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June 2023

Collier Edition - Monthly

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**Hearing Loss
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**LOOKING FOR AN
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DO YOU NEED A DENTIST OR AN ENDODONTIST?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Last month we talked about dentophobia and ways to alleviate pain in the dentist's chair through sedation. This month let's look at how to choose the right dentist for your needs. Choosing well can help eliminate the stress of extra visits and take away some of the anxiety many feel when they experience a toothache.

First, to clarify, endodontists are dentists who specialize in tooth pain, disease, and infection. They have extra training which helps them to diagnose and treat problems. They are specialists with one to two years of extra training beyond standard dental school. This training focuses on procedures related to the interior of teeth. They can perform root canals, which is a treatment designed to save an infected or decayed tooth. Less than 3% of dentists are endodontists.

What does an endodontist do?

According to the *American Association of Endodontists* website, endodontists differ from regular dentists in the following 3 ways:

Endodontists Have Specialized Expertise

By limiting their practice to endodontics, endodontists focus exclusively on treatments of dental pulp. Endodontists don't place fillings or clean teeth — they dedicate their time to diagnosing and treating tooth pain. They are skilled specialists in finding the cause of oral and facial pain that has been difficult to diagnosis.

Endodontists Are Experts in Pain Management

Endodontists use specialized techniques to ensure patients are thoroughly comfortable during their treatments. They are experts in administering numbing medications, especially in patients who traditionally have problems getting and staying numb. In addition to treating you comfortably, patients will be relieved of tooth pain after their root canal procedure when the pulp infection or inflammation heals.



Endodontists Use Cutting-Edge Technologies

Endodontists have materials and equipment designed to make your treatment more comfortable and successful. They use a small sheet of plastic or rubber called a dental dam to isolate the tooth during treatment, protecting the rest of your mouth. Digital radiographs and 3-D imaging allows endodontists to take detailed pictures of tiny tooth anatomy to better see the root canals and any related infections. Endodontists use dental operating microscopes to better see inside the root canals to thoroughly treat them.¹



Dr. Elena Kan of Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

Dr. Elena Kan is a Board-Certified Endodontist (ABE). Less than 25% of endodontists hold the prestigious ABE Certification.

Dr. Kan achieved the Certificate in Endodontics and Master of Science degree from the Department of Endodontics 3-year post-doctorate graduate specialty program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry. Her research during her residency was titled, "Periapical Microsurgery: The Effects of Locally Injected Dexamethasone on Post-Operative Healing", which studied the

effects of steroids on reducing pain and healing time. Her research was published in the industry's top publication: "Journal of Endodontics", Volume 42, Number 11, November 2016.

Dr. Kan is licensed to practice in both Florida and North Carolina. She is a member of the American Dental Association, American Association of Endodontists, Florida Endodontic Association and numerous local dental organizations.

She was born in Russia and attended Omsk Regional Medical College for her degree in dentistry. She practiced general dentistry in Omsk for a decade. Before immigrating to the U.S., she was practicing general dentistry in a dual clinic setting where she was the senior dentist in one of the clinics that employed 11 dentists. Her extensive experience in operative procedures, cosmetic restorations, pediatric and family dentistry gives her a unique perspective as a specialist.

Upon immigrating to the U.S. in 2003, she began learning English and the basics of the American life. Dr. Kan repeated dental school in U.S. and graduated from the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill with her degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS). Afterwards, she continued her education to specialize in Endodontics at UNC.

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1. What's the difference between a dentist and an endodontist? (2022) American Association of Endodontists. Available at: <https://www.aac.org/patients/why-see-an-endodontist/whats-difference-dentist-endodontist/>.

THE POWER OF FAMILY FITNESS: Strengthening Bonds and Reducing Breast Cancer Risks

By Sharla Gayle Patterson, MD, MBA

In today's fast-paced world, the importance of family fitness cannot be overstated. Engaging in physical activities as a family not only promotes overall health and well-being but also strengthens the emotional bonds between family members. Additionally, maintaining an active lifestyle has been shown to have a profound impact on reducing the risk of various diseases, including breast cancer. In this article, we delve into the significance of family fitness in fostering a healthy lifestyle and its specific role in mitigating the risk of breast cancer.

Promoting a Culture of Health

By engaging in regular physical activities together, families create a culture of health that becomes an integral part of their daily lives. Whether it's going for a walk, playing sports, or participating in outdoor activities, involving the entire family not only makes exercise enjoyable but also encourages each member to lead an active lifestyle. Regular exercise helps manage weight, lowers blood pressure, and improves cardiovascular health. It also enhances mental well-being by reducing stress and anxiety levels.

Strengthening Family Bonds

Participating in fitness activities as a family strengthens the emotional bonds between its members. When families exercise together, they create shared experiences, build memories, and develop a sense of teamwork and unity. Collaborative physical activities foster communication, trust, and mutual support, leading to a deeper emotional connection among family members. Furthermore, engaging in friendly competition or setting fitness goals together can instill discipline and motivation, teaching children important life skills.

Breast Cancer Prevention

Regular physical exercise has been linked to a reduced risk of breast cancer, highlighting the vital role of family fitness in preventing this prevalent disease. Studies have shown that physical activity lowers the levels of estrogen and insulin in the body, hormones associated with the development



and growth of breast cancer cells. Engaging in moderate-intensity exercises, such as brisk walking, swimming, or cycling, can significantly lower the risk.

How much exercise do you need?

Unfortunately, there is not a magic number of hours that women can exercise to prevent cancer from occurring or to lower risk. But we do know that some is better than none, and more is better than less. Also, more vigorous activity is more effective than less vigorous activity. The American Cancer Society recommends all adults engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity each week, preferably spread throughout the week.

Encouraging family fitness, especially during adolescence, is crucial as it contributes to establishing healthy habits that can last a lifetime. Research suggests that girls who engage in physical activities during their teenage years may have a lower risk of developing breast cancer in the future. By promoting an active lifestyle early on, parents can instill a sense of responsibility towards their health in their children.

Furthermore, family fitness can also involve adopting healthy dietary habits, which play a significant role in reducing breast cancer risk. A well-balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, combined with regular exercise, provides a powerful defense against breast cancer. Encouraging family meal planning, involving children in cooking nutritious meals, and promoting healthy snack options are effective strategies to develop healthy eating habits.

Family fitness serves as a powerful tool for fostering physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. By engaging in physical activities together, families create a positive environment that supports an active lifestyle and strengthens the bonds between its members. Moreover, family fitness plays a vital role in reducing the risk of breast cancer. Encouraging regular exercise and healthy eating habits within the family unit can have a profound impact on the long-term health of its members, promoting a culture of health and well-being that extends across generations.

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MRI of the Brain Imaging at ProScan NCH

By Michael Shriver, MD - Proscan Imaging NCH Partner

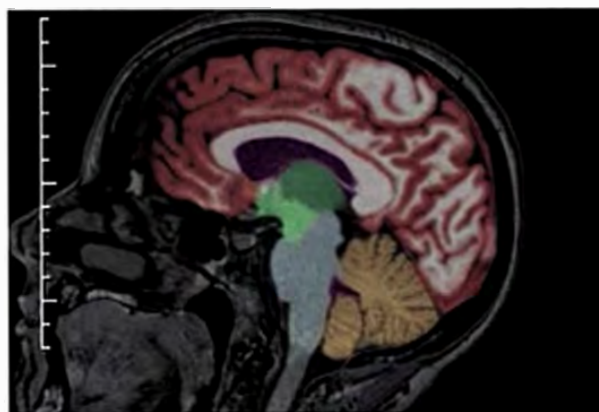
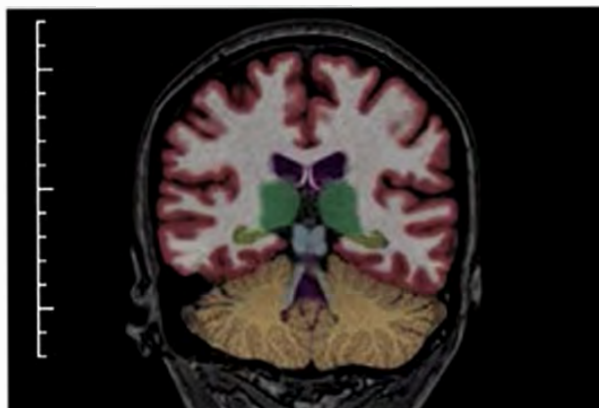
NeuroQuant® is the first FDA cleared software that allows for the volumetric analysis of brain parenchyma with MRI. The NeuroQuant software can be utilized on Brain MRIs acquired at 3 Tesla or higher, and provides the radiologist and clinician accurate, fast, and evidence-based results. It provides quantitative volumetric measurements of the brain parenchyma, including cortical, subcortical, cerebellar, deep grey, and brainstem structures/nuclei.

This technology can be utilized in the evaluation of an assortment of brain abnormalities, including tumors, developmental and vascular anomalies, epilepsy, trauma, and neurodegenerative disorders.

In the setting of tumors and vascular anomalies, NeuroQuant's volumetric analysis of parenchymal volumes allows for the radiologist and clinician to understand the impact of the pathology on adjacent structures. For the evaluation of patients with epilepsy or traumatic brain injury, the precise quantitative analysis of brain parenchyma allows Neurologists the ability to accurately diagnose the site and etiology of the patient's presenting symptoms, affording the Neurologist to provide the most precise possible care and interventions.

NeuroQuant can also be used to evaluate for patterns of brain parenchymal volume loss in the setting of memory loss or cognitive impairment. This allows for a more sensitive and accurate understanding of a patient's neurodegenerative pattern, which affords clinicians the ability to better understand the etiology of a patient's cognitive impairment. Ultimately, this allows for the earlier and more accurate treatment of a patient's neurodegenerative disorder.

NeuroQuant utilizes 3D T1 MRI sequences to precisely map the boundaries of cortical and subcortical structures, with great accuracy and precision. Subjective measurements and qualitative analysis of these findings are greatly flawed with disparate inter-reader and intra-reader variability between studies. This qualitative analysis can provide clinicians and patients with confusing, inaccurate interpretations of their Brain MRI results, which can lead to ambiguity in choosing the appropriate treatment. NeuroQuant's objective, automated segmentation tool allows for the accurate and reproducible



NeuroQuant® 3.0 Tesla Brain MRI

volumetric quantification of brain parenchyma. This allows for the accurate evaluation of brain volumes on initial and repeated assessment, which may play a critical role in following a patient's disease progress.

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Dr. Michael Shriver is board eligible by the American College of Radiology and Board Certified by the American Board of Nuclear Medicine. He completed an Integrated Nuclear Radiology Fellowship and Neuroradiology Fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. His diagnostic radiology residency was also completed at Penn. Dr. Shriver completed medical school at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, Cleveland, OH, and an Internal Medicine Internship at Cleveland Clinic.

Dr. Shriver has relocated to Naples with his wife, Stacy and daughter, Lily. He is excited to add his expertise and experience to the most qualified Radiology services team in the Southwest Florida Region. Our team of talented physicians, caring and professional technologists, and advanced imaging equipment provide our patients with the highest quality of care.



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LOOKING FOR AN INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGIST? MEET DR. LARRY LESLIE

Cardiology is a branch of medicine that deals with the study, diagnosis and care of the cardiovascular system. Since there are so many aspects of your heart's function, your cardiologist has to consider many variables when identifying what may be wrong with your heart. Some of these variables include your heart, arteries or blood vessels.

Dr. Leslie is Board Certified in Interventional Cardiology and Cardiovascular Disease, specializing in cardiovascular disease management, transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), chronic hypertension, acute myocardial infarctions (AMI), aortic stenosis, atrial fibrillation (arrhythmia), hyperlipidemia/lipid management, peripheral vascular disease, valvular disorders, and patient education.

He holds a Doctor of Medicine from the University of Kentucky College of Medicine and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology & Computer Science from Transylvania University, both in Lexington, Kentucky. Dr. Leslie also has an impressive list of achievements obtained through advanced training.

Having practiced medicine in the Naples community since 2016, Dr. Leslie has a strong interest in patient education and advocacy.

As is so often the case, his choice of specialty resulted from a very personal experience. "I first became interested in cardiology as a child when my grandmother had open heart surgery. The concept of replacing a heart valve with an artificial one fascinated me," he recalls. "As I progressed through training, I found myself most comfortable treating heart patients. I enjoy invasive procedures. Healing patients' hearts is very gratifying."

Today, Dr. Leslie treats most types of cardiovascular disease and is trained in specialized diagnostic and cardiac intervention procedures. Procedures include right and left heart catheterization, percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), Cardiac Stent Placement, and transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR).



"I think I am unique because I try to treat every patient as an extended family member. Listening to patients is a lost art in modern medicine. I take my time and never rush," he says. "Plus, I try to be personable and light-hearted. My patients will tell you I'm kind and compassionate."

More simply put: Dr. Leslie truly loves people and acknowledges, "I have never met a stranger!"

The heart is one of the most essential muscles in the body, yet more than 84 million Americans suffer from a form of cardiovascular disease. To combat this sobering statistic, Dr. Leslie wanted to be aligned with the best medical team possible. "I was attracted to Physicians Regional Healthcare System because of their desire and commitment to building the best cardiac care in Southwest Florida."

Physicians Regional Healthcare System's expanded Heart Center includes advanced surgical equipment and technologies, allowing a range of interventional cardiology procedures, including minimally invasive structural heart procedures.

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Dr. Leslie has office hours at:
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**Physicians Regional Collier Blvd.
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ADVANCING VISION RESTORATION

Exploring Laser Cataract Surgery and Premium Lens Options

By Jon R. Berlie, M.D.

When it comes to restoring vision impaired by cataracts, modern advancements in ophthalmology have revolutionized the treatment process. Laser cataract surgery, in conjunction with premium lens options, offers patients enhanced visual outcomes and improved quality of life. In this article, we delve into the remarkable innovations provided by board-certified ophthalmologists, focusing on the benefits of laser-assisted cataract surgery and the various premium lens options available. By shedding light on these cutting-edge techniques, we aim to empower patients to make informed decisions about their vision health.

Laser-Assisted Cataract Surgery

Traditionally, cataract surgery involves manual incisions and the use of handheld instruments to remove the cloudy lens. However, with the advent of laser-assisted cataract surgery, precision and safety have reached new heights. This advanced technique utilizes femtosecond laser technology, enabling surgeons to perform key steps of the procedure with unparalleled accuracy.

The benefits of laser cataract surgery are manifold. Firstly, the laser's precise incisions allow for a customized and self-sealing corneal wound, promoting faster healing and reducing the risk of infection. Secondly, the laser assists in fragmenting the clouded lens, enabling easier and gentler removal. Additionally, it aids in the precise placement of premium intraocular lenses (IOLs), maximizing visual outcomes. The procedure is typically painless and requires minimal downtime, with patients experiencing a swift recovery.

Premium Lens Options

Once the cataract is removed, the choice of intraocular lens is crucial in determining the patient's visual outcome. Premium lens options offer advanced features that can address additional refractive errors, reduce dependence on glasses, and enhance visual clarity.

Multifocal IOLs provide patients with the ability to see at various distances, minimizing the need for glasses after surgery. These lenses have multiple focal points, allowing individuals to seamlessly transition between near, intermediate, and far vision.



Accommodating IOLs, on the other hand, mimic the natural focusing mechanism of the eye, providing a range of vision without relying on the ciliary muscles.

For patients with astigmatism, toric IOLs correct the asymmetrical curvature of the cornea, reducing or eliminating the need for astigmatic glasses or contact lenses. Additionally, advanced technology IOLs, such as extended depth of focus (EDOF) lenses, can optimize vision by extending the range of clear vision, especially in low-light conditions.

As a board-certified ophthalmologist, the goal is to offer patients the best possible visual outcomes following cataract surgery. Laser-assisted cataract surgery, combined with premium lens options, represents a significant step forward in achieving this goal. By harnessing state-of-the-art technology and personalized lens selection, ophthalmologists can tailor treatments to meet individual needs and aspirations. Patients can look forward to improved vision, reduced dependency on glasses, and an enhanced quality of life. Consulting with a qualified ophthalmologist and exploring the available options is the first step toward regaining crystal-clear vision and experiencing the world anew.



JON R. BERLIE, M.D.
LASIK, Cataract & Lens
Replacement Surgeon

Dr. Berlie is a board-certified ophthalmologist who specializes in LASIK and premium lens cataract surgery. He has been serving the Naples community for over 20 years. Dr. Berlie achieves superior visual outcomes for his cataract patients by utilizing the latest lens technology combined with state of the art equipment. His expertise in this area has led the Center For Sight Naples office to be recognized as the "Best Eye Center" in Naples, FL for the past 15 years. He has been honored as one of America's "Top Doctors" by the prestigious Top Doctors list, published annually by Castle Connolly Medical, Ltd.

Dr. Berlie completed his undergraduate training at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada and the California State University of San Bernardino where he received the California State University of San Bernardino Research Scholarship Award. He then attended Creighton University School of Medicine in Omaha, Nebraska where he graduated Cum Laude, was elected as Class President, and received the Senior of the Year Award. He completed his internship in internal medicine also at Creighton University Medical Center.

Dr. Berlie continued his education at the University of Nebraska Medical Center where he completed his ophthalmology residency and received the awards of Chief Resident and the Resident of the Year Award. Dr. Berlie then went on to Saint Anthony Hospital in Oklahoma City to complete his fellowship training in Oculoplastic and Aesthetic Laser Surgery.

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TOP DOCTORSSM
2023



Do More Than the Minimum in Your Fight Against Cancer

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

Being handed a cancer diagnosis can be devastating. It is the word no one wants to hear from their doctor, but it seems almost inevitable at times. In fact, cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States. If you are not the one who is in the fight at the moment, it is highly likely that you know someone who is.

The good news is that the survival rate for many types of cancer is quite high. According to the cancer.gov website, as of January 2019, there were an estimated 16.9 million cancer survivors in the United States. The number of cancer survivors is projected to increase to 22.2 million by 2030.¹

So, what can we do to help us be one of the survivors? One thing that has shown to be effective is getting plenty of exercise while undergoing cancer treatment. Virtually every doctor in the world will tell you that getting a good amount of exercise is vital for survival, but how much exercise and what types of exercise should you be getting?

Being physically active can be difficult while undergoing aggressive cancer treatments like chemotherapy and radiation. However, research clearly shows that most people who are more active during cancer treatment have fewer side effects, a faster recovery time, and, in some cases, a decreased risk of the cancer returning.²

If you are undergoing cancer treatments, exercise recommendations, even minimal ones, can sound overwhelming. It is important to understand that exercise is another form of treatment. It isn't just something one does to maintain a good physique. We simply must change this mindset. Exercise is medicine.

Benefits of physical activity while undergoing cancer treatment

Some of the benefits of exercising during and after cancer treatment include:

1. Cancer-related fatigue is one of the worst and most common symptoms of cancer. And what is the best medicine for fatigue? Exercise! Build in short periods of activity instead of lying down. Exercise will improve your mood by reducing anxiety and depression. Additionally, exercise will



improve bone health and make everyday activities easier. And as if all of these benefits aren't enough, exercise helps improve your ability to engage in daily activities.

2. Resistance training is becoming part of cancer treatment because of the various benefits it provides. Resistance training programs that target "hypertrophy, bone density, strength, functional mobility and body composition" have been shown in some cases to improve treatment outcomes and quality of life for patients and survivors. These programs should be individualized and monitored by a qualified professional and should "adequately stress the musculoskeletal system".²

3. Muscles fight cancer and can lower the risk of dying from cancer by as much as 40%, according to a study conducted at the Cooper Institute in Dallas, Texas. That same study showed that "higher levels of muscular strength are associated with lower cancer mortality risk in men."³ The study indicated that being strong can lower one's risk of getting cancer in general and boost the chance of survival.

Dr. Colin Champ, MD, CSCS

Colin Champ, M.D., C.S.C.S., has dual board certifications in Radiation Oncology and Integrative and Holistic Medicine. He is an Associate Professor at Drexel University College of Medicine. If you would like to read more of his articles about how exercise affects cancer survival, visit his website at colinchamp.com.

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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SUN SAFETY AND YOU: WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR SKIN

The Skin Cancer Foundation says 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70, and those who experience more than five sunburns are at double the risk for melanoma.

Here in southwest Florida, it's a real concern.

Most skin cancers are caused by the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, which can cause DNA damage. But there is one simple step we can take to help protect our skin, says **Jacqueline Thomas, D.O.**, a dermatologist with Physicians Regional Medical Group. Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.

"A golf-ball size or shot-glass amount is the quantity recommended for one body application," Dr. Thomas says. "Consistent use is key, and you should reapply every two hours of exposure."

While sunscreen certainly helps, it should not be the only tool in your arsenal. Broad-brimmed hats, sunglasses, and sun-protective clothing with UPF of 50+ or higher can help, too. Don't depend on baseball hats, Dr. Thomas says, because the nose, cheeks, chin, and ears remain unprotected.

Parents should pass their good habits down to children, with the use of sunscreen becoming second nature to young ones. When it comes to children, it is important to learn sun protection habits early, Dr. Thomas says,

"The use of sunscreen should become second nature to children. You would not have a child get into a car without a seatbelt; the same should apply to children and sunscreen," Dr. Thomas says. "Skin damage starts early when not protected."

In addition to being vigilant about protecting your skin, undergoing regular skin checks with a dermatologist can help catch potential skin cancers in early stages, when they are most treatable. If you choose to check your skin at home, it may be helpful to follow ABCDE.



- **A- Asymmetry:** Draw a line down the center of a lesion. If the two sides do not match identically, the lesion is asymmetric and is, therefore, something to be checked.
- **B- Borders:** Irregular borders that are scalloped, jagged, or have notches should be evaluated.
- **C- Color:** One monotonous color is usually safe. If there are multiple colors, this can be a warning sign.
- **D- Diameter:** If a lesion is larger than 6mm, or the size of a pencil eraser, it should be examined.
- **E- Evolving:** A patient should know their skin better than their doctor or anyone else. If a lesion is changing or evolving over time, that can be suspicious.

Remember that some melanomas occur in moles that we already have. When in doubt, get it checked out. From skin cancer to skin acne, Physicians Regional Medical Group offers diagnostic services and treatment options for a range of skin conditions.

Our board-certified dermatologists take the time to listen to your concerns and develop a treatment plan to meet your needs. We offer a range of medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatology services to address a variety of skin care needs, including:

- Diagnostics and preventive care
- Acne treatment
- Treatment for aging and sun-damaged skin
- Skin cancer surgery
- Skin cancer screenings and treatment
- Photodynamic therapy for treatment of precancerous and superficial skin cancer
- Mole removal

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*Dr. Thomas is located at 8340 Collier Blvd.
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ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION AND TREATMENT OPTIONS

By Dr. Kristina Buscaino

Are you experiencing changes in your sexual health and erectile quality?

Erectile dysfunction (ED) may present as difficulty obtaining or maintaining an erection. It can be an embarrassing issue, not only when it happens to you, but also when you seek medical treatment. Many men live quietly with poor erectile quality without determining the etiology due to feeling self-conscious about what they are going through. It is important to discuss this issue with your doctor, as 1) ED may be due to underlying medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes, and 2) ED may affect your quality of life by decreasing your confidence and causing strain on your relationships.

Most men start treatment with oral medications, penile injections, or vacuum erection devices. These options may not be tolerable due to side effects of medications or fear of needles; men may also prefer not to utilize these options as it may only mask their ED, rather than fix their ED.

So, what other options are there?

Low Intensity Shock Wave Lithotripsy (LiSWT)

LiSWT is a non-invasive treatment that utilizes a small external probe to apply soundwaves to your penis. These soundwaves stimulate tissue and blood vessel regeneration, improving penile blood flow and erectile quality. Studies have demonstrated improvement in erectile hardness scores.¹ There is minimal downtime with this procedure. You may resume sexual activity the same day as your LiSWT.

Priapus Shot (P-shot)

The P-shot consists of platelet rich plasma (PRP) spun down from your own blood. PRP contains platelets and growth factors. This is injected directly into your penis with or without stem cells. These components help rejuvenate and stimulate cells to regenerate, increasing tissue and blood supply to improve your erectile quality. Studies have demonstrated PRP is a safe and effective treatment for ED.² As with LiSWT, there is minimal down time, and you may resume sexual activity the same day of your injection.



Penile Implant

There are two types of penile implants, the semi rigid (malleable) and inflatable penile prosthesis. Penile implants require surgery to be placed. Semi rigid (malleable) penile implants are always firm, and as the name entails, can be straightened for sexual intercourse or bent for concealment. The inflatable penile implant is meant to mimic penile firmness (when inflated) and flaccidity (when deflated). Major benefits of undergoing penile implant surgery are no longer relying on time sensitive options, as you are in control of your erections. With a penile implant, patient satisfaction rates are greater than 85%, with improved sexual quality of life among patients and their respective partners.³

What To Do Next

If you are not satisfied with your sexual health and current erectile quality, and are considering these treatment options for ED, contact Advanced Urology

Institute today. Schedule your appointment for an in-depth evaluation of your symptoms and history to determine the best treatment option for you.

About the Author

Kristina Buscaino is the only urologist in Southwest Florida who is fellowship trained in sexual medicine and andrology, with a focus on erectile dysfunction, Peyronie's Disease, and infertility. She received her medical degree from Touro University Nevada, completed her urology residency at McLaren Macomb in Metro Detroit, and completed a fellowship in sexual medicine and andrology at University of South Florida in Tampa.

Please Contact Advanced Urology Institute Today.

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Chronic Limb Ischemia: Many Physicians Want to Amputate, While They Should Be Focusing on Advanced Interventional Treatment

By Julian J. Javier, MD, FSCAI, FACC, FACP and Leandro Perez, MD, FACC, FSCAI, RPVI

Individuals with peripheral arterial disease (PAD) have blood flow disruptions due to narrowed or damaged blood vessels. Peripheral artery disease is a growing condition that puts patients at high risk for heart attacks and other cardiovascular events due to atherosclerosis (buildup of plaque), and the risk of plaque sloughing off and creating clots.

Advanced PAD often Leads to CLI

In the early stages of PAD, patients may show no symptoms, or they are often ignored. PAD is progressive; symptomatic disease progression and cardiovascular morbidity are high as it evolves. The advanced stages of PAD, which occludes blood flow, especially in the tibia and foot arteries, causing ulcerations, gangrene, and tissue loss, is known as Chronic Limb Ischemia (CLI).

Approximately 2 million people in the U.S. have CLI, but that number is probably much higher as it often goes undiagnosed until the disease is severely advanced. CLI is an occlusive disease state that doesn't provide adequate perfusion to complete the body's metabolic demands. CLI is increasingly escalating. Few other diseases have as high of a mortality rate as CLI.

Numerous Amputations Should be Prevented

In south Florida, we are seeing record numbers of people that were recommended amputation. In most of these cases, it is unfounded. Many physicians resort to amputation to try and save their patients' lives, but it's unfortunately often performed unnecessarily, and it puts patients at a higher risk of death. Amputation severely reduces a person's survival rate. Because CLI is increasing in record numbers, patients' survival rates are much worse than that of many deadly cancers, yet there is no clear strategic protocol in place by the government to help patients survive and better prepare and mandate their physician's treatment plans.

In-Depth Imaging is Crucial to Avoid Unnecessary Amputation

Patients with CLI almost always have comorbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, kidney disease, and extensive atherosclerosis throughout their bodies. Angiography is a critical tool to understand the patient's vascular health overall. Sadly, many patients with CLI are never offered any in-depth imaging studies. With the proper testing,

physicians can decide how to best treat the patient and avoid amputation through revascularization procedures. Patients who undergo amputation have double the risk within the year of death.

Many physicians see gangrene as a clear sign for amputation, yet amputation doubles the death rate in patients. Vascular and surgical revascularization treatment as opposed to amputation, are the optimal treatment options to provide better outcomes and survival rates.

It's unfair to not educate patients on their options. And it's unethical to not properly diagnose and offer advanced treatment options.

Angiography lowers a patient's risk of amputation by 90% compared to those who do not receive it. However, only one in four patients are offered an angiography.¹ Managing the numerous comorbidities that coincide with CLI is essential. Unfortunately, less than one third of patients are prescribed medications to manage disease states such as diabetes, lipid disorders or hypertension.²

Symptoms of PAD

- Claudication (leg and calf pain while walking)
- Weak pulse on ankle or foot
- Hair loss on legs and feet
- Leg pain while standing or sitting, which subsides after resting for an extended period of time
- A sensation of tightness & burning may occur in the leg or foot
- Swelling of the calves, which dissipates after elevation
- Dark veins
- Dry, itchy skin
- Ulcers can occur near the ankle and are often painless, but may have a dark rim
- Shortness of breath

Symptoms of Advanced PAD/CLI

- Ischemic rest pain
- Non-healing wounds
- Gangrene
- Multiple systemic comorbidities

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Diagnosis and Advanced Treatment Options

Once diagnosis is confirmed, there are multiple treatment options that range from conservative to invasive; it all depends on the severity of the condition. For more advanced conditions, invasive treatment is needed. Until recently, invasive treatments were mostly surgical, very traumatic with days of recovery in hospital post-surgery; however, in the last decade, the introduction of percutaneous non-surgical techniques procedures has shifted the treatments from surgery to catheter-based interventions that do not require blades or general anesthesia. The same techniques used to open arteries of the heart without surgeries using catheter-based therapy are now the method of choice for the treatment of venous or arterial disease of the legs. The introduction of catheter-based techniques has now caused a shift from a surgical technique to a percutaneous technique that can be done in the comfort of an office without the need of hospitalization, all done under local anesthesia as an outpatient procedure.

Our goal is to educate patient and improve legislation on imperative CLI protocols and treatment to help individuals avoid unnecessary amputation.



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.



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LEARN HOW YOU CAN FIND RELIEF FROM THE DEBILITATING PAIN OF PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY WITHOUT ADDICTIVE DRUGS

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

Over 116 million people suffer from various types of chronic pain disorders, and 20 million of those individuals have peripheral neuropathy; that number is speculated to be much higher due to patients not getting a proper diagnosis. Peripheral nerves run from the spinal cord to the arms, hands, legs and feet.

UNDERSTANDING PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY
Peripheral Neuropathy is a complex condition, but nerve damage and signaling are the issue, finding the root cause is how a comprehensive plan is customized to regenerate a patients nerves, cells and tissues. Having high blood sugar levels, along with low blood oxygen supply, nutrient deficiency, high toxicity and inflammation damages the nerves throughout the body. This damage generally affects the long peripheral nerves that feed sensations to the legs, feet, and toes from the spinal cord, through communication with the brain. If your condition has progressed, you may feel nerve damage sensations in your upper extremities as well.

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY SYMPTOMS

- Numbness
- Tingling
- Burning sensations
- Painful aching
- Joint inflammation
- Joint damage
- Balance issues
- Skin discoloration & texture changes
- Muscle cramps
- Feelings of stiffness
- Non-healing foot & ankle ulcers

STOP MASKING SYMPTOMS AND PAIN

The most common treatment for nerve pain and numbness is to mask it with narcotic prescription pain medications. Narcotics like Opioids are highly addictive, and our state is currently leading the country in abusing the drug and overdose episodes.

There are better alternatives to Peripheral Neuropathy that do not include addictive drugs.



Physical medicine provides alternative therapeutic and rehabilitating procedures can significantly improve the condition, offer pain relief and limit drug dependency.

FEEL AMAZING INSTITUTE'S ALTERNATIVE CARE

- Red LED and Low Level Infrared Light Therapy help to heal and regenerate the small nerve endings that are damaged in peripheral neuropathy
- Gentle electrical stimulation therapy improves nerve function, reduces pain, and improves movement.
- Stem Cell Allografts Biologics
- Platelet Rich Plasma
- Spinal Decompression Therapy
- Ozone Therapy
- Peptide Therapy
- Therapeutic Shockwave/Soundwave
- Natural supplementation to regenerate myelin sheath

WHAT KINDS OF EFFECTS CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE NEUROPATHY TREATMENT AT FEEL AMAZING INSTITUTE?

Clinical studies show that 88% of the people who undergo the treatment experience excellent results with one or more of the following: Reduced pain and cramps, reduced tingling and numbness, ability to experience normal touch without pain, reduced cold or burning sensations, improved balance and coordination, lowered dependency on medications, improved sleep, reduced sensation of restlessness in

the legs. Several people also experience reduced local swelling and inflammation, increased range of motion, increased blood flow to the extremities, decreased tension, and decreased muscle spasm.

An important side benefit to the treatment is that it reduces the risk of falls significantly by improving balance and position awareness of the feet.

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- Arm or leg pain, or numbness
- Peripheral Neuropathy pain or numbness
- Restless Leg Syndrome
- Headaches, dizziness, vertigo, or balance problems
- Disc bulge or herniation, sciatica, or stenosis
- Auto Accident, Whiplash Injuries

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NERVOUS STOMACH CRAMPS

A HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

With the psychological burden of Covid-19 pandemic upon us, one of the common questions I hear from my patients is: "Doc, I am so upset by what is going on and I get these stomach cramps. What can I do without taking medications?"

The truth is that our gut has a mind of its own. It is truly our second brain. There are several reasons for that. On the molecular level, there are more receptors for serotonin - a happiness neurotransmitter - in the gut, than in the brain. On a quantum level, there are memories being recorded as electromagnetic imprints in our gut. If you doubt this fact, just talk to any organ recipient and they will tell you that they often have memories of things that never happened to them but did happen to the deceased organ donors. Now, because our organs store memories, which consist of thoughts and experiences coupled with emotions, we effectively have a second mind within our physical body, populated with this information.

You will often hear people say: "I know this with my gut". And it is true. Any stimulus you are exposed to, like the news on TV for example, is then instantly matched through a huge database of associative memories - the gut then releases the neuro-hormones coupled with that memory. For example, if you lost someone in 9/11 - the overwhelming emotion of grief has been registered with your gut. The fear for your loved ones while listening to the anxiety-provoking statistics on TV today - will trigger the very peptide cascade which made you 'feel it in your gut' back in 2001. This vicious cycle will continue until you take action. What can you do?

First of all, avoidance of the negative information from TV and internet is important. Remember: they exist to sell you bad news. Instead, increase your exposure to 'feel good' experiences like Nature walks and day trips. Thankfully, Collier County abounds with parks, beaches and nature trails to make this an easy fit.



Take probiotics preventively. Our gut does not just have a mind of its own - it also has its own immune system. We are home to trillions of bacteria, fungi, viruses, and even parasites - collectively known as a Microbiome. Each person's Microbiome is determined not only by their genetic blueprint, but also by the food they are eating, the stress they are exposed to, and the environmental pollution that surrounds them. Most of the "citizens" of this Microbiome reside in our large and small intestine, but some live on the skin and even other parts of the body. When this intricate system is ideally balanced, every player has a purpose.

The job of the Microbiome is to maintain healthy digestion, immunity, neurologic function, and skin health, respiratory, and even reproductive and urinary functions. Unfortunately, the end of the 20th century has been marked by antibiotics being overprescribed to the majority of patients in the western world. As a result, most of us have emerged with our good bacteria being exterminated as a collateral damage in pursuit of the virulent bacteria.

While it is very important to address psychosocial factors like anxiety and stress we have discussed above, a recommendation for a good probiotic is often useful. Truth be known, probiotics are not just repopulating the gut. They also interact with the immune cells, digested food molecules, and other existing Microbiome bacteria - and this

intricate cooperation is what truly boosts our homeostasis. Among some exciting scientific breakthroughs in this field is the hope that soon engineered probiotics will enable people to retain more nutrients from the foods they are eating.

Here is a tip for picking out the most appropriate probiotic formula for your nervous gut: If you are trying to improve digestive function, combat excess gas, or alleviate abdominal cramping, go for the formula that has *S.bouardii*, *B.lactis*, and *L.plantarum*, and *L.acidophilus* probiotic strains built into it. And even if your probiotic product does not officially require refrigeration - it is prudent to keep it in the dark and cool place, to avoid spoilage. Because probiotic manufacturing is not regulated by FDA, you should always discuss using your Microbiome needs with your physician. If, despite your best efforts, you have still come down with nervous stomach cramps - drink some warm peppermint tea - it has an antispasmodic effect on the gut. Eating dark chocolate may offer a mild relief. A good rule of thumb is that quick fixes do not work to fix the root of the problem with your nervous gut. Try implementing meaningful lifestyle changes as discussed above, coupled with meditative visualizations, deep breathing, and restorative yoga. All of these holistic modalities can be very helpful in drug-free restoration of gut homeostasis.



Svetlana Kogan, M.D. is a Board Certified Medical Doctor with 25 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 Medi-

cine 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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THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF MEN OVER 50 STAYING HEALTHY

Celebrating Men's Health Month

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

Men's Health Month is an annual observance that serves as a timely reminder of the critical need for men, especially those over 50, to prioritize their health. As men age, their bodies undergo numerous changes, making it essential to adopt healthy habits and maintain overall well-being. In this article, we delve into the key reasons why men over 50 must pay attention to their health, highlighting the physical, mental, and emotional benefits that result from proactive self-care.

Physical Well-being

The aging process often brings with it various physical challenges, including a higher risk of chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. By prioritizing their health, men over 50 can significantly reduce these risks. Engaging in regular exercise, following a balanced diet, and scheduling routine check-ups with healthcare professionals are all vital for maintaining physical well-being. Regular physical activity can enhance cardiovascular health, strengthen bones and muscles, and boost overall energy levels, helping men to maintain their independence and enjoy an active lifestyle.

Mental and Cognitive Health

Men's mental health is just as crucial as their physical well-being. Over 50, men may experience an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline. Engaging in activities that promote mental and emotional well-being, such as stress reduction techniques, regular social interactions, and pursuing hobbies and interests, can significantly contribute to maintaining good mental health. Additionally, staying mentally active through reading, puzzles, and lifelong learning can help preserve cognitive function and delay the onset of age-related conditions like dementia.

Preventive Screenings and Early Detection

Men over 50 should take advantage of preventive screenings and early detection methods to identify potential health issues before they become more severe. Regular check-ups and recommended screenings for conditions such as prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, high blood pressure, and cholesterol levels are crucial.



Detecting and treating these conditions at an early stage significantly improves the chances of successful outcomes and allows for more effective management. Men should consult their healthcare providers to develop a personalized screening plan based on their medical history and risk factors.

Emotional Well-being and Support Networks

Emotional well-being plays a pivotal role in men's overall health. Unfortunately, men often face societal pressure to appear stoic and downplay their emotional needs. Men's Health Month offers an opportunity to challenge these stereotypes and encourage men over 50 to seek emotional support when needed. Building and nurturing strong support networks, including friends, family, and support groups, can provide a safe space for men to express their feelings, share experiences, and seek guidance. Seeking professional help from therapists or counselors can also be immensely beneficial in managing stress, improving relationships, and enhancing overall emotional well-being.

Men's Health Month serves as a powerful reminder for men over 50 to prioritize their health and well-being. By embracing healthy lifestyle choices, seeking preventive screenings, and nurturing emotional support networks, men can enjoy a higher quality of life and reduce the risk of age-related health issues. Taking proactive steps towards physical, mental, and emotional health not only benefits men themselves but also sets a positive example for younger generations. Let us use this month to celebrate men's health and encourage men over 50 to make their well-being a top priority.

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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Men's Health Month: Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's Disease Doesn't Discriminate

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder that affects the movement of the body. The degeneration of dopamine-producing neurons in the brain causes it. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter responsible for transmitting signals and controlling movement and coordination.

As a result of the loss of dopamine-producing neurons, individuals with Parkinson's disease experience a variety of motor symptoms such as tremors, stiffness, and slowness of movement. They may also experience non-motor symptoms such as depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and cognitive changes. The onset of Parkinson's disease is usually gradual, and symptoms can initially be mild. Over time, the symptoms can become more pronounced and can significantly impact daily activities and quality of life.

While there is currently no cure for Parkinson's disease, medications and therapies are available to manage the symptoms. Treatment options may include dopamine replacement therapy, light therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

It is important to note that Parkinson's disease is a highly individualized condition, and symptoms and disease progression can vary greatly from person to person. Therefore, it is important to work closely with a healthcare provider who can tailor a specific treatment plan to your needs.

Parkinson's and Sleep

- According to the National Institute of Health, men are twice more likely to have Parkinson's than women.
- While both women and men with PD tend to have similar symptoms with movement, men tend to have more difficulty with REM sleep behavior disorder (acting out physically while dreaming).
- Sleep is often negatively impacted by Parkinson's. Men living with Parkinson's report waking with stiffness and pain, making even small tasks more challenging.
- Difficulty with sleeping also negatively influences mood and can result in anxiety and/or depression.
- Although both men and women living with PD experience motor symptoms, some studies indicate that men may display more rigidity in movement while women may exhibit more tremors.



- There are many different treatment options for managing Parkinson's symptoms, but several reported to make a difference in **Quality of Life** include consistent exercise and improved nutrition, focusing on a diet rich with fruit and vegetables that promote overall good health and brain functions.

How LASENE Can Help

Light therapy, also known as photobiomodulation therapy, is a non-invasive treatment approach that involves exposing the body to specific wavelengths of light to promote healing and reduce inflammation. While the exact mechanism by which light therapy may improve symptoms in Parkinson's disease is not fully understood, there are several hypotheses on how it may work.

One hypothesis is that light therapy may help to improve communication between the brain and the nervous system. Studies have shown that light therapy can increase the production of certain neurotransmitters, such as dopamine, which is known to be deficient in Parkinson's disease. By increasing the production of dopamine, light therapy may help to improve the communication between the brain and the nervous system, which could lead to improvements in motor and non-motor symptoms.

Another hypothesis is that light therapy may help to reduce inflammation in the brain. Inflammation is believed to play a role in the development and progression of Parkinson's disease and reducing inflammation may help to slow disease progression and improve symptoms. Light therapy has been shown to reduce inflammation in animal models of Parkinson's disease, and clinical trials are currently underway to investigate its potential in humans. One such study shows a 48% improvement in Sleep Quality – (problems falling asleep, balance, alertness, core functions).

Comments from Men or Family Members receiving the LASENE Therapy:

- Noted loss in Parkinson's mask, and he smiles today. Also, improvement in gait and postural elevation.
- "I am taking naps once in a while before I was taking daily naps."
- No freeze gait today. Doing good, getting up better from a chair.
- Gait is smoother, with less throwing of the arms and torso for forward momentum.
- "The whole laser thing, I had a little bit of 'is this all good? I'm like, you know, is this going to burn anything?' (laughs) So it was great for me to see and understand that there wasn't any downside, but there was a bunch of upsides."
- "It was so bad I was very symptomatic, and we were looking for walkers. This program has given me inspiration and hope."
- "I used to look in the future and see this person in the wheelchair drooling, and now I don't see that. That's a horrible thing to see. And now I see improvement and I think I can stay that status quo. If I can just stay the way I am now, I'd be happy, really happy, and I think I can just stay like this."

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GOLF AND LOWER BACK PAIN

By Larry Piretra, PT, DPT, CSCS, TPI-M1

Golf is a popular pastime for thousands of Americans. It is also a source of pain for many of those thousands. The torque and force used to swing a golf club can create significant risk for developing lower back pain, and this pain most commonly develops over time.

Some believe that back pain is just a side effect of their golf habit. It is the most often reported injury among golfers. In fact, as many as 25% of golfers over the age of 65 report lower back pain. However, it is important to know that it can be avoided with proper technique and training.

Incorrect swing techniques and bad habits that create risk for golfers include:

- Bending too far to the trailing side during the forward swing, placing excessive force on the trailing side
- Prolonging the swing by rotating the body beyond its range of motion, increasing the risk of injury
- Engaging muscles inadequately or engaging the wrong muscles, making the muscles prone to tearing
- Rotating the leg inward at the hip with a narrow range of motion, risking injury to the hip
- Having weak core muscles, increasing the risk of muscle strain
- Playing golf for extended periods of time, leading to muscle fatigue¹

PREVENTION OF LOWER BACK PAIN FROM GOLFING

Strong core

Core strength is important. Core muscles are used during the golf swing. This creates potential for fatigue and injury. When fatigue or injury occurs, the muscles that compensate for injured core muscles then become at risk for fatigue and injury.

A golf screening conducted by a trained professional can identify the faults in the swing and target the corresponding muscles so that fatigue and injury do not occur. If they have already occurred, then those muscles can be targeted for rehabilitation.

One of the top swing faults associated with lower back pain is a failed overhead squat. This correlated with early extension nearly 100% of the time. A golfer with a failed overhead squat has a decreased external rotation in the right shoulder, further exacerbating the problem.

1. Scott Curtis, D., Golf and low back pain, Spine. Available at: <https://www.spine-health.com/conditions/sports-and-spine-injuries/golf-and-low-back-pain>



Some simple things that are also important for preventing back pain from golf are ensuring that you have the proper golf club fit, utilizing a long putter, and pushing your cart instead of pulling it around the course. These small adjustments to your game can decrease the stress and strain that you place on the lumbar spine. Also, carrying a golf bag with only one strap can be hazardous to not only the lower back, but also to the shoulder and ankle; try using a backpack style bag for your clubs instead.

Another important factor to consider in prevention of lower back pain is bodyweight. Being overweight adds a significant risk. Weight loss and diet counseling must be an integral part of prevention and/or rehabilitation when considering a golfer's back.

Rehabilitation after an injury

The rehabilitation process after a golf injury can take place early or late. Starting to correct the problem when it first begins is obviously the best course of action.

Early rehabilitation for golfers with lower back pain must be a team effort. It should include a multidisciplinary team of professionals who work together to get the golfer back on the course safely. The team should consist of a physiatrist, a physical therapist, TPI certified professional, and a PGA teaching professional.

As mentioned above, core strength is important for preventing lower back pain. Once an injury has occurred, core stability training should be an integral part of the golfer's rehabilitation program. A golfer without lower back pain can have as much as twice the trunk flexion velocity during the downswing. This is achieved by using those core muscles in the abdomen.

Another essential piece of the rehabilitation puzzle is transversus abdominis and multifidus training. Core stability involves more than just one set of

muscles. It is a fluid, continuous motion involving many parts. Hip abductors, erector spinae, and quadratus lumborum all play a role.

Late rehabilitation focuses on the swing faults and physical imbalances of the individual golfer. Scapular and hip stabilization is part of core strength and must be achieved to prevent injury. The gluteus medius muscles stabilize the pelvis and provide a base trunk rotation. During the swing, gluteus medius inhibition increases lateral hip movement and can cause increased lateral bending at impact.

Golf Movement Screen

The sooner a golfer is able to identify his/her imbalances and swing faults, the sooner they can be corrected. This is key in preventing injuries and in complete rehabilitation. At Performance Optimal Health, we ensure personalized programming and a team approach to care, you can optimize your golf performance by improving your strength and mobility. Our Titleist Performance Institute Certified golf experts examine inefficiencies in your biomechanics and identify areas for improvement through a musculoskeletal lens.

Our professionals promote a collaborative team approach between the player, their golf pro or teaching professional, their physical therapist, and others involved in the optimization of the golfer's performance to provide the best outcomes possible. We also have nutritionists and mental performance consultants on staff to comprehensively round out a player's needs.

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.



Larry Piretra, PT, DPT, CSCS, TPI-M2, is a physical therapist, strength and conditioning specialist, TPI Certified Medical Professional and Golf Programming Lead at Performance.



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ADVANCEMENTS IN MIGRAINE TREATMENT ALLEVIATING THE BURDEN OF CHRONIC HEADACHES

By Kathy V. Verdes, APRN, A-GNP-C

Migraines are debilitating and recurring headaches that affect millions of people worldwide, significantly impacting their quality of life. However, recent years have witnessed significant advancements in the understanding and treatment of migraines. Researchers and medical professionals are dedicated to unraveling the mysteries of this neurological disorder and developing innovative strategies to alleviate its symptoms. In this article, we will explore the nature of migraines, their impact on individuals, and the cutting-edge treatments that are being developed to provide relief to those suffering from migraines.

Understanding Migraines

Migraines are more than just headaches; they are a complex neurological condition characterized by intense throbbing pain, often on one side of the head, and accompanied by a range of other symptoms. These symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light and sound, and visual disturbances known as auras. Migraines can be triggered by various factors, such as stress, hormonal changes, certain foods, environmental factors, and genetic predisposition.

Traditional Treatment Approaches

In the past, treatment for migraines focused primarily on managing the symptoms rather than targeting the root causes. Over-the-counter pain relievers, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), were commonly used. For more severe cases, prescription medications, including triptans and ergots, were prescribed to constrict blood vessels and relieve pain. However, these treatments were not always effective for all individuals and often had side effects.

Advancements in Migraine Treatment

In recent years, significant progress has been made in the field of migraine treatment. One major breakthrough has been the development of migraine-specific drugs known as calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) inhibitors. CGRP is a neurotransmitter involved in the development of migraines, and these medications work by blocking



its activity, thereby reducing the frequency and severity of migraine attacks. CGRP inhibitors, such as erenumab, fremanezumab, and galcanezumab, have shown promising results in clinical trials and are now approved for use.

Another exciting advancement is the use of neuromodulation devices for migraine management. These devices, such as transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) and non-invasive vagus nerve stimulation (nVNS), provide targeted electrical or magnetic impulses to specific areas of the brain, modulating abnormal brain activity associated with migraines. They have been shown to reduce the frequency and intensity of migraine attacks and are well-tolerated by patients.

Furthermore, behavioral and lifestyle interventions have gained recognition as effective adjunctive treatments for migraines. Techniques like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and biofeedback therapy help individuals manage stress, identify triggers, and develop coping strategies to reduce the frequency and impact of migraines. Additionally, maintaining a regular sleep schedule, managing stress levels, and incorporating regular exercise into one's routine have been found to be beneficial for migraine management.

The evolving understanding of migraines and the development of innovative treatment approaches offer hope to the millions of individuals suffering from this debilitating condition. With the advent of CGRP inhibitors, neuromodulation devices, and behavioral interventions, healthcare professionals now have an expanded array of tools to address migraines more effectively. However, continued research and development are necessary to refine existing treatments and explore new avenues. By working collaboratively, researchers, healthcare providers, and patients can continue to improve the quality of life for those affected by migraines and move closer to a future where migraines are better understood and managed.

KATHY VERDES APRN, A-GNP- C

Kathy earned her Master's in Nursing Degree from Kaplan University in 2017. Kathy is certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) as an Adult- Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (A-GNP-C). Prior to her Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Degree (APRN), Kathy managed a weight loss clinic for over 6 years right here in Naples. Kathy has since then managed acute and chronic care illnesses in different settings, and she genuinely enjoys spending time with her patients.

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Myasthenia Gravis AWARENESS



Myasthenia gravis is a chronic autoimmune, neuromuscular disease that causes weakness in the skeletal muscles. These are the muscles that connect to your bones and contract to allow your arms and legs to move and make breathing possible. The muscles that are most affected include the eyes/eyelids, facial muscles, and the muscles that control chewing, swallowing, and talking.

According to the Johns Hopkins Medical website, the most common symptoms include:

- Visual problems, including drooping eyelids (ptosis) and double vision (diplopia)
- Muscle weakness and fatigue may vary rapidly in intensity over days or even hours and worsen as muscles are used (early fatigue)
- Facial muscle involvement causing a mask-like appearance; a smile may appear more like a snarl
- Trouble swallowing or pronouncing words
- Weakness of the neck or limbs¹

How is myasthenia gravis diagnosed?

A doctor can diagnose myasthenia gravis based on symptoms and various tests. One common way to diagnose myasthenia gravis is to test how you respond to certain medicines. Muscle weakness often dramatically improves for a brief time when you are given an anticholinesterase medicine. If you respond to the medicine, it confirms myasthenia gravis.

Other tests that may be done include:

- **Blood tests.** These tests look for antibodies that may be present in people with myasthenia gravis.
- **Genetic tests** to see if there is a family history related to the disease.
- **Nerve conduction studies.** A test called repetitive nerve stimulation is used to diagnose myasthenia gravis.
- **Electromyogram (EMG).** A test that measures the electrical activity of a muscle. An EMG can detect abnormal electrical muscle activity due to diseases and neuromuscular conditions.¹

Treating myasthenia gravis

There is no known cure for myasthenia gravis. However, available treatments can control symptoms and often allow you to have a relatively high quality of life.

There are several therapies available to help reduce and improve muscle weakness, including:

Thymectomy—An operation to remove the problematic thymus gland can reduce symptoms, possibly by rebalancing the immune system. Stable, long-lasting complete remissions are the goal of thymectomy and may occur in about 50 percent of individuals who undergo this procedure.

Monoclonal antibody—A treatment that targets the process by which acetylcholine antibodies injure the neuromuscular junction.

Immunosuppressive drugs—A group of drugs that improve muscle strength by suppressing the production of abnormal antibodies, such as prednisone, azathioprine, mycophenolate mofetil, and tacrolimus. The drugs can cause significant side effects and must be carefully monitored by a physician.

Plasmapheresis and intravenous immunoglobulin—Therapies that are used in severe cases of myasthenia gravis to remove destructive antibodies that attack the neuromuscular junction, although their effectiveness usually only lasts a few weeks or months.

Intravenous immunoglobulin is a highly concentrated injection of antibodies pooled from many healthy donors that temporarily changes the way the immune system operates. It works by binding to the antibodies that cause myasthenia gravis and removing them from circulation.²

Paragon Healthcare

At Paragon Healthcare, we support the Myasthenia Gravis (MG) community through infusible therapies such as immunoglobulin (Ig), Soliris, Ultomiris and Vyvgart. Nationally, our infusion centers treated nearly 1k MG patients during April 2023 and more than 3.5k year-to-date. This puts us in a place to serve as many MG patients this year as the nearly 10k patients we supported in 2022.

A nationwide leader for more than 20 years in infusion care, Paragon specializes in immunoglobulin therapy through our IV Anywhere approach. As a key therapy to help manage myasthenia gravis, we offer Ig through either home infusion or our infusion centers. Providing exemplary care to our Ig patients through flexibility in treatment locations, clinical education and access to affordable solutions is vital.

Specifically, we:

- Created a Center of Excellence team with Ig-certified pharmacists and intake specialists. This team assesses each patient individually and educates patients and their physicians on our multiple Ig brands to ensure optimal clinical outcomes and broader access.
- Provide options for Subcutaneous Immunoglobulin Therapy (SCIg) and Intravenous Immunoglobulin Therapy (IVIg), including an in-home nursing support program for patient education, to offer more flexibility.
- SCIg is administered under the skin and can benefit patients with IV access challenges, prior adverse reactions to IVIg and specific lifestyle needs. IVIg is administered into a vein and offers patients registered nurses to infuse and monitor their therapy at our infusion centers.
- Work with most insurance providers, including Medicare and Medicaid, and connect eligible patients with financial assistance programs—the two most common challenges for Ig patients. Additionally, we review and help with benefits, prior authorizations, internal and external patient assistance programs and more.

As immunoglobulin therapy aids multiple conditions beyond MG, our team treats Ig patients of all ages from children to seniors across specialties including dermatology, hematology, infectious disease, neurology, primary immune deficiency, rheumatology, secondary immune deficiency and transplant.

1. Myasthenia Gravis (2023) Myasthenia Gravis | Johns Hopkins Medicine. Available at: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/myasthenia-gravis>.
2. Myasthenia Gravis, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Available at: <https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/myasthenia-gravis>



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OUTPATIENT TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG ADDICTION

By Robert Gibson, Managing Director - Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group

All Alcohol and Substance abuse treatment programs are not created equal. Intensive outpatient (IOP) treatment programs for alcohol and substance abuse provide comprehensive care and support for individuals struggling with addiction. Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group, located at 704 Goodlette-Frank Road Naples, FL 34102, is a unique 90-day treatment program that is tailored for each client's needs. Crossroads has developed a proprietary curriculum that helps individuals seeking long term sobriety and provides assistance in reaching their goals and dreams.

Crossroads Tier 1 IOP treatment program is designed for individuals new to recovery. Its primary focus is maintaining long term sobriety. We identify each individual's potential relapse triggers and develop alternative relapse skills. Our core beliefs are examined and broken down into fact or opinion. We set specific measurable goals for every client. Clients focus on identifying career goals and work with their therapist and counselor to find a pathway to reach their obtainable dreams. Additionally, we address housing, which is a current crisis in SWFL. Crossroads assist our graduates to team together and seek sober living housing, allowing individuals in early recovery to pool their resources and support each other in their road to recovery.

Crossroads Tier 2 IOP treatment program is designed specifically for professionals or retirees who recognize that their drinking or drug use is or is getting "out of control" and want to make a change in their lives. Unfortunately, many of these individuals continue to suffer because they fear the stigma of recovery and may also feel they are too old, or far along in their careers to set aside the time for a 30-60 day in house residential rehab program. At Crossroads we fully understand these concerns and apprehensions. A separate intensive outpatient program (IOP) addiction recovery program for professionals is important for several reasons:

- 1. Confidentiality:** Professionals may be hesitant to seek treatment for addiction in traditional rehab or outpatient programs due to concerns about confidentiality. A program specifically designed for professionals can provide a more discreet and confidential environment, which can increase the likelihood that they will seek and receive treatment.
- 2. Unique Needs:** Professionals may have unique needs and challenges in addiction recovery, such as concerns about their careers or the impact of addiction on their professional reputations. A separate program can address these needs and provide specialized support and resources for professionals in recovery.



3. Supportive Environment: Our program provides a supportive environment with others who face similar challenges and experiences. This will help individuals in recovery feel less isolated and will increase their motivation to engage in treatment and maintain their sobriety.

4. Tailored Treatment: Our program provides tailored treatment that addresses the specific needs and challenges of professionals in recovery. For example, the program may include components such as stress management, career counseling, or relapse prevention strategies that are tailored to the unique needs of professionals.

Overall, such an IOP recovery program for professionals provides a more supportive, confidential, and tailored environment for individuals in recovery who may have unique needs and concerns related to their professional lives. By providing a specialized program for professionals, individuals in recovery increase their likelihood of successfully overcoming addiction and maintaining their sobriety over the long term.

Crossroads Tier 3 IOP treatment program is specifically oriented towards those individuals suffering from dual diagnosis. Dual diagnosis treatment, which refers to the treatment of co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, can be challenging in addiction recovery for several reasons:

- 1. Complexity:** Dual diagnosis cases are often more complex than cases of substance abuse alone, as the presence of a mental health disorder can complicate treatment and recovery efforts.
- 2. Misdiagnosis:** It can be difficult to accurately diagnose both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder, as symptoms of one disorder can mimic the symptoms of the other. This can result in misdiagnosis and a delay in appropriate treatment.
- 3. Treatment resistance:** Individuals with dual diagnosis may be resistant to treatment or may struggle to engage in treatment due to the presence of anxiety, depression, or psychosis.

4. Stigma: There is often a stigma associated with both mental health disorders and substance abuse, which can make it challenging for individuals to seek and receive treatment for both conditions.

Despite these challenges, effective treatment for dual diagnosis is possible. Crossroads integrated treatment addresses both the mental health disorder and substance use disorder can be effective in managing symptoms and promoting recovery. Our dual diagnosis program involves medication management, behavioral therapy, and support groups. In addition, our individualized treatment plans that address each person's unique needs and challenges can improve the likelihood of success in recovery from dual diagnosis.

KEY ELEMENTS FOR AN EFFECTIVE IOP TREATMENT PROGRAM

1. Individualized Treatment Plans: Each patient's journey towards recovery is unique and requires a personalized approach. Crossroads IOP program developed individualized treatment plans based on a thorough assessment of the patient's addiction history, mental health, and overall health status. The plans are regularly reviewed and updated based on the patient's progress.

2. Evidence-Based Therapies: Effective IOP programs should provide evidence-based therapies such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing, and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT). Crossroads integrates these therapies which are proven to be effective in treating addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders.

3. Group Therapy: Group therapy is an essential component of Crossroads IOP programs as it provides patients with a supportive community of peers who can relate to their struggles. Group therapy also allows patients to learn from each other and provides opportunities for them to practice healthy communication and relationship-building skills.

4. Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT): MAT involves the use of medications such as methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone to manage cravings and withdrawal symptoms during the recovery process. Crossroads IOP program offers MAT to patients who need it as part of their individualized treatment plan.

5. Holistic Care: A strong IOP program should address the whole person, including their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Crossroads holistic care includes activities such as yoga, meditation, art therapy, boating, hiking, as well as other group outings and activities.

6. Family Involvement: Addiction affects not only the individual struggling with it but also their loved ones.

A successful IOP program should involve family members in the treatment process through family therapy and education.

7. Aftercare Planning: All IOP programs should prepare patients for the transition back to their daily lives by developing a comprehensive aftercare plan. Crossroads offers ongoing support such as continued therapy, support group meetings, and sober living arrangements if needed.

Overall, a successful IOP program should prioritize patient-centered care, evidence-based treatments, and ongoing support to ensure the best possible outcomes for individuals struggling with addiction.

Why is Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group Considered One of the Best Intensive Outpatient (IOP) Programs in SWFL?

There are a few factors that can contribute to an IOP treatment program's reputation as a top program, which may apply to Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group or any other program that is well-regarded in the field.

One of the main factors is the program's track record of success in treating substance abuse and addiction. This is evidenced by the program's outcomes data, testimonials from former patients, or recognition from reputable third-party organizations in the field of addiction treatment.

Another important factor is the program's adherence to evidence-based treatment practices, as well as its ability to provide individualized treatment plans to meet the unique needs of each patient.

A top IOP program like Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group maintains a highly qualified and experienced staff, including licensed therapists and medical professionals who are skilled in treating addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders.

The program should also prioritize ongoing support and aftercare planning to help patients maintain their sobriety and avoid relapse after completing the program. This is a priority at Crossroads.

Overall, a top IOP program like Crossroads, offers high-quality care and support tailored to each patient's needs, along with a commitment to evidence-based treatment practices and ongoing support for long-term recovery.

Redefining Core Beliefs in Recovery

At Crossroads we examine the core beliefs of each client. Core beliefs in recovery refer to the deeply held beliefs that individuals have about themselves, the world around them, and their place in it. These beliefs are often shaped by past experiences and can influence a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, including their ability to recover from addiction.

In the context of recovery from addiction, core beliefs may include beliefs about oneself, such as feelings of worthlessness or shame, or beliefs about others, such as distrust or fear of being judged. These core beliefs are often negative and may contribute to feelings of hopelessness or despair, which can make recovery more challenging.

As a result, one of the key objectives of recovery is to identify and challenge these negative core beliefs, replacing them with more positive and empowering beliefs that support recovery. At Crossroads, this involves working with a therapist or counselor to identify these beliefs and understand how they are impacting a person's recovery.

For example, a person who believes that they are inherently flawed or unworthy may struggle to maintain sobriety because they do not believe they deserve to recover. In this case, a therapist may help the person identify the source of this belief and work with them to challenge and reframe it into a more positive belief, such as "I am worthy of love and happiness."

By identifying and challenging negative core beliefs, individuals in recovery can create a more positive mindset that supports their efforts to maintain sobriety. This may involve practicing mindfulness, engaging in positive self-talk, and focusing on the present moment, rather than dwelling on past mistakes or negative thoughts. Through this process, individuals can cultivate a sense of self-worth and empowerment, which can help support their ongoing recovery journey.

The Importance of Regaining Self-Esteem in Recovery:

Regaining self-esteem is an important aspect of recovery from addiction because addiction can often cause individuals to feel a sense of shame, guilt, and worthlessness. These negative feelings can further contribute to substance abuse and addiction and make it more challenging for individuals to achieve and maintain sobriety.

Regaining self-esteem in recovery involves rebuilding a sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-confidence. This may involve working with a therapist or counselor to identify negative thoughts and beliefs that are contributing to feelings of shame and worthlessness. Through therapy, individuals can learn to challenge and replace these negative beliefs with more positive and empowering beliefs that support their recovery.

At Crossroads, self-esteem is improved through engagement in activities and behaviors that promote feelings of accomplishment, such as setting and achieving personal goals, volunteering, or pursuing a new hobby. These activities can help individuals develop a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives and can help boost feelings of self-worth and confidence.

In addition, we strive to build and maintain healthy relationships with others that contribute to improved self-esteem. By surrounding oneself with supportive and positive people, individuals can feel more valued, respected, and connected, which can further boost their sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Overall, regaining self-esteem is important in recovery from addiction because it helps individuals develop a more positive sense of self and reduces feelings of shame, guilt, and worthlessness that can contribute to substance abuse and addiction. By rebuilding self-esteem, individuals can improve their chances of achieving and maintaining sobriety over the long term.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a form of psychotherapy that focuses on identifying and changing negative thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. In the context of recovery from addiction, CBT is often used to help individuals challenge and reframe negative thoughts and beliefs that contribute to substance abuse and addiction.

CBT is based on the idea that thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interconnected and that changing one can impact others. In CBT, the therapist works with the individual to identify negative thoughts and beliefs that may be contributing to addiction, such as beliefs about self-worth, stress, or coping mechanisms.

Once these negative thoughts and beliefs are identified, Crossroads therapists help the individual develop strategies for challenging and replacing them with more positive, empowering thoughts and beliefs. For example, an individual who struggles with addiction due to a belief that they are not worthy of happiness or success may work with a therapist to identify the source of this belief and develop strategies for challenging and replacing it with more positive beliefs, such as "I am capable of making positive changes in my life."

CBT also helps individuals develop coping skills and strategies for managing stress and other triggers that may contribute to addiction. By learning to identify and manage these triggers, individuals can reduce their risk of relapse and maintain their sobriety over the long term.

CBT is a valuable tool in recovery from addiction because it helps individuals address the underlying thoughts and beliefs that contribute to substance abuse and addiction. By identifying and challenging negative beliefs, individuals can develop a more positive mindset that supports their recovery and reduces their risk of relapse.



Crossroads Behavioral Health Center

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THE POWER OF UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

By Dr. Thomas Hofmann, PhD, LCSW, LMFT

Why are people the way they are? How does understanding people help you personally and professionally?

Having a deeper understanding about yourself – your behavior patterns and thoughts – gives you the ability to better understand others. Ultimately, it means being more self-aware. Reaching a higher level of self-awareness is a journey you can take while also training for a meaningful career.

Our bachelor's degree in applied psychology accomplishes that. Each class is designed to help you grow personally, which in turn helps you grow professionally. You'll gain a dynamic skill set that can be applied in a variety of career paths. These paths include child and family services, human resources, sales, case management, community agencies and as counselor aides in hospitals. The people you work, depending on your chosen path, can range from children and adolescents to adults, the elderly, and veterans.

In addition to understanding what motivates people and influences their behaviors, you'll learn the scientific methodology behind psychology, along with gaining stronger oral, written, and critical thinking skills. The degree is online, but you'll participate in live-chat discussions and other shared experiences in a virtual environment designed to encourage and challenge your thinking.

Each class you take is an immersion into the subject, and you'll learn from practicing experts in the field. Some of the classes include general, experimental and educational psychology, organizational psychology, cognitive and social psychology, plus the principles of analytic techniques and the psychology of conflict management.

As you near graduation from this program, your interest in helping others may mean the desire to become a clinical mental health counselor. Our master's in clinical mental health counseling will take all that you've learned at the bachelor's level to a whole new level of expertise. This program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling



and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This will help you prepare for the licensing board exam to become a mental health counselor.

This master's program offers the benefit of learning online, and is enhanced further with an internship and on-campus residencies. Some of the classes you'll take include counseling in community settings, social and cultural foundations of counseling practice, group theories and practice, human growth and development, and legal, ethical and professional standards of counseling practice.

As you prepare to graduate with your master's degree, you'll also have your professional career plan completed.

As we know, the need for mental health counselors continue to rise. According to o'net, the demand will grow 11 percent by the year 2031. Nationally, that's over 45,000 jobs!

Ultimately, both of these degrees can offer you a better understanding of yourself. This knowledge can then take you on a career path of your choice.

To learn more, visit Hodges.edu.

Dr. Thomas Hofmann is the Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree program director at Hodges University. He is a Florida Approved Supervisor for Mental Health, Family Therapy, and Social Work Registered interns and a licensed social work and marriage and family therapist.



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ASK THE EXPERT

Hearing Loss and Increased Risk of Falling

Dr. Sarah Sessler, Au.D



Many of the causes of senior citizens falling and injuring themselves are preventable. Physicians routinely advise their older patients to exercise, have their vision checked, and monitor whether any medications may cause dizziness. Another contributor to falls is untreated hearing loss, which has been linked by multiple studies to a significant increase in risk of falls. This information needs to be shared widely with patients over the age of 65, along with encouragement to seek treatment for hearing loss as part of an overall strategy to preserve health and life.

"People with a 25-decibel hearing loss (classified as mild) were nearly three times more likely to have a history of falling than those with no hearing loss. Every additional 10 decibels of hearing loss meant an increased 1.4-fold risk of falling."¹

Hearing aids make sounds in the environment audible, speech clearer, and music more enjoyable. When patients are no longer constantly worried that they won't hear an approaching car or doorbell ring, can freely hear and understand the conversation and can enjoy the sounds of nature and beautiful music, cognitive load and stress decrease. They can fully engage in social activities and interactions with friends and family, and also in the hobbies and physical exercises that keep the body and mind active. In fact, there are now hearing aids that have been clinically proven to reduce listening effort based on brainwave measurements.²

Falls from hearing loss lead to injuries and hospitalization.

Falls are responsible for numerous injuries and deaths among Americans 65 and older. Older people commonly experience brain injuries, as well as hip and other bone fractures after a fall. Beyond the human cost, these serious conditions generate billions of dollars in healthcare expenses due to extended hospital stays, surgical interventions, and related treatments.

"Over BOOK patients a year are hospitalized because of a fall injury, most often because of a head injury or hip fracture."³



One of the most significant studies conducted to determine the connection between untreated hearing loss and falls, utilized data from the 2001-2004 cycles of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.⁴ This survey has regularly collected health data from thousands of Americans since 1971. More than 2,000 survey participants between the ages of 40 to 69 had their hearing tested and responded to the question, "Have you fallen during the past year?" Researchers also tested participants' vestibular function in order to determine if their balance was being affected by hearing loss.

The lead researchers reported that people with mild hearing loss (25 decibels) were nearly three times as likely to have a history of falling. Every additional 10 dB of lost hearing increased the likelihood of falling by 1.4. Even after other factors (age, sex, race, cardiovascular disease and vestibular function) were considered, the findings held true.

Dr. Frank Lin, an otologist and epidemiologist who conducted this and several other studies on the broader implications of hearing loss, suggests the following possible reasons for the link to falls:

- People who can't hear well might not have good awareness of their overall environment, increasing the potential to trip and fall
- Cognitive load increases in those with hearing loss. The brain is overwhelmed with demands on its limited resources to maintain balance and gait, while straining to hear and process auditory input
- Cochlear disorders may include vestibular dysfunction, leading to poor balance

"... a possible causal pathway between hearing loss and falling, are intriguing because hearing loss is highly prevalent but remains vastly under-treated in older adults."⁵

The association between hearing loss and increased change of falling is considered clinically significant. Research is ongoing, but is reasonable to suggest that patients are made aware of the link between hearing loss and falls. Adults over the age of 55 should have their hearing tested annually and wear hearing aids when recommended by their hearing care professional.

Hearing loss decreases awareness of surrounding environment and increases cognitive load. In turn, this raises the potential for falls.

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The Importance of Progesterone Replacement in Both Men and Women

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

Of the many hormones in the body, a select few are typically categorized as being for one gender or for the other. Many people are often surprised to learn, though, that despite these hormones being more prominent in one gender, they are essential for proper body functioning in both.

One example of these hormones is progesterone, which is often considered for women, although it has many essential roles in men. However, progesterone can decline in both genders for a number of reasons, including with age or due to health conditions. When progesterone levels fall, unpleasant symptoms can occur, which is why progesterone replacement is a crucial treatment for those with unbalanced hormones.

What Is Progesterone?

Progesterone is a hormone most often known to be released by the corpus luteum after a woman has ovulated. Also referred to as the “pregnancy hormone,” progesterone prepares the uterus for pregnancy by thickening the lining and preventing muscle contractions that would expel an egg.

Despite its primary role in preparing the female body for pregnancy, though, progesterone is also vital for men, albeit with different roles.

Let’s further discuss the role of progesterone in both genders and why it is crucial for men and women to have balanced progesterone levels.

The Role of Progesterone in Women

Progesterone varies considerably through a woman’s menstrual cycle, with it being produced in low levels during the first half but rising considerably following ovulation. If a woman becomes pregnant, progesterone remains high throughout the pregnancy and aids in breast milk production upon delivery of the baby.

While the ovaries initially produce progesterone, the placenta begins producing progesterone at a higher rate after 8 or 10 weeks of pregnancy. This increase in progesterone keeps the body from releasing more eggs and prepares the breasts to produce milk.



Despite the role of progesterone in pregnancy, it can also be used to prevent pregnancy. In fact, progesterone is often used by itself or in combination with estrogen in hormonal contraceptives. When in this format, it helps the cervical mucus thicken, making it difficult for sperm to reach and fertilize an egg. It can also cause the uterine lining to thin, or it may stop ovulation entirely.

Because of these extremes in the body, promoting an ideal amount of progesterone is critical for healthy fertility, if pregnancy is a woman’s goal.

Signs Of Low Progesterone in Women

Some signs of low progesterone in women include:

- missing periods or having abnormal periods
- uterine bleeding
- repeated miscarriages
- spotting and pain while pregnant
- infertility

Progesterone and estrogen are also closely related, so if progesterone is too low, it may cause estrogen levels to become high, which can cause weight gain, headaches, or mood swings.

The Role of Progesterone in Men

Despite being considered the “pregnancy hormone,” progesterone is also an essential hormone in men.

In men, progesterone plays a vital role in mood regulation and keeping the mind calm. It also impacts libido and promotes fertility from the man’s side. This is because progesterone influences spermiogenesis, or the creation of sperm; if the amount of progesterone in a man is too low, the body might not be able to produce as much sperm, which can influence a couple’s ability to conceive.

Progesterone is also crucial for the biosynthesis of testosterone, otherwise known as the male sex hormone, which is responsible for the development of secondary sex characteristics such as body hair, muscle growth, and a deeper voice.

Progesterone also plays an essential role in the male body regarding counteracting the effects of estrogen, which can cause testosterone levels to decline. Proper progesterone levels ensure that these sex hormones are in the correct balance.

Signs Of Low Progesterone in Men

Some of the signs of low progesterone in men include:

- hair loss
- low libido
- fatigue
- weight gain
- depression
- breast growth
- muscle loss
- bone loss
- erectile dysfunction

Low progesterone levels can also increase the risk of certain health conditions such as arthritis, osteoporosis, prostate cancer, and prostatism.

Estrogen Dominance and Progesterone

Progesterone is an antagonist to estrogen, giving it an important role in keeping estrogen levels in check. However, this also means that if progesterone levels are too low, estrogen levels can become high without anything to keep them in the correct range, a condition called estrogen dominance.

While estrogen dominance is most often referred to in women, it can affect men as well, with both genders having shared and also different symptoms.

Women with estrogen dominance may have symptoms that include:

- swelling and tenderness in the breasts
- low libido
- bloating
- weight gain
- mood swings
- headaches
- increase premenstrual syndrome symptoms
- fatigue
- cold hands or feet
- memory problems
- anxiety and panic attacks

Men can share some of the above symptoms in addition to experiencing infertility issues, breast tissue growth, or erectile dysfunction.

Normal estrogen levels in adult, menopausal women range from 15 – 350 pg/ml. In adult men, estrogen levels should range from 10 - 40 pg/ml. Estrogen counts higher than these ranges may signify low progesterone.

What Causes Low Progesterone?

There are many causes of low progesterone, some due to a temporary situation, whereas others may be more chronic.

Hypothyroidism

Many of the hormones in the body interact, which is evident between the thyroid hormones, T3 and T4, and progesterone. With hypothyroidism, the thyroid does not produce enough hormones, and since the thyroid is responsible for regulating the endocrine system, this can then influence how well the body is able to produce progesterone.

It is also possible for low progesterone to lead to hypothyroidism, so this connection is bi-directional.

Low Cholesterol

Cholesterol is needed by the body in order to make progesterone. So, if your cholesterol is low, your body does not have enough of the building blocks required to produce enough progesterone.

Stress

Stress contributes to many health conditions, and low progesterone is one of them. This is because the hormone secreted by the body when in a perceived stressful situation, cortisol, utilizes the resources needed to make progesterone.

Essentially, when the body is stressed, it halts progesterone production in order to increase the amount of cortisol produced. For those experiencing chronic stress, this means that cortisol continually interferes with progesterone production.

Anovulatory Cycle

An anovulatory cycle is a menstrual cycle where ovulation does not occur. Since a rise in progesterone is triggered by the release of an egg and the empty follicle it leaves behind called the corpus luteum, an anovulatory cycle results in no increase in progesterone.

Anovulatory cycles are common in those on certain types of birth control or with PCOS.

Abnormal Bodyweight

Your body weight can play a prominent role in progesterone production because of its impact on the menstrual cycle. This is because women need a certain amount of body fat in order to have a regular cycle, which leads to ovulation and a rise in progesterone. Because of this, low body weight may impede ovulation, leading to no progesterone production.

Problems can occur at the other end of the spectrum as well, though. This is because fat cells produce estrogen, so high body fat can result in an overproduction of estrogen, which can lead to low progesterone. Studies have shown this correlation between obesity and low progesterone in men as well.

Prolactin Disorder

Prolactin is a hormone produced by the pituitary, and it negatively affects the production of sex hormone precursors. Those with hyperprolactinemia produce too much prolactin, which can disrupt the menstrual cycle, keeping progesterone from being produced.

Correcting Low Progesterone

Progesterone replacement therapy involves progestins, which are synthetic compounds mimicking the effects of progesterone on the body.

Some reasons why someone may be treated with progesterone hormone therapy are to:

- correct a low amount of progesterone due to underproduction
- bring on menstruation
- reverse low progesterone resulting from certain medications
- replace progesterone that is limited due to specific medical procedures

There are many different forms of progesterone hormone therapy, such as:

- injections
- oral capsules
- vaginal gels
- vaginal inserts
- vaginal suppositories

The ideal method of progesterone replacement will depend on gender, symptoms, and personal preferences.

The Importance of Progesterone Replacement

Besides helping to address problems with fertility, progesterone replacement can also be essential for a healthy pregnancy in women. For example, women who are pregnant, but have low progesterone, may be at a greater risk of preterm delivery or miscarriage. Replacing progesterone can help prevent these complications from occurring.



Progesterone replacement produces similar benefits in men regarding improving fertility due to its role in spermatogenesis and the fact that low progesterone can lead to erectile dysfunction.

Progesterone can also help with other symptoms affecting well-being, including those that appear in men with low progesterone. These benefits can include an improvement in mood, better sleep, and stronger bones.

Some cases of low progesterone are temporary, but for those suffering significantly from low progesterone, it is likely due to a chronic cause, and the only way to find relief is by addressing the hormonal imbalance.

Progesterone can be supplemented in many forms, such as injections, pills, or creams, which help raise progesterone levels and assist the body in functioning correctly, reversing unpleasant symptoms. Working with a doctor who specializes in hormones can also ensure that you get just the right amount of progesterone, as too much can also cause problems, especially for those looking to conceive.

By adequately balancing progesterone, all other hormones in the body can work in balance again, significantly improving your quality of life.

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PICKLEBALL INJURIES WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

By James M. Ray, MD

Like most racket sports, pickleball comes with traumatic as well as overuse injuries.

Some pickleball injuries are avoidable, others happen because of court trauma.

When they do occur, you can get the treatment you need to get back on the court and enjoy all that pickleball offers. These injuries result in down time for recovery before you can return to play.

Acute pickleball injuries occur from falls, twists, deceleration and cutting activities involving the knees, ankles, wrists, hands, elbows, and shoulders.

Others are chronic, which happen over time, due to overuse.

Most active players are age 60 years or older, and account for many pickleball-related emergency room visits.

Preparticipation precautions can help lower your chances of injury. Most of these principles were learned through our active athletic years but still hold true today.

- Warm up and stretch before playing. Important to prevent muscle strains and ligament sprains.
- Watch for gym bags, rackets, towels, water bottles, moveable benches/chairs on or around the court that could cause trips or falls.
- Avoid courts that may not be in the best repair, or wet becoming, slippery making foot activity difficult to decelerate and cut.
- Avoid backpedaling (moving backward) which may add to proprioception instability, dizziness, and loss of balance on the court resulting in a fall.
- Communicate with your partner, avoid confusion, maintain spacing during play, watch tripping or running into each other.
- Know your body, hydrate often and rest when fatigued. The majority of injuries occur when tired, winded or out of shape.



**19,000
INJURIES EVERY YEAR
91%
IN PLAYERS 50 OR OLDER**

- **Strains** – A strain results from overstretching or tearing muscles or tendons. Hamstrings are commonly strained if warm-up before playing is inadequate.
- **Sprains** – An ankle sprain involves an injury to a lateral ligament to the outside of the ankle. Pain is usually felt on the outside of the ankle. Depending upon the severity, swelling may be immediate. Discoloration may not immediately present over the area of injury but will delineate the ligament injury.
- **Fractures** – The most common fracture is of the wrist. The mechanism of injury is from falling on an outstretched arm landing on the hand. Going backward for a ball, or falling forward, positioning the arm to break the fall results in the fracture. Osteoporosis also plays a role in the fracture severity.

Returning to play in the case of pickleball injuries is important to understand to prevent reinjury. Less severe injuries like mild muscle (hamstring) strains, players can return to pickleball after a few weeks of

rest and stretching activities. Severe strains may take longer to heal and extend the down time before return. Ankle sprains also may take 3-6 weeks of recovery time before returning to play. Fractures need to be completely healed, no pain with function and full range of motion before return. Bracing may also help with returning to athletic activities.

If medical treatment was implemented after injury, listening to your doctor or health care professional during recovering is important. When you do return to playing, take it slow. Our Medical/Orthopedic/Sports Medicine Experts at Naples-Clinic can care for your acute pickleball injuries, including your chronic injuries, and help you with return to play issues. **Naples-Clinic Offers Walk-in Medical and Ortho Urgent Care.** To learn more, or schedule an appointment, or walk-in call 239-384-9392.

James M. Ray, MD

James M. Ray, MD is an orthopedic surgeon who graduated Medical School in 1979 from Louisiana State University. Dr. Ray trained in Orthopedic Surgery at Orlando Health, Orlando, Florida. He was a Sports Medicine Fellow at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He was also an Academic Physician as an Assistant Professor of Orthopedics/ Sports Medicine at the University of Kentucky, Lexington. He has a master's degree in Executive Health Administration from the University of Florida, Gainesville. He has traveled with numerous Sports Teams Nationally and Internationally. He is now interested in treatment and management of Orthopedic injuries, arthritis, and chronic problems limiting function. He specializes in Quality-of-life issues using IV therapies, biologic injectables and immune boost treatments.

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Medical Marijuana Explained, Sort of...

By Hans Doherty - Growing in Health Florida

I see several clients each day. Many of them are in pain, can't sleep, and are stressed out. Some of them are already (MMJ) medical marijuana card holders. Many of them DO NOT need it! What I'm saying is that most of them can use "non-medical" cannabis to help with these and many other conditions.

First, to obtain your MMJ card you need to have a "qualifying condition". You need to explain to the doctor what your medical condition is. The list is quite comprehensive and honestly, I've never seen anyone get declined by a certifying physician. Second, you need to pay them \$200 (on average) for the exam and pay \$75 to the state. That's \$275 total. Then you need to renew the card after 6 months. Another \$150 (on average) plus another \$75 to the state. \$225 total.

I'll do the math: \$200+\$75+\$150+\$75=\$500.

What do you get for that \$500? You get to purchase and consume Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) delta 9 from a licensed dispensary. THC delta 9 is the federally regulated cannabinoid. THC is great for pain, and sleep, and for appetite. THC will also create a euphoric effect. THC gets you high if you consume too much. Dosing is the most important factor when it comes to THC because of this factor.

What's the difference between medical marijuana and non-medical marijuana?

Nothing really...Cannabis is cannabis. However, the government has categorized any cannabis with a THC content above .03% as marijuana and below .03% as hemp. It's the same plant. It just comes down to the amount of THC contained within.

Then why do people want their MMJ card? Many are told by their doctor that marijuana might help them alleviate their condition(s). Which is true. However, THC delta 9 is only one cannabinoid in the cannabis plant. It's not good for inflammation. It's not good for anxiety. It's not good for "everything" as your physician may think.



There are several other cannabinoids in the plant that are also very beneficial to the endocannabinoid system. CBD is great for inflammation. CBG is great for anxiety. CBN is great for sleep. No MMJ card required for any of these.

CBDA, CBGA, THCA are essentially raw cannabinoids. What this means is that they have not been decarboxylated (heated/converted) into the final elements CBD, CBG, and THC. No MMJ card required for any of these either.

You may have heard of THC Delta 8? This is hemp derived THC. It's about 1/3 less potent than THC 9. It will create a euphoric effect and get you high. Dosing is key.

It's great for pain, sleep, and helps with appetite too. No MMJ card required for this either.

You DO NOT need your MMJ card to enter Growing in Health. We CAN help you obtain your card, if you desire. However, you might not need that to find relief.

That's the bottom line. Before you spend \$500, please stop by and try something here first. Ask questions, be informed, don't waste your money unnecessarily.

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For more information, please message me at info@growinginhealthflorida.org, come by the store, or give me a call. I'm always happy to answer your questions. The more informed people are about cannabis the more they will seek it out as an alternative to other pharmaceutical drugs. That's a big step in a more natural direction.

Thank you for reading!

*FDA disclaimer: Cannabis does not treat, cure, remedy any medical condition.

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



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Pain, Dryness & Irritation: How Women Are Rejuvenating Their Lives

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

Who doesn't want to feel better and more confident about their sexual health? Many women try to hide their condition from their partner, or suffer in silence because they believe it's "normal" for them. That couldn't be further from the truth. Whether your pain is caused by endometriosis, pelvic conditions, vulvovaginal atrophy, hormonal dysfunction, or from medications, there are answers.

Female Sexual Dissatisfaction Has Many Causes

Natural processes like aging, childbirth and menopause can have deleterious effects on a woman's sexual well-being and sensations. Since we all tend to avoid anything that doesn't feel good, a woman's sexual desires and success in achieving them are inversely related to the atrophy and scarring in the vaginal canal that these life-events can create, like tearing of the vagina during childbirth, dryness of the vaginal tissues after menopause, and the laxity of the vagina causing decreased sexual sensation. Sexual satisfaction can be negatively impacted by hormonal changes after menopause, but many women cannot take vaginal estrogens or do not find this treatment to be effective or convenient enough. This is where laser energy comes in: CO2 laser energy has been proven to regrow normal collagen (a necessary protein found in all of our organs) in the vaginal and vulvar tissues leading to improved "accommodation" and "stretchiness" of the vagina which in turn leads to greater sexual satisfaction and lubrication and a decrease in discomfort during and after sex.

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Although, hormone therapy can be used to treat vaginal vulvar atrophy and dyspareunia (painful intercourse), sometimes it isn't enough. The CO2RE Intima procedure has helped countless women enjoy life like they used to. It is noninvasive, nonsurgical and is performed in your physician's office.



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- CO2RE Intima is an in-office, non-surgical laser procedure to restore vaginal health, by improving hydration and promoting healthy vaginal pH
- Each CO2RE Intima treatment relieves symptoms of vulvovaginal atrophy, rejuvenates vaginal tissue and treats exterior tissue to improve vaginal cosmetic appearance.
- 100% showed significant improvement in vaginal health (elasticity, fluid volume, pH level, epithelial integrity and moisture)
- 91% reported an improvement in dryness

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- You desire enhancement in sexual functioning and a better sexual experience.
- You seek vaginal cosmetic improvement and you want to feel more confident about your feminine health.

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Joseph Gauta, MD



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UNDERSTANDING GYNECOMASTIA

A Common Concern for Men

By Gunnar Bergqvist, MD

Gynecomastia is a common condition which describes the development of breast tissue in men. Almost 95% of all men will have gynecomastia at some point in their life.

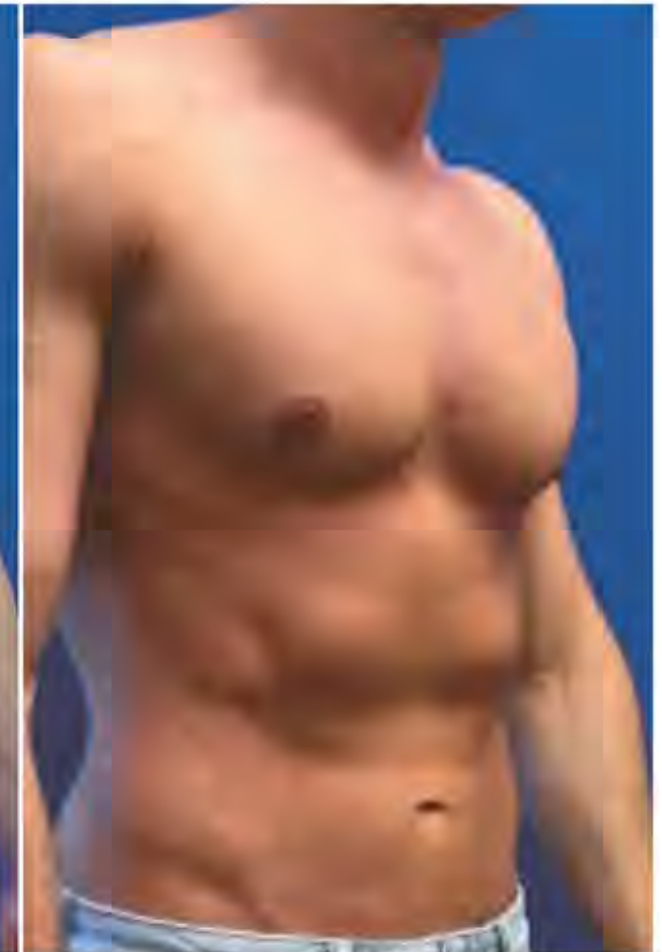
The peak incidence is 12.7 years of age and also secondary peak, which starts developing after the age of 65.

The most common cause is idiopathic, meaning, the cause is unknown.

It's uncommon that it's related to hormonal changes and normally, laboratory testing is of no benefit and is most often self-limiting. However, if gynecomastia has been present for more than a year, it normally is not something that will correct without surgical intervention.

Gynecomastia comes in three different scales, Grade 1 to Grade 3. Grade 1 is tissue just under the nipple-areola. Grade 2 describes having extra tissue throughout the Breast, but not having extra skin. Lastly, Grade 3 defines having significant amount of extra breast tissue and skin.

There are several ways to correct this: either through open incision; suction methods; or a combination of the two. Currently the best method of treatment is a combination of power-liposuction with Renuvion skin tightening. This uses a plasma helium beam after the liposuction to tighten the tissue. This poses less downtime and risk to the patient as no anesthesia is required and can be done in the clinical office setting using local tumescent anesthesia. Fat grafting and lipo-sculpting during the procedure can give better definition with outstanding results.



It is possible to have abdominal liposuction at the same time.

The photograph attached are of a patient having Grade 2 gynecomastia. This patient has benefited by gaining more confidence and has become more active as a result. The procedure itself takes only a few hours in the clinic and the recovery requires simply slowing down and wearing a compression garment for a few weeks. Most Patients can return to work rather immediately.

Gynecomastia is a condition that can cause distress and impact the emotional well-being of men. By understanding the condition and seeking professional guidance, individuals can find effective treatment options and regain their confidence and self-esteem.

Fun fact, well known Pharaoh, Tutankhamun, had gynecomastia. Some claim the origin of the word "tits" has been derived from "Tutan" who then later became the proto-germanic word "tittaz."

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Gunnar Bergqvist, MD
Practice Made Perfect

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROVIDES A WEALTH OF HEALTH BENEFITS FOR OLDER ADULTS

By Mary Beth Baxter



Regular physical activity can positively impact your body and mind in many scientifically proven ways—from keeping your weight under control and improving your balance and range of motion to strengthening your bones, protecting your joints and even helping preserve your brain function. Also, research shows that regular cardiovascular exercise reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, breast and colon cancer, depression, and falls.

Kay Springston, a resident at The Carlisle Naples, says she is reaping the many benefits of an active lifestyle. She exercises 5-6 times per week and appreciates the convenience of the Zest 'mind, body, soul' wellness classes available onsite at the active retirement community.

"The Qigong class and the instructor are wonderful," she said. "I go every week. It combines movement with breathing and meditation. I find it very relaxing."

The Carlisle offers a robust calendar of wellness activities, including SRG's signature Zest fitness program, Cardio, Strength & Balance™, created to promote the core elements of good health—no matter your age or fitness level. Stretch Fitness, Yoga, and Tai Chi are also offered, as well as Aqua Fitness and Golf Putting, which encourages residents to take advantage of the community's resort-like setting.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention recommends at least 150 minutes of exercise per week of moderate-intensity activity for older adults aged 65 and over and suggests talking with your physician before starting a new fitness regimen.

HERE ARE A FEW ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR STAYING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE:

Walk to better health: Walking improves cardiac risk factors such as cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, vascular function, stiffness, inflammation, and mental stress. According to research, walking may be one of the best exercises for health, and experts recommend a daily goal of 7,500 steps.

Incorporate strength training: Regular strength training can help you feel more confident while doing daily tasks involving bending and lifting, plus improve your bone and muscle density. Sarcopenia, the age-related loss of muscle mass and strength, can be treated and even reversed through resistance-based strength training exercises incorporating kettlebells and resistance bands.

Stay balanced: Many balance or stability problems caused by aging, medication side effects or conditions such as arthritis, stroke, Parkinson's disease, or Multiple Sclerosis respond well to exercises such as balance classes and Tai Chi and Qigong.

Stretch for success: Stretching loosens and strengthens tight muscles, which can affect posture and balance. A study found that stretching five times per week can increase range of motion up to 2.4 degrees per week in each muscle group.

"Movement energizes us, makes us stronger and nurtures our soul," said The Carlisle's Executive Director Bill Diamond. "Residents may find their strength and independence improve upon moving to our community. In addition to our fitness center with a variety of choices in equipment, exercise programs and classes, our chef-prepared menu options coupled with FreshZest, which focuses on plant-forward and whole-food entrees, provide numerous choices for residents to lead a vibrant, healthy lifestyle."

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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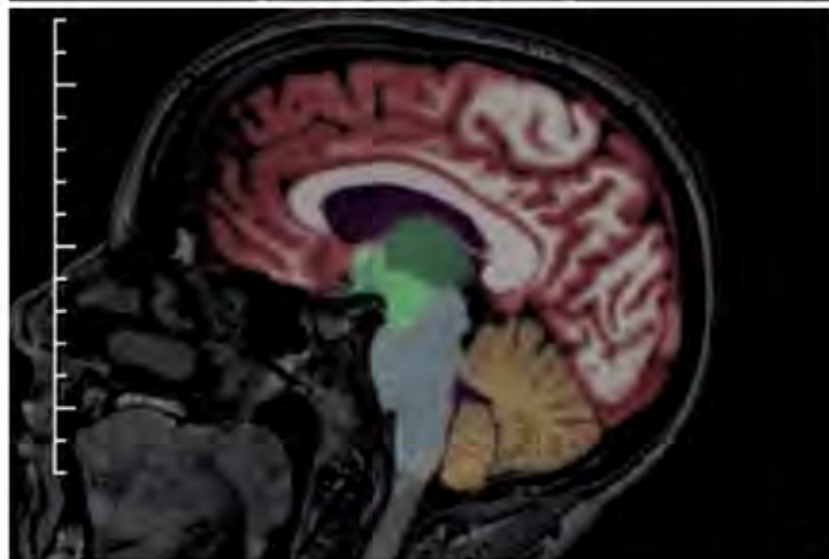
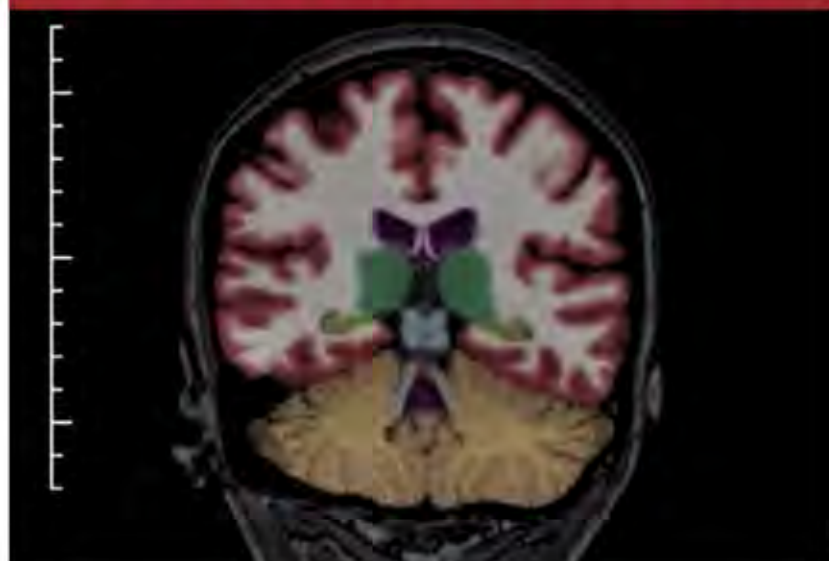
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Bunions Are Quite Painful

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Fashion and trends in shoe wear are often the cause of women's discomfort and issues with their feet. One condition in particular that has been plaguing women for years is bunions. Like other inflammatory arthritic conditions, bunions can be hereditary. It's not uncommon for patients to tell their podiatrist that their mother, sister, or aunt had bunions. After the age of 40, many women begin to notice that their big toe joint hurts, and in moderate to severe cases, it may even begin to protrude and rub on the inside of their shoes. Once this happens painful sores can form, and the joint may begin to swell, causing even more discomfort.

What Can You Do?

Many women will try and work through the pain, but bunions are progressive and once they become inflamed, many people succumb to wearing more comfortable shoes, or using gel toe inserts that help keep the toes in the proper alignment. Icing the foot can help to tamp down inflammations, as well as taking NSAID's (ibuprofen) as needed to lessen the discomfort.

When the conservative approach begins to stop working, which is NOT unusual as most bunions fail to heal on their own, surgery is the definitive answer.

Collier Podiatry Offers Advanced Surgical Options

In bunion surgery, the toe bone is cut in half, and part of the bone is removed. In many cases, there is a need to relieve tension on surrounding ligaments and tendons to try and realign the joint and bones. Generally, bunion surgery is done under an ankle block, which means that your foot will be completely numb, but you will not need to go under general anesthesia in most cases. Surgery can include removing boney spurs, removing part of the toe bone, relieving tension on ligaments and tendons, realigning and reconnecting the joint and

bones. Depending on the complexity of your surgery depends on your need and level of anesthesia.

The total recovery can take a few months, but initially, you will be in a protective boot or cast for the first two to four weeks. You will be able to get around, but you must take precautions as to not injure your surgical site, and instead, allow the foot and toe time to heal properly.

BUNIONS ARE PAINFUL! It's always best to be proactive and get them treated before they get too advanced.

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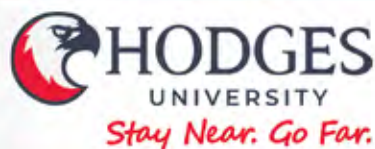
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SHEDDING LIGHT ON CATARACT AWARENESS MONTH

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Cataracts, a common eye condition characterized by the clouding of the lens, significantly impact millions of individuals worldwide. As an internist, I believe it is crucial to raise awareness about cataracts and their implications during Cataract Awareness Month. This article aims to enlighten readers about cataracts, their risk factors, preventive measures, and available treatment options. By empowering individuals with knowledge, we can encourage early detection, promote timely interventions, and ultimately improve the quality of life for those affected by cataracts.

Understanding Cataracts

Cataracts occur when the lens of the eye becomes cloudy, leading to blurred vision and potentially severe visual impairment. Age-related changes in the lens are the primary cause of cataracts, although other factors such as genetics, smoking, diabetes, and excessive ultraviolet exposure can contribute to their development. Symptoms may include gradual vision loss, decreased night vision, sensitivity to light, and the perception of halos around lights.

Prevention and Risk Reduction

While cataracts are typically associated with aging, certain preventive measures can help reduce the risk and delay their onset. Shielding the eyes from harmful ultraviolet rays by wearing sunglasses and wide-brimmed hats outdoors is crucial. A nutritious diet rich in antioxidants, particularly vitamins C and E, may also support eye health. Smoking cessation and managing chronic conditions like diabetes can further minimize the likelihood of cataract development.

Early Detection and Diagnosis

Regular comprehensive eye exams play a pivotal role in identifying cataracts at their early stages. During these evaluations, ophthalmologists evaluate visual acuity, assess the lens for cloudiness, and perform additional tests to determine the severity of the condition. Early detection allows for prompt interventions, ensuring appropriate treatment and minimizing the impact on an individual's daily life.



Treatment Options

While cataracts cannot be reversed or prevented from progressing, effective treatment options are available to restore vision. Surgery is the most common and successful approach, involving the removal of the clouded lens and its replacement with an artificial intraocular lens. This outpatient procedure is safe, generally painless, and typically results in significant visual improvement. Post-operative care and follow-up appointments are crucial for monitoring healing and optimizing outcomes.

Cataract Awareness Month serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining optimal vision health. By educating individuals about risk factors, preventive measures, and available treatment options, we can empower them to take proactive steps towards preserving their vision. Regular eye exams, healthy lifestyle choices, and timely interventions are key to reducing the burden of cataracts and enhancing the quality of life for affected individuals.

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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All the Rage with Celebrities, The Vampire Facelift and Facial Can Give You Your Youthful Appearance Back

By Kathleen M Marc, MD, FACOG

As we age skin can become dull, lose elasticity and droop. There are of course surgical options and hyaluronic acid fillers, but the procedures that are topping everyone's wish list are the Vampire facelift and the vampire facial.

Naturally found in your blood, platelets are a rich source of proteins called growth factors, which promote healing and regeneration. Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) contains a higher concentration of platelets than the amount normally found in your blood. To create PRP a sample of your blood is drawn and placed in a centrifuge, which separates out the platelets. These concentrated platelets are recombined with your blood plasma to make PRP. Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is then reinjected into the problem areas.

PRP injections are an alternative to Botox and fillers. Platelet Rich Plasma is taken from the patient's own blood, spun down and reintroduced into the face just like a filler to create and stimulate your body's own growth factors. PRP produces collagen, hyaluronic acid, elastin, and plumps the skin. PRP injections with the vampire facelift maintain the facial contours of the natural look of the patient.

With just four to six PRP treatments over a two to four-week period, patients are seeing results that last for up to 2 years, so over the long-term, it's very cost effective and 100% safe. You don't have to be concerned about toxins or chemicals with your own PRP.



Vampire Facelift

For the "facelift", the PRP is injected into various areas of the face to create a plumping effect. The procedure is safe because it's utilizing the patient's own blood and it's free of toxins. The body begins to "repair" itself and regenerates collagen, elastin and healing properties, which create a youthful appearance.

Vampire Facial

The facial works in much the same way as the "facelift", but with tiny perforations in the skin as opposed to injections. The tiny perforations allow the PRP to penetrate into the dermal layers, and the results continuously improve the glow of the skin within two to three months. Many patients report plumped skin, a brighter complexion and seeing less noticeable dark circles.

Bring out your inner beauty naturally. Your beauty will be revived with a natural face shape, increased collagen, smoother skin, increased blood flow, youthful glow, and a younger appearance.

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Vampire Breast Lift

The Vampire Breast Lift is a non-surgical way of enhancing the breasts, and giving them a lift, without causing the downtime and pain that implants or even a standard breast lift would involve. It can give fullness, lift and enhance cleavage.

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Kathleen M Marc, MD, FACOG
Medical Director

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Homestead Tax Considerations When Renting Your Home in Florida

By Naples Attorney Zachary W. Lombardo

There are tens of thousands of listings on Airbnb, Vrbo, and other rental platforms throughout Florida. If you are considering renting your home out, or if you already rent your home out, that may impact your homestead protections and, correspondingly, result in increased property taxes.

Recent Case Provides Guidance on Renting Your Home

The Florida Supreme Court's recent holding in *Furst v. Rebholz* provides guidance on the impact of renting your home on homestead protections. The Supreme Court held the Florida Homestead Tax Exemption and the Florida Save Our Homes Exemption could be reduced by a property appraiser if part of a home is rented out for commercial purposes.

Florida Homestead Tax Exemptions

The Florida Homestead Tax Exemption is a state constitutional benefit that allows homeowners who meet specific criteria to reduce the taxable value of their primary residence by up to \$50,000 for certain taxes. To qualify, the homeowner must have owned and occupied the property as their primary residence on January 1st of the tax year.

The Florida Save Our Homes exemption is a Florida law that limits the amount of annual assessed value increases to the lesser of 3% or the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), for homesteaded properties. This exemption provides protection to homeowners from significant property tax increases when the value of their homes appreciates.

The above two protections can result in significant tax savings for homeowners.

Potential to Lose Homestead Tax Exemptions

In the *Furst* case, a property owner rented out a portion of his house and lived in the rest. The property appraiser discovered this and concluded that because some percentage of the property was being used for commercial purposes, specifically a rental, the homestead tax exemption and the save our homes exemption did not apply to that percentage of the property.



The Florida Supreme Court has affirmed this analysis but made a few distinctions: 1. The analysis employed does not apply to work-from-home scenarios, and 2. Because of property divisibility issues, the holding does not apply to the homestead protection of real estate from creditors.

Another important distinction is arguably that in the *Furst* case, the portions of the house were rented out for full-year periods. This is important because many rent out their entire home, but only for a small percentage of the year. Arguably, because the homestead protections apply to an owner's primary residence, that status is not lost if the owner, for example, goes on a trip and rents out their home while away. If, however, an entire portion of a home is rented out all year, that portion is not your primary residence.

About the Author

Zachary W. Lombardo is a Naples native and an attorney at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. His Juris Doctorate is from the Florida State University College of Law. He focuses his land use, zoning, business, contract drafting, and litigation practice in the Southwest Florida community.

Zach has successfully represented and guided clients in land use and local government matters, including advocating for as well as objecting to

comprehensive plan amendments, re-zonings, variances, conditional uses, and non-conforming uses before the Marco Island Planning Board, the Marco Island City Council, the Collier County Planning Commission, the Collier County Hearing Examiner, and the Board of County Commissioners of Collier County. He also has experience in property tax appeals, code enforcement and appeals of code enforcement matters. In addition, he has represented and guided clients on matters involving public records, including litigation.

Zach guides clients in environmental concerns and issues involving state lands, including environmental resource permits and sovereign land leases before state agencies and in litigation. Zach also serves as board counsel to the City of Everglades City Planning and Zoning Committee and represents the firm's various municipal and special district clients.



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ACU-HEALING: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO MIGRAINE PREVENTION AND RELIEF

By Alik Minikhanov, AP, DOM

It's a gorgeous day; the sun shines brightly, and a gentle breeze blows through the trees. Some people dread these days – can you imagine?

But bright lights can trigger migraines, and the sun flashing off car mirrors and windows can ruin the rest of your day. Unfortunately, light isn't the only trigger. Any of the following can trigger a migraine.

- Hormonal changes
- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Stress
- Sleep changes
- Weather changes
- Diet
- Dehydration
- Smell
- Medication Overuse

So, how can you help against the auras, pain, and exhaustion that come with a migraine?

You could limit your triggers.

Anyone who's had migraines is aware of the triggers listed above and, in fact, may find more than one item listed can trigger your migraines.

Diet is one thing that also triggers some patients' migraines, specifically caffeine. But caffeine feels like a necessity if you're like most working adults!

Then there are triggers that are harder to control, like light. You can't hide in your basement if you have to go to work, and asking your co-workers to work with some of the lights off doesn't win you any friends.

Limiting triggers is a great first step; naturally, in our society, medication will come as the next best solution when migraines occur.

However, migraine medication works for some – not all.

Some migraine medications work really well at stopping the migraine before it gets too far. It may stop auras completely and even keep the pain from ever happening!



However, these medications come with their own risks and adverse effects, including, but not limited to:

- Weight gain
- Insomnia
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Headaches

If you have regular migraines, your medication to prevent them may also contribute to them! It's a trigger called Medication Overuse Headache.

Medication isn't the last solution to migraines in fact, it may be one you're looking to avoid or combine with other options like acupuncture, a treatment Dr. Alik is all too familiar with.

Dr. Alik's Acu-Healing can help with migraines.

A study conducted in 2012 showed that "...acupuncture is at least as effective as prophylactic drug treatment and has fewer adverse effects. Therefore, acupuncture should be considered an option for patients willing to undergo this treatment."

Acu-Healing combines treatments like acupuncture, meridian massage, and energy healing. It relieves migraine triggers like stress, changes in sleep, and hormonal changes, starting with the root cause, not just the symptoms.

Acu-Healing has a cumulative effect, meaning that the benefits of each session build on the previous ones. A study titled Acupuncture for the prevention of episodic migraine conducted in 2016 stated, "...the effect of true acupuncture was still present after six months."

Dr. Alik has worked with dozens of patients with varying levels of migraines who use a combination of treatments to manage their triggers.

Managing migraines involves understanding and addressing triggers that can provoke these debilitating headaches. While triggers such as hormonal changes, caffeine, stress, and environmental factors may be difficult to control, limiting exposure to them can be a crucial step in prevention.

Medication is often employed for migraine relief, but it may not work for everyone and can come with its own side effects. As an alternative, treatments like Acu-Healing, which combines acupuncture, meridian massage, and energy healing, offer a promising approach. Research suggests that acupuncture can be as effective as prophylactic drugs with fewer adverse effects.

Dr. Alik's Acu-Healing focuses on targeting the root causes of migraines and has shown cumulative and long-lasting benefits. By working with patients to manage their triggers, Dr. Alik aims to provide effective relief for individuals suffering from migraines.

If you struggle with migraines, considering alternative treatments like Acu-Healing may offer a new path toward better management and improved quality of life.

How do you book an appointment with Dr. Alik?

Visit our website at iamdesignedtoheal.com or call 239.322.3817 to schedule your **free initial consultation** with Dr. Alik.

We cannot wait to help you simply feel better!

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New Loss Support Group Welcomes LGBTQ+

While many of the reactions to a significant loss are common among all groups of people, those who identify as members of an LGBTQ+ community often must deal with additional stressors related to their grief. In response, Avow's Center for Grief Support offers a new weekly discussion group for LGBTQ+ people to share their grief journeys in a welcoming and accepting environment. The group meets on Friday mornings at 10:00 AM on Avow's campus in central Naples.

"Despite a positive trend in attitudes about people who are not straight, it is still true that LGBTQ+ citizens in the US are disenfranchised by too many individuals, systems, institutions, and programs," says Rita Ruggles, MSW, manager of Avow's adult bereavement services. "This can be especially painful when someone is grieving the loss of a partner or relationship that many in society refuse to acknowledge as legitimate, legal, and deeply meaningful. While their straight friends and relatives are embraced and supported during a period of loss, LGBTQ+ people often don't feel comfortable even openly acknowledging that their relationship exists. That isolation from social norms and traditional sources of support can be devastating and can lengthen and complicate how someone comes to healthful terms with such overwhelming loss."

The group is facilitated by Avow bereavement volunteer Judy Gaffney, who understands the underlying biases and prejudices that many LGBTQ+ people face in their daily lives. "Many of the people in our group have experienced rejection from their biological families, friends, religious institutions and workplaces simply for acknowledging their natural sexual orientation or gender identity," says Gaffney. "Some cannot even speak of the loving partnership they have enjoyed for years or decades. When society won't even recognize that non-straight relationships are valid, equal, and worthy, those who are LGBTQ+ can feel stranded and alone in their grief. We are here to put an end to that isolation and to offer unconditional support to LGBTQ+ people grieving a loss."

"We want to make sure that group participants feel welcome, that they don't have to wonder what straight, cis-gendered people in the group may think about their sexuality, relationships, or loss. We talk about how other negative realities common to this



community – such as discrimination, rejection, and lack of legal equity with the straight/cis community – can deepen and color their loss of a loving relationship. There is no judgment here."

Mike Dias, volunteer for Avow and Naples Pride, agrees that open visibility in the group is essential to its success. "Our community has experienced decades of discrimination and exclusion," he explains. "Many of us lived through the early years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, when we lost so many friends and 'chosen family' members. We experienced such tremendous grief and fear yet were isolated and mocked. That experience still colors our need to be visible, to be comfortable in settings where we can be vulnerable and honest without fearing aggression or discrimination against us."

Gaffney says the group commonly discusses the death loss of a partner or loved one but invites participants to talk about other topics such as losing relationships during a gender transition or when coming out to family and friends. "Grief is not confined to the loss of a partner," Gaffney says. "We talk about whatever is on our participants'

minds, with the goal of helping everyone come to terms with their feelings so they can build an authentic, rewarding life."

Avow, a palliative care, hospice, and grief support nonprofit agency operating for 40 years in Collier County, has earned a platinum credential in the SAGECare cultural competency training from Sage, an organization for advocacy and services for LGBTQ+ elders. The Avow campus, near the intersection of Pine Ridge Road and exit 107 of the I-75 Interstate, is a safe space for those who identify as LGBTQ+.

Those interested in attending the LGBTQ+ support group should contact Gaffney at Judy.Gaffney@avowcares.org. To learn more about any Avow service, call (239) 280-2288, or visit avowcares.org.



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TOP 7 BENEFITS FOR MEN

Men in Florida face various challenges, from coping with stress to managing pain and inflammation.

Medical marijuana has emerged as a powerful solution to these issues, offering numerous benefits for men's physical and mental health. In this article, we'll explore ten key benefits of medical marijuana for men, which could make a significant difference in your daily life. By the end, you'll be eager to explore the advantages of medical marijuana and how men can benefit from this natural alternative.

Say Goodbye to Insomnia

One of the most common problems that men face is sleeplessness or insomnia.

A good night's rest is essential for maintaining overall health and well-being. Medical marijuana is known for promoting relaxation and improving sleep quality.

Its calming effects can help you unwind at the end of a long day, allowing you to fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer. By enhancing the quality of your rest, medical marijuana can boost your energy levels, mood, and overall performance during the day.

Conquer Inflammation and Dominate the Gym

Inflammation is a natural response to injury, but chronic inflammation can lead to various health issues, including joint pain and reduced mobility.

For fitness enthusiasts and athletes, inflammation can be a significant roadblock in their quest for peak performance. Medical marijuana has potent anti-inflammatory properties, making it an ideal alternative to traditional pain relief medications. By reducing inflammation and alleviating pain, medical marijuana enables you to hit the gym harder and recover faster, ensuring you stay on top of your fitness game.

Ignite Your Passion: Enhance Sexual Function and Desire

Medical marijuana has been found to impact sexual function and desire in men positively.



It can help alleviate performance anxiety and promote relaxation, allowing you to be more present and engaged during intimate moments. Moreover, medical marijuana improves blood flow and increases sensitivity, heightening the sexual experience. A recent study review in *Psychology Today* found 74 percent said cannabis improved their sexual satisfaction, while 59 percent said it increased their sexual desire.

With the help of medical marijuana, it may be possible to enhance and rekindle the spark in your love life.

PTSD Relief: Reclaim Your Peace of Mind

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating condition that affects millions of men worldwide.

The symptoms of PTSD, such as flashbacks, nightmares, and anxiety, can make daily life incredibly challenging. Medical marijuana has been found to reduce the severity of PTSD symptoms, helping men regain control over their mental health.

In a placebo-controlled, double-blind study published in March 2021 in *PLOS ONE*, it was found that cannabis was very beneficial for PTSD that can affect up to 20% of recent veterans. Over the course of a year, the study found that cannabis users reported a greater decrease in the severity of their PTSD symptoms. It was also found that they were more than 2.5 times as likely to no longer meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD as those who did not use cannabis.

Support Your Mental Health: Ease Anxiety and Depression

Mental health is critical to overall well-being, and medical marijuana has positively impacted various mental health conditions.

By promoting relaxation, reducing stress, and improving mood, medical marijuana can be a valuable tool in managing anxiety and depression. Medical marijuana's natural ability to bind with the endocannabinoid system can help balance brain chemistry and provide much-needed relief for those struggling with these conditions. A 2019 study of 103 adult patients found CBD to be better tolerated than routine psychiatric medications, displaying great promise as a tool for reducing anxiety in clinical populations.

Alleviate Chronic Pain and Enhance Quality of Life

Chronic pain can be debilitating and negatively impact your daily life.

Medical marijuana has proven effective in managing various types of pain, from neuropathic pain to cancer-related pain. Its analgesic properties can help reduce the reliance on prescription painkillers, which often come with a host of side effects and the risk of addiction.

By using medical marijuana as a natural pain relief alternative, you can significantly improve your quality of life and enjoy your daily activities without being held back by pain.

Strengthen Your Immune System and Ward Off Illness

A strong immune system is essential for preventing illnesses and maintaining overall health.

Research suggests that medical marijuana can support the immune system by modulating immune responses and reducing inflammation. According to research published in the *Journal of Neuroimmunology*, Cannabinoids can modulate both the function and secretion of cytokines from immune cells thus offering treatment opportunities for inflammatory diseases.

By incorporating medical marijuana into your health regimen, you can fortify your immune system and reduce your susceptibility to various ailments.



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Understanding Polycystic Kidney Disease

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) means that the kidneys have become damaged. The common causes of CKD are diabetes mellitus, hypertension, inherited diseases, and nephritis.

Polycystic kidney disease is the fourth leading cause of kidney failure and 600,000 people in the United States have the disorder. Polycystic kidney disease (PKD) affects the kidneys with cysts that grow and are filled with fluid. These cysts can damage the kidneys, and essentially take over the kidney's ability to work properly, especially if there are numerous cysts growing at one time. These cysts can severely reduce kidney function.

Poly cystic kidney disease can also affect other organs in the body including the spleen, ovaries, liver, pancreas, bowels, brain, and heart. Most people don't develop PKD until middle age, and the symptoms can range from mild to severe.

The primary symptoms of PKD are as follows:

- High blood pressure
- Back or side pain
- Swollen abdomen
- Blood in the urine
- Frequent bladder and/or kidney infections
- Fluttering or pounding chest
- Chest pain
- Headaches

50 to 60 percent of individuals with PKD will develop kidney failure.

PKD Treatment

Individuals with PKD will need dialysis and possibly a kidney transplant. There are also medications that can help treat the disorder and certain diets that will help to prevent the growth of the cysts, which can stop the progression of the disease. PKD can be genetic, so it's best to speak to your physician about your children's health or any planned pregnancies.

How Can the Progression of Kidney Disease Be Delayed?

1. Keeping blood pressure under 130/80 or if you have diabetes or protein in the urine, under 125/75.
2. Taking certain types of medications called ACE-Inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers.

3. If you are diabetic, keeping blood sugars tightly controlled (HbA1c less than 7.0).
4. Avoiding medications that harm your kidneys such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. (NSAIDs). Examples are Motrin, ibuprofen, Aleve, Advil, Naprosyn. A Cox-2 inhibitor called Celebrex is also harmful.
5. Avoiding, if possible, IV contrast dye used for CT scans and heart catheterizations and gadolinium used in MRIs.
6. Controlling your cholesterol.
7. Quit smoking.
8. If overweight, losing weight.
9. Treating anemia if present.
10. Avoiding Fleet phospho-soda (oral) and Fleet enemas for patients in Stage 4 and 5 chronic kidney disease.

Associates in Nephrology

Associates in Nephrology has been providing comprehensive kidney care and transplant services in South-west Florida since 1984. Our team of nephrologists, nurse practitioners, and medical assistants are engaged in all aspects of providing the most advanced services for kidney disease and kidney transplants.

Chronic Kidney Disease Program

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) means that the kidneys have become damaged. The common causes of CKD are diabetes mellitus, hypertension, inherited diseases, and nephritis.

The purpose of the CKD program is to slow the progression of damage to the kidneys and treat associated complications such as hypertension, anemia, and bone disease. If we are unable to arrest the disease process and the kidney damage progresses to end stage renal disease (ESRD), our plan is to manage these complications while preparing patients for renal (kidney) replacement therapy. This therapy can consist of peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, home hemodialysis, or kidney transplantation.

Managing these complications and preparing patients for renal replacement therapy is a complex process of visits, treatment, and teaching sessions. Our medical team consists of nephrologists (kidney doctors), nurse practitioners, registered dietitians, nurses, and medical assistants.

Services Provided

Associates in Nephrology provides treatment for many kidney related conditions, as well as kidney transplant services.

- All forms of Dialysis – Hemodialysis and Peritoneal
- Diabetic Kidney Disorder
- Dietitian Services for Kidney Patients
- Disorders of Blood Chemistry
- Electrolyte Disorders
- Fluid Overload, Edema (swelling)
- Glomerulonephritis
- Hypertension
- Injections of Aranesp for Anemia related to Kidney Disease
- Kidney Transplant Services: Patient and Donor Evaluations, Post-Transplant Follow-up Care
- Lupus Nephritis
- Nephrotic Syndrome
- Pyelonephritis
- Polycystic Kidney Disease
- Recurring kidney stones
- Renal Failure
- Renal Insufficiency

We work collaboratively with a patient's primary care physician and specialists to slow the progression of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and prevent or manage complications such as hypertension, anemia, and bone disease. Additionally, our multidisciplinary team of professionals can assist you in arranging a wide array of supportive services and educational programs for patients in all stages of CKD. For patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD), our nephrologists can prepare them for all renal replacement therapies: in-center or home hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and kidney transplant.

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Hip Fractures After a Fall:

What I Learned From My Hip Fracture

By Susan Keller, BSN, MPH

On election day, 2022, I enthusiastically rode my bicycle to the local voting precinct to cast my vote. After quickly stopping bicycle, my foot failed to clear the bicycle seat, sending me crashing onto my left hip.

I lay in the street motionless, in childbirth like pain, unable to properly move my left leg.

I didn't wait for someone to ask if they should call an ambulance, I begged bystanders to call an ambulance, I asked every minute, where was the ambulance? Two guys lifted me up. The pain and abnormal position of my dangling leg was a sure indication something was wrong.

The ambulance ride to the hospital seemed to take hours, yet ER triage time seemed to take just minutes. There was a flurry of healthcare team introductions, forms to sign and then preparation for an x-ray.

My belt wasn't even unbuckled when the nurses knew my new pair of J Crew shorts would have to be cut off. I was in significant pain and didn't care.

I was fortunate to have fallen mid-day, as the hospital had an orthopedic surgeon on call and readily accessible.

Dr. Robert Swift, my orthopedic surgeon addressed the fracture head on, preparing me for surgery, which I surely thought could wait at least three days. He informed me this was not the case, as the situation was an urgency.

Two hours later, my sedation had worn off and I was welcomed to the orthopedic unit. I thought surely an indwelling catheter would have been inserted so I wouldn't have to get out of bed to pee, but there was none. Getting out of bed, if to just go to the bathroom, was instrumental in the recovery process.

My mindset changed from "I can't move" to how to "how can I move so it's not painful"?

During my week stay at the hospital, the nursing staff inspected the surgical dressing, assessed my pain and recovery progress. Physical therapy taught me how to reposition myself, get me out of bed and how to walk using a walker.

The goal of the healthcare team was to ensure I was healing and to provide me with the knowledge, motivation and tools to have a successful recovery at home. I was transferred to an inpatient rehabilitation

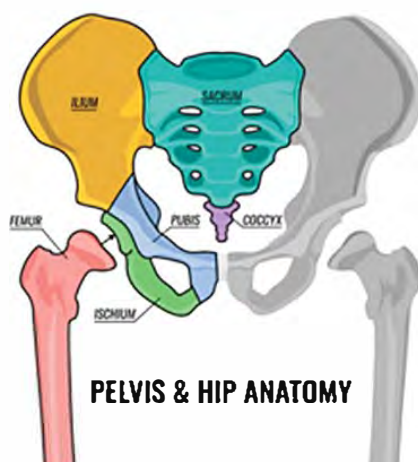
program at a local rehabilitation hospital. Physical therapy was scheduled daily, progressing from two sessions a day, increasing to four times a day by week's end.

Home physical therapy was scheduled before the hospital discharge. Physical therapy reinforced the leg exercises taught in the hospital. I progressed from using a walker to using a rollator. While I was sometimes uncomfortable performing the exercises, they were instrumental in my healing process. Ice, pain medication and my mantra "I can do this" helped the healing process even more.

The partnership between my health care provider and orthopedic surgeon gave me peace of mind that progress was being made.

Almost two months after my hip surgery successfully completing physical therapy. I rode my bike past my neighbors, only to find her sprawled in her driveway, in obvious pain. We elected to drive to the hospital. While she was fortunate not to need surgery, the CT scan revealed she had a pelvic fracture. Fortunately, Dr. Swift was her orthopedic surgeon as well.

There is confusion about what exactly a hip fracture is. Is it a femur fracture? Is there a hip bone? Is a pelvic fracture worse? The hip is made up of the femur and the pelvis. When there is a fall onto the side all of those structures are at risk. There can be fractures of the femur through the top part of the bone. There can be fractures that separate the ball of the femur through the neck. There can be surrounding fractures around the pelvis on the front and even into the back of the pelvis. Many of these fractures are referred to as "hip fractures."



Osteoporosis is a disease in which the bone's mineral density and mass is decreased, thereby negatively impacting bones strength, thereby increasing the risk of bone fracture (broken bones).

Risk factors for osteoporosis include:

- Race
- Women greater than.
- Age (age 50 and over)
- Men with low testosterone levels
- Smokers and heavy drinking (more than two drinks a day on most days)
- Weight (less than 125 pounds)
- Previous bariatric surgery
- Previous fragility fracture as a senior
- Kidney failure, inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, liver disease or an eating disorder
- Taking oral corticosteroids on a daily basis, or other high-risk medications (e.g., thyroid hormone replacement, immunosuppressant drugs, warfarin)

Osteopenia is a loss of bone mineral density (BMD) that weakens bones, normally this occurs first and if untreated can progress to Osteoporosis.

Signs and risk factors, including:

- Height loss
- Receding gums
- Curved, stooped forward shape of the spine
- Lower back pain
- Prior fragility fractures with mild impact can occur at the shoulder, elbow, wrist, spine and ankle.

My hip fracture motivated me to reduce my osteoporosis risk factors that I could control, including maintaining a proper weight, working on flexibility and range of motion exercise, performing resistance exercises, eating a healthy diet, and participating in daily weight bearing activities.

A fall is just not a fall, see your Orthopedic Surgeon or go to the ER. In my case Dr. Swift worked to get me to the operating room urgently. This prevented me from lying in a hospital bed in pain waiting to go to the Operating room. Early intervention got me out of bed and on to a speedy recovery. Early intervention was a key to my early recovery, and a hallmark of Dr. Swift's commitment to care.

Feel free to contact Dr. Robert Swift or ask for him in the Emergency Department if you fall and have concern for a fracture.

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What Does An Otolaryngologist Do?

By Florida Gulf Coast Ear, Nose & Throat

What is an Otolaryngologist?

Otolaryngology is the oldest medical specialty in the United States. Otolaryngologists are physicians trained in the medical and surgical management and treatment of patients with diseases and disorders of the ear, nose, throat (ENT), allergy, and related structures of the head and neck. They are commonly referred to as ENT physicians.

Otolaryngologists are ready to start practicing medicine after completing up to 15 years of college and post-graduate training.

What types of medical problems do otolaryngologists treat?

The Ears – Otolaryngologists are trained in both the medical and surgical treatment of hearing loss, ear infections, balance disorders, ear noise (tinnitus), nerve pain, and facial and cranial nerve disorders.

The Nose – Care of the nasal cavity and sinuses is one of the primary skills of otolaryngologists including sinus disease, allergies, nosebleeds, and nasal deformities (both functional and cosmetic).

The Throat – Otolaryngologists manage tonsils and adenoid infections, diseases of the larynx (voice box) and esophagus including voice and swallowing disorders, airway problems including obstructive sleep apnea and snoring.

The Head and Neck – Otolaryngologists are trained to treat infectious diseases of the head and neck area, both benign and malignant (cancerous) tumors including the thyroid, facial trauma, and deformities of the face (both cosmetic and reconstructive).



EAR

The ear is a very sophisticated organ. It not only provides us with the ability to hear but it is also integrally involved in our balance system.

Hearing loss and dizziness affect millions of lives every year, significantly impacting their quality of life. With specialized training in otology and neuro-otology, our physicians treat a wide array of diseases affecting the ear.



DIAGNOSTIC, TREATMENT, SURGICAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES PROVIDED:

- Adult and Pediatric Ear Disorders
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- Ear Tubes
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- Hearing Aids
- Tinnitus/Ringing in the Ears
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- Middle Ear Problems and Prosthesis
- Perforated Ear Drums
- Otosclerosis and Laser Stapedotomy
- Sudden Sensorineural Hearing loss

We offer advanced diagnostic testing and treatment for all types of hearing loss including sensorineural hearing loss, conductive hearing loss, mixed hearing loss, sudden hearing loss and unilateral hearing loss.

Imbalance, dizziness and vertigo can be very complex problems. That's why we here at Florida Gulf Coast ENT understand the importance of a complete, thorough medical evaluation and in-depth diagnostic testing for your dizziness issues. Let our team of highly trained professionals be a resource for you. Don't let your life be diminished by dizziness, poor balance or hearing loss.

We have one of the largest selection of hearing aids available for people with hearing loss. Our hearing rehabilitation specialists will help you select the type of hearing device that is right for you. We have hearing aids to fit every budget and lifestyle. Financing and special programs are available.

HEARING

We offer advanced diagnostic testing and treatment for all types of hearing loss including sensorineural hearing loss, conductive hearing loss, mixed hearing loss, sudden hearing loss and unilateral hearing loss.

Imbalance, dizziness and vertigo can be very complex problems. That's why we here at Florida Gulf Coast ENT understand the importance of a complete, thorough medical evaluation and in-depth diagnostic testing for your dizziness issues. Let our team of highly trained professionals be a resource for you. Don't let your life be diminished by dizziness, poor balance or hearing loss.

Patients with hearing loss can count on our highly skilled audiology staff to provide comprehensive diagnostic evaluations for hearing as well as rehabilitative technology and services that are unmatched by other area providers.

We have one of the largest selection of hearing aids available for people with hearing loss. We offer a variety of state-of-the-art and cosmetically appealing hearing aids. Our hearing rehabilitation specialists will help you select the type of hearing device that is right for you. We have hearing aids to fit every budget and lifestyle. Financing and special programs are available. We also provide digital programming, repairs, maintenance and accessories onsite.

BALANCE & DIZZINESS

Our specialists perform an advanced comprehensive evaluation, and spend extra time educating patients on the specific nature of their complaints. Our patients leave the office with a complete understanding of their underlying problem. The patients are comfortable with the treatment options utilized to manage these distressing symptoms. Here their problem and the treatment options are analyzed in a comprehensive manner, and delivered by caring and knowledgeable physicians and professionals.

- Vertigo
- Meniere's
- Dizziness
- Inner Ear Infections/Labyrinthitis
- Vestibular Disorders

Hearing Aids & Assistive Listening Devices

You can discuss hearing aid options with the doctors and the audiologist to determine which model might be right for you. Click on appropriate model to read more about the advantages, disadvantages and suitability of each model. You can also discuss surgery to correct hearing loss and assistive devices in the home with the doctors.

- Behind-The-Ear (BTE)
- In-The-Ear (ITE)
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- Completely-In-The-Canal (CIC)
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- Seasonal Allergies to Pollens, Dust Mites, & Molds
- Allergens, Pollen, Dust, Dust Mites & Mold Spores
- Animal Allergies
- Food Allergies – including Gluten & Casein Allergy
- Animal Allergies
- Skin Allergies/Eczema
- Hives
- Anaphylaxis & Angioedema
- Allergy Shots
- Xolair
- Allergic Asthma
- Allergic Reactions to Insects

BALLOON SINUPLASTY**What is Balloon Sinuplasty?**

- Balloon Sinuplasty (BSP) is a safe and effective procedure for many patients seeking relief from uncomfortable and painful sinusitis symptoms.
- If you have been diagnosed with chronic sinusitis and are not responding well to medication, or if you have recurrent acute rhinosinusitis, you may be a candidate for sinus surgery. There is now a less invasive technology used by ENT doctors to treat patients with chronic and recurrent acute sinusitis.
- With Balloon Sinuplasty, ENT doctors open inflamed sinuses in the same way that heart surgeons open up blocked arteries during balloon angioplasty. The procedure is less invasive than traditional sinus surgery, and effective at relieving symptoms of chronic sinusitis. Balloon Sinuplasty allows patients to return to normal activities quickly. Unlike conventional sinus surgery, it does not include removal of bone or tissue from the nose. And, Balloon Sinuplasty is now offered by some doctors in their office under local anesthesia, so that there is no need to go to an operating room or undergo general anesthesia.

THROAT

Problems of the throat are quite common. The staff of Florida Gulf Coast Ear, Nose and Throat is highly skilled and experienced.

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- Voice Gender Dysphoria

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- Airway obstruction
- Sleep apnea syndrome
- Chronic cough
- Laryngeal cancer
- Tracheal stenosis
- Subglottic stenosis

Swallowing Disorders:

- Zenker's Diverticulum
- Cricopharyngeal Hypertrophy
- Cervical esophageal narrowing
- Inability to burp or belch (R-CPD)
- Laryngopharyngeal reflux

ARE YOU ONE OF THE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS SUFFERING FROM MIGRAINES?

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

I would like to talk about some new research on help with a debilitating chronic condition that thirty-nine million Americans suffer from: Migraines.

Migraines are severe headaches characterized by intense, throbbing pain throughout the head. It can last up to two days and attacks can occur several times a month – talk about a condition that can really diminish your quality of life! Women are three times more likely than men to suffer from the condition, and often experience more symptoms such as nausea and vomiting.

Men, however, are more likely to have migraines with auras; flashes of light, a blind spot, a change in vision or tingling sensation in the face or hands. These symptoms can be very concerning and upsetting.

I often recommend keeping a headache journal to record what you ate, what you were doing, and where you were when you felt a migraine come on. This can be useful. But if your trigger is a change in weather or a drop in hormone levels during your menstrual cycle, it's going to be extremely hard – if not impossible – to eliminate these triggers from your life.

New research by the *Journal of Headache and Pain* identifies inflammation as a key component in migraine attacks. The study found inflammation, which is our body's immune response, signals protein clusters to stimulate neurons and cause pain. Therefore, getting to the root of the issue, making changes to eliminate chronic inflammation, can produce better results for migraine relief than limiting the medical response to triggers.

Key contributors to migraine related inflammation, according to recent research:

- **Stress:** Prolonged stress leads to elevated cortisol in the body, which causes not only inflammation, but can disrupt the digestive system, reproductive system, and growth processes in the body.



- **Inflammatory foods:** These include red and processed meat, soda and sugary beverages, refined carbohydrates (white bread, white rice, pasta, pastries, etc.), refined sugars, fried foods, and trans fats.

- **Excess weight:** Research from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis confirmed that fat cells inside the abdomen secrete molecules that can increase inflammation.

- **Low vitamin levels:** If you're low in Vitamin D, folate, magnesium, Riboflavin (B12) and CoQ10, you may be more prone to migraine headaches.

- **Not eating enough antioxidants:** Foods such as berries, leafy greens, nuts, olive oil and fatty fish are all excellent sources of anti-inflammatory antioxidants.
- **Caffeine and alcohol:** Women metabolize caffeine and alcohol more slowly than men, and while every individual is different in tolerance levels, limiting caffeine and alcohol to no more than 1-2 servings a day may help limit the negative effects both these toxins have on the body.

- **Not getting enough exercise:** According to the American Migraine Foundation, regular exercise can help reduce the frequency of migraines. Exercise releases endorphins which are the body's natural pain killers, and it helps reduce stress, improve sleep quality, and maintain a healthy weight—all things that can contribute to inflammation and subsequently, migraine headaches.

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UNDERSTANDING TYPE 1 AND TYPE 2 DIABETES

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

Diabetes is a chronic condition affecting more than 37 million Americans, or more than 11 percent of the population. It is characterized by high blood sugar levels which, if left unmanaged, can lead to a variety of life-threatening complications, including heart disease, stroke, blindness and kidney failure. We have learned a great deal about the disease and treatments have improved dramatically in recent years. However, the differentiation of Type 1 and 2 diabetes is not always well defined and the disease states can overlap in several ways. As a result, some patients are not provided the proper treatment plan to help them best manage their disease.

Historical Generalizations Drives Misdiagnosis

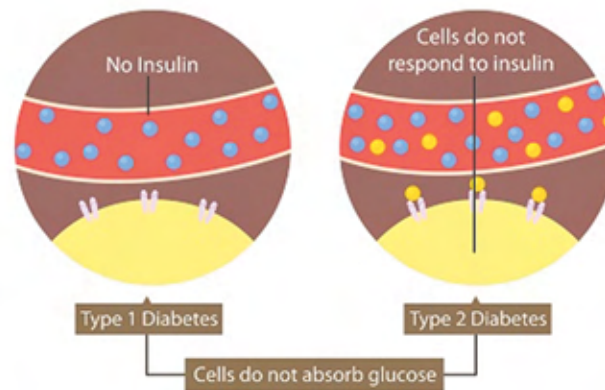
Historically, Type 1 diabetes was considered "children's diabetes," based on the belief that Type 1 diabetes primarily affected children and adolescents. Type 2 diabetes was labeled as "adult diabetes" because it was more prevalent among adults. This perception stemmed from observations made by medical professionals based on the age at diagnosis and the underlying causes of each condition. While both forms of diabetes cause high blood sugar levels in patients with the disease, there are fundamental differences between Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes, previously referred to as "juvenile diabetes" or "insulin-dependent diabetes," is an autoimmune disorder where the body's immune system attacks the islet cells in the pancreas that make insulin. As a result, the pancreas fails to make insulin, leading to elevated blood sugar levels. While it often develops in childhood or adolescence, there has been a rise in adult-onset Type 1 diabetes cases. This phenomenon dispels the notion that it exclusively affects young individuals.

Adult-onset Diabetes Often Misdiagnosed

One form of adult-onset Type 1 diabetes is known as Latent Autoimmune Diabetes in Adults (LADA). LADA shares similarities with Type 2 diabetes in terms of its onset later in life, but it is characterized by an autoimmune response like Type 1 diabetes. LADA is often misdiagnosed as Type 2



diabetes initially, as it progresses more slowly than classical Type 1 diabetes. It is essential for medical professionals to be aware of this distinction to provide appropriate treatment and care.

Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes, previously labeled "adult-onset diabetes" or "non-insulin-dependent diabetes," is the most common form of diabetes. While Type 2 also results in high blood glucose levels, it is due to the body becoming resistant to the effects of insulin and when the pancreas fails to produce enough insulin to maintain normal blood sugar levels. While it is predominantly observed in adults, we are now witnessing an alarming trend of increased Type 2 diabetes cases among younger individuals, partly driven by the obesity epidemic.

The rise in childhood obesity has played a significant role in the increased prevalence of Type 2 diabetes among young people. Unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles contribute to weight gain and insulin resistance, increasing the risk of developing this condition. It is crucial to address these lifestyle factors and promote healthier habits to prevent and manage Type 2 diabetes in children.

Challenges in Diagnosis

Differentiating between Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes can be challenging due to overlapping symptoms and atypical presentations. Misdiagnosis can occur, leading to delayed or inadequate treatment. It is important for healthcare providers to consider various factors, including age, family history, body weight, and autoimmune markers to make an accurate diagnosis.

I was recently referred two gentlemen, ages 24 and 46 with similar presentations. Each are very fit and active. They had each been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes and were taking oral medications appropriate for that diagnosis. Their blood sugars were wildly out of control with sugars ranging above 300 mg/dl often. After confirmatory lab work, I determined that each actually had a form of Type 1 diabetes. I initiated insulin and stopped the oral medications. Their blood sugars dropped to more normal levels and were more easily controlled. Both patients were diagnosed later in life than a typical Type 1 diabetic and have a latent onset of immune-based diabetes. These cases illustrate that the formerly defined classes of diabetes are not universally accurate. Proper diagnosis often requires more exploration, testing and time.

Treating Type 1 and Type 2 Requires Effective Management

Early detection, proper diagnosis, and personalized treatment plans are essential for effectively managing both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. For Type 1 diabetes, lifelong insulin therapy is necessary, as the body cannot produce insulin on its own. In Type 2 diabetes, lifestyle modifications such as healthy eating, regular physical activity, and medication may be prescribed to control blood sugar levels.

It is important to note that individuals with diabetes, regardless of the type, can lead fulfilling lives with proper management. Regular blood sugar monitoring, healthy lifestyle choices, and ongoing medical care are crucial components of diabetes management.

If you have any concerns or experience symptoms related to diabetes, consult a healthcare professional for an accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

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: naplesdiabetesconcierge.com

Compounded Hormone Replacement Therapy

Upon aging, women will start to experience symptoms of hormonal imbalance, which can be related to perimenopause, menopause, postmenopause, giving birth or from a hysterectomy.

Females tend to experience an imbalance of estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone, which can lead to hot flashes, night sweats, anxiety, depression, brain fog, weight gain, loss of muscle, irritability and bone deficiency. Bone loss in women can exacerbate stress fractures caused by osteopenia or osteoporosis.

Changing the hormone levels through bio-identical hormone therapy can alleviate or in many cases eliminate these symptoms and life fluctuations. There are even studies now that suggest bio-identical hormones can help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and dementia.

In the U.S., Bio-identical Hormone Therapy (BHT) has been used since the 1930s. And based on hundreds of current medically thorough studies, the results for patients overall quality of life and dramatic changes in their hormonal symptoms are astounding.

Bio-identical hormones are equal to our body's natural hormones on a molecular level. The difference between synthetic and identical hormones is that synthetic hormones do not match human hormones on a biological level. For example, a very popular synthetic estrogen cream that many physicians prescribe is made from a pregnant horse's urine. Most people can see why the body would not fully accept this substance.



Bio-identical hormones are made from plant sources and are easily received by the body as natural and normal. They are much more therapeutic and effective than synthetic hormonal substances.

Bio-identical progesterone will provide the most efficient way to mesh with the body's natural progesterone receptors. This is critical because body receptors are structure specific. A few of the benefits from bio-identical progesterone are proper embryo development and survival, increase in bone health, protection against breast cancer and endometrial growth, an antidepressant effect, controlling blood clotting and an increased sex drive. The side effects are fatigue and lack of energy or drowsiness.

On the contrary, Progestin (synthetic) doesn't have quite as many benefits. In fact, it has more negative effects, like, miscarriages, weight gain, decreased sex drive, increased risk of breast cancer, high risk of fractures and osteoporosis, increased blood clotting risks, anxiety, depression, migraine headaches and other health related disorders.

Opposite of what some uninformed physicians believe, women that have had a hysterectomy see just as many benefits with progesterone therapy. It's has been widely studied and proven that bio-identical, hormone replacement is just as important and beneficial for their health, even though they no longer have a uterus. For women, progesterone is essential for all of life's stages, and it provides beneficial results outside of the uterus because progesterone receptors are embedded in almost every cell in the body. Women without a uterus still need progesterone therapy.

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Obviously, the bio-identical progesterone hormone therapy is the better option due to its ability to work with the body naturally, and due to the proven health benefits that coincide with the treatment. At MISIRx Pharmacy, they understand the importance of providing this type of hormone therapy for their patients.



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WHAT IS THE MIND DIET?

In this article we focus specifically on the impact a potentially revolutionary nutrition plan called the MIND diet can have on Alzheimer's prevention for seniors.

The possibility of losing our cognitive abilities can be even scarier than the loss of physical abilities as we age. There are an estimated 5.5 million Americans with Alzheimer's, affecting millions more people caregiving for loved ones affected by the devastating disease, with no cure at the present moment. Therefore, many seniors and their families are wondering what they can do to be proactive and prevent the onset of Alzheimer's.

For the purposes of this article, we're going to focus specifically on the impact potentially revolutionary nutrition plan called the MIND diet can have on Alzheimer's prevention for seniors.

The name MIND diet surprisingly isn't in reference to the diet's supposed ability to improve cognitive functioning. Rather, it stands for Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay. The MIND diet meal plan is essentially a combination of two popular diets, the Mediterranean and DASH, with an emphasis on brain foods shown to improve cognitive functioning.

HISTORY OF THE MIND DIET

Dr. Martha Clare Morris, an expert in nutritional epidemiology at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, introduced the MIND diet meal plan in 2015. Her studies on the diet tested and compared the effects

of the Mediterranean, DASH, and MIND diets in adults aged 58-98 years. The study found that diligently sticking to all three diets was associated with a reduced risk for Alzheimer's disease, but only the MIND diet showed lower risk even with moderate adherence. Another study showed that participants who stuck to the MIND diet lowered their risk for Alzheimer's by 54%. In addition to the MIND diet's effect on Alzheimer's prevention, Dr. Morris and her colleagues recently studied the diet's effect on the cognitive decline of stroke survivors.

Those in the study who were highly adherent to the MIND diet had substantially slower rates of cognitive decline than people who didn't follow the diet.

Given the newness of the MIND diet meal plan and relatively few scientific studies conducted, scientists still need to do more research, but the early results are certainly very promising. Some have even coined the phrase "Alzheimer's diet" when referencing the MIND diet meal plan, and US News and World Report ranked the MIND diet #5 in its list of Best Diets in 2018.

FOODS TO EMPHASIZE

If you choose to follow the MIND diet for yourself or integrate it into the meal plan of a senior loved one, here are the brain foods you'll want to emphasize and recommended number of servings/week:

Leafy greens (spinach, mixed greens, kale): aim for at least 6 servings of leafy greens per week. In addition to cognitive benefits, leafy greens are high in vitamin K and many other essential nutrients.

Other veggies: in addition to leafy greens, try to eat one additional serving of vegetables per day.

Berries: aim for two or more servings a week. Smoothies are great for seniors to get their weekly servings of berries.

Nuts: at least five servings per week. Nuts are also a great source of protein and healthy fats.

Wholegrains: three or more servings a day. Common wholegrains include brown rice and whole-wheat pasta.

Oliveoil: replace butter with olive oil, and use it as your primary oil for cooking. Keep in mind that when sautéing, it's better to use standard olive oil than extra virgin olive oil.

Wine: a glass of wine, particularly red, a day has been proven to have cognitive benefits.

Fish: at least one serving per week. Salmon is especially beneficial and is loaded with Omega-3 fatty acids.

FOODS TO AVOID

Some foods to avoid include:

Red meat: aim for less than four servings per week, and choose leaner cuts. Think tenderloin, not rib eye.

Butter and margarine: less than a tablespoon daily.

Cheese: less than one serving per week.

Added sugar: avoid or limit unhealthy desserts, no more than five servings per week. Instead of pastries and ice cream, try dark chocolate.

Fast food: it's best to eliminate fast food altogether because it's typically loaded with sugar and sodium.

One of the big benefits of the MIND diet meal plan is that it's not a "fad diet" and doesn't require you to eliminate lots of foods from your diet. Rather, it calls for moderation of unhealthy foods and emphasizing healthy brain foods. This makes the MIND diet easier to follow for seniors than more extreme nutrition plans like the Paleo diet or Vegan diet.

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

Phone: 239-776-1758

Email: bill.springer@chefsforseniors.com



AT LEAST THREE SERVINGS OF WHOLE GRAINS EACH DAY		
AT LEAST ONE DARK GREEN SALAD AND ONE OTHER VEGETABLE EACH DAY		BERRIES AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK
AT LEAST A ONE-OUNCE SERVING OF NUTS EACH DAY		
BEANS OR LEGUMES AT LEAST EVERY OTHER DAY	POULTRY AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK	FISH AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK <i>If you don't drink alcohol, purple grape juice provides many of the same benefits.</i>
A FIVE-OUNCE GLASS OF RED WINE EACH DAY		
NO MORE THAN ONE TABLESPOON A DAY OF BUTTER OR MARGARINE; CHOOSE OLIVE OIL INSTEAD	CHEESE, FRIED FOOD AND FAST FOOD NO MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK	
PASTRIES AND SWEETS LESS THAN FIVE TIMES A WEEK		

Understanding Vitiligo: Causes, Symptoms, and Treatments

By Christina Tremblay, PA-C

Vitiligo is an autoimmune skin condition that causes your skin to lose its color or pigment. This condition happens when the body's immune system destroys melanocytes. Melanocytes are skin cells that make melanin, which is the chemical that gives skin its color or pigmentation. When someone has vitiligo, they develop milky-white patches on their skin. This condition is more noticeable in people with darker skin because of the contrast between normal skin tone and the white patches that develop with vitiligo.

Anyone can get vitiligo and it can occur at any age. Michael Jackson is famously known for having this condition. For many people, the white patches start to appear before the age of 20. A person has a higher chance of getting vitiligo if they have a family history of the condition. People with vitiligo may be more likely to develop other autoimmune disorders as well. Occasionally, your dermatologist may recommend bloodwork.

There are different types of vitiligo. Non-segmental vitiligo, the most common type, typically has patches that appear on both sides of the body such as both hands. This type tends to slowly spread with new areas developing on and off throughout a person's life. Segmental vitiligo, or unilateral vitiligo, tends to have rapid color loss on one side of the body.



This type typically stabilizes within 6 months to a year and the color loss stops. The total body surface area that becomes affected will vary between individuals. It is unpredictable when or how much the patches will spread.

Vitiligo is a chronic skin disease that does not have a cure. There are various therapy options that can help halt the progression or reverse its effects. Some treatment options include topical corticosteroids, steroid sparing topicals, and/or phototherapy. Opzelura is a newer topical prescription for non-segmental vitiligo to help repigment the skin. Therapy options vary and are always customized for the individual. Vitiligo can negatively impact self-confidence so be sure to consult your dermatologist for your personalized treatment options!

MEET Christina Tremblay, PA-C

Christina Tremblay, PA-C, was born and raised in Orlando. She attended University of Miami on a scholarship, studying biomedical engineering. Christina went on to graduate cum laude with her bachelor of science in biology from University of Central Florida. Prior to PA school, she acquired experience in pediatric and adult emergency medicine at NCH North Naples and Downtown hospitals.



Christina attended PA school at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale. During her graduate studies, she authored and presented research on melanoma and the importance of patient education and screening. Christina was twice awarded the Chancellor's Scholarship and graduated with honors in master of medical science, physician assistant.

Personally trained by Dr. Daniel Wasserman, Christina specializes in general dermatology for all age groups. She emphasizes educating her patients and listening to their individual needs to provide personalized treatment. Christina is passionate about treating skin cancer, acne, rosacea, rashes, and psoriasis. Due to her previous struggle with skin conditions, Christina is particularly dedicated to enhancing how her patients look and feel about themselves. In her free time, Christina enjoys weightlifting, traveling, playing piano, and spending time with her family.

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Don't Forget the Mycotoxins

Sick Building Syndrome and Mold Restoration

By Julie S. Hurst-Nicoll, MBA, CMI, CMR - President, American Mold Experts

Mold produces a byproduct as it grows and matures. That byproduct is called a mycotoxin. The *US National Library of Medicine*, National Institute of Health states, "Mycotoxins are secondary metabolites produced by mold." As the name implies, it is a toxin.

The US National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health continues its comments by stating "metabolites produced by mold are capable of causing disease and death in humans and other animals."* Many of our mold-sick customers have health issues not only due to mold but the mycotoxins they produce.

Symptoms can widely range and affect many different organ systems, as suggested by author and practicing physician Neil Nathan, M.D. He is author of *Mold and Mycotoxins, Current Evaluation & Treatment* (2016). He published the following list of symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Muscle aches and cramps
- Headaches
- Unusual pains ("ice pick" or "lightning bolt")
- Abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhea
- Sensitivity to bright light, tearing, blurred vision
- Chronic sinus congestion
- Cough, chest pain, shortness of breath
- Joint pain with morning stiffness
- Cognitive impairment
- Skin sensitivity to light touch
- Appetite swings and weight gain
- Mood swings
- Numbness and tingling, often in unusual patterns
- Night sweats
- Frequent urination
- Temperature dysregulation
- Sensitivity to static electrical shocks
- Metallic taste in the mouth
- Excessive thirst
- Impotence
- Menorrhagia



Mycotoxin molecules are a much smaller molecule than the mold spore itself, making it easier to travel throughout a structure and ductwork. Mold spores are typically 1-6 microns, while human hair is about 100 microns and a mycotoxin metabolite is .1 micron. This small size, therefore, makes it easy to inhale or be absorbed through the skin.

In today's remediation process we should not only be concerned with mold removal but also these small molecules that can cause severe health issues. There are two areas of focus. The first is removal of all dust particulate where these molecules often land and take up residency. The second is in the ductwork and its role in distribution, which must be addressed in mold remediation projects. We always recommend duct and coil cleaning at the same time of mold remediation.

Not all species of mold produces a toxic substance. But if we see obvious mold and know it has been there for several weeks, we should assume mycotoxins can be present without testing. A recent study of mold growing on wallpaper was determined to produce mycotoxins that were detectable in two weeks of colony growth.**

There are several labs that test for mycotoxins in the urine of suspected mold-sick patients. and there are only a couple of labs that test for mycotoxins in the environment. We find many patients will want the environmental tests to confirm their location of exposure, home, auto or work. We use RealTime Labs in these cases, which require dust samplings of the structure for evaluation.

Testing is not always necessary if you understand the species of mold that produce mycotoxins. The most common include:

- *Stachybotrys chartarum*
- *Aspergillus flavus*
- *Aspergillus fumigatus*
- *Aspergillus niger*
- *Aspergillus versicolor*
- *Fusarium verticilloides*
- *Penicillium chrysogenum*
- *Penicillium citrinum*
- *Penicillium brevicompactum*
- *Chaetomium globosum*

As we all know, when you see mold, no matter what color, it needs to be removed. But how do we remove a .1 micron size molecule? Hepa filtration is only required to remove 99.97 percent of particles of .3 microns or larger. Not small enough. Air scrubbers remove airborne particles down to .3 microns. Still not small enough. In addition to the removal of all dust particulate, we find that newer fogging products, like MoldStainT-Klear by U.S. Enzyme, LLC, effectively ensure mycotoxin removal.

*Mycotoxins, J.W. Benniett and M. Klich, Journal publication July 2003, *Clin Microbiol Rev*; 16(3): 497-516. doi: 10.1128/C MR.16.3.497-516.2003, PMID: PMC164220 PMID: 12857779

**Aerosolization of Mycotoxins after Growth of Toxinogenic Fungi on Wallpaper, August 2017, *American Society for Microbiology, Applied and Environmental Microbiology*. Aleksic B, Draghi M, Bicox S, Bailly S, Lacroix M, Oswald IP, Bailly J-D, Robine E. 2017. *Appl Environ Microbiol* 83:e01001-17. <https://doi.org/10.1128/AEM.01001-17>



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KEEP YOUR PET SAFE FROM THE CANE TOAD

A species of warty, toxic toads invades Florida backyards every year as it multiplies across the southern part of the state. When you see heavy rains, be on the lookout for the Cane Toad. The cane toad, also known as the bufo toad, is a poisonous amphibian that, when provoked, can produce a milky white toxin on its back, a substance that is particularly dangerous to house pets.

The toxin could leave a dog or cat in serious distress or dead in as little as 15 minutes, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission. The creatures breed after periods of rainy weather, according to Toad Busters, a south Florida company specializing in the removal of the dangerous toads. The rainy season lasts through the summer.

The state's wildlife commission encourages homeowners to kill Cane Toads whenever possible. The white toxin is visible near the sacs on the left side of the toad. What do they look like? Honestly, cane toads are gross. They're tan to reddish-brown, dark brown or gray, and their backs are marked with dark spots, according to the University of Florida. They have warty skin. Cane toads have large, triangular parotoid glands on their shoulders that secrete a milky toxin. (Native toads' parotoid glands are oval.) Unlike native southern toads, cane toads do not have ridges or "crests" on top of the head.

Even cane toad tadpoles are toxic. You can spot a cane toad by its size and its triangular glands. Cane toads usually are 4-6 inches long, sometimes growing to 9½ inches. With very few exceptions, any toad in Florida that is larger than 4 inches is not native and almost certainly is an invasive cane toad,

according to the University of Florida. A cane toad's favorite place is the ground. They don't like to climb.



Cane toads are native to South and Central America and were introduced into Palm Beach County to control pests in sugar cane fields, according to the University of Florida. They can be found in central and south Florida and in an isolated population along the Florida Panhandle. They live in urbanized habitats and agricultural lands but also in some natural areas, including floodplain and mangrove swamps. The cane toad (Bufo marinus) can hurt or kill pets.

Cane toads prey on anything they can get into their mouths, according to the University of Florida, but they normally feed on beetles, centipedes, crabs, millipedes, roaches, scorpions, spiders and other invertebrates. They also have been known to eat frogs, snakes, small reptiles, small birds and small mammals.

If a pet bites, licks or even sniffs a cane toad, it could become sick and, if not treated, it could die. Symptoms of poisoning in pets include excessive drooling and extremely red gums, headshaking, crying, loss of coordination and sometimes convulsions. If a dog bites or encounters a cane toad, use a damp cloth or towel and wipe the inside of the dog's mouth to make sure no toxins were swallowed. Do not flush the dog's mouth with a hose. It could send toxins down the animal's throat.

Dogs should be taken to a veterinarian as soon as possible to treat symptoms such as seizures, heart problems such as arrhythmia and body temperatures that skyrocket, then plunge. Dog droppings should be picked up; cane toads are attracted to proteins in the droppings.

There is a humane way to get rid of cane toads. The University of Florida recommends euthanizing them by rubbing or spraying 20% benzocaine toothache gel or sunburn spray (not 5% lidocaine) on the toad. In a few minutes, it will become unconscious. Put the toad in a sealed plastic bag in the freezer for 24-48 hours to ensure it is humanely euthanized.

The best trapping method is a net and a deep bucket with steep sides, according to the University of Florida. Make sure to put a board or lid on top of the bucket. The Florida wildlife commission recommends wearing latex, rubber, or nitrile gloves to safely handle the toads.

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THE MAGNYM PROCEDURE

Revolutionizing Sexual Function and Treating Premature Ejaculation

By Dr. Carolina Young

In recent years, medical science has made significant strides in improving sexual health and addressing common issues such as premature ejaculation. One groundbreaking procedure that has garnered considerable attention is the Magnym Procedure. Designed to enhance sexual function and alleviate premature ejaculation, this innovative technique offers new hope to individuals seeking a fulfilling and satisfying sex life. In this article, we will explore the Magnym Procedure in detail, highlighting its benefits, efficacy, and potential impact on individuals facing sexual challenges.

Understanding the Magnym Procedure

The Magnym Procedure uses a medication called (Neuromodulator) to relax the specific muscles that play a part in causing ED. It is a minimally invasive treatment aimed at improving sexual function and addressing premature ejaculation. This revolutionary technique involves the use of precisely targeted magnetic stimulation to modulate the nerves responsible for ejaculation. By stimulating specific neural pathways, the procedure aims to enhance the control and timing of ejaculation, thereby improving sexual performance and overall satisfaction.

Benefits of the Magnym Procedure

Enhanced Sexual Function: One of the primary benefits of the Magnym Procedure is the potential for enhanced sexual function. By modulating the neural pathways involved in ejaculation, the procedure can help individuals achieve better control over their ejaculation timing, leading to improved sexual experiences for both partners.

Treatment for Premature Ejaculation: Premature ejaculation is a common sexual issue that affects many men worldwide. The Magnym Procedure offers a promising treatment option for individuals struggling with this condition. Through precise magnetic stimulation, the procedure can help regulate the neural pathways associated with premature ejaculation, enabling men to prolong sexual activity and achieve greater satisfaction.

Minimally Invasive and Safe: The Magnym Procedure is a minimally invasive technique, making it a preferable option for individuals seeking sexual health interventions. Compared to traditional surgical procedures, the Magnym Procedure involves

minimal discomfort and has a lower risk of complications. The non-surgical nature of the procedure also means that recovery time is significantly reduced, allowing individuals to resume their normal activities relatively quickly.

Lasting Results: Another advantage of the Magnym Procedure is the potential for long-lasting results. Unlike temporary solutions such as topical creams or medications, the procedure aims to address the underlying causes of premature ejaculation and provide sustainable improvement in sexual function. This can lead to increased self-confidence, improved relationships, and a more satisfying sex life.

Efficacy and Research

The efficacy of the Magnym Procedure in improving sexual function and treating premature ejaculation has been supported by promising research findings. Clinical studies have demonstrated significant improvements in ejaculation control, sexual satisfaction, and overall quality of life following the procedure. The results indicate that the Magnym Procedure offers a viable and effective solution for individuals seeking to address sexual challenges.

The Magnym Procedure represents a groundbreaking approach to improving sexual function and treating premature ejaculation. With its minimally invasive nature, lasting results, and proven efficacy, this innovative technique provides hope for individuals struggling with sexual challenges. As medical science continues to advance, it is exciting to witness the development of transformative procedures like the Magnym Procedure, which have the potential to positively impact the lives of many, fostering healthier relationships, increased self-confidence, and ultimately, a more fulfilling sex life.

Invest in Your Confidence Today

The Magnym Procedure is a quick and effective treatment that allows you to invest in your self-esteem and confidence. Life is too short to not look and feel your best so why not take the step and invest in yourself and your image with this quick and effective non-surgical treatment? If you want to learn more, we can help. Our experienced staff is here and ready to help you learn more about this treatment and determine if it's right for you.

*Individual results may vary



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Rejuvenating Health and Vitality: Exploring the Benefits of NAD+ IV Drip Therapy

In recent years, a revolutionary therapy has been gaining attention for its potential to enhance cellular health, boost energy levels, and promote overall well-being. NAD+ IV drip therapy, which involves intravenous administration of nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD+), has been heralded as a game-changer in the field of anti-aging and regenerative medicine. In this article, we will delve into the benefits of NAD+ IV drip therapy and explore how it can positively impact our health.

Cellular Energy Production

NAD+ is an essential coenzyme involved in various metabolic processes within our cells. It plays a crucial role in energy production, facilitating the conversion of nutrients into adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the body's primary source of energy. As we age, NAD+ levels naturally decline, resulting in decreased cellular energy production. NAD+ IV drip therapy replenishes these levels, boosting cellular energy and promoting optimal bodily functions.

DNA Repair and Anti-Aging

Another remarkable benefit of NAD+ IV drip therapy is its potential to support DNA repair and delay the aging process. NAD+ is a key component in the activation of sirtuins, a group of proteins that regulate gene expression and cellular longevity. By enhancing sirtuin activity, NAD+ promotes DNA repair, reduces DNA damage, and supports healthy aging at the cellular level.

Neuroprotection and Cognitive Enhancement

NAD+ IV drip therapy has shown promising results in promoting brain health and cognitive function.



Research suggests that NAD+ supports the growth and survival of neurons, enhances synaptic plasticity, and improves mitochondrial function in the brain. By bolstering these crucial aspects, NAD+ IV therapy may help protect against neurodegenerative diseases and enhance cognitive performance.

Anti-Inflammatory Effects

Chronic inflammation is a major contributor to various health issues, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and neurodegenerative disorders. NAD+ IV drip therapy has been found to possess potent anti-inflammatory properties by inhibiting the production of pro-inflammatory molecules and modulating immune responses. By reducing inflammation, NAD+ therapy may help alleviate symptoms associated with inflammatory conditions and improve overall health.

Addiction Recovery and Detoxification

NAD+ IV drip therapy has also shown promise in aiding addiction recovery and supporting detoxification processes. NAD+ plays a crucial role in neurotransmitter synthesis and restoration of brain health. By providing the necessary building blocks

for optimal neurotransmitter function, NAD+ therapy can help reduce cravings, alleviate withdrawal symptoms, and support individuals on their journey to recovery.

Enhanced Athletic Performance

Athletes and fitness enthusiasts can benefit from NAD+ IV drip therapy due to its ability to improve energy metabolism and accelerate muscle recovery. By increasing NAD+ levels, this therapy optimizes cellular energy production, allowing athletes to push their limits and enhance performance. Additionally, NAD+ therapy aids in post-exercise muscle repair and reduces inflammation, promoting faster recovery and reduced muscle soreness.

NAD+ IV drip therapy offers a multitude of benefits, ranging from cellular energy production and anti-aging effects to neuroprotection and detoxification support. With its potential to enhance overall well-being and promote longevity, this revolutionary therapy is changing the landscape of regenerative medicine. However, it is crucial to consult with healthcare professionals experienced in NAD+ therapy to ensure safe and effective treatment. As research continues to unveil the full potential of NAD+ IV drip therapy, its transformative effects on health and vitality are becoming increasingly evident.

To learn more about NAD+ IV drip therapy and how it can benefit your health, talk to IV Therapy inc today. With the right nutrients and support, you can enjoy a safe and healthy travel experience that leaves you feeling refreshed, rejuvenated, and ready for anything.

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We're All Looking for Ways Age Well: Why That Must Also Include Eye Health

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

Recently, the American Academy of Ophthalmology presented an article entitled, "Fighting the Signs of Aging? Don't Forget the Eyes," by Reena Mukamal. I wanted to share it due to its critical points on many eye symptoms that individuals often ignore. Ignoring these symptoms can intensify treatable disorders and exacerbate disease. It can even lead to low vision or vision loss.

Common eye concerns for adults 40 and older

It's a fact of life for adults. Just like wrinkles, slowing metabolism and graying hair, your eyes are eventually affected by age. It's important to understand how your eyes change with age and what you can do to keep them in the best health possible.

Here is a summary of common eye conditions and diseases experienced at different stages of adulthood. Some of these changes are normal, age-related developments. Others may be signs of a vision-threatening disease or condition. But all of these are reasons why the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends that everyone start seeing an ophthalmologist at age 40 to ensure early diagnosis and treatment that may save your sight.

Presbyopia

Beginning in the late 30s and early 40s, the lens in your eye loses flexibility, making it difficult to read up close. This condition is called presbyopia (which literally means "aging eye") and is commonly treated with over-the-counter reading glasses, though other treatments are also available.

Dry eye

Dry eye develops with age and is a common problem for women during pregnancy and menopause. These hormonal changes cause changes in the eye's tear production. Certain medications can also cause dry eye. If you have dry eye, you may be prone to an eyelid irritation called blepharitis, a common cause of irritation or swelling of the eyelids. In addition to seeing an ophthalmologist, there are many simple things you can do at home to keep your eyes moist.

Diabetic retinopathy

People in their 50s, 60s and 70s with diabetes are most at risk for this disease. Diabetic retinopathy occurs when the small blood vessels inside the retina

swell, leak fluid or close off completely due to elevated blood sugar levels. But you can take steps to prevent diabetic retinopathy with tight control of blood sugar and blood pressure levels. It is also critical to see your ophthalmologist regularly for diabetic retinopathy screening exams.

Cataracts

Cataracts are very common in older people. As you age, proteins in your lens begin to clump together. These clumps, known as cataracts, make the lens less transparent and cause blurry, cloudy or dim vision and increased glare. Many people with the condition describe it as similar to looking out of a dirty windshield. Cataracts can interfere with daily activities like driving at night and distinguishing colors. Treatment can include glasses for early stages of cataracts and surgery to remove them.

Glaucoma

Glaucoma damages the optic nerve, which transmits visual information to the brain. This damage often leads to loss of side vision. Left untreated, this can lead to complete blindness. Glaucoma is most common in people age 55 and older. One of the problems with glaucoma, especially open-angle glaucoma, is that there are typically no symptoms in the early stages. Many people who have the disease do not know they have it. This is why it is important, especially as you get older, to have regular medical eye exams.

Floaters and Flashes

As people grow older, the fluid that fills the inside their eye starts to shrink, forming clumps or strands. These can appear as "floaters" (small specks or lines moving in your field of vision). This fluid can also pull away from the back wall of the eye, causing you to see "flashes" (flashing lights or lightning streaks in your vision). This is normally harmless, but in some cases, it can lead to retinal detachment and cause blindness. If you experience new floaters and flashes, it's important to see your ophthalmologist as soon as possible, especially if you are over age 45, are nearsighted or have had eye injuries in the past.

Source: <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/news/fighting-signs-of-aging-don-t-forget-eyes>

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD)

AMD affects the central vision, limiting a person's ability to read and recognize faces. This can be caused by a thinning of the macula (the light-sensitive part of the retina) or by a growth of abnormal blood vessels under the retina. AMD can lead to blindness if not treated and it is the leading cause of blindness in Americans over 65. But early and regular visits to the ophthalmologists can reduce vision loss and, in many cases, recover vision.

So what's the best defense for aging eyes?

You can keep your eyes in the best shape possible by being proactive. Don't wait to develop symptoms before seeing an ophthalmologist. The Academy recommends that all healthy adults, even those without symptoms, have a comprehensive eye exam by age 40, as this is when age-related changes begin to happen to our eyes.

After the baseline exam, adults should have comprehensive exams:

- Every two to four years until age 54
- Every one to three years until age 65
- By age 65, every one to two years, or as recommended by your ophthalmologist.

Some adults may need more frequent eye exams if they have a disease or condition that may impact their eyes, such as diabetes.

If you are experiencing any changes in your eye health, whether it is blurry vision, pain, impaired vision, or any other visual irregularities, you should see an ophthalmologist right away. The earlier a disease is detected, the better the outcome and treatment options are for you. You will find a friendly and warm environment at Personalized Retina Care of Naples. Please call (239) 325-3970 today to schedule your eye exam. When necessary same day appointments can often be accommodated.

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



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BREAKING THE SILENCE: UNVEILING MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

By Richard Capiola, MD

Mental health knows no boundaries, affecting people of all genders, ages, and backgrounds. However, there remains a pervasive stigma surrounding men's mental health issues, leading to a significant number of men hiding their struggles until they reach a critical point. In this article, we shed light on the challenges faced by men when it comes to depression and anxiety, the reasons behind their reluctance to seek help, and the importance of breaking the silence surrounding men's mental health.

The Hidden Burden of Depression and Anxiety

Depression and anxiety are common mental health conditions that impact millions of men worldwide. Despite this prevalence, men often find it difficult to acknowledge and express their emotions due to societal expectations. The pressure to conform to traditional masculine ideals, which emphasize strength and emotional resilience, can make it challenging for men to admit their vulnerabilities.

The Mask of Masculinity

Men are often conditioned to believe that revealing their mental health struggles is a sign of weakness. The societal stereotype of masculinity perpetuates the idea that men should be stoic, self-reliant, and unaffected by emotional turmoil. Consequently, many men suppress their feelings, wearing a metaphorical mask that hides their pain and prevents them from seeking the help they desperately need.



The Consequences of Silence

Failing to address mental health issues in their early stages can lead to severe consequences for men. Untreated depression and anxiety can exacerbate feelings of hopelessness, isolation, and despair, impacting relationships, work performance, and overall well-being. Moreover, men are statistically more likely to turn to self-destructive coping mechanisms such as substance abuse, which further compound their mental health struggles.

Breaking the Stigma

Breaking down the stigma surrounding men's mental health is crucial to encourage open dialogue and foster a supportive environment. Education and awareness campaigns need to challenge the notion that seeking help is a sign of weakness, emphasizing that it is an act of courage and strength. Media, community organizations, and healthcare professionals play a pivotal role in creating spaces where men feel comfortable discussing their mental health concerns.

Promoting Help-Seeking Behavior

To encourage men to seek help, mental health resources and support should be readily available and accessible. Employers can implement workplace programs that address mental health issues, offer counseling services, and promote a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, mental health professionals can adopt a gender-sensitive approach, recognizing the unique challenges faced by men and tailoring treatments accordingly.

Role Models and Peer Support

Positive male role models who openly discuss their mental health struggles can inspire other men to seek help. Celebrities, athletes, and public figures who share their personal stories contribute significantly to breaking down barriers and dismantling harmful stereotypes. Peer support networks, both online and offline, can provide safe spaces for men to connect, share experiences, and support one another.

The journey towards destigmatizing men's mental health issues starts with acknowledging the challenges faced by men and understanding the reasons behind their reluctance to reveal their struggles. By challenging societal norms and promoting help-seeking behavior, we can create an environment where men feel empowered to prioritize their mental well-being. Let us unite to break the silence surrounding men's mental health and ensure that every man has the opportunity to seek support, find healing, and live a fulfilling life.

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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.



CLOSED HOME SALES ON THE RISE

By Robert Nardi, Broker/Owner

Closed sales of homes in Naples during the first quarter of 2023 exceeded closed sales reported in the first quarter of 2019 (pre-COVID), when inventory levels were nearly three times the current level. According to the March 2023 Market Report by the Naples Area Board of REALTORS® (NABOR®), which tracks home listings and sales within Collier County (excluding Marco Island), overall inventory in March increased 92.4 percent to 2,900 properties from 1,507 properties in March 2022. While historically low at 3.6 months of inventory, inventory in Naples has continued to grow since it bottomed out at 0.8 months in December 2021.

Closed sales decreased 16.5 percent to 1,017 closed sales from 1,218 closed sales in March 2022, but compared to March 2019, closed sales increased 2.6 percent. Pending sales in March decreased by 14.5 percent to 1,377 pending sales from 1,611 pending sales in March 2022; compared to March 2019, pending sales increased by 22 percent. At the same time, new listing growth was relatively static in the first quarter of 2023. New listings during March decreased by 17.9 percent to 1,369 new listings from 1,667 new listings in March 2022, but compared to March 2019, new listings for the month slipped by only 2.5 percent.

Lastly, driven by the condominium market, which had a 5.9 percent increase in its median closed price, the median closed price in March increased 7.3 percent to \$615,000 from \$573,000 in March 2022. Compared to the single-family market, the more significant growth in the condominium market was due to its affordability. Therefore, demand is higher because buyers most likely could afford a condominium at a lower price than what a single-family home would cost them, driving the higher median price.

The NABOR® March 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 a chart format. Please send an e-mail request to Robert Nardi at Robert@NardiRealty.com to receive your copy.



What does this mean?

Buyers today are facing high-interest rates, rising property and flood insurance rates, and low inventory levels; these factors are not diminishing demand for those who wish to live in Naples. Even though we have a 3.6-month supply, it should not discourage potential buyers. It comes down to where the buyer wishes to purchase. Inventory numbers could fluctuate at any time. From all indicators, some areas of Naples could have an over-year supply of homes like Port Royal. My thoughts are that inventory should become available at a faster rate. However, some sellers are still sitting on the fence because they fear a possible recession may impact their home's value. However, they must realize that what they paid for it twenty years ago is a much smaller number than what they could get now. These sellers would be wise to jump off the fence and toss their property into the ring. It indeed could be a great time to sell!

Searching for a loan

If you wish to purchase in today's market, there are still a lot of opportunities to find a lower interest rate or find programs out there that could assist you in purchasing. My best advice is to seek out a mortgage broker.

Tell the mortgage broker about your work life and what organizations you work for or have worked for. Are/Were you in the military, a firefighter, or a first home buyer? Some programs could assist you with your down payment, get discounts on the interest rate or do both! The most important tool you can use when you buy a home is a pre-approval letter that lists your rate and what you are qualified for. Therefore, there will be no guessing about what you can afford or cannot afford. You can buy with confidence.

If you shop for new construction, some builders discount interest rates as low as 4.99% if you finance through their mortgage company. Hence, when you walk into a new home sales center, ask the sales associate about discounted mortgage rates.

Lastly, if you have an investment account, the other possibility is to speak with your financial advisor. With an investment portfolio, you could borrow against it and receive a reduced interest rate than the standard. You would then have to pay monthly, including principal and interest. The interest paid could be deposited directly to your investment account based on loan terms. Therefore, you would be paying yourself the interest! You must ask your financial advisor. The possibilities are endless.

Seasonal Rentals

If you, your friends, or your family wish to book a seasonal rental for 2024, they should do it as quickly as possible to get the best selection for the next season. By this time, many rental agencies know who will or will not be returning next year. If you are interested in booking, please contact Sheri Martin, Rental Administrator for Nardi Realty, at 239-571-6189 or via email at sheri@teamone-source.com. Or you can always search for your rentals at www.BuyNaples.Net. Enjoy exploring and have a healthy and happy summer!



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Six Ways to Advocate for Yourself, The Caregiver, at Work

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

In May we shared *Advocating for Yourself, The Caregiver, At Home*. Today, we share *Six Ways to Advocate for Yourself, The Caregiver, at Work*.

According to AARP, one in six US employees spends 20 hours per week, on average, as an unpaid caregiver, assisting an older relative. Today, working mothers (there are 20 million in the US) have a lot of support from employers like child care assistance, flexible spending accounts for childcare, etc. But what about working daughters and working sons? There are 53 million unpaid family caregivers in the United States. Where is your help? The answer is, there is not a lot of it, which is why you must learn to advocate for yourself at work.

1. Start Planning Now

Caregiving will happen to you. Take a good look at your situation. How old are your parents or other potential people who may need you to provide care for them? The average age of someone receiving care is 69.4. The average age of the caregiver is 50.1. If you are a woman reading this, you are almost twice as likely to be the primary caregiver than your male counterpart. Start conversations about end of life care so you are not surprised later. Ask the people in your life about their expectations.

2. Talk to Your Supervisor

Sadly, only 56% of caregivers report their work supervisor is even aware of their caregiving responsibilities. Managers often report they did not know



about an employee's situation, but wish they had. Instead of leaving this vacuum for your employer to fill with speculation, talk to them. Tell them what is going on. Take your opportunity to shape the narrative.

3. Talk to Human Resources

Forbes reports that up to 80% of employees never look at their full benefits package. It is likely you do not know what your company actually offers. Do they offer paid time off for eldercare? Some do. What about flexible spending accounts geared towards paying for eldercare expenses like medicine and adult day care? By talking to Human Resources you can find out what is actually covered.

If HR does not have any support they can offer, show them what other companies are doing. Introduce them to EASE: Employee Assistance Solutions for Eldercare. (www.seniorcare-nyfl.com/ease.html). Or, find what other companies offer and share that. (Best Places To Work for Working Daughters 2022 list at www.workingdaughter.com/bestco2022.) The more Human Resources knows about the needs employees have the more they will be able to advocate for those needs.

4. Speak Up: It Is Okay To Cry At Work

Share your story with your coworkers. Most caregivers are afraid of the backlash of sharing their caregiving story, choosing to hide reality by blocking out "busy" time on their calendar instead sharing the truth of their life like, "Mom's Chemo Appt." But, if you do not speak out about the reality of your life, how will anyone else know it is okay to?

5. Create Your Own Support Network

With 1 in 6 people providing unpaid care to elderly relatives, it is likely that your coworkers are going through the same thing. Do what you can to change the culture. Create a Caregivers Lunch Hour where you and your coworkers come together and share local resources and success you have had. Perhaps you could wrangle a younger co-worker to be your planner. Or, ask your boss to hire an intern to plan events for you. College students need credit hours. When you are in the thick of it do not deny or downplay the utter exhaustion and loneliness you feel. All change happens when people share their story.

6. Keep the Long Term Perspective

As sure as caregiving comes, it also goes. When you are in the thick of it do not deny or downplay the utter exhaustion and loneliness you are sure to feel but remember caregiving ends. The average length of time for elder caregiving is 4 years. You will want to quit your job at some point. But, unless you have at least 30 years of income in the bank, do not. Do everything you can, but remember you can not do it all.

Special Note: If you are management level and above, you have the responsibility to understand this issue now. Your employees need more support than you know. They will go the extra mile when they feel supported. If you would like to talk about your benefits package and how it can be enhanced to support caregivers, call us at (212) 913-9963 or (239) 330-2133. We can help you build a more robust benefits package.



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Medicare Things to Know...

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

CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services)

CMS regulates marketing and plan presentations, including when companies are allowed to market, and how they market. **Unsolicited direct contact that was not requested or initiated by the consumer is prohibited.** This includes in-person (e.g., door-to-door marketing), telephonic (e.g., outbound telemarketing), electronic (e.g., email, voicemail messages, text messages) solicitation. **DO NOT** give anyone that contacts you without your permission your personal information.

There are companies that are using unethical marketing practices; do not let yourself be taken advantage of. Medicare and Social Security will never call you unless you reached out to them for a return call. There are companies calling individuals pretending to be Medicare, claiming to be there to help. Again, **Medicare will not call you to enroll you in a plan!** Some companies that may have your prescription Part D drug plan have been calling customers saying they are entitled to some free benefits. They try to switch you to an Advantage Plan Part C because they are more profitable. If that occurs you will not have Original Medicare anymore and, since it is illegal to have an Advantage Plan and a Medicare Supplement (Medigap) at the same time, you will lose your Medicare Supplement plan. You might never be able to get a supplement plan again. You must medically qualify for a supplement plan; if when you re-apply you are older and have developed illnesses that come with age, you could be ineligible.

Florida is an entry age state for Medicare Supplements; this means that all premium increases will be based off the age you were when you joined the plan. There are lower cost Medicare Supplements that work well if you are healthy and do not need a lot of care. The price of the lower cost supplement plan plus the out-of-pocket maximum you could pay if you got really sick is still less than the out-of-pocket maximum cost of most Advantage Plans. Insurance agents and insurance companies like to sell Advantage Plans because they make more money. I'm not saying they are bad, but you need to understand the true differences and what could happen in the future.



Did you miss Medicare/Health Insurance Open Enrollment?

THERE ARE: Special Enrollment Periods

- You turn 65 or are new to Medicare
- MOVING out of the Area, Moving to a New Area.
- You qualify for extra help with Medicare Prescription Drugs
- You dropped a Medigap Policy for the 1st time within the 1st 12 months
- Special Needs Plans - New or no longer requiring a Special Needs Plan
- Losing Coverage

*You qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain life events, including **losing health coverage, moving, getting married, having a baby, or adopting a child.** Depending on your Special Enrollment Period type, you may have 60 days before or 60 days following the event to enroll in a plan.

Individual/Family Medical Insurance – There are other options available if you do not have pre-existing conditions. These plans can be a lot less expensive especially if you do not qualify for government subsidy. There are national carriers that offer particularly good plans with comprehensive coverage. You can buy them any time during the year. Do not go without coverage!

Travel Insurance – Most of our USA Health plans do not include coverage when leaving the United States, including Cruises. We recommend always getting a comprehensive Medical Travel Insurance Policy. They are less than you think and can make a world of a difference. There are Trip cancellation insurance policies that cover you for delays, cancellation, lost baggage; they can be costly but may also be well worth it; but check that the medical coverage is enough.

Pet Insurance – Our fur babies need insurance coverage too. The younger you start the less it costs as vet bills escalate. Most of us would do anything for our 4-legged loved ones. Why not cover them as well. There are a wide range of deductibles and copays. In most cases coverage starts for less than \$1.00 a day. Pre-existing medical conditions in most cases are NOT covered, so the earlier the better.

You should really work with a local broker to explore all your options. Don't invite strangers into your house or give them your personal information over the phone. With social media, Facebook, WebEx solicitation if you do not know them, please be careful. There are so many scams out there. Go or call a local agent, build a relationship and if in the future you have a question you can back and see them.

Also remember when moving you may have a special enrollment period to apply or change your health insurance coverage. Also check your wills, trusts, and make sure they follow Florida's laws and guidelines. Establish yourself with a local Insurance Broker, Attorney and CPA. Ask a professional; most of the time your first consultation is at no charge.

To learn more about your options, call to schedule an appointment:

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5 Tips for Minimizing Toy Chaos in Your Home

by **maidpro**

Remember those days (before kids) when it was safe to walk barefoot across a room without risk of stepping on a Lego? When your visual field wasn't constantly being assaulted by assorted plastics in bright primary colors? When a tidy room might actually stay tidy for something longer than 3 minutes?

Right, us neither. If you have kids in the zero to preteen range (and that includes fur babies!), then toy chaos is a fact of life. You need to accept it, but don't have to succumb entirely. Here are 5 tips for minimizing toy chaos in your home.

Dedicate excess storage capacity for toys. Let's say, for example, you have 3 bins designated for daily toy storage. If those bins are stuffed full at the end of the day, you can pretty much count on them being dumped loudly and thoroughly at the start of the next day's play. Double bin capacity and fill each one only halfway, making it much easier for kids to rummage through and find what they are looking for. Sorting and labeling bins by major toy types, by kid/toy ownership, and so forth further minimizes the likelihood of dumping.

Schedule playdates wisely. Some kids are just natural born scatterers. Like, you are quite sure they stand in the middle of a room, flinging things around when you're not looking. Figure out who THOSE kids are and keep a closer-than-usual watch when they come over to play. Also, be honest.



If your kid is the scatterer, make sure they do at least their fair share of post-play tidying. If you are consistent with this, both dumping and scattering behaviors should abate over time.

Move toys in and out of heavy rotation. Keep a secret, well-out-of-reach space available for stowing away some portion of your kids' toys. Every so often, when your kids are either out or asleep for the night, remove and stow a few items from daily bins. If you notice your child looking for something, you can surreptitiously return it to daily rotation. Or you can magically find stowed items on bad-weather days, when kids' boredom levels are peaking. If a few weeks or months go by and a stowed item is never mentioned, you can be sure it's safe to move along. That goes for brand new stuff as well. So, for example, let's say you host a birthday party for your child's entire class of 25 kids. Few children will remember all 25 gifts they opened (especially if they unwrap the gifts during their exciting party). Pay close attention to how they react when opening each gift. When they're not looking, grab and stow the ones that receive the least-excited reactions. Add sticky notes to remind you who gave what and you can get away with re-gifting at other birthday parties or holidays.

Recruit kids for big toy cleanouts at least twice a year. Time these cleanouts for just prior to birthdays or big gift-giving holidays, so you can rationalize as "making space for all the new stuff you are going to get." Other good strategies for convincing kids to part with their beloved old toys include appealing to their sense of:

Growing up and maturing – "Let's give some of these old baby toys to your new cousin!"

Kindness and social justice – "Let's donate some of these toys to kids who are less fortunate than you."

Community – "Let's help raise money for your school by donating some of these toys to the spring fair."

Money and saving – "Let's see if we can sell some of these toys on Facebook marketplace; you can use the earnings to start your own savings account at the bank."

Special occasion – "Let's make this fun; when we're done, we can enjoy [fill in something fun or typically disallowed]."

As always, before donating toys, ensure they are safe, intact, in good repair, and as clean as you would want them to be for your own child.

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When You Are At Your Wits End

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

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.

The 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.



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