

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

# Health & Wellness<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE

July 2023

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**NURTURING  
WOMEN'S  
COGNITIVE  
WELL-BEING**

During Menopause  
and Hot Flashes

**WHEN BUG BITES  
AND STINGS  
NEED MEDICAL  
ATTENTION**

**BEATING  
THE HEAT**

**PROTECTING  
YOUR SKIN**

**PAIN**

Is it Always  
Part of Getting  
Older?

**PROTECTING  
YOUR VISION**

The Importance  
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**ACHIEVE  
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# CHAO PINHOLE SURGICAL TECHNIQUE AND DR. WILLIAM CAMPBELL

The Chao pinhole technique is a minimally invasive method used in dentistry to treat gum recession and improve the aesthetics of the smile. Developed by Dr. John Chao, this innovative procedure offers an alternative to traditional gum grafting surgery. The technique involves creating a small pinhole in the gum tissue near the recession area and using specialized instruments to gently loosen the gum tissue. The loosened tissue is then guided over the exposed root surface to cover the recession. The pinhole acts as the entry point, eliminating the need for incisions or sutures, resulting in less discomfort and a quicker recovery time. The Chao pinhole technique has gained popularity due to its simplicity, effectiveness, and ability to provide natural-looking results, making it a preferred choice for patients seeking gum recession treatment.



**Dr. William Campbell** at Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry is one of an elite group of dentists with the certification to perform the Chao pinhole technique. *Health & Wellness* had the opportunity to interview him recently about this technique and how he got involved in this elite dentistry niche.

**Health & Wellness:** Dr. Campbell, you are one of only a few dentists in the world who are certified to perform the Chao Pinhole Surgical Technique. What made you want to study and become certified in this particular technique?

**Dr. Campbell:** I became interested in the procedure after seeing countless patients coming to the office with significant gingival recession. I have always been open to new ways to better serve patients and their needs.

At the time of learning the procedure, I was 1 of 800 dentists in the world. Today, there are probably 2000-3000 dentists worldwide, which is still a select group of sorts.

**Health & Wellness:** Who is a candidate for this procedure?

**Dr. Campbell:** The majority of patients suffering from gingival recession and its effects are candidates



for the procedure. After a thorough examination and assessment of the severity of the recession, the potential for success can be discussed. Patient expectations must be carefully managed and made clear from the start.

**Health & Wellness:** What do you tell patients who are nervous about the procedure?

**Dr. Campbell:** I have had very phobic patients in the past undergo the procedure. Some have considered using nitrous oxide to help reduce their anxiety, but most do just fine with use of local anesthetic. My team and I are very patient centric and make sure each patient is comfortable throughout the procedure. Most patients typically manage any post op discomfort with the use of ibuprofen for a day or two following the procedure.

**Health & Wellness:** What would you like patients to know about you?

**Dr. Campbell:** I would like patients to know that I enjoy learning and attend continuing education courses regularly. I prefer to use conservative treatment options as much as possible. Comprehensive care, full mouth rehabs and occlusion (bite), use of

guided surgery for dental implants, cosmetic veneers, etc., are procedures I also enjoy doing. I have a great team who supports me and they are knowledgeable and very comforting to patients.

**Dr. William Campbell, DMD** exhibits brilliance when treating his patients, and he is continually striving to absorb as much education and training as possible. He completed the curriculum at the Dawson Center for Advanced Dental Learning in St. Petersburg, Florida, focusing on treatment of occlusion and bite disorders, as well as TMJ/TMD courses at the nearby Piper Education Center. The thirst for these continuing education courses is one tenet firmly rooted at Dr. Campbell's core. Case in point, he completed a one-year accelerated master's degree in the Biomedical Sciences program at Barry University in Miami, Florida. Following completion of his master's, he earned his doctorate in Dental Medicine at Nova Southeastern University in 2009.

Success has always been part of his DNA in one form or another. The native of Queens, New York, was a 4.0 student while playing varsity baseball at St. Thomas Aquinas H.S. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

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## NURTURING WOMEN'S COGNITIVE WELL-BEING DURING MENOPAUSE AND HOT FLASHES

By Sharla Gayle Patterson, MD, MBA

**B**rain Health Month serves as an opportune time to focus on the cognitive well-being of individuals, and in particular, the unique challenges faced by women experiencing menopause and hot flashes. As women navigate this transitional phase of life, hormonal fluctuations can impact their brain health, leading to cognitive changes and challenges. This article explores the significance of Brain Health Month in raising awareness about menopause-related brain health issues and highlights strategies and lifestyle modifications that can empower women to navigate this stage with enhanced cognitive vitality.

### Understanding Menopause and Hot Flashes

Menopause is a natural biological process marking the end of a woman's reproductive years. One of the most well-known symptoms of menopause is hot flashes, sudden episodes of intense heat, often accompanied by sweating and flushing. Beyond their physical manifestations, menopause and hot flashes can also affect a woman's cognitive health. Studies suggest that hormonal changes during menopause may influence cognitive abilities, including memory, attention, and executive functions.

### The Significance of Brain Health Month

Brain Health Month serves as a reminder to prioritize cognitive well-being and address the unique challenges faced by women during menopause. By shedding light on menopause-related brain health issues, this observance aims to promote awareness, education, and action. It provides an opportunity for healthcare professionals, researchers,

and the general public to come together to discuss and explore strategies to mitigate the cognitive impact of menopause and hot flashes.

### Mitigating Cognitive Changes

Although menopause-related cognitive changes can be distressing, there are various strategies that women can employ to nurture brain health. Regular exercise has been shown to have positive effects on cognitive function, mood, and overall well-being. Engaging in activities that challenge the brain, such as puzzles, reading, or learning new skills, can also promote cognitive agility.

A balanced diet rich in antioxidants, omega-3 fatty acids, and B vitamins can support brain health. Additionally, managing stress through techniques like mindfulness, meditation, and relaxation exercises can help alleviate cognitive symptoms associated with menopause.

It is crucial for women to seek support from healthcare professionals who specialize in menopause and understand the complex interactions between hormones and cognition. Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and other medications may be considered in certain cases to alleviate menopausal symptoms and potentially mitigate cognitive changes.

### Empowering Women with Knowledge

Brain Health Month empowers women with knowledge about menopause-related cognitive changes. By disseminating accurate information and resources, women can make informed decisions about their health and seek appropriate support.

Encouraging open conversations about menopause and its impact on cognitive well-being helps reduce stigma and enables women to seek help when needed.

Brain Health Month plays a crucial role in raising awareness about menopause-related cognitive changes, particularly in the context of hot flashes. By prioritizing brain health and implementing lifestyle modifications, women can navigate this transitional phase with enhanced cognitive vitality, ensuring a better quality of life during and beyond menopause.

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# HOW TO PREVENT A UTI

**U**rinary tract infections (UTIs) are one of the most common bacterial infections in the United States, resulting in seven million office visits to healthcare providers each year. Additionally, 50 percent of women and three percent of men worldwide will experience a UTI in their lifetime. While most UTIs are not serious, they can cause discomfort, and if left untreated could lead to kidney damage or sepsis.

UTIs are an infection in any part of the urinary system including kidneys, bladder and urethra, often caused by bacteria, like E. coli, entering through the urethra. Symptoms include painful urination, the frequent urge to urinate and pressure in the abdomen or groin.

“Anyone who has had a UTI knows how uncomfortable they can be,” says Dr. Veronica Gomez, M.D. “While there are steps you can take to help prevent a UTI, the only treatment is antibiotics prescribed by a doctor.”

**Dr. Gomez suggests these habits to help reduce the risk of developing a UTI:**

- **Empty your bladder completely and frequently:** Holding urine for long periods of time can increase the risk of bacteria accumulating in the bladder.
- **Wipe correctly:** To avoid bacteria entering the urethra, always wipe from front to back after using the restroom.



- **Stay hydrated:** Drinking a lot, especially water, helps flush out bad bacteria that can cause infection. Oppositely, avoid liquids that can irritate the bladder like alcohol and excessive caffeine.
- **Avoid irritations:** Scented feminine hygiene products and sprays can irritate the urethra, increasing the risk of developing an infection.
- **Try cranberries:** Cranberry juice is often associated with relief from UTIs and according to the National Health Institute, cranberries contain the compound proanthocyanidins that can help prevent bacteria from sticking to the walls of the bladder.

Dr. Gomez is Board Certified in Family Medicine, and specializes in all aspects of primary care for children and adults. Her preventative care services include child and adult health screenings, menopause, chronic disease management, women’s health, immunizations, and wellness visits.

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*If you are experiencing symptoms of a UTI, or want to book a wellness visit with a primary care physician, visit <https://www.physiciansregionalmedicalgroup.com/doctors-providers/gomez-veronica-md-9118>*



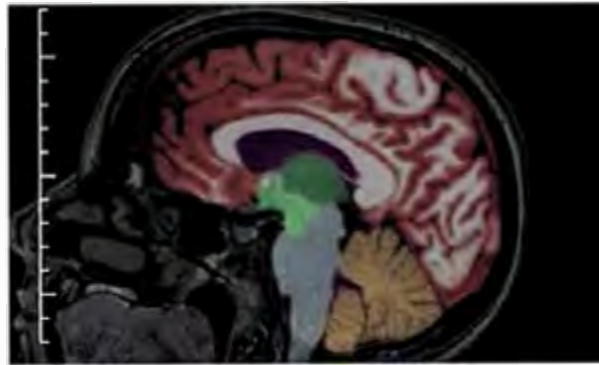
# Alzheimer Dementia

By Michael Shriver, MD - ProScan Imaging NCH Partner

**A**lzheimer disease is the most common form of dementia and is responsible for 60 to 80% of all neurodegenerative disease in the population. This imposes a significant mental, emotional, and financial burden on nations around the world, including the United States. The prevalence of Alzheimer dementia is directly correlated with age. Approximately 10% of adults 65 and older are diagnosed, compared to 20-40% of those over 85-90 years of age being diagnosed with Alzheimer dementia. An estimated 6.7 million Americans aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer dementia in 2023. By 2050, it is projected that more than 12.7 million people will be diagnosed with Alzheimer dementia aged 65 and older. At the age of 70, individuals living with Alzheimer dementia are twice as likely to die before the age of 80 than those who do not have the disease. One in three senior citizens will die with Alzheimer or another dementia. Deaths from Alzheimer dementia have doubled between 2000 and 2019, while most other leading causes of death such as heart disease or kidney disease have decreased over that same time period. As well, patients with Alzheimer dementia before age 60 are more likely to have a genetic form of the disease, emphasizing the need for early detection and intervention. Alzheimer dementia is characterized by the accumulation of cerebral amyloid-beta neuritic plaques and Tau neurofibrillary tangles, which eventually result in the loss of neurons.

These abnormal accumulations of material occur in certain areas of the brain that lead to neurocognitive decline in patients over time. While Alzheimer dementia is a common and impactful disease, it is difficult for primary care providers to diagnose and treat, especially early in the disease process when care can be the most important to slow disease progress. Nearly 40% of primary care physicians reported that they "never" or "only sometimes" are comfortable making a diagnosis of Alzheimer dementia. As well, half of primary care physicians report they do not feel adequately prepared to care for individuals with Alzheimer or other dementias.

These stark numbers and difficulty in diagnosing and caring for individuals with dementia are likely related to the heterogeneity of Alzheimer dementia presentation in patients, which makes it hard to identify and appropriately diagnose. In the past, and often still to this day, the definitive diagnosis is



only made at the time of autopsy following a patient's death. This can often result in ambiguity of a patient's disease, which delays appropriate care. Given Alzheimer dementia's prevalence, impact on society, and deterioration of individuals and their relationships with loved ones, it is of utmost importance to continue our goal to detect Alzheimer dementia earlier, accurately diagnose patients with the correct form of dementia, and optimize the patient's care to delay dementia progression and provide patients with the best possible life as they move forward. Fortunately, there are new FDA approved medications for the treatment of Alzheimer dementia that have shown a delay in cognitive decline for patients.

These drugs are Aducanumab (Aduhelm™) and Lecanemab (Leqembi). These medications target amyloid plaques, with randomized controlled studies showing a reduction in amyloid plaques over the course of treatment. This further exemplifies the need to diagnose Alzheimer dementia early so that patients can receive these groundbreaking and life-changing treatments. ProScan/NCH Imaging offers a variety of radiology services to help physicians diagnose Alzheimer disease. NeuroQuant MRI of the brain is the first FDA cleared software that allows for the volumetric analysis of brain parenchyma. It provides quantitative volumetric measurements of the brain parenchyma, including cortical, subcortical, cerebellar, deep grey, and brainstem structures/nuclei. NeuroQuant can 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. Nuclear medicine imaging also plays a critical role in diagnosing neurodegenerative disorders. F-18 fluorodeoxyglucose

(FDG) PET of the brain identifies areas of hypometabolism in the cerebral hemispheres, which is evaluated by a radiologist to identify the pattern of the patient's neurodegeneration. As well, Amyloid PET uses radiotracers to identify whether amyloid plaques are present or not present in the brain. This will be a critical diagnostic examination to determine if these new groundbreaking Alzheimer treatments are indicated and would be effective for the patient's care. These radiology imaging examinations offered by ProScan/NCH imaging allow the radiologist to provide the patient's physicians with detailed, evidence based findings to accurately detect and identify the patient's neurodegenerative disorder. At ProScan/NCH imaging, these studies are interpreted by board certified Neuroradiologists and Nuclear Medicine physicians, ensuring accurate and precise interpretations. These services will play a critical role in the future care of patients with neurodegenerative diseases, especially Alzheimer dementia.



**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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# PROTECTING YOUR VISION

## THE IMPORTANCE OF UV SAFETY

By Penny Orr, O.D. - Optometric Physician

The warm rays of the sun can be inviting, but it's important to remember that prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation can have detrimental effects on our vision. Unprotected eyes are vulnerable to conditions such as cataract formation, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and other eye disorders. In this article, we will explore the significance of UV safety and provide valuable tips on how to safeguard your vision from the harmful effects of the sun.

### Understanding UV Radiation

UV radiation is a type of energy emitted by the sun. It falls into three categories: UVA, UVB, and UVC. UVC radiation is mostly absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere, but both UVA and UVB rays can cause damage to our eyes. When our eyes are exposed to excessive amounts of UV radiation over time, the risk of developing eye conditions increases significantly. The two most common disorders associated with UV exposure are cataracts and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

### Cataracts: Clouding of the Lens

Cataracts occur when the clear lens inside the eye becomes cloudy, leading to blurred vision and eventual vision loss. UV radiation can be a risk factor for cataract development, particularly in individuals who spend extended periods outdoors without proper eye protection. The harmful UV rays can damage proteins in the lens, causing them to clump together and form a cloudy area. Over time, this cloudiness increases, impeding the passage of light and affecting vision.

### Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD): Central Vision Loss

AMD is a progressive eye condition that affects the macula, the central part of the retina responsible for sharp, detailed vision. While the exact cause of AMD is not fully understood, prolonged exposure to UV radiation is believed to contribute to its development. UV rays can trigger oxidative stress in the macular cells, leading to cellular damage and inflammation. Over time, this damage can result in the loss of central vision, making it challenging to read, recognize faces, or perform other crucial tasks.

### Preventing UV-Related Eye Disorders

Protecting your vision from the harmful effects of UV radiation is vital. Here are some practical steps you can take to reduce your risk of eye disorders:



**Wear UV-blocking sunglasses:** Opt for sunglasses that provide 100% UVA and UVB protection. Look for a label that states "UV 400" or "100% UV protection" to ensure proper shielding from harmful rays.

**Choose wide-brimmed hats:** Pair your sunglasses with a wide-brimmed hat to further shield your eyes and face from direct sunlight.

**Seek shade during peak hours:** When the sun is at its strongest, typically between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., try to stay in shaded areas or create your shade using umbrellas or canopies.

**Use protective eyewear:** If you engage in outdoor activities that expose your eyes to potential hazards (e.g., sports, construction), wear protective goggles or safety glasses designed to block UV radiation.

**Get regular eye check-ups:** Routine eye examinations can help detect early signs of UV-related eye disorders and allow for timely intervention.

UV safety is crucial for maintaining healthy vision. Prolonged exposure to UV radiation can lead to cataract formation, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and other eye disorders. By adopting simple yet effective measures like wearing UV-blocking sunglasses, seeking shade, and using protective eyewear, we can significantly reduce our risk of these conditions. Let us prioritize your eye health and keep your vision healthy this summer.



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**PENNY ORR, O.D.**  
Optometric Physician

Dr. Orr is a board-certified optometric physician that provides a wide variety of primary eye care to patients. She completed her bachelor's degree at Florida Southern College, followed by her Doctor of Optometry degree at the Southern College of Optometry in Memphis. She completed internships at Winter Haven Eye Clinic in Winter Haven, Florida and St. Luke's Eye Institute in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

Dr. Orr is a member of the American Optometric Association, Florida Optometric Association, Southwest Florida Optometric Association, Contact Lens Association of Optometrists and the Kiwanis Club. She has dedicated her time to the Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity, an organization that facilitates the provision and sustainability of vision care worldwide for people who can neither afford nor obtain such care. She has traveled to Belize, Santo Domingo, Costa Rica, Haiti and Panama. Dr. Orr serves on several local boards including the Humane Society of Lee County, Parkinson's of Southwest Florida and Alzheimer's Association Florida Gulf Coast Chapter.

Originally from Maine, Dr. Orr has lived in Southwest Florida since 1989. Dr. Orr is active in sports, particularly tennis, golf and cycling. She is passionate about animal rescue and enjoys crafting and traveling.





## Resistance Training for the Cancer Patient: Maximizing Strength, Power, Functional Mobility, and Body Composition to Maximize Health and Outcomes

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

There are many benefits to adding exercise to cancer treatment, particularly with muscle resistance training activities that increase muscle cell size, bone mineral density (bone strength), muscle strength, functional mobility for daily living activities, and body composition. Strength training that puts sufficient stress on the musculoskeletal system to improve the structural integrity of bones and muscles, stimulates metabolism and the immune system, increases the body's ability to heal, and minimizes the risk of injury is the goal of an exercise program for everyone, but perhaps more so for individuals treated for cancer. Exercise and strength training should be recognized for those who want to add years to their life or improve the quality of the years they have left.

The current medical research suggests that applying the above exercise principles, practiced in a safe environment under expert observation, may offer cancer patients an effective means of improving overall health and cancer-specific outcomes. Resistance exercise training for the cancer patient improves the mind and the heart in literal and figurative ways. Read on to see the connection.

Sarcopenia is the loss of muscle tissue, a process that increases with aging. Cancer patients often experience sarcopenia, as well as the loss of strength, energy, and mobility when undergoing treatments. Those changes are visible to the patient and the caretaker. However, what can't be seen is that the heart muscles are also weakened. The cardiac muscle must stay healthy to pump blood thru the body. Therefore, keeping our body moving and strong, even during illness. Significantly increases our number of days and our quality of life.

Obesity, strength, and functional mobility loss are significant challenges to the cancer patient both during and after cancer treatment. Sarcopenia (the loss of muscle tissue) and obesity are associated with an increased risk of heart disease in cancer survivors. With loss of physical fitness, frailty, and decreased bone health accompanying many cancer treatment strategies, cancer patients are at higher risk for falls, fractures, hospitalizations, and death.

Cancer patients experience high rates of orthopedic issues like pain, nerve damage, limited mobility, frailty, musculoskeletal problems like sarcopenia (decreased muscle mass and strength), and decreased bone mineral density (BMD). These issues are also related to survival outcomes, with the principal underlying factor of a lack of muscle mass strongly associated with poorer outcomes after cancer treatment.

Despite multiple studies demonstrating improved quality of life, physical function, and overall positive outcomes, exercise regimens and resistance training are still not routine in cancer treatment. To date, exercise oncology efforts have predominantly focused on aerobic and lower-intensity resistance training. While specific protocols aimed at improving strength and preserving muscle mass have been established in the literature, the majority of medical professionals are hesitant to apply contemporary resistance training and performance principles that would typically be utilized in individuals without cancer, partially due to fear of exacerbating conditions like lymphedema (swelling of the soft tissue and hardening of the skin) and physical exhaustion.

As a result of cautiousness and the need to establish safety and validity, these strength training regimens have generally focused on seated machine-based lifts that isolate muscles often in seated positions, as opposed to compound body movements and free weight exercises to improve strength, mobility, function, and hypertrophy. As exercise prescriptions become more advanced and relevant to cancer patients, newer regimens should mirror exercise principles used in noncancer populations while accounting for each individual's health and the specific limitations of their diagnosis and treatment. The treatment of early-stage breast and prostate cancer, for instance, may leave individuals without deficits and at an exercise capacity similar to that of the general population.

Muscle mass loss of up to 50% with atrophy of type II muscle fibers and a decrease in the overall number of muscle fibers is common during aging. This correlates with losses in strength and mobility and a higher risk of falls. Muscle loss and sarcopenia appear to be higher among cancer patients than in the general population, and skeletal muscle depletion independently predicts unfavorable clinical outcomes across various cancer histologies. Greater muscle mass is more important than body mass index (BMI) as a marker of mortality. Adequate muscle mass provides multiple benefits, including enhanced strength and physical function, reduced risk of falls and fractures, and enhanced metabolic function and insulin sensitivity.

Exercise is the most direct method to increase physical functioning and performance, specifically through exercise routines that utilize and improve muscular fitness and fundamental movement patterns (push, pull, hinge, squat, and core activation). Specificity of workouts is vital, as regimens should be aimed at targeting and improving task-specific activities, focusing

on exercises that precisely imitate and improve typical movement patterns. Many fractures occur due to loss of strength and balance issues. Optimal functional movement ability improves balance, proprioception, gait, and dynamic agility and is directly associated with a lower risk of injury, particularly among those who are elderly. Compound and functional movements with opposing resistance are performed to improve and optimize particular movements or activities, specifically those of activities of daily living (ADLs), which can help prevent falls and injury. Compound exercises employing functional movements rely on coordination, balance, and extensive muscular activation to offset shear stresses during joint movement.

In summary, there are many benefits of exercise in the cancer treatment and survivorship setting. Optimal implementation of resistance therapy should target hypertrophy, bone mineral density, strength, functional mobility, and body composition, which are best achieved through a series of individualized, high-intensity, compound movements that mirror functional mobility patterns, routinely performed over sessions limited to 60 minutes. Adequate stress on the musculoskeletal system is necessary to promote compensatory cellular mechanisms that improve the structural integrity of bones and muscles, stimulate metabolism and the immune system, optimize functional performance, and minimize mechanical injury risk. The current evidence suggests that applying the above exercise principles, practiced in a safe environment under expert observation, may offer cancer patients an effective means of improving both the quality and quantity of life.



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Dr. Colin Champ, MD, CSCS

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





# HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT SPECIALIST FOR YOUR HEART OR VASCULAR CONDITIONS

Choosing a specialist is very difficult; many times, you don't know which kind of specialists you need for your health problem, and if you do know, it can still be challenging to know which physician to choose.

For instance, you have "circulation" problems because your legs are tired and cramping, skin is hardening and getting dark spots, you have a non-healing ulcer in your feet or ankle, and you have been having leg or ankle swelling.

By having these symptoms, you immediately think you should see a vascular specialist but which one? Do you see a cardiologist or a vascular surgeon?

The best way to go about it is choose a cardiac and vascular specialist with great clinical knowledge and great procedural skills. They will perform an evaluation, and once your doctor has done a thorough examination, they will guide you to whom you should see.

**Making sure your specialist is board certified and qualified is critical.**

Different vascular specialists care for similar conditions. For example, for individuals with vascular or

circulation problems of the legs, cardiovascular specialists, vascular surgeons, and interventional radiologists are all capable of treating vascular-related problems of the leg. All three specialists are highly trained individuals skilled in treating complex vascular conditions, although there are some differences among them.

Many specialists only offer invasive or surgical treatment and would refer you to other specialists for conservative or non-interventional therapy, requiring that you see another specialist.

**Finding a comprehensive physician and practice is beneficial in numerous ways for patients.**

*The Naples Cardiac and Endovascular Center, also known as NCEC, was founded by Dr. Julian J Javier, a board certified cardiac and endovascular expert.* The center is dedicated to conditions of the heart and arterio-venous disease and was created with the purpose of providing a "patient-centered care" approach for patients with heart and vascular problems in one location.

Vascular-related problems go hand to hand with heart disease and share the same risk factors: age, hypertension, high cholesterol, genes, smoking, diabetes, obesity, all risk factors that lead to cardiac and vascular problems of venous and arterial origin.

**Not all conditions require invasive procedures.** The NCEC specialists offer preventive and conservative care, diagnostic testing, and the most highly sophisticated interventions at the comfort of their center. Understanding that not all heart and vascular conditions need to be treated invasively or surgically, the center offers its knowledge of conservative and preventive therapies as well.



Julian Javier, MD



Leandro Perez, MD



Tracey 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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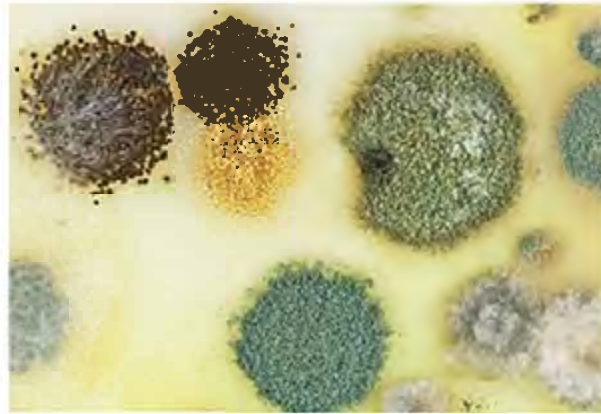
# Remediation Complete... What Next?

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

I often see clients complete their remediation process and render a sigh of relief after their clearance comes back clean. I understand the thought "glad that is over", but the reality is this is where the homeowner due diligence begins!

Yes your home is now mold safe but the key is understanding all the issues that can affect your home in the future and safeguarding your future. From the moment we complete the work recontamination can begin. Mold is everywhere. Have you considered all the issues that could potentially affect your living space:

1. Finding a great deal on a garage sale furniture or even new furniture that has been sitting in a warehouse that might not be climate controlled could easily transfer mold spores into your home.
2. Have you considered your auto is making you sick? Cars can get moisture in from rain and snow and create humidity to grow mold. Same for boats, campers and RV's.
3. Have you considered your work environment may have mold in building or HVAC. Monitor humidity; look for roof leaks, stained drop down ceiling tiles or condensation moisture, dark stains on return air grates.
4. Has your vacuum been cleaned? Does your cleaning lady bring in her own vacuum or pole duster transferring spores from the previous home they cleaned?
5. What are you doing to eliminate dust? Mold feeds on dust.
6. Remember every time you enter your home from outside mold spores can remain on your clothes and enter your home. True for your pets too, bringing in mold spores.
7. Those that live in wooded areas will naturally have more mold spores around their home.
8. Those that love to nourish your landscape with wood mulch are actually providing more mold spores



around the exterior of their home that can easily enter through entering a door. Be especially diligent when new mulch gets laid before it settles.

9. Condensation. Whether on windows, ductwork or plumbing pipes this added moisture can raise your humidity levels and provide the needed nutrition for mold to multiply.

10. Help your furnace help you. Be sure you are using at least a MERV 8 filter and change regularly. And when you change out be sure and put the old one in a sealed plastic bag before walking through your home to dispose of in your trash.

11. For as little as \$10 you can purchase humidity meters to place throughout your home or office. Make sure the humidity stays below 60% at all times! Some common species of mold can grow and thrive just on high humidity.

12. Basements are notorious for humidity and even the best maintained finished basement can have leaks or sump pump failures. Keep on guard with humidity meters, have back up alarms on sump pumps and monitor humidity.

13. Monitor the humidity coming from your HVAC vents. If your air conditioning short cycles it may cool but not run long enough to remove the humidity. This can be due to your unit being oversized for the home or a fan speed issue. Another HVAC issue is keeping your home too warm when your AC is on. If your unit does not run often to dehumidify then high humidity will cause the most

common mold species, that looks like dust to grow unnoticed. If you are one of those that were told to keep your fan on continuously versus auto is another problem we often see causing high humidity. When your system is on and the humidity it extracts from the air condensates in the unit. If when the system is off but the fan is still running the air blows over these wet coils putting humidity back into your home.

14. Make sure you keep your crawl space vapor barrier in good shape and contractors that might be in there like a plumber does not move it about providing for uncovered areas that can allow earth humidity to rise and increase the humidity within your home.

15. Check your downspouts to be sure they extend from your structure and don't dislodge during mowing or storms.

16. Always be on the look out for excess moisture:

- Disconnected dryer vents
- Icemaker line leaks
- Plumbing leaks
- Roof or chimney leaks
- Windows excess condensation
- Toilet seal leaks
- Tub/shower leaks or escaping water during a bath or shower
- Dishwasher or clothes washer leaks
- Wet towels, swimsuits, athletic clothes

Once you have been affected by mold or the mycotoxins they produce there is a new realization that you must now be more conscious with humidity and water leaks. This list certainly is not exhaustive but can provide a checklist to review. If you have any questions, please contact us.



**CALL TODAY to schedule an assessment!**  
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**Julie S. Hurst- Nicoll, MBA, CMI, CMR**  
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# WHEN BUG BITES AND STINGS NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION

**S**ummertime brings sunshine, more hours outside and an increased risk of bug bites and stings. Insects like mosquitoes, ticks, bees and spiders are often harmless, but sometimes their bites and stings can spread disease or cause dangerous allergic reactions and infections.

An insect bite releases saliva and stings release venom that can cause skin to become red, swollen and itchy. When symptoms last longer than a few days, or they become worse, medical intervention may be required.

“If you spend time outside, getting bit or stung by an insect is nearly unavoidable, which is why it’s important to know when to get medical treatment,” says Dr. Timothy Martin, M.D. “Depending on the severity of a reaction to a bite or sting, a round of antibiotics or topical ointment may be prescribed.”

**Dr. Martin recommends seeking medical care if you experience the following:**

- An allergic reaction: Hives, rapid heartbeat, or swelling of the mouth, tongue and throat could indicate an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis. If you or a loved one are experiencing symptoms of an allergic reaction or anaphylaxis, which is life threatening, call 911 and administer epinephrine if it is available.
- Cellulitis: Swollen lymph nodes and oozing pus can be symptoms of cellulitis, a non-contagious skin infection that requires antibiotics. If left untreated, it could cause sepsis.
- Bite from a disease carrier: Ticks can carry Lyme disease and mosquitoes can spread viruses through their bites like West Nile and Zika. If bitten by a disease-carrying insect and you experience symptoms like fever, fatigue or red streaks surrounding the bite, seek medical attention.



- Flu-like symptoms: Go to the emergency room if symptoms like chills, headache, sore throat and fever last more than 48 hours after a bite or sting or if symptoms worsen rapidly.
- Worsening redness: Redness usually goes away after a few days, however, if the redness spreads or red lines from the bite site develop, it could be a sign of infection.

“To better protect yourself or your loved ones this summer, wear long sleeve shirts and pants, use insect repellents with DEET as an active ingredient and avoid bug-infested areas. Make it a point to check your skin when you go inside to find any insects that might have attached to you or bites needing treatment,” says Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Timothy Martin, M.D.**, is board certified in internal medicine and specializes in outpatient primary care for all adults. He treats multiple areas including hypertension, diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, anxiety/depression, rheumatoid processes, and endocrine ailments. Dr. Martin offers annual wellness visits, performs thorough physical examinations and offers pre-operative appointments.

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If you do experience an allergic or other serious reaction to a bug bite or sting, seek immediate care. To schedule an appointment please visit [physiciansregionalmedicalgroup.com](http://physiciansregionalmedicalgroup.com) or to make an appointment call 239-348-4221.



# WHEN BLOOD PRESSURE IS ELEVATED

## A FUNCTIONAL MEDICAL DOCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

It would be nice if before people get to the point where they need blood pressure medications, they would have access to preventive checkups where the root causes of any potential future hypertension would be picked up and addressed. Functional Medicine, which is a modern holistic outgrowth of Internal Medicine, starts by looking for the reasons why the patient may be developing an elevated blood pressure. Some of the causes of Hypertension we investigate are:

Medications which patients happen to be taking, like non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs), Birth Control pills, Steroids, some anti-depressants, certain nasal sprays, some weight loss medications, and medications used for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

We also look for and treat underlying medical conditions which can prompt high blood pressures, such as:

Sleep Apnea, Thyroid or Parathyroid disease, Kidney disease, Obesity, Hyperlipidemia, Environmental exposure to Lead, cadmium, or arsenic, and disease of the adrenal glands to name a few. In functional medicine philosophy, oxidative stress poses a key clinical imbalance in the development of hypertension. What does that mean? Well, as our bodies work to disarm all the toxic substances which we encounter in our diet and environment, there are these very nasty characters forming in the blood called reactive oxygen species (ROS). It is the combination of the abundance of these nasty ROS and the shortage of our natural defenses against them which create oxidative stress.

Oxidative stress makes our blood vessels dysfunctional, promotes insulin resistance, creates inflammation everywhere and leads to higher blood pressures.

A functional medicine doctor can measure important markers of oxidative stress in your blood and nip the disease in the bud, before it has a chance to affect the end organs, like kidney,



pancreas, heart, liver, etc. We also measure micronutrient levels to assess our patients' defense antioxidant reserves. This gives us a chance to provide targeted supplementation of micronutrients to those who need it.

The result? Hypertension reversed.

Another thing that recently got functional doctors' attention is how our inappropriately triggered immunity can lead to hypertension and vascular disease, Covid 19 being the best example. When they started looking into how exactly vascular disease develops, they noticed that it starts with the disturbance of the innermost layer called endothelium. One of the major disturbances is the decreased production of the vasodilating substance called Nitric Oxide, an increase in the production of its antagonist ADMA, and another is the excess of the endogenously produced substance called Homocysteine. We can measure all these markers with simple blood tests, to confirm that these issues are present in a particular patient. You must be thinking: but what can you do if you discover these early precursors of hypertension and vascular disease?

The good news is that thanks to cutting-edge research, functional doctors work to address these disturbances with professional grade supplements, botanicals, nutritional interventions, and lifestyle modifications. Here is a real-life example from my own private practice: a new patient who had signed up with my practice, was discovered during her intake examination to have newly elevated

blood pressures. While going through her medications list, I discovered that she has been taking over the counter Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs). These were recommended to her by her doctor years ago to help with her gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), and she was reflexively buying these pills over the counter for years.

On in-depth testing, I discovered high levels of ADMA in her blood and wisely remembered that PPIs increase ADMA and decrease Nitric Oxide causing an impaired ability of the blood vessels to expand to maintain normal BP levels. I then promptly took this patient off the PPI medication. As a result, her blood pressure and vascular dysfunction markers have normalized within several weeks. We also successfully treated her GERD with appropriate non-pharmaceutical functional supplements, changes in the foods she was eating, and tweaking her daily routine.

Changes in my patient's lifestyle routines are powerful natural medicines for the elevated blood pressure. For example, regular aerobic activity like brisk walking at least 30 minutes /day decreases my patients blood pressure anywhere between 5-10 mm. By the same token, restricting their sodium intake to 2.4 g/day decreases BP by another 2-8 mm. There are many more natural functional approaches to hypertension and my hope is that someday we can at best avert and at least reverse the public health burden of Hypertension which affects 116 million Americans.



**Svetlana Kogan, M.D.**

*The author of 'Diet Slave No More!', Svetlana Kogan, MD is a Board-Certified Internal Medicine, Holistic & Functional Medical Doctor with 25 years of experience. She has appeared as a health expert on prime-time TV and radio stations*

*and has authored hundreds of holistic health articles for internet and print. She moved her Concierge Practice from Manhattan NYC to Naples in 2019. Her Functional Medicine Primary Care Practice is focused on prevention and holistic approach to illness, and longevity.*

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## Lasene Therapeutic Light Therapy: Illuminating the Path to Health and Well-being

**L**asene represents an innovative advancement in Therapeutic Light Treatments, merging cutting-edge technology with proprietary treatment protocols to address chronic pain and enhance the quality of life for individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease, sleep disorders, executive function decline, and other neurological degenerative conditions.

Through extensive research and development, Lasene has become an integral part of a series of evidence-based protocols focused on pain management and neurological restoration. These protocols aim to provide safe, affordable, and effective care to those seeking relief.

As the creators of Lasene, our primary objective is to integrate the finest technologies and treatment strategies to alleviate the challenges faced by individuals with neurodegenerative and neuromusculoskeletal disorders. Our goal is to empower our patients, enabling them to regain an active and productive lifestyle.

### What Does Lasene Do?

Loss of normal nerve function can arise from various factors such as trauma, malnutrition, vascular compromise, aging, toxicity, diseases, and, to a lesser extent, genetics. These compromises in neurological function can affect different areas of the nervous system, including peripheral, spinal, and cranial neurology.

**LASENE Programs offer a powerful solution for addressing neural deficits associated with specific**

conditions such as Parkinson's disease, traumatic brain injury (TBI), and sleep dysfunction. These programs target not only the conditions themselves but also the symptoms related to them, such as chronic pain, tremors, digestion issues, balance problems, gait abnormalities, mood disturbances, anxiety, memory impairments, and more.

The implementation of LASENE Programs has the potential to reduce long-term suffering by improving quality-of-life metrics for individuals with compromised neurology. This approach offers significant benefits without the side effects, adverse events, contraindications, or modifications to traditional treatment methods.

The utilization of LASENE Programs opens up expanded treatment capabilities and new opportunities to help patients with neurological conditions. These programs can be integrated into a healthcare practice, allowing staff members to deliver care while doctors oversee the treatment of other patients. The ease of integration and compatibility with current practices and staff, including comprehensive training, makes it a convenient option.

Our LASENE Programs support both the clinical and business aspects of addressing patients' neurological needs. They facilitate an efficient workflow, provide necessary equipment, offer training, enable the creation of individualized and dynamic patient treatment plans, ensure HIPAA compliance in patient processing and records, and encompass other essential aspects required for successful treatment.

### Brand Partnership Benefits

The brand partnership opportunity for Lasene offers numerous benefits that set it apart from other options in the market. It provides advanced solutions that are not available anywhere else, delivering life-changing results to patients. The brand partnership package includes a turnkey solution with all the necessary equipment, systems, and training, ensuring a smooth implementation process. Brand partnership can expect a fast and significant return on investment (ROI) due to the high demand for the unique Lasene treatments. Furthermore, there is a vast untapped market share, allowing the brand partners to leverage their current patient base and attract new clients easily. The high patient referral rate further contributes to the potential for success and growth. Additionally, the brand partnership is easily expandable, allowing partners to scale their operations as desired.

The Lasene Proprietary System is a comprehensive management tool that guides the patient's journey from intake to treatment completion. Implementing this system is straightforward and efficient. It dynamically generates individual treatment maps and progress graphs, ensuring personalized care for each patient. The treatment sessions are delivered by trained staff members, optimizing the efficient use of staff and clinicians' time. This approach also simplifies the delivery of treatment for the providers themselves. Importantly, all patients purchase and commit to full treatment programs, eliminating the need for billing, insurance, or collections processes.

Lasene stands out from the competition for several reasons. It has a strong foundation in data-driven patient outcomes, with predictability, dependability, and reproducibility rates of 95%. This reliability instills confidence in both franchisees and patients. Moreover, Lasene has broader applications beyond traditional healthcare approaches, offering non-invasive and non-pharmaceutical solutions. This positions Lasene as a low-risk option for patients seeking alternative treatment methods, further enhancing its appeal and market potential.

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# THE GAME-CHANGER:

## Semaglutide Revolutionizes Weight Loss Treatment

By Lisa Gonzalez, APRN-BC

In the constant battle against obesity, a groundbreaking treatment has emerged that offers hope for those struggling with excessive weight. Semaglutide, originally developed to treat type 2 diabetes, has now gained attention for its remarkable effectiveness in promoting weight loss. With its unique mechanism of action, Semaglutide has shown promising results in clinical trials, leading to its recent approval as a weight loss medication. This article explores the remarkable potential of Semaglutide as a game-changer in the field of weight management, offering new possibilities for individuals seeking to shed those stubborn pounds.

### Understanding Semaglutide and its Mechanism of Action

Semaglutide belongs to a class of medications called glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs). Originally used to help regulate blood sugar levels in patients with type 2 diabetes, Semaglutide has shown an unexpected secondary benefit: significant weight loss. It works by mimicking the action of the hormone GLP-1, which helps control appetite and regulate glucose metabolism. By activating the GLP-1 receptors in the brain, Semaglutide reduces hunger and increases feelings of fullness, ultimately leading to reduced calorie intake.

### Promising Results from Clinical Trials

Clinical trials evaluating the efficacy of Semaglutide for weight loss have yielded highly encouraging results. In a landmark study involving over 2,000 participants, individuals treated with Semaglutide achieved an average weight loss of 15-20% of their body weight over the course of one year. These outcomes far exceeded those achieved through conventional weight loss interventions, such as diet and exercise alone. Furthermore, Semaglutide was found to improve various markers of cardiometabolic health, including blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and blood sugar control.

### Benefits and Safety Considerations

The potential benefits of Semaglutide as a weight loss treatment extend beyond its impressive efficacy. The medication is administered once weekly via subcutaneous injection, making it convenient and user-friendly. Additionally, Semaglutide has shown promise in helping individuals maintain their weight



loss over an extended period, minimizing the risk of weight regain. However, like any medication, Semaglutide does come with potential side effects, including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and, rarely, pancreatitis. Close monitoring by healthcare professionals is necessary to ensure patient safety.

### A New Paradigm in Weight Management

The approval of Semaglutide as a weight loss medication marks a significant milestone in the fight against obesity. Traditional approaches to weight management, such as diet and exercise, often fall short due to the complex nature of obesity. Semaglutide offers a promising alternative for individuals struggling with excessive weight, providing an additional tool in the comprehensive treatment arsenal. Its effectiveness in reducing weight, improving cardiometabolic health, and maintaining long-term results sets it apart from previous interventions.

### What To Expect During My Consultation?

- Physical assessment
- Lab review
- Weight and body measurement
- Discussion of supplemental medication options
- Goal establishment
- Lifestyle dietary changes

Semaglutide represents a groundbreaking advancement in weight loss treatment. With its unique mechanism of action and remarkable efficacy, it has the potential to transform the lives of millions of individuals battling obesity. The approval of Semaglutide as a weight loss medication opens up new possibilities for achieving sustainable weight loss and improved overall health. However, it is crucial to recognize that Semaglutide is not a magic pill and should be used in conjunction with lifestyle changes and under the guidance of healthcare professionals. As further research unfolds, Semaglutide may continue to reshape the landscape of weight management, offering hope for a healthier future.

At Soleil Health and Wellness, we believe that true health and beauty are intertwined, forming the foundation for a fulfilling and vibrant life. Led by Nurse Practitioner Lisa Gonzalez, APRN-BC, our practice is dedicated to providing exceptional care and transformative services that empower our patients to unlock their full potential. With a focus on holistic well-being, cutting-edge treatments, and personalized care, we strive to build lifelong relationships with those we serve.



**Lisa Gonzalez, APRN-BC**

Lisa Gonzalez is a compassionate and highly skilled Board-Certified Family Nurse Practitioner, certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). After graduating with honors from Nova Southeastern University, Lisa's remarkable journey has been

marked by both didactic and clinical achievements. Her extensive training includes aesthetic procedures such as Botox/Dysport injections, Dermal Fillers, Microneedling, and Platelet-Rich Plasma Injections. With experience in Primary Care, Acute Care, and Skilled Home Care, Lisa was drawn to the profession by her deep desire to serve others and build lifelong relationships with her patients.

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# UNLOCKING THE BENEFITS OF PELVIC HEALTH PHYSICAL THERAPY: EMPOWERING WOMEN OF ALL AGES

**P**elvic health is a critical aspect of overall well-being that often goes unnoticed or neglected. Many women experience pelvic floor dysfunction at some point in their lives, leading to discomfort, pain, and a diminished quality of life. Fortunately, Pelvic Health Physical Therapy (PT) offers effective and non-invasive solutions to address these concerns. In this article, we will explore the fundamentals of pelvic health physical therapy, its benefits, common conditions treated, and the road to a healthier pelvic region.

## Understanding Pelvic Health Physical Therapy

Pelvic Health Physical Therapy is a highly specialized area of physical therapy that focuses on evaluating, diagnosing, and treating conditions related to the pelvic floor. The pelvic floor muscles, ligaments, and connective tissues provide support to the pelvic organs, including the bladder, uterus, and rectum. Pelvic floor dysfunction can occur due to a variety of reasons, such as pregnancy, childbirth, surgery, aging, or other chronic conditions.

Pelvic Health PT sessions typically involve a comprehensive assessment of the patient's condition, which includes a thorough medical history review, physical examination (may include both internal and external), and functional assessment. Based on the findings, the physical therapist develops an individualized treatment plan that may include exercises, manual therapy techniques, biofeedback, education, and lifestyle modifications. The primary goals of Pelvic Health PT are to relieve pain, improve muscle strength and coordination, enhance bladder control, and restore overall pelvic health and function.

## Treatment for a Range of Conditions

Pelvic Health PT is not solely limited to one particular condition. It addresses a broad spectrum of pelvic floor dysfunctions, including, but not limited to:

- **Pelvic Pain:** Pelvic pain is a common symptom that can arise from various conditions such as pelvic floor dysfunction, endometriosis, or musculoskeletal issues. Pelvic Health PT can help identify the underlying causes of pelvic pain and develop a personalized treatment plan to alleviate pain and improve quality of life.

- **Urinary Incontinence:** Pelvic floor muscles play a vital role in maintaining bladder control. Pelvic Health PT can teach individuals exercises and techniques to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles and improve muscle coordination.

- **Pre-and Postnatal Care:** Pelvic Health PT provides invaluable support during pregnancy and after childbirth. It focuses on strengthening the pelvic floor muscles, addressing diastasis recti, and rehabilitating the body post-delivery.

- **Pre-and Post-Surgical Support:** Pelvic Health PT is often recommended before and after pelvic surgeries, such as a hysterectomy, or surgeries related to pelvic organ prolapse. Pre-surgical therapy can prepare the pelvic floor muscles for the procedure, while post-surgical therapy can aid in recovery, reduce pain, and restore function.

- **Pelvic Organ Prolapse:** Pelvic organ prolapse occurs when the pelvic organs descend into our outside the vaginal canal. Pelvic Health PT can provide exercises and strategies to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles, which can alleviate symptoms and potentially reduce the need for surgery.

- **Sexual Dysfunction:** Pelvic Health physical therapy can address sexual dysfunction related to pelvic floor issues, such as pain during intercourse, lack of sensation, or difficulty achieving orgasm. By addressing underlying pelvic floor muscle dysfunction and providing specific exercises, physical therapists can help improve sexual function and satisfaction.

## Advantages of Pelvic Health Physical Therapy

Pelvic Health PT offers numerous advantages for women dealing with pelvic floor dysfunctions. Some advantages include, but are not limited to:

- **Non-Invasive and Constructive approach:** Pelvic Health PT emphasizes non-invasive and conservative treatment options. It aims to empower individuals to actively participate in their recovery. This approach is particularly beneficial for those who prefer to explore natural solutions or wish to avoid surgery.

- **Improved Quality of Life:** Pelvic Floor Dysfunctions can significantly impact an individual's quality

of life, often leading to embarrassment, social isolation, and decreased self-confidence. Pelvic Health PT helps individuals regain control over their bodies and lives and positively impacts mental health, self-esteem and interpersonal relationships.

- **Prevention and Long-Term Benefits:** Pelvic Health PT not only focuses on treating existing conditions but also emphasizes preventive strategies. Through education and exercises, individuals can learn proper techniques for pelvic floor muscle activation, breathing patterns, and body mechanics, which can reduce the risk of future pelvic floor issues.

## Why Choose Absolute Physical Therapy of SW FL for Pelvic Health PT

Absolute Physical Therapy is the ideal choice for Pelvic Health PT due to their unparalleled expertise, personalized care, above national average outcomes, and commitment to improving their patients' quality of life. With a team of highly skilled and specialized Pelvic Health therapists, they possess extensive knowledge treating pelvic floor dysfunctions and related conditions. By utilizing evidence-based techniques, they provide tailored treatment plans that address the unique needs of each individual. Moreover, their compassionate and supportive approach creates a comfortable environment for patients, allowing them to openly discuss their concerns and receive the highest level of care. With Absolute Physical Therapy, patients can trust in their dedication to restoring pelvic health and achieving long-lasting results.



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# HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED PROBLEMS WITH RETURN TO PLAY AFTER A KNEE INJURY OR TOTAL JOINT SURGERY?

By James M. Ray, MD



**M**aybe you have AMI. Arthrogenic Muscle Inhibition presents itself as marked weakness of the quadriceps muscle, seen as muscle atrophy. This is partly due to the lack of motor neuron recruitment and neural inhibition that prevents the brain from fully activating the quadriceps mechanism. This translates into muscle weakness, instability and loss of motion. If you have ever experienced a significant knee injury you know how hard it is to rehab the injury to return to a level of function and strength.

Lately, new information has surfaced explaining the reason behind marked muscle atrophy even after intensive physical therapy. Once the knee has been injured or even undergone surgery the proprioceptive mechanisms are disrupted. The brain no longer can sense the spatial relationship of the knee to force, speed, direction and spatial position. The excellent surgeon performing the ACL reconstruction or Total Knee Replacement cannot replace or recreate the mechanoreceptors. These structures are permanently lost, and in most cases do not regenerate.

The brain has lost the connection and is unable to return the quadriceps muscle tone, strength and function to pre-injury levels. Our focus through the years has been on recreating normal anatomy to improve function to as close to normal post-injury/surgery as possible. The science and technology have improved to satisfy the surgeon's ability to provide advanced expertise to improve our outcomes. However, what has been lacking is our understanding of how the brain recruits motorneurons to the quadriceps after injury or surgery.

The bottom line is, after injury or surgery do not pass on the rehab. One must continue to listen to the therapist. Motion is key for function. Full extension and flexion allow normal walking. Flexion contractures of the knee or keeping the knee bent through ambulation increases energy expenditure and causes anterior knee pain and limited motion. Lack of full motion may also lead to excessive scarring or arthrofibrosis. Pain also plays a role in

AMI development. Make sure to communicate with the therapist and your physician when it comes to pain management. Opioids may not be the answer. The lack of full motion and quadriceps strength may make the knee feel unstable. This could lead to reinjury.

Ask your therapist or medical professional about AMI. If you have any concerns about your knee injury, knee surgery or questions about return to play or work, please come by and see us at Naples-Clinic Ortho Urgent Care.



**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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# RN 2.0



SCAN ME

By Nashat Abualhajja, Ph.D., RN

*"As a nurse, we have the opportunity to heal the heart, mind, soul, and body of our patients, their families, and ourselves. They may not remember your name, but they will never forget the way you made them feel."* – Maya Angelou

Interestingly, Maya Angelou was never a nurse, yet she had a deep understanding of what it takes to be one.

The need for nurses to provide compassionate care is part of the equation. With all the advancements in treatments, nurses need to have a deeper knowledge of their craft in order to provide their patients with holistic and complex care.

That's just one of the advantages nurses have when they earn their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN).

Other advantages of BSN-prepared nurses include:

- A better and faster track to pursue senior positions, including nurse managers and nursing directors
- Faster increases in hourly pay than those with an ASN
- A path to graduate nursing degrees

Additionally, state and regulatory agencies, including the Veterans Administration, have mandates for BSN-prepared nurses. Many healthcare facilities now require RNs to have a BSN for entry level nursing positions. As the population ages, the need for nurses with a BSN grows. Studies show that nurses with a BSN can provide a higher level of care because they have a higher level of competency in the nursing practice, increased skills in communication, leadership, professional integration, plus research and evaluation. In all, that leads to better patient outcomes.\*

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*Dr. Nashat Abualhajja, Ph.D., RN, is the nursing program director at Hodges University.*

\*The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) "The Impact of Education on Nursing Practice (AACN, 2014)



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

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

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

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

## Why Headaches and Migraines are a Public Health Issue

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

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

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

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Insomnia
- Depression
- Irritability

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

- Heart disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke

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

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

## How Medical Marijuana Assists Individuals With Headaches and Migraines

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

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

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

### Decreased Glutamate Levels

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

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

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

### Reduced Neurogenic Inflammation

Medical marijuana is a classic substance to decrease inflammation.

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

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

### Serotonin Production

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

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

### Pain Reduction

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

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

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

## The Best Medical Marijuana Products for Headaches and Migraines

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

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

### Medical Marijuana Vape Cartridges

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

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

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

### Medical Marijuana Tinctures

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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# THE SURPRISING LINK BETWEEN ACUPUNCTURE AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

By Alik Minikhanov, DACM, AP

**F**orgetting can be more than a minor inconvenience, especially for Americans 65 and older.

Perhaps you have witnessed firsthand the struggles of a parent or a friend who isn't just forgetting car keys or random items at the grocery store but also important details like a friend's name, frequently misplacing things, or even forgetting how to perform once-familiar tasks like making a cup of coffee.

In Florida alone, Alzheimer's disease is projected to increase by a staggering 24.1% by 2025, highlighting the pressing need for effective treatments.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, due to the intricate nature of the human brain, Alzheimer's remains a challenging condition to address.

## How does Alzheimer's affect the brain?

Alzheimer's can begin before there are symptoms.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, "An asymptomatic individual may have biological changes of Alzheimer's in their brain but no cognitive symptoms. Hallmarks of Alzheimer's, such as amyloid buildup, may be present up to 20 years before someone exhibits changes in memory, thinking, or behavior."<sup>2</sup>

Scientists believe Alzheimer's disease interferes with the normal functioning of cells, primarily due to the formation of abnormal developments called plaque and tangles.

- **Plaques**, known as beta-amyloid (BAY-tuh AM-uh-loyd), are accumulations of protein fragments that deposit in the gaps between nerve cells.
- **Tangles**, composed of a protein called tau (rhymes with "wow"), are twisted fibers that accumulate within cells.

Scientists do not fully understand the precise function of plaques and tangles in Alzheimer's disease.

However, experts widely believe these abnormal protein formations play a significant role in impeding

communication between nerve cells and disrupting vital cellular processes necessary for cell survival.<sup>3</sup>

While current treatments offer limited symptomatic relief, finding a cure or effective means to slow down the progression of the disease remains a significant challenge.

Consequently, researchers are actively investigating alternative therapies, among which acupuncture has emerged as an unexpected contender.

## What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is an integral part of traditional Chinese medicine, dating back over 2,500 years. The practice involves inserting thin needles into specific points on the body to stimulate energy flow along meridians.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, disruptions in this energy flow can lead to various health conditions. Acupuncture aims to restore balance and promote overall well-being.

"As an important therapeutic technique in traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture has been proved effective in treating many neurologic diseases including AD. The efficacy of acupuncture is also acknowledged by the National Institutes of Health of the United States."<sup>4</sup>

## The Link Between Acupuncture and Alzheimer's

Acupuncture treatments may provide multifaceted benefits that address several factors associated with the disease like the following:

- **Enhancing Neuroplasticity:** Neuroplasticity refers to the brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections.<sup>5</sup>
- **Enhancing Blood Flow:** Proper blood flow is crucial for delivering oxygen and nutrients to the brain.
- **Reducing Stress and Anxiety:** Acupuncture has been shown to stimulate the release of endorphins and serotonin, promoting relaxation and reducing stress levels.
- **Improving Sleep Quality:** Restorative sleep is crucial for cognitive function and overall wellbeing, and acupuncture may offer a complementary

approach to managing sleep-related issues in Alzheimer's patients.

## How Does Acu-healing help?

At I Am Designed to Heal, Dr. Alik's signature Acu-Healing treatments consist of acupuncture, meridian massage, meditation, and energy healing.

These treatment options offer a range of benefits not exclusive to Alzheimer's.

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."<sup>6</sup>

The emerging link between acupuncture and Alzheimer's disease is a promising development in pursuing effective treatments for this disease.

As the field of Alzheimer's research continues to evolve, exploring alternative therapies like acupuncture offers hope for individuals affected by this debilitating disease and their families.

## How do you book an appointment with Dr. Alik?

Visit our website at [www.iamdesignedtoheal.com/schedule/](http://www.iamdesignedtoheal.com/schedule/) or call **239.322.3817** to schedule your free initial consultation with Dr. Alik Minikhanov, DACM, AP.

Taking care of yourself early will only provide a lifetime of benefits. It's never too late to begin.

**We cannot wait to help you simply feel better!**

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# 4 TIPS TO HELP OLDER ADULTS STAY SOCIALLY CONNECTED

By Mary Beth Baxter

In an ever-evolving world where technology seems to connect us, it's easy to assume loneliness and isolation are problems of the past. However, for many older adults, these feelings remain all too real and present. The impact of isolation can be profound, affecting mental and emotional well-being and physical health. By taking a proactive approach to combat isolation, you'll soon find yourself forming meaningful connections to ensure a healthy and fulfilling life.

**Pursue hobbies and interests:** Exploring hobbies and interests can be an excellent way to connect with others who share similar passions. Consider joining clubs, groups, or classes related to activities you enjoy, such as art, gardening, fitness or reading. These gatherings provide opportunities to meet new people, build friendships, and stay socially engaged.

At The Carlisle, an active retirement community in North Naples, residents find they have plenty of newfound time to discover hobbies and interests, thanks to the maintenance-free lifestyle. Sallie Ray, a longtime resident, has channeled her creativity into designing a line of greeting cards, "Sassies by Sallie," which she proudly makes for her neighbors' birthdays. Alexandra Wildey, a fellow crafter, credits The Carlisle for expanding her social circle. Her stunning jewelry, which she creates in her residence, is especially popular, and the signature pieces have been a great way to spark conversation!

**Attend community events:** Stay informed about local events, workshops or classes in the Collier County area. Participating in community activities allows you to engage with people from diverse backgrounds and establish new connections. Check community centers, libraries and local newsletters for upcoming events tailored to older adults.

An entire team is dedicated to providing opportunities to connect at The Carlisle. From an upcoming all-American 4th of July celebration to lively Social Hours, there's an event to pique every



interest. Zest Director Marcia Aldana plans over 30 weekly events, including intimate group gatherings such as the book club and Mahjonn.

"We love the evening entertainment. There's plenty of toe-tapping, clapping and singing. It's terrific and creates a sense of camaraderie," said Ken Rotskoff. "I also enjoy walking into The Carlisle Room for dinner with a smile and seeing others smiling. It makes me feel good that I've found such wonderful people to share my life with and learn about their backgrounds."

**Embrace technology:** Technology has made it easier than ever to connect with others, even from the comfort of your home. Invest in a smartphone, tablet or computer to stay connected through social media platforms, video calls, and messaging apps. These tools can help you maintain relationships with family, friends and even join online communities of like-minded individuals.

Carlisle residents have plenty of opportunities to embrace technology and stay connected. Virtual programs are offered via Zoom, and tech-savvy instructors provide guidance on using iPhones and Android devices. It's not uncommon to see residents chatting with a great-grandchild on FaceTime or sending photos from a fun activity at the community to their adult children.

**Move to a senior living community:** Senior living communities offer a vibrant and supportive environment designed specifically for older adults and provide various opportunities for social engagement

and companionship. By transitioning to a senior living community, you can surround yourself with others who share similar interests and experiences, fostering an instant sense of community and camaraderie.

"The Carlisle Living Room is the hub of the community," added Ray. "It's a fabulous spot to meet others. I've made very good friends over the years."

Combating isolation often requires active participation. By being intentional about connecting with others, you'll find your sense of belonging and fulfillment magnified. Meaningful connections with friends, family, and new acquaintances can enrich your life in ways you may not have imagined.

"At The Carlisle, our connections are felt in the smile from a staff member to the poignant conversation between two veterans," said Aldana. "Each interaction strengthens our bonds and adds to the vibrancy and spirit of our community."

*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](http://www.TheCarlisleNaples.com).*



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# Achieve the Perfect Summer Body with **JuVaShape™** Body Contouring Radio Frequency Technology

By Kathleen M Marc, MD, FACOG

**S**ummer season is here, many individuals strive to achieve their ideal beach-ready body. While diet and exercise are crucial, sometimes we need an extra boost to target stubborn areas of fat and cellulite. In recent years, advancements in aesthetic technology have revolutionized body contouring procedures. One such innovation is JuVaShape Body Contouring radio frequency technology. This non-invasive and painless treatment has gained popularity for its ability to tighten skin, reduce fat deposits, and diminish cellulite. In this article, we will explore how JuVaShape can help you get your body summer-ready, providing you with the confidence to rock your favorite swimsuit.

## Understanding JuVaShape Body Contouring

JuVaShape Body Contouring utilizes the power of radio frequency (RF) technology to target and improve the appearance of problem areas on the body. This revolutionary treatment involves the application of controlled RF energy, which penetrates deep into the skin layers, stimulating collagen production and promoting cellular metabolism. This process results in a reduction of fat cells, improved skin elasticity, and the smoothing of cellulite.

## The Benefits of JuVaShape

**Targeted Fat Reduction:** JuVaShape precisely targets fat cells, breaking them down and allowing the body to naturally eliminate them. This helps to contour the body and reduce inches in specific areas such as the abdomen, thighs, arms, and buttocks.

**Cellulite Reduction:** JuVaShape's RF technology enhances blood circulation and lymphatic drainage, reducing the appearance of cellulite. By smoothing the dimpled skin, it helps create a more toned and even texture.

**Skin Tightening:** Collagen, a protein responsible for skin elasticity, diminishes with age. JuVaShape stimulates collagen production, resulting in tighter and firmer skin. This can help address sagging skin and improve the overall appearance of the treated area.



## The Procedure and Results

JuVaShape treatments are performed by certified professionals in specialized clinics or medical spas. The procedure is non-invasive, painless, and requires no downtime, making it convenient for those with busy schedules. During the session, the provider uses a handheld device that emits RF energy, gently massaging the treatment area.

While individual experiences may vary, most patients notice visible results after just a few sessions. The gradual improvement continues even after the treatment is completed, as the body continues to eliminate the treated fat cells. Patients often report smoother, tighter skin, reduced circumference in treated areas, and improved body contours.

## Maintaining Your Results

To maximize and maintain the benefits of JuVaShape, it is important to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and staying hydrated will support the body's natural processes and help sustain the results achieved through the treatment. Remember that JuVaShape is not a substitute for weight loss or a healthy lifestyle, but rather a complementary tool to enhance your efforts.

Aesthetic Treatment Centers wants to get your body beach-ready this summer season, JuVaShape Body Contouring radio frequency technology may be the solution you've been looking for. With its non-invasive approach,

noticeable results, and minimal downtime, JuVaShape can help you achieve the confidence to embrace the summer with open arms.

## Some advantages of JuVaShape:

- Liposuction and other more invasive body sculpting technologies are no match for cellulite, but JuVaShape™ uses powerful noninvasive radio frequency (RF) technology to target uneven texture and restore a smooth, youthful look.
- JuVaShape™ gives our treatment staff precise control so they can use both bipolar and unipolar radio frequencies to create meticulously targeted friction and heating to create beautiful outcomes.
- This system can be used on nearly any skin type at any time of year with absolutely no side effects or downtime required!
- JuVaShape™ can lessen the appearance of cellulite and even produce a skin tightening effect, but this technology is not designed to help you lose weight.

## Aesthetic Treatment Centers

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

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# New Vitals Monitoring Tools Give Comfort to Palliative Care Patients

**J**anice Feenstra of Naples knows what is important: a four-time survivor of HER-2 positive breast cancer, she has spent almost a decade focusing on family and faith while fighting for her life. A former nurse at Avow, a hospice and palliative care provider based in Collier County, Feenstra is now an Avow patient. She works with Avow's non-hospice palliative care team to address physical and emotional symptoms that affect the quality of her life. The palliative care team provides care oversight, guidance, and support to people like Feenstra, who have a serious illness but who are not at end of life.

"I've always been a strong and positive person, and I've been blessed with a wonderfully supportive family that has been by my side throughout my illness," says Feenstra. "Over the course of my disease, I've had setbacks and periods of difficulty dealing with things like pain and nausea from treatments. The Avow palliative care team has been by my side, resolving the side effects that make me feel sick and fatigued. I have also taken great strength from the social worker on the Avow palliative care team, who uplifts me when I feel ready to 'throw in the towel' after so many years of fighting for my life. The team makes a huge difference in my ability to enjoy my life, even while I am still quite ill."

Avow recently implemented remote patient monitoring, a medical technology that provides monitoring tools for patients with chronic illnesses. The devices capture vital patient health indicators such as blood pressure, blood sugar, body temperature, blood oxygen concentration, and weight, then transmit the results to Avow, and if requested, the patient's primary care or specialist provider for follow-up. Patients appreciate the devices because they have been shown to reduce the need for doctor visits and hospitalizations, lower healthcare costs, and improve quality of life.

Eileen Fagan Crowley, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse for Avow's palliative care service, values the benefits of the remote patient monitoring technology for patients, their caregivers, and the palliative care team. "When patients regularly measure their



vitals from home, we can quickly identify early warning signs of changes in their underlying conditions," says Crowley. "Sometimes patients or their caregivers aren't even aware that something important has changed. The monitoring devices help us quickly respond to patient needs in real time, all without requiring the patient to leave home or schedule a visit with the palliative care team. We like to call the devices the 'digital team members' that help us care for patients."

The devices are mailed to patients, which may include blood pressure monitors, glucose meters, fingertip pulse oximeters, heart rate monitors, or weight scales, directly to patients, then follows up with personalized training. "The devices are very easy to use for people who have no special training or experience in self-monitoring," says Crowley. "We understand that patients and their families are often stressed, and need tools that are not overwhelming in any way. The devices transmit results to clinicians who immediately respond when those results are outside of expected norms. That means we can respond very quickly to emerging patient needs."

Janice Feenstra recalls an experience she had when monitoring her blood pressure. The device detected an elevated reading, and both the Avow palliative care team and her primary care physician checked in with her after receiving the results.

"They determined the spike was due to a change in medication," says Feenstra, "and that I had nothing extra to worry about. It was wonderful, feeling cared for and watched over, even on a weekend when medical offices are usually closed."

Crowley says these remote monitoring devices can also make family caregivers feel more confident in the home care they provide. "Spouses or other caregivers can see in real-time that their loved one is stable, or they can see how the patient reacts to changes in their health status. Family members out of the area can also take comfort in knowing we are keeping a watchful eye on their loved one's vital measurements. These devices can be an extension of care in the patient's home, keeping comfortable, and in control until our next visit."

Avow's palliative care team sees patients in their palliative clinic on the Avow campus in central Collier County and provide house calls to patients wherever they live. For more information, call the clinic at 239-280-2288 (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.), or visit [www.avowcares.org](http://www.avowcares.org).



239.280.2288  
[www.avowcares.org](http://www.avowcares.org)



# Stop Overlooking Signs of Incontinence

By Rolando Rivera, MD, FACS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Advanced treatment modalities for refractory patients to conservative therapy and anticholinergics are available in the urologic armamentarium. Urological evaluation of these patients will most likely include a cystoscopy, urine cultures and urine cytology to rule out bladder pathology and bladder malignancies. As well, a detailed, computerized assessment study of bladder function called urodynamics may help the clinician in establishing the best treatment option.

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

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

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

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

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# URGENT CARE FOR FALLS RELATED TO VERTIGO, DEHYDRATION, AND HEAT

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

**B**rain health is of utmost importance as it affects our overall well-being and quality of life. One common cause of falls and related injuries is the combination of vertigo, dehydration, and heat. These factors can lead to imbalance, dizziness, and reduced cognitive function, making urgent care essential. In this article, we will explore the impact of vertigo, dehydration, and heat on brain health, the potential risks they pose, and the necessary urgent care measures to prevent falls and protect brain health.

## The Link between Vertigo and Falls

Vertigo, a condition characterized by a spinning sensation, can greatly increase the risk of falls. It is often caused by an inner ear dysfunction, such as benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV). The disorientation and loss of balance associated with vertigo can lead to hazardous falls, resulting in head injuries and potential damage to the brain. Naples Clinic plays a vital role in promptly assessing and treating vertigo-related falls to prevent further harm and minimize the impact on brain health.

## The Impact of Dehydration on Brain Function

Dehydration is a common condition that can have severe consequences for brain health. When the body lacks adequate fluid intake, cognitive function can be compromised, leading to confusion, dizziness, and reduced coordination—significant risk factors for falls. Urgent care centers are equipped to provide immediate intervention by administering intravenous fluids to restore hydration levels quickly. Recognizing the signs of dehydration and seeking urgent care can prevent falls and safeguard the brain from potential injury.

## The Dangers of Heat-Related Falls

Heat-related falls pose a significant risk to brain health, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the elderly. High temperatures can lead to heat exhaustion or heatstroke, causing weakness, fatigue, and disorientation. These symptoms increase the likelihood of falls, which can result in traumatic brain injuries. Urgent care facilities offer cooling measures, such as ice packs and intravenous fluids, to counter the effects of heat-related falls. Timely intervention and effective management are crucial to mitigating the impact on brain health.



## Measures to Prevent Falls

To address falls related to vertigo, dehydration, and heat, Naples Clinic employ various preventive measures. These include thorough medical evaluations to identify underlying causes, such as inner ear disorders or fluid imbalances. Our professionals can prescribe appropriate medications for vertigo, provide intravenous fluids for dehydration, and implement cooling techniques for heat-related issues. Additionally, Naples Clinic offer comprehensive fall risk assessments, balance training, and educational resources to promote long-term brain health and prevent future falls.

Maintaining brain health is vital for overall well-being, and addressing falls related to vertigo, dehydration, and heat is crucial in this regard. By seeking urgent care promptly, individuals experiencing symptoms associated with these factors can receive timely intervention, preventing falls, and protecting their brain health for a better quality of life.

## 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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# Unraveling the Complexity of Brain Diseases

**T**he human brain is an intricate organ that governs our thoughts, emotions, and actions. However, within this complexity lies a vulnerability to various disorders that can profoundly impact an individual's quality of life. Brain diseases encompass a wide range of neurological disorders, each with its unique characteristics and challenges. This article will shed light on some of the most prevalent brain diseases, exploring their causes, symptoms, and potential treatment avenues, while emphasizing the importance of ongoing research in this field.

**Alzheimer's Disease:** Alzheimer's disease, a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, is one of the most common forms of dementia. It is characterized by memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioral changes. Researchers have identified certain genetic factors, such as mutations in the amyloid precursor protein (APP) and presenilin genes, as potential contributors to the development of Alzheimer's disease.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the accumulation of amyloid-beta plaques and tau protein tangles in the brain has been linked to the pathology of this disease.<sup>2</sup> Although there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, ongoing research focuses on developing interventions to slow down its progression and improve patients' quality of life.

**Parkinson's Disease:** Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive movement disorder that affects millions worldwide. It is primarily caused by the loss of dopamine-producing cells in the substantia nigra region of the brain. Genetic mutations, exposure to environmental toxins, and oxidative stress have been implicated in the development of Parkinson's disease.<sup>3</sup> Tremors, rigidity, bradykinesia, and postural instability are hallmark symptoms of this condition. Treatment options include medications to manage symptoms, deep brain stimulation, and physical therapy.<sup>4</sup>

**Multiple Sclerosis:** Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune disease characterized by the immune system mistakenly attacking the protective covering of nerve fibers, known as myelin, in the central nervous system. The exact cause of MS remains unknown, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic and environmental factors.<sup>5</sup> MS presents with a wide range of symptoms,

including fatigue, impaired coordination, muscle weakness, and cognitive difficulties. Disease-modifying therapies, rehabilitation programs, and symptom management strategies are the current approaches in managing MS.<sup>6</sup>

**Autoimmune Encephalitis:** Autoimmune encephalitis is a relatively rare but increasingly recognized group of brain diseases characterized by inflammation of the brain due to an autoimmune response. It occurs when the immune system mistakenly targets proteins within the brain, leading to neurological symptoms. Antibodies targeting specific proteins, such as NMDA receptors, LGI1, and GABAB receptors, have been identified in different forms of autoimmune encephalitis.<sup>7</sup> Symptoms can range from psychiatric manifestations, such as psychosis and mood changes, to neurological symptoms, including seizures, memory problems, and movement disorders. Treatment typically involves immunotherapy, such as corticosteroids, intravenous immunoglobulins, and plasma exchange, to suppress the autoimmune response and reduce inflammation.<sup>8</sup>

**Conclusion:** Brain diseases continue to present significant challenges in the medical field, impacting the lives of millions of individuals worldwide. Understanding the underlying causes, symptoms, and available treatment options is crucial in advancing research and developing effective interventions. Ongoing research aims to unravel the intricate mechanisms involved in these brain diseases, ultimately leading to improved diagnostic tools, more targeted therapies, and the possibility of finding cures. By supporting scientific endeavors and raising awareness, we can foster progress in the battle against these complex neurological disorders, offering hope for individuals and their families facing these challenges.



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Some of the medication Paragon administers to treat the brain diseases described above, as well as others, include:

- Aduhelm
- Amvuttra
- Briumvi
- Immunoglobulin both SCIG and IVIG
- Lemtrada
- Leqembi
- Migraine Therapy
- Ocrevus
- Onpattro
- Radicava
- Rituxan (including biosimilar's)
- Soliris
- Solu Medrol
- Tysabri
- Ultomiris
- Uplizna
- Vyepi
- Vyvgart

Nationwide, Paragon administered more than 2,200 infusions in May with the above-mentioned medications and more than 9,900 infusions year to date.

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# ASK THE EXPERT

## Hearing Loss and Dementia

Dr. Brittany Colburn, Au.D.

**Today, greater emphasis is being placed on hearing health.**

There is no better time than the present to consider your hearing as part of your overall health. Just like a routine dental or eye exam, it is recommended that anyone over the age of 55 have a baseline hearing test. It is important to be informed of the risks you take if you ignore your hearing loss. Dangers that include certain life-threatening co-morbidities.

*"Seniors with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing ... Our findings emphasize just how important it is for physicians to discuss hearing with their patients and to be proactive in addressing any hearing declines over time."<sup>1</sup>*

**The link between untreated hearing loss and development of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.**

Multiple studies indicate hearing loss can be linked to the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Leaving hearing loss untreated could pose a serious risk that has not been widely shared with the hearing impaired population. This information is another reason why it is important to make informed and timely decisions about hearing care.

Frank R. Lin, MD, Ph.D conducted a study commonly cited by medical professionals on the topic of hearing loss and cognitive decline.<sup>2</sup> Conducted with 1,984 older adults, the study indicated that the more severe the hearing loss, the greater the likelihood of developing a cognitive disorder, and the steeper the decline in mental function. However, even subjects with mild hearing loss were found likelier to experience cognitive failures.

*"Declines in hearing abilities may accelerate gray matter atrophy and increase the listening effort necessary to comprehend speech ... Hearing aids may not only improve hearing but preserve the brain."<sup>3</sup>*



In 2014, Dr. Lin's team used magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to show that people with hearing impairments lost more than an additional cubic centimeter of brain matter annually, and experienced greater shrinkage of tissue in the structures responsible for processing sound and speech, than those with normal hearing. The atrophy affected the middle and inferior temporal gyri, which play key roles in memory and sensory integration. Similar damage to these regions can be seen in patients with Alzheimer's disease.<sup>4</sup>

At the time the initial study results were released, Dr. Lin and other experts put forth several theories as to why hearing loss may lead to dementia and Alzheimer's disease:

- The effort it takes those with hearing loss to hear and comprehend creates a regular strain that interferes with normal cognition
- Hearing impaired people tend to withdraw socially and the lack of regular interaction leads to mental stagnation
- A combination of all these factors contributes to cognitive decline

*"Untreated hearing loss is linked to reduced earnings, increased workplace absenteeism, and lower workplace productivity, as well as depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline."<sup>5</sup>*

Researchers have offered a few convincing theories as to the exact reason for a link between hearing loss and cognitive decline. One is that in the presence of hearing loss, the individual has to exert much greater mental effort trying to hear and understand. This increased listening effort or cognitive load means that the brain devotes more resources trying to compensate for the hearing loss, at the expense of other processes, such as memory and thinking. Another idea suggests that with hearing loss, the parts of the brain responsible for hearing atrophy. These same areas also play roles in memory and sensory integration, and have been shown to be involved in the early stages of cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease. A third theory involves social isolation. Individuals who have a hard time hearing tend to withdraw from social interactions. The subsequent social isolation has been linked with cognitive decline by numerous studies.

**Hearing aids slow the progression of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.**

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 conversation, and can enjoy the sounds of nature and beautiful music, cognitive load and stress decrease. Hearing aid wearers can fully engage in social activities and interactions with friends and family, and also in 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 brain-wave measurements.<sup>6</sup>

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A recent study following 3,700 participants over the course of 25 years revealed that participants with hearing loss had lower scores for cognitive ability at the beginning of the study than the control group with normal hearing. However, those who wore hearing aids experienced a shallower rate of decline in cognitive abilities that nearly matched their naturally hearing peers. Conversely, the participants with hearing loss who did not wear hearing aids experienced a markedly steeper decline in cognition.<sup>7</sup>

Another group of researchers also reached the conclusion that wearing hearing aids improves cognition in patients with hearing loss.<sup>8</sup> In this study, hearing impaired participants took cognitive exams that measured memory, attention, and processing speed then wore hearing aids for two weeks and took the tests again. The results were compared and showed a significant uptick in percentages scored for recalling words and selective attention, and an increase in processing speed resulting in correct answers.

Researchers theorize that hearing loss requires the brain to devote the majority of its resources to understanding speech, diverting it from other cognitive duties. This cognitive "overload" is relieved by the use of hearing aids, thus alleviating strain and avoiding one of the pathways to dementia.

**Early diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss slows the progression of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.**

As evidence continues to mount that hearing loss is a contributing factor in the development of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, it is imperative to inform patients of the profound consequences of ignoring their hearing loss. People with hearing loss wait an average of seven years from when they are diagnosed to seek treatment, even though the sooner hearing loss is detected and treatment begins, the more hearing ability can be preserved. Considering early diagnosis and medical intervention can also slow the progression of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, it is more important than ever to have a baseline hearing test to see where you stand.

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# Code Enforcement Inspections in Florida: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

By Lenore T. Brakefield, Naples Attorney.



**A** stranger in your backyard would likely raise your suspicion. However, if that stranger was driving a county or city-owned vehicle and carrying a clipboard, you might dismiss that person as having the right to be there on official business. That may not be the case, and if that person is a code enforcement officer, they almost certainly do not have the right to be there without either a warrant or your permission. While that does not mean you should forcefully remove a county or city official from your property, it does mean you may have a valid complaint against your local government for violating your rights.

## Who are Code Enforcement Officers?

Code enforcement officers are agents authorized by the county or another municipality to ensure that members of the community, their homes, and places of business are in compliance with various local codes. These officers are authorized to issue citations and notices to appear in county court when they believe a person or other entity has committed a civil infraction in violation of a code or ordinance enacted by the county or the city.

## Unreasonable Property Searches in Florida

The Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution and s. 12, Art. 1 of the Florida Constitution protects commercial and private property from unreasonable searches. When discussions of the fourth amendment arise, they usually focus on the excessive use of force or unreasonable searches and seizures of one's property by law enforcement officers; however, the same protections from unreasonable searches and seizures hold true for code enforcement officers.

There is no express or implied authority for a warrantless search by a code enforcement officer. Accordingly, an inspection of private property by a code enforcement officer that is without the consent of the owner, operator, or occupant or without the issuance of an administrative search warrant is an unreasonable search and a violation of one's constitutional rights.

## Exceptions to Inspection Warrants

There are two exceptions to the requirement for an administrative inspection warrant or consent. First,

is the issuance of an inspection warrant. An inspection warrant, not to be confused with an administrative search warrant, allows a state or local official, such as a code enforcement officer, to inspect any building, place, or structure for compliance with applicable fire, safety, plumbing, electrical, health, minimum housing, and zoning standards. Per Florida Statute, owner-occupied family residences are exempt from inspection warrants.

The second and more applicable exception is that a code enforcement officer does not need permission or an administrative search warrant to inspect property for code compliance for the areas that can be seen from public property, such as streets.

It is essential to know and understand your rights.

## About the Author

Attorney Lenore T. Brakefield is partner at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. (WPL) in Naples and Marco Island, Florida. She is a Naples native and graduated cum laude from the University of Florida Levin College of Law. Lenore focuses her law practice on civil and commercial litigation, including construction litigation matters. She also handles local government law, code enforcement violations, community association law, real estate law, and contract and transactional matters. Additionally, Lenore is a Certified Financial Litigator by the American Academy for Certified Financial Litigators.

Lenore acknowledges WPL summer associate Logan Wardlow for his contribution to this article. Logan attends The University of Mississippi School of Law in Oxford, Mississippi. He graduated with honors from the University of West Florida with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, General Business Major, and a Management and Legal Studies Double Minor.



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# PROTECTING YOUR SKIN

## UV SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH

**A**s the summer heat intensifies, so does the risk of sunburn and other harmful effects of UV radiation. July is recognized as UV Safety Awareness Month, highlighting the importance of protecting our skin from the damaging effects of the sun. With longer days and more time spent outdoors, it's crucial to be well-informed about UV radiation, its potential risks, and effective sun safety practices. This article aims to raise awareness about the dangers of UV radiation and provide practical tips to safeguard your skin during the month of July and beyond.

### Understanding UV Radiation

UV radiation is a form of electromagnetic radiation emitted by the sun. It consists of three types: UVA, UVB, and UVC. UVA rays can prematurely age the skin, leading to wrinkles and age spots, while UVB rays are the primary cause of sunburns. Both UVA and UVB rays contribute to the development of skin cancer. UVC rays are absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere and do not reach the surface. However, the depletion of the ozone layer has allowed more UV radiation to reach the Earth's surface, increasing the risk of skin damage.

### Recognizing the Risks

Excessive exposure to UV radiation can have severe consequences for our skin and overall health. Sunburns are not only painful but also increase the risk of skin cancer. Prolonged UV exposure can lead to premature aging, skin discoloration, eye damage, and weakened immune system. It is essential to note that UV rays can penetrate clouds and are present even on overcast days. Additionally, UV radiation can reflect off surfaces like sand, water, concrete, and snow, intensifying the exposure. Therefore, it's crucial to take precautions regardless of the weather conditions.

### Practicing Sun Safety

To protect your skin and enjoy the summer safely, follow these sun safety practices:

**Apply sunscreen:** Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 and apply it generously to all exposed areas of your body. Reapply every two hours or after swimming or sweating.



**Seek shade:** Avoid direct sunlight during peak hours, typically between 10 am and 4 pm when UV rays are the strongest. Seek shade under trees, umbrellas, or wear protective clothing like wide-brimmed hats and long-sleeved shirts.

**Wear sunglasses:** Protect your eyes from harmful UV rays by wearing sunglasses with 100% UV protection. This reduces the risk of cataracts and other eye conditions caused by prolonged sun exposure.

**Cover up:** Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that covers your arms and legs. Dark colors and tightly woven fabrics provide better protection.

**Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration, especially when spending time outdoors in the sun.

July UV Safety Awareness Month serves as a reminder of the importance of protecting our skin from harmful UV radiation. By understanding the risks associated with excessive sun exposure and practicing sun safety measures, we can reduce the likelihood of sunburns, premature aging, and skin cancer. Remember to apply sunscreen, seek shade, wear sunglasses and protective clothing, and stay hydrated throughout the summer months and beyond. Taking these simple yet crucial steps will help ensure that you can enjoy the sunshine while safeguarding your skin and overall health.

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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# Happy Feet—Happy Life— How Foot Procedures Can Help

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

If you have pain in your feet from issues such as bunions, plantar fasciitis, hammertoes or multiple other conditions, you may have tried different at-home remedies like self-massage, soaking, taping or bracing, but these often leave individuals still in pain and dealing with stiffness, immobility and the list goes on and on.

The force we place on our feet each day with every step is two to three times your body weight. To put it in perspective, if a person weighs 150 lbs., they can potentially be putting 450 lbs. of pressure on their feet! In this intricate body part, many things can cause foot pain.

Painful feet make daily living and activities challenging. The good news is, there are viable options to correct, regenerate, and improve your condition, and many of those are noninvasive.

## Muscle Spasms | Sciatic Pain | Joint Pain Leg Pain | Foot & Ankle Pain

Deep tissue laser therapy is a noninvasive, advanced technology used to accelerate your body's own natural healing process. In a process called photo-bio-stimulation the laser sends photons into damaged cells, which increases blood flow, stimulates the healing process, and reduces inflammation by penetrating throughout the layers of tissue, ligaments, and muscles.

Using this non-invasive laser therapy will reduce the amount of tissue or joint pain in just one session, and after the 6th session it usually feels better, but 90% of healing usually comes after 10 sessions. The regenerative effects are long-lasting.

## Heel Pain | Plantar Fasciitis | Heel Spur Achilles Tendonitis | Achilles tendinosis

Heel pain is one foot condition that strikes with surprise. You may be totally fine one day and then all of a sudden, your heel hurts with every step you try and take. Because several conditions can lead to heel pain, it's important to be seen by an experienced podiatrist.

You will need an examination of your foot and ankle using high-definition X-rays or an ultrasound. In some cases, Dr. Petrocelli or Collier Podiatry sends patients out for an MRI to confirm a tear or fracture.

• **Plantar fasciitis and heel spur:** If you notice pain and inflammation in your heel, you might have plantar fasciitis. If the condition worsens, it might develop into an abnormal heel bone growth called a heel spur.

• **Achilles tendonitis and Achilles tendinosis:** Achilles tendonitis is a condition where you feel pain in your Achilles tendon, which is located at the back of your leg near your heel. It can turn into Achilles tendinosis, where the tendon breaks down and tears.

If you think you may have one of these conditions, contact Dr. Petrocelli to identify the source of your pain and receive the best treatment.

After examining your foot and determining the precise cause of your pain, Dr. Petrocelli might recommend the following approaches, depending on your condition:

- Laser therapy
- Custom orthotics to help your feet absorb shock as you walk
- Surgical shoe or boots are used so that the fracture will heal
- Taping of the foot
- Physical therapy or gentle stretches
- Ice application for 24 to 48 hours and then heat application

If the condition does not improve, our doctor may recommend surgery, cortisone injections for plantar fasciitis or heel spur, and corticosteroid shots for Achilles tendonitis or Achilles tendinosis.

## Bunions

Bunions are a type of foot deformity, caused by the joint of your big toe protruding. It is often caused by wearing pointed or ill-fitting shoes that squeeze your toes into unnatural positions.

Bunions can be treated by wearing proper shoes, or wearing specialty splints or orthotics, but sometimes surgery is needed.

*Here are signs that you need to consider surgery:*

- It Is Often Times Hereditary
- Pain That Limits Your Everyday Activities, Even with Proper Shoes
- Inability to Walk More than a Few Blocks Without Pain
- Toe Deformity
- Pain Persisting Even with Anti-Inflammatory Drugs
- Bunions Not Healing Even After a Change in Shoes or Medication
- If It Is Affecting Your Quality Of Life, We Recommend Surgery

## Hammer Toe

When the muscles in your toes get out of balance, they can start contracting into a claw like position. This causes the toe to bend in an upward position in the middle joint of the toe. When this happens, it can create severe pain. Hammertoe can be genetic and many times occurs in people with either a high arch or a flat foot. Various forms of arthritis can contribute to this issue as well. And unfortunately, ill-fitting footwear can also cause hammertoe, due to pushing the toes out of their normal position for long periods of time.

## Treatment

- Padding the toe
- Wearing more comfortable shoes
- Outpatient surgery (This involves redirecting the lower tendons of the toe to the top of the toe to help straighten it into the correct position)

The causes of foot pain are vastly numerous and depend on your specific circumstances. Consulting with a podiatric specialist is the best decision for a proper diagnosis and a successful treatment outcome.

## Collier Podiatry

Dr. Michael Petrocelli has been practicing podiatric medicine for well over 20 years. He is an expert in his field and a leader to his peers. If you are experiencing any foot pain or foot conditions, please contact Collier Podiatry at (9239) 774-0019, or visit their website at [www.collierpodiatry.com](http://www.collierpodiatry.com)



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

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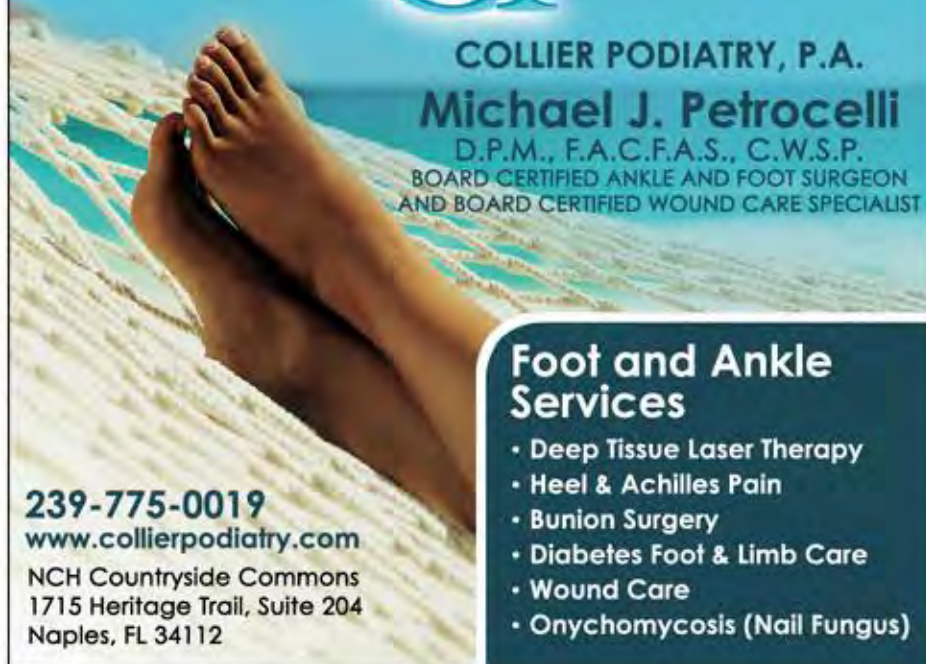


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- \* *Difficulty walking or balancing.*
- \* *Some people have atypical symptoms.*

#### PAD pain may feel like:

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

#### Advanced PAD stages may cause:

- \* *Leg pain at rest.*
- \* *Skin ulcerations.*
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# MARIJUANA MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

By Hans Doherty - Growing in Health Florida

Let's begin by stating some cannabis facts.

**1. Cannabis has been used for its medicinal properties for 1000's of years.** In the year 2737 BC it was Chinese emperor Shen Nung was the first to describe its therapeutic effects.

**2. NO one has ever overdosed and died from using cannabis.** You might feel like you're dying if you consume too much, but you won't die. For some, high levels of THC can bring on a feeling of deep euphoria, anxiousness or even paranoia. That's why dosing is so important.

**3. Cannabis is NOT a gateway drug.** For many years we have been conditioned into thinking that cannabis use will inevitably lead to heavier drugs. In fact, it's just the opposite effect.

Doctors have discovered that the different cannabis cannabinoids, including THC, help reduce the cravings and decrease the urges associated with drug addiction.

Ask yourself why our federal government along with big pharmaceutical companies, big alcohol companies, and big tobacco companies all pay Washington lobbyists millions of dollars to keep cannabis from becoming legal nationally.

### It's a legitimate question.

The reason is because it's competition. These entities will all suffer a serious hit to their bottom line if cannabis becomes legal.

Most people understand how powerful these industries are in our society. Many also understand that tobacco, alcohol, and pharmaceutical drugs are slowly killing users.

### They don't care!! Profits over people!!

Even some "big cannabis" companies are pushing high THC levels because it's what makes them more money.

There are many products available now that are very effective, yet contain no or very little THC.

Educating people about this is what I do everyday. Eliminating the stigma isn't easy. The propagandists have done a good job at scaring people away from this plant.



You all remember that movie called *Refer Madness*. "Women cry for it...Men die for it". All lies propagated by government officials to justify their actions in locking up young men and women who simply wanted to relieve their pain or sleep a little better.

Sure, maybe to get "high" too.

Learn more about how this ancient remedy might be applied to your situation at Growing in Health Florida.

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I'm always happy to help my customers make informed decisions about their medical cannabis needs.

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For more information, please message me at [info@growinginhealthflorida.org](mailto: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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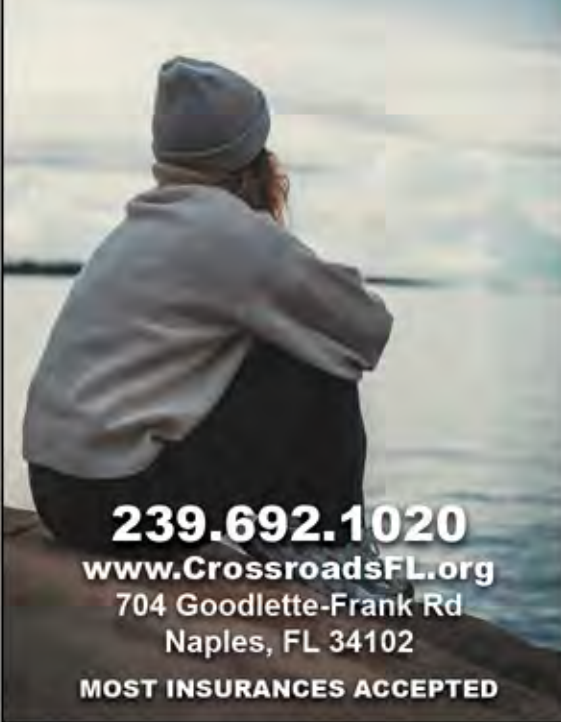
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# UNDERSTANDING RHINITIS

By Florida Gulf Coast Ear, Nose & Throat

## WHAT IS RHINITIS?

Rhinitis is an incredibly common condition, affecting more than 20 million adults and more than 7 million children in the United States each year. Rhinitis means *inflammation of the nose* and is characterized by symptoms resulting from inflammation of the nasal mucous membrane. Rhinitis is frequently confused with *sinusitis (inflammation of the sinus spaces)*, and most people who think they have sinusitis are really suffering from chronic rhinitis.

## Symptoms

- Nasal congestion
- Difficult breathing
- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Post-nasal drainage
- Itchy nose
- Headaches

## Description

Rhinitis features inflammation and swelling of the **mucous membranes**, a moist tissue that lines the nasal cavity. The purpose of this membrane is to trap dust, pollen, bacteria, viruses and other particles in a thin fluid called **mucus**. Tiny hairs called **cilia** move the particles down the throat. This keeps the air that goes into your lungs clean and free of debris.

When this membrane becomes irritated, it can cause reactions such as thickened mucus, swelling, stuffy nose, difficulty breathing, sneezing and headaches. While rhinitis usually isn't serious, its symptoms can negatively impact sleeping, exercising, and other daily activities.

Rhinitis can be acute or chronic. **Acute rhinitis** is temporary, lasting a few days in most people. In others, **chronic rhinitis** can last weeks or months, and often recurs.

## ALLERGIC RHINITIS

Most commonly, rhinitis is caused by an **allergen**. An allergen is a substance that a person's immune system recognizes as foreign or dangerous. As a result, the immune system reacts by making a type of antibody (a protein intended to neutralize the foreign substance) called **Immunoglobulin E (IgE)** to defend against the allergen. This reaction leads to the release of inflammatory chemicals such as **histamine**. When an allergen is the cause, it is called **allergic rhinitis**.

Allergic rhinitis can be seasonal or perennial. **Seasonal allergic rhinitis** is caused by an allergen that appears at a certain time of the year, such as tree pollen in the spring, grass pollen in the summer, and weed pollen and mold spores in the fall. **Perennial allergic rhinitis** can exist year-round from exposure to certain foods and medicines, pets and other animals, and dust mites in carpeting and upholstery.

Southwest Florida is in a tropical climate zone. While allergens here do have seasonal variation, the growing season is 12 months long, making perennial symptoms much more common than in more northern climate zones.

Common Allergens	
Pollen	Drugs and medicines
Dust	Certain foods
Mites	Certain beverages
Mold and fungal spores	Insect venom
Animal proteins and dander	Chemicals

## Evaluation of Rhinitis at Florida Gulf Coast ENT

When you visit Florida Gulf Coast ENT with suspected rhinitis, your physician will ask you about your symptoms, including when they began, the severity, frequency, known triggers, and progression. Your physician will want to know what treatments you've tried and if they've been successful, and will ask about your medical history and any prior allergy testing, lab testing or imaging.

Your physician will examine the inside of your nose to evaluate the color of your nasal membrane, the amount, color and consistency of mucus, and look for swelling and any abnormalities that could be causing or contributing to your symptoms, such as a deviated septum or nasal polyps. Your physician may perform a nasal endoscopy, which uses a small camera and light to visualize the sinus openings and the back of the nose all the way to the nasopharynx and throat.

Depending on what is seen in the physical exam, additional tests may be performed, such as allergy tests, pulmonary function tests, lab testing, x-rays or CAT scans. Florida Gulf Coast ENT can perform a number of these diagnostic tests in the office for your convenience.



Once a diagnosis of rhinitis is made, your physician will develop a personalized treatment plan to help you reduce or eliminate known causes and triggers and control your symptoms with avoidance measures, environmental control, medications, immunotherapy or surgery.

## Treatment of Allergic Rhinitis

Treatment of allergic rhinitis is based on the type and severity of symptoms, in addition to a person's age, other medical conditions, daily medications, and overall health. A personalized treatment plan is required to manage allergy problems, as each individual experiences their allergy symptoms differently. Your physician at Florida Gulf Coast ENT can help you determine appropriate treatment.

## Initial Treatments for Allergic Rhinitis

**Allergy testing** with counseling and avoidance of the substances that trigger the allergies.

**Nasal irrigation** flushes saline (a saltwater solution) through your nasal cavity to remove allergens and excess mucus, and to moisten the mucous membranes. This can be done with a squeeze bottle or with a number of different irrigation devices found at your local pharmacy.

**Antihistamines** reduce or block histamine, the major inflammatory chemical your body produces in reaction to an allergen. These medications can help with itchiness, runny nose, and sneezing, but are less effective at easing congestion. Antihistamines are available as tablets, capsules, liquids, nasal sprays, and eyedrops. They are available in both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) formulas.

**Nasal corticosteroid sprays** reduce nasal inflammation and swelling and excess mucus, making it easier to breathe. They also ease congestion, runny nose, sneezing, and itching. They are available in both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) formulas.



**Decongestants** reduce congestion by shrinking swollen blood vessels and nasal tissue. They don't ease sneezing or itching symptoms. Decongestants are available as tablets, liquids, nasal drops, and nasal sprays. They are available in prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) formulas. Some are available without a prescription but must be obtained from behind the pharmacy counter. Decongestants can have adverse effects on blood pressure and heart function. They should be used with caution or under doctor supervision.

Medications don't improve symptoms in every individual. Some people require daily medications or multiple medications to control their symptoms. In these cases, it's better to control the symptoms by stopping the allergic reaction from occurring. There are therapies that will change the immune system and make a person less allergic.

**Allergy immunotherapy** uses injections or sublingual (under the tongue) drops to expose a person to small, increasing doses of a known allergen. Over time, this reduces the IgE antibodies while building "blocking antibodies" that eliminate allergens from the body, helping to develop tolerance to the allergen. This makes the person less allergic and reduces or eliminates symptoms.



Overuse of decongestant nasal drops or sprays can cause even more severe nasal congestion when the decongestant wears off, called rebound congestion. Talk to your physician at Florida Gulf Coast ENT about proper usage of decongestants.

### Procedural Options for Allergic Rhinitis

Allergy immunotherapy is the best long-term alternative for chronic allergic rhinitis symptoms. There are no procedures that will cure allergies, but some can reduce specific allergic rhinitis symptoms, including improved breathing and decreased sense of congestion. The procedures may reduce sense of ear fullness and pressure, facial pressure, and may reduce nasal drainage. The options include both surgical and less invasive in-office procedures.

### Inferior Turbinoplasty

Nasal obstruction is commonly caused by enlargement of structures in the nose called the turbinates. Most people have never heard of the turbinates, but almost everybody has complained about their turbinates numerous times in their life. These structures are full of glandular tissue that can expand like a grape or shrink like a raisin. A very successful and minimally invasive procedure, called a turbinoplasty, removes the glandular tissue from the turbinate, reducing its size, prohibiting further growth, and reducing obstruction in the nasal cavity. The procedure is over 90% successful at improving breathing and nasal congestion, is well-tolerated and performed easily in the office, and has few restrictions or risks following the procedure.

### Balloon Sinuplasty

While typically performed specifically for chronic sinusitis, balloon sinuplasty can benefit patients with chronic rhinitis who are prone to more frequent nasal infections. Balloon sinuplasty opens the sinus drainage tracts to allow for better drainage and equalization of pressure. It can be performed safely and easily in the office with minimal post-procedure restrictions or risks.

### Intranasal Ablations

Intranasal ablation procedures work on specific areas of swelling in the nasal cavity to improve the openness of the nasal cavities and sinuses. Ablations decrease the glandular tissue that causes nasal obstruction, congestion, and drainage. Ablations to some of the nasal nerves can decrease the stimulation of the glands to produce mucus, reducing nasal drainage. This works especially well in individuals who frequently feel thin watery drainage running out of their nose, a condition frequently worsened by eating. Some of the most common ablation procedures are known as the Rhinaer and Clarifix procedures. The physicians at Florida Gulf Coast ENT have access to multiple ablation devices that can treat each individual's needs.

### Rhinoplasty

Typically a cosmetic procedure, some external and cosmetic nasal defects can significantly affect nasal breathing. Florida Gulf Coast ENT has physicians who specialize in rhinoplasty for both functional and cosmetic reasons.

### Septoplasty

The nasal septum (the cartilage and bone in the middle of the nose that should divide the nose into two equal halves) is one of the most common reasons for chronic nasal obstruction. As we age, and in response to specific nasal or facial trauma, this cartilage and bone begins to shift away from the center, narrowing the breathing passages.

Septoplasty surgery can provide significant improvement in nasal breathing and reduce the number of sinus infections in certain individuals. It is typically performed at a surgery center or hospital under general anesthesia. However, some deviations can be improved with in-office procedures. In-office balloon assisted septoplasty is becoming a more common procedure. It's currently not covered by insurance, but is a less invasive option that can be performed in the office to improve nasal breathing.

Chronic inflammation of the nasal mucous membrane can cause nasal polyps, sinusitis, or middle ear infections. Talk to your physician about controlling your symptoms to help prevent these complications.

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# Shopping for the Best Incontinence Underwear?

There Might be a Better Solution

**Do you experience accidental bladder leaks before making it to the restroom? Are you on the search for the best incontinence underwear?**

**A**lthough incontinence underwear may help conceal leaks you experience or prevent leaking to your clothes, it does not treat your underlying symptoms. If you struggle with bladder control or leaks, this may be a sign that you have overactive bladder.

## What is Overactive Bladder?

Overactive bladder is an umbrella term that includes the frequent and urgent need to empty your bladder. One of the most common symptoms of overactive bladder is a sudden urge to urinate, resulting in unintentional urine loss which is referred to as incontinence.

Overactive bladder can affect 1 in 3 people in the United States over the age of 40.<sup>1,2</sup> Though this bladder control issue may occur more often as people get older, it is not a normal part of aging.

You may be suffering from overactive bladder if:

- **Urgency** - You experience a sudden or compelling need to urinate with inability to hold urine or control it
- **Urgency Incontinence** - You experience an urgent need to urinate and have urinary leakage accidents or trouble holding urine before making it to the restroom
- **Frequency** - You go to the restroom to urinate so often that it disrupts your life—typically 8 or more times a day
- **Nocturia** - You wake up more than 1 time per night because you need to urinate

The good news, there are treatment options available to help regain control of your bladder. The Florida

Bladder Institute is now offering Axonics® Therapy, a long-lasting solution that is clinically proven to help regain bladder control and deliver clinically meaningful improvements in quality of life\*.

## What is Axonics Therapy?

Axonics Therapy is an advanced treatment option that works by providing gentle stimulation to the nerves that control the bladder and bowel, which can help restore normal control and result in symptom improvement.

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\*50% or greater reduction in symptoms

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# CROSSROADS SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES GROUP Examines Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and its Relationship to Drug Abuse and Alcoholism

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

**P**ost-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be associated with drug abuse and alcoholism. Individuals who have experienced traumatic events often turn to substance abuse to cope with their symptoms or numb their emotions. Self-medication can provide temporary relief but often leads to a cycle of addiction and worsens the overall mental health condition. Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group, located at 704 Goodlette-Frank Road Naples, FL 34102, provides Intensive Outpatient (IOP) treatment, as well as individualized therapy for clients suffering from PTSD and substance abuse addictions. Crossroads offers a unique 90-day treatment program tailored for each client's needs.

## WHAT IS PTSD?

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that manifests itself in some individuals after having experienced or witnessed a traumatic event. PTSD can occur in response to a single traumatic event, as well as prolonged exposure to traumatic experiences.

The symptoms of PTSD are grouped into four main categories:

**1. Intrusive Memories:** Individuals with PTSD often experience recurrent and distressing memories of traumatic events. This can include vivid flashbacks, nightmares, or intrusive thoughts triggered by various reminders of the trauma.

**2. Avoidance:** People with PTSD may actively avoid reminders or triggers associated with the traumatic event. This can involve avoiding certain places, people, activities, or conversations that remind them of the trauma. They may also try to suppress their thoughts or feelings related to the event.

**3. Negative Changes in Thinking and Mood:** PTSD can cause significant changes in an individual's thoughts and emotions. This may include persistent negative beliefs about oneself or the world, feelings of detachment from others, a loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, difficulty experiencing positive emotions, or a sense of emotional numbness.



**4. Hyperarousal and Reactivity:** Individuals with PTSD often experience increased arousal and reactivity to their surroundings. This can manifest as being easily startled, having difficulty sleeping or concentrating, feeling irritable or angry, and being hypervigilant or constantly on guard for potential threats.

## COMMON CAUSES OF PTSD

PTSD can develop in response to a wide range of traumatic events. While any traumatic experience has the potential to lead to PTSD, some common causes include:

**1. Combat and War:** Military personnel who have been involved in combat or war zones are at risk of developing PTSD. Witnessing or experiencing life-threatening events, loss of comrades, and stress of prolonged exposure to danger can contribute to the development of the disorder.

**2. Physical or Sexual Assault:** Survivors of physical or sexual assault, including domestic violence, rape, or childhood abuse, are at a heightened risk of developing PTSD. The trauma associated with these experiences can have long-lasting effects on an individual's mental health.

**3. Natural Disasters:** Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, or wildfires can be extremely traumatic. The loss of homes, belongings,

and the threat to one's safety during these events can trigger PTSD symptoms in those who experience or witness them.

**4. Accidents:** Serious accidents, such as car crashes, train derailments, or industrial accidents, can be traumatic and result in the development of PTSD. The suddenness and life-threatening nature of such events can leave individuals with persistent distressing symptoms.

**5. Medical Trauma:** Individuals who have undergone traumatic medical procedures, experienced life-threatening illnesses, or been involved in severe accidents resulting in significant injuries may develop PTSD. The physical and emotional impact of these events can be overwhelming and lead to lasting psychological trauma.

**6. Witnessing Violence:** Being a witness to violence, such as a shooting, terrorist attack, or violent crime, can be profoundly traumatic. The shock and fear associated with witnessing such events can contribute to the development of PTSD.

It's important to note that the propensity for developing PTSD varies from person to person, and not everyone who experiences a traumatic event will develop the disorder. Factors such as pre-existing mental health conditions, previous trauma exposure, available support systems, and individual



resilience can influence the likelihood of developing PTSD. Seeking professional help and early support following a traumatic event is crucial for effective intervention and treatment.

#### WHY SO MANY PERSONS SUFFERING FROM PTSD OFTEN STRUGGLE WITH DRUG ADDICTION AND ALCOHOLISM?

There are several reasons why individuals with PTSD often struggle with drug addiction and alcoholism:

**1. Self-Medication:** Many individuals with PTSD turn to drugs or alcohol as a means of self-medication. They may use substances to temporarily alleviate the distressing symptoms of PTSD, such as anxiety, depression, nightmares, and hypervigilance. Substances can provide a temporary escape or numbness from the emotional pain associated with trauma. However, this self-medication often leads to a cycle of substance abuse and addiction.

**2. Coping with Emotional Distress:** PTSD can be incredibly challenging to manage, as it involves intense and often overwhelming emotions. Individuals may turn to drugs or alcohol to cope with the emotional distress caused by their traumatic experiences. Substance use can provide a temporary sense of relief or help individuals feel more in control of their emotions, even though it is ultimately detrimental to their overall well-being.

**3. Impaired Emotional Regulation:** PTSD can disrupt an individual's ability to regulate their emotions effectively. They may struggle with intense anger, fear, or sadness, and have difficulty managing these emotions in healthy ways. Substance abuse further impairs emotional regulation, making it even harder for individuals to cope with their PTSD symptoms and reinforces the cycle of addiction.

**4. Co-Occurring Disorders:** PTSD and substance abuse often appear together in the same individual. The presence of both conditions simultaneously is known as a dual diagnosis or co-occurring disorder. Trauma and substance abuse have complex interactions, with each condition influencing and exacerbating the other. The traumatic experiences and resulting PTSD symptoms can contribute to the development of substance abuse, while substance abuse can intensify the symptoms of PTSD.

**5. Neurobiological Factors:** Both PTSD and substance abuse can affect the brain's reward system and neurotransmitter functioning. Trauma can lead to dysregulation in brain chemistry, making individuals more susceptible to the reinforcing effects of drugs and alcohol. Substance abuse can further alter brain function, making it harder for individuals to break free from addiction and exacerbating the symptoms of PTSD.

Crossroads addresses both PTSD and substance abuse in a comprehensive treatment plan for individuals who are struggling with both conditions. Crossroads integrated treatment approach targets both the trauma-related symptoms and the addiction provides the best chance for recovery and improved quality of life. It is important to seek professional help from healthcare providers experienced in treating co-occurring disorders to develop an individualized treatment plan.

#### WHY CROSSROADS IOP AND OUTPATIENT TREATMENT PLANS HELP WITH PTSD?

Crossroads Intensive outpatient treatment (IOP) therapy and individual therapy can be valuable treatment approaches for individuals with PTSD. Crossroads utilizes the following therapies to treat PTSD and related substance abuse addictions:

**1. Intensive Outpatient Treatment (IOP) Therapy:** Crossroads IOP therapy is a structured treatment program that provides more intensive support than traditional outpatient therapy while allowing individuals to live at home and maintain their daily routines.

**a. Structured Support:** Crossroads provides a structured environment with scheduled therapy sessions and group activities. This structure provides a sense of stability and consistency, which can be beneficial for individuals with PTSD who may struggle with a lack of structure in their lives.

**b. Comprehensive Treatment:** Crossroads incorporates various therapeutic modalities tailored to the individual's needs. This includes individual therapy, group therapy, trauma-focused therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and other evidence-based interventions. This comprehensive approach addresses the complex nature of PTSD and helps individuals develop effective coping strategies and skills.

**c. Peer Support:** Crossroads treatment involves group therapy sessions where individuals can connect with others who have experienced similar traumas. Peer support can be immensely valuable in reducing feelings of isolation, normalizing experiences, and fostering a sense of belonging and understanding.

**d. Flexibility:** Crossroads IOP therapy provides more flexibility than inpatient treatment programs, allowing individuals to attend therapy sessions while still being able to fulfill their daily responsibilities such as work, school, or caregiving. This flexibility can make therapy more accessible and sustainable for individuals with PTSD.

**2. Individual Therapy:** At Crossroads, individual therapy, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) or trauma-focused therapy, can be highly effective in treating PTSD. Individual therapy can help in the following ways:

**a. Trauma Processing:** Individual therapy provides a safe and confidential space for individuals to process their traumatic experiences. Crossroads therapists trained in trauma-focused approaches help individuals gradually explore and make sense of their trauma memories, emotions, and beliefs. This process can contribute to reducing the distressing symptoms of PTSD.

**b. Coping Skills Development:** Crossroads therapists work collaboratively with individuals to develop effective coping strategies for managing PTSD symptoms. These skills may include relaxation techniques, grounding exercises, emotion regulation techniques, and stress management strategies. Individual therapy allows for personalized and tailored interventions to meet the specific needs of the individual.

**c. Addressing Co-occurring Issues:** Crossroads individual therapy provides an opportunity to address any co-occurring disorders or challenges alongside PTSD. This may include addressing substance abuse, depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns commonly associated with PTSD.

**d. Building a Therapeutic Relationship:** The relationship between the individual and therapist at Crossroads is a critical aspect of individual therapy. The therapist provides support, empathy, in a non-judgmental space, fostering trust and promoting healing. This therapeutic alliance can facilitate the individual's engagement in therapy and enhance treatment outcomes.

Crossroads IOP therapy and Crossroads individual therapy programs can be effective in helping individuals with PTSD. The choice between these approaches often depends on the severity of symptoms, the level of support needed, and the individual's preferences and circumstances. It's important to work with a mental health professional to determine the most appropriate treatment plan for everyone's unique needs.



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# IN-OFFICE LIPOSUCTION, AN EASY TOLERABLE PROCEDURE

By Gunnar Bergqvist, MD

Liposuction has become a rather easy and safe procedure that does not require anesthesia. Plastic Surgeon, Dr. Gunnar Bergqvist, performs liposuction in his private surgery suite on just about any area of the body, such as the abdomen, thighs, flanks, arms, jawline, trunk, and breasts.

Liposuction began in France over 100 years ago. The interest in the procedure reduced due to unrefined techniques, however, it has now become a common and safe procedure due to medical advancements. The tumescent technique for local anesthesia has revolutionized liposuction by eliminating both risks of general anesthesia and bleeding once associated with liposuction. The associated vasoconstriction has permitted the extensive use of microcannulas and superficial liposuction, thus dramatically improving aesthetic results. Without proper training, its nearly impossible to perform liposuction without anesthesia. It requires much experience and training, thus it is very important that patients evaluate who they will choose to do this procedure.

## What to expect

After a consultation with Dr. Bergqvist, the procedure is booked in an office setting with "awake" anesthesia, which is currently the preferred method. It can also be done in a surgery center setting so you can receive anesthesia if chosen. The day of the procedure, patients are asked to make sure they have a ride home, as it is not safe to drive yourself after any medical procedure. When the patient arrives, they change into a bathrobe and are given something to reduce anxiety if they so chose. The patient then is marked by Dr. Bergqvist and made comfortable before he begins to administer the tumescent slowly. This normally takes about 45 min. Then the patient rests for about an hour. Some patients, however, choose to receive some botox and fillers if they want that, as per their consultation. Or, they may choose to have a HydraFacial by our lovely Aesthetician.



When the numbing medication has taken effect, the doctor begins the process of removing the fat which takes about 45 min – an hour. There are no incisions that require stitches. Once this process is finished, there are two other options that can be done should the patient have chosen one of the following during their consultation:

1. They can have their fat transferred to another area of the body, such as the breast or buttocks. This process is known as "Fat grafting." Dr. Bergqvist processes the fatty tissue that was removed and then injects where extra volume is desired.

Or,

2. J- Plasma which is another short process that is fantastic for skin tightening. This can be done with or without the liposuction procedure. Some patients are thin and want tightening only. This cannula is inserted in the exact same place the liposuction



cannulas were. It has a tip that gives off a helium plasma beam that induces the deposition of collagen and skin tightening. The process reveals tightening within the first few months but the full benefits from this show after about 5 months. It's like a tummy tuck, yet without having had the surgery or scar.

Liposuction and J-Plasma can be performed on practically any area of the body that has extra fat. Many patients have been offered to neck lift surgery by Dr. Bergqvist. However, most patients can choose the liposuction/J-Plasma combination which would give outstanding results and there would be no need for anesthesia, stitches or scar concerns. Once the fat is removed from an area, no additional fat cells repopulate that area.

## Recovery

There is little to no downtime and most patients have some swelling and bruising for a few weeks. The benefit of Tumescent anesthesia is the drastic reduction of pain and discomfort after this procedure. Most patients manage pain using over the counter pain medication if needed and are asked to refrain from strenuous activity. The most important part of recovery is the use of compression garments which are provided. This will help build and create your new shape!

Dr. Bergqvist is double boarded by the American Board of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery as well as the American Board of Surgery and a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons which hold the Highest standard of care in the field. In 2019 Dr. Bergqvist and Dr. Jeffery Klein, (the inventor of Tumescent Anesthesia), showed new results with an even more advanced formula called TLAD, (Tumescent Lidocaine Antibiotic Delivery), which further reduces pain and discomfort after even more invasive surgeries that can be used for all types of surgeries. This solution has allowed Dr. Bergqvist to expand its use for many other procedures allowing many procedures to be done directly in his office.

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# OBESITY AND ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

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

**O**besity affects millions of Americans. Over the last couple of decades, it has spread from the adult population to adolescents and children. Although it is often attributed to poor eating habits and a lack of exercise, the truth is really a bit more complicated than that. The process by which the body converts food into energy can be influenced by chemicals in the environment, over which we have little control, and by genetics, over which we have zero control. It is a complex combination of genetic susceptibility, biological pathways related to metabolism and body weight regulation, and environmental factors.<sup>1</sup>

## World Health Organization Fast Facts on Obesity

- Worldwide obesity has nearly tripled since 1975.
- In 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight. Of these over 650 million were obese.
- 39% of adults aged 18 years and over were overweight in 2016, and 13% were obese.
- Most of the world's population live in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight.
- 39 million children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese in 2020.
- Over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016.
- Obesity is preventable.<sup>2</sup>

## Obesity and orthopedic conditions

Obesity is a growing concern in the health community because of the morbidities associated with it. There is also a higher occurrence of many orthopedic conditions among obese individuals than their non-obese counterparts. Obesity also worsens the progression of many of these orthopedic conditions. Studies have shown that obesity may have a negative impact on bone metabolism and may be implicated in the pathophysiology of some orthopedic conditions like osteoporosis, fractures, osteoarthritis and many soft tissue ailments by both reduction in bone mass and elaboration of proinflammatory cytokines. These contribute to preponderance of musculoskeletal co-morbidities among obese patients. Critical peri-operative issues which



include increased cardiopulmonary risks, issues of special equipment, instrumentation, surgical approach, patients' positioning and adjustments in medication should be acknowledged and meticulously addressed in operative management of orthopedic conditions in obese patients. Surgeries in obese patients are fraught with operative challenges and post-operative complications than in the non-obese and a good knowledge of the critical issues in surgical management of obese patients is necessary to facilitate decision making as well as rendering of effective and efficient orthopedic care.<sup>2</sup>

## Does obesity exclude a person from orthopedic surgery?

Obese patients sometimes hear from their doctor that in order to undergo a needed orthopedic surgery, such as a knee or hip replacement, they'll need to lose 50, 75, or even 100 pounds. And sometimes the recommendation is to lose even more, as if that's an easy or realistic prospect. While the surgeon's recommendations may be disappointing, the rationale seems sound: people carrying a lot of excess weight have long been considered at higher risk for complications, and less likely to experience the profound pain relief expected from this major operation. Indeed, several studies describe higher rates of infections and dislocations and lower rates of good results after hip or knee replacement among the obese, especially the severely obese.

But there is promising news. The studies that doctors have long relied on to back up their recommendations were conducted decades ago. Newer studies are showing different results. The researchers conclude that "obesity in itself should not be a deterrent to undergoing total joint replacement to relieve symptoms." However, the potential for more complications must be considered as well, something this study did not formally examine.

Given the high and rising rates of obesity and arthritis in this country, the results of this study will likely apply to many people. And they suggest that surgeons should change expectations about what surgery has to offer obese individuals with severe arthritis.

## Here are some of the new findings:

- Those who were the most obese (about 25% of those in the study) had more pain and poorer function prior to surgery than those who were leaner.
- The amount of functional gain in obese individuals six months after joint replacement was significant, and similar to that experienced by those who were not obese.
- Pain relief was greater among the most obese than other weight groups. After surgery, pain levels were similar in all weight groups.<sup>3</sup>

The bottom line is that obesity should be avoided. That is always going to be true. Obese patients DO need to lose weight and obesity CAN cause significant complications during and after surgery. However, this new study is at least promising. There is hope of relief for patients suffering from orthopedic conditions that limit their mobility.

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# The Relationship Between COVID-19 And Hair Loss

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

**C** OVID-19 sent out shockwaves through all aspects of society, many of which we still feel today. We all remember the toilet paper shortages and the social distancing requirements, but less known are the long-term effects that can come from those who had this virus, some of which we're still trying to understand.

Among these conversations about COVID-19's lasting impact is an increasing number of reports of hair loss, which many people notice only after they have had the virus. By logical reasoning, the question then arises of whether COVID-19 can cause hair loss and how to reverse it in the case that it does.

## Hair Loss from COVID-19

COVID-19 is a virus most notably known for its effects on the respiratory system, where it likes to invade the lungs and interfere with breathing. This begs the question, though, of how this virus that prefers the lungs can result in hair loss. However, this hair loss might not be as central to COVID-19 as we expect.

Hair loss is normal after having any high fever or illness, and fever is a common symptom in those who have COVID-19 because of the body's desire to attack and rid itself of this outside contagion. So, hair loss has less to do with COVID-19 itself, and more to do with it being a virus that causes illness and fever in the body.

Furthermore, while many people may consider it hair loss, it's actually hair shedding, with the medical name of telogen effluvium. Still, the term hair loss is commonly used to depict the scenario.

A 2022 study into telogen effluvium found that of the 198 patients included in the study, 48 showed hair loss after having COVID-19, making it a prominent comorbidity, or lasting health complication, for those who had this virus.

Telogen effluvium (TE) is one of the most popular types of alopecia in women and can be provoked by:

- trauma
- stressful events
- hormonal imbalance
- malnutrition
- drugs



This condition occurs when more hairs than usual enter the shedding, or telogen, phase of the hair growth lifecycle at the same time.

So, while COVID-19 is not the only cause of TE, as a viral infection it is a possible culprit.

## Why Does COVID-19 Trigger Hair Loss?

It can be a distressing situation to have undergone COVID-19 infection, something with aftereffects that are still largely unknown, only to begin experiencing hair loss. Furthermore, since hair shedding due to COVID does not occur immediately following infection, it can often be hard to narrow down if the cause is COVID, genetics, or something else entirely.

There are a few reasons why COVID-19 may cause hair loss, and they all primarily stem from stress. As for the type of stress, it can be physical stress on the body, or mental stress of the mind.

For physical stressors, those with COVID-19 often have a high fever, which is often associated with hair shedding following infection. While this stressor is mild, more serious physical stressors can also lead to

hair loss, such as being placed on a ventilator because of respiratory complications. Both of these complications place the body under physical stress, which may trigger TE.

COVID-19 also increases mental stress as you deal with the infection and how you feel because of it.

When you look at it this way, it is clear that COVID-19 infection can place tremendous stress on the body through various means, which is resulting in more cases of TE following infection.

Still, the severity of hair loss does not always relate to how severe the illness was. For instance, some people with severe COVID symptoms may not have any hair loss, while those with mild symptoms experience severe hair loss.

## How Long Can It Last?

If you suffer from hair shedding due to COVID-19, or any other illness, it becomes most noticeable about two to three months after having the fever or infection. As for how long it lasts, it may take six to nine months before shedding stops and your hair begins to look normal again. However, some



studies on COVID-19-related hair shedding have seen that it stops sooner than this, sometimes in only two to three months instead of the six-month average.

#### Is COVID-19 Hair Loss Permanent?

The good news about TE from COVID-19 is that it is not permanent. The hair phase shifts to telogen more quickly than it should, but once the new strand begins growing in, the hair can return to normal.

This is because TE does not cause someone to lose their hair follicles, which is what occurs in the case of hair loss. While there might be a bit of time when the hair does not grow, since the hair follicle is still there, the hair will eventually regrow.

Still, as with most things, there is an exception. In less than 10% of cases, those experiencing hair shedding may suffer from chronic TE, which is when the hair shedding persists beyond six months. While the exact cause of chronic TE is unknown, in cases linked to COVID-19, it's suspected to be from the significant amount of stress you underwent while infected and the fact that you might not yet be back to normal even after six months. Even in this case, though, TE is not permanent, only longer lasting.

#### Reversing COVID-19-Related Hair Loss

If you are experiencing hair shedding due to TE, you do not have to worry about losing all of your hair, as the proportion of telogen hairs never exceeds 50%. Still, this is something that you likely want to avoid.

So, what can be done if you are suffering from hair loss? The following are some great steps:

#### Check For Other Causes of Hair Loss

Since TE is delayed from your COVID-19 infection, it can be hard to know if your hair loss is from COVID or something else. To be sure, you can check other possible causes of hair loss.

Nutritional deficiencies are one such possibility. Hair relies on a balanced amount of nutrients, and in some cases, your hair loss might be because you're suffering from a deficiency in one type.

A blood test can be used to check for any nutritional deficiencies that might be affecting your hair growth. Furthermore, focusing on a more well-rounded and healthy diet can increase your chances of getting all the nutrients your body needs from the food you eat.

Your hormones might also be the culprit, with thyroids that are unbalanced possibly being the cause of your hair loss. A laboratory test can check your thyroid hormones, and if they are unbalanced, medication can be prescribed to address the low or high levels.

#### Check Your Stress

If tests for nutrient deficiencies and unbalanced hormones show no problems in these areas, and TE is determined to be the cause of your hair shedding, the only thing that you can really do is wait it out.

However, it's easier said than done to give your hair months to hopefully regrow, but one very important thing that you can do in this time is focus on your stress levels and keep them as minimal as possible.

TE most often results from stress, whether the stress of your environment or stress placed on your body from the illness. To ensure that TE runs its course and does not stick around longer than you want, you want to ensure that your stress levels do not remain high.

If you experience stress in your life, whether from your work, home life, or even thoughts of your hair loss, you want to work hard to address these concerns to lower your stress. Finding a healthy way to work through your worries, such as meditation, exercise, or counseling, can also be influential.

As for stress due to illness, this involves providing your body with all it needs to properly care for itself and recover from illness. For instance, your body may require more sleep as it heals or a more balanced diet rich in vitamins and nutrients it can use to repair and damage.

Stress can keep TE around longer, so by actively working to reduce stress in all forms, you can increase the odds of your hair finally beginning the regrowth cycle.

#### Medication

Medication is not always the right choice, but sometimes it can be.

For those with acute TE, hair growth will recover spontaneously, and their hair will begin growing again. Because of this, and since it can be hard to know when to stop medication once it has been started, it's not often recommended for those with acute TE. However, once you have been experiencing hair shedding for four to six months, and it does not appear to be getting better, it might be time to look into medication.

#### Remember: It's Not Permanent

In most cases, hair shedding results because of stress. While it is usually from stress sustained by the body due to illness, any stress you experience from the current state of the world can also influence your hair's growth phase.

However, it's also common for hair shedding to then cause increasing stress, perpetuating the problem.

In these cases, it's important to remember that any hair loss due to TE is not permanent, and your hair will recover. Even chronic cases of TE, which last longer than 6 months, are still not cases of permanent hair loss. Once the body returns to balance, hair will begin regrowing again.

So, the best thing you can do to reverse hair loss is to remain calm, both in your mindset about any hair you have lost and in all other aspects of your life.

#### COVID-19 Hair Loss: Key Takeaways

Because of the increasing amount of physical and mental stress COVID-19 infection places on the body, more and more people are suffering from hair loss months after their infection.

Unfortunately, there's not much that can be done to reverse hair loss from COVID-19 beyond waiting for everything to sort itself out. If you find yourself at this point, remember that your hair will grow back, and this is only a temporary process.

Still, while COVID-19 can cause hair shedding, it may not be the cause of your hair loss, which is why it is best to reach out to a doctor to look into your health profile to determine if something else is to blame for your hair loss.

Remember, while hair is often considered only for its influence on physical appearance, it can provide a lot of information about your internal health. If your hair is shedding more than before, it may be wise to listen to your body and look into why this is happening with your doctor.

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# KIDNEY CANCER: Are You at Risk?

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

**T**he kidneys are a major part of our detoxifying system. These two small bean-shaped organs clean the blood and filter waste products and toxins from the body through the urine. Kidney cancer is one of the ten most prevalent cancers. The lifetime risk for developing kidney cancer is about 1 in 46 in men and 1 in 82 in women.<sup>1</sup>

The symptoms of kidney cancer often go unnoticed or don't begin to show until the tumor(s) has grown. However, some of the key indicators are as follows:

- Blood in the urine
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Fever or infection
- Swollen abdomen
- Lump on the side of the abdomen (with or without pain)
- Anemia
- Swollen legs and ankles
- Chronic inflammation
- High blood pressure
- Shortness of breath

If you have symptoms or your physician finds a lump during a physical examination, they will order diagnostic testing such as a renal arteriogram, MRI, CT Scan, blood and urine analysis, and a needle biopsy may be necessary.

There are some increased risk factors, which make some individuals more susceptible to renal cancer. The risks factors included:

- Being over the age of 40
- Being male
- Being black
- Smoking
- Obese
- Overuse of NSAIDs and other prescription medications
- Family History
- Chemical Exposures
- Kidney disease

Most kidney cancer appears first in the tubules of the kidneys. When the malignant cells form a tumor(s) the growth rate is typically slow, so the

likelihood of an early diagnosis is increased, and the treatment can usually be performed before the tumor has metastasized into any other organs.

### Treatment

Depending on the stage and size of the tumor(s), your physician will develop a specific treatment plan tailored to your needs.

Typically, performing a nephrectomy treats kidney cancer. There are three main types of this surgical option. The first is a Partial nephrectomy, which removes the tumor and some of the surrounding tissue. The second is a Simple nephrectomy, which removes the entire kidney, and the third treatment method is a Radical nephrectomy, which removes the kidney, adrenal glands, lymph nodes, and any questionable surrounding tissue margins. These procedures can usually be done laparoscopically. Some patients may also require radiation or chemotherapy treatments.

### Associates in Nephrology

Associates in Nephrology has been providing comprehensive kidney care and transplant services in Southwest 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.

Source:

1. [https://www.nftr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAYc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1ldxNN-rM7OKwmg3j43bZni6h175MIICzWnSQRoCE5QQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.nftr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAYc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1ldxNN-rM7OKwmg3j43bZni6h175MIICzWnSQRoCE5QQAvD_BwE)

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
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- Kidney Transplant Services: Patient and Donor Evaluations, Post-Transplant Follow-up Care
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- Pyelonephritis
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- Recurring kidney stones
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- 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 education 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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\* In Collier County as of September 2022 [medicare.gov/care-compare](http://medicare.gov/care-compare)

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# PAIN: IS IT ALWAYS PART OF GETTING OLDER?

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

**W**e've been taught to believe that aches and pains are a part of getting older. But what if I told you the two are not inextricably linked? The latest studies do not show a direct relationship between pain and age. In fact, a National Center for Health Statistics report found the highest prevalence of chronic pain peaks at age 65.

Population-based studies found a lower prevalence of lower back, neck, headache, and abdominal pain among older adults when compared to younger adults, and according to the Arthritis Foundation, of all adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis, 64% are under the age of 64.

Greater risk factors than just age alone for arthritis are genetics, obesity, and prior injuries.

There is no denying that as we age, muscle fibers become less dense, making them less flexible, but there are plenty of things you can do help keep your joints in great working condition and reduce the chances of pain and injury.

## Tips for keeping joints limber and strong:

**1. Manage weight.** Excess weight on our cartilage and bones causes the breakdown of joints. The additional load causes a release of chemicals that can lead to joint destruction. Osteoarthritis gets worse faster and is more severe in people who are overweight. They are also more likely to need hip or knee replacement surgery and have more complications post-surgery.

**2. Keep moving.** Staying active is one of the best ways to prevent pain and joint stiffness. It's important to move every day. As we get older, we need to modify our workout routines to equally focus on strength training, cardio, and stretching. Strength training is vital because it helps us build muscle and improves the flexibility of the ligaments that support the joints. Cardio, or aerobic exercises such as walking, swimming, running or cycling help burn calories, keep our endurance up, and keep the weight off. And stretching, of course, helps us stay flexible. Most important, consistent movement helps prevent injury which can lead to pain later in life. Many injuries I see as



a physician are from people who sit behind a desk five days a week and then hit the tennis or pickleball courts hard on the weekend. That's the quickest recipe for injury. If possible, add some activity to your weekdays as well, constant movement is the best way to keep your joints pliable and prevent injury.

**3. Start slow and listen to your body.** Many people want to start off strong when they begin a new exercise regimen. They work out too hard on the first day and risk inflaming or stressing the joint muscles. It's important to give yourself time to build muscle strength around the joints, this allows the muscles to support the joints to take the impact of a more intense workout. If you are trying to start up a new routine, listen to your body, it will tell you if you've had enough. If you experience any pain during activity, cut back or stop. What you do not want to do is injure yourself or make your muscles so sore you can't work out again the next day. Remember the goal is to build a new routine, which means consistency, not power. If you haven't exercised in a long time start out light with walks or bike rides. If you're starting a new workout, go slow enough in the beginning to develop the proper form and technique. Another quick way to injure yourself is by putting a lot of weight or impact on your bones and ligaments improperly.

**4. Hydrate.** Drink plenty of fluids. The fluid that directly lubricates your joints is primarily made up of water. This fluid is important to reduce friction in your joints which can cause pain. Hydration also helps build and strengthen the muscles around your joints to further protect with shock absorption and boosts our endurance.

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# THE ULTIMATE PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY RELIEF PROGRAM

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

**P**eripheral neuropathy is a complex condition. Finding the root cause and the extent of damage and to what types of nerves or blood vessels is how a comprehensive plan is customized to regenerate a patient's nerves cells and tissues. Conventional medicine has no answers. It's either live with it or take addicting medications for the pain, most commonly gabapentin.

Very few physicians are trained to treat the condition. Success ideally involves collaboration of medical personnel, chiropractic and or physical therapy personnel, and functional neurology. At Feel Amazing Institute this is what we offer.

## What is the Ultimate Neuropathy Program?

There are several clinics in SWFL that propose a treatment for peripheral neuropathy. There are dozens of treatments that have shown to be beneficial for the diagnosis. Many clinics do one or two of these treatment options but very few can combine and offer dozens of these options.

At Feel Amazing Institute, we were the original clinic to create a comprehensive Neuropathy program back in 2006. There was a learning curve and results varied at first. After 16 years of experience, becoming board-certified in functional neurology, and becoming medically integrated, my clinic now has it down to a science. In 2017 my office was one of the first in the country, and I believe still the only in southwest Florida, to offer regenerative medicine and natural biologics as options for peripheral neuropathy. To date this has been the most significant endeavor to enhance results for our clients.

## All neuropathies are not the same and require different programs.

Because what works well for one person may not necessarily work well for another, it's never a good idea to depend on just one or two treatments. It is just as easy to combine many types of treatments to improve the chances and the amount of success. Also the treatment must be individualized and specific.

The Ultimate Neuropathy Program should include advanced technologies to be done at a physician's office as well as treatments for self-care at home. It may include vitamin and wellness infusions to



enhance the body's internal environment for healing. It may include light therapies, electrical therapies, sound and pressure wave therapies, Pulsed electro-magnetic field therapies, regenerative medicine options, as well as lifestyle and nutritional recommendations.

Many clinics do a Toronto Clinical Neuropathy assessment and score. Some will do an infrared heat map of the feet. However, without an extensive neurological training, the interpretation of the score and image is what is key.

## What to do and what not to do, and when?

Is the neuropathy peripheral or central? Big nerves or small nerves? Motor, sensory, autonomic, or all the above? One nerve or many nerves? How will the treatment differ if it's both feet, both hands, equal damage bilaterally, or worse on one side? How will the treatment differ if there is burning pain, numbness, loss of balance, weakness, or complicated by back pain or stenosis? What if the neuropathy affects the entire body? Is there a treatment for that? Yes, there are several.

Our clinic has a very sophisticated computer analysis that measures peripheral nerve function, peripheral vascular function, and central nerve function with a score for each, and an extensive report breaking down the many physiological and metabolic components. The test can be repeated after a treatment regimen and the improvement measured and quantified.



## HILER

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## What modalities are used for improvement?

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

- Five different electrical therapies
- Four possible light therapies
- Four types of vibration therapy
- Class 4 high powered lasers
- Pulsed electromagnetic fields (PEMF)
- Soundwave/Shockwave/pressure waves
- Ozone therapy and/or peptide therapy
- Spinal decompression therapy (often not needed)
- Natural supplementation and/or vitamin-wellness infusions
- Injections or infusions of Natural Biologics including Wharton's jelly allografts, growth factors, and platelet rich plasma.

## What kind of results can be achieved through the ultimate neuropathy treatment program at Feel Amazing Institute?

Our patients report that better than 90% have excellent results. Most who undergo the treatment experience the following: reduced pain, reduced tingling and numbness, ability to experience normal touch without pain, reduce cold or burning sensations, improved balance and coordination, lowered dependency on medication, improved sleep, relief of restless legs, reduced swelling and inflammation, improved muscle function.

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

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

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

If you need a highly experienced, chiropractic neurologist in Naples, Florida, look no further than Feel Amazing Institute. For more information, to schedule a free telephone consultation, or for free informational seminar or webinar, call today!





# Fireworks Eye Safety

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

The numbers are clear: Fireworks are dangerous and July 4 is an especially risky time for eye injuries. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's most recent annual fireworks injury report (PDF) fireworks caused 12 deaths and 10,000 injuries in 2019. Three-quarters of the fireworks injuries treated in emergency rooms happened between mid-June and mid-July.

The most recent *Consumer Product Safety Commission* report found that 15% of fireworks injuries were eye injuries. In the most severe cases, fireworks can rupture the globe of the eye, cause chemical and thermal burns, **corneal abrasions** and **retinal detachment** — all of which can cause permanent eye damage and vision loss.

Children and young adults are frequent victims. Children age 15 and under accounted for 36% of the total injuries, according to the commission's report. And half of the injuries requiring an emergency room visit were to people age 20 or younger. Even sparklers can be dangerous, as they burn at more than 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Sparklers were responsible for 1,200 of the injuries in the latest report, and a sparkler mishap caused one of the fireworks deaths reported in 2017.

The people injured by fireworks aren't necessarily handling the explosives themselves. In fact, **65% of people injured by fireworks were bystanders**, according to another study. The statistics don't lie. Children and people not handling fireworks themselves are in as much danger as the people actually lighting fireworks.

## What to Do for a Fireworks Eye Injury

Fireworks-related eye injuries can combine blunt force trauma, heat burns and chemical exposure. If an eye injury from fireworks occurs, it should be considered a medical emergency.

- Seek medical attention immediately.
- Do not rub your eyes.
- Do not rinse your eyes.
- Do not apply pressure.
- Do not remove any objects that are stuck in the eye.
- Do not apply ointments or take any blood-thinning pain medications such as aspirin or ibuprofen unless directed by a doctor.



## Fireworks Safety Tips

The best way to avoid a potentially blinding fireworks injury is by attending a professional, public fireworks show rather than purchasing fireworks for home use.

## If you attend or live near a professional fireworks show:

- Respect safety barriers, follow all safety instructions and view fireworks from at least 500 feet away.
- Do not touch unexploded fireworks; instead, immediately contact local fire or police departments to help.

For those who decide to purchase and use consumer fireworks in states where they are legal (PDF), follow these safety tips from the *Consumer Product Safety Commission*:

- Do not allow young children to play with fireworks. Sparklers, a firework often considered by many to be the ideal "safe" device for the young, burn at very high temperatures and should be not be handled by young children. Children may not understand the danger involved with fireworks and may not act appropriately while using the devices or in case of emergency.

Source:  
<https://www.cpsc.gov/eye-health/tips-prevention/injuries-fireworks-eye-safety>

- Older children should be permitted to use fireworks only under close adult supervision.
- Do not allow any running or horseplay.
- Set off fireworks outdoors in a clear area, away from houses, dry leaves, or grass and other flammable materials.
- Keep a bucket of water nearby for emergencies and for pouring on fireworks that fail to ignite or explode.
- Do not try to relight or handle malfunctioning or "dud" fireworks. Soak them with water and throw them away.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never light fireworks in a container, especially a glass or metal container.
- Keep unused fireworks away from firing areas.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Check instructions for special storage directions.
- Observe local laws.
- Never have any portion of your body directly over a firework while lighting.
- Do not experiment with homemade fireworks.

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

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



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# THE BOCOX™ PROCEDURE

## ENHANCING PENIS HEALTH AND FUNCTION WITH BOTOX®

By Dr. Viviana Cuberos

**W**hen it comes to men's sexual health, the BocoX™ procedure has emerged as a revolutionary technique utilizing Botox® injections to improve penis health and function. Botox®, commonly known for its cosmetic applications, is now being employed as a minimally invasive solution to address various sexual concerns. In this article, we will delve into the details of the BocoX™ procedure, its potential benefits, and what men need to know about this innovative approach to enhancing their sexual well-being.

### Understanding the BocoX™ Procedure

The BocoX™ procedure is a specialized technique that involves injecting Botox, a purified form of the botulinum toxin, into specific areas of the penis. The injections are strategically administered to target the smooth muscle tissue responsible for erectile function. By temporarily relaxing these muscles, Botox can alleviate conditions such as erectile dysfunction (ED), Peyronie's disease, and premature ejaculation. This groundbreaking procedure offers a non-surgical alternative to traditional treatment options, providing men with a safe and effective solution for improving their sexual health.

### Benefits of the BocoX™ Procedure

The BocoX™ procedure offers several potential benefits for men experiencing sexual health issues. Primarily, it can aid in the treatment of erectile dysfunction by promoting better blood flow and relaxation of the penile muscles. Additionally, Botox injections can address the symptoms of Peyronie's disease, a condition characterized by the abnormal curvature of the penis, by relaxing the affected area and reducing pain during intercourse. Moreover, the BocoX procedure has shown promising results in combating premature ejaculation, extending sexual stamina, and enhancing overall sexual satisfaction. These benefits make the BocoX procedure an appealing option for men seeking to improve their sexual performance and regain confidence in the bedroom.

### Procedure and Recovery

The BocoX™ procedure is typically performed as an outpatient procedure in a medical office or clinic. The process involves administering Botox injections into predetermined areas of the penis, guided by



ultrasound or other imaging techniques. The injections are relatively painless, and the entire procedure usually takes less than 30 minutes. After the treatment, patients may experience mild swelling, bruising, or discomfort, but these side effects are temporary and typically resolve within a few days. Full recovery is expected within a week, and patients can resume sexual activity as advised by their healthcare provider. The BocoX™ procedure's minimally invasive nature and quick recovery time make it an attractive option for those seeking to improve their sexual health without significant downtime.

### Considerations and Potential Risks

While the BocoX™ procedure offers promising results, it is essential for men to approach it with realistic expectations and consult with a qualified healthcare professional. Like any medical procedure, there are potential risks involved. Some individuals may experience allergic reactions to Botox or encounter temporary side effects such as bruising, swelling, or pain. It is crucial to choose a reputable and experienced healthcare provider who specializes in sexual health to ensure safe and effective treatment. Open communication with the healthcare provider regarding medical history, expectations, and concerns is key to a successful outcome.

*Nothing, including this procedure, works for everyone. Discuss the procedure with your provider & read the consent form which incorporates the possible side effects seen with both Botox and Viagra (since, in theory, the same side effects could occur with BocoX™).*

*WARNING: Treating erectile dysfunction is serious business; only providers trained & licensed by the Cellular Medicine Association® (indicated by their listing on our directory) can legally use the name, BocoX™, to describe a procedure offered in their office.*

The BocoX™ procedure utilizing Botox injections represents an exciting advancement in the field of men's sexual health. With its potential to improve erectile function, alleviate Peyronie's disease symptoms, and enhance overall sexual satisfaction, this minimally invasive technique offers hope to men seeking effective solutions. By understanding the procedure, considering the benefits and risks, and consulting with a qualified professional, men can make informed decisions about their sexual well-being and explore the potential benefits of the BocoX procedure.

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# SUN-SMART

## How to Shield Your Children from Harmful UV Rays and Sunburns

By Vivian Wong, MD, PhD, FAAD

**P**rotecting children and infants from the sun's harmful rays is crucial in preventing sunburns and reducing the risk of skin cancer later in life. Here are some tips to keep in mind when it comes to sun protection for children and infants:

**1. Keep babies under six months out of direct sunlight** - Infants under six months of age should be kept out of direct sunlight as much as possible. They have delicate and sensitive skin that can easily get burned, so it's best to keep them in the shade or under a canopy. Dress them in lightweight, long-sleeved clothing, and a hat with a brim to protect their face and scalp.

**2. Use sunscreen on babies over six months** - Once your baby is over six months old, it's safe to use sunscreen on them. Choose a mineral sunscreen containing zinc and titanium that is specifically designed for infants and has a minimum SPF of 30, such as EltaMD UV Pure. Apply it generously to all areas of the skin that are exposed to the sun.

**3. Reapply sunscreen often** - Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours or more frequently if your child is swimming or sweating.



**4. Seek shade during peak sun hours** - The sun's rays are the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Try to keep your children in the shade during these hours, or plan activities indoors during this time.

**5. Dress children in protective clothing** - Lightweight, long-sleeved shirts and pants can provide additional protection from the sun's harmful rays. Look for clothing made from tightly woven fabrics, as they provide better protection.

Remember, it's never too early to start protecting your child's skin from the sun. By following these tips, you can help keep your child's delicate skin safe and reduce their risk of skin damage later in life.

### MEET VIVIAN WONG, MD, PHD, FAAD

*Dr. Wong is a board-certified dermatologist with a dual M.D. and Ph.D. She joins Skin Wellness Physicians after a career as a faculty member and core teaching faculty at the Department of Dermatology at Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. She completed her dermatology residency and served as the chief resident at Brown University. She is a renowned researcher with collaborators in North America, Europe and Asia. She has authored over 250 articles and textbook chapters to date on important topics such as eczema/atopic dermatitis, melanoma and basal cell carcinoma. She has been interviewed as a dermatology expert by the Boston Magazine, Boston25 News and QuantiaMD. She has spoken and presented at more than 50 international and domestic conferences and received more than 40 awards and research grants for her scientific and clinical endeavors. She also serves as a consultant to medical diagnostic, therapeutic and technology companies.*



*Dr. Wong is a leader in adult and pediatric dermatology, as well as cosmetic dermatology, offering procedures including Botox, cosmetic fillers, Kybella, chemical peels, lasers, and scalp injections for hair health. During her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and cooking.*

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# IMPACT OF LOCATION, INVENTORY, & INTEREST RATES

By Robert Nardi, Broker/Owner

The Naples real estate market enjoyed another month of increased home values driven mainly by another month of below-typical inventory levels. According to the area's top real estate brokers, resale home inventory in Naples this year will unlikely spike to levels we enjoyed before the pandemic. However, since 2019, the number of new listings has remained consistent, with most months enjoying an average of between 1,100 and 1,300 new listings. According to the April 2023 Market Report by the Naples Area Board of REALTORS® (NABOR®), which tracks home listings and sales within Collier County (excluding Marco Island), some findings are:

- Overall inventory increased 64.4 percent to 2,868 homes for sale from 1,745 homes for sale in April 2022.
- The median closed price for single-family homes increased 3.1 percent to \$825,000 from \$800,000 in April 2022.
- Within the condominium market, the median closed price increased 14.3 percent to \$526,000 from \$460,000 in April 2022.
- New listings decreased 25 percent to 1,116 new listings from 1,488 new listings in April 2022.

If you wish to see all the statistics, the NABOR® April 2023 Market Report provides price ranges and geographic segmentation and includes an overall market summary in a chart format. Please send an e-mail to [Robert@NardiRealty.com](mailto:Robert@NardiRealty.com) requesting an electronic copy.

## What does this all mean?

Higher mortgage interest rates are slowing property sales in Naples because:

- Home buyers are forced out of the market because they cannot qualify for the loan because of the added expense of a larger monthly payment.
- Buyers who wish to purchase Naples' properties have their homes up for sale in other states but face challenges of selling quickly because of fewer qualified buyers.



- On the selling side in Naples, higher interest rates prevent prospective sellers with a lower interest rate from selling. Sitting on the fence slows the replenishment of inventory and lessons purchasing simultaneously.

In contrast, if you own in Naples, the good news is that your property has typically doubled in value since 2019, providing sellers with a nice profit for their next home purchase. With a hefty down payment, these sellers can minimize their next home's mortgage obligation to make monthly payments affordable, even at a higher interest rate.

## Location and Inventory

I moved to Naples 21 years ago, and at the time, all my REALTOR® would tell me is, "You want to be West of 41, nearest to the beach." Apparently, at the time, it was very much in demand. Then in 2004, we had Hurricane Charlie, then in 2005 Wilma, then in 2017 Irma, and then in 2022, finally Ian! When reviewing Naples's inventory, properties off the water and east of 75 are in demand. Of course, after Ian, people are concerned about the storm surge. In addition, a majority of property West of 41 is in a flood zone which would require you to purchase flood insurance if you have a mortgage.

A great example was in January 2019, the neighborhood of Port Royal had 1.3 years of inventory; today, it has 1.3 years. But in January 2019, the Vineyards had ten months of inventory; today, it has less than a month. Even in areas east of Collier Boulevard (SR 951), there are less than four months of inventory.

## Some Advice for Buyers

When purchasing a single-family home in Naples, please do your homework. Know the areas you wish to live in and then research a home's insurance and utility costs. In addition, if the property is part of a Homeowners' Association (HOA), verify all paid assessments for Hurricane Ian and, if any, are still coming from the HOA. Lastly, try to get the listed home's Sellers Disclosure which tells you the age of items like the cooling and heating systems, water heater, and roof. Roof age is most important. Many insurance carriers will not insure if a roof is 20 years or older. In the past, an insurance carrier would not issue a homeowner's policy if a roof inspection revealed structural or age issues. However, the new homeowner could sign an affidavit stating they would put on a new roof within a designated time post-closing. Insurance carriers would then insure the property. However, this is no longer an option. As the purchaser, you would have to look for a third-party insurance carrier, i.e., Lloyds of London, to insure your home. Generally, when this occurs, your home insurance would typically double in price.

With a condominium purchase, you would follow the same type of investigation for a single-family home. However, the most significant difference is roof age. Generally, the condominium's structure is managed/maintained by the association. So having a roof over 20 years old would not affect the purchase. However, I would review the association's budget and make sure they have a line item for roof replacement with sufficient balance.

Now more than ever, do your due diligence before purchasing property!

**Questions?** Please feel free to call me at 239-293-3592 or via e-mail at [Robert@NardiRealty.com](mailto:Robert@NardiRealty.com).

*Enjoy your summer, and happy purchasing!*



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# Beating the Heat: Tackling Summer Dehydration in SW Florida with IV Rehydration

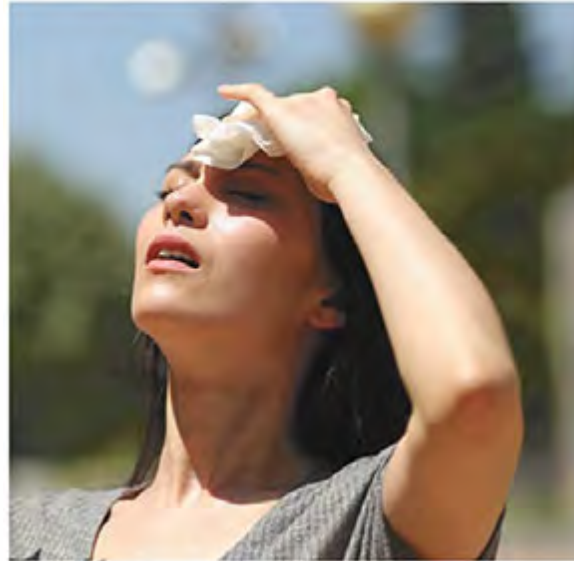
**A**s the summer heat intensifies in Southwest Florida, the risk of dehydration becomes a significant concern. The combination of high temperatures and humidity can cause individuals to lose substantial amounts of water and electrolytes, leading to various health issues. Fortunately, intravenous (IV) rehydration therapy offers an effective solution to combat dehydration and restore optimal hydration levels. In this article, we will explore the challenges posed by summer dehydration in Southwest Florida and delve into the benefits of IV rehydration as a valuable remedy.

## The Heat Wave in Southwest Florida

Southwest Florida is known for its sweltering summers, characterized by scorching temperatures and stifling humidity. These climatic conditions can lead to profuse sweating, accelerating fluid loss from the body. Dehydration, if left unaddressed, can result in fatigue, dizziness, muscle cramps, and even heatstroke. To safeguard against these risks, it is crucial to understand the importance of staying adequately hydrated and the limitations of oral rehydration methods alone.

## The Limitations of Oral Rehydration

While consuming fluids orally is an essential part of maintaining hydration, it may not always suffice, especially during periods of intense heat and dehydration. The digestive system can be slow in absorbing the necessary fluids and electrolytes, which



delays the rehydration process. Additionally, excessive vomiting or diarrhea can hinder fluid intake altogether. In such cases, intravenous rehydration therapy emerges as a valuable option to quickly replenish fluids and essential electrolytes.

## The Benefits of IV Rehydration

IV rehydration therapy involves administering a carefully balanced solution of water, electrolytes, and nutrients directly into the bloodstream. By bypassing the digestive system, IV hydration allows for rapid absorption and efficient distribution of essential fluids throughout the body. This method ensures that individuals receive optimal

hydration, even when oral intake is compromised or insufficient. IV rehydration can help alleviate dehydration symptoms promptly, restoring energy levels, improving cognitive function, and enhancing overall well-being. Furthermore, this therapy can benefit individuals with specific health conditions, such as athletes recovering from intense workouts or individuals suffering from gastrointestinal illnesses that impede oral intake.

Dehydration poses a significant threat during the scorching summers of Southwest Florida. Recognizing the limitations of oral rehydration, intravenous therapy emerges as a game-changer in combating dehydration effectively. IV rehydration offers rapid and efficient replenishment of fluids and electrolytes, helping to alleviate dehydration symptoms promptly. Whether it's athletes seeking quick recovery or individuals with compromised oral intake, IV hydration provides a reliable solution to beat the heat and maintain optimal hydration levels throughout the summer season in Southwest Florida.

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# LOW TESTOSTERONE IN MEN:

## Understanding the Benefits of Hormone Replacement Therapy

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

**T**estosterone, the primary male sex hormone, plays a crucial role in various physiological processes, including sexual function, muscle mass maintenance, bone density regulation, and mood stability. This condition, known as low testosterone or hypogonadism, can have significant implications for overall health and well-being. For those who suspect they have low testosterone, it's important to understand the causes, symptoms and treatments available.

The causes of low testosterone are varied and can include:

- **Age:** Testosterone levels naturally decline with age.
- **Injury or illness:** Damage to the testicles that produce testosterone can lead to low testosterone levels.
- **Medications:** Some medications, such as steroids and chemotherapy drugs, can cause low testosterone levels.
- **Medical conditions:** Certain medical conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, and chronic kidney disease, can also lead to low testosterone levels.
- **Rarely,** an undiagnosed pituitary tumor can result in low testosterone levels

### Symptoms of Low Testosterone

Low testosterone can manifest in various symptoms, including reduced libido, erectile dysfunction, fatigue, decreased muscle mass, increased body fat, depressed mood, and decreased cognitive function. These symptoms can significantly impact a man's quality of life and overall well-being.

### Low Testosterone Treatment Options

When low testosterone symptoms are present and testosterone levels are below the normal range, hormone replacement therapy (HRT) may be considered. HRT aims to restore testosterone levels to the optimal range and alleviate associated symptoms. There are several methods of administering testosterone replacement, the most widely used being injections. However, in determining the best treatment it is important to

try and replicate normal physiology as much as possible. Testosterone pellets can be implanted in the side flank or upper buttock area and allow for continuous release of testosterone over a 3 to 4 month period. Many men feel much better while using this treatment thus avoiding the peaks and valleys of testosterone levels inherent with injection treatment. The choice of treatment must be individualized and take into account patient preference, lifestyle, and medical history.

Benefits of Hormone Replacement Therapy for Those with Low Testosterone:

**1. Improved Sexual Function:** One of the primary benefits of HRT is the improvement of sexual function in men. Testosterone replacement therapy can help increase libido, improve erectile function, and enhance overall sexual satisfaction.

**2. Increased Muscle Mass and Strength:** Testosterone plays a vital role in the development and maintenance of muscle mass. HRT can help reverse the loss of muscle mass associated with low testosterone, leading to increased strength and physical performance.

**3. Enhanced Bone Density:** Testosterone is crucial for maintaining healthy bone density in men. Low testosterone levels can increase the risk of osteoporosis and fractures. HRT can help improve bone mineral density and reduce the risk of osteoporotic fractures.

**4. Improved Mood and Cognitive Function:** Testosterone has a significant impact on mood regulation and cognitive function. Low testosterone levels have been associated with symptoms of depression, irritability, and decreased cognitive abilities. HRT can help alleviate these symptoms and improve overall mental well-being.

**5. Cardiovascular Health:** Testosterone plays a role in maintaining cardiovascular health in men. Low testosterone levels have been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, such as heart disease and stroke. HRT may help improve cardiovascular markers, including cholesterol levels and blood pressure, reducing the risk of these conditions.

### Recommendations and Considerations

While HRT can offer significant benefits for men with clinically low testosterone levels, it is essential

to consider individual factors and make informed decisions. Here are some recommendations and considerations you should take into account:

**1. Diagnosis and Monitoring:** Accurate diagnosis of low testosterone should be made based on symptoms, physical examination, and blood tests. Regular monitoring of testosterone levels and overall health is necessary during hormone replacement therapy.

**2. Individualized Approach:** HRT should be tailored to the individual, taking into account factors such as age, overall health, patient preference, and lifestyle. Working closely with a qualified healthcare provider is crucial to determine the appropriate dosage and treatment method.

**3. Potential Risks and Side Effects:** Although generally safe and well-tolerated, hormone replacement therapy may carry potential risks and side effects. These can include fluid retention, acne, breast enlargement, sleep apnea exacerbation, and in rare cases, increased risk of cardiovascular events. It is important to discuss these potential risks with a healthcare provider and weigh them against the benefits.

**4. Lifestyle Modifications:** Alongside hormone replacement therapy, adopting a healthy lifestyle can further optimize the benefits. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, weight management, stress reduction, and adequate sleep can contribute to overall well-being and complement the effects of HRT.

It is crucial to approach HRT on an individual basis, considering factors such as diagnosis, monitoring, potential risks, and lifestyle modifications. Working closely with a knowledgeable healthcare provider will help ensure the optimal use of hormone replacement therapy and maximize its benefits while minimizing potential risks.

*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.*

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# UNDERSTANDING PTSD DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

By Richard Capiola, MD

**P**ost-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating mental health condition that affects individuals who have experienced or witnessed traumatic events. It can manifest in various ways, such as intrusive memories, flashbacks, nightmares, and heightened anxiety. This article explores the diagnosis and treatment of PTSD, shedding light on the importance of early identification and providing insights into effective therapeutic interventions.

## Diagnosis of PTSD

Diagnosing PTSD requires a comprehensive evaluation by a mental health professional. The fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) outlines specific criteria for diagnosing PTSD. To receive a diagnosis, an individual must have experienced a traumatic event and subsequently exhibit symptoms such as intrusive thoughts, avoidance of trauma-related triggers, negative mood changes, and hyperarousal.

Healthcare professionals utilize various assessment tools and interviews to gather information and determine the presence and severity of PTSD symptoms. They consider the duration and intensity of symptoms, as well as their impact on daily functioning. Accurate diagnosis is crucial for developing an appropriate treatment plan tailored to the individual's needs.



## Treatment Approaches

The treatment of PTSD often involves a combination of psychotherapy, medication, and self-help strategies. The goal is to alleviate symptoms, improve overall functioning, and enhance the individual's quality of life. Here are some commonly used treatment approaches for PTSD:

**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** CBT is a widely recognized therapy for PTSD. It focuses on helping individuals identify and change negative thought patterns and behaviors associated with trauma. Through techniques such as exposure therapy and cognitive restructuring, CBT aims to reduce avoidance and alleviate distressing symptoms.

**Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR):** EMDR is a specialized therapy that utilizes bilateral stimulation to help individuals process

traumatic memories. By guiding the person's eye movements or using other forms of stimulation, EMDR facilitates the reprocessing of traumatic experiences, leading to a reduction in distressing symptoms.

**Medication:** Certain medications, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), may be prescribed to manage PTSD symptoms. These medications can help regulate mood, reduce anxiety, and improve sleep patterns. It is essential to consult a psychiatrist to determine the appropriate medication and dosage.

**Self-Help Strategies:** Individuals with PTSD can benefit from self-help strategies like practicing relaxation techniques, engaging in regular physical exercise, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and seeking support from friends, family, or support groups. These strategies can enhance coping mechanisms and promote resilience.

PTSD is a complex mental health condition that requires proper diagnosis and effective treatment. Identifying PTSD symptoms early and seeking professional help is crucial for individuals to regain control over their lives. Psychotherapy, medication, and self-help strategies offer valuable tools for managing and alleviating PTSD symptoms. With the right support and interventions, individuals with PTSD can embark on a path of healing, recovery, and improved well-being.

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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.





# Navigating Solo Aging

## ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

As our population ages, an increasing number of older adults find themselves making decisions about their future independently, without the support of adult children or close relatives. This experience, known as solo aging, is becoming more prevalent in society. With projections indicating that one in five Americans will be retirement age by 2030, it is crucial for solo agers to understand the unique challenges they may face and take proactive steps to advocate for themselves and prepare for the future.

### What is Solo Aging?

Solo agers are older adults who are navigating the aging process without immediate family support. This group includes individuals or couples without children, those who never married or had children, individuals living alone due to divorce or the death of a partner, and those whose children or relatives live far away or are not involved in their lives. Many solo agers associate living alone as they age with positive feelings such as independence, satisfaction, and happiness. However, they may also experience a sense of lacking companionship, feeling left out, and isolation compared to the general population aged 50 and above.

### Challenges Faced by Solo Agers

While solo agers may have a positive outlook on their aging journey, they face unique concerns and challenges. Solo agers are more likely to fear dying alone, being moved somewhere against their will, and having someone appointed by the court to make decisions for them. Additionally, this group tends to worry about losing their independence, being alone without family or friends around, and not being able to stay in their homes.

### Lack of Preparedness

One of the significant issues faced by solo agers is a lack of preparedness for the future. Only about one-third of solo agers report having someone who could assist in managing their household or handle day-to-day expenses if they were no longer able to do so. Furthermore, a considerable number of solo agers have postponed making their end-of-life wishes known. Approximately half have an advanced medical directive, and even



among those who have one, only a fraction have shared it with their primary-care doctor. Additionally, a significant percentage of solo agers have not created a will or trust, nor made arrangements for their funeral or burial. Many have done little or no planning for living assistance as they age.

### Empowering Solo Agers Through Advocacy and Preparation

Solo agers must be proactive in advocating for themselves and planning for their future. Here are some steps they can take to navigate solo aging successfully:

- 1. Building a Supportive Network:** Engage with community organizations, social groups, and online communities that cater to the needs of solo agers. These connections can provide companionship, support, and assistance when needed.
- 2. Communicating End-of-Life Wishes:** Create advanced medical directives, such as a living will or health care proxy, to ensure your medical preferences are known and respected. Share these documents with your primary-care doctor and trusted individuals who may be involved in your care.

- 3. Legal and Financial Planning:** Consult with an attorney to create a comprehensive estate plan that includes a will or trust, power of attorney, and other relevant legal documents. Regularly review and update these documents to reflect any changes in circumstances.

- 4. Long-Term Care Options:** Educate yourself about various living options available for aging adults, such as assisted living, independent living communities, or home care services. Understand the costs, benefits, and eligibility criteria associated with each option.

- 5. Caregiver Support:** Consider building a network of trusted individuals, such as friends, neighbors, or professional caregivers, who can provide assistance with day-to-day tasks, manage household responsibilities, and offer emotional support.

Solo aging presents unique opportunities and challenges for older adults. By embracing independence, building supportive networks, and taking proactive steps to plan for the future, solo agers can advocate for themselves and ensure a fulfilling and secure retirement journey. It is essential to address concerns, communicate end-of-life wishes, and make informed decisions about long-term care to enjoy a life that is meaningful, connected, and prepared for the years to come.

Senior Care Authority takes pride in understanding and supporting the solo aging process. Our advisors are trained to provide the tools you need to surround yourself with the right support and make a plan for the future. To contact us call (239) 330-2133, or visit our website at [www.scanyfl.com](http://www.scanyfl.com).



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# WHERE ARE ALL THE BIDETS?

**T**he year 2020 brought many new sights and shortages of household goods that had never been scarce. Global supply chains ceased to keep up with the burgeoning demand for toilet paper, and some of us were left sitting on the toilet with nothing to wipe with. According to Google Trends, the search term “bidet” skyrocketed in popularity in March 2020. This is no coincidence, as media outlets throughout the country were reporting toilet paper shortages.

## A wave of bidets

While the pandemic decimated many businesses, this was great news for the bidet industry. Although the bidet has existed for over 400 years, lack of knowledge and reluctance to discuss posterior hygiene had hindered widespread adoption of bidets. An estimated twelve percent of the American population has regular access to a bidet, which means the majority of us do not know the benefits of using one!

## Benefits of bidets

Men, women, and children of all ages and abilities can all appreciate a bidet, because we all move our bowels. Possible benefits include:

- Better personal hygiene, we wash our hands and should also wash our behinds.
- Allows those who cannot use toilet paper effectively to be clean.
- For women, bidets have a front wash handy for preventing urinary tract infections (UTIs), and maintaining cleanliness during menstruation.
- Reduce irritation caused by extra wiping for those with chronic gastro-inflammatory ailments, like Crohn's disease and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).



Empty toilet paper shelves at a Costco in N.J. Seth Wenig/Associated Press

- Save money on toilet paper
- Reduce waste and stress on plumbing.
- Greatly reduce environmental impact.

## Cultural consequences

You may have heard about “Japanese toilets” or the prevalence of bidets in Japan. They call their bidets Washlets, which is a branded term coined by Toto, a Japanese manufacturer of toilets and other bathroom fixtures. The Japanese highly value personal hygiene, and it is no surprise they developed sophisticated technology to keep your rear clean at all times. Compare this to Western culture, where it is either taboo or humorous to discuss one of the most basic bodily functions.

## Common misconceptions

If you have never come into contact with a bidet, it is not likely you will see one outside of luxury hotels and other accommodations for rent. Before we can all welcome bidets into our homes, we need to address concerns that stem from a lack of knowledge about them. Many wonder how they work, if they are sanitary, or if you need to be a woman to use one:



The Nova Eco, a modern bidet toilet seat. Nozzle can be seen at the center-rear of the seat.

- Bidets don't touch you, they simply spray your bottom with water. Think a more directed water fountain for your undercarriage.
- Many bidets clean themselves automatically by rinsing their nozzles after every use. Some use germ killing solutions and use materials that are naturally antimicrobial such as silver.
- Bidets have retractable wands. The nozzle that sprays you never hangs out unless it is being used, thus saving it from the typical abuse that a toilet bowl withstands.
- Modern bidets are integrated into toilet seats. This means that they do not add much cleaning to the standard regimen since the toilet they rest on is already on a cleaning schedule.

## In conclusion

The best way to appreciate the benefits of a bidet is to install one in your home. According to a consumer spending survey from Japan in 2016, 81% of Japanese households have a bidet. In Japan, it is common to see a bidet in a public bathroom, because their culture dictates they be available at all times. When American culture shifts to emphasize posterior hygiene, we will start to see them everywhere.

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# Taking the Emotions Out of Investing

By Nina Azwoir, First Vice President, Investments

**E**motions help us in so many aspects of our lives – from deciding which color we want to paint our homes to what to cook for a large family dinner, we unknowingly use emotions to fuel decisions that we make. Oftentimes, our emotions help to intuitively guide us when logical reasoning doesn't readily present itself, however, in some situations, like investing, emotions can lead to more harm than good. Leaving your emotions at the door when investing your money saves you from making costly mistakes and can help keep you on track with your long-term goals.

Understanding how emotions influence our decisions and judgements when doing something as significant as investing can go a long way in ensuring that you keep a level-head when managing your money. Humans tend to respond emotionally in decisions when faced with uncertainty, a phenomenon known as Psychological bias, that can result in errors of judgement.

For example, emotions can lead you to take on more risks to prevent a sure loss, but when faced with a sure gain, we fail to take risks to maximize our profits.

The fact of the matter is that the more emotional an event happens to be, the less sensibly we respond. So, how can we prevent our emotions from clouding our judgements, and what alternative strategies should we utilize to ensure that the investments we make to guarantee future stability are well-reasoned and logically sound? Well, first, we need to look into the common emotional mistakes that people make when investing.

## Understanding Emotional Investment Mistakes

There are four main emotions that can impact how you invest your money but being able to recognize and combat them will prevent you from making common investment mistakes.

1) Impatience, which causes frequent trading to try and quickly enhance returns, can lead to higher trading costs, more taxes, and lower returns in the long run. To avoid falling victim to wanting to see results quickly, building and following an investment plan can stop you from getting distracted by short-term movement of the market and remain on-track with long term goals.



2) Overconfidence, like relying on “hot” investments to boost your portfolio's performance, can lead to lower performance and a higher risk of loss. Instead of following word-of-mouth, select investments based on research, not, and keep your portfolio diversified to generate more consistent returns in any market.

3) Another common emotion that can affect your investment decisions is fear. Fear of loss can result in becoming too hesitant to reenter the equity market, which in turn can prevent you from losing income by failing to capitalize on a market rebound. Rather than allowing fear to hold you back, try looking into easing into the equity market with an automatic investing strategy like dollar cost averaging. Fear and its byproduct, indecision, make you more likely to stay in cash to help protect your assets from market volatility. However, cash alone is unlikely to generate the returns necessary to achieve your retirement goals. Overall, this can lead to a loss of purchasing power over time. Monitoring your portfolio using the “3 Bucket Model” to review your asset allocation can help to offset the fears that inherently come with taking financial risks.

4) The final primary emotion that can impact how you choose to invest is panic. Say for example, one of your investments isn't doing too well. If you allow panic to control your decisions, you may think selling equities in down markets and moving to cash may help, but this only ensures short-term safety. Doing this leads to potential shortfalls in retirement income and can prevent you keeping the long-term growth necessary to reach your retirement goals. Instead of letting panic guide you, try staying calm and using history as a reliable tool to guide you in maintaining your long-term focus.

## Managing Emotions and a Trusted Advisor

It may seem overwhelming to try and keep all the various emotions listed above in check, but there are simple ways that you can manage your emotions when investing in order to help you yield the most effective returns.

First, make sure you understand how your investments will respond to different market conditions. Focusing on the key benefits and the potential pitfalls, such as how your investment is likely to perform in turbulent markets, will make you less likely to make emotional mistakes because you'll be able to understand the nature of the risks you take. Remember to always keep in mind that the more volatile your investment, the stronger emotions you may feel when dealing with them.

Another way to prevent your emotions from disrupting your long-term investment plans is to focus on strategizing rather than reacting. Building a diversified portfolio can not only generate consistent returns but can also offer a sense of stability when dealing with strong emotions.

Creating a withdrawal strategy can also give you the reassurance that your income will last for life.

Finally, seeking an outside perspective, like a trusted financial professional that suits your needs and availability, can help you navigate the ups and downs of the market. A financial professional's third-party objectivity and their ability to help guide you during difficult decisions reduces your risk of making emotional-fueled investment mistakes.

As humans, emotions are an invaluable tool we use when navigating through life, but when it comes to the world of investments, acknowledging, but not acting on them is your smartest and safest plan of action.

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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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# TOP 4 Reasons Chefs for Seniors Might Be The Right Choice For You

## #1 Shopping is Challenging

In light of our global pandemic, shopping has proven to be challenging for all ages, but if you have an underlying medical condition or are over 65, the risk of infection has become a significant concern. Along with COVID-19, shopping at the grocery store heightens the risk of other communicable illnesses such as the flu or the common cold.

In addition to these concerns, many seniors find it taxing or may not be able to drive themselves safely to the store due to mobility issues, diminished eyesight, cognitive issues, or other aspects that might make driving, parking, shopping, walking, or calculating a genuine challenge.

## #2 Cooking is Becoming Difficult or Dangerous

Perhaps you used to love cooking, or maybe you've never been keen on whipping up a meal. Some individuals find that following a recipe and cooking can be difficult, time-consuming, or in some cases, dangerous.

If you'd prefer to have someone else make your meals out of convenience, or you'd rather not unintentionally burn or overcook your food, many people feel the same way. This is especially true for seniors who no longer need to cook for an entire family and those that have issues with getting around easily or are developing neurodegenerative disorders.

## #3 You or Your Loved one Need Special Meals (Low Sodium, Low Fat, etc.)

Have you or your loved one undergone a heart procedure, stroke, or been diagnosed with diabetes? If so, you know the importance of following a strict diet that will help manage and sustain your disease and longevity.

Many people find it challenging to understand which foods are best and how to prepare those foods so that they are delicious and appetizing.

## #4 You Want Nutritious Food Without the Hassle

Combining all of the reasons that so many seniors could benefit from a chef-prepared meal is easily identified in the previously mentioned issues and

conditions. You want to eat the healthiest meals possible, meals that are good for your body, and that taste amazing so that it's easy to stick to eating the way you know you should. That's where Chefs for Seniors can help.

### Chefs for Seniors

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

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

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

### Professionally Prepared Meals and Clean Up!

Chefs for Seniors offers rotating menu options, which includes select Chef creations inspired by the region. Clients select their desired meal in advance, allowing the chef to shop and prepare the meals on the designated cooking day. Chefs prepare the meals between two to two and a half

hours. And an added benefit is that after the meal is prepared and stored according to the client's preferences, the chefs clean before leaving the house.

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

### Cost and Insurance Coverage

The price of our services are region-specific and depends on your individual needs. Our goal is to provide an affordable solution that seniors can use long-term. We offer three different service packages to meet a variety of needs: Standard, Custom, and Non-Standard.

Some Long Term Health Insurance Policies may cover certain in-home services like Chefs For Seniors.

### Multiple Meals During Visit

During a 2-hour home visit, your personal chef will prepare 4 different entrées and 10-12 individually-packaged servings of meals. The exact number of servings depending on your appetite and the types of meals ordered and serving sizes can be adjusted with your chef.

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

### Special Diets

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

*For any questions, please contact Chefs For Seniors at 239-776-1758.*



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Every organism in equilibrium (homeostasis) regulates the genetic and metabolism of every one of its cells, through the cellular intelligence. The cellular intelligence at the same time generates the autoimmune intelligence (protecting the cellular system), and the biochemistry and genetics, allowing the communication and nutrition of the cellular system. Natural Energy Healing works with the original amplification, organized and directed energy, able to recognize at a certain specific moment the alterations of the frequencies in conflict. Giving or transmitting the specific amount of energy to the cells now suffering imbalance, resetting their functionality gradually. Natural Energy Healing always is looking for energy body blockages in order to start removing them until finding the root of the issues, during



the process, the Energetic Fields subjected to cleaning will be compensated with wellness reprogramming, generating calm and more lucidity in the patient.

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# MEMORY MATTERS

By Amy Hoffmann Schenk, RN, BSN, MS Ed, Community Engagement Lead  
Neuropsychiatric Research Center of SW Florida

Is it normal to have problems with our memory as we get older? Are you concerned that your memory seems to be getting worse? Do you just chalk it up to old age? Doesn't everyone have memory problems as they get older? Why is early detection so important?

These are some of the questions that are common around the topic of memory loss. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), while age is a the most important known risk factor for the disease, old age does *not* cause Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, and it's estimated that 1/9 (one in nine people) aged 65 and older have Alzheimer's. That roughly translates to approximately 6.7 million people in the United States who have Alzheimer's disease, per the 2023 Alzheimer's Association facts and figures document. Here in Florida, it is estimated that around 580,000 people are living with Alzheimer's disease.

It is quite common for people to get the terms Alzheimer's and dementia confused. The best way to describe dementia is that dementia is a syndrome, characterized by a decline in mental functioning. Thinking, remembering, and reasoning are all impacted, and these changes are typically not reversible. In addition, to have a diagnosis of dementia, these changes in cognition are significant enough to interfere with your daily life.

Alzheimer's disease is a type of dementia, and estimated to be between 60 – 80% of all cases of dementia. Alzheimer's disease is progressive (it continues to get worse), neurodegenerative (nerve cells in the brain, called neurons, become damaged and lose function and die), and while there are a number of early warning signs of Alzheimer's disease, decline in short term memory is common. There are many different types of dementia. Vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, Frontotemporal dementia and mixed dementia are several of the most common types.

**Why is early detection important?** Currently, early detection and screening procedures are very common for a variety of illnesses. You may have



already had one or more of these types of screening. Cholesterol screening, Pap tests, fecal occult blood testing, colonoscopy, mammography, diabetes screening tests and the PSA (prostate specific antigen) blood test are all examples of screening tests. Having a memory screen should be a part of an annual health checkup.

You may be wondering why you should have a memory screen. There are a variety of reasons that having a memory screen is important. One of the main reasons is to find out why someone is experiencing memory concerns. There are a variety of different conditions that can impact one's memory that are reversible and/or treatable. Conditions such as thyroid issues, vitamin B12 deficiency, sleep apnea, depression, medication interactions, excessive alcohol use, even significant stress and anxiety can cause memory issues. These causes can be addressed. Even if you are not currently concerned about your memory, you can be proactive with your brain health by having a baseline memory screen done.

Regular memory screening may be beneficial in the early detection of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. The risk of dementia increases with age. When diagnosed early enough, a combination of lifestyle changes and medical treatments

can potentially delay the progression. The information obtained from the screening is not a diagnosis but will better enable you to take charge of your brain health.

**What is a memory screen?** Memory screening promotes healthier aging and is one thing you can do to try to prevent or delay the onset of symptoms associated with Alzheimer's. Annual memory testing is highly recommended for adults ages fifty or older, or even earlier if you are experiencing memory problems that worry you. It is a positive, proactive step you can take right now to take charge of your brain health. You will get a free cognitive assessment, plus education about aging, memory, lifestyle factors and referrals to appropriate community resources.

To make it easy to get a memory screen, the Neuropsychiatric Research Center of Southwest Florida (NPRC) will be offering free memory screens on August 8th and 9th. The screenings will take place at 14271 Metropolis Avenue, Fort Myers, 33912. To schedule your free memory screen, contact our office at 239-939-7777. Please bring a list of your current medications to your appointment. The screening and all services provided at our center are at no cost to you and we do not ask for any insurance information. At the Neuropsychiatric Research center there are many cutting edge clinical studies that are focused on addressing memory issues.

**References:**

Lee S, Huang H, Zelen M. Early detection of disease and scheduling of screening examinations. *Stat Methods Med Res.* 2004 Dec;13(6):443-56. doi: 10.1191/0962280204sm377ra. PMID: Diagnosing Alzheimer's: How Alzheimer's is diagnosed - Mayo Clinic <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/leecountyflorida>



Contact NPRC at 239-939-7777  
today for your free memory screen.



# Summer Cleaning

**S**ummer has finally arrived! Summer months in Florida mean humidity, rain to shine (and back, again) within minutes, and all of the fun that comes with being outside. The best things about summer are getting a tan while grilling, enjoying company, and breaking out those dusty pool noodles. Kicking back and relaxing is nice, but before you do... think about something else, cleaning. Cleaning is definitely not at the top of most people's list of summer activities, but it can make the rest of your summer more carefree.

Let's start with the inside. Humidity can mean many things to Floridians. The list includes, but is not limited to, swarms of mosquitos, unbearable sweat, and that overall heavy feeling in the air. Keeping the bathroom fan turned on during, and even 15-20 minutes after a shower, will reduce the humidity that mold thrives on. When removing mold and mildew, non-scrubbing products can reduce the amount of time spent stuck inside. On a cooler note, refrigerators become more active than usual in summer months while grabbing some refreshing beverages. Lemonade goes with summer like sugar goes with "sticky". Avoiding messes due to spilt liquids can be accomplished by purchasing refrigerator shelf liners is quick and easy. Removing and replacing the liners makes cleaning up a snap.

Garbage can be a uniquely smelly fixture in the home. Sludge, grime, and old food all add up to a recipe for disaster; mix in the summer heat and it can make a bad situation much worse. Many times the reason our garbage smells so bad is not what's inside the bag, but outside and beneath it. Placing a garbage liner inside the can will reduce the risk of leakage and spills. A collection of mold and bacteria can build up inside. Take the time to address this kitchen mainstay, your nose will be happy you did.

We all love to sit on our lanais at night and enjoy the company of friends and family. Outdoor lighting is utilized more often in the summer, but after a period of non-use they can collect pollen, dust, bugs, and more. Dusting is a given, yet taking down the fixture and washing it inside and out is the proper solution. A little bleach or vinegar with water ensures that the lights stay brighter and the company stays longer.

Grilling out in summer has to be one of the great American pastimes. A few beverages, friends, and the smell of a New York Strip being cooked to perfection makes for an ideal summer day. Before you grab the peppercorn sauce, make sure the grill has been cleaned after a long winter. No dangerous chemicals are needed to clean the grill; just take some rolled-up tin foil and dip it in white vinegar. Then scrub the grate for a few minutes and presto... you are ready to start cooking.

If you want to leave the summer cleaning to someone else, contact MaidPro at (239) 431-9080. The folks there are experts in every aspect of cleaning; whether indoors or outside. They have the supplies and know-how to prep your home for a relaxing summer. You can also visit them at [www.maidpro.com/naples](http://www.maidpro.com/naples).



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# SUMMER PET SAFETY

July is full of pool parties, fireworks, patriotism, and barbecues. Humans enjoy their summer holidays in their backyard or around the water. Although these weekends are extra fun for humans, they are the riskiest for your pets. Humans will think of sunscreens and watch out for the kids but not enough will think of dangers that come with the summer to their pets.

Statistics from The American Humane Association show that one out of three pets is lost at some point in their lives. The same statistics show that about ten million pets, both dogs and cats, are stolen or lost in the US every year. Additional information from Coalition for Reuniting Pets and Families shows that less than twenty-five percent of these pets are reunited with their families.

Cases of pet death are also on the rise during the summer. These cases are caused by the increasing number of crimes towards animals and the uncondusive temperatures and weather conditions. Summer increases cases of heat stress-related injuries and possible deaths for both cats and dogs.

As sad as those statistics are, the summer also provides a perfect chance to be smart and creative with how you keep these cuties comfortable and safe. Here's a list of some summer dangers for pets and smart tips to avoid them.

## Dehydration and Heatstroke

This is the first and the most overlooked pet danger that is very common during the summer. Dogs can become dangerously overheated, becoming sluggish, tired, and restless. They may also start to vomit and diarrhea or excessively salivate. During your summer outings with your pet, always check for dehydration. Pinching the skin to check whether it's elastic is a viable way of checking whether the pet is dehydrated. It's also important to provide shade, rest, and sunscreen to your pets. The nose, the ears, eyelids, and the paws are especially susceptible to sun burn. Pets are especially at risk if they are light colored (ginger/white) or have any thin fur/bald patches. It's important to protect your pet from sunburn, not only because it's painful but because it can also sometimes lead to skin cancer.

## BBQ dangers

There are obvious risks of burning and some grave risks, such as overeating. This shows that you should be very careful with your children and pets



in case of outdoor cookouts. The dog can be invited to overeat or any other danger. The trash should be covered, and children strictly advised not to overfeed the dogs and cats. All bones are NOT the same! Bones can get stuck. Sometimes they get stuck across the roof of the mouth. This causes the dog to paw at their face and drool heavily. More worryingly, they can lodge of the back of the throat. The signs of this include breathing difficulties, choking noises, and heavy salivation. When a dog eats a lot of bone, there's a risk it knits together inside the intestine. That ball of bone then forms a blockage, much like hair clogging a drain. The consequences of a blocked gut are more serious. Firstly, food can't pass along so the dog vomits and becomes dehydrated. Then the stagnant gut contents release toxins, which poison the dog. And finally, the gut wall can die off. Avoid your pet eating poultry bones. If they do sneak a bone from a chicken or turkey, monitor your pet closely for signs of distress.

## Pet drowning in swimming pools

As you enjoy your time in an outdoor swimming pool, be aware that it can only take a few seconds for a dog or a cat to drown. There are some breeds of cats and dogs that are at the greatest danger. This is an overstated summer danger because most people assume their dogs and cats are excellent swimmers. The fact remains that even excellent swimmers may fail to get out of the swimming pool safely. Puppies and Kittens are at the greatest danger of drowning.

## Spiders and snakes

Another pervasive danger that comes with summer is one humans don't always see. Although the risks of a snake and spider bites are not common in all the places, some areas report more severe cases than others. This means that you should protect your pet from venomous animals such as rattlesnakes and black widow spiders. How serious a snake and spider bites is depends on several factors. Some common factors are the pet's age, size, weight, and breed. It's now essential to be on the lookout for slithering snakes and spiders when walking your dog in rural areas.

## Solar dermatitis

Solar dermatitis is a common condition caused by prolonged exposure to direct sunlight. This condition is prevalent in cats and dogs that have pale and white patches on the skin. The condition usually affects the non-pigmented areas such as the ears, nose, and eyelids. We all know that the harmful rays of the sun can cause skin damages to humans. This is the same issue with cats and dogs. Remember, humans can wear sunscreens, unlike pets. So, always provide enough shade for your pets during those long summer outings.

## Pool poison

You will probably be spending a lot of your time in the swimming pool with your dog. Although experts never disclose this, the ingestion of chlorine and other pool chemicals can cause more problems in pets than in humans. For example, dogs may experience stomach distress (diarrhea and vomiting in dogs) and kidney problems. Ingesting some of these chemicals can be hazardous for some pets and can cause serious heart diseases and kidney failure.

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# Failure is a Part of Growth

By Pastor Timothy L. Neptune

**T**he Apostle Peter was a bold man. He stepped up when others stepped back. He was often the first to speak in a group setting. Because of his faith, he was able to walk on water. And, like most risk takers, he experienced his share of failures.

Faith involves risk. Failure is a possibility. But that's okay. Step out of the boat anyway. I love a small part of a speech given by President Teddy Roosevelt back in 1910. He said,

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

I would rather die on the playing field engaged in the battle than rot in the grandstands as a spectator.

Did Peter fail when he started to sink? Yes, he failed. But I think there were 11 bigger failures sitting in the boat afraid to even try to walk on water.

We need men and women of courage today. High-impact people who are willing to take risks and trust God with the results.

Failure is an indispensable part of growth.

The greatest lessons I've learned in life are from the many mistakes I've made along the way.

If you want to be a high-impact person, you too, will make some mistakes and need God to bail you out.

Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and his faith began to waver. But give Peter some credit... he was in the middle of a really big storm, he was outside of his boat in the darkest part of the night. Can you imagine how scary that must have been? I get nervous just standing at the back of cruise ship at night looking out at the sea!

Nevertheless, if we keep our eyes on Christ, what do we really have to fear?

As followers of Jesus Christ, we've been called to live a life of adventure that requires great risk and great faith.

Perhaps you've tried before but failed. That's okay. Admit your lack of faith and move on.



Whatever you do, don't give up, give in, or quit.

You lose more often than you win in life. There are more bad days than good days. You fail more often than you achieve. Remember that God is sovereign and always in control. Nothing can happen to you except by divine permission or divine directive.

Don't live with regrets and second guesses. Learn from your mistakes and then move on. It does no good to dwell on the past and wish you could do it over. Just keep moving forward... that's how your faith grows.

*Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church Naples, a new church located on the campus of Florida SouthWestern State College in Naples, FL. For church times and other information, visit [www.venturenaples.com](http://www.venturenaples.com).*

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#### **An Example of How Prescription Hope Works:**

Myasthenia Gravis is a chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disorder affecting communication between nerves and muscles.

In a healthy body, nerve cells transmit signals to the muscles, which allow them to move. In MG, your immune system mistakenly produces antibodies that attack the receptors on your muscle cells. These receptors are called acetylcholine receptors, essential for transmitting nerve impulses to your muscles.

The antibodies in MG disrupt the normal functioning of acetylcholine receptors, leading to muscle weakness and fatigue. MG's most affected muscles are those that control eye and eyelid movements, facial expressions, chewing, swallowing, and speaking. However, MG can also affect muscles in other body parts, including the limbs.

The hallmark symptom of MG is muscle weakness that worsens with activity and improves with rest. This means you may experience fatigue and weakness in the affected muscles after using them for some time. For example, you may find it challenging to keep your eyes open, have difficulty chewing or swallowing, or experience slurred speech after talking for a while. Weakness can also affect your limbs, making lifting objects or climbing stairs more difficult.

It's important to note that MG symptoms can vary from person to person. Some individuals may have mild symptoms that only affect specific muscle groups, while others may experience more severe and generalized weakness.

Diagnosing MG typically involves a combination of clinical evaluation, physical examination, and specific tests. Your healthcare provider may conduct tests such as electromyography (EMG), blood tests to check for specific antibodies, and a medication called edrophonium (Tensilon) test to observe how your muscles respond.

Although there is currently no cure for MG, the condition can be effectively managed. Treatment options aim to improve muscle strength, minimize symptoms, and prevent complications. The most common approach involves medications that enhance the transmission of nerve signals to your muscles. These medications may include acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, immunosuppressants, or corticosteroids.

**Cellcept®** is the brand name for the medication mycophenolate mofetil, commonly used in treating Myasthenia Gravis (MG). It belongs to a class of medications called immunosuppressants.

Cellcept works by suppressing the activity of the immune system, specifically the production of certain immune cells called lymphocytes. By reducing the immune response, Cellcept helps to decrease the production of the antibodies that attack the acetylcholine receptors in MG.

#### **The benefits of using Cellcept for MG include:**

**1. Improved muscle strength:** Cellcept can help reduce the symptoms of muscle weakness and fatigue associated with MG. By suppressing the immune response, it helps to prevent the destruction of acetylcholine receptors, allowing for better nerve-to-muscle communication.

**2. Symptom control:** Cellcept can help manage and control the symptoms of MG, including weakness in the muscles involved in eye movements, facial expressions, swallowing, and limb movements.

**3. Reduced frequency of MG exacerbations:** By modulating the immune response, Cellcept can help decrease the frequency and severity of MG exacerbations, which are periods of increased symptoms.

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