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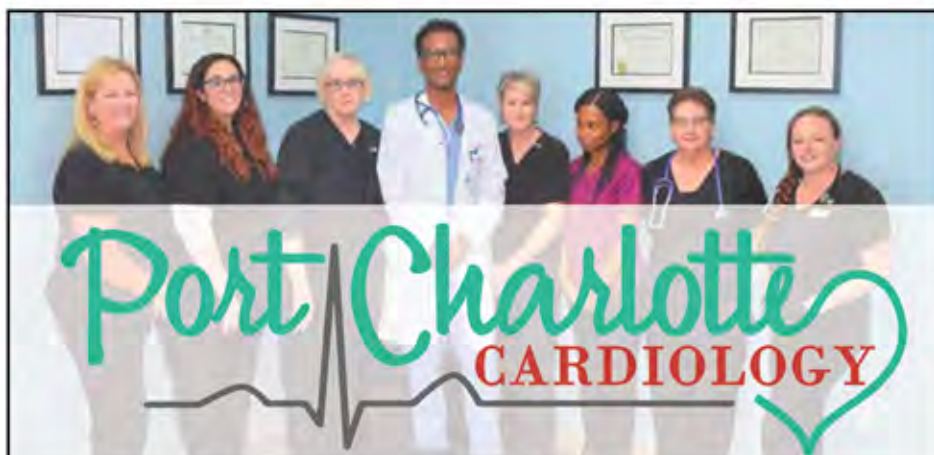
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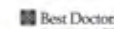
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By Dr. Lackey

Vein Disease: Underdiagnosed & Undertreated

Our circulatory system keeps our body and its tissues healthy, but when that system goes awry, we develop a series of diseases, including vein disease and all its symptoms. Based on the latest scientific data, vein disease in the U.S. is underdiagnosed and undertreated, and it affects more than 40 million Americans. Unfortunately, less than one-half of one percent of Americans seek treatment and fewer than half a million ever receive treatment for vein disease.

Venous circulation in legs is a very important part of our overall daily health and can become a problem when vein reflux affects circulation. Vein reflux is a medical condition where leg veins are unable to properly transport blood back up to the heart. Medically, this is known as chronic venous insufficiency (CVI). Typically, CVI is associated with the development of spider veins or varicose veins in the legs. When CVI is not treated properly, it will lead to more serious consequences, such as ulcers, spontaneous bleeding, and life-threatening deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Here's some perspective, chronic venous insufficiency is twice as prevalent as coronary heart disease (America's #1 killer), and five times more common than peripheral artery disease.

What Causes Chronic Venous Insufficiency?

The short answer is malfunctioning valves inside the veins. When blood circulates inside the body, the heart pumps blood down the leg. To get the blood back up to the heart, however, the body relies on a combination of valves and muscle contractions to push blood upward. Healthy valves within the veins act as backflow prevention device in the legs to keep the blood from flowing backward and pooling in the legs. Faulty veins don't close completely, resulting in varicose veins, swelling, heaviness, itching, and a whole host of other life-changing symptoms.



Are You at Risk for Vein Disease?

Most likely, if you have any of these high-risk factors - a family history, obesity, prolonged sitting or standing, multiple pregnancies, you're older than 40 and/or you smoke or once did. Women are affected with vein disease more than men; however, men don't escape this dangerous disease.

What are the Signs & Symptoms of Vein Disease?

More common symptoms that develop over time include pain, heaviness, fatigue, aching, itching, restless legs, burning, and cramping. Physical findings are large areas of spider veins, varicose veins, leg swelling, discoloration, skin thickening, and ulcers.

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Navigating the Maze of Eye Health: Insights into Glaucoma and Treatments for Retinal, Macular, and Vitreous Disorders

Jesse T. McCann, M.D., Ph.D.

The eye, a marvel of biological engineering, is susceptible to various conditions that can compromise vision. Among these, glaucoma and disorders affecting the retina, macula, vitreous, and related structures stand as formidable challenges in the realm of eye health.

Glaucoma, often referred to as the "silent thief of sight," stealthily damages the optic nerve due to increased pressure within the eye. This condition stealthily progresses, primarily targeting peripheral vision before noticeable sight loss occurs. Timely detection through routine eye exams becomes critical. Treatment strategies primarily revolve around reducing intraocular pressure through medications, laser therapies, or surgical procedures. The aim is to mitigate pressure on the optic nerve, potentially preserving remaining vision.

Retinal disorders encompass a spectrum of conditions affecting the retina, a crucial layer at the back of the eye responsible for transforming light into neural signals for vision. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and diabetic retinopathy are common afflictions in this category. AMD disrupts central vision, impacting tasks like reading and recognizing faces, while diabetic retinopathy stems from diabetes-induced damage to retinal blood vessels. Treatments involve medications, injections, laser interventions, or surgical techniques, aiming to slow disease progression and maintain visual acuity.

The macula, a tiny yet indispensable part of the retina, plays a pivotal role in enabling sharp, central vision. Conditions like macular degeneration or macular holes affect this area, leading to blurred or distorted central vision. Treatment modalities encompass a range of approaches, including injections, laser therapy, or surgical interventions, all aimed at restoring or halting further loss of central vision.

The vitreous, a gel-like substance filling the eye, can be prone to disorders like vitreous detachment or the presence of floaters. Vitreous detachment occurs when this gel separates from the retina, causing floaters or flashes in vision. While often benign, sudden or severe symptoms require immediate medical attention to rule out any associated retinal tears or detachment.



Advancements in technology have revolutionized the landscape of treating these ocular conditions. Laser therapies offer precise interventions, such as laser trabeculoplasty for glaucoma or photocoagulation for retinal disorders. Intravitreal injections, delivering medication directly into the eye, have become integral in managing retinal diseases like AMD or diabetic retinopathy.

Surgical interventions encompass a wide array of procedures, from conventional to minimally invasive surgeries, playing a crucial role in managing severe cases or complications. Surgeries like vitrectomy for vitreous disorders or trabeculectomy for glaucoma aim to alleviate symptoms and prevent further vision impairment.

Early diagnosis and prompt intervention significantly influence the prognosis of these ocular conditions. Regular eye examinations serve as the cornerstone for healthcare providers to detect subtle changes and initiate timely treatments, potentially preserving vision and enhancing quality of life.

Furthermore, ongoing research continues to push the boundaries of treatment possibilities. Advancements in gene therapy, stem cell research, and the integration of artificial intelligence in diagnostics hold promise in reshaping treatment paradigms and potentially restoring vision in previously untreatable conditions.

In conclusion, glaucoma and disorders affecting the retina, macula, vitreous, and related eye structures present formidable challenges to vision health. However, with early detection, advancements in treatments, and ongoing research endeavors, there is optimism for enhanced management strategies and potential cures. Vigilance in regular eye check-ups and access to cutting-edge therapies are pivotal in safeguarding one of our most precious senses—vision.

Jesse T. McCann, M.D., Ph.D.

Originally from New York, Dr. McCann trained as a materials chemist with an undergraduate degree in chemistry from Dartmouth College followed by a Ph.D. from the University of Washington in materials chemistry. In graduate school, he worked on designing advanced nanoscale materials used in the aerospace and biomedical fields. He completed his medical degree (Alpha Omega Alpha) from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx and residency training in ophthalmology at New York University. His interest in ophthalmology was cemented after volunteering to help prevent night blindness caused by Vitamin A insufficiency in the Thar Desert region of India.

Dr. McCann is currently an active member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the European Society of Retina Specialists, and the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

Since becoming a retina specialist, Dr. McCann has volunteered internationally to expand eye care and diabetic retinopathy care in Bolivia with Retina Global. In his free time, Dr. McCann enjoys kayaking, swimming, rescuing parrots, and spending time outdoors in the Florida sunshine.

Education: Dartmouth College, University of Washington, Albert Einstein College of Medicine (Alpha Omega Alpha), Greenwich-Yale New Haven Health, New York University, Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospitals, Columbia University

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

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LET'S TALK GOUT

By Dr. Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM, FACPM

Gout is a condition caused from a buildup of uric acid in the body. In the foot and ankle, it is most commonly seen in the big toe joint but can occur at nearby joints as well. Gout "attacks" or "flares up" are caused when uric acid crystalizes and deposits in a joint. Uric acid is a natural chemical in the body, that results from the breakdown of purine. Its naturally circulating in our blood and eliminated in our urine. When there is too much uric acid or the body cannot eliminate it properly it accumulates leading to a gouty attack or flare up. Some people's kidneys cannot eliminate the normal amount of gout found in the body and others make too much it.

The great toe is most often affected because uric acid is sensitive to temperature changes. At cooler temperatures, it crystalizes. The great toe is a "cool joint" as it is the far away from the heart. This cooler temperature environment allows the uric acid to crystalize and deposit in the joint. Although, it's important to remember gout cannot occur in other joints as well.

Gout has a genetic component and is often inherited. Other risk factors include high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, chemotherapy, surgery, stress and certain medications and vitamins. For example, aspirin, diuretics and niacin can affect the body's ability to remove uric acid leading to gouty attacks. It can affect both men and women of all ages, but is more often seen in older men aged 40-60. Certain foods with high levels of purines can also increase your risk of gout. These foods include shellfish, organ meat, red wine, beer and red meat.

Symptoms of gout include a sudden intense pain, redness, swelling and warmth over a joint. If you think you are suffering from gout contact your local foot and ankle specialist. Your doctor will order blood work and x-rays to ensure correct diagnosis of your symptoms. Once it has been determined you are suffering from gout treatment can be initiated right away. Treatment may include one or more of the following: NSAID's, corticosteroids, injections, diet modifications, increased fluids and medications that can help your body eliminate uric acid. Without proper treatment, recurrent episodes of gout can lead to permanent damage of the affected joint.



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Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM, FACPM

Isin Mustafa, DPM, is a Podiatrist at Family Foot & Leg Centers in Port Charlotte, FL. She is a Fellow of the American College of Foot & Ankle Surgeons. Call 239-430-3668 or visit www.NaplesPodiatrist.com to make an appointment. Visit FootHealthFacts.org to learn more about foot and ankle conditions.

Glaucoma: What You Need to Know

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month, the perfect time to raise awareness for this sight-stealing disease. Nearly all of us begin to experience some vision changes as we age, even if it's just having to rely on a cheap pair of readers from the grocery store. In order to remain independent as we get older, we need to know about age-related changes that could potentially affect our day-to-day lives. And vision loss – primarily glaucoma – is one of those changes.

What is Glaucoma?

According to the CDC, more than 3 million Americans have glaucoma, but only half actually know it. It is the second leading cause of blindness worldwide. Glaucoma is a group of diseases that damage the eye's optic nerve due to increased pressure inside the eye. The progression of the disease is usually gradual. However, once glaucoma has caused damage resulting in vision loss, the damage is permanent and irreparable.

Early Glaucoma Symptoms

Because vision loss caused by glaucoma cannot be restored, it's important that seniors watch out for signs and symptoms that could be an indication they have the eye disease. If caught early, glaucoma's progression can be slowed by various treatment methods, including surgery.

Some of the early signs of glaucoma include:

- Loss of side vision
- Inability to adjust to darkened rooms
- Blurred or foggy vision, especially when awakening
- Eye pain
- Severe headaches

Who's at Risk for Developing Glaucoma?

While anyone can get glaucoma, the risk is higher in people over the age of 60. Others with an increased risk of getting glaucoma include African Americans over the age of 40 and people who have diabetes. Glaucoma is also hereditary, so it's important to know your family history. According to the Glaucoma Research Foundation, your risk of developing primary open-angle glaucoma is up to nine times higher than average if one of your parents or siblings has the disease.



Other possible risk factors include:

- High myopia (nearsightedness)
- Hypertension
- Central corneal thickness less than .5 mm

Take Action to Prevent Glaucoma

Vision loss and glaucoma aren't a given just because you get older. There are steps you can take to protect your eyes and lower your risk of getting glaucoma. When it comes to this progressive eye disease, early detection and prevention are key.

Whether you fall into a high-risk category or not, make sure you're getting routine comprehensive dilated eye exams. These exams help to catch glaucoma and other eye diseases early when they are most treatable. Your eye care specialist will instruct you on how frequently you need to receive these exams. However, Medicare covers a glaucoma test once a year for people in high-risk groups, so be sure you take advantage of this benefit.

In addition to getting your eyes checked, you should try to do the following steps to help prevent glaucoma:

Exercise – Regular physical activity can help to lower intraocular pressure (IOP).

Maintain a stable weight – A high Body Mass Index (BMI) causes pressure in the eyes, while a low BMI can cause the optic nerve to press inward.

Stop smoking – Smoking causes thinning of the retinal nerve fiber layer, a symptom of glaucoma.

Monitor your blood pressure – Increased blood pressure results in increased eye pressure.

Glaucoma Treatment Options

Early onset of glaucoma usually affects your peripheral vision first – what you can see on the side of your head when looking ahead. If not treated in time and effectively, your central vision – vision used to see objects clearly – will also begin to be affected.

Early treatment intervention is vital to preserving your eyesight. Glaucoma is treated with eye drops, oral medication, and surgery. Treatment methods may be combined depending on your specific needs. The goal of treatment is to reduce the pressure in your eye.

You should always follow any specific directions given by your healthcare professional, whether it be your primary care provider or your eyecare specialist. Glaucoma is a highly detectable disease and one that can be managed properly. Make your eye health a priority. Schedule an appointment with a VIPcare provider to discuss your risk and what preventative measures you can take to protect your eyesight. Call **941-541-4812**.



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UNLOCKING RELIEF:

Botox Injections for Neck Tension in Easing TMJ, Tinnitus, and Headaches

By Dr. Jai Grewal

In today's fast-paced world, stress is often held in our bodies, particularly in the neck and shoulders. But what if there was a surprising solution to alleviate not just neck tension but also its ripple effects on common issues like TMJ, tinnitus, and headaches? Enter Botox, typically associated with cosmetic enhancements, now proving to be a game-changer in therapeutic relief.

The neck, a junction of intricate muscles, is a hotspot for tension accumulation. Stress, poor posture, or even physical injury can tighten these muscles, leading to chronic discomfort and triggering various related conditions. However, recent medical studies have uncovered the profound benefits of Botox injections in addressing these issues.

Botox, known for its ability to relax muscles by temporarily blocking nerve signals, has gained attention beyond its cosmetic realm. By strategically injecting Botox into specific points of the neck muscles, practitioners can alleviate tension and offer relief from conditions such as TMJ (temporomandibular joint disorder), tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and headaches, including migraines.

TMJ, often caused by jaw tension or misalignment, can be excruciating, affecting one's ability to chew, speak, or even open the mouth comfortably. Surprisingly, Botox injections into the neck muscles surrounding the jaw have shown promising results in easing TMJ symptoms by releasing the tension responsible for this discomfort, providing welcome relief for sufferers.

Moreover, tinnitus, characterized by persistent ringing or buzzing in the ears, can be associated with muscle tension in the neck. Botox injections, by relaxing these muscles, have displayed potential in reducing the severity or frequency of tinnitus symptoms, improving the overall quality of life for those affected.

The correlation between neck tension and headaches, particularly migraines, has long been acknowledged. Many migraine sufferers experience relief after receiving Botox injections targeted at the neck muscles. This treatment not



only alleviates existing pain but also diminishes the frequency and intensity of future migraines, offering a more sustainable solution than conventional medications.

However, as with any medical procedure, the efficacy and suitability of Botox injections for neck tension-related conditions should be discussed with a qualified healthcare professional. Individual responses to treatment may vary, and thorough evaluation by a specialist is crucial to determine the best approach for each patient.

It's essential to highlight that while Botox injections for neck tension-related issues show promise, they are not a cure-all. Lifestyle changes, physical therapy, and other complementary treatments may be recommended alongside or instead of Botox, depending on the individual's specific condition and needs.

In conclusion, the application of Botox beyond cosmetic enhancements has emerged as a beacon of hope for those battling neck tension-related ailments like TMJ, tinnitus, and headaches. Its ability to relax targeted muscles offers relief and improved quality of life for many, paving the way for a more holistic approach to addressing these common yet debilitating conditions. Consulting with healthcare professionals knowledgeable in this therapy can be a crucial step towards unlocking the relief and reclaiming comfort and well-being.

About Dr. Grewal

Dr. Jai Grewal is a board-certified neurologist specializing in the use of botulinum toxins (such as Botox®) for therapeutic and cosmetic uses. Dr. Grewal completed his neurology residency at the University of Texas, Southwestern in Dallas. He completed his fellowship in cancer neurology at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. As Dr. Grewal was training in therapeutic uses of Botox, he fell in love with the therapy because he noticed that it was helping patients with their mood and improving how patients felt about themselves. He has been using Botox for over 20 years for a range of FDA approved uses. He has administered over 250,000 units across various indications, and is considered one of the most experienced injectors in the area. He has experience with most botulinum toxins including Botox, Dysport®, Xeomin®, and Myobloc®. When appropriate, Dr. Grewal incorporates cutting edge technology such as infrared vein locators, ultrasound guidance, and EMG guidance to optimize patient outcomes and minimize side-effects and avoid bruising. Precision is at the core of Dr. Grewal's technique. Dr. Grewal also injects dermal filler (Juvederm and Restylane), Kybella for excess fat under the chin, as well as biostimulators (Sculptra and Radiesse). In addition to expertise in standard of care therapies, Dr. Grewal is an experienced researcher and has participated in over 40 clinical trials for various neurological conditions, and has authored over 50 publications. Dr. Grewal has held faculty appointments as an Assistant Professor of Neurology at Stony Brook University and at Hofstra University.

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Understanding the Bidirectional Link: Exploring Cardiorenal Syndrome

By Dr. Aneley Yegezu Hundae, M.D., FACC

Cardiorenal Syndrome: A Complex Interplay Between Heart and Kidneys

The intricate relationship between the heart and kidneys often goes unnoticed until complications arise. Cardiorenal Syndrome, a condition where dysfunction in one organ triggers malfunctions in the other, exemplifies this interconnectedness. In this article, we delve into the mechanisms, types, and management of this bidirectional ailment.

Cardiorenal Syndrome represents a paradoxical challenge, where a sick heart can lead to kidney dysfunction, and vice versa. It encompasses a spectrum of disorders where heart and kidney conditions exacerbate each other, creating a cyclic deterioration that complicates treatment and management strategies.

This syndrome manifests through five distinct types, each showcasing a unique interplay between cardiac and renal functions. Type 1 involves acute cardiorenal syndrome, where abrupt heart injury leads to rapid kidney dysfunction. Type 2 showcases chronic abnormalities in heart function causing progressive kidney impairment. Type 3 occurs due to an abrupt deterioration in kidney function leading to heart failure. Type 4 refers to a chronic kidney disease causing heart dysfunction. Lastly, Type 5 involves systemic conditions affecting both organs simultaneously.

Understanding the pathophysiology behind Cardiorenal Syndrome is crucial. For instance, in Type 1, acute heart failure causes decreased blood flow to the kidneys, initiating a cascade of events leading to impaired renal function. Conversely, in Type 2, chronic heart failure leads to reduced cardiac output, activating neurohormonal pathways that adversely impact kidney function.

Managing Cardiorenal Syndrome demands a comprehensive approach. Treatment strategies often involve addressing the primary causative factor while simultaneously managing both heart and kidney conditions. Diuretics, ACE inhibitors, beta-blockers, and aldosterone antagonists are frequently employed to manage fluid overload and optimize cardiac function. However, cautious administration is essential to prevent further renal damage.



Lifestyle modifications such as dietary changes, exercise, and weight management play pivotal roles. Additionally, close monitoring of fluid intake and output, along with regular check-ups to assess cardiac and renal functions, are imperative in managing this complex syndrome.

Research continues to explore innovative therapies, including novel drugs targeting specific pathways involved in the cardiorenal connection. Furthermore, advancements in technology, such as wearable devices and remote monitoring, offer promising avenues for better management and early intervention.

Prevention remains a cornerstone in addressing Cardiorenal Syndrome. Early detection and management of risk factors like hypertension, diabetes, and obesity can significantly reduce the incidence of this syndrome. Educating individuals about the intricate relationship between heart and kidney health empowers them to adopt healthier lifestyles and seek timely medical intervention.

In conclusion, Cardiorenal Syndrome epitomizes the intricate interdependence between the heart and kidneys. Recognizing its various types, understanding the underlying mechanisms, and adopting a multidisciplinary approach to management are pivotal in mitigating its impact. Through ongoing research, innovative therapies, and proactive prevention strategies, we strive to alleviate the burden of this complex syndrome on global health.



Dr. Aneley Yegezu Hundae, M.D., FACC
INVASIVE CARDIOLOGY
AND ADVANCED HEART
FAILURE MANAGEMENT

Dr. Hundae received his Premedical and Doctor of Medicine Degree from Jimma University School of Medicine. He completed his Internal medicine Residency at Mercer University School of Medicine. His Heart Failure/Heart Transplant fellowship at the University of Miami Cardiovascular Fellowship Program. Cardiovascular fellowship at Baylor University Medical Center.

Board certifications

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Anti-Aging: Love Your Skin

By Nancy Gardner, Ph.D., Board Certified Nurse Practitioner at South Osprey Dermatology, Sarasota, Florida

Throughout history, people have been interested in maintaining youthful-looking skin and preventing the effects of aging. The desire to care for our skin has evolved significantly, from Cleopatra's milk baths to the 1980's when sunscreens began competing with sun tanning products.

Evidence-based research has shed light on why there is such a variation in how our skin ages. This evolving knowledge base, along with public demand, has taken science to today's advanced cosmetic technology and industry.

Our skin is our largest organ and serves an essential role in protecting our body from bacteria, viruses, fungi, and water loss while regulating body temperature. Maintaining the integrity of our skin is very important to maintaining our well-being and feeling good.

Epidermal lipids (cholesterol, ceramides, and fatty acids) of keratocytes origin play a role in skin barrier function. As we age, the barrier becomes thinner, causing dryness, loss of youthful appearance, and fine lines.



Premature aging can be caused by:

- Health issues
- Daily exposure to environmental pollutants
- Sun exposure
- Climate extremes
- Dehydration
- Poor diet
- Stress

The breakdown of the lipid barrier contributes to various surface skin problems such as premature aging, infections, inflammation, irritation, itching, dryness, discoloration, acne, dermatitis, eczema, psoriasis, and sun damage.

I am often asked how someone can improve skin health and decrease signs of aging. Here are some things I recommend:

- Drink 6-8 glasses of water
- Use a high-quality moisturizer
- Adopt a diet rich in polyphenols
- Limit meat consumption and avoid processed or cured meats
- Consume multiple servings of fruits and vegetables
- Get restful sleep
- Spend time in the fresh air
- Avoid pollution and extended sun exposure
- Protect your skin from extreme temperatures
- Exercise for 30 minutes daily, walking counts!
- Practice mindfulness meditation for 5 minutes daily and engage in enjoyable activities

Sound familiar? What is suitable for antiaging is also good for our health!

Beware, there are some things we do to our skin that can adversely impact skin health such as over or under-exfoliation, excessive alcohol, smoking, sun exposure, and use of low-quality skincare products.

High-quality products like *CeraVe*, *Cetaphil*, *Neutrogena*, *SkinCeuticals*, *Beverly Hills, MD*, and others can help protect and restore skin damage and slow signs of aging. Cleansers enhanced with vitamin antioxidants can reduce dryness and inflammation. There are several versions of enhanced moisturizers, some with hyaluronic acid, oils, vitamins C, B, and E. There are creams and Gels with vitamin B3 - niacinamide. Many contain quality sunscreen. *Beverly Hills MD Brighten* and *Tighten Restorative Skin Oil*, and *SkinCeuticals Triple Lipid Restore 2-4-2* are excellent moisturizers for any skin condition and climate with optimal proportions of ceramides, fatty acids, and cholesterol.

Products based on natural oils that help protect and heal the skin's barrier are those with coconut, olive, jojoba, sunflower, and rosehip. Vitamin A products such as Retin-A should be prescribed by a dermatologist. They come in different strengths

and should be used appropriately for optimal results. Vitamin A- retinol products offer an excellent way to make the most of what you do to protect your skin barrier and decrease signs of aging.

Emerging affordable office procedures with limited to no downtime stimulate the natural process of improving and supporting a more youthful appearance. These treatments can help slow the appearance of lines to help turn back the clock.

Treatments such as:

- Botox to relax overused muscles
- Microchanneling (stimulates cell turnover and the body's collagen production to reduce fine lines and increase natural resiliency to the skin)
- PRX TC33 peel-less peels (zero downtime - it works from within, promoting cell turnover and collagen production underneath the top layers)
- Facial peels have different strengths that smooth, increase cell turnover, exfoliate, and reduce fine lines
- Hyaluronic acid fillers plump, lift, and stimulate natural hyaluronic acid
- Lasers treatments
- Plastic surgery
- Daily nutritional supplements

While most skincare products can enhance skin health and appearance, selecting the right ones for specific skin conditions is crucial. Consult with your dermatologist to determine the best options. Choose the right skincare products and seek professional treatments to maintain healthy, youthful-looking skin for years to come. Love your skin and promote its well-being.



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Alcohol & Its Implications on Mental Health

By Steven Stein, MD - Board-certified Psychiatrist

The use of alcohol is engrained in American culture and is one of the most socially acceptable drugs used, but unfortunately often abused. While opinions may vary as to the amount considered safe for human consumption, regular and excessive use can quickly transform from a source of relaxation to a far worse overall stressor. Prolonged and excessive alcohol use can be a serious and life-threatening problem that can lead to many physical, psychological and social dangers, that affect all ages, ethnicities, and socioeconomic classes. However, when alcohol consumption spirals out of control and begins to interfere with daily life, it can lead to a serious condition known as Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD). This disorder not only takes a toll on physical health but also has a profound impact on mental well-being.

Alcohol's Physical Effects: Physically, alcohol can damage nearly every organ in the body. Prolonged excessive drinking can lead to fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, liver cirrhosis (a potentially fatal condition where liver tissue is replaced by scar tissue), and liver cancer. Additionally, alcohol weakens the immune system, making the body more susceptible to infections. Our heart health can also be compromised, with alcohol contributing to high blood pressure, irregular heartbeats, and an increased risk of stroke.

What is Alcohol Use Disorder:

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) is a chronic and progressive disease characterized by an inability to control alcohol intake, increased tolerance, and dependence leading to withdrawal symptoms. AUD can devastate lives, affecting not only the individual but also their loved ones. Alcohol withdrawal is one of only a few drug withdrawals that can be a medical emergency and even life threatening. Because of this, the assessment of one's severity of use and need for additional services, and possibly medication management should be completed only by a trained professional.

Alcohol's Impact on the Brain and Mental Health:

Alcohol abuse also wreaks havoc on mental health. One of the most apparent ways that AUD affects mental health is through its impact on the brain's chemistry. Alcohol is a central nervous



system depressant, meaning it slows down brain activity. Initially, this might result in feelings of euphoria and relaxation, but prolonged and excessive alcohol use can disrupt the delicate balance of neurotransmitters and hormones in the brain. This imbalance can lead to mood disturbances such as depression and anxiety. Alcohol can lead to deepening feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and even suicidal thoughts. Anxiety, too, can intensify as the brain's ability to manage stress becomes compromised. The interplay between alcohol and mental health creates a ripple effect, as individuals might turn to alcohol to cope with emotional pain, only to find themselves sinking deeper into distress. Additionally, we can develop a tolerance to alcohol's effects causing us to drink more which contributes to the development of a physical dependence.

Depression often coexists with AUD, creating a vicious cycle. Individuals with AUD may initially turn to alcohol as a means of coping with feelings of sadness or despair. However, alcohol's depressive effects can exacerbate these emotions over time. Anxiety is another common mental health issue intertwined with AUD. While alcohol might temporarily alleviate feelings of anxiety, it actually heightens these emotions in the long run. Chronic alcohol use disrupts the brain's ability to regulate stress, making individuals more susceptible to experiencing heightened anxiety and panic attacks.

The relationship between AUD and mental health is not unidirectional. Just as alcohol abuse can worsen mental health conditions, preexisting mental health

conditions can also increase the risk of developing AUD. Individuals with conditions like depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) might turn to alcohol as a form of self-medication, attempting to alleviate their distressing symptoms. However, this self-medication often results in an escalating cycle of alcohol use and worsened mental health symptoms and outcomes.

Treatment for Alcohol Use Disorder is not a one size fits all approach. Breaking the cycle requires a holistic approach that addresses both physical and mental health components, combining therapies, support groups, and possibly medication. A comprehensive assessment should be completed by a medical profession trained in identifying the disorder and the subsequent management approach under medical supervision to ensure the most comfort and best outcome. Not everyone with alcohol use disorder is required to be hospitalized or complete inpatient residential rehabilitation; some can be treated as an outpatient with therapy, support groups and pharmacological interventions. That said, some do require a more intensive approach including detoxification in a facility or hospital for their own safety. An evaluation by a professional is also key to identify and treat any underlying coexisting mood disorder such as depression, anxiety or PTSD.

If you believe you or a loved one may be experiencing some level of alcohol abuse that is impacting your mental, social or physical health please know that you are not alone. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to start feeling better and living life the way you want to live it on your terms. If you would like more information on how Tidewater Total Mind Care can help, feel free to contact us today at 941-202-1999.



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How to make—and keep—a New Year's resolution to quit tobacco.

It is no secret that most New Year's resolutions tend to fail before they even have a chance to "get off the ground". However, something about the "clean slate" that a new year brings inspires every one of us to try anyway. We think about all the positive changes we want to make in our lives, to get off to a great start, but get sidetracked by the busy-ness and pressures of life and lose focus. Despite our failures, we vow to ourselves that we will "do better next year". The failure that many of us experience is often the result of failing to make a sustainable plan. Benjamin Franklin said it best when he said: "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!"

If you're planning to start off this new year tobacco-free, set yourself up for success by creating a plan, learning what it takes to quit and knowing what to expect from the process.³

When it comes to quitting and staying quit, you must have a plan.¹ Having a personalized plan will not only keep you on track, but it will also help get you through the challenging moments that will inevitably come your way. Here are six simple steps to create your quit plan that will set you up for success:⁴

Step One: Mark your calendar.

With New Year's coming up, now is a perfect time to quit tobacco for good. Start 2024 off on the right foot by cutting out the #1 preventable cause of death and disease in the United States: tobacco use.¹ Set your quit date, but also tell your friends and family your plans to quit and explain how they can help you. Quitting tobacco is easier when people in your life support you.⁴

Step Two: Calculate your savings.

Did you know a pack-a-day smoker can save over \$2,200 a year from quitting?⁴ Cutting out tobacco use is an excellent way to build your savings back up now that the holidays are behind you. To see how much you can save, visit [TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/cost](https://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/cost) to view a smoking cost calculator.

Step Three: Think about your reasons for quitting.

Whether your main reason for quitting is related to health, money, family, job, or social stigma, you are making the right decision for your health and the health of those around you by quitting tobacco use. Knowing your reasons for why you want to quit can keep you motivated and on track, especially in the difficult moments.⁴

References:

1 Tools to Quit: Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Cessation Program Participant Toolkit. Area Health Education Centers, 2018.

2 <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/10-reasons-why-new-years-resolutions-fail.html>

3 <https://www.verywellmind.com/tips-to-quit-smoking-for-new-years-2824378>

4 <https://smokefree.gov/build-your-quit-plan>



Step Four: Know your triggers.

Think about what things make you more likely to use tobacco, then develop strategies to keep you in control of those triggers.

Step Five: Fight your cravings.

When you get an urge to use tobacco, changing what you are doing or your physical location can make it easier to get your mind off of tobacco until the craving passes.

Step Six: Set yourself up for success.

Choose strategies and tools to help you quit. Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC), as part of the Tobacco Free Florida AHEC Cessation Program — offers Group Quit, free tobacco cessation classes that are available to help someone quit all forms of tobacco. These group cessation classes, now held virtually, provide information about the effects of tobacco use, the benefits of quitting, and will assist you with developing your own customized quit plan. Free nicotine replacement therapy in the form of patches, gum or lozenges (*if medically appropriate and while supplies last*) are provided with the class. Attendees will also receive a participant workbook, quit kit materials, and follow up support from a trained tobacco treatment specialist.

Contact us today at 866-534-7909 or visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/groupquitcalendar to schedule a class or learn more about the program!



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There's never been a better time to quit with Group Quit

Tobacco Free Florida's Group Quit Sessions (in-person or virtual) now offer participants \$25 - \$125 in gift cards for their attendance.*

Group Quit offers free, expert-led in-person or virtual sessions for all Florida residents regardless of insurance status. Upon class completion, participants are eligible for nicotine replacement therapy such as gum, patches or lozenges.**

Pre-registration required
Call Gulfcoast South AHEC today at:
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*while supplies last
**if medically appropriate for those 18 years of age or older

Learn more about all of Tobacco Free Florida's tools and services at tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway.



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Providing information that will promote living a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle.

Southwest Florida's Health & Wellness Magazine is the most effective and affordable way to reach customers. More than 30,000 copies are distributed every month at hospitals, health and wellness centers, shopping plazas, grocery stores and many other locations.



Making CBD Your Health Resolution 2024

Have you ever wondered what CBD is and why it's effective for so many different problems? I'm often asked how CBD can help with seizures, PTSD, anxiety, pain, inflammation, digestive issues, depression, sleep, blood pressure, diabetes, glaucoma, and more. CBD, or cannabidiol, is just one of over a hundred cannabinoids found in the cannabis or hemp plant. Since the farm bill of 2018, research that was previously impossible due to cannabis prohibition has become feasible.

CBD activates a system in our body called the endocannabinoid system, which is specifically designed to receive cannabinoids. Essentially, it's a system primed by nature to interact with one plant—CBD activates it. The role of CBD is to restore balance and homeostasis in our body. Activating this system prompts the body to produce appropriate responses: managing pain, reducing inflammation, regulating digestion, boosting the immune system, and maintaining mood, blood pressure, blood sugar, and sleep cycles.

In essence, it's our body performing as nature intended because we're providing what it needs to function optimally. Just like deficiencies in vitamins and nutrients impair our body's ability to heal and repair, cannabinoid deficiency affects our body's optimal function due to limited access caused by prohibition.

The most widely recognized benefit of CBD is its anti-inflammatory properties. Let me explain the chain reaction and how it works. Everyone experiences pain, even if they don't acknowledge it. As a society, we've learned to overlook much of our discomfort and push through. Whether physical or emotional, pain creates stress, affecting our sleep and impeding our body's natural healing response.

Sleep is vital for our body's recovery, but if it's disrupted by pain or an overactive mind, it initiates a cycle of dysfunction leading to reliance on various prescriptions. Inflammation is the body's immune response to fix issues, but when it overreacts, it can damage tissues and organs, mimicking conditions like arthritis. Reduced activity due to discomfort further disrupts our sleep, impacting mental capacities.



Reducing inflammation with CBD decreases pain, allowing for more activity during the day and better sleep at night. Think of CBD as a vital nutrient; consistency is key for desired benefits.

Finding the right dosage requires trial and error to determine what works best for you. Overdosing on CBD is not a concern, but it's essential to consult your doctor or pharmacist for potential interactions with pharmaceutical medications before starting a CBD regimen.



Glaucoma, a January focus, was also one of the few approved conditions to be part of the government's federal compassionate use cannabis program started back in 1978 to 13 patients which continues today to the remaining living participants. The Cannabis is grown at the university of Mississippi and each patient was sent a tin of 150 pre rolled cigarettes every month. Cannabis has shown to be effective at alleviating the pressure behind the eyes due to the constricting or narrowing of the blood vessels. Cannabis is known as a vasodilator opening the blood vessels to decrease pressure because of this property it may also help with blood pressure, migraines and headaches through vasodilation.

Sources: *The Science Beyond the Controversy.*
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK224386/>

<https://www.mpp.org/policy/federal/federal-governments-medical-marijuana-program/#:~:text=The%20Compassionate%20Investigational%20New%20Drug,be%20of%20very%20low%20quality.>

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At Banner Harvest, we are passionate about CBD and believe it is a great natural alternative for many people. We strive to offer the highest quality options, unsurpassed in efficacy and consistency. All our products are farm to table which means grown, formulated, and made here in-house from scratch. We take great pride in our quality control; each individual product and batch is tested by ACS an accredited 3rd party laboratory. We test not only for potency, but also the full panel, which includes pesticides, residual solvents, microbials, and heavy metals. Each product includes a QR code which has the COA (certificate of analysis) which is the lab analysis report listing test results. It is critical for the consumer to understand and demand access to a product's test. Many CBD brands being sold are white labeling or private labeling their products from unregulated overseas sources or huge corporate distributors who do not have any quality or efficacy standards and worst of all, supply an altered COA or no testing at all. Trust your source.

With over 40 years of combined experience in the legal cannabis industry, our team at Banner Harvest strives not only to educate but also to create the highest quality Hemp and CBD products in the market. We conduct full panel lab testing at a 3rd-party DEA lab in Florida to ensure accuracy in formulation and labeling, ensuring you can trust the purity, safety, and efficacy of every product. With over 15 years of experience in patient advocacy and education, Banner Harvest stands as the 1st and only CBD company in the state accredited by the Better Business Bureau. Passionate about our work, we aim to share our knowledge. Education is our tool to undo over 100 years of propaganda against this God-given natural plant medicine. Through education, consumers can make the best decisions for themselves, their families, and their pets.

These statements and the products of this company are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.



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ADVANCED URINARY INCONTINENCE PROCEDURES

Approximately 10 to 20 million people in the United States are suffering from urinary incontinence. If you have issues with leaking when coughing, jumping, or laughing, or if you have severe urgency to urinate day and night, you are not alone. Correct diagnosis of the type of incontinence is the first and most important step in developing an appropriate and effective treatment plan for incontinence.

There are several types of urinary incontinence:

- Stress incontinence
- Urge incontinence
- Mixed incontinence
- Overflow incontinence
- Functional incontinence

The good news is that you are not stuck with wearing pads or pull up for the rest of your life. There are viable treatment options from medications, Botox injections, nerve stimulators and implantable slings to name a few. Two of the more advanced innovative procedures that are noninvasive are sacral neuromodulation and urethral bulking.

Sacral Neuromodulation

Sacral neuromodulation is an advanced procedure that uses a tiny wire that is placed on the glut muscle with a quarter-size impulse device that sends messages to the brain to regulate urination. This procedure takes around 30 minutes to perform, and if the procedure does not work, or if a patient decides they want it removed, we can take it out quite easily. Other similar devices can also be placed on the sacral nerve to induce sacral neuromodulation to send small impulses to the bladder.

Bulkamid—Urethral Bulking

Bulkamid is a soft, smooth hydrogel that consists of 97.5% water and 2.5% polyacrylamide. Once injected, Bulkamid provides additional volume to the urethra and acts as a scaffold for cells to grow through helping to provide long lasting relief of stress urinary incontinence symptoms. Bulkamid is noninvasive and requires no surgery. It is injected directly into the closing mechanism of the urethra. More than 70,000 patients have been treated with Bulkamid.



What is urethral bulking?

Urethral bulking involves the injection of a soft hydrogel (the size of a pea) like Bulkamid, into 3 or 4 locations in the urethral wall using a small telescope. The total volume injected is around 2mls.

Bulkamid aims to restore the natural closing pressure of the urethra preventing urine from leaking out unintentionally during normal daily activities (e.g., when you cough, laugh, walk or exercise).

Short procedure

Urethral bulking takes around 10 – 15 minutes and is usually done in day surgery or out-patient clinic with a local anesthetic.

No Incisions

A series of small injections are used, you may feel a sting, however, no cuts are made.

Quick recovery

In most cases patients can get back to their normal activities within a day.

If you have pain, pressure, urgency, or frequent urination, don't put off seeing a urologist, as these conditions only progress with time. Getting a proper diagnosis and early treatment is critical.

Source: <https://bulkamid.com/us/>

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health in Venice, Florida, provides comprehensive and personalized care in a relaxed, spa-like office. Under the care of John Devine, MD, a fellowship-trained urogynecologist, the practice specializes in women's pelvic health and urogynecology, providing care for women of all ages, from adolescents to adults.

Taking a patient-centric approach to care, Dr. Devine schedules ample time for patient appointments. He also makes himself directly available to his patients to answer any clinical questions.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health provides comprehensive evaluations of female pelvic health concerns. Services include gynecology care to manage general health and wellness, as well as the evaluation and treatment of conditions and symptoms arising from menopause.

The practice also specializes in urogynecology, which is an OB/GYN subspecialty that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of female urinary incontinence and pelvic floor disorders, like pelvic organ prolapse.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health also provides care to women struggling with interstitial cystitis or fecal incontinence. Additionally, Dr. Devine offers consultations and surgical treatment for women experiencing complications from mesh.

For patient-centric care from an experienced physician with friendly and accommodating staff, call The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health, or request an appointment today. Please call 941-457-7700.

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Navigating Weight Loss with Ozempic/Semaglutide: IMPACT ON JOINT AND BACK PAIN TREATMENTS

By Physicians Rehabilitation

Weight loss and its connection to joint and back pain treatments have been areas of significant interest for those exploring the benefits of medications like Ozempic/Semaglutide. The correlation between weight reduction and pain management holds promise, but understanding their intricate relationship is crucial.

Ozempic/Semaglutide, known for its effectiveness in aiding weight loss by regulating appetite and reducing calorie intake, has drawn attention not only for its weight-reduction abilities but also for its potential impact on joint and back pain. Research suggests that obesity significantly contributes to joint and back pain due to added stress on weight-bearing joints and strain on the back muscles. Therefore, the weight loss achieved through medications like Ozempic/Semaglutide might alleviate these issues.

The mechanism behind this relationship lies in the reduction of excess weight. As individuals shed pounds while on Ozempic/Semaglutide, the pressure on joints lessens, potentially resulting in decreased joint pain. Moreover, weight loss can alleviate strain on the back, relieving discomfort and improving mobility for those suffering from chronic back pain.

However, it's essential to approach this connection with a nuanced perspective. Weight loss, although beneficial, might initially exacerbate joint and back pain for some individuals. Rapid weight reduction can lead to temporary changes in muscle structure and joint alignment, causing discomfort until the body adjusts to the new weight.

Additionally, Ozempic/Semaglutide might interact with certain pain medications commonly used for joint and back pain. Understanding these interactions is vital to ensure optimal pain management while undergoing a weight loss regimen. Consulting healthcare providers becomes imperative to navigate potential medication adjustments or considerations for alternative pain management strategies.



Incorporating a holistic approach that combines weight loss strategies with targeted exercises aimed at strengthening muscles supporting joints and the back can further enhance the positive outcomes. Physical therapy, low-impact exercises, and adopting ergonomic practices in daily activities play crucial roles in managing joint and back pain while on a weight loss journey with Ozempic/Semaglutide.

Nevertheless, individual responses to Ozempic/Semaglutide and its influence on joint and back pain treatments can vary. Some may experience significant relief, while others might notice moderate improvements or even initial discomfort before benefits manifest. Monitoring one's body, staying in touch with healthcare professionals, and maintaining open communication about experiences are pivotal during this process.

Furthermore, lifestyle modifications beyond medication play a pivotal role in achieving sustainable weight loss and managing joint and back pain.

Healthy dietary choices, adequate hydration, stress management techniques, and sufficient sleep complement the effects of Ozempic/Semaglutide, fostering an overall healthier lifestyle conducive to weight loss and pain management.



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In conclusion, Ozempic/Semaglutide's role in weight loss holds promise for positively impacting joint and back pain. While the connection between weight reduction and pain management is notable, it's essential to approach it with a comprehensive understanding of individual responses, potential interactions, and the need for a holistic approach combining medication, lifestyle adjustments, and targeted exercises. Ultimately, navigating weight loss with Ozempic/Semaglutide while addressing joint and back pain requires personalized strategies tailored to individual needs, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between patients and healthcare providers.

We, at Physicians Rehabilitation, have always taken a multi-modality approach to treating chronic joint pain and osteoarthritis by offering various types of injection therapies, physical therapy, bracing, and interventional pain management, but now we are also offering medical weight loss options to help you with your long-term health goals. We are focused on helping you gain mobility, improve your strength, and live a pain-free lifestyle, but also getting you to look and feel your best! Call us today to get more information on our weight loss program!

MEDICAL WEIGHT LOSS IS NOW EASIER THAN EVER

At Physicians Rehabilitation, we offer Semaglutide injections for weight loss. Approved by the FDA for weight loss in June of 2022, using Semaglutide, 90% of patients are losing 5% or more of their body weight.

Semaglutide (Wegovy/Ozempic generic) injections:

- Increase insulin production
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- It signals your brain that you are full so you can lose weight without feeling like you are depriving yourself.

Schedule a weight loss consultation with Physicians Rehab and bring your copy of Health and Wellness Magazine for a \$100 DISCOUNT Off your initial consultation and injection. We are serious about your health and wellness!!

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Each session takes approximately 20 minutes with noticeable results. It is recommended to have 1 session per week for 5 weeks followed by 1 session per month for maintenance. This plan of care will have a cumulative effect and help to maintain a higher production of collagen and elastin. The visual improvement is very noticeable, with a reduction of fat layer and a lift up effect on your facial skin.



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CryoSlimming starts with an initial warming sequence by creating dilation of the fat cells making them more receptive to the cold phase CryoSlimming.

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Final sequence of CryoSlimming uses heat to bring your skin back to its normal temperature to reactivate metabolism and facilitate the drainage of organic waste. The organic waste is a result of the dead cells and are disposed of via the lymphatic system and normal body elimination within 2 weeks.

CRYOSKIN REVOLUTION TONING

CryoToning makes the use of cold temperatures to tone the skin and improve cellular metabolism. Sessions can be performed on any part of the body for a tightening effect on the skin. CryoToning sessions can be for post-baby belly, weight loss, saggy skin, arms, legs, etc. Applying cold temperatures to the skin has an instant tightening effect, and works long term by stimulating the production of collagen and elastin. CryoToning will also stimulate lymphatic drainage from that specific area.

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Compassionate Home Health: Excellence in Promoting, Maintaining, and Restoring Health

In the sphere of home health, a profound dedication to compassion intertwines seamlessly with the pursuit of excellence. It's not merely about administering care; it's a heartfelt commitment to promoting, maintaining, and restoring health for those entrusted to our care. Within this compassionate paradigm lies an unwavering passion for excellence, shaping the very essence of how we serve.

At the core of compassionate home health lies the understanding that each individual's journey toward wellness is unique. It's about recognizing the person beyond the ailment and establishing a profound connection built on empathy and understanding. This approach transcends the mere clinical routine; it cultivates a sense of trust, fostering an environment where individuals feel heard and cared for on a deeper level.

To promote health in the home setting requires a holistic view that extends beyond just physical wellness. It encompasses emotional support, mental resilience, and nurturing an environment that encourages overall well-being. It's about empowering individuals to take charge of their health while providing the necessary guidance and support to navigate the intricacies of their wellness journey.

Maintaining health within the confines of one's home demands a harmonious blend of expertise and personalized care. It involves meticulous planning, where every aspect of care is tailored to suit the unique needs of each individual. Whether it's managing medications, assisting with daily activities, or offering companionship, the goal remains unwavering – to maintain the highest standard of health and comfort.

However, the true essence of compassionate home health shines when restoration becomes imperative. It's during these challenging times that the dedication to excellence truly becomes palpable. Restoring health isn't just about addressing the physical symptoms; it's about instilling hope, inspiring resilience, and guiding individuals through the process of healing with unwavering support and encouragement.



A passion for excellence becomes the cornerstone in every facet of our service. It drives continuous improvement in the quality of care provided, propelling us to seek innovative approaches, staying abreast of the latest advancements in healthcare, and fostering an environment where learning and development are constant companions.

Moreover, this passion transcends individual roles; it becomes a collective commitment ingrained in the ethos of every caregiver, nurse, and therapist member. It's the unwavering dedication to going above and beyond, to not just meet but exceed expectations, ensuring that those we serve receive nothing short of exemplary care.

In the pursuit of excellence, compassion becomes the guiding light that illuminates every decision made and action taken. It's the willingness to listen intently, to hold hands during difficult times, and to celebrate victories – big or small. Excellence isn't just a standard; it's a way of life that echoes in every interaction, every treatment, and every smile shared.

Compassionate home health, driven by a passion for excellence, isn't merely a profession; it's a calling. It's a commitment to humanity, a dedication to making a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve. It's about transforming healthcare into an experience imbued with empathy, respect, and a relentless pursuit of the highest quality care.

In conclusion, the heart of compassionate home health beats in rhythm with the passion for excellence. It's a symphony where empathy, dedication, and expertise harmonize to create a melody of healing and hope. This compassionate pursuit of excellence defines our commitment to promoting, maintaining, and restoring health for those whose lives we touch, leaving an indelible mark of care and compassion.

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Exploring the Link Between Traumatic Brain Injury and Hearing-Related Symptoms

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) often reveals itself in a multitude of ways, and one often overlooked aspect is its impact on hearing. While the immediate consequences of a TBI are evident, such as physical impairment or cognitive challenges, the subtler effects on auditory functions can significantly affect an individual's overall well-being.

The connection between TBI and hearing-related symptoms has gained traction in recent years within the medical community. Studies have indicated that TBI, ranging from mild concussions to severe head injuries, can lead to various auditory complications. One common manifestation is hearing loss or difficulty in auditory processing. Even seemingly minor head injuries can disrupt the intricate mechanisms involved in perceiving sound.

Individuals who have experienced TBI might encounter problems distinguishing speech in noisy environments or understanding conversations, especially when multiple people are speaking simultaneously. Moreover, they might struggle with sound localization, making it challenging to identify the source of a sound accurately. Such issues can greatly impact daily life, causing frustration and isolation in social settings.

Beyond hearing loss, TBI can trigger a condition known as tinnitus, characterized by ringing, buzzing, or hissing sounds in the ears. This persistent noise can significantly impede concentration, sleep, and

overall mental health. The onset of tinnitus after a head injury underscores the intricate relationship between brain function and auditory perception.

Furthermore, the complex neural networks responsible for processing auditory information can be disrupted by TBI. This disruption might result in hypersensitivity to certain frequencies or sound volumes, causing discomfort or pain in response to seemingly normal environmental noises. This heightened sensitivity, known as hyperacusis, can further complicate an individual's daily life, making exposure to regular sounds an ordeal.

The correlation between TBI and auditory dysfunction prompts the need for comprehensive evaluation and treatment strategies. Early identification of these hearing-related symptoms following a head injury is crucial for effective management. Audiological assessments and thorough examinations by healthcare professionals specializing in both TBI and audiology play a pivotal role in understanding and addressing these challenges.

Fortunately, advancements in technology and rehabilitative interventions offer hope. Hearing aids, assistive listening devices, and auditory rehabilitation programs tailored to address specific TBI-related auditory issues can significantly improve an individual's quality of life. Moreover, therapies focusing on cognitive rehabilitation and auditory processing can aid in managing the intricacies of TBI-induced hearing problems.

Raising awareness about the correlation between TBI and hearing-related symptoms is vital. Education on preventive measures, prompt medical attention following head injuries, and comprehensive rehabilitation strategies can mitigate the long-term impact of TBI on auditory functions.

In conclusion, while the visible consequences of traumatic brain injury are often apparent, the less obvious effects on hearing can significantly affect an individual's life. From subtle auditory processing issues to the distressing symptoms of tinnitus and hyperacusis, TBI-related hearing complications warrant attention and specialized care. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach encompassing medical intervention, rehabilitative therapies, and increased awareness within both medical communities and the general public.

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Doctor of Audiology



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EFFORTLESS BEAUTY

Unveiling the Advantages and Process of Laser Hair Removal

Smooth, hair-free skin has long been a beauty ideal, and laser hair removal has emerged as a groundbreaking solution. In recent years, its popularity has soared due to its effectiveness and numerous benefits.

Laser hair removal involves using concentrated beams of light to target hair follicles. The process begins with a consultation where the technician assesses skin type and hair color to determine the most suitable laser for the individual. This customization ensures optimal results while minimizing any risks.

One of the most significant advantages of laser hair removal is its precision. The laser selectively targets hair follicles, leaving the surrounding skin undamaged. This precision is particularly beneficial in areas like the face, where delicate skin requires careful treatment.

Moreover, laser hair removal is a long-term solution. While multiple sessions are typically required to achieve the best results, the reduction in hair growth is significant and long-lasting. This is because the laser's energy disrupts the hair follicles' ability to grow new hair, leading to a reduction in hair density over time.

Another benefit of laser hair removal is its speed. The procedure can target multiple hair follicles simultaneously, making it a quick process for smaller areas like the upper lip or underarms. Larger areas such as the legs or back might take longer but still offer a more efficient alternative to traditional methods like shaving or waxing.

Furthermore, compared to other hair removal techniques, laser hair removal often results in smoother skin. Without the irritation caused by shaving or waxing, individuals can enjoy silky-smooth skin without the risk of ingrown hairs or razor bumps.

The procedure's versatility is also noteworthy. It can be applied to various body parts, from smaller, sensitive areas to larger expanses. This versatility allows individuals to customize their treatment plan according to their specific needs.



While laser hair removal offers numerous benefits, it's crucial to consider certain factors before undergoing the procedure. Factors such as skin type, hair color, and medical history can impact the efficacy and safety of the treatment. Consulting with a qualified professional ensures a personalized approach and minimizes potential risks.

Additionally, the procedure might cause mild discomfort, often described as a snapping sensation or a mild stinging feeling. However, this discomfort is typically manageable and temporary.

As with any cosmetic procedure, there are potential side effects. These can include redness, swelling, and, in rare cases, blistering or changes in skin pigmentation. However, these side effects are usually temporary and subside within a few days.

In conclusion, laser hair removal offers a multitude of benefits, making it a popular choice for those seeking a more permanent solution to unwanted hair. Its precision, long-term effectiveness, speed, and versatility make it an attractive option for individuals looking to achieve smooth, hair-free skin without the hassle of traditional hair removal methods. As always, consulting with a qualified professional is crucial to determine if laser hair removal is the right choice based on individual circumstances and preferences.

About Restoration Bar

Restoration Bar is the Anti Aging aspect of our medical office. Our belief is that through regeneration we can achieve restoration. As local medical providers, we have found that many office and hospital visits could be avoided had the patients maintained hydration and / or optimal oxygenation. A key component for our human body to function is adequate perfusion to all systems. Hydration and Oxygenation are critical for this.

At Restoration Bar, we offer IV fluids, vitamins and minerals to help with hydration status. In addition, we offer customized IV formulations to address specific goals. Our recreational oxygen offers 20 minutes of highly concentrated oxygen with or without plant based aromatherapy. Often, taking the time during this session to focus on inhalation and exhalation serves as a reminder of how we often 'forget to breathe' during our busy lives.

In addition, we offer a multitude of aging interventions. It is our belief that for our bodies to accept and respond to any of our services, being of optimal hydration and oxygenation is essential.

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Radiology Associates physicians are board certified radiologists with training in all aspects of diagnostic imaging, including CT, Mammography, MRI, Ultrasound, X-ray, and Nuclear Medicine. Additionally, each has advanced subspecialty training in one or more areas of medical imaging or interventional radiology that we believe provides the basis for providing the highest level of patient care.

Our goal is to provide high quality patient care in a comfortable environment, using the latest imaging and interventional technology and working in close collaboration with referring physicians.

Radiology Associates of Venice and Englewood is pleased to offer the following diagnostic imaging services:

MRI Scan

Magnetic resonance imaging, commonly known as MRI is a medical test that aids physicians in diagnosis and treating medical conditions. This is a non-invasive and typically painless test.

Breast MRI

Breast MRI uses Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to look specifically at the breast. It is a non-invasive procedure that doctors can use to determine what the inside of the breast looks like without having to do surgery or flatten the breast (as in a mammogram).

MRA

Magnetic Resonance Angiography - Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA) uses the same MRI scanner to get its images, however it is a special type of MRI scan that looks at blood vessels and blood flow. MRA can help diagnose aneurysms, and also detect narrowing or blockages of blood vessels. If there is decreased or blocked flow leading to the brain this can be the cause of a stroke. Additionally, it can be an ideal aid to the physician for surgical planning. Some MRA's, as with MRI's, require a contrast medium.

CT Scan

CT Scan sometimes called CAT scanning is a painless and a non-invasive medical test that helps physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions.

Ultrasound

A process that uses high-frequency sound waves to produce pictures of the inside of the body. Because ultrasound images are captured in real time, they are able to show blood flowing through the blood vessels, as well as the movement of the body's organs and its structure.

Nuclear Medicine

Nuclear medicine is a specialized form of radiology. Patients are given a radioactive substance either by mouth or intravenously that collects in specific body organs. Then the gamma camera detects the energy being emitted from that substance and an image can then be captured.

Digital X-Ray & Fluoroscopy

An X-ray is a painless and quick test for the patient to endure. It involves exposing the part of the body that is being examined to a small dose of ionizing radiation to produce pictures of the inside of the body.

3D Mammography

3D mammography is a new technology in the fight against breast cancer that allows doctors to examine your breast tissue one layer at a time. 3D mammography uses high-powered computing to convert digital breast images into a stack of very thin layers or "slices"- building what is essentially a "3-dimensional mammogram".

Bone Density DEXA

Bone density scanning, also called dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) or bone densitometry, is an enhanced form of x-ray technology that is used to measure bone loss.

PET Scan

Positron emission tomography, also called PET imaging or a PET scan, is a type of nuclear medicine imaging.

For more information about the diagnostic imaging services available at Radiology Associates of Venice, Englewood and Sarasota. Call the Venice office at 941-488-7781 or the Englewood office at 941-475-5471 or the Sarasota office at 941-342-7283.



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Defeat Gum Disease

There is a silent oral disease affecting more than 80% of adults. Chances are you either have had or are currently battling periodontal (gum) disease. Unfortunately, in many cases, the disease goes undetected until painful symptoms begin occurring. At which time the disease and any adverse conditions have already set in. Because there are no early signs of periodontal disease, it often goes untreated until the physical symptoms surface and by then the concern is treatment not prevention. It is extremely important for everyone to have regular dental check ups at the recommended six month interval. Without these check ups and proper oral care, periodontal disease can silently cause not only oral health problems but can also contribute to other major health concerns.

Periodontal disease, also known as gum disease, is the chronic infection of the soft tissue around the teeth caused by plaque producing bacteria. The gums hold the teeth in place. As the gums become infected, they loosen their hold on the teeth and pockets are formed. These pockets collect debris and cause more infection and bone loss to the tooth. Gum disease is infectious and contagious. It can spread from tooth to tooth in the mouth and from one person's mouth to another through saliva.

As with other diseases, prevention is key to good oral health. It is important for everyone to practice diligent, thorough, and proper oral care by scheduling check ups every six months. At which time, your dentist will be able to detect and treat any signs of periodontal disease before symptoms begin to show and the damage is done. As mentioned earlier, most people do not know they have periodontal disease until they begin suffering from any combination of the following signs:

- Chronic bad breath
- Red or swollen gums
- Bleeding gums especially after tooth brushing
- Tender or sore gums
- Loose or shifting teeth
- Receding gums
- Sensitive teeth



If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, there are various treatment plans your dentist may recommend depending on the severity of your case. The most important action is meticulous at home daily oral care. Teeth must be brushed twice or more times each day for at least two minutes and flossed at least once per day. Other treatments include oral rinses, periodontal cleanings, and sometimes surgery.

Traditional periodontal surgery involves cutting and suturing of the gums and recovery time can be long and painful. With the advancement of modern laser technology, there is an alternative. Joseph H. Farag, DMD offers a better alternative for patients battling periodontal disease. Dr. Farag offers patients laser-assisted new attachment procedure (LANAP™) which is a no-cut, no-sew procedure to treat mild to advanced periodontal disease. The advancements in laser surgery techniques, have made treating periodontal faster and less painful. LANAP™ is much less invasive than traditional surgery, allowing patients to return to work the next day if desired.

Even with the benefits of LANAP™ it is obviously best to practice good oral care. The most important preventative measure to avoid the insidious gum disease is to take excellent care of your teeth. Proper cleaning at least twice a day is imperative. The goal is to keep the bacteria that cause the plaque at very low levels.

If your gums are painful, red, or swollen don't ignore the signs; make an appointment today that may save your teeth and gums. Treating periodontal disease sooner is always better than later.

Benefits of LANAP™

EASY - LANAP™ is about as EASY as erasing a blackboard - unlike older techniques, there is no cutting and no suturing of the gums.

MINIMAL DISCOMFORT - Both during and post procedure, the patient experiences very minimal discomfort with LANAP™ than with prior standard surgery techniques.

SHORTER PROCEDURE TIME - It takes less time to complete LANAP™ than traditional surgery. Typically it takes is two 2-hour visits to the office and two follow up visits. Traditional surgery requires four sessions of about one hour each, with subsequent visits for suture removal and additional check-ups.

LESS GUM LOSS - LANAP™ minimizes the loss of gum tissue, traditional surgery often involves removing a significant amount of gum tissue. This tissue loss can lead to sensitive teeth since your roots are exposed. Also, if the treatment needs to be performed again in the future, you have not removed the bone and gums during the first LANAP™ treatment. Typically with LANAP™, any gum tissue shrinkage is actually due to reduced swelling of the area that was previously diseased and inflamed.

SHORT RECOVERY - Many patients fully recover from LANAP™ within 24 hours. In most cases, patients feel just fine post surgery and daily activities are not interrupted. On the other hand, recovery after traditional surgery can take up to 4 weeks during which patients can experience considerable pain and swelling.

SAFE - LANAP™ with the PerioLase is SAFE for patients with health concerns such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or those taking medications such as Coumadin or Cyclosporine.

Dr. Joseph Farag - Port Charlotte Dentalcare

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www.Drfarag.com

ESTATE ADMINISTRATION

By James W. Mallonee

How many personal representatives do you need to manage your estate following death. You can select any number of persons to serve as personal representative, but with that selection comes potential problems and litigation. You are limited (under Florida law) to who can serve as your personal representative but not as to quantity.

Florida law states that your personal representative must either be a family member or the spouse of one of the family members. It also allows any Florida resident to serve as personal representative and the individual selected must be over 18 years of age and have capacity.

The problems of selecting a personal representative normally comes into play when there are two or more nominees selected to serve at the same time. Generally speaking, the selection of multiple personal representatives is the result of Mom (or Dad) not wanting to hurt the feelings of someone and thus such persons are selected to serve together. This has the potential of causing a disaster when the personal representatives have differing agendas.

Consider the following facts:

Mom is dying and elects to have a Will drawn up. Her immediate family consists of three children, with one child living nearby and the other two living out of State. Because mom is concerned about hurting the feelings of the children by not selecting them as a personal representative, she insists that the Will give management of her estate to her three children. At mom's death, issues quickly escalate



over who has control over her real estate and bank accounts. The local child changes the locks on the real estate (in an effort to secure the property from possible vandalism). In addition, Mom's bank accounts (titled in Mom and the local child's name) are closed (supposedly in an effort to pay Mom's immediate expenses such as electric, water and insurance). Lastly, the local child removes Mom's car to secure it and keeps the keys.

So far everything seems to be moving in the right direction until one of the other children comes into town and wants to check on the house and other assets of the property. The problems quickly escalate when it is learned by the other two children that accounts were closed and there is no access to the residence.

The other two children want to enter the residence but the local child refuses and no information concerning the date of death values of the bank accounts are forthcoming. Suddenly, lines of animosity are drawn and the specter of litigation is beginning with each party claiming the other has stolen funds and items from the estate. What is worse is that there is no communication nor consent between the siblings.

The failure to communicate and gain consent among the siblings before taking action almost always assures a disaster. You should not depend on the attorney selected to manage the beneficiaries to play nicely. The question that gets asked at this point is, did this really have to happen?

The immediate answer is no. Had Mom selected only one of the children to serve then much of the animosity would not occur. What usually happens next is finger pointing and accusations which leads to litigation and expenses that simply did not have to happen. Thus, the recommendation is to have only one person serve as personal representative. Make certain that the individual you select is capable of communicating, is honest and can manage multiple things at once along with good monetary skills.

If you are unsure who would be in the best interest of your estate, have a conversation with the attorney of your choice to discuss the aspects selecting the best personal representative for your estate and the reason why you believe them to be a good choice. Being the oldest and local sibling is not always in the best interest of the family dynamics.

This article is intended for informational use only and is not for purposes of providing legal advice or association of a lawyer - client relationship.

James W. Mallonee, P.A.

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Does Taking Fish Oil Lower Cholesterol?

By Bo Martinsen, MD

Many people believe that incorporating omega-3s into their diet will solve their cholesterol woes. But the truth is much more nuanced; it's not as simple as taking a daily fish oil capsule or drinking a teaspoon of cod liver oil.

In this article, we'll uncover how these essential fatty acids impact your lipid profile – plus look at how much omega-3 you need to reap the benefits.

Cholesterol Is More Than One Thing

The term “cholesterol” often gets tossed around as though it were a single concept. But really, cholesterol includes several measurements. When you take a lipid test, the results are broken down into a few main components:

Triglycerides: Our bodies convert the extra calories, fat and sugars we eat into triglycerides. Having too high triglyceride levels is bad.

LDL: LDL, or low-density lipoproteins, is commonly referred to as the “bad” cholesterol. It builds up plaque in the arteries. LDL can be further analyzed by particle size. Small, dense particles are considered more harmful than large, fluffy particles.

HDL: HDL, or high-density lipoproteins, are the “good” cholesterol. Having a higher number is better.

Total Cholesterol: Your total cholesterol number is based on the other three components. Here's the formula: HDL + LDL + 20% triglycerides = total cholesterol.

Omega-3s impact these numbers in different ways. Let's take a closer look at what the science shows.

Triglyceride Levels

Studies show that taking omega-3s will consistently lower triglyceride levels. But the effect depends on how much you consume.

Higher doses of EPA and DHA omega-3s are needed to significantly reduce triglyceride levels. For example, a 2020 review from researchers in Norway highlighted the following trend:

- 850 mg of EPA/DHA lowered triglycerides by only 3.4%.

- 2400 mg of EPA/DHA lowered triglycerides by 16%.
- 5100 mg of EPA/DHA lowered triglycerides by 27%.

On average, studies report that taking between 3000 – 4000 mg of EPA/DHA will translate to a 25% drop in triglyceride levels.

Of course, the actual impact for any individual will depend on many factors, like genetics, age, gender, and your baseline triglyceride levels. There's also the quality of the omega-3 product to consider, including the freshness level of the oil.

Can Fish Oil Pills Lower Triglyceride Levels?

Most regular fish oil capsules contain only 300 mg of EPA/DHA. With that serving size, you would need to take 10 or more capsules every day to get an adequate dose.

Concentrated omega-3 products can deliver higher doses of EPA and DHA in fewer servings. But even with prescription omega-3 oils aimed at managing hyperlipidemia, you have to take at least 4 capsules daily.

At Omega3 Innovations, we offer 3000 mg EPA/DHA in a pre-measured, drinkable single serving. This liquid form makes it easier for people to meet their omega-3 needs and experience beneficial effects.

LDL Cholesterol

While the benefits of omega-3s for triglyceride levels are widely known and accepted, their effects on LDL levels are more complex.

Again, there are different types of LDL cholesterol. On a lipid panel, people typically pay the greatest attention to the LDL-C value. Most studies show that omega-3s don't really impact LDL-C. However, one exception seems to be for people with very high triglyceride levels (>500mg/dl). For these people, omega-3s may increase LDL somewhat.

There's also Lp(a), or a type of low-density LDL that can create plaque in your arteries. Most studies (but not all) note a modest decrease in this value with omega-3s, which is good.

Finally, omega-3s seem to facilitate a shift from small dense LDL particles to bigger and lighter large buoyant LDL. This is positive, since small dense LDL is more likely to create arterial plaque. Indeed, shifting from small dense to large buoyant LDL is associated with lower heart disease risk.

HDL Cholesterol

When it comes to HDL cholesterol, research suggests that omega-3s have little effect in general.

The exception is again for people with very high triglycerides. In these cases, omega-3s may increase the HDL levels by more than 10%. This is positive, since HDL is the “good” cholesterol.

What's the Best Measure of Heart Disease Risk?

Many studies show that your ratio of triglycerides to HDL may be a more important number than looking at your total cholesterol. Having a high triglyceride:HDL ratio is associated with heart disease, insulin resistance, and low testosterone levels in men. Interestingly, the risk seems to be independent of bad cholesterol numbers or medication use.

Taking sufficient doses of omega-3s will typically reduce the triglycerides to HDL ratio. This improvement could be one of the reasons for the purported heart health benefits of these fatty acids.

For the full article and references, please visit:

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/does-taking-fish-oil-lower-cholesterol/>

Bo Martinsen, MD

Dr. Martinsen is an omega-3 specialist, innovator, and advocate for natural foods. As co-founder and CEO of Omega3 Innovations, he has created several medical food products that combine effective doses of omega-3s with fibers and other nutrients. Before Omega3 Innovations, Dr. Martinsen practiced medicine in Norway for over 20 years.



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Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Remember the old merry-go-rounds on the playground when you were a kid? You would spin in circles until you felt like you were going to fly off. That's how life can feel if you don't make some necessary changes.

You live a much faster lifestyle than your parents did. Your children will live an even faster lifestyle than you did. As we enter a new year, perhaps it is a good time to evaluate the pace of your life and make some necessary adjustments. The Psalmist tells us:

2In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.
Psalm 127:2

If you are getting up early and staying up late but still don't feel like you can get everything done... you are probably trying to do too much.

Living at a hectic pace comes at a price. You end up feeling more stressed because you are trying to cram too many things into your day. You end up having no margin in your life. As the margins get tighter the stress goes higher.

You have to take time to recharge your batteries. Here's a lesson I learned years ago: You have just enough time to do the will of God. If you can't get everything done on your "to do" list, maybe there are things on the list you shouldn't be doing.

I want to share with you two simple strategies to help you slow down the pace of your life so that you can enjoy life.

The first strategy is to learn to be content. If you're serious about slowing down, you don't start with your schedule—you start with your heart.

The Apostle Paul said this about contentment. *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

Philippians 4:11-13

If you're going to slow down your life, you have to learn contentment. Paul also said this about contentment: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.* 1 Tim. 6:6-7

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things. Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

I'm not waiting for *more* in order to be happy. I'm happy right now. I have dreams and I have goals but I don't need *more* in order to be happy. That's contentment.

Contentment will come easier when you realize two things: life is not a competition with other people and having more will not make you happier. This is not the message promoted by our culture, but it is true.

Jesus said it like this, *"Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'*" Luke 12:15

If you find yourself making statements like this:



- My life is a rat race.
- I don't know how I'm going to get it all done.
- I am just so exhausted.
- I don't know how much more of this I can take.
- I just want to escape.

These phrases are all warning signs that you are on the road to burn out. You need to slow down the pace. Perhaps as we begin this new year, taking an honest evaluation of your life and determine if some changes are necessary. Are you content in your life right now?

As the merry-go-round spins faster it is only a matter of time before you either get sick, or fall off. Or, better yet, just slow down, be content, and enjoy the ride.



VENTURECHURCH
Naples

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

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