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MAGAZINE

April 2023

Collier Edition - Monthly

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REGIONAL
HEALTHCARE
SYSTEM**

WELCOMES

Veronica Gomez, M.D.
Board Certified in Family Medicine

**INNOVATIVE
TREATMENT**

**Improves Quality
of Life**

**THE LINK
BETWEEN
STRESS AND
CANCER**

**ALLERGIES &
ASTHMA**

**How Are They
Connected?**

**ABOUT
WOMEN'S
HEALTH**

**2023 SWFL
Parkinson's Disease
Spring Symposium**

WELLNESS

**The Relationship Between
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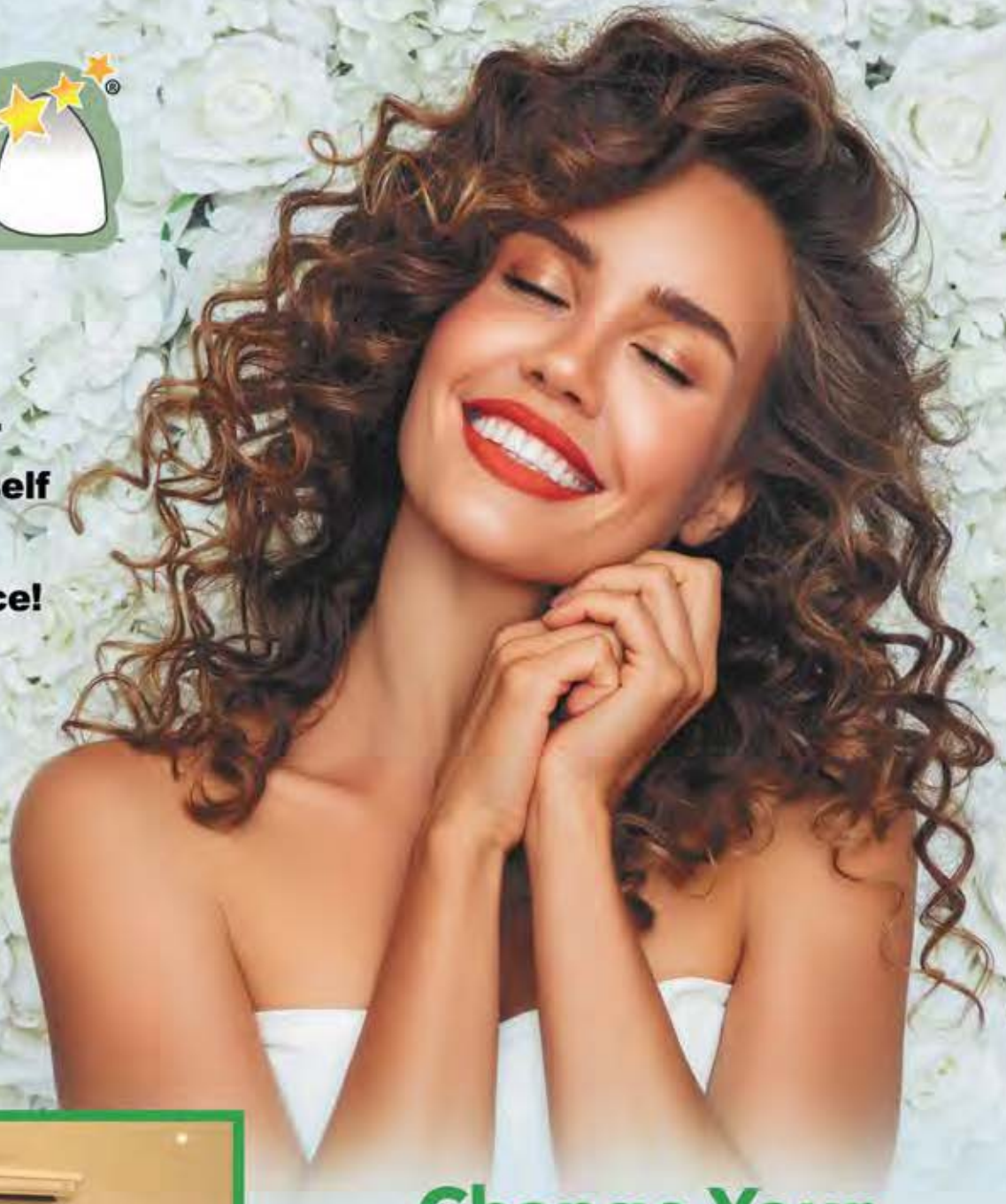


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Presentations:



"Nutrition in Parkinson's Disease"

Glorivel Koury de Ramos, M.D.
Medical Director, "RK Healthy Life", Atlanta, GA
Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine
Diplomate, American Board of Obesity Medicine
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"Why Exercise is the Best Medicine for Parkinson's Disease"

Ramon A. Gil, M.D.
Diplomate, American Academy of Psychiatry and Neurology
Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine
Medical Director, Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

Breakout Sessions:

"Yoga as Part of Your Treatment"

Shebani Abdulnour, Yoga Therapist

"Dance Therapy for PD"

by Sarah Latotsky, Patricia De L'Ossa, RPT and Sergio Valdivia, RPT

"Fitness"

by Jay Woods

"Rock Steady Boxing and Pedaling for PD"

by Lisa Heid, Christy Barfield, RSB, Tabatha Stepensky, RSB, and Terri Hughes, PFP from the Punta Gorda YMCA

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Longevity. If you are looking forward to a better tomorrow, and many more of them, keeping an eye on your wellness is critical. At Performance Optimal Health we put together a coordinated and highly-personalized strategy which combines exercise, recovery, nutrition and stress management to improve longevity and your quality of life. Let's face it, aging gracefully is overrated.

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ORAL HEALTH AND YOUR OVERALL HEALTH - IS THERE A CONNECTION?

Did you realize that problems that originate in your mouth can affect the rest of your body? The human body is a complex network that is interconnected throughout. When one part of the body suffers, it can have an effect on other parts as well. Poor oral health can lead to diseases that can affect your overall health.

Taking proper care of your oral health by flossing, brushing, and visiting the dentist regularly can keep the bacteria living in your mouth at bay. These bacteria are usually harmless, but when left to grow, can cause health risks such as tooth decay which can lead to gum disease and really bad breath.

Additionally, oral health can affect our ability to eat, speak, smile, and show our emotions. When it is not given proper care, oral health can also affect a person's self-esteem as well as their academic and professional attendance. Oral disease, from cavities to cancer, can cause pain and disability for millions of Americans and cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year.¹

At Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry, we are proud to offer the best possible care to our patients. Our team is dedicated to helping each patient obtain and maintain optimal oral health.



Dr. Ana Scopu DDS

In 2014, Dr. Ana Scopu DDS, MSc was one of fewer than 20 general dentists in the United States to have completed a master's degree in Specialized Orthodontics at the prestigious International Medical College at Munster University in Germany. This illustrious master's program is recognized in 29 European countries and is a collaboration between six universities across Europe and Asia -- all of which are listed, signed and stamped by the dean of each university on her academic Certificate of Achievement. Dr. Scopu radiates when recalling, "It was amazing and exciting to collaborate with doctors from all around the world, learning new techniques and treating patients in Europe." The master's program consisted of over 1,500 study hours and completion of a master's thesis prior to graduation.



Dr. Scopu's paper was specifically on orthodontic treatment in conjunction with skeletal anchorage in the treatment of Maxillary Vertical Excess as an alternative to bimaxillary orthognathic surgery.

In addition, Dr. Scopu has had previous orthodontic training with Progressive Orthodontic Seminars. In 2011, she received their two-year Comprehensive Orthodontic Training. In 2012, she followed it up with a one-year program in Advanced Orthodontics and holds a Certificate of Completion for both. Dr. Scopu graduated with a Doctor of Dental Surgery Degree from NYU College of Dentistry in 2007 and holds both Florida and New York state dental licenses. She completed her undergraduate training at Binghamton University NY, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Biology prior to attending dental school.

Since graduating NYUCD, she has completed a one-year general residency program at Wyckoff Heights Medical center in Brooklyn NY in 2008. The program was heavily oriented in Oral Surgery and Prosthodontics. Dr. Scopu, because of her interest in esthetic dentistry and function, voluntarily spent every Saturday working on complex dental cases at the New York Hospital Queens Prosthodontic Residency Program with the Prosthodontic Residence. During the residency program, Dr. Scopu was the only doctor selected to work side by side with the clinic director, Dr. Miller, to treat severely disabled children in the operating room. Dr. Scopu was also frequently chosen to assist the attending oral surgeon in OR with orthognathic surgery. Dr. Scopu remembers this as one of the best years of her life in achieving personal and professional growth. As she says, "It opened my eyes to how special dentistry was and how I was privileged to be a part of it."

For six years Dr. Scopu worked alongside her husband Mr. Boban Milentijevic, Master Dental Technician in Function and Occlusion and National Board-Certified Dental Technician in Ceramics, creating beautiful smiles at their previous private practice in NY. For over 10 years, Dr. Scopu has completed numerous Continuing Education Courses in Function, Treatment Planning, Esthetic Dentistry, Orthodontics and Implantology. She thrives learning and implementing these new facets into everyday practice. She's frequently leading the industry in perfecting and using newer, more advanced techniques and equipment.

Dr. Scopu is originally from NY and has lived there most of her life. She is trilingual in English, Serbian and Romanian. Dr. Scopu and her husband are excited to have settled down in Southwest Florida. She is a very happy mom to a boy named Stefan. She has embraced this role wholeheartedly and really enjoys every minute of his development. When outside the office, Dr. Scopu loves spending time with her husband, enjoying the little and big things they do together. She loves walking on the beach and taking time out to be grateful. Dr. Scopu also enjoys personal growth and helping people whenever she can.

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1. Oral Health Basics (2023) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/index.html>

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Breast Cancer and Mental Health

By Sharla Gayle Patterson, MD, MBA

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women in the United States, second only to certain types of skin cancer. Currently, the average risk of a woman in the United States developing breast cancer sometime in her life is about 13%. This means there is a 1 in 8 chance of developing breast cancer.¹

It's not uncommon to experience a wide range of emotions following a breast cancer diagnosis, including stress, anxiety, fear, uncertainty, and depression. These emotions can have a strong effect on your mental health. As you discuss your treatment options with your doctor, keep in mind that treating the physical symptoms of breast cancer is just one part of a comprehensive plan. It's important to also consider the mental and emotional effects of your diagnosis. Not only will it improve your overall quality of life, but it could also help you as you go through the treatment process.

Taking care of your mental health and well-being after being diagnosed with breast cancer can help improve your quality of life — especially if you're not feeling like yourself anymore. It may be helpful to consider mental health support services if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Sleep disturbances, such as difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Changes in your overall mood, such as feeling very sad or constantly stressed out or anxious
- Lack of joy or interest in activities you normally enjoy
- Changes in appetite that result in weight loss or gain
- Difficulty getting out of bed because of a lack of energy and not because of breast cancer treatment side effects
- Difficulty concentrating or focusing
- Using alcohol or drugs to reduce stress
- Noticing an increase in aches and pains, including headaches and stomachaches²

Ways to support your mental health while living with breast cancer

Visit a mental health professional

A mental health professional can help you cope with your diagnosis on many levels. A professional can do more than just listen to your concerns. They can also teach you how to explain your illness to your children or how to deal with your family's response. In addition, they can provide tips on controlling stress and teach you problem-solving strategies.

Be open with your family and friends

It's important to avoid hiding from family and friends during this stressful time. Be open about your emotions and fears with them. Remember that it's okay to feel frustrated or angry. Family and friends are there to listen and help you manage those sentiments.

A 2016 study found that women with breast cancer who are more socially isolated experience an increase in cancer-related mortality. Try not to keep your feelings bottled up. Reach out to your loved ones for support.³

Join a support group

Support groups are helpful because you get to talk to other people who are experiencing some of the same things that you're going through. These groups can be in-person, online, or over the phone. Many support groups are tailored to your age or stage of breast cancer treatment or recovery.

Make your mental health a priority

Breast cancer, regardless of the stage, can be a scary diagnosis. You may feel as if your life is slipping away. It is normal to feel sad, anxious, and even depressed; however, it is also important to prioritize your mental health just as you prioritize your breast cancer treatment plan.

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1. Breast cancer and mental health, Psychology Today. Sussex Publishers. Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/happiness-is-state-mind/202010/breast-cancer-and-mental-health>.
2. How breast cancer can affect mental health. Available at: <https://www.breastcancer.org/managing-life/taking-care-of-mental-health/how-breast-cancer-affects-mental-health>.
3. Cafasso, J. (2020) How to support your mental health with metastatic breast cancer, Healthline. Healthline Media. Available at: <https://www.healthline.com/health/metastatic-breast-cancer/mental-health-support#be-open-to-loved-ones>.

Avoid negative coping mechanisms such as alcohol, food, and drugs that can mask your emotions. Taking care of your mental health not only means going to therapy and joining support groups, but it also means practicing self-care, which includes moving your body, sleeping, eating whole foods, doing things that you enjoy, splurging on a wig (if you are struggling with hair loss), and setting boundaries with others. Asking your friends and family to be included in your therapy sessions and self-care routines can also help you build stronger relationships and help them understand what you are experiencing.

Magnolia Breast Center – The Trusted Choice for Breast Cancer Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment in Southwest Florida

Breast cancer is a serious, life-threatening disease that needs to be detected and treated at the earliest stage possible. Whether you want to know your risk of developing cancer, get yourself checked for cancer, or get treated for cancer, the experts at Magnolia Breast Center can help you.

We have extensive experience in treating breast cancer patients – including highly complicated cases and patients with an advanced stage of cancer. We can determine the severity of your condition, take your unique needs and preferences into account, and devise a customized treatment plan to achieve a positive outcome.

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PHYSICIANS REGIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WELCOMES VERONICA GOMEZ, M.D.

Physicians Regional Healthcare System is excited to welcome Veronica Gomez, MD, to their medical staff. Conveniently located at Physicians Regional - Founders Square at the corner of Immokalee Road and Collier Blvd. Dr. Gomez specializes in all aspects of primary care for both children and adults.

Primary Care doctors are the first step in maintaining your health by focusing on positive health outcomes and preventative care. They work closely with specialists to collaborate and ensure that each patient has seamless care. Family Medicine physicians provide quality care for the entire family versus Internal Medicine Doctors who focus primarily on adult medicine. Our Family Medicine doctors at Physicians Regional Medical Group, treat a range of acute and chronic illnesses that span from infants to senior health care. Establishing a Family Medicine physician is beneficial to your health and prevention of disease. These are the doctors that will be treating you from the start of your health journey and by forming relationships, they will know your medical history to aide in preventative care.

Dr. Gomez is Board Certified in Family Medicine and specializes in all aspects of primary care for children and adults. Her preventative care services include:

- Child and adult health screenings
- Menopause
- Chronic disease management
- Women's health
- Immunizations
- Wellness visits

She provides a wide variety of treatment and specializes in preventative medicine, annual physicals, newborn and pediatric care, wellness visits for all ages, chronic disease management, hypertension and diabetes, hypercholesterolemia, depression, COPD, asthma, skin lesions and wound management. Her philosophy is, "In medicine, less is more". Dr. Gomez, thinks it's important to get ahead of these chronic conditions by living a healthy lifestyle and receiving wellness exams to help prevent future concerns.



In addition to women wellness exams, Dr. Gomez also specializes in women's health and annual PAP exams. She knew she wanted to become a doctor at the age of 7 when she read about a delivery and saw pictures of an actual birth. She said, "My specialty is diverse, I love pregnancy, women's health and well-being".

A fluent Spanish and Portuguese speaker, Dr. Gomez received her Doctor of Medicine at Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda in Venezuela. She received her advanced training in Family Medicine through her residency at The Brooklyn Hospital Center in Brooklyn, NY. Additionally, she has a certification in Diplomate of The American Board of Family Medicine and is part of

the American Academy of Family Medicine professional society. Before relocating to Southwest Florida, she was a Family Medicine doctor at The Brooklyn Hospital until 2021 and finally at City MD, Urgent Care in Brooklyn, NY until 2022.



Dr. Gomez is now accepting new patients.

Dr. Veronica Gomez is located at Physicians Regional - Founders Square 8831 Founders Square Drive, Naples, FL 34120. For more information, call (239) 920-4503.

UNDERSTANDING HEAD AND NECK CANCERS

By Dr. Alan Brown

When patients receive a cancer diagnosis, they typically ask how it developed. Pinpointing a cause can be difficult.

Risk factors for head and neck cancer can often be attributed to use of tobacco products and alcohol, viral infections, genetics or exposure to occupational hazards like sawdust, asbestos or radiation, among other factors.

April is Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Month, and the board-certified radiation oncologists at Advocate Radiation Oncology join their colleagues nationwide in raising awareness about the risks, symptoms and treatment options for head and neck cancer, which accounts for nearly 4% of all cancers in the U.S.

Advocate's world-class physicians are experienced in treating the gamut of head and neck cancers, as well as breast, prostate, lung, brain, rectal, liver, bone, cervical and other types of cancers.

Brain Cancer vs. Head and Neck Cancer

Brain tumors can grow quickly, have a multitude of severe symptoms and disrupt the way your body functions, so it's understandable that a brain cancer diagnosis is worrisome. However, brain cancer is different than head and neck cancer, a broad term describing a group of cancers affecting the throat and sinuses. According to the American Cancer Society, there are five primary types of head and neck cancers:

- Laryngeal and Hypopharyngeal Cancer: voice box and lower throat
- Oral Cavity and Oropharyngeal Cancer: mouth and middle throat
- Nasopharyngeal Cancer: upper throat behind nose
- Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer: nose and openings behind nose
- Salivary Gland Cancer: glands that make saliva

The variety of head and neck cancers also means symptoms can vary. Common signs and symptoms include lumps, hoarseness, sores, pain swallowing, nasal congestion or difficulty breathing, numbness, ear pain, ear infections, loosening of teeth, weight loss and loss of hearing, taste or smell.



Survival rates vary by cancer type and stage, but can be high if detected and treated early.

Treatment Options

Radiation therapy is a popular treatment option that uses targeted doses of radiation to kill cancer cells by damaging the genetic material inside them. This treatment prevents cancer cells from growing and spreading.

Radiation oncologists work collaboratively with otolaryngologists, medical oncologists, surgeons and other medical professionals to develop a personalized treatment plan based on an individual's medical history, the cancer's present state and other factors. Radiation therapy can be used as the sole treatment option or in combination with chemotherapy treatments and surgery.

Because head and neck cancers affect our critical senses – hearing, taste, smell and sight – there is no room for error during treatments. Advocate has invested in the most innovative, precise cancer-fighting equipment on the market today, including Varian's Halcyon, TrueBeam and Identify machines that measure precision within a millimeter. Such precise treatments minimize damage to

surrounding tissue, and thus lessen potential side effects of radiation while reducing treatment times.

We know our bodies best. If you suspect something is wrong or have a concern, the first step is immediately contacting your primary care physician. From there, Advocate will partner with you and your physician to develop a comprehensive plan to defeat cancer.



About the Author

Dr. Alan Brown is a board-certified radiation oncologist at Advocate Radiation Oncology. For more information, please visit AdvocateRO.com.



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The human brain is a marvel of nature, possessing incredible abilities that continue to astound scientists and researchers. Its remarkable complexity and versatility enables us to perceive, think, reason, remember, and create. Despite the casual use of words like "awesome" and "amazing" by some, they are entirely appropriate when discussing the brain. Its true wonder lies in its capacity to regulate and coordinate countless physiological and cognitive processes in our bodies.

"Most of the medical society would tell you we know very little about the inner brain," stated Charles Lindsey McAlpine, CEO and COO of LASENE, Naples. "It's only through recent technological advances that we can look to ways of helping the brain achieve even its simplest needs of sleep and memory."

The company, LASENE, provides laser technology and proprietary advanced treatments for fostering functional improvement in patient's living with Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, brain trauma, and other neurological degenerative ailments. They bridge the gap between the world's finest laser technology and advanced treatment protocols to improve quality-of-life by reducing the many complications of these diseases.

"In coming years, we will all live longer, which is great, but the HOW we live is just as important." McAlpine said. No one really wants to live long and not properly function, do they? So being involved with a therapy that allows for the best quality of life, and clearer thinking is very exciting.

"I went through my original program over a year ago. I recently went to my neurologist and my Doctor continues to see the improvement I saw throughout my treatment and after. I would highly recommend LASENE to anyone seeking a better quality of life." -Patient Karen



The company's mission is to bring the best of technologies and protocols together for the sole purpose of reducing the suffering associated with neurodegenerative and neuromusculoskeletal conditions, and to bring people back to a more active and productive life.

"I have found a treatment that has really helped me, LASENE. They have improved my Quality of Life and I am back to doing what I love....I highly recommend it, go do it."

— Patient Judy

Watching the aging process with my own father, who suffered with dementia and early stages of Alzheimer's, was sad to witness. It was tough seeing a bright, happy, articulate person lose those functions," McAlpine said. Being involved with the solutions that LASENE offers would have certainly benefited him, but now the ability to share those positive results with others is a gift.

LASENE does not promise a cure for degenerative complications. However, over a typically six-month care program, the company can provide laser technology and methodology to rehabilitate areas of nerve, muscle and skeletal systems that are affected

by these neurological ailments. Through the company's proprietary methodology, a patient can experience a significant reduction or remission in a variety of quality of life symptoms specific to their condition.

"Results are what the overwhelming majority of the patients who come to LASENE experience," McAlpine said. "We see hugely positive results that quickly resonate into all parts of their lives. The individual therapy itself is noninvasive, painless, and brief. Most patients say 'I had some initial fear, but wow I wish I'd have done this sooner.'

"I was diagnosed with advanced symptoms of Parkinson's disease in 2015. Symptoms included shuffling gait, severe forward posture, muscle rigidity, loss of voice projection and volume, tongue and mouth tremors, whole body tremors, right hand severe tremors, constipation, insomnia, nightmares, low energy, decreased libido and erectile dysfunction, and brain fog. I began Lasene in June 2022. Light changes began to surface during the first 30 days. Now I have normal gait and posture, no mouth tremors, no body shaking, only a slight right-hand tremor that occurs a couple of times a day, restored sleep, no nightmares, normal bowel movements, restored libido and sexual function, voice projection restored, no more brain fog." Dr. DL

"Sleep is the most impressive and consistent progress patients report. Their sleep patterns and quality of sleep. We measure this both objectively through sleep tracking devices and subjectively through interviews and medical observation." We have many patients that also see a reduction in their tremors, an improvement in their walk/gait, and an improvement to their mood and cognitive ability.

Working with the amazing and awesome human brain brings rewards to those at LASENE and the patients they work with.



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REGENERATIVE MEDICINE TEAM AT POH

By Jacob Ober, PT, DPT, ATC

The field of regenerative medicine is ever-changing based on new scientific developments. At Performance Optimal Health, our regenerative medicine team is dedicated to being an extension of the expert care healthcare practitioners provide. Successful patient care is rooted in a team that is dedicated to collaboration to create and consistently update best-in-class physical therapy protocols based on the most advanced evidence and progressions in the field. The best treatment approach includes targeted exercise strategies for the specific area treated and addressing movement and muscle performance deficiencies at adjacent joints. In addition, utilizing advanced technologies such as blood flow-restricted therapy (BFR) also enhances treatment outcomes. Below, we dive into some of the key aspects of regenerative medicine, breaking it down as well as discussing a key modality and treatment outline for one of the most common degenerative diseases.

Regenerative Medicine:

- Regenerative medicine is an umbrella term for a branch of medicine that uses stem cells and tissue engineering to "fix" tissues that have failed to repair themselves.☒
- These innovative outpatient procedures are minimally invasive, ultrasound-guided, and use local (not general) anesthesia. They are used for a variety of sports injuries and musculoskeletal conditions.
- Regenerative medicine promotes regeneration and joint restoration using blood-based procedures such as platelet-rich plasma, stem cells, and cell-based or tissue engineering.
- Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) – Using your own blood, your own platelets are isolated and concentrated and then injected back into the injured area.
- Stem Cell Injections - Bone marrow is drawn from your pelvic bone, concentrated to remove the unwanted portions, and inject it back into the injured area.
- There is a growing importance for its uses in the non-operative management of various pathologies, including knee osteoarthritis, rotator cuff tears, and various muscle and tendon injuries. Common areas treated with regenerative medicine include the hamstring muscle/tendon, Achilles tendon, patellar tendon, and the tendons of the elbow linked to golfer's and tennis elbow.



Knee Osteoarthritis

Knee osteoarthritis is one of the most common degenerative diseases in the knee and can affect any synovial fluid in the body. KOA is the leading cause of disability claims and affects the quality of life of millions of people. It accounts for 80% of the global burden of diseases and affects 10% of men and 16% of women aged 60 years and older. Arthritis in the knee joint is mostly related to being overweight and has increasing prevalence with age and weight. A BMI rise is a known risk factor for KOA, potentially due to joint overloading and adiposity-induced inflammation.

Methods of Treatment:

Weight Loss & Strength Training:

- Moderate physical exercise is associated with a decreased risk of severe KOA.
- A change of 1% in body weight has been shown to have a significant association with slower loss of tibial cartilage volume and improvement in symptoms, suggesting a meaningful impact on cartilage health.
- Incorporation of an inflammation-conscious diet and interventions is critical to reducing BMI.
- Exercises should be designed to progress from single-joint to multi-jointed kinetic chain exercises focusing on motions to address the core, hip, knee, and ankle.

- Cardiorespiratory training is recommended to maintain and improve aerobic capacity in conjunction with neuromuscular training to maintain overall muscle strength, flexibility, and proprioception.

Blood Flow Restriction:

- Blood Flow Restriction training (BFR) is a rapidly growing intervention for patients suffering from muscle atrophy, weakness, neuromuscular control deficits, pain, and traumatic injuries where sufficient loads are required for muscle strengthening and hypertrophy cannot be tolerated.
- BFR can improve pain while inducing less joint stress, emerging as a feasible and effective therapeutic treatment in OA symptom management.
- Research supports using BFR to increase muscle hypertrophy, increase strength, improve serum growth hormone, and muscle endurance, increase peripheral stem cell count and increase protein synthesis by using less than recommended weight training intensities for those gains.

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.



Jacob Ober, PT, DPT, ATC, is a physical therapist, dry needling specialist and certified athletic trainer based in Central Naples who subspecializes in working with athletes.



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ABOUT WOMEN'S HEALTH



Early patient-centered care for screening and prevention is crucial to maintain positive health outcomes. It is important to address women's health in a comprehensive, personalized manner, so that the care is focused on the individual patient, her risk, and her needs. "I want to engage women in their care and be empowered to live long and healthy lives. My goal is to always have my clients feel comfortable talking with me about anything," says Kelly Gallo, APRN.

Kelly Gallo is a Board Certified Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), specializing in women's health, providing care that includes the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of the health care needs of women throughout their lifespan.

Education about health and wellness can play a key role in women's lives. Kelly Gallo is sure to take the time to make sure her patients understand what the exam entails and what disease screening includes. It is not at all uncommon for women to not understand what a Pap smear is and what exactly we are testing for. It is important to ask your gynecologist any questions you may have and be sure to understand your results.

Starting with preventive care at an early age can be really beneficial. Young women don't necessarily need a pelvic exam, even if they are sexually active. Recommendations for cervical cancer screening with a Pap smear begin at age 21. Even between ages 21-25, the patient and provider can engage in individualized care with shared decision making.

The HPV vaccine protects against developing certain cancers later in life, such as cervical cancer. The recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is for boys and girls to get their HPV vaccine at age 11 or 12.

Contraceptive counseling can be important, regardless of whether a teen is sexually active. We often start with a discussion about contraception, protection from sexually transmitted infections and how to feel comfortable communicating with your partner to have a healthy relationship, and by having a conversation about sexual activity, taking care of your body, and respecting your body first as well as how to protect yourself.

When you are in your 20s and 30s is the time to either maintain where you are or identify your risk factors for different diseases, whether that's obesity, diabetes, family history of issues like cancer and heart disease, or reducing sexually transmitted disease risk.

At Physicians Regional Healthcare System, we understand that women have different health care needs than men, and the environment in which they receive care is sometimes as important as the care itself. That's why we are leading the way in providing women with quality experiences and solutions. With facilities designed specifically for women's health-care needs that offer advanced tools and techniques, women are traveling to Physicians Regional Healthcare System from around the country for care.

The Women's Center provides women with a unique brand of care that blends comfort and advanced medical technology. We offer a wide array of gynecological and urogynecological procedures for women of all ages, as well as advanced diagnostic services, such as digital mammography and an MRI with breast coil, for enhanced accuracy in evaluating breast health.

MEET OUR GYNECOLOGY TEAM



Kelly Gallo, MSN, APRN

Kelly specializes in Women's healthcare, including annual well woman exams, gynecologic problem visits, preconception counseling, contraception counseling and management, PCOS, perimenopause/menopause and hormone replacement therapy education.

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Lisa Henricks, M.D.

Dr. Lisa Henricks is Board Certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and provides expertise in the evaluation and treatment of all aspects of gynecologic care including menstrual cycle irregularity, dysmenorrhea, contraceptive care, endometriosis, uterine fibroids, abnormal pap smears, pelvic support problems and incontinence as well as menopause, fertility and well-woman care. She specializes in preventative testing for genetic predisposition syndromes as well as minimally invasive surgical procedures including robotic assisted operative laparoscopy and hysterectomy.

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The Link Between Stress and Cancer

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

Stress is your body's normal and natural response to a perceived threat. It can be good or bad. Stress can drive you to accomplish things and it can help you to avoid danger, or it can cause you to pull out your hair and make you look old before your time.

Whether good or bad, too much stress can greatly impact your physical and emotional health. Much research has been conducted to show the correlation between stress and problems such as heart disease or depression, for example. But what about the link between stress and cancer? The answer isn't obvious, but experts are studying the possible role that stress can play in the development of various types of cancer.

Types of Stress

Before we dig too deep into the connections between stress and cancer, let's take a step back and discuss the different types of stress. There are two types of stress, acute and chronic. To some degree, both are a normal part of daily life.

Acute stress

Acute stress is what most people imagine when they talk about stress. It's typically short-lived and triggered by specific situations.

These might include:

- Needing to slam on your brakes to avoid hitting a car that's pulled in front of you
- Arguing with a family member or friend
- Being in traffic that's causing you to be late to work
- Feeling pressure to meet an important deadline

Acute stress can cause several physical symptoms, including an increased heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, quick breathing, and sweating. These effects are usually temporary and resolve once the stressful situation is over.

Chronic stress

Chronic stress happens when your stress response is activated for prolonged periods. It can wear you down both physically and emotionally.

Examples of things that can lead to chronic stress include:

- Living in a dysfunctional or abusive home situation
- Working a job that you hate
- Having frequent financial trouble
- Living with a chronic illness or caring for a loved one who does

Compared to acute stress, chronic stress can have long-term effects on physical and emotional health. Over time, chronic stress can contribute to conditions such as heart disease, anxiety and depression, and a weakened immune system.

Can stress cause cancer?

Although chronic stress can lead to many health problems, it is unclear whether it is linked to cancer. Studies conducted to date have had varying results.

Even when stress appears to be linked to cancer risk, the relationship could be indirect. For example, people under chronic stress may develop certain unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking, overeating, becoming less active, or drinking alcohol, that are themselves associated with increased risks of some cancers.

This is only one of several theories about stress and cancer. Many theories exist about how stress could contribute to a person's risk of developing cancer.

Here are some of the most popular ones:

- Continuous activation of the stress response and exposure to the associated hormones could promote the growth and spread of tumors.
- The immune system can be essential for finding and eliminating cancer cells. But chronic stress can make it harder for your immune system to carry out these tasks.
- Prolonged stress could lead to inflammation that may contribute to cancer risk.¹

Thoughts from Dr. Colin Champ

Stress from our workplace, which usually includes high work demand, long hours, and a difficult working environment, has shown both positive and negative links with cancer. Individuals with chronically stressful states, like depression and a lack of social support, seem to experience an increased risk of cancer. Yet, like most population studies, results have been mixed and often contradictory, and narrowing down the cause versus effect of this association has been difficult.

References:

1. Seladi-Schulman, J. (2019) Can stress cause cancer? The evidence is mixed, Healthline. Healthline Media. Available at: <https://www.healthline.com/health/can-stress-cause-cancer#theories>.
2. Stress and cancer - it's bad, but not all bad (2017) Colin Champ. Available at: <https://colinchamp.com/stress-and-cancer/>.

Difficult and stressful life events seem to have a stronger association with cancer, specifically breast cancer. For instance, the death of a mother during childhood leaves the child at an increased risk of breast cancer later in life. Jewish individuals who were part of the Holocaust experienced a higher risk of breast and colon cancer versus the rest of the population. Collateral damage from stressful events like death, divorce, or a continued stressful social situation takes a little over a decade to lead to cancer.²

However, all stress is not bad. Acute stress—sprinting, lifting heavy weights, taking on challenges—is a normal part of life and may provide benefits. Acute stresses can stimulate the immune system and support metabolism. My general advice is to try to minimize the chronic causes of stress in your life while accepting the acute one and using them to your advantage.

Inspire Exercise Medicine

Inspire Exercise Medicine is focused exclusively on supporting cancer patients on the road to regaining their health with oncologist-defined evidence-based treatment plans for nutrition and exercise in support of their overall health and wellness.

A significant part of the Inspire Exercise Medicine space is dedicated to physical, monitored exercises on machines and with exercise equipment specifically selected for treatment purposes.



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Dr. Colin Champ, MD, CSCS

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

CHOOSE YOUR CARDIOVASCULAR SPECIALIST WISELY

Each year millions of patients are faced with cardiovascular conditions. Whether your heart and vascular disorder require surgery or minimally invasive procedures, choosing a cardiovascular specialist should not be taken lightly. Making sure the physician you select has the credentials and experience necessary is essential, and when it comes to healing your body, and reducing future risk, finding the best surgeon is critical.

You have a choice. It's essential for patients to do their research, look at reviews and patient testimonials, and most importantly, patients should go with a physician or group with the experience level, innovation, and training necessary to improve their condition and restore function.

Dr. Javier, founder of Naples Heart & Vein, is not just a remarkable physician; he is also a world-renown thought leader and trains his peers with the knowledge and skills that he has mastered over the past two decades. His practice specializes in treating cardiovascular and vein conditions.

Dr. Javier is an Endovascular Specialist, Board Certified in Interventional Cardiology & a Vascular Specialist. He did his cardiovascular specialty at Saint Louis University and his Interventional Cardiology specialty at the University of Arkansas for Medical Science in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is board-certified in Cardiovascular Disease and in Interventional Cardiology. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the Society of Cardiac Angiography and Interventions; he is also a member of the European Society of Cardiology, American Venous Forum, and the Society of Lymphatic and Venous disease.

Dr. Javier gained extensive experience in the cardiac and vascular field while practicing at the Miami Cardiac and Vascular Institute from 1998 to 2005. The Miami Cardiac and Vascular Institute are World Known for its pioneering work in the Endovascular field. During his time here, Dr. Javier concentrated on venous disease as well as joining the research and cardiovascular team at Baptist Hospital.

Academic Background

Dr. Javier began his academic career in 1996 as a faculty member of the University of Arkansas for Medical Science and director of the Coronary care unit at the VA system in Little Rock. He is a Voluntary Assistant professor at the University of Miami School of Medicine and Adjunct Professor of Medicine at Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. Javier moved to Naples to assume the directorship of The Naples Cardiac Endovascular Center, A center dedicated to the treatment of Cardiac and Vascular disorders, and where he practices as an endovascular specialist and cardiologist.

Medical Authorship

Dr. Javier has authored 6 books chapters, and multiple peer-reviewed articles in Endovascular Disease and has been the principal investigator in many trials developing a new therapeutic technique to treat venous disorder.

Dr. Julian Javier is one of the pioneers in the radial access technique for heart catheterization using this approach since 1996, which in the last three years has become the recommended technique by cardiac societies for Left Heart Catheterization. He presented his radial technique experience via multiple abstracts at the annual meeting of the Society of Cardiac Angiography and Interventions in Boston, MA in 2003.

Dr. Javier is a frequent invited speaker in many National and International conferences on cardiac and endovascular disorders. He is co-creator of two patents in the venous world, one of the devices which is a phlebectomy hook is widely used by venous specialists in the United States. Another is a catheter that assists in venous ablation.

Clinical Research

Dr. Julian Javier is an experience and skill interventionists, with a strong belief in preventive medicine. He is an active participant in clinical research and works with some of the most prestigious academic centers and investigators in the cardiac and vascular field. He is currently the director of Advanced Research for Health Improvement studying new and advanced therapies for heart disease. Advanced Research is dedicated to bringing to Southwest Florida medical research that was formerly only available in academic and large centers.

He is also the director of Venous Hands on Course, dedicated to teaching other specialists his technique for treating venous disease.

When it comes to your cardiovascular health, Naples Heart & Vein is the elite group practice featuring Dr. Javier and Dr. Leandro Perez. Both have impeccable training and experience, and their patients attest to their remarkable outcomes and patient care.

WHAT THEIR PATIENTS HAVE TO SAY:

"The result was immediate, and the recovery time was almost inexistent. Highly satisfied with staff's skill level with how they handle the complete process/procedure and follow up." —D. Lopez

"Very clean, professional, and understanding staff. Maria is very good at what she does – very gentle, explained everything in full, and it was just an overall pleasant experience." —O. Fernandez

"No more veins – my thigh looks great! I had a great experience. The procedure was a success & the doctor is very skilled. The staff is super competent, and the environment could not be more beautiful." —A. Miller

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



Julian Javier, MD



Leandro Perez, MD



Tracy Roth, MD

Dr. Julian J. Javier, Dr. Leandro Perez and Dr. Tracey Roth are Interventional Cardio-Vascular specialists with emphasis on peripheral arterial and venous disease and valvular heart problems. They are board certified in interventional cardiology and recognized nationally and internationally, authors of multiple articles in prestige peer review journals and book chapters.

They are affiliated with Physicians Regional Medical Center and Collier Regional and are accepting new patients.



Naples Cardiac and Endovascular Center

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THE "ULTIMATE" SPINE CARE AND SPINAL DECOMPRESSION PROGRAM

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

Spine pain is extremely prevalent in the United States. **Low back pain** is a number one pain related diagnosis in our country and it's the number one cause of long-term disability. It is also the number 1 reason for long-term use of opiates and addictive painkillers. **Neck pain** is the number one chronic complaint for those who have suffered a car accident injury or whiplash. 65% of people who have suffered a whiplash never fully recover and have long-term symptoms. Conventional medicine basically has no answer besides painkillers, steroid injections, nerve ablations, and surgery.

Very few physicians are trained to treat and rehabilitate the spine apart from physical therapists and chiropractors. Medical practitioners who also train in Regenerative therapeutics and Biologics may also offer a better than average outcome for suffering patients. At **Feel Amazing Institute** we have advanced training in the diagnosis and treatment of your spinal complaints. We combine chiropractic, physical therapeutics, rehabilitation, and regenerative medicine to get the best possible outcomes.

What is the ultimate spinal care program?

At **Feel Amazing Institute** we were the original clinic to offer **non-surgical spinal decompression therapy** back in 2003. After 20 years of experience, becoming board-certified in functional neurology, and becoming medically integrated and trained in regenerative procedures, our results are exceptional. To this day we are the only clinic in southwest Florida to combine this many modalities to enhance the outcomes for the community of Naples.

Spine pain can be very different for different people

The source of spine pain and other complaints varies from one person to the next. The source of pain may be the bones, joints, discs, ligaments, or muscles. Ultimately these structures cause pain due to neurological irritation or damage.

The "Ultimate" spinal care program should include advanced technologies performed in physician's office and treatments for self-care at home. It can include different types of chiropractic treatment,

some of which do not involve manipulation of the spine but may include very gentle techniques. Treatment may include advanced technologies like spinal decompression therapy, shockwave therapy, class 4 lasers, pulsed electromagnetic fields, regenerative treatments such as platelet rich plasma, and cellular therapies that involve injections of growth factors, including products containing stem cells.

Feel Amazing Institute has six providers; a supervising medical doctor, two nurse practitioners, and three chiropractors. We also have four chiropractic assistants who perform our physical therapies. Each morning our entire office meets to discuss each new case from the previous day. We put our heads together and come up with the best possible prescription for treatment based on our over 120 years of combined experience. We feel it's usually not ideal to rely on just one type of treatment, such as chiropractic to stabilize and strengthen the spinal ailment. We will often combine several of our modalities to get the best improvement as quickly as possible. We want the condition to heal as thoroughly as possible so our clients do not suffer chronic problems for their lifetime, robbing them of their happiness and joy, and in the long run costing more than getting the job done right in the first place.

What modalities are used for improvement?

These are prescribed on an individual basis after a thorough assessment.

- Six decompression therapy tables
- Five different electrical therapies
- Two types of lasers
- Pulsed electromagnetic fields (PEMF)
- Sound waves / Shock waves / Pressure waves
- Massage therapy
- Stretching and strengthening exercises, both in office and for home
- DME durable medical equipment including back braces and supports ozone and peptide therapies
- Injections or infusions of Natural Biologics, including Wharton's jelly allografts, growth factors, and platelet rich plasma



What results can be achieved through the ultimate spinal care program at Feelamazing Institute?

Our patients report that better than 92% have excellent results. Most who undergo our treatments experience reduced pain, lower dependency on medication, improved activities, improve sleep, and more joy. We only except patients who we truly feel we can help and will let people know upfront if we feel there is a better option elsewhere.

Feel Amazing Institute is equipped to diagnose and help a wide range of conditions that include:

- Severe or chronic spine pain
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Shoulder, elbow, or wrist pain
- Hip, knee, ankle or foot pain
- Headache, dizziness, vertigo, or balance problems
- Disc bulge or herniation, sciatica, or stenosis
- Auto accident and whiplash injuries

For more information or to schedule a free telephone consultation or for a free informational seminar call today!



**FEEL AMAZING
INSTITUTE**

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FEELAMAZING.COM

Dr. Richard Hiler DABCN, is a board-certified Chiropractic Neurologist with more than 26 years of clinical experience. Dr. Hiler and his team offer a complementary telephone consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment contact the office at 239.330.1000.

Energy Medicine - a road less travelled.

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

Part 2

In the last few months, these articles dived deeper into the topic of how human body functions on many levels including electro-chemical, neuro-hormonal, and energetic. An impeccable functioning of these pathways is fundamental for a normal healing process. When any level is disrupted due to either a lack of building blocks or a stagnation of energetic impulses, the homeostasis is disrupted. And what are we without homeostasis but a dysfunctional bag of liquid proteins? Balance of all the systems on all levels is the ultimate goal of holistic approach to health.

Last month I wrote about how my personal experience with Ondamed technology prompted me to purchase this Energy Medicine machine for my practice. Low-level pulsed electro-magnetic fields (PEMFs) have been shown since late 90'es to positively affect cellular processes and stimulate growth factors involved in cellular repair and bone formation. Every cell membrane carries an electromagnetic charge which becomes distorted by our environment such as cell phones for example. PEMFs provide a tune up/correction of these charges. This correction creates an anti-inflammatory effect and a statistically significant reduction in pain when treating acute whiplash injuries, chronic musculoskeletal pain, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, epicondylitis, and neuropathic pain, to mention a few disorders.

While undergoing training with Ondamed I also came across research studies done in orthopedics in people suffering from non-unionized fractures (in other words, fractures which had difficulty healing). Bones have such a horrible blood supply and to have a machine which would be able to accelerate regeneration of the bone despite that innate deficiency was quite impressive. Shortly after I acquired the machine in 2007, a patient of mine sustained a severe fracture. She was a 59 year old woman who was celebrating her 40th wedding anniversary, but slipped and fell on the way to the bathroom. She sustained something called "complex butterfly proximal humerus fracture". Butterfly fragments are large, triangular fracture fragments seen commonly in comminuted long bone fractures.



The term is commonly used in orthopedic surgery, and more often than not results in surgery involving screw or plate. On the one hand, my patient was of a holistic mindset and would not hear of a surgery or medication for pain. On the other hand, she was a piano player and was rather depressed at the prospect of possibly becoming disabled at what she loved to do most. She turned to me for solutions and I immediately thought of Ondamed.

So we paired up for an aggressive treatment schedule: a combination of biofeedback-based PEMF applications and a combination of preset PEMFs geared towards healing acute bone fractures, regeneration of the tissues around the bones (periosteum), and alleviation of pain signals. We met every other day for the first three weeks, and then every two days for the next three weeks. Her pain was completely gone and she was periodically testing how she was doing by grabbing onto the surface of the table. Such was the extent of her associated peripheral nerve injury that in the beginning of the treatment when she held onto the table on the traumatized side— she would feel as though she were touching two tables. After 6 weeks, she triumphantly announced to me that she now felt one table. I took it as a very good sign and referred her back to her orthopedist who documented a healed fracture in his office with an x-ray. This was way ahead of the schedule as the typical time for such fracture to heal was about 12 weeks.

Over the years, I have had similar success with other types of fractures, including pelvic and clavicle fractures. Another area of bone health where Ondamed came incredibly handy was the mechanical wear and tear of Osteoarthritis. I have had patients with large joints, such as hips and knees who used to live in a lot of pain and were told that they had a "bone on bone" situation and that the surgery had to be done right away. While the response to pain was variable, almost always I had a successful outcome of delaying the surgery by years – the longest was 10 years from the day the patient was first told that he had to have a hip replacement right away. To be continued.



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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ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA

How Are They Connected?

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

Spring has finally sprung and while we are enjoying amazing weather and getting ready for summer, for some spring means watery eyes, a runny nose, and itchy skin. Allergies and asthma are two of the most common chronic diseases in the United States.

According to Mayo Clinic, allergies occur when your immune system reacts to a foreign substance — such as pollen, bee venom or pet dander — or sometimes a food that doesn't cause a reaction in most people.

Your immune system produces substances known as antibodies. When you have allergies, your immune system makes antibodies that identify a particular allergen as harmful, even though it isn't. When you come into contact with the allergen, your immune system's reaction can inflame your skin, sinuses, airways or digestive system.

The severity of allergies varies from person to person and can range from minor irritation to anaphylaxis — a potentially life-threatening emergency. While most allergies can't be cured, treatments can help relieve your allergy symptoms.¹

Asthma is a long-term disease that causes inflammation and swelling of the airways. This results in narrowing of the airways that carry air from the nose and mouth to the lungs. Asthma symptoms include trouble breathing (shortness of breath), wheezing, coughing, and tightness or pain in the chest. Its symptoms can be triggered by different things for different people. Allergens, like dust or pet dander, are common triggers. Some people also develop asthma symptoms in response to certain foods or to exercise.

Asthma can be deadly. As with allergies, there is no cure for asthma, but appropriate treatment prevents asthma attacks and can help you have a better quality of life. Sadly, it is one of the most common and costly diseases in the United States.

What many people may not realize is the link between allergies and asthma, which often occur together. If you experience either condition, you can benefit from learning about how they are related. Doing so will help you limit your exposure to triggers and treat your symptoms.



Many people experience one condition without the other, but allergies can either worsen asthma or trigger it. When these conditions are so closely related, it's known as allergy-induced or allergic asthma. It is the most common type of asthma diagnosed in the United States. It affects 60 percent of people with asthma.

Many of the same substances that trigger allergies can also affect people with asthma. As previously mentioned, pollen, spores, dust mites, and pet dander are examples of common allergens. When people with allergies come into contact with allergens, their immune system attacks the allergens the same way they would attack bacteria or a virus. This often leads to watery eyes, runny nose, and coughing. It can also cause a flare-up of asthma symptoms. Therefore, it can be helpful for people with asthma to closely watch the pollen count, limit time spent outside on dry and windy days, and be mindful of other allergens that may induce an asthmatic reaction.

Family history affects a person's chances of developing allergies or asthma. If one or both parents have allergies, it's much more likely that their children will have allergies. Having allergies such as hay fever increases your risk of developing asthma.

1. Allergies (2022) Mayo Clinic. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Available at: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/allergies/symptoms-causes/syc-20351497>.

2. Allergic asthma: Causes, symptoms, tests & treatment, Cleveland Clinic. Available at: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21461-allergic-asthma>.

Does an asthma attack triggered by allergies feel different than a typical asthma attack?

When you have an asthma attack that's triggered by your allergies, it is a severe flair up of your asthma symptoms. During an asthma attack, your airways will tighten, making it difficult to breathe. You may also feel chest pressure, wheeze and cough. The symptoms of an allergic asthma attack are the same as an asthma attack caused by something else. The difference between the two is the cause of the asthma attack. When you experience severe asthma symptoms after breathing in an allergen, this is typically allergic asthma.²

Whether you are dealing with seasonal or year-round allergies, chronic asthma, or allergic asthma, seeing a doctor is the best step you can take toward living well in spite of these conditions. While there is no cure, adequate and informed treatment can improve your quality of life while experiencing allergies or asthma. Over the counter medicines can and do offer relief, but it is easy to treat yourself with the wrong medicine and not get the relief you so desperately need. If you'd like to speak to a doctor, 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.

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.



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WELLNESS

We often hear and use the word “wellness” without necessarily considering its meaning.

By Ramon A. Gil, M.D., Medical Director, Parkinson’s Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

Simply put: wellness is the opposite of illness. As parents, it is logical to assume that we all want our children to be healthy. We are therefore very involved in caring for their wellness. We pay attention to what they eat. We make sure that they play and exercise. We make sure they go to bed and sleep for an adequate amount of time. We make sure that they interact with other children and develop proper social skills. We strive to ensure that they receive an education that is second to none. We include religion in their lives. We instill confidence in the fact that working hard to stay healthy pays off.

Yet, today we are an obese country. Why have we forgotten about wellness? Why are children becoming more sedentary? Why are we all becoming less social, more isolated? Why have we allowed the quality of education in our nation to decline to levels never seen before? Why have we neglected spirituality and religion? In this absent-mindedness, we now find ourselves obese, ill and depressed. As per February of 2021, United States was the world’s 10th most obese country and the most obese country in North America with 36.2% of its population having a body mass index of over 30.0.

Only Covid was able to stop the steady rise in the number of bariatric surgeries in this country from 2011 to 2019. Six out of the ten most prescribed drugs in the USA last year were to treat diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure, all associated with obesity. Sadly, 15% of adults aged 18-39 are taking antidepressant drugs, and that number increases to 20% for those aged 60 and over. In 2022, 42% of adults and 20% of children in this country are obese. Scientists and health professionals have worked hard to determine the cause. It really isn’t that hard: Americans eat more calories than they burn, and the excess energy is stored as fat.

How is this connected to Parkinson’s Disease (PD)? Very simple, obesity is known to be the main risk factor to developing type II diabetes, and diabetes has a markedly negative effect in PD patients. In a study published in 2022, researchers demonstrated that type II diabetes is associated with faster disease

progression in Parkinson’s (“The Impact of Type 2 Diabetes in Parkinson’s Disease”. Athauda, Evan, Wernick et al. *Movement Disorders*, Vol. 37, No. 8, 2022). Furthermore, according to the American Heart Association, obesity is the most important risk factor to developing sleep apnea. Significant sleep apnea is present in 40% of obese individuals, and 70% of sleep apnea patients are obese. Last year, the NIH reported (once again) that sleep apnea is associated with a significantly increased risk of dementia, particularly for Alzheimer’s Disease and Parkinson’s Disease patients. Several studies have previously demonstrated sleep apnea as a high risk factor for dementia.

During the days of Covid, we had more PD patients in our center dying from PD complications than because of actually contracting Covid. Some of the most critical factors were social isolation, physical deconditioning, loss of appetite with limited nutrition, and worsening of depression and psychosis, leading to the downward spiral that eventually took their lives.

Wellness should therefore be a central priority for all of us. As healthcare professionals, we should be promoting wellness more than any other intervention in the treatment of PD. You, as patients and care partners, must acknowledge your responsibility in caring for yourselves. You must direct your energies and efforts to achieving physical, mental, social, spiritual, and emotional wellness. The good news is that this treatment does not cost much, there are no negative side effects, and you don’t need a doctor’s prescription or insurance authorization.

We care deeply about all of you. To that end, we dedicate this program, not to medications or surgical treatments for PD, but to the daily practice of healthy habits in attaining better physical and mental health outcomes. Instead of just surviving, our aim is to see you thriving. Consider it an even better way to define “wellness”.

Welcome to our 2023 Parkinson’s Disease Spring Symposium.

Parkinson’s Disease Treatment Center of SWFL, in partnership with Charlotte County Medical Society proudly presents.

2023 SWFL Parkinson’s Disease Spring Symposium: WELLNESS

Friday, April 21, 2023

9:00 am to 4:00 pm • Kings Gate Golf Club
24000 Rampart Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL

Presentations:

“Nutrition in Parkinson’s Disease”



Glorivel Koury de Ramos, M.D.

Medical Director, “RK Healthy Life”, Atlanta, GA
Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine
Diplomate, American Board of Obesity Medicine
Certified by American Board of Lifestyle Medicine

“Why Exercise is the Best Medicine for Parkinson’s Disease”



Ramon A. Gil, M.D.

Diplomate, American Academy of Psychiatry and Neurology
Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine
Medical Director, Parkinson’s Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

Breakout Sessions:

“Yoga as Part of Your Treatment”

Shebani Abdulnour, Yoga Therapist

“Dance Therapy for PD” by Sarah Latotskyy,

Patricia De L’Ossa, RPT and Sergio Valdivia, RPT

“Fitness” by Jay Woods

“Rock Steady Boxing and Pedaling for PD”

by Lisa Heid, Christy Barfield, RSB, Tabatha Stepensky, RSB, and Terri Hughes, PFP from the Punta Gorda YMCA



**For more info or to register contact Jennifer at Dr. Gil’s Office:
Phone (941) 743-4987 | Fax (941) 743-4486
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The Importance of Vascularization in Diabetic Wound Healing

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

Diabetes is a complicated condition to gain control of, but one of the most painful parts of this disease is the development of diabetic wounds. Often these wounds become “non-healing” due to the adverse effects of the systemic disorder.

Millions of people with diabetes will suffer from diabetic foot ulcers more than once in their lifetimes. Diabetes is a progressive disease that is many times, not taken seriously enough by people predisposed to the disorder.

High blood sugar damages various organs within the body, but also has a severely adverse effect on nerves. This nerve damage happens when the blood supply is limited. The small blood vessels, which supply blood and nutrients to the nerves becomes impaired. When the nerves are no longer fed nutrients, they either die, or their signals to the brain are ineffective. The lack of brain signaling from the nerve endings makes it difficult for a person to feel pain in their foot, so often injuries and these disorders are overlooked. This syndrome is called peripheral diabetic neuropathy.

Because of this nerve damage, people with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing foot ulcers. A foot wound may not sound overly alarming to most people, but foot ulcers can be life-threatening. These small sores go undetected due to the lack of feeling. If a patient delays treatment, foot ulcers can lead to amputation, strokes, heart attacks and severe infections that can spread throughout the entire body.

At Collier Podiatry, they make it a priority to provide advanced diabetic wound services. Collier Podiatry, is the practice of Dr. Petrocelli, a board-certified podiatrist who has been practicing since 1994. With over 20 years of experience, Dr. Petrocelli provides next-level care for diabetic patients with wounds and ulcers. He is board certified in wound healing and can treat any wound below the knee.



Diabetic Wounds & Vascularization

If you have ulcers and lacerations that never fully heal, you might have a chronic wound. These are most often caused by diabetes mellitus, which causes blood vessels in the feet and hands to grow smaller. The restriction of blood flow damages nerve areas and reduces sensation.

Chronic wounds can also be caused by venous stasis, a condition of the veins in the lower legs, which also deprives your feet of adequate blood flow. With both conditions, when you bump or cut your foot or when you develop an ulcer, the lack of blood flow makes it difficult for the wound to heal.

In the endothelial layer of the dermis, vascularization must take place in order to heal the wound. The neovascularization or also known as angiogenesis is when new microvessels, fibroblast, and collagen begin to proliferate and form along with an increase in oxygen uptake and micronutrients to help grow new tissue, and to build a strong vascular blood flow to supply the proper nutrients to the dermal layers.

Along with Collier Podiatry’s advanced wound healing protocols, Dr. Petrocelli often works directly with vascular surgeons to find ways to restore blood flow to the affected area so that the wound can finally heal.

Collier Podiatry maps out your treatment plan by taking a meticulous culture of your chronic wound, which assists them in deciphering and implementing the best strategy for your diabetic wound care and prescribing the correct medications for your particular case. Collier Podiatry does all of this with the goal of ridding you of your painful chronic wounds once and for all.

Wound Care Treatment:

- Antibiotics
- Grafts
- Hyperbaric oxygen treatments
- Saline debridement
- Surgery
- Therapeutic footwear
- Wound care
- Vascular Treatment

People with diabetes are encouraged to do self-checks on their feet daily. As soon as you notice any redness or wounds, it is imperative to see your podiatrist.

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 direct at (239) 775-0019.



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ASK THE EXPERT

Hearing Loss and Depression

Rachel Spencer, Au.D. - Doctor of Audiology/Ear Nerd

The link between hearing loss and depression has been reinforced by recent studies. Several studies have been conducted on the link between depression and hearing loss. Recent findings indicate that of the groups studied, women of all ages and adults age 18 to 69 with hearing loss are more likely to experience "significant depression" than hearing loss sufferers over 70.¹

"We found a significant association between hearing impairment and moderate to severe depression."²

There are several likely reasons that loss of hearing leads to depression in so many. Communication, which is vital to social interactions, becomes a source of stress when someone has to strain to hear others speak, and frequent misunderstandings result in embarrassment. After a while, people with untreated hearing loss begin to avoid social situations, particularly if they involve loud surroundings like parties or crowded restaurants. Withdrawal tends to progress until the person quits on life, choosing to remain in silent isolation rather than struggle to hear and communicate publicly. Hearing loss sufferers may think they simply cannot be helped because hearing loss is a "terminal" condition for which there is no cure. They may feel their hearing loss is a signal that they are simply too old to participate in social activities. Cutting oneself off from society and activities is a red flag for depression.

"Loss of hearing represents more than just difficulty hearing sounds. It can lead to social isolation and depression."³

The following are ten facts medical professionals need to know about the risk of patients with hearing loss developing depression:

1. In a study conducted on Generation X and Baby Boomer patients with untreated hearing loss, participants were found more likely to develop depression and other psychological issues than their hearing peers.⁴

2. Another large study of adults 50 and older with untreated hearing loss found they were more likely to experience depression and other emotional and mental instabilities, and were significantly less socially active than their peers who wore hearing aids.⁵

An increased number of studies in recent years are reinforcing the association between untreated hearing loss and depression. While further research to establish causation is ongoing, there is enough data to suggest physicians inform patients of the link between hearing loss and depression, to advise having hearing tested annually and encourage patients to evaluate wearing hearing aids if recommended by their hearing care professional.

Women and adults under the age of 70 are more susceptible to depression from hearing loss.

3. This same study found depression and similar disorders tend to worsen as hearing ability declines.

4. Patients with untreated hearing loss find it more difficult to communicate with others, leading to the avoidance of social interaction with friends and family. Isolation is a known contributor to depression.⁶

5. The onset of depression in older adults has been associated with the development of dementia or Alzheimer's disease - which is also a co-morbidity of hearing loss.⁷

6. Along with depression, patients with untreated hearing loss are known to experience anxiety, paranoia, relationship problems, stress, and other negative emotions.⁸

7. A retrospective study with 117 patients older than 65 years and diagnosed with moderate to profound hearing loss shows that older adults with moderate to profound hearing loss gain benefit from hearing aids or cochlear implants not only in terms of improved hearing function, but also in terms of positive effects on anxiety, depression, health status and quality of life.⁹

8. 36% of patients who begin wearing hearing aids experience improved overall mental health, while 34% increase their social engagement.¹⁰

9. Despite the fact that hearing aids can help improve patients' lives, the average span of time from patient realization of hearing loss to purchase of hearing aids is eight years.¹¹

10. An initiative called Healthy People 2020 calls for an increase in hearing tests for adults between the ages of 20-70.¹²

"... but studies also show that people with hearing loss who use hearing aids often have fewer depressive symptoms, greater social engagement, and improved quality of life."¹³

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Arthritis? In Naples, You're Not Alone (of course) and there's a plan:

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

Some times hear a kind of quietly heroic outlook from patients during an initial conversation about their arthritis: "It's something I have to put up with. I have to be strong about it." I admire that, for obvious reasons. But if you or someone close to you has arthritis, know that endurance is by no means the only tool we have.

Well over a quarter of us here in the Naples area have arthritis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than a third of adults in our region with arthritis report severe joint pain.

All of us await a breakthrough drug or two that might alleviate the symptoms. But the most recent overview of research found that the widely touted glucosamine and chondroitin yield only "clinically questionable" and minimally effective long-term benefit, for knee and hip osteoarthritis (osteoarthritis is the most common kind). Vitamin D improves symptoms to a degree, for some patients. But of the dozen classes of drugs tested, "none...appears to have long-term clinically significant benefit," the study concluded.

But it's often useful to get our heads out of the medicine cabinet. For example, physical activity can improve quality of life for those with arthritis in several ways, studies have shown: among these are pain reduction, improvement in mood, and enhanced joint movement. Perhaps your family medical practice has a health coach who can prescribe safe exercises.

At WellcomeMD, our coach's emphasis is on any physical activity program you can succeed with -- not on winning body-builder medals. Any activity at all is better than none. Our focus is on balance, stretches, aerobics, flexibility and some strength training. Each program is tailored for each individual patient's needs and capacity.



Work with your healthcare provider, too, on how diet may ease arthritis symptoms. On my desk is a recent review of 70 research studies on rheumatoid arthritis (the second-most-common kind) and diet. Their most important findings are that diet can help -- "it is recommended that nutrition should be routinely addressed" -- but that individual cases vary widely. Vitamin D supplements and avoiding salt helped some, for instance.

Some patients reported fasting gave significant but temporary improvement. Some patients were helped too by Mediterranean and vegetarian diets. The key, then, is to have a close and attentive collaboration with your personal physician.

WELLCOMEMD Naples

The path to long-term well-being is deeply personal. For example, your genetics profile holds valuable information about your best approach to optimal diet, fitness, and disease prevention. We use the most advanced lab tests and focuses on lifestyle, stressors, and environmental exposures to avoid, treat or reverse health issues.

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Do you need a new healthcare advocate? Please give us a call at (239) 451-5105 for a tour of our membership medical practice and a free consultation or visit wellcomemd.com/naples-florida.



DIANA MACIAN, M.D.

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REGENERATIVE MEDICINE IN GYNECOLOGY



By Kathleen M Marc, MD, FACOG

What is Regenerative Medicine? It is using the power of your own body to enhance and regenerate tissue. In gynecology it can be used to enhance and regenerate breast tissue. It can be used to restore vaginal laxity after childbirth. It can be used to treat GSM, Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause including vaginal dryness, painful intercourse, decreased sexual function, urinary frequency and stress incontinence.

Signs of the aging breast include color becoming more gray because of loss of blood flow, the shape of the breast becoming collapsed and droopy, decreased sensation after breast feeding, implants or other surgery, inverted nipples and crepe-paper skin in the cleavage area. The Vampire Breast lift can improve these changes by using PRP, platelet-rich plasma, derived from your own body, in combination with a small amount of hyaluronic acid filler.

The regenerative power of your own body can also be stimulated by energy devices such as radiofrequency. ThermiVa is a non-surgical radiofrequency device that encourages new collagen formation, blood supply and moisture. It is a non-invasive solution for changes in the labia and vagina that happen after childbirth or after menopause. ThermiVa improves sexual function, increases sensitivity and improves sexual satisfaction. ThermiVa creates a mild heat

injury under the surface of the vaginal and vulvar tissues that stimulates the body to produce collagen and new blood vessels which can then tighten the labial tissues to reduce sag, improve moisture which reduces vaginal dryness and painful intercourse and stimulate nerve growth which improves sexual function.

The O-Shot is another regenerative procedure that can be performed alone or in combination with ThermiVa. O-Shot is an in-office procedure where the patient's blood is drawn and placed in a centrifuge to isolate the red blood cells from the clear plasma. The red cells are discarded and the plasma is treated with a special process to activate the plasma, which contains a high concentration of platelets (PRP- platelet-rich plasma) Then, using a very tiny needle, the PRP is injected back into the clitoris and lower vagina into the area most important for sexual response. When the PRP is injected, the body sees it as an injury and calls forth 7 different growth factors as well as the patient's own stem cells to start the healing cascade which causes collagen production, the production of small blood vessels, and stimulates nerves. The O-Shot can help with decreased libido, stress urinary incontinence, urge incontinence, vaginal dryness and resulting painful intercourse, lichen sclerosis and lichen planus. It improves sexual response. The combination of ThermiVa and O-shot seems to have additive benefits in alleviating these symptoms.

CarboxyTherapy is the latest addition to regenerative medicine for the face and body. CO2Lift is the first clinically proven topical application of a carboxy gel. It results in higher tissue oxygenation and the development of new blood vessels. It increases hydration 117% and showed a 26% increase in elastin after 4 weeks of use. When used after energy treatments, such as ThermiVa, it speeds healing and improves outcomes. A special kit for CO2Lift V (for the vagina) has a syringe to place the gel in the vagina overnight. When the gel is applied carbon dioxide is absorbed into the tissue creating a deficiency in oxygen. In response the capillaries expand to allow more blood flow.

More oxygen and nutrients are then supplied to the tissue, which helps to regenerate tissue. This may help Genitourinary Syndrome of menopause, is great for new mothers, women who have had chemotherapy, and women with a history of breast cancer who can't take estrogen. CO2LiftV is another powerful tool in the armamentarium of regenerative treatments.

It's very exciting to have a variety of non-invasive, non-surgical treatments available to help women improve such a variety of symptoms which can improve their lives.

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Kathleen M Marc, MD, FACOG
Medical Director

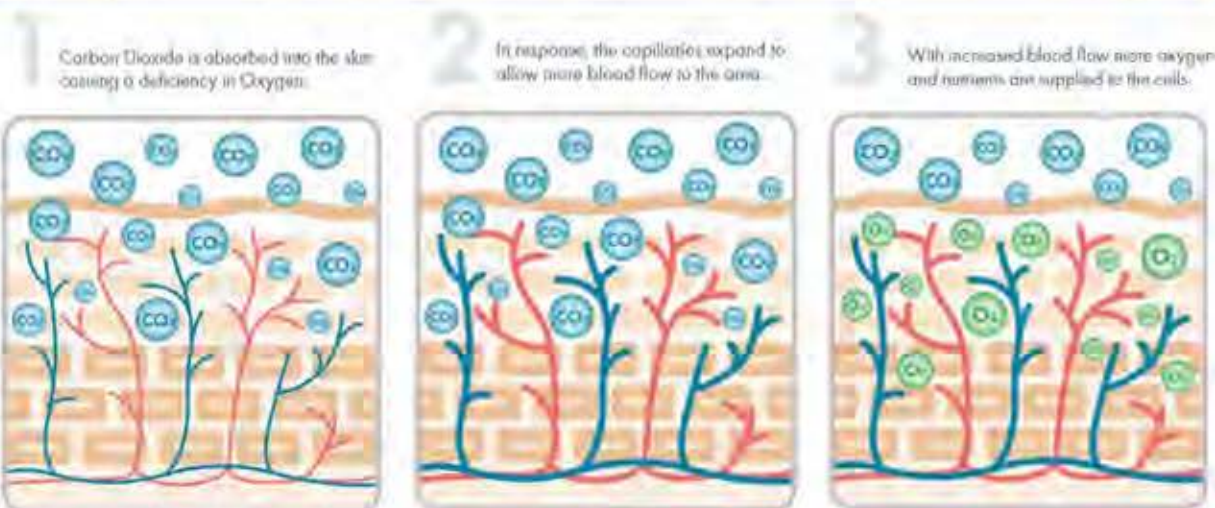
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CANNABIS & ADDICTION

By Hans Doherty - Growing in Health Florida

Addiction is not an easy subject to discuss. It affects our families and our communities most often negatively. Addiction is about loneliness, isolation, and self-loathing. We are all effected directly or indirectly. When your co-worker doesn't show up for work, or your sister or brother says they can't be there, perhaps addiction is the reason.

Someone you know is silently dealing with addiction right now.

Be kind. Be supportive. Be educated so you can recognize the signs and maybe save someone who feels desperate or just needs a helping hand out from the shadows.

There are chemical changes that happen to our bodies when we go from occasional, or social use, to the more destructive addiction. How this happens is being studied by psychiatrists, and phycologists around the world.

What triggers addiction? It's believed that dopamine, an important chemical in the brain, plays a key role. When the addict satisfies their craving by "using" whatever it is their addicted to, dopamine is released in vast amounts and produces a natural high. This is part of the brains reward response that tells us,

WOW...I like this, so let's do it again.

I don't care if your eating toilet paper. If you're feeding your addiction, the reward response will take place when you satisfy that desire by flooding the brain with dopamine. Food, alcohol, nicotine, the list of addictions goes on and on. People become addicted because of the reward response. Chemical dependency is part of the equation too.

Cannabis has long been mislabeled as a gateway drug. Studies now show that just the opposite is the case. Cannabis helps to curb cravings by reducing that reward response. It takes away that euphoric effect and lessens the desire for the person to take or want more. I'm not saying that you'll quit being an addict if you use cannabis, but studies show it can help.



THC and CBD in high doses can be used as a bridge to sobriety. I have several clients who are off opiates, but now use suboxone or methadone. These are also addictive, but don't get the patient "high". Getting off those meds can be difficult, if not impossible to quit because there is a withdrawal factor. Chemical dependency is real. Being dope sick is a real thing. It can disrupt daily life for 2-3 weeks until those chemicals are able to be rid from the body.

In-patient addiction treatment hospitals are expensive and don't always work. The person being treated must have the desire to quit, end of story!

We all know you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. Addiction is the same thing. First step is to get the commitment that sobriety is desired. From there, it's possible to make real changes to surroundings and behaviors. Without that commitment, the efforts might fall short.

I encourage those with questions to come visit me at the store, or to call me.

Thank you for reading!

FDA disclosure: Cannabis has not been proven to diagnose, treat or remedy any medical condition. No medical advice rendered.

I'm here to answer your questions and perhaps change someone's life forever!

We invite your questions at
www.growinginhealthflorida.org

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



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IS IT POSSIBLE TO OVERDOSE ON THC?

One of the most common questions among medical marijuana patients and their loved ones is *can you overdose on THC?* Below, you'll discover everything you need to know when consuming too much medical marijuana.

Is it Possible to Overdose on THC?

It is *theoretically* possible to consume enough THC, the primary psychoactive component in cannabis, to cause an overdose, but it is *highly* unlikely.

A study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that the THC necessary to overdose is around 1,500 pounds of marijuana consumed within about fifteen minutes. This is significantly more than any person could consume in such a short period of time and is far beyond the levels of THC that are typically found in marijuana. Additionally, the symptoms of a THC overdose are primarily psychological and do not pose significant physical risks. These symptoms include anxiety, paranoia, and hallucinations. Therefore, it is practically impossible to overdose on medical marijuana and THC.

Is it Possible to Reduce or Counteract the Effects of THC?

CBD, also known as cannabidiol, is a non-psychoactive compound found in cannabis that can counteract some of the effects of THC, the primary psychoactive component in cannabis.

CBD can counteract the anxiety and paranoia that high levels of THC can cause by increasing the levels of a neurotransmitter called GABA in the brain. GABA is responsible for regulating the activity of neurons and is known to have an inhibitory effect on neurotransmission, which can help to calm the nervous system.

Additionally, CBD can also interact with other receptors in the body, such as the CB1 receptors, which are responsible for the psychoactive effects of THC, and modulate their activity, which can reduce the overall psychoactive effects of THC.

It is important to note that while CBD and THC have different effects, they both have therapeutic potential and can enhance each other's effects when used in a balanced ratio, commonly known as the entourage effect.

How to Counteract the Effects of THC Naturally

Consuming too much THC can produce effects that can scare beginners and seasoned medical marijuana patients. Although it's practically impossible to overdose, most people want to avoid unwanted consequences.

There are a few natural ways that may help to decrease the intensity of the effects of THC:

- 1. Hydration:** Drinking water can help to alleviate dry mouth and eyes, which are common side effects of THC.
- 2. Sleep:** Getting enough can help reduce fatigue and disorientation, which are also common side effects of THC.
- 3. Food:** Eating a balanced diet can help to reduce the intensity of the "munchies" and other side effects of THC.
- 4. Exercise:** Light exercise or yoga can help to reduce anxiety and paranoia, which high levels of THC can cause.
- 5. CBD:** As previously discussed, CBD, a non-psychoactive compound found in cannabis, can counteract some of the effects of THC by increasing the levels of GABA in the brain and modulating the activity of the CB1 receptors.
- 6. Time:** The effects of THC will decrease over time as the body metabolizes the compound.

It's important to remember that these methods may not work for everyone, and the effects of THC can vary depending on the individual, the dose, and the method of consumption.

What are the Side Effects of Consuming Too Much Medical Marijuana?

The side effects of THC-dominant medical marijuana can vary depending on the individual, the dose, and the method of consumption. Common side effects can include:

- Increased appetite, often referred to as "the munchies"
- Dry mouth and eyes
- Increased heart rate
- Coordination and balance problems
- Short-term memory impairment
- Anxiety, paranoia, or other psychological distress in some people, particularly those prone to these conditions or consuming high doses.

It's worth noting that the side effects of THC can be more pronounced if consumed in large amounts, if ingested by people who are not used to it, or by those with a history of mental health issues.

Enjoy Medical Marijuana Safely in Florida With an MMJ Card

Now that you understand that it's nearly impossible to overdose on THC — it's time to get in touch with a medical marijuana doctor in Florida.

From best practices to recommended MMJ strains, qualified medical marijuana doctors are an excellent source of information on staying safe while consuming THC-dominant products. With hundreds of qualifications and uses for medical marijuana, there's no better time than now to educate yourself on cannabis safety to ensure an exceptional experience.



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THE DANGERS OF DISTRACTED DRIVING

A Dangerous Road for New Drivers

By John W. Watford, MD, LLC

Driving is a privilege that comes with great responsibility. As a new driver, you are excited to hit the road and explore new places. However, it is important to understand the dangers of distracted driving. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), distracted driving is a leading cause of accidents, particularly among young drivers. In this article, we will discuss the dangers of distracted driving and how you can avoid it as a new driver.

What is Distracted Driving?

Distracted driving refers to any activity that takes your attention away from driving. It includes anything from texting or using a phone to eating, applying makeup, or adjusting the radio. Distracted driving is a major concern as it increases the risk of accidents and fatalities on the road.

The Dangers of Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is a serious issue that affects everyone on the road. It is particularly concerning for new drivers who lack experience and are still learning the rules of the road. Here are some of the dangers of distracted driving:

- **Reduced Reaction Time:** Distracted driving can significantly reduce your reaction time. This means you may not be able to react in time to avoid an accident.
- **Impaired Judgment:** When you are distracted, your judgment may be impaired. This can cause you to make poor decisions on the road, such as changing lanes without checking your blind spot.
- **Loss of Focus:** Distracted driving can cause you to lose focus on the road. This means you may miss important signs, signals, or other vehicles on the road.
- **Increased Risk of Accidents:** Distracted driving is a leading cause of accidents. In fact, according to the NHTSA, distracted driving was responsible for 2,841 deaths in 2018 alone.

How to Avoid Distracted Driving as a New Driver

As a new driver, it is important to prioritize safety on the road. Here are some tips to avoid distracted driving:



Put Away Your Phone: One of the biggest distractions while driving is using your phone. Put your phone away while driving, or use a hands-free device if you need to make a call.

- **Avoid Eating and Drinking:** Eating and drinking while driving can also be a distraction. Finish your food or drink before getting behind the wheel.
- **Adjust Your Settings Before Driving:** Before driving, adjust your radio, GPS, and climate control settings. This will help you avoid distractions while driving.
- **Avoid Multitasking:** Driving requires your full attention. Avoid multitasking, such as applying makeup or grooming, while driving.
- **Pull Over if Necessary:** If you need to do something that requires your full attention, pull over to a safe location and complete the task before getting back on the road.

Conclusion

Distracted driving is a serious issue that affects everyone on the road. As a new driver, it is important to prioritize safety and avoid distractions while driving. By following the tips outlined in this article, you can reduce your risk of accidents and help keep yourself and others safe on the road. Remember, driving is a privilege, and with it comes great responsibility.

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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ABDOMINOPLASTY & ABDOMINAL LIPOSUCTION WITH J-PLASMA: THE DIFFERENCES.

By Plastic Surgery Center of Naples

Abdominoplasty is the recontouring and removal of skin and fat from the abdomen while also recontouring the deeper tissues and muscle layers. Abdominal liposuction only removes the fat under the skin and no skin is removed. Liposuction only involves small, tiny puncture wounds. Panniculectomy is the removal of a significant hanging "skin apron" done for the purpose of hygiene. This procedure does not hide the scar in as low of a position as the abdominoplasty.

The first abdominoplasty was done in 1890 in France. This did not, however, become a common procedure until the late 1900's. Techniques advanced to hide the incision in the bikini area and recreating the belly button became standard.

Now we have many different versions of tummy tucks and refinements from full abdominoplasties to mini tucks. A full **abdominoplasty** is done under anesthesia in a surgery center. Today over 250,000 abdominoplasties are done every year. They always involve a longer incision as skin is removed and the procedure involves re-contouring the skin, fat, and abdominal wall, as well as hiding the scar in the bikini location. The belly button is repositioned, and a scar is formed around it. This often involves surgery done in the surgery center setting and sometimes in a hospital. Drains are commonly used, and the post operative compression garments are needed for 4 to 6 weeks (about 1 and a half months). The recovery is more significant the more surgery is done, particularly if the deeper layers are tightened.

Abdominal liposuction is the procedure at which time you remove some of the fat by suction aspiration rather than cutting it out. This by itself will not remove any of the extra skin, and therefore it is not equivalent to abdominoplasty. Liposuction does not recontour the deeper fascia and deeper tissues, only the fat under the skin, however, some

Dr. Gunnar Bergqvist, MD



Before 10 days post op

of the newer techniques that we use, can *tighten* the skin by several different modalities. One of these is called J-plasma (also known as Renuvion). This used a plasma helium bean under the skin, inducing progressive skin tightening over the next six months. Skin is reduced without the need for removal and no incisions, but rather small puncture wounds. Drains are not used but post-surgical garments should be worn for at least 4 to 6 mo. This procedure can be done under local tumescence in an office setting without significant anesthesia and the patient is awake. It is not uncomfortable and it's extremely popular. The Fat removed can sometimes be grafted elsewhere. Most commonly buttocks or breast.

The ultimate determination which procedure would be best for you is based on the amount of skin and tissue that would need to be removed. Surgical risks and recovery should also be considered. A tummy



Liposol Plasma 1 wk post op

Dr. Bergqvist



tuck, (abdominoplasty,) has higher surgical risk than liposuction with J-plasma. These procedures are considered cosmetic. Only a panniculectomy can be considered potentially medical, in which case insurance would cover the cost.

I perform many of these procedures and I always want patients to know, while it's not a weight-loss procedure, it will improve a man or woman's physique. Patients are offered to go on our weight loss program, which is a **series of shots** given once a week for a few months to assist for larger amounts of general over-all weight loss. This has been a successful program that allows patients to feel their best before or after a procedure.

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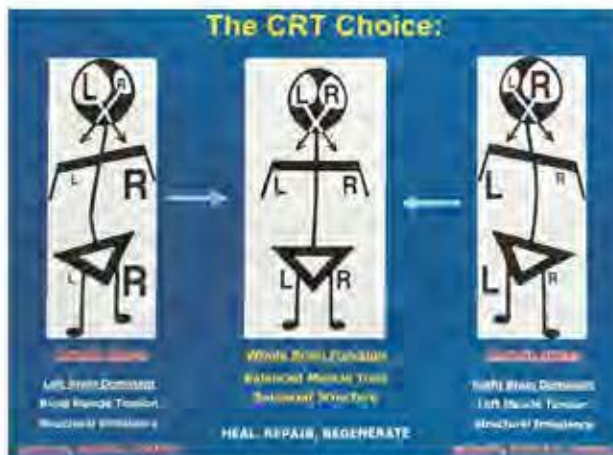
MINDFUL HEALTH

By Chrysa Smith: chryasmith.com

"What can I help you improve?" Irena Basnikova asks of her clients. From golf swings to weight loss to improved posture, the owner of Naples Fitness Wellness, using all available therapies in her studio, creates a custom-tailored approach to achieving her client's goals. You might call it mindful health.

Her plan for you will likely include several modalities, selected just for you. The goal? To get the body to relax and open up; for the immune system to be restored to optimal functioning, allowing you to achieve your desired outcomes.

Whatever your issues, one of the things we all experience is stress, and that plays an important role for your entire body. In fact, some doctors believe unresolved stress is responsible for 100% of illness. Thus, balancing the body and the brain go hand-in-hand. In fact, Irena will often be heard talking about the connection of all parts of the body, including the brain—mindful health.



Irena will begin with **Cranial Release Technique (CRT)**. The theory behind it is that the body gets 'blocked' due to stress. And this blockage begins all the way up in your cranium. This therapy releases the stress through a hands-on approach that resets the relationship between 22 bones designed to 'live fluidly' with each other. Having personally experienced this, I can describe it as an 'reopening' of closed-off energy, clarity. I experienced freer movement, feeling somewhat like a weight had been lifted from me. This technique has been successful in relieving all types of symptoms of a misaligned brain, from hormonal and skin problems to stomach sensitivities and neurological problems.

Irena says, "Neurologists speak about proper nutrition for brain health." And it comes down to eating healthy, whole foods and supplementing with the

vitamins and minerals needed to run your own personal machine. "What are we feeding the brain?" she asks her clients. After trying various health supplements without the results she was hoping for, one of the companies Irena discovered is **NeoLife**. Addressing complete health with a line of natural, organic, holistic food and supplements, she has found it is one of the nutritional companies that delivered results for her and several of her clients. She also offers something called **Epigenetic reporting or Optimize Immunity and Wellbeing Report**. Taking a snip of hair, a person's DNA—their unique profile is analyzed. "That hair tells a story," she says. And that is nutrition, environmental exposure, vitamin, and mineral deficiencies. Like with many of Irena's therapies, it provides awareness as to what tweaks she can help you with and what you can make for yourself. While you can't control your genetics, you can control what food, supplements, environments you expose yourself to. Mindful health comes with thinking about putting your best efforts forward, knowing that everything you put in your body makes it healthier or not. The report revealed some results I might have guessed for myself, given my conditions. Others surprised me, like eating certain favorite foods which might not be all that favorable on my system. Gathering the information on what needs to be increased or decreased will lead further to any other therapies to address it.

One modality Irena uses as part of the program, is called **HOCATT**. What exactly is it? Physically, it resembles a steam chamber. Designed for personal use, you enter the unit, get comfortable as adjustments for body size are made. Once situated properly, the unit is closed from the neck down, and ozone is piped into the chamber, while pure oxygen is released near your nose. The unit goes through a variety of sequences, specifically programmed for your area of concern. Ultimately, HOCATT detoxes the brain, providing mental clarity and focus—a clearing out the clutter we collect in the course of daily life. As it operates, it can also support specific areas of concern, whether it be clearing out a respiratory infection, boosting immunity, and more. It is able to provide ten different technologies within one 30-minute session. It's such a relaxing treatment, clients have been known to fall asleep during the cycle, including my husband. He had a respiratory infection, so Irena programmed him for lungs and immune support. Two sessions and he said his head and chest felt clearer, and within a few more days, I could see a big improvement.



Irena may combine HOCATT with something called **Brain Tap** as part of the program. Sounds, experiences, and vibrations come together in a program that virtually takes your body back to the frequencies we were designed to live with—as if to reprogram the brain. Much modern technology has interfered with this aspect of health, as radiation and stress play havoc with our bodies. So, how does it work? Take for example, how stress-relieving the beach is. It is known that there is a positive frequency near water. It's what makes people feel good there, as though your shoulders drop, you take a deep breath and all the worries of your world seem to disappear. Measured in Hz, that frequency can be recreated virtually, through the use of a headset that essentially mimics that environment, reducing stress and its negative effects. Regular sessions lead to a more relaxed state, positive energy, better circadian rhythm. And all it takes is about a 20-minute cycle. Working in tandem with other therapies, Brain Tap leads to other health benefits as well, including weight loss.

You've probably heard of **Biofeedback**. It's been verbally used in traditional therapy sessions, but the **LIFE system** is an advanced electro/psychological device. The device can be programmed for a variety of functions that support stress reduction, muscle relaxation, and the overall well-being of the body. And, it can be done either in-office or virtually, including during the stressful times that often come with travel.

I got an education. I received several therapies, including CRT, HOCATT, posture, stretching and Pilates. I got on some supplements. Looking forward to trying BrainTap and Biofeedback as well. I'm eating healthier, and I'm feeling pretty darn good. And I trust that most of Irena's clients are as well.

**All therapies are intended to provide body and brain harmony, to provide a holistic approach to health, and are not intended to diagnose or treat medical conditions.*



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PICKLEBALL

By Robert Swift, D.O.
Board Certified Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine



Pickleball is a recreational sport that is gaining in popularity and has become one of the fastest growing sports in America. The sport is easy to learn, promotes competitiveness and socialization, and is a great form of low impact exercise.

The game was developed in 1965 by a former Washington state congressman, Joel Pritchard. He and a friend were looking to play badminton, but unable to find a full set of rackets they improvised, playing with wooden ping-pong paddles and a perforated plastic ball. With this collection of equipment, they played on an asphalt surface using a badminton net adjusted to a height like that of tennis. The friends eventually developed a permanent set of rules. Their intention was to develop a sport the entire family could enjoy together. Within two years, the first permanent court was constructed next door to Joel Pritchard's home. Within a few more years, a corporation was developed to protect the sport. Since its inception, the game has continued to grow, and is now played in all 50 states.

The game was named after the Pritchards' dog, Pickles. In the early development of the game, there no official name assigned to it. As the game progressed, an official name was needed, and "Pickleball" was it.

Pickleball is currently the fastest growing sport in the US. The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) estimated that in 2017 there were over 2.8 million Pickleball players in the U.S., which was an increase of 12.3% from the previous year. Further details from the 2016 SFIA report included that over 1.5 million people were 'casual' participants (play one to seven times per year), and that 930,000 were 'core' participants (play eight or more times per year). Further breakdown of participation rates by age showed that 'core' participants tend to be older, with 75% of core participants being age 55 or older, and 42% of all players over 65 considered to be core participants. Along with fitness benefits of the sport, many older adults enjoy playing Pickleball because it promotes competitiveness and socialization.

Associated Injuries

A recent literature search did not reveal any published research describing specific injuries related to Pickleball. However, there is published research on injuries associated with other racket sports. In tennis, a similar style racket sport played on a similar surface, the most common injuries are sprains/strains of the lower extremity, followed by sprains/strains of the upper extremity and injuries of the trunk and low back. Given the underhand nature of the game play of Pickleball, one would expect a lower occurrence of shoulder

injuries than in tennis where overhand serving is a major component of the sport. However, there is still a risk for a variety of other upper extremity injuries in Pickleball.

Acute Injuries

Acute traumatic injuries in Pickleball can result from falls, secondary to a sudden turning or pivoting movement. Sprains of the ankle joint, particularly with inversion, are very common in tennis and the mechanism for this injury would be similar for Pickleball. Depending on the severity of the sprain, this injury could result in significantly impaired movement or inability to bear weight. If weight bearing is painful, initial treatment may initially include crutches (if needed), or immobilization with an ankle brace. Further treatment consisting of relative rest, icing, compression, and elevation (RICE) are generally useful in the treatment of sprains of the ankle and other joints. Depending on severity, ankle sprains can take several weeks to resolve, but patients can generally resume their previous level of play if proper steps are taken during the healing process. Return to sport participation for this and other injuries is often expedited by physical therapy.

Other injuries that can arise near the ankle can involve the Achilles tendon. These can include an Achilles strain, which can present as pain anywhere along the tendon, from the musculotendinous component at the lower calf muscle, to the body of the tendon, to its insertion at the calcaneus. Treatment of Achilles tendon strains typically consists of relative rest, focused stretching of the tendon, and eccentric loading exercises. This injury can take weeks to fully heal. A much less common but more severe injury, Achilles tendon rupture, can occur with forceful movement of the ankle, usually an abrupt plantarflexion. This injury usually results in severe pain in the posterior ankle and an inability to bear weight or actively plantarflex the foot. This type of injury will often require surgical repair and should be evaluated promptly for optimal long term outcome.

Knee injuries are also common in racket sports such as tennis, and likely to affect Pickleball players as well. These can range from acute sprains of the knee to meniscal and ligamentous injuries. A sprain of the knee can affect the collateral ligaments, caused by rapid starting/stopping and sudden turning or pivoting movements. A sprain will often result in pain with weight bearing, usually worse with lateral movement. Acute injuries of the meniscus can include tears, which can present with the same mechanism as a ligament sprain, but often will result in the inability to

bear weight, decreased range of motion, and significant swelling. Treatment of these injuries can range from initial non-weight bearing, to bracing, to physical therapy, or even potential surgical repair. Any knee injury that results in pain with weight bearing, decreased range of motion, or significant swelling should prompt immediate evaluation by a physician.

Muscle groups in the lower extremity that can be acutely strained include the hamstring muscles, quadriceps, hip flexors and adductors, and calf. Many strains can involve partial tearing of the muscle body or tendon. These injuries can present as pain in the muscle with stretching or muscle contraction. Mild sprains usually respond to RICE treatment, and participants can usually return to their activity in a matter of a few weeks. More severe muscle strains or tears may have more severe pain, associated swelling or bruising of the muscle, and tend to take longer to recover. As stated above, many of these injuries will respond well to physical therapy, and this can often help to assist players to return to their previous level of competing and can often address other potential biomechanical inefficiencies that can be future injury risks.

For the upper extremity, the wrist is a common site of tennis injury, and Pickleball players are at risk as well. Falls onto an outstretched hand are a common mechanism for wrist sprains and can also result in a fracture. The elbow and shoulder can also be injured by falls. Minor bruising to the upper extremity may be initially treated with RICE, but an injury to the upper extremity that causes significant swelling, bruising, or limited range of motion should prompt a player to be evaluated.

Pickle ball can be a great way to enjoy the beautiful weather and there are many courts in the SWFL area. The benefits of exercise, and socialization out way the risks of injury. Even when we are at our most competitive, it is important to remember to play it safe, give up the point. That way you can always come back to the court to play again.

Always stretch and warm up gently before competitive play. Make sure you are getting your physical once a year to understand and appreciate your health. Drink plenty of water and the occasional sports drink. Wear appropriate gear, and footwear.

In the event of any related Pickleball injury we are available to take care of you and get you back on the court.

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IN OFFICE HYSTEROSCOPY

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

What is a hysteroscopy?

Hysteroscopy is a procedure that can be used to both diagnose and treat causes of abnormal bleeding. The procedure allows your doctor to look inside your uterus with a tool called a hysteroscope. This is a thin, lighted tube that is inserted into the vagina to examine the cervix and inside of the uterus. Hysteroscopy can be a part of the diagnosis process or an operative procedure.

What is diagnostic hysteroscopy?

Dr. Gauta normally performs a diagnostic hysteroscopy in the office. The patient receives analgesia so they will be comfortable during the test. It is used to diagnose conditions such as abnormal uterine bleeding, adhesions, fibroids, polyps or to locate displaced intrauterine devices IUDs.

One of the newest technologies he uses in the office and in conjunction with the hysteroscope is RESECTR™. RESECTR allows Dr. Gauta to gently remove and eliminate intrauterine fibroids without the need to remove or even cut the uterus and without harming your uterine lining. This is especially important if you want to have children in the future. The procedure is performed under local analgesia and most patients experience only mild to moderate cramping. Patients go home the same day and on average, a 3 cm fibroid (about the size of a grape) can be removed in approximately 10 minutes.

What is operative hysteroscopy?

Operative hysteroscopy is used to correct an abnormal condition that has been detected during a diagnostic hysteroscopy. If an abnormal condition was detected during the diagnostic hysteroscopy, an operative hysteroscopy can often be performed. Many conditions can be treated in the office using advanced technologies such as RESECTR which eliminates the need for a second visit and is a cost savings to the patient.

The time it takes to perform a hysteroscopy can range from less than five minutes to more than an hour depending on your specific condition. If an operative hysteroscopy is required Dr. Gauta will determine if it should be done in the office or surgery center. The choice is yours however where you would like your procedure done.



When is operative hysteroscopy used?

Your doctor may perform a hysteroscopy to correct the following uterine conditions:

- **Polyps and fibroids:** Hysteroscopy is used to remove these non-cancerous growths found in the uterus.
- **Adhesions:** Also known as Asherman's Syndrome, uterine adhesions are bands of scar tissue that can form in the uterus and may lead to changes in menstrual flow as well as infertility. Hysteroscopy can help your doctor locate and remove the adhesions.
- **Septums:** Hysteroscopy can help determine whether you have a uterine septum, a malformation (defect) of the uterus that is present from birth.
- **Abnormal bleeding:** Hysteroscopy can help identify the cause of heavy or lengthy menstrual flow, as well as bleeding between periods or after menopause. Endometrial ablation is one procedure in which the hysteroscope, along with other instruments, is used to destroy the uterine lining in order to treat some causes of heavy bleeding.

When should hysteroscopy be performed?

Your doctor may recommend scheduling the hysteroscopy for the first week after your menstrual period. This timing will provide the doctor with the best view of the inside of your uterus. Hysteroscopy is also performed to determine the cause of unexplained bleeding or spotting in postmenopausal women.

How is hysteroscopy performed?

Prior to the procedure, your doctor may prescribe a sedative to help you relax. You will then be given analgesia appropriate for where you are having the procedure done. The procedure itself takes place in the following order:

- The doctor will dilate (widen) your cervix to allow the hysteroscope to be inserted.
- The hysteroscope is inserted through your vagina and cervix into the uterus.
- Carbon dioxide gas or a liquid solution is then inserted into the uterus, through the hysteroscope, to expand it and to clear away any blood or mucus.
- Next, a light shone through the hysteroscope allows your doctor to see your uterus and the openings of the fallopian tubes into the uterine cavity.
- Finally, if surgery needs to be performed, small instruments are inserted into the uterus through the hysteroscope.

What can I expect after a hysteroscopy?

Most patients require nothing more than tylenol or ibuprofen to help with mild cramping.



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UNDERSTANDING DIZZINESS, VERTIGO & BALANCE DISORDERS

By Florida Gulf Coast Ear, Nose & Throat

What Is a Balance Disorder?

Your sense of balance is critically important to help prevent falls and injury.

A balance disorder affects your body's ability to hold an upright, safe position and is often experienced as dizziness and vertigo. **Dizziness** is a feeling of being unsteady or having a distorted sense of your body in the space in the space around it. **Vertigo** involves a sense a movement, as if you or the environment around you is spinning.

Dizziness and vertigo can be accompanied by lightheadedness, blurred vision, confusion, disorientation, nausea, and vomiting. Dizziness and vertigo are symptoms of numerous conditions, including anxiety, dehydration, circulation issues, nervous system and brain conditions, medication side effects, and inner ear disorders.

An ENT can help you determine if your dizziness or vertigo is caused by an inner ear disorder.

Balance and the Inner Ear

Your sense of balance is guided by signals from your eyes, ears, and sensory receptors to your brain.

The part of your ears involved in balance is called the **vestibular system**, a structure of bone and soft tissue located in your inner ear. Within this structure are loopshaped canals that contain fluid hairlike sensors. When you move your head, the fluid in the vestibular system causes the hairlike sensors to bend, sending a signal to your brain that your head has changed position. With this information, your brain can send signals to other parts of the body, such as your eyes and muscles, to move your body's position and visual focus to help maintain your sense of balance.

When any part of the vestibular system is injured or malfunctioning, proper signals to your brain can be disrupted, causing you to feel imbalanced. When the vestibular system is the cause of your sense of imbalance, it is called a **vestibular disorder**.

COMMON VESTIBULAR DISORDERS

Autoimmune Inner Ear Disease (AIED)

Autoimmune Inner Ear Disease is caused by a malfunctioning immune system that attacks healthy ear tissue. It affects both ears and causes hearing loss and balance issues. Once symptoms are present, they typically progress quickly. AIED is



rare, affecting 15 out of 100,000 people, and is most common in middle-aged women. It commonly occurs with other autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, scleroderma, and ulcerative colitis.

Acoustic Neuroma

Acoustic neuroma is a benign (non-cancerous) tumor that grows on the nerves in the inner ear that are responsible for hearing and balance. The pressure on the nerve from the tumor may cause hearing loss and imbalance.

Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV)

Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV) is one of the most common vestibular disorders. The structures in your ear that monitor your head's movements crystals that make you sensitive to gravity. These crystals can become dislodged for several reasons, such as serious trauma to the head or even minor trauma such as a violent sneeze or bumping your head into something. When the crystals become dislodged, they can move into the canals of the vestibular system and create a fall signal of head movement, causing dizziness. Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo can occur at any age but is most common in people over the age of 50.

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome (MdDS)

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome is a rare condition that causes a severe and often debilitating feeling of swaying or bobbing, much like motion sickness but without motion. It often follows boat or ship travel but can persist for months or longer. While it is a neurological condition rather than a vestibular condition as it does not involve the inner ear, patients often see ENT physicians for a diagnosis.

Ménière's Disease

Ménière's disease causes severe vertigo, ringing in the ears, hearing loss, and a feeling of fullness or congestion in the ear. In Ménière's disease, a buildup of fluid in the inner ear interferes with the vestibular nerve's ability to send signals that regulate balance to the brain. Ménière's disease usually affects only one ear but over time can progress to affect both ears.

Labyrinthitis

Labyrinthitis is a disorder of the inner ear that occurs when one of the vestibular nerves becomes inflamed. It is commonly caused by a viral infection, such as an upper respiratory infection or the flu, or less commonly by a bacterial infection such as strep throat or pneumonia.

Otosclerosis

Otosclerosis is a rare condition characterized by an abnormal growth of bone of the middle ear. It commonly affects hearing loss, and less commonly can affect balance if the growth extends into the inner ear.

Ototoxicity

Ototoxicity is caused by exposure to certain drugs or chemicals that damage nerves in the inner ear that are responsible for hearing and balance. There are more than 200 prescription and over-the-counter medications and chemicals that are known to cause ototoxicity. Discuss with your doctor the potential for hearing or balance damage of any medication you are taking.

Vestibular Migraine

Vestibular migraine is one of the most common causes of spontaneous vertigo, loss of balance and sensitivity to motion. Unlike other migraines, vestibular migraine may or may not feature headache, although most people diagnosed with vestibular migraine have a history of migraine headaches. Although vestibular migraine is a neurological condition, it can mimic vestibular conditions such as Ménière's disease and patients should consult an ENT physician to rule out any inner ear disorders.



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Vestibular Neuritis

Vestibular neuritis, or vestibular neuronitis, is characterized by inflammation of the vestibular nerve in the inner ear. It causes a sudden case of severe vertigo, dizziness, balance problems, nausea and vomiting that can last for minutes or prolonged over several days. Vestibular neuritis is typically caused by a virus either in the ear or elsewhere in the body.

Perilymph Fistula

A perilymph fistula is a tear or defect in the membrane that separates the air-filled middle ear and the fluid-filled inner ear. This tear allows fluid from the inner ear to flow into the middle ear, causing a change in the ear pressure of the middle ear. This change in ear pressure can stimulate the balance structures in the inner ear. Sudden pressure changes, head trauma, or injury to the ear are common causes.

DIAGNOSING VESTIBULAR DISORDERS

The otolaryngologists at Florida Gulf Coast ENT and the audiologists at Florida Gulf Coast Hearing Center are trained to performed diagnostic tests for vestibular function. Tests they may perform include:

- **Hearing tests** – To evaluate hearing functionality
- **Electrocochleography (ECoG)** – Measures inner ear fluid pressure
- **Electronystagmography (ENG) or Videonystagmography (VNG)** – Measures eye movement and the muscles that control them
- **Head movement testing** – Evaluates the effect of tilting your head
- **Rotational chair testing** – Measures eye movements while you sit in a computerized chair that moves
- **Posturography** – Measures your ability to maintain proper posture under different test conditions
- **Subjective visual vertical test (SVV)** – Measures how your inner ear senses gravity
- **Vestibular evoked myogenic potential (VEMP)** – Evaluates the functionality of the inner ear and vestibular nerve
- **Blood tests** - To check for infections

Your otolaryngologist may consult with other physicians such as neurologists to assess neurological conditions, and cardiologists to assess circulatory conditions.

TREATING VESTIBULAR DISORDERS

Your treatment plan will depend on which type of vestibular disorder you have. Options may include:

- Medications to treat an infection
- Medications to prevent vertigo and nausea
- Treatment of underlying conditions
- Surgery to repair inner ear function
- Dietary changes
- Activity changes
- Physical or occupational therapy

BE SAFE WHEN FEELING DIZZY

Dizziness and vertigo increase the risk of falling and injuries. To minimize this potential, consider taking these safety precautions:

- Minimize driving
- Minimize going up and down the stairs
- Walk with a cane or walker
- Install "grab bars" in the bathroom
- Wear low-heeled shoes



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ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

ALCOHOL'S NEGATIVE EFFECTS

Alcohol is a widely consumed beverage, with social and cultural significance for many people around the world. However, alcohol consumption can have negative effects on the organs and body, which is why it is important to be aware of the potential risks associated with drinking.

The liver is one of the most important organs affected by alcohol consumption. The liver processes alcohol and removes it from the body, but excessive drinking can damage the liver, leading to a range of problems, including fatty liver disease, hepatitis, and cirrhosis. Fatty liver disease occurs when fat accumulates in the liver, which can cause inflammation and scarring. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, which can be caused by excessive alcohol consumption. Cirrhosis is a chronic disease that results in scarring of the liver, which can lead to liver failure.

Excessive alcohol consumption can also have negative effects on the digestive system. Alcohol irritates the lining of the stomach and can cause inflammation, which can lead to ulcers and other digestive problems. Heavy drinking can also cause inflammation of the pancreas, which can lead to pancreatitis, a serious and potentially life-threatening condition.

Alcohol can also have negative effects on the cardiovascular system. Excessive drinking can cause high blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and stroke. Alcohol can also cause an irregular heartbeat, which can increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Heavy drinking can also lead to the development of a condition known as alcoholic cardiomyopathy, which is a weakening of the heart muscle.

Alcohol consumption can also affect the brain and nervous system. Alcohol is a depressant, which means it slows down the activity of the central nervous system. This can cause a range of effects, including impaired judgment, memory loss, and difficulty with coordination and balance. Long-term heavy drinking can also cause a range of neurological problems, including dementia, peripheral neuropathy, and Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome.



In addition to these effects, alcohol consumption can also have negative effects on mental health. Alcohol is often used as a coping mechanism for stress and anxiety, but excessive drinking can actually make these problems worse. Alcohol can also cause mood swings and irritability, and can increase the risk of depression and suicide.

There are also a range of other negative effects associated with alcohol consumption. For example, alcohol can cause dehydration, which can lead to headaches, dizziness, and fatigue. Alcohol can also impair the immune system, making it harder for the body to fight off infections and illnesses. And of course, excessive drinking can lead to alcohol poisoning, which can be life-threatening.

Given these potential risks, it is important to be aware of the amount of alcohol you are consuming, and to drink in moderation. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that men consume no more than two drinks per day, and that women consume no more than one drink per day. However, it is important to remember that these guidelines are just that - guidelines. The amount of alcohol that is safe for you to consume depends on a range of factors, including your age, weight, and overall health.

If you are concerned about the amount of alcohol you are consuming, there are a range of resources available to help. Your doctor or a mental health

professional can provide advice and support, and there are a range of support groups and online communities for people struggling with alcohol addiction.

Alcohol consumption can have a range of negative effects on the organs and body, including the liver, digestive system, cardiovascular system, brain and nervous system, and mental health. To reduce the risks associated with alcohol consumption, it is important to be aware of the amount of alcohol you are consuming, and to drink in moderation. If you are struggling with alcohol addiction, there are a range of resources available to help, and seeking support is an important step.

If you are looking for a team of medical professionals to talk to you about your health, the team at Well-Being Medical Center in Naples is available and ready to help. They offer a wide variety of services including preventative care, health consultations, and pride themselves on patient satisfaction.

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.



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Advanced Treatment for OVERACTIVE BLADDER

Have you tried treatment for overactive bladder and still suffer from any of the symptoms below?

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- ✓ Getting up at night 2 or more times to urinate
- ✓ Wearing adult protective undergarments or pads
- ✓ Inability to empty your bladder completely
- ✓ Curbing your usual activities because you must be near a restroom at all times

If you are a man or woman who said yes to any of these, then you should know about some of the advanced therapies that are available and can drastically improve your quality of life.

Commonly used therapies such as behavioral modification, bladder training and medications are a first line of therapy for overactive bladder (OAB). Unfortunately, in many patients, these do not work or don't work well enough. Some patients may even be unable to tolerate the common side effects of medications such as dry mouth, dry eyes or constipation. If you or someone you know has OAB, the use of sacral neuromodulation or Botox may be the answer. In a specialty trained urologists' hands these treatments can succeed where others have failed.

SACRAL NEUROMODULATION

Sacral neuromodulation (SNM) allows regulation of the nerves that go to the bladder. This works by sending messages back to the brain to regulate the "on-off" switch for bladder function. A simple way to think of SNM is as a pacemaker for the bladder. It can help to bring your bladder function back to normal function if it is too active or even underactive.

SNM is approved by the FDA for the treatment of refractory OAB, urge incontinence and urinary re-tention. Currently one company (Medtronic Inc., Minneapolis) produces this SNM device for international use under the name InterStim®. In Europe, it



is also used successfully to treat bowel dysfunction including severe constipation, fecal urgency, frequency and fecal soiling. This is possible because there are nerves in the pelvis that work on both the bladder and bowel.

SNM is a very appealing option to patients due to its high success rate (up to 80%) and a unique trial phase. This trial phase of 3 to 7 days is called a percutaneous nerve evaluation (PNE) and is a simple procedure that places a thin temporary lead next to the nerve that controls bladder function. This can be placed using local anesthesia or light sedation and takes minutes to perform. This gives the patient the ability to "test drive" the device without going through the full implant. It also helps patients to gain insight on just how much the InterStim could help them. At the end of the trial, the leads are removed in the office without damaging the nerve.

If the PNE is successful in reducing symptoms, it is likely that the full implant will work in these patients. The InterStim uses an implantable lead and small battery that are placed for long-term treatment of OAB or urinary retention. Once placed, the InterStim can last up to ten years depending on its use. The battery can be easily changed under local anesthesia. After implantation, the InterStim is virtually undetectable even in a bathing suit. This device can drastically improve a patient's quality of life.

BOTULINUM TOXIN (Botox)

Botox injections are another option in the treatment of OAB. The Botox is placed directly in the bladder muscle for treatment of OAB and urge incontinence.

This is done with a simple cystoscopy (small telescope) and can be done under local anesthesia or sedation. It works by binding to nerve endings allowing for relaxation of the bladder muscle. This has been shown to improve symptoms in up to 70% of patients and up to 60% of patients will have complete resolution of their OAB or urge incontinence. Botox, however, only lasts 6 to 9 months and needs to be repeated. The FDA considers this an off-label use even though it has been used successfully for years. Use of Botox in the bladder carries no greater risk to the patient than cosmetic procedures.

These are only a few of the many options that can significantly improve quality of life. A full range of treatments for OAB and any other urologic concerns are offered at Advanced Urology Institute.

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When to Contact a Divorce Attorney

By J. Christopher Lombardo, Florida Family Law Attorney

Divorce or separation is a life event that takes considerable thought and contemplation. There are many circumstances that contribute to a possible breakup, each and every one unique in its own way.

So why contact a divorce attorney? For a variety of reasons. Common reasons for doing so may be that your needs are not met, the relationship has become unhealthy for you or the children, the relationship has become abusive, or there has been a breach of trust. Financial distress can also lead to a decision to move forward with a divorce. In recent times, the pressure of events beyond the marriage can contribute to the deterioration of a relationship, such as COVID or hurricanes. Going through a divorce is undoubtedly difficult, and preparing to meet with a lawyer may be confusing.

But When Should One Actually Contact a Divorce Lawyer?

It is unnecessary to have one hundred percent decided whether to file for divorce before meeting with an attorney. In fact, it is wise to schedule a consultation with a divorce attorney prior to making that final decision to discuss your circumstances and educate yourself about the process and the respective rights of the parties. Your divorce attorney will help you sort out what documents and information to gather, signs to look out for, how the process works, the costs and fees involved, timing, your rights, and the qualifications of your divorce attorney to assist you.

A divorce attorney can also inform you of the pitfalls and reactions you may expect from your spouse, your children and their attorneys should you move forward and according to your specific situation. Therefore, you will gather more information as you decide about the future of your relationship or ending it, placing you in a better position to make this hard decision.

But What If I am Still Undecided About Divorcing?

You may even need to consult with your family law attorney more than once before signing on the dotted line to file for divorce. Your attorneys may



need to help you understand how Florida Family Law works concerning how debts and assets are divided, among other issues such as child sharing, alimony, child support, etc. By the time you have completed your meetings with your divorce attorney, you will be fully knowledgeable about the process, the procedures, and the ins and outs of a Florida divorce. You should also consider reaching out to a therapist or a trusted religious counselor.

In the meantime, get organized. Keep a list of assets, debts, accounts, and a diary of events that may be important and lead you to meet with an attorney. Gather relevant factual information and document anything that may help when meeting with your divorce attorney.

Be conscious of your emotions and how you are communicating with your spouse. Refrain from engaging in corrosive texting or aggressive communication. Do not escalate the situation. Also, remember that ethical standards bind attorneys to discuss your lawsuit on a confidential basis.

Contact Our Divorce Attorneys in Naples

The family law attorneys at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. have encountered many situations concerning divorce in Florida, the equitable distribution of assets, and child custody and time-sharing agreements. Additionally, our attorneys are

experienced in family law negotiations and mediation concerning the outcomes of a divorce in Florida. After meeting with our divorce lawyers, you will better understand what to expect in your divorce case in Florida. Contact us today for more information about how to get started.

About the Author

J. Christopher Lombardo, a partner at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo P.A., is a Florida Family Law attorney and Certified Financial Litigator. He has over three decades of experience practicing law in Florida. In addition to family law, his practice areas include civil litigation, commercial litigation, appellate practice and personal injury. Outside of his legal practice, Mr. Lombardo has served as the North Collier Fire Commissioner since 1999 and is on the Board of Directors of Golisano Children's Museum of Naples and Shy Wolf Sanctuary. For more information, call (239) 649-6555.



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APRIL IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Senior Communities Offer Peace of Mind Now & Into the Future

By Greg Pascucci

Twenty percent of older adults in a recent study stated they experience a lot of stress in their daily lives. From caring for a loved one to worrying about the upkeep of a home, there is no shortage of reasons for anxiety and worry. For older adults desiring a more carefree, maintenance-free lifestyle, a senior living community can provide peace of mind now and into the future.

Gerald Martin moved to The Carlisle Naples three years ago and credits the active retirement community with his newfound freedom to spend each day as he wishes.

"I lived in Naples for 35 years and owned a condo," he explained. "I was tired of all the cooking and cleaning, and now that I'm here at The Carlisle, I'm glad someone else is doing that for me!"

Without the day-to-day responsibility of household chores, Martin said a typical day includes enjoying breakfast in the onsite dining room, The Carlisle Room, exercising and catching up with neighbors over a few rounds of card games. He also looks forward to getting together with his longtime friends at Quail Run Golf Course, located a few miles from The Carlisle.

"It's nice to maintain those friendships plus meet new friends here," he said. "The live entertainment at The Carlisle on Wednesdays and Thursdays is great for catching up over live music and drinks."

He encourages older adults to move to a senior living community while they are healthy enough to take advantage of the wealth of programs offered. Each month, for example, The Carlisle's Zest Department – charged with appealing to residents' mind, body, and spirit – plan a variety of fitness classes, arts and crafts, educational programs, outings, concerts, and more. There is an activity designed to pique every interest!

Residents at senior living communities can spend each day as they wish, and for many, that may involve discovering (or rediscovering) a new hobby.



Older adults at retirement communities have become authors, artists, musicians, mentors, and actors. They have even discovered new careers post-retirement, giving them a new sense of purpose, one of the keys to successful aging.

A senior living community can also help alleviate the stress for older adults providing care for a spouse. Though caregiving can be an extremely rewarding experience, it may be stressful and lead to caregiver burnout. Recent studies have found feeling overwhelmed for extended periods can lead to depression, which is associated with heart disease and more debilitating outcomes.

"At The Carlisle Naples, our team understands the stress and emotional toll caregiving can create. Our independent and assisted living campus offers a wealth of supportive services and amenities to help older adults flourish while easing day-to-day caregiver responsibilities," said Executor Director Bill Diamond. "The assisted living program provides options for residents who may need additional services and still prefer to remain in a familiar, residential setting. Our extended congregate care (ECC) license also allows The Carlisle to provide additional supportive and nursing services to residents who would otherwise need to transition to a skilled nursing facility. They, along with their families, have peace of mind knowing supportive care services are available should their needs change."

With much of the day-to-day stressors removed from residents' lives, they can spend each day focused on more meaningful activities, leading to a higher quality of life.

Here are a few additional tips for reducing stress:

1. **Practice mindfulness:** Slow down and live in the moment;
2. **Exercise:** Physical activity reduces stress hormones and stimulates the production of endorphins which boosts one's spirit;
3. **Connect with others:** Positive human connections have been linked to lower levels of stress hormones;
4. **Get adequate sleep:** Sleep calms and restores the body and regulates mood;
5. **Experience nature:** Being in nature can reduce blood pressure and stress. Even viewing scenes of nature can elicit a feeling of calm.

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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Hospice Chaplains Help Patients Find Peace

Many of us think of dying as a purely physical act, usually eased by medicines, and overseen by doctors, nurses, and anxious family members. Transitioning from this life, however, is also a spiritual act, a process that is deeply personal. Hospice chaplains help patients connect with whatever they define as “peace giving” in their lives, whether that is a supreme being, nature, relationships with others, or anything else they define as sacred. That role, says Helen MacCallum, chaplain at Avow Hospice in Collier County, is deeply rewarding because it can bring a peace that transcends physical comfort.

“Traditional US medical systems look to hospice at end of life for increased levels of care at the patient bedside in body, mind, and spirit,” says MacCallum. “The hospice chaplain is responsible for identifying any unmet spiritual needs or concerns the patient may have that are impeding their ability to experience spiritual peacefulness. The chaplain incorporates pathways into the patient’s plan of care to help free them from the burden of any spiritual distress or existential issues.”

Hospice chaplains are nondenominational and respect all cultures and faith traditions. They also recognize that patients define “coming to peace” in their own unique ways. For some patients, that may mean asking for forgiveness from a supreme being. Others may find peace by reconciling with a loved one, or accepting that such reconciliation, while deeply longed for, will not take place. Still others seek reassurance that they lived their lives well, fulfilling the promises they made and using their talents to their greatest good.

Chaplains are members of the multidisciplinary team that surrounds each hospice patient and family. Other members include physicians, nurses, personal care aides, social workers, and trained volunteers. Because dying is a process that involves body, mind, and spirit, hospice chaplains work closely with other team members to address patient concerns that cross disciplines. “While I am working with a patient who feels guilty for something he or she did in the past, I might look to the team social worker assigned to the patient for assistance or a collaborative visit to ensure we provide maximum support to both the patient and their loved ones,” MacCallum explains.



Hospice patients always have the choice to work with a chaplain – or not. Some may opt to visit with a spiritual leader from their own faith community, or to keep discussions of spiritual concerns private or with only selected family members or friends.

“The last days and weeks of life are a sacred time,” MacCallum continues, “and we respect how the patient and family chooses to move through them. Many patients have a sense of spirituality that has grown or changed over their lifetime; they may want to talk about that. Other patients enjoy creating a sort of life review through talking about what they have been proud of or regretted over the years. This is especially true for our veteran patients, who may hold conflicting feelings about their time of service. Avow’s 5-star We Honor Veterans program helps veterans find peace and a sense of gratitude. I deeply treasure the opportunities I have to thank our veteran patients by presenting them with a blanket, certificate, and pin for their service. Our team is also trained in the unique ways that veterans of each conflict may perceive their service. Some feel spiritually guilty, others are proud of their military accomplishments. Chaplains help patients wherever they are in their spiritual journey.”

Hospice chaplains can baptize patients, facilitate renewal of wedding vows, and offer prayers of release and commendation prior to and at the time of the patient’s death. They often serve as the officiant at memorial and/or graveside services, leading family and friends through a celebration of the patient’s life. They can also connect patients with out-of-town relatives or friends through videoconferencing applications on mobile devices like cell phones and tablets.

“I think of my role as an agent of peace,” says MacCallum. “My job is to listen, to learn, and to love. Spiritual wellness at the end of life is so important, and it is my privilege to help my patients find it, however they define it. That is Avow’s mission: to create peace.”

For more information about Avow’s hospice, palliative care, or grief support programs, visit www.avowcares.org or call 239-280-2288.



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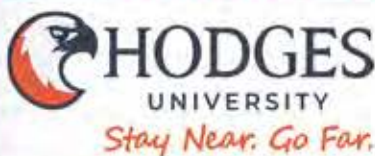


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The Relationship Between Hormones and Mental Health

By Dr. Melissa (Mel) Irvine, DNP - Clinical Sexologist
Specializes in Sexual Medicine and Beauty

Mental health is crucial for a good quality of life, and declining mental health can cause individuals to withdraw from the activities they once enjoyed. In other cases, someone may feel too tired or anxious to care for themselves and nurture their needs, impacting their emotional well-being.

Many factors can affect mental health, but hormones remain a driving force. Despite this, hormone dysregulation is often overlooked when it comes to identifying and treating mental health conditions. This is because many traditional doctors only consider the physical implications of hormone dysfunction and not the emotional toll that can occur.

The relationship between hormone levels and mental health is complex, which is why we have broken it down into the many different components, such as the different hormones influencing mental health and the direct and indirect ways they can do this.

HORMONES AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH

Listed below are some of the different hormones that can affect mental health and their roles in the body.

Cortisol

Also known as the stress hormone, cortisol is produced by the adrenal glands and causes someone to feel stressed due to its role in the body's fight-or-flight response.

Actions controlled by cortisol include:

- sugar levels in the bloodstream
- metabolism regulation
- blood pressure regulation
- the body's sleep-wake cycle

Estrogen

While estrogen is most commonly known as a female sex hormone, responsible for producing female secondary sex characteristics and regulating a woman's menstrual cycle, it can also impact mental health by increasing anxiousness and irritability when it declines.

The role of estrogen in mental health lies in its role in regulating neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin, norepinephrine, and epinephrine, which all play a role in mood regulation. In particular, estrogen



increases the production of serotonin, which is the "feel good" chemical, while also increasing the activity of serotonin receptors in the brain.

Estrogen also plays a role in regulating endorphins, another type of hormone that brings a rush of happiness when released.

Progesterone

Yet another female sex hormone is progesterone, which is predominantly found at higher levels during the second part of a woman's menstrual cycle following ovulation. However, this rise in progesterone may also lead to increases in depressive thoughts or an overall lowered mood.

The general role of progesterone is to prepare the endometrium for a potential pregnancy after ovulation. It does this by thickening the lining of the uterus and preventing muscle contractions in the uterus that can cause the body to reject the egg.

If the body conceives, progesterone levels remain high, stimulating the blood vessels in the endometrium to feed the growing fetus and prepare the breasts for milk production.

DHEA

Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) is a precursor to other hormones in the body, including testosterone and estrogen. It is a hormone produced in the adrenal gland, and its levels typically peak in early adulthood and then gradually decline with age.

T3 and T4

Two hormones released by the thyroid, T3 and T4, affect metabolic rate, impacting our emotions and energy levels.

Melatonin

Produced in time with your circadian rhythm and light/dark cycles, melatonin increases sleepiness, helping your body prepare for bed.

How Hormones Affect Mental Health

Responsible for regulating actions within the body, hormones also significantly affect mood and mental health. When too much or too little of these hormones are produced, mental health symptoms can worsen.

HORMONES CAN AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

Increases Mood Disorders

Specific hormone-related conditions have a higher rate of anxiety and depression. For example, those with PCOS are 3 times more likely to be affected by anxiety or depression. Additionally, a study on endometriosis patients found that 87.5% of the patients presented with anxiety symptoms and 86.5% with depressive symptoms.

Hormone imbalances unrelated to specific conditions can also increase the risk of mood disorders. For example, those with significantly high levels of cortisol can often develop anxiety disorders.

Additionally, while high estrogen levels are typically associated with a better mood, if estrogen levels are overly high while progesterone levels are low, a condition called estrogen dominance can occur, with symptoms of depression and irritability. In some cases, estrogen dominance may also cause anxiety.

Mental health problems can also occur when progesterone is too high, as this is associated with increased amygdala sensitivity. The amygdala is a part of the brain responsible for the body's fight or flight response, so amygdala sensitivity can lead to a greater likelihood of anxiety, depression, or just feeling off.

Depression has also been reported in those with low levels of DHEA. A study even found that treating older patients with depression through DHEA supplements helped address their depressive symptoms.

Impacts Sleep

Many hormones, such as estrogen, melatonin, and cortisol, can make it hard to fall or stay asleep, depending on their levels. When the body does not get enough sleep, your mental health can suffer; this has been proven by research showing that brain activity during sleep significantly affects someone's emotional and mental health.

In particular, REM sleep aids the brain in processing emotional information, and a lack of sleep can impact how much positive emotional content is consolidated. This has been shown to increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

Sleep and mental health share a connection in both directions, meaning lack of sleep can increase the risk of mental health disorders, but sleep may also suffer from existing mental health problems, further worsening symptoms.

Based on this evidence, it is clear that hormonal imbalances affecting the body's ability to fall or stay asleep can then have detrimental effects on mental health.

Causes Mood Swings

One complication of too little estrogen is mood swings, which is why they are a common symptom of women going through menopause. With this stage of life, the amount of estrogen a woman's body produces significantly declines, sometimes resulting in mood swings. This symptom is especially common at the beginning of menopause, when estrogen levels fluctuate.

Lowers Self Esteem

Besides the direct effect of hormones on our mental health, they can also indirectly influence mental health through the way that they change the body. For example, hormonal imbalances can cause physical transformations such as hair thinning, weight gain, acne, and unwanted hair growth. These factors can contribute to your body image and may diminish your self-esteem.

Many doctors overlook how much the physical changes from hormonal imbalance can influence your self-esteem and emotional well-being, which is why seeing a doctor who specializes in hormones, and understands how drastically they affect the body, is essential.

Increases Stress

Besides cortisol, other hormonal imbalances can cause stress to the body in other, less direct ways.

When there is a hormonal imbalance, the body senses it through the insular cortex, a part of the brain that can sense the body's internal state. When hormone levels are incorrect, the insular cortex perceives it, resulting in physiological stress.

Essentially, when your hormones are out of balance, your body "feels off," which can influence your mental well-being.

Affects Fertility

Specific hormones such as estrogen, DHEA, and progesterone can also affect fertility when they are imbalanced. For couples looking to start or grow their family, an inability to do so can significantly affect their emotional well-being.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

There are many actions you can take to help improve your mental health, such as:

Exercise Regularly

Exercising regularly can be good for more than just your physical health; it can also improve your mental health by helping to regulate hormones.

Cortisol, in particular, can become high and build up in the body without regular exercise. By exercising, your body is able to use up some of the cortisol, leaving less behind.

Endorphins such as dopamine also increase when exercising, further improving your mood.

Improve Sleep Hygiene

While hormones can affect your sleep, you can also take action to improve your sleep hygiene and increase your chances of falling and staying asleep.

Some ways to improve sleep hygiene include:

- doing calming activities before bed
- limiting screen time in the hour before bed
- going to sleep and waking up around the same time
- sleeping in a cool, dark, and quiet room

Improving your sleep hygiene helps to regulate your circadian rhythm, which then influences hormone levels.

Correct Imbalanced Hormones

While the above actions can help bolster your mental health, if your mental health decline is due to hormone dysfunction, the most crucial step will be to correct these imbalances.

Hormonal supplements can significantly improve your mental health. For example, a study on depression and thyroid function found that supplementing T3 significantly reduced depressive symptoms in the participants, even relieving some participants of depression entirely.

Many hormones are available in a supplement form and can be found in a pill, tablet, or cream, depending on the hormone being supplemented. Meeting with a physician specializing in hormones is an important step in identifying hormonal imbalances and receiving the correct treatment to correct them.

Receive Help for Your Mental Health Struggle

Mental health issues are not uncommon, and it is estimated that 1 in 4 adults struggle with a mental health condition at some point in their life. When it comes to correcting mental health conditions, it is often most helpful to correct the underlying cause, which is often hormonal.

If you are struggling with symptoms of anxiety, depression, or insomnia or are experiencing irritability, difficulty concentrating, or problems with weight or appetite, you may be experiencing a hormonal imbalance.

Hormonal imbalances can dramatically affect many parts of your health and well-being. However, that also means that identifying and remedying the imbalance can return peace to your life.

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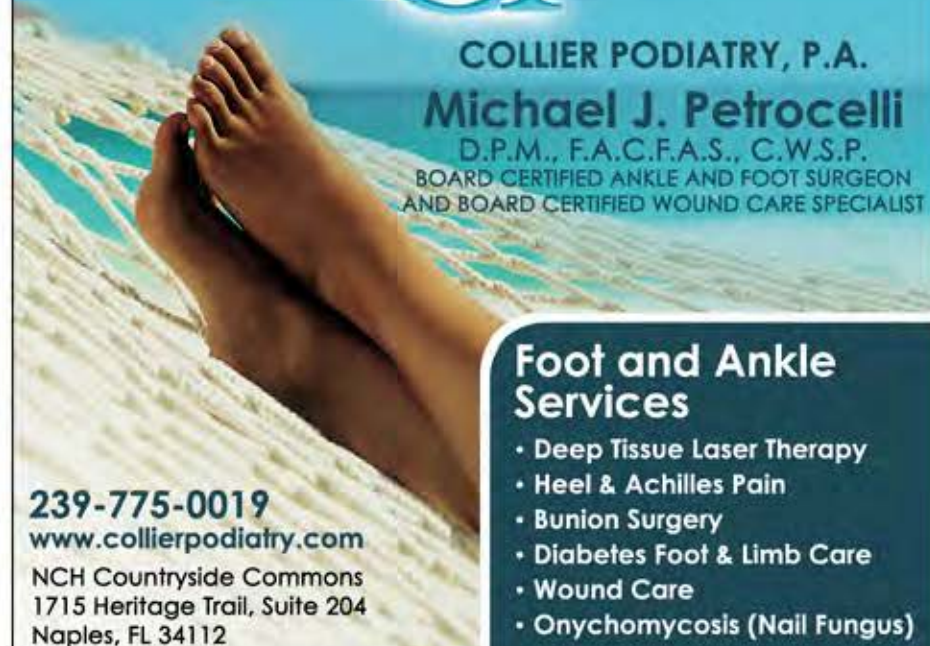
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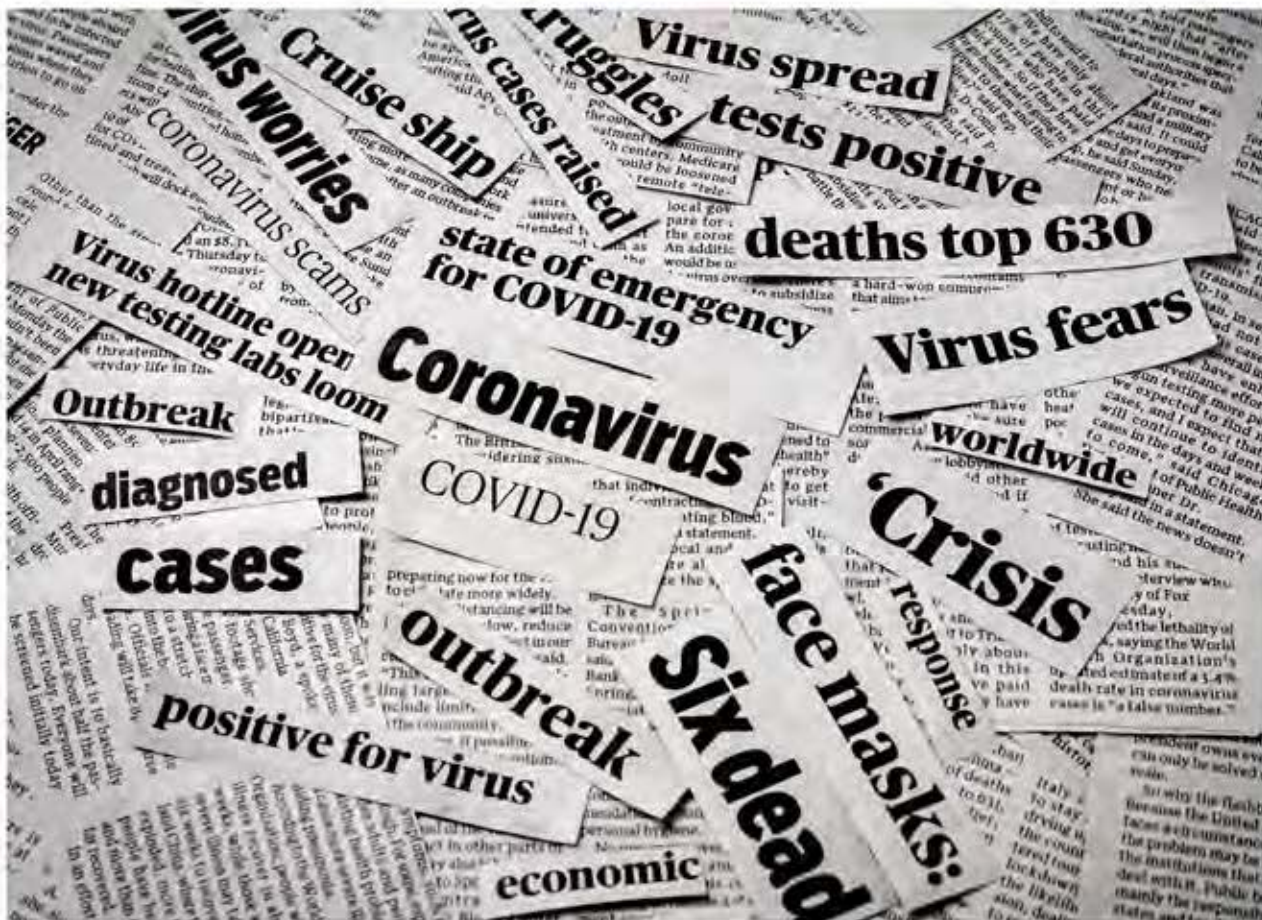
Stress Management

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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By Dr. Melissa Houston

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Dr. Melissa Houston is the lead faculty for The Wheel bachelor's in organizational management degree at Hodges University.

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Can Specific Foods Boost Eye Health and Vision?

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

There have been numerous reports and studies on the effectiveness of certain foods that may boost eye health. Dr. Taba, Ophthalmologist and Retina Specialist, recommends the following informative article published by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, titled, known vitamins, 3 of which have been proven to help your eyes, 36 Fabulous Foods to Boost Eye Health.

36 Fabulous Foods to Boost Eye Health

If you're looking for a diet that's healthy for your eyes, here's some good news: The same diet that helps your heart and the rest of your body will help your eyes. Plus, you'll enjoy many delicious choices. For 2020: The Year of the Eye, the American Academy of Ophthalmology intended to list 20 vision-healthy foods. Instead, we came up with 36. It's a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, beans and fish.

Why Is Nutrition Important for Good Vision?

"Some nutrients keep the eye healthy overall, and some have been found to reduce the risk of eye diseases," said Rebecca J. Taylor, MD, an ophthalmologist in Nashville, Tennessee.

Eating a diet low in fat and rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains can help not only your heart but also your eyes. This isn't surprising: Your eyes rely on tiny arteries for oxygen and nutrients, just as the heart relies on much larger arteries. Keeping those arteries healthy will help your eyes.

What Should I Focus On for Eye-Healthy Eating?

Orange-colored vegetables and fruits with vitamin A

Perhaps the best-known eye-healthy nutrient is vitamin A. Your retina needs plenty of vitamin A to help turn light rays into the images we see. Also, without enough vitamin A, your eyes can't stay moist enough to prevent dry eye.

Carrots are a well-known source of vitamin A. **Sweet potatoes** provide even more vitamin A, Dr. Taylor said. "A sweet potato has more than 200% of the daily dose of vitamin A doctors recommend." Fruits, including **cantaloupe** and **apricots**, can be a good source of vitamin A.

Fruits and veggies rich in Vitamin C

Vitamin C is critical to eye health. As an antioxidant, vitamin C helps protect the body from damage caused by some things we eat, unhealthy habits and environmental factors. Fried foods, tobacco smoke and the sun's rays can produce free radicals--molecules that can damage and kill cells. Vitamin C helps repair and grow new tissue cells.

Good sources of vitamin C include citrus fruits, such as **oranges, tangerines, grapefruit** and **lemons**. Lots of other foods offer vitamin C, including peaches, red bell peppers, tomatoes and strawberries. Antioxidants can prevent or at least delay age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and cataracts, according to the Age-Related Eye Diseases Study (AREDS).

Vitamin E

Another important antioxidant is vitamin E, which helps keep cells healthy. Vitamin E can be found in **avocados, almonds** and **sunflower seeds**.

Cold-water fish with omega-3 fatty acids

Diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids from cold-water fish may help reduce the risk of developing eye disease later in life, research suggests. These fish include **salmon, tuna, sardines, halibut** and **trout**. "Omega-3's are good for tear function, so eating fish may help people with dry eye," Dr. Taylor said.

Leafy green vegetables rich in lutein and zeaxanthin. Lutein and zeaxanthin are antioxidants found in the pigments of leafy green vegetables and other brightly colored foods. They are key to protecting the macula, the area of the eye that gives us our central, most detailed vision. Kale and spinach have plenty of these nutrients. Other foods with useful amounts of lutein and zeaxanthin include romaine lettuce, collards, turnip greens, broccoli and peas. And while not leafy and green, eggs also are a good source of these nutrients.

Beans and zinc

The mineral zinc helps keep the retina healthy and may protect your eyes from the damaging effects of light. However, zinc can lower the amount of copper in your body, which we need to help form red blood cells. Fortunately, you can increase both

at once with all kinds of beans (legumes), including **black-eyed peas, kidney beans** and **lima beans**. Other foods high in zinc include oysters, lean red meat, poultry and fortified cereals.

Should I Get Eye-Healthy Nutrients Through Vitamin Supplements?

Eating the right food is the best way to get eye-healthy nutrients, Dr. Taylor said. "In general, most Americans can and should get enough nutrients through their diet without needing to take supplements."

People who have macular degeneration are an exception. "In this case, taking supplements is recommended by the Age Related Eye Disease Study 2, a follow-up to the AREDS (Age-Related Eye Disease) Study. Talk with your ophthalmologist if you or a family member has AMD," Dr. Taylor said.

No matter your age, it's not too late to start eating healthy, she said. "So many of my patients focus on a healthy diet only after they've been diagnosed with a serious health problem. Start eating well now to benefit your vision and your health for the rest of your life."

Personalized Retina Care of Naples

If you are experiencing any changes in your eye health, whether it is blurry vision, pain, impaired vision, or any other eye irregularities, it is imperative that you see an ophthalmologist right away. The earlier disease or disorders are detected, the better the outcome and treatment options are for you.

Personalized Retina Care of Naples provides incomparable diagnosis, medical and surgical treatment for retinal conditions and disorders. Dr. Taba is a Board-Certified Ophthalmologist and is Fellowship trained in surgical and medical retinal diseases.

There are ways to prevent the progression of low sight, regain your independence and correct your vision. To find out more, or to schedule your appointment, please call (239) 325-3970 today.

Reference:

1. American Academy of Ophthalmology, C. Vermont, 36 Fabulous Foods to Boost Eye Health, January 10, 2020, <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/fabulous-foods-your-eyes>



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Estate Planning 201 - Advanced Strategies

By Adam Day, CFP®, RICP®, CFT-I™ - Senior Wealth Advisor

Estate planning is a process of protecting your assets and transferring them to your beneficiaries in an efficient and tax-saving manner. Planning for what happens after you pass away can also include intangibles, such as key-values you want to imprint on the next generation. The bottom line is you should have a plan in place for all of it.

Last month we shared the basics and the importance of getting this plan started, including powers of attorney, the living wills, and ensuring all beneficiaries are adequately updated; this could also mean a trust.

However, there are many situations that could warrant a larger, more involved estate plan, like when an individual's net worth and future estate lies above the federal estate tax exclusion; the federal estate tax exclusion is the amount below which your estate is not subject to taxes when you pass away, adjusted for inflation each year. In 2023, the amount per person is \$12.92 million, and the current exclusion was doubled under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) and is set to expire in 2026. Unless Congress extends or changes it, the exclusion will revert back to \$5 million (adjusted for inflation) after 2026.

Things to think about for High-Net-Worth Estate Planning

If you have a high net worth, estate planning can be more complex and challenging. This is usually where a trust comes into plan. Trusts are legal entities that can hold assets for the benefit of certain beneficiaries. Trusts can offer many advantages for high-net-worth individuals, such as asset protection, privacy, control, flexibility, and tax savings. If you'll recall, there are two main types of trusts:

- **Revocable Trust:** A revocable trust is a trust that can be changed or revoked at any time by the person who created it (the grantor). A revocable trust allows the grantor to retain control over the assets in the trust and avoid probate (the legal process of settling an estate). However, a revocable trust does not provide protection from creditors or estate taxes, as the assets are still considered part of the grantor's estate. A revocable trust becomes irrevocable upon the death of the grantor.

- **Irrevocable Trust:** An irrevocable trust is a trust that cannot be changed or revoked once created without the consent of all beneficiaries (the people who will receive the assets in the trust). An irrevocable trust transfers ownership of the assets to the trust, meaning they are no longer part of the grantor's estate. This can provide benefits such as asset

protection, estate tax reduction, and charitable giving. However, an irrevocable trust also means that the grantor loses control over and access to the assets in the trust.

One of the main goals of estate planning is to minimize taxes, such as state tax, gift tax, generation-skipping tax, inheritance tax, and income tax, that can affect the value of your estate. An irrevocable trust is often used in one of its many forms to help with tax planning. Here are a few examples to help with tax planning within estates:

- **Spousal Lifetime Access Trust (SLAT):** A SLAT is an irrevocable trust created by one spouse for the benefit of the other spouse and potentially other family members. The grantor spouse uses their gift tax exemption to make a gift to the SLAT for the benefit of their beneficiary spouse. The beneficiary spouse can access the trust assets during their lifetime, while preserving them for future generations. A SLAT can also be used to fund life insurance policies that may provide liquidity and protection for the estate. Keep in mind, a SLAT also has some risks and limitations to be aware of before creating one.

- **Grantor Retained Annuity Trust (GRAT):** It is an irrevocable trust that allows you to transfer assets to your beneficiaries while retaining an annuity payment for a fixed term. The annuity payment is based on an IRS interest rate (Section 7520 rate). If you survive the term and the assets appreciate more than the Section 7520 rate, then your beneficiaries will receive the excess value free of gift or estate tax. A GRAT can be a powerful tool to transfer wealth to your heirs with minimal tax consequences.

Estate planning is not always about giving to family members. Many legacies include charitable giving and planning. Charitable giving through an estate is a great way to maximize your generosity; it is also another way of reducing your taxable estate while supporting those causes that you care about. With the proper planning, you can make charitable contributions during your lifetime or at death, enjoy possible income tax deductions as well as estate tax savings, and even have an income stream that pays you or your beneficiaries. Here's a few examples of some of these tools:

- **Establishing a donor advised fund:** as mentioned in a previous article, a donor advised fund is a great way to create flexibility around your giving.

In terms of estate planning it allows you to name a beneficiary of your fund so that the giving will continue after you pass away.

- **Using life insurance or a charitable gift rider:** You can name a charity as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy or add a charitable gift rider to your policy, allowing you to make a substantial gift with relatively small premiums and receive an income tax deduction for your contributions.

- **Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT):** A CRT is an irrevocable trust that pays you, or your beneficiaries, an income stream for life or a term of years, then distributes the remaining assets to one or more charities of your choice. A CRT can provide income tax deductions, capital gains tax deferral, estate tax reduction, and philanthropic satisfaction.

- **Contributing a charitable rollover from your IRA:** If you are 70½ or older using a QCD, you can transfer money directly from your IRA to a qualified charity without paying income tax on the distribution; or name a charity as a beneficiary.

As you can see, estate planning can get to be complex and every situation is unique and requires careful analysis and planning. It's so important to consult with an experienced estate planning attorney, financial planner, and tax professionals to help you design a customized plan that suits your needs and goals. Email Adam at aday@wqcorp.com with your questions or to set up an initial conversation.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Email me at aday@wqcorp.com with questions and be on the lookout for next month's article as we dive into more complex topics.

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Easter and Springtime Hazards for Dogs and Cats

When it is time for spring cleaning, you often stow away your winter decor, perhaps dig out your Easter or springtime decorations, and transform your home for the season. If you have a cat or dog in the house, you might want to steer clear of seasonal items that might pose potential threats to your pet's health. Prevent a trip to the emergency vet by pet-proofing your spring-spiffy house.

Easter Grass

Cats love anything that moves. Easter grass moves easily in a room with a breeze or draft, makes interesting sounds, and, for some cats, it is simply irresistible and must be eaten.

Stringy things like Easter grass or tinsel at Christmas, pose a deadly threat if ingested. Veterinarians consider Easter grass a linear foreign body. Signs that your pet has this problem, aside from the material being visible from the mouth or anus, are vomiting, straining to defecate, and a painful abdomen.

Trying to pull out visible grass strings is not recommended. Pulling the strand can cause more damage if the piece is long and trapped far inside the body. Call your veterinarian if you suspect that your cat has sampled the Easter grass. While linear foreign bodies are more common in cats, dogs may also ingest non-food material, and the same concerns apply here.



Chocolate

Chocolate is typically more of a dog hazard, as many dogs have a sweet tooth, a great nose, and the determination to find chocolate—hidden or not. More often than not, your dog will find Reese's Peanut Butter Cups or Hershey's Kisses in eggs hidden in your backyard Easter hunt before your kids, so, keep them away.

The toxic components in chocolate are theobromine and caffeine, and the level of toxicity is based on the type and quantity of chocolate consumed as well as the size of your pet.

Different types of chocolate have different amounts of theobromine and caffeine; dark chocolate contains the highest concentrations and white "chocolate" contains the least. Early clinical signs are vomiting, diarrhea, and trembling.

The toxicity level for either a dog or cat is the same depending on weight, however, dogs are more so in danger than cats since dogs are drawn to sweets meanwhile cats are not. A cat may try some chocolate but is less likely to continue eating it.

Xylitol

If you're baking a cake for Easter beware of xylitol. It's an artificial sweetener used in home baking and found in many products including some sugar-free gums and diet foods. It can also be found in some Easter eggs. Dogs are extremely sensitive to xylitol and even small amounts can cause toxicity. Early symptoms of xylitol poisoning include lethargy, vomiting and loss of coordination. Seizures and even death may occur. Assistance dog Ginny made a remarkable recovery after eating a toxic amount of xylitol.

Spring flowers and plants

Spring flowers and plants can be found in many homes and gardens around Easter. Unfortunately, several are poisonous to dogs, with the bulbs posing the biggest risk. Daffodil, lily and spring crocus bulbs are all highly toxic. Symptoms of plant or bulb poisoning can include vomiting, upset stomach and heart and kidney problems.

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EVIDENCE OF GROWING CONFIDENCE IN THE NAPLES REAL ESTATE MARKET

By Robert Nardi, Broker/Owner

Evidence of growing confidence in the Naples real estate market revealed itself in January as new sellers entered the sales market. New listings in January rose 74.5 percent compared to December 2022 and 3.2 percent to 1,338 new listings from 1,297 new listings a year ago, according to the January 2023 Market Report by the Naples Area Board of REALTORS® (NABOR®), which tracks home listings and sales within Collier County (excluding Marco Island). But the rise in home options during January did not stymie home values as median closed prices rose 11.1 percent to \$600,000 from \$540,000 in January 2022. An even number of single-family homes and condominiums made up the increased inventory. Therefore, Buyers have more options. Closed sales in January decreased 33.8 percent to 555 homes from 839 in January 2022. But the spike in new listings is a good turn of events as they pushed inventory up 122.7 percent to 2,699 properties from 1,212 properties in January 2022.

Pending sales in January were remarkably higher than pending sales not only in December (682) but also compared to January 2019 (660) and January 2020 (892). Compared to last January's phenomenal sales activity, pending sales decreased 20.5 percent to 1,092 pending sales from 1,373 pending sales in January 2022.

Pent-up demand was evident in January. While showings decreased 20 percent compared to January 2022, they nearly doubled compared to

December's reported showings. Of course, another factor contributing to increased contracts (pending sales) during January was the 1,092 price decreases reported for the month, which brought the overall percent of current list price value down to 95.8 percent, a 4.2 percent decrease from 100 percent in January 2022. The first price reductions occurred with investors. They wanted to move their inventory.

The NABOR® January 2023 Market Report compares single-family home and condominium sales (via the Southwest Florida MLS), price ranges, and geographic segmentation and includes an overall market summary. NABOR® sales statistics are in chart format and if you wish to receive a copy, please e-mail Robert@NardiRealty.com.

What does this all mean?

Buyers have more of an opportunity to purchase with a more considerable inventory. However, depending on the property location, they may still have competing offers. Beachfront or near-the-beach properties are at high demand. It astounds me the number of multiple offers these properties can manifest. What is also apparent is most offers are all cash. We are talking about properties \$2 million or less. Paying cash used to be "king," but now everyone is offering it. So, it does not set an offer apart from others. Hence, having an experienced REALTOR® is essential who can create a strategy that will produce an accepted offer.

Interest Rates

Interest rates continue to inch up, and when this happens, it mentally prevents people from making a move unless an incident in life pushes the decision along, like birth or death. Generally, potential Buyers want to avoid making a move because their current mortgage rates are relatively low, generally from 2.75% to 3.75%. The higher interest rates are a deterrent. Luckily, this does not affect Florida like other states because we are primarily a secondary market. Hence, our market continues to push forward while other housing markets in the United States are stalling.

Do you think about a rental for next season?

Having a rental for the season is a great way to "test the waters." It is less expensive than purchasing property and allows people to explore Naples and its surrounding areas. Nardi Realty will be able to start booking rentals for next season starting Mid-April. The reason is that we give the current tenants the "first right of refusal." If they pass on their current rental, it will become available and offered to "next in line." Therefore, if you are interested in seasonal rentals, call Sheri Martin, Rental Administrator, at 239-571-6189. You will be placed on a list and contacted if the rental becomes available. Seasonal rates can go from \$4000 to \$100,000 monthly (Yes! \$100,000 is not a typo). Other expenses include Tourist Tax (any rental less than six months and one day is considered a short-term rental and will be taxed at 12%), application, background check, and cleaning fees.

Enjoy and have a fantastic April!

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ROSACEA: TYPES, CAUSES, AND TREATMENTS

By Renee Deneweth, PA - C

Rosacea Awareness Month is upon us, providing the perfect opportunity to discuss one of the most common skin conditions we see in dermatology.

Rosacea is most thought of as having rosy cheeks or a red face. There are, however, several variants of rosacea with differing presentations and treatments. Recognizing the difference is essential to properly managing the condition. Facial redness, dilated blood vessels, and flushing are classically seen in erythematotelangiectatic rosacea. In papulopustular rosacea, patients are faced with red, raised, pimple-like bumps on the face. Patients may also have a combination of these types. Other variants include rhinophyma in which patients exhibit changes to nasal tissue, giving the appearance of thick, bulbous skin on the nose, and ocular rosacea which correlates with eye sensitivity and irritation.

The exact cause of rosacea has not yet been identified, though there are many factors that are thought to be involved. Amongst these are skin barrier dysfunction, genetics, the immune system, vascular hypersensitivity, and even microorganisms such as demodex mites. Though the precise cause is unknown, it is important to identify and avoid triggers of rosacea when possible.



The most common triggers include sun exposure, hot or spicy foods, hot or cold weather, alcohol, stress, exercise, and use of topical steroids.

Rosacea is a chronic condition but can be well-controlled with the appropriate treatment regimen. Management begins at home and involves diligent sun protection and utilization of a gentle skincare regimen including a daily moisturizer to maintain the skin's protective barrier. Primarily erythematotelangiectatic rosacea is most responsive to laser therapy or oral medications that target vasculature. In the case of papulopustular rosacea, there are several topical and oral antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory options that are safe and effective. Patients should collaborate with their dermatology provider to select which option is best suited for them.

At Skin Wellness Physicians, we are happy to help you navigate all of your skincare needs (including rosacea). We look forward to seeing you!



Renee Deneweth, PA-C, is a Florida native who was born and raised in Orlando. She obtained her Bachelor of Science degree from Florida Gulf Coast University where she graduated with Honors. Renee gained experience in adult emergency medicine working at Lee Memorial and Health Park emergency departments and obtained licensure as an Emergency Medical Technician. Soon after, Renee's interest in dermatology was realized as she began working as a medical assistant with Skin Wellness Physicians.

Renee went on to attend PA school at her alma mater, Florida Gulf Coast University, where she graduated with a Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree and was inducted into Pi Alpha, the National Honor Society for Physician Assistants. She has since returned to Skin Wellness Physicians as a Physician Assistant and has been personally trained in General Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery by Dr. Wasserman, Dr. Tremaine, and Dr. Wong.

Renee is passionate about diagnosing and treating skin conditions in all age groups and ensuring individualized care for each of her patients. She is excited to work with the growing community of Naples!

In her free time, Renee enjoys traveling, exercising, and spending time with friends and family.



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HOW P-SHOT CAN IMPROVE YOUR SEXUAL PERFORMANCE

By Dr. Carolina Young

In recent years, the P-shot (also known as the Priapus Shot) has gained popularity as a treatment for erectile dysfunction and to improve sexual performance. However, the latest advancements in the use of stem cells in this procedure have taken it to a whole new level.

The P-shot is a nonsurgical procedure that involves injecting platelet-rich plasma (PRP) into the penis. PRP is a concentrated form of blood plasma that contains growth factors, which are known to stimulate cell growth and regeneration. This growth factor cocktail helps to improve the quality and duration of erections, increase sensitivity, and improve sexual performance.

Stem cells are the building blocks of the body and can differentiate into various types of cells, including those in the penis. This ability makes stem cells a potent tool for regenerating damaged tissues and improving overall sexual health. When combined with the P-shot, stem cells can boost its effectiveness and provide longer-lasting results.

The procedure is simple and quick, taking about 30 minutes. First, the doctor takes a sample of the patient's blood and extracts the PRP. Then, stem cells are added to the PRP mixture, creating a potent solution that is injected into the penis using a tiny needle. The P-shot with stem cells is virtually painless, and patients can resume their daily activities immediately.

One of the most significant advantages of the P-shot with stem cells is its ability to increase sensitivity. As men age, their sensitivity can decrease, making it more challenging to achieve and maintain an erection. The P-shot with stem cells can help to restore sensitivity, making sexual activity more enjoyable.

In addition to increased sensitivity, the P-shot with stem cells can also improve sexual performance. It works by increasing blood flow to the penis, which is essential for achieving and maintaining an erection. The combination of PRP and stem cells stimulates



the growth of new blood vessels and tissues, improving the overall health of the penis and making it easier to achieve and maintain an erection.

The P-shot with stem cells can also benefit men who suffer from Peyronie's disease, a condition in which scar tissue develops inside the penis, causing it to bend or curve during an erection. The P-shot with stem cells can help to break down the scar tissue and regenerate healthy tissue, improving the appearance and function of the penis.

While the P-shot with stem cells is a relatively new procedure, the results so far have been promising. Patients report increased sensitivity, improved sexual performance, and longer-lasting erections. Because the procedure uses the patient's own blood, there is no risk of rejection or allergic reaction.

As with any medical procedure, there are risks associated with the P-shot with stem cells. These risks include bleeding, infection, and pain at the injection site. However, these risks are minimal, and most patients experience no side effects.

The P-shot with stem cells is not a magic bullet, and it is not a cure for erectile dysfunction or other sexual health issues. However, it can be an effective tool for improving sexual performance and increasing sensitivity, especially when combined with other treatments and lifestyle changes.

If you are considering the P-shot with stem cells, it is essential to find a qualified and experienced provider. Look for a doctor who has experience with

the procedure and who uses the latest techniques and equipment. Ask to see before and after photos of previous patients, and read reviews from other patients to get an idea of the doctor's track record.

The P-shot with stem cells is a promising new treatment for improving sexual performance and increasing sensitivity. It is a safe and effective procedure that can provide long-lasting results, and it is suitable for men of all ages. If you are considering the P-shot with stem cells, speak to your doctor to find out if it is right for you.

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EXERCISE ESSENTIAL TO EFFECTIVE DIABETES MANAGEMENT

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

As an endocrinologist living with type 1 diabetes, exercise has played a huge role in helping me manage my own health. Diabetes is a chronic disease that affects how the body uses glucose, the main source of energy for your cells. Type 1 Diabetes results from an autoimmune attack rendering the beta cells of the pancreas ineffective in making insulin. Type 2 Diabetes occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin and when the body cannot use insulin effectively. Exercise is a powerful tool that can help people with both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes manage their condition and improve their overall health.

Exercise helps lower blood glucose levels.

One of the key benefits of exercise is its ability to lower blood glucose levels. When you exercise, your muscles use glucose for energy, which helps to lower the amount of glucose in your blood. Regular exercise can also help to improve insulin sensitivity, making it easier for your body to use insulin effectively. This means that your body can better regulate your blood sugar levels even when you're not exercising.

Exercise can help to control weight.

Obesity is a major risk factor for developing type 2 diabetes, and losing weight can help to reduce your risk of developing the disease. Improving glycemic control in and of itself can lead to weight gain in diabetes by eliminating the calories that are

excreted through the urine as sugar. Exercise can be a powerful antidepressant and can lead to improved mood and self-esteem. Many patients find it easier to make smart food choices when they include regular exercise in their routines.

Don't forget weight bearing exercise.

Most people are aware of the cardiovascular benefits of aerobic exercise but many are not quite as familiar with the benefits of building muscle. A lot of patients ask me how they can increase or "jump start" their metabolism. The only way to safely increase metabolism is by building lean body mass through weight bearing activity. Having more muscle ignites the body's fat burning machine and allows the metabolic rate to increase throughout day. Increased muscle mass leads to improved insulin sensitivity and better blood glucose control, as well.

Exercise can also improve cardiovascular health.

Diabetes is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, and regular exercise can help to reduce your risk of developing heart disease. Exercise can help to lower blood pressure, reduce cholesterol levels, and improve circulation, all of which can contribute to a healthier cardiovascular system.



Commit to the long term.

When it comes to exercise, it's important to find an activity that you enjoy and that you can stick to over the long term. This might include activities like walking, cycling, swimming, or dancing. The American Diabetes Association recommends that adults with diabetes engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise per week, spread out over at least three days. Strength training exercises should also be included at least twice per week.

It's also important to be mindful of your blood glucose levels when exercising. You may need to adjust your medication or insulin dosages to accommodate changes in your activity level. It's also important to stay hydrated and to carry a source of glucose with you in case your blood sugar levels drop too low.

By finding an activity that you enjoy and that you can stick to over the long term, you can reap the benefits of exercise and improve your overall health and well-being. If you have diabetes, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider before starting any new exercise program to ensure that it is safe for you. With the right guidance and support, exercise can be a powerful tool in managing diabetes and living a healthy, active life.

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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Reflections of an Adult Child

Some would call the term “adult child” an oxymoron. I would call it my life.

By Guest Author, Bruce Nathanson, Advisor, Senior Care Authority

The truth is, so long as we have a parent—and no matter how old we are—we are locked into the role of being a child. For better or for worse.

Caregiving for a parent instantly propels us into the unknowns of aging, complete with its anxiety, frustration, and unpredictability. And, just as we learned as little kids, while we can't always control a situation, we can certainly exert a powerful influence upon it.

Only now, the stakes are so much higher; the pressures, so much greater.

Here is my story. While working as an executive for the largest nonprofit nursing home in New York State, I was the lead caregiver for two aging parents. They were on very different trajectories. Dad, beset with cancer and cardio issues, was physically breaking down. Mom, who held it together while Dad declined, experienced a fall shortly after his death. This resulted in a broken hip, which in turn hastened the progressive dementia which followed. While my siblings were there to help, as the “aging specialist,” I became the health care proxy and clinical point of contact.

I learned a few things along the way.

First, have the conversation—or better yet, a series of conversations—about what really matters in the final chapters of life...and end of life. This process may take some time to get rolling. Discomfort, avoidance, and denial are always present. However, try to engage your parents as early as possible, involve your siblings, and be open to everyone's thoughts and feelings. Listen hard to what is being said. Facilitate, but do not be too quick to put your stamp on the outcome. Consider reading and discussing Atul Gawande's wonderful book *Being Mortal*, if that type of dialogue works for your family. Evaluate all options and choices that need to be made.

Second, get your ducks in a row. Organize the things that you can control, recognizing that aging and caregiving are unpredictable journeys.



Jack and Florence Nathanson

Get the basics in order, including legal affairs, finances, insurance, medical care, and safe housing.

Third, don't try to go it alone. Use professional resources that are readily available, and get trusted, third-party advice. Talk to friends, participate in support groups. At work, consider speaking with your supervisor and the Human Resources/Benefits Departments about your situation and the stresses that you face. They are there to support you and to enhance your well-being. Even with all the support from friends and family, work colleagues and Human Resources, I could have used even more help. I wish I knew then about Senior Care Authority.

Finally, take care of yourself even as you take care of someone else. Caregiving can be all-consuming. Don't let it be. Make time for yourself and your family. Find time to exercise—even if it's a short walk—and eat as healthily as possible. Breathe.

After seven years of caregiving for two frail, aging parents, to say I felt fatigued would be an understatement. At the same time, I was honored to be able to help my parents when they needed it most. What was most meaningful were the gifts that they both gave me in their final years; the time spent, the stories told, the chance to be together when it really mattered.

After all, I was still their child and that's what parents do for their kids. Being a caregiver just made it possible.

I often wonder, in retrospect, how could I have been a better caregiver? As my parents slowed down, I needed to move faster just to keep up with their needs. I had so many questions...and hardly had the time to find the answers. What I really needed was a personal consultant like a Care Advisor from Senior Care Authority, someone experienced and trustworthy who could instantly provide guidance and support.

Senior Care Authority can answer questions like:

1. What type of senior living community would be the right place?
2. How do I know when it's time?
3. How do I keep my promises while making sure they get the best care?
4. How do we build consensus as a family so nobody feels left behind?

Fast forward to today, I am pleased to be associated with Senior Care Authority and to provide these advisory services to older adults and their families. It is my pleasure to help navigate the maze of care and housing issues. If you need assistance, please contact me at bruce@seniorcareauthority.com or call 914-419-1302 or anyone in our Florida location at (239) 300-2133 or by emailing info@scanyfl.com.

Bruce Nathanson is an Advisor with Senior Care Authority NY FL. In addition to working directly with clients, he also consults with small and mid-sized companies on a benefits program for employees who are juggling the demands of caregiving for older relatives. The program is called EASE—Employee Assistance Solutions for Eldercare.



Senior Living and Care Solutions

ALCOHOL'S EFFECT ON RELATIONSHIPS

By Richard Capiola, MD

Alcohol is one of the most commonly abused substances in the world. While alcohol is a legal substance and is often used in social situations, it can also be highly addictive and can have significant negative effects on mental health and relationships.

Alcohol addiction, also known as alcoholism, is a chronic disease characterized by the inability to control alcohol consumption. People with alcohol addiction often experience intense cravings for alcohol and may continue to drink despite the negative consequences it has on their life. Alcohol addiction can lead to a range of physical and mental health problems, including liver disease, heart disease, and depression.

One of the most significant ways that alcohol addiction can hurt relationships is through the breakdown of communication. When a person is addicted to alcohol, they may become withdrawn or defensive, and may struggle to communicate effectively with their loved ones. This can create a cycle of misunderstandings, arguments, and resentment, which can strain even the strongest relationships.

Alcohol addiction can also lead to a range of behavioral problems that can hurt relationships. For example, people with alcohol addiction may become more aggressive or unpredictable when they are under the influence of alcohol. They may

also struggle to fulfill their responsibilities or commitments, such as showing up for work or caring for their family. These behaviors can cause their loved ones to feel stressed, frustrated, and resentful.

Another way that alcohol addiction can hurt relationships is through the impact it has on mental health. Alcohol addiction is often associated with depression and anxiety, which can make it difficult for a person to maintain healthy relationships. People with alcohol addiction may struggle to express their emotions or connect with others on an emotional level, which can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Alcohol addiction can also lead to financial problems, which can strain relationships. People with alcohol addiction may spend significant amounts of money on alcohol, which can cause financial strain for themselves and their loved ones. They may also struggle to maintain steady employment, which can lead to financial instability and stress for their family.

If you or a loved one is struggling with alcohol addiction, it is important to seek help as soon as possible. Alcohol addiction is a treatable disease, and there are a range of treatment options available, including therapy, medication, and support groups. Seeking treatment can help you to regain control of your life, improve your mental health, and repair damaged relationships.

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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Treatment of Adolescents and Adults, Alcohol and Substance abuse, medication assisted therapy with suboxone, and patients needing psychiatric assessments related to the court system.

Dr Capiola's mission is to focus on the strengths inherent in all of us to help overcome any problems and life stresses that make us feel stuck and limited. He combines psychotherapy and medication management into all patient visits.

IF YOU HAVE MISSING TEETH, YOUR HEALTH CAN BE AFFECTED: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

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. Bacteria often goes unnoticed under crowns, bridges or within root canaled teeth, unless x-rays are taken. When the bacteria harbors for long enough, it will literally eat away at the bone structure.

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.

The 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 and occluding teeth helps to regenerate bone daily, keeping teeth and the jawbone healthy.

A missing tooth will affect the dentition

When teeth are missing, and there is nothing for the other teeth to bite against, this is when bone loss takes place, and it can happen quite rapidly in both the upper (maxillary) and lower (mandibular) jawbone. Consequently, the occluding teeth will either drop down or lift out of the bone, to try and adequately occlude with their natural bite. If this happens, a patient could potentially lose multiple teeth, because they will become loose and be subjected to bacteria deep within the gumline.



Dental Implants

Dental implants are the ideal resolution; it's optimal to have an implant (titanium post and porcelain crown) placed. In addition to preventing bone loss and facial contour changes, if you leave an open space between teeth, the proximal teeth will shift, trying to fill in the interproximal space.

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.

Periodontal Disease

A six-year study, followed patients who had lost more than one tooth, and evaluated their prevalence of periodontal disease. The study, titled "Periodontitis in US Adults" was published in JADA (Journal of the American Dental Association) and the ada.org.

The results were as follows, 42% of the individuals developed periodontal disease. 7.8% had severe periodontitis. These patients also had deep probing measurements of 4 mm or greater and tissue attachment loss.

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. There are multiple treatment options; however, if you need to replace missing teeth, getting dental implants is the best solution for overall health.

Caring Dentistry of Naples

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.

We provide general dentistry, cosmetic, surgical, restorative, and advanced technology, and software to offer the best solutions and treatment outcomes for our patients.

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!



Please call Caring Dentistry of Naples at (239) 455-1044.

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If we are speaking your language, scan the QR Code and register! Can't wait to welcome you into our Sisterhood!

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Have a Sensitive Stomach? IV Vitamin Infusions Can Help

By Emily Stephen

"I have a sensitive stomach, so I can't take any vitamins." I understand this wholeheartedly after over 20 years of dealing with Ulcerative Colitis.

Gastrointestinal discomfort is common. People with acid reflux, IBS, Celiac, Ulcerative Colitis, Crohn's disease and indigestion in general often find it hard to take vitamins.

How do you stay nourished if you can't absorb the nutrients from food and vitamins? And how can your sensitive stomach heal and become strong without nutrition? The solution is simple – intermuscular (IM) or intravenous (IV) vitamin therapy.

Many vitamins, B-12, B Complex, Glutathione and Vitamin C – just to name a few – can all be administered as an IM shot or added to an IV bag of fluids. Many ask what is the main difference between an IM or IV of vitamins? With an IV, you also get the benefits of hydration – a full liter of fluid – directly to your system with added vitamins as desired/needed. With this hydration and vitamin therapy, you get 100% absorption directly to your blood stream, which means minimal work for your GI system. Since we know that healing nutrients are crucial to heal a sensitive stomach, an IV of nutrients is really the best way to go.

Intermuscular injections, on the other hand, are a slow release of nutrients to your system without the hydration bonus. We recommend a monthly or bimonthly IV and then IMs intermingled between your IV therapy to keep known vitamin deficiencies at bay. For example, if you know you are in high need of B12, it would be smart to do a monthly B12 shot in between your IV therapy.

Research continues to remind us that oral vitamins are not the best solution. And this is particularly true for people with IBS or other chronic GI issues. Not only is the absorption rate low for oral vitamins, certain vitamins irritate the digestive tract when taken orally. Vitamin-C and magnesium are two common vitamins that can cause diarrhea; however, when these vitamins are delivered directly into the bloodstream, this irritation does not occur.



Patients with difficulty absorbing nutrients often report feeling more energy, better sleep, clearer mental function, and shorter healing time with IV vitamin therapy.

If you experience any of the following – listed below, you might want to consider switching your vitamin therapy to IV and/or IM. The below mentioned are common symptoms of IBS:

- Pain or cramping when having a bowel movement
- Extreme variations in how often you have a bowel movement
- Changes in the look of your bowel movements
- Significant weight loss
- Iron deficiency
- Trouble swallowing
- Rectal bleeding
- Unexplained nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea at night
- Continuous pain unrelated to bowel movements or gas

Most people with IBS can find simple lifestyle changes that help manage their IBS and can live relatively normal lives with little to no symptoms. IBS doesn't have one single cause instead a few factors can contribute to the development of the disorder, including:

- **Severe infection:** IBS may develop after a severe infection or virus. A large number of bacteria in the intestines can also play a part.
- Nervous system irregularities
- Early stress exposure.

- **Muscle contractions:** Having strong muscle contractions in the intestines can quickly cause food to move through the digestive system and potentially cause bloating, gas or diarrhea. Weak muscle contractions can lead to dry stool or hard stool because of slow food passage.
- **Gut microbes changes:** Changes that happen to the microbe in your digestive tract include types of bacteria, viruses and fungi.

Factors that can trigger IBS after a person is diagnosed include:

- **Stress:** High levels of stress can aggravate current symptoms of IBS. Stress management is an essential part of controlling IBS symptoms.
- **Food:** Certain foods can trigger IBS symptoms or significantly worsen the symptoms. Some of the most common food options that can irritate IBS symptoms are dairy products, wheat, milk, beans, cabbage, carbonated beverages and citrus fruit.

Various prescribed medications or lifestyle changes are standard treatment or management options for individuals with IBS. These methods may work for some, but others may continue looking for an effective treatment option that relieves their IBS symptoms. IV therapy is a form of treatment that you can try to help control symptoms of IBS.

People who need help rehydrating or relieving nausea can experience significant relief from IV therapy. IBS makes it challenging for people to absorb critical nutrients into the body that keeps them healthy and strong. Receiving these nutrients can help certain parts of the digestive system function comfortably, so quickly receiving these items from an IV treatment is beneficial for those with IBS.



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KEEPING OUR CLIENTS SAFE AT HOME DURING COVID-19

Dear Chef For Seniors Community,

With the ever-changing COVID-19 situation we want to assure you that Chefs For Seniors is committed to the health and safety of our clients, franchise owners, employees, and local communities.

At Chefs For Seniors, we continue to reinforce the highest standards of safe food handling practices as well as guidelines set forth by the CDC.

Our priority has been and continues to be, the health and safety of our chefs and clients. If a chef feels that they are putting a client at risk by servicing them, they have been instructed to notify their home location so that alternate arrangements can be made.

We ask that you notify your local Chefs For Seniors office if you have a scheduled appointment and are feeling ill so that we can protect our chef employees. Good communication is key during this time.

We are reinforcing existing operating procedures to ensure that your meals are prepared using the guidelines from the health department and that our chefs are following procedures for safe food handling.



We would like to also assure you that all of our franchise owners and chefs are licensed with their ServSafe certification. Our operating procedures for cleanliness and sanitation include:

- Checking temperature before going to the home
- Social distancing while in the home
- Wearing face masks
- Thorough hand washing throughout the service
- Cleaning the kitchen before and after the service
- Wiping down groceries prior to use

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

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Email: bill.springer@chefsforseiors.com



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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.

Your Clean Home is Our Business



Did you know that a cleaning service company can do so much more than keep your home clean? Did you know that a service like this can actually help to reduce the amount of stress that you are suffering from? Let me explain. Cleaning takes a lot out of you. I mean, even the slightest clean to your home can take a lot of effort.

This is just going to add more stress onto you. Things become extra bad if you have had a pretty stressful day as it is. You just don't want to clean. If you don't clean the problem becomes much worse. You see, studies have shown time and time again that living in an unclean environment can actually lead to all sorts of stress and health concerns, anxiety attacks and high blood pressure which can lead to heart issues. Being unable to clean this environment how you want to is just going to make things a lot worse.

Don't sell yourself short, your time is extremely valuable. Need a dollar value? Just calculate how much you make per hour, and multiply it by the amount of time it will take to clean your place, and then multiply that by the value you place on spending that time with your family. Chances are it's much less expensive to hire a house cleaning company, than to do it yourself.

Maid Pro understands the stress that comes from worrying about a clean house. At Maid Pro, they understand that their customers are the reason they exist. That's why all of their team members follow a set of core beliefs that center around you, the customer. They know that listening to the wants and needs of their customers and delivering a personalized service makes for a more enjoyable experience for everyone.

Less Stress: a healthy organized home can reduce stress levels and ensure you're feeling your best even when not at home.

Healthy Lifestyle: airborne pollutants and allergens can irritate our immune systems and trigger respiratory issues such as asthma.

Have Friends & Family Over: a clean home is an inviting home. Don't stress about having people over because of the clutter in your home. Stay on top of it with Maid Pro's cleaning services and spend more quality time with those you love.

When you are surrounded by a mess, the hormone Cortisol is released into your system. This is a stress causing hormone that can speed up aging and increase your chances for heart disease. When your messy home is cleaned up, endorphins are released. This makes you feel great.

There are plenty of reasons to choose, and love, Maid Pro. Maybe it's because they work with you to build a cleaning plan, tailored to your needs and budget. Or because their cleaning staff are expertly trained to provide the highest quality clean. It could be because they allow you to choose when and how often they clean so that they fit perfectly into your life and schedule. No matter the reason, at the end of the day cleaning is their passion and it's what they bring to each and every home they touch.

February is dedicated to raising awareness about heart disease and increasing knowledge about prevention. Eliminate stress and worry from your life where and when you can. Your heart will thank you. Maid Pro can help reduce that unwanted stress and keep your home clean and beautiful which will allow you more quality time with your family and loved ones.



A clean house is also beneficial towards our general health. When our houses are not maintained and cleaned often, the germs, and bacteria, if not taken care of properly, can accumulate to the point that they create sickness. Our body's natural immune systems can only tolerate so much. If we let the germs and bacteria get out of hand, then not only our health, but our family's health will be at risk. When we take care of and maintain a clean home it will ensure long term good health for your family to enjoy for years to come.

Valentine's day is right around the corner give the gift of a clean healthy home give Maid Pro a call, let them know what you need and they will give you an estimate right then and there. They believe that everyone should have a clean and healthy home. That's why they make sure the products, tools and processes they use are in the best interest of the planet and every customer whose life they touch.

Maid Pro takes the work out of "housework" for you. Your home is in good hands with Maid Pro they clean so you don't have to.

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When You Are At Your Wits End

Have you ever been at your wits' end? Have you ever been so confused that you didn't really know which way was up? Have you ever had the feeling, "I know I need to do something...but I don't know what 'something' to do."

The Bible tells the story of a group of sailors who went out to sea and encountered a huge storm that almost killed them:

²³Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. ²⁴They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep. ²⁵For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. ²⁶They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. ²⁷They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. ²⁸Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. ²⁹He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. ³⁰They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. ³¹Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Psalm 107:23-31

Can you relate to this group of sailors? Maybe the circumstances in your life have caused your courage to melt away. Perhaps you are going through a storm of your own. You may find yourself at your wits' end without any clear direction as to what to do next. If so, follow the example of the sailors in the Bible.

There first thing they did was cry out to the LORD in their trouble. Don't underestimate the power of prayer. An old gospel song says, "when God is all you have, you'll find He's all you need." God responded to the sailor's prayer by bringing them out of their distress. In fact, it says he stilled the storm to a whisper and the waves of the sea were hushed. God can do that in your life and in your situation as well. Call out to him. His timing is not always as quick as we may like but He knows what is best for each of us.

When the storm was over, the text says that God guided the sailors to their desired haven. They found their place of rest and peace. Storms don't last forever... and neither will yours. Keep your faith in God. Cry out to Him in your pain. Trust that He knows what's best and keep praying and seeking your desired haven... it may be just around the corner.

And then, don't forget to thank God when He does bring you through the storm. The story concludes by saying, "Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men."

Storms, crises, pain and problems are an unfortunate reality of life. We grow through the pain and learn valuable lessons during these times. Don't give up, give in, or quit. When you find yourself at your wits' end...hang on, cry out to God, and look for His deliverance.



Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church in Naples, Florida. Venture Church meets on the campus of FSW State College on Lely Cultural Blvd. in East Naples. For times and directions, visit www.venturenaples.com.



VENTURECHURCH
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A photograph of two women on a tennis court. The woman on the left is wearing a white visor and a dark red athletic top, high-fiving the woman on the right. The woman on the right is wearing a white visor, a white tank top, and white shorts, holding a tennis racket. They are both smiling. The background shows a tennis court with a wooden fence and trees under a clear blue sky.

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