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May 2024

Collier Edition - Monthly

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CONTENTS MAY 2024

- 6 Closing Deals with a Smile:
The Story of a Real Estate Agent's
Transformation
- 7 Understanding the Increased Risk
of Breast Cancer in Ashkenazi Jewish
Women
- 8 Is Your Skin Ready for Summer?
- 9 Developing Healthy- Habits Could
be the Key to Reducing Risk of Stroke
- 10 Weight Loss and Your Heart
- 11 Understanding the Role of
Exercise in Cancer Risk Reduction
- 12 Peripheral Neuropathy:
There is a Treatment!
- 13 Transforming Dentistry Through
Advanced Robotics
- 14 Nurturing Your Eyesight:
The Significance of May as
Healthy Vision Month
- 15 Exploring Funeral Traditions
and Innovation in End-of-Life Services
- 16 Holistic Answers to Your Questions
for Common Health Concerns
- 17 The Non-Surgical Solution
to Chronic Disc Pain
- 18 Connecting SWFL to Support
Older Adults
- 19 Exploring the Spectrum of Neurotoxins
in Cosmetics: Enhancing Beauty Safely
- 20 What is Plantar Fasciitis?
- 21 Are You Struggling with
Urinary Incontinence?
- 22 The Carlisle Naples Celebrates
Older American and the Power of
Connection
- 23 Understanding Arthritis:
Arthritis Awareness Month
- 24 Shedding Light on Stroke
Awareness Month: Unveiling the Link
Between Strokes and Vision
- 25 Unlocking the Secrets of
Microneedling

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26 Understanding Stroke:
The Importance of Awareness
and Prevention

27 Hearing Loss Is Common Across
the Lifespan: National Speech, Language,
Hearing Month

28 The Advantages of Home Health
Care for Seniors: A Pathway to Comfort,
Safety, and Independence

29 Understanding and Preventing
Skin Cancer in Sunny Florida

30 How Your Sex Hormones Can
Support (or Hinder) Your Weight Loss
Journey

32 The Rising Promise of Semaglutide
in Weight Loss

33 Arthritis... Help!

40 Hiring an Experienced Realtor for
Your Real Estate Journey Matters

42 Revocable Living Vs. Irrevocable
Trusts: Differences That Matter

44 Harnessing The Healing Potential
of Neuroacupuncture for Parkinson's
Disease

46 Understanding the Root Causes
and Effective Treatments for Back Pain

48 Menopause and UTIs: What Every
Woman Should Understand

50 What Does An Otolaryngologist Do?

52 In Celebration of May as Mental
Health Awareness Month

53 Compounded Hormone
Replacement Therapy

54 Are You Practicing Mindful Wealth?

55 Shockwave Therapy: A Superior
Approach for Tennis Elbow Relief

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

57 Understanding Depression:
Diagnosis and Expert Management

58 Mental Health Matters at
Creative Scripts: How Can Estriol
Help You?

59 The Matterhorn Method:
Lightning Fast Pain Relief

60 Eating Heart Healthy Meals
Just Got a Whole Lot Easier

61 Beyond the Legend: Bob Marley's
Legacy Sheds Light on Melanoma

62 How Mold Affects the Elderly

63 Caring for Caregivers: Nurturing
Mental Health Amidst the Demands of
Dementia Care

64 Health Insurance

65 High Blood Pressure in Pets:
Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment

66 Crystal Personalization at
Healing Crystal Tunnel

67 6 Household Cleaning Supplies
New Homeowners Should Have

68 CBD And Ways to Manage
Mental Health

69 Spiritual Wellness:
Slowing the Pace of Your Life



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Closing Deals with a Smile: The Story of a Real Estate Agent's Transformation

By Dr. William Campbell

Loretta Copper has handled high-end client asset acquisitions for the past 30 years, with the past eight years in Real Estate from Lakewood Ranch to Naples. But today, she wants to show you her smile. Due to low calcium levels, tooth erosion from acid reflux, and her nightly jaw clenching and grinding, Loretta had many cracked and chipped teeth. Loretta states, "One day, I just looked in the mirror and decided this was the day I was going to do something about my mouth. So, I got online and started researching dentists in the area. Park Family Dental had SO many great patient reviews, literally hundreds of positive reviews from happy patients. I sat at my computer, read these reviews, saw the before and after pictures of patients, and called to make an appointment immediately."

"When I went for my initial consultation, I was terrified of the unknown. The pain? The cost? The time? But once I sat in the chair and met Dr. Campbell and his team, all those fears disappeared. Dr. Campbell asked me what I wanted, and I told him I want a beautiful smile! We went over my treatment options, and I felt more confident that day."

Dr. Campbell and his team first updated Loretta's dental hygiene needs. Next, they prepared her upper and lower arches the same day. Dr. Campbell shares, "Typically, between preparation of all teeth, temporary fabrication, and final impressions for the lab, this appointment could take most of the day. Approximately 6 hours or more. The first day is definitely a long day; however, patients can see immediate differences in their smiles and, ultimately, their self-confidence."

Loretta recalls the moment when assistant Alejandra handed her a mirror: "I couldn't smile big enough!! Initially, I was only going to have the top teeth treated on the first day, but I loved the results so much that I asked if we could work on the bottom teeth that day, too. Alejandra and James kept asking me if I was ok, if I needed a break, did I want to take a walk and stretch my legs, but I had a goal of a beautiful smile and I wasn't backing down. I spent 16 hours in the dental chair this one day and Dr. Campbell's team provided the utmost level of care to meet my needs."

Dr. Campbell knows the importance of a great team. Clinical Team members Alejandra Munoz, Ana Perez, and James Garcia are part of the magic. Dr. Campbell states, "James, who has been with me chair-side for about 10 years now, is phenomenal with his temporaries. Patients sometimes don't want to give up their temps for the real deal." James, Ana, and Alejandra



Loretta Copper

have a way of connecting with patients who trust their care to them and often ask for them by name when they schedule their appointments."

At her final fitting, Loretta affirms she wasn't the only one shedding tears. Alejandra brought in a bottle of bubbly, and we all toasted my new smile! I can't express how my self-confidence and self-esteem have blossomed since I met the Park Dental Team. Even my granddaughter noticed. When a child says, "Grandma, you smile so much more now." It makes the whole process worthwhile."

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.



Before



After



Dr. William Campbell

Since becoming a dentist in 2009, Dr. William Campbell has cherished the opportunity to provide tangible, often immediate, benefits to the lives of his patients, whether by restoring their self-confidence through cosmetic work or by relieving their pain in their dental emergencies. Since graduating from dental school, Dr. Campbell has committed to continuing his education to provide the most informed care for his patients. He offers a wide range of specialized services, including gum recession treatment, bone grafting, dental implants, and cosmetic smile makeovers. He has been named a Top Dentist by Naples Illustrated twice so far.

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Understanding the Increased Risk of Breast Cancer in Ashkenazi Jewish Women

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide, affecting millions of individuals each year. While breast cancer can occur in women of all ethnicities, research has shown that Ashkenazi Jewish women have a higher susceptibility to the disease compared to other populations. Understanding the factors contributing to this increased risk and the importance of genetic testing can empower individuals to take proactive steps in managing their health.

Background: Why Are Ashkenazi Jewish Women More Susceptible to Breast Cancer?

Ashkenazi Jews are individuals of Central and Eastern European Jewish descent with a distinct genetic heritage. Studies have indicated that Ashkenazi Jewish women have a higher prevalence of specific genetic mutations, particularly in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, compared to the general population. These mutations significantly increase the risk of developing breast cancer, as well as ovarian and other cancers.

Geographical Distribution and Lifestyle Factors:

While Ashkenazi Jews are dispersed throughout the United States and other countries, there are significant populations in areas such as New York, New Jersey, and California. However, the increased risk of breast cancer among Ashkenazi Jewish women cannot be attributed solely to geographical location. Instead, genetic factors and cultural practices may play a more significant role.

Dietary Habits:

Some researchers have suggested that dietary habits among Ashkenazi Jews may contribute to their increased risk of breast cancer. Traditional Ashkenazi Jewish cuisine, which often includes foods high in fat and calories, may influence cancer risk. However, more research is needed to fully understand the impact of diet on breast cancer risk in this population.

Set Apart from Other Breast Cancer Statistics:

Ashkenazi Jewish women are set apart from other breast cancer statistical demographics due to their higher prevalence of genetic mutations associated with the disease. While genetic mutations such as BRCA1 and BRCA2 are found in all ethnic groups, they are particularly common among Ashkenazi Jews, affecting approximately 1 in 40 individuals compared to 1 in 400 in the general population [1]. This significantly elevates the lifetime risk of developing breast cancer and underscores the importance of genetic testing and early detection.

The Role of Genetic Testing:

Genetic testing plays a crucial role in identifying individuals at increased risk of hereditary breast cancer,



including Ashkenazi Jewish women. Testing for mutations in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes can help assess an individual's risk and inform personalized screening and prevention strategies.

Outcomes of Genetic Testing:

The outcomes of genetic testing for breast cancer risk can vary depending on the results. A positive result indicates the presence of a harmful mutation in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, significantly increasing the lifetime risk of developing breast and ovarian cancers. In contrast, a negative result indicates the absence of these mutations, although it does not eliminate the possibility of developing breast cancer.

Ashkenazi Jewish women face a higher risk of breast cancer due to genetic factors, particularly mutations in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes. Genetic testing offers a valuable tool for identifying individuals at increased risk and guiding personalized screening and prevention strategies. By understanding their genetic risk factors and taking proactive measures, Ashkenazi Jewish women can empower themselves to make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

Genetic counseling and gene testing are part of Magnolia Breast Center's comprehensive approach to breast health which encompasses all areas of this journey: prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship.

Magnolia Nurse practitioner Julie Stewart, MSN, APN, WHNP, is dedicated to evaluating women with risk factors for breast cancer and helps them develop a high risk screening program that works for them. Genetic counseling is completed in the office and if appropriate, genetic testing can be done at the same time.

References:

1. National Cancer Institute. (n.d.). Genetics of Breast and Gynecologic Cancers (PDQ®)—Health Professional Version. Retrieved from https://www.cancer.gov/types/breast/hp/breast-ovarian-genetics-pdq#_2

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.

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. During this time, she also participated in training the next generation of surgical residents in the General Surgery and Plastics Residency Programs at Southern Illinois University. 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.

In her free time, Dr. Mai enjoys traveling, cooking, exercising, weight training, yoga, reading, and spending time with her family.



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Is Your Skin Ready for Summer?

Preparing our skincare routines for the upcoming summer months is crucial as we approach May, which marks Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month. Advanced Medical Aesthetician Brittany Napior emphasizes the importance of prevention, stating, "In the summer, we are naturally outdoors much more. The biggest target to hit when it comes to skincare is prevention." Brittany advocates for incorporating antioxidant-rich serums, such as Vitamin C, and emphasizes the significance of sun protection.

Brittany highlights the importance of layering skincare products for efficacy and success. She suggests the following morning skincare routine:

1. Cleansing
2. Vitamin C serum
3. Moisturizer
4. Eye cream
5. Sunscreen

Brittany explains the misconception surrounding sun protection, distinguishing between chemical filters found in sunscreen and mineral/physical sun protection in sunblock. "There is a misunderstanding that all sun protection is created equal," Brittany notes. She explains that while sunscreen protects against skin

cancer and aids in preventing brown spots and pigmentation, it can exacerbate conditions like melasma and rosacea due to the conversion of sun rays into heat.

On the other hand, sunblock acts as a mirror, completely blocking the sun's rays and repelling them away from the skin. Brittany recommends sunblock for outdoor activities, particularly in regions like South Florida, where sun exposure is frequent. She reassures that modern formulations of micronized zinc provide effective protection without traditional zinc-based sunblocks' thick, sticky texture.

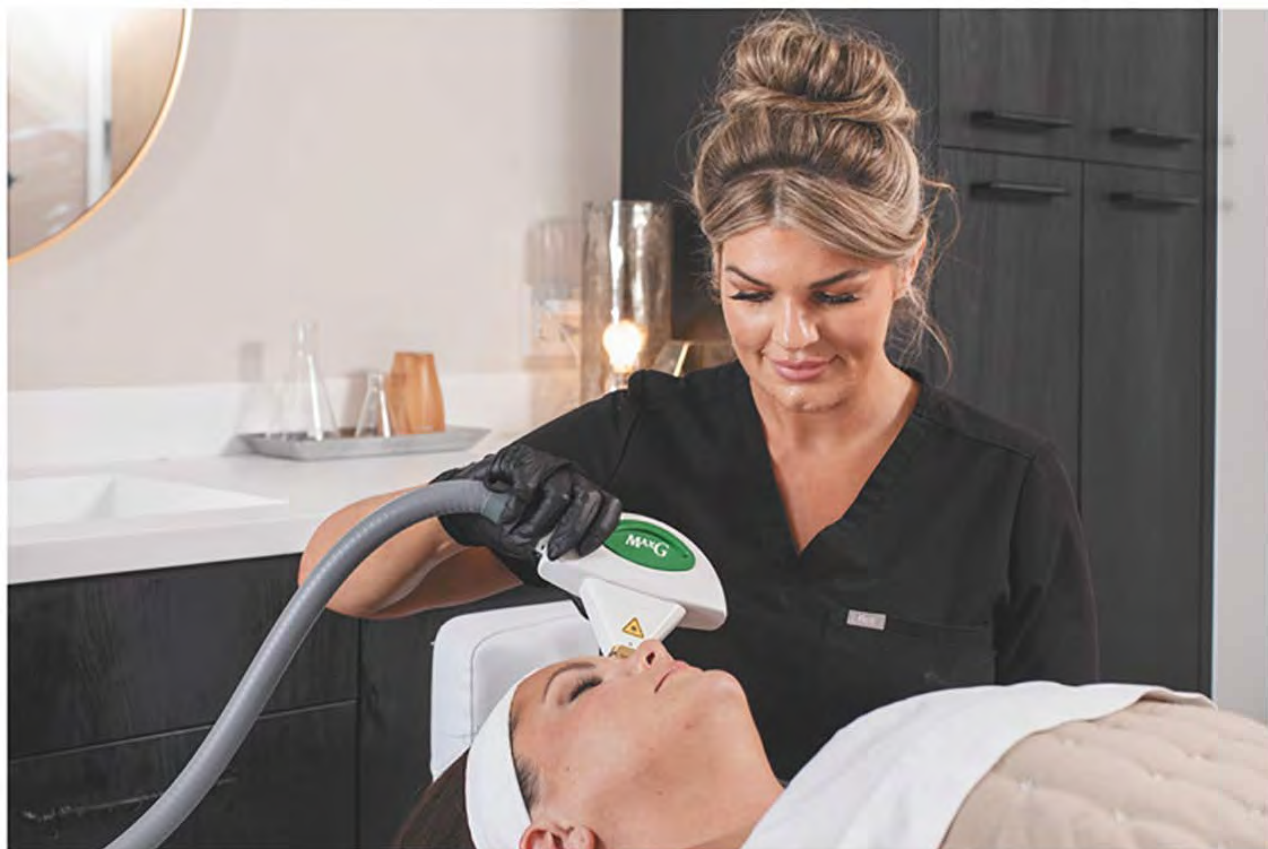
At the Naples Aesthetic Institute, we offer a range of skincare products from trusted brands like Skinbetter Science, Skinceuticals, and Dr. Gill's own skincare line. Brittany and her team of aestheticians can assist you in selecting the right antioxidant and sun protection products tailored to your needs.

Our most sought-after treatment during the summer is the Diamond Glow facial, paired with an antioxidant-rich serum to rejuvenate and protect the skin. Brittany emphasizes, "Prevention is key, and with the right skincare regimen, you can enjoy the outdoors safely while preserving the health and beauty of your skin."



Brittany Napior
Advanced Medical Aesthetician

Naples native, Brittany Napior brings to us 14 years in medical aesthetics and makeup artistry. In skincare, she takes a result-oriented approach that provides deep exfoliation and hydration to bring out the skin's natural glow. She prides herself on demonstrating medical-grade care while maintaining the relaxing feel of a spa environment. She developed her passion for makeup after seeing the transformation and new found confidence from her post-surgical and laser patients.



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Developing Healthy Habits Could be the Key to Reducing Risk of Stroke

The number of age-adjusted deaths in Collier County due to stroke has been on the rise since 2013, but there are key steps you can take to both help prevent a stroke and recognize symptoms to ensure care is provided quickly.

May is National Stroke Awareness Month, raising the profile of just how critical it is to identify stroke symptoms and seek care if stroke is suspected.

Stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain either ruptures or is blocked by a clot. The brain is deprived of blood and oxygen, destroying millions of brain cells within minutes. This can cause temporary or permanent brain damage, disability, and even death.

However, the risk of stroke can be significantly reduced by adopting a healthy lifestyle and controlling risk factors like high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. The following lifestyle habits can help prevent strokes.

Don't smoke: If you smoke, stop, and also avoid secondhand smoke. The risk of having a stroke increases 12% for every five cigarettes smoked each day. For African-American adults, smoking cigarettes more than doubles the risk of stroke compared to never smoking.

Eat well: Prioritize eating high quality food like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fish and nuts while limiting foods with high cholesterol, saturated fats and trans fats.

Exercise: The American Heart Association found those who are more active have a 25 - 30% lower risk of stroke. Exercising can be as simple as walking, gardening or riding a bike.

Reduce alcohol: Drinking too much alcohol can increase blood pressure levels and triglycerides, a form of fat in the blood that can harden arteries. For women, limit alcohol to one serving per day, and two servings per day for men.

These healthy habits may also reduce the long-term effects of stroke; pending how quickly care is received. Use **BE FAST** to remember stroke symptoms, and call 911 if someone is displaying the following.



- **BALANCE:** Is there a sudden loss of balance or coordination?
- **EYES:** Is there sudden blurred or double vision?
- **FACE:** Is one or both sides of the person's face drooping or numb?
- **ARMS:** Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one side drift downward? Is there weakness or numbness on one side?
- **SPEECH:** Does the person have slurred or garbled speech?
- **TIME:** If the person experiences the sudden onset of any of these symptoms, call 911 for immediate medical attention. Getting the person to the hospital as quickly and as safely as possible is crucial for treatment to possibly stop the stroke in progress and reduce long-term effects.

Physicians Regional Healthcare System has two emergency departments, both with the ability to care for patients with stroke symptoms. Physicians Regional - Pine Ridge is a Comprehensive Stroke Center and

delivers the highest quality of care to the most complex cases, offering evidence-based treatments. Pine Ridge also earned the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes the hospital's commitment to guaranteeing stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines.

Physicians Regional - Collier Blvd is designated as a Primary Stroke Center, highlighting the ability to stabilize and treat most emergent stroke patients.

For more information on the stroke program, please visit
[https://www.physiciansregional.com/stroke-care.](https://www.physiciansregional.com/stroke-care)



Weight Loss and Your Heart:

The Dangers of Muscle Mass Loss While Taking Weight Loss Medications

Preventing Muscle Loss: Vital for Heart Health

Our bodies undergo various changes as we age, including gradually losing muscle mass and strength. This process, known as sarcopenia, is not just a concern for our physical appearance but also for our overall health, particularly our heart health. Preserving muscle mass matters, especially for individuals taking weight loss medications like GLP-1 agonists, and how Naples Cardiac and Endovascular Center is leading the way in addressing this issue.

Understanding the Connection Between Muscle Loss and Heart Disease

Sarcopenia isn't just about losing muscle; it's about losing a key component of our body's health and vitality. Recent studies have shown that the decline in muscle mass is closely linked to an increased risk of heart disease and other cardiovascular complications. This is particularly relevant for individuals with coronary heart disease (CHD), where maintaining muscle strength becomes even more critical.

Research has indicated that individuals with low muscle mass tend to experience higher rates of major adverse cardiovascular events (MACEs) and all-cause mortality. These findings underscore the importance of addressing muscle health in cardiovascular disease management.



Why Muscle Matters for Heart Health

Our muscles do more than help us move; they play a crucial role in supporting our cardiovascular system. Strong muscles promote better blood circulation, help regulate blood sugar levels, and contribute to overall metabolic health. By preserving muscle mass, we can better protect our heart and reduce the risk of cardiovascular complications.



Introducing Naples Cardiac and Endovascular Center's Approach

At Naples Cardiac and Endovascular Center, we understand the importance of preserving muscle mass, especially for individuals undergoing weight loss treatments like GLP-1 agonists. That's why we've integrated state-of-the-art equipment to accurately measure muscle mass in our patients participating in weight loss programs.

Led by renowned specialists like Dr. Leandro Perez, Dr. Tracy Roth, Dr. Javier, and the newest addition, Dr. Solano, our team is dedicated to helping patients maintain their muscle mass while achieving their weight loss goals. With board-certified lifestyle specialists on board, we offer comprehensive wellness programs tailored to each individual's needs.

Empowering Patients for Better Health

We believe that knowledge is power, so we're committed to educating our patients about the importance of muscle health in preventing cardiovascular disease. By providing the latest tools and techniques for measuring muscle mass and personalized lifestyle recommendations, we empower our patients to take control of their heart health and overall well-being.

Higher precision enables best estimate of Appendicular Lean Mass (ALM) for effective assessment of sarcopenia.

Take Charge of Your Health

If you're taking any of the new weight loss medications like Ozempic, Wegovy or other formulations for weight loss or have concerns about preserving muscle mass, don't hesitate to contact Naples Cardiac and Endovascular Center. Our team is here to support you on your journey to better health. Call us at 239-300-0586 to schedule a consultation and learn more about our innovative heart health and muscle preservation approach.

**Julian J Javier, MD, FACC, FSCAI and
Leandro Pérez MD, FSCAI, FACC**

Dr. Javier and Dr. Perez are board-certified in cardiovascular disease and interventional cardiology. They are fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the Society of Cardiac Angiography and Interventions.



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UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF EXERCISE IN CANCER RISK REDUCTION

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

Exercise is frequently touted as a vital component of a healthy lifestyle, and its benefits extend beyond physical fitness. Research suggests that regular physical activity can reduce the risk of certain types of cancer. However, it's essential to examine the evidence critically and understand the nuances of this relationship.

Types of Cancer Affected by Exercise

Numerous studies have explored the connection between exercise and cancer risk, with varying degrees of certainty across different types of cancer. For instance, Dr. Jennifer Ligibel, senior physician in the Breast Oncology Center at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, notes there is strong evidence to suggest that regular exercise may lower the risk of breast and colon cancers. Other cancers, such as bladder, endometrial, esophageal, kidney, and gastric cancers, also show promising associations with physical activity, albeit with moderate strength evidence.

Uncertainties and Complexity

Despite the encouraging findings, it's important to acknowledge the complexity of the relationship between exercise and cancer risk. The data primarily relies on observational studies, which have limitations in establishing causality. Factors such as the type and intensity of exercise and individual characteristics may influence the outcomes.

Examining the Evidence

A recent study published in *Cancer Cell* sheds light on the impact of exercise on cancer incidence. The study, which analyzed data from the Prostate, Lung, Colorectal and Ovarian Cancer Screening Trial, revealed lower risks for certain cancers among individuals who engaged in vigorous exercise. However, the findings also highlighted discrepancies, with some cancers showing no significant connection to exercise.

Quantifying the Benefits

While the exact magnitude of exercise's protective effect on cancer risk remains a topic of debate, research suggests that even modest levels of physical activity can confer benefits. According to a systematic review by the Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee, individuals with higher



physical activity levels may experience a 10%- 20% lower risk of developing certain cancers than sedentary individuals.

Optimizing Exercise for Cancer Prevention

Determining the optimal exercise "dose" for cancer risk reduction poses a challenge. Current recommendations advocate for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week, supplemented by strength training. However, the ideal type and exercise intensity for cancer prevention warrants further investigation.

Mechanisms of Action

The mechanisms underlying exercise's protective effect on cancer risk are multifaceted and not yet fully understood. Studies suggest exercise may influence tumor growth and immune function, thereby mitigating cancer development. The association between exercise and lower cancer risk persists even after accounting for confounding factors such as body weight.

Practical Considerations

Encouraging individuals to adopt and maintain a physically active lifestyle is paramount. While guidelines provide general recommendations, it's essential to tailor exercise prescriptions to individual

preferences and capabilities. Emphasizing enjoyable and sustainable activities can facilitate adherence to exercise regimens.

Exercise holds promise as a modifiable factor in reducing the risk of certain cancers. While the evidence is not definitive, incorporating regular physical activity into daily routines can contribute to overall health and well-being. Inspire Exercise Medicine's Director of Health and Wellness Dr. Nancy Tarbell notes that "as medical professionals, we advocate for an active lifestyle as part of a comprehensive approach to cancer treatment and prevention. We at IEM believe in the importance of strength training. Our small class size and individualized program also helps keep the joy in exercise as medicine."

Sources:

<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/does-exercise-reduce-cancer-risk-its-just-not-simple-2024a10004g0?form=fpf>



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PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY: THERE IS A TREATMENT!

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

Do you have numbness or tingling in your arms, hands, legs, feet, or toes? Perhaps you are dealing with inflammation, restless legs, or burning sensations. If you have any of these issues, it's essential to seek medical attention as these are frequently warning signs of peripheral neuropathy. It's not uncommon; 20 million Americans have peripheral neuropathy.

Peripheral nerves run from the spinal cord to the arms, hands, legs, and feet. If the nerves are damaged due to injury or disease, it can cause some of the following symptoms:

Peripheral Neuropathy Symptoms

- Numbness
- Tingling
- Burning sensations
- Painful aching
- Balance issues
- Skin discoloration & texture changes
- Muscle cramps
- Feelings of stiffness or pressure
- Non-healing foot & ankle ulcers
- Cold feet
- Walking on marshmallows (sensations)

Many times, peripheral neuropathy is related to cancer treatment, medications, spinal injuries, or diabetes. In the case of diabetes, there is an extremely high storage of glucose; Glucose damages many organs in the body but also has a severely adverse effect on nerves. This nerve damage happens because 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. Symptoms of numbness, tingling, stumbling, and foot injuries are common. 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.

There are viable ways to treat your condition's root cause and not just mask symptoms with pain medications, which is unfortunately what many providers will recommend.



You Don't Need Addictive Drugs—You Need to Treat the Cause of The Neuropathy

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

Your Options

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

Feel Amazing Institute's Alternative Care

- Red LED and Low Level Infrared Light Therapy help to heal and regenerate the small nerve endings that are damaged in peripheral neuropathy
- Gentle electrical stimulation therapy improves nerve function, reduces pain, and improves movement.
- Stem Cell Allografts
- Platelet Rich Plasma
- Spinal Decompression Therapy
- Ozone Therapy
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- Disc bulge or herniation, sciatica, or stenosis
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Dr. Richard Hiler DABCN, is a board-certified Chiropractic Neurologist with more than 27 years of clinical experience. Dr. Hiler and his team offer a complementary telephone consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment contact the office at 239.330.1000.

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NURTURING YOUR EYESIGHT: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAY AS HEALTHY VISION MONTH

Every May, the United States observes Healthy Vision Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of maintaining good eye health. With the prevalence of eye conditions and vision problems on the rise, this annual campaign serves as a reminder for individuals to prioritize their eyesight and take proactive steps towards preserving it. From regular eye exams to lifestyle adjustments, here's why May is a crucial month for nurturing your vision.



The Importance of Healthy Vision

Our eyes play a fundamental role in how we experience the world around us. From appreciating breathtaking landscapes to connecting with loved ones through eye contact, vision is integral to our daily lives. However, many individuals overlook the significance of eye health until they encounter issues or discomfort.

Preventative Care Through Regular Eye Exams

One of the most effective ways to maintain healthy vision is through regular eye examinations. These comprehensive assessments not only evaluate visual acuity but also screen for potential eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataracts, and macular degeneration. Detecting these conditions early can significantly improve treatment outcomes and preserve vision.

Understanding Vision Risks

Certain factors can increase the risk of developing vision problems, including age, family history, and lifestyle choices. Older adults are particularly susceptible to age-related eye diseases, highlighting the importance of regular screenings as individuals grow older. Additionally, habits such as smoking, excessive screen time, and poor nutrition can contribute to vision decline over time.

Promoting Eye-Friendly Lifestyles

Healthy Vision Month encourages individuals to adopt habits that support optimal eye health. This includes maintaining a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and omega-3 fatty acids, which can benefit both overall health and eye function. Furthermore, practicing good eye hygiene, such as taking breaks from digital devices and protecting eyes from harmful UV rays, can help reduce strain and prevent damage.

Empowering Individuals Through Education

Education plays a pivotal role in empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their eye health. Through community outreach programs, informational resources, and public campaigns, Healthy Vision Month raises awareness about common eye conditions, risk factors, and available treatments. By equipping people with knowledge, they can take proactive steps towards preserving their vision and seeking timely care when needed.

Advancements in Eye Care Technology

Advances in technology continue to revolutionize the field of eye care, offering innovative solutions for diagnosing and treating various eye conditions. From sophisticated imaging techniques to minimally invasive surgical procedures, these advancements enhance the accuracy, safety, and effectiveness of eye care interventions. Healthy Vision Month serves as an opportunity to celebrate these breakthroughs while encouraging individuals to leverage them for their benefit.

Addressing Disparities in Eye Health

Despite the progress made in eye care, disparities in access to services and treatment persist, particularly among underserved communities. Healthy Vision Month advocates for equitable access to eye care services, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to receive timely screenings, treatment, and vision correction. By addressing these disparities, we can work towards a future where eye health is a priority for all.

Taking Action for Healthy Vision

As Healthy Vision Month unfolds, individuals are encouraged to take proactive steps towards safeguarding their eyesight. Whether it's scheduling a comprehensive eye exam, adopting healthier lifestyle habits, or spreading awareness within their communities, every action contributes to the collective effort of preserving vision for generations to come.

May serves as a reminder of the importance of healthy vision and the proactive steps individuals can take to maintain it. By prioritizing regular eye care, adopting eye-friendly lifestyles, and advocating for equitable access to services, we can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy a lifetime of clear, vibrant vision. As we celebrate Healthy Vision Month, let us commit to nurturing our eyesight and embracing a future where healthy vision is within reach for all.



Hunter Vittone, OD Optometric Physician

Dr. Hunter Vittone is an optometrist at Center For Sight. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from The Pennsylvania State University in State College, PA, and his Doctor of Optometry degree from Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry in Davie, FL.

Prior to joining Center For Sight, Dr. Vittone completed two optometric externships and earned certifications in CooperVision MiSight Orthokeratology, Paragon CRT Orthokeratology and MoonLens Orthokeratology.

At Center For Sight, Dr. Vittone provides comprehensive eye exams, ocular disease management, glaucoma treatment, dry eye care, as well as family eye care and contact lens fittings. He also provides pre- and post-operative care.

He is a member of the American Optometric Association and the Nova Optometry Practice Management Association.

In his spare time, Dr. Vittone enjoys golfing, fishing, tennis, and taking ski trips during the winter.

Dr. Vittone will be seeing patients in our Naples, FL office.



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EXPLORING FUNERAL TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS IN END-OF-LIFE SERVICES

Funeral traditions vary greatly across cultures and regions, reflecting diverse beliefs, customs, and practices surrounding death and mourning. While traditional funeral services remain prevalent, modern innovations and changes in end-of-life services offer alternative approaches to honoring and memorializing loved ones.

TRADITIONAL FUNERAL PRACTICES

In many cultures, traditional funeral practices involve rituals and ceremonies that commemorate the deceased's life and provide comfort to grieving family and friends. These may include:

1. Viewing and Visitation: A wake or viewing allows mourners to pay their respects to the deceased and offer condolences to the family. It provides an opportunity for closure and remembrance.

2. Religious Ceremonies: Funeral services often incorporate religious rituals and prayers that reflect the beliefs and faith of the deceased and their family.

3. Burial or Cremation: Burial and cremation are two common methods of disposition. Burial involves interring the body in the ground, typically in a cemetery, while cremation involves cremating the body and may be followed by scattering the ashes or placing them in an urn.

4. Memorial Services: Memorial services may be held in addition to or in place of traditional funeral services. They provide an opportunity for remembrance and celebration of the deceased's life.

CONTEMPORARY AND INNOVATIVE END-OF-LIFE SERVICES

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in alternative approaches to end-of-life services that reflect changing attitudes toward death and dying. These innovations seek to personalize and modernize the funeral experience, catering to diverse preferences and needs. Some examples include:

1. Virtual Memorials: With the rise of technology, virtual memorials and online platforms offer a digital space for sharing memories, photos, and condolences. These platforms allow friends and family worldwide to participate in the mourning process remotely.



2. Celebration of Life Events: Celebration of life events provide a more upbeat and personalized alternative to traditional funeral services. Instead of focusing on mourning, these gatherings celebrate the deceased's life and accomplishments, often incorporating music, storytelling, and other elements of joy.

3. Artistic Memorials: Some individuals opt for artistic memorials that honor their passions and interests. This may include creating custom art pieces, commissioned sculptures, or memorial gardens that reflect the personality and legacy of the deceased.

4. Pre-Planning and Pre-Paid Services: Pre-planning and pre-paid funeral services allow individuals to arrange their end-of-life care in advance. This relieves the burden on family members and ensures the deceased's wishes are honored.

Funeral traditions continue to evolve, reflecting changing attitudes and cultural norms surrounding death and mourning. While traditional practices remain prevalent, contemporary innovations offer alternative approaches to end-of-life services that cater to individual preferences and values.

Whether opting for a traditional funeral or exploring modern alternatives, the ultimate goal remains the same: to honor the life of the deceased and provide comfort to grieving loved ones.

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Holistic Answers to Your Questions for Common Health Concerns

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

Patient asked: Over the past month, I have been experiencing severe lower back pain while lying in bed. I have no idea what's causing it since I have not done any heavy lifting or unusual activity. Some nights the pain is so sharp that I can't even fall asleep. Why is this happening to me?

Dr.Kogan's opinion: Back pain – which affects 80 percent of Americans at some point in their lives – is one of the top complaints in primary care practice. Make sure to have your primary care doctor check this out with an X-ray or MRI first. Assuming the outcome of the above is all good, you can then approach this issue holistically. Since your pain is worse when you lie down and you have not overexerted yourself, you could be suffering from muscle spasms, which are often brought on by a magnesium or calcium deficiency. You may be feeling bad now because warmer weather raises the risk of a magnesium shortfall. To restore the proper flow of nutrients to muscle cells and ease your pain, try taking 200 mg of magnesium citrate twice a day and at least 500 mg of calcium citrate once a day. You may also want to include magnesium-rich foods like wheat-bran cereal (if you are not gluten-sensitive) into your diet. If you are gluten sensitive, pumpkin seeds, bananas, avocados, and spinach are excellent sources of magnesium. It can take three to four weeks to correct the deficiency, so in the meantime, consider rubbing a bit of magnesium oil on your back before going to bed. The oil penetrates the skin and gets to the muscle layer, and could help improve the discomfort in about a week. I would also recommend Mind-Body techniques such as Progressive Muscle Relaxation, in which you can relax different parts of your body, one muscle group at a time. Another great holistic modality is Ondamed (pulsed low frequency electromagnetic fields) – a painless treatment in which the vibrational frequencies of the muscle groups receive a tune up. For acute pain, a series often 30-minute treatments are typically sufficient. For more information on Ondamed, check ondamed.net.



Patient asked: I have read a lot about the dangers of acid reflux medications. Are there any natural fixes that will help?

Dr.Kogan's opinion: You are right to be leery of proton pump inhibitors and H2 blockers. Their chronic use has been linked to bone fractures and increased risk of infections. These pharmaceuticals can also decrease calcium absorption and wipe out stomach acid, which is needed for breaking down any and all food proteins. If your GI doctor agrees with you trying to wean off of your meds, try sleeping with 2 pillows – this will help to prevent acid from accumulating in your esophagus and throat. Also, try not to eat after 7 pm and go to sleep no later than 10pm to avoid unnecessary acid production in the late evening. There are some foods that increase acid production which you should try to avoid: caffeine, alcohol, tomatoes, chocolate, and spicy foods. There are also several simple natural remedies that will improve your reflux. My favorites is Rhizinate Chewable supplement by Integrative Therapeutics. The main ingredient - deglycyrrhizinated licorice stimulates and accelerates the natural protective factors in the digestive tract which help relieve occasional heartburn. In Rhizinate, the glycyrrhizin compound--associated with high blood pressure--has been removed. It's chewable because saliva enhances the effect of Rhizinate's natural compounds, and it tastes great. Alternatively, you can try slipper elm bark and mastic gum - based supplement called Pylori-Plex by Douglas Labs. Mastic gum, a resin obtained from the tree, Pistacia lentiscus, is used traditionally in the Mediterranean as both a food ingredient and a traditional healing plant for the gastrointestinal system. Several animal and human

studies indicate that it may have the ability to reduce the H. Pylori bacteria, commonly related to many cases of heartburn and acid reflux. This in turn can play an important role in supporting the body's exposure to H. pylori and maintaining the body's natural defenses against ulcer formation.

Patient Asked: Every time I fly, I get very gassy. I've tried avoiding fiber and gassy foods, but it does not work. Our vacation is coming up. Is there anything I can do?

Dr.Kogan's Opinion: This is actually a very common problem and here is why: The gases in the digestive system expand when the aircraft descends, meaning that even the slightest bit of turbulence can lead to bloat and gas. Many people describe holding in bowel movements to avoid using the plane's cramped restroom, but that can make things even worse. My advice is: Always use the facilities when you need to (especially on long flights), and avoid carbonated beverages, beans, legumes, broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage on the day of your trip. Also smart: When the "fasten seat belt" sign dims, get up every half hour and walk up and down the aisle for 5 minutes. This movement will uncrunch your abdomen, relieving additional pressure on your intestines. If all else fails, keep the following natural remedies in your bag: you can try Gasalia by Boiron – a homeopathic remedy, which you can use as directed on the box or if you prefer herbal remedies – try Gas and Bloating Herbal capsules by Gaia.

This fennel seed and chamomile based supplement helps promote the absorption and elimination of gas, while a unique blend of synergistic herbs and essential oils improves digestive function and provides natural relief to the intestine.

Here is to your Health!



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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The Non-Surgical Solution to Chronic Disc Pain

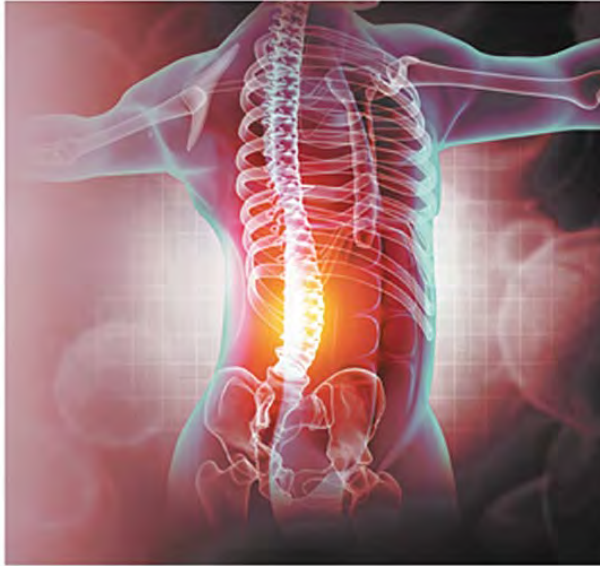
By Dr. Michael Shaffer

Douglass Hill is a busy fella. Entrepreneur, Lacrosse coach, gym rat, community activist, man on a mission to enjoy life. Then one day, while carrying a heavy object with a helper, Doug's world changed. The helper dropped the object, and Doug ended up with a protruding disc and pain that intensified over days. Handfuls of pain relievers wouldn't even allow Doug to sleep more than an hour at a time. Miserable and looking for a solution that didn't involve surgery and months of downtime, he sought advice from his gym friends. The overwhelming suggestion was, "Go see Doc Shaffer!"

Doug's initial consultation gave him a renewed hope for pain relief. "Just talking with Dr. Shaffer made me feel better. He was able to explain my injury in a way that I understood. He took his time. He gave me options. Dr. Shaffer didn't immediately jump to narcotics and knives. Instead, he sent me for an MRI and showed me how his spinal decompression table worked." Subsequently Doug underwent nonsurgical spinal decompression, his symptoms completely resolved and the benefits are persistent.

Spinal decompression is an elective non-surgical treatment option designed to relieve pressure on the spine and alleviate symptoms associated with conditions such as protruding discs, herniated discs, degenerative disc disease, and spinal stenosis. By gently stretching the spine, decompression therapy aims to create negative pressure within the discs, allowing bulging or herniated discs to retract, relieving pressure on nerves, and promoting the influx of healing nutrients and fluids into the affected area. For most cases, the prescribed treatment protocol typically consists of approximately 24 sessions over nine weeks. As part of our commitment to providing personalized care, Dr. Shaffer offers a complimentary consultation where he can review your clinical findings, discuss your symptoms and goals, and determine if spinal decompression therapy, specifically the Hill DT protocol, is the right choice for you.

The Hill DT table is a state-of-the-art device designed specifically for spinal decompression therapy. It utilizes advanced technology and precise engineering to provide targeted decompression to



the affected spine areas. The table's design allows for controlled and comfortable patient positioning, ensuring optimal effectiveness and safety throughout treatment.

Research has shown that spinal decompression therapy, particularly when performed using advanced devices like the Hill DT table, can be highly effective in relieving symptoms and improving the quality of life for patients suffering from spinal conditions. According to data from the Hill DT website, clinical studies have demonstrated success rates ranging from 71% to 89% for patients undergoing spinal decompression therapy.

If you're interested in exploring spinal decompression therapy further or scheduling a consultation, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your health and well-being are our top priorities, and we're here to support you every step of the way. Consider spinal decompression therapy as part of your journey toward improved spinal health and overall wellness.

A personalized approach is crucial in decompression treatment. Consulting with a healthcare professional such as Dr. Michael Shaffer, a Chiropractic Physician, will help determine the most practical combination of treatments tailored to an individual's unique condition.

Spinal decompression is gaining popularity as an innovative and practical approach to treating sciatica. This therapy aims to create negative pressure within

the disc, reducing nerve root compression. By relieving pressure in the spine, increased circulation also occurs in the disc, which is a vital aid in the healing process. The procedure is noninvasive, and patients typically experience a gentle stretching sensation during the session. Understanding the common causes, recognizing symptoms, and exploring advanced treatment options like spinal decompression can pave the way to a pain-free and healthier life.



Dr. Shaffer has been serving Collier County since 1981. He specializes in spinal care, chronic and acute musculoskeletal conditions, injury, and rehabilitation.

To schedule a complimentary consultation, please call and speak to Kay, office manager.



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Connecting SWFL to Support Older Adults

FGCU's Shady Rest Institute on Positive Aging aims to transform opportunities for living well while living long

The Shady Rest Institute on Positive Aging is a regional hub to connect Florida Gulf Coast University with community organizations supporting the older adult community in Southwest Florida.

Faculty, staff and students from FGCU's Marieb College of Health & Human Services and from across the university's academic disciplines pursue this mission through education, service, research and advocacy.

"This is going to be transformative for Southwest Florida," says Shawn Felton, dean of Marieb College. "The region has a vast need to enhance services for older adults. FGCU is committed to providing educational services and research for older adults. We are confident this institute will become the hub to connect seniors to all the services they need."

What is positive aging?

Positive aging is about a positive view of aging as a healthy, normal part of life.

A Yale University study looked at the long-term health consequences of ageism on seniors. Researchers determined that age discrimination has the potential power to shorten seniors' lives. Among the study group, seniors with more positive views about aging lived 7.5 years longer than people who perceived aging negatively.

Additional studies indicated that positive thinking could result in an 11-15% longer life span and can increase the likelihood of living to age 85 or beyond.

Investing in eldercare

A group long known for working with older adults made a significant investment in launching this institute. The Shady Rest Foundation, a name synonymous with eldercare in Lee County, pledged \$5 million to Marieb College to aid in the institute's creation and operation. The foundation previously gave \$4.1 million for scholarships to Marieb College undergraduate and graduate students who plan to pursue healthcare careers involving older adults.



Thomas Felke, associate dean of Marieb College and the institute's executive director, says while it won't be a brick-and-mortar center at first, he expects its impact to be palpable.

"Something like this is needed here," he says. "We don't want it to be a place where people are coming to us. We want to be able to meet people where they are."

The longtime FGCU social work professor has been active in community efforts to improve the lives of older residents and individuals experiencing food insecurity and homelessness. Through his many community connections and previous research, he knows this about older people: "Despite being the largest segment of the population, they feel like a forgotten segment and have a hard time finding and accessing services."

An umbrella organization

The Shady Rest Institute will coordinate the many agencies offering help to older adults and aim to form a central clearinghouse through which people can locate and access services. It will also provide educational outreach for those working with older residents or who want to but need additional training; advocate for policies beneficial to this age group; and help develop an adequate workforce to provide services for the burgeoning 65+ population.

The last part is essential since it's expected that this population segment will increase more than 50% in Lee and Collier counties and 37% in Charlotte County by 2040.

Investigating issues critical to older adults

Felke says the institute will also do what FGCU researchers do best: community-impact research. He envisions it as a multidisciplinary entity, much like The Water School at FGCU, where researchers from various disciplines come together to address problems. This makes sense, he says, in a state that leads the nation in the share of people over 65.

He foresees involving Marieb College experts, such as social workers, occupational and physical therapists and nurses, as well as bringing in the college's Exercise is Medicine program. From the Lutgert College of Business, experts in wills, trusts and estate planning would be valuable. U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering experts could focus on home modifications and livable communities. From the College of Arts & Sciences, music therapy and art therapy could be included.

And that's just the beginning. Felke sees many possibilities for the institute, which he is approaching with this mantra: "Aging is not a disease; it is an opportunity."

Learn more

Explore FGCU's Marieb College of Health & Human Services and the Shady Rest Institute on Positive Aging at fgcu.edu/marieb.



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EXPLORING THE SPECTRUM OF NEUROTOXINS IN COSMETICS: ENHANCING BEAUTY SAFELY

In the world of cosmetics, the pursuit of beauty often involves exploring innovative ingredients and formulations. Among these, neurotoxins have gained attention for their potential to reverse the natural signs of aging, when used judiciously. However, the word "toxin" may evoke apprehension, conjuring images of danger and harm. The results of neurotoxin lie in the expertise of your injector, and results can be very natural, allowing you to look like the more relaxed version of yourself.

For those concerned about the safety of toxin, it is important to remember that it is used for medical purposes as well. While Botox may be most commonly known for its usefulness as a cosmetic anti-aging treatment, that was not the original intention for it. More units are injected for medical reasons than cosmetic reasons! Neurotoxin is used to treat neck spasms, sweating, over-active bladder, lazy eye, and migraine headaches.

One of the most widely recognized toxins in cosmetics is botulinum toxin, commonly known as Botox® Cosmetic. Derived from the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*, Botox is revered for its ability to reduce the appearance of wrinkles by temporarily paralyzing facial muscles. By inhibiting muscle contractions, Botox smoothes out lines and creases, offering a youthful, rejuvenated look. Its effectiveness and FDA approval in treating the crow's feet (laugh or smile lines), forehead furrows (horizontal creases across the forehead), and frown lines (the so called "11's") has made it a staple in cosmetic clinics worldwide. The results of toxin last, on average, 3-4 months in most patients.

There are now a wide variety of neurotoxins available. The differences between toxins are subtle, and all of them deliver a similar effect. The current lineup of toxins available in the United States are Botox, Dysport, Jeuveau, Xeomin, and Daxxify. Letybo, the leading neurotoxin brand in South Korea, is set to launch in the U.S. in the second half of 2024.



An expert injector will also be able to utilize toxin with more advanced techniques in other areas of the face. These off-label injection treatments can target the jelly roll under the eye, the bunny lines on the side of the nose, a gummy smile, the vertically oriented lines around the lips, or a downward turned smile.

These more advanced techniques require an injector with an understanding of complex facial anatomy, but can deliver nice results for these problem areas.

One of the latest trends in toxin injections is the "lip flip," especially for a patient who is apprehensive about getting filler injected in the lips. This technique involves injecting four to six units of Botox above the upper lip at the center and near the corners of the mouth. The primary effect of the lip flip is to relax the muscles that connect to the upper lip, allowing the lip to relax and curl outward, thereby appearing larger and more defined in shape. It is important to note that the results of a lip flip last less than

traditionally injected areas. A lip flip lasts 6-8 weeks, as these muscles are in constant motion from talking and chewing.

Neurotoxin injections are relatively easy to undergo, and have no down-time after the procedure. You may have tiny swollen areas (similar to mosquito bites) in the injected areas that will resolve within five to ten minutes after injections. There may be minor bruising in the injected areas. You should refrain from massaging the injected areas, remain upright for 4 hours after injections, and avoid heavy sweating for 24 hours post-procedure.

Neurotoxin injections can be highly customizable, and results can be tailored to suit your needs. Less toxin will achieve a more natural result, while more toxin will result in a more "frozen" appearance. It is important to express your desired result to your injector.

In conclusion, while the idea of toxins in cosmetics may initially spark concern, their judicious use under professional guidance can yield remarkable aesthetic benefits. From smoothing wrinkles to enhancing hair and nails, toxins play a multifaceted role in the pursuit of beauty. However, it's crucial to prioritize safety and informed decision-making when considering cosmetic treatments involving toxins, ensuring both efficacy and well-being go hand in hand.

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What is Plantar Fasciitis?

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

If you suffer from heel pain, you are well accompanied by over a million others that see their doctor for heel pain each year. The most common foot and heel discomfort is caused by a painful disorder known as plantar fasciitis.

The foot is comprised of many different bones, joints, tendons, and ligaments; these include the plantar fascia. The plantar fascia is a band of ligament tissue. It stretches from the heel of your foot to the middle, and it is responsible for reinforcing and supporting your arch. When this area becomes inflamed due to extreme tension on the ligament, pain erupts every time you take a step, and if left untreated, many people will even experience discomfort while at rest.

Because plantar fasciitis is one of the most common foot issues; one in ten people will experience it at some time in their life. Usually, the pain is concentrated in the heel area, and it is generally caused by small injuries that occur over an extended period of time. It's quite common for heel spurs, which are bony protrusions under the heel bone to coincide with plantar fasciitis.

There are many treatment options that you can do at home with the guidance of your podiatrist to try and alleviate the painful symptoms of plantar fasciitis. But, because of weight bearing, this area of the foot, in particular, is challenging to heal on its own, The key to getting your foot health back to normal, and you free from pain is to have medically based procedures provided by your podiatrist.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Rest

Rest is one of the most important aspects of healing plantar fasciitis. It can take between 6 and 18 months for the issue to resolve completely. Taking it easy on the arches which you are healing is important.



Arch Supports & Orthotics

Arch taping or using orthotics can help to alleviate pressure and some of the pain associated with plantar fasciitis.

Stretching Exercises

Dynamic stretches can be very helpful to relax and create more flexibility within the tendon. Your podiatrist will give you a detailed list of exercises that you can safely do at home.

Anti-Inflammatory Medications

Ice and NSAIDs such as ibuprofen can help to reduce inflammation. These work best in conjunction with other treatments.

Ultrasound- Guided Corticosteroid Injections

This is an innovative treatment available from Collier Podiatry. It allows the podiatrist to view the precise placement of the cortisone injectable via an advanced ultrasound machine to make certain that all of the pain and tension relieving material is placed accurately.

Laser Treatment

Laser therapy is one of the top methods to reduce your pain and inflammation. Deep tissue laser therapy uses a process called photobiomodulation, which penetrates deep into the muscles tissues using photon energy. This therapy increases cellular metabolism while decreasing inflammation and pain.

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ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH URINARY INCONTINENCE?

When it comes to urinary incontinence, you have many choices and treatment options, but you must be honest with yourself in order to finally get long-lasting medical help. If you answer yes to one or more of the following questions, it's time to see a specialist.

Yes or No:

- Do you often have an uncomfortable or uncontrollable urge to urinate?
- Do you have frequent urination during the day?
- When you get the urge to go, do you make it to the bathroom on time?
- Do you wake up to urinate more than once per night?
- Does urine leak when you cough, sneeze, laugh, jump, exercise, or lift heavy objects?
- To help your symptoms, have you tried wearing pads or briefs, drinking less, doing Kegel exercises, rearranging your daily routine?

THE TRUTH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

#1 It's important that you don't just see someone claiming to be a pelvic floor specialist.

A modern subspecialty called Female Pelvic Medicine & Reproductive Surgery (a.k.a. Urogynecology) was developed to harness this knowledge to benefit women of all ages. A Urogynecologist has advanced training in treating these disorders that a gynecologist and a urologist may not have. A gynecologist specializes in the female reproductive system (vagina, uterus, and ovaries) and a urologist specializes in the urinary tract of both men and women. A urogynecologist blends the knowledge of a gynecologist and urologist to give women the best possible outcomes for disorders that affect these two closely integrated systems.

The Florida Bladder Institute, based in Naples Florida, is one of the country's first urogynecology practices. Typically, a woman would have to see a gynecologist for one problem, a urologist for another and a gastroenterologist for another. Dr. Joseph Gauta explains, "A Urogynecologist has the skill and experience to assess the entire pelvic region including the uterus, bladder, vagina and rectum as well as the muscles, ligaments, connective tissue and nerves that support those systems." He added, "This means a thorough evaluation is done of your urinary, lower gastrointestinal and reproductive systems as a whole to ensure you receive the best possible treatment and outcome in the most efficient and cost-effective manner."



#2 It's not cookie-cutter. Your treatment should depend on the type and severity of your disorder.

"Urinary incontinence" is a general term and symptoms can range from mild leaking to uncontrollable wetting. It can happen to anyone, but it becomes more common with age. There are many types of urinary incontinence, and sometimes a woman may have more than one of the following types:

- Stress
- OAB
- Urgency
- Mixed incontinence (i.e., stress and urgency can occur together)

Your treatment should be custom-tailored to the specific cause of your incontinence, your medical and surgical history, your overall health, age, and goals.

#3 It's not always incontinence.

Sometimes there are other conditions that may feel like an incontinence problem or cause unusual pain. The Florida Bladder Institute is well-prepared to evaluate and treat related problems of the urinary system that may be causing your discomfort.

The Florida Bladder Institute can offer several options used in combination or individually depending on your needs. They may include medications, diet modification, bladder retraining and Kegel exercises to strengthen the pelvic muscles.

#4 There are numerous incontinence treatment options.

The good news is that virtually all types of incontinence are treatable. The Florida Bladder Institute's expert team is dedicated to helping you achieve the highest level of health and quality of life.

The clinical staff of the Florida Bladder Institute is well-versed and experienced in using a variety of techniques including medication, rehabilitation, minimally invasive surgical intervention, and life-style education to improve your overall health and help you regain control and reclaim your freedom.

The Florida Bladder Institute's Innovative Techniques and Treatment Options:

- Bladder Retraining
- Emsella (Kegel chair)
- Pelvic Floor Rehabilitation including Kegel Exercises, physical therapy and electrical stimulation
- Laser and Muscle Therapy
- Biofeedback
- Botox Bladder Injections
- Pessary Vaginal Device
- Injections including Botox and bulking procedures
- Outpatient Surgery
- Surgery for Organ Prolapse / Dropped Bladder Repair
- Axonics® Sacral Nerve Stimulation

At the Florida Bladder Institute, you will experience a thorough approach to the evaluation and treatment of pelvic organ prolapse, bladder and lower urinary tract disorders, bowel and gas incontinence, bleeding, pelvic pain and menopause. Our compassionate and expertly trained team will guide you along the way using state-of-the-art technology in our comfortable and private setting.



Joseph Gauta, MD



Nicole Houser, PA-C



Lisa Mark, MD



Amy Goetz, PA-C



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THE CARLISLE NAPLES CELEBRATES OLDER AMERICANS AND THE POWER OF CONNECTION

By Jenny Bradley

May is Older Americans Month, a time to celebrate the profound contributions of members of our communities. This year's theme, "Powered by Connection," emphasizes the importance of social engagement and meaningful relationships as we age.

Across the country, older adults are proving that later life is a time of growth and vitality. Whether sharing their wisdom with younger generations, volunteering or pursuing new hobbies, our residents play a significant role in shaping the fabric of our society. In honor of Older Americans Month, here are five tips to help older adults stay connected and thrive:

1. Foster Intergenerational Bonds

Connecting with people of all ages can have a profoundly positive impact. Look for opportunities to engage with younger generations, such as volunteering at a local school or community center. The mutual exchange of knowledge and perspectives benefits both the young and the young at heart.

At The Carlisle, a senior living community in North Naples, residents and staff unite as an extended family spanning multiple generations. Residents often serve as "foster grandparents," sharing their life experiences and knowledge with younger team members. Whether it's teaching a server to knit or celebrating a 50th anniversary with the dedicated staff at The Carlisle, these connections enrich the lives of everyone and strengthen the community's bonds.

2. Embrace New Technology

Embrace our ever-evolving digital world. Platforms like video chatting, social media, and online classes can help you stay socially engaged, even from the comfort of your own home. Many senior living communities offer technology training and staff support to help residents learn how to use these tools with confidence.

Residents at The Carlisle have endless opportunities to embrace technology. A Tech 101 class teaches smartphone basics, including taking photos and downloading apps. Plus, the community's staff is always available to assist with technology questions. A memorable example of this is when a resident was unable to make it to his granddaughter's wedding. The Carlisle team stepped in to help him attend via videoconferencing. He was even able to walk her down the aisle – virtually!

3. Volunteer Your Time and Talents

Giving back is a great way to increase one's sense of fulfillment and purpose. Research local organizations that could benefit from your unique skills and life experiences. Volunteering fosters a sense of connection with your community, whether helping at an animal shelter, mentoring students or lending a hand at a food bank.

Since most senior living communities offer a maintenance-free lifestyle, residents now have more time to dedicate to causes that are near and dear to their hearts. At The Carlisle, many residents find immense joy in volunteering within the community, from leading activities to serving on the Resident Council. The different ways of staying connected with others are truly limitless.

4. Prioritize Physical Activity

Structured group fitness opportunities like yoga classes, walking clubs and dance sessions can provide both physical benefits and a social outlet, making exercise a fun and engaging part of the day. These programs help participants maintain healthy lifestyles while enjoying the camaraderie of group exercise.

On-site health and wellness programs at senior living communities offer convenience and cultivate a strong sense of community. Residents enjoy the social benefits of group fitness as well as the accountability of having others join them in classes. These interactions in fitness classes can forge strong bonds based on mutual interests, fostering lasting friendships among participants.

5. Nurture Meaningful Relationships

Strong social connections are vital to healthy aging. Make spending quality time with family and friends a priority, and don't hesitate to step outside your comfort zone to form new connections. Senior living communities often host social events, clubs, and outings that create easy opportunities to build meaningful relationships with neighbors who share your interests.

For instance, The Carlisle Naples is home to nearly 50 veterans, many of whom have found camaraderie and support through their participation in the active retirement community's American Veteran Association (AVA) group. The club was founded by veteran Christopher Dietz, the Clinical Therapy Director for The Carlisle's on-site integrated therapy provider, EmpowerMe Wellness. The group meets weekly, allowing members to

connect, share military stories and give back to the external community through volunteer initiatives. Several group members participated in last month's Honor Flight Network Mission #26, which transported them to Washington, D.C., to honor and celebrate their service and sacrifices. The Carlisle's Executive Director Bill Diamond and Director of Assisted Living Melissa Christiansen-Kloss accompanied them on the flight, enhancing the connections between residents and staff.

By embracing these tips, older adults can harness the power of connection and continue to lead vibrant, fulfilling lives. With offerings ranging from technology classes and group fitness to intergenerational programs and community service opportunities, senior living communities provide the perfect environments for older adults to thrive.

Located at 6945 Carlisle Court in Naples, The Carlisle offers independent and assisted living lifestyles featuring spacious one-and two-bedroom residences, dedicated housekeeping and flat linen services, basic cable TV, all utilities except telephone, and elevated 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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UNDERSTANDING ARTHRITIS

Shedding Light During Arthritis Awareness Month

Arthritis, a term encompassing over 100 different types of joint diseases and conditions, affects millions worldwide, causing pain, stiffness, and reduced mobility. As the world marks Arthritis Awareness Month this May, it's imperative to shed light on this often misunderstood condition and its impact on individuals and communities.

Arthritis is not a condition confined to the elderly; it can affect people of all ages, including children. Despite its prevalence, misconceptions persist, hindering both awareness and support for those living with arthritis. Therefore, this awareness month serves as an opportunity to educate, advocate, and support those affected.

Raising awareness about arthritis involves dispelling myths and misconceptions. While commonly associated with aging, arthritis can develop due to various factors, including genetics, autoimmune disorders, injuries, and infections. By understanding these diverse causes, society can move beyond stereotypes and offer better support to individuals navigating the complexities of arthritis.

Moreover, highlighting the importance of early diagnosis and intervention is crucial. Early detection allows for better management of symptoms and can slow the progression of the disease. Through public education campaigns and initiatives during Arthritis Awareness Month, individuals are encouraged to prioritize their joint health and seek medical attention if they experience persistent symptoms such as joint pain, swelling, or stiffness.

Arthritis not only impacts physical health but also takes a toll on mental and emotional well-being. Living with chronic pain and limited mobility can lead to feelings of isolation, depression, and anxiety. Thus, raising awareness about the psychological aspect of arthritis is essential. By fostering understanding and empathy, communities can offer valuable support networks to those struggling with the emotional burden of the condition.

In addition to raising awareness, Arthritis Awareness Month serves as a platform for advocacy and policy change. By amplifying the voices of individuals living



with arthritis, advocates can push for improved access to healthcare, research funding, and workplace accommodations. Through collective action, strides can be made towards creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for those affected by arthritis.

Furthermore, promoting lifestyle modifications and self-management strategies is key to empowering individuals with arthritis. From maintaining a healthy weight to engaging in regular exercise and adopting joint-friendly habits, there are various steps individuals can take to manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life. Arthritis Awareness Month provides an opportunity to disseminate these valuable resources and encourage proactive self-care.

It's also important to recognize the impact of arthritis on caregivers and family members. The burden of supporting a loved one with arthritis can be immense, both emotionally and physically. By acknowledging the vital role of caregivers and providing resources and support, communities can ensure that no one faces the challenges of arthritis alone.

Education plays a pivotal role in dispelling stigma and fostering empathy towards those living with arthritis. By incorporating arthritis awareness into school curriculums and public health initiatives, we can cultivate a more informed and compassionate

society. Additionally, promoting research and innovation in arthritis treatment and management is essential for improving outcomes and enhancing the lives of those affected by the condition.

In conclusion, Arthritis Awareness Month serves as a crucial reminder of the importance of understanding, supporting, and advocating for individuals living with arthritis. By dispelling myths, promoting early detection and intervention, addressing the psychological impact, advocating for policy change, empowering individuals through self-management strategies, and supporting caregivers, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all. Let us unite in raising awareness, promoting empathy, and striving for a world where arthritis no longer limits lives.



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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Shedding Light on Stroke Awareness Month: Unveiling the Link Between Strokes and Vision

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

May marks Stroke Awareness Month, a crucial time to highlight the importance of understanding strokes and their potential impact on various aspects of health, including vision. While strokes primarily affect the brain, their repercussions can extend to the eyes, often serving as early indicators or resulting in lasting visual impairments. As we delve into the connection between strokes and vision, it becomes evident that raising awareness about this correlation is essential for early detection, prevention, and holistic stroke management.

Strokes, often referred to as "brain attacks," occur when blood flow to the brain is interrupted or reduced, leading to the deprivation of oxygen and essential nutrients. This interruption can result from a blockage in the blood vessels (ischemic stroke) or the rupture of blood vessels (hemorrhagic stroke). While strokes can manifest in various ways, including sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, difficulty speaking, and severe headaches, their impact on vision is less commonly understood.

The eyes serve as windows to the brain, and changes in vision can often indicate underlying neurological issues, including strokes. One of the most common visual symptoms associated with strokes is sudden vision loss or changes, which can range from partial blindness to double vision. These changes may occur abruptly and affect one or both eyes, depending on the location and severity of the stroke. Additionally, individuals may experience visual disturbances such as blurred vision, tunnel vision, or difficulty focusing, all of which warrant immediate medical attention.

The connection between strokes and vision lies in the intricate network of blood vessels that supply oxygen and nutrients to the eyes and the brain. When a stroke occurs, these blood vessels may become compromised, leading to decreased blood flow and potential damage to the optic nerve or retina. The optic nerve, responsible for transmitting visual information from the eyes to the brain, is particularly vulnerable to the effects of strokes, often resulting in vision loss or impairment.

Furthermore, strokes can indirectly impact vision through their effects on cognitive function and mobility. Cognitive impairments resulting from strokes, such as memory loss or difficulty processing information, can hinder a person's ability to interpret visual stimuli effectively. Similarly, mobility issues stemming from stroke-related paralysis or weakness can limit a person's field of vision and spatial awareness, increasing the risk of falls or accidents.

Early detection and intervention are crucial in mitigating the visual consequences of strokes. Regular eye exams, including assessments of visual acuity, peripheral vision, and eye movement, can help detect subtle changes indicative of underlying neurological issues. Additionally, imaging tests such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or computed tomography (CT) scans can provide valuable insights into the extent and location of brain damage caused by strokes.

Preventive measures play a pivotal role in reducing the risk of strokes and preserving vision. Lifestyle modifications, including maintaining a healthy diet, engaging in regular exercise, managing stress, and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption, can significantly lower the risk of stroke occurrence. Moreover, managing underlying health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and high cholesterol through medication and regular monitoring can further decrease the likelihood of stroke-related complications.

In conclusion, Stroke Awareness Month serves as a poignant reminder of the multifaceted nature of strokes and their potential impact on vision. By understanding the connection between strokes and the eyes, individuals can take proactive steps to safeguard their visual health and reduce the risk of stroke-related visual impairments. Through increased awareness, early detection, and comprehensive stroke management, we can strive towards a future where strokes no longer cast a shadow on vision and overall well-being.



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.

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UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF MICRONEEDLING

In the quest for youthful, radiant skin, individuals often explore various skincare treatments and procedures. Among these, Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) microneedling has emerged as a revolutionary approach, captivating the attention of skincare enthusiasts and professionals alike. Combining the power of PRP therapy with microneedling techniques, this innovative procedure offers promising results in skin rejuvenation, collagen stimulation, and overall skin health improvement.

Understanding PRP Microneedling

PRP microneedling, also known as the "vampire facial," merges two potent skincare techniques: platelet-rich plasma therapy and microneedling. Platelet-rich plasma is derived from the patient's own blood, containing a concentrated solution of platelets, growth factors, and cytokines. These components play a crucial role in tissue repair, regeneration, and collagen production. Microneedling, on the other hand, involves the use of fine needles to create controlled micro-injuries in the skin, stimulating the body's natural healing process.

Microneedling with Exosomes

Exosomes, small extracellular vesicles secreted by cells, have garnered increasing attention in the field of regenerative medicine and skin rejuvenation. These tiny vesicles are packed with bioactive molecules such as proteins, nucleic acids, and lipids, which play crucial roles in intercellular communication and tissue repair. When utilized in conjunction with PRP microneedling, exosomes enhance the effectiveness of the treatment by providing additional growth factors and signaling molecules. The combination of microneedling with exosomes can promote collagen production, improve skin texture, and reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Furthermore, exosomes offer a promising avenue for targeted delivery of therapeutic agents, making them a valuable asset in cosmetic procedures aimed at achieving youthful and radiant skin.

The Procedure Unveiled

The PRP microneedling procedure begins with a simple blood draw from the patient, typically from the arm. The blood is then processed using a centrifuge to separate the platelet-rich plasma from other blood components. Once isolated, the PRP is applied topically to the treatment area or injected into the skin, depending on the patient's specific needs and desired outcomes.

Next, the microneedling device, equipped with tiny needles, is gently maneuvered over the skin's surface. As the needles create micro-channels, the PRP is able



to penetrate deeper into the skin, maximizing its effectiveness. The combination of microneedling and PRP promotes collagen and elastin production, improves skin texture, and enhances overall skin tone.

Benefits Beyond Skin Deep

PRP microneedling offers a plethora of benefits beyond mere cosmetic enhancement. By harnessing the body's natural healing mechanisms, this procedure addresses a wide range of skincare concerns, including fine lines, wrinkles, acne scars, and hyperpigmentation. Moreover, PRP contains growth factors that promote tissue regeneration, making it an ideal solution for individuals seeking to improve the appearance of scars or stretch marks.

Furthermore, microneedling with exosomes is a safe and minimally invasive procedure, making it suitable for individuals with various skin types and concerns. Unlike more aggressive treatments like laser therapy or chemical peels, microneedling with PRP or exosomes boasts minimal downtime and a reduced risk of adverse effects, making it an attractive option for those with busy lifestyles.

The Science Behind the Glow

At the heart of PRP microneedling lies the science of skin regeneration. Platelets, abundant in PRP, contain growth factors such as platelet-derived growth factor (PDGF), transforming growth factor-beta (TGF- β), and vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF), among others. These growth factors play pivotal roles in cell proliferation, angiogenesis, and collagen synthesis, contributing to the rejuvenation and revitalization of the skin.

Microneedling complements the action of PRP by creating controlled micro-injuries in the skin, triggering the body's natural wound healing response. As the skin repairs itself, collagen and elastin fibers are synthesized, resulting in firmer, smoother skin texture. Additionally, the micro-channels created by microneedling facilitate better absorption of PRP, allowing its potent components to penetrate deep into the dermis and exert their regenerative effects.

Optimal Results and Considerations

While PRP microneedling offers promising results, achieving optimal outcomes requires a customized treatment plan tailored to the individual's unique skincare needs and goals. Multiple sessions spaced several weeks apart may be recommended to achieve the desired improvement in skin texture and appearance.

Moreover, post-treatment care is essential to support the skin's healing process and maximize the longevity of results. This may include gentle skincare products, sun protection, and avoiding activities that may irritate the skin. Consulting with a qualified skincare professional is paramount to ensure a safe and effective treatment experience.

In the realm of skincare innovations, PRP microneedling stands out as a game-changer, offering a holistic approach to skin rejuvenation and regeneration. By harnessing the power of platelet-rich plasma and microneedling, this cutting-edge procedure delivers remarkable results in improving skin texture, tone, and overall youthfulness. With its minimal downtime, versatility, and proven efficacy, PRP microneedling continues to redefine the landscape of modern skincare, empowering individuals to unveil their most radiant selves.

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UNDERSTANDING STROKE:

The Importance of Awareness and Prevention

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

Stroke is a medical emergency that occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted or reduced, leading to the death of brain cells. It is a leading cause of disability and death worldwide, yet it is largely preventable. Increasing awareness about stroke, its risk factors, and preventive measures is crucial in reducing its incidence and improving outcomes for those affected.

What is Stroke?

Stroke, also known as a cerebrovascular accident (CVA), can be classified into two main types: ischemic stroke and hemorrhagic stroke. Ischemic stroke occurs when a blood clot blocks an artery supplying blood to the brain, while hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures or leaks. Both types can cause serious damage to the brain and require immediate medical attention.

Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of stroke is essential for prompt treatment and better outcomes. The acronym FAST is a useful tool for identifying stroke:

- **Face drooping:** One side of the face may droop or become numb. Ask the person to smile to check for facial weakness.
- **Arm weakness:** One arm may drift downward when both arms are raised. Weakness or numbness in one arm is also a common symptom.
- **Speech difficulty:** Speech may be slurred or difficult to understand. The person may have trouble speaking or understanding others.
- **Time to call emergency services:** If you observe any of these signs, it's crucial to seek immediate medical attention. Time is of the essence in treating stroke.

Risk Factors for Stroke

Several risk factors increase the likelihood of experiencing a stroke. These include:

- **High blood pressure:** Hypertension is the most significant risk factor for stroke. Managing blood pressure through lifestyle changes and medication can reduce the risk.

- **Smoking:** Tobacco use increases the risk of stroke by damaging blood vessels and promoting the formation of blood clots.
- **Diabetes:** People with diabetes are at higher risk of stroke due to elevated blood sugar levels that can damage blood vessels over time.
- **High cholesterol:** Elevated levels of cholesterol can lead to the buildup of plaque in blood vessels, increasing the risk of blockages that cause stroke.
- **Obesity:** Being overweight or obese contributes to other risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol, increasing the overall risk of stroke.
- **Physical inactivity:** Lack of regular exercise can lead to obesity, high blood pressure, and other risk factors for stroke.

Prevention and Lifestyle Modifications

While certain risk factors for stroke, such as age and family history, cannot be changed, many can be modified through lifestyle changes:

- **Healthy diet:** Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help maintain a healthy weight and reduce the risk of stroke.
- **Regular exercise:** Engaging in regular physical activity can help control weight, lower blood pressure, and improve overall cardiovascular health.
- **Smoking cessation:** Quitting smoking is one of the most important steps a person can take to reduce their risk of stroke and other cardiovascular diseases.
- **Limiting alcohol intake:** Excessive alcohol consumption can raise blood pressure and contribute to other risk factors for stroke. Moderation is key.
- **Managing chronic conditions:** Proper management of conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol is essential in reducing the risk of stroke.

Stroke Awareness and Education

Increasing public awareness about stroke is crucial in ensuring that people recognize the signs and symptoms and seek prompt medical attention.

Educational campaigns, community events, and outreach programs play a vital role in disseminating information about stroke prevention, risk factors, and treatment options.

Stroke is a devastating condition that can have life-altering consequences, but it is not inevitable. By understanding the risk factors, recognizing the signs and symptoms, and adopting healthy lifestyle habits, individuals can take proactive steps to reduce their risk of stroke. Moreover, raising awareness about stroke within communities and healthcare systems is essential in promoting early detection, timely treatment, and better outcomes for those affected by this condition. Through collective efforts, we can work towards a future where stroke incidence is minimized, and the burden of stroke-related disability and mortality is greatly reduced.

Are you ready for a consultation?

Your treatment will be performed by a Certified Nurse Practitioner. Schedule your appointment now!

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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Hearing Loss Is Common Across the Lifespan

Decibels Audiology Audiologist Encourages Residents to Learn the Signs of Hearing Loss This National Speech-Language-Hearing Month

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

According to new estimates, 1 in 9 Americans has hearing loss in both ears. Although hearing loss can have serious consequences when left unaddressed, it is often not prioritized as a health or quality-of-life issue. This is a reality that Naples audiologist Rachel Spencer is aiming to change this May, which is recognized as National Speech-Language-Hearing Month.

"Most of us take our hearing for granted until we start to have significant difficulties," said Spencer. "Even then, we often don't fully appreciate how critical our hearing is to all aspects of our lives. This May, I want to encourage everyone in the community to consider the state of their hearing—and to seek an evaluation from an audiologist if they have concerns. A variety of options are available if you discover that you have some degree of hearing loss, and audiologists can guide people through those options."

Hearing Loss in Adults

When it comes to adults, hearing loss is exceedingly and increasingly common as people age. Among adults ages 35–64, roughly 9% have permanent hearing loss in both ears. That number rises to 35% for people ages 65–74, and 73% for adults 75 and older. (Note that these figures do not include people with mild hearing loss or people with hearing loss in one ear.)

In adults, unaddressed hearing loss can lead to a poorer quality of life marked by challenges in areas such as physical and mental health, personal relationships, career growth and earning potential, and cognitive abilities as one ages (including a possible increased risk of dementia for some groups).

Despite the benefits of treatment, adults routinely delay acting on their hearing difficulties—and some never pursue it at all. Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30%) has ever used them. Even fewer adults aged 20–69 (approximately 16%) who could benefit from wearing hearing aids have ever used them.



"We know that treatment for hearing loss has the potential to transform a person's life," continued Spencer. "Most people have no idea how much they were missing until they get hearing aids. Beyond feeling more connected to others and more engaged in their lives, they experience a plethora of other benefits. A major new study has even found that U.S. adults with hearing loss who wear hearing aids consistently have a significantly lower risk of dying earlier than those who never wear them."

In adults, signs of hearing loss include the following:

- Hearing ringing, roaring, or beeping in one or both ears
- Not responding to spoken words
- Having persistent ear discomfort after exposure to loud noise
- Having muffled hearing
- Experiencing constant frustration trying to hear speech and other sounds
- Avoiding conversation
- Experiencing social isolation
- Experiencing depression

As a first step, adults with questions about their hearing can schedule a complimentary in-depth

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The Advantages of Home Health Care for Seniors: A Pathway to Comfort, Safety, and Independence

Shopping for home health care for a senior is akin to navigating the options when purchasing a new car. Just as selecting a vehicle involves weighing factors like reliability, safety features, and comfort, choosing the right care for your loved one requires careful consideration of various factors. While opting for the cheapest model might seem tempting initially, the adage "you get what you pay for" rings true in both scenarios. Regarding senior care, home health care emerges as the premium option, offering unparalleled benefits that prioritize personalized attention, reduced risk, and enhanced independence. For caregivers and seniors alike, understanding these advantages is pivotal in making informed decisions about their healthcare journey.

Personalized Care Tailored to Individual Needs

One of the primary advantages of home health care is its ability to provide personalized care tailored to everyone's unique needs. According to a study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, personalized care plans crafted by home health professionals have been shown to improve health outcomes for seniors significantly. These plans encompass a comprehensive range of services, including skilled nursing, rehabilitation therapies, medication management, and assistance with activities of daily living.

Reduced Risk of Infections and Hospital Readmissions

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveal that seniors are at a higher risk of contracting infections during hospital stays, with infections accounting for a significant portion of hospital readmissions among this demographic. Home health care mitigates this risk by providing care in the familiar and controlled environment of one's home, where exposure to infectious agents is minimized. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) found that seniors receiving home health care experienced lower hospital readmission rates than those receiving care in institutional settings.

Promoting Independence and Quality of Life

Maintaining independence and quality of life is paramount for seniors who wish to age in place or receive extra support while residing in assisted living facilities. Home health care empowers seniors to retain a sense of autonomy and dignity by enabling them to receive care in a setting that aligns with their preferences and lifestyle choices. Research conducted by the National Institute on Aging underscores the



positive impact of home-based care on seniors' emotional well-being, social engagement, and overall satisfaction with their care experience.

Empowering Caregivers with Support and Respite

Home health care is a vital source of support and respite for family caregivers, alleviating the physical, emotional, and financial burdens associated with caregiving responsibilities. According to the Family Caregiver Alliance, home health services provide professional assistance with caregiving tasks and offer educational resources, counseling, and caregiver support programs. This holistic approach enables caregivers to fulfill their roles more effectively while maintaining their health and well-being.

Home health care benefits for seniors and their caregivers are profound and far-reaching. By embracing this model of care, individuals can experience the comfort of familiar surroundings, reduce the risk of infections and hospital readmissions, and preserve their independence and quality of life. As the demand for home health services continues to increase, caregivers and seniors must explore this option as a viable and compassionate pathway to holistic care and support.

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Understanding and Preventing Skin Cancer in Sunny Florida

By Jillian Hunt, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, AOCNP, Naples Cancer Advisors

Living in Florida, with its year-round sunshine and warm temperatures, offers many benefits, from beautiful beaches to outdoor activities. However, this sunny environment also increases exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays, which are a significant risk factor for skin cancer, including melanoma. Understanding the risks and adopting preventive measures can help residents enjoy the sun safely while minimizing their skin cancer risk.

What is Skin Cancer?

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. It occurs when mutations develop in the DNA of skin cells, primarily due to UV radiation from the sun or tanning beds, leading these cells to grow uncontrollably. The three most common types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma, with melanoma being the most aggressive and lethal if not caught early.

Risk Factors for Skin Cancer

Several factors increase the risk of developing skin cancer:

- **Excessive Sun Exposure:** UV radiation is the leading cause of skin cancer. Florida's residents are particularly at risk due to the state's strong sunlight throughout the year.
- **Skin Type:** Individuals with fair skin, light hair, and blue or green eyes have a higher risk of sun damage and subsequently skin cancer.
- **History of Sunburns:** Experiencing sunburns, especially blistering ones during childhood, can double the risk of melanoma later in life.
- **Personal or Family History:** A history of skin cancer in oneself or a family increases the likelihood of developing skin cancer.
- **Age and Gender:** Older individuals and males are generally more prone to skin cancer, though melanoma is also a leading cause of cancer in young adults.
- **Tanning bed use:** Like sun exposure Tanning bed use is another source of UV radiation exposure.

Prevention: Key to Reducing Risk

Prevention is pivotal in combating skin cancer. Here are some effective strategies recommended by dermatologists and cancer prevention researchers:



1. **Sun Protection:** Regular use of sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or higher can significantly reduce the risk of skin cancer. Apply it liberally and reapply every two hours, or immediately after swimming or sweating.
2. **Wear Protective Clothing:** Long-sleeved shirts, pants, wide-brimmed hats, and sunglasses help protect against UV rays. Clothing with UV protective fabrics offers additional safety.
3. **Seek Shade:** The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Seeking shade during these hours further reduces UV exposure.
4. **Avoid Tanning Beds:** Tanning beds emit harmful UV radiation similar to the sun and should be avoided to lower skin cancer risk.
5. **Regular Skin Checks:** Early detection is crucial for successful treatment. Monthly self-examinations and annual professional skin exams can help catch skin cancer early when it is most treatable.

The Role of Diet and Lifestyle in Cancer Prevention

Research indicates that a healthy diet and lifestyle can also play a role in preventing skin cancer. Diets rich in fruits, vegetables, and antioxidants can help protect the skin from UV damage. Foods high in beta-carotene and vitamins C, E, and A are particularly beneficial.

Regular physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight are also associated with a lower risk of various cancers, including melanoma. Limiting alcohol intake and avoiding smoking can further reduce cancer risk.

Community and Support in Florida

Florida's healthcare providers and cancer prevention organizations offer numerous resources and support for residents. These include educational programs on sun safety, free or low-cost skin cancer screenings, and support groups for those affected by skin cancer.

Conclusion

Living in Florida requires being proactive about sun safety and skin health. By understanding the risks and taking preventive measures, Floridians can enjoy the sunshine while significantly reducing their risk of skin cancer. Awareness, education, and regular healthcare consultations are key components of a comprehensive approach to cancer prevention.

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This comprehensive approach not only helps individuals lead healthier lives but also reduces the overall burden of skin cancer on the healthcare system, making it a win-win for everyone involved.



Jillian Hunt
MSN, APRN, FNP-C, AOCNP

Jillian has been caring for cancer patients since 2004. In that time, she has set the benchmark for her patient-centric approach in Cincinnati and beyond. Her professional journey began at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 1999 on the hematology/oncology/bone marrow transplant unit and later the emergency department.

After spending five years caring for children, Jillian found her passion in caring for the adult oncology patient. Starting as a chemotherapy infusion nurse in private practice with Dr. Philip Leming at Cincinnati Hematology Oncology, she then pursued an advanced degree to offer a higher level of care to her cancer patients.

Jillian has been an oncology nurse practitioner since 2011 and is passionate about patient care, education and staying current on research opportunities available for the patients she cares for.

Jillian is a national speaker traveling to educate clinicians on the use and management of toxicities of medications that are used in cancer treatments. She has spoken at national nursing conferences and sits on several advisory boards. Jillian feels strongly about staying on the front lines to improve patient care and expert advice on cancer.



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How Your Sex Hormones Can Support (or Hinder) Your Weight Loss Journey

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

Are you aware of the role your sex hormones play in regulating glucose and promoting weight loss? While thyroid hormone plays a role in regulating the metabolism and how the body burns calories, sex hormones play a role in distribution of fat stores and water retention.

Have you ever put in all the effort to lose weight—modifying your diet, adding in exercise—only to have the numbers on the scale stay the same? It can be aggravating to feel as though all your efforts are going to waste, but it may not be because you're not doing enough; it could be because your hormones are unbalanced, causing your body to hold onto glucose.

With high blood sugar leaving your body in a perpetual state of fat-storing instead of fat-burning, it's no wonder why weight loss becomes exceptionally challenging.

Let's further explore the role some crucial hormones have in blood sugar management and weight loss and what the key is to finally seeing those numbers on the scale go down.

Estrogen: A Glucose Reducer

Estrogen, the female hormone known for regulating the menstrual cycle and promoting the development of female characteristics, also plays a crucial role in directing glucose to the right areas of your body. Namely, estrogen encourages muscle cells to take in glucose.

Estrogen accomplishes this by stimulating the cells lining your blood vessels to deliver insulin to muscles, with insulin then encouraging the muscle to take in glucose and use it. The result? Thanks to estrogen, your blood sugar level lowers.

Researchers have long known the protection offered by estrogen against Type 2 diabetes, a disease where insulin becomes less effective in the body organs responsible for controlling blood sugar, resulting in high blood sugar. They've seen that women undergoing menopause have a significantly higher risk of Type 2 diabetes, meaning Type 2 diabetes risk increases when estrogen levels



decrease. Additionally, it's been shown that this risk of diabetes becomes less drastic when menopausal women are given hormone replacement therapy to restore their estrogen levels.

While women have more estrogen circulating through their bodies, men still require this hormone, and its declining numbers can also increase their risk of insulin resistance.

In short, it's clear that estrogen is crucial for regulating glucose levels in the body.

However, these benefits of estrogen can reverse if the amounts are too high. Some research has found that high concentrations of estradiol, a form of estrogen, can cause insulin resistance, which can cause blood sugar levels to rise.

Progesterone: An Insulin Inhibitor

While estrogen is crucial for helping your body deliver insulin where needed and increase glucose uptake—lowering blood sugar levels—progesterone does the opposite.

Progesterone, a hormone that supports menstruation and, if a woman is pregnant, supports the pregnancy, can also affect insulin signaling in a type of fat

cell, 3T3-L1 adipocytes. This can lead to higher blood sugar levels because progesterone keeps these cells from up taking glucose, which then allows the glucose to continue circulating in the blood.

Progesterone increases significantly during pregnancy, and given its influence over insulin, this increase in progesterone may be what contributes to gestational diabetes in pregnant women.

Everything is about balance in the body and progesterone is the counterbalance to the negative side effects of estrogen. When estrogen is in excess it may also lead to insulin resistance and in turn weight gain. Progesterone is also a natural diuretic and keeps both estrogen and testosterone in check when maintained within the right levels.

Testosterone: The Baby Bear of Hormones

Do you know how, in the fairy tale, Baby Bear has everything that is “just right?” This is how testosterone levels need to be, with studies showing that both high and low testosterone are associated with insulin resistance. This data shows the importance of finding the ideal target range for each person and keeping hormones within these personalized bounds to ensure the other parts of the body work as needed.

Additionally, testosterone regulation and its influence can vary based on gender. Studies have shown that increased testosterone levels in males (if they are low) can cause a more favorable metabolism of glucose, lowering glucose levels and improving insulin sensitivity. However, increased testosterone was not shown to influence glucose metabolism in women.

Hormone replacement therapy has traditionally taken a very cookie cutter approach, and everyone is treated as if they are the same. This evidence showcases the importance of a customized approach to hormonal management, as not everybody will respond in the same way or need the same alterations.

Blood Sugar And Weight Loss: How Are They Connected?

We've spent a lot of time discussing how various hormones affect our body's ability to manage blood sugar levels, but how does blood sugar influence our weight loss journey? It's simple: your blood sugar levels can either make it easier or harder to lose weight, and it's all because of how your body signals within itself.

If your insulin levels are high, your body never receives a signal to run through glycogen (a form of glucose and a primary energy source) and then burn fat stores for energy. Instead, your body will remain in fat-storing instead of fat-burning mode. As you can expect, this makes weight loss challenging—not impossible, but much harder than it could otherwise be.

Insulin is what unlocks the insulin receptors on your cells. They're like a gate; once it's open, your cells can let in glucose and convert it into energy. If the gate remains shut, though, which can occur if your blood sugar is too high, the cells don't open, and glucose stays in the bloodstream, making your blood sugar rise even more. This phenomenon is referred to as insulin resistance.

When insulin resistance occurs, your body produces more insulin to try and unlock the cells, but it only makes matters worse. So, the key to making fat-burning possible is to ensure your body has stable sugar levels and that insulin never goes into overdrive; otherwise, those gates will stay shut.

Hormone Optimization: A Necessary Element of Weight Loss

Society places diet and exercise as the two key components of losing weight, but there's a hidden factor

that many people don't consider despite it making all the difference for your weight loss journey: your hormonal balance.

The most current and hottest weight loss trend are peptide injections of Semaglutide (Ozempic®/Wegovy®/Rybelsus®) and Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®/Zepbound™). While these therapies are effective and individuals will lose weight, once the weight loss goals are met and the medication is discontinued the weight lost will return if the hormones are not optimized.

Blood sugar levels that are too high, or insulin that is not receptive enough, can cause your body to stay in fat-storing mode, and the culprit of these high blood sugar levels and insulin sensitivity may be your hormones.

So, even if you revamp your diet or add in an exercise routine, if your hormones are imbalanced and affecting your blood sugar, your body will fight to hold on to its fat stores. This means that the numbers on the scale might not change or will change very slowly, no matter how many healthy habits you adopt.

Ultimately, the key to weight loss is ensuring your hormones are properly balanced. This not only means that your hormone levels, individually, should be within your body's ideal range—which can be different from the standard recommendations—but your hormones need to be balanced with each other. For instance, blood sugar levels are best managed when your estrogen is higher than your progesterone, so you need to check the levels of each hormone, how they compare to each other, and which ratio produces the best results.

This is a challenging balance to find, which is why working with a hormone specialist is so crucial—they can find the balance that helps you regain control of your hormones and encourages your body to finally release its hold on glucose and fat.

Can Weight Loss Medications Replace the Need for Hormone Optimization?

Even if you take medication for weight loss, you still need hormonal balance if you want to maintain your weight loss.

To better understand why, we need to look at how blood sugar levels become fat.

Your body requires energy from food to complete all its processes, but if you eat more than your body needs, glucose will be left floating around in your bloodstream. When your body has excess glucose, it stores it as fat, leading to weight gain.

Weight loss medication often suppresses your appetite, which lowers blood glucose levels and encourages your body to instead break down fat for energy. However, once you come off the medication, your blood sugar can once again rise if your hormones are imbalanced, causing the excess glucose to once again become fat.

When your hormones are optimized, though, your body will use glucose more efficiently, which can keep your blood sugar levels normal. This puts you in the right place to maintain your weight loss even when you stop taking medication.

If you're looking to lose weight, diet and exercise are crucial components of any healthy lifestyle, but to truly see success, you need to take a closer look at your hormones and ensure that they're setting your body up for success.

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THE RISING PROMISE OF SEMAGLUTIDE IN WEIGHT LOSS: A GAME-CHANGER ON THE HORIZON

By Dr. Magdalena Kerschner

In the persistent battle against obesity, the emergence of Semaglutide has ignited hope and fascination within the medical community and beyond. Originally developed as a treatment for type 2 diabetes, Semaglutide has unexpectedly revealed a remarkable side effect – substantial weight loss. This unexpected twist has spurred intensive research and clinical trials, positioning Semaglutide as a potential game-changer in the fight against obesity.

Semaglutide belongs to a class of medications known as GLP-1 receptor agonists, which work by mimicking the effects of the naturally occurring hormone GLP-1. Originally approved for the management of type 2 diabetes, its efficacy in controlling blood sugar levels was well-documented. However, its impact on weight loss came as a surprise during clinical trials.

The groundbreaking STEP (Semaglutide Treatment Effect in People with obesity) trials provided compelling evidence of Semaglutide's efficacy in promoting weight loss. In these trials, individuals with obesity who received Semaglutide injections experienced significant reductions in body weight compared to those on a placebo. The results were nothing short of remarkable, with participants achieving weight loss of up to 15% or more of their initial body weight over the course of the study.

One of the key factors contributing to Semaglutide's weight loss effect is its ability to reduce appetite. By acting on the brain's appetite control centers, Semaglutide helps individuals feel fuller for longer periods, leading to reduced food intake and subsequent weight loss. Additionally, Semaglutide may also influence other factors involved in weight regulation, such as slowing gastric emptying and improving insulin sensitivity.

The potential of Semaglutide as a weight loss aid extends beyond its physiological effects. Unlike many weight loss medications that require daily administration, Semaglutide is administered once weekly via subcutaneous injection. This convenience factor not only enhances patient compliance but also makes Semaglutide an attractive option for long-term weight management.

Despite its promising efficacy, Semaglutide is not without limitations and considerations. Like any medication, it may cause side effects in some individuals, including nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. However, these side effects are typically mild to moderate in severity and tend to diminish over



time. Additionally, Semaglutide is not recommended for use in individuals with a history of pancreatitis or thyroid cancer due to safety concerns.

Moreover, Semaglutide is intended to complement lifestyle modifications, including a healthy diet and regular exercise, rather than serve as a standalone solution for weight loss. As such, its effectiveness may vary depending on individual adherence to these lifestyle changes. Furthermore, the long-term safety and efficacy of Semaglutide for weight loss beyond the duration of clinical trials remain to be fully elucidated.

Despite these considerations, the enthusiasm surrounding Semaglutide's potential as a weight loss treatment continues to grow. It was approved by regulatory agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of obesity would mark a significant milestone in the field of obesity management. Moreover, Semaglutide's benefit in addressing obesity, type 2 diabetes, and treatment of cardiovascular disease to lower the rate of heart attacks may offer a compelling treatment option for individuals with these conditions, who often face significant challenges in achieving weight loss.

Looking ahead, ongoing research is focused on further understanding the mechanisms underlying Semaglutide's weight loss effects and identifying strategies to optimize its use in clinical practice. This includes exploring the potential use of higher doses of Semaglutide, combination therapies with other weight loss medications, and personalized approaches based on individual patient characteristics.

In conclusion, Semaglutide represents a promising new frontier in the treatment of obesity. Its ability to induce significant weight loss, coupled with its convenient dosing regimen, positions it as a potential game-changer in the field of weight management. However, further research is needed to fully realize its long-term safety and efficacy and to identify the optimal strategies for its use in clinical practice. Nonetheless, Semaglutide's emergence heralds a new era of hope and possibility for individuals struggling with obesity worldwide.



Dr. Kerschner

Dr. Magdalena Kerschner is a board-certified Anesthesiologist and board-certified Interventional Pain specialist.

She completed her medical school education at Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit Michigan and subsequent anesthesiology residency at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY.

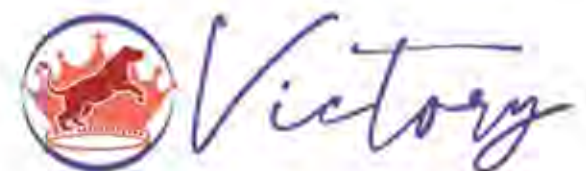
After many years of practicing traditional medicine and treating illness, Dr. Kerschner realized that preventing disease before it starts results in healthier and happier patients.

The concept of preventing illness has awakened in her an interest in weight management and bio-identical hormone replacement therapies as a modern way to promote physical and emotional wellness. Dr. Kerschner holds a certificate of training from Dr. Neal Rouzier – a nationally recognized authority in bio-identical hormone replacement therapies and preventive medicine as well as receiving a Certificate of Continued Medical Education in Wellness at Canyon Ranch.

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ARTHRITIS... HELP!

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

Arthritis is a group of disorders that cause inflammation and pain in the joints. It affects millions of people worldwide, and it is one of the leading causes of disability. There are over 100 types of arthritis, and each one has unique symptoms, causes, and treatments. While there are many types of healthcare professionals that can help manage arthritis, an orthopedic surgeon is an essential part of the treatment plan for certain types of arthritis.

Orthopedic surgeons specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disorders of the musculoskeletal system. This includes bones, joints, muscles, tendons, ligaments, and nerves. Arthritis affects the joints, which makes an orthopedic surgeon a crucial part of the treatment team for certain types of arthritis.

One of the most common types of arthritis is osteoarthritis. This type of arthritis is caused by the wear and tear of the joints over time. Osteoarthritis can affect any joint in the body, but it most commonly affects the hands, hips, knees, and spine. While there is no cure for osteoarthritis, there are many treatment options available to help manage the symptoms. An orthopedic surgeon can provide surgical options such as joint replacement, which can greatly improve the quality of life for people with osteoarthritis.

Another type of arthritis that may require the expertise of an orthopedic surgeon is rheumatoid arthritis. Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disorder that causes the immune system to attack the joints, resulting in inflammation, pain, and damage to the joints. The most commonly affected joints in rheumatoid arthritis are the hands, wrists, and feet. While there are many medications available to help manage the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, some people may require surgery to help improve joint function. An orthopedic surgeon can perform procedures such as joint fusion or joint replacement to help alleviate the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis.

Psoriatic arthritis is another type of arthritis that may require the expertise of an orthopedic surgeon. This type of arthritis is characterized by joint pain,



stiffness, and swelling, and it often occurs in people with psoriasis. The most commonly affected joints in psoriatic arthritis are the fingers, toes, and spine.

While medications can help manage the symptoms of psoriatic arthritis, some people may require surgery to help improve joint function. An orthopedic surgeon can perform procedures such as synovectomy or joint replacement to help alleviate the symptoms of psoriatic arthritis.

In addition to the types of arthritis mentioned above, there are many other types of arthritis that may require the expertise of an orthopedic surgeon. These include gout, ankylosing spondylitis, and reactive arthritis, among others. An orthopedic surgeon can provide a comprehensive evaluation of the joints and recommend the best course of treatment based on the individual's specific needs.

Arthritis is a complex and varied group of disorders that affect millions of people worldwide. While there are many types of healthcare professionals that can help manage arthritis, an orthopedic surgeon is an essential part of the treatment plan for certain types of arthritis. With their specialized training and expertise in the musculoskeletal system, orthopedic surgeons can provide surgical options that can greatly improve the quality of life for people with arthritis. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with arthritis, it is important to work with a healthcare team that includes an orthopedic surgeon to ensure that you receive the best possible care.

Everyone has a busy life and being hurt or injured can get in the way of the enjoyment of life." Dr. Swift believes that movement gets us back to enjoying our lives. Our goal is to restore pain free motion to the injured spine, shoulder, knee, elbow, hip and ankle using the most modern, innovative and safety proven techniques available in orthopedic surgery today. My practice uses state of the art procedures that treat injured joints. It doesn't matter if you are an accomplished athlete, a weekend warrior, a busy professional, an active parent, or grandparent, our goal is to keep you active and get you moving. I believe it is important to spend time together and understand how we can accomplish your goals.

Robert D. Swift, DO is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon and a Fellow of the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. He has subspecialty and advanced training in minimally invasive surgery of the shoulder, knee, hip, ankle, and elbow. He has additional orthopedic trauma training to better manage fractures and Training in Robotic Knee and hip replacement. He has been an adjunct professor of Orthopedics at Vanderbilt University and at Upstate University Medical Center. Dr. Swift attended medical school at the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed a general surgery internship with the US Army at Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center and was then stationed in Europe. As a physician he supported missions and troops throughout Europe. He was asked to be the military physician for medical support to the White House Mission to Chernobyl. Dr. Swift completed his orthopedic residency training at UMDNJ-SOM/Copper Medical Center. He rejoined the military after residency and was stationed at Ft. Campbell, KY. He deployed to Afghanistan as the Chief of Orthopedics at Bagram. His service was decorated by the Bronze Star Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal. Dr. Swift is accomplished in his field; he has been the Team Physician for Division I Athletic programs, been a course instructor, presenter, and author on fracture care and on minimally invasive shoulder and knee surgery. While in Michigan he was selected as a Top Doctor for 2019-2021.

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HIRING AN **EXPERIENCED** REALTOR FOR YOUR REAL ESTATE JOURNEY MATTERS

In the dynamic world of real estate, the decision to buy or sell a property is a significant milestone, laden with both excitement and complexity. Amidst the myriad of tasks and considerations, one critical choice can make or break your real estate experience – the selection of a seasoned and experienced realtor. In this article, we delve into the reasons why hiring an experienced realtor matters and how their expertise can be a game-changer in achieving your property goals.

Expertise That Transcends Transactions

An experienced realtor is not merely a facilitator of transactions; they are seasoned professionals equipped with a wealth of industry knowledge. From understanding market trends and pricing strategies to navigating intricate legal nuances, their expertise extends beyond the surface. When you engage an experienced realtor, you gain a strategic partner who can provide valuable insights and guidance throughout the entire real estate process.

Navigating the Complex Landscape

The real estate landscape is multifaceted, marked by intricate processes and regulations. An experienced realtor has weathered the storms of various market conditions and witnessed the evolution of legal frameworks. This wealth of experience empowers them to navigate complexities seamlessly, ensuring that your transactions adhere to all legal requirements and regulatory standards. Their ability to foresee potential challenges and proactively address them adds an extra layer of security to your real estate endeavors.

Market Knowledge: A Competitive Edge

Markets are dynamic, with fluctuations in demand, supply, and pricing. An experienced realtor is akin to a living repository of market knowledge, attuned to the pulse of the industry. Their ability to analyze trends, anticipate shifts, and identify strategic opportunities provides you with a competitive edge. Whether you are buying or selling, having a realtor with a finger on the market's pulse can maximize your returns and optimize your investment.

Negotiation Prowess

The art of negotiation is a crucial aspect of any real estate transaction. Seasoned realtors hone their negotiation skills over years of dealing with diverse



clients, fellow agents, and market conditions. When you have an experienced realtor by your side, you benefit from their adept negotiation prowess. Whether securing the best price for your property or navigating a competitive bid to secure your dream home, their ability to negotiate effectively can be the differentiating factor in a successful deal.

Access to a Robust Network

Establishing connections is paramount in the real estate realm, and experienced realtors boast an extensive network of professionals. From mortgage brokers and inspectors to contractors and legal experts, their connections can streamline the entire process. This network not only expedites transactions but also ensures that you have access to trusted professionals, enhancing the overall quality of your real estate journey.

Personalized Guidance and Support

Buying or selling a property is a deeply personal experience, often laden with emotions and aspirations. An experienced realtor recognizes the individuality of each client's needs and tailors their approach accordingly. Their ability to offer personalized guidance and support goes beyond the transactional aspects, fostering a sense of trust and reliability. This personalized touch is particularly invaluable in mitigating stress and ensuring a smooth, enjoyable real estate experience.

In conclusion, the decision to hire an experienced realtor is an investment in the success of your real estate journey. Their expertise transcends the transactional nature of real estate, offering a holistic approach that encompasses market knowledge, negotiation prowess, and a robust network of professionals. As you embark on your property endeavors, partnering with an experienced realtor is not just a choice; it's a strategic decision that can make all the difference in achieving your real estate goals.

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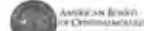
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REVOCAABLE LIVING VS. IRREVOCAABLE TRUSTS: DIFFERENCES THAT MATTER

By *Dominico R. Palma, Florida Estate Planning Attorney*

Trusts are flexible estate planning tools that can serve a variety of purposes. When combined with a Will and other appropriate estate planning tools, trusts can help people at all stages of life confidently achieve their estate planning goals.

Several different types of trusts are used in estate planning. Broadly speaking, these trusts fall into two categories: (i) revocable living trusts and (ii) irrevocable trusts.

Incorporating a Revocable Living Trust Into Your Estate Plan

Revocable living trusts allow you to plan for the future while still maintaining complete control over your assets during your lifetime. When you establish a revocable living trust as part of your estate plan, this trust will serve several purposes that your Last Will and Testament would otherwise serve. Most importantly, it will allow your loved ones to avoid the probate process.

Under Florida law, when a person passes away with or without a Will, all personal assets become inaccessible. Accessing these assets requires court involvement, the process of which is called "Probate." This process involves additional time, expense, and possible complications in finalizing the decedent's personal affairs.

When you place assets into a revocable living trust, they are not part of your probate estate. As a result, the assets are distributed privately, and there is no need to involve the courts. A carefully drafted Florida revocable living trust combined with other estate planning tools will often keep a person's entire estate out of probate.

As the term "revocable living trust" suggests, these trusts are revocable. This means that if you decide to modify the terms of your trust or get rid of it entirely, you can do so at any time for any reason. This flexibility, combined with the ability to avoid probate, makes the revocable living trust a valuable estate planning tool for many people.



Using Irrevocable Trusts to Achieve Specific Estate Planning Goals

If revocable living trusts are so flexible and effective, why would you create an irrevocable trust instead? While revocable living trusts are useful as general estate planning tools in Florida, irrevocable trusts can help you achieve a variety of more specific estate planning goals.

There are several types of irrevocable trusts—all of which are useful in different circumstances. For example, some of the most commonly used irrevocable trusts include:

- Spousal Lifetime Access Trusts
- Charitable Trusts
- Qualified Personal Residence Trust
- Irrevocable Life Insurance Trusts
- Qualified Income Trusts
- Special Needs Trusts

Although the permanent nature of these trusts may seem daunting and comes with certain disadvantages, such as giving up ownership and control of assets, the irrevocability comes with certain benefits. For example, using irrevocable trusts may allow for tax advantages or help qualify an individual for Medicaid.

The use of trusts in estate planning is highly specific to each individual's or family's wants and needs. Thus, meeting with an Estate Planning lawyer in Florida is imperative to inform you of all your options and determine what will work best for you.

Discuss Your Options with a Florida Estate Planning Lawyer

Do you have questions about incorporating a revocable living trust or an irrevocable trust into your estate plan? If so, we invite you to get in touch. To discuss your options with an experienced Florida estate planning lawyer at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A., please call 239-394-5161 or visit www.wpl-legal.com for more information.



About the Author

Dominico "Nico" R. Palma is an associate attorney with Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. in the Marco Island location. His law practice focuses on Florida estate planning, probate and trust administration, business planning and real estate transactions. Originally from Roseto, Pennsylvania, Nico moved to Naples in 2019 to attend Ave Maria School of Law.

Nico's passion for helping clients and the community led him to serve as a First Lieutenant in the Florida Army National Guard as well as in multiple roles for organizations such as the National Italian American Bar Association, the Florida Italian-American Bar Association, and the Estate Planning and Probate Committee of the Elder Law Section of The Florida Bar. Additionally, Nico is an active member of the Naples Italian-American Society and Young Professionals of Naples.

Outside the office, Nico enjoys golfing, beachgoing, and spending time with his English bulldog, Apollo.



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HARNESSING THE HEALING POTENTIAL OF NEUROACUPUNCTURE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

A Comprehensive Guide

By Alik Minikhanov, AP, DOM

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a progressive neurological disorder that affects millions of people worldwide. Despite advancements in conventional treatments, managing PD remains a challenge due to its complex and multifaceted nature. In recent years, an ancient healing practice, neuroacupuncture, has garnered attention as a promising adjunct therapy for PD. Combining traditional acupuncture techniques with modern neuroscience principles, neuroacupuncture offers a unique approach to addressing the underlying neurochemical imbalances and neurological dysfunction associated with PD.

In this comprehensive guide, we delve into the mechanisms and evidence supporting the use of neuroacupuncture in the management of Parkinson's disease.

Understanding Neuroacupuncture

Neuroacupuncture is a specialized form of acupuncture that integrates traditional acupuncture principles with insights from neuroscience. Unlike conventional acupuncture, which focuses on restoring the flow of Qi (vital energy) along meridians, neuroacupuncture targets specific neurological conditions by stimulating key points on the body, including the scalp, ears, and extremities.

By strategically placing fine needles, neuroacupuncture aims to modulate neurotransmitter activity, regulate neural circuits, and promote neuroplasticity—the brain's ability to adapt and rewire in response to stimuli.

How Does Neuroacupuncture Help?

1. Regulation of Neurotransmitters: Parkinson's disease is characterized by a deficiency of dopamine, a neurotransmitter essential for motor function. Studies have shown that neuroacupuncture can enhance dopamine release in the brain, thereby alleviating motor symptoms such as tremors, rigidity, and bradykinesia.

2. Modulation of Neural Circuits: Neuroacupuncture targets specific brain regions implicated in Parkinson's disease pathology, including the basal ganglia and related motor circuits. By modulating neural activity within these circuits, neuroacupuncture helps restore the balance between excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmission, leading to improved motor control and coordination.



3. Promotion of Neuroplasticity: Neuroacupuncture stimulates neurogenic niches within the brain, such as the subventricular zone and hippocampus, where new neurons are generated. By promoting neuroplasticity, neuroacupuncture facilitates the formation of new neural connections and the rewiring of existing circuits, which may contribute to motor recovery and functional improvement in individuals with PD.

4. Reduction of Oxidative Stress and Inflammation: Parkinson's disease is associated with oxidative stress and neuroinflammation, which contribute to neuronal damage and disease progression. Neuroacupuncture exerts antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, thereby mitigating oxidative damage, suppressing inflammatory responses, and protecting neurons from degeneration.

5. Improvement of Non-Motor Symptoms: In addition to motor symptoms, PD can manifest as a range of non-motor symptoms, including depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and autonomic dysfunction. Neuroacupuncture addresses these symptoms by regulating the activity of the autonomic nervous system, modulating neurotransmitter levels, and promoting emotional well-being.

Supported by Science: The Clinical Evidence

Numerous clinical studies and systematic reviews have investigated the efficacy of neuroacupuncture in the management of Parkinson's disease. For example, a randomized controlled trial published in the *Journal of Neurology* found that neuroacupuncture combined with conventional medication significantly improved motor function and activities of daily living in patients with PD compared to medication alone. Similarly, a meta-analysis published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* concluded that acupuncture, including neuroacupuncture, was associated with significant improvements in motor symptoms, quality of life, and disability scores in PD patients.

Moreover, neuroimaging studies have provided insights into the neurobiological mechanisms underlying the therapeutic effects of neuroacupuncture in PD. Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies have shown that neuroacupuncture modulates activity within the basal ganglia and related motor circuits, as well as the mesocorticolimbic reward pathway, which may contribute to its anti-Parkinsonian effects.

Conclusion

Neuroacupuncture offers a promising adjunctive therapy for individuals living with Parkinson's disease, addressing both motor and non-motor symptoms while promoting overall well-being. By targeting the underlying neurochemical imbalances and neurological dysfunction associated with PD, neuroacupuncture harnesses the body's innate healing mechanisms to alleviate symptoms, improve function, and enhance quality of life. As research in this field continues to advance, neuroacupuncture holds immense potential as a safe, effective, and natural approach to managing Parkinson's disease.

My practice specializes in assisting many patients struggling with Parkinson's disease and other neurological conditions including Alzheimer's disease and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) through the application of neuroacupuncture. We have witnessed significant improvements with many of our patients and highly recommend regular treatment sessions to optimize potential lifestyle improvements.

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Understanding the Root Causes and Effective Treatments for Back Pain

By Amanda N. Sacino, MD-PhD • Neurosurgeon and Managing Partner

Back pain is a pervasive and often debilitating condition that affects millions of people worldwide. Understanding the underlying causes of back pain and exploring effective treatment options are essential for managing this common ailment. This article delves into the main causes of back pain, ranging from musculoskeletal issues to underlying medical conditions, and examines various treatment modalities aimed at providing relief and restoring functionality.

Common Causes of Back Pain:

1. Muscular Strain and Sprain: Muscular strain or sprain is one of the most prevalent causes of back pain. Activities such as lifting heavy objects, sudden movements, or poor posture can strain the muscles and ligaments in the back, leading to pain and stiffness. Overuse injuries, repetitive motions, and inadequate conditioning of the back muscles can exacerbate this condition.

2. Herniated Disc: Intervertebral discs act as cushions between the vertebrae, providing flexibility and shock absorption to the spine. A herniated or slipped disc occurs when the soft inner core of the disc protrudes through the tough outer layer, irritating nearby nerves and causing back pain. This condition often results from age-related degeneration, trauma, or excessive strain on the spine.

3. Degenerative Disc Disease: Degenerative disc disease is a progressive condition characterized by the breakdown of intervertebral discs over time. As discs lose hydration and elasticity, they become less effective at absorbing shock and maintaining spinal alignment, leading to pain and stiffness in the back. Factors such as aging, genetics, and lifestyle choices can contribute to the development of this condition.

4. Spinal Stenosis: Spinal stenosis is a narrowing of the spinal canal or neural foramina, the openings through which nerves exit the spinal cord. This narrowing can compress the spinal cord or nerve roots, causing pain, numbness, and weakness in the back and legs. Spinal stenosis may result from age-related changes, such as bone spurs or thickened ligaments, or conditions like arthritis or spinal tumors.

5. Spondylolisthesis: Spondylolisthesis is a condition in which one vertebra slips forward or backward in relation to an adjacent vertebra. This displacement

can compress spinal nerves, leading to back pain, sciatica, and muscle weakness. Spondylolisthesis can be congenital or acquired and is often associated with repetitive stress, trauma, or degenerative changes in the spine.

Effective Treatments for Back Pain:

1. Physical Therapy and Exercise: Physical therapy aims to strengthen the muscles supporting the spine, improve flexibility, and correct posture to alleviate back pain and prevent recurrence. Exercise programs tailored to individual needs can include stretching, strengthening exercises, and low-impact aerobic activities to promote healing and rehabilitation.

2. Medications: Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or naproxen can help reduce inflammation and alleviate mild to moderate back pain. In cases of severe or chronic pain, prescription medications such as muscle relaxants, opioid analgesics, or antidepressants may be prescribed under medical supervision.

3. Bracing: A medically fitted back brace will provide support to the spine, especially during activities that can exacerbate muscular strain and sprain, and spondylolisthesis. The bracing also reminds patients not to engage in movements that can be harmful to the spine such as extreme bending and twisting.

4. Injections: Epidural steroid injections deliver anti-inflammatory medications directly to the affected area of the spine, providing temporary relief from pain and inflammation associated with conditions like herniated discs or spinal stenosis. Other types of injections, such as facet joint injections or nerve blocks, target specific sources of pain in the spine.

5. Minimally Invasive Procedures: Minimally invasive procedures such as percutaneous discectomy, radiofrequency ablation, or spinal cord stimulation may be recommended for individuals with persistent or severe back pain that does not respond to conservative treatments. These procedures involve targeted interventions to relieve pain and improve function while minimizing tissue damage and recovery time.

6. Surgery: In cases where conservative treatments fail to provide adequate relief or there is evidence of structural damage requiring surgical intervention, various surgical procedures may be considered. These may include discectomy, laminectomy, spinal fusion, or artificial disc replacement, depending on the underlying cause and severity of the back pain.

Conclusion: Back pain can significantly impact daily life and functionality, but with proper diagnosis and treatment, many individuals can find relief and improve their quality of life. Understanding the root causes of back pain and exploring a combination of conservative treatments, minimally invasive procedures, and surgical options tailored to individual needs can help individuals effectively manage this common condition and return to an active, pain-free lifestyle.

About Amanda Sacino, MD, PhD

Dr. Sacino was born and raised on the east coast of Florida. After securing her undergraduate degree at Boston University, she returned to her home state and attended the University of Florida, where she obtained her medical and post-doctorate degrees.

Her PhD work focused on proteinopathies, mainly Parkinsonism. But her mentors recognized her surgical precision skills, and so Dr. Sacino pursued extensive training in cranial, spine, and peripheral nerve surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. From there, she completed two spine fellowships at Johns Hopkins Hospital and the Swedish Neuroscience Institute. Her surgical spine training includes experience with degenerative diseases, congenital diseases, deformity, oncology, and trauma.

Dr. Sacino trained under Dr. Nicholas Theodore, the inventor of the Globus ExcelsiusGPS robot. She was present during the first robotic surgery at Johns Hopkins and trained extensively for five years with the robot during both spine and cranial cases.

Dr. Sacino's high standards and pursuit of quality has led her to become well-respected by her mentors and peers. Her goal is to provide patients with case-specific solutions so they have all the information and options they need to make informed decisions.



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Menopause and UTIs: What Every Woman Should Understand

Menopause marks a significant transition in a woman's life, signaling the end of reproductive years. While it's a natural process, menopause comes with its own set of changes and challenges, including the increased risk of urinary tract infections (UTIs). The chance of recurrent UTIs increases as a person progresses through menopause. A 2019 study found that 19–36% of premenopausal females experience recurrent UTIs and that the rate of recurrence increases to 55% after menopause. Understanding the relationship between menopause and UTIs is crucial for women's health and well-being.

1. Overview of Menopause

Menopause typically occurs around age 51, though it can vary widely among individuals. It is defined as the cessation of menstrual periods for 12 consecutive months, marking the end of a woman's reproductive phase. During menopause, hormonal changes, particularly the decline in estrogen levels, lead to various symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, and vaginal dryness.

2. Connection between Menopause and UTIs

The drop in estrogen levels during menopause plays a significant role in the increased susceptibility to UTIs. Estrogen helps maintain the health of the urinary tract by supporting the growth of beneficial bacteria and maintaining the integrity of the vaginal and urinary tissues. As estrogen levels decline, the vaginal pH becomes less acidic, creating an environment conducive to the growth of harmful bacteria like *E. coli*, which can ascend the urinary tract and cause infections.

3. Managing and Preventing UTIs during Menopause and Beyond

Managing UTIs during menopause involves a combination of preventive measures and treatment strategies. It's essential for women to:

- **Stay hydrated:** Drinking plenty of water helps flush out bacteria from the urinary tract.
- **Practice good hygiene:** Wiping from front to back after using the toilet helps prevent the spread of bacteria from the anus to the urinary tract.
- **Urinate frequently:** Emptying the bladder regularly helps prevent bacteria buildup.
- **Avoid irritants:** Certain products such as douches, feminine sprays, and harsh soaps can disrupt the natural balance of vaginal flora and increase the risk of UTIs.

In addition to these measures, incorporating cranberry products into the diet has been shown to help prevent UTIs. Cranberries contain compounds called proanthocyanidins (PACs) that prevent bacteria from

adhering to the urinary tract walls, thus reducing the risk of infection. Utiva Cranberry PACs, with a clinically effective dose of 36mg PACs, offer a convenient and natural way to support urinary tract health during menopause and beyond.

Utiva Webinar: Navigating Menopause

To further explore the topic of menopause and its associated challenges, Utiva is hosting a free live webinar/Q&A session titled "Navigating Menopause." This informative event will feature guest speakers Dr. Susan Oakley, a Urogynecologist, and Shirley Weir, a Menopause Educator.

Event Details:

- Date: Tuesday, May 14th
- Time: 7:30 pm EST
- Format: Live Q&A session on menopause

Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and advice on managing menopause-related issues. Register now to reserve your spot and empower yourself with the knowledge to navigate this transformative phase of life.

For more information and to register for the webinar, visit Utiva's webpage.

<https://www.utivahealth.com/menopause>

Sources:

- Utiva Health. "Everything You Need to Know About UTIs During Menopause." Retrieved from Utiva Health Blog: https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/everything-you-need-to-know-about-utis-during-menopause?_pos=2&_sid=4140b6639&_ss=r
- Utiva Health. "Pelvic Health Issues in Women: Navigating Challenges at Every Age." Retrieved from Utiva Health Blog: https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/pelvic-health-issues-in-women-navigating-challenges-at-every-age?_pos=4&_sid=d5a2c02aa&_ss=r

The banner features the Utiva logo in the top left corner. To the right, it says 'FREE WEBINAR' with a circular icon. The main title 'NAVIGATING MENOPAUSE' is written in large, white, serif font. Below the title, a white rounded rectangle contains the text 'ALL THINGS VAGINAL HEALTH, SEXUAL HEALTH & BLADDER WELLNESS'. On the right side, it says 'JOIN US — TUE MAY 14, 7:30 PM EST'. In the center, there are two circular portraits of the speakers: Dr. Susan Oakley on the left and Shirley Weir on the right. Below the portraits, their names and titles are listed: 'DR. SUSAN OAKLEY UROGYNECOLOGIST' and 'SHIRLEY WEIR MENOPAUSE EDUCATOR'. At the bottom, a white bar contains the text 'Register at www.utivahealth.com'.

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What Does An Otolaryngologist Do?

What is an Otolaryngologist?

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

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

What types of medical problems do otolaryngologists treat?

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

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

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

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

EAR

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

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

DIAGNOSTIC, TREATMENT, SURGICAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES PROVIDED:

- Adult and Pediatric Ear Disorders
- Vertigo & Balance Disorders
- Ear Infections
- Ear Tubes

- Hearing Loss
- Implantable Hearing Devices
- Hearing Aids
- Tinnitus/Ringing in the Ears
- Tumors and Skin Cysts
- Middle Ear Problems and Prosthesis
- Perforated Ear Drums
- Otosclerosis and Laser Stapedotomy
- Sudden Sensorineural Hearing loss

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

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

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

HEARING

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

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

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

BALANCE & DIZZINESS

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

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

Hearing Aids & Assistive Listening Devices

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

- Behind-The-Ear (BTE)
- In-The-Ear (ITE)
- In-The-Canal (ITC)
- Completely-In-The-Canal (CIC)
- Receiver in the Canal (RIC)
- Open Fitting

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- Allergies
- Acute & Chronic Sinusitis

- Bacterial Infections
- Nosebleeds
- Nasal Obstruction/Deviated Septums
- Snoring
- Allergic Fungal Sinusitis
- Sinonasal Tumors/Masses
- Nasal Polyps
- Endoscopic Sinus Surgery
- Balloon Sinuplasty™
- Clarifix
- Sinonasal Trauma
- Sinonasal Tumors/Polyps/Masses
- Smell/Taste Problems

ALLERGIES & ASTHMA

Our physicians are board certified and fellowship trained in ear, nose and throat-related allergy problems, including food allergies and allergies of the eyes and skin. We provide testing and treatment for a wide range of allergic diseases.

TESTING, TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR:

- Adult & Pediatric Allergies & Hay Fever Symptoms
- Seasonal Allergies to Pollens, Dust Mites, & Molds
- Allergens, Pollen, Dust, Dust Mites & Mold Spores
- Animal Allergies
- Food Allergies – including Gluten & Casein Allergy
- Animal Allergies
- Skin Allergies/Eczema
- Hives
- Anaphylaxis & Angioedema
- Allergy Shots
- Xolair
- Allergic Asthma
- Allergic Reactions to Insects

BALLOON SINUPLASTY

What is Balloon Sinuplasty?

- Balloon Sinuplasty (BSP) is a safe and effective procedure for many patients seeking relief from uncomfortable and painful sinusitis symptoms.
- If you have been diagnosed with chronic sinusitis and are not responding well to medication, or if you have recurrent acute rhinosinusitis, you may be a candidate for sinus surgery. There is now a less invasive technology used by ENT doctors to treat patients with chronic and recurrent acute sinusitis.
- With Balloon Sinuplasty, ENT doctors open inflamed sinuses in the same way that heart surgeons open up blocked arteries during balloon angioplasty. The procedure is less invasive than traditional sinus surgery, and effective at relieving symptoms of chronic

sinusitis. Balloon Sinuplasty allows patients to return to normal activities quickly. Unlike conventional sinus surgery, it does not include removal of bone or tissue from the nose. And, Balloon Sinuplasty is now offered by some doctors in their office under local anesthesia, so that there is no need to go to an operating room or undergo general anesthesia.

THROAT

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

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DIAGNOSTIC, TREATMENT AND SURGICAL SERVICES PROVIDED:

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- Somnoplasty Post Nasal Drip/Phlegm in Throat
- Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease – GERD
- Epiglottitis
- Laryngitis
- Swallowing Disorders
- Voice Disorders including Botox for Spasmodic Dysphonia
- Vocal Cord Disorders
- Vocal Cord Polyps and Nodules
- Soft Palate
- Snoring & Sleep Apnea

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- Vocal fold nodules and polyps
- Vocal fold cysts and granulomas
- Early laryngeal cancer and precancerous lesions of the larynx
- Reinke's Edema
- Laryngeal papillomatosis
- Laryngeal Dystonia/Spasmodic Dysphonia
- Neurologic conditions affecting voice
- Voice Gender Dysphoria

Airway Disorders:

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

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Dr. Sonkarley grew up in the Midwest and received his Doctorate from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine. He completed his Otolaryngology Residency at the University of Oklahoma. He served in the US Marine Corps for 5 years and was awarded the Joint Services Achievement Medal after his tour in Iraq.



Kathleen Rocuant, Au.D FAAA received her Doctorate from the Arizona School of Health Sciences and is Board Certified by the American Board of Audiology. She specializes in Hearing Evaluations

Hearing Aids and Hearing Solutions. She is a Fellow American Academy of Audiology and a member of the American Academy of Audiology and the Florida Academy of Audiology.



Carly Treibits, PA-C is a graduate of Florida Gulf Coast University and is a Board Certified Physician Assistant. She is a member of the Florida Academy of Physician Assistants and the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

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In Celebration of May as Mental Health Awareness Month

By Margaret Mouracade, MD

May is associated with Maia, the goddess of spring and growth. It is in this spirit that I as a nephrologist wish to write about the topic of Mental Health as May is deemed as National Mental Health Awareness Month. As a physician closing in on her 27th year of practice, I can attest to the need for all health-care providers to appreciate and to grow in their ability to recognize the importance of mental health wellness and to incorporate in their practice a means to address. Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how well we handle stress, relate to others and how we make choices. For us in the healthcare field, our ability to engage our patients in partnerships as well as to motivate them to embrace change and to adopt new lifestyle habits relies heavily on the state of their mental health.

Data from 2020 reported by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health) showed that in the United States, 1 in 5 adults (21% or 52.9 million people) experience mental illness. Furthermore, 1 in 20 adults (5.6% or 14.2 million) experience serious mental illness. NIH (National Institute of Mental Health) defines serious mental illness as a mental, behavioral or emotional disorder resulting in serious functional impairment, which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. This is a disease that we find rooted in our youth, noting that data reviewed from 2016 showed that between the ages of 6-17 that 1 in 6 (16.5% or 7.7 million) experienced a mental health disorder. Data reviewed showed that 50% of lifetime mental illness begins by age 14 and 75% by age 24. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among those aged 10-14. As a physician who also has board certification in addiction medicine, I found it quite noteworthy that 6.7% (17 million people) were identified as experiencing a co-occurring substance disorder and mental illness. In adults anxiety far leads as the most prevalent mental illness with 19% experiencing (48 million) the next prevalent is depression at 8.4% (21 million) and rounding out the top 3 would be PTSD at 3.6% (9 million).



Raising awareness that mental health illness should be treated like any other chronic disease entity is paramount. Similar to other chronic diseases, mental health illness has genetic propensity as it can be found in families as well as its manifestation in terms of severity often can be related to environmental factors as well as coexistence of other illness/conditions. Like other chronic diseases there can be periods of stability /dormancy and then flares can occur if triggered. Its treatment, like most other chronic diseases, is best appreciated when an integrative approach is taken with a combination of optimization of self-care, therapeutic endeavors and/or pharmacologic interventions. NAMI reports that the average delay between onset of mental illness and treatment is 11 years. In 2020, 46.2% of US adults with mental illness received treatment while 64.5% of those with serious mental illness were treated. Data reviewed from 2016 showed that 50.6% of youths aged 6-17 with mental illness received treatment.

The impact of mental illness can be appreciated in that depression raises the risk of developing cardiovascular and metabolic diseases by more than 40% than the general population. Depression has been recognized as a leading cause of disability worldwide. Substance use disorder has been identified in 32% of those with mental illness. High school students with significant symptoms of depression

are more than twice as likely to drop out compared to their peers. Some data collected from the Department of Corrections show that 37% of adults incarcerated have a diagnosed mental illness and that 70% of youth in the juvenile justice system have mental illness. Mood disorders are the most common cause of hospitalization for those under 45 years of age in the US excluding pregnancy and birth.

It is my hope that I have helped raise awareness of the need to address Mental Health and to appreciate the need to seek treatment and care like any other health issue. Treatment must be provided in a holistic, integrative and respectful manner. A state of wellness can be attained when an individual is provided a nurturing and restorative environment in which the skills and knowledge can be learned and gained to navigate through life and its challenges.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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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,
Wintrust Wealth Management.*

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SHOCKWAVE THERAPY:

A Superior Approach for Tennis Elbow Relief

By Dr. Viviana Cuberos

Tennis elbow, medically known as lateral epicondylitis, is a common condition characterized by pain and inflammation in the tendons that join the forearm muscles outside the elbow. Despite its name, tennis elbow is not exclusive to tennis players and can affect individuals engaged in repetitive arm motions, such as gardening, painting, or manual labor. It often results from overuse or repetitive stress on the forearm muscles and tendons, leading to microtears and inflammation.

Shockwave therapy has emerged as a highly effective treatment option for tennis elbow, offering superior outcomes compared to traditional interventions like cortisone shots. Shockwave therapy utilizes acoustic waves to stimulate healing processes in affected tissues, promoting tissue regeneration, neovascularization, and pain reduction. Unlike cortisone shots, which provide temporary relief by reducing inflammation, shockwave therapy targets the underlying pathology of tennis elbow, addressing both symptoms and the root cause of the condition.

Research studies have demonstrated the efficacy of shockwave therapy in treating tennis elbow. A meta-analysis published in the American Journal of Sports Medicine reviewed 28 randomized controlled trials. It concluded that shockwave therapy



significantly improves pain and function in patients with lateral epicondylitis compared to placebo or other interventions. Furthermore, a study published in the Journal of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery found that shockwave therapy produced better long-term outcomes and lower recurrence rates than corticosteroid injections in tennis elbow patients.

The superiority of shockwave therapy over cortisone shots lies in its ability to promote tissue healing and long-term symptom relief without the risks associated with corticosteroid use. Cortisone shots may provide short-term pain relief but carry potential side effects such as tendon weakening, cartilage damage, and increased risk of tendon rupture with repeated injections. In contrast, shockwave therapy is non-invasive, well-tolerated, and does not pose the same risks of tissue damage or systemic side effects.

Shockwave therapy offers a superior approach to relieving symptoms and pain associated with tennis elbow compared to cortisone shots. By targeting the underlying pathology and promoting tissue healing, shockwave therapy provides long-lasting relief and improved functional outcomes for patients with lateral epicondylitis. Orchida Medical Group recommends shockwave therapy as a safe and effective treatment option for individuals seeking relief from the debilitating symptoms of tennis elbow.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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Understanding Depression: Diagnosis and Expert Management

By Richard J. Capiola, MD

Depression is a pervasive mental health condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It is a complex and often debilitating illness that requires comprehensive diagnosis and expert management to improve the quality of life for those affected. In this article, we will explore the diagnosis and management of depression from the perspective of a psychiatrist, shedding light on the importance of professional intervention.

Diagnosing Depression

The first step in managing depression is an accurate diagnosis. Psychiatrists, as medical doctors with specialized training in mental health, are uniquely qualified for this task. They employ a combination of methods, including clinical interviews, psychological assessments, and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) criteria to evaluate a patient's symptoms. This thorough assessment helps determine the severity and type of depression, ensuring that treatment is tailored to the individual.

Differentiating Depression Types

Psychiatrists play a crucial role in distinguishing between various types of depression, such as major depressive disorder, persistent depressive disorder (dysthymia), bipolar disorder, and seasonal affective disorder. Each type may necessitate distinct management strategies, underscoring the importance of precise diagnosis.

Medication Management

Once diagnosed, psychiatrists can recommend medication as part of the treatment plan. Antidepressant medications, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), are commonly prescribed. Psychiatrists carefully select the appropriate medication and dosage based on the patient's symptoms, medical history, and potential side effects.

Therapeutic Interventions

In addition to medications, psychotherapy plays a vital role in managing depression. Psychiatrists often provide therapy themselves or collaborate with clinical psychologists and therapists to offer evidence-based approaches like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), interpersonal therapy (IPT), and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT). These therapies help patients understand and cope with their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, ultimately promoting recovery.

Monitoring and Adjustments

Regular follow-up appointments with a psychiatrist are crucial during depression management. They monitor medication efficacy, side effects, and overall progress, making necessary adjustments to the treatment plan. This ongoing relationship helps ensure that patients receive the most suitable care throughout their recovery journey.

Addressing Co-occurring Conditions

Psychiatrists are trained to identify and address co-occurring conditions that may exacerbate depression, such as anxiety disorders, substance use disorders, or medical conditions. Treating these comorbidities is essential for comprehensive depression management.

Preventing Relapse

Depression can be a recurring illness, and psychiatrists help patients develop relapse prevention strategies. This may involve continuing therapy, adjusting medications, and incorporating lifestyle changes to reduce stress and support mental well-being.

Supporting the Family

Depression affects not only the individual but also their loved ones. Psychiatrists often work with families to educate them about depression, improve communication, and provide guidance on how to support their loved one's recovery.

Depression is a challenging mental health condition, but with the expertise of a psychiatrist, it can be diagnosed accurately and managed effectively. Through a combination of medication management, psychotherapy, ongoing monitoring, and a holistic approach to mental health, individuals living with depression can find hope and healing on their journey to recovery. Consulting a qualified psychiatrist is a vital step in this process, as they possess the knowledge and experience to provide the comprehensive care needed for those battling depression.

Dr. Richard J. Capiola is the Chief of Psychiatry for Physicians Regional Medical Center. He received his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine and has been in practice for more than 20 years. Call Dr. Capiola today at 239-649-7494.



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



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS AT CREATIVE SCRIPTS: HOW CAN ESTRIOL HELP YOU?

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

Are you yearning to recapture the vitality and vibrancy of your younger self? Look no further than compounded hormone replacement therapy (HRT) from Creative Scripts Compounding Pharmacy. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by life's daily demands, leading to fatigue, mood swings, and mental fog. But imagine reclaiming the energy, mental clarity, and emotional balance that defined your youth. Compounded HRT offers a personalized approach to hormone optimization tailored to your unique needs, **available exclusively at compounding pharmacies like Creative Scripts**, to reignite your zest for life. By restoring hormonal balance, compounded HRT rejuvenates your body and nurtures your mental health, empowering you to thrive at every stage of life.

1. Hormones and Depression: Hormones are crucial in regulating various bodily functions, including mood regulation. Fluctuations in hormone levels, such as estrogen (like estriol), progesterone, and testosterone, can influence neurotransmitter activity in the brain, affecting mood and emotional well-being.

2. Estrogen and Depression: Research suggests that estrogen may have antidepressant effects. Studies have found that fluctuations in estrogen levels during menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause can contribute to mood swings and depressive symptoms in some individuals. Estriol, a form of estrogen, is available exclusively at compounding pharmacies like Creative Scripts, offering women a customized approach to hormone therapy tailored to their specific needs. Along with estradiol and estrone, estriol is a type of estrogen hormone naturally produced by the ovaries, particularly during pregnancy. Estriol significantly regulates various physiological processes, including the menstrual cycle, pregnancy, and menopause. In hormone replacement therapy (HRT), Estriol is sometimes used as a component to help alleviate symptoms associated with menopause, such as hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and mood swings. It is believed to have milder estrogenic effects compared to other forms of estrogen, which may make it a preferred option for some individuals, particularly those who are sensitive to stronger estrogenic effects. Estriol, is available exclusively at compounding pharmacies



like Creative Scripts, offering women a customized approach to hormone therapy tailored to their specific needs. However, like any hormone therapy, estriol should be used under the guidance of a healthcare provider to ensure safe and effective treatment.

3. Testosterone and Depression: While often associated with men, testosterone is also vital for women's health. Low testosterone levels in women have been linked to mood disturbances and decreased quality of life. Testosterone therapy, when appropriately prescribed and monitored, can improve mood, energy levels, and overall well-being in women experiencing testosterone deficiency.

4. HRT and Insomnia: Sleep disturbances often accompany depression and can exacerbate symptoms. Compounded HRT from Creative Scripts Compounding Pharmacy has been shown to improve sleep quality and duration in some individuals, contributing to overall mental well-being and mood stability.

5. Benefits of Compounded Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT): Compounding pharmacies like Creative Scripts offer a unique advantage in hormone therapy by providing customized formulations tailored to individual needs. Unlike commercially available synthetic hormones, compounded hormones are formulated to match each patient's specific hormone levels, promoting optimal balance and minimizing side effects. Creative Scripts specializes in creative prescription solutions to address various symptoms and preferences, including custom dosages, delivery methods, and combination therapies.

6. Considerations and Caution: While compounded HRT offers many benefits, consulting with a healthcare provider experienced in hormone therapy is essential to ensure safe and effective treatment. Individual factors such as medical history, hormone levels, and treatment goals should be considered when determining the appropriateness of compounded HRT. Regular monitoring and adjustments may be necessary to optimize outcomes and minimize potential risks.

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.

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The Matterhorn Method: Lightning Fast Pain Relief

By Angela Puchalla, MS, ATC, LAT

Current research indicates that one in four American adults, and 81% of youth, DO NOT meet the minimum recommendations for physical activity. The body is not designed to be idle, and we know that moving regularly can add years to our lives. As we age, we want to be able to continue to do the things we love, whether that be general activities of daily living or participation in recreational sports. However, injuries can be a major part of being active. Pain is unique to all of us and can be all-encompassing as it may adversely impact functional, social, and psychological well-being.

Coordinated movement is planned in the cerebral cortex, and staged signals are sent down to the spinal cord and out to the motor neurons. When staged signals fire in the correct order and reach their intended muscles, the body moves with an efficient motor pattern. After an injury or feeling pain, the pattern of these staged signals can become distorted or changed; resulting in compensation, which can lead to weakness, pain and further injury. Pain signals from the brain can last long after the acute tissue is healed causing chronic pain.

Correcting your neurological compensation allows for signals to fire in the correct order to absorb the force of movement. Once your brain and muscles communicate as they should, your body will operate efficiently and the brain will not elicit a pain signal.

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 over 70 professional athletes, 11 Olympians, and thousands of SW Florida residents in as little as two weeks. In 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 without any results. 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.”

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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Eating Heart Healthy Meals Just Got a Whole Lot Easier

Eating more plant-based foods doesn't mean you have to be vegan or vegetarian, although those options are good for some individuals. The Mediterranean diet, the MIND or Dash diet are all viable options for individuals that want to have healthy cardiovascular systems but still consume some animal products. Eating plant-based foods while consuming lean proteins like finfish, shellfish or poultry can nonetheless be very healthy. With a heart-healthy diet, the best advice is to load up on fresh produce, limit refined or processed foods, reduce alcohol and sugar, eliminate processed meats and excessive saturated fats. If being vegan or vegetarian is better suited for one's personal preference or needs, that is absolutely a remarkable way to stay healthy and protect the heart. But the one thing we know from various studies and research is that processed carbohydrates, sugars, and trans fats cause inflammation and can exacerbate cardiovascular disorders.



Speaking to a medical professional is essential to learn which foods are best for your condition.

Meal planning, grocery shopping and food preparation can be challenging for seniors. That's why Chefs for Seniors specializes in fresh, nutritious meals that are cooked right in the comfort of your home, AND there is no shopping or planning involved on your part.

What is Chefs for Seniors?

As individuals age, shopping and preparing meals can become a difficult task. With so many other issues to worry about such as being a caregiver, suffering from arthritis, or other disorders that limit mobility, cooking is one thing that many seniors wish they didn't have to do. 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.

Why Chefs For Seniors?

Our Mission is to Provide Amazing Food and Proper Nutrition

- Find peace of mind knowing our personal chefs will handle the 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

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.

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.

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. 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.

What if I Have a Special Diet or Dietary Concerns?

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.

Do I Have to Supply the Cooking Equipment?

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!

You don't have to be a senior to enjoy the professional chef prepared foods! Contact Chefs For Seniors today to find out more.

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

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BEYOND THE LEGEND: BOB MARLEY'S LEGACY SHEDS LIGHT ON MELANOMA

By Dr. Daniel Wasserman

The recent release of Bob Marley's biopic movie happens to be juxtaposed with the month of May, also known as Melanoma Awareness Month. Many people identify Bob Marley with his epic reggae hits and his legendary album Exodus named by Time magazine as the greatest album of the 20th century. However, many people are not aware that Bob Marley's premature passing came from a festering wound on his toe that he had believed he received from playing football, or soccer. It was later discovered that he had malignant melanoma which he later died from.

It is easy to overlook that, albeit rare, dark-skinned individuals can still develop skin cancer and it can oftentimes be more deadly due to their delay in diagnosis. In this circumstance, Marley developed a type of melanoma called acral lentiginous melanoma, more commonly seen in dark skinned individuals on the hands or feet. In 2023, melanoma was the 5th most common cancer, with a 5-year relative survival of 93.5%, and a median age of diagnosis of 66. In men, melanoma is most commonly found on the trunk and especially the back. Women develop melanoma most commonly on the arms and legs.

THE ABCDE'S OF MELANOMA:

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VARIED FROM ONE AREA TO ANOTHER; SHADES OF TAN AND BROWN, BLACK; SOMETIMES WHITE, RED OR BLUE.
-  **DIAMETER**
MELANOMAS ARE USUALLY GREATER THAN 6MM (THE SIZE OF A PENCIL ERASER), WHEN DIAGNOSED THEY CAN BE SMALLER.
-  **EVOLVING**
A MOLE OF SKIN LESION THAT LOOKS DIFFERENT FROM THE REST OR IS CHANGING IN SIZE, SHAPE OR COLOR.

Risk factors for melanoma include high UVA or UVB exposure which is unavoidable in Florida. Additionally, blue eyes, fair and/or red hair, pale complexion, easy burning, history of abnormal moles, and a family history for melanoma (2.2x higher risk with at least one affected relative) are all risk factors for melanoma.

The gold standard treatment for melanoma is still surgical removal, while systemic therapies are used once the disease has spread from the initial site on the skin.

Melanoma Awareness Month is the annual opportunity to identify any suspicious lesions one has and if concerned see your board-certified dermatologist.



Daniel I. Wasserman, MD

Fellowship-trained Laser and Cosmetic Dermatologist
Fellowship-trained Mohs Surgeon
Board Certified Dermatologist

Dr. Wasserman is a board certified dermatologist with fellowship training at Harvard Medical School in laser and cosmetic surgery, as well as fellowship training in Mohs skin cancer surgery. He has contributed as a dermatology expert for online and print magazines. In addition, he frequently lectures to professional societies and organizations on his diverse research. For more information about skin care visit the Skin Wellness Physicians website at www.skinwellnessflorida.com

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HOW MOLD AFFECTS THE ELDERLY



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

Mold can have significant effects on the health of elderly individuals, particularly those with pre-existing conditions or compromised immune systems.

Mold, a type of fungus that thrives in damp and humid environments, can pose serious health risks to people of all ages. However, the elderly are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of mold exposure due to age-related changes in their immune systems and respiratory functions. Understanding how mold affects the elderly can help in taking preventive measures and addressing any mold promptly.

One of the most common ways mold affects the elderly is through **respiratory problems**. Mold spores can become airborne and enter the respiratory system when inhaled. For older adults with respiratory conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or allergies, exposure to mold can exacerbate their symptoms and lead to respiratory distress. Mold exposure has been linked to increased coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, and chest tightness in elderly individuals with pre-existing respiratory issues.

Moreover, mold can trigger allergic reactions in seniors, causing symptoms such as sneezing, runny or stuffy nose, itchy or watery eyes, and skin irritation. These **allergic reactions** can be particularly bothersome for older adults who may already have weakened immune systems or multiple health concerns to manage.

In addition to respiratory and allergic reactions, mold exposure has been associated with other health problems in the elderly, including infections. Certain types of **mold produce mycotoxins, which are toxic substances that can cause infections when they enter the body**. Elderly individuals with weakened immune systems are more susceptible to these **infections** and **neurological affects**, which can manifest as skin infections, sinus infections, or even neurological symptoms which can affect multiple organs or even cause cancer.

Furthermore, mold exposure has been linked to **cognitive issues** in older adults. A study published in the American Journal of Public Health found a correlation between mold exposure and cognitive decline in seniors. The presence of mold in living spaces was associated with poorer cognitive function, including problems with memory, attention, and decision-making abilities. This highlights the importance of maintaining a mold-free environment for the cognitive well-being of elderly individuals.

Another concern related to mold and the elderly is the potential for mold-related illnesses to be misdiagnosed or overlooked. Symptoms of mold exposure, such as respiratory problems or allergies, can be similar to those of other health conditions common in seniors. This can lead to delays in diagnosis and treatment, prolonging the discomfort and health risks associated with mold exposure.

Preventing mold growth and addressing mold issues promptly are crucial steps in protecting the health of elderly individuals. Here are some strategies to prevent mold-related problems in the elderly:

- 1. Maintain proper ventilation:** Ensure that living spaces are well-ventilated to reduce humidity levels and prevent moisture buildup, which promotes mold growth.
- 2. Address water leaks promptly:** Repair any leaks in plumbing, roofs, or windows to prevent water intrusion and mold formation.
- 3. Use dehumidifiers:** In areas prone to high humidity, such as bathrooms and basements, use dehumidifiers to keep moisture levels in check.
- 4. Clean and inspect regularly:** Regularly clean and inspect areas where mold is likely to grow, such as bathrooms, kitchens, and basements. Use mold-inhibiting cleaners and promptly address any signs of mold growth.
- 5. Seek professional help if needed:** If mold growth is extensive or persistent, consult a professional mold remediation specialist to safely and effectively remove the mold from the environment.

By taking proactive measures to prevent mold growth and promptly addressing any mold issues, elderly individuals can reduce their risk of experiencing the adverse health effects associated with mold exposure. Regular monitoring of indoor air quality and maintaining a clean and dry living environment are essential for promoting the health and well-being of older adults.



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CARING FOR CAREGIVERS:

Nurturing Mental Health Amidst the Demands of Dementia Care

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

May is Mental Health Month, shining a spotlight on a critical aspect of caregiving often overlooked: the mental health of dementia caregivers. Understanding this topic is crucial, given the high stakes for both caregivers and those with dementia. Experts estimated in 2020 that there were around 7 million people over 65 with Alzheimer's, just one form of dementia. By 2040, this number is expected to rise to 12 million or more.

Most people with dementia do not reside in nursing homes but live with spouses, adult children, or close family friends who provide care. Unpaid family caregivers, predominantly daughters, dedicate substantial time to caring for loved ones with dementia. According to statistics, daughters provide 39% of unpaid care hours, followed by spouses (25%), sons (17%), and other family members and friends (20%).*

The care provided at home by these individuals is typically unpaid. According to the CDC, 16 million Americans provided over 17 billion hours of unpaid care for family and friends with dementia-related diseases. This immense responsibility leads to significant stress, making it easy for caregivers to neglect their mental health.

Caregiver burnout is a genuine risk, creeping up unexpectedly due to the constant stress, worry, and emotional strain of caregiving. Prioritizing



self-care is not just a luxury but a necessity for both the caregiver's well-being and their ability to provide quality care.

Self-care varies for each caregiver but involves finding activities that nourish the soul and provide grounding. Whether it's meditation, baking, running, or talking to a friend, any activity that rejuvenates you is beneficial. Setting boundaries is crucial; it's okay to say no to overwhelming responsibilities. Taking time to recharge is vital, benefiting both the caregiver and the person with dementia.

Seeking support is another essential aspect of self-care. Caregivers should not attempt to navigate this journey alone. Friends, family, support groups, or therapists can offer the emotional support and guidance needed. Sharing struggles with others who understand can be empowering and reassuring. There is strength in vulnerability. If you do not

have supportive friends or family, there are valuable community groups which meet online, and you can join them any time day or night.

Guilt is a common feeling among caregivers, but it's important to remember that self-care is not selfish but selfless. By caring for their own mental health, caregivers are better equipped to care for their loved ones. Research consistently shows that caregivers of people with dementia have higher rates of depression, anxiety, and physical health issues. This can look like becoming easily agitated and frustrated, feeling hopeless, poor sleep, loss of energy, difficulty thinking and concentrating, and more. Physically, caregivers have higher rates of high blood pressure, diabetes, and cognitive impairment. Caregivers also experience more physical pain and discomfort. Prioritizing self-care is not just beneficial; it's essential for maintaining good health and providing quality care.

Self-care is important because caregivers deserve it. Caregiving is one of the hardest jobs there is, and it should be done with love, compassion, and grace. Caregivers must treat themselves with the same kindness and compassion that they show to others.

In conclusion, self-care is not a luxury but a necessity for dementia caregivers. By prioritizing their mental health, caregivers can prevent burnout, improve their well-being, and provide the best possible care for their loved ones.

Sources:
*<https://www.prb.org/resources/fact-sheet-u-s-dementia-trends/>

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Health Insurance

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

It is illegal for an insurance agent to call you regarding Medicare.

Do not talk to someone you have not given permission to call. Ask them for their National Producer number and report them to Medicare for an unsolicited call.

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.

Logical Insurance Solutions is a SWFL Insurance Broker that works with most of the carriers, we are happy to help you through the maze. This is what we do daily, it is second nature to us. We offer virtual seminars, one on one WebEx, phone and in person appointments.

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High Blood Pressure in Pets: Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment

There are several factors that can contribute to hypertension in pets. Some of the common causes include:



Obesity: Just like in humans, obesity is a leading cause of high blood pressure in pets. Extra weight puts extra strain on the heart, leading to an increase in blood pressure.

Kidney Disease: Kidney disease can cause hypertension in pets by affecting the kidneys' ability to regulate blood pressure.

Hyperthyroidism: Overactive thyroid glands can cause hypertension in cats.

Cushing's Disease: This condition, which causes an overproduction of cortisol hormone, can lead to hypertension in dogs.

Aging: As pets age, their blood vessels become less elastic, and their blood pressure tends to increase.

Symptoms of High Blood Pressure in Pets

High blood pressure in pets can be asymptomatic, meaning there are no obvious signs of the condition. However, in some cases, pets may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Seizures
- Blindness or other vision problems
- Disorientation or confusion
- Nosebleeds
- Difficulty breathing
- Weakness or lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Increased thirst and urination

If you notice any of these symptoms in your pet, it is essential to take them to a veterinarian immediately. Early detection and treatment can prevent complications and improve your pet's quality of life.

Treatment of High Blood Pressure in Pets

The treatment of high blood pressure in pets depends on the underlying cause of the condition. In some cases, managing the underlying condition can resolve the hypertension. For example, weight loss can help manage hypertension in obese pets, and treating kidney disease can help regulate blood pressure in pets with kidney problems.

In other cases, medication may be necessary to control hypertension. There are several medications available to treat high blood pressure in pets, including angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and calcium channel blockers. These medications work by relaxing the blood vessels, which lowers blood pressure.

In addition to medication, lifestyle changes can also help manage hypertension in pets. For example, feeding your pet a healthy diet, ensuring they get regular exercise, and reducing stress can help manage hypertension.

High blood pressure is a common condition that affects pets, and it can lead to serious complications if left untreated. As a pet owner, it is essential to be aware of the causes, symptoms, and treatment of hypertension in pets. Regular veterinary checkups can help detect hypertension early, and early treatment can prevent complications and improve your pet's quality of life. By making lifestyle changes and working with your veterinarian to manage your pet's hypertension, you can help ensure that your furry companion lives a long and healthy life.

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CRYSTAL PERSONALIZATION AT HEALING CRYSTAL TUNNEL

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.

The Journey to Self Renewal

HEALING CRYSTAL TUNNEL will provide the skills and benefits of being present, focusing your energy, and reconnecting with yourself. Slow down your mind, bring clarity to your thoughts, and experience personal growth. Are you still struggling for answers? Give us a try. We have many patients who have been all over the world getting treatment the traditional way with no resolution. We strive to transform your current life into a new beautiful life path, which you never knew existed!

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- STRESS REDUCTION
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- ELEVATE MOOD
- DEEP RELAXATION
- EMOTIONAL/PHYSICAL DISTRESS
- IMPROVE SELF-ESTEEM
- PINEAL GLAND AND PITUITARY ACTIVATION
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- SERENITY AND PEACE
- BALANCE YOUR EMOTIONAL BODY
- ENERGETIC EXPANSION
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6 Household Cleaning Supplies New Homeowners Should Have



Moving into a new home is an exciting and stressful experience. There are so many moving parts, and the task of cleaning can easily fall to the side. Don't let this happen by hiring the professional cleaners at MaidPro. We can ensure your new home starts and stays clean. That way, you have more time to purchase the cleaning essentials. This new homeowner cleaning supply list of six items will help you have the basics to keep your home clean.

1. Microfiber Towels

The versatility of microfiber cloths makes them essential in your new home. The gentle fibers make them suitable for a broad range of surface types. They are also effective at disinfecting your home. When one gets dirty, you can throw them in the wash and use them again.

2. Vacuum

You need to be able to clean the floors of your new home. A vacuum can work on various surfaces, making it the perfect solution for your new home. Look for a vacuum with the ability to adjust for different floor types. That way, you can easily transition from carpet or rugs to tile or hardwood flooring.

3. All Purpose Cleaner

An all-purpose cleaner is a versatile cleaning product that you can use on surfaces all over your home. This makes it an essential first cleaning product for your new home. Use this cleaner with a microfiber cloth in every room in your home.

4. Glass Cleaner

One surface where all-purpose cleaner doesn't work is on glass or mirror. You need a specific glass cleaner that will clean while also leaving the surface streak-free. Use glass cleaner in the bathroom to clean the mirror and glass around the shower. Then wipe down the inside of the windows in the rest of the home. This cleans them and increases the amount of natural light coming in.

5. Wood Cleaner

Protect your wood furniture by using a specialized cleaner. All-purpose cleaners can cause damage to your wood, so using a specialized cleaner is a must. Look for one that can clean, condition, and protect. This will ensure your wood furniture stays looking beautiful for years to come.

6. Toilet Brush and Cleaner

The other items on this list are general purpose and can be used throughout the home. However, they aren't suitable for cleaning the toilet. Instead, you need a toilet brush and cleaner. This lets you clean the inside of the toilet bowl.

Hire the Cleaning Pros

You have plenty to think about when moving into your new home. Don't let cleaning fall through the cracks. Having these six essential items will make a strong start to establishing your cleaning kit. Another great option is to hire a professional cleaner. The professionals at MaidPro can take on the cleaning responsibility so that you can focus on other tasks. That way, your new home starts clean and stays clean.



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CBD And Ways to Manage MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a universal concern in today's fast-paced world. The demands of work, family, and daily life often leave us feeling overwhelmed and depleted. Amidst the chaos, it is crucial to prioritize self-care to prevent burnout and maintain overall well-being. As we explore avenues for healing and restoration, let us not overlook the profound connection between nature and mental health. Our ancestors understood this connection intimately, drawing upon the healing properties of the earth to nourish their bodies and souls. The scripture says in: Proverbs 12:25 (NKJV) "Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad."

Recognizing the Symptoms of Stress and Anxiety:

- Trouble concentrating or making decisions.
- Feelings of irritability, tension, or restlessness.
- Physical manifestations such as nausea, heart palpitations, sweating, or trouble sleeping.
- Sense of impending danger, panic, or doom.

The Mind-Body Connection:

Emotions play a significant role in our physical health, with each emotion linked to specific organs in the body. Understanding these connections can provide valuable insights into how we care for ourselves and our well-being non-pharmaceutically.

Examples:

- Stress weakens the heart.
- Worry affects digestion and can lead to ulcers.
- Fear impacts the kidneys, often causing urinary urgency.
- Grief is linked to shallow breathing and lung health.
- Anger can overload the liver, leading to toxicity and illness.

Harnessing Nature's Healing Power:

One remarkable example of nature's healing power is found in Hemp and its compounds, such as CBD. At the heart of its efficacy lies the endocannabinoid system (ECS), a complex network of receptors and neurotransmitters found throughout the body. The ECS plays a crucial role in regulating a wide array of physiological processes, including neuroprotection, mood, appetite, pain sensation, and immune response.



When properly stimulated, the ECS helps to maintain balance within the body, promoting overall health and wellness. CBD interacts with the ECS to help alleviate inflammation, anxiety, depression, and much more.

Take proactive steps towards understanding and improving your mental health. We now offer Bio resonance scanning to help you assess your nutritional deficiencies, hormones, emotions and more.

Please call us today to schedule a scan and consultation at 352-350-0200. Understanding what is going on in your body is key to being able to make positive changes. When you know better you can do better. Even small changes can make a huge difference in how you feel physically, mentally and spiritually. We look forward to working with you to become the best version of yourself and who God made you to be.

Seeking Support: If you are struggling with mental health issues, remember that you're not alone. Reach out for support from friends, family, or professional resources.

Call: 988 is confidential, free crisis service that is available to everyone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Lifeline connects people to the nearest crisis center in the Lifeline national network. These centers provide crisis counseling and mental health referrals.

Source:
<https://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/prevention/mental-health/links.html>



1. Sunlight Therapy: One of nature's most potent healing agents is sunlight. Exposure to natural sunlight helps regulate our circadian rhythms, boosts mood, and promotes the production of vitamin D, essential for bone health and immune function. Make it a priority to spend time outdoors each day, soaking in the rejuvenating rays of the sun.

2. Hydration: Water is life, and staying adequately hydrated is essential for overall health and vitality. Opt for clean, filtered water whenever possible, and aim to drink at least eight glasses a day. Consider adding lemon and a pinch of salt to your water for added flavor and nutrients.

3. Grounding: Connecting with the Earth's electromagnetic field, known as grounding has been shown to have numerous health benefits, including reduced inflammation, improved sleep, and stress relief. Take time each day to walk barefoot on grass, sand, or soil, allowing your body to absorb the Earth's healing energy and discharge negative energy in your body.

4. Mindful Movement: Incorporating regular exercise into your routine is vital for maintaining physical and mental well-being. Whether it's pickleball, golf, or walking, find activities that bring you joy and make movement a priority in your daily life.

5. Diet: Fuel your body with CLEAN whole foods that are rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Incorporate grass-fed and fish proteins, and healthy fats into your diet, and minimize processed foods and sugars.



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Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Apostle Paul said this about contentment. *¹¹I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹²I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* Philippians 4:11-13

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

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things.

Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

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

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

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

If you find yourself making statements like this:

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

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

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



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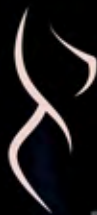
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