbeing.

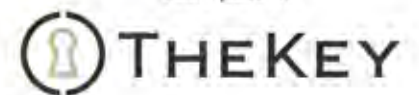
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Heart Health and Diet:

Making the Best Choice for Your Heart

When it comes to diet and nutrition, there are countless gurus and influencers claiming they have the best advice, but the truth is, depending on your overall health, some diets are just downright dangerous. If you have any heart or vascular conditions, you need to take caution with this type of advice and speak to your cardiologist about what's best for you.

As an example, let's look at the popular KETO diet. Many people are jumping on the ketogenic bandwagon, and while it's beneficial for some individuals, it can wreak havoc on the endothelial and arterial walls if done improperly. Saturated fats, processed meats, and dairy might sound delicious, but they can be detrimental to heart health and cause excessive plaque to form in the arteries throughout the body. If you want to limit simple carbs like bread, pasta, chips, and cookies, that's a fantastic idea and can help you maintain a healthy weight and reduce the risk of chronic disease.

There is no magic diet, but avoiding added sugars, white flour, packaged foods, and snacks is a great way to feel better, increase energy and reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and many other conditions. However, it's not just about what we avoid that's important, but it's also critical to eat a healthy diet the majority of the time.

Increasing your intake of fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits is a great way to increase fiber, phytonutrients, and numerous vitamins in your diet. This will feed your cells and can even help to reduce some of the damage that may have taken place over the years. It's also wise to add in lean proteins. These can be plant-based or animal products, or a combination of both. Things like finfish, shellfish, nuts, seeds, and legumes are an excellent choice to feed and nourish your body.

It's also important not to go FAT-FREE. Yes, you may think all cardiologists favor fat-free diets, but those old ways of thinking are outdated. It's important to avoid most saturated fats, but eating healthy fats is vital for the body to function properly. Foods like olives, avocados, walnuts, and extra virgin olive oil are full of essential nutrients and fatty acids that we need to thrive optimally.



There have been several recent studies on the effects of the Mediterranean Diet and Heart disease. Although the results vary somewhat, in the end, after following patients for several years, those on a Mediterranean style diet, which is rich in plants and fish, and limits sugar, meats, and packaged foods have a significantly less incidence of heart disease. The Mediterranean and similar diets also show that it has the most impact on those with high blood pressure, high lipid counts (cholesterol, triglycerides), diabetes, and obesity.

At Well-Being Medical Center of Naples, we offer:

Preventative Care

Our office offers all standard routine health exams for all patients. If further testing is needed, we will create a comprehensive plan to help each patient reach their optimal health.

Health Consultations

Our staff is composed of health professionals who are experts in their field. We work with our patients through one-on-one consultations to prioritize health goals and address any health concerns.

Patient Satisfaction

Our top priority is patient satisfaction. We go the extra mile to create and execute on individualized treatment plans to make sure each patient understands their health journey from start to finish.

Contact Well-Being Medical Center of Naples today at (239) 315-7801.



Dr. Ricardo Martinez

Dr. Ricardo Martinez is an internist in Naples, FL and is affiliated with NCH Baker Hospital. He received his medical degree from Superior Institute of Medical Sciences of Santiago de Cuba and has been in practice 20 years. He also speaks multiple languages, including Spanish. He specializes in hospital medicine, ambulatory care and is experienced in hospice and palliative medicine, bariatric medicine, diabetes mellitus, food allergy, and infectious disease. As of March 16th, 2020, Dr. Martinez has founded Well-Being Medical center in Naples Florida. He is looking forward to providing Medical care within primary care settings and urgent care service throughout the Naples Florida area.



239-315-7801

www.well-beingmedicalcenter.org

851 5th Ave. N. Suite 102, Naples, FL 34102

Advanced Cardiac Care That Comes To Your Home

Imagine this: “Jack” is someone you love; he suffers from cardiovascular disease. Jack’s life is a series of seemingly endless trips to the offices of his primary care physician and cardiologist. These visits are stressful and tiring for Jack, challenging his breathing, causing him chest pain, and robbing him of energy. You are also exhausted from caring for Jack and getting him to his many medical appointments. You worry when Jack’s symptoms spike out of control, sending him to the emergency room yet again. Both you and Jack want peace more than anything: relief from the symptoms of Jack’s illness, but also peace that comes from living without so much anxiety, uncertainty, and stress.

Avow, based in Collier County, offers a special program just for people like Jack and his family. Called the Advanced Cardiac Care initiative, the program was developed nationally by the National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI) and the American Heart Association (AHA). It brings together the best and most advanced treatments available for cardiac patients. Avow, a non-profit hospice and palliative care provider for 40 years in Southwest Florida, is specially trained to offer the program locally to those with heart failure.

“Cardiovascular disease is the number one disease killer in America, yet less than 5% of otherwise qualified patients enter hospice care for help,” says Dr. Cynthia Nehrkorn, vice president of medical services for Avow, which is also a member of NPHI. “Too many people think hospice is for the last days or hours of life. That is not true, especially for seriously ill patients like those with end-stage heart disease. Hospice programs help people live comfortable, less stressful lives, even as their diseases progress. Some patients even live longer than their doctors predicted because they improve under hospice care. Hospice is all about peace of mind, for both patients and their families.”

The Advanced Cardiac Care program is a lifeline for patients, addressing care gaps that include low utilization of hospice care, low access to proper care for minority families, and lack of education in proper symptom management and care.

“Avow treats advanced cardiac care patients in their homes, where they are most comfortable,” says Nehrkorn. “Our clinical team members receive specialized training in how best to relieve the symptoms that plague heart patients, such as chest



pain, fluid retention, shortness of breath, cough, fatigue, and loss of appetite or nausea. When patients receive this care in their homes, they are much more comfortable and at peace. Our program’s goal is to keep patients out of the hospital and out of waiting rooms, so they and their families can focus on the relationships and activities that make life meaningful.”

Cardiac patients in Avow’s program receive regular visits by a nurse to evaluate and manage their symptoms at home. Personal care aides assist with bathing and grooming the patient. There is no need for family caregivers to make multiple trips to a pharmacy: Avow has medications delivered directly to the patient’s home. Avow can also provide other equipment the patient needs, such as oxygen, an adjustable bed, and devices that assist the patient with walking.

“We work collaboratively with each patient’s primary care provider and/or cardiologist,” says Nehrkorn. “Hospice and palliative care programs take a team approach to care, involving not only the patient’s other medical providers but also the

patient himself/herself and the family. We follow the lead of the patient, ensuring that we respect his or her goals for care and wishes for a calm and peaceful life.”

Avow’s program also includes emotional and spiritual support for patients and families who need help in coping with the demands of illness and caregiving. Bereavement specialists who work with children and adults help families and patients come to terms with their fears and losses; this care is available any time to anyone, without cost.

For more information about Avow’s Advanced Cardiac Care initiative, other hospice programs, palliative care program, or grief/loss support care for children and adults, visit www.avowcares.org or call (239) 280-2288.



239.280.2288
www.avowcares.org

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICAL MARIJUANA, HEADACHES, & MIGRAINES

Headaches and migraines are some of the most prevalent threats to public health in the United States.

From an increased risk of heart disease to constant pain, headaches and migraines are serious neurological issues. However, studies point toward medical marijuana as a turning point in the fight against headaches and migraines.

Below, we'll discuss how medical marijuana can be used against migraines and headaches.

Why Headaches and Migraines are a Public Health Issue

According to self-reported data, nearly 1 in 6 Americans experience chronic headaches and migraines.

Furthermore, women are more at risk for migraines compared to men.

Headaches are extremely burdensome, but migraines are a significant health problem. Overall, migraines may lead to:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Irritability

Aside from these immediate risks, chronic headaches and migraines may lead to serious health concerns, such as:

- Heart disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke

Ultimately, recurring headaches and migraines require professional care. From a public health standpoint, migraines lead to an outsized risk, increasing pressure on medical resources.

Specifically, migraines indirectly cost the United States an estimated \$19 billion annually. From hospital bills to work-related absenteeism, migraines diminish the United State's workforce at an extreme rate.

How Medical Marijuana Assists Individuals With Headaches and Migraines

As it stands, current medical treatments poorly manage headaches and migraines.

Additionally, traditional migraine and headache prescriptions are flushed with adverse side effects. Traditional migraine and headache medicine produces their own problems, from dizziness to an upset stomach.

Luckily, medical marijuana for migraines and headaches has been extensively researched. Below, we'll discuss how medical marijuana assists individuals experiencing chronic headaches and migraines.

Decreased Glutamate Levels

When it comes to persistent headaches and migraines, glutamate levels play a significant role.

Specifically, increased glutamate levels trigger migraines or instances of aura. According to various studies, glutamate levels decrease when individuals consume medical marijuana.

By removing a common trigger, individuals who suffer from repetitive headaches and migraines may benefit from consuming medical marijuana, such as flowers, edibles, and concentrates.

Reduced Neurogenic Inflammation

Medical marijuana is a classic substance to decrease inflammation.

As migraines strike, receptors within the brain surge unopposed. Thus, neurogenic inflammation produces the electric pain sensation that individuals experience while undergoing a migraine.

Medical marijuana stimulates a response and opposes these receptor-based cascades. Ultimately, neurogenic inflammation is reduced, making migraines far less painful.

Serotonin Production

Medical marijuana is known to mimic the 5-HT1A receptors to produce serotonin.

In this case, serotonin reduces neurological pain while reducing stress. Overall, serotonin modulates pain, making bouts with migraine a much less painful experience.

Pain Reduction

One of the most important receptors in the body in regard to pain management is TRPV1.

The TRPV1 receptor is activated by cannabinoids, such as CBD, within medical marijuana. By harnessing medical marijuana rich in CBD, MMJ patients may significantly reduce the pain experienced during the onset of a migraine.

Additionally, TRPV1 receptors may inhibit various receptors associated with headache and migraine-induced pain. Thus, TRPV1 receptors play a crucial role in inhibiting the mechanism for headaches and migraines to occur.

The Best Medical Marijuana Products for Headaches and Migraines

If you're ready to reduce migraine and headache pain, it may be a good time to apply for a medical marijuana card.

Once a medical marijuana doctor has approved you, you're clear to purchase a wide range of MMJ products. However, some products may work better than others when combating a migraine's sudden and aggressive effects.

Medical Marijuana Vape Cartridges

When you need instant and potent effects, it's hard to beat vape cartridges loaded with high-quality medical marijuana concentrate.

Vape cartridges can reach deliver high percentages of THC — making them incredibly potent. A single puff from a vape cart can produce much-needed effects in the event of a sudden instance of headache or migraine.

Furthermore, vape carts are portable and easy to use when it matters most.

Medical Marijuana Tinctures

If you prefer not to smoke or vape — MMJ tinctures may be your best option.

Tinctures are consumed sublingually and are incredibly easy to use. However, tinctures may take upwards of 45-minutes to take effect.

Smoking or vaping medical marijuana may be the ideal method if you require rapid effects. Ultimately, consumers must experience various medical marijuana products to find out which works best when experiencing a headache or migraine.

When Should You Consume Medical Marijuana During a Migraine or Headache?

If you're experiencing a migraine or headache — you should act quickly.

Migraines typically intensify over time when left untreated, making them incredibly painful. Headaches may turn into migraines, so it's crucial to take the necessary steps to stop the pain in its tracks.

Overall, studies show a significant reduction in migraine and headache intensity when marijuana is consumed shortly after the onset. When caught soon enough, the migraine intensity may diminish considerably.

With this in mind, it's best to use a fast-acting medical marijuana product, such as flowers or vape cartridges or a THC nasal rescue spray.



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EXOSOMES

New Anti-Aging Powerhouse!

By Kathleen M Marc, MD, FACOG

Over the past few years, exosomes have made a name in the field of rejuvenation and antiaging. Based on the available data, it seems that exosomes will be an integral part of rejuvenation therapy, especially in people interested in stem cell therapy.

Unsurprisingly, many people have never heard of exosomes. So, what exactly are exosomes? How would they help with aging?

Exosomes, which are extracellular vesicles secreted by stem cells, are a powerful addition to regenerative medicine and restoration of skin health. They target the root causes of skin aging and can be used in both hair restoration and skin rejuvenation.

Stem cells, derived from adipose tissue of young adults, secrete cell-free vesicles called exosomes, which are active in cell-to-cell communication. They carry growth factors, peptides and protein-signaling molecules that facilitate cell growth. They are attracted to cells with inflammation and are absorbed. There, they release their cargo, which then works to speed up the regenerative process.

We stop producing elastin by age 18. Collagen production significantly slows by age 25. Exosomes have benefits that surpass PRP, platelet-rich plasma. Exosomes contain over 50 growth factors, compared to 8-10 growth factors in young/healthy adult PRP. It promotes skin cell proliferation by 80%.

Exosomes are indicated for topical use to improve the health of skin and hair. This regenerative complex can be combined with energy devices used in aesthetic procedures for amazing results. When Benev Exosomes are combined with any treatment that causes a wound healing response, they have been clinically proven to produce 300% more elastin and 600% more collagen than controls! The addition of these exosomes has also been shown to cut recovery time in half.



Exosomes can be used with micro-needling, after laser procedures, intense pulsed light (IPL) procedures, after chemical peels and after radiofrequency procedures (RF). They can be used in hair restoration with micro-needling of the scalp.

Exosome therapy for skin rejuvenation

As we age, our skin becomes prone to age-related deterioration, such as wrinkles. Primarily, these issues originate when you can't regenerate the lost components of your skin.

When applied to the skin, this treatment is highly effective for signs of aging, a dull and dehydrated complexion, calming sensitive skin, reducing lesions and scars (such as acne scars), creating a more even texture, and for shrinking enlarged pores.

Exosomes assist directly with increasing skin elasticity and collagen to promote firmness and smoothness. They carry the necessary information to the resident cells to trigger the repair of fine lines, wrinkles and areas of damaged texture. Patients should expect to see a reduction in skin irritation, redness, fine lines, age spots, dullness, and dryness.

Exosome therapy has been shown to improve acne, sagging skin, enlarged pores, scarring, uneven tone and have often been shown to increase volume in hollowed portions of the face due to aging.¹

Exosome therapy for hair loss

Exosome therapy for hair loss uses natural growth factors from the human body to help regenerate and regrow hair in both men and women. Exosome Therapy is particularly effective at restoring hair growth in the earlier stages of hair loss.

Exosomes are introduced around existing hair follicles to strengthen and upregulate them. This type of therapy can also stimulate the growth of new hair follicles in patients with hair thinning, balding and excessive shedding. The causes for this hair loss could be attributed to a host of reasons such as metabolic disorders, stress hormones, hormonal imbalances, free radical damage and genetics in both men and women.

Exosomes will cause natural hair growth in as little as two to three months, continuing throughout the year. The most noticeable results will be fully apparent after about six months.

Aesthetic Treatment Centers

As a leader in the industry, ATC always offers the latest technology in skin and body care. By combining their expertise through industry leaders, innovative procedures, and cutting-edge products, you will always receive remarkable results within the serene, inviting atmosphere of Aesthetic Treatment Centers.

References:

1. Cook, D. (2023) Exosomes treatments in Dallas at Advanced Skin Fitness medspa, Advanced Skin Fitness. Available at: <https://advancedskinfitness.com/dallas/exosomes-treatment/>.
2. Exosomes for skin and hair (2023) Dr Glancey Clinics. Available at: <https://www.drglancey-clinics.com/exosomes-for-skin-and-hair/>.

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To find out more about their procedures and expertise, please call **239-322-3790** for an appointment, or visit them online at **atcnaples.com**.



What are Hammertoes?

Michael J. Petrocelli, D.P.M., F.A.C.F.A.S., C.W.S.P.
Board Certified Ankle and Foot Surgeon and Board Certified Wound Care Specialist

Hammertoes are most frequently caused by structural problems in the toe or from wearing poor fitting shoes. It causes the the middle joint to bend. Hammertoe is most frequently caused by structural problems in the toe or from wearing poor fitting shoes. It is important to diagnose and treat hammertoe early because the condition tends to become worse over time. If left untreated, hammertoe can require surgery.

Your toes are part of your forefoot. They help you balance, walk, and move. Your big toe contains two bones. Your second through fifth toes contain three bones. Hammertoe results when the middle joint is bent.

Causes

Hammertoe commonly develops because of structural changes that take place over time in the muscles and tendons that bend the toes. People with certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, are at risk for developing hammertoe. It can be an inherited condition for some people. Other causes include trauma and wearing shoes that are too tight, narrow, or have high heels. The toe next to the big toe is most frequently affected by hammertoe.

Symptoms

The symptoms of hammertoe are progressive, meaning that they get worse over time. Hammertoe causes the middle joint on the second, third, fourth, or fifth toes to bend. The affected toe may be painful or irritated, especially when you wear shoes. Areas of thickened skin may develop between, on top of, or at the end of your toes. Thickened skin may also appear on the bottom of your toe or the ball of your foot. It may be difficult to find a pair of shoes that is comfortable to wear.

Diagnosis

Your podiatrist can diagnose hammertoe by reviewing your medical history and examining your foot. X-rays are typically done.



Treatment

There are many non-surgical treatments to help relieve symptoms of hammertoe. The first step for many people is wearing the right size and type of shoe. Low-heeled shoes with a boxy or roomy toe area are helpful. Cushioned insoles, customized orthopedic inserts, and pads can provided relief as well. Splints or straps may be used to help correct toe position.

Your podiatrist may show you toe stretches and exercises to perform, and can safely remove corns and calluses. You should not try to remove them at home.

Surgery

Surgery is used when other types of treatment fail to relieve symptoms or for advanced cases of hammertoe. There are several types of surgery to treat hammertoe. A small piece of bone may be removed from the joint. The toe joint may be fused to straighten it. Surgical hardware, such as a pin and screws may be used to hold the bones in place while they heal. Other types of surgery involve removing skin (wedging) or correcting muscles and tendons to balance the joint.

Collier Podiatry

It's important to be evaluated by an experienced podiatric professional if you're experiencing any

type of foot pain. At Collier Podiatry, Dr. Michael Petrocelli has been practicing podiatric medicine for well over 20 years. He is an expert in his field and a leader to his peers, he and his staff see a countless number of patients with heel pain and injuries in the Naples area.

Along with bunion treatment, Collier Podiatry will provide you with personalized instructions on the necessary amount of rest, stretching exercises and home care to get you back to doing what you love.

The caring supportive staff at Collier Podiatry is available to answer your questions and make your appointment. Please visit their website at www.collierpodiatry.com, or call them at (239) 775-0019



COLLIER PODIATRY, P.A.
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By Irena Basnikova

YOUR POSTURE IS KEY TO GOOD HEALTH

At Naples Fitness Wellness, we believe that the principles of good posture are the key to improving your overall health. The Strong Posture Program is seven steps in seven weeks to learn how the principles of posture impact and improve your health and help you identify what habits need to be changed to improve your posture. The Strong Posture Program is for you if you want to relieve pain, strengthen balance, increase flexibility, breath easier, and look younger.

There is strong evidence that posture exercise helps prevent stooped posture. Good posture can strengthen balance to prevent falls and fractures. Hunching over and balance problems are typically associated with aging. They are commonly accepted as "part of getting old" and are not treated. This is not necessarily true. Unlike the ads for osteoporosis drugs paid for by pharmaceutical companies, no advertising campaigns promote regular StrongPosture® exercises. We've seen significant improvements in posture and a reduction of fractures in post-menopausal women.

Another reason to keep your body moving as we age, and why posture-related problems are a growing epidemic in seniors, is that as healthcare improves in other areas, people are living longer. However, aging adults are at greater risk of posture and joint degeneration. The longer people live, the more time the accumulated consequences of poor posture must catch up with them. Posture and motion don't only affect how long you live, but also how well you live. Alignment and bio-mechanically related back problems are the #3 reason for all doctor visits in the United States.

Finding the best anti-aging strategies to live a long and healthy life is at the top of many peoples' minds. People often ask if the loss of mobility, flexibility, and vitality is just a normal part of aging. The answer is a definite no. Getting older does not have to result in physical limitations. The typical bent-over posture of old age occurs due to the body adapting to long-term poor posture. Injuries and age cause the joints to stiffen and the muscles to tighten. Consequently, as the shoulders and upper body become more bent forward, the muscles work harder to keep the body balanced. In turn, muscles become progressively tighter.



Posture Mechanics by the Numbers:

- 80 percent of Americans are impacted by back pain at some point in their lives.
- 65 million Americans suffer back pain every year.
- Musculoskeletal conditions, including arthritis, low back pain, and repetitive motion strain, are the leading cause of missing work.
- 83% of Americans rely on over-the-counter pain relievers.
- 2/3 of the people who have experienced back pain can expect an episode yearly.
- Low back pain is the most common cause of disability for people under age 45. This causes lost productivity, diminished life enjoyment, and the ability to perform routine daily activities.

If we let it, the aging process often begins with avoidance of movement. Some people start early in life to limit their activity because of pain or what they perceive may cause pain. Some people restrict or alter their training due to past injuries, and the injury causes abnormal movement patterns, which result in pain. Many other people eliminate activity just because they think it will cause discomfort. In some cases, our only limitations are those we place on ourselves. But this isn't an anti-aging mindset. Youth is a feeling, not an age. Think young and be young.

Naples Fitness Wellness acts as a catalyst for individuals who seek to enhance their physical strength and posture and boost their immune system. By identifying the need for physical & mental balance, wellness, and stability for athletes and adults, Irena introduces and coaches clients through their journey with Massage Therapy, Active Isolated Stretching, HOCATT (Hyperthermic Ozone and Carbonic Acid Transdermal Therapy), HuGo High-Intensity PEMF (Pulsed Electromagnetic Field), and other effective techniques. Irena is trained to increase clients' well-being and athletic performance by providing wellness care, technology, and training services. Staying ahead of wellness trends, Naples Fitness Wellness' facility includes Centropix products, Swiss-made technology designed to introduce desirable frequencies and regulate electro-smog produced by cell phones, Wi-Fi, and 5G. With you in mind, Naples Fitness Wellness delivers life-changing results that help reduce physical pain, repair & restore flexibility, and improve balance.



At *Naples Fitness Wellness*, we accomplish tremendous results by combining various training programs and massage therapy to suit each client's individual needs. Whether your goal is to gain or lose weight, rehab an injury, or find a healthier way of life, we have a program for you!



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WHY YOUR KNEE HURTS, AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

REGENERATIVE MEDICINE FOR CARTILAGE WEAR OR TEAR

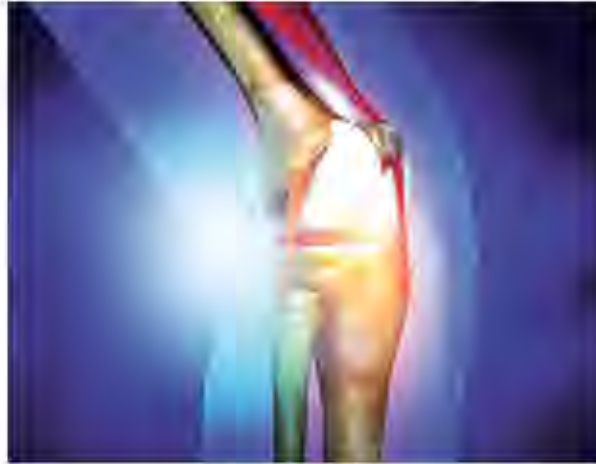
Due to injuries, mechanical issues, or overuse and aging, cartilage may be damaged or lost, Resulting in pain.

Stem cell allograft - In times of injury the body recruits its own stem cells for repair and healing. As we age our own stem cells become less efficient. The addition of millions of young potent stem cells from an allograft helps to body to heal like it did when it was younger and more capable. Allograft is a tissue donation and transplant from one person to another. Connective tissue from one source containing live mesenchymal stem cells may help with inflammation and regeneration of cells in a recipient. Umbilical cord stem cells from Wharton's jelly is considered a connective tissue. The Allograft has nothing to do with the baby. It comes from the umbilical cord from a healthy birth. The umbilical tissue could either be discarded or preserved for medical benefits. The tissue contains no antigens so there is no rejection and no matching required for the recipient. The allograft is administered with a simple injection and there is no downtime after the procedure.

Placental and amniotic fluid allograft - While Wharton's jelly contains 7% by volume mesenchymal stem cells and 93% other growth factors, the placental allograft contains no live stem cells but 100% growth factors. While this application doesn't work quite as well as the live cells combined with the growth factors, if it is done more than once similar results and outcomes can be obtained.

Platelet rich plasma PRP - Platelets from your own blood draw are concentrated and injected into the site of needed repair. Your own platelets release growth factors in the area to also assist in regenerative healing. There are many different techniques for concentrating the platelets. Also, the younger and healthier the patient the healthier the platelets will be, and better outcomes can be expected.

Prolozone Therapy - a proliferative mix of vitamins, natural sugars, and ozone are combined to cause a reduction in inflammation and stimulate tissue repair.



Viscosupplementation - using hyaluronic acid molecules. There are many hyaluronic acid products available that are commonly used to cushion and lubricate the joints. The natural fluid within the knee joint space is normally high in hyaluronic acid molecules. As we age the concentration of these molecules is less therefore the addition of these products can help the joint move better and feel better for a period of time. Examples of these products are Genvisc, Hymovis, Hyalgan, and Synvisc. These products will do nothing to regenerate or repair the joint and the results are temporary.

Mechanical issues - There are 13 muscles which cross the knee joint. These muscles must work in unison to properly move the joint. Some muscles may become too tight and other muscles may become weak over time. The imbalance of tightness or weakness accelerates wear and tear on the joint. There are very few practitioners which are skilled in diagnosing then lengthening the tight muscles and strengthening the weak muscles. To complicate matters further, there are 12 muscles that cross the ankle and 16 muscles that move the hip. When walking these muscles also play a role in the mechanics of the knee joint and must also be considered.

Four nerves from the low back innervate the muscles that move the knee. Nerve function and back function therefore must also be considered in a complete knee rehab regimen.

Alignment - Many patients with knee pain may have worn out only the inside or only the outside of the knee joint. This happens due to the muscle function and the actual alignment of the joint space. The lower bone or shinbone (tibia) may rotate inward or outward or straight back. The malalignment of the joint causes excessive stress and accelerates degeneration and damage unevenly through the joint. The key is early detection before the malalignment becomes permanent.

Even if patients have already had joint replacements, and all medical options have been tried; often correcting the muscle mechanics and alignment can give a good amount of relief.

Although our orthopedic surgeons are brilliant when it comes to joint replacements and other surgeries, they are not usually knowledgeable and would probably even be skeptical of these natural corrective procedures.

We also offer a vast array of physical therapies: light therapies, electrical therapies, laser, shock-wave/acoustic wave, as well as Ozone and Peptide therapy.

Feel Amazing Institute proudly serves the Naples area with comprehensive physical medicine, regenerative medicine, and chiropractic services since 1998. Our office strives for excellence. Whether you suffer from chronic pain, are recovering from an injury, or seeking overall improved health and performance, we have the skills and experience to help you work toward your goals.

If you are in need of a clinic highly experienced Regenerative Medicine or Chiropractic in Naples, FL, look no further than **Feel Amazing Institute**. For more information or to schedule your initial consultation, call us today!



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CBD & PET HEALTH

By Hans Doherty - Growing in Health Florida

Nearly half of the households in America have a dog. Just as many own a cat too. They bring us companionship, comfort, and become part of the family in time. It's only natural that we want them to be healthy and free from problems.

Last summer I was working at my store on Cape Cod when a young girl and her mom passed by. I heard the girl say, "Can we go into the pet store mommy"?

She saw my Mouchie (my dog) and Mr. Winks (my one eye cat) in the window.

Her mom said, "I don't think that's a pet store, but we can go in". So they did.

The first comment that mom made was that her husband has "really bad" anxiety. What do you have for that? I went through my presentation. I explained how cannabis works in conjunction with our bodies natural endogenous (internal) cannabinoid system. It helps regulate sleep, stress, diet, pain, etc. I showed her some tinctures, and edibles. I explained the pros and cons of each.

Then she asked, what do kind of CBD products do you have for dogs? I explained that animals have the same endocannabinoid system that humans do. Pets can experience pain, anxiety, inflammation, and aggression just like we do.

They have the same CB1 and CB2 receptors that respond to CBD also. She had to tell me all about her 110 pound German Shepard named Sharky.

He hates when it's thunder and lightning outside. He's terrified! He's hiding under the bed. Well, trying to hide under the bed, she said. He's an absolute mess.

I hear stories like this frequently. It's sad because nobody wants the dog to suffer. In the end, she bought some CBD for Sharky, not the husband.

The point is people care about their pets more than their actual family members, sometimes. It's weird, but true. Pets don't talk back. Their love is unconditional!



Pet CBD is the same as people CBD. Except for the strength and the salmon or bacon flavor the base ingredient is the same. It affects things in a similar fashion. I've even suggested sharing your people CBD with your animal because nothing good quality is cheap. If it works for you, it will work for them too.

I have worked with veterinarians and vet technicians who sell and recommend these products at their clinics. Growing in Health Florida offers pet tincture and treats. The weight of the beast will determine how many milligrams your pet needs. Strength does matter. Milligrams per kilogram is how the veterinarian does it. A larger animal needs more than a smaller one.

You're all invited to visit the store. We are VERY pet friendly here. Bring your dog (on a leash) and bring the cat too?! I can answer your questions and offer some suggestions if you'd like.

I am offering cannabis classes starting on January 25 at 6PM. Learn more and help your pet stay free from the problems described above.

Thank you for reading!

We invite your questions at www.growinginhealthflorida.org.

*Hans Doherty,
Owner of Growing
in Health Florida,
with his pal
Moochie.*



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WHEN IT'S TIME FOR A "SURGICAL" NECK LIFT

By Gunnar Bergqvist, MD

For 115 years, neck & facelift procedures have been performed by surgeons.

Over that time the procedure has change from being simply a slight skin tightening, to altering all elevations, tightening, and lifting of the deeper structures of the face, and to the current combination techniques involving lifting, removing extra skin in augmenting areas with reduced tissue volume and even some procedures that involve minimally invasive techniques.

As a person matures in age, facial structures change as does the envelope of the skin, migrating, stretching, and becoming less elastic in its natural state resulting in jowls, sometimes sunken areas or deep wrinkles and fatty deposits an area that we don't consider attractive.

Neck and Face lifts are a restorative procedure, lifting tissues, where they were when a person was younger, giving a youthful appearance and turning back the clock.

Newer, minimally invasive techniques have great uses but often don't have enough ability to reduce the amount of extra skin and tissue sag that has developed over the years; therefore, an open, surgical technique is necessary. A well trained plastic Surgeon will tell you when these approaches wont remove your sagging skin and thus will recommend the open, surgical neck lift.

With advances in technique, a deep facelift can be done in an office setting under local anesthesia. This involves an incision around the ear, (and often under the chin) from which you can dissect out the tissues of the face as well as the neck. Sometimes we must make an accessory incision in the area under



the chin. Some of the bands that develop in your neck can be addressed via this incision, and now we can also sometimes address this through percutaneous approaches which use very small incisions to release his muscle bands.

Neck & face lifts are not a cookie-cutter procedure. Everybody tends to be a different person and often there is a variation in technique between patient and patient. Surgical technique has evolved to find use from some of the excessive tissues removed which may be placed in some areas of the head and neck. It's common we would do some fat grafting or soft tissue augmentation with this tissue in areas that have lost volume, particularly the cheeks.

Sometimes one of the issues is not the fat under the skin, but rather the glands under the muscles in the neck. If this is the case, these can be reduced through a small incision under the chin. It is important to have an assessment by a qualified and experienced surgeon to recognize the difference between the structures which still need to be respected, augmented, lifted, or tightened and, to be sure that you



have the right amount of soft tissue coverage. Occasionally less experienced surgeons will try to over resect tissue, particularly in the neck, resulting in a very unattractive contour, and even though it has less fat and tissues, results are not attractive or authentic looking.

I have included some pictures for a full face and neck lift down for deep plane, SMAS, (Superficial Musculo Aponeurotic System) lift using local anesthesia in the office. While results are immediate, you can see in these three years after photos, that her facelift stands up to time, because of the quality of the work.

Do not be confused by official sounding boards or certifications, as there is no recognized certifying board with "cosmetic surgery" in its title. Look for surgeons with the symbol from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons when seeking a trusted surgeon for any cosmetic procedure. The ASPS assures that a surgeon has met the most rigorous requirements in skill, patient safety as well as having had superior surgical training from an accredited residency program.

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Naples Cardiac & Endovascular Center



Peripheral Artery Disease | Venous Insufficiency | Endovascular Center

Symptoms that may indicate PAD:

- * *Weak or tired legs.*
- * *Difficulty walking or balancing.*
- * *Some people have atypical symptoms.*

PAD pain may feel like:

- * *Tight, aching, or squeezing pain in the calf, foot, thigh, or buttock that occurs during exercise.*
- * *The pain usually gets worse during exercise and goes away when you rest.*

Advanced PAD stages may cause:

- * *Leg pain at rest.*
- * *Skin ulcerations.*
- * *Gangrene.*

We are able to evaluate and treat lower extremity arterial and deep venous disorders using minimally invasive (catheter-based) procedures without surgical incisions. Many of these procedures can be performed in our state-of-the-art Office-Based Endovascular Suite. This results in improved patient convenience and satisfaction.

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www.heartvein.com

ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH URINARY INCONTINENCE?

When it comes to urinary incontinence, you have many choices and treatment options, but you must be honest with yourself in order to finally get long-lasting medical help. If you answer yes to one or more of the following questions, it's time to see a specialist.

Yes or No:

- Do you often have an uncomfortable or uncontrollable urge to urinate?
- Do you have frequent urination during the day?
- When you get the urge to go, do you make it to the bathroom on time?
- Do you wake up to urinate more than once per night?
- Does urine leak when you cough, sneeze, laugh, jump, exercise, or lift heavy objects?
- To help your symptoms, have you tried wearing pads or briefs, drinking less, doing Kegel exercises, rearranging your daily routine?

THE TRUTH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

#1 It's important that you don't just see someone claiming to be a pelvic floor specialist.

A modern subspecialty called Female Pelvic Medicine & Reproductive Surgery (a.k.a. Urogynecology) was developed to harness this knowledge to benefit women of all ages. A Urogynecologist has advanced training in treating these disorders that a gynecologist and a urologist may not have. A gynecologist specializes in the female reproductive system (vagina, uterus, and ovaries) and a urologist specializes in the urinary tract of both men and women. A urogynecologist blends the knowledge of a gynecologist and urologist to give women the best possible outcomes for disorders that affect these two closely integrated systems.

The Florida Bladder Institute, based in Naples Florida, is one of the country's first urogynecology practices. Typically, a woman would have to see a gynecologist for one problem, a urologist for another and a gastroenterologist for another. Dr. Joseph Gauta explains, "A Urogynecologist has the skill and experience to assess the entire pelvic region including the uterus, bladder, vagina and rectum as well as the muscles, ligaments, connective tissue and nerves that support those systems." He added, "This means a thorough evaluation is done of your urinary, lower gastrointestinal and reproductive systems as a whole to ensure you receive the best possible treatment and outcome in the most efficient and cost-effective manner."



#2 It's not cookie-cutter. Your treatment should depend on the type and severity of your disorder.

"Urinary incontinence" is a general term and symptoms can range from mild leaking to uncontrollable wetting. It can happen to anyone, but it becomes more common with age. There are many types of urinary incontinence, and sometimes a woman may have more than one of the following types:

- Stress
- OAB
- Urgency
- Mixed incontinence (i.e., stress and urgency can occur together)

Your treatment should be custom-tailored to the specific cause of your incontinence, your medical and surgical history, your overall health, age, and goals.

#3 It's not always incontinence.

Sometimes there are other conditions that may feel like an incontinence problem or cause unusual pain. The Florida Bladder Institute is well-prepared to evaluate and treat related problems of the urinary system that may be causing your discomfort.

The Florida Bladder Institute can offer several options used in combination or individually depending on your needs. They may include medications, diet modification, bladder retraining and Kegel exercises to strengthen the pelvic muscles.

#4 There are numerous incontinence treatment options.

The good news is that virtually all types of incontinence are treatable. The Florida Bladder Institute's expert team is dedicated to helping you achieve the highest level of health and quality of life.

The clinical staff of the Florida Bladder Institute is well-versed and experienced in using a variety of techniques including medication, rehabilitation, minimally invasive surgical intervention, and lifestyle education to improve your overall health and help you regain control and reclaim your freedom.

The Florida Bladder Institute's Innovative Techniques and Treatment Options:

- Bladder Retraining
- Emsella (Kegel chair)
- Pelvic Floor Rehabilitation including Kegel Exercises, physical therapy and electrical stimulation
- Laser and Muscle Therapy
- Biofeedback
- Botox Bladder Injections
- Pessary Vaginal Device
- Injections including Botox and bulking procedures
- Outpatient Surgery
- Surgery for Organ Prolapse / Dropped Bladder Repair
- Axonics[®] Sacral Nerve Stimulation

At the Florida Bladder Institute, you will experience a thorough approach to the evaluation and treatment of pelvic organ prolapse, bladder and lower urinary tract disorders, bowel and gas incontinence, bleeding, pelvic pain and menopause. Our compassionate and expertly trained team will guide you along the way using state-of-the-art technology in our comfortable and private setting.



Joseph Gauta, MD



Mackenzie Hudson, PA-C



Nicole Houser, PA-C



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What Do Ringing Ears, Heart Throbs, and Noisy Eyeballs Have in Common? Read on to learn!

By John W. Watford, MD, LLC

Our inner ears are tiny apparatuses each occupying a very small space within the bone of our skulls that measures about 1.5cm by 2cm on each side. The pair of tiny organs allow us to not only hear a whisper across the room, but also to be able look with both eyes at objects in the world around us. Our ears are also critical to our ability to stand and move our bodies the way we desire. Small disturbances within the organs themselves or to the bone or blood vessels nearby can create major changes in how we hear or move. Those disturbances can be from acquired infections, changes in blood flow or bone growth, or injury.

Many people have experienced an unusual, high-pitched, often transient tone in their ears that can cause some mild hearing loss or dizziness called tinnitus (TIN-ni-tus), or eponymously, Ménière's Disease. Physicians encounter some patients suffering from this syndrome continuously. It is difficult to fully treat and is a source of significant burden and discomfort. We internists and primary care physicians rely heavily on our ear, nose, and throat colleagues to evaluate our patients with severe cases that persist and do not respond to initial treatment.

Some people experience an audible "swooshing" noise in one or both ears that corresponds to their heartbeat or pulse. Hence, it is called pulsatile tinnitus. Its cause may be very different from more common ringing in the ears and should be carefully evaluated. A healthy athlete who has just run a race or performed another strenuous exercise may experience the normal sensation of hearing their heartbeat or feeling their pulse in their throat or neck. However, a person who can hear blood flowing most or all the time requires careful evaluation. Your doctor will examine your ears and may refer you for a formal hearing test and likely examination by an E.N.T. specialist (otolaryngologist). Depending on the hearing test and your history, he or she may also order a brain MRI to fully visualize the functional components of the ear including the ear drum, the three tiny bones of the ear (hammer, anvil, and stirrup – remember those?) and the main sensory organs: the cochlea and the semicircular canals. Sometimes, detailed pictures of the blood vessels near the ear must be taken to make sure no

blockages or detours in blood vessels exist that could lead to more severe problems in the future. Those pictures can be taken by CT scan, specially configured MRI study, or angiogram of the blood vessels performed by a neuroradiologist or neurosurgeon. Normal tests are usually very reassuring that no dangerous abnormalities are present.

If hearing your own heartbeat isn't nuisance enough, stranger things do exist. Some people have described a sensation of not only hearing their heart beating and blood flowing in their head, but also hearing themselves breathing or hearing their own voice as if it was originating in their head. Similarly, others have described a sensation of "walking on the surface of a drum" and hearing their own footsteps internally. Even hearing one's own eye movements has been described by individuals with a very curious (and fortunately very rare) problem called Superior Canal Dehiscence Syndrome (SCDS). It can occur if the bone encasing the superior semicircular canal (one of the sensors of our inner ear that allows us to know our orientation in space) experiences an otherwise very minor disruption that alters how vibrations are usually conducted through the organs of the inner ear. Consequently, tiny pressure waves or vibrations that are not usually transmitted to the sensory part of our inner ears become detectable and disruptive. The exact source of the disruption to the layer of bone and its nearby superior semicircular canal is not always known. Injury to the head or sometimes underlying defects that create inconsistencies in bone growth are thought to be causes. Diagnosing SCDS is very difficult, and the cure may require skull surgery.

Our inner ears are incredible organs that allow us to interface with our environment and move within it for the duration of our lives. While it is true that most of us will experience transient trouble with our ears, and many of us will experience some hearing loss over time, keep in mind that sudden, odd changes to your hearing or balance warrant a visit to your doctor. Let us use our ears to help you with yours!

ABOUT DR. WATFORD

My pursuit of a career in medicine began with natural curiosity about "how things work". My early engineering interests later transformed into an interest in biology as I was inspired by my parents, several wonderful teachers in high school, and a general curiosity about physiology.

I believe curiosity helps us connect with each other. Curiosity drives lifelong learning, makes us better problem solvers, and nurtures our need to take on new challenges. It helps us to listen actively, inspires generosity to collaborate, and expands our empathy.

I grew up largely in Alabama and Florida and completed my undergraduate degree in Biomedical Sciences with Honors at Auburn University. There I founded the first inpatient shadowing program for health sciences students and was a charter member of the Auburn University Honors College. I earned my medical degree at the University of South Alabama in 2003 followed by internships in General Surgery at Carraway Methodist Medical Center, Birmingham, Alabama and then Internal Medicine at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, Portland, Oregon.

My family and I settled in Naples in 2020 where I became part of the staff of Naples Community Hospital providing inpatient services. I opened my own practice in February of 2022.

Dr. John W. Watford is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and has been practicing since 2003. His concierge primary care medicine practice is now open and welcoming new patients. Reach Dr. Watford at 239-544-7440 or info@drwatfordnaples.com

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Spider Veins vs. Varicose Veins: What's the Difference?

By Zulay Zayas, ARNP

Varicose veins and spider veins are swollen, twisted veins that usually appear on the legs. Women are more likely to have varicose veins and spider veins. Pregnancy, older age, and obesity can increase your risk of varicose veins and spider veins. Varicose veins and spider veins are often painless and do not usually cause health problems.

Many of us will eventually encounter vein health issues. It's usually hereditary, so if your parents or grandparents have or had spider or varicose veins, you are more likely to develop them as well. If you become pregnant or have a job or lifestyle that requires standing for long periods of time, this may make them worse, or increase the probability of getting them.

Spider veins

Spider veins (telangiectasia) are damaged, visible blood vessels just beneath your skin's surface. They typically look red, blue or purple. They may appear in clusters that resemble spider webs or tree branches. Spider veins can form anywhere, but they usually develop in your legs or face.

Varicose veins

Varicose veins are deeper. When they become noticeable, they begin to pop out — giving the vein a 3D appearance. These veins supply blood to deep muscle tissue, so they're bigger. That means when they become visible, they're more obvious.

COMMON RISK FACTORS FOR SPIDER AND VARICOSE VEINS

There are a number of factors that put people at a greater risk of developing spider and varicose veins. Some of these include:

- **Obesity** - extra weight puts additional pressure on the veins.
- **Age** - though spider veins don't exist only in older people, the disease progresses with time. This is due to the fact that there is greater wear and tear on vein valves over time. This makes it more difficult for blood to flow properly, and can result in blood pooling.
- **Pregnancy** - in order to support a baby during pregnancy, blood volume nearly doubles, which leads to enlarged veins and potentially spider veins.



- **Genetics** - the chances of developing spider veins increases if others in the family suffer from them.
- **Sedentary lifestyle** - sitting or standing for extended periods of time restricts blood flow and can lead to blood pooling.
- **Gender** - due to hormonal changes women often experience during pregnancy and menopause, spider veins are more likely to occur in women.
- **Hormonal changes** - these occur during pregnancy, and menopause. Taking birth control pills and other medicines containing estrogen progesterone also may contribute to the forming of varicose or spider veins.
- **Sun exposure** - this can cause spider veins on the cheeks or nose of a fair-skinned person.¹

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of spider and varicose veins happens with a simple physical examination by a vein specialist. Because these veins are visible at the surface of your skin, they can simply be diagnosed by a vein specialist during a physical exam. As mentioned above, spider veins can appear anywhere on the legs, the face, and the chest. They are purple, blue, pink or red and typically resemble a spider web and can be flat or slightly raised to the touch. Varicose veins are 3D and primarily on the legs.

Reference:
1. Spider veins - symptoms, causes & treatments (2022) Vein Clinics of America. Available at: <https://www.veinclinics.com/conditions/spider-veins/>.

Treatment

The good news is that we don't have to live with these visible and unsightly veins. There are a number of treatment options available for those who'd like to look younger and have healthier looking skin.

Zulay Zayas, is an advanced registered nurse practitioner (ANRP) with many years of experience in the cardiac and endovascular field of study, who currently works in Naples, FL. at the Naples Cardiac & Endovascular Center.

Zulay began to work at the Naples Cardiac & Endovascular Center as an advanced registered nurse practitioner. She is responsible for venous pre-op evaluations and post-op follow-ups, and treats patients who need sclerotherapy and transcutaneous laser treatments for spider veins.

For an appointment with Zulay and the highly trained, professional team at Naples Cardiac & Endovascular Center, visit our website at www.heartvein.com or call 239.300.0586.

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HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

BY DR. LINELL KING

High blood pressure (hypertension) is called the “silent killer” for good reason. It often has no symptoms but is a major risk of heart disease and stroke. And these diseases are among the leading causes of death in the United States.

Almost half of U.S. adults have high blood pressure. Your blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury, which is abbreviated as mm Hg. *There are two numbers involved in the measurement:*

- **Systolic blood pressure.** The top number represents the force of the pressure when your heart pushes blood into the arteries throughout the rest of your body.
- **Diastolic blood pressure.** The bottom number represents the pressure in your blood vessels between beats, when your heart is filling relaxing.

Your blood pressure depends on how much blood your heart is pumping, and how much resistance there is to blood flow in your arteries. The narrower your arteries, the higher your blood pressure.

Blood pressure lower than 120/80 mm Hg is considered normal. Blood pressure that’s 130/80 mm Hg or more is considered high.

If your numbers are above normal but under 130/80 mm Hg, you fall into the category of elevated blood pressure. This means you’re at risk of developing high blood pressure.

The good news about elevated blood pressure is that you can make changes to significantly reduce your numbers and lower your risk — without requiring medications.

Here are some tips for making lifestyle changes for treating blood pressure through healthy eating and physical activity.

Eating healthy. One lifestyle change that can help lower blood pressure is the DASH eating plan. DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. The DASH eating plan is high in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products. The Dash plan also includes whole grains, poultry, fish, beans, nuts and seeds, and has low amounts of total fat, saturated fats, red meats, sweets, and sugared beverages.



Researchers believe that it is the combination of 8 to 10 servings a day of fruits and vegetables and 3 servings of low-fat or nonfat dairy products that causes the DASH eating plan to lower blood pressure. These foods are low in sodium and high in calcium, potassium, and magnesium which can lower blood pressure. It is best to get these nutrients from eating foods, because taking calcium, potassium, and magnesium supplements does not have the same synergistic effect.

The DASH plan is a healthy way of eating for everyone, but especially if you want to prevent high blood pressure and other health problems.

Getting regular physical activity. You don’t have to train for a marathon to get all the benefits of physical activity. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it part of your daily routine. The Department of Health and Human Services’ Physical Activity Guidelines recommend building up to at least 150 minutes of activity each week – that’s 30 minutes a day, five days a week.

Do aerobic activities for at least 10 minutes at a time. Aerobic activities are walking, running, swimming, cycling, rowing, anything that gets you breathing harder and your heart beating faster. If you haven’t been active for a while, start with a low, comfortable level, but slowly build in intensity and length of time of the activity.

There are DVDs available that you may use to walk or be physically active indoors in any weather and at any convenient time of day or night.

Your physical activity may become a special time to not only refresh your body, but relieve your mind of stressful thoughts. Coping successfully with stress is another lifestyle method for controlling high blood pressure.

If you have a heart problem or a chronic disease, it is always a good idea to talk with your healthcare provider about increasing your physical activity level. Usually, they are happy to see that you are choosing a more active lifestyle.

Lifestyle modifications can significantly help improve blood pressure:

- **Eating strategy:** prioritize whole foods and get plenty of vegetables, limit or avoid processed foods
- **Sleep:** 7-8 hours every night
- **Stress:** address chronic stressors, meditation, yoga, walking in nature, journaling, etc.
- **Exercise/movement:** intentional movement 30 minutes per day
- **Community:** Get friends and/or family involved!

If you find yourself in the category of needing a higher level of treatment for your high blood pressure, keep in mind that lifestyle changes, especially increased physical activity and healthier eating patterns, are worthwhile to your overall well-being, whether or not you are prescribed medication for treatment of your high blood pressure.



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CAN I MOVE OUT OF STATE WITH MY CHILDREN AFTER A FLORIDA DIVORCE?

By Kenneth V. Mundy, Florida Divorce Attorney

Divorce is a time of massive transition when significant decisions are being considered and made. One question might be whether you can move out of state with your children during or after your Florida divorce. The short answer is maybe, but you must have court permission and consent to do so, and this is not always easy to obtain. There are several other legal issues relating to relocation during your divorce, so it is best to contact a Naples FL marital and family law attorney to advise you and cover all your bases.

More than 50 Miles Away

In a Florida divorce, a parent who wants to move a child more than 50 miles away for more than 60 days must lawfully inform the other parent and obtain consent. Otherwise, a court order must be obtained if the other parent does not give their consent. If you have questions about relocation out of state in a Florida divorce proceeding, contact the family law attorneys at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo (WPL) in Naples who have significant experience in these legal matters.

Relocation Defined

Florida Statute §61.13001 clarifies how and when relocation of a Florida parent is allowed. Additionally, you may not be able to move out of the state even if you are not taking your children with you. The defines "relocation" as:

"...change in the location of the principal residence of a parent or other person from his or her principal place of residence at the time of the last order establishing or modifying time-sharing, or at the time of filing the pending action to establish or modify time-sharing. The change of location must be at least 50 miles from that residence and for at least 60 consecutive days, not including a temporary absence from the principal residence for purposes of vacation, education, or the provision of health care for the child."

Therefore, a party to a divorce must get the Court's permission to move more than 50 miles from the home address listed in the most recent court order. The purpose of this statute is to protect children from being unnecessarily removed from their environment and uprooted from their homes and to avoid long distances, and hardship on family members.

Consequences of Unlawfully Moving Out of State During Your Florida Divorce

The statute further advises:

"Relocating the child without complying with the requirements of this subsection subjects the party in violation to contempt and other proceedings to compel the return of the child and may be taken into account by the court in any initial or postjudgment action seeking a determination or modification of the parenting plan or the access or time-sharing schedule...."

As you can see, moving away with your child without an agreement, consent or court order is much more severe than you may have previously realized and could result in disaster for you and your child.

Relocation by Agreement

However, you and your spouse could reach an agreement as to relocation. In this case, a judge will consider your agreement and several factors:

- Can a meaningful relationship be maintained?
- The specific area the moving parent is going, the reason, and whether the quality of life for both the children and parents will be enhanced due to the move.
- Age and academic issues will also be discussed as well as the child's activities in the community.
- How the move will affect the child's physical and emotional health and well-being.
- Reasons for the move or reasons for objecting to the move.
- Specifics of the relocation in terms of the date, place, transportation, and plan for mutually agreeable time-sharing.

The agreement must be in writing and filed with the Court. The agreement must include the visitation schedule and how the transportation of the child is handled. Additionally, if any other party has visitation rights, like a grandparent, that party will have to agree to the relocation in the written document as well.

In the Best Interests of the Children

If no joint agreement by divorcing parties is reached, the parent seeking to relocate must file a petition with the court with various information, including the detailed reasons for the move, a description of the location including state, city, specific physical address and home phone number, the date of intended move, and visitation proposal as to all interested parties. The non-agreeing party must respond, or a hearing or trial will ensue. Keep in mind, the bottom line is family Law judges will always determine based on the child's best interest.

Let us face it—timesharing between homes of divorcing parents is already a hardship for your children, even within the same town. Although extenuating circumstances may necessitate moving, adding extensive travel on top of this stress is likely not in the best interests of your children or you. However, if the situation arises, a move must be made according to the laws of the State of Florida concerning relocation, time-sharing and custody.

Our Team on Your Side

A divorce attorney at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. can help you propose the best possible agreement putting your side of the story forward and representing you before the judge. You do not have to go it alone. Contact WPL today for a consultation regarding time-sharing, visitation, custody, or potential relocation due to your Florida divorce.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kenneth V. Mundy is a family law attorney with the law firm of Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. For undergraduate school, Ken graduated cum laude from Florida Gulf Coast University in 2013. Thereafter, Ken graduated summa cum laude from Ave Maria School of Law in 2016, obtaining his Juris Doctor. Originally from New Jersey, Ken moved to Naples, Florida, with his parents and sister in 1997. Ken continues to happily reside in Naples with his wife, Taylor, and son, Dallas.



Ken is a Certified Financial Litigator (CFL™) focusing on family and marital law, including but not limited to complex divorces, child custody disputes, child support and alimony issues, relocation, paternity actions, and domestic violence proceedings. Ken is committed to protecting, educating, and guiding clients through the difficult and challenging processes associated with family law matters. In every case, Ken ensures his clients are placed in a position to make decisions in the best interest of themselves and their families while maintaining their dignity and self-respect.

Ken was recently named one of The Best Lawyers in America®: Ones to Watch and as a Top Lawyer in Family Law in Naples Illustrated. Ken is also very involved in the community as he is on the Board of Directors for Meals of Hope and the Naples Junior Chamber, both of which are not-for-profit entities.



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FIVE TIPS FOR A HEART-HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

By Greg Pascucci

American Heart Month, observed each February, encourages people to focus on cardiovascular health. According to the American Heart Association, heart disease continues to be among the greatest health threats to Americans and is the leading cause of death worldwide.

Here are five heart-healthy tips for February and beyond:

1. Start Your Day Off on the Right Note

Breakfast is often called the most important meal of the day, and new research is supporting this claim. Studies in both the U.S. and Japan found skipping breakfast was associated with an increased risk for cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. Pausing to enjoy breakfast helps get stomach juices flowing which is good for the heart. A heart-healthy breakfast includes berries, fresh fruit, low-fat dairy and whole grains.

At The Carlisle Naples, an active retirement community, residents have a choice of complimentary breakfast or lunch in the onsite restaurant. Healthy, heart-friendly options are available from the menu along with made-to-order selections. A full kitchen is also available in independent living residences, enabling residents to prepare breakfast on their own if they prefer.

2. Add More Color to Your Diet

A study published by the Annals of Internal Medicine found diets rich in fruits and vegetables over the course of eight weeks optimized heart health, including lowering markers for heart damage and strain. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests adults eat 1.5-2 cups of fruit and 2-3 cups of vegetables per day.

The Carlisle's Executive Chef, Marlon Perez, invites residents to think outside the salad bowl to incorporate fruits and vegetables into their diets. The FreshZest menu, for example, complements the onsite restaurant's existing menu and offers delicious plant-based options. Signature FreshZest dishes include Artichoke with Cremini Mushroom Eggplant Cannelloni, Crispy Bean Chimichanga, Potato and Spinach Gnocchi, Pad Thai Spaghetti Squash and a Caprese Stuffed Avocado.

Chef Perez encourages eating seasonal products for fresher and tastier options. Local farmers' markets are also great for adding a variety of fruits and vegetables to your plate.

3. Move Your Body

Research continues to find exercise is one of the best ways to maintain and improve heart health. However, before beginning a new fitness regimen, be sure to check with your doctor. Exercises should include aerobic exercises like walking and aquacise, as well as stretching, often associated with yoga and tai chi.

Carlisle resident Zita King credits the wealth of fitness classes available at the community with keeping her and her neighbors healthy. Each week, there are more than 10 different opportunities for physical activity, with classes ranging from boxing to virtual bowling.

"It's so convenient having classes within steps of our front door," she said. "Plus, there's always someone to attend a class with or enjoy a brisk stroll around the community."

4. Practice Good Dental Hygiene

Dental health is often correlated with overall health, impacting the heart. Gum disease has been linked to risk factors for heart disease, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. Experts suggest regular dental check-ups and reporting noticeable signs of periodontal disease such as red, swollen or tender gums and bleeding while brushing or flossing to the dentist immediately.

The Carlisle provides scheduled transportation to local health providers, helping to ensure residents remain vigilant about their health. Also, informative health and wellness lectures are scheduled throughout the month at the independent and assisted living community to provide the tools and resources to make heart-healthy decisions.

5. Get a Good Night's Rest/Manage Stress

A study that followed older adults for five years found those with irregular sleep schedules were twice as likely to develop heart disease than their counterparts.

The CDC reports poor sleep can lead to higher stress levels, less motivation to be active and unhealthy food choices. Experts recommend keeping your bedroom at a comfortable temperature and avoiding eating large meals close to bedtime to get a better night's sleep.

At The Carlisle, residents have peace of mind knowing there is an entire team dedicated to their health and wellness. Plus, the community's maintenance-free lifestyle provides freedom from household chores such as cooking, creating a more relaxed environment for residents to thrive.

"The staff takes care of everything for us," explained resident Ann Simpson. "There is such a burden lifted off your shoulders knowing your needs are taken care of now and into the future."

Located at 6945 Carlisle Court in Naples, The Carlisle offers independent and assisted living lifestyles featuring spacious one-and two-bedroom residences, weekly housekeeping and flat linen services, basic cable TV, all utilities except telephone, and delicious dining with daily, chef-prepared specials. The community is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), an important distinction that provides residents with the assurance that the highest standards of quality care, services and safeguards are maintained. For more information about the community, please call 239-221-0017 or visit www.TheCarlisleNaples.com.



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32 REASONS A DENTAL HYGIENIST HELPS YOUR SMILE

By Dr. Susan Anderson, Program Director, Dental Hygiene Program at Hodges University

As an adult, we have 32 teeth that together make up our smiles, and help us enjoy life. February is Dental Hygiene Month, and your dental hygienist is a key in helping you keep your smile through your life.

The American Dental Association recommends getting your teeth cleaned regularly, and the frequency can be determined when you visit the dentist's office. Generally speaking, most people should have their teeth cleaned every six months. Most health insurance plans cover that, and it's a benefit you should use. Getting your teeth cleaned helps prevent problems like tooth decay, cavities, gum tissue erosion, and gum disease, for starters. These problems can lead to early tooth loss.

Of course, regularly brushing and flossing your teeth goes a long way in maintaining a healthy mouth, but even that isn't enough to prevent problems. A dental hygienist is professionally educated and trained to look for any problems.

Having your teeth professionally cleaned offers many benefits, including:

- The prevention gum disease
- The prevention of tooth decay
- The removal of tooth stains like coffee
- The removal of plaque, which contributes to bad breath
- The early detection of oral health issues, like oral cancer

The need for consistent dental care is a challenge.

For example in Lee County alone:

- 54.4% of residents believe there is moderate to major problem with oral health
- 24.1% of children have not been to a dentist/ received dental care in a year
- 38.5% of adults have not been to a dentist/ received dental care in a year
- Major reasons: access, cost and education about oral health

*2020 Community Health Needs Assessment Report, Lee County



To help make dental care more accessible and affordable, the Hodges University Dental Hygiene Clinic opened January 30. Patients will receive oral health screenings, preventative dental cleanings and, if needed, digital x-rays. Dental cleaning prices start at \$30 for children up to age 16, and \$40 for adults. X-Rays range from \$15 to \$40. Future services will include periodontal scaling/root planning, fluoride treatments, and tooth sealants.



Starting in February, the Hodges University Dental Hygiene Clinic will be open on Mondays from 1:30-5:30 p.m.; and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Appointments can be made by calling (239) 938-7787. For questions or more information, you can email the clinic: hudental@hodges.edu



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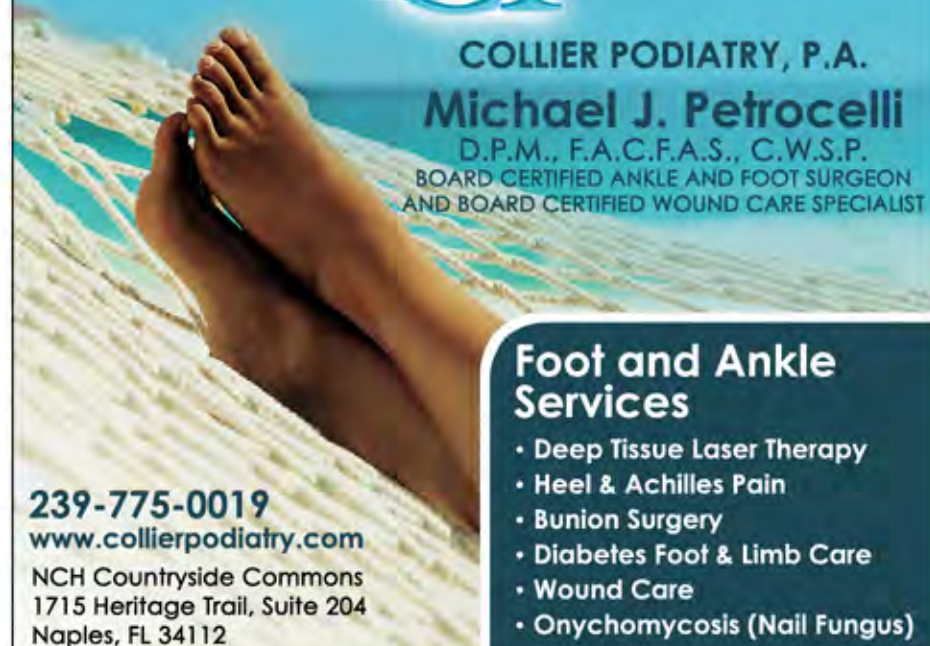
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COVID-19 And Its Potential Effect to Hormones

By Dr. Melissa (Mel) Irvine, DNP - Clinical Sexologist
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After two years of COVID-19 exposure, many of us feel as though we know what happens with this infection. It attacks the respiratory system, causes a nasty-sounding cough, and can leave people unbelievably fatigued.

However, as research surrounding COVID-19 grows, scientists are finding that this virus may be affecting the body in more ways than we initially suspected, including an impact on our hormone levels.

COVID-19 is not the only infection to show a connection with hormones. For example, hormone dysfunction that results in menstruation abnormalities, early menopause, and miscarriage has also been documented with Hepatitis B and C and HIV infections.

It is suspected that this hormonal dysfunction occurs because the viruses cause multisystem disruption, although it may also result from organ-specific effects.

COVID-19's Effect on the Endocrine System

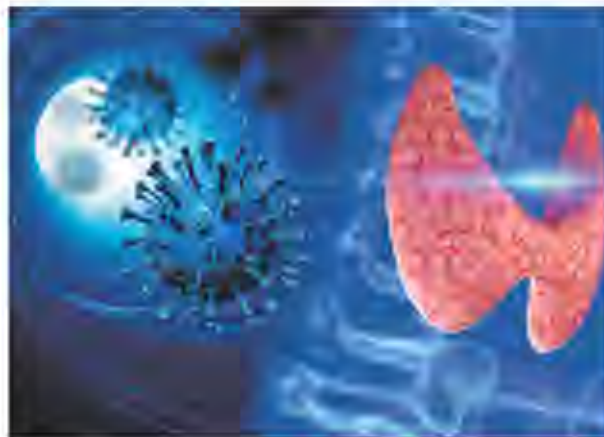
The endocrine system consists of the glands that produce hormones responsible for tissue growth, metabolism, and reproduction, among many other roles. When the body needs a hormone for a specific function, the gland signals for the release of it.

However, COVID-19 may affect the endocrine system, disrupting hormone production. It can accomplish this by using angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) to infiltrate host cells. While COVID-19 most often penetrates cells in the lungs, it also shows the potential to enter any cell with ACE2 expression, which includes some endocrine glands.

There are five primary endocrine glands that may be susceptible to damage from COVID-19. Let's discuss each gland and what its dysfunction means for your body.

Pancreas

The pancreas is the gland responsible for producing insulin, which helps the cells of the body take in and use blood sugar for energy. When insulin is not produced or does not work correctly, blood sugar levels can rise.



Any major illness can be associated with stress-related high blood sugar. Still, studies have reported that patients with SARS, a close variant of coronavirus, who had never received glucocorticoids showed significantly higher blood sugar levels than those with non-SARS pneumonia.

Additionally, studies have found that two out of five COVID-19 patients exhibit new-onset diabetes at admission into the hospital, and it is suspected that it occurs because of damage caused to the pancreatic β -cells.

Studies have also found that COVID-19 may worsen insulin resistance in those who already have type 2 diabetes. This is because SARS-CoV-2 increases the serum levels of fetuin-A, which is a glycoprotein that has been linked with impaired insulin sensitivity.

Adrenal Gland

One of the primary strategies utilized by SARS-CoV-2, like other viruses such as influenza, to evade the immune system is knocking down the host's cortisol stress response. It is suspected that this occurs through molecular mimicry. With this, the proteins of SARS-CoV-2 are very similar to those of the adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH), which means the antibodies produced by the body against SARS-CoV-2 may inadvertently attack ACTH instead, blocking the stress-induced cortisol rise.

Hypothalamus - Pituitary

One neurological manifestation that can occur in those with COVID-19 is hyposmia, or a loss of smell. This is likely to occur because the cells responsible for your sense of smell express ACE2, and SARS-CoV-2

can invade these cells. Since hyposmia in COVID-19 is not associated with nasal obstruction, it becomes more like that it has a neurogenic origin.

Thyroid

The cells of the thyroid also express ACE2, which may be why hypothyroidism can result from COVID-19 infection, and why a COVID-19 infection can exacerbate an existing autoimmune thyroid disease.

On top of this, low thyroid hormones are associated with poorer COVID-19 outcomes, such as higher disease severity, ICU admission, hospitalization, and mortality.

Gonads

The testes show a high level of ACE2 expression, and a study on 81 men with COVID-19 showed lower testosterone levels and significantly higher luteinizing hormone levels.

Acute COVID-19 infection can also affect the female sex hormones, with observations of menstruation abnormalities when infected. This may be because ACE2 receptor proteins are expressed in the ovaries, which supports the idea that COVID-19 temporarily disrupts ovarian hormone production.

The Effect of Hormones on COVID-19

Not only can COVID-19 infection affect the hormones produced in the body, but hormones can also affect the infection. Namely, sex hormones play a role.

Epidemiological evidence has shown a clear gender disparity regarding COVID-19 severity and fatality. While many factors can contribute to this, one is the differences in sex hormones, although it is an area still requiring more research.

While the risk of becoming infected by COVID-19 is the same for both genders, males are twice as likely as females to have a critical or fatal disease. However, these gender differences are not present in prepubescent individuals, which leads scientists to consider the effect of sex hormones on COVID-19 progression.

Differences exist between genders for those with long COVID as well, which is a condition that appears following acute COVID-19 infection. In particular, women appear to be at a greater risk of long COVID, with female gender and age under 50 as risk factors for long COVID.

Based on the differences in gender and age for long-COVID risk, it is suspected that sex hormone differences between males and females can play a role in the appearance of long COVID.

COVID-19 And Hormones: A Double-Sided Relationship

COVID-19 remains a rampant infection spreading from person to person, but our knowledge of it has risen significantly since its first introduction more than two years ago.

One observation is the way in which acute COVID-19 infection can affect the cells in many endocrine glands, including the pancreas, adrenal gland, hypothalamus/pituitary, thyroid, and gonads. This then has the potential to disrupt the hormones produced by these glands and cause a variety of symptoms.

However, this relationship goes both ways, and the hormones in the body can also affect COVID-19 severity. The differences primarily lie around gender and the difference in sex hormones. Men are twice as likely to experience a more severe acute infection, but women are more likely to suffer from long-COVID.

As more information is gained about COVID-19, we will learn more about the relationship between COVID-19 and hormones and how one affects the other.

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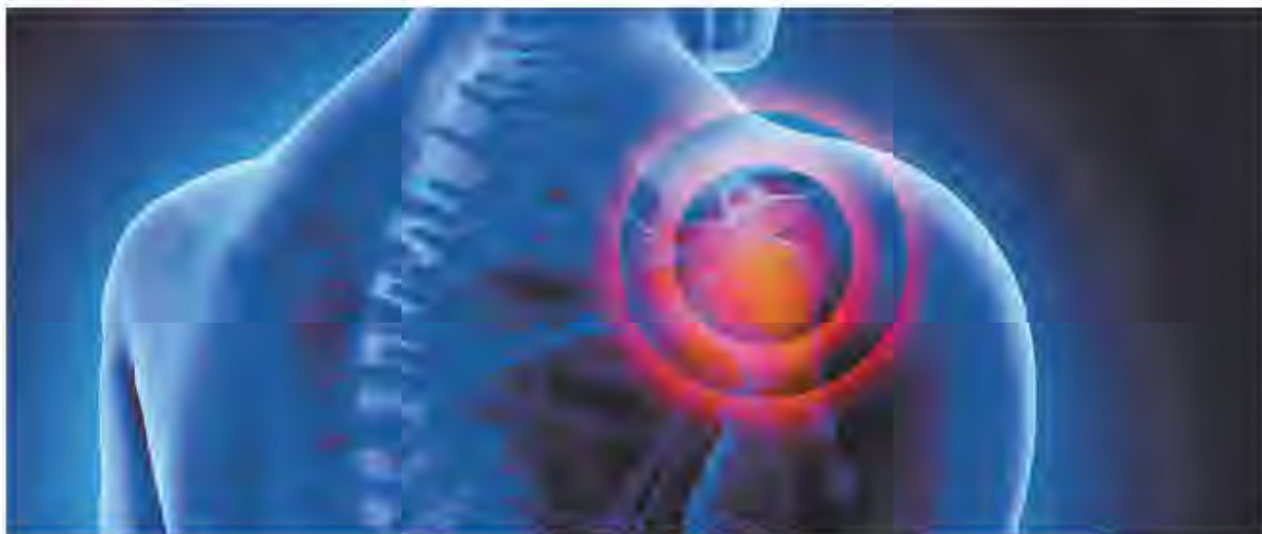
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Shoulder Injuries and Your Treatment Options

By Robert Swift, D.O.

Board Certified Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine

Driving along the beach, nearby parks or in many communities, you'll notice that people of all ages are living active lifestyles. Here in Florida, we have gorgeous weather throughout the entire year, which allows for more activities like jogging, tennis, pickleball, kayaking, pushing grandchildren on the swing, and the list goes on and on; but with all of this healthy activity, many individuals are more prone to injury and wear and tear.

One of the most common injury sites is the shoulder. The shoulder is a combination of bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, and muscles that provide an extensive range of motion in common everyday tasks, as well as in advanced athletic performance. Whether you're using a walker, picking up a heavy grocery bag, or driving the ball 200 yards, an optimal range of motion is key to healthy living. However, many times shoulder pain is due to advanced arthritis or degenerative joint disease. If you have tried pain medications, alternative methods, physical therapy and are still experiencing difficulty with range-of-motion or impingements and discomfort; it may be time to speak to your orthopedic surgeon about shoulder replacement surgery, also known as shoulder arthroplasty.

Most tears of the rotator cuff occur slowly over time as the tissue wears out, and they commonly occur in those 50 years and older. Any force strong enough to tear tendons also damages and weakens

the surrounding ligaments. Shoulder pain is multifactorial, and rotator cuff results in instability, frozen shoulder, and severe discomfort. Many rotator cuff tears can be treated nonoperatively. However, painful tears and tears that interfere with shoulder function should be treated with surgical repair.

An MRI, and an evaluation of the overall shoulder stability, which is essential if the individual wants to return to their normal activities, is determined, and the best option for that specific patient is planned out, including rehab and physical therapy.

For full tears of the rotator cuff, surgery is almost always necessary, and this can be done through a standard incision or by arthroscopy. If the person can use their arm with some mobility, the tear may be partial and, in that case, arthroscopic repair may suffice.

How is arthroscopic surgery performed?

Your surgeon begins the procedure by inserting the arthroscope through a small incision made near the treatment area. A sterile liquid is used to help open up the area, making it easier to see the joint.

Your surgeon then uses specialized miniature instruments to cut, shave, and apply stitches to the affected area. Additional incisions may be required to insert the surgical instruments. Once the joint has been treated, the incisions are bandaged, and you're off to recovery.

Recovery

After surgery, the initial recovery time usually takes about six weeks as the tendon heals back to bone. Full recovery can take a few months up to a year. Many patients report feeling no pain, and also having an increased range-of-motion very soon after surgery. Your surgeon will also provide you with an exercise and stretching program, along with physical therapy for an allotted period of time.

Although arthroscopic surgery can be used to treat any joint in the body, it's most commonly performed on joints in the knee, shoulder, elbow, ankle, hip, and wrist. If arthritis develops in a shoulder joint, and after conservative treatment options such as physical therapy, oral medications and injections fail, shoulder replacement is a successful option.

Shoulder Replacement Surgery

During a traditional shoulder replacement procedure, the surgeon will remove part of the top of the humerus bone, which is located in the joint of the shoulder. The Surgery consists of reshaping the shoulder joint and placing a metal stem (a few inches long) into the shaft of the humerus bone. A metal or plastic plate is then attached to the glenoid socket. These two connected devices will then take the place of the "ball and socket" in the upper shoulder area. Over time, the new joint replacement will allow the shoulder to move more freely, and it will substantially alleviate the pain that the individual was accustomed to on a daily basis. This procedure is for patients with normal rotator cuff tendons.

There are several types of shoulder replacements. If you need one you may be a candidate for a resurfacing type replacement.

Finally, if you wear out your rotator cuff muscles and tendons, and also develop arthritis, you would be a candidate for a reverse total shoulder replacement.

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STRESS MANAGEMENT

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

Have you ever felt overwhelmed? Are you feeling stressed out? The holidays can sometimes be quite stressful, whether it be making the house ready, making sure you have gotten all the presents for your loved ones/friends, but you might want to take some time for yourself too. In fact, the holidays are known to bring out all sorts of ailments and health problems, more than any time of year. The stress of the holidays is real and not something to be ignored and brushed under the rug. Stress Management is truly something we all have to deal with at one point or another. Not all stress is bad, but when you start to feel overwhelmed and feel a loss of control, that's when stress can wreak havoc in your life.

The first part in managing your stress is to identify the stressor, for example-whether it be certain negative people, going through a divorce, being told of a new diagnosis or fear of losing your job. Whatever that stressor is, it's important to identify it, talk it over with a close friend/relative or perhaps write it in a stress journal. It is crucial to not keep the feelings/emotions bottled up because that in itself is truly, I believe the heart of many health problems. Stress has been linked to heart disease, depression/mental illnesses, inflammatory conditions (ie arthritis, autoimmune illnesses, etc) and even some forms of cancer.

The second part of stress management is coming up with a plan or solution to dealing with the problem that is creating the stress/turmoil in your life. This is where taking a step back for a moment can often help. Sometimes, taking a deep breath and talking out loud is all that may be needed. I also believe it is extremely important to have outlets or hobbies in your life. Some people find getting up early and meditating is a way to relax and recharge your mind. Others may find playing an instrument, listening to a Ted talk, gardening or reading a book keeps them relaxed and content. The point is, you have to find some activity that makes you happy and feel relaxed. This in itself, helps you think of the solution as a third party and coming up with a new perspective on the problem/situation creating the stress in your life.

I think it is important to have general lifestyle principles and routines embedded in your life such as the 5 steps below:

1. It is important to stay positive and surround yourself with people that will bring positivity in your life as well.
2. Exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy diet also helps with keeping the stress levels manageable.
3. Staying well hydrated and avoiding excessive consumption of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages also help you manage your stress.
4. Learn also how to say "no" to unnecessary requests. You need to know your limits and stick to them. It is important to know the difference between the "shoulds" and the "musts" and when needed to say "no" to taking on too much, whether it be in your personal or professional life. Taking on too much is indeed a recipe for disaster and the root of stress for most people.
5. Lastly, getting enough sleep is also vital to stress management. Most of us are not getting the recommended 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night.

In the end, it is always important to ask oneself, "Is this going to make a difference in the grand scheme of things?" "Is it really worth getting upset over?"

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Eating more plant-based foods doesn't mean you have to be vegan or vegetarian, although those options are good for some individuals. The Mediterranean diet, the MIND or Dash diet are all viable options for individuals that want to have healthy cardiovascular systems but still consume some animal products. Eating plant-based foods while consuming lean proteins like finfish, shellfish or poultry can nonetheless be very healthy. With a heart-healthy diet, the best advice is to load up on fresh produce, limit refined or processed foods, reduce alcohol and sugar, eliminate processed meats and excessive saturated fats. If being vegan or vegetarian is better suited for one's personal preference or needs, that is absolutely a remarkable way to stay healthy and protect the heart. But the one thing we know from various studies and research is that processed carbohydrates, sugars, and trans fats cause inflammation and can exacerbate cardiovascular disorders.



Speaking to a medical professional is essential to learn which foods are best for your condition.

Meal planning, grocery shopping and food preparation can be challenging for seniors. That's why Chefs for Seniors specializes in fresh, nutritious meals that are cooked right in the comfort of your home, AND there is no shopping or planning involved on your part.

What is Chefs for Seniors?

As individuals age, shopping and preparing meals can become a difficult task. With so many other issues to worry about such as being a caregiver, suffering from arthritis, or other disorders that limit mobility, cooking is one thing that many seniors wish they didn't have to do. Chefs For Seniors is a welcomed answer for many that want nutritious, flavorful foods custom-prepared right in the comfort of your home by

a licensed chef that not only provides gourmet-style meals, but also compassionate companionship. They also have specialty meals for low sodium, low fat, and other dietary needs.

Why Chefs For Seniors?

Our Mission is to Provide Amazing Food and Proper Nutrition

- Find peace of mind knowing our personal chefs will handle the cooking
- Feel healthy and rejuvenated with meals for seniors that fit your diet
- Truly affordable and much less expensive than eating out
- All personal chefs are servsafe licensed, undergo background checks, and are fully insured

Chefs For Seniors is a welcomed answer for many that want nutritious, flavorful foods custom-prepared right in the comfort of your home by a licensed chef that not only provides gourmet-style meals, but also compassionate companionship. They also have specialty meals for low sodium, low fat, and other dietary needs.

The company's local professional chefs prepare affordable meals for the week in the home using the freshest ingredients, while offering a fun interactive experience. Chefs for Seniors is a private meal preparation service which specializes in providing companionship with the chefs preparing the meals in the home of the client. Clients select meals from a regional menu which can be customized to the client's dietary preferences and needs. The process aims to be an affordable option for seniors who may want fresh home-cooked meals, but who may be physically unable to cook the meals for themselves.

Professionally Prepared Meals and Clean Up!

Chefs for Seniors offers rotating menu options, which includes select Chef creations inspired by the region. Clients select their desired meal in advance, allowing the chef to shop and prepare the meals on the designated cooking day. Chefs prepare the meals between two to two and a half hours. And an added benefit is that after the meal is prepared and stored according to the client's preferences, the chefs clean before leaving the house.

The price of our services are region-specific and depends on your individual needs. Our goal is to provide an affordable solution that seniors can use long-term. We offer three different service packages to meet a variety of needs: Standard, Custom, and Non-Standard. Some Long Term Health Insurance Policies may cover certain in-home services like Chefs For Seniors. During a 2-hour home visit, your personal chef will prepare 4 different entrées and 10-12 individually-packaged servings of meals. The exact number of servings depending on your appetite and the types of meals ordered and serving sizes can be adjusted with your chef.

Most clients have their personal chef visit their home every week, although some choose to schedule services every 2 weeks or 2x per week. We can work within your budget, appetite, and needs.

What if I Have a Special Diet or Dietary Concerns?

We can accommodate most dietary concerns and diets. Our chefs and menus are particularly well-suited for low-sodium, diabetic friendly, gluten-free, Kosher, and renal diet meals. We also take inspiration from the DASH Diet (Dietary Approach To Stopping Hypertension), when designing our weekly menu rotations. Our Custom Package is well suited for clients with less common diets or dietary concerns.

Do I Have to Supply the Cooking Equipment?

Your chef will bring their own "toolbox" with pots, pans, knives, and utensils into the home. You don't need to have anything on hand except an appetite and working appliances!

You don't have to be a senior to enjoy the professional chef prepared foods! Contact Chefs For Seniors today to find out more.

For any questions, please contact your local Chefs For Seniors Office:

Phone: **239-776-1758**

Email: bill.springer@chefsforseniors.com



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What Are Floaters and Flashes?

Dr. Katia Taba, Board-Certified Ophthalmologist and Retinal Specialist

What Are Floaters?

Floaters look like small specks, dots, circles, lines or cobwebs in your field of vision. While they seem to be in front of your eye, they are floating inside. Floaters are tiny clumps of gel or cells inside the vitreous that fills your eye. What you see are the shadows these clumps cast on your retina.

You usually notice floaters when looking at something plain, like a blank wall or a blue sky.

As we age, our vitreous starts to thicken or shrink. Sometimes clumps or strands form in the vitreous. If the vitreous pulls away from the back of the eye, it is called posterior vitreous detachment. Floaters usually happen with posterior vitreous detachment. They are not serious, and they tend to fade and become less noticeable over time. Severe floaters can be removed by surgery, but this has risks and is seldom necessary or recommended.

You are more likely to get floaters if you:

- are nearsighted (you need glasses to see far away)
- have had surgery for cataracts
- have had inflammation (swelling) inside the eye

What Are Flashes?

Flashes can look like flashing lights or lightning streaks in your field of vision. Some people compare them to seeing "stars" after being hit on the head. You might

Source: <https://www.aaopt.org/eye-health/diseases/what-are-floaters-flashes>

see flashes on and off for weeks, or even months. Flashes happen when the vitreous rubs or pulls on your retina.

As people age, it is common to see flashes occasionally. Any new floaters or flashes should be examined by your ophthalmologist.

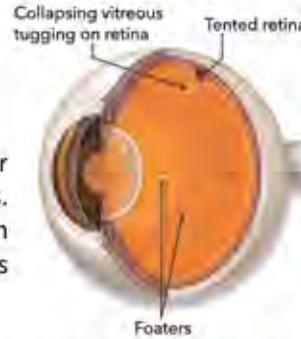
Flashes and Migraines

Sometimes people have light flashes that look like jagged lines or heat waves. These can appear in one or both eyes and may last up to 20 minutes. This type of flash may be caused by a migraine. A migraine is a spasm of blood vessels in the brain.

When you get a headache after these flashes, it is called a "migraine headache." But sometimes you only see the light flash without having a headache. This is called an "ophthalmic migraine" or "migraine without headache."

Floaters and Flashes Treatment

When floaters and flashes are serious
Most floaters and flashes are not a problem. However, there are times when they can be signs of a serious condition. Here is when you should call an ophthalmologist right away:



- you notice a lot of new floaters
- you have a lot of flashes
- a shadow appears in your peripheral (side) vision
- a gray curtain covers part of your vision

These floaters and flashes could be symptoms of a torn or detached retina. This is when the retina pulls away from the back of your eye. This is a serious condition that needs to be treated.

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If you are experiencing any changes in your eye health, whether it is blurry vision, pain, impaired vision, or any other visual irregularities, you should see an ophthalmologist right away. The earlier a disease is detected, the better the outcome and treatment options are for you. You will find a friendly and warm environment at Personalized Retina Care of Naples.

Please call (239) 325-3970 today to schedule your eye exam. When necessary same day appointments can often be accommodated.

Personalized Retina Care of Naples provides comprehensive diagnosis and treatment for retinal disorders. Dr. Taba also gives second opinions on retinal and general eye conditions. Dr. Taba is a Board-Certified Ophthalmologist and is Fellowship trained in surgical and medical retinal diseases.

Retina Group of Florida & Personalized Retina Care of Naples Join Together to Expand Patient Access:

Personalized Retina Care of Naples is proud to announce it has joined together with Retina Group of Florida. RGF currently serves communities on the East Coast of Florida, West Coast of Florida, Central Florida and now includes Southwest Florida.

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SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

By Richard Capiola, MD

You've probably heard of the idea of setting boundaries. Just about any counselor will tell you that boundaries are important for your mental health and that without them your life can seem out of control.

In general, a boundary is defined as a point where two things become different. For example, a river can form a boundary between two states. Your skin is a boundary between you and the outside world. Physical boundaries are easy to see. But what about personal boundaries? How do we set them and how do we make others aware of them if they cannot be seen?

Boundaries differ from person to person and are mediated by variations in culture, personality, and social context. Boundaries appropriate in a business meeting would seem irrelevant in a nightclub with old friends! Setting boundaries defines our expectations of ourselves and others in different kinds of relationships and in different circumstances.

Knowing when and how to set up healthy boundaries can be tricky. When you evaluate your values and core beliefs, it's easier to put protections in place to support your own physical, mental and emotional health. When you do this, in most cases, you'll be overwhelmingly supported.

What are healthy boundaries?

Healthy boundaries are an important tool needed to make sure we have our needs met. They allow us to:

- Retain our identity.
- Prevent others from taking advantage of or manipulating us.
- Promote healthy relationships.
- Allow us to be appropriately assertive.
- Empower us to strive for personal goals and establish empathy for others.

"Boundaries are the framework we set for ourselves on how we want to be treated by others and how we treat other people," says Karen Salerno, Social worker, MSSA, LISW-S. "It's setting up how you want to be treated, it promotes physical and emotional wellbeing, and it respects your needs and the other person's needs in a relationship."¹

Let's look at some examples of healthy boundaries.

- **Saying no without guilt.** This is especially difficult in American culture where we feel obligated to give an excuse rather than just saying no to a request.
- **Saying yes because you want to** — not out of guilt or obligation.
- **Asking for what you want or need.**
- **Taking care of yourself.**
- **Behaving according to your own values and beliefs.**
- **Feeling safe to express difficult emotions and have disagreements.**
- **Feeling supported to pursue your own goals.**
- **Being treated as an equal.**
- **Taking responsibility for your own happiness and not feeling responsible for someone else's happiness.**

How to set boundaries

In order to set boundaries, you must be self-aware. Before you can communicate your expectations to others, you'll need to know them yourself. Knowing yourself and what you are and are not comfortable with in certain situations is important.

Once you have an idea about who you are and what makes you uncomfortable, good communication is the next step. Be clear and assertive. Communicate clearly and effectively, without being demanding or whiny. Assertiveness involves expressing feelings openly and respectfully.

Here are three easy steps to setting healthy boundaries:

Step 1. Be as clear and as straightforward as possible. Do not raise your voice.

Step 2. State your need or request directly in terms of what you'd like, rather than what you don't want or like.

Step 3. Accept any discomfort that arises as a result, whether it's guilt, shame, or remorse.

References:

1. Bigley (2023) How to set healthy boundaries in relationships, Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland Clinic. Available at: <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-to-set-boundaries/>.
- o Nash, P.D. (2022) How to set healthy boundaries & build positive relationships, PositivePsychology.com. Available at: <https://positivepsychology.com/great-self-care-setting-healthy-boundaries/>.

That last step can be a doozy since we often train ourselves that guilt, shame, and remorse are negative emotions. Accepting our emotions then helps us to deal with our emotions. Not allowing ourselves to feel emotions, positive or negative, is not healthy. We feel how we feel and we need to learn what to do with whatever feelings come as a result of our decisions.

Unhealthy boundaries are often learned in childhood. Fortunately, they can be unlearned. Once you understand what healthy boundaries are, you can begin to explore your barriers to healthy boundaries. Like all skills, learning appropriate boundaries takes practice. With time and practice, you will begin to experience feeling safe, worthy, and in control.

If your mental health could benefit by some new, healthier boundaries, there is help in SWFL. Dr. Richard Capiola, MD is a Board-Certified Psychiatrist in Naples with over 31 years of experience in the medical field. He graduated from Tulane University School of Medicine in 1990. Be sure to call ahead with Dr. Capiola to book an appointment.

ABOUT DR. CAPIOLA

With triple board certification in general psychiatry, addiction psychiatry and forensic psychiatry, Dr. Richard J. Capiola has been in practice for 27 years. During his training at Tulane Medical School and UCLA, Dr. Capiola developed a keen interest in the treatment of depression and anxiety overlapping with drug and alcohol abuse. This focus led to his role as chief medical officer for Oglethorpe Inc., which specializes in the treatment of mental health and addiction. He has been instrumental in the clinical development and oversight of 12 specialty treatment centers in five states.

Dr. Capiola's specialties include adult and adolescent psychiatry, treatment of anxiety, depression, and substance use problems, and forensic psychiatry, where he evaluates patients with legal issues related to mental health.

Dr. Capiola is the chief of psychiatry for Physicians Regional Medical Center and was the medical director for the Wilough at Naples for many years. He's served 10 years with The Joint Commission, which evaluates hospitals nationwide for quality of care and safety.

Dr. Capiola was the featured neuropsychiatrist in the recent book "Don't Give Up On Me" with Darryl Strawberry. His confidential private practice focuses on using each individual's inherent strengths to achieve the goal of living a healthy, well-balanced life.

RICHARD J. CAPIOLA, MD

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SAY GOODBYE TO REDS, ROSACEA AND VESSELS

By Dr. Anita Grassi

Facial redness is a common reason for visits to the dermatologist's office. It can be the result of conditions such as rosacea, broken blood vessels due to chronic sun damage, and marks left from acne. Redness is usually vascular in origin. Makeup will only go so far to camouflage it and medications while helpful often provide only temporary relief.

The VBeam™ Perfecta laser is a safe and effective treatment for vascular lesions of the skin. It employs pulsed-dye technology used since the 1980's to target blood vessels specifically and thus minimize damage to the surrounding tissue. The VBeam™ Perfecta laser emits a 595 nm beam of light which is absorbed by hemoglobin in blood. This absorption of light energy generates heat which in turn is transferred to the blood vessel wall damaging it. Such selective damage reduces the risk of side effects including discoloration and scarring.

Rosacea is a good example of facial redness that responds well to VBeam™ Perfecta laser treatments. Rosacea is a chronic condition that starts in adulthood and can progress to background redness, enlarged blood vessels called telangiectasia, acne-like papules and flushing. While the inflammatory, acne-like bumps respond to topical and oral medications, the background redness and telangiectasia often remain. The VBeam™ Perfecta



laser can effectively reduce the redness and vessels in 2-3 treatments usually spaced about 1 month apart with little pain or downtime. Topical numbing is not required. Patients often describe the laser pulses as a snapping sensation against the skin. The comfort level of the treatment is enhanced by a cooling spray that is emitted nearly simultaneously with the laser pulse. After treatment the skin may look red and puffy with occasional bruising that resolves within days. Sunscreens are advised both before and after treatment as suntan can interfere with the absorption of the laser light and increase the risks of hyperpigmentation.

VBeam™ Perfecta laser can also effectively treat other vascular growths of the skin such as cherry angiomas, those small, bright red spots. Cherry angiomas are thicker and may need to be treated with settings that create more bruising in order to work. Redness from acne scars will fade with the VBeam™ Perfecta laser but must be used along with a good acne regimen to reduce further outbreaks. Red surgical scars can also lighten in color with VBeam™ Perfecta laser treatment, although the thickness of the scar may not improve.

If you are interested in learning more about laser treatment of vascular conditions, contact Skin Wellness Physicians to schedule a consultation.

DR. ANITA GRASSI

Board Certified Dermatologist



Dr. Anita Grassi is a board-certified dermatologist who joins Skin Wellness Physicians after a long career in both academic and private practice in the Boston area. She spent 30 years in practice at the Derma-

tology Laser and Cosmetic Center at xpert for Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA, where she gained experience in cutting-edge laser treatments of skin disorders. She also served on the faculty of Harvard Medical School as an assistant professor and was instrumental in training many residents and fellows in medical dermatology, laser, and cosmetic procedures. Furthermore, she co-founded a private practice in Watertown, MA, bringing the same level of skillful dermatologic care into the community setting.



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THERE'S A BUZZ IN THE EAR!

By Melissa Stanley R.N., B.S.N.

The first full week of February, tinnitus awareness is observed. Tinnitus is defined as a ringing, buzzing or similar sensation in the ears. More people are affected by it than we know. Some people may hear sounds of singing, music, pulse (pulsatile tinnitus), humming, and hissing. My husband suffers from tinnitus. He describes it as a white noise which gradually worsened overtime and is worse when it is quiet. It can make him irritable at times because he can hear everything in the background but nothing close. Other people we know get a bad headache with their tinnitus. Everyone has a different experience as to how tinnitus affects them. It can be a frustrating and a debilitating issue.

What causes tinnitus?

It is not clear why it happens but it often occurs with some type of hearing loss. It can happen to all ages especially to those over the age of 60. Common causes of tinnitus include earwax build-up, middle ear infection, anemia, inner ear damage for repeated exposure to loud noises, allergies, Meniere's disease, or age-related hearing loss. Some people may only experience a mild irritation while others it affects their daily lives.

So the question is, can tinnitus be treated?

The first step for treating tinnitus is properly diagnosing and measuring tinnitus. Getting an ear examined by a healthcare professional to see if the problem may be caused by a treatable condition such as an ear infection or build-up of earwax would be a good start. You may be referred to a specialist for further testing and possible treatments. Some places offer free hearing tests such as Costco. There

is no medication or promising treatment for tinnitus. Treating some of the causes may help reduce the severity of complications and symptoms. According to the Mayo Clinic, "For many people, tinnitus improves with treatment of the underlying cause or with other treatments that reduce or mask the noise, making tinnitus less noticeable."

Some studies have shown a B12 deficiency can contribute to tinnitus and hearing loss. Vitamin B12 deficiency may cause the demyelination of neurons in the cochlear nerve impairing the vascular and nervous systems of the auditory system, thus resulting in tinnitus and hearing loss. The 2 most common types of B12 are Cyanocobalamin and Methylcobalamin. At PrimeIV, we offer methylcobalamin (active B12), which is a naturally occurring form, via intravenous administration or intramuscular injection. Vitamin B12 is an important water-soluble vitamin that your body needs. It is involved in red blood cell production, brain health, nerve function, metabolism and DNA synthesis. Since it is not produced naturally in your body, we have to get it from supplements as well as food sources like eggs, milk, fish and meat. There is a gene mutation associated with B12 that affects the ability of the body to turn it into forms that body can utilize. Not everyone knows if they have a gene mutation unless they have been tested.

Vitamin D deficiency has also been linked to tinnitus. It is a fast-soluble vitamin that can cause poor bone health which includes the inner ear bones.

Even though we live in sunny Florida, most people are deficient in this vitamin. Vitamin D is naturally produced in our bodies when exposed to direct sunlight. Exposing your skin to sun without sunscreen feels great but may contribute to skin cancer. Vitamin D 50,000 IU Intramuscular injection every 3-4 weeks.

Along with vitamins, Mineral deficiencies such as magnesium have been found to prevent hearing loss amongst noise exposure. Magnesium is helpful in decreasing tinnitus sounds as a result of hearing loss. Healthy levels of magnesium keep the blood vessels relaxed, allowing adequate blood to flow throughout the body, including the inner ear.

PrimeIV is proud to partner with Routine. Routine is a convenient at-home test kit. You order your test kit online, collect your sample, send it back and then wait for your results. Routine test kits provide a comprehensive analysis to uncover your micronutrient deficiencies. Once you receive your results, bring them into PrimeIV. We will review your results and customize a wellness plan for your needs.

Unfortunately, for my husband, his tinnitus is caused from repeated exposure to loud noises. He has no hearing loss, according to all of his hearing tests, so treating his symptoms is the only way to improve his everyday tinnitus. There are many resources available online for tinnitus sufferers such as American Tinnitus Association (ata.org) and American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (asha.org). Maintaining a well balanced diet while filling nutrient gaps with supplements and knowing your deficiencies can greatly improve your quality of life and improve your ear health.

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How to Increase Employee Retention and Well-Being

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

Organizations can improve their bottom-line by actively supporting workers who double as caregivers for older adults.

Did you know that if one of your valued employees were to leave, it would cost your business up to two times their annual salary to hire and train a replacement? And this doesn't even begin to address the impact that high turnover has on remaining staff and customers.

It's no wonder that Employee Retention is a critical goal for corporate executives, not-for-profit leaders, and human resource professionals. Very likely, this is one of those vexing issues that keeps you up at night.

As we begin the new fiscal year, there is a wealth of literature in the HR field on how to retain top employees, complete with lists, strategies, and plans. But what is consistent across every recommendation is the need to do three things:

1. To offer well designed benefit plans
2. To prioritize employees' work/life balance
3. To support workers' well-being

While corporations and not-for-profits generally offer an array of valuable employee assistance programs, one critical benefit area that is often overlooked is *senior care* support services.

According to AARP, one in six US employees spends 20 hours per week, on average, assisting an older relative. Much of this time occurs during business hours. Yet companies routinely fail to recognize this issue and, as a result, suffer an enormous toll on their finances and on their employees' performance.

The costs are astounding! Across the country, working caregivers cost employers an estimated eight percent more than non-caregivers. That equates to a stunning \$13.4 billion per year. And that is a direct hit to the bottom line.

This is where Senior Care Authority can help. Through benefit plans managed by companies and organizations, we offer a program called *EASE*—Employee Assistance Solutions for Eldercare.



For employers, *EASE* has the potential to lower absenteeism and improve productivity. By supporting employees during their critical caregiving moments, it can improve worker satisfaction and reduce turnover.

For employees, the *EASE* program helps people focus on their work tasks, knowing that the needs of their family members are being guided by a professional. Employees will experience reductions in stress, anxiety, and tension. All of which leads to increased productivity on the job.

"*EASE* is a timely solution designed so organizations can support their employees who are juggling the demands of work while acting as a caregiver for an older loved one," said Bruce Nathanson, Advisor at Senior Care Authority. "Our high touch services are personalized to address each client's situation and needs."

EASE custom-tailored programs help employee caregivers sort through and understand the range of care options, traverse a complex healthcare system, and help them make decisions that are right for the older adult in their care. Services include:

- **Family Coaching:** As a third-party advisor outside the emotional landscape of the family, we can help family members express points of view, discuss issues, and reach consensus. We do this in a constructive and respectful manner recognizing that everyone needs to be heard and have their opinions valued.

- **Senior Self-Driving Assessments:** We offer a nationally recognized program to help older drivers and their concerned families work through the complicated issues of diminishing driving skills due to aging. Our self-assessment process promotes buy in and maintains a higher quality of relationships.

- **Eldercare Consulting:** We help clients navigate a complex healthcare system and the challenging transitions that so often occur. We support long distance caregiving, and we arrange referrals to specialists—including attorneys, financial planners, and homecare and daycare services. Our guidance includes development of customized and manageable care plans with clear steps and goals that serve as a roadmap. We also provide on-going "peace of mind" support following move-in to a residential community.

- **Residential Placement Services:** We work with families to identify the best senior living and care options, whether it is independent living, assisted living, memory care or skilled nursing. After creating a "short list" of potential solutions, we schedule tours and accompany clients on each visit. We assist in paperwork completion and moving arrangements.

Advisors at *Senior Care Authority* are, or have been, a caregiver for a family member. Each member of the team has also received accreditation as a Certified Dementia Practitioner. This allows staff to combine personal experience with professional training to support clients with compassion and skill.

As we begin 2023, senior managers and benefit professionals can take a bold step towards improving retention by recognizing and supporting your employees who double as caregivers. Not only will your bottom-line shine, but your workers will be more strongly committed to their work and your organization.

If you're interested in high touch, customized solutions to meet the needs of your workforce-- and your organization--call Bruce Nathanson, at Senior Care Authority at 212-913-9963 or visit our website <https://www.seniorcare-nyfl.com/ease.html>.



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DIABETES AND HEART DISEASE: WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?

By Andrea Hayes, MD, F.A.C.E.

The most common cause of death in patients with diabetes, is NOT diabetes itself, but cardiovascular disease (commonly called heart disease or CV disease). Patients with diabetes are twice as likely to die of heart attack and stroke as their non-diabetic counterparts and frequently develop disease at a much younger age. Heart disease refers to the fatty build-up of cholesterol (plaque) in the large arteries that supply blood to the heart, brain and extremities. When the artery becomes clogged, the organ loses sufficient blood flow for normal functioning.

Type 2 diabetes is considered a "cardiovascular disease equivalent" meaning that a person with diabetes has the same chance of having a heart attack as a person who has already suffered from a cardiovascular event. During my 25 years of practice in Endocrinology and Diabetes, I've treated thousands of patients with Type 2 diabetes who were at very high risk of heart disease or who were already diagnosed with the condition. My goal at each visit is to focus not only on blood sugar control but on all known factors contributing to overall cardiovascular risk.

Here are the most important modifiable risk factors that can reduce your risk of developing heart disease:

1. LDL cholesterol: The most important number to know, whether you have diabetes or not, is the "bad cholesterol" or LDL (low density lipoprotein). This level has been shown to be more tightly correlated with heart disease risk than blood pressure, A1C and even smoking. Most labs report a normal LDL

as being less than 100 mg/dl. National guidelines suggest that patients with diabetes should maintain an LDL less than 70 mg/dl; for those with known heart disease, the LDL should likely be targeted at below 55 mg/dl.

In other words, a "normal" LDL is just not good enough if you have diabetes. Lower than normal is better. The HDL (high density lipoprotein) or "good cholesterol" is an important number as well. In general, the higher the HDL the more protected one is for CV risk. However, it is more difficult to change the HDL than the LDL because genetics and gender play an important role in determining this number. High triglycerides are another component of total cholesterol that should be addressed.

2. Blood Pressure: Blood pressure is a very important parameter to control in patients with diabetes in order to reduce CV risk. When blood pressure is high, it places stress on the arteries making them more fragile and subject to blockage or rupture. Blood pressure should generally measure less than 120 -125/80 for optimal protection. Some patients may require three or more medications in combination for the purpose of keeping blood pressure within normal range. Proper control of hypertension helps prevent stroke, heart and kidney disease making this measurement very high on the list of risk factor modification targets.

3. A1C: The A1C test reflects the 90 day blood sugar average in a patient with diabetes. This level reflects the amount of sugar attached to the red blood cell which typically lives 90 days. I call this the "diabetes report card" because it takes into account the average blood sugar over the preceding three months; it does

not however take into account glucose excursions including high and low values that may occur daily. Blood sugar control is known to be an important risk factor in microvascular disease modification particularly relating to small blood vessel disease of the retina, kidneys and nerves.

4. Smoking. If you don't smoke, great. If you do, it's time to quit. The chemicals in cigarette smoke lead to a toxic milieu in the vasculature promoting deposition of plaque and ultimately, unhealthy arteries.

5. Obesity, dietary composition and physical activity. These factors can't be overstated as important in the primary and secondary prevention of heart disease in both the diabetic and non-diabetic populations. Generally, there is no need to implement a fancy, restrictive diet or to start training for a marathon. Small, daily, sustainable changes add up to big changes in the long run. For example, if you are sedentary, start small by walking more frequently, taking the stairs instead of the elevator and park farther away from your destination. Change your diet by first eliminating regular sodas or sugared drinks which contain "empty calories". Ask your physician about medications that can promote weight loss.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in our nation, ahead of cancer, COVID-19, dementia and others. People with diabetes and those at risk for heart disease should address their risk factors in order to prevent devastating consequences.

Andrea Hayes MD received her Type 1 diagnosis at age 15. She is a board-certified endocrinologist who has been in practice for 25 years. She offers prompt appointments for patients in home, local office or via telehealth.

For more information, call 239-641-8199 or visit: naplesdiabetesconciierge.com



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- Low testosterone
- Obesity
- Metabolic Syndrome
- General Endocrine Disorders

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AND CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Peripheral neuropathy, a result of damage to the nerves located outside of the brain and spinal cord (peripheral nerves), often causes weakness, numbness and pain, usually in the hands and feet. It can also affect other areas and body functions including digestion, urination and circulation.

Your peripheral nervous system sends information from your brain and spinal cord (central nervous system) to the rest of your body. The peripheral nerves also send sensory information to the central nervous system.¹

People with peripheral neuropathy generally describe the pain as stabbing, burning or tingling. In many cases, symptoms improve, especially if caused by a treatable condition. Peripheral neuropathy currently affects over 20 million people in the United States.

While neuropathy can be severe, the most common forms of neuropathy include diabetic neuropathy, carpal tunnel syndrome, and sciatica which are actually quite prevalent in adult populations. The symptoms of neuropathy greatly depend on the type of nerves that are damaged, ranging from motor nerves, and sensory nerves.

Causes of peripheral neuropathy

Diabetes is the number 1 cause of peripheral neuropathy, but it is not the only cause. Some of the health conditions that can cause peripheral neuropathy include:

- Excessive alcohol drinking for years
- Low levels of vitamin B12 or other vitamins
- Physical damage to the nerves, such as from an injury or during surgery
- An underactive thyroid gland
- Certain infections, such as shingles, Lyme disease, diphtheria, botulism and HIV
- Inflammation of the blood vessels
- Chronic liver disease or chronic kidney disease
- The presence of an abnormal protein in the blood (monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance, or MGUS)
- Certain types of cancer, such as lymphoma, a cancer of the lymphatic system, and multiple myeloma, a type of bone marrow cancer
- Health conditions caused by overactivity of the immune system, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus²

How Chiropractic Care Can Work for Cases of Neuropathy

Chiropractic treatments can take care of peripheral diseases by focusing on handling all fundamental nerve conditions that cause inflammation. The pain will gradually disappear after several sessions of chiropractic massage, which is carried out on specific joints to ease chronic pain.

Chiropractic Therapy is the best alternative to normal peripheral medications, and patients look forward to relief in their joints as well as an improvement to their overall health. In order to achieve a positive result, chiropractors can personalize each treatment plan to satisfy the individual patient's needs.

With chiropractic treatments, patients with neuropathy can be provided with various approaches that heal damage; These manipulations and adjustments of nerves can be helpful in symptom management like tingling sensations, loss of sensation on one part of the foot and/or weakness of various muscles.

Choosing chiropractic care as an alternative to regular medications can be helpful in the treatment of your nerve pain because chiropractors often recommend a therapy for the decompression of your spine if you are a patient with chronic pain in the lower back.

Also, patients with neuropathy can benefit from therapeutic ultrasound devices, which allow chiropractors the easy option of giving their patients some mild but deep stimulations in the tissue without necessarily using heat directly at the nerve to relieve pain.

With chiropractic treatment, there may be no special requirement to solve all neuropathy problems. However, chiropractors can provide patients with various relieving options, depending on their nerve symptoms. Some patients with mild neuropathy can get better after one session with a chiropractor, while others may get well only after a series of regular visits.

During chiropractic care sessions, a chiropractor targets the main neuropathy case of each patient, using physical therapy to achieve an accurate solution to the problem. Following this method of treatment, patients can begin to see significant results.

Depending on the severity of your pain and symptoms, treatment for neuropathy is often adjusted to first treat the associating condition that is causing the pain. To manage nerve pain and these underlying conditions, we utilize a combination of natural therapeutic treatments such as corrective care, and nerve regeneration to greatly reduce the severity of your discomfort.

Our mission at Caliber Wellness is simply to serve you. We have a beautiful holistic approach to the structural, chemical, and emotional health in our patients. Each potential root cause of your symptoms must be considered and ACCURATELY treated to achieve LASTING RESULTS. Every treatment plan is personalized to YOU. No two patients are exactly the same, and neither is their health journey! We are here to support you each step of the way.

Our state-of-the-art equipment and objective testing methods let us know exactly what you need to get your life back instead of masking symptoms.

For more information on neuropathy or nerve pain or to request an appointment, please don't hesitate to contact us today at (239) 658-2665 or visit our website at www.caliberwellness.com.

1. Peripheral neuropathy (2022). Mayo Clinic. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Available at: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/peripheral-neuropathy/symptoms-causes/syc-20352061>.

2. NHS choices. NHS. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/peripheral-neuropathy/causes/>.



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INVENTORY, INSURANCE, AND REAL ESTATE TAXES

By Robert Nardi, Broker/Owner

According to the November 2022 Market Report by the Naples Area Board of REALTORS® (NABOR®), which tracks home listings and sales within Collier County (excluding Marco Island), there were 552 overall closed sales in November, which is a 41.4 percent decrease from 942 closed sales recorded in November 2021. The post-pandemic home buying surge when mortgage rates were historically low has ended. Housing inventory in Naples is rising but remains low at just 2.8 months of inventory reported in November (a balanced market has a six-month supply of inventory). As expected, the limited inventory environment in Naples is restricting sales and increasing prices. Though broker analysts reviewing the report pointed out that cash sales accounted for 62.3 percent of closed sales in November, it indicates that the Naples housing market remains a solid investment. The November report showed inventory rose in all price categories except the \$300,000 and below category, which decreased 14.2 percent from 127 to 109 properties. Overall inventory in November rose 96.8 percent to 2,478 properties from 1,259 properties in November 2021. Comparatively, in November 2019, there were 5,563 properties in inventory, which was split between 2,771 single-family homes and 2,792 condominiums. Today, the inventory is single-family home heavy, accounting for 63 percent of all homes in Naples. November's overall median closed price increased 20.4 percent to \$600,000 from \$498,500 in November 2021. If you wish to see the entire report in chart form, please send an email to Robert@NardiRealty.com.

What does this all mean?

We are slowly turning into a balanced market. The only hurdle now that we have is insurance. Since Hurricane Ian, insurance companies have been inundated with insurance claims. To add to the mix, they are swamped with the harsh weather up north (pipes bursting from the cold, roofs leaking, etc.). They are moving slower than usual, so many potential sellers are also slow to move. They need to work with their insurance company to get a resolution to repair damaged properties to put them on the market. Hence, it will be slow before six months of inventory are available.

Now for the buyers who are purchasing and wish to obtain insurance, it is becoming more and more difficult. If you purchase a property with a 20-year-old clay tile roof that is sound and has no leaks, no insurance company will insure the property. However, you can seek a third-party insurer, like Lloyds of London. The price of insurance could be costly until a new roof is installed. If it is a shingle roof and is 15 years old, insurance companies will still insure it but will need to undergo a certification process each year up until its 20th year, and then it must be replaced. Lastly, some insurers now offer insurance but will no longer insure the roof. Hence, when looking at a property, you must read the Seller's Disclosure, find out the roof's age, and investigate your insurance options. You can also try shopping for insurance using an insurance broker instead of just going through one company. They can send out your information and receive 3-4 quotes back.

The benefits of living in Florida full time.

Property owners pay three times more for property insurance than in other states.

However, there are many financial benefits to living here. First of all there is no state tax, and if you purchase in Collier County, real estate taxes are 1.25% of the assessed value set by the Collier Appraiser. I am happy to report that Collier County has the lowest real estate taxes in all of Florida. In addition, if you don't live in the City of Naples proper, you have no city tax. The other huge benefit is the homestead exemption. If you become a full-time resident, you'll receive this exemption on your real estate taxes, saving you up to \$625 a year on your taxable value. The most significant savings is that your taxes can only increase by 3% a year until you sell your property. Even though your property value could go up 10% a year, you pay taxes of 3%. This is a considerable saving over time. Another benefit is if you are a married couple and one spouse dies, it simply transfers to the other spouse without any tax ramifications. Lastly, since it is your homestead property, if you were ever involved in a lawsuit and a lien was placed on your home, a judge could never force you to sell your property to pay off the lien.

We live in paradise!

Southwest Florida is recovering quickly from Hurricane Ian. 95% of our beaches are open. The Gulf of Mexico is shimmering greens and blues. Our weather is fantastic in the winter months. So if you are looking to buy a little piece of paradise, you could always start searching online at www.BuyNaples.net, or if you wish to have personalized service, please feel free to contact me directly at 239-293-3592 or send an e-mail to Robert@NardiRealty.com. I am here to help! Happy New Year!

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Retirement Planning During High Inflation

In 2022 we witnessed inflation numbers that haven't been around since the early 1980's. When the decision comes to retire during a year with inflation this high, how are we supposed to plan? What are we supposed to think?

Retirement can be a whirlwind of emotions. Even though I am not currently retired, I have walked many clients through this and planned with folks for years to prepare them for it and have then watched them take the leap.

The outcome is always different; regardless of how financially prepared you are, the emotions of no longer working can yield many different reactions. Retirement is a hard transition that can be even more difficult in a high inflationary environment.

What are the risks to a retiree when inflation is high?

One of the most challenging risks to your retirement is the sequence of return risk, which takes the time your portfolio returns happen and how it can help or hurt the longevity of your portfolio into consideration. Let's say you retire when the market is down 15%, and you need to take withdrawals. Ultimately this will hurt the longevity of your portfolio. However, if you retire with returns up 15%, you can take withdrawals from your gains and thus increase the longevity of your portfolio.

Inflation can be a factor that also forces the market to drop, and we witnessed as such in 2022 with negative returns in many areas of the market. Under these circumstances, the longevity of your retirement portfolio can be diminished if the sequencing of returns is negative due to market downturns. Inflation can also eat away at your purchasing power. If you were planning on spending \$120,000 every year but now goods and services cost more, you now need to spend \$125,000 to live the same lifestyle.

High inflation forces the Federal Reserve into action, and in some cases, such action is a contraction of the economy. They do so in various ways, but mainly by trying to slow the supply of money. Much like what we saw in 2022, the Fed raised their rate targets which caused interest rates on debt to increase quickly. Purchasing a second property, downsizing in retirement, or even buying a new car will now look different when rates are higher than they were.



So if you're planning to retire or are already retired, what are you supposed to do?

- **First, find opportunities.** When the Fed raises the target rates, safe assets such as money market funds, bank CDs, and short-term government bond yields go up, helping anyone sitting on cash or retirees looking for a place to park their short-term dollars. With inflation running hot, it might be a good time to reallocate your portfolio. Take this time to determine if one asset class has grown more than another. Now is when it might make sense to shift some around to buy the undervalued asset class.

Think outside the box. Many sectors or certain types of investments tend to grow when inflation is high.

- **Have you heard of a buffered note?** These can work very well in this market, seeing as the return is pegged to the stock market, which provides the possibility of upside, but also includes some downside protection. These are structured notes built using options contracts, which means when volatility is high, the terms are much more favorable. These are available through investment advisors or ETF form.

- **How about real estate or even farmland?** Both asset classes can be a part of a portfolio in many different ways.

- **Most of all, do not panic.** Money is deeply emotional already. When you have uncertain times, it can cause you to become even more reactive and make the wrong decision. Now is the time to speak to your financial planner and update the plan. Use their tools, such as the Monte Carlo simulator and update your probability of success. Check-in on your spending and saving. If you are still preparing for retirement, see this time as an opportunity to save in a market that is "on sale." The big thing is to remember to control what you have control of and let the things go that are out of your control.

Who knows what 2023 will bring? In times like these, it is always good to take a deep breath, step back and analyze things logically. There are always opportunities, and financial plans should be flexible. Engage with your financial team to understand how to take advantage of these times. Your financial planner and tax advisor should be able to point you in the right direction. If Wealthquest can help with education or answers to questions, please email Adam at aday@wqcorp.com.

Buffered Note Disclosure:

The investment products discussed herein are considered complex investment products. Such products contain unique features, risks, terms, conditions, fees, charges, and expenses specific to each product. The overall performance of the product is dependent on the performance of an underlying or linked derivative financial instrument, formula, or strategy. Return of principal is not guaranteed and is subject to the credit risk of the issuer. Investments in complex products are subject to the risks of the underlying reference asset classes to which the product may be linked, which include, but are not limited to, market risk, liquidity risk, call risk, income risk, as well as other risks associated with foreign, developing, or emerging markets, such as currency, political, and economic risks. Depending upon the particular complex product, participation in any underlying asset ("underlier") is subject to certain caps and restrictions. Any investment product with leverage associated may work for or against the investor. Market-Linked Products are subject to the credit risk of the issuer. Investors who sell complex products or Market-Linked Products prior to maturity are subject to the risk of loss of principal, as there may not be an active secondary market. You should not purchase a complex investment product until you have read the specific offering documentation and understand the specific investment terms, features, risks, fees, charges, and expenses of such investment.

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ORAL HEALTH: ARE YOU OVERDUE FOR YOUR EXAM?

Regular Dental Visits Are Important

Dental health and proactive measures are essential. Staying on top of your dental health through cleanings, x-rays, and dental examinations are critical to avoid in-depth procedures and to maintain a healthy mouth that's free of decay, bacteria, and oral cancer.

Are you overdue for a dental cleaning and exam?

Periodontal disease is caused by bacteria that harbors deep within the pockets of the teeth. If you notice bleeding when you floss or brush your teeth, you might have underlying bacteria that is causing inflammation in your gingival tissue. Never ignore pain, odor, teeth that move easily or any other dental or oral health changes. These issues can intensify quickly. It's never too late, but as with any health condition, early treatment is always best.

Aging Restorative Treatment

As we age, teeth can begin to break down with wear and tear or inadequate hygiene. When children get fillings or root canals, those will most likely need to be replaced as they age. Almost all restorative dental treatment has limitations. If the old fillings in your teeth have any dark margins, you may have microleakage around the restoration, which can lead to decay and the need for root canals or extractions. Antibiotics will only work on abscesses caused by trauma or bacteria for a short period of time before the infection returns. A long-term restorative option will be necessary.

X-rays and examinations provide in-depth detail on the health of your teeth, gums, soft tissue, and bone structure.

Missing Teeth and Extractions

There are multiple treatment options; however, if you need to replace missing teeth, getting dental implants is the best solution for overall health. When an extraction is necessary, it's because the structure of the tooth is too weak to support a crown or restoration, or it may be due to the bone loss and periodontal disease within the supporting gingival tissue (gum line).

If a tooth is removed and not replaced with an implant, denture or bridge, several adverse reactions begin to take place. The first is that the facial structures can change. As individuals age, the facial contours that once supported the lips and cheeks can change with muscle atrophy and the effects of gravity, but when there is added tooth loss, the facial structures change drastically. The outcomes are an increased aging effect with noticeable sagging and gaunt like features.

This may seem superficial, but there is an underlying cause that increases health risks and disorders. The underlying cause is bone loss. When a tooth is extracted, the alveolar sac (bone socket) begins to degenerate, and the surrounding jaw structure will as well.

Degeneration of bone is caused by lack of contact of the teeth. When healthy teeth are correctly abutting against each other, it creates pressure and friction on the teeth and surrounding bone. This pressure from biting helps to regenerate bone on a daily basis, keeping teeth and the jawbone firmly sustained.

Dental implants can be used to replace one or multiple teeth. Implants are also a remarkable solution for holding in a permanent bridge or as an anchor(s) for dentures.

If there is significant bone loss, bone grafts can help to regenerate the bone that's been compromised and assure that the implants are securely supported.

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At Caring Dentistry of Naples, we are a genuine team of dental professionals that always strive to treat our patients with love and kindness. Dr. Dianelis Blanco values excellent communication, which helps guide you to the right treatments to meet your individual needs. We are committed to helping you feel at home and do everything possible to help you have an excellent dental experience.

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We welcome you to our dental office and look forward to helping you learn to love your smile. You are welcome to browse through our website to learn more about our services for dental care in Naples, Florida, and we invite you to feel free to call us with any questions. Schedule an appointment with our dentist today and let us be the reason you smile!



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Health Insurance IMPORTANT DATES!



By Ulla-Undine Merritt (Dee) National Producer Number (NPN) 8853366

HEALTH INSURANCE is more important than ever! There is no way to determine when something will happen or when you could be diagnosed with a serious medical condition. So, saying I am healthy, so I don't need health insurance makes no sense. Insurance is moving the financial risk from you to the insurance company. There are always options for about every budget. Work with a professional that is contracted with many carriers and offers multiple options. Many plans are available year-round, the government plans such as the Marketplace and Medicare have specific times that you can enroll unless you have a Special Enrollment Period due to, as an example loss of coverage, marriage, moving out of the plans service area, etc.

MEDICARE – Annual Enrollment Period October 15-December 7th, 2022, for January 1st, 2023, effective. Medicare Advantage – Part C & Part D Prescription Plans

Most of the plans in your area have made many changes and things you might not notice, especially important, are your doctors still in network, what tier are your medications and maybe the tier changed, copays, coinsurance. What extras are the plans offering? Maybe you need extra dental, vision, hearing aids. Many plans include some wonderful extra benefits, but it is also particularly important to know how to use the benefit and if they work for you.

CMS has made many rules for 2023 Medicare season. If you want to enroll or review your plan over the phone or on a Webex, you need to agree to be recorded and Medicare requires us to keep the recording for 10 years. In person appointments do not have that requirement, but you need to sign a scope of appointment that just authorizes us to talk to you about what you checked, such as Medicare Advantage or a Drug Plan it does not allow us to do anything but talk to you about these topics. Many plans have decreased the cost of Insulin which will be a huge savings for so many in 2023. Talk about maximum of \$2,000 drug cost in a year, is not valid in 2023 but hopefully in 2025. Many changes are happening year after year. Find an agent that will be there for you, year after year.

When you turn 65 you are eligible for Medicare, once you have worked 40 quarters roughly 10 years there is no cost for Medicare Part "A". Part A covers Hospitals, Skilled Nursing, Home Health & Hospice. Medicare Part B you can choose to take at 65 or you can hold off if you are still working and have credible coverage. If you do not have group health insurance that is considered qualified, and then you want it you would have a late enrollment penalty for each month you did not have Part B & Part D and that penalty will last for the rest of your life. Part B covers, doctors, imaging, blood work, ambulance, durable medical equipment, etc. Part D is a Medicare Drug Plan and covers medications. During your initial enrollment period it is especially important to understand your options! Medicare Supplements/Medigap Plans are NOT guarantee issue you may need to medically qualify. You can purchase a Medigap Plan during your 1st 6-month on Medicare Part B without medical underwriting. There are a lot of things you need to know. Again, work with an agent you can trust! **Especially important:** when you **move** you need to know your options. Can you keep the same plan? Do you need to make a change and what does that look like?

We offer **Free Medicare Seminars** in Lee & Collier County please e-mail info@logicalinsurance.com to register or call **239-362-0855** for dates. Medicare's website is www.Medicare.gov.

MARKETPLACE – Obama Care/Affordable Care Act – open enrollment starts November 1st- December 15th for January 1st effective. December 16th to January 15th will have February 1st, 2023, effective.

The website is HealthCare.gov, your local insurance agent can help you through the maze. The government also changes each year what how much you can earn to receive subsidy to help lower your cost for insurance. Many people are not aware that they do not need to forgo having health insurance and there are affordable options for them. Insurance is not just about the price of the premium but particularly important the network of doctors, hospital, etc. that you can have access to. Be careful carriers that are selling in your area might not have a good network, so the price might be right but if your hospital and your doctors are not in their network that is a problem. So always check the network!

Understanding deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, what applies to the deductible? Do I have to pay the deductible before the plan pays? This differs by each plan, Copays vs. coinsurance if you do not understand ask, become informed about what you are buying and how it works.

Individual/Family Health Insurance – Being young and healthy does not mean you do not need health insurance. Do you know anyone that knew when they were going to be diagnosed with cancer, or when they were going to have a heart attack or even a serious accident? I do not, it happens, and insurance is there to help you get the care you need and limit your financial exposure. What are your insurance options, and what is best for you? Employer Group Coverage, Individual Medically Underwritten Health Insurance, Medicaid, or the Government Market Place Guaranteed Issue Health Insurance. There is a lot to know about the differences, as well as the cost. The monthly premium should not be your only consideration. *You do not know what you do not know so ask the experts, which do know about all of plans and can help educate and guide you thru the enrollment process. When it comes to medically underwritten plans most of them you can enroll all year long, but you can also be denied based on medical underwriting.*

Logical Insurance Solutions is a SWFL Insurance Broker that works with most of the carriers, we are happy to help you through the maze. This is what we do daily, it is second nature to us. We offer virtual seminars, one on one WebEx, phone and in person appointments.

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We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.

Why Your Pets Teeth Matter

Pet dental health is an important aspect of overall pet wellness that is often overlooked by pet owners. Just like humans, pets can develop a variety of dental problems such as tooth decay, gum disease, and bad breath. These issues can not only cause pain and discomfort for your pet, but can also lead to more serious health problems if left untreated.

One of the most important things you can do to maintain your pet's dental health is to take them to the vet for regular check-ups and cleanings. Your vet will be able to identify any potential dental problems early on, and provide appropriate treatment to prevent them from becoming more serious. They will also be able to give your pet a professional cleaning to remove plaque and tartar buildup.

Another important aspect of pet dental health is at-home care. This includes regular teeth brushing, which is the most effective way to remove plaque and prevent tooth decay. It is recommended that you brush your pet's teeth at least once a week, using a toothbrush and toothpaste specifically designed for pets. It may take some time for your pet to get used to the process, so it is important to be patient and work with them slowly.

In addition to brushing, there are also other at-home care options available such as dental chews, toys, and food. These products can help to keep your pet's teeth and gums healthy by promoting chewing and reducing plaque buildup. However,



it is important to note that these products should not be used as a replacement for regular brushing and professional cleanings.

Proper nutrition is also an important aspect of pet dental health. Feeding your pet a diet that is high in protein and low in carbohydrates can help to reduce plaque buildup, as well as provide essential nutrients for healthy teeth and gums. However, it is important to consult with your vet before making any changes to your pet's diet.

In addition to the above, there are also several dental problems that can occur in pets such as:

- **Periodontal disease:** This is the most common dental problem in pets, and is caused by a buildup of plaque and tartar on the teeth. If left untreated, periodontal disease can lead to tooth loss, as well as more serious health problems such as heart and kidney disease.

- **Tooth decay:** Just like in humans, tooth decay can occur in pets. It is caused by bacteria that produce acid, which erodes the tooth enamel. This can lead to pain and discomfort for your pet, as well as tooth loss if left untreated.

- **Misaligned teeth:** Some pets may be born with misaligned teeth, or may develop them over time. This can lead to a variety of problems, including difficulty eating and an increased risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

- **Oral tumors:** While rare, oral tumors can occur in pets. These tumors can be malignant or benign, and can affect any part of the oral cavity, including the teeth, gums, and tongue.

If you suspect that your pet may have any of these dental problems, it is important to take them to the vet as soon as possible. Your vet will be able to diagnose the problem and provide appropriate treatment. In some cases, this may include tooth extraction, root canals, or other dental procedures.

Pet dental health is an important aspect of overall pet wellness that is often overlooked by pet owners. Regular check-ups and cleanings with a vet, as well as at-home care such as brushing and dental chews, can help to maintain your pet's dental health. Proper nutrition and early identification and treatment of dental problems can also help to prevent more serious health issues from occurring.

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What's Your Diet?

By Pastor Roger P. Felipe

Weight-watchers. Nutrisystem. Mediterranean diet. Paleo. Living healthy has become a craze, although obesity in our country, rather legitimizes it. For many people it is about looking and feeling better, living longer, stronger and disease-free. These are all important reasons for eating clean, exercising, and learning to rest our bodies sufficiently.

For Christians, however, trying to maintain healthy habits finds its motivation in more than adopting diet fads to longevity and better quality of life. Taking care of our bodies is stewardship. That is, it is a reflection of our recognition of having been created by God, and how our lives can be instruments in his hands to serve and honor him on earth. Of course, God can use both the healthy and the unfit for his purposes, including the sick, feeble, and dying. Human worth and value is not in question.

The reality is that our earthly lives are only a speck in the sands of eternity. However, Christ followers understand that life doesn't belong to them. It is a gift from a Good Father who entrusted them with a brief span of years that should be invested in loving others and making our world a better place. For those who have believed in Christ and experienced God's forgiveness of sin, the reason for taking care of their bodies goes beyond living

longer and healthier. It's about honoring Jesus Christ with all of life, including the way they take care of their bodies.

In his book, *"The Unknown God: Searching for spiritual fulfillment,"* Oxford University professor, Alister McGrath, describes the parable of Plato's Cave, a story about people enslaved inside the cave oblivious to the reality that existed on the outside beyond the flickering shadows which they knew. That is, until the day someone was able to find their way out and discover a world beyond description, a world of beauty and splendor. McGrath writes, "Our desires have become attached to things that are little more than shadows, when they are meant to be attached to something which cannot decay or disappoint" (32).

How does this relate to healthy living? Focusing on living healthier and longer, like any other pursuit we might obsess about, really reveals a spiritual longing in our souls for something more: *eternity*. Whether is it longing for a "perfect" relationship that often disenchant, earthly riches that can quickly vanish, or a healthy and strong body that is suddenly brought to a standstill due to an unexpected medical report, our hearts are longing for something beyond what this world can provide.



McGrath probes us to consider this question: "Suppose our longing for fulfillment points to something we have yet to discover? What if our yearning is a clue to the meaning of the universe?" (10). Taking care of your body and staying healthy is a good thing, but it isn't everything. The truth of the matter is, whatever we pursue in life has a way to deceive us to think that by attaining "it" our lives will be complete. They're not. Deep inside a voice continues to remind us that our longings for fulfillment are like signposts in the sky pointing us to something beyond ourselves. Could that something (Someone) be our Creator?

May you achieve physical well-being and wholeness. But may you also discover the gift of eternal life which Jesus promises to all who believe and trust in him alone. "...I have come that they may have life, and have it in abundance" (John 10:10). I would enjoy exploring with you the meaning of life and God.



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