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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

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CONTENTS

AUGUST 2024

6 Interview with Jennifer Christopher:
A Journey to a Beautiful Smile at Park
Family Dental

7 World Cancer Support Month:
Breast Cancer Patients Uniting for
Strength and Hope

8 Weathering the Storm: Hurricane
Preparedness for Alzheimer's Patients

9 Revitalize Your Skin with Sculptra:
The Collagen-Boosting Injectable

10 5 Steps to Help You Look
Forward to Your Gynecology Visit

11 Pioneering Exercise Oncology
at Inspire Exercise Medicine

12 Beating the Heat and Protecting
Your Heart

13 Understanding Glaucoma:
Advances in Diagnosis and Treatment

14 Downsizing Now Can Lead to a
More Fulfilling Life in Retirement

15 Navigating End-of-Life Planning

16 So, Is Sugar that Bad for Me?

17 Healing Knees Naturally:
A Journey from Pain to Regeneration

18 FGCU Graduates Are Your
Physician Assistants

19 Understanding Regenerative
Medicine for Knee Pain

20 Diabetes Adversely Affects
Foot and Leg Health

21 Can a High-Tech Chair Cure
Incontinence?

22 Focusing on Eye Health:
Essential Tips for a Visually Vibrant
School Year

23 Patient & Physician Perspective:
EP's Cancer Journey

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24 Exploring the Spectrum of Neurotoxins in Cosmetics: Enhancing Beauty Safely

25 Restoring Balance: The Promise of Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement Therapy for Women

26 Hepatitis Awareness Month: Get a Free Liver Scan in August at Ageless Wellness Spa "The Liver Clinic (TLC)"

27 Back-to-School Health Checks: The Importance of Annual and Sports Physicals

28 Why Annual Hearing Tests Are So Important

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

32 Experience Relief with Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression

36 The Relationship Between Inflammation and Sugar Consumption

38 Celebrating National Immunization Month and Protecting Public Health

40 Understanding Polycystic Kidney Disease

41 Let Us Keep You in the Game

42 Unlocking Luxury Living: The Indispensable Role of Experienced Realtors

44 What Is a Living Will?

46 When You Have to Pee All the Time: Overactive Bladder and Its Impact on Quality of Life

50 What Does An Otolaryngologist Do?

52 Are You Practicing Mindful Wealth?

53 Misir Pharmacy Compounding Skincare Customized Specifically for You

54 Growth Hormone: A Potential Aid in Fasting Recovery and Joint Replacement Healing

55 A New Lab in Town: Take Control of Your Health with Any Lab Test Now

56 Back to School Time: Is My Child's School Making Them Sick? Why Mold is Likely at School?

57 The Matterhorn Method: Eliminating Pain and Inspiring Hope

58 GlycoCheck! Revolutionizing Vascular Health Assessment

59 Back to School Separation Anxiety

60 Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT) and Inflammaging: Addressing Chronic Inflammation and Aging

61 Crystal Personalization at Healing Crystal Tunnel

62 Weathering the Storm: 5 Disaster Preparedness Tips for You, an Adult Child with a Senior Parent

63 Pet Care While Traveling: Hurricane Awareness and Health Tips

64 What Is The Mind Diet?

65 How to Enjoy Having Your Home Professionally Cleaned

66 Navigating the Healthcare Landscape: A Comprehensive Guide

67 Spiritual Wellness: Dealing With Life's Painful Situations



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Interview with Jennifer Christopher: A Journey to a Beautiful Smile at Park Family Dental

By Dr. Long Huynh, AAACD

Finding a dental practice that meets high standards of professionalism and talent can be challenging, especially after relocating. Jennifer Christopher, a patient at Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry, shares her experience of finally finding the right dental care in Naples after years of searching. This interview highlights Jennifer's journey and the transformative dental procedures she underwent with Dr. Long.



What Led You to Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry?

Jennifer Christopher: "I'm originally from Chicago, where finding both a talented and professional dental practice is a breeze. When I moved to Naples back in 2012, I was disappointed by the lack of sophistication and talent, so I found myself transitioning from practice to practice, hoping to come across a place comparable to what I experienced in Chicago. After 8 long years of bouncing around, I finally found Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry after searching online for an accredited cosmetic dentist."

How Was Your Experience There?

Jennifer Christopher: "By way of brief background, I was born without both lateral incisors, requiring me to get a 'Marilyn Bridge' when I was a freshman in high school. Over the past 25 years, I've had between three to four pricey dental procedures replacing my bridge, as they typically last around 10 years. This means I've had multiple experiences with cosmetic dentists and was hesitant about having this procedure done for the first time in Naples.

From what I recall, my first visit to Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry was due to unforeseen circumstances in which my (front) lateral incisor was chipped. As mentioned, I only wanted to work with an accredited cosmetic dentist, which led me to Dr. Long. As soon as I sat down, I felt at ease. I found Dr. Long to be extremely professional, patient, and intentional with his work. I didn't feel like a dollar sign; I felt like someone Dr. Long wanted to help. This feeling goes a very long way when you are missing two of your front teeth. When you add to this his talent and the positive work environment (everyone with a uniform is smiling), it's a no-brainer."

The Procedures: Porcelain Crowns, Veneers, and Bridges

Jennifer's dental transformation involved several key procedures performed by Dr. Long, including porcelain crowns, veneers, and a bridge on the upper anterior teeth.

Porcelain Crowns

Porcelain crowns are used to restore severely damaged or decayed teeth. They are custom-made to match the color and shape of natural teeth, providing a durable and aesthetically pleasing result. In Jennifer's case, porcelain crowns were essential in rebuilding her chipped and structurally compromised teeth, ensuring both functionality and appearance were restored.

Veneers

Dental veneers are thin, custom-made shells designed to cover the front surface of teeth. They are typically made from porcelain or resin composite materials. Veneers are ideal for improving the appearance of teeth that are discolored, worn down, chipped, or misaligned. For Jennifer, veneers helped create a seamless and natural-looking smile by covering imperfections and enhancing the overall aesthetic of her upper front teeth.

Dental Bridges

A dental bridge fills the gap created by one or more missing teeth. A traditional bridge consists of crowns on either side of the gap, with a false tooth (or teeth) in between. Jennifer's "Marilyn Bridge" had served her well for years, but Dr. Long's expertise in creating a new, more advanced bridge provided her with a stronger, more natural-looking solution. This bridge not only restored her smile but also improved her bite and overall oral health.

Another Successful Transformation at Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

Jennifer Christopher's story is a testament to the exceptional care and expertise found at Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry. Through the skilled hands of Dr. Long, Jennifer received a comprehensive dental makeover that restored her confidence and enhanced

her smile. Her experience highlights the importance of finding a dental practice that combines professionalism, talent, and a patient-centered approach.

Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry stands out as a beacon of excellence for those seeking top-tier cosmetic dental care. If you want to transform your smile or need expert dental care, consider scheduling a consultation with Dr. Long and his team. Experience the difference between personalized and professional dental care that prioritizes your well-being and satisfaction.



Dr. Long has earned his accreditation with The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) through his dedication and commitment to excellence and work ethic. This exceptional honor has been achieved by only 16 dentists in Florida. He is

the only accredited cosmetic dentist in Southwest Florida. Building and maintaining a trusting relationship with his patients is the foundation of his practice. He surrounded himself with a capable team of five dentists, and together, they will tailor your specific needs, from IV sedation to root canals, surgeries, and braces (like one-stop-shopping). They are passionate about changing the lives of their patients and alleviating their pain and suffering, primarily through cosmetic smile makeovers, full-mouth restorations, and complex implant restorations.

To learn more about Dr. Long and his office, please visit myparkdental.com.

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WORLD CANCER SUPPORT MONTH: Breast Cancer Patients Uniting for Strength and Hope

By Sharla Gayle Patterson, MD, MBA

World Cancer Support Month serves as a powerful reminder of the collective strength and compassion needed to combat cancer. Among the many types of cancer, breast cancer continues to affect millions of lives worldwide. This article explores how breast cancer patients come together during World Cancer Support Month, forming bonds of solidarity, sharing experiences, and offering unwavering support to one another. Through their united efforts, they inspire hope, raise awareness, and make a profound impact on the fight against breast cancer.

The Significance of World Cancer Support Month
World Cancer Support Month, observed annually in October, holds immense importance in raising awareness about cancer, highlighting the challenges faced by patients, and fostering a sense of community among cancer survivors. It provides a platform for individuals, organizations, and communities to come together and support those affected by cancer, including breast cancer patients.

Empowering the Breast Cancer Community

Breast cancer patients often find solace and strength by connecting with others who have shared similar experiences. During World Cancer Support Month, numerous support groups, both online and offline, organize events and activities exclusively for breast cancer patients. These platforms enable individuals to share their stories, exchange coping strategies, and build lasting connections.

Supportive Networks and Resources

World Cancer Support Month showcases the diverse range of resources available to breast cancer patients. From local support groups to global initiatives, patients gain access to a wealth of information, emotional support, and practical advice. These networks offer a safe space for patients to discuss concerns, seek guidance, and find comfort amidst the challenges of their journey.

Community Events and Fundraisers

World Cancer Support Month witnesses a surge of community events and fundraisers dedicated to breast cancer awareness and support. Walks, runs, and other activities bring breast cancer patients,



survivors, caregivers, and advocates together, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose. Such events not only raise funds for research and treatment but also generate awareness and highlight the importance of early detection.

Educational Campaigns and Awareness Initiatives

Breast cancer patients and survivors play a vital role in educating others about the disease during World Cancer Support Month. Through speaking engagements, online campaigns, and local initiatives, they share their personal stories, knowledge, and experiences, promoting awareness and encouraging proactive healthcare measures. Their collective voice helps debunk myths, dispel stigma, and emphasize the significance of regular screenings and self-examinations.

Creating Supportive Online Communities

In today's digital age, breast cancer patients leverage the power of social media and online platforms to connect and support one another. World Cancer Support Month sees an upsurge in online communities, forums, and social media groups specifically designed for breast cancer patients. These virtual spaces offer a constant source of encouragement, information, and a platform to express concerns and triumphs.

Inspiring Stories of Resilience

World Cancer Support Month shines a spotlight on the incredible resilience and determination displayed by breast cancer patients. Their stories of survival, courage, and resilience inspire others facing similar challenges and create a sense of hope. These narratives foster an environment where breast cancer patients can find strength, hope, and motivation to persevere.

World Cancer Support Month serves as a powerful reminder of the strength, resilience, and unity within the breast cancer community. Through shared experiences, support networks, community events, and awareness initiatives, breast cancer patients find solace, support, and empowerment. Their unwavering spirit and determination create a ripple effect, inspiring others, raising awareness, and fostering a global movement against breast cancer. Together, they embody the essence of World Cancer Support Month, reminding the world that no one fights alone in the battle against cancer.

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Weathering the Storm: Hurricane Preparedness for Alzheimer's Patients

Hurricanes are a regular concern for residents of Southwest Florida, but for those living with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers, these natural disasters pose unique challenges. The combination of memory loss, confusion, and the disruption of familiar routines can make hurricane preparation and evacuation particularly stressful for Alzheimer's patients. This article aims to educate caregivers and family members on the importance of hurricane preparedness and provide strategies to minimize the impact on those with Alzheimer's in Southwest Florida.

Understanding the Risks

Alzheimer's patients are especially vulnerable during hurricanes due to several factors:

1. Difficulty understanding warnings and instructions
2. Increased confusion and agitation in unfamiliar environments
3. Potential for wandering or getting lost during evacuations
4. Reliance on routine and familiar surroundings for comfort and orientation
5. Sensitivity to changes in temperature, noise, and lighting

These factors underscore the need for careful planning and preparation to ensure the safety and well-being of Alzheimer's patients during hurricane season.

Creating a Hurricane Preparedness Plan

Developing a comprehensive plan well in advance of hurricane season is crucial. Here are key elements to include:

1. **Emergency Kit:** Prepare a kit containing essential items such as medications, medical supplies, important documents, comfortable clothing, and familiar objects that provide comfort to the patient.
2. **Medication Management:** Ensure a minimum two-week supply of all necessary medications. Keep a detailed list of medications, dosages, and any allergies.
3. **Identification:** Provide the patient with an ID bracelet or clothing tags with their name, medical condition, and emergency contact information.
4. **Communication Plan:** Establish a network of family members, friends, and healthcare providers who can be contacted in case of emergency. Share your evacuation plans with this network.

5. **Evacuation Route:** Familiarize yourself and the patient with potential evacuation routes. If possible, practice these routes during calm weather to reduce anxiety during an actual evacuation.

6. **Safe Haven:** Identify a safe location to evacuate to, such as a family member's home outside the hurricane zone or a special needs shelter that can accommodate Alzheimer's patients.

7. **Medical Equipment:** If the patient requires specific medical equipment, ensure it is portable or have a plan to obtain necessary equipment at your evacuation destination.

Strategies to Limit the Impact of Hurricanes on Alzheimer's Patients

1. **Maintain Routine:** Try to stick to familiar routines as much as possible, even in an evacuation setting. This can help reduce anxiety and confusion.

2. **Create a Calm Environment:** Minimize exposure to news coverage and weather updates, which may cause distress. Instead, engage the patient in familiar activities or conversations.

3. **Provide Reassurance:** Offer frequent reassurance and maintain a calm demeanor. Your emotional state can significantly influence the patient's response to the situation.

4. **Use Simple Communication:** Explain what's happening in clear, simple terms. Avoid complex details that may overwhelm or confuse the patient.

5. **Involve the Patient:** Where possible, involve the patient in simple preparation tasks. This can help maintain a sense of control and purpose.

6. **Pack Comfort Items:** Bring familiar objects such as favorite blankets, photos, or music that can provide comfort in unfamiliar surroundings.

7. **Plan for Wandering:** In unfamiliar environments, the risk of wandering increases. Have a plan to prevent and respond to wandering, such as door alarms or identification bracelets.

8. **Manage Sundowning:** Be prepared for increased confusion or agitation during evening hours, a phenomenon known as sundowning. Maintain a well-lit environment and engage in calming activities during these times.

Collaborating with Healthcare Providers and Community Resources

Reach out to the patient's healthcare team for advice on managing specific medical needs during a hurricane. They may provide additional recommendations or resources tailored to the patient's condition.

Familiarize yourself with local community resources:

1. Register with your county's special needs registry if available.
2. Contact your local Alzheimer's Association chapter for support and resources.
3. Identify special needs shelters in your area that can accommodate Alzheimer's patients.
4. Consider joining local support groups to share experiences and strategies with other caregivers.

The Importance of Self-Care for Caregivers

Caring for an Alzheimer's patient during a hurricane can be physically and emotionally taxing. Remember to take care of yourself:

1. Pack essential items for yourself, including medications and comfort items.
2. Arrange for respite care or additional support during evacuation if possible.
3. Practice stress-reduction techniques such as deep breathing or meditation.
4. Don't hesitate to ask for help from family, friends, or professional services.

Hurricane preparedness for Alzheimer's patients in Southwest Florida requires careful planning and consideration of the unique challenges posed by the disease. By creating a comprehensive plan, maintaining familiar routines where possible, and utilizing available resources, caregivers can help minimize the impact of hurricanes on their loved ones with Alzheimer's. Remember, preparation is key to weathering the storm safely and comfortably. Stay informed, stay prepared, and prioritize the well-being of both the patient and the caregiver throughout the hurricane season.



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Revitalize Your Skin with Sculptra:

THE COLLAGEN-BOOSTING INJECTABLE

Many people seek youthful, radiant skin by combating the signs of aging through cosmetic treatments. Among the options available, Sculptra stands out not just as a filler but as a revolutionary bio-stimulatory aesthetic injectable that promotes natural collagen production. This article delves into how Sculptra works, the areas it targets, its longevity, and the science behind its effectiveness.

Understanding Sculptra

Sculptra, known scientifically as poly-L-lactic acid (PLLA), is a synthetic, biocompatible substance used for years in medical devices like dissolvable stitches. In aesthetic medicine, Sculptra is unique due to its ability to stimulate collagen production deep within the skin. Unlike traditional fillers that add immediate volume, Sculptra works gradually, leading to a more natural and long-lasting improvement in skin quality.

How Sculptra Works

When injected into the dermis, Sculptra acts as a collagen stimulator. Collagen, a protein that provides structure and elasticity to the skin, naturally diminishes with age, leading to wrinkles, fine lines, and sagging skin. Sculptra's micro-particles stimulate the body's collagen production, gradually restoring the skin's inner structure and volume. Over time, as collagen levels increase, the skin becomes firmer and smoother, and the appearance of wrinkles and folds diminishes.

Target Areas for Sculptra

Sculptra is particularly effective for treating:

- **Nasolabial Folds:** These deep lines run from the nose to the mouth, often referred to as smile lines.
- **Marionette Lines:** Lines extending from the corners of the mouth to the chin.
- **Chin Wrinkles:** Horizontal lines that can form on the chin.
- **Cheeks:** To restore volume and improve the contours of the mid-face.
- **Jawline:** Enhancing definition and reducing sagging.
- **Temples:** Adding volume to hollowed areas.

In addition to these areas, Sculptra can be used off-label for body contouring and enhancing other areas where volume loss has occurred.

Duration and Effectiveness

One of Sculptra's most appealing features is its longevity. Clinical studies have shown that the effects of Sculptra can last up to two years or more, significantly



longer than many other dermal fillers. The gradual process of collagen stimulation means that patients see continued improvement over several months following their initial treatment. According to a study published in the *Journal of Drugs in Dermatology*, approximately 80% of patients treated with Sculptra reported high satisfaction with their results after two years.

The Science Behind Sculptra

Sculptra's efficacy lies in its ability to stimulate collagen production. Collagen is critical to the skin's connective tissue, providing structure, elasticity, and strength. As we age, collagen production slows, leading to the formation of wrinkles and sagging skin. By injecting PLLA microparticles into the dermis, Sculptra promotes the body's natural collagen synthesis process. This gradual increase in collagen smooths out wrinkles and improves overall skin texture and firmness.

Clinical Studies and Statistics

Clinical studies have validated the effectiveness of Sculptra. One study in the *Dermatologic Surgery Journal* noted that patients treated with Sculptra showed significant improvement in facial volume and skin quality over 25 months. Another study published in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology* highlighted that over 90% of patients experienced noticeable skin texture and elasticity improvements six months post-treatment.

The Sculptra Treatment Process

The Sculptra treatment involves a series of injections, typically administered over three sessions about six weeks apart. This phased approach allows for a gradual and natural-looking improvement. The procedure is minimally invasive, with most patients experiencing only mild discomfort and minor side effects such as swelling or bruising, which typically resolve within a few days.

Is Sculptra Right for You?

Sculptra suits individuals seeking a natural, long-lasting solution to facial wrinkles and volume loss. It is particularly beneficial for those who prefer gradual improvements and wish to avoid the abrupt changes that can come with other fillers. However, as with any cosmetic procedure, it is essential to consult with a qualified medical professional to determine if Sculptra is the right option based on individual skin type and aesthetic goals.

Embrace a Youthful Glow with Sculptra

Sculptra offers a unique approach to facial rejuvenation by harnessing the body's natural collagen production process. With its ability to provide long-lasting and natural-looking results, Sculptra is an excellent option for those seeking to enhance their appearance and restore youthful skin quality. If you're considering Sculptra or want to learn more about how it can help you achieve your aesthetic goals, schedule a consultation with Naples Aesthetic Institute today. Our team of experienced professionals provides personalized care and helps you look and feel your best.

Understanding how Sculptra works and its benefits can help you decide whether this innovative treatment is right for you. Contact Naples Aesthetic Institute to begin your journey towards rejuvenated, youthful skin.

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5 STEPS TO HELP YOU LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR GYNECOLOGY VISIT

It's rare that women look forward to a mammogram or Pap smear, but they are the most effective tools for protecting against breast and cervical cancers. These screenings help diagnose the two most common cancers for women in earlier stages, which helps lead to better outcomes.

It is widely suggested that women have a mammogram once a year beginning at age 40, unless their physician recommends screenings begin earlier based on personal health history. Women should begin getting Pap tests at age 21.

These routine appointments with a gynecologist don't need to be daunting, and are an important part of self-care, says Ani Maggio, nurse practitioner specializing in gynecology at Physicians Regional Medical Group.

"Before your next appointment, make sure you are prepared and know what to expect so that your appointment is an informative and stress-free experience," she says. "It is easier to ask your gynecologist questions at your annual appointment because the primary focus is on your women's health needs."

Here are five simple steps women can take to improve their annual checkup experience:

- Find a gynecologist you feel comfortable with. Seek recommendations from friends and family members you trust or search online patient reviews. The more comfortable you are with a provider, the more open you are likely to be, leading to better care.
- Schedule strategically. It's a good idea to schedule your appointment during the time of month when your breasts are the least tender (after your monthly period) to minimize any potential discomfort during your exam.
- Make a list of questions and any new symptoms or concerns before your appointment.
- Remember the human body is natural and it's smart to discuss all areas of health with your healthcare provider. Be your own advocate and be sure to bring up topics that are important to you, even if they may seem embarrassing.



- Be proactive. Ask when results will be available from any tests performed during your examination and how results will be delivered - uploaded to the patient portal or via phone call?

"Seeing a gynecologist can be an uncomfortable experience for some women, but it shouldn't be," Maggio says, "Scheduling your annual wellness exam is the first step in taking control of your health-

care, and you can be in control of your visit as well by finding the right provider, being prepared and asking the right questions."



To schedule your annual gynecology exam or appointment call (239) 306-6599 or visit PRMGdoctors.com.



AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. CIARAN FAIRMAN: PIONEERING EXERCISE ONCOLOGY AT INSPIRE EXERCISE MEDICINE

Health and Wellness Magazine had the privilege of conversing with Dr. Ciaran Fairman, the newly appointed Chief Scientific Officer at Inspire Exercise Medicine. Dr. Fairman, with his unique journey and expertise in exercise oncology, shared his vision of introducing innovative approaches to cancer treatment through exercise and nutrition.

H&W: Dr. Fairman, thank you for joining us. Can you tell us about your background and how you came to specialize in exercise oncology?

Dr. Fairman: Certainly. My journey and expertise have led me to a specific focus on exercise oncology. I've dedicated my training to understanding how exercise and nutrition can significantly improve the lives of cancer patients, both during and after treatment. My postdoctoral training was a deep dive into the world of resistance training for cancer patients. It was a stroke of luck that I met Bruce, a kindred spirit who shares my passion for using strength training to enhance the quality of life for cancer patients. Our collaboration felt like a natural fit, given our shared interests in lifestyle medicine and oncology.

H&W: How did your partnership with Inspire Exercise Medicine come about?

Dr. Fairman: Bruce and I first connected during our joint work with the University of Miami. I was immediately captivated by his fervor for lifestyle medicine. Bruce, on the other hand, was fascinated by my background and training under Rob Newton. It was a perfect match. Bruce extended an invitation for me to visit his clinic, and I was astounded by their cutting-edge facilities and progressive approach. This sparked discussions on how we could collaborate to develop targeted exercise programs as an innovative adjuvant therapy for cancer treatment.

H&W: Can you explain the current state of exercise oncology and your role at Inspire?

Dr. Fairman: The field of exercise oncology is relatively young, about 30 years old. Initially, the focus was on determining the safety of exercise for cancer patients. Over the past 10 to 15 years, the focus has shifted to making exercise effective in managing the side effects of cancer and its treatments. There's a growing body of research showing that exercise is both safe and effective for cancer patients. At Inspire, my role as Chief Scientific Officer involves managing a trial aimed at tailoring exercise programs for cancer patients. This includes designing the study, managing it, and ensuring it adheres to high standards of integrity and rigor.

H&W: What is unique about the exercise programs you are developing at Inspire?

Dr. Fairman: Our focus is on resistance training to help people with cancer during and after their treatments. My training combines sports performance with clinical exercise physiology, specializing in oncology. There are very few experts in the world with this specific background, so it's exciting to bring this expertise to Inspire.

We aim to use exercise not just as supportive care but as an integral part of cancer treatment. We're using precise metrics to quantify and monitor exercise doses, and we're tracking physical activity, sedentary behavior, sleep patterns, and daily symptoms to tailor and adjust exercise regimens effectively.

H&W: How do you ensure the exercise programs are effective and individualized for each patient?

Dr. Fairman: We use both subjective and objective measures to assess physical function and quality of life. This includes gold-standard tests for physical function, strength, and body composition, paired with subjective assessments of quality of life, fatigue, and cancer-related burden. We're also taking blood samples to investigate biomarkers that could predict individual responses to exercise. This approach mirrors the precision medicine model used in cancer treatments, allowing us to tailor exercise programs to each patient's unique molecular profile.

H&W: What excites you most about your work at Inspire Exercise Medicine?

Dr. Fairman: The opportunity to work with someone like Bruce, who is so passionate about using lifestyle medicine, is incredibly exciting. Exercise oncology is still fighting for recognition in the broader field of cancer care, so having a partner who understands and values this approach is invaluable. Additionally, our focus on resistance training is somewhat unique and crucial, especially for older adults who experience muscle loss and physical decline due to cancer and its treatments. Seeing patients regain strength, improve their quality of life, and achieve milestones like lifting their grandchildren again is incredibly rewarding.

H&W: Can you share a personal story that influenced your career in exercise oncology?

Dr. Fairman: My interest in this field became personal when my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer while I was in college. I was initially interested in strength and conditioning, but seeing the physical toll that cancer treatments took on my mother—her weight loss, strength decline, and frailty—made me realize the potential of exercise to counteract these effects. A mentor helped me see the connection between exercise and cancer care, and this has driven my work for the past 15 years.

H&W: How do you see your role impacting the local community in Naples?

Dr. Fairman: Beyond the long-term research goals, our work at Inspire has an immediate impact on the Naples community. We are ensuring that cancer patients here receive the best possible care through exercise programs that are grounded in cutting-edge research. This combination of immediate and long-term benefits is what makes our work so fulfilling.

H&W: Dr. Fairman, thank you for sharing your insights with us. Is there anything else you would like our readers to know?

Dr. Fairman: I'm just incredibly grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this field and to work on such an exciting project. My journey from Dublin to here has been driven by a passion for helping people through exercise oncology, and I'm honored to be part of a team that shares this vision. We're committed to advancing the science and improving the lives of cancer patients through innovative exercise and nutrition programs.

For more information or to schedule a consultation with Dr. Ciaran Fairman at Inspire Exercise Medicine, please visit Inspire Exercise Medicine's website or call (239) 555-6789.

Ciaran Fairman, Ph.D., CSCS, CET
Chief Scientific Officer

Ciaran has more than a decade of experience conducting research and developing programs specifically designed to help people with cancer recover from cancer treatments and live a full life. Ciaran received his PhD in Kinesiology with a focus on exercise oncology from The Ohio State University. He continued his training in exercise oncology during his Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship in Exercise Oncology at Edith Cowan University in Australia.

Ciaran is also an assistant professor of exercise science at the University of South Carolina, where he is the director of an exercise oncology research lab. The lab's primary research focus is examining the impact of exercise and nutrition on improving the quality of life of individuals diagnosed with cancer during and after their treatment.

Ciaran has dedicated his life to better understanding how exercise can help manage the side effects of cancer treatments and allow you to live a full life. In his role, he is committed to ensuring the exercise program and assessments at Inspire Exercise Medicine are constantly updated using the latest cutting-edge research from the field of Exercise Oncology.

Outside of IEM, Ciaran is a mediocre athlete. He continues to play soccer and Gaelic football to live out his failed high school dreams. When not playing sports, you can find him in the mountains.

- BS in Health Science, Kentucky Wesleyan College
- MS in Kinesiology, Georgia Southern University
- PhD in Kinesiology, Ohio State University
- Postdoctoral fellowship, Edith Cowan University
- American College of Sports Medicine, Cancer Exercise Trainer
- National Strength and Conditioning Association, Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist



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BEATING THE HEAT AND PROTECTING YOUR HEART

As the mercury rises and the humidity thickens, Florida's scorching summers present unique challenges for residents and visitors alike. While many flock to the Sunshine State for its pristine beaches and outdoor attractions, those with heart conditions or at risk of heart disease must take extra precautions during these sweltering months. This article explores the connection between Florida's summer climate and heart health, offering valuable insights and preventive measures to keep your ticker in top shape.

The Florida Heat-Heart Connection

Florida's summers are notorious for their intense heat and humidity, often pushing the heat index well above 100°F. This extreme weather can place significant stress on the cardiovascular system, particularly for those with pre-existing heart conditions or risk factors. As the body works harder to cool itself, heart rate increases, blood vessels dilate, and blood pressure may fluctuate, potentially leading to complications for vulnerable individuals.

Moreover, the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke rises dramatically during these months. These heat-related illnesses can be especially dangerous for people with heart disease, as they may exacerbate existing conditions or trigger cardiac events.

Understanding the Risks

Several factors contribute to increased heart-related risks during Florida summers:

- 1. Dehydration:** Excessive sweating can lead to rapid fluid loss, thickening the blood and making the heart work harder to pump it through the body.
- 2. Electrolyte imbalance:** Along with water, vital minerals like potassium and sodium are lost through sweat, potentially disrupting heart rhythm.
- 3. Medication interactions:** Some heart medications, such as diuretics and beta-blockers, can affect the body's ability to regulate temperature or increase sun sensitivity.
- 4. Air quality:** Hot, stagnant air can trap pollutants, potentially worsening respiratory issues and indirectly straining the heart.
- 5. Sudden temperature changes:** Moving between air-conditioned spaces and the sweltering outdoors can shock the system, causing blood pressure fluctuations.

Preventive Measures for Heart Health

Despite these challenges, there are numerous strategies to safeguard your heart during Florida's summer months:

- 1. Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Avoid excessive alcohol and caffeine, which can contribute to dehydration.
- 2. Time your activities wisely:** Plan outdoor exercises and errands for early morning or evening when temperatures are cooler.
- 3. Dress appropriately:** Opt for loose-fitting, light-colored clothing that reflects sunlight and allows your skin to breathe.
- 4. Seek shade and air conditioning:** Limit sun exposure, especially during peak hours (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), and take frequent breaks in air-conditioned environments.
- 5. Monitor your medications:** Consult your healthcare provider about any necessary adjustments to your medication regimen during hot weather.
- 6. Maintain a heart-healthy diet:** Emphasize fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins. These foods can help regulate body temperature and provide essential nutrients.
- 7. Know the warning signs:** Familiarize yourself with symptoms of heat exhaustion and heart attack, such as dizziness, nausea, chest pain, or shortness of breath.
- 8. Stay informed:** Keep an eye on local weather forecasts and heat advisories to plan your activities accordingly.
- 9. Gradual acclimatization:** If you're new to Florida or returning after time away, allow your body to adjust to the heat gradually over several days.
- 10. Regular check-ups:** Schedule routine visits with your healthcare provider to monitor your heart health and discuss any concerns.

Building a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle

Beyond these immediate precautions, cultivating a heart-healthy lifestyle is crucial for long-term cardiovascular well-being in Florida's climate:

- 1. Regular exercise:** Engage in moderate physical activity, such as swimming or indoor workouts, to strengthen your heart and improve its efficiency.
- 2. Stress management:** Practice relaxation techniques like meditation or yoga to reduce stress-induced strain on your heart.
- 3. Balanced diet:** Incorporate foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, and antioxidants to support overall heart health.
- 4. Weight management:** Maintain a healthy weight to reduce the workload on your heart, especially during hot weather.
- 5. Limit sodium intake:** Excessive salt can lead to fluid retention and increased blood pressure, particularly problematic in hot weather.
- 6. Stay socially connected:** Engage with friends and family, as social isolation can negatively impact heart health.

Embracing Florida's Summer Safely

While Florida's summers pose unique challenges for heart health, they needn't be a source of constant worry. By understanding the risks, implementing preventive measures, and maintaining a heart-healthy lifestyle, residents and visitors can safely enjoy all that the Sunshine State has to offer.

Remember, your heart works tirelessly to keep you alive and well. By taking these steps to protect it during the hottest months, you're investing in your long-term health and well-being. So, as you soak up the sun and revel in Florida's natural beauty this summer, do so with the confidence that comes from knowing you're taking care of your most vital organ.



Julian Javier, MD - Leandro Perez, MD - Tracy Roth, MD - Sandraliz Solano, MD

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UNDERSTANDING GLAUCOMA

Advances in Diagnosis and Treatment

By Julie A. Carter, M.D. - Fellowship-Trained Glaucoma Specialist

Glaucoma, a group of eye diseases, poses a significant threat to vision worldwide. Characterized by damage to the optic nerve, it often progresses silently, leading to irreversible vision loss. However, with advancements in medical science and technology, there is hope for early detection and effective management of this condition. This article delves into the different types of glaucoma, explores diagnostic techniques, and discusses the treatment options available to combat this sight-stealing disease.

Types of Glaucoma

Glaucoma encompasses several subtypes, including primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG), angle-closure glaucoma, normal-tension glaucoma, and secondary glaucoma. POAG, the most common form, develops gradually without apparent symptoms until late stages. Angle-closure glaucoma occurs due to blocked drainage channels in the eye, causing rapid and painful increases in eye pressure. Normal-tension glaucoma involves optic nerve damage despite normal eye pressure, while secondary glaucoma arises as a result of other eye conditions or systemic diseases.

Diagnosing Glaucoma

Early diagnosis is crucial in preventing vision loss from glaucoma. Ophthalmologists employ various methods to evaluate the condition of the optic nerve, measure intraocular pressure (IOP), and assess the visual field. Regular eye examinations, including tonometry to measure IOP, funduscopy to inspect the optic nerve, and visual field testing, are essential for detecting glaucoma. Additionally, advanced techniques like optical coherence tomography (OCT) and scanning laser polarimetry (SLP) aid in providing precise measurements of the optic nerve and retinal nerve fiber layer, enhancing diagnostic accuracy.

Treatment Options

The treatment of glaucoma aims to reduce intraocular pressure, the primary risk factor for optic nerve damage. Eye drops, such as prostaglandin analogs, beta-blockers, alpha agonists, and carbonic anhydrase inhibitors, are commonly prescribed to lower IOP. These medications work by either reducing the

production of aqueous humor or improving its outflow. Laser therapy, including selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLT) and laser peripheral iridotomy (LPI), can also help in controlling IOP. SLT enhances the drainage of fluid from the eye, while LPI creates a small opening to improve the outflow.

In more severe cases, surgical interventions may be necessary. Trabeculectomy, a filtration surgery, creates a new drainage channel to reduce IOP. Minimally invasive glaucoma surgeries (MIGS) have emerged as a viable option, involving the use of small devices to enhance fluid drainage. These procedures are less invasive and have quicker recovery times compared to traditional surgeries.

Promising Advances

Research is continually advancing our understanding of glaucoma and uncovering potential breakthroughs in its treatment. Gene therapy, neuroprotective agents, stem cell therapy, and novel drug delivery systems are areas of active investigation. Genetic testing may provide insights into a patient's predisposition to glaucoma, aiding in early intervention. Additionally, emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, show promise in assisting with glaucoma diagnosis and monitoring.

Glaucoma demands attention as a leading cause of irreversible blindness. Timely detection, diligent monitoring, and appropriate treatment can help preserve vision and improve patients' quality of life. Regular eye examinations, compliance with prescribed medications, and lifestyle modifications, such as maintaining a healthy diet and managing systemic conditions, contribute to effective management. As research progresses, new diagnostic tools and treatment modalities offer hope for earlier intervention and improved outcomes in the battle against glaucoma.

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JULIE A. CARTER, M.D.

Dr. Carter is a board-certified ophthalmologist with fellowship training in the specialty of Glaucoma.

Dr. Carter was born and raised in Sarasota, Florida. She attended Georgia Tech, where she earned a degree in mechanical engineering. After college, Dr. Carter worked for the Kimberly-Clark Corporation, where she contributed to patents on products ranging from baby diapers to surgeon's gowns. During her time at Kimberly-Clark, she realized her passion was in medicine and returned to medical school at the University of South Florida, where she earned the honor of joining the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society.

Dr. Carter completed her ophthalmology residency at the University of South Florida, serving as Chief Resident. She completed an additional year of fellowship training in the specialty of glaucoma at the University of South Florida.

At Center For Sight, Dr. Carter treats general ophthalmology patients, in addition to glaucoma patients. She works closely with her glaucoma patients to develop an effective treatment plan to maintain and protect their eyesight. She feels that one of the most rewarding parts of her career is the opportunity to build long-term relationships with her patients; many of whom now feel like family.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her three children, her husband, Jason, and their many pets! She is passionate about healthy living and wellness. She is a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Collier County Medical Society and the Florida Society of Ophthalmology.

Downsizing Now Can Lead to a More Fulfilling Life in Retirement

(Surrounded by the Things You Love!)

By Jenny Bradley

Summer's sweltering heat can keep us indoors, creating a perfect opportunity to tackle the task of downsizing. This August, why not transform your indoor retreat into a productive endeavor? At The Carlisle Naples, we've developed a good strategy for preparing to live your best life in the community with others. The first step is to "rightsize" your life, making it easier to begin a new chapter filled with good food, good fun and good friends at The Carlisle Naples.

Here are some tips:

1. Start with Sentimental Items: Begin your downsizing journey with items that hold the most emotional value. Tackling the home office or garage first can be cathartic, helping you make meaningful decisions about what to keep and what to let go.

2. Adopt the Four-Box Method: Label four boxes as "Keep," "Donate," "Sell" and "Trash." This method simplifies the sorting process and helps you stay organized as you declutter.

3. Digitize Cherished Memories: Convert old photos, letters and documents into digital formats. Not only will this save space, but it also ensures your memories are preserved and easily accessible.

4. Invest in Smart Storage Solutions: Utilize furniture with built-in storage, such as ottomans and bed frames with drawers. Vacuum-sealed bags for clothing and bedding can also maximize space in your new home.

Downsizing also opens the door to a simpler, more enjoyable lifestyle and can help ensure a smooth transition to community living.

While moving from a large home filled with memories to a smaller residence may feel overwhelming, it's important to think of a senior living community in more than just square footage. Communities such as The Carlisle Naples offer freedom



from maintenance and household chores. Tasks such as cooking and cleaning are handled by a dedicated team of professionals, freeing up your time to enjoy the things you love.

Plus, there is an entire community just outside your front door. A library stacked with the latest best-sellers and classic tales eliminates the need for a book collection within your home. Hosting guests or celebrating an anniversary? The private dining room is the perfect venue. At The Carlisle Naples, a state-of-the-art fitness center complemented by daily health and wellness classes keeps you active and healthy without needing to bring personal equipment. The beautifully landscaped community features meandering walking paths and outdoor spaces for avid walkers and nature lovers.

Downsizing doesn't mean giving up social connections. With a monthly calendar of events, outings and activities, you'll find countless opportunities to meet new friends and stay engaged. Residents at The Carlisle Naples find their social circles expand upon moving to the community, and with their newfound time, they can pursue new hobbies and interests.

The Carlisle Naples team will share valuable resources to make your move as smooth as possible. For example, staff can help you determine which furniture will fit best in your new home and recommend trusted

moving specialists. These specialists can handle everything from packing and transporting your belongings to managing estate sales, ensuring your transition is seamless and as stress-free as possible.

By downsizing now, you're not just reducing clutter; you're opening the door to a vibrant and fulfilling new chapter enriched by a purpose-driven lifestyle surrounded by people who care about your happiness and well-being. Embrace the summer by simplifying your life and anticipating the endless possibilities that await in a welcoming, supportive community environment.

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 ECC licensed with an integrated health care clinic located onsite. The Carlisle Naples is accredited by the National 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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NAVIGATING END-OF-LIFE PLANNING

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

The Importance of Pre-Planning

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

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

Steps for Effective Funeral Planning

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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SO, IS SUGAR THAT BAD FOR ME?

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D.

When we think of bad sugars, most of us conjure up the images of fast carbs – the ones that send blood sugar soaring-like bagels, cookies, and white bread. While these will surely pack on pounds, there are some important truths about carbohydrates in general. They are essential for peak energy and brain-power, since the glucose they are converted to is the preferred form of fuel for the body and the brain.

And why is it a preferred source of energy? Because it is the fastest! Unfortunately though, the fast carbs we tend to turn to have a high glycemic impact. This means that they will flood the bloodstream with glucose (sugar) triggering a rapid insulin peak, which fosters fat storage. It makes sense: we don't need all that much sugar for energy, so insulin will move some of it into the liver and some into the muscle for storage as glycogen, and the rest will be stored as a fat. Some common examples of high GI sugars: white bread, white rice, corn flakes, cookies, and candy.

The analogy I used in my book "Diet Slave No More!" is: "As sugars rapidly enter our bloodstream, the liver "policeman" calls upon his partner pancreas to release a "police dog" called insulin – and together they all go to work, trying to clear "the streets" of blood vessel from all the sugar floating in there.

Sugar criminals that cannot be caught and cuffed as glycogen - turn to fat deposits.

This explains why people whose diets are highest in fast sugars are also the most obese. Moreover, a study published in *The Lancet*, a reputable British medical journal, found that a diet rich in fast carbs doubled body fat storage. This redundant fat storage happens to be very dangerous for people with fatty liver. This is a very common condition in which a person does not have any symptoms, but on a routine blood test the doctor discovers that the liver numbers are off and the ultrasound of the liver shows extensive fatty deposits. Over the course of time, this condition could lead to liver cancer. So, you can see how everything is interconnected and how loading yourself with cookies can lead to unexpected nasty issues over the years.



In addition to harmful fat deposits, fast sugar with its powerful insulin peaks causes a subsequent steep drop of blood sugar below normal levels. Such dips result in mood swings and appetite spikes. This of course fuels a cycle that makes over-eating inevitable. Studies show that people, who eat meals high in fast carbs, eat way too much food over the next 5 hours – about 82% more than average.

Another downside to fast (high Glycemic Index) sugar foods, which is very relevant for today's world – is that a sugar overload creates a high oxidative stress on the body. To put it simply, when the body's resources are being used up on sugar utilization and "clearing up the streets of arteries" – the person is actually at highest risk from having viruses like Coronavirus wreak havoc on their immune system, cardiovascular integrity – and lead to poor clinical outcomes.

But I don't mean to give sugar a bad name. I don't like extremes. In fact, people who steer clear of sugars entirely, hoping to burn their inner fat stores – a so-called ketogenic diet – end up in another trap. When energy derived from sugar is in short supply, the body starts consuming lean muscle as a fuel long before it will tap into the fat as energy source. Do you really want to start losing your muscles on a ketogenic diet? I didn't think so. I saw a study in which subjects whose carbs consumption was extremely low, lost an average of 32%

of lean tissue in 12 weeks! And the body is not stupid: when it senses how the muscle gets "cannibalized" by ketogenic diet, it slows down its metabolism altogether. This is what I described in my book as a "Starvation mode" – an energy-conserving state which can slow your metabolism by 40%. And since carbohydrate deprivation robs the brain of the sugar needed for peak performance on the go, you are guaranteed to have brain fog and inability to focus.

Avoiding the high glycemic index and processed foods, and eating smaller portions frequently – will help avoid the extremes and steer your metabolism in the golden middle.



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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Healing Knees Naturally:

A Journey from Pain to Regeneration

By Sonny Gensing

Knee pain is a common concern that affects many, particularly as we age. For those who appreciate an active lifestyle, knee discomfort can significantly hinder enjoyment of activities such as golfing, hiking, pickleball, or even a leisurely stroll. Understanding the underlying causes and exploring advanced solutions can make all the difference in reclaiming a pain-free, active life. This article compares regenerative therapy and functional medicine with traditional treatments like cortisone injections and medication, to help you make informed decisions about your knee health.

Common Knee Conditions

Before exploring solutions, it's essential to recognize the most common types of knee injuries and conditions:

- 1. Osteoarthritis:** Often called "wear and tear" arthritis, this condition involves cartilage degeneration, leading to "bone on bone" pain and stiffness.
- 2. Meniscus Tears:** These occur when the knee is twisted while bearing weight, often resulting in pain, swelling, and limited movement.
- 3. Ligament Injuries:** Including ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) and MCL (medial collateral ligament) tears, usually caused by sudden stops or changes in direction.
- 4. Patellar Tendinitis:** Also known as "jumper's knee," this condition involves inflammation of the tendon connecting the kneecap to the shinbone, often causing pain when using stairs.
- 5. Bursitis:** Inflammation of the small fluid-filled sacs (bursae) that cushion the knee joint, leading to pain and swelling, making it difficult to kneel or rise from the floor.

Traditional Treatments: Cortisone Injections and Medications

Cortisone injections and pain medications have long been go-to treatments for knee pain. While these methods can provide quick relief, the results are temporary and often mask symptoms rather than address root causes.

Cortisone Injections: These can rapidly reduce inflammation and pain. However, their effects are temporary, and repeated use can lead to weakening of joint structures, scar tissue buildup, and potential side effects such as increased blood sugar levels and higher risk of joint infection.

Medications: Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and pain relievers can help manage pain and inflammation. However, long-term use can lead to gastrointestinal issues, cardiovascular risks, and potential dependency.

While these treatments offer symptom relief, they do not promote actual healing of knee structures. This is where regenerative therapy and functional medicine come into play.

Regenerative Therapy: Healing from Within

Regenerative therapy focuses on harnessing the body's natural healing capabilities to repair and regenerate damaged tissues. Common regenerative treatments for knee pain include:

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Therapy: This involves drawing a small amount of the patient's blood, processing it to concentrate platelets, and injecting it into the knee. Platelets contain growth factors that can stimulate tissue repair and reduce inflammation. This approach is often most effective for newer injuries and in younger, healthy individuals.

Stem Cell Therapy: This treatment uses stem cells, often harvested from donated umbilical cord tissue. These cells have been shown through research and clinical studies to regenerate cartilage, tendons, and ligaments. Stem cells have the unique ability to develop into various types of cells, aiding in the repair of damaged tissues or creating joint space for more pain-free and fluid motion.

Regenerative therapy offers a more sustainable solution by addressing the root cause of knee pain, promoting natural healing, and potentially leading to long-term improvements in joint function.

Functional Medicine: A Holistic Approach

Functional medicine takes a comprehensive approach to knee pain, considering the interconnectedness of the body's systems. This method involves:

Personalized Nutrition: Anti-inflammatory diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and essential nutrients can support joint health and reduce inflammation. Functional Medicine providers often include peptide therapy to speed healing and stem cell proliferation.

Exercise and Physical Therapy: Tailored exercise programs can strengthen muscles around the knee, improving stability and reducing strain on the joint.

Lifestyle Modifications: Stress management, adequate sleep, and maintaining healthy weight and blood sugar levels can all contribute to better knee health and overall well-being.

Regeneration vs. Symptom Management

The fundamental difference between regenerative therapy and traditional treatments lies in their approach to knee pain:

Traditional Treatments: Focus on symptom relief, often providing temporary respite without addressing underlying issues.

Regenerative Therapy and Functional Medicine: Aim to heal and repair the body, offering a more holistic and long-term solution by promoting natural healing processes and overall health.

Making the Choice

For those seeking not just relief but true healing, regenerative therapy and functional medicine present promising alternatives to conventional treatments. By focusing on the root cause of knee pain and supporting the body's natural ability to heal, these methods can help maintain an active, fulfilling lifestyle well into your golden years.

Well Infused's Approach

Well Infused is committed to delivering personalized results beyond a one-size-fits-all approach. Before starting a care plan, a comprehensive evaluation establishes a baseline to measure health improvements. Regenerative Therapy and Functional Medicine recommendations always include preparatory and follow-up services, aiming to help each client achieve exceptional results and optimal well-being through innovative services.

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FGCU Graduates Are Your Physician Assistants

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As part of Marieb College of Health & Human Services at Florida Gulf Coast University, the master of physician assistant studies program prepares medical professionals to provide evidence-based patient-centered care as part of a collaborative healthcare team.

The program's curriculum begins with 15 months of instruction in physiology, pharmacology, anatomy, clinical medicine, clinical integration and clinical skills on campus. The remaining 12 months are dedicated to four-week supervised clinical rotations at healthcare sites off campus. Core clinical rotations are in primary-care medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, behavioral health, women's health, general surgery and emergency medicine.

Marieb College's rigorous program ensures top-quality professionals enter the workforce to provide comprehensive, compassionate care to patients in many settings. They work in hospitals, medical offices, community health centers, nursing homes, retail and workplace clinics, educational facilities and more.

Physician assistants' duties vary depending on where they work, their level of experience and their specialty. They may be the people in your doctor's office or urgent-care clinic entrusted to work with you in some of these ways:

- Taking medical histories
- Conduct physical exams
- Diagnosing and treating illness
- Ordering and interpreting tests
- Developing treatment plans
- Counseling on preventive care
- Performing procedures or assisting in surgery

Demand for physician assistants like those graduating from FGCU is expected to grow 27% by 2032, much faster than the average for all occupations, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. With hands-on learning in state-of-the-art facilities and the individualized attention of dedicated faculty, Marieb College graduates are poised to lead this growing field.

Marieb College a top draw for PAs

When the time came for Allayna Vanderheid to consider physician assistant graduate programs, FGCU topped the list of possibilities. Vanderheid



gained a favorable impression of the program long before she enrolled. Her sister, Zoe, earned her master's degree in physician assistant studies at FGCU in 2021.

"Zoe really loved her program at FGCU," said Vanderheid, who completed her master's in physician assistant studies in December 2023. "It was an easy decision for me to add it to my applications. When I had an admissions interview, they liked me, and I liked them, and it worked out perfectly."

Indeed, her educational journey culminated in the best possible way, by her landing a position at an orthopedics practice in Naples — her hometown.

Smaller class sizes, accessible faculty

At FGCU, students like Vanderheid experience the benefits of close peer cohorts and personal interaction with faculty. Classes of just 20 students are the norm.

Professors are accessible in person and online for questions from class or about homework, research or career paths. As a result, they observe the personalities and learning styles of each student and how they will best absorb and learn the information they are teaching.

Marieb College's students also benefit from the varied teaching methods faculty use. These range from lectures to a mentor-mentee scheme in which

younger students interact with more senior ones on assignments. Professor-led reviews helped students focus on what they should know for their exams.

Many of the professors worked or still work as PAs in addition to teaching. This means they can often illustrate concepts by drawing on their own professional experiences. They may show images of CT scans or chest X-rays of ER patients to classes. After learning a patient's history, the students ask questions and then spell out a course of treatment.

Marieb graduates prepared to excel

Marieb College's PA program has a proven record of success, with all graduating cohorts attaining first-time board certification pass rates above the national average and overall pass rates of 100%.

Our PA graduates enjoy successful careers in a variety of healthcare disciplines, including primary care, emergency medicine, critical care and surgical specialties. Based on alumni communication, most graduates opt to remain in Florida after graduation to practice in their local communities, with many staying here in Southwest Florida. In part, this is due to the experience garnered and connections made during their clinical rotations within FGCU's dedicated community provider network.

Building on the success of the first five graduating cohorts of the master of physician assistant studies, Marieb College of Health & Human Services looks forward to expanding the program to meeting growing demand for healthcare professionals in Southwest Florida and beyond.

For more information about Marieb College's master of physician assistant studies program, go to fgcu.edu/mariebcollege, email paprogram@fgcu.edu or call 239-745-4477.



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UNDERSTANDING REGENERATIVE MEDICINE FOR KNEE PAIN

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

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

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

REGENERATIVE MEDICINE FOR KNEE AND JOINT PAIN

Hyaluronic Acid Injections

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

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

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



Stem Cell Therapy/Allografts

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

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

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

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

OTHER OPTIONS

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

Feel Amazing Spine & Joint Institute

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

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

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

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



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Diabetes Adversely Affects Foot and Leg Health

Dr. Michael J. Petrocelli, Board Certified in Ankle and Foot Surgeries

Diabetic neuropathy is a progressive disease that affects nearly 200,000 new patients per year. Roughly, 29 million Americans have diabetes. Many of these cases are undiagnosed, but for those individuals that struggle with the disease, symptoms of diabetic neuropathy can be debilitating.

People with diabetes have 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.

Individuals with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing foot ulcers. These are not just simple wounds that are to be overlooked. When a diabetic person develops these foot ulcers, it can be life threatening.

Understanding the disease state is complex, but in short, having high blood sugar levels, along with low blood and oxygen supply, damages the nerves throughout the body. This damage affects the long peripheral nerves that feed sensations to the legs, feet, and toes from the spinal cord, through communication with the brain. If your condition has progressed, along with nerve damage, you may develop lingering sores on your feet and toes that are resistant to healing.

Diabetic Foot Neuropathy Symptoms

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



Once the peripheral nerves are damaged, there is no cure. Along with medications and drug therapies, there are proven methods to lessen the symptoms of diabetic foot neuropathy.

Foot Ulcers

Because of the nerve damage, the feet will most likely not secrete oils or sweat properly and can develop cracks and deep slits from dry skin. Calluses can also split, and once these issues start to take place, bleeding, infections and non-healing wounds form on the bottom of the foot and toes. The lack of blood supply and the nerve issues, do not allow the wound to heal properly on its own. Along with this disorder, the individual will continue to put pressure on the foot; this rubbing action is similar to wearing a hole in your sock or shoe.

It's critical to keep your glucose levels regulated.

Diabetic Foot Ulcer Treatment

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

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

Collier Podiatry

Dr. Michael Petrocelli has been practicing podiatric medicine for well over 20 years. He is an expert in his field and a leader to his peers. Podiatrists treat the entire knee down area of the leg, so if you are experiencing diabetic leg, ankle, or foot wounds, rest assured that Collier Podiatry's podiatric care is your best option.

Their kind and well-trained staff are ready to answer your questions and concerns and get you back on your feet again. Collier Podiatry is available to answer your questions and make your appointment. Please call them at (239) 775-0019.



COLLIER PODIATRY, P.A.
Michael J. Petrocelli
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CAN A HIGH-TECH CHAIR CURE INCONTINENCE?

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

Do you wear urinary pads or diapers? Do you leak when you exercise or sneeze? Aging, childbirth, and menopause can all lead to incontinence. There are many treatments such as surgical procedures, pessary devices, and medications to help cure or reduce incontinence.

There is a new device by BTL called Emsella that makes incontinence treatment as simple as sitting in a chair! The Emsella is a unique chair that patients can simply sit and relax in (fully clothed) and have their pelvic floor significantly strengthened during a 28 minute treatment.

The Emsella chair is being touted as the Kegel throne. Each treatment provides the equivalent of doing over 10,000 kegel exercises. It produces high-frequency vibrations with thousands of contractions per session that tighten the pelvic floor muscles and the bladder. Results can often be noticed as quickly as the first treatment. Most women and men will undergo just six sessions in a full three-week program to restore their pelvic muscle strength. The best part is, 67% of treated patients totally eliminated or decreased the use of hygienic pads, and 95% of treated patients improved quality of life.

Who Is The Right Candidate For BTL Emsella?
BTL EMSELLA™ is a great option for patients of any age who desire solution for urinary incontinence and improvement in their quality of life.

How Long Is The Treatment?

How Many Sessions Do I Need?

Your provider will tailor a treatment plan for you. A typical treatment takes 28 minutes and you will need about 6 sessions, scheduled twice a week.

What Does The Procedure Feel Like?

Is It Painful?

You will experience tingling and pelvic floor muscle contractions during the procedure. The treatment is painless and you may resume daily activities immediately after the treatment.



The following patients should not seek Emsella treatment.

1. Subject is pregnant, planning to get pregnant or within 3 months postpartum;
2. Subject has a pacemaker;
3. Subject has an implant or IUD containing metal (e.g. copper 7);
4. Subject has piercing between the waist and knees and is not willing to remove it before each treatment

How Fast Will I See Results?

You may observe improvement after a single session. The results will typically continue to improve over the next few weeks.¹

This progressive treatment is helping numerous men and women find their freedom, confidence, and get their life back without having to worry about urinary incontinence. Emsella has been featured on the Doctors and in various news and media outlets.

References:

1. Body by BTL, A Breakthrough Treatment For Incontinence And Confidence, 2019 Btl Industries Inc.



Some comments from local users:

- I don't have to worry about peeing when I sneeze anymore
- My husband definitely notices the difference
- I just feel lighter down there.

To learn more about this technology please go to our website at www.FloridaBladderInstitute.com. Call 239-449-7979 to schedule your Emsella consultation today.



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Focusing on Eye Health:

Essential Tips for a Visually Vibrant School Year

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

As the new school year approaches, parents and students alike are bustling with preparations. While much attention is given to new backpacks, supplies, and clothes, it's crucial not to overlook one of the most important aspects of academic success: eye health. Good vision is fundamental to learning, and with the increasing use of digital devices in education, protecting and maintaining eye health has never been more critical.

The digital age has transformed classrooms, with computers, tablets, and smartphones becoming integral to the learning process. While these tools offer numerous educational benefits, they also present challenges to eye health. Extended screen time can lead to digital eye strain, characterized by symptoms such as dry eyes, headaches, and blurred vision. To combat this, students should practice the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break to look at something 20 feet away. This simple habit can significantly reduce eye strain and fatigue.

Proper lighting is another key factor in maintaining eye health during study sessions. Ensure that your child's workspace is well-lit, with a balance of natural and artificial light. Avoid glare on screens by positioning light sources to the side rather than directly in front of or behind the display. If necessary, consider using anti-glare screens or adjusting the display settings to reduce eye strain.

Regular eye exams are essential for students of all ages. Vision problems can often go unnoticed, especially in younger children who may not realize they're experiencing difficulties. An annual comprehensive eye exam can detect issues early, allowing for timely intervention. These exams are particularly important before the school year begins, as undiagnosed vision problems can significantly impact a student's academic performance and overall well-being.

For students who wear glasses or contact lenses, the start of the school year is an ideal time to ensure prescriptions are up-to-date. Outdated prescriptions can lead to eye strain, headaches, and difficulty focusing, all of which can hinder learning. Additionally, parents should consider investing in glasses with blue light filtering technology, which can help reduce the harmful effects of prolonged exposure to digital screens.

Nutrition plays a vital role in eye health. Encourage a diet rich in vitamins A, C, and E, as well as omega-3 fatty acids and zinc. Foods such as carrots, sweet potatoes, citrus fruits, leafy greens, fish, and nuts can contribute to better eye health. Staying hydrated is also crucial, as it helps prevent dry eyes, a common issue exacerbated by air conditioning in classrooms and extended screen time.

Physical activity isn't just good for overall health; it's beneficial for eyes too. Regular exercise improves blood circulation, which is essential for eye health. Encourage outdoor activities during breaks and after school, as natural light exposure has been linked to reduced risk of nearsightedness in children.

For students involved in sports, proper eye protection is paramount. Sports-related eye injuries are common but often preventable. Ensure your child wears appropriate protective eyewear during physical activities, especially for high-risk sports like basketball, baseball, and racquet sports.

As the academic workload increases, many students find themselves studying late into the night. However, adequate sleep is crucial for eye health and overall well-being. Lack of sleep can lead to dry eyes, eye strain, and difficulty focusing. Encourage a consistent sleep schedule that allows for 8-10 hours of rest per night.

Lastly, educate your children about the importance of eye health and good habits. Teaching them to be aware of their visual comfort and to take breaks when needed can instill lifelong habits that protect their vision.

By prioritizing eye health as part of back-to-school preparations, parents can set their children up for a successful and visually comfortable academic year. Regular eye exams, proper nutrition, balanced screen time, and good study habits all contribute to maintaining healthy eyes and clear vision. Remember, good eyesight is a key tool for learning, and taking care of it should be at the top of every student's priority list.



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

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

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

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

Retina Group of Florida

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

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



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Patient & Physician Perspective: EP's Cancer Journey

By Mohammad Jahanzeb, MD, FACP, FASCO - Medical Oncologist at Naples Cancer Advisors

"I was diagnosed with stage-four lung cancer in 2011. My primary care doctor was surprised after conducting numerous tests to determine the cause of my persistent cough. Finally, an X-ray revealed I had cancer. I was sent to University of Miami Healthcare and Deerfield to see Dr. Mohammad Jahanzeb (Dr. MJ). It was the best thing that could have happened to me. He took the time to meet with my husband and me, and in his office explained the steps he would take to help me. I asked if he had any treatments that would prevent me from going bald. He granted my request, and I never went bald or was even hospitalized. He started my chemo and also administered Xgeva shots.

Over the years, Dr. MJ had to change the chemo, but it always included the Xgeva shot. He always treated me well and showed genuine interest in how I was feeling and progressing. Because of Dr. MJ's care, I was able to continue working full-time and maintain all of my weekly activities. He made sure to have scans and MRIs performed to monitor my progress. After a few years, he wanted to check for mutations so I could start taking pills. He tried three times because he wasn't giving up, and on the third try, he got a match and then started me on the pills. He continued to follow up on all the scans and MRIs, and we were all very pleased.

The years kept passing, and I continued to feel better and better. I can't thank Dr. MJ enough. It reminds me of the story in the Bible where a woman was sick with a blood issue for 12+ years and was healed by Jesus. Well, the modern-day woman is me, and Jesus sent Dr. MJ here to help me. It has been 12+ years, and I no longer have any visible cancer cells. I feel great, and as I said before, I cannot thank Dr. MJ enough for his amazing care because he truly cared for his patients and always showed it. I am now living well." - EP

Dr. MJ's Perspective

Although it has been about 13 years, I still vividly remember when EP came to see me for a second opinion at the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center's Deerfield Beach Campus. She was very passionate about her job as a church schoolteacher and never wanted to traumatize her students by losing her hair due to chemotherapy, which would have given away her diagnosis of cancer. I promised her that I will choose drugs that don't cause hair loss



without compromising the effectiveness of the treatment. Her biopsy material from the spine was so limited that it was all used up in making the diagnosis of lung adenocarcinoma with spread to the bone, with no tissue left for mutation testing. As a result, I gave her three lines of different chemotherapy agents that don't cause hair loss, followed by immunotherapy. She went 5 years on these drugs with a near-normal quality of life. I then informed her that any additional drugs I may offer will cause hair loss unless we try another biopsy to find a mutation that is targetable with pills. She graciously agreed, and a biopsy was done, but the tissue was used up doing other tests that did not yield the right information. I commend her for agreeing to a third biopsy upon my insistence which revealed an ALK fusion, for which we had FDA approved targeted therapy options. Now there are 5 available options, and she is currently on the 3rd, still doing great. She has done better than most patients with her diagnosis and stage, where the estimated average survival in 2011 was quoted as 10-12 months. Now ALK-positive patients receiving targeted therapy are expected to live longer than 7 years! It is truly heartening to see this progress within the past two decades.



We are excited to announce that Dr. Jahanzeb is joining the Naples Cancer Advisors (NCA) practice to provide no-cost second-opinions to the SWFL community. NCA is a nonprofit practice which provides platinum-level consultative oncology services such as second opinions, care coordination, referrals, clinical trial navigation, financial navigation, and precision oncology services including genetic testing and counseling to cancer patients in the Southwest Florida area - at no cost to the patient.

Dr. Jahanzeb is the Co-Founder and President of OncAdvisor and also co-founded PrecisCa. His most recent practice sites were Florida Cancer Specialists and Florida Precision Oncology. He was formerly a Professor of Clinical Medicine, Hematology/Oncology at University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine, where he also served as the Associate Director of Community Outreach and Medical Director of the Deerfield Campus for the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center for about nine years. He received his oncology training at Washington University/Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, MO, where he subsequently served on Faculty. He has practiced and led clinical research in lung and breast cancer medical oncology for about 30 years.



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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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RESTORING BALANCE:

The Promise of Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement Therapy for Women

By Dr. Magdalena Kerschner

As women age, hormonal changes can significantly impact their quality of life. Many experience symptoms like hot flashes, mood swings, and decreased libido during menopause and perimenopause. To address these issues, an increasing number of women are turning to bio-identical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT) as a potential solution. This approach aims to alleviate symptoms and improve overall well-being by using hormones that are chemically identical to those produced naturally by the body.

Bio-identical hormones are derived from plant sources, typically soy or yams, and are molecularly altered to match human hormones exactly. This similarity allows them to function in the body just like endogenous hormones. Common bio-identical hormones used in therapy include estradiol, progesterone, and testosterone. Unlike traditional hormone replacement therapy, which often uses synthetic or animal-derived hormones, BHRT offers a more personalized and potentially safer alternative.

One of the primary advantages of BHRT is its customizability. Healthcare providers can tailor the hormone blend and dosage to each woman's unique needs based on her symptoms, hormone levels, and medical history. This individualized approach may lead to better symptom relief and fewer side effects compared to one-size-fits-all treatments.

Women seeking BHRT typically undergo comprehensive hormone testing to determine their specific imbalances. This may include blood, saliva, or urine tests to measure levels of estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and other relevant hormones. Based on these results, a qualified practitioner can create a personalized treatment plan.

Bio-identical hormones come in various forms, including creams, gels, patches, pills, and pellets. The delivery method is chosen based on the patient's preference and medical considerations. For example, transdermal applications like creams or patches may be preferred for women with liver issues, as they bypass first-pass metabolism in the liver.

Many women report significant improvements in their quality of life after starting BHRT. Common benefits include reduced hot flashes and night sweats, improved sleep, increased energy, enhanced



mood, better cognitive function, and improved sexual health. Some studies also suggest that BHRT may offer protection against osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease, though more research is needed to confirm these potential long-term benefits.

Despite its growing popularity, BHRT is not without controversy. The FDA has not approved many bio-identical hormone preparations, particularly those made by compounding pharmacies. Critics argue that there is insufficient long-term data on the safety and efficacy of these treatments. However, proponents of BHRT contend that because these hormones are identical to those naturally produced by the body, they are inherently safer than synthetic alternatives.

As with any medical treatment, BHRT carries potential risks and side effects. These may include bloating, breast tenderness, nausea, and mood swings, especially during the initial adjustment period. There are also concerns about potential increased risks of certain cancers, particularly breast cancer, although the evidence is mixed and often debated among medical professionals.

Women considering BHRT should consult with a healthcare provider who specializes in hormonal health and has experience with bio-identical hormones. A thorough evaluation of medical history, symptoms, and hormone levels is essential to determine if BHRT is appropriate and to develop an effective treatment plan.

In conclusion, bio-identical hormone replacement therapy offers a promising option for women seeking relief from menopausal symptoms and hormonal imbalances. While more research is needed to fully understand its long-term effects, many women find that BHRT significantly improves their quality of life. As with any medical decision, it's crucial to weigh the potential benefits against the risks and work closely with a qualified healthcare provider to make an informed choice about hormone therapy.



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.

Victory Wellness Naples, the leading medspa in Naples and the entire state of Florida.

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Hepatitis Awareness Month:

Get a Free Liver Scan in August at Ageless Wellness Spa "The Liver Clinic (TLC)"

As we observe Hepatitis Awareness Month, it's crucial to raise awareness about liver health and the importance of regular screenings. The Liver Clinic (TLC) is committed to promoting liver health and is offering free liver scanner tests throughout the month of August. This initiative is designed to encourage individuals to take proactive steps towards maintaining a healthy liver.

Why Liver Health Matters

The liver is a vital organ responsible for numerous essential functions, including detoxification, protein synthesis, and the production of biochemicals necessary for digestion. Hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver, can significantly impair these functions and lead to serious health issues if left untreated. Regular liver scans can detect early signs of liver damage or disease, allowing for timely intervention and better health outcomes.

Benefits of a Free Liver Scan at TLC

1. Enhanced Marketing Insights: TLC's experience in providing liver scans helps gather valuable marketing insights. These insights are crucial for driving more scans and increasing product sales, ultimately benefiting the community by encouraging liver health awareness.

2. Increased Repeat Scans and Screenings: Partnering with TLC ensures more repeat scans and screenings, fostering a culture of regular health check-ups. This practice not only aids in early detection but also promotes long-term liver health.

3. Boosted Customer Lifetime Value: Offering liver scans as part of a product subscription model increases customer lifetime value. Regular check-ups ensure that customers remain engaged with their health journey, leading to better health outcomes and sustained engagement with TLC's services.

4. Personalized Consultations: At TLC, we go beyond just scanning. We offer referrals to nutritionists for personalized liver optimization consultations. This approach ensures that each individual receives tailored advice on diet and lifestyle changes to support liver health.



5. Hepatologist Referrals: For those requiring more specialized care, TLC provides referrals to hepatologists. These personalized consultations offer in-depth insights and treatment plans, ensuring comprehensive liver care.

6. Cost-Effective and Scalable Services: Compared to other non-liver scan services, TLC's liver scans are highly scalable and cost-effective. This allows us to serve a larger population while maintaining high-quality care and keeping costs manageable for our patients.

Join Us This August

Take advantage of the free liver scanner tests available at TLC during Hepatitis Awareness Month. By participating in this initiative, you are taking a proactive step towards better liver health. Early detection through liver scans can make a significant difference in managing and treating liver conditions effectively.

To schedule your free liver scan or to learn more about our services, please visit Ageless Wellness Spa The Liver Clinic (TLC) or contact us at **239-241-2718**. Let's work together towards a healthier future, starting with a healthy liver.

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL HEALTH CHECKS: THE IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL AND SPORTS PHYSICALS

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

As summer winds down and the new academic year approaches, parents and students alike are caught up in the whirlwind of back-to-school preparations. Amidst the shopping for school supplies and new clothes, it's crucial not to overlook one of the most important aspects of preparing for the school year: health check-ups. Annual physicals and sports physicals play a vital role in ensuring students are healthy, ready to learn, and prepared for athletic activities.

Annual physicals, also known as well-child visits, are comprehensive health examinations that serve as a cornerstone of preventive care for children and adolescents. These check-ups provide an opportunity for healthcare providers to assess a child's overall health, track growth and development, and address any concerns or potential health issues. During an annual physical, doctors typically:

1. Review medical history and family health background
2. Perform a thorough physical examination
3. Check vital signs, including height, weight, blood pressure, and heart rate
4. Assess vision and hearing
5. Evaluate physical and emotional development
6. Update immunizations
7. Discuss nutrition, sleep habits, and safety measures
8. Address any specific health concerns or questions

These regular check-ups are essential for detecting and preventing potential health problems before they become serious. They also provide a valuable opportunity for children and parents to build a relationship with their healthcare provider, fostering open communication about health and wellness.

Sports physicals, on the other hand, are specifically designed to determine whether it's safe for a student to participate in a particular sport or athletic activity. While there is some overlap with annual physicals, sports physicals focus more on aspects related to athletic performance and injury prevention. Key components of a sports physical include:

1. Review of medical history, with emphasis on past injuries or conditions that might affect athletic performance
2. Assessment of physical fitness and strength
3. Evaluation of flexibility and joint function
4. Screening for conditions that may increase the risk of injury during sports activities
5. Discussion of sport-specific injury prevention strategies
6. Recommendations for safe training practices and proper nutrition

Many schools require students to complete a sports physical before participating in team sports or other athletic programs. This requirement helps ensure the safety of young athletes and can identify potential health risks that might be exacerbated by intense physical activity.

While annual physicals and sports physicals serve different primary purposes, they both contribute significantly to a student's overall health and well-being. In some cases, healthcare providers may be able to combine these examinations into a single, comprehensive visit, saving time and potentially reducing costs for families.

As the new school year approaches, it's important for parents to schedule these check-ups well in advance. Many healthcare providers experience a surge in appointments during the late summer months, so booking early can help ensure that students complete their physicals before school and sports seasons begin.

During these visits, parents and students should take an active role in discussing health concerns and asking questions. This is an excellent opportunity to address any issues related to physical health, mental well-being, or social development. Topics such as stress management, healthy eating habits, and sleep patterns are particularly relevant as students prepare for the demands of a new academic year.

For adolescents, these check-ups also provide a chance to discuss more sensitive topics, such as puberty, sexual health, and substance use prevention, in a confidential and supportive environment.

Healthcare providers can offer guidance and resources tailored to the individual needs of each student.

In addition to the immediate benefits of ensuring students are healthy and ready for the school year, regular physicals contribute to long-term health outcomes. By establishing a pattern of preventive care early in life, children and adolescents are more likely to continue prioritizing their health as they grow into adulthood.

As we navigate the ongoing challenges posed by public health concerns, including the COVID-19 pandemic, these routine health check-ups take on even greater significance. They provide an opportunity to discuss and implement appropriate preventive measures, update vaccinations, and address any lingering health effects or concerns related to the pandemic.

Are you ready for a consultation?

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KATHY VERDES APRN, A-GNP- C

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



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Why Annual Hearing Tests Are So Important

Dr. Brittany Colburn, Au.D. Doctor of Audiology/Ear Nerd

It's important to test your hearing every year because hearing loss is often a gradual process. You may be struggling to hear, but since the day to day changes in your hearing are small, you might not recognize your hearing loss at first. In fact, your friends and family are more likely to notice your hearing loss and may comment that you're not hearing as well as you used to.

In the same way that you go to your doctor for an annual checkup, you need to schedule an annual hearing test with a licensed audiologist. This provides you with a baseline for your hearing health, and at subsequent hearing tests you'll be able to monitor your hearing health and see if your hearing has changed.

Many people fail to recognize the signs of hearing loss and wait far too long before seeking treatment. On average, Americans wait 7 years before visiting a hearing health professional, even if their quality of life has been severely impacted by their hearing loss! Yearly hearing tests will insure that you catch your hearing loss early and seek treatment before hearing loss affects other areas of your life.

Untreated Hearing Loss and Relationships

For those living with untreated hearing loss, relationships with friends and loved ones start to suffer. You're not able to communicate as well as you used to, fail to hear a whisper 'I love you', or accidentally ignore your loved ones when they speak to you from across the room. Even if your family knows you are not being rude and are struggling to hear, difficulty having a deep conversation can be frustrating for everyone and leads to tension and miscommunication.

Those with hearing loss often draw back from social situations as well. When you're struggling to follow conversations, the last place you want to be is in a crowded restaurant scrambling to understand a group conversation. You'll often get lost and confused and are worried that you may mishear something and answer inappropriately. If you're living with untreated hearing loss you risk social isolation as you spend more time at home



alone than out with friends. You're more likely to deal with stress and anxiety, and greatly increase your risk of depression.

Untreated Hearing Loss and Health

Living with untreated hearing loss doesn't just affect your relationships, it's also linked to a lot of negative health outcomes. Those with hearing loss are more accident prone, visit the hospital more, and have far higher health care costs. They're often less mobile, and more likely to suffer from conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, and heart disease.

Untreated hearing loss is also closely linked to rapid cognitive decline. Not only are the parts of your brain used to hear not being exercised, but when you're less social and active other parts of your brain are idle as well. This affects the neural pathways in your brain, and in a sad case of use it or lose it, you're likely to experience brain shrinkage and brain cell death. You're more likely to suffer from dementia or Alzheimer's disease, and this further diminishes your brain's capabilities.

Treating Hearing Loss

The good news is that treating hearing loss will help you avoid these negative outcomes, both in

your relationships and your overall health. With a quality pair of hearing devices, you'll be able to hear clearly, engage with your loved ones, and participate in all the activities you love, keeping your body and mind healthy and happy.

Treating hearing loss as soon as possible is the key to a healthy year so call Decibels Audiology to book your annual hearing test, meet our university-trained doctors of audiology, and find out what treatment options are right for you.

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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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Experience Relief with Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression

By Dr. Michael Shaffer

Are you seeking relief from neck or back issues but want to avoid surgery? Non-surgical Spinal Decompression might be the solution you've been looking for. This innovative treatment gently lengthens and releases the spine, alleviating pressure on pinched nerves and soft tissue. Why is the non-surgical approach gaining popularity?

1. Gentle Alternative to Surgery

Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression offers a gentle alternative to invasive procedures. By creating negative pressures within the spinal discs, this therapy effectively addresses issues like bulging or herniated discs without the possible the need for surgery.

2. Comprehensive Treatment Program

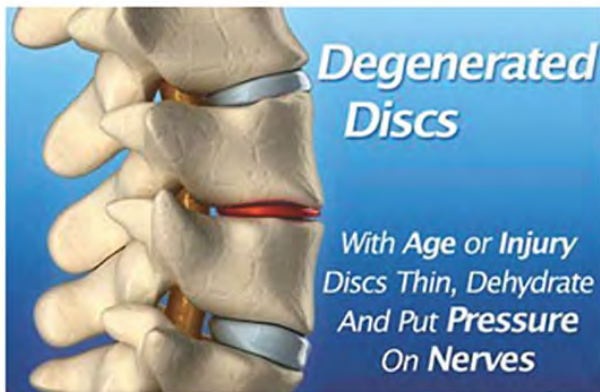
Our state-of-the-art equipment, The Hill DT table, ensures a comprehensive treatment program tailored to your needs. Equipped with advanced sensors and an actuator system, it provides a smooth, comfortable experience while monitoring your progress.

3. Targeted Relief for Various Conditions

Whether you're dealing with degenerative disc disease, facet syndrome, or ongoing pain, Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression can offer targeted relief. It helps draw herniated disc material back into place, rehydrating the discs and promoting healing.

4. Personalized Care Approach

Dr. Shaffer provides personalized care, starting with a complimentary consultation and review of your records. The treatment plan includes a thorough evaluation, pre-treatment therapy, and nutritional recommendations to restore disc health and reduce inflammation.



The Hill DT table sets itself apart with its sophisticated load sensor technology. Constantly monitoring treatment force and patient resistance ensures a low-force, smooth decompression experience. This technology leads to better outcomes by minimizing muscle-guarding and optimizing treatment effectiveness.

Specific Mechanical Effects of Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression Include:

- Vertebral separation allows decreased pressure in the disc.
- Separation and movement of spinal joints.
- Stretching of spinal ligaments.
- Widening of Vertebral foramina (the opening the nerve goes through), allowing increased space for the nerve root.
- Gentle stretching of the spinal muscles.

Are You a Candidate?

Potential candidates' diagnoses include conditions such as disc bulge/herniation, degenerative joint disease, and sciatica. If you're experiencing ongoing neck or back pain, schedule a consultation to see if Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression is right for you.

Experience the difference with Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression and take the first step towards a pain-free life. 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. A personalized approach is crucial in compression treatment. Consulting with a healthcare professional such as Dr. Michael Shaffer, Chiropractic Physician, will help determine the most practical combination of treatments tailored to an individual's unique condition.

Spinal decompression has gained 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, a vital aid in healing. 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.

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The Relationship Between Inflammation and Sugar Consumption

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

Inflammation is a natural component of the immune system that aids the body through its healing process. However, certain foods, such as sugar, can cause inflammation in the body. While this is normal, overconsumption of sugar can lead to chronic low-grade inflammation, which can contribute to many different health problems.

Let's further explore the relationship between sugar consumption and inflammation and what you can do to protect your health.

The Connection Between Sugar and Inflammation

When the body senses an injury or infection, it reacts by releasing chemicals that fight off the harmful antigens while also protecting it. This results in inflammation, which can cause warmth, redness, and swelling.

Like a virus or bacteria, sugar can also cause inflammation in the body. Scientists believe that this is because sugar stimulates the production of free fatty acids in the liver. The compounds that result as the body digests these free fatty acids can then trigger inflammatory processes.

In 2018, a systematic review found several studies that linked the consumption of more dietary sugar, primarily due to sugary drinks, with chronic inflammation. The studies found that those who had a higher sugar diet possessed more inflammatory markers in the blood, especially a marker called C-reactive protein.

Additionally, a 2014 study found that those who reduce their sugary drink intake experienced a decrease in inflammatory markers in the blood.

Findings such as this not only show that sugar can cause inflammation, but that the inflammation caused by sugar can be undone by decreasing sugar consumption. However, it is important to do this sooner than later since, while you can lower inflammatory markers, it is not possible to undo the damage already caused by chronic inflammation.

The Dangers of Chronic Inflammation

Some of the signs of chronic inflammation can include:

- body pain
- anxiety, depression, and other mood disorders
- weight gain
- insomnia and constant fatigue
- frequent infections
- diarrhea, constipation, and acid reflux

Chronic inflammation can also increase the risk of certain health conditions, including depression, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and dementia.

Detecting Chronic Inflammation

Chronic inflammation can be gauged based on the presence of inflammatory markers, some of which include C-reactive protein (CRP), plasma viscosity (PV), and erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR). These markers are measured through blood tests, and they serve an important role in helping doctors diagnose and monitor inflammatory conditions.

Research has shown that sugar not only increases inflammatory markers but also increases LDL cholesterol and insulin resistance. A study on 29 healthy individuals saw these increases after the participants drank just one can of soda each day, consuming an additional 40 grams of added sugar.

Not only does sugar cause inflammatory markers to spike, but this effect lasts even after the food is consumed. For example, a study on fructose consumption found that a 50 g dose of fructose caused a spike in CRP 30 minutes later, and it remained high for more than two hours.

How Does Sugar Cause Inflammation?

We've seen the studies showing that eating sugar causes an increase in inflammatory markers, but why is it that this occurs?

There are many ways that sugar may affect the body and cause inflammation, such as:

Increased Gut Permeability

Consuming too much sugar can increase the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes, two conditions that can increase gut permeability.

The gut is a central part of the body, playing a significant role in the immune system. However, when gut permeability increases, toxins, bacteria, and undigested food can more easily move out of the gut and into the bloodstream. Your body then reacts to these foreign components with inflammation.

With high sugar consumption, the gut is continually "leaky," leading to chronic low-grade inflammation.

Excess AGE Production

Advanced glycation end products (AGEs) are harmful compounds that can form when fat or protein combines with sugar in the bloodstream. The more sugar you consume, the more sugar in the bloodstream, and the greater chance of this happening.

When there are too many AGEs in the body, oxidative stress and inflammation can occur.

Weight Gain

One of the complications of excess sugar consumption is weight gain, which can lead to inflammation in two ways: excess fat can increase inflammatory markers and may lead to insulin resistance, increasing sugar levels in the bloodstream.

Higher LDL Cholesterol

There are two types of cholesterol in the body, low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol. Despite there being two types of cholesterol, one is often referred to as "bad" cholesterol (LDL), while the other is referred to as "good" (HDL).

This is because LDL cholesterol contributes to the build-up of fatty deposits in the arteries. This then narrows the arteries and increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, or other cardiovascular health concerns.

Excess LDL cholesterol has also been associated with higher levels of the inflammatory marker C-reactive protein (CRP).

Sugar can increase LDL cholesterol, which then increases inflammation.

Risks of Chronic Inflammation

While sugar is not the only cause of inflammation in the body, it is a contributor, and many health conditions can result from excess sugar consumption and the resultant chronic low-grade inflammation.

Diabetes

One effect that a diet high in added sugar can cause to the body is insulin resistance. Insulin is a hormone responsible for turning blood sugar into energy for cells. However, with insulin resistance, the body is unable to use the sugar circulating in the blood, and this sugar can end up building up.

Over time, this insulin resistance can lead to diabetes, a comorbidity factor for many other health concerns.

Heart Disease

Multiple studies have reported a strong link between sugary drink consumption and heart disease risk. There are many ways in which sugar can lead to this increased risk, including the increase in LDL cholesterol, increased blood pressure, increased inflammatory markers, insulin resistance, and obesity.

The relationship between sugar and heart disease can be significant, with one study on more than 75,000 women finding that a diet high in sugar and refined carbohydrates resulted in a 98% greater risk of heart disease.

Cancer

Multiple studies have shown a relationship between sugar consumption and increased cancer risk.

More research is needed to further examine this relationship, but scientists suspect that the inflammatory nature of sugar is what causes the increased risk of cancer. This is because chronic inflammation may damage the cells of the body and their DNA.

Other scientists believe that chronically high insulin levels play a role in cancer development, something to which excess sugar consumption also contributes.

How to Reduce Inflammation Naturally

You can reduce inflammation in many ways, with one of the biggest being a reduction in sugar consumption. Multiple studies have shown that eating less sugar can decrease inflammation, so this should be a top priority.

As a guide, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that your sugar intake not exceed 10% of your daily energy intake, but aiming for a lower percentage may offer greater health benefits.

Another way to naturally reduce inflammation is by getting enough sleep. Studies have shown that inflammatory markers rise when you don't get enough sleep. So, to help with your inflammation, make sure that you are spending enough time asleep each night.

To lower inflammation, it is also helpful to avoid other foods that commonly cause inflammation. While sugar can cause inflammation in the body, it is not the only food to be a culprit of this, with some other inflammatory foods including:

- trans fats (fried foods, fast food, donuts, cookies)
- saturated fats (red meat, decadent desserts, full-fat dairy products)
- alcohol
- excess omega-6 fatty acids (sunflower oil, corn oil, vegetable oil)
- MSG (soy sauce, prepared soups, deli meats)
- refined carbohydrates (white rice, bread, white potatoes)

Managing your weight is another important way to reduce the risk of inflammation since obesity is a risk factor for chronic inflammation. This is because excess fat in the body can increase inflammatory factors, so weight loss is the most effective strategy for reducing chronic inflammation.

A final way to address inflammation is by correcting any hormonal balances. The sex hormones of testosterone and estrogen can slow the production of inflammatory factors. So, if estrogen or testosterone levels are low, which can occur with age and certain life stages (i.e., menopause), the production of inflammatory factors may increase.

By working with a doctor to test your hormone levels and address any imbalances, you could reduce chronic inflammation.

Sugar and Inflammation

While sugar is a component of many tasty drinks and beverages, consuming it in excess can cause chronic inflammation in the body, which can increase the risk of health conditions such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Sugar is not the only thing to blame for chronic inflammation, but it does play a key role and limiting sugar consumption has shown significant improvements in inflammation levels.

Other ways to address inflammation and lower it include getting enough sleep and correcting hormonal imbalances. If you are concerned about inflammation in your body, reach out to your doctor to check your inflammatory markers and discuss how to lower them and protect your health.

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CELEBRATING NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION MONTH AND PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH

August is an important month for public health as it is designated as National Immunization Month in many countries worldwide. This observance serves as a reminder of the crucial role immunizations play in preventing and eradicating diseases. Vaccines have proven to be one of the most effective and cost-efficient means of safeguarding individuals and communities from various infectious diseases. In this article, we will explore the significance of National Immunization Month, delve into the importance of vaccinations, highlight key initiatives and events during August, and discuss how we can all contribute to promoting immunization and protecting public health.

Importance of Immunizations

Immunizations are vital in preventing the spread of contagious diseases and safeguarding public health. Vaccines have played a significant role in eliminating or reducing the prevalence of once-devastating diseases such as polio, smallpox, and measles. They work by stimulating the body's immune system to recognize and fight specific pathogens, thus providing immunity. By ensuring that individuals, particularly children, receive the recommended vaccines, we can not only protect them but also create a shield of immunity within the community, a concept known as herd immunity.

National Immunization Month Initiatives

National Immunization Month brings together healthcare providers, policymakers, and communities to emphasize the importance of immunization. Throughout August, numerous initiatives are organized to promote awareness, education, and accessibility to vaccines. Health departments and organizations collaborate to offer immunization clinics, school vaccination drives, and public campaigns to reach diverse populations.

One of the key objectives during this month is to ensure that people of all ages are up-to-date with their immunizations. The focus extends beyond childhood vaccines to include vaccinations recommended for adolescents, adults, and seniors. Highlighting the benefits of vaccines, dispelling common myths and misconceptions, and addressing any



concerns are integral parts of these initiatives. Additionally, healthcare professionals engage in outreach activities to reach underserved communities, emphasizing equity in access to immunizations.

Community Involvement and Education

Community involvement plays a vital role in raising awareness about the importance of immunizations. Schools, workplaces, and local organizations can participate by organizing educational events, distributing informational materials, or hosting vaccination drives. By fostering a culture of vaccine literacy, communities can empower individuals to make informed decisions regarding their health and the health of their loved ones.

Education is a crucial component of National Immunization Month. Informative materials, brochures, and online resources are readily available to answer common questions about vaccines and address concerns. It is essential to combat misinformation and debunk myths that may lead to vaccine hesitancy. By providing accurate information backed by scientific evidence, we can help individuals understand the benefits and safety of vaccines.

National Immunization Month in August serves as a reminder of the critical role vaccines play in protecting public health. By celebrating this observance, we can promote the significance of immunizations, emphasize the importance of staying up-to-date with vaccines, and encourage community involvement. Vaccines save lives, prevent diseases, and contribute to the well-being of individuals and societies as a whole. As we commemorate National Immunization Month, let us work together to ensure that everyone has access to immunizations and that accurate information about vaccines is readily available. By doing so, we can continue to safeguard public health and build a healthier future for all.

Contact Well-Being Medical Center of Naples today at (239) 315-7801.



Dr. Ricardo Martinez

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



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Understanding Polycystic Kidney Disease

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

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

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

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

The primary symptoms of PKD are as follows:

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

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

PKD Treatment

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

How Can the Progression of Kidney Disease Be Delayed?

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

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

Associates in Nephrology

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

Chronic Kidney Disease Program

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

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

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

Services Provided

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

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

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

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LET US KEEP YOU IN THE GAME

By Robert Swift, D.O.

Board Certified Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine

It's back to school for our kids and Football season is around the corner and for a lot of people it can't come soon enough. However, with the onset of football season a lot of athletes can and will suffer injuries. High school and college football camps start and unfortunately injuries can occur. Hopefully many athletes took the opportunity to rest and recover during the off-season, have any ailments addressed and undergo rehabilitation recovery. Or started a rigorous off-season training program.

The highest rate of injuries occur in the preseason, followed by the regular season and then the playoffs or post season. The most common injuries typically are ligamentous injuries involving the ankle, the knee, the shoulder and the hip. Athletes who play football are seven times more likely to get injured in a game than in practice. Unfortunately, despite the improvements in equipment, and tackling techniques, concussions are still a significant part of the sport. Repeat injuries are common, as well as injuries occurring to compensate for a recovering body part. It's important to get the appropriate rehab, rest, and treatment to avoid significant season ending injury.

What can the college or high school athlete do to prevent these injuries? First, get a preseason physical. Make sure your previous ailments were addressed and you have no other injuries that require rehab before you get involved with your preseason conditioning program. Second, be involved in a preseason conditioning program that also includes cross training and participating in other sports.

Understand the importance of nutrition and hydration when training and recovering from your previous season. Single sport training can result in overuse injuries. 10% of athletes will have an injury from over training. Mix up your training. Consider bike riding, hiking, swimming, yoga, or beach volleyball to keep your whole body in shape. Isolating your training within a single sport can result in injury and loss of playing time.



With many nationally recognized high school and college football programs in the state of Florida, appreciate that summer camps are hot and humid. It's important to drink crystal clear, cold water as well as sports drinks to keep yourself hydrated, prevent cramps, and heat related injuries. Make sure all of your protective equipment fits and is in good serviceable condition. A piece of tape should not replace a broken strap or snap.

If an injury occurs in preseason, the regular season or game, no matter how slight, let your trainer or orthopedic sports medicine doctor know. Early intervention, bracing, rehab, and exercise can often quickly get you back in the game safely, preventing a season ending injury. The goal of athletic trainers and orthopedic professionals is to get you back on the field of play, provide education and intervention so you can return safely and successfully to the game of football. Help us do our job by keeping us informed early so we can keep you on the field and in the game.

About Dr. Robert D. Swift, D.O.

Robert D. Swift, D.O. is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon and a Fellow of the American Osteopathic Association of Orthopedics. He has advanced training in minimally invasive surgery of the shoulder, knee, ankle, hip, and orthopedic trauma training.

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. While stationed in Europe as an army physician, he supported missions and troops throughout Bosnia and Kosovo.

Dr. Swift completed his orthopedic residency training at the University of Medicine Dentistry of New Jersey, also known as UMDNJ-SOM/Copper Medical Center. After residency, he rejoined the military and was stationed at Ft. Campbell, KY. He was deployed as Chief of Orthopedics in Bagram, Afghanistan. His services are decorated by the Bronze Star Medal and the Meritorious Service Medal.

Dr. Swift is accomplished in his field. He has been a course instructor, presenter, and author on fracture care and on the minimally invasive shoulder and knee surgery.

Dr. Robert D. Swift, D.O., Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon, is a national leader in sports medicine and orthopedic joint care with over 20 years of experience in:

- Shoulder, rotator cuff injuries, dislocations, replacement, fractures, and regenerative treatments
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UNLOCKING LUXURY LIVING: THE INDISPENSABLE ROLE OF EXPERIENCED REALTORS IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S GATED COMMUNITIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Stan and Scott have exceeded expectations! Work ethic, professionalism and attention to detail were paramount to finding the perfect beachfront property in a difficult buyer's market. Also, very knowledgeable in preparing my existing golf course home for a quick successful sale." - Nick G.

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Our love for Southwest Florida and extensive area knowledge will give you a true insider's perspective regarding luxury home listings, expert marketing strategies, and trusted building services. We will work with you to develop a solid plan to sell your home for top dollar in the current market.

We'd love to connect and share why working with The Whitcomb Group is one of your best decisions. Thank you!

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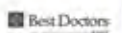
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WHAT IS A LIVING WILL?

By Florida Estate Planning Attorneys, *Dominico R. Palma and Mary C. Brockman*

A Living Will is an important legal tool, or advanced directive, for Florida residents to consider when creating an estate plan. It is a legal document with the purpose of expressing your wishes regarding the type of medical care you choose, including life prolonging procedures, and preferences for pain management, organ donation or other end-of-life medical decisions.

The very specific circumstances when a Living Will is used is when 1.) an individual is incapacitated, and 2.) has a terminal condition, end-stage condition or is in a persistent vegetative state and 3.) two doctors, a treating physician and consulting physician, determine there is no *reasonable medical probability of recovery* from such condition.

Having a Living Will ensures that your wishes are honored and relieves your loved ones from making difficult and emotional decisions for you. Additionally, it takes sensitive personal decisions out of the hands of medical providers who may not know the desires of their patients.

The Benefits of a Living Will

- Removes the pressure from family members throughout an inherently stressful and emotional experience.
- Alleviates family discord which may occur if there is disagreement about your end-of-life treatment.
- Ensures your final wishes are met regarding the medical care you wish to receive in your final moments and senior years.
- Removes any vagueness or uncertainty about your wishes for medical comfort and care when you cannot communicate or make decisions for yourself.

Requirements for a Valid Living Will in Florida

- A Living Will must be signed in the presence of two subscribing witnesses, one of whom is neither a spouse nor a blood relative of the individual signing, sometimes referred to as the "Declarant."
- If a person is mentally or physically unable to sign their own Living Will, then a designated witness must sign in their presence and under their direction.



- The Living Will must be provided to a primary physician or health care facility to become part of their permanent medical records.
- Under Florida law, any competent adult can execute a Living Will.

Contact our Florida Estate Planning Attorneys

An estate planning attorney at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A. can help explain options to add to your Living Will. Often, the document is much more complex than simply removing life-prolonging procedures when there is no hope of recovery. There are far more considerations to take into account specific to each individual person's desires when they near the end of their life. A Living Will helps to give peace of mind to both you and your loved ones.



Dominico R. Palma



Mary C. Brockman



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When You Have to Pee All the Time: Overactive Bladder and Its Impact on Quality of Life

Overactive bladder (OAB) is a common condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It's characterized by frequent and urgent urges to urinate, often accompanied by involuntary urine leakage. While OAB is not life-threatening, it can significantly impact an individual's quality of life, causing discomfort, embarrassment, and disruption to daily activities.

Understanding Overactive Bladder

Overactive bladder occurs when the bladder muscle contracts involuntarily, even when the bladder isn't full. This results in sudden, intense urges to urinate that can be difficult to control. OAB is not a normal part of aging, although it becomes more common as people get older. It's important to distinguish OAB from other urinary conditions, such as urinary tract infections or prostate problems in men.

Prevalence of Overactive Bladder

OAB is more common than many people realize. It's estimated that about 16% of the adult population experiences symptoms of OAB. The prevalence increases with age, affecting up to 30% of older adults. Despite its prevalence, many individuals with OAB do not seek medical help due to embarrassment or the misconception that it's a normal part of aging.

Impact on Quality of Life

The effects of OAB on an individual's quality of life can be profound and far-reaching. People with OAB often experience:

- 1. Sleep disruption:** Frequent nighttime urination (nocturia) can lead to poor sleep quality and daytime fatigue.
- 2. Social isolation:** Fear of accidents or being far from a bathroom can cause individuals to avoid social situations.
- 3. Emotional distress:** Anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem are common among those with OAB.
- 4. Reduced productivity:** Frequent bathroom breaks can interfere with work and daily activities.
- 5. Relationship strain:** OAB can impact intimate relationships and cause embarrassment with partners.
- 6. Physical discomfort:** The constant urge to urinate can be physically uncomfortable and distracting.



Coping and Support

Living with OAB can be challenging, but there are ways to cope and find support:

- 1. Join support groups:** Connecting with others who have OAB can provide emotional support and practical tips.
- 2. Communicate openly:** Discuss your condition with family, friends, and colleagues to help them understand your needs.
- 3. Plan ahead:** Know the location of bathrooms when going out and consider using absorbent products for peace of mind.
- 4. Seek professional help:** Consult with a healthcare provider or urologist for proper diagnosis and treatment options.

Lifestyle Changes to Manage OAB Symptoms

While medical treatments are available, many people find relief through lifestyle modifications:

- 1. Bladder training:** Gradually increasing the time between bathroom visits can help improve bladder control.
- 2. Pelvic floor exercises:** Strengthening the pelvic floor muscles (Kegel exercises) can improve bladder control.
- 3. Dietary changes:** Avoiding bladder irritants such as caffeine, alcohol, and spicy foods can reduce symptoms.
- 4. Fluid management:** Maintaining proper hydration while avoiding excessive fluid intake, especially before bedtime.
- 5. Weight management:** Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce pressure on the bladder and improve symptoms.
- 6. Scheduled voiding:** Using the bathroom at regular intervals rather than waiting for the urge to urinate.

Educational Resources

Education is key to managing OAB effectively. Patients can benefit from:

- 1. Online resources:** Reputable websites offer information on OAB, its causes, and management strategies.
- 2. Healthcare provider education:** Urologists and continence specialists can provide personalized advice and treatment plans.
- 3. Workshops and seminars:** Many healthcare facilities offer educational sessions on bladder health and OAB management.
- 4. Self-help books:** There are numerous books available that provide in-depth information and coping strategies for OAB.

Solutions, Including Utiva Bladder Health Product

While lifestyle changes are often the first line of defense against OAB, some individuals may benefit from additional support. One such option is the Utiva Bladder Health Product. This natural supplement is designed to support bladder health and may help alleviate some symptoms of OAB.

Utiva Bladder Health Product contains ingredients that have been traditionally used to support urinary tract health. While it's not a cure for OAB, some users report improved bladder control and reduced urinary urgency with regular use. As with any supplement, it's important to consult with a healthcare provider before starting use, especially if you're taking other medications.

It's worth noting that while natural products like Utiva may offer benefits, they should be used as part of a comprehensive approach to managing OAB. This approach may include lifestyle changes, pelvic floor exercises, and medical treatments as recommended by a healthcare provider.

In conclusion, overactive bladder is a common condition that can significantly impact quality of life. However, with proper understanding, support, and management strategies, individuals with OAB can lead fulfilling lives. By combining lifestyle changes, education, and potentially beneficial products like Utiva Bladder Health, many people find relief from their OAB symptoms. Remember, if you're experiencing symptoms of OAB, it's important to seek professional medical advice for proper diagnosis and personalized treatment options.

Sources:

- <https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/can-you-treat-overactive-bladder-naturally>
- <https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/the-side-effects-of-oab-medication-and-how-they-impact-patient-compliance>

For more information, visit Utiva's webpage.

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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

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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:

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- 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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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.

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- Dizziness
- Inner Ear Infections/Labyrinthitis
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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.

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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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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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Meet Nina Azwoir:
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GROWTH HORMONE:

A Potential Aid in Fasting Recovery and Joint Replacement Healing

By Dr. Viviana Cuberos

Growth hormone (GH) has garnered significant attention in recent years for its potential role in various aspects of health and recovery. Two areas where GH, particularly its synthetic form human growth hormone (HGH) like Omnitrope, has shown promise are in fasting recovery and healing after joint replacement surgeries. This article explores the potential benefits of growth hormone in these contexts, with a focus on hip, knee, and shoulder joint replacements.

Fasting Recovery and Growth Hormone

Fasting has become increasingly popular for its potential health benefits, including improved insulin sensitivity, cellular repair, and longevity. However, extended fasting periods can also lead to muscle loss and decreased metabolic rate. This is where growth hormone may play a crucial role.

During fasting, the body naturally increases its production of growth hormone. This hormone helps preserve lean muscle mass and promotes the use of stored fat for energy. By supplementing with synthetic growth hormone like Omnitrope during or after a fast, individuals may potentially enhance these effects, leading to improved recovery and maintenance of muscle mass.

It's important to note that while the use of growth hormone for this purpose shows promise, more research is needed to fully understand its effects and potential risks in the context of fasting recovery.

Growth Hormone and Joint Replacement Recovery

Joint replacement surgeries, particularly for the hip, knee, and shoulder, are common procedures that can significantly improve quality of life for those suffering from severe joint pain or dysfunction. However, the recovery process can be lengthy and challenging. Growth hormone may offer potential benefits in accelerating healing and improving outcomes after these surgeries.

Hip Replacement: Hip replacement surgery involves replacing the damaged hip joint with an artificial implant. The recovery process typically takes several weeks to months. Growth hormone may potentially aid in this process by promoting bone and soft tissue healing, reducing inflammation, and improving muscle strength around the new joint.

Knee Replacement: Knee replacement surgery is a common procedure for individuals with severe knee arthritis or injury. The recovery period can be extensive, often requiring intensive physical therapy. Growth hormone supplementation might help accelerate healing of the surgical site, reduce post-operative pain, and improve muscle strength and flexibility around the knee joint.

Shoulder Replacement: While less common than hip or knee replacements, shoulder replacement surgery can be necessary for severe arthritis or rotator cuff injuries. The complex nature of the shoulder joint makes recovery particularly challenging. Growth hormone could potentially aid in tissue repair, reduce inflammation, and improve overall healing time.

The Potential Mechanism of Action

Growth hormone exerts its effects through various mechanisms that could be beneficial in joint replacement recovery:

- 1. Stimulation of cell growth and reproduction:** GH promotes the growth and regeneration of various tissues, including bone, cartilage, and muscle.
- 2. Increased collagen synthesis:** Collagen is crucial for wound healing and tissue repair. GH has been shown to enhance collagen production, which could aid in surgical site healing.
- 3. Enhanced protein synthesis:** By promoting protein synthesis, GH may help maintain and build muscle mass during the recovery period when physical activity is limited.
- 4. Improved bone mineralization:** GH plays a role in bone metabolism and could potentially enhance the integration of the artificial joint with the surrounding bone.

Considerations and Precautions

While the potential benefits of growth hormone in fasting recovery and joint replacement healing are intriguing, it's crucial to approach its use with caution. The use of synthetic growth hormone like Omnitrope is typically restricted to specific medical conditions and should only be administered under close medical supervision.

Potential side effects of growth hormone supplementation can include joint pain, muscle pain, fluid retention, and carpal tunnel syndrome. In some cases, it may also increase the risk of diabetes or contribute to the growth of existing tumors.

Moreover, the long-term effects of growth hormone supplementation in these contexts are not yet fully understood. More research is needed to establish safe and effective protocols for its use in fasting recovery and joint replacement healing.

Conclusion

Growth hormone, including synthetic forms like Omnitrope, shows promise in potentially aiding fasting recovery and healing after joint replacement surgeries. Its ability to promote tissue growth, enhance protein synthesis, and improve bone mineralization could offer significant benefits in these contexts. However, it's crucial to approach its use cautiously and under proper medical guidance. As research in this area continues to evolve, we may gain a clearer understanding of how to harness the potential benefits of growth hormone while minimizing risks.

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Residents of Naples, Florida now have a convenient new option for getting affordable lab tests right in their neighborhood. **Any Lab Test Now** has opened a new location on Immokalee Road, bringing their extensive selection of professional lab tests to the Naples area.

Any Lab Test Now allows individuals to order their own lab tests without requiring a doctor's order. This puts patients in control of their own health monitoring and screening. The retail lab testing model provides an easy and affordable way to get lab work done for wellness, prevention, treatment, and management of existing conditions.

"We're excited to open our doors in Naples and provide this level of access to lab testing services," said the local owner. "Our goal is to empower people to be proactive about their health by making it simple and affordable to get the lab tests they need."

At Any Lab Test Now, patients can get tested for a wide range of health concerns from routine wellness panels to highly specialized biomarker tests. Some of the most popular tests offered include:

- **Annual Check-Up Panel:** A comprehensive array of tests that screen for a variety of potential health issues like diabetes, liver and kidney problems, anemia and more.

- **Paternity Informational (Non-Legal):** For those needing to determine biological relationships through DNA testing for personal knowledge.
- **STD Panel, Comprehensive:** Screens for all major sexually transmitted infections like HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B & C, herpes, chlamydia and more.
- **Cholesterol (Lipid) Panel:** Checks HDL, LDL, triglycerides and total cholesterol levels to assess heart disease risk.
- **5 Panel Rapid Drug Screen (Urine):** Detects recent use of marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, opiates and PCP.
- **Weight Management Hormone Test Panel:** Looks at levels of hormones like cortisol, thyroid, testosterone and more that can affect weight.
- **Hemoglobin A1C:** Used to monitor average blood sugar levels over 2-3 months for diabetes management.
- **Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA):** Screens for prostate cancer and other prostate disorders in men.
- **Basic Thyroid Panel:** Checks TSH, T4 and T3 levels to identify thyroid disorders.
- **Testosterone, Free & Total:** Measures free and total testosterone levels in men and women.



The new Any Lab Test Now Naples is staffed by certified technicians who can properly collect samples for blood tests, urine tests, saliva tests, hair tests and more. They are knowledgeable about all the tests offered and can help customers select the right screening for their needs. Test results are typically available within 24-48 hours.

With the opening of the Naples location, residents of Collier County now have convenient access to professional lab testing services. Stop by Any Lab Test Now on Immokalee Road and take control of your health today.

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BACK TO SCHOOL TIME

Is My Child's School Making Them Sick? Why Mold is Likely at School?

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

As children return to school, parents naturally worry about their well-being and safety in the educational environment. Among various health concerns, mold exposure is a significant yet often overlooked issue that can impact students' health. Mold in schools can lead to various health problems, including respiratory issues, allergies, and even cognitive difficulties.

Why is Mold So Likely at School?

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of mold in school buildings:

- 1. Aging Infrastructure:** Many schools are housed in older buildings with outdated infrastructure. Over time, roofs, windows, and plumbing systems can develop leaks, allowing moisture to seep into the building. Moisture is the primary catalyst for mold growth.
- 2. High Foot Traffic:** Schools experience high foot traffic, which can bring in dirt, moisture, and mold spores from outside. This is especially true in areas like hallways, classrooms, and gymnasiums.
- 3. Inadequate Ventilation:** Proper ventilation is crucial for controlling indoor humidity levels. Many schools have inadequate ventilation systems, which can lead to increased humidity and moisture buildup, creating an ideal environment for mold growth.
- 4. Custodial Challenges:** School custodial staff often face significant challenges in maintaining a clean and dry environment due to budget constraints, limited staff, and the sheer size of the buildings they need to manage.
- 5. Seasonal Changes:** Schools are often closed for extended periods during summer and winter breaks. During these times, HVAC systems might be turned off or run at lower efficiency, leading to fluctuating indoor humidity levels, which can promote mold growth.
- 6. Water Damage:** Incidents like flooding, plumbing leaks, and roof leaks can go unnoticed or unaddressed for a period, leading to significant mold growth. Schools might not always have the resources for timely repairs.
- 7. Food Source:** Mold loves paper and books to feed on. Also these items absorb moisture and humidity which can lead to mold growth.

Health Effects of Mold Exposure in Children

Children are particularly vulnerable to the adverse health effects of mold exposure for several reasons:

- 1. Developing Immune Systems:** Children's immune systems are still developing, making them more susceptible to infections and allergic reactions caused by mold exposure.
- 2. Respiratory Sensitivity:** Mold spores can trigger or exacerbate respiratory issues such as asthma, bronchitis, and other chronic lung conditions. Children with pre-existing respiratory conditions are at higher risk.
- 3. Allergic Reactions:** Common symptoms of mold allergies include sneezing, coughing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rashes. These symptoms can affect a child's ability to concentrate and perform well in school.
- 4. Cognitive and Behavioral Effects:** Some studies suggest that exposure to mold and its mycotoxins, the byproduct of mold, can lead to cognitive and behavioral issues, such as difficulties with attention, memory, and learning.

Signs of Mold in Schools

Parents should be aware of the signs that might indicate mold problems in their child's school:

- 1. Musty Odors:** A persistent musty smell is often the first sign of mold. If classrooms or other areas of the school consistently have an unpleasant odor, it may indicate mold presence.
- 2. Visible Mold Growth:** Mold can appear as black, green, or white patches on walls, ceilings, or floors. Pay attention to any visible signs of mold in the school.
- 3. Water Stains or Damage:** Water stains on ceilings, walls, or floors can indicate previous or ongoing moisture problems, which are conducive to mold growth.
- 4. Health Complaints:** If multiple students or staff members report symptoms such as headaches, respiratory issues, or allergic reactions, it might be related to mold exposure.

Preventing and Addressing Mold in Schools

Ensuring a mold-free environment in schools requires proactive measures and collaboration between parents, school staff, and administrators:

- 1. Regular Inspections:** Schools should conduct regular inspections of their buildings to identify and address any potential mold problems early. This includes checking for leaks, water damage, and areas with high humidity.
- 2. Improve Ventilation:** Proper ventilation systems should be installed and maintained to ensure adequate air circulation and control indoor humidity levels.
- 3. Prompt Repairs:** Any water damage or leaks should be repaired promptly to prevent moisture accumulation and mold growth.
- 4. Cleaning Protocols:** Schools should establish and follow rigorous cleaning protocols to ensure that areas prone to moisture and dirt are regularly cleaned and dried.
- 5. Education and Awareness:** Educating school staff and students about the importance of maintaining a mold-free environment can help in early detection and prevention of mold issues.
- 6. Advocacy:** Parents can advocate for better building maintenance and mold prevention measures by staying informed and raising concerns with school administrators and local education authorities.

Conclusion

Mold in schools is a significant concern that can affect children's health and academic performance. By understanding why mold is prevalent in school environments and recognizing the signs of mold exposure, parents and school staff can take proactive steps to ensure a healthier learning environment. Through collaborative efforts, we can protect our children's health and well-being, ensuring they thrive in their educational journey.



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Julie S. Hurst - Nicoll,
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The Matterhorn Method: Eliminating Pain and Inspiring Hope

By Angela Puchalla, MS, ATC, LAT

As we age, we are constantly fighting an uphill battle of pain and physical limitations. When our body starts to break down, we are unable to perform the activities that we want and the mental burden becomes as great as the physical one. Many patients bounce from doctor to doctor without ever getting to the root cause of their problem. This can be extremely frustrating and causes many to lose hope.

Naples based Matterhorn Fit, has a solution. 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 and are still in pain.. When you address pain, injury, and movement dysfunction from a neurological level, the results are fast 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 fast 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. “ 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 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.”

To schedule an initial evaluation visit
matterhornfit.com or call the office at
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GlycoCheck!

Revolutionizing Vascular Health Assessment

By Lisa H. Sprague MSS, PTA, LMT

GLYCOCHECK



Met the GlycoCheck! For many years, the medical field has only analyzed a portion of the vascular system – the veins, arteries, and heart. However, those comprise only 1% of the surface area of all the vessels in your body, with the microvascular system making up the other 99%.

Until recently, those microvessels weren't given much attention in the medical field. Due to their tiny size, they couldn't be measured, couldn't be operated on, and couldn't be examined and assessed. There has been no instrumentation small enough to evaluate and mitigate any issue until now!

The GlycoCheck is an FDA-registered, Class 1 medical device that allows the function of the microvascular system to be measured and analyzed, monitoring the status of the endothelial glycocalyx lining inside the microvessels. The device has been heavily researched around the globe, and there is no other device available – it is a truly one-of-a-kind, life-changing system. Once only used in hospitals and universities, GlycoCheck is now available for practitioners!

What Is the Glycocalyx?

Have you ever heard of the glycocalyx? It comes as no surprise if your answer is “sort of”—or even a resounding “no.” But it's critical to understand what it is, since it happens to be the most important part of our cardiovascular system and the literal foundation of our overall health. You may look and even feel healthy on the outside, but inside your microvascular system, a completely different situation could be developing.

Put simply, the glycocalyx is the Teflon-like lining of all our blood vessels. It is made up of a micro-thin gel and is the largest organ in the body that protects the inside walls of our entire circulatory system. Our blood vessels are not just hollow tubes that our blood flows through – there's so much more going on inside.

The integrity of the glycocalyx is extremely important. We have over 60,000 miles of microvessels that comprise 99% of our vascular system. At the “sweet spot” of nutrient-, oxygen-, and waste-product exchange to and from our tissues and organs lies the tiniest microvessels, just 4–6 microns thick. If the

glycocalyx is compromised and the single-cell thick vessel wall is exposed, it leaves the vessel vulnerable to damage. A compromised/damaged glycocalyx can become leaky and tissues and organs can begin to starve due to lack of nutrients and oxygen, leading to health decline.

Early warning signs of declining health due to a damaged glycocalyx are fatigue, cold hands and feet, thinning hair, memory loss, blood sugar imbalances, blood pressure inconsistencies, lack of focus, and slow wound healing. Scientific research tells us that endothelial glycocalyx dysfunction can progress to several diseases and conditions.

The Role and Health of the Glycocalyx: Many researchers consider the endothelial glycocalyx as a first line of defense against vascular diseases. You cannot have healthy vascular walls without a healthy glycocalyx. Highlights of the importance of your glycocalyx are: 1. Maximizes delivery of nutrients and oxygen to your tissues and organs 2. Regulates healthy blood flow 3. Protects your entire vascular system from damage.

Other functions of the glycocalyx include the regulation of vascular permeability, fluid balance, and the synthesis of nitric oxide in response to the blood flow. The surface of the glycocalyx helps maintain endothelial function.

How Does GlycoCheck Work?

A video microscope camera is placed under the tongue showing live movement of red blood cells as they travel through your microvessels. In a matter of minutes, GlycoCheck measures and analyzes 100,000 vessels, with 1,000 measurements calculated per vessel. It is a non-invasive test that takes approximately 10-20 minutes that produces a Microvascular Health Score that reveals the health of the microvessels by measuring several key parameters of the microvascular system:

- Capillary Density
- Capillary Blood Volume Recruitment Capacity
- Capillary Blood Volume Dynamic
- Perfused Boundary Region Flow Corrected
- Microvascular Health Score (MVHS):

Your Microvascular Health Score is the overall score based on capillary density, recruitment capacity, and glycocalyx health. A higher score means better microvascular health.

A healthy microvascular system is essential for maximizing your health potential. Clearly, the health of the epithelial glycocalyx has a significant impact on all aspects of our overall health. A plan to maintain or improve your health – regardless of your age – should involve optimizing the function of your endothelial glycocalyx.

Think of all the nutritious food and beneficial supplements you take to bolster your health. Now you can find out how well you are actually delivering those nutrients. Lastly have you ever wondered why someone with no cardiovascular history has a heart attack or even dies of a massive heart attack? I wonder about the health of their microvascular system. Knowledge is power and now we can know and be proactive.

I am proud to be one of the few testing sites in the United States to offer you GlycoCheck. Testing is provided in my office or on-site for HealthCare professionals. Discover the most comprehensive analysis of your microvascular system and how to improve your glycocalyx and optimize blood flow for a healthier you!

Lisa H. Sprague MSS, PTA, LMT

Lisa H. Sprague MSS, PTA, LMT is a licensed healthcare practitioner with over 35 years of experience and owner of MV Solutions and Science & Art of Healing. She holds AS, BS, and MSS degrees and is currently pursuing her PhD. Her extensive experience, skill and training have allowed her to become a unique specialist to benefit her clients.

She has been in private practice in Naples, FL since 1999 and became a certified GlycoCheck tester and trainer in 2022. She specializes in GlycoCheck microvascular testing and therapies that optimize healing from the cellular level. Lisa utilizes new approaches to optimize your health and well-being from the cellular level. Powering your potential from the cellular level and frequency based therapies are core to her private practices.

You can connect with Lisa at 239-821-1223 or Lisa@MVsolutions.pro.

Please go to www.microvasculartesting.com & www.ScienceandArtofHealing.com for more information.



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Back to School Separation Anxiety

By Richard J. Capiola, MD

Going back-to-school is an exciting time for many children, and some parents. For some children however, it also stirs up stress and anxiety. Are they going to like their new teacher? Are they going to enjoy their new school? Are their friends going to be in their class? Do they have the cool new shoes, or did they pick the wrong ones? It is normal for children of all ages to experience anxiety when separating from parents or caregivers. If your child is changing schools, don't gloss over their feelings of anxiety and stress. Even changing from one building to another, like the change from an elementary school to a middle school, or the change from middle school to high school, even when most of your classmates are going to with you can be very stressful. Leaving high school for college, even if you will still be living at home is (hopefully) one of the most exciting and yet stressful events a young person will face for their age.

Dealing with stress and anxiety is part of parenting. It's common and necessary for people to talk with their children experiencing separation anxiety and life stage changes. When children experience more intense fears and anxieties that interfere with going to school or are over a prolonged period, or that interfere with how they function at school and/or how they interact with others, this is what psychiatrists call separation anxiety disorder. Separation anxiety disorder is the most common anxiety disorder in children under 12 years of age. Anxiety can affect even the happiest, most well-adjusted children.

Separation anxiety can unfold in different ways. Children may refuse to go to school or participate in new activities in the absence of their parent. They may also refuse to go to bed without their parent or sleep away from home. Some children experiencing separation anxiety have physical symptoms such as

stomach aches and nightmares, while others may experience headaches or a racing heartbeat. Others may have persistent thoughts that something bad is going to happen to themselves or to their parents. At this point it is advisable to seek professional help.

Strategies to help you and your child have a successful School Start

Whether you know your child has struggled significantly with anxiety before, or they seem worried or anxious about going back to school, we offer several strategies below to help you navigate these feelings with them.

- **Validate your child's fears and anxieties.** Feeling anxious about separating from the comfort of caregivers is a normal response to stressful events. When children express anxiety, let them know you hear them and understand. You can validate and normalize their feelings by saying: "I get that you feel worried. I bet many other kids are feeling that way too. Let's talk about it." Let your child lead the conversation. This may not be a onetime conversation. Feelings may come out in small doses. Always be ready to listen and validate.

- **Encourage positive self-talk.** Help children develop a growth mindset that includes positive and productive statements such as: "I am brave, I can do this." Positive self-talk has been linked to increased self-esteem in kids. Try practicing this at home well before the first trip to school. Make self-talk familiar and routine. Then it will be easier for kids to use these statements when they are separated from you or get anxious at school.

- **Plan to take small steps through the fall.** It is a lot to ask children to go from limited social interactions during the summer to extended social interactions in a small space at school. During the first few weeks of school, try to resist the temptation to fill the evening weekends

with outings and events. Consider doing home-based activities that children are familiar with to help provide some consistency in their environment. As your children get more comfortable with social interactions, start progressively adding more activities to their calendar as time permits.

- **Stick to routines.** The transition to a new school climate may feel unpredictable to children. This can result in increased anxiety. One way to reduce such anxiety is by having consistent routines at home. For example, stick to a consistent schedule when it comes to eating, bath time, screen time and bedtime. Research has found this has helped children experience more well-being during the pandemic. So, keep that momentum going!

- **Talk about the positive aspects of going to school and venturing out in new ways.** Children and adults can have a hard time seeing the positive aspects of anxiety-inducing situations. Parents can help children see the positive side of the back-to-school, including learning new things, time with friends or participating in extracurricular activities.

- **Model positive behaviors.** Children are not the only ones that have seen an increase in their anxiety these past two years. There have also been rises in parental anxiety as well. Even with respect to school, many parents may also be anxious about being separated from their child. When parents discuss their anxiety and stressors, children may internalize these worries. Try to avoid discussing your life stressors in front of your child. And for goodness sakes, avoid exposure to alarming media, which has been shown to increase children's anxiety. If you think the world news stresses you out, imagine what all that negativity can do to a child!

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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Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT) & Inflammaging: Addressing Chronic Inflammation and Aging

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

Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT) is an emerging therapeutic approach aimed at mitigating the effects of aging, mainly through the management of chronic inflammation, or "inflammaging." BHRT can address inflammaging, cardiovascular disease, systemic inflammation, frailty, and other health issues, particularly in women undergoing menopause. Cytokines are used to diagnose and treat autoinflammatory and autoimmune diseases and the impact of menopause and adverse childhood experiences on inflammatory markers.

This month we will overview some of the therapies for BHRT. In the coming months, we will focus on each one in more detail. We hope you check back in future editions to learn more.

Understanding Inflammaging

Inflammaging refers to the chronic, low-grade inflammation that typically accompanies aging. This persistent inflammatory state is a significant risk factor for various age-related diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and neurodegenerative disorders. Chronic inflammation is characterized by an elevated presence of pro-inflammatory cytokines, which can damage tissues and organs over time.

BHRT and Its Role in Reducing Inflammaging

BHRT involves using hormones chemically identical to those produced by the human body. It aims to restore hormone levels to balance, thereby reducing the inflammatory responses associated with hormone imbalances. Studies have shown that BHRT can effectively decrease levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, thereby mitigating the effects of chronic inflammation and reducing the risk of age-related diseases.

Cardiovascular Disease and Systemic Inflammation

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Systemic inflammation is a crucial contributor to the development and progression of CVD. Elevated levels of inflammatory markers such as C-reactive protein (CRP) and interleukin-6 (IL-6) are associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular events. BHRT has been shown to lower these inflammatory markers, thereby potentially reducing the risk of CVD in postmenopausal women.

Systemic Inflammation and Frailty

Frailty in older adults is often linked to chronic systemic inflammation. Elevated levels of inflammatory cytokines can lead to muscle atrophy, reduced

physical function, and increased vulnerability to stressors. By modulating hormone levels, BHRT can help reduce systemic inflammation and improve physical resilience, decreasing the risk of frailty in older adults.

Evaluating Cytokines for Diagnosis and Treatment

Cytokines play a pivotal role in the immune response and are key indicators of inflammation. Evaluating cytokine levels can aid in diagnosing and treating autoinflammatory and autoimmune diseases. For instance, measuring levels of IL-1, IL-6, and tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α) can provide insights into a patient's inflammatory status, guiding targeted therapies that include BHRT.

The Impact of Menopause Transition on Inflammatory Markers

The menopause transition is marked by significant hormonal changes that can influence inflammatory markers. Research indicates that postmenopausal women have higher levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines than premenopausal women. This increase in inflammation is associated with a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and neurodegenerative conditions. BHRT can help mitigate these risks by balancing hormone levels and reducing systemic inflammation.

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Inflammation

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have been linked to long-term health consequences, including heightened inflammatory responses. Individuals with a history of ACEs often exhibit elevated levels of inflammatory markers, which can persist into adulthood and increase the risk of chronic diseases. BHRT, by addressing hormone imbalances, can potentially reduce the inflammatory burden in individuals affected by ACEs, thereby improving their overall health outcomes.

Peri-Menopause and Neurodegenerative Disease

The peri-menopause phase is characterized by fluctuating hormone levels, which can lead to increased systemic inflammation. This inflammatory state has been implicated in the development of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease. By stabilizing hormone levels, BHRT can reduce inflammation during the peri-menopause phase, potentially lowering the risk of neurodegenerative diseases later in life.

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Solutions from Creative Scripts

Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT) offers a promising approach to managing inflammaging and its associated health risks. By restoring hormone balance, BHRT can reduce chronic inflammation, lower the risk of cardiovascular disease, improve physical resilience, and potentially prevent neurodegenerative diseases. Evaluating cytokine levels can further enhance the diagnosis and treatment of inflammatory conditions, making BHRT a valuable tool in promoting healthy aging.

For individuals experiencing hormonal imbalances or chronic inflammation symptoms, it is essential to seek medical advice from a qualified healthcare provider. Creative Scripts in Naples, FL, offers comprehensive BHRT solutions tailored to meet each patient's unique needs, helping them achieve optimal health and wellness.

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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

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Weathering the Storm: 5 Disaster Preparedness Tips for You, an Adult Child with a Senior Parent

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

Safeguard Your Aging Loved One During Storm Season

After Hurricane Ian hit in 2022, we introduced you to Stan and Mary. Stan and Mary lived in a high-rise in Florida when the hurricane hit. Although they were in an evacuation zone, everyone thought they would be safe because the staff in their building was top-notch, plus it was built to withstand hurricane-force winds. However, what they and most people did not consider is what would happen if the power went out for long periods of time? What would happen if staff could not make it to the building due to storm damage?

As an adult child, it is essential for you to proactively prepare for potential disasters like hurricanes, heat waves, flooding, and blizzards. This is especially true if you have recently noticed a parent or loved one displaying dementia-like symptoms. Here are five real-life situations for you to consider when preparing for any natural disaster.

Power Outages and Medical Equipment

Power outages can pose significant challenges for seniors who rely on medical equipment like scooters, lift chairs, CPAP machines, or even something simple like hearing aids, which use rechargeable batteries. Does your family member use electrical medical devices? Do they have alternative methods of using or charging their equipment? Do they actually know how to use alternative methods? Investing in a portable generator or a battery backup system is only good if they know where it is and how to use it.

Ensuring Food and Water Supply

After Hurricane Ian, I met Joan*, age 76, and her daughter Michelle* on the 13th floor of an over-55 community in Naples. When I met them, they had just begun the long trek from the fourteenth floor to the first floor via the stairs because the elevator was out. It was obvious the stress of the situation had overwhelmed them both. After one flight of stairs, Joan gave up. She had a broken foot (in a boot) and was tired and wanted to go back upstairs. Michelle knew they



needed to either go all the way to the first floor to get food and medical supplies or go back up one flight to wait it out. Her mom, who had undiagnosed cognitive decline, could not understand why Michelle was adamant they had to continue down more stairs.

Temperature Control and Electric Shutters

Susan's* home had electric storm shutters to protect her windows. They worked effectively during the storm. However, the building lost power, and the generator system was flooded. This meant there was no electricity, and she could not open any windows to get airflow into the apartment. Her lovely home with all its amenities became a hotbox, which could have easily caused heat exhaustion.

Assess Your Loved One's Cognitive Ability

If you have ever wondered if your loved one may be experiencing cognitive decline, now is the time to assess their cognitive level. Here are some simple things for you to consider and questions you can ask to determine if they are able to remain in their home. What would you do if there was a fire? Can your loved one tell you what they would do, and is it the right thing? Would they call 911? Would they leave the house? Can your loved one hear a fire alarm, or do they know what a fire alarm means? I had a client who lived alone, but his family decided to move him into a memory care community because his cognitive ability declined to the point where he did not know what a fire alarm sounded like. Do they ever confuse the telephone and the television remote control? In times of emergency,

this is a big problem. The last thing you would want is for your mom or dad to try to call for help using the television remote. Do they rely on medication support from someone who may not be able to get to them in a storm or emergency? If they have an automatic pill dispenser or an aide that provides medical care, what will happen if the aide is unable to get to their home? Would they know the right medication to take, and would they remember to do it?

Proactive Planning:

Proactive planning is key to ensuring your loved one's safety. Now is the time to create a comprehensive emergency plan with essential contact information for healthcare providers, emergency services, and neighbors who can offer assistance. Compile copies of important documents like medical records, insurance information, and identification papers in a secure location. Sharing them with appropriate people via Google Drive, One Drive, or Dropbox can make it much easier for everyone. Establish regular communication protocols and ensure your loved one understands the plan and their role in it.

If you do not think your loved one would know how to manage in an emergency situation, it is time for you to act. Information is always important. You can read this article to learn more about how Senior Living Providers plan for emergency situations:

<https://www.seniorcare-nyfl.com/elder-care-and-senior-living-blog/how-senior-living-communities-prepare-for-natural-disasters-1667516343701.html>

We find most families do not understand how communities prepare and all the work they do to make sure your loved one gets the best care possible. We are here to answer any questions you have and can help you create a disaster preparedness plan for you and your loved one. We can also help you after the disaster by finding short-term accommodations until things are back in order.

**Names have changed to protect our client's privacy.*



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PET CARE WHILE TRAVELING

HURRICANE AWARENESS AND HEALTH TIPS

Pet owners often face the challenge of balancing their love for travel with the responsibility of caring for their furry companions. As much as we enjoy exploring new places, it's essential to prioritize our pets' well-being while on the move. Moreover, for those living in hurricane-prone areas, taking care of pets during natural disasters like hurricanes requires special attention. This article explores valuable tips for pet care while traveling and essential hurricane awareness health tips to ensure the safety and happiness of our beloved animals.

PET CARE WHILE TRAVELING

1. Plan Ahead: Before embarking on any journey, it's crucial to plan for your pet's comfort and safety. Research pet-friendly accommodations, check pet policies of airlines or other transportation options, and make sure your pet is up-to-date on vaccinations.

2. Crate Training: If your pet isn't accustomed to traveling, crate training can help ease their anxiety during the journey. Gradually introduce them to the crate and make it a safe and positive space.

3. Pack Essentials: Bring along your pet's necessities, including food, water, medications, grooming tools, favorite toys, and a leash. Familiar items can provide comfort and maintain a sense of routine.

4. Frequent Breaks: During road trips, plan for regular breaks to allow your pet to stretch, exercise, and relieve themselves. Always keep them on a leash and ensure their safety at rest stops.



5. Pet Identification: Ensure your pet has a collar with an updated ID tag that includes your contact information. Additionally, consider microchipping your pet for added security, as it increases the chances of a reunion if they get lost.

HURRICANE AWARENESS HEALTH TIPS

1. Early Preparations: As hurricane season approaches, create an emergency plan that includes your pets. Know local evacuation routes and pet-friendly shelters in case you need to evacuate.

2. Stock Up on Supplies: Have a hurricane-ready pet kit that includes essential supplies such as pet food, water, medications, first aid items, a leash, and their comfort items like blankets or toys.

3. Keep Your Pet Indoors: As the hurricane approaches, keep your pet indoors to prevent them from getting frightened or lost. Secure all windows and doors to minimize risks.

4. Comfort and Reassurance: Pets can get anxious during storms, so provide a safe space for them to retreat. Comfort and reassure them during the turbulent weather to help reduce stress.

5. Post-Storm Care: After the hurricane passes, inspect your surroundings for potential hazards before allowing your pet outside. Debris and contaminated water can pose risks.

As responsible pet owners, it's our duty to ensure our furry friends are well-cared for, whether we're traveling or facing the challenges of hurricane season. By planning ahead, providing comfort and reassurance, and staying informed about hurricane awareness health tips, we can make the journey enjoyable and safe for our pets. Remember, the key is to prioritize their well-being and create a positive experience for them, even during challenging times. With these tips in mind, you can embark on new adventures or navigate hurricane season with your pet by your side, knowing that you've taken every precaution to keep them happy and healthy.

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WHAT IS THE MIND DIET?

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

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

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

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

HISTORY OF THE MIND DIET

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

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

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

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

FOODS TO EMPHASIZE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOODS TO AVOID

Some foods to avoid include:

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

Butter and margarine: less than a tablespoon daily.

Cheese: less than one serving per week.

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

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

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

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

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

How to Enjoy Having Your Home Professionally Cleaned

Your house is a mess. You have no free time. You hate to clean. If this sounds familiar, you're not alone. Over 100 million people in the US and Canada feel the same way. As you plan to hire house cleaning services, here are some tips that will make your experience even better.

Remember that you're hiring human beings

If you plan on every speck of dust being gone after your clean, you're most likely setting yourself up for disappointment. You'll enjoy your service more if you are realistic about what you're getting. While professional house cleaners are exceptional at what they do, they are not super human. They can't clean your master bathroom in 5 minutes. Humans also make mistakes. If something isn't done well, relax, call the house cleaning service at the office, and let them know. Depending on the type of issue, most professional house cleaning companies will send someone out to re-clean the area and make sure to correct the situation.

Leave your home while it's being cleaned

Do you like when someone looks over your shoulder while you work? Neither do housecleaners. Relax. Professional house cleaning services screen their employees, conduct background checks, and are bonded and insured. Get the most out of your cleaning service by getting out of your house during the cleaning process. Not only will you enjoy the great feeling of walking into a clean

home, but the cleaning staff will be better able to focus on their job. While leaving isn't a requirement, you just might find out how great it feels to abandon all thoughts of cleaning!

Leave a tip

Tipping service professionals is nothing new. Everyone tips their server at a restaurant, the bellboy, the valet. Tipping your cleaning professional is a good thing. Think about this; a professional cleaner is in your home, touching virtually all of your possessions. Cleaning is a physically demanding job. House cleaners are constantly bending down, scrubbing, walking up and down stairs, reaching up high, and moving heavy things around. And if hard work isn't enough, remember that they're dealing with all your dirty stuff! It's well worth a few extra dollars to say thank you. And who doesn't love a tip? Remember, a happy cleaner is a great cleaner.

To clean or not to clean

It's a question most people grapple with. Should I clean my house before the cleaning person comes? This is really up to you and there is no right answer. If you have hired a cleaning person for a set amount of time, the cleaner will be able to provide a deeper clean if your home is very tidy before their arrival. But, some people don't like even tidying up. If that's you, then letting the house cleaner do that might be well worth it. In the end, you have to decide how you want the house cleaner spending their time.

I clean my home in 1 hour... they should too

People always think a professional house cleaner should be able to clean their home faster than they clean it themselves. This is a misconception. When most homeowners clean their homes, they clean very differently than someone they hire. Homeowners know what areas they can skip and usually don't clean all the areas that professionals do. For example, many homeowners may skip the toilet when cleaning the bathrooms, only wiping down the counter and mirror. And even if they do tackle the toilet, they usually don't get the floor behind it. Professional home cleaners must clean everything, which, in the end, usually takes longer.

If you're realistic about your house cleaning service, you'll be much happier. And if there is something you're not happy with, simply call the office. You'll be much better off working through a few small issues than constantly jumping from one cleaning service to the next. Once you and the professional company get it right, having your home professionally cleaned is on.



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Navigating the Healthcare Landscape: A Comprehensive Guide

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

In today's intricate societal fabric, healthcare often presents itself as a labyrinth. The common tendency is to focus on the cost and the additional services a health plan might offer. However, the real focus should be on access to care - the 'what if's'. What if you are diagnosed with cancer or a heart condition? The importance of a robust network cannot be overstated, as it ensures you receive the best care from the hospital and specialist you need.

Unfortunately, many individuals overlook their potential future needs, focusing solely on their current health status and the financial implications. It's crucial to understand that in Individual, Group, and Medicare Advantage insurance, a doctor or hospital can exit the network or be asked to leave, and this does not constitute grounds for changing plans.

The upcoming 2025 Medicare season will bring significant changes. It's imperative to conduct a thorough review and work with a broker who represents multiple companies in your area. You can review plans starting October 1-14 and enroll from October 15 to December 7, 2024, for 2025. Ensure you review doctors, hospitals, and other medical services to verify they are in-network. Remember, just because they are in-network now doesn't guarantee they will be in 2025.

Prescription medications will undergo substantial changes in 2025 due to the Inflation Reduction Act, which caps the annual out-of-pocket expenses at \$2,000 for Part D Medications. We anticipate an increase in Part D premiums and changes in the formularies. The cap ONLY applies to in-formulary medications. This also affects Advantage Plans.

If your insurance company has recently dropped your doctor, we may still have options. Contact us or a professional specializing in Medicare. As insurance agents, we are not notified when your doctor is no longer in the network. It's your responsibility to reach out to us so we can assist you before it's too late.



Under the new Biden administration rules for short-term health plans, plans issued or sold on or after September 1, 2024, will be limited to total durations of no more than four months, including renewals.

Short Term and Tri-Term Health Insurance plans are affordable options for many. The Affordable Care Act/Market Place/Obama Care is available to all residents at the regular price. Affordability comes into play if you receive a subsidy to help pay for a portion of your healthcare, based on your household income and if you have qualified group coverage that the government considers affordable to you.

Health insurance is complex, but you don't have to navigate it alone. We suggest you seek help from a professional. We don't charge for our services and neither do most in our industry.

Travel Insurance – Summer is a time when many of us are traveling within the USA, on a cruise, or abroad. Check to make sure your insurance has you covered. Travel Medical Insurance is not that expensive and if you were to need it, it's a very small investment in peace of mind.

Life Insurance – You are never too young, and you can never have enough. Life insurance also has living benefits. The younger you start, the more affordable it is. Your insurability is not guaranteed so the younger and healthier, the better.

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

To learn more about your options, schedule an appointment with Logical Insurance Solutions for all your insurance needs. I am licensed in most states. Visit www.Logicalinsurance.com or call 239-362-0855. You can also reach us at info@Logicalinsurance.com.

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Dealing With Life's Painful Situations

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

On Father's Day in 2005 my dad came to my office to visit and talk about how things were going. In the course of our discussion he mentioned that he experienced a terrible night's sleep because his back was causing him so much pain. I told him that it was time to go to the ER and get checked out to find out what was causing all of his pain. He did, and that started a two-year battle with pancreatic cancer. My dad fought an incredible fight with this terrible cancer but passed away in August of 2007.

Many people have faced the pain of having to bury a loved one. The question is, "How do I deal with the pain?" We may have confidence that our loved one is in a better place, but do we do with the pain that we still feel?

As you read this, maybe your pain is not in the loss associated with death, but rather you have faced the end of a relationship, or perhaps have received bad news regarding your own health. The question still remains, "what are we to do with these painful situations?"

As we turn through the pages of Scripture, we find that the thoughts and writings of the Psalmist David bring comfort and hope to those in pain. David understood painful situations for he faced many of them in his own life. He too, buried many loved ones and faced enormous family problems. How did he get through these challenges? He turned to God for help.

David tells us in the book of Psalms, ¹⁸ *The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalms 34:18*

You are never closer to God than when you are hurting. David knew that from personal experience. David took his pain and his problems to the Lord and asked for His help. In Psalm 142:1-2 David wrote, *"I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble."*

Our natural tendency is to suffer in silence. We put on a smile and pretend that everything is fine in our lives. Yet in reality, we know that ignoring our pain does not bring relief. We hope that time will heal all wounds but we know it does not. In fact, time often makes matters even worse.

Pain is our body's way of letting us know that we need to deal with something. Whether it is physical, emotional, or relational, pain should not be ignored. And yet still, we try to run from it.

It is human nature to run from painful situations. By law, all doors in public buildings swing out. When people panic, they run. They try to escape. When we face pain, loss and hurt, we look for ways to escape. We dream



of running away from reality in hopes of finding peace and comfort over the next rainbow. Sometimes people try to escape by turning to alcohol, drugs, food, or even inappropriate relationships. Running from your problems never brings resolution.

David went on to say in Psalm 142:3 that ³ *"When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who knows my way..."* God knows the pain we feel and He wants us to run to Him with our troubles.

As you read his Psalms, you will quickly notice that David was very open about what he was going through. And yet, through it all, he learned to trust and depend on God.

When dealing with the pressures and strains of life and the emotional challenges we face, we can learn much from David's example. Stop pretending that you can handle everything in your own strength and turn to God who loves you and cares about you. He specializes in mending broken hearts.

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