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
 **PHYSICIANS REGIONAL
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Randall Jacobs, M.D.

Gastroenterology

**ARE YOU FEELING
THE BURN FROM
ACID REFLUX ON
A REGULAR BASIS?**

**You Could Have a More
Serious Condition**

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**UNMASKING
PARKINSON'S
DISEASE**

**Recognizing Prevalence
and Warning Signs**

**The Correlation
Between Exercise &
Better Mental Health**

**WE ALL AGE.
How Do We
Prevent Frailty?**

**ENHANCING VISION
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A Love Story from the Dental Chair

By Dr. Tamer Eshra

Tony and Markeita Barnette were married 32 years before an illness took both of his legs and then eventually his life. Markeita never left Tony's side during the three years he bravely fought for his life. Tony never let Markeita's dream of having a new smile die. After his passing, Markeita discovered Tony had set aside money for Markeita to have the smile she had always wanted. Even during her grief of losing her beloved life mate, Markeita knew that she owed it to Tony to follow through with the complex procedure to show her appreciation of the life they had shared.

Dr. Tamer Eshra says, "This is one of the most emotional cases I have ever done. You should have been in the office on delivery day. It was a day of happy tears, proud tears, and rejoicing tears. All the tears!! Even the administration team felt it. A case that was treated with love, care, and mutual trust. Handing Markeita the mirror is a core memory I will never forget. This lady knew when she smiled now that it was her late husband, Tony, smiling back at her! So moving."

Terrie Kleinberg from the administrative team recalls, "When Markeita would come in, she would cover her mouth or wear a mask. She was very self-contentious about her teeth. The day her prosthesis came in, she was so full of joy. Markeita hugged everyone in the office. When she walked out the front door, she turned around and gave us the biggest smile. Markeita was grateful to finish her implant journey and knew she would always have the Park Dental Family cheering her on."

"At our initial consultation, Dr. Eshra explained that I needed some work done on my sinus cavities and teeth. I knew I needed a new mouth, and I knew it wouldn't be easy. But Dr. Eshra saw the things I couldn't. He saw how my oral health was affecting my body and mind. At times during the process my whole face and neck were black and blue. There was pain, but there was also healing. What this journey taught me was worth every dime, every minute, and every tear. Now, I have the outlook on life Tony wanted me to have. I am never going to be ashamed to smile again." Markeita Barnette, happy patient.

Dr. Eshra and Markeita would also like to thank Park Dental team members Mariam Leon, Anita Perez and Gigi De La O from the Clinical Team. "These ladies worked tirelessly with me on the clinical and personal level to make this happen." Says Dr. Eshra. "They positively impacted Markeita and made her feel like family. They worked with the scheduling team to ensure timeliness with all the lab steps to the point where they were taking the items to the lab and picking them up from the lab themselves to expedite processing time and not wait on shipping and delivery. Markeita even trusted these ladies to help her choose the most aesthetic teeth shape and shade. Our Park Dental team cares about our patients, and it shows in Markeita's smile!"

Understanding Implant-Supported Prosthesis:

Implant-supported prostheses are a modern and effective way to replace missing teeth and restore dental function and aesthetics. Unlike traditional dentures, which sit on the gums, implant-supported prostheses are anchored securely to dental implants surgically placed in the jawbone. This provides a stable and durable foundation for your new teeth, offering a natural look, feel, and function.

The Procedure:

1. Initial Consultation: The journey begins with a comprehensive consultation with your dental provider. During this visit, your dentist will assess your oral health, discuss your treatment goals, and determine if implant-supported prostheses are suitable for you.

2. Treatment Planning: Once it's established that implant-supported prostheses are the right option for you, a personalized treatment plan will be created. This plan considers the number of implants needed, the type of prosthesis (such as a fixed bridge or overdenture), and any additional procedures required, such as bone grafting.

3. Implant Placement: The next step involves the surgical placement of dental implants into the jawbone. This procedure is typically performed under local anesthesia to ensure your comfort. The implants serve as artificial tooth roots and are strategically positioned to provide optimal support for your prosthetic teeth.

4. Healing Period: After implant placement, a healing period is necessary to allow the implants to fuse with the surrounding bone in an osseointegration process. This typically takes several months, during which temporary prosthetic teeth may be worn to maintain aesthetics and function.

5. Prosthetic Design and Fabrication: Once osseointegration is complete and the implants are securely integrated into the jawbone, impressions of your mouth are taken to create your final prosthetic teeth. These custom-made prostheses are meticulously designed to blend seamlessly with your natural teeth and facial features.

6. Prosthesis Placement: The final step involves attaching your new prosthetic teeth to the dental implants. Your dentist will ensure proper fit, function, and aesthetics and make any necessary adjustments to achieve optimal results.

Implant-supported prostheses offer numerous benefits, including enhanced stability and comfort by eliminating the instability and discomfort of traditional dentures, allowing for confident eating, speaking, and smiling. Additionally, they improve oral health by replacing missing teeth and preserving jawbone structure, preventing further dental issues. These prostheses

provide a natural appearance, resembling real teeth in color, shape, and texture, for a beautiful, lifelike smile. Proper care offers long-term durability, potentially lasting a lifetime and providing a lasting solution for missing teeth.

Implant-supported prostheses offer a reliable and transformative solution if you're ready to reclaim your smile and enhance your confidence. By partnering with skilled dental professionals, like the team at Park Dental, and embracing modern technology, you can enjoy the benefits of a beautiful, functional, and healthy smile for years to come. Say goodbye to missing teeth and hello to a new era of dental wellness with implant-supported prostheses.

Park Family Dental offers a wide range of services, including cosmetic dentistry, teeth replacement, orthodontics, dental implants, dentures, sedation dentistry, emergency dental treatments, pediatric treatments, and dental surgery. Bette Dirksen states that the team at Park Dental is top-notch. "From the check-in at the front office to the hygienists and assistants, I feel at home there. The whole staff cares about each patient, which has changed my outlook on going to the dentist."



Dr. Tamer Eshra

Dr. Eshra is passionate about creating beautiful, natural-looking smiles for his patients. His approach to cosmetic dentistry combines artistry with a deep understanding of dental function to create long-lasting treatments that are both visually appealing and fully functional.

The foundation of his practice, though, is his relationship with his patients. Recognizing that a dentist's work is more than just fixing teeth, Dr. Eshra focuses on building trust, understanding each individual's needs, and working collaboratively to achieve optimal oral health while creating a comfortable patient environment. Outside of the office, you'll find Dr. Eshra spending time with his family, traveling, or connecting with nature through fishing, one of his favorite pastimes.

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Managing Anxiety in Breast Cancer Patients through Diet and Exercise

A breast cancer diagnosis can spur many emotions, and anxiety is certainly one of them. Throughout this journey -- diagnosis, treatment, and recovery -- often brings about significant anxiety due to the uncertainties and stress associated with the disease. However, emerging research suggests that adopting a healthy diet and engaging in regular exercise can play a crucial role in managing anxiety and improving overall well-being for breast cancer patients.

Understanding Anxiety in Breast Cancer Patients: News of a breast concern can trigger a wide range of emotional responses, including fear, worry, and anxiety. The uncertainty surrounding the disease, concerns about treatment outcomes, and potential changes to one's body image and lifestyle can contribute to heightened anxiety levels. Additionally, the side effects of cancer treatments such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and hormonal therapy can further exacerbate feelings of distress and anxiety.

According to a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, approximately 15-25% of breast cancer patients experience clinically significant levels of anxiety, highlighting the need for comprehensive supportive care interventions to address mental health concerns throughout the cancer journey.

Impact of Diet on Anxiety Management: Emerging evidence suggests that dietary factors play a significant role in mental health outcomes, including anxiety. Breast cancer patients can benefit from a balanced and nutritious diet of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Several dietary components have been associated with improved mental health and reduced anxiety levels:

1. Omega-3 Fatty Acids: In fatty fish (such as salmon, mackerel, and sardines), flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts, omega-3 fatty acids have been linked to decreased symptoms of anxiety and depression. Incorporating these foods into the diet may help alleviate anxiety in breast cancer patients.

2. Antioxidants: Fruits and vegetables rich in antioxidants, such as berries, citrus fruits, leafy greens, and cruciferous vegetables, have anti-inflammatory properties that may contribute to improved mood and reduced anxiety levels.

3. Complex Carbohydrates: Whole grains, legumes, and starchy vegetables provide a steady supply of glucose to the brain, which is essential for optimal brain function and mood regulation. Including complex carbohydrates in meals can help stabilize blood sugar levels and promote a sense of calmness and well-being.

Regular Exercise as a Tool for Anxiety Reduction: Physical activity has long been recognized for its numerous health benefits, including its positive impact on mental and emotional well-being. Breast cancer patients can reap the following benefits from incorporating regular exercise into their treatment and recovery journey:

1. Stress Reduction: Exercise stimulates the release of endorphins, neurotransmitters that act as natural painkillers and mood elevators. Engaging in physical activity can help reduce stress, anxiety, and feelings of depression commonly experienced by breast cancer patients.

2. Improved Sleep Quality: Regular exercise promotes better sleep quality and duration, which is essential for overall mental and physical health. Adequate sleep plays a crucial role in coping with stress and anxiety during cancer treatment.

3. Enhanced Self-Esteem: Exercise can boost self-confidence and body image, particularly for breast cancer patients who may experience changes in their physical appearance due to surgery or treatment-related side effects. Engaging in physical activity fosters a sense of empowerment and control over one's health and well-being.

4. Social Support: Participating in group exercise classes or outdoor activities can provide opportunities for social interaction and support, which is vital for coping with the emotional challenges of breast cancer.

The expert care team at Magnolia Breast Center is experienced in helping patients manage anxiety with a multifaceted approach that addresses both physical and emotional well-being.

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Tam T. Mai, MD, FACS, FSSO
Board Certified Breast Surgical Oncologist



Dr. Tam T. Mai is a board-certified, fellowship-trained breast surgeon certified by the American Board of Surgery and the Society of Surgical Oncology. She completed her oncoplastic breast surgery training at the University of Southern California, Hoag Breast Fellowship

Program, under the world-renowned Dr. Melvin Silverstein, a pioneer of oncoplastic breast surgery. This approach utilizes plastic surgery techniques and principles to reshape the breast immediately following breast-conserving surgery for breast cancer to preserve the aesthetics of the breasts.

In addition to better quality of life, patients also report positive impacts on:

- Breast satisfaction
- Psychosocial well-being
- Sexual well-being

Before her move to Naples, Dr. Mai served as Medical Director of the Springfield Clinic Breast Health Center, an NAPBC-accredited multidisciplinary breast health center in central Illinois.

Dr. Mai is passionate about practicing evidence-based medicine and bringing high-level breast care to serve patients with breast diseases. She strongly believes in exercise as a treatment to improve overall wellness, breast cancer survival, and reduce the risk of cancer recurrence.



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UNMASKING PARKINSON'S DISEASE: Recognizing Prevalence and Warning Signs

Parkinson's disease, a complex and progressive neurological disorder, affects millions of people worldwide, with its impact extending far beyond the individuals diagnosed. Understanding its prevalence and recognizing the early warning signs is crucial for timely intervention and improved quality of life. In this article, we delve into the prevalence of Parkinson's disease and the subtle yet significant warning signs that often precede its diagnosis.

The Prevalence of Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurodegenerative disorder after Alzheimer's disease, affecting approximately 1% of the global population over the age of 60 (Pringsheim et al., 2014). Although it is more commonly associated with older adults, Parkinson's disease can strike at any age, even in rare cases during childhood.

The prevalence of Parkinson's disease varies by region and ethnicity, with some studies suggesting a higher incidence among Caucasians. Additionally, men are generally more susceptible to Parkinson's disease than women, although the reasons for this gender disparity remain unclear.

Warning Signs of Parkinson's Disease

Early detection of Parkinson's disease is essential for timely medical intervention and improved management of symptoms. While the disease's hallmark motor symptoms, such as tremors, bradykinesia (slowness of movement), and rigidity, are well-known, there are several subtle warning signs that can precede the onset of these characteristic motor impairments:

- **Micrographia:** Micrographia refers to a gradual decrease in handwriting size and legibility. People with Parkinson's disease may notice that their writing becomes progressively smaller and more cramped over time.
- **Loss of Sense of Smell:** Anosmia, or the loss of the sense of smell, can occur years before motor symptoms manifest. Individuals may struggle to detect familiar scents or find certain odors unpleasant.
- **Sleep Disturbances:** Sleep disturbances, such as frequent awakenings, restless leg syndrome, or vivid dreams, can be early indicators of Parkinson's disease. These disturbances often disrupt restful sleep, leading to daytime fatigue.

- **Constipation:** Persistent constipation, often overlooked, can be a gastrointestinal symptom of Parkinson's disease. The condition results from the impact of the disease on the autonomic nervous system.

- **Depression and Anxiety:** Mood changes, including depression and anxiety, can occur in the early stages of Parkinson's disease. These emotional shifts may precede motor symptoms, making diagnosis challenging.

- **Reduced Arm Swing:** An alteration in arm swing while walking can be an early indicator of the disease. Some individuals may notice a lack of natural arm movement when walking, leading to a distinctive "stooped" posture.

- **Stooped Posture:** Individuals may develop a stooped posture, known as camptocormia, characterized by a forward-leaning stance that worsens with walking.

- **Voice Changes:** Changes in speech, including softening of the voice, slurring, or hesitations, can occur in the early stages of Parkinson's disease, making communication difficult.

- **Small, Shuffling Steps:** People may develop a shuffling gait with small, rapid steps and difficulty initiating or stopping movement. This can lead to balance issues and an increased risk of falls.

- **Mask-like Expression:** A loss of facial expression, also known as a "mask-like" face, can make individuals appear less expressive and emotional, even when experiencing different emotions.

Recognizing these warning signs and promptly seeking medical evaluation can lead to earlier diagnosis and better management of Parkinson's disease. While there is currently no cure, early intervention with medications and lifestyle modifications can help control symptoms, improve quality of life, and delay disease progression.

Conclusion

Parkinson's disease is a prevalent and challenging neurological disorder that affects individuals and their families on a profound level. Recognizing its prevalence and understanding the subtle warning signs that often precede its diagnosis is paramount to providing timely care and support.

While there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, early intervention can significantly improve the management of symptoms, enhance the quality of life, and offer hope to those affected. Regular check-ups, especially for individuals experiencing one or more of the mentioned warning signs, can aid in the early detection of Parkinson's disease and the initiation of appropriate treatment and support. Increased awareness of these signs is a vital step toward improving the lives of individuals living with Parkinson's disease and advancing research toward a cure.

Aqualane Clinical Research is a comprehensive clinical research group focusing on advancing medical therapies in a wide array of human disease states. We provide patients with the opportunity to participate in the discovery of treatments where none currently exist or where there is an unmet need for safety and more effectiveness. By collaborating with our patients, their care partners, and sponsors in the industry, we focus on the safe and ethical study of these emerging therapies.

Aqualane Clinical Research has trials open for people with UNTREATED Parkinson's disease.

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- You have been diagnosed with but are not taking any anti-parkinsonian medication
- You are between 30-75 years of age
- You have no clinically significant Orthostatic hypotension

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Are you feeling the burn from acid reflux on a regular basis? You could have a more serious condition.

Nearly all of us have experienced heartburn on an occasional basis, but if you are feeling the burn more than twice a week, you could have gastroesophageal reflux disease, one of the most common gastrointestinal diseases. In fact, it's estimated that 20% of us in Southwest Florida have GERD.

"It can be challenging to tell the difference between acid reflux, heartburn and GERD," says Dr. Randall Jacobs, a board-certified gastroenterologist with Physicians Regional Medical Group. "Reflux is the underlying problem — muscles in the stomach, esophagus and diaphragm relax, allowing acid to flow back up the esophagus from the stomach, and heartburn is a symptom of reflux."

The tell-tale burning sensation occurs because, unlike the stomach, the esophagus is not protected by a mucous lining, and long-term exposure to stomach acid can cause tissue damage. GERD can be generally characterized as having frequent reflux (two or more times per week) and can lead to issues like esophageal inflammation, narrowing of the esophagus from scar tissue, or even esophageal cancer.

Anyone can develop GERD, but those who are overweight, pregnant, smoke or take medications such as antihistamines, painkillers or antidepressants may be more at-risk.

For infrequent reflux and heartburn, lifestyle changes and diet choices can help. Limit caffeine, carbonated or alcoholic beverages, chocolate, citrus and tomato products, greasy foods and spicy foods, as they can be linked to reflux. Smaller meals, eating more slowly, and not eating too close to bedtime also help decrease heartburn symptoms.

Over-the-counter medications can provide relief, but Jacobs says if you need medication more than twice a week, especially after making dietary changes, it may be time to see a physician for evaluation.

The American College of Gastroenterology offers the following questions to help determine severity of your heartburn and reflux.

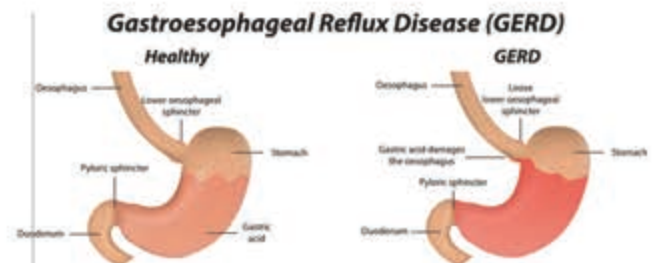
- Do you frequently have an uncomfortable feeling behind the breast bone, a burning sensation in the back of your throat, or a bitter acid taste in your mouth?



- Do you often experience these problems after meals?
- Do you experience heartburn or indigestion more than twice a week?
- Do you find that antacids only provide temporary relief?
- Are you taking prescription medicine to treat heartburn, but still having symptoms?

If the answer to two or more of these is "yes," seeing a physician is recommended.

"GERD also may play a role in asthma symptoms, chronic cough or ear, nose and throat problems," Jacobs said. "The good news is that it's controllable with minor intervention in most cases."



Jacobs provides care for all gastrointestinal disorders and has extensive experience in Barrett's Esophagus (a form of GERD).

To make an appointment, call (239) 393-8805 or visit PhysiciansRegionalGastro.com.

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COPD and the Heart

What You Need to Know

The interconnection between Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and cardiovascular (CV) disease highlights a significant area of concern within public health and clinical management. COPD is a progressive respiratory condition marked by obstructed airflow from the lungs, leading to symptoms like breathing difficulty, cough, mucus (sputum) production, and wheezing. It's not only a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide but also a significant contributor to global health and socioeconomic burdens.

The data from large-scale epidemiological studies, such as the Burden of Obstructive Lung Diseases program, underscores the vast impact of COPD, estimating around 384 million cases globally in 2010 with an 11.7% prevalence. This prevalence places COPD as the third leading cause of death globally, trailing only behind ischemic heart disease and stroke, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2018. In the United States, it ranks as the fourth leading cause of death.

One critical factor that exacerbates the severity and outcomes of COPD is the presence of comorbid conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. Cardiovascular diseases, in particular, are among the most common comorbidities associated with COPD, significantly influencing its prognosis. Studies (Divo et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2015; Rothnie et al., 2015; Curkendall et al., 2006) have shown that patients with both COPD and cardiovascular disease face a higher risk of hospitalizations and mortality from cardiovascular-related causes. Furthermore, exacerbations of COPD can precipitate cardiovascular events such as myocardial infarction (MI), stroke, heart failure (HF), unstable angina, transient ischemic attack (TIA), and cardiovascular death (Crisan et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2015; Curkendall et al., 2006).

The pathophysiological link between COPD and CV disease is rooted in shared risk factors such as smoking, physical inactivity, and poor diet. These, along with other complex, multifactorial influences, contribute to the detrimental clinical outcomes observed in patients, including increased rates of hospitalization and mortality.



Despite advancements in the management of COPD, there remains a significant unmet need for addressing the dual burden of mortality and cardio-pulmonary outcomes in COPD patients, suggesting that a more integrated approach to the management of COPD and its comorbid conditions is essential for improving patient outcomes.

Dr. Javier's, Perez's and Roth's selection as investigators to evaluate the risk of cardiovascular events in patients with underlying Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) signifies a crucial step towards understanding and mitigating the intertwined health challenges posed by these conditions. Given the established connection between COPD and an increased risk of cardiovascular events, Dr. Javier's research aims to delve into the complexities of this relationship, offering insights that could lead to improved patient outcomes.

Dr. Javier's, Perez's and Roth's" research will focus on several key areas:

1. Epidemiology: Understanding the prevalence and incidence of cardiovascular events among COPD patients compared to the general population.

2. Pathophysiology: Investigating the underlying mechanisms that link COPD and cardiovascular disease, including systemic inflammation, increased arterial stiffness, and changes in blood clotting and oxygenation.

3. Risk Factors: Identifying specific risk factors that contribute to the increased incidence of cardiovascular events in COPD patients, such as severity of lung disease, presence of hypoxemia (low blood oxygen levels), and lifestyle factors.

4. Intervention Strategies: Evaluating the effectiveness of various interventions, including pharmacological treatments, lifestyle modifications, and pulmonary rehabilitation, in reducing the risk of cardiovascular events in COPD patients.

By focusing on these areas, Dr. Javier's research has the potential to update current understanding and provide critical insights into the prevention and management of cardiovascular events in patients with COPD. The outcomes of this research could inform clinical practice, guiding healthcare professionals in offering more comprehensive care that addresses both respiratory and cardiovascular aspects of COPD patients' health. Ultimately, the goal is to reduce the incidence of devastating cardiovascular events among these vulnerable patients and improve their overall prognosis and quality of life.

If you suffer from COPD and are interested in our program, please call 239-230-2021 and mention that you are calling for the COPD trial.



Julian Javier, MD



Leandro Perez, MD



Tracy Roth, MD

Dr. Julian J. Javier, Dr. Leandro Perez, and Dr. Tracey Roth are Interventional Cardio-Vascular specialists with emphasis on peripheral arterial and venous disease and valvular heart problems.

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UNDERSTANDING REGENERATIVE MEDICINE FOR KNEE PAIN

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

Unlike traditional knee surgery, which can be intimidating and unnecessary for many patients, regenerative, minimally invasive procedures are proving effective for numerous individuals that suffer from knee arthritis, injuries and degeneration. These therapies can alleviate pain, and also restore and regenerate tissue.

Standard medicine often only masks pain and symptoms with addictive drugs and corticosteroid injections, and many times unnecessary surgery is recommended. At Feel Amazing Institute, they specialize in treating knee and joint pain to give patients remarkable results and regeneration.

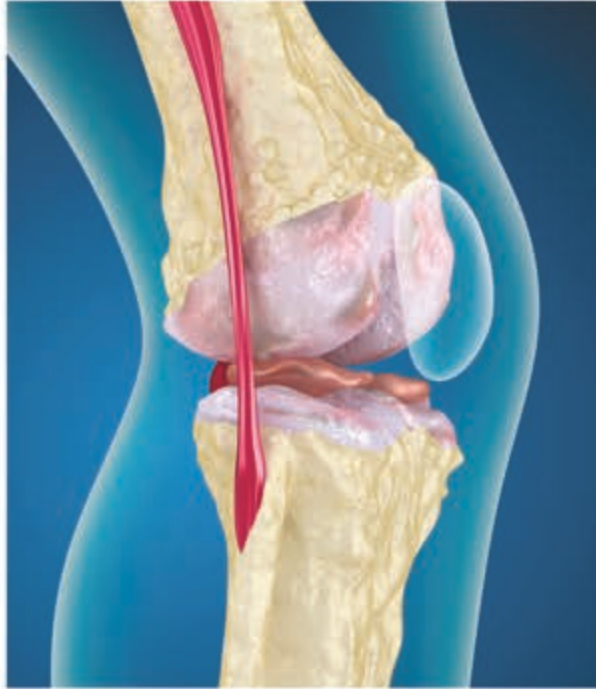
REGENERATIVE MEDICINE FOR KNEE AND JOINT PAIN

Hyaluronic Acid Injections

When all else has failed, it's important to know that there are other treatment options available. One such option is hyaluronic acid injections. These injections are essentially a form of knee and joint pain treatment that are often used when other options, like pain relievers, have been proven ineffective. *Insurance will often cover these injections.*

Hyaluronic acid is a substance that works by serving as a lubricant and shock absorber within your joints. It's already found naturally within the body, although large amounts are often broken down and lost within individuals with osteoarthritis. Your body, and more specifically, your joints, need hyaluronic acid for optimal functionality. If your joints do not have enough of it, the absence of an effective shock absorber means you can expect to experience regular stiffness and joint pain. Hyaluronic acid is injected in the form of a solution or gel. In most cases, you will receive a series of shots over a two to five-week period. Injections are generally given one week apart in an effort to gauge their effectiveness.

The overall effectiveness of these injections varies from patient to patient. It's difficult to say exactly how well this particular knee and joint pain treatment will work for you. Based on past studies and the wide use of the method, however, most patients find that these injections work wonders to significantly reduce pain and stiffness within their joints.



Stem Cell Therapy/Allografts

Stem cell therapy is a minimally-invasive way to heal the underlying causes of your knee pain, rather than treating the pain alone. It can slow down degenerative conditions and, in some cases, help new tissue grow.

At Feel Amazing Institute, we use stem cell allografts sourced from the placenta, amniotic fluid, or umbilical cord. The stem cells are sourced from healthy mothers/healthy births and screened in FDA-approved labs before being sent out to practices like ours.

Your joint stem cell therapy will include injections into the affected joints. Each stem cell release growth factors in the vicinity, making it possible to regrow and heal damaged tissues that can't regenerate on their own. Patients report that the discomfort is minimal, and there is very little recovery time involved.

Stem cell joint therapy is important because once the body starts to degenerate, it will not stop— It ACCELERATES! It is estimated that once degeneration starts in the knee, it will continue to lose 4% to 6% of the cartilage each year until it is bone on bone approximately 15 to 25 years) unless we RE-generate it.

OTHER OPTIONS

- Medicare may fully or partially cover the following options*
- Visco-supplementation- (Hyaluronic acid gels)
- Adjustments/alignments of the knee and associated structures
- Durable medical braces and equipment
- We also offer ozone, peptide therapy, and platelet rich plasma (PRP) to reduce inflammation and enhance healing
- Hot and cold laser, pressure wave (shockwave therapy), and pulsed electromagnetic frequency (PEMF)

Feel Amazing Institute

We proudly serve the Naples area with comprehensive Chiropractic, Physical Medicine, and Regenerative Medicine services since 1998. Our office strives for excellence Whether you suffer from chronic pain, are recovering from an injury, or are seeking overall improved health and performance, we have the skills and experience to help you work toward your goals.

If you are looking for treatment of bulging discs and/or herniations, neck or back pain, spinal misalignment and correction, sciatica, neuropathy (numbness and/or burning and pain in feet and hands), you have found the right place for your health care needs.

We have comprehensive programs if you sustained injuries in a Auto Accident or at Work, or if you have Peripheral Neuropathy, Balance Disorders, or need VAX-D Spinal Decompression Treatments.

If you are in need of a highly experienced chiropractor, or regenerative medicine in Naples, FL, look no further than Feel Amazing Institute. Call us at (239) 330-1000 or visit feelamazing.com.



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- Great smile & life-changing results: Dental implants look, feel and function like real teeth, helping you take control of your oral health now and for the future.

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THE CORRELATION BETWEEN EXERCISE AND BETTER MENTAL HEALTH

By Nancy J. Tarbell, MD FASTRO - Director of Health and Wellness

Regular physical activity has long been recognized for its multitude of benefits, and recent research further underscores its role as a potential treatment option for depression. A study published in *The BMJ* revealed compelling evidence linking various forms of exercise to decreased symptoms of depression, both when practiced independently and in conjunction with therapy and medication.

The study identified several exercises that were effective in reducing depressive symptoms. These included walking, jogging, yoga, strength training, mixed aerobic exercises, tai chi, and qigong. Interestingly, the study found that the intensity of the activity correlated with its effectiveness, suggesting that more vigorous forms of exercise may offer greater benefits in managing depression.

Walking or jogging, yoga and strength training emerged as particularly effective exercises for alleviating depression. However, the study noted that the differences in effectiveness among various exercise regimens were marginal, indicating that individuals may benefit from choosing the type of exercise that best suits their preferences and physical capabilities.

Director of Health and Wellness at Naples' only exercise Medicine clinic Dr. Nancy Tarbell explains, ***"We emphasize strength training in our program at Inspire Exercise Medicine. Our classes are small, tailored, group classes with the added benefit of social connections. Our body of work focuses on the association between functional movement, disease prevention and mental health."***

Inspire Exercise Medicine was founded on the simple fact that exercise is a medical treatment. Its healthcare providers and performance coaches use evidence-based methods including the exercise prescription as part of their treatment plans. The prescriptions are individualized to each patient's needs to elicit healing processes within the muscles for the management and prevention of chronic conditions, including cancer.



Yoga also demonstrated significant promise as a means of reducing depression. Its emphasis on mindfulness and the mind-body connection may contribute to its effectiveness in improving mental health outcomes. Additionally, both yoga and strength training were well-tolerated, making them accessible options for individuals seeking to incorporate exercise into their treatment regimen without experiencing discomfort or pain.

While the study provides valuable insights into the role of exercise in managing depression, further research is warranted to validate the effectiveness of different exercise modalities. Dr. Mimi Winsberg, a psychiatrist and co-founder of Brightside Health, underscores the importance of evidence-based interventions in addressing depression. With depression affecting millions of adults in the United States annually, exploring alternative treatment approaches such as exercise is crucial for improving patient outcomes.

Depression is a complex mental health condition characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in activities. It can manifest in various symptoms, including fatigue, changes in appetite, and thoughts of suicide. Given its pervasive impact, healthcare providers need to explore holistic approaches to treatment, including lifestyle interventions like exercise.

For individuals looking to incorporate exercise into their routine, the key is choosing activities they enjoy and find sustainable. Dr. Tarbell encourages

patients to embrace variety in their exercise regimen, as different activities may offer distinct benefits. By experimenting with different forms of exercise, individuals can discover what works best for them and tailor their approach to meet their unique needs.

As medical professionals, it's our responsibility to empower patients to take an active role in managing their mental health. By emphasizing the potential benefits of exercise and providing personalized recommendations, we can support individuals in their journey toward improved well-being.

Dr. Paige Gurizzian, an internal medicine resident at the Cleveland Clinic and a member of the ABC News Medical Unit, contributed to the writing of this article and provided valuable medical insights.

Sources:
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ENHANCING VISION BEYOND SURGERY: Center For Sight Now Offering RxSight Light Adjustable Lens™

The field of ophthalmology has taken a remarkable leap forward with the introduction of the RXSIGHT™ Light Adjustable Lens (LAL). As a groundbreaking addition to premium lens technology, this innovative solution is redefining the post-cataract surgery experience for patients seeking optimal vision outcomes.

Traditionally, cataract surgery has provided patients with improved vision by replacing the clouded natural lens with an intraocular lens (IOL). However, the journey to achieving the clearest vision doesn't always end with the surgical procedure. Factors such as healing time, individual eye characteristics, and lifestyle preferences can influence visual acuity post-surgery. This is where the Light Adjustable Lens shines.

Offered in select markets by leading eye care providers like Center For Sight, the Light Adjustable Lens empowers surgeons to tailor vision correction even after the initial cataract surgery. Unlike conventional intraocular lenses, which are fixed in power and cannot be altered once implanted, the LAL allows for personalized adjustments to be made through a series of non-invasive, painless light treatment procedures.

The key to the Light Adjustable Lens lies in its adaptability. By harnessing the power of light-sensitive material embedded within the lens, ophthalmologists can fine-tune the refractive properties to suit each patient's unique visual needs. This customization process occurs over multiple sessions, giving patients the opportunity to preview and refine their vision until it reaches an optimal level of clarity and comfort.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Light Adjustable Lens is its versatility. While it is particularly beneficial for individuals with a history of laser or corneal surgeries, its applications extend to a wide range of patients seeking precise vision correction.

The patient experience with the Light Adjustable Lens is characterized by convenience and control. The LAL streamlines the process into brief, manageable sessions performed in the comfort of the doctor's office. This minimally invasive approach ensures minimal disruption to daily routines while maximizing the potential for exceptional visual outcomes.



The RXSIGHT™ Light Adjustable Lens heralds a new era of precision and personalization in cataract surgery and vision correction. Its ability to refine visual outcomes beyond the operating room underscores its significance as a transformative tool with this innovative technology, the future of clear, customizable vision looks brighter than ever before.

About Center For Sight

Center For Sight is a leading multi-specialty eye care practice in Florida. The practice offers patients convenient access to nationally renowned surgeons, highly trained, compassionate staff members and cutting-edge technology. Center For Sight is a member practice of US Eye, a patient-centric network of premium eye care practices with 64 locations in the Southeastern United States. US Eye is a patient-first, physician-led, vertically integrated multi-specialty eye care practice group with a mission to become the country's most admired brand in eye care. For additional information and locations, visit CenterForSightSWFL.com.

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JON R. BERLIE, M.D.
Laser Cataract & Premium
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Dr. Berlie is a board-certified ophthalmologist who specializes in LASIK and premium lens cataract surgery. He has been serving the Naples community for over 20 years. Dr. Berlie achieves superior visual outcomes for his cataract patients by utilizing the latest lens technology combined with state of the art equipment. His expertise in this area has led the Center For Sight Naples office to be recognized as the "Best Eye Center" in Naples, FL for the past 15 years. In addition to laser cataract surgery, Dr. Berlie performs vision correction procedures including Epi-LASEK and Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE). He is also skilled in reconstructive and cosmetic eyelid surgery. He has been honored as one of America's "Top Doctors" by the prestigious Top Doctors list, published annually by Castle Connolly Medical, Ltd.

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

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

NAVIGATING END-OF-LIFE PLANNING

In the journey of life, death is an inevitable destination that we must all face. Despite its certainty, many individuals and families find themselves unprepared when the time comes to bid farewell to a loved one. The burden of making funeral arrangements can be overwhelming during grief and mourning. However, one can alleviate some of the stress associated with end-of-life preparations with careful planning and foresight.

The Importance of Pre-Planning

Planning for end-of-life arrangements is a crucial aspect of responsible adulthood. By taking proactive steps to plan ahead, individuals can ensure that their wishes are honored and their loved ones are spared from making difficult decisions during emotional turmoil. Additionally, pre-planning allows for addressing financial considerations, potentially relieving the financial burden on surviving family members.

According to recent National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) statistics, only 21% of Americans have made formal end-of-life arrangements. This highlights a significant gap in preparedness that can lead to added stress and uncertainty for families when a loved one passes away unexpectedly.

Steps for Effective Funeral Planning

1. Initiate Conversations: Begin discussing end-of-life preferences with loved ones. These conversations can be challenging but essential for ensuring everyone is on the same page regarding funeral wishes.

2. Research Funeral Homes: Explore different funeral homes in your area and compare services and pricing. Consider factors such as location, reputation, and available amenities.

3. Determine Budget: Establish a budget for funeral expenses and make financial arrangements accordingly. Funeral costs vary widely, so knowing what you can afford is important.

4. Choose Burial or Cremation: Decide whether burial or cremation is preferred and discuss the options with family members. Consider religious or cultural preferences when making this decision.



5. Select Funeral Products and Services: Choose a casket, urn, memorial service, and any additional services such as transportation or floral arrangements. Be mindful of costs and select options that align with your budget and preferences.

6. Document End-of-Life Wishes: Create a written document outlining your end-of-life wishes, including funeral arrangements, burial or cremation preferences, and any specific requests for memorial services or rituals.

7. Consider Pre-Planning Options: Explore pre-planning options offered by funeral homes, which allow individuals to make arrangements in advance and lock in pricing. Pre-planning can provide peace of mind and relieve loved ones of the burden of making decisions during a time of grief. A pre-planning checklist is available at: <https://www.palmroyalecares.com/plan-ahead/why-plan-ahead>

8. Review and Update Plans Regularly: It's important to review and update end-of-life plans regularly to account for any changes in preferences or circumstances. Keep loved ones informed of revisions to ensure your wishes are accurately documented.

By following these steps and taking a proactive approach to funeral planning, individuals can ensure that their end-of-life wishes are honored and their loved ones are supported during a difficult time. Remember, planning ahead is a practical decision and a compassionate gesture toward those we leave behind.

We proudly announce that we have expanded our services by adding a beautiful, state-of-the-art funeral home on our grounds. This makes Palm Royale the newest and only independently owned "combination" funeral home and cemetery in Collier County. Park Royale is your one stop for funeral services, burial, or cremation and even a banquet hall for meal after to celebrate the life of your loved one.



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Holistic Answers to Commonly Asked Medical Questions

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

Website question: My allergies are worse than ever this month. What can I do for relief?

Dr.Kogan answered: Scientists are reporting that higher-than-average seasonal temperatures and heightened carbon dioxide levels are creating longer ragweed seasons and more concentrated pollen counts. In addition, the red tide is here in Naples on and off this fall, and as a result more people may be reporting allergic symptoms. To get immediate relief, try irrigating your nasal passages with saline. To do: mix 1/2 teaspoon of sea salt with a pint of lukewarm water and add to a Neti Pot. I like the one by Himalayan Institute available at my online link:

<https://us.fullscript.com/welcome/skogan>

Tilt your head to one side, then pour a small amount of the solution into one nostril and let it drain out of the other nostril. Repeat the routine on the opposite side, and alternate for a total of three rinses on each side. This is best done in the morning and at night. The salt will act as a natural antibacterial agent, while the water will wash away any impurities and mucus. Another synergistic remedy for allergies is homeopathic sublingual tablets Allergy Relief by Hevert (available at the same online link as above). Use as directed on the box and enjoy allergy relief within an hour of the first dose.

Keep balancing and strengthening your immune system by eating healthy organic foods, and avoiding greasy fried fast foods. Hydrate, get good sleep, and decrease the amount of alcohol intake as it depresses your immune system and activates histamine release which is already at an all time high with allergies. Cardiovascular exercise and improved endurance also contribute to the decrease of incidence of allergic reactions. Think about it this way: if the body is strong and wholesome all around, it will have a better fighting chance when allergens surround it. This accounts for the fact that you can have two people of the same age, gender, and working conditions - and the one with better overall health will have a smaller chance of developing allergies.

Website question: My Mom has battled with osteoporosis for a long time, so I've always taken calcium and vitamin D supplements. But I read an article that said these supplements can actually have dangerous side effects. Could I possibly be taking too much calcium and vitamin D?

Dr.Kogan answers: Calcium and vitamin D are helpful for prevention of osteoporosis, but the dose depends on your age, medical history and current blood test levels. In some cases, excessive use of supplements can lead to dangerously high levels of calcium in the blood. This in turn, may trigger high blood pressure and kidney failure. Headlines on this subject stem from a report in the Journal of American Nephrology, which found that postmenopausal women, pregnant women, transplant recipients, and those on dialysis, are at the highest risk for this kind of overdose. If you have experienced abdominal pain, excessive thirst, constipation and muscle weakness, see your doctor right away.

Otherwise, rest assured that if you are eating a diet rich in calcium, you will likely have good preventive levels. Calcium rich foods are: yogurt, kefir, cheese, eggs, cruciferous vegetables such as kale, collard greens, and broccoli, spinach, okra, and sardines to mention a few. If you do not have any osteopenia (early osteoporosis) - chances are you currently do not even need to take any calcium pills - just eat calcium rich diet. In fact, multivitamins, joint-support supplements and many antacids can also contain calcium and contribute to excessive intake. As far as the vitamin D goes, it is extremely difficult to get it from the diet - only fatty fish flesh possesses some significant levels. So we truly have to manufacture it in our skin with the aid of the sun's ultraviolet light or take it as a supplement.

Due to our proximity to the equator here in Florida, it is easier to get enough sunlight to help manufacture that vitamin D all year round. If you are fair skinned - it is enough to spend 5-10 total daily minutes outside in the midday. If you are dark-skinned the time required in the sun doubles.



Because of the damaging effects of the midday sun-rays, this exposure may be too much for some people at risk for malignant melanoma. So you may want to just measure your vitamin D 25 (OH) levels with your doctor and if the levels are low - just take a daily supplement of vitamin D3 (the dose depends on your level of deficiency, age and needs - speak to your doc). Vitamin D blood levels should be especially carefully monitored in folks with heart failure, cancers, or hormonal diseases. Overall, I applaud your decision not to take supplements blindly. Everyone's circumstances and needs are different and it is good to team up with your medical doctor to figure out what is best for you.



Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

The author of 'Diet Slave No More!', Svetlana Kogan, MD is a Board-Certified Internal Medicine, Holistic & Functional Medical Doctor with 25 years of experience. She has appeared as a health expert on prime-time TV and radio stations and has authored hundreds of holistic health articles for internet and print. She moved her Concierge Practice from Manhattan NYC to Naples in 2019. Her Functional Medicine Primary Care Practice is focused on prevention and holistic approach to illness, and longevity.

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PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH: TIPS FOR ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE

By Jenny Bradley

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month, a time to highlight the challenges those living with this condition face and foster a deeper understanding of how we can all support better health and wellness. According to the Parkinson's Foundation, 10 million people worldwide are impacted by the disease.

While living with the disease is challenging, here are some practical tips to help you maintain and improve your quality of life.

Regular Physical Exercise

Staying active is crucial for everyone, particularly for individuals with Parkinson's. Regular, gentle exercises like walking, yoga, or tai chi can significantly enhance mobility and balance. Residents at The Carlisle Naples appreciate the convenience of having health and wellness programs within the active retirement community. Every Tuesday, for example, a boxing class is offered through EmpowerMe Wellness, an integrated healthcare provider, to help residents improve balance, hand-eye coordination and strength.

Healthy Diet

A nutritious diet plays a vital role in managing Parkinson's symptoms. A balanced intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can provide the energy and nutrients needed for optimal health. At The Carlisle, an in-house culinary team prepares delicious, nutrient-rich meals daily, including FreshZest selections from a plant-forward menu. The community's menus are crafted to cater to the specific dietary needs of residents, ensuring they receive the best nutrition to support their health and wellness.

Mental Engagement

Keeping the mind active is just as important as physical exercise. Cognitive activities like puzzles, reading, or even learning a new hobby can help sustain cognitive functions. The Carlisle provides a wealth of opportunities for mental stimulation through our holistic Zest programming, including arts and crafts, educational lectures, and book clubs, fostering a stimulating environment that nurtures the brain.



Social Interaction

Isolation can have detrimental effects on individuals with Parkinson's. Engaging in social activities can uplift spirits and improve mental health. Carlisle residents have numerous opportunities to interact and build meaningful relationships. From social gatherings to group activities, the community provides a supportive and lively atmosphere that encourages connection and camaraderie.

Stress Management

Managing stress is essential for mitigating Parkinson's symptoms. Techniques like meditation, yoga, or even simple breathing exercises can make a significant difference. Senior living communities like The Carlisle offer a maintenance-free lifestyle, ensuring residents can eliminate the stress of homeownership such as lawn care, cooking, and cleaning. Without day-to-day household responsibilities, residents can spend each day as they wish. The Carlisle's tranquil setting and meandering walking paths also provide a serene environment in which to unwind and rejuvenate.

Regular Medical Check-ups

Consistent medical care is critical for monitoring and managing Parkinson's. Regular check-ups can help adjust treatments as needed and address any emerging issues promptly. The Carlisle ensures residents have easy access to healthcare services, including MyCare

Clinic and EmpowerMe Wellness, which offers physical, occupational and speech therapies. Transportation is also provided for external appointments, creating seamless, comprehensive care that residents can rely on.

"At The Carlisle, we are more than just a senior living community; we are a place where wellness and quality of life are our top priorities," said Executive Director Bill Diamond. "During Parkinson's Awareness Month and throughout the year, we are dedicated to providing an environment that supports the health and happiness of all our residents, especially those navigating the challenges of Parkinson's."

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



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Why Does Your Neck Hurt?

By Dr. Michael Shaffer

Your neck is the pedestal for your head. It is made up of 7 bones called vertebrae. These are stacked on top of each other to form the top of the spinal column. This is the main structure which protects the spinal cord and links the network of nerves throughout your body. Messages travel along this network sending sensations, such as pain, to your brain. The bones are linked together by facet joints. These are small joints between your vertebrae that, together with your neck muscles, allow you to move your head in any direction. Between the vertebrae are discs that act as shock absorbers and give the spine its flexibility. A "slipped disc" occurs when one of these discs moves slightly out of its natural position in the spine.



Neck pain is known as cervicalgia and neck pain with radiating arm pain/numbness is known as cervical radiculitis. These conditions can range from annoying to debilitating. Diagnosing these conditions typically involves conducting a physical examination, reviewing your medical history, and possibly ordering imaging tests like X-rays, MRI, or CT scans to determine the cause of the pain. Neck pain is very common and most of us will have it at some point in our lives. It is usually the result of holding your neck in the same position for too long. However, other things can also cause or contribute to pain, such as:

- poor posture (the way your body is positioned when standing or sitting)
- sleeping in an awkward position
- tension in your muscles
- injury such as a muscle strain/sprain or whiplash
- prolonged use of a desktop, laptop computer or cell phone commonly referred to as Text Neck.



- a slipped spinal disc (herniated disc)
- wear and tear in the bones of the neck, which is a normal part of ageing
- wear and tear of the spinal discs (cervical spondylosis). This is also a normal part of ageing

Rarer causes of neck pain include:

- damage to the vertebrae, spinal cord or nerves in the neck
- a compressed (pinched) nerve referred to as cervical radiculopathy
- an infection
- osteoporosis related bone damage or fractures
- cancer
- meningitis
- arthritis

Symptoms may include

- Pain that's often worsened by holding the head in one place for long periods, such as when driving or working at a computer
- It may be painful to move your neck and your muscles may feel tight or spasmed, especially if you've been sitting or sleeping in one position for a long time.
- You may notice that your neck won't turn as far as it normally does, for example when you try to look over your shoulder while reversing the car.
- Headache
- Pain and numbness or weakness in the arm or forearm

There are various treatment options available, one effective treatment option is non-surgical spinal decompression. This is an FDA approved, non-invasive treatment for patients suffering from neck and back problems.

Decompression treatment slowly and gently releases pressure in the spine through repetitive movements by a customized medical device. The table pulls and releases, creating a pressure change within the disc, surrounding soft tissues and joints. This pressure change allows the disc bulges or herniations and nutrients to be pulled back into the disc. Rehydration of the disc and surrounding tissues creates a physiological change which assists the body's natural healing process. Dr. Michael Shaffer utilizes the Hill DT Decompression Therapy Table. This is a highly specialized table with eight unique treatment options to choose from. The Hill DT table has built in actuators and sensors creating intelligent Bio-Feedback Technology. As a result, if there is any physical movement by the patient during treatment, the table will auto-correct itself to insure proper treatment is delivered.

If you are suffering from neck pain and would like to find out if you are a candidate for Non-surgical Spinal Decompression, call the office of Dr. Michael Shaffer. You will speak to Kay and she will schedule you for a complimentary consultation. Dr. Shaffer will review your symptoms and imaging studies to determine if you are a candidate for Spinal Decompression.



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New ProScan NCH Imaging Center Offers the First Contrast-Enhanced Mammography in Southwest Florida

One out of every eight women in the United States will develop breast cancer at some point in their lifetime. The first line of defense against this awful disease is early detection through quality imaging – performed routinely throughout every woman’s lifetime.

“In patients identified as high-risk, where the chances of breast cancer are increased, additional screening with MRI is recommended,” said Sergio Dromi, MD, ProScan NCH Director of Breast Imaging, board-certified and fellowship-trained in breast imaging.

ProScan Women’s Imaging at NCH provides the most comprehensive and cutting-edge imaging solutions, and just opened its newest facility on Vanderbilt Beach Road in North Naples. The facility offers all breast imaging services in one location including screening and diagnostic mammography (screening 3D/Tomosynthesis), MRI, ultrasound, contrast-enhanced mammography, and multimodality biopsies. It has been proven that 3D mammography improves the detection of breast cancer while decreasing the number of callbacks.

“ProScan Women’s Imaging at NCH is the first center in Southwest Florida to offer this imaging service,” explained Dr. Dromi.

Contrast-enhanced mammography works like a regular diagnostic mammogram with the addition of an injection of contrast to highlight areas of abnormal blood flow. Contrast will only be available for diagnostic mammograms. The facility also offers a dedicated 3T MRI for breast imaging that is faster and creates sharper images compared to low-field MRIs.

The imaging center also offers dedicated ultrasound elastography, which helps distinguish between stiffness and soft tissues. “The majority of cancers demonstrate a stiffer behavior when compared to benign tissue, and elastography helps to determine whether or not a biopsy is needed,” said Dr. Dromi.



All imaging is performed by trained and certified technologists following the American College of Radiology and FDA guidelines. Dedicated breast imaging fellowship-trained radiologists interpret the images.

If previous breast imaging is immediately available, new screening exams will be read by a radiologist within 24 hours. If not, the patient’s prior imaging records are ordered, and the exam will be read within two weeks. “Prior exams are important in comparing the patient’s breast tissue year-over-year and help reduce unnecessary callbacks,” said Dr. Dromi.

Guidelines state that patients with an average risk for breast cancer should start screening mammograms at the age of 40 – and should be repeated every year until life expectancy is no more than ten years.

“High-risk patients who have either a genetic predisposition, family history, or who test more than 20% on the Tyrer-Cuzick scale need to start the surveillance ten years before the first-degree relative was diagnosed with breast cancer – or at the age of 30. These patients should be screened every year with mammograms and MRI,” Dr. Dromi said.

The Tyrer-Cuzick scale provides a risk score that estimates the likelihood of a woman developing breast cancer in 10 years and throughout her lifetime.



Sergio Dromi, MD, ProScan NCH Director of Breast Imaging, board-certified and fellowship-trained in breast imaging.

“Patients with dense breast tissue have an indirectly increased risk for breast cancer due to the possibility of cancer being obscured by dense tissue. Interpreting these images is more complex, so additional surveillance with a more sensitive test, such as an MRI, is recommended,” Dr. Dromi said.

Screening mammograms can be self-referred. However, a physician or specialist referral is needed for diagnostic examinations.

Early detection of breast cancer is vital, because it can be treated easily with less aggressive surgeries and therapies. “A 3 millimeter cancer is much more easily excised and treated – with a much better long-term prognosis – than a 5 centimeter cancer,” Dr. Dromi added.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call ProScan NCH at (239) 624-4443, option 3. The center is located at 2320 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Suite 1, in Naples.



For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 239-624-4443.

PROSCAN.COM

While the gold standard is still an MRI, we have launched the latest imaging tool for patients who cannot get an MRI; a contrast-enhanced mammography.

- Sergio Dromi, MD, ProScan NCH Director of Breast Imaging

NCH



The Importance of Vascularization in Diabetic Wound Healing

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

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

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

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

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

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



Diabetic Wounds & Vascularization

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

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

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

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

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

Wound Care Treatment:

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

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

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



COLLIER PODIATRY, P.A.
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RELIEF FOR CHRONIC NERVE PAIN

If you're struggling with persistent pain, especially in your legs and feet, the cause could be NEUROPATHY. Peripheral nerve damage is a condition that often goes unnoticed, and individuals may endure prolonged pain without understanding the root cause. Neuropathy is a condition that affects millions of Americans which often leads to symptoms such as tingling, numbness, and loss of balance.

Causes of Peripheral neuropathy can include: (but not limited to)

- 1. Diabetes:** Elevated blood sugar levels over time can damage nerves.
- 2. Trauma or Injury:** Physical injuries, accidents, or trauma can lead to nerve damage.
- 3. Infections:** Certain infections, such as shingles or Lyme disease, may affect the peripheral nerves.
- 4. Toxins:** Exposure to certain toxins, like those found in some medications or environmental substances, can cause neuropathy.
- 5. Autoimmune Diseases:** Conditions where the immune system attacks the body's own tissues may lead to nerve damage.
- 6. Genetics:** Some individuals may be genetically predisposed to peripheral neuropathy.

How do you know if you have Neuropathy?

Peripheral neuropathy can manifest with a variety of symptoms that can significantly impact an individual's well-being and overall quality of life. Patients often report sensations of tingling or numbness, akin to experiencing "pins and needles" in the affected areas, numbness, pain when walking, difficulty sleeping due to foot discomfort, muscle weakness and even sensitivity to touch. All affect quality of life- starting out gradually and gradually getting worse if not treated.

Furthermore, nerve damage can affect coordination and balance, leading to challenges in maintaining stability. These diverse symptoms underscore the complexity of peripheral neuropathy and highlight the importance of seeking professional medical evaluation for an accurate diagnosis and tailored treatment plan. It is crucial



for individuals to be vigilant about any changes in sensation, movement, or pain, and to promptly consult with a healthcare provider for comprehensive assessment and treatment options.

Treatments:

There are traditional treatments for Neuropathy limited to a narrow range of pain medications. Often these only provide temporary relief and can contribute to further complications.

At Jaffe Sports Medicine, our innovative all-inclusive approach to treating pain combines various therapeutic techniques with advanced treatments to reduce pain and inflammation associated with peripheral nerve damage. What sets our Clinics apart is the comprehensive treatment approach consisting of Interventional Pain Management, Physical Therapy, Sports Medicine and Orthopedic Surgery. In addition, Nerve conductive studies and EMG testing play an important role in your overall treatment plan. Our program's primary goal is to alleviate pain and numbness and actively work towards restoring, and rebuilding your overall quality of life. Our Physician-led team understands pain can impact various aspects of your life, from

daily activities to your emotional well-being. The goal at Jaffe Sports Medicine is for you to Live, Work & Play Pain Free! Our team is here to support you on your journey to living a fulfilling life.

We currently accept new patients at our three Southwest Florida locations conveniently located in Cape Coral, North Naples, and Downtown Naples. Most major insurances, including Medicare and many HMO plans, cover treatment at Jaffe Sports Medicine, making our comprehensive care accessible to a broader spectrum of individuals.

It's crucial to understand that while our treatments aim to alleviate discomfort, the information provided here is for informational purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for professional medical advice. Every individual's situation is unique, and consulting with your healthcare provider is paramount for personalized guidance and recommendations for living a pain free life.

Jaffe Sports Medicine blends rehabilitative medicine, pain specialist and therapeutic services under one roof to provide a complete, thorough, and customized treatment plan for each patient.

If suffering from neuropathy, any chronic pain, fibromyalgia, arthritis, or any other condition, preventing you from living your best life, our team of board-certified physicians, and certified physical therapists are here to help and all clinics are accepting new patients

To learn more about our services and schedule an appointment, visit our website at JAFFESPORTSMEDICINE.COM.



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WE ALL AGE. HOW DO WE PREVENT FRAILITY?

By Andre Davies, M.D., Board Certified in Internal Medicine & Geriatrics

What makes older adults more susceptible to various health stressors and how can older adults prevent a decline in their own health? Over the last few years, we have seen how devastating illnesses, like COVID, have impacted older adults in comparison to the younger generations. This vulnerability may be due in part to older adults having more complex medical histories than other age groups, which places them at higher risk. (Older adults with COPD, for instance, may have more health complications from a respiratory illness than a younger adult who has no history of lung disease). A second contributor to this vulnerability is 'frailty,' which is an age-related syndrome, not necessarily associated with any specific medical illness.

About 1 in 10 adults 65 years and older are considered to have frailty, and that increases to 1 in 4 adults 85 years and older. Frailty affects a person's physiologic 'reserve' and 'resilience,' or the ability of the body to recover from a health stressor. Being frail is associated with increased falls, hospitalizations, poorer outcomes from surgeries, delayed recovery, and increased risks of mortality. It is therefore important that physicians identify patients who are frail or are at risk so that we may provide guidance to patients and other health professionals to reduce the incidence of those adverse events.



Frailty is a challenging topic to discuss, in part because there are several ways to define this syndrome. It is broad, covering concepts that range from physical manifestations to changes

at the cellular level. In general, the body of a healthy person exists in a balance, where the various systems work harmoniously together. In frailty, these various systems are dysregulated and negatively impact each other. For example, the loss of muscle in the body negatively impacts our body's metabolic system, changing the way our bodies process insulin, then affecting our stress responses and increasing inflammation chronically. This in turn affects the musculoskeletal system. This dysregulation decreases our body's ability to respond to crises like illness.

There are many ways to measure frailty and make a diagnosis. A basic and easy to understand approach is looking to see if the patient has a frailty phenotype, also known as physical frailty. I evaluate my patients for clinical manifestations of frailty: signs of weakness,



significant weight loss, fatigue, decreased walking speed, and changes in level of physical activity. Meeting three out of five of those criteria suggests that the patient is frail; two out of the five qualifies as pre-frail.

Research into frailty syndrome is a hot topic in the science of the aging community, and the goal of these investigators is to identify therapies to address it. The results have been frustrating. Even though inflammation levels are elevated, and certain hormones may be lower, efforts to use targeted therapies like anti-inflammatories or hormonal replacements have not shown significant success. One idea why these therapies do not work is that frailty affects many systems throughout the body, and fixing one area does not heal the larger problem. There is no easy fix or reversal of frailty. However, patients can take steps to reduce their risk of becoming frail.

One of the most important changes a patient can make to combat frailty is to increase their physical activity. Increased physical activity helps the body stave off muscle atrophy, increase energy levels, reduce the risk of insulin resistance, reduce cardiovascular disease, promote healthy metabolism, and reduce hormonal surges that increase inflammation. Physical activity is a cornerstone of healthy aging; the addition of social interactions amplifies its impact. Whether you are participating in group exercise classes, sports or even an outdoor walk with friends, you not only reap the benefits of physical fitness, but studies show you also benefit from social connections and improved well-being.

I recommend patients adhere to a healthy nutrition plan, like the Mediterranean diet, as a means of improving their overall well-being and reducing the risk of chronic diseases. One of the benefits of the mediterranean diet is that it promotes the consumption of lean proteins which provides the body with essential amino acids necessary for muscle growth and repair. Adequate protein intake provides rich nutrients to your muscles that thrive during physical activity, and therefore improves the overall system.

I advise patients at risk of frailty to consume 0.8 grams of protein for every 1 kg of body weight, depending on their health issues. For example, a 150lb adult would consume 54grams of protein daily. Of course, it is important to check with your healthcare provider to review your medical history, before starting any nutritional plan. As part of this conversation, patients should review their current medications with their provider. There may be some prescriptions that are no longer indicated or others that could be consolidated.

By focusing on prevention, early detection, medication management, comprehensive care, and promoting a good quality of life, providers can help patients maintain optimal health. Through this collaborative and pro-active approach, together we can improve our well-being and prevent becoming frail.

To learn more about our Concierge Internal Medicine services and Dr. Andre Davies, please visit our website at GCMedicine.com. If you would like to schedule a complimentary meet and greet with Dr. Andre Davies, please email Christina@gcmedicine.com or contact our office at **239-566-3100**.



Andre Davies, MD

Dr. Andre Davies is a highly qualified Ivy League trained board-certified physician in both Internal Medicine and Geriatrics. He brings a wealth

of expertise and knowledge to his practice. Specializing in adult primary care for both men and women, he focuses on preventive health, managing chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes. Dr. Davies excels in pre-op exams, annual physical, diabetic screenings, immunizations, cancer screenings, weight management, and nutritional deficiencies. As a fellowship trained Geriatrician, he adeptly addresses complex health issues, emphasizing cognitive evaluations and mental well-being.



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Hearing Loss and Anxiety: What's the Connection?

By Sarah Sessler, Au.D. Doctor of Audiology/Ear Nerd

If you've just been diagnosed with hearing loss—or your hearing has gotten worse—you may be feeling anxious.

Anxiety is a persistent heightened state of alert. It's a normal reaction to stressful situations, but for some people it spirals out of control and becomes a disorder in and of itself. Often, that means they can't stop thinking "what if?"

Hearing loss can trigger or feed into anxious thinking. When you have hearing loss, you may worry about a lot of things: What if I don't hear something important? What if I misunderstand someone and embarrass myself? What if my hearing aid batteries run out? What if my tinnitus get worse? And so on.

Why are you anxious?

Mental health professionals generally categorize anxiety into five buckets: obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, social anxiety disorder, panic disorder and generalized anxiety disorder. If you have a car accident and banged your head, you might experience rapid hearing loss and possibly other symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Your symptoms and treatment plan might look very different from someone who has slowly been losing her hearing and is constantly looking for signs that she's developing dementia (when it's really just hearing loss).

Complicating the picture is that people with hearing loss may have a related condition that causes tinnitus and dizziness, which can be unsettling and anxiety inducing, as well.

What the research shows

Struggling in everyday situations that aren't difficult for other people is stressful. Anxiety is one response to chronic stress. In a 12-year study of nearly 4,000 French people age 65 and up, participants diagnosed with hearing loss at the beginning had a greater chance of developing anxiety symptoms over time.



Interestingly, people with vision loss weren't more likely to become anxious. It's often observed that people accept wearing glasses more easily than hearing aids—possibly because of the anxiety associated with hearing loss.

In general evidence of a tie is stronger when it corresponds with severity. In a study of more than 1,700 adults aged 75-85 with mild hearing loss had a 32 percent higher risk of reporting anxiety. If you had a moderate or higher loss, your chance of anxiety rose by 59 percent.

Communication tools can help

If your problem is primarily the struggles of socializing with hearing loss, you can learn to love social gatherings again. You can take someone to a quieter room and have a great conversation—once you have hearing aids. Also, learn the key communication skills for people with hearing impairments.

Even with hearing aids, hearing loss requires realistic expectations. For example, you may need to accept that you can't hear the people at the other end of a long table. As a person with hearing loss, you will learn not to be embarrassed when other people are laughing at a joke you didn't catch. Simply say, "I didn't hear that."

Hearing aids and other devices

And of course, if hearing loss is triggering anxiety, hearing aids could dramatically improve your life.

While they will not restore your hearing to normal, they can help you deal with some of the worrying aspects of hearing loss, such as communication snafus.

But just the thought of hearing aids makes me anxious.

When you're anxious in general or about hearing, you may be anxious about your hearing aids as well.

Although it's common to stall and be anxious when you first face your hearing problem, people tend to adjust to hearing aids over weeks or months. Many audiologists observe that men are especially likely to take pride in being healthy, so they resist admitting what seems like a weakness.

Some patients seem to adjust, largely to please other people, but months later, simply stop wearing their aids. Because their anxiety was never confronted or because their anxiety is too overwhelming, their coping mechanisms are unable to rise to the occasion of dealing with the hearing loss or hearing aids. When these people give up on their hearing aids, they end up feeling isolated. Too many dig in their heels and get angry at family and friends who complain that they can't hear.

Next Steps

Resolve to have a baseline hearing test to determine if you have any hearing loss. At Decibels Audiology our hearing tests are always complimentary. It's our way of giving back to the community. Call today to schedule your complimentary hearing test. You will be glad you did!

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UNVEILING THE HEALING POTENTIAL:

Exploring the Benefits of BPC-157 Body Protection Compound

In the world of regenerative medicine, BPC-157, also known as Body Protection Compound-157, has emerged as a promising peptide with a myriad of potential benefits for human health. Initially discovered in the gastric juices of humans, BPC-157 has since garnered attention for its remarkable healing properties and therapeutic potential across various medical conditions. Let's delve into the science behind this peptide and explore its diverse range of benefits.

BPC-157 is a synthetic peptide derived from a naturally occurring protein found in the human body. It consists of a sequence of 15 amino acids, which play crucial roles in supporting the body's natural healing processes. Research indicates that BPC-157 exerts its effects by promoting angiogenesis, the formation of new blood vessels, and enhancing tissue regeneration. These mechanisms underpin its therapeutic potential in treating a wide array of conditions, ranging from musculoskeletal injuries to gastrointestinal disorders.

One of the most well-documented benefits of BPC-157 is its ability to accelerate the healing of musculoskeletal injuries. Studies have shown that BPC-157 promotes the repair of damaged tendons, ligaments, and muscles by stimulating the proliferation of fibroblasts and endothelial cells, which are essential for tissue regeneration. Athletes and individuals engaged in physical activities often turn to BPC-157 to expedite recovery from injuries such as tendonitis, muscle strains, and joint sprains, allowing them to resume training and performance more quickly.

Moreover, BPC-157 has demonstrated promising effects in alleviating symptoms associated with various gastrointestinal disorders. Research suggests that BPC-157 can protect and repair the gastrointestinal mucosa, the lining of the digestive tract, by reducing inflammation and enhancing tissue integrity. This makes it a potential therapeutic option for conditions such as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), peptic ulcers, and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), where maintaining gut health is paramount for symptom management and overall well-being.



Furthermore, BPC-157 has shown neuroprotective properties, indicating its potential utility in treating neurological conditions and injuries. Preclinical studies have revealed that BPC-157 exerts neuroprotective effects by modulating neurotransmitter levels, reducing oxidative stress, and promoting neuronal survival. This suggests that BPC-157 could hold promise for conditions such as traumatic brain injury, stroke, and neurodegenerative diseases, where preserving neuronal function and promoting recovery are critical therapeutic goals.

In addition to its direct effects on tissue repair and regeneration, BPC-157 has been implicated in modulating various physiological processes, including inflammation and immune function. By exerting anti-inflammatory effects and regulating immune responses, BPC-157 may contribute to the maintenance of overall health and resilience against disease. This broad spectrum of actions underscores the potential of BPC-157 as a multifaceted therapeutic agent with applications across different medical specialties.

It is important to note that while the preliminary findings on BPC-157 are promising, further research is needed to fully elucidate its safety profile, optimal dosing regimens, and long-term effects.

As with any novel therapeutic agent, caution should be exercised, and individuals considering BPC-157 supplementation should consult with a qualified healthcare professional.

In conclusion, BPC-157 Body Protection Compound holds immense promise as a therapeutic agent with diverse applications in promoting tissue repair, alleviating gastrointestinal distress, and supporting neurological health. Its ability to accelerate healing, modulate inflammation, and enhance tissue regeneration makes it a compelling candidate for further investigation and potential clinical use. As research into BPC-157 continues to evolve, it may unlock new avenues for treating a wide range of medical conditions and improving human health and well-being.

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The Connection Between Anxiety and Eye Health: Understanding the Impact on Vision

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

In the fast-paced world we live in, stress and anxiety have become almost commonplace. From work deadlines to personal responsibilities, it's easy to become overwhelmed by the demands of daily life. While the effects of stress and anxiety on mental health are well-documented, their impact on physical health, particularly eye health, is often overlooked.

Anxiety, a feeling of worry or nervousness, can manifest in various physical symptoms, including changes in blood flow to the eyes. This alteration in blood flow can lead to a range of eye-related issues, such as blurred vision, eye strain, and dry eyes. For individuals already prone to eye problems, such as glaucoma or dry eye syndrome, prolonged stress and anxiety can exacerbate these conditions, worsening their symptoms and potentially leading to further complications.

One of the most common symptoms of stress and anxiety-related eye issues is blurred vision. This occurs when the muscles in the eyes become tense due to heightened stress levels, affecting their ability to focus properly. As a result, objects may appear blurry or out of focus, making tasks such as reading or driving challenging and uncomfortable.

Eye strain is another prevalent issue associated with stress and anxiety. When we feel anxious or stressed, we tend to tense our muscles, including those in the eyes, leading to fatigue and strain. Staring at screens for extended periods, a common occurrence in today's digital age, can exacerbate this strain, causing discomfort, headaches, and difficulty concentrating.

Dry eyes are also a common complaint among individuals experiencing heightened levels of stress and anxiety. Stress can disrupt the natural balance of tear production and drainage in the eyes, resulting in inadequate lubrication and discomfort. Without sufficient moisture, the eyes may feel gritty, irritated, or excessively watery, impacting both comfort and vision quality.

Moreover, for individuals already dealing with underlying eye conditions such as glaucoma or dry eye syndrome, stress and anxiety can pose additional challenges. Glaucoma, a group of eye diseases characterized by damage to the optic nerve, can be exacerbated by elevated intraocular pressure, which may occur during periods of stress. Similarly, stress-related changes in tear production can worsen the symptoms of dry eye syndrome, leading to increased discomfort and potential damage to the cornea.

Given the significant impact of stress and anxiety on eye health, it is essential to prioritize self-care and stress management strategies. Incorporating relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga into your daily routine can help alleviate stress and promote overall well-being. Additionally, taking regular breaks from screen time, practicing good eye hygiene, and staying hydrated can support optimal eye health and minimize the impact of stress-related symptoms.

Furthermore, seeking professional help and support is crucial for managing anxiety and its associated effects on both mental and physical health. Whether through therapy, medication, or holistic approaches, there are various resources available to help individuals cope with stress and anxiety effectively.

In conclusion, the relationship between stress, anxiety, and eye health is undeniable. From blurred vision and eye strain to dry eyes and exacerbation of existing conditions, prolonged stress can take a toll on our eyesight and overall well-being. By prioritizing stress management techniques and seeking appropriate support, we can protect our vision and cultivate a healthier, more balanced lifestyle. Let's raise awareness about the importance of mental health in preserving our precious sense of sight.



Katia E. Taba, MD, is the board-certified ophthalmologist and retina specialist at Personalized Retina Care of Naples in Naples, Florida. Dr. Taba treats macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, macular holes, eye floaters and flashes, and other serious eye problems that can interfere with sight or steal vision without treatment. Patients know Dr. Taba as an extremely friendly and welcoming care provider who maintains great professionalism at all times.

Dr. Taba is a board-certified ophthalmologist in both her home country of Brazil and in the United States. She earned her medical degree at a leading medical school in Brazil and continued specialized vitreoretinal surgery training in Florida, New York, California, Louisiana, and many other locations in the U.S. Dr. Taba trained under the leading experts in the field of ocular disease.

Dr. Taba's extensive training and experience include many years as both a clinician and academician. She entered solo practice as a way to deliver consistently great care in a world where the environment and health care policies are always changing.

Dr. Taba wants to make sure that patients always get the most accurate diagnosis and most effective treatment, so she uses only the latest, state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment. Dr. Taba is the first retina specialist on the southwest coast of Florida to have wide-angle viewing imaging. Dr. Taba also makes sure that injections and treatments are pain-free so patients can always expect a comfortable experience.

Retina Group of Florida

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.

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



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Alcohol Consumption and Its Impact on Cancer Development and Cancer Survivorship

By Lana Uhrig RN, MBA, PhD in Public Health in Environmental Science, Executive Director, Naples Cancer Advisors

Alcohol consumption is a widely acknowledged risk factor for the development of various cancers and presents unique considerations for cancer survivors. Here we will explore the relationship between alcohol use and cancer development, as well as the recommendations for alcohol consumption among cancer survivors.

The Link Between Alcohol and Cancer Development:

Alcohol consumption has been identified as a significant risk factor for several types of cancer, including but not limited to, head and neck, esophageal, liver, breast, and colorectal cancers. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a part of the World Health Organization (WHO), classifies alcohol as a Group 1 carcinogen, indicating that there is sufficient evidence to establish a causal relationship between alcohol consumption and cancer (1).

The carcinogenic effects of alcohol are attributed to various mechanisms. Ethanol, the primary component of alcoholic beverages, is metabolized into acetaldehyde, a toxic compound that can damage DNA and prevent its repair. This DNA damage can lead to mutations that increase the risk of cancer development (2). Additionally, alcohol can enhance the carcinogenic effects of other substances, such as tobacco, and increase estrogen levels, which is associated with an elevated risk of breast cancer (3).

Recommendations for Alcohol Consumption Among Cancer Survivors:

For cancer survivors, the relationship between alcohol consumption and cancer recurrence or the development of new primary cancers is complex. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends that cancer survivors limit their alcohol intake, with an emphasis on abstaining from alcohol as the best choice for those who have been diagnosed with cancers that are known to be influenced by alcohol (4).

The ACS guidelines suggest that if cancer survivors choose to consume alcohol, they should do so in moderation, defined as up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men (4). However, these recommendations are general and may need to be tailored based on the individual's cancer type, treatment history, and overall health status.

For example, breast cancer survivors, particularly those with hormone receptor-positive tumors, may be advised to avoid alcohol entirely due to its potential to increase estrogen levels. Similarly, survivors of head and neck or esophageal cancers, which are strongly linked to alcohol consumption, may be counseled to abstain from alcohol to reduce the risk of recurrence (5).

Alcohol consumption is a modifiable risk factor for cancer development and poses specific considerations for cancer survivors. While moderate alcohol intake may be acceptable for some survivors, abstinence is the safest option for those with a history of alcohol-related cancers. It is essential for cancer survivors to discuss their alcohol consumption with their healthcare providers to receive personalized recommendations based on their individual risk factors and health status.

Naples Cancer Advisors (NCA) stands as a pillar of support for Southwest Florida residents facing a cancer diagnosis. Guided by compassion, expertise, and empowerment, NCA provide consultative oncology services including second opinions, care coordination, referrals, clinical trial navigation, financial navigation, and precision oncology services such as genetic testing and counseling - all at no charge to the patient, thanks to generous donors.

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Southwest Florida residents with a current or past cancer diagnosis are eligible for a no-cost consultation at Naples Cancer Advisors. The world-class team of experts works directly with your treating physician to help improve your plan of care. For more information, call 239.846.2273 (CARE) or visit NaplesCancerAdvisors.org.



Lana Uhrig, RN, MBA, PhD

Lana joins Naples Cancer Advisors as an accomplished healthcare executive with extensive experience in operations, strategic planning, leadership development & mentoring, board development and community engagement. She received her Ph.D. in Public Health from The Ohio State University, an MBA from Franklin University, and a bachelor's in nursing from Ohio University. Recently arriving in South Florida, Lana has been instrumental in opening Naples Cancer Advisors (NCA), a second location for the Cincinnati Cancer Foundation-Cincinnati Cancer Advisors where she serves as the Clinical & Business Development Officer. NCA is a philanthropic organization providing free second opinions and genetic counseling services to those newly diagnosed with cancer in the SW Florida Community. Previously, Lana served as the Vice President & Chief Nursing Officer for Emory Healthcare-Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University and the Executive Administrative Director of the University of Cincinnati Cancer Institute. In past roles, she has been recognized as a subject matter expert in the development, implementation, and growth of cancer programs and non-profit administration.



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APRIL IS PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

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

April marks a pivotal moment in the fight against Parkinson's disease, as it's globally recognized as Parkinson's Awareness Month. This month serves as a beacon of hope, shedding light on the realities faced by millions worldwide grappling with this neurodegenerative disorder. Through education, advocacy, and support, Parkinson's Awareness Month aims to dispel myths, raise awareness, and inspire action. Here are key facts and insights to deepen our understanding of Parkinson's disease and the significance of April as its dedicated awareness month.

The Origins of Parkinson's Awareness Month

Established in April 1997 by the Parkinson's Disease Foundation (PDF), now merged with the Parkinson's Foundation, Parkinson's Awareness Month aims to honor the birth month of Dr. James Parkinson. Dr. Parkinson's seminal work, "An Essay on the Shaking Palsy," published in 1817, was the first detailed description of the disease, laying the foundation for future research and understanding.

Understanding Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects movement, primarily due to the loss of dopamine-producing brain cells. Common symptoms include tremors, bradykinesia (slowed movements), rigidity, and impaired balance. However, Parkinson's can also manifest with non-motor symptoms such as cognitive impairment, depression, and sleep disturbances.

Global Impact and Prevalence

Parkinson's disease affects people of all races and ethnicities, with over 10 million individuals worldwide living with the condition. As the global population ages, the prevalence of Parkinson's is expected to rise significantly, making awareness and early intervention crucial.

Advancements in Research and Treatment

Over the years, significant progress has been made in understanding Parkinson's disease, leading to advancements in treatment and management strategies. From medication and deep brain stimulation to promising research in neuroprotection and disease-modifying therapies, ongoing efforts offer hope for improved quality of life and ultimately, a cure.



Challenges and Stigma

Despite progress, Parkinson's disease continues to pose significant challenges, both for those living with the condition and their caregivers. Stigma and misconceptions surrounding Parkinson's can lead to social isolation and barriers to accessing support and resources. Parkinson's Awareness Month aims to challenge these stereotypes and foster greater understanding and empathy.

Empowering Advocacy and Support

Parkinson's organizations and advocacy groups play a crucial role in providing support, resources, and a unified voice for the Parkinson's community. From fundraising events and awareness campaigns to educational initiatives and support groups, these organizations empower individuals to navigate their Parkinson's journey with dignity and resilience.

The Power of Community

Parkinson's Awareness Month serves as a rallying point for the global Parkinson's community, bringing together individuals, families, caregivers, healthcare professionals, researchers, and advocates. Through shared experiences and collective action, this community drives positive change, raises funds for research, and amplifies the voices of those affected by Parkinson's.

The Importance of Early Detection and Intervention

Early diagnosis and intervention are key to managing Parkinson's disease effectively. Recognizing the early signs and symptoms, seeking medical evaluation, and accessing specialized care can help individuals optimize their treatment plan and maintain independence for as long as possible.

Inspiring Stories of Hope and Resilience

Amidst the challenges posed by Parkinson's disease, stories of hope, resilience, and triumph abound. From individuals courageously navigating their Parkinson's journey to researchers tirelessly working towards a cure, Parkinson's Awareness Month celebrates the strength and resilience of the human spirit.

Joining the Movement

As April unfolds, let us join hands in solidarity with the Parkinson's community. Whether through raising awareness, participating in fundraising events, or advocating for policy change, each of us has the power to make a difference in the fight against Parkinson's disease.

In conclusion, Parkinson's Awareness Month in April serves as a poignant reminder of the impact of Parkinson's disease on individuals, families, and communities worldwide. By raising awareness, dispelling myths, fostering empathy, and promoting advocacy, we can collectively strive towards a future free from the burden of Parkinson's. Let us stand together, united in our pursuit of a world where Parkinson's disease is no longer a source of fear or uncertainty, but rather a chapter in the history of medical triumphs.

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KATHY VERDES APRN, A-GNP-C

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



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

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

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

SACRAL NEUROMODULATION

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

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



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

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

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

BOTULINUM TOXIN (Botox)

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

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

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

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WHAT IS THE FLORIDA SUNSHINE LAW?

By Anthony P. Pires, Jr., B.C.S., Florida Local Government Lawyer

As local government law attorneys in Florida, Woodward, Pires & Lombardo regularly assist clients and provide guidance and representation concerning Florida's Sunshine Law regarding open government. As noted by the Office of the Attorney General of Florida, Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Law, commonly referred to as the "Sunshine Law," provides the public a right of access to governmental proceedings of public boards or commissions at both the state and local levels. The law requires Florida governments to show their work by making decisions at publicly noticed meetings where minutes are taken and then filed/recorded.

The Sunshine Law "is of both constitutional and statutory dimension" and can be found in Article 1, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution and Section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes. These constitutional and statutory provisions establish a fundamental right of access to virtually all meetings of boards, commissions, and other governing bodies of state and local governmental agencies or authorities, with the exception of the courts and the state Legislature, which has its own constitutional provision relating to access.

The Three Elements of the Florida Sunshine Law The Sunshine Law requires:

- (1) meetings of public boards or commissions must be open to the public.
- (2) reasonable notice of such meetings must be given; and
- (3) minutes of the meetings must be taken and promptly recorded.

The law applies whenever two or more board members meet and discuss items reasonably foreseeable to be on an upcoming agenda.

Government Transparency

These requirements result in what may appear to be inefficiencies because, for example, opponents of the proposed action by the governmental body can watch the decision-making process, but the goal of the Florida Sunshine Law is not efficiency, it is transparency.



Another perceived inefficiency is that discussions can only happen at publicly noticed meetings at locations accessible to the public. Thus, if a board subject to the Sunshine Law only meets once per month, absent setting and noticing special meetings, it cannot address items more frequently than that.

Exceptions to the Sunshine Law

There are a limited number of exceptions to the requirement that meetings must be open to the public. One exception is when a government is a party to pending litigation. During those times, Florida government boards can hold closed sessions with their attorneys with certain limitations and under strict conditions. These meetings, however, must have a court reporter, and the transcript becomes a public record after the litigation is concluded.

Government-in-the-Sunshine Manual

The Florida Attorney General's office compiles an annual guide known as the Government-in-the-Sunshine Manual at no taxpayer expense to assist the public. You can find it at:

[https://legacy.myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/wf/mnos-b9qq79/\\$file/sunshinemanual.pdf](https://legacy.myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/wf/mnos-b9qq79/$file/sunshinemanual.pdf)

Talk to Our Florida Local Government Law Attorneys
If you need assistance with issues surrounding the Sunshine Law, contact one of the Florida government relations attorneys at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. today.



About the Author

Anthony ("Tony") P. Pires, Jr. is a Partner at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. He provides legal services to clients throughout Collier and Lee Counties in Local Government Law, Municipal Law, Land Use and Zoning Law, Land Use Applications, Rezoning, Bond Validation, and Administrative Law. Tony serves as long-standing general counsel to various Florida community development districts (CDDs) and as special counsel to various county constitutional officers. His exceptional knowledge of Southwest Florida's growth and development and his legal expertise allow him to guide public and private clients through complicated land use, local government, and real estate matters. Tony's law practice showcases his tireless dedication to public service and client relationships.

Tony has been a Board Certified Specialist (B.C.S.) in City, County and Local Government Law by The Florida Bar for over 25 years. He is rated AV Preeminent® by Martindale-Hubbell® Peer Review Ratings™, a rating given to only attorneys who are ranked at the highest level of professional excellence for their legal expertise, communication skills, and ethical standards by their peers.



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PICKLEBALL

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



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

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

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

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

Associated Injuries

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

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

Acute Injuries

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

Understanding the Importance of Responsible Drinking

Alcohol Awareness Month is an annual observance dedicated to increasing public awareness and understanding of the consequences of excessive alcohol consumption. Held every April, this month-long campaign aims to educate individuals and communities about the risks associated with alcohol abuse while promoting responsible drinking habits.

Understanding the Importance

Alcohol consumption is deeply ingrained in many cultures worldwide, often associated with social gatherings, celebrations, and relaxation. While moderate drinking can be a part of a healthy lifestyle for some, excessive alcohol consumption can lead to a myriad of health, social, and economic problems. Alcohol Awareness Month serves as a platform to address these issues and empower individuals to make informed choices regarding alcohol consumption.

Raising Awareness

One of the primary goals of Alcohol Awareness Month is to educate the public about the potential dangers of excessive drinking. This includes raising awareness of the physical health risks such as liver disease, cardiovascular problems, and an increased risk of certain cancers. Additionally, excessive alcohol consumption can impair cognitive function, leading to accidents, injuries, and even fatalities.

Promoting Responsible Drinking

Promoting responsible drinking is a key focus of Alcohol Awareness Month. This involves encouraging individuals to be mindful of their alcohol intake, know their limits, and avoid engaging in risky behaviors such as driving under the influence. Education on the importance of moderation and strategies for harm reduction, such as spacing drinks with water and eating before drinking, are essential components of responsible drinking campaigns.

Supporting Those Affected

Alcohol misuse not only affects the individual but also their families, friends, and communities. Alcohol Awareness Month seeks to provide support and resources for those struggling with alcohol addiction or affected by the consequences of someone else's drinking. This includes promoting access to treatment and support services, as well as reducing the stigma associated with seeking help for alcohol-related issues.



Empowering Change

By promoting awareness and encouraging responsible drinking habits, Alcohol Awareness Month aims to empower individuals to make positive changes in their lives and communities. This may involve challenging social norms surrounding alcohol consumption, advocating for policy changes to reduce alcohol-related harm, and supporting initiatives that promote healthier lifestyles.

Community Engagement

Alcohol Awareness Month encourages community involvement through a variety of events and activities. These may include educational workshops, health fairs, public forums, and outreach programs aimed at reaching diverse populations. By engaging with local organizations, schools, and businesses, communities can work together to address alcohol-related issues and promote a culture of responsibility.

Alcohol Awareness Month serves as a vital reminder of the importance of responsible drinking and the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and society as a whole. By raising awareness, promoting education, and providing support, this annual observance plays a crucial role in empowering individuals to make informed choices about alcohol consumption and fostering healthier communities. As we observe Alcohol Awareness Month this April, let us join together in the effort to promote responsible drinking habits and reduce the harm caused by excessive alcohol consumption.



Dr. Ricardo Martinez

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



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THE IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE RECOVERY

By Robert C. Gibson

Managing Director Crossroads Behavioral Health Center and Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group

In the realm of alcohol and substance abuse recovery, one size does not fit all. The importance of individualized treatment programs cannot be overstated, as they recognize the unique complexities of each person's journey toward sobriety. **Crossroads Behavioral Health Center / Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group, located at 708 Goodlette-Frank Road Naples, FL 34102,** is a unique 90-day intensive outpatient (IOP) treatment program that is tailored for each client's needs. Crossroads has developed a proprietary curriculum that helps individuals seeking long term sobriety and aids in reaching their goals and dreams.

Intensive outpatient treatment (IOP) is often considered the most effective and flexible form of treatment for alcohol and substance abuse disorders for several reasons. One key advantage is the flexibility it offers in terms of scheduling. Unlike inpatient programs that require individuals to reside at the facility, IOP allows participants to maintain their daily routines, such as work or school, while still receiving intensive treatment during specified hours. This flexibility makes it a practical option for those who cannot commit to a full-time residential program due to family or work responsibilities. Additionally, Crossroads offers tele-health therapy, that delivers treatment programs to clients unable to attend in-person therapy sessions.

Crossroads multifaceted approach that includes individual counseling, group therapy, and educational sessions, addresses the various aspects of addiction, providing a well-rounded support system for recovery. The program serves as a transitional step and guide to increased independence and returning to daily life. This continuity of care helps individuals maintain their progress and cope with the challenges of reintegration into society.

CROSSROADS MULT-TIERED LEVELS OF CARE:

Unlike other IOP programs, Crossroads offers various levels of care, tailored for each individual's unique needs and circumstances.

CROSSROADS TIER 1 TREATMENT PROGRAM - is designed for individuals new to recovery. Its primary focus is maintaining long term sobriety. We identify everyone's potential relapse triggers and develop alternative relapse skills. Our core beliefs are examined and broken down into fact or opinion. We set specific measurable goals for every client. Clients focus on identifying career goals and work with their therapist and counselor to find a pathway to reach their obtainable dreams. In addition to employment skills, we address housing, which is a current crisis in SWFL. Crossroads assist our graduates to team together and seek sober

living housing, allowing individuals in early recovery to pool their resources and support each other on their road to recovery.

CROSSROADS TIER 2 TREATMENT PROGRAM - is designed specifically for professionals or retirees who recognize their increased drinking or drug use and want to make a change in their lives. Unfortunately, many of these individuals continue to suffer because they fear the stigma of recovery and often feel they are too old, or far along in their careers to set aside the time for a 30-60-day residential rehab program. At Crossroads we fully understand these concerns and apprehensions. Crossroads independent intensive outpatient addiction recovery program (IOP) for professionals and retirees is crucial for addressing:

1. Confidentiality: Professionals and retirees are often hesitant to seek treatment for addiction in traditional rehab and organized group programs (AA /NA etc.) due to concerns about confidentiality. Crossroads Tier 2 treatment program is specifically designed for professionals, providing a more discreet and confidential environment, which increases the likelihood that they will seek and receive treatment.

2. Unique Needs: Professionals and retirees have unique needs and challenges in addiction recovery, including concerns about their careers or the impact of addiction on their reputations. Crossroads autonomous program addresses these needs and provides specialized support and resources for professionals in recovery.

3. Supportive Environment: Crossroads program provides a supportive environment with others who face similar challenges and experiences. This helps our clients feel less isolated and increases their motivation to engage in treatment and maintain their sobriety.

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

CROSSROADS TIER 3 TREATMENT PROGRAM - is specifically oriented towards those individuals suffering from dual diagnosis. Dual diagnosis treatment, which refers to the treatment of co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, can be challenging in addiction recovery for:

1. Complexity: Dual diagnosis cases are often more complex than cases of substance abuse alone, as the presence of a mental health disorder can complicate treatment and recovery efforts.

2. Misdiagnosis: It is often difficult to accurately diagnose both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder, as symptoms of one disorder can mimic the symptoms of the other. This can result in misdiagnosis and a delay in appropriate treatment.

3. Treatment resistance: Individuals with dual diagnosis may be resistant to treatment or may struggle to engage in treatment due to the presence of anxiety, depression, or psychosis.

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

Crossroads Tier 3 dual diagnosis program involves medication management, behavioral therapy, and support groups. In addition, our individualized treatment plans address each person's unique needs and challenges.

CROSSROADS TIER 4 TREATMENT PROGRAM - Is a specific treatment program for individuals with drug and alcohol related arrests. Crossroads Tier 4 treatment program, in association with the **SW Florida Safety Council**, as well as **Collier and Lee County Parole Departments**, assists court and other mandated individuals following a DUI and / or drug related arrest. This unique program provides a **pivotal alternative to incarceration through individualized, state-accredited treatment**. At Crossroads, we prioritize comprehensive care, recognizing the multifaceted nature of addiction recovery. Our Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) combines individual counseling, group therapy, psycho-education, and evidence-based therapies to address every facet of addiction. Unlike residential programs, **Crossroads Tier 4 treatment program** offers flexibility, allowing clients to fulfill court-mandated obligations while undergoing treatment. With structured sessions, regular drug testing, and peer support, our program fosters accountability and motivation. Moreover, our focus on skill development equips clients with practical tools for long-term sobriety. As a crucial part of the recovery journey, Crossroads IOP serves as a continuum of care, providing referrals and connections to support clients beyond program completion.

KEY ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE IOP TREATMENT PROGRAM:

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

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

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

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

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

6. Family Involvement: Addiction affects not only the individual struggling with it but also their loved ones. Crossroads promotes the involvement of family members in the treatment process through family therapy and education.

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

WHY IS CROSSROADS SUBSTANCE ABUSE CONSIDERED ONE OF THE PREMIERE INTENSIVE OUTPATIENT (IOP) TREATMENT PROGRAMS IN SW FLORIDA?

There are a few factors that contribute to an IOP treatment program's reputation as a top program that is well-regarded in the field. One of the main factors is the program's history of success in treating substance abuse and addiction. This is evidenced by the program's outcome data, testimonials from former patients, or recognition from reputable third-party organizations in the field of addiction treatment. **Crossroads is an industry leader in all of these categories.**

Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group maintains a highly qualified and experienced staff, including licensed therapists and medical professionals who are skilled in treating addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders. The program prioritizes ongoing support and aftercare planning to help patients maintain their sobriety and avoid relapse after completing the program. Crossroads, consistently offers high-quality care and support tailored to each patient's needs, along with a commitment to evidence-based treatment practices and ongoing support for long-term recovery.

If you or a loved one is considering mental health or addiction treatment, emotions surrounding this decision can be quite complex and confusing. You may recognize that you are experiencing more than normal difficulties in your life. You may have persistent feelings of sadness, anxiety, or hopelessness- yet resistance is blocking you. You may acknowledge that substance use, or addictive behaviors are causing significant disruptions and emotional difficulties in your life, yet the resistance is strong. **Crossroads Substance Abuse Services Group** is a gateway to a better healthier life, free of the dependence of alcohol and drugs.

Please feel confident to contact us at **(239) 692.1020** to learn more about Crossroads and our programs. We strive to promote a safe and helpful environment that supports each individual's unique journey to long term growth, well-being, and recovery.



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UNLOCKING THE MIND: How Acupuncture and Neuroacupuncture Offer Hope for Alzheimer's and Dementia

By Alik Minikhanov, AP, DOM

In the realm of neurological disorders, Alzheimer's disease and dementia stand as formidable adversaries, robbing individuals of their memories, cognitive abilities, and ultimately their independence. As these conditions continue to affect millions worldwide, the search for effective treatments remains paramount. As a specialist in treating patients with neurological conditions I have found that a combination of acupuncture and neuroacupuncture provide promising avenues for alleviating symptoms and enhancing the quality of life for those grappling with these debilitating conditions.

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia

Before delving into the potential benefits of acupuncture, it's crucial to grasp the nature of Alzheimer's and dementia. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, characterized by progressive memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioral changes. Dementia, on the other hand, encompasses a broader category of cognitive impairments affecting memory, reasoning, and communication abilities.

The Ancient Wisdom of Acupuncture

Acupuncture, originating from traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) dating back thousands of years, involves the insertion of thin needles into specific points on the body to stimulate energy flow, or "qi." According to TCM theory, imbalances in qi can lead to various ailments, and acupuncture aims to restore harmony within the body.

While conventional Western medicine approaches Alzheimer's and dementia primarily through pharmaceutical interventions, acupuncture offers a holistic perspective, targeting both physical and mental well-being. Research suggests that acupuncture may enhance cognitive function, alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety, and improve overall quality of life for individuals with these conditions.

Modernizing Tradition: The Emergence of Neuroacupuncture

Building upon the principles of traditional acupuncture, neuroacupuncture integrates modern knowledge of neuroanatomy and neuroscience to enhance its effectiveness, particularly in neurological disorders. This specialized form of acupuncture

focuses on stimulating specific points on the scalp, ears, and body to influence brain activity and neural pathways associated with cognitive function.

Neuroacupuncture employs precise needling techniques to target brain regions implicated in Alzheimer's and dementia. By stimulating neural networks and neurotransmitter systems, neuroacupuncture aims to mitigate cognitive decline and promote neuroplasticity—the brain's ability to adapt and reorganize itself.

A Growing Body of Evidence

While the scientific understanding of acupuncture's mechanisms in treating Alzheimer's and dementia is still evolving, a growing body of research provides compelling insights into its potential benefits. Several studies have demonstrated the positive effects of acupuncture on cognitive function, memory retention, and behavioral symptoms in individuals with dementia.

A systematic review published in the *Journal of Clinical Neuroscience* analyzed the results of multiple randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and concluded that acupuncture may offer significant improvements in cognitive function and activities of daily living for patients with Alzheimer's disease. Another meta-analysis published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* found acupuncture to be effective in reducing agitation and improving overall behavioral symptoms in dementia patients.

Targeting Symptom Management

One of the most pressing challenges in Alzheimer's and dementia care is managing behavioral and psychological symptoms such as agitation, aggression, and sleep disturbances. Conventional pharmacological treatments often come with adverse side effects and may not adequately address these symptoms. Acupuncture and neuroacupuncture, by contrast, offer a non-pharmacological approach with potentially fewer risks and broader applicability.

Research suggests that acupuncture may help regulate neurotransmitter levels, including serotonin and dopamine, which play crucial roles in mood regulation and behavior. By promoting relaxation, reducing stress hormones, and modulating the autonomic nervous system, acupuncture can effectively alleviate agitation, anxiety, and sleep disturbances in individuals with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Empowering Personalized Care

One of the strengths of acupuncture and neuroacupuncture lies in their individualized approach to treatment. I work to assess each patient's unique constitution, symptoms, and underlying imbalances to tailor acupuncture protocols accordingly. This personalized approach aligns with the principles of precision medicine, emphasizing the importance of targeted interventions based on genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors.

Moreover, acupuncture and neuroacupuncture can complement existing therapies and lifestyle interventions for Alzheimer's and dementia, including cognitive rehabilitation, physical exercise, and nutritional support. Integrating these modalities within a comprehensive care plan fosters a synergistic approach to managing symptoms and promoting overall well-being.

Looking Ahead: Expanding Research and Accessibility

While the evidence supporting acupuncture and neuroacupuncture in Alzheimer's and dementia care continues to accumulate, further research is needed to elucidate their mechanisms of action and optimize treatment protocols. Large-scale clinical trials, coupled with advances in neuroimaging and biomarker research, hold the potential to deepen our understanding of how acupuncture influences brain function and neuroplasticity in these conditions.

In addition to advancing scientific inquiry, efforts to enhance the accessibility of acupuncture and neuroacupuncture services for individuals with Alzheimer's and dementia are essential. Collaborative initiatives involving healthcare providers, policymakers, and community organizations can help expand access to these therapies and integrate them into standard care practices.

In the quest to confront the challenges of Alzheimer's and dementia, acupuncture and neuroacupuncture offer not only therapeutic benefits but also a profound reminder of the enduring wisdom of ancient healing traditions converging with modern scientific inquiry. As we continue to unlock the mysteries of the mind, these ancient arts stand as beacons of hope, illuminating new pathways towards holistic well-being and resilience in the face of cognitive decline.

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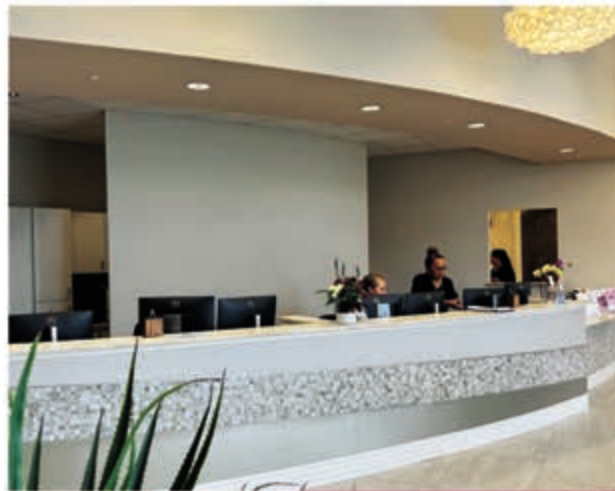
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Unraveling the Complexity of Brain Diseases

The human brain is an intricate organ that governs our thoughts, emotions, and actions. However, within this complexity lies a vulnerability to various disorders that can profoundly impact an individual's quality of life. Brain diseases encompass a wide range of neurological disorders, each with its unique characteristics and challenges. This article will shed light on some of the most prevalent brain diseases, exploring their causes, symptoms, and potential treatment avenues, while emphasizing the importance of ongoing research in this field.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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- Radicava
- Rituxan (including biosimilar's)
- Soliris
- Solu Medrol
- Tysabri
- Ulimiris
- Uplizna
- Vyapti
- Vyvgart

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Recurrent UTIs: Addressing the Risk of Antibiotic Resistance

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common bacterial infections that affect millions of individuals worldwide each year. While typically treated with antibiotics, the rising prevalence of antibiotic resistance poses a significant challenge in managing recurrent UTIs effectively. In this article, we'll explore the importance of addressing recurrent UTIs and strategies to mitigate the risk of antibiotic resistance, focusing on Utiva Cranberry PACs as a clinically effective prevention.

1. Overview of Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs):

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) occur when bacteria enter the urinary tract and multiply, leading to frequent urination, burning sensation during urination, and pelvic discomfort. UTIs can affect various parts of the urinary tract, including the bladder (cystitis), urethra (urethritis), and kidneys (pyelonephritis).

2. Importance of Addressing Recurrent UTIs:

Recurrent UTIs, defined as two or more infections within six months or three or more within one year, pose significant health risks and can profoundly impact quality of life. Individuals who experience recurrent UTIs often face frequent discomfort, disruption of daily activities, and an increased risk of complications such as kidney damage and sepsis.

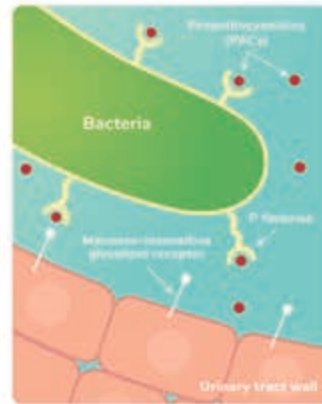
3. The Growing Concern of Antibiotic Resistance:

Antibiotic resistance has emerged as a global health threat, compromising the effectiveness of antibiotics in treating bacterial infections. Recurrent UTIs present a particularly challenging scenario, as they often result in repeated antibiotic courses, contributing to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. A 2019 study published in the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) found alarming rates of antibiotic resistance among UTI-causing bacteria, with more than 92 percent resistant to at least one common antibiotic and almost 80 percent to at least two.

(Source: NCBI Study)

4. UTI Prevention: Strategies to Avoid Unnecessary Antibiotic Use:

Given the risks associated with antibiotic resistance, it's essential to explore preventive strategies to reduce the reliance on antibiotics for recurrent UTIs. Healthcare providers emphasize the importance of adopting lifestyle modifications and hygiene practices, such as staying hydrated, urinating after intercourse, and



practicing proper genital hygiene to prevent UTIs. Additionally, avoiding unnecessary antibiotic use for non-severe UTIs and considering alternative approaches for prevention are crucial in combating antibiotic resistance.

5. Utiva Cranberry PACs: A Clinically Effective

Prevention: Utiva Cranberry PACs offer a promising solution for UTI prevention without contributing to antibiotic resistance. Cranberry proanthocyanidins (PACs) have been extensively studied for their ability to inhibit bacterial adhesion to the urinary tract, preventing the colonization and proliferation of UTI-causing bacteria. A urogynecologist, Dr. Emily Rutledge emphasizes, "There is a lot of evidence that cranberry supplements are safe and effective. You can find all sorts of cranberry supplements but if they don't have that 36 mg PAC and are measured by DMAC/A2 then they are a waste of money." Utiva Cranberry PACs, with a standardized dose of 36 mg PACs measured by DMAC/A2, provide a clinically effective option for individuals seeking to reduce their risk of recurrent UTIs.

Recurrent UTIs pose a significant health concern, exacerbated by the growing threat of antibiotic resistance. Healthcare providers and patients play a vital role in addressing this challenge by adopting preventive strategies and exploring alternative approaches to UTI management. Dr. Colleen McDermott, another urogynecologist, recommends,

"Antibiotics are the first-line treatment, but there are clinically proven options to help prevent. When considering cranberry supplements, I recommend my patients select a product with 36 mg of PACs." Utiva Cranberry PACs offer a safe, evidence-based option for UTI prevention, empowering individuals to take proactive steps towards better urinary health and reduced reliance on antibiotics.

Sources:

- https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/antibiotics-resistance?_pos=1&_sid=51bf18b74&_ss=r
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6436442/>



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What Doctors are Saying

Recurrent UTIs can be a constant battle in the clinic. In an attempt to minimize the use of antibiotics, I always consider natural options to help reduce the frequency of UTIs in my patients. Utiva is a trusted brand which provides a great, clean cranberry product which has been very effective in preventing UTIs in many of my patients. ”

Dr. Yana Barbalet
Urologist, Lahey Health, Massachusetts



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By Plastic Surgery Center of Naples

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

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

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

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

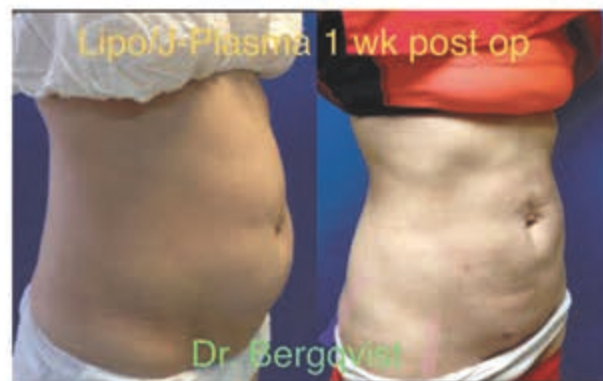
Dr. Gunnar Bergqvist, MD



Before 10 days post op

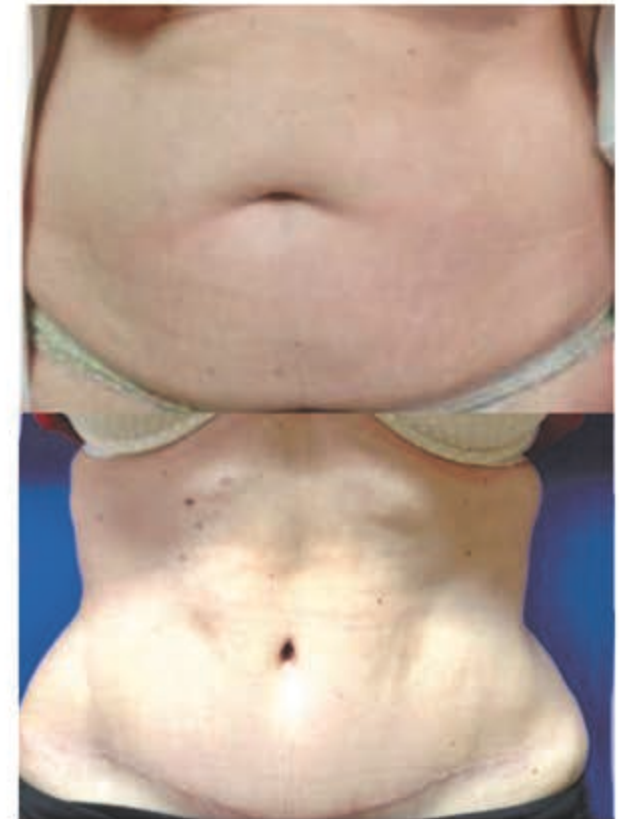
of the newer techniques that we use, can *tighten* the skin by several different modalities. One of these is called J-plasma (also known as Renuvion). This used a plasma helium bean under the skin, inducing progressive skin tightening over the next six months. Skin is reduced without the need for removal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

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



LipoJ-Plasma 1 wk post op

Dr. Bergqvist



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

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

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UNLOCKING LUXURY LIVING: THE INDISPENSABLE ROLE OF EXPERIENCED REALTORS IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S GATED COMMUNITIES

Choosing the right realtor is crucial when navigating the competitive and exclusive real estate market of Southwest Florida, particularly when considering gated communities and luxury properties. Southwest Florida, known for its pristine beaches, vibrant cultural scene, and luxurious lifestyle, attracts discerning homebuyers seeking the epitome of upscale living. In such a dynamic environment, the expertise of an experienced realtor becomes indispensable.

The allure of gated communities in Southwest Florida lies not only in the added security they offer but also in the sense of exclusivity and community living. Experienced realtors in the region understand the intricacies of these gated neighborhoods, possessing insights into the unique features and amenities each community provides. From golf courses and private beaches to state-of-the-art amenities, they can guide prospective buyers to the enclave that aligns seamlessly with their preferences and lifestyle.

Luxury properties within these gated communities present a myriad of options, each with its own distinctive charm. An experienced realtor brings a wealth of knowledge to the table, helping buyers navigate the complexities of the luxury real estate market. They are adept at identifying properties that match not just the buyer's budget but also their specific criteria for opulence, architectural style, and preferred amenities.

In a market where timing is often of the essence, seasoned real estate agents possess the ability to stay ahead of trends and fluctuations. They are well-versed in the Southwest Florida market's ebbs and flows, enabling them to provide valuable insights on when to buy or sell. This foresight is especially crucial in the luxury real estate sector, where timing can significantly impact property values.

Furthermore, an experienced realtor can facilitate a smooth and efficient buying or selling process. Navigating the paperwork, negotiations, and legalities of real estate transactions requires a level of expertise that can only be gained through years of

hands-on experience. Buyers and sellers alike benefit from the guidance of a real estate professional who can streamline the process and mitigate potential challenges.

In the realm of luxury real estate, discretion is often paramount. Seasoned realtors in Southwest Florida understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality and respecting the privacy of their clients. This level of professionalism is particularly crucial when dealing with high-profile individuals or celebrities who seek refuge in the exclusive gated communities of the region.

Beyond their knowledge of the local real estate market, experienced realtors also boast an extensive network of industry connections. From architects and interior designers to legal professionals and contractors, these connections can prove invaluable when it comes to enhancing and maintaining a luxury property. The ability to tap into this network ensures that clients receive top-notch service at every stage of the real estate process.

Ultimately, the importance of using experienced realtors in Southwest Florida when exploring gated communities and luxury properties cannot be overstated. Their expertise, market knowledge, and network of connections distinguish them as invaluable partners in the pursuit of a dream home. In a region renowned for its upscale living, entrusting the guidance of a seasoned real estate professional is not just a wise decision – it's a key to unlocking the doors of Southwest Florida's most exclusive residences.

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IS IT POSSIBLE TO OVERDOSE ON THC?

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

Is it Possible to Overdose on THC?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



How to Counteract the Effects of THC Naturally

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Enjoy Medical Marijuana Safely in Florida With an MMJ Card

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

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

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Stress Management

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

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

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

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



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

1. It is important to stay positive and surround yourself with people that will bring positivity in your life as well.
2. Exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy diet also helps with keeping the stress levels manageable.
3. Staying well hydrated and avoiding excessive consumption of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages also help you manage your stress.
4. Learn also how to say "no" to unnecessary requests. You need to know your limits and stick to them. It is important to know the difference between the "shoulds" and the "musts" and when needed to say "no" to taking on too much, whether

it be in your personal or professional life. Taking on too much is indeed a recipe for disaster and the root of stress for most people.

5. Lastly, getting enough sleep is also vital to stress management. Most of us are not getting the recommended 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night.

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

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The Relationship Between Hormones and Mental Health

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

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

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

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

HORMONES AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH

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

Cortisol

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

Actions controlled by cortisol include:

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

Estrogen

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

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



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

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

Progesterone

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

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

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

DHEA

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

T3 and T4

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

Melatonin

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

How Hormones Affect Mental Health

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

HORMONES CAN AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

Increases Mood Disorders

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

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

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

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

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

Impacts Sleep

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

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

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

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

Causes Mood Swings

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

Lowers Self Esteem

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

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

Increases Stress

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

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

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

Affects Fertility

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

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

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

Exercise Regularly

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

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

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

Improve Sleep Hygiene

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

Some ways to improve sleep hygiene include:

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

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

Correct Imbalanced Hormones

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

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

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

Receive Help for Your Mental Health Struggle

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Brand Partnership Benefits

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

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

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

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Elevate Your Beach Life: The Transformative Power of Deborah Korpi's Ballet-inspired Posture Therapy

By Deborah Korpi, BGS, LMT, MMP

Living at the beach offers an idyllic and relaxing lifestyle, but it's not without its challenges. Among the most overlooked but crucial issues that beach-dwellers face is poor posture. While the beach environment fosters a sense of serenity, it can inadvertently contribute to posture problems. Fortunately, Deborah Korpi's Ballet-inspired Posture Therapy, based on her 40 years of ballet training and teaching, offers an innovative solution that allows you to improve your posture in the comfort and privacy of your own home with private and individual sessions on Zoom! This unique approach not only enhances your overall well-being and appearance but also brings the grace and elegance of ballet to your beach life.

The Perils of Poor Posture at the Beach:

- 1. Muscle Strain and Fatigue:** Spending long hours lounging on the beach or carrying heavy beach gear can lead to muscle strain and fatigue, especially in the neck, shoulders, and back. Prolonged poor posture can exacerbate these issues, causing discomfort and affecting your beach experience.
- 2. Reduced Mobility:** Poor posture can restrict your range of motion, making it challenging to engage in beach activities such as swimming, surfing, or beach volleyball. Lack of mobility can lead to a sedentary lifestyle, further contributing to posture problems.
- 3. Spinal Misalignment:** Frequent slouching or hunching while sitting on the beach can gradually lead to spinal misalignment. This not only causes pain and discomfort but also affects your overall posture and physical appearance.
- 4. Breathing Difficulties:** Rounded shoulders and a forward head posture can compress your lungs, making it harder to breathe deeply. This can reduce your lung capacity and lead to feelings of fatigue and breathlessness.
- 5. Negative Self-Perception:** Poor posture can impact your self-confidence and body image. Feeling insecure about your appearance may prevent you from fully enjoying the beach lifestyle and social interactions.



BEFORE



AFTER

The Benefits of Improved Posture:

- 1. Enhanced Physical Health:** Correcting poor posture can alleviate muscle strain, reduce fatigue, and improve overall mobility. Proper alignment also enhances blood circulation, promoting better cardiovascular health.
- 2. Increased Energy and Vitality:** By improving posture, you can experience increased energy levels, allowing you to participate in more beach activities with enthusiasm and vigor.
- 3. Improved Breathing:** Better posture allows for optimal lung expansion, enhancing oxygen intake and promoting better respiratory function, which contributes to increased energy and relaxation.
- 4. Enhanced Self-Confidence:** Improved posture leads to a more upright and confident appearance, positively impacting how others perceive you and boosting your self-esteem.
- 5. Reduced Pain and Discomfort:** Correcting posture imbalances can alleviate chronic pain caused by poor alignment, allowing you to fully enjoy the beach lifestyle without discomfort.

Introducing Deborah Korpi's Ballet-inspired Posture Therapy:

Deborah Korpi's Ballet-inspired Posture Therapy is a unique and transformative solution that draws from her 40 years of ballet training and teaching, as well as her 20 years as a Massage Therapist and Medical Massage Therapist. Deborah has honed her understanding of body alignment, grace, and poise. She brings this expertise to her uniquely designed posture therapy, infusing it with the elegance and precision of ballet movements.

The Benefits of Deborah's Approach:

- 1. Ballet-inspired Movements:** Deborah's therapy incorporates ballet-inspired exercises and stretches that not only improve posture but also add a touch of grace to your everyday movements.
- 2. Personalized Attention:** With Deborah's vast experience, she provides personalized attention and guidance, tailoring the therapy to suit your specific posture needs and goals.
- 3. Mind-Body Connection:** Deborah's approach emphasizes the mind-body connection, fostering awareness of your body's alignment and posture in everyday activities, including your time spent at the beach.
- 4. Posture Refinement:** Beyond just correcting poor posture, Deborah's therapy helps refine your posture, instilling an air of poise and elegance in your overall presence.

Embrace the Benefits of Improved Posture with Deborah Korpi's Therapy:

With Deborah Korpi's Ballet-inspired Posture Therapy, you have the opportunity to elevate your beach life experience to new heights. By addressing poor posture and achieving proper alignment with the grace of ballet, you'll not only feel physically better but also radiate confidence and vitality with every movement. Embrace the convenience of this innovative therapy, and soon everyone will be asking, "What have you been doing to look so good and taller?"

Improve your posture, embrace a healthier lifestyle, and infuse the elegance of ballet into your beach life with Deborah Korpi's Ballet-inspired Posture Therapy. Enjoy your time at the beach with improved posture, and witness the positive impact it brings to every aspect of your life, guided by Deborah's expertise and passion for the art of ballet. With private and individual sessions on Zoom, you can now embark on this transformative journey from the comfort of your own home.

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THE GAME-CHANGER:

Semaglutide Revolutionizes Weight Loss Treatment

By Lisa Gonzalez, APRN-BC

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

Understanding Semaglutide and its Mechanism of Action

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

Promising Results from Clinical Trials

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

Benefits and Safety Considerations

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



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

A New Paradigm in Weight Management

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

What To Expect During My Consultation?

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

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

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



Lisa Gonzalez, APRN-BC

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

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

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You can always feel better about shopping at a locally owned and operated store. When shopping at big-box stores, your money increases a high-level executive's already immense salary. By shopping at a local business, your money will help put food on a family's table or send their kids to camp. In other words, your money is recycled into your own community.

At independent pharmacies, you'll gain all the benefits of getting to know your pharmacist, and your pharmacist getting to know you. We can always take the time to greet you by name, hear your story, and answer your questions. Having a dedicated pharmacist who knows you and your needs also means there's less chance of an error occurring. At independent pharmacies, our main goal is to help you and make sure your visit to the pharmacy is a positive experience.

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

#1 Shopping is Challenging

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

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

#2 Cooking is Becoming Difficult or Dangerous

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

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

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

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

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

#4 You Want Nutritious Food Without the Hassle

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

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

Chefs for Seniors

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

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

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

Professionally Prepared Meals and Clean Up!

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

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

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

Cost and Insurance Coverage

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

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

Multiple Meals During Visit

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

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

Special Diets

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

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BRAIN ANEURYSMS UNVEILED: Navigating the Risks, Symptoms, and Treatments

By Gregory Cannarsa, MD, Fellowship-Trained Neurosurgeon

A cerebral aneurysm, also known as intracranial or brain aneurysm, occurs when a portion of an artery wall weakens, allowing it to balloon out or widen abnormally. The condition can be caused by various factors, including congenital defects, high blood pressure, atherosclerosis, and head trauma. Lifestyle factors, such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption, can also contribute to their development.

Aneurysms can vary in size and shape, being classified as saccular aneurysms, which have a rounded sac-like appearance and are the most common type; fusiform aneurysms, which involve the entire circumference of the artery and tend to be less prone to rupture; and mycotic aneurysms, which result from infections.

Most cerebral aneurysms do not show symptoms until they rupture. Unruptured aneurysms, however, may occasionally cause symptoms if they are large enough to press on brain tissues or nerves, which could lead to pain above and behind an eye, dilated pupils, double vision, or other changes in vision, and numbness or weakness on one side of the face or body.

When an Aneurysm Ruptures

The rupture of a cerebral aneurysm is a medical emergency that leads to subarachnoid hemorrhage, a type of stroke caused by bleeding into the space surrounding the brain. This can result in sudden severe headache, nausea and vomiting, stiff neck, blurred or double vision, sensitivity to light, seizure, drooping eyelid, loss of consciousness, and even death.

Management and Treatment

The management of cerebral aneurysms is complex and depends on various factors, including the size, location, and shape of the aneurysm, whether it has ruptured, and the patient's overall health and age.

For Unruptured Aneurysms

Management strategies for unruptured cerebral aneurysms include careful monitoring and controlling risk factors, such as high blood pressure and smoking. Medical therapy may involve the use of medications to lower blood pressure. Neurosurgical intervention may be considered for larger or symptomatic unruptured aneurysms or those in patients with a high risk of rupture. The two main surgical treatments are:

- **Microvascular Clipping:** A procedure in which a neurosurgeon places a tiny clip at the base of the aneurysm to stop blood flow into it.
- **Endovascular Coiling:** A less invasive procedure that involves threading a catheter through the blood vessels to the aneurysm and then filling it with coils to prevent rupture.

Microvascular Clipping: Pros and Cons

PROS:

- **Durability:** Microvascular clipping is considered a durable treatment with a low rate of recurrence. Once the clip is securely in place, the aneurysm is permanently sealed off from the blood circulation, which effectively eliminates the risk of future bleeding from that aneurysm.
- **Direct Closure:** This procedure allows the surgeon to directly visualize and treat the aneurysm, ensuring a complete closure.
- **Long-Term Effectiveness:** Studies have shown that microvascular clipping has excellent long-term outcomes, with the vast majority of patients remaining free of aneurysm-related complications for decades after surgery.

CONS:

- **Invasiveness:** Clipping is a more invasive procedure than coiling, requiring a craniotomy (opening of the skull). This generally results in a longer recovery period and carries higher risks of complications.
- **Limited Access:** Some aneurysms, due to their location or the configuration of surrounding blood vessels, may be difficult or impossible to treat with clipping.

Endovascular Coiling: Pros and Cons

PROS:

- **Less Invasive:** Coiling is less invasive than clipping, as it involves threading a catheter through the vascular system to the aneurysm site. This usually results in shorter hospital stays and faster recovery times.
- **Lower Immediate Risks:** The procedure generally has fewer immediate risks compared to clipping, such as reduced risk of infection and less impact on surrounding brain tissue.
- **Accessibility:** Coiling can often treat aneurysms that are difficult to access surgically due to their location in the brain.

CONS:

- **Recurrence Risk:** There is a higher risk of aneurysm recurrence after coiling, necessitating regular imaging studies to monitor for potential issues. Some aneurysms may require additional treatments if they start to recur.
- **Not Suitable for All Aneurysms:** Coiling may not be an option for aneurysms with wide necks or certain shapes, as the coils need to securely lodge within the aneurysm to prevent blood flow into it.

For Ruptured Aneurysms

Immediate treatment is critical for ruptured aneurysms. This typically involves stabilizing the patient, controlling blood pressure, and preventing rebleeding and other complications. Neurosurgical intervention to secure the aneurysm is usually necessary and can be life-saving.

Prevention and Awareness

While some risk factors for cerebral aneurysms cannot be controlled, such as genetic predisposition and congenital conditions, lifestyle modifications can reduce the risk. Maintaining healthy blood pressure, quitting smoking, managing stress, and eating a balanced diet can all contribute to lower risk. Awareness of the signs and symptoms of a ruptured aneurysm is crucial for early intervention and management. Individuals experiencing sudden, severe headaches, especially if accompanied by other symptoms of a stroke, should seek immediate medical attention.

Conclusion

Cerebral aneurysms represent a significant health concern due to their potential to cause life-threatening conditions when they rupture. Advances in diagnostic imaging and treatment have improved outcomes for many patients, but early detection and management remain key. Awareness of risk factors, symptoms, and treatment options is essential for both healthcare providers and the public to mitigate the impact of these potentially devastating conditions.

About Gregory Cannarsa, MD

Dr. Cannarsa completed neurosurgical residency at the University of Maryland Medical Center/Shock Trauma Center, training in all types of neurosurgery both cranial and spinal. He focuses on cranial neurosurgery including brain tumors, hydrocephalus, stroke, brain bleeds, trauma, aneurysms, and other cerebrovascular malformations. He did a further specialized Cranial and Cerebrovascular Neurosurgery Fellowship at Swedish Neuroscience Institute in Seattle, WA. His goal is to ensure patients' quickest recovery and the longest lasting treatment whenever possible through minimally-invasive and minimally-disruptive techniques. He's a strong advocate of no-hair-shave neurosurgery such that the patient keeps all of their hair, as well as invisible closures which involves closing all incisions without the use of staples or sutures that need to be removed. He is accepting new patients which are seen within one week of referral at his practice, Apex Brain & Spine, located in Naples, Florida.



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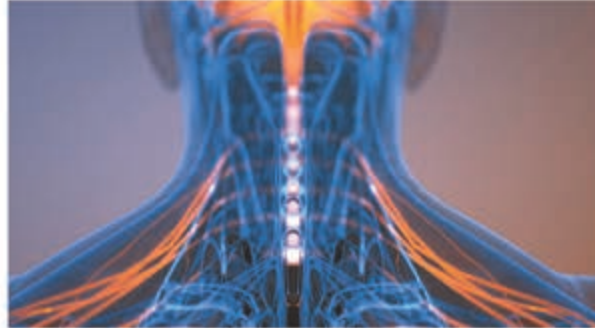
The Matterhorn Method: A Seamless Integration Between Pain Relief and Performance

By Angela Puchalla, MS, ATC, LAT

The leading company in Florida for identifying and correcting neurological compensation is Naples-based Matterhorn Fit. Through their proprietary process, called the Matterhorn Method, they have been able to successfully treat thousands of active seniors, over 70 professional athletes and 11 Olympians, in as little as two weeks. Through their comprehensive initial evaluation, they will identify exactly where the root cause of your problem is coming from, create a plan to fix it quickly, and prevent it from returning.

"Many of our clients have lost hope. They have tried traditional treatment methods and still live with pain. When you address pain, injury, and movement dysfunction from a neurological level, the results are immediate and our clients become hopeful again," says Matterhorn Fit CEO Ryan Vesce.

Ryan Vesce was on the verge of retirement from his professional hockey career after major back and hip surgery, but mentally he was not ready. Ryan teamed up with professional athlete strength coach, Sean Sullivan, to find a solution to his chronic pain. The team spent the next five years compiling various techniques they had learned in professional sports into a systematic process and applied it to Ryan's rehabilitation. The results were immediate and it enabled Ryan to keep playing for an additional 5 years pain free. Ryan and Sean founded Matterhorn Fit in 2018 to bring their newly developed process, called the Matterhorn Method, to everyday people who struggle with pain.



"When I retired in 2018, we had to tell the world what we had discovered," says Vesce. "So we started testing our new process on pro athletes, and it worked. We started testing on active seniors in the area (60-80 yr olds) and it worked. In fact, the Matterhorn Method worked so well that our clients told all of their family and friends about it. That's when we knew we had something really special. Within 2 weeks, virtually all of our patients were seeing a major reduction of pain and that has held true for thousands of our clients through today. The process worked fast. The culture was inspiring, and we began to take off."

WHY IT WORKS

The reason why Matterhorn Fit has been able to consistently relieve pain in two weeks is credited to their proprietary process called the Matterhorn Method. The Matterhorn Method identifies the root cause of the issue from a neurological level and allows for muscles that were inactive to support the body again which eliminates the pain response from the brain.

The first step in Matterhorn Fit's process is a comprehensive initial evaluation. Through their evaluation, they will be able to identify any neurological compensation in the client's system. If they do find compensations, there is a very high probability that they can improve the client's pain in two weeks.

"Through our initial evaluation we will be able to determine IF we can help you. If we do find something that we can fix, then we will start you with 6 sessions over a two week period to resolve your symptoms," says Vesce. "Over 94% of our clients have reported a major reduction of pain within two weeks. After the symptoms are resolved, we build a personalized movement plan to prevent the problem from returning."

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Empowering Parkinson's Patients: Coastal Breeze Home Health's LSVT BIG Exercise Program

Parkinson's Awareness Month is a crucial time to shed light on innovative approaches to managing this neurodegenerative condition. Among the many interventions available, Coastal Breeze Home Health stands out for its dedication to providing comprehensive care, including the LSVT BIG exercise program. This specialized regimen offers hope and improved quality of life to individuals living with Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's disease affects millions worldwide, causing tremors, stiffness, and impaired movement. While there's no cure, effective management strategies can alleviate symptoms and enhance mobility. LSVT BIG, an evidence-based program developed specifically for Parkinson's patients, focuses on enhancing movements, balance, and overall function.

Coastal Breeze Home Health recognizes the importance of personalized care for Parkinson's patients. Through the LSVT BIG program, their team of skilled therapists delivers tailored exercises designed to address each patient's unique needs. These exercises emphasize amplitude, encouraging patients to make bigger, more controlled movements to counteract the effects of Parkinson's rigidity and bradykinesia.

One of the hallmarks of LSVT BIG is its intensive nature. Patients undergo sessions multiple times a week for several weeks, allowing for concentrated practice and skill acquisition. Coastal Breeze Home Health's therapists guide patients through exercises that target everyday activities like walking, reaching, and getting up from a chair. By practicing these movements in therapy, patients can transfer their newfound skills to real-life situations, improving independence and confidence.

Moreover, the LSVT BIG program extends beyond physical exercises. It incorporates cognitive components to enhance attention, problem-solving, and multitasking abilities—skills often impaired in Parkinson's patients. Coastal Breeze Home Health's holistic approach ensures that patients receive comprehensive support to address both motor and non-motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's Awareness Month serves as an opportune time to highlight the transformative impact of the LSVT BIG program. By participating in this specialized exercise regimen, patients experience tangible improvements in their mobility and overall well-being. Enhanced movement capabilities translate to greater freedom and a higher quality of life for individuals living with Parkinson's disease.

Coastal Breeze Home Health's commitment to Parkinson's care extends beyond the therapy sessions. They provide education and support to patients and their families, empowering them with the knowledge and tools to navigate the challenges associated with Parkinson's disease. By fostering a collaborative and compassionate environment, Coastal Breeze Home Health ensures that patients feel supported every step of their journey.

Furthermore, Coastal Breeze Home Health leverages technology to enhance the delivery of LSVT BIG exercises. Through telehealth platforms, patients can access therapy sessions from the comfort of their homes, eliminating barriers to care and increasing accessibility for those with mobility limitations. This innovative approach ensures continuity of care and promotes adherence to the exercise program, ultimately leading to better outcomes for patients.

As Parkinson's Awareness Month unfolds, Coastal Breeze Home Health continues to advocate for the importance of early intervention and comprehensive care in managing Parkinson's disease. Through their dedication to the LSVT BIG program, they empower patients to reclaim control over their lives and pursue meaningful activities with confidence.

In conclusion, Parkinson's Awareness Month serves as a reminder of the resilience and determination of individuals living with Parkinson's disease. With programs like LSVT BIG offered by Coastal Breeze Home Health, there is hope for a brighter future. By prioritizing personalized care, education, and innovation, Coastal Breeze Home Health remains at the forefront of Parkinson's care, enriching the lives of patients and their families across communities.

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THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A SAFE TANNING BED

By Dr. Anne Marie Tremaine

Do not let a recent viral TikTok by Kim Kardashian persuade you, tanning beds are harmful. I would even say that tanning beds are worse than natural sunlight. UV radiation is a proven, cancer-causing carcinogen and classified in the same category as cigarettes. The Skin Cancer Foundation reported that more than 419,000 cases of skin cancer in the U.S. each year are associated with indoor tanning.

Natural sunlight emits both UVA and UVB light, while tanning beds emit UVA alone. Previously, it was thought that UVA just caused aging skin (sunsspots, skin laxity, and wrinkles) and UVB light caused skin cancer. We now know UVA causes aging skin and skin cancer. The UVA light penetrates deeper into the skin and is strongly linked to melanoma.

In addition, tanning beds emit 10 to 15 times more UVA light than the sun. There is no "safe dose" of this light, and even worse is that you have no idea how much light you are being exposed to as the tanning bulbs can vary greatly. Even with short exposure people can get burns and blisters from tanning bed use.

Minors are especially at risk. Using tanning beds before age 20 can increase your chances of developing melanoma by 47%, and the risk increases the more you use the tanning bed.



Thankfully, many states have banned minors from indoor tanning and hopefully more will get on the bandwagon soon. Countries such as Australia, Brazil, and Iran have recognized the dangers and have completely outlawed indoor tanning.

The top reason I have heard that people use a tanning bed: to get a base tan. This is a misnomer, even if you have a "base tan," you can still get a sunburn. This leads me to my next point. Many people think that it is only sunburns that are bad. Unfortunately, every time you tan OR burn, you damage the DNA in your skin. This damage accumulates and leads to wrinkles, age spots, loss of skin firmness, and worst of all, skin cancer. If you use tanning beds now or have used them in the past, I recommend having a dermatologist evaluate your skin.

Anne Marie Tremaine, MD



Dr. Anne Marie Tremaine is a board-certified dermatologist who enjoys taking care of all patients, from newborns to geriatric patients. Dr. Tremaine provides the full spectrum of dermatologic care from skin exams, skin cancer treatments, acne, rosacea, eczema, psoriasis, birthmarks, cosmetic procedures, and skin care regimens. Her goal is to treat each individual patient with a customized treatment plan, rather than treating the disease state alone or approaching treatments with a cookie cutter approach.

Dr. Tremaine settled in Naples, Florida, in 2016 after 15 years of traveling around the country for her education and training. She grew up in Western New York, but relocated to Washington, D.C., for her undergraduate training in biology. She moved back to New York for medical school, then met her husband. Before starting her dermatology residency in Irvine, California, Dr. Tremaine spent several years as a clinical investigator on numerous clinical drug trials.

After her residency, Dr. Tremaine felt compelled to continue her education in cosmetic dermatology. She moved to Boston to complete a fellowship at Harvard Medical School in laser and cosmetic surgery. This intensive year of training has allowed her to become an expert in cosmetic and laser procedures, including BOTOX®, injectable fillers, spider vein treatments, photo-rejuvenation, and options to address scarring, brown spots, and broken blood vessels. After practicing dermatology in private practice in Southern California, she and her husband made the decision to move back east to be closer to family.

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Understanding Alcohol Use Disorder and Its Impact on Relationships

By Richard J. Capiola, MD

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a chronic, relapsing brain disorder characterized by compulsive alcohol use, loss of control over alcohol intake, and negative emotional states when not using. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), approximately 14.1 million adults in the United States ages 18 and older had AUD in 2019. This condition affects individuals and significantly impacts their relationships with family, friends, and romantic partners.

Effects of Alcohol Use Disorder on Relationships:

1. Communication Breakdown: Alcohol use can impair cognitive functions, leading to difficulties in effective communication. Individuals with AUD may experience slurred speech, impaired judgment, and memory lapses, making it challenging for them to express themselves clearly. This communication breakdown can strain relationships, leading to misunderstandings, arguments, and resentment.

2. Trust Issues: Continued alcohol misuse can erode trust within relationships. Unpredictable behavior, such as lying about drinking habits, breaking promises, or engaging in risky behaviors while under the influence, can lead loved ones to question the reliability and honesty of the individual with AUD. Repeated breaches of trust can damage the foundation of relationships, causing emotional distress and distancing between partners.

3. Emotional Distress: Alcohol use disorder often coexists with mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. Individuals may turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism to numb negative emotions or alleviate stress. However, excessive alcohol consumption can exacerbate these underlying mental health issues and contribute to emotional volatility. Partners may experience heightened levels of stress, frustration, and helplessness as they witness their loved one struggle with both alcohol dependence and emotional distress.



4. Isolation and Social Withdrawal: Individuals with AUD may prioritize drinking over spending time with loved ones or participating in social activities. As alcohol becomes the focal point of their lives, they may withdraw from social gatherings, neglect responsibilities, and isolate themselves from family and friends who do not support their drinking habits. This isolation can lead to feelings of loneliness, abandonment, and alienation among both the individual with AUD and their loved ones.

5. Financial Strain: Alcohol misuse can place a significant financial burden on individuals and their families. Excessive spending on alcohol, legal fees resulting from alcohol-related incidents, and medical expenses related to health complications can deplete savings and strain household finances. Financial instability can lead to stress, arguments, and resentment within relationships, further exacerbating existing tensions.

Seeking Help and Support:

It's essential for individuals struggling with alcohol use disorder to recognize the impact of their drinking on their relationships and seek help from qualified professionals. Mental health therapists, addiction counselors, and support groups can provide valuable resources and guidance for individuals and their loved ones navigating the challenges of AUD.

Therapy sessions can offer a safe space for individuals to explore the underlying factors contributing to their alcohol misuse, develop coping strategies for

managing triggers and cravings, and improve communication and conflict resolution skills within relationships. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing, and family therapy are among the evidence-based approaches used to address AUD and its effects on interpersonal dynamics.

Additionally, support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) provide peer support and encouragement for individuals seeking sobriety. Attending meetings and connecting with others who understand their struggles can help individuals feel less isolated and more motivated to maintain their recovery journey.

Alcohol use disorder not only affects the individual but also has far-reaching consequences on their relationships with family, friends, and romantic partners. From communication breakdowns and trust issues to emotional distress and financial strain, the impact of AUD can be profound and multifaceted. However, with professional help, support, and a commitment to sobriety, individuals can repair and strengthen their relationships while addressing their alcohol misuse. If you or someone you know is struggling with alcohol use disorder, it's essential to seek help and support from qualified professionals to start the journey toward healing and recovery.

If you or someone you love is exhibiting signs of a mood disorder or other mental health issues, there is help in Southwest Florida. Dr. Richard Capiola, MD, is a board-certified psychiatrist with specialty certifications in addiction and forensic psychiatry and over 31 years of experience in the medical field. He graduated from Tulane University School of Medicine in 1990. Be sure to call Dr. Capiola ahead of time to book an appointment.

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MOLD ALLERGY

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

Sneezing is not always the symptom of a cold. According to United States Department of Health & Humans Services, sometimes, it is an allergic reaction to something in the air. Health experts estimate that 35 million Americans suffer from upper respiratory tract symptoms that are allergic reactions to airborne allergens. Worldwide, airborne allergens cause the most problems for people with allergies. The respiratory symptoms of asthma, which affect approximately 11 million Americans, are often provoked by airborne allergens.

What is mold allergy? When inhaled, tiny fungal spores, or sometimes pieces of fungi, may cause allergic rhinitis. Because they are so small, mold spores also can reach the lungs. In a small number of people, symptoms of mold allergy may be brought on or worsened by eating certain foods such as cheeses processed with fungi or mushrooms, dried fruits, and foods containing yeast, soy sauce, or vinegar will produce allergy symptoms.

Where do molds grow? Molds can be found wherever there is moisture, oxygen, and a food source. In the fall, they grow on rotting logs and fallen leaves, especially in moist, shady areas. In gardens they can be found in compost piles and on certain grasses and weeds. Some molds attach to grains such as wheat, oats, barley, and corn, which makes farms, grain bins, and silos likely places to find mold. Hot spots of mold growth in the home include damp basements and closets, bathrooms (especially shower stalls), places where fresh food is stored, refrigerator drip trays, house plants, air conditioners, humidifiers, garbage pails, furniture or the many other materials in a home.

What molds are allergenic? Like pollens, mold spores are important airborne allergens only if they are abundant, easily carried by air currents, or concentrated in the indoor environment. Found almost everywhere, mold spores in some areas are so numerous they often outnumber the pollens in the air. In general, Alternaria and Cladosporium (Hormodendrum) are the molds most commonly found both indoors and outdoors in the United States. Aspergillus, Penicillium, Helminthosporium, Epicoccum, Fusarium, Mucor, Rhizopus, and Aureobasidium (Pullularia) are common as well. Are mold counts helpful? Similar to pollen counts, mold counts may suggest the types and number of fungi present at a certain time and place.

Are there other mold-related disorders? Mold may cause other health problems similar to allergic diseases. Some kinds of Aspergillus may cause several different illnesses, including both infections and allergies. These fungi may lodge in the airways or a distant part of the lung and grow until they form a compact sphere known as a "fungus ball." Aspergillus may grasp the opportunity to invade the lungs or the whole body. In some people, exposure to these fungi also can lead to asthma or to a lung disease resembling severe inflammatory asthma called allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis. This latter condition causes wheezing, low-grade fever, and coughing up of brown-flecked masses or mucus plugs. Skin testing, blood tests, X Rays, and examination of the sputum for fungi can help establish the diagnosis.¹

What about Mold Toxins? There are also poisons released by some molds called mycotoxins, these molecules are typically smaller than the mold spore itself making it even more difficult to detect and requires special indoor testing. These poisons can cause neurological health affects and will typically be present even after a mold remediation. In fact the latest research has shown that traditional remediation process can increase the mycotoxins in the indoor environment.

If you have questions reach us at
info@americanmoldexperts.com

References:

1 Info provided by U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

NIH Publication No. 03-7045 April 2003 www.niaid.nih.gov



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CARING FOR A LOVED ONE WITH DEMENTIA: Practical Tips for Managing Anxiety

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

Caring for a loved one with dementia can be a challenging and emotional journey. As a caregiver, you play a crucial role in providing support and comfort to your loved one as they navigate the complexities of this progressive neurological condition. One common challenge faced by individuals with dementia is anxiety, which can manifest in various ways and significantly impact their well-being and yours. In this article, we will explore practical tips for managing your loved one's inevitable anxiety, understand why they experience it, and examine how your own anxiety as a caregiver can affect them.

Anxiety is a common symptom experienced by individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's and can be triggered by a variety of factors, including:

• Cognitive Decline

As dementia progresses, individuals may experience memory loss, confusion, and difficulty understanding their surroundings. These cognitive changes can lead to feelings of uncertainty and fear, contributing to anxiety.

• Environmental Changes

Any changes in the environment, such as moving to a new place, changes in routine, or unfamiliar faces, can trigger anxiety in individuals with dementia. They may struggle to adapt to new situations and feel overwhelmed by the unfamiliarity.

• Loss of Independence

Dementia can gradually strip away a person's independence, leading to feelings of frustration, helplessness, and anxiety. Tasks that were once routine and effortless may become challenging, causing distress and anxiety.

• Communication Difficulties

Individuals with dementia may have difficulty expressing their needs and understanding verbal cues. Certainly, most experience slower processing abilities and may also have lowered hearing ability. This can lead to feeling isolated and misunderstood, further exacerbating their anxiety.

As a caregiver there are strategies you can employ to help manage your loved one's anxiety and promote their well-being:

• Establish a Calm and Familiar Environment

Create a soothing and familiar environment for your loved one by minimizing noise, clutter, and other potential stressors. Maintain a consistent daily routine to provide stability and predictability, which can help reduce anxiety.

• Practice Effective Communication

First, slow your communication down. Provide time for your loved one to follow the conversation and process what you have shared or asked. Use clear, simple language and nonverbal cues to communicate. It can be helpful to comment on their emotions which can help them identify how they are feeling. For example, "Mom, it seems like you might feel nervous...." If your loved one's language skills remain intact, your ability to voice and hold space for their emotions can help them connect with their own emotions. Validate their feelings. Reassure them they are not alone.

• Engage in Meaningful Activities

Encourage your loved one to participate in activities that they enjoy and find meaningful. Engaging in hobbies, music therapy, art therapy, or gentle exercise can help distract them from their worries and reduce anxiety. Loneliness and anxiety breed loneliness and anxiety. As the disease progresses, they will need more help initiating activity.

How Caregiver Anxiety Affects Your Loved One:

It is essential to recognize that as a caregiver, your own anxiety and stress can impact your loved one's stress.

• Emotional Contagion

Individuals with dementia are highly attuned to the emotions of those around them and may notice your anxiety and stress. If you are feeling anxious, your loved one may mirror those emotions, leading to increased agitation and distress for you both. They may not be able to articulate it but if your loved one feels extra stressed or anxious, check in with yourself regularly. Is your loved one picking up on your emotions?

• Reduced Quality of Care

Caregiver anxiety can impair your ability to provide effective care. When you are feeling overwhelmed or anxious, you may be less patient, attentive, and compassionate, which can negatively impact your



loved one's well-being. Chronic caregiver stress and anxiety can strain your relationship with your loved one, leading to increased tension and conflict. This can further exacerbate their anxiety and make it challenging to maintain a supportive and nurturing environment.

Managing Caregiver Anxiety

Taking care of your own mental and emotional well-being is essential for effectively caregiving. Reach out to friends, family members, or support groups for emotional support and encouragement. Talking to others who understand what you are going through can provide validation and comfort. It may be difficult, but maintain connection to your life outside of caregiving and dementia. Accept that you cannot control dementia nor provide perfect care. Set realistic expectations for yourself. Give yourself time to rest and recharge by taking regular breaks from caregiving duties. Enlist the help of other family members, friends, or respite care services to give yourself a much-needed break.

In conclusion, caring for a loved one with dementia requires patience, compassion, and understanding. By implementing practical strategies to manage anxiety and taking care of your own well-being, you can create a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes your loved one's overall quality of life. Remember that you are not alone, and there are resources available to help you navigate this challenging journey.



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Easter and Springtime Hazards for Dogs and Cats

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

Easter Grass

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

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

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



Chocolate

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

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

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

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

Xylitol

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

Spring flowers and plants

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

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CMS has made many rules for 2024 Medicare season. If you want to enroll or review your plan over the phone, you need to agree to be recorded and Medicare requires us to keep the recording for 10 years. In person appointments do not have that requirement, but you need to sign a scope of appointment that authorizes us to talk to you about Medicare Advantage or a Drug Plan. It does not allow us to do anything but talk to you about these topics.

Many plans have decreased the cost of Insulin which will be a huge savings for so many in 2024. Part D after you, the plan and the pharmaceutical company paid \$8,000 you no longer have a cost for your medications for the rest of the year.

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



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

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

Travel Insurance – Did you know that most health insurance does NOT cover you outside of the country and that includes a cruise, in international

waters (4 miles out). Travel insurance is not just about trip cancellation but most importantly what if you got sick or had an accident on your trip. Medical Trip insurance is very important and most of the time not very costly when you weigh the benefits.

Pet Insurance – Your 4-legged family members need insurance as well, especially for the big sudden emergency room services. The younger the pet the less the cost of insurance and there are unlimited benefits as well.

Life Insurance – You are never too young to have life insurance and many types offer living benefits. As an example, I purchase life insurance for my grandchildren almost as soon as they are born. Their policy continues to build cash value that they can use during their lives, for maybe education, wedding or even a 1st home purchase. The younger you are the lower the cost.

Long Term Care Insurance – Overall, 48.7% of older adults with ADL difficulties (or an estimated 3 million persons aged 70 and older) reported needing some sort of personal assistance with one or more ADLs, and, of those individuals with need, 20.7% (or an estimated 629,000 persons) had an unmet need. Long Term Care Insurance helps pay for in home, or facility-based needs, such as assistance with acts of daily living or help with paying for a facility. Start shopping for this insurance in your 40's, but it's never too late to try. Your overall health will pay a major roll in the cost of the plan's premium. The sooner than later for affordability. Remember Medicare is NOT meant for Nursing Home Care/Skilled Nursing.

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Shockwave Therapy vs. Cortisone Therapy for Plantar Fasciitis

By Dr. Viviana Cuberos

Plantar fasciitis is a common condition characterized by inflammation of the plantar fascia, a thick band of tissue that runs across the bottom of the foot. It causes heel pain and discomfort, often impacting daily activities and quality of life. Among the various treatment options available, shockwave therapy and cortisone injections are two prominent choices. This article compares these two treatments' effectiveness, safety, and long-term outcomes.

Effectiveness: Shockwave therapy, also known as extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT), involves applying high-energy shockwaves to the affected area. These shockwaves stimulate healing by promoting blood flow and tissue regeneration. Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of shockwave therapy in relieving pain and improving function in patients with plantar fasciitis. For instance, a meta-analysis published in the Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery and Research found that shockwave therapy significantly reduced pain and improved functional outcomes compared to placebo or other treatments.

On the other hand, cortisone injections deliver a potent anti-inflammatory medication directly into the affected area. While cortisone injections provide rapid pain relief by reducing inflammation, their long-term effectiveness is debated. Research published in the American Journal of Sports Medicine suggests that cortisone injections may offer short-term relief but could potentially lead to tissue degeneration and increased risk of recurrence in the long run.

Safety: Both shockwave therapy and cortisone injections carry certain risks and potential side effects. Shockwave therapy is generally considered safe, with minimal risk of complications. However, some patients may experience temporary discomfort during the treatment or mild bruising afterward. Complications of shockwave therapy are quite rare; however, it is important that a physician assess the patient's injury and health before treatment begins.

While effective in reducing pain and inflammation, cortisone injections pose several safety concerns. Repeated injections may weaken the plantar fascia, increasing the risk of rupture or other complications. Moreover, cortisone injections can cause temporary pain at the injection site, thinning of the skin, discoloration, and even infection. Patients with diabetes or compromised immune systems may be at higher risk of adverse reactions to cortisone injections.

Long-Term Outcomes: When considering long-term outcomes, shockwave therapy offers more promising results than cortisone injections. Research published in the Journal of Foot and Ankle Surgery suggests that the benefits of shockwave therapy may persist for up to a year or longer after treatment. Furthermore, shockwave therapy has been shown to stimulate tissue healing and regeneration, potentially addressing the underlying causes of plantar fasciitis rather than merely masking symptoms.

In contrast, cortisone injections may provide temporary relief but often fail to address the underlying pathology of plantar fasciitis. A study published in the Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association found that while cortisone injections provided



short-term pain relief, patients experienced a high rate of recurrence within six months to a year after treatment. Additionally, the repeated use of cortisone injections may lead to tissue degeneration and worsen the condition over time.

Both shockwave therapy and cortisone injections offer benefits and drawbacks in treating plantar fasciitis. Shockwave therapy appears to be more effective in providing long-term pain relief and improving functional outcomes compared to cortisone injections. Furthermore, shockwave therapy is generally considered safer with minimal risk of adverse effects. However, individual patient preferences, medical history, and the severity of the condition should be considered when choosing the most appropriate treatment approach. Patients are encouraged to consult a qualified healthcare provider to determine the best course for managing their plantar fasciitis.



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Enhancing Medication Management for Individuals on the Autism Spectrum through Compounded Medications

By Jerry and Lisa Meloche, Pharm.D., Owners, Compounding Pharmacists

April marks National Autism Awareness Month, a time to illuminate individuals' challenges on the autism spectrum and explore innovative approaches to improving their quality of life. Medication management is a crucial aspect of care for many individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), yet it can pose unique challenges due to sensory sensitivities and other factors. Compounded medications offer a tailored solution to address these challenges, providing alternative dosage forms and customized formulations that meet the specific needs of individuals on the spectrum.

Medication Management for Individuals with Autism: Individuals with autism often require medication to manage co-occurring conditions such as anxiety, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), epilepsy, and sleep disturbances. These medications aim to alleviate symptoms and improve functioning but administering them can be difficult when sensory sensitivities come into play. For example, many individuals with autism have aversions to certain textures, tastes, smells, and colors commonly found in commercially available medications.

Benefits of Compounded Medications: Compounding pharmacies specialize in creating personalized medications tailored to individual patient needs. For individuals on the autism spectrum, compounded medications offer several benefits:

- 1. Alternative Dosage Forms:** Compounded medications can be formulated into various dosage forms, including liquids, creams, gels, powders, and capsules. This flexibility allows caregivers to administer medications in a more tolerable form for the individual, reducing resistance and improving adherence.
- 2. Customized Formulations:** Compounding pharmacists can create medications without colors, flavors, preservatives, or sweeteners that may trigger sensory aversions in individuals with autism. Compound medications can minimize adverse reactions and enhance acceptance by customizing the formulation.
- 3. Adjusted Doses:** Some individuals with autism may require doses of medications that are not commercially available. Compounding pharmacies can prepare custom doses based on specific therapeutic needs, ensuring optimal efficacy and safety for each patient.



4. Combination Therapies: Compounded medications can combine multiple active ingredients into a single dosage form, simplifying medication regimens for individuals with complex treatment needs. This approach can enhance convenience and improve overall medication management.

Common Medications for Individuals with Autism: While medication management varies depending on individual needs and co-occurring conditions, some commonly prescribed medications for individuals with autism include:

- 1. Antipsychotics:** Antipsychotic medications such as risperidone and aripiprazole are often used to manage irritability, aggression, and repetitive behaviors in individuals with autism.
- 2. Stimulants:** Stimulant medications like methylphenidate and amphetamine salts may be prescribed to address symptoms of ADHD, including impulsivity and hyperactivity, which commonly co-occur with autism.
- 3. Antidepressants:** Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as fluoxetine and sertraline are sometimes prescribed to manage anxiety and mood disturbances in individuals with autism.
- 4. Anticonvulsants:** Anticonvulsant medications like valproic acid and lamotrigine may be used to treat epilepsy, which affects a significant portion of individuals with autism.
- 5. Sleep Aids:** Medications such as melatonin or certain sedating antihistamines may be prescribed to improve sleep quality and address insomnia, which is prevalent among individuals with autism.

Medication management plays a vital role in the comprehensive care of individuals on the autism spectrum. Compounded medications offer a valuable solution to overcome the challenges associated with sensory sensitivities and medication adherence. By providing alternative dosage forms, customized formulations, and tailored doses, compounding pharmacies empower caregivers to optimize treatment outcomes and enhance the quality of life for individuals with autism. Caregivers need to work closely with healthcare professionals, including compounding pharmacists, to develop personalized medication regimens that address the unique needs of everyone on the spectrum.

Creative Scripts Compounding Pharmacy custom builds medication, one patient at a time. We use the highest quality pharmaceutical-grade ingredients, state-of-the-art bases, equipment, and technology. Continual training on the newest techniques, advances in therapy, and regulations allows our pharmacists and technicians to provide the safest, most effective medications for you AND your pets. In addition to compounded medications, we offer pharmaceutical-grade nutritional supplements, health advice, and hormone consults. Creative Scripts specializes in veterinary compounding, dermatology, bio-identical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT), pain management, and more. Pharmacists Jerry and Lisa Meloche have served Naples and surrounding communities since 2005.

References:
Compounded Medications for Patients with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Background for Pharmacists" by Jeannie K. Lee et al. (Journal of the American Pharmacists Association, 2018)



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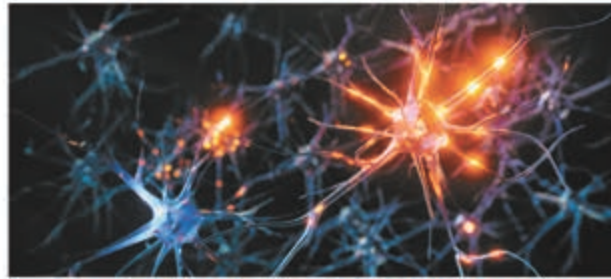
Exploring the Potential of CBD in Managing Parkinson's Disease Symptoms

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder that affects movement, causing tremors, stiffness, and difficulty with balance and coordination. While there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, various treatments aim to manage its symptoms and improve the quality of life for patients. In recent years, there has been growing interest in the potential therapeutic effects of cannabidiol (CBD), a compound derived from the cannabis plant, in managing Parkinson's disease symptoms.

CBD is one of over a hundred cannabinoids found in cannabis. Unlike tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), another well-known cannabinoid, CBD does not produce psychoactive effects. Instead, it is believed to interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, which plays a role in regulating functions such as mood, sleep, appetite, and pain sensation.

Research into the potential benefits of CBD for Parkinson's disease is still in its early stages, but preliminary studies and anecdotal evidence suggest that it may offer some relief for certain symptoms of the condition.

One of the most common symptoms of Parkinson's disease is tremors, involuntary shaking of the hands, arms, legs, jaw, or tongue. Some studies have suggested that CBD may help reduce tremors and improve motor function in Parkinson's patients. A study published in the *Journal of Psychopharmacology* found that CBD significantly reduced both the frequency and severity of tremors in Parkinson's patients



compared to a placebo. However, more research is needed to confirm these findings and understand the mechanisms underlying CBD's effects on tremors.

In addition to tremors, Parkinson's disease can cause muscle stiffness and rigidity, making it difficult for patients to move freely. CBD's potential muscle relaxant properties may offer relief for these symptoms. A study published in the *European Journal of Pain* found that CBD applied topically reduced muscle stiffness and improved mobility in rats with arthritis, suggesting that it may have similar effects in Parkinson's patients. Further clinical trials are needed to determine the optimal dosage and delivery method of CBD for managing muscle stiffness in Parkinson's disease.

Furthermore, Parkinson's disease can have a significant impact on mood and mental well-being. Depression and anxiety are common among Parkinson's patients, partly due to changes in brain chemistry caused by the disease. CBD has been studied for its potential antidepressant and anxiolytic properties, with promising results in both animal and human studies. By modulating the endocannabinoid system and interacting with serotonin receptors in the brain, CBD may help alleviate symptoms of depression and

anxiety in Parkinson's patients. However, more research is needed to determine the long-term effects and safety of CBD for managing mood disorders in this population.

It's important to note that while CBD shows promise as a potential treatment for Parkinson's disease symptoms, it is not a cure, and it may not work for everyone. Additionally, CBD can interact with certain medications commonly prescribed to Parkinson's patients, so it's essential to consult with a healthcare professional before incorporating CBD into your treatment regimen.

In conclusion, while more research is needed to fully understand the effects of CBD on Parkinson's disease, early evidence suggests that it may offer relief for symptoms such as tremors, muscle stiffness, and mood disorders. As scientists continue to explore the therapeutic potential of CBD, it holds promise as a complementary treatment option for Parkinson's patients seeking relief from the debilitating symptoms of the disease.

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Are You Practicing Mindful Wealth?

Courtesy of Nina Azwoir, First Vice President, Investments

If the past few months have given you more time for introspection, use it to improve your financial plan in a big-picture way. Even for the privileged among us who still have our jobs, are not on the front lines with the pandemic, and have not had anyone close to us felled by COVID-19, the current crisis has brought hardships big and small.

Parents have confronted the daily struggle of trying to do their jobs while also home-schooling. Adult children have not been able to visit their elderly parents. Graduations, weddings, and even funerals have been put on hold or “Zoomified.” Yet as difficult as it has been, there have been a few silver linings too, especially for those of us lucky enough to not be touched directly by the crisis. One of the most valuable is that pressing pause on our usual routines has given many of us the opportunity to take a step back, get out of our ruts, and take stock. What do we really value? What do we really miss? What can we not wait to do when this is all over? What “necessity” of our past lives, whether the daily purchased latte or frequent meals in restaurants, are we finding that we are quite happily doing without?

Travel may be someone’s greatest longing, while others miss cooking and entertaining big groups of family and friends. Talking about how the pandemic has changed our thinking on a topic, or made us want to do more of something else, can help us feel like we are using the present situation productively. The current sense of isolation will not be for naught, because it is shaping how we intend to use our lives in the future, when we once again have a full set of choices before us.

Are You Allocating Your Time and Money with Your Intentions?

It can be argued that now is a good time to put a fresh set of eyes on your financial plan, taking a similarly expansive view of it that you might not have been able to do when you were busy and mired in your day-to-day activities. Too often, one expert opined, financial plans (and planners) move straight to the “solution” phase, without stopping to ask some basic questions about what someone is trying to achieve and what their real problems are.

“Much of the scientific research about spending and happiness points to a clear connection between spending on experiences versus things.”

What will constitute “success” for you over the next few years, not just in financial terms, but in life terms, too? Are you allocating your time and money in line with your intentions, what you find fulfilling, and what brings you joy? These questions are incredibly personal; no one else can answer them for you.

Whether you are well into retirement or early in your career, it can be easy to backburner questions like these and move straight to logistics, determining your asset allocation and minimizing taxes, for example. Those are all worthy pursuits, but if you find yourself with a bit of extra time to think a bit more broadly and introspectively about your financial plan, here are some of the key questions to ask yourself.

What Expenditures Bring You Happiness?

As most investors know, the biggest determinant of whether you achieve financial success is how much you spend versus how much you save. But as important as it is to make sure your intake exceeds your outgo, budgeting can seem like sheer drudgery. Here is a different way to think about budgeting. Simply begin to take note of how various discretionary expenditures make you feel. It can be incredibly illuminating. Much of the scientific research about spending and happiness points to a clear connection between spending on experiences versus things. Many would also argue that many of life’s most memorable experiences cost very little.

How Are You Allocating Your Precious Resources?

Investors should strive to make smart allocations of financial capital across opportunity sets, not just saving versus spending but also debt pay down versus investing in the market, how much to allocate to retirement savings versus college, and so on. These are crucial topics worthy of significant analysis and introspection. Ultimately, the right answers are a matter of math (expected return on “investment”) and personal preference.

Many of us pay much less attention to how we allocate an even more scarce resource, our time, even though that allocation will ultimately have an even greater impact on whether we feel like we have met our goals. Of course, some of our time expenditures are pre-ordained, the time we spend working or caring for children, for example. Even within those allocations it seems worthwhile to be more mindful, to help ensure that your allocation of time in a given day, week, or year aligns with your goals and vision for that period. An audit of how you are allocating your time currently is a good starting point. Technology tools can help you determine how much time you waste (uh, spend) on social media and other activities that could be detracting from your productivity and happiness.

What Is Your Definition of “Enough”?

Many of us are operating with an incredibly vague notion of how much we really need to save in order to achieve our financial goals and find security. Even financial planners might rely on rules of thumb when setting your retirement savings target. For example, they might assume that you will need 80% of your working income in retirement and extrapolate the rest of your plan from there.

As humans, we often have a natural tendency to reach for more more more, regardless of whether that “more” is actually bringing more happiness and security. Trying to keep up with the people around us, in terms of possessions and outward signs of success, can get exhausting and may not get us any closer to our life’s goals. That is why, in this period of limited activity, spending, and social contact, it is worthwhile to think through your own definition of enough, both now and for the future.

What Do You Want Your Legacy to Be?

When taking a strictly financial and estate-planning perspective, leaving a “legacy” is one of those topics that can seem overly narrow. It is about leaving assets behind for children, grandchildren, and other loved ones, as well as charity if we so choose. It is about making sure we do not burden the people we care about. Those are crucial considerations and they are why everyone needs an estate plan that includes wills, powers of attorney, and beneficiary designations, among other key documents.

While you are at it, why not think big picture about your legacy, too? What do you hope people will say about you after you are gone? What life philosophy or pieces of wisdom do you hope that your loved ones will always associate with you? If you find yourself with a bit of extra time for introspection, write down a few ideas along these lines. And no, you are not too young to start thinking about this. You can find templates for creating a “personal legacy” online, but some good advice is not to overthink it. Balance more serious ideas with more lighthearted ones. We all have credos that we live by; make sure your loved ones know yours.

**Nina Azwoir, First Vice President of Investments,
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What is the meaning of crystal personalization? Personalizing a crystal consists of aligning the vibrational frequencies of the crystal or in some cases a certain range of frequencies of the crystal with the frequencies of a specific person. All crystals, just like everything that exists in this and all universes, are fundamentally based on vibrational frequencies. From their unimaginable small beginnings, starting their process of alienation and transformation, more infinitely unimaginable small fractions of time. This "time" is nothing like we know here on earth. These vibrations are already pure energy, magnetism, existence and non-existence, creation and negation, in addition to being components of the whole in and of themselves.

During the process of crowding, combination, adaptation, mixing, alignment, and harmonic condensation, the vibrations increase their density. They share information to create the visible and invisible, the perceptible and the imperceptible. Within one of these billions of vibrational paths one can identify and define crystals. The crystals are capable of receiving, storing processing, and sharing information, which in turn is vibration moving at different frequency scales. All these crystals, even in their extremely pure form, already accumulate information. This information comes in the form of exploitation, recollection, transportation, storage, and all the extensive manipulation. The crystals ultimately absorb an especially wide range of emotional impressions contributed mostly unconsciously by those who came into direct contact with them. In our existence and within the immense dimensionality of vibrations of which we are composed, we share specific vibrational frequencies with each and every one of the crystals.

Crystals are possible to manipulate by creating a direct alignment with the vibrations of a specific imbalance due to multiple circumstances. It is also possible to program crystals so they interact directly by collecting, accumulating and processing low-density vibrations, which could be affecting an organ and/or organism. For this it is necessary to **FIRST**: perform an Energetic Cleanse, eliminating all possible vibrational contamination collected previously, during this process, communication with the crystal begins by opening one of its vortices, thus being able to enter the interior of his library, which is composed of multiple hallways, levels and sub-levels. Reading, visualizing and identifying the crystal's content. Once this intervention has been carried out, it is necessary to equalize the vibrations that are not its own. In this case we could assimilate as surgical energy blockages, proceeding to remove and eliminate all that unwanted information.

SECOND: Energization; which consists of raising the level of resonance through the spiral application of frequencies of the same intensity. As a result, the expansion or amplification of its energy level will be expressed in the form of sensory resonance so one can feel between other things during the alignment or personalization process.

THIRD: Personalization; consists of synchronizing the vibrational memory of the crystal with the cellular memory of the energy fields with whom the crystal has possession, specific and according to each particular case. Multiple steps taken through each case the harmonic alignment of high-frequencies vibratory impulses of the crystal, with the vibrational frequencies of an organic being that oscillate at the same energy levels of the crystal, creating a protective field that surrounds the organism or part of it with the crystal.

Giving the crystal a specialized and specified ability, depending on the necessity for collecting, blocking, minimizing and/or canceling possible negative interactions that could be influencing the individual's magnetic field.

Next, low energy levels; by intersecting the high energy sources of the clean and energized crystal with the vibrational imbalances of an organism or one of its organs, it is possible to raise the degree of energy by channeling the amplified emissions of the energetic level of the crystal. To summarize, in order to **PERSONALIZE** a crystal, it must go through the process of alignment, channeling, attunement of energy levels and intensity of vibratory frequencies of the crystal, which is connected with those of any organic being.

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The Secret to Younger-Looking Skin and Hair Regrowth

By Dr. Andrew and Teresa Kontos

In the quest for eternal youth and radiant beauty, advancements in medical science have led to the discovery of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) as a revolutionary treatment. This natural and innovative therapy has gained immense popularity for its remarkable ability to enhance skin rejuvenation and stimulate hair regrowth.

Platelet-rich plasma is derived from the patient's own blood, making it a safe and autologous treatment. The process involves drawing a small amount of blood and then using a centrifuge to separate the platelets, growth factors, and other bioactive proteins from the rest of the blood components. This concentrated plasma is then strategically applied to target areas, providing a powerful boost for both skin and hair.

One of the key benefits of PRP therapy is its ability to stimulate collagen production in the skin. Collagen, a protein responsible for maintaining skin's elasticity and firmness, naturally diminishes with age. By introducing PRP into the skin, the growth factors prompt the production of new collagen, resulting in a smoother, tighter, and more youthful complexion. This process is particularly effective in reducing fine lines, wrinkles, and acne scars, making PRP a sought-after treatment in the field of aesthetic medicine.

Moreover, PRP is not limited to facial rejuvenation; it has shown remarkable success in addressing hair loss and promoting hair regrowth. Hair follicles are nourished and stimulated by the growth factors present in PRP, which can lead to thicker, healthier hair. This has been a game-changer for individuals experiencing hair thinning or balding, providing a non-surgical alternative that taps into the body's natural healing mechanisms.

The versatility of PRP extends beyond its cosmetic applications. Orthopedic and sports medicine have embraced this therapy for its ability to accelerate healing and reduce inflammation in injured tissues. Athletes, in particular, have turned to PRP injections to aid in the recovery of joint injuries and promote faster tissue regeneration.

As with any medical procedure, it's essential to consult with a qualified healthcare professional before undergoing PRP therapy. A thorough assessment of the individual's health, medical history, and specific concerns is crucial to determine the suitability of the treatment.



In conclusion, platelet-rich plasma stands as a groundbreaking solution in the pursuit of younger-looking skin and hair regrowth. Harnessing the body's natural healing capabilities, PRP therapy offers a safe and effective option for those seeking non-invasive yet transformative results. Whether used for facial rejuvenation, hair restoration, or in the realm of sports medicine, the applications of PRP continue to expand, unlocking the potential to turn back the hands of time and reveal a more vibrant, confident self.

Soluna Medical Aesthetics is a luxury medical spa in Bonita Springs, FL. Our core belief is that reducing stress and tension is crucial for improving our clients' well-being. Our treatments are designed to benefit the entire body and are administered by expert staff in body treatments, aesthetics, and skincare, including services like acne treatment, anti-aging procedures, and cosmetic treatments. In addition, we focus on enhancing both mental as well as physical rejuvenation through methods like meditation and energy healing.

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Teresa Kontos

Teresa Kontos is the co-owner and Human Resources Director of Innovative Dermatology and Mohs Surgery Center for the past 8 years. The company has grown into two locations, and both are thriving and successful. Mrs. Kontos has a master's degree in social work and in Human Resources. Mrs. Kontos has over 20 years of experience working in social work. She has been a Director of Foster Care, Clinical Director in a Juvenile Delinquency facility, therapist and caseworker in both foster care and hospice. She has two business certifications from International Association of Professions Career College, Spa Owner Certificate and Metaphysical Shop Owner Certificate. Mrs. Kontos is certified in many areas of Wellness as well. She has experience in Energy/Sound/Crystal healings, mediation, life coach and many other areas of metaphysical treatments.

Mrs. Kontos is a wife of 20 years and mother of 3 children. Her hobbies include reading, scuba diving (including coral restoration projects and dive against debris projects), cooking, walking and taking care of her animals.

Dr. Andrew Kontos

Dr. Andrew Kontos is a highly regarded board-certified dermatologist and fellowship-trained and board-certified Mohs micrographic and cutaneous oncology surgeon. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and a master's and medical degrees from Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan with an internship at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan. Thereafter, he completed residency and extensive training with fellowships in clinical research and phototherapy and epidermolysis bullosa within the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, Michigan. Advancing his skills and credentials, Dr. Kontos obtained fellowship-training in Mohs micrographic surgery and cutaneous oncology in Tampa, Florida.

Following his education and training, Dr. Kontos moved to Southwest Florida in 2007 to devote his training and expertise in advanced dermatology to the Greater Fort Myers and Naples communities. An esteemed physician and surgeon, he began Innovative Dermatology and Mohs Surgery in 2015 to provide attentive and individualized medical care, specializing in general and complex skin conditions with a primary focus on detecting and preventing skin cancer. A fellowship-trained expert in Mohs micrographic surgery and cutaneous oncology, Dr. Kontos precisely identifies and removes skin cancer with minimal potential for scarring and the lowest chance of re-growth. This technique is considered the most effective skin cancer treatment with a 99% cure rate and performed in the office for comfort and convenience.

Committed to providing high-quality skin care, Dr. Kontos remains up to date in medical advancements to continue offering the best care available for his patients. The values that guide his patient-centered model of delivering positive outcomes are compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence.

Dr. Kontos is a dedicated husband of 20 years and father of three. He is fluent in the Greek language. His personal hobbies include traveling, astronomy, classical studies, and scuba diving.



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Your Clean Home is Our Business



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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When You Are At Your Wits End

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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