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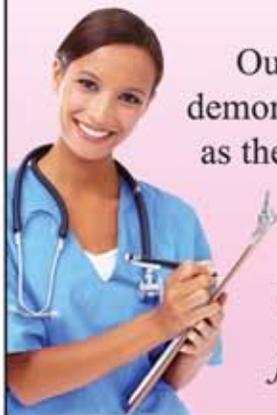
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Heart **Healthy** Flavor—Throw Away Your Salt Shaker!

By Gino Sedillo, MD, FACC, CardioVascular Solutions Institute

Dr. Gino Sedillo, and his staff at Cardiovascular Solutions Institute, support the heart healthy guidelines suggested by the Cleveland Clinic. Some evidence suggests that limiting daily sodium intake to 1500 milligrams (less than a teaspoon) may benefit patients with cardiovascular risks including, heart failure and hypertension for all middle aged and older adults.

Dr. Sedillo maintains that, “A low sodium diet is an important component in the management of high blood pressure as well as congestive heart failure.”

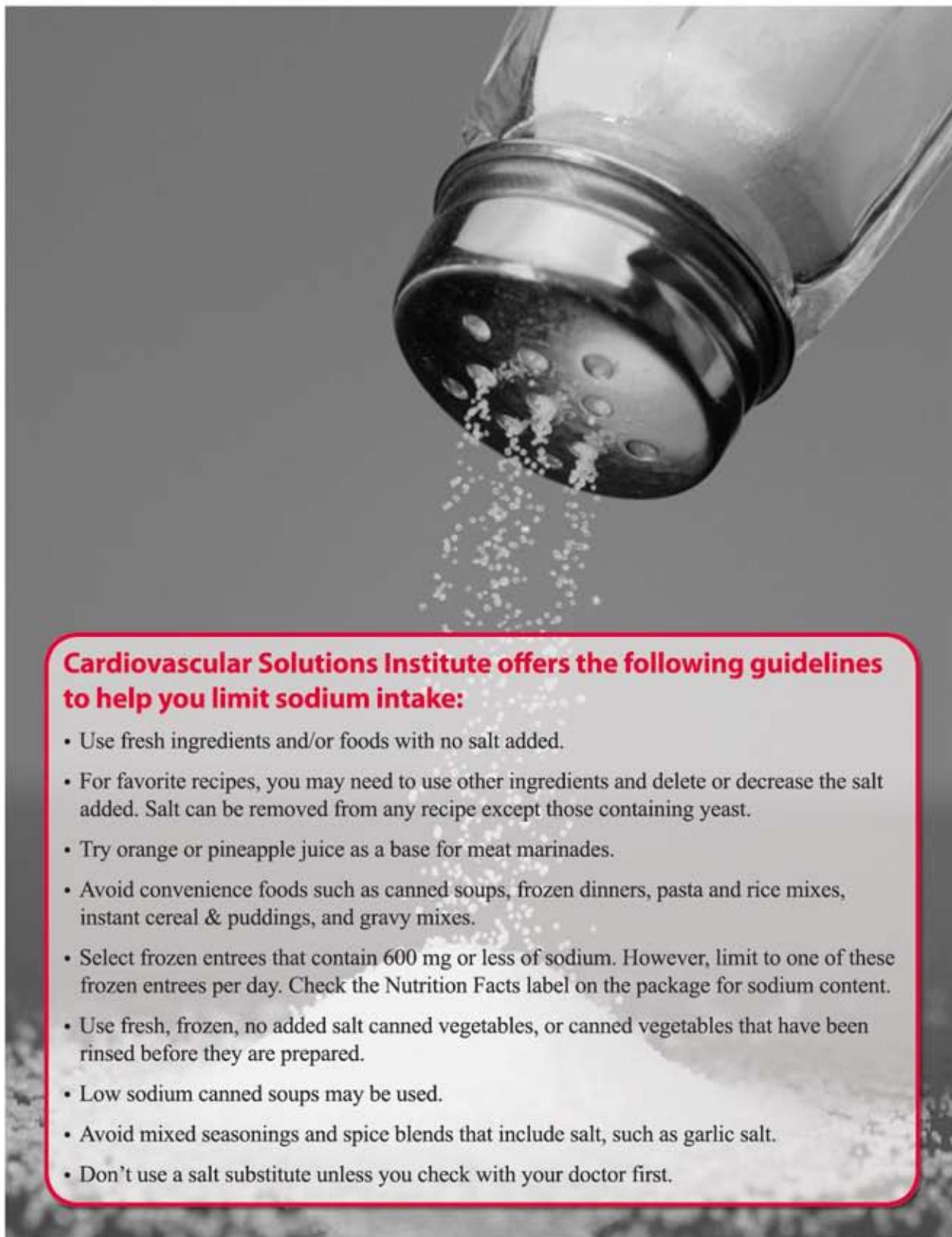
If you are like millions of Americans, salt is one of the few, if not the only (aside from pepper), ingredients added to your food for flavor. Although salt is very tasty and is easily added to almost any recipe, it is very important for you to limit the amount of sodium in your diet.

Sodium is a mineral found in many foods. It helps keep normal fluids balanced in the body. Most people eat foods containing more sodium than they need. Some foods may be high in sodium and not taste salty. Eating too much sodium causes the body to keep or retain too much water.

Following a low sodium diet helps control high blood pressure (hypertension), swelling, and water build up (edema). A low-sodium diet can also help decrease breathing difficulties caused when the weakened heart has difficulty pumping excess fluid out of the body.

According to Dr. Sedillo, “In many cases, strict salt avoidance can reduce the need for medications, or at least can result in lowering the dosages.”

A low-sodium diet means more than just eliminating the salt shaker from the table! However, that is a good start since one teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg of sodium. In some cases, it is important to keep a record of the amount of sodium you consume every day.



Cardiovascular Solutions Institute offers the following guidelines to help you limit sodium intake:

- Use fresh ingredients and/or foods with no salt added.
- For favorite recipes, you may need to use other ingredients and delete or decrease the salt added. Salt can be removed from any recipe except those containing yeast.
- Try orange or pineapple juice as a base for meat marinades.
- Avoid convenience foods such as canned soups, frozen dinners, pasta and rice mixes, instant cereal & puddings, and gravy mixes.
- Select frozen entrees that contain 600 mg or less of sodium. However, limit to one of these frozen entrees per day. Check the Nutrition Facts label on the package for sodium content.
- Use fresh, frozen, no added salt canned vegetables, or canned vegetables that have been rinsed before they are prepared.
- Low sodium canned soups may be used.
- Avoid mixed seasonings and spice blends that include salt, such as garlic salt.
- Don't use a salt substitute unless you check with your doctor first.



Prostate Cancer

By Suhail A. Khoury, M.D., F.A.C.P., Ph.D.

Prostate cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death in men in the United States. The most common is lung cancer. It affects approximately one third of all men's cancer cases. Most of prostate cancer patients are older men over 60 years of age. About 40 to 50 percent of all men develop prostate cancer during their life span. Approximately 300,000 men are affected annually and 40,000 deaths occur each year. The incidence is highest among African Americans and lowest among Native Americans.

The prostate gland consists of four zones, the largest (70%) is primarily glandular, in the peripheral zone, located toward the posterior side of the gland, and may be palpated on digital rectal exam (DRE). Testosterone, the male sex hormone, plays a significant role in prostate cancer development. Early in the development of the disease, the patient may not be symptomatic. Early detection may be achieved when a nodule is detected on DRE. The prostate gland usually increases in size as men age without being cancerous. Prostate specific antigen (PSA), an enzyme measured with blood tests, is also used for the detection of prostate cancer. The normal range is 0.0-4.0; recently, a value of 2.6 or more is considered suspicious. PSA may be elevated with inflammation and with manipulation (after DRE). Patients may not be symptomatic or they may complain of a weaker urine stream, discomfort with urination, frequent urination, blood in the urine, dribbling, hesitation, etc. When cancer is suspected, a work up is initiated. This has been a controversial subject in recent literature, arguing that the risks of the diagnosis may exceed the benefit. Many medical organizations recommend against screening. Regardless, if a nodule is detected, a recently available MRI of Prostate is done followed by a biopsy as indicated. As mentioned above, PSA is not specific to prostate cancer. 25 % of men with cancer show normal PSA (0 to 4) and more than half the men with a high PSA are free of prostate cancer. When PSA is elevated and the gland on DRE feels soft, symmetrical, and no nodules, it is best to repeat PSA measurements in 2 to 3 months. If the PSA value continues to increase, a work up is recommended; if the value decreases the probability of cancer is low. A course of antibiotics is often administered, particularly if the gland is tender to palpation and the PSA is repeated. If the PSA is lower, it is probably due to infection (prostatitis) and repeat PSA periodically at 3 to 6 months intervals. When PSA level is 4 to 10 mg/ml, total and free PSA are measured. The lower the percentage of the free PSA, the higher the risk of cancer. When suspicion is high, biopsies are obtained for detection and staging. Staging is based on the



Gleason grade, which shows how aggressive the tumor is, and on the TNM staging system, which indicates the local extent, its spread to regional lymph nodes, and distant metastasis. Survival rate is high if the disease is diagnosed at earlier stages. The risks associated with screening include false positive or negative results, pain and discomfort with biopsies, anxieties and psychological effects, bleeding, and infection. Total and free PSA, family history, ethnicity, and life expectancy should be considered prior to biopsy. The velocity of increase in PSA is also very meaningful. A PSA increase of 0.6 ng/ml or more in a year raises the level of suspicion.

Dietary prevention of prostate cancer is not established. Numerous studies have suggested that a diet high in vegetables and fish decrease the risk of prostate cancer. Evidence did not support this claim, similarly with vitamin E and selenium supplements.

Consumption of whole milk was associated with more aggressive disease and low-fat milk is associated with risk of less aggressive disease. There are also possible protective effects of consumption of soy bean and of tomato, but the evidence is lacking. Use of aspirin and other non-steroidal agents showed lower risk of prostate cancer.

Treatment of prostate cancer is individualized. For older men with limited life expectancy, watchful waiting is usually elected and treatment with hormone manipulation with disease progression. Patients with low risk disease are observed closely and treated if and when their disease progresses. Treatment of low risk or early stage cancer is primarily with radical prostatectomy (if the disease is contained within the prostate capsule). If metastasis into lymph nodes are found prior to surgery, prostatectomy is usually excluded. Other options for localized disease are radiation therapy, either external beam or radioactive seeding (brachytherapy). Cryosurgery is another approach of destroying the prostate with freezing and thawing. The results are not consistent and depend on the size of the prostate, the larger the gland the more difficult it is to freeze it. Surgery after this procedure is usually with increased complication. Patients with localized disease, high dose external beam radiation with concomitant long term androgen deprivation treatment (hormone manipulation) showed more favorable results. There is no systemic therapy for early stage and no effective systemic therapy for metastatic prostate cancer. Patients with advanced and metastatic disease are treated with androgen deprivation and localized radiation therapy to prolong life and control the symptoms. High-intensity focused ultrasound is a new treatment modality used by few centers to treat early stage prostate cancer. It employs ultrasound waves to destroy the gland. It is associated with complications and is still under investigation.

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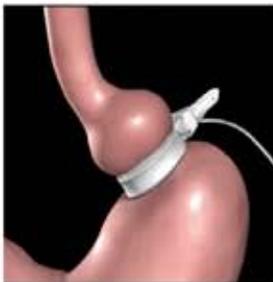


Safe & Effective Weight Loss Combination

By Gary M. Bunch, MD, F.A.C.S.

Chances are, right now you would like to (or need to) lose some weight, build some muscle and get in better shape, or maybe you just want to live a better, healthier lifestyle. Dr. Bunch of Bradenton Surgical Group will challenge the way you think about slimming down and shaping up, by introducing you to the Body by Vi program and the LAP-BAND surgery.

If your goal is to lose 10 pounds or 100 pounds, Dr. Bunch can assist you in choosing the correct Body by Vi program. The popular transformation program contains everything you need to get the extra unwanted weight off and keep it off. Most people start the program by replacing two meals each day with a nutritional shake. Also offered through the program are: fat burner, essential oils, hunger blockers (to help you fend off those hungry feelings throughout the day), and an herb based energy drink.



The Body by Vi programs are not just for those looking to lose weight, the nutritional shakes can be added to your current diet to help you build muscle. So, whether you are looking to reach your goal weight or maintain a healthy weight, the Body by Vi program is a perfect fit for anyone looking to get fit and healthy.

There have been many studies done on the effectiveness of meal replacement nutritional shakes, and in the end what we have learned is, they succeed in helping people lose/maintain weight, have more energy, and just feel better in general. The Body by Vi shakes use amazing ingredients that help build and maintain lean muscle, are easily digested, and include prebiotics to support a healthy body. The shakes have 12 grams of protein, and you know we're all huge fans of protein. They also have about 30% of your daily vitamins and minerals per serving. Their strongest feature is the 0 grams of sugar and only 90 calories per serving, which is great.

According to Dr. Bunch, patients who have tried unsuccessfully to lose weight and keep it off are consistently getting great results with the Body by Vi program. The program is often used by patients who choose to have the minimally invasive LAP-

BAND surgery that is offered at Bradenton Surgical Group. LAP-BAND patients will often use the Body by Vi nutritional shakes as preparation for surgery or to ensure they are getting adequate healthy nutrition following the surgery.

The procedure itself is considered safer and less traumatic than other kinds of bariatric surgery as there is no cutting, stapling or rerouting of the stomach or intestines. Because the LAP-BAND surgery is performed laparoscopically, there are no large incisions so there is less discomfort to the patient and a shorter hospital stay.

With the safety of his patients in mind, and the undeniable results it produces, Dr. Bunch has elected to restrict bariatric practice to performing LAP-BAND surgery only. The advantages of LAP-BAND over gastric bypass and other bariatric procedures is clear. Dr. Bunch is experienced in these procedures and believes LAP-BAND is much safer and will eventually take the place of the old standard gastric bypass.

By coupling the Body by Vi program and the LAP-BAND procedure, Dr. Bunch has created a successful weight loss program that has provided many patients a safe, effective platform to lose weight and keep it off. For more information about the Body by Vi products or the LAP-BAND procedure please call 941-744-2700 to schedule a consultation or visit www.bradentonsurgicalgroup.bodybyvi.com.

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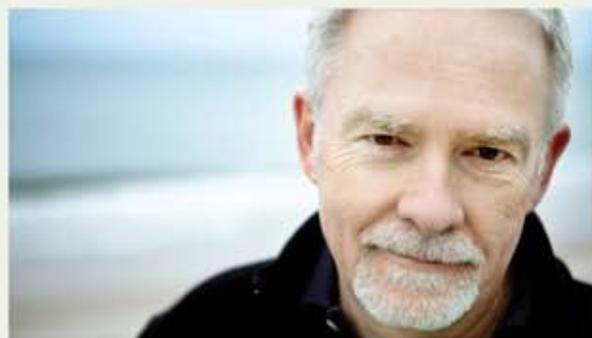
Low Testosterone

By Dr. Mitch Yadven

Hormones are chemicals made in your body that act on another part of the body after traveling through the bloodstream. Testosterone is a hormone which is naturally produced in both men and women but is found in much higher levels in men. The majority of testosterone is made in the testicles in men with a small portion of it being made in the adrenal glands. In women it is made in the adrenal glands and ovaries.

Testosterone has been thought to be predominantly a “sex” hormone with the function of improving sex drive and helping maintain erections in men. Recent research has now shown testosterone to also have many other functions, including effects on metabolism, maintenance of bone strength, muscle integrity, cardiovascular health and support of the brain and cognition and mood, in both men and women. Additionally, evidence suggests testosterone deficiency can lead to other hormonal changes, which may then contribute to the development of type 2 diabetes. Lack of testosterone is also associated with decreased bone density and contributes to osteoporosis and osteopenia. Anemia, muscle weakness; impaired cognitive function, decreased motivational drive, fatigue, lethargy, and an overall decreased sense of well being can also be seen in testosterone deficiency. Low testosterone levels are associated with increased mortality.

Circulating testosterone levels do fall with age; however, the rate of decline can be quite variable amongst different individuals. A large number of men won't have their testosterone levels fall until the 70th th decade, whereas other men's levels will decline at a much younger age. For example, 20% of men older than 55 years of age will have low levels of testosterone. Bioavailable testosterone is the active form that has actual activity on the body's organs, which is only about 2% of a person's total testosterone. When bioavailable testosterone is measured, however, 50% of men above 50 years are defined as having low testosterone. This is why it is important to measure bioavailable testosterone when making clinical decisions about testosterone replacement.



Men May Experience the Following Secondary to Low Testosterone:

- Decreased Sex Drive
- Impotence
- Decreased Muscle Mass and Strength
- Increased Body Fat
- Memory Dysfunction
- Decreased Appetite
- Decreased Hair Growth
- Bone Weakness
- Decreased Red Blood Cells

Once the diagnosis of low testosterone (hypogonadism) is made, further testing should be pursued to help to determine the cause of the deficiency. Some causes can be:

- Aging
- Chronic Medical Conditions
- Acute Illness
- Alcohol Abuse
- Birth Defect
- Testicular Infection
- Testicular Trauma
- Head Trauma
- Medications
- Problems with the Pituitary Gland
- Environmental Toxins
- Chemotherapy
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Sleep Apnea

There is even evidence that nutritional deficiencies can contribute to low testosterone.

The medical history for evaluating low testosterone includes questioning about sexual desire, reduced nocturnal and morning erections, loss of drive, decreased physical energy, fatigue, depressed mood and irritability and even alterations in memory. One must realize that these symptoms as well as others reported by men with low testosterone, such as depression, difficulty concentrating, irritability, and insomnia are non-specific and may be related to other medical conditions as well.

Physical examination for this evaluation may or may not be helpful in making the diagnosis, as findings of low testosterone such as muscle weakness, reduced body hair, and abdominal obesity may also be seen in men with a number of other medical conditions. Additional findings may be small testicular size or poor consistency, abnormal hair distribution, and enlarged breasts.

After history and physical examination is done, the next step in the evaluation would be laboratory testing. Historically, two early morning blood samples drawn prior to 10AM when blood levels are highest, are used to confirm the diagnosis of low testosterone.

Testosterone measurements can also be checked via saliva and urinary levels. The total testosterone can be used to calculate the free or bioavailable testosterone that is thought to be the active form of testosterone. Low levels can prompt the need for additional lab testing to check for potential causes of the low testosterone that may be correctable without testosterone replacement.





Testosterone can be converted to other hormones by different tissues in the body. These major hormones of interest are estradiol and dihydrotestosterone.

Estradiol

In peripheral fatty tissues testosterone can be converted by the enzyme aromatase to estradiol which is a primary form of estrogen. This is one of the reasons overweight men may have enlarged breasts. Significantly elevated estradiol levels in men has been linked to increased mortality and to diabetes.

DHT

Another hormone converted from testosterone is dihydrotestosterone (DHT). In adult males the two actions of DHT are on the prostate where it causes the growth enlargement and sometimes obstruction as is noted in the disease benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH). DHT also effects the scalp where it causes hair loss as is seen in male pattern baldness. The enzyme that converts testosterone to DHT is called 5 alpha reductase and it has been targeted by medications like Proscar and Avodart to reverse prostate growth. On average, Proscar and Avodart reduce prostate size by 20 – 30 % and can greatly reduce urinary frequency and urgency in many men.

DHT levels are checked after starting testosterone replacement and if they are markedly elevated drugs like these that inhibit the formation of DHT can be utilized to prevent urinary symptoms that are associated with BPH and an enlarged prostate.

DHEA is another hormone that has some similar effects as testosterone. The majority of this hormone is made in the adrenal glands and it also diminishes with aging and can be depleted by chronic stress. DHEA has been shown to protect against heart disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, cancer, memory loss, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis. It can increase energy levels, libido, memory and immunity.

Replacement

Once the diagnosis of low testosterone has been made, replacement options can be reviewed and a decision made about how to raise testosterone levels. Unfortunately oral testosterone replacement is not an option due to the breakdown by the liver when it is swallowed and can cause liver toxicity. Other options include IM injections, patches, pharmaceutical gels, compounded creams, and implanted Testosterone pellets. Although they all will deliver testosterone to the body, they each have their own pros and cons that can be reviewed by your doctor.

In younger patients a potential “kick start” may be needed to restart the body's own natural testosterone production and this can be done with injections of the popular weight loss medication which is also a natural hormone HCG or the medication clomiphene.

After Testosterone replacement has been started it is very important to follow up and monitor testosterone levels as well as check other bloodwork to assure no possible complications arise. One such lab is PSA which is used as a screening test for prostate cancer.

Although there is an association between prostate cancer and testosterone, it is an old belief that testosterone administration could increase the risk of developing prostate cancer. In reality there is no evidence to support this and in fact now the medical community is investigating an association between low testosterone levels and prostate cancer.

It is still believed that if there is active cancer of the prostate whether localized or metastatic testosterone can promote cancer growth. Therefore the presence of active prostate cancer is a reason not to use supplemental testosterone.

PSA still needs to be monitored closely during testosterone replacement therapy especially in someone with a family history of prostate cancer. In cases of localized prostate cancer years after successful treatment, with no evidence of active disease as noted by PSA and examination it is very reasonable to initiate testosterone therapy as long as very close follow up is maintained.

Testosterone is a naturally occurring hormone and replacement with its bioidentical form to restore physiologic levels can support a normal and happy sex life as well as improve well being, quality of life and enhancing longevity.



Dr. Mitchell Yadven

Dr. Yadven was born and raised in the Bronx, New York. He received his undergraduate degree from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia and a Masters degree in Molecular Biology from George Washington University in Washington D.C. After college, Dr. Yadven worked as a marine biologist for the Smithsonian Institute in both Washington, D.C. and the Caribbean. He then received his Medical Degree and General Surgery training at George Washington University. Wanting to return to the South, Dr. Yadven completed his Urology Residency at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. He is

Board Certified by the American Board of Urology. Dr. Yadven has been in private practice in Bradenton, Florida since 1997 and is happy to call Florida his home.

Dr. Yadven practices all aspects of general Urology, with particular interest in prostate disease, urinary stone management and minimally invasive therapies. He has developed products for the management of urinary retention resulting in a U.S. patent.

In his free time, Dr. Yadven enjoys photography and digital art, NFL football (he is a huge New York Giants and New Orleans Saints fan), computers, water sports and fun at home with his wife Sharon, his two children Sarah and Maxwell and his family's animal menagerie.



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If you have been suffering from constant or intermittent knee pain that just won't go away no matter how much ibuprofen you take, don't worry – there is another option.

If you have tried other treatments and experienced little to no relief, you may still be a candidate for our treatment program. Call (239) 687-2165 to schedule a no-cost, no-obligation consultation today!

At Physicians Rehabilitation, it's very important to understand that we are not just addressing knee pain. Our goal is to give you the best chance we possibly can of Preventing Knee Replacement Surgery in the future, which is what knee arthritis frequently evolves into if left undetected and unaddressed.

For this reason, we encourage you to schedule an appointment to determine if you are a candidate for the Hyalgan treatment for knee arthritis. You can always have more radical procedures performed later, if necessary. However, with knee replacement surgery, once done, there is no turning back to a more conservative approach. Knee replacement surgery is indeed necessary for some people with extreme conditions that Hyalgan is unable to help, but as we have seen with many of our patients... A Total Knee Replacement is a Very Extreme Measure To Take without considering all your options for a condition as common as knee arthritis.

What are Hyalgan Injections?

Hyalgan injections treat knee osteoarthritis. Hyaluronic Acid (Hyalgan) is a natural substance extracted from rooster combs and purified to mimic the lubricating substances that occur naturally in the joint called synovial fluid. When Hyalgan is injected into the knee, it provides replacement for diseased synovial fluid, which is the cause of your pain. Hyalgan specifically targets the osteoarthritis in your knee, unlike over the counter oral medications or non-steroidal inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) that affect all parts of your body.

What's the process?

It's a very easy and quick process. Our Doctors will inject Hyalgan directing into your knee joint using a high tech medical device called a Fluoroscope to pinpoint the exact location intended with extreme accuracy, which provides the best possible outcome from each injection. Then, an injection of dye confirms needle placement to ensure that the pain relieving drug Hyalgan reaches the knee capsule where it bonds with the naturally occurring joint fluid to create a lubricating and cushioning layer. That's why if you have tried any type of pain reduction injection elsewhere without success, we may still be able to assist you as your original injection may have never would up in just the right place. Most patients compare the treatment to getting a flu shot and report little pain or discomfort.

When will I feel results?

Most feel an immediate reduction in pain and return to normal activities in weeks.



Avoid Unnecessary Surgery! This FDA-approved treatment is proven to relieve knee pain, while eliminating the need for surgery. Treatment is safe, easy and covered by most insurance companies, including Medicare.

Will my insurance cover this treatment?

Yes, most major insurances and Medicare will pay for this treatment.

What are other people saying about it?

"My knee feels great. I had already had a total knee replacement and wanted to try something rather than go through another painful surgery. After completing the program, I can now dance again which I have not done in years, and my lifestyle is on its way back to normal!" - Elizabeth B.

So what are you waiting for?

Pick up the phone and call us today to schedule your NO-COST, NO-OBLIGATION consultation. The demand for this procedure has been overwhelming. We've added extra lines to accommodate your calls, so if our line is busy, or you are re-directed to voice mail, please leave a message or call back. Living pain free and getting your life back is well worth the phone call. So keep calling – help is only a phone call away...



941-702-9575 | www.PhysiciansRehabilitation.com

Speech, More Than Just Talk

Most people associate speech therapy with the ability or lack thereof to speak, and therapy associated with that. Speech rehabilitation is only a small part of what speech therapists do. In fact, speech-language therapists have many responsibilities in acute-care settings, medical inpatient rehabilitation, outpatient rehabilitation and rehabilitation in the home care setting.

Speech Therapists work closely with physician specialists (ENTs, neurologists, neurosurgeons, physiatrists, internists, family practitioners) to diagnose a range of problems, and initiate treatment. Speech Therapists also play a role in hearing conservation. They are qualified to screen patients' hearing to determine if a referral to an audiologist is necessary.

One of the more common clinical uses of speech therapy, especially in the home care setting is in the diagnosis of neurological conditions. Speech Therapists are often asked to evaluate both cognitive (thinking, knowing, perceiving) and physiological (physical) problems. The way in which a person speaks and uses language reveals a great deal about thought-processing skills, memory deficits, and the ability to focus attention. Deficits in these areas can indicate brain injury, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and a host of other neurologic conditions. Because Speech Therapists are trained to identify unusual patterns in speech, their assessment can be extremely important to an accurate diagnosis and an effective treatment plan.

Speech Therapy is highly effective with those who have difficulty in swallowing. Difficulty in swallowing is common among patients who have suffered a stroke or who have other neurological diseases, like multiple sclerosis and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease). Speech Therapists use a variety of diagnostic tools to detect swallowing problems and treat patients to overcome swallowing difficulties associated with their disease.

One of the most under utilized uses for speech therapy in Home Care is for cognitive uses. Often patients have difficulty retrieving words, sequencing activities, and understanding what they hear and



what they read. Cognitive therapy is designed to provide clients with strategies to improve their thinking skills and their every-day functioning.

At Nurse On Call we utilize speech therapists for more than just talking, we utilize their expertise for all forms of communication. The ability to communicate is more than just talking. It involves listening, understanding, reading, and writing. For communication to make sense it also involves being able to think clearly and remember information. Speech Therapy is covered at 100% to those who meet the Medicare guidelines for home health, and we have a therapist for that!

For more information on speech therapy and other home health services, please call your local Nurse On Call branch.



941.366.2900

HHA: 299993068



No Flu for Me – Prevention is Key

By Eric M. Folkens, M.D., Family Medicine,
Bradenton/Lakewood Ranch/Sarasota Urgent Care Walk-In Clinics

With cold and flu season quickly approaching, it is important to be reminded of simple tips that are well known but oftentimes overlooked. There are no known cures for colds and flu, so cold and flu prevention should be your goal. A proactive approach to warding off colds and flu is apt to make your whole life healthier. Antibiotics act only on bacteria, and flu is caused by a virus. So antibiotics do not work on a virus. Research has proven that the most effective way for preventing the flu is to get the flu shot. Even though it is highly recommended some people still choose not to get a flu shot. The following tips will help prevent you from getting the dreaded flu. Everyone should apply these strategies on a daily basis, especially if you chose not to receive a flu shot.

1. Wash Your Hands

Most cold and flu viruses are spread by direct contact. Someone who has the flu sneezes onto their hand, and then touches the telephone, the keyboard, a kitchen glass. The germs can live for hours -- in some cases weeks -- only to be picked up by the next person who touches the same object. So wash your hands often. If no sink is available, rub your hands together very hard for a minute or so. That also helps break up most of the cold germs. Or rub an alcohol-based hand sanitizer onto your hands.

2. Don't Cover Your Sneezes and Coughs With Your Hands

Because germs and viruses cling to your bare hands, muffling coughs and sneezes with your hands results in passing along your germs to others. When you feel a sneeze or cough coming, use a tissue, then throw it away immediately. If you don't have a tissue, turn your head away from people near you and cough into the air.

3. Don't Touch Your Face

Cold and flu viruses enter your body through the eyes, nose, or mouth. Touching their faces is the major way children catch colds, and a key way they pass colds on to their parents.

4. Drink Plenty of Fluids

Water flushes your system, washing out the poisons as it rehydrates you. A typical, healthy adult needs 1.5 litres of fluids each day. How can you tell if you're getting enough liquid? If the color of your urine runs close to clear, you're getting enough. If it's deep yellow, you need more fluids.

5. Do Aerobic Exercise Regularly

Aerobic exercise speeds up the heart to pump larger quantities of blood; makes you breathe faster to help transfer oxygen from your lungs to your blood; and makes you sweat once your body heats up. These exercises help increase the body's natural virus-killing cells.



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6. Oxidative stress - Don't Smoke

Statistics show that heavy smokers get more severe colds and more frequent ones.

Even being around smoke profoundly zaps the immune system. Smoke dries out your nasal passages and paralyzes cilia. These are the delicate hairs that line the mucous membranes in your nose and lungs, and with their wavy movements, sweep cold and flu viruses out of the nasal passages. Experts contend that one cigarette can paralyze cilia for as long as 30 to 40 minutes. Nicosolven Co-enzyme Q10 liquid capsules decrease oxidative stress if taken daily.

7. Cut Alcohol Consumption

Heavy alcohol use suppresses the immune system in a variety of ways. Heavier drinkers are more

prone to initial infections as well as secondary complications. Alcohol also dehydrates the body -- it actually takes more fluids from your system than it puts in.

8. Rest

If you can teach yourself to rest and relax, you can activate your immune system on demand. There's evidence that when you put your relaxation skills into action, your interleukins -- leaders in the immune system response against cold and flu viruses -- increase in the bloodstream. Train yourself to picture an image you find pleasant or calming. Do this 30 minutes a day for several months. Keep in mind, relaxation is a learnable skill, but it is not doing nothing. People who try to relax, but are in fact bored, show no changes in blood chemicals.

9. Consider getting the flu vaccination

Whether or not you get a flu shot is a personal decision but information from the Centers For Disease Control and Protection recommend that certain groups of high-risk individuals receive a flu vaccination every year. Those people include:

- People who are 65 years old or older and anyone who lives in a nursing home
- People with chronic heart or lung conditions that are 6 months or older
- People with diabetes, chronic kidney disease, a compromised immune system, or anyone who needs regular medical care that is 6 months or older
- Children from 6 months to 18 years that are on long term aspirin therapy and all children who are 6 months to 23 months old
- Women who will be pregnant during the flu season
- People who routinely come in close contact with people in the high-risk group, such as health care professionals
- People with a condition that has the possibility of compromising their respiratory function such as a brain injury, brain disease, spinal cord injury, seizure disorders and other nerve or muscle disorders that make it difficult for a person to breathe or swallow

If you do get a flu shot the best time to receive it is from the latter part of September through the middle of November, although getting a flu shot almost any time during the season will still give a person some protection from the flu or influenza. But the flu shot doesn't give a person protection or effectiveness against the flu for about two weeks after receiving it. And in order to receive the maximum protection from the flu a person needs to get a flu shot every year.





BLADELESS LASER Cataract Surgery

ASK THE EXPERTS at THE EYE ASSOCIATES

Courtesy of The Eye Associates

What are cataracts and what cause them?

Most cataracts are a natural part of the aging process and are present in half of adults over age 65. They occur when the natural crystalline lens in the eye becomes cloudy.

What are some common symptoms of cataracts?

- **Blurred Distance Vision:** Vision in general starts to blur, but it is especially noticeable when driving or watching TV.
- **Sensitivity to Glare:** Many people find it difficult to drive towards the sun. They also find it harder to see golf balls against a bright sky, even though vision may seem acceptable under other circumstances.
- **Night Blindness:** Because a cataract allows less light through the lens, it may become more bothersome in low light conditions, especially when trying to drive at night.
- **Loss of Depth Perception:** If you find yourself bumping the curb when parking, or if others say that you get too close to cars while driving, you may have a cataract in just one eye, which can cause difficulty in judging distances.
- **Difficulty Reading:** Reading is often blurry, making it difficult to read medicine bottles and phones.
- **Loss of Color Perception:** This symptom usually goes unnoticed until after the cataract has been removed. Many people are even shocked to see the colors they have chosen for their home.

Restoring Vision Through the Miracle of Cataract Surgery

The development of cataracts is often a slow process. In its early stages, eyeglasses are effective. However, as the condition worsens, the only effective means of restoring vision is through the miracle of cataract surgery.

Using the newest, most advanced technology, The Eye Associates' skilled surgeons will safely and gently remove the cataract. The surgery is performed outpatient and under local anesthesia. The actual surgery takes less than 15 minutes, although you will be here longer for pre-op and post-op care. Patients are usually able to resume most normal activities within hours, and frequently have better vision than they had before they developed cataracts.

What is Bladeless Laser Cataract Surgery and how is it different from traditional surgery?

Bladeless Laser Cataract Surgery uses a cool computer-guided laser for many critical steps of cataract surgery, whereby traditional cataract surgery is done manually with a blade.



What is an Alcon LenSx® laser and how does it work?

The Alcon LenSx® is The Eye Associates' femto-second laser for cataract surgery, which emits cool pulses to automate the most challenging steps of cataract surgery, such as performing corneal incisions, opening the capsule and softening and breaking up the cataract. Also, the laser has high definition imaging providing real-time, three-dimensional images that enable our skilled surgeons, Dr. Harris Silverman, Dr. Robert Friedman, Dr. Cathleen McCabe and Dr. Brian Foster, to offer patients the most accurate and predictable outcomes. The LenSx® laser can even treat astigmatism.

Why did The Eye Associates decide to begin utilizing the LenSx® laser for cataract surgery?

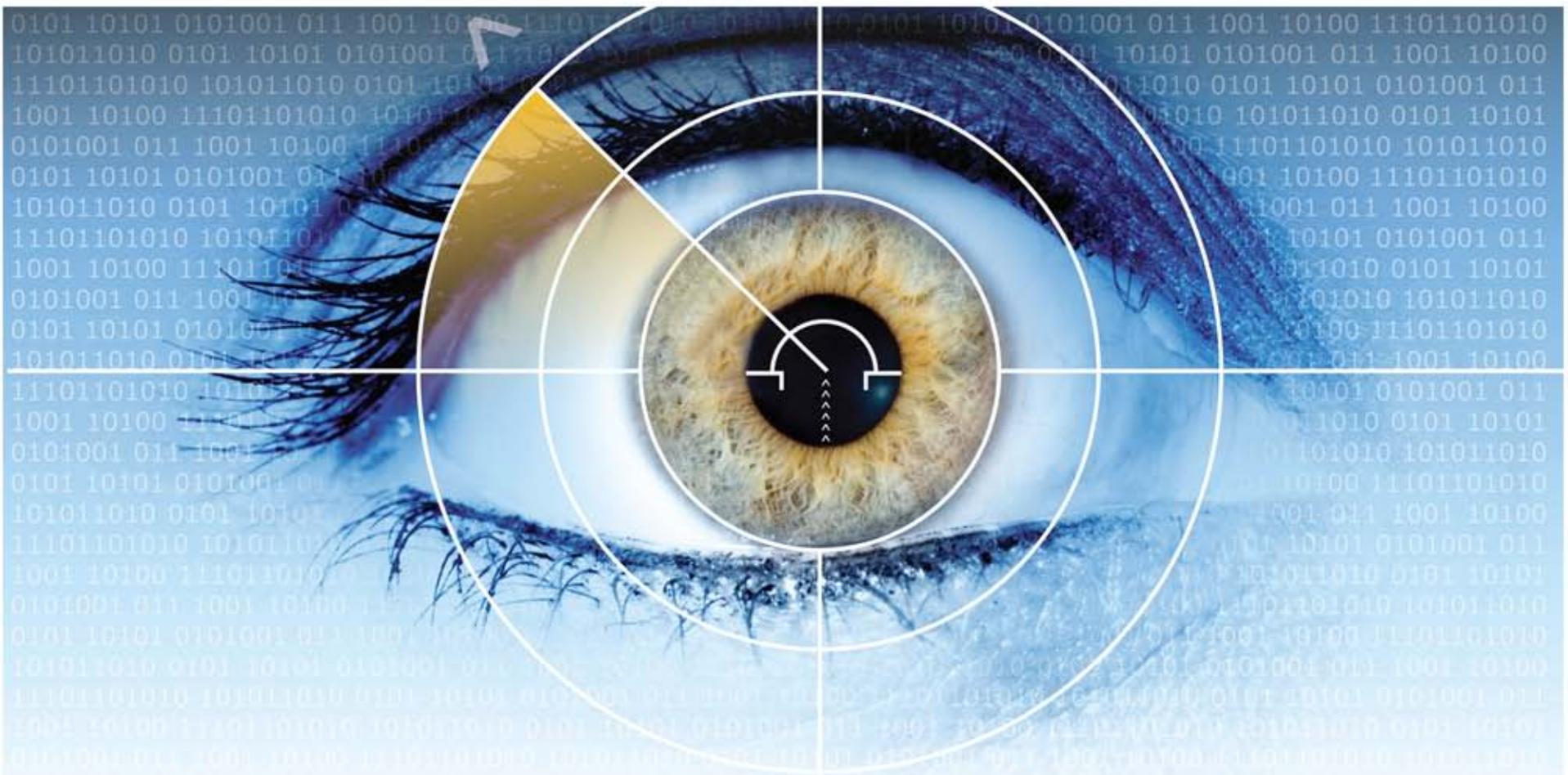
The Eye Associates has always been a leading innovator in cataract surgery and we pride ourselves on having the most surgically advanced technology. More doctors choose us for themselves and their patients because this technology, combined with our experienced surgical team, translates to greater precision and outstanding outcomes.

Will this procedure be covered by insurance?

Individuals must check with their insurance for specific coverage, but if reduced vision criteria is met, Medicare pays 80% of a **standard** cataract surgery, after a yearly deductible is met. The LenSx® laser part of the surgery is a premium enhanced procedure **not covered** by Medicare, and requires some out-of-pocket fee from the patient. We make sure that patients receive specific information on all the cost of their procedure during the counseling process and before the cataract surgery.

Can cataracts grow back?

No, cataracts cannot grow back, however, sometimes after successful cataract surgery, the natural capsule that is left behind becomes cloudy and causes blurry vision again. This occurs in approximately 30 percent of patients, and can be soon after surgery or many years later. Not to worry, though. This cloudy capsule can be corrected quickly, using a simple laser procedure, called a **YAG Laser Capsulotomy**. So if you had cataract surgery and your vision is not as good as it was right after the surgery, you may need a YAG. People see sharply again right after the procedure, usually returning to most normal activities that same day.



Why should patients choose The Eye Associates?

For more than 30 years, The Eye Associates has set the standard in cataract surgery. That tradition of excellence continues with the FDA approved LenSx Cataract Laser. This Bladeless Laser has increased the precision and accuracy of the most critical steps in cataract surgery, and is more gentle than manual surgery. Combining that with our seasoned surgical team, Dr. Harris Silverman, Dr. Robert Friedman, Dr. Cathleen McCabe and Dr. Brian Foster, our patients can relax knowing that they have the most technologically advanced option for cataract surgery.

Also, The Eye Associates' Surgery and Laser Center and its highly trained staff are uniquely and exclusively dedicated to eye procedures. We are state licensed, Medicare approved and even have an advanced accreditation from the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), given only to those with superior patient care ratings.

Protect Your Driving Privileges

Driving is a vital part of maintaining an independent lifestyle, so it is important that you do all you can to maintain good vision. A study found that cataract surgery patients had **50 percent fewer car accidents** compared to those who did not have the surgery, concluding that cataract surgery benefits older drivers by enhancing vision and helping them to become safer drivers.

In fact, after cataract surgery, many patients actually experience better vision than they had before they developed cataracts, giving patients a lifetime of better vision and safer driving.

The First Step

If you are experiencing any of the symptoms of cataracts, the first step is to have a comprehensive eye examination. Your doctor will be able to determine if a cataract is the cause of your decreased vision. If it is, and if it is inhibiting your quality of life and the activities that bring you joy, then you and your surgeon will determine which option is best for your eyes and lifestyle.

To learn more about cataract surgery, make plans to attend one of our free cataract seminars at The Eye Associates, or to make an appointment for a cataract evaluation today, please call 1-866-865-2020.



THE EYE ASSOCIATES

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Better Health for the Holidays

Optimal Health is Achievable!

Written by, Carolyn Waygood, Certified Natural Health Professional

The holiday season is a joyous one, filled with gatherings of family and friends, festive parties, and delectable gifts! But for those who struggle with health challenges, be it excess weight, blood sugar management, digestive disorders, or painful inflammation, the holiday season is a time of anxiety. Temptations of over-indulgence lurk around every corner, and feelings of “failing” your health goals can darken this blessed and happy season! NO MORE!

Let me introduce you to an incredible line of natural wellness products formulated to help you achieve greater health and wellness! Plexus Worldwide, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, is a company committed to our health, the use of natural ingredients to help address America’s most common health challenges, and specialize in life-changing products. Best known for their complete approach to weight loss, Plexus has grown 16,457% during the past 3 years, as worldwide sales QUADRUPLED in 2013! This incredible growth occurred, in part, because their wellness products are effective, and customers are seeing the results!

Their most popular product, Plexus Slim, is a powdered drink mix that helps people maintain healthy blood sugars, promotes healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels, increases willpower over food and reduces binge eating. Formulated using a proprietary blend of natural ingredients such as chromium, chlorogenic acid extract from green coffee beans, Garcinia Cambogia, and alpha lipoic acid, Plexus Slim helps the body drop excess weight naturally. “The Plexus Slim formula is so unique”, explains Carolyn Waygood, Certified Natural Health Professional, “and I consider it the most complete approach to natural weight loss on the market today.” It is also the simplest approach to weight loss we’ve discovered. Just mix the powdered packet into a bottle of water, shake it, and drink it 15-30 minutes before breakfast, and customers report feeling more energy and less hungry throughout the day. “Since Plexus Slim helps maintain healthy blood sugars, people enjoy an even level of energy daily, as well as reduce food cravings caused by drops in blood glucose”, notes Carolyn.

Most people enjoy indulging during the holidays, which is a staple part of gatherings of family & friends. “I don’t preach about eating a perfect diet”, admits Ms. Waygood. “I help people balance real-life with better health.” By helping the body better metabolize and utilize unhealthy substances such as sugary carbs and glucose-laden sweets, you can enjoy holiday fare without the guilt of gaining weight! Carolyn’s suggested products for **HEALTHY WEIGHT MANAGEMENT during the holiday season** include Plexus Slim together with either Plexus Boost or Accelerator, and the optional BLOCK supplement formulated to help slow the absorption of starch & sugar for healthier glucose levels. Features and benefits of this powerful product set include;



- Vitamin B & Green Tea extract to aid in metabolism
- Yerba Mate shown to Increase thermogenesis
- Alpha Lipoic Acid helps turn glucose into energy
- Chlorogenic acid to help maintain healthy cholesterol/lipid levels
- Garcinia Cambogia to help control the appetite & cravings
- A proprietary seaweed blend to help slow conversion of starches/sugars to glucose
- Caralluma Fimbriata to help Improve endurance
- Supports overall healthy weight control



Plexus also offers help for those suffering from digestive challenges, and the need for better detoxification. As a result of the modern lifestyle, most of our bodies are burdened with toxic waste and sluggish metabolisms.

Having an excess of toxic waste can leave the body tired, achy, and bloated, with a low energy level and weakened immune system. Detoxification is a process



that expels excess waste and accumulated toxins from our body. Fortunately, Plexus has developed products to help the body detoxify and cleanse the gastrointestinal tract and arteries. Carolyn’s suggested products for **HEALTHY DIGESTION & DETOXIFICATION during the holiday season** include Plexus Slim together with Plexus ProBio5, and the Plexus BioCleanse supplement. Features and benefits of this powerful product set include;

- Chitosinase supports Yeast organism (Candida) & fungal cleanse
- Lactobacillus Sporogenes helps provides proper probiotic balance in the intestinal tract
- A cleaner GI tract helps increase nutrient absorption
- Improves Energy Levels by Oxygenating the entire body
- Ascorbic Acid helps cleanse the GI tract & arteries
- Bioflavonoids enhance weight loss
- Magnesium helps relieve constipation & supports overall healthy weight control

With over 76 million Americans suffering from discomfort each day, finding relief from soreness can be a life-changing gift this holiday season! If you’ve been living with discomfort, such as back problems, muscle tension, and joint soreness, you may be searching for natural lasting relief. The good news is Plexus has developed Fast Relief™, a cutting-edge, three-product system with a proprietary ingredient blend that will help you live happier, healthier, and discomfort-free. “Pain is the body’s way of signaling that something’s wrong”, explains Ms. Waygood. “And it’s typically associated with inflammation – the body’s normal response to injury. However, when the inflammatory process doesn’t shut off, and chronic inflammation yields long-term pain – it’s difficult to enjoy the holidays!”

Carolyn's suggested products for **RELIEVING SORENESS & DISCOMFORT during the holiday season** include Plexus Slim together with Plexus Fast-Relief Cream, and the Plexus Fast-Relief daily supplement. Features and benefits of this powerful product set include;

- Anti-inflammatory benefits of ETARol™ and Aloe
- Improved joint & muscle function from MSM
- Pain relief from cooling Menthol, as well as Turmeric, Serrapeptase, and Bromelain
- Joint tissue repair from Chondroitin, Glucosamine, and Hyaluronic Acid

"I have personally worked with dozens of people, and know of thousands of others, who have achieved greater health as a result of the Plexus products", Carolyn says. "The important thing is to make that initial step to address your personal health challenge, and then be guided by the experience of a wellness professional." Carolyn's wellness advice is FREE to Plexus customers, including a complementary 90-Day Challenge Program for customers who initiate their wellness routine during the month of December. For more information, contact Ms. Waygood at (941) 713-3767, or via email at Carolyn@LoseWeightFL.com. For more information about the Plexus products she refers to, visit www.Waygood.MyPlexusProducts.com today!



"When I started taking the Plexus products I weighed 185 pounds and was wearing a size 14. I used Plexus for five months and lost a whopping 52 pounds. I am in a size 5 now. I feel great thanks to Plexus Slim. And the best part is that I haven't gained a single pound back. What an amazing product. I would recommend this to anyone." – Rochelle D.



"I started taking Plexus Slim with Accelerator 4 months ago and I have lost 26 pounds. I went from a size 12 to a size 8. Even during the Holidays when the food craving was at its worst, I was able to enjoy and eat what I wanted without gaining a pound!" – Hope S.



"At first I was skeptical about the Plexus products. However, I went ahead and tried them and I am very blessed that I did. I have gone from a size 22 (211 pounds) to a size 14 (174 pounds). I have lost a total of 32 inches." – Brandi S.

Are you eager to see and hear MORE Plexus success stories? You can! An inspiring collage of Plexus customer testimonies can be viewed on You Tube by visiting <http://youtu.be/HWD9vLFjVcc>. If you are still skeptical of the amazing health benefits people have achieved with Plexus products, watch this brief 8 minute video and hear a compilation of life-changing Plexus testimonials from real people seeing real results!

This holiday season, give yourself the GIFT OF HEALTH, and learn more about how natural products from Plexus Worldwide can help you experience a healthy, more joyful holiday this year! Contact your local Plexus Ambassador today to discuss your personal health goals this season! These Independent Ambassadors are ready to support you in achieving optimal health now, and into the New Year!

Happy Holidays



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Safety First

Contrary to what Hollywood portrays, aging can be a wonderful thing. Getting to see our children grow up into mature adults and live out their goals is a very rewarding process. One of the main purposes on this earth, besides our own happiness, is to pass our knowledge and wisdom to the next generation. "Leave this place better than we found it" is a great slogan to live by. However, as we age, even simple tasks may become more daunting and even risky to our health.

Although moving to an assisted living facility can be beneficial to you and your family, it is usually viewed as the last resort. Most people prefer to stay in their own home for as long as possible. Making the home safe for you or an elderly relative can help extend a lifestyle that is both familiar and comfortable. Sometimes it is hard to come to terms with difficult facts, but the number one cause of death for seniors is falling. A broken hip bone can have a difficult time healing due to the age of the individual; which can lead to further complications. In order to keep "home" a safe place, there are definitely some basic changes that must be made.

In case of a fire, it is important to keep an escape route clear of obstacles. Like all home safety plans, this is always at the top of the list, because it can be the most extreme emergency we can encounter. Next, keep all the fire alarms in working order with good batteries. Our sense of smell can diminish over time, so the ability to detect fire on our own is at risk. When night falls, being able to see is crucial. Even in a familiar house, adding light switches for more convenience is helpful. There are lights that can be turned on and off by a clap reducing the amount of time searching in the dark for a switch. Nightlights in high travel areas are a simple solution to avoiding furniture while getting up for a midnight feast or bathroom trip.

You can decrease the risk of falling by getting rid of loose or slippery carpets. If an elderly person uses a cane or walker, you can add or clean the rubber at the bottom to keep firm resistance. Non-skid floor wax is a good addition to tile or wood floor. Loose wires should also be straightened up and kept out of the way. All these changes might seem small, but every accident is usually caused by something small and overlooked.

These safety tips have been brought to you by Banyan Assisted Living. Their main goal is to see that everyone stays in their home in a safe and responsible way. However, if you or a loved one are ever in a position to seek out alternative living arrangements, please contact them at **(941) 412-4748**. Their facility revolves around safety and comfort and is located in Venice at 100 Base Avenue East. You can also visit their website at www.abanyanresidence.com.



A Banyan Residence has the following features to do so:

- Custom Shuttle
- Monthly Newsletter
- Spa Day
- Walking Club
- Physical Therapy Room
- TV satellite service
- Movie theatre popcorn
- Family & Friends BBQ
- Tropical Garden
- Fruits & Vegetable Garden
- Walking Club
- Waterfall
- Physical fitness activities
- Salon Room
- Custom Shuttle Bus
- Koi Fish & Duck Pond
- Butterfly Garden
- Special Events: Annual Red Carpet Fashion Show



800-365-4189
www.visitingangels.com

Visiting Angels Help You Beat the Holiday Blues

The holidays are supposed to be a joyful time of good cheer, parties and family gatherings, but it is not unusual for many of us to feel sad, lonely or even anxious during the holidays. This condition, which has come to be called "holiday blues," can occur with any holiday or vacation time. It commonly happens at the end of the year when it can seem that just about everyone is celebrating in some way. High expectations, loneliness and stress can lead to holiday blues during the season from Thanksgiving to New Year's. In most cases symptoms are temporary, but they can be serious if they last for more than two weeks, leading to clinical anxiety and/or depression.

Why are seniors susceptible?

Many factors can contribute to feelings of sadness that seniors may feel around the holidays. The holidays can heighten feelings of grief and loss for seniors adjusting to changes related to the process of aging, such as life without a loved one or close friends, ill health, or a move from a lifelong family home into a retirement home or senior community. They may feel guilty about having feelings of sadness which may in turn intensify those feelings of sadness.

How to manage the holiday blues?

The holiday blues can be a normal response to a stress-filled time of the year, but seniors don't have to suffer unnecessarily. Mental Health America, a non-profit dedicated to helping Americans lead mentally healthier lives, offers the following tips for coping with stress:



- Keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Try to set realistic goals. Make a list and prioritize the important activities.
- Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely; there is room for these feelings to be present, even if the person chooses not to express them.
- Leave yesteryear in the past and look toward to the future. Life brings changes. Don't set yourself up in comparing today with the "good ol' days."
- Do something for someone else. Try volunteering some of your time to help others.
- Enjoy activities that are free, such as taking a drive to look at holiday decorations.
- Be aware that excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression.
- Try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a new way.
- Spend time with supportive and caring people. Reach out and make new friends, or contact someone you haven't heard from in a while.
- Find a family member, friend, member of the clergy, or a physician or professional counselor you can talk with who can help you through this difficult time.

When is it more serious than just the holiday blues?

While they may be intense and unsettling, holiday blues are usually short-lived, lasting for a few days to a few weeks prior to or just after the holiday. However, it is important for family members, physicians and other caregivers to be alert to signs of something more serious than just seasonal sadness. Many elderly individuals may feel that depression is a natural part of aging and may not seek treatment on their own.

Depression is a very real and serious disease that can be treated and managed, but can be life-threatening if left untreated. The signs of depression include: sadness that won't lift; loss of interest or pleasure; changes in appetite and weight; thoughts of death or suicide. If you notice that a loved one seems depressed, encourage them to talk to their healthcare provider.

How can Visiting Angels help?

The friendly, experienced, and knowledgeable Visiting Angels team members can help reduce your stress during the holidays by assisting with any home care services needed. During this time of year, we are often busy and having someone to help manage daily health activities can prevent stress and allow you to enjoy the festivities to the fullest.

If health issues prevent you from participating in social events, or if you are lonely and missing loved ones during this time of year, a Visiting Angel can keep you company and make ensure you are properly taking care of yourself to prevent holiday blues and worsening health conditions.

If diagnosed with depression, elderly patients may respond more readily when receiving care in the comfort of home, surrounded by their family and possessions. Visiting Angels offers an in-home care program to assist patients, families and caregivers affected by depression and other behavioral health disorders to journey towards wholeness. Services include stabilization, medication management, family interventions and long-term management.

If you have any questions about the various home care services provided by Visiting Angels, please call 1-800-365-4189 today. We are here to help in any way that we can.

New Advances in Compression Therapy for Limb Swelling

By Alyssa Parker

A common challenge faced in the medical field is finding the cause of an individual's limb swelling. Any limb swelling may be your body's way of letting you know there is a potential underlying condition that can cause even more damage if left untreated. When swelling in a limb becomes chronic, pinpointing the origin is vital to getting proper treatment. Some of the most common diagnosis are venous insufficiency and lymphedema.



Fluid accumulation can cause painful swelling, non-healing wounds, heaviness, and discomfort decreasing your mobility. Recent studies show that nearly 7 million people in the United States suffer from venous disease. While 2 to 3 Americans suffer from secondary lymphedema.

Chronic venous insufficiency (CVI) is when blood is unable to circulate from the lower limbs back to the heart. CVI is caused by incompetent valves and venous hypertension, in both parts of your venous system. The venous system is comprised of two parts, deep circulation and superficial circulation which are interconnected by perforating veins. Your venous system is an important component to delivering blood to the heart, then passing it through the lungs to obtain oxygen. The oxygenated blood is then delivered to the lower limbs.

Venous hypertension leads to secondary Lymphedema from the lymphatic system's inability to keep up with an abnormally high demand of protein rich fluid. Lymphedema is chronic swelling from protein-rich fluid accumulation in the tissue. Lymphedema occurs secondary to CVI when the lymphatic system is obstructed causing damage, blockage, or abnormal development. Primary Lymphedema can be hereditary or congenital, where an individual is born with a compromised lymphatic system.

Risk Factors

Once your circulatory system has been obstructed leading to venous insufficiency or lymphedema this may lead to an interruption in the venous and lymphatic flow. Both diseases are manageable and treatable however there is no cure for either one.

Risk factors may include:

- Unknown swelling of a limb
- Family history
- Invasive surgical procedure i.e. radical cancer surgery
- Chronic open wounds
- Decreased mobility
- Infections such as cellulitis/ lymphangitis
- Skin changes such as discoloration or hardening



Management: Compression Pump

Understanding the ongoing management of both venous insufficiency and lymphedema are important in preventing irreversible damage to the body. Compression therapy along with proper nutrition a healthy diet and exercise are the foundation of a treatment plan. Compression stockings are often difficult to get on with little results for chronic swelling. Diuretics may be harmful for long-term treatment. Compression devices are widely recognized and highly effective treatment. This is a safe and effective way to assist your body's circulatory system in moving the excess fluid which has accumulated in the limb.

A pneumatic compression device mimics the muscle contraction that naturally occurs when performing a cardiovascular activity. A compression device is used for both acute care (short term in the hospital) as well as chronic care (long term in the home). The compression pump increases blood flow and lymphatic flow. By increasing the circulation in the affected limb many painful symptoms will be alleviated. When compression treatment is used on a limb the excess fluid is removed and worked back into the lymphatic system the natural way. For patients with chronic ulcers using a compression device will help heal the wound from the inside out, by increasing the circulation in the return of the blood from the heart. The heart delivers oxygen rich blood back to the legs and the tissue speeding the recovery time.

For patients who many have Chronic venous insufficiency a test called a vascular or duplex ultrasound may be used to examine the blood circulation in your legs.

The compression pump is approved by Medicare and covered by many commercial insurers; Actual coverage varies with individual commercial insurance policies. Acute Wound Care, LLC is a highly focused local provider of wound products and compression pumps working with select area physicians highly versed in treating swollen limbs and chronic wounds.

Contact Acute Wound Care today by calling 239-949-4412 to learn more about the benefits of compression devices and the other in-home services available.



ACUTE WOUND CARE

For more information and articles on this topic, Google "Acute Wound Care" or visit www.AcuteWoundCare.com or call

239-949-4412

and speak with a specialist.

Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

According to experts, the highest crime rate of the year is during the holiday season. Consider the following safety tips this shopping season to better protect yourself:

Leave your purse at home. Take a small amount of money or 1 credit card with you and your ID. Place these items in a small wallet and tuck them safely inside your pants pocket. This will help keep them out of the eyes of people that are watching for their next easy target. If you must take your purse make sure to hide your purse inside your jacket and shorten the strap. This makes it harder to see and you less of a target.

Write down your credit card number you are taking with you and the customer service number. Place this information inside your glove box in your car in case your card becomes lost or stolen.

Beware of people around you.

There is safety in numbers. If possible, shop in a group or with another person. Thieves often times work in groups. One thief will distract you by bumping into you and the other will rob you. If you are shopping with a group of people, it's more difficult and less likely for a robbery to occur.

Don't talk to strangers. We tell our children this, but as adults we should also follow this rule. As mentioned earlier, thieves will try to distract you. They often do this by asking you questions or for help while their partner in crime is stealing your belongings.

Have your keys in hand. When you are walking to your car make sure you already have your keys handy. Muggers count on people being distracted as they're fumbling for their keys. Walk with confidence and be very alert of anyone walking up on you. Prior to getting in your car be sure no one has broken in and climbed in the back seat. And, once you get in your car, immediately lock the doors.

Trust your intuition. If you are getting a bad vibe from someone, trust your instinct. Don't get into an elevator alone with someone if it doesn't feel right. Be aware of anyone who might be following you or seems suspicious.

Sources: www.homesecuritysource.com,
www.tipsforholidayshopping.com



Try to park as close to the store as you can and in a well lit area, if shopping at night. If you are particularly nervous, go to the security office and ask someone to escort you to your car.





ESTATE PLANNING TO AVOID GUARDIANSHIP

By James W. Mallonee

Consider the following situation, the children come to visit over the holidays and they begin to remark about your confusion or failing to manage your day-to-day activities. They also begin assisting you frequently and state that you seem to be having difficulty with your vision and remembering things. Moreover the children begin asking questions about what estate planning tools you have in place and ask to see them. If you have not thought about considering an estate plan then consider the concerns stated by your children as warning signs that you might want too. The children return to their home and your next visit is from an attorney who announces to you that he or she has been appointed by the Court to protect your interest in a guardianship proceeding. The question that faces most persons in this situation is "what are my options?"

Surprisingly, you have many but it will require you to pre-plan with the lawyer of your choice.

Florida's Guardianship Laws provide that no removal of ones rights may be implemented on an individual if there are alternatives available to prevent such loss of rights. In the situation given above, one of the least restrictive alternatives to the loss of your rights are a set of estate planning documents, namely, Revocable Trust, Durable Power of Attorney and Healthcare Surrogacy coupled with a Living Will (sometimes called advanced directive).

Generally speaking, if you have a trust that is funded, your vulnerability to having your property placed into the control of a guardian appointed by the Court can be protected by the appointment of a successor trustee. The successor trustee takes control of the trust property making it virtually impossible for you to convey property to others who do not have your best interest at heart. Most trust documents provide a mechanism for a succession of trustees which is accomplished by certification from a physician of a person's incompetence or direct resignation by the serving trustee.

In addition, any property that is not titled in the name of the trust can be controlled by the agent named in a Durable Power of Attorney. The agent is known as an Attorney-in-Fact, who generally possesses the same powers as you regarding the management of your property. Florida law updated its Durable Power of Attorney authority in 2011 providing significant powers that can be scaled to fit anyone's needs.

A Healthcare Surrogate complements a Trust and Durable Power of Attorney. A Healthcare Surrogate gives your named agent(s) the ability to make consensual health decisions for you in the event you cannot.

The combination of the three estate planning documents makes the likelihood of a successful guardianship proceeding an uphill battle. The reason for this is that your financial affairs will be managed by a successor trustee and Attorney-in-Fact along with the management of your health decisions by the appointment of the Healthcare Surrogate of your choice. However, simply possessing the combination of the estate planning documents is not foolproof.

Be aware that there is always the danger that the person acting in the role of your successor trustee and agent is not well suited for such role. Keep in mind that an Attorney-in-Fact may have the power to wipe out your property that is not titled in the name of the trust. Of course there are fiduciary responsibilities that are attached to the Attorney-in-Fact and successor trustee, but if your entire savings is lost, the fiduciary duties imposed may not be very comforting when your lost savings cannot be recovered. Thus, take notice that a Durable Power of Attorney and Trust instrument is a very powerful set of documents and should not be taken lightly.

So how do estate planning documents help? By having the combination of a Durable Power of Attorney, Trust and Healthcare Surrogate in place, the argument becomes that your property and health are being managed and protected by third parties which acts as a least restrictive alternative to the need for the appointment of a guardian to control your person and property.

One of the hardest decisions to make is deciding who is the most protective and trustworthy person to entrust your health and financial decisions to. Just remember, if no estate planning is put in place, it is possible that the next attorney you see will be the one appointed by the Court to represent you in a guardianship proceeding.

About the Author:

James W. Mallonee (Jim Mallonee) is a graduate with a B.A. degree from the University of South Florida and a Master of Science degree from Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. He obtained his Juris Doctorate from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, California. Prior to returning to Florida to practice law, Mr. Mallonee was employed by Intel Corporation for 22 years in such locations as New Jersey, Florida and California.

In addition to being a member of the Florida Bar since 2003, Mr. Mallonee serves on the Charlotte Community Foundation Committee for asset allocation and teaches Business Law at State College of Florida. Mr. Mallonee is also on the Board of Directors for the Military Heritage Museum located in Charlotte County, Florida.

His firm practices law in the following areas: Probate, Wills & Trusts, Guardianships, and Litigation in the areas of Real Estate, Guardianships and Estates. The firm has two locations in Venice and Port Charlotte, Florida.

James W. Mallonee, P.A.

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(941) 207-2223**

Taking a Spin Around the Dance Floor Increases Mental Health

If you've ever watched ABC's hit TV show "Dancing with the Stars," then you know that dancing is hard work. Dance has long been known to be an excellent way to stay physically fit. But could there be mental and cognitive benefits to dancing as well?

Recent studies have proven that symptoms of depression, stress, fatigue, and headaches can be alleviated with regular dancing.

A major study published in the New England Journal of Medicine reported that dance can be a powerful way to improve brain health. The research, focused on the effect of dancing on the brain, has measured factors such as memory, sense of well being, increased serotonin and reduced stress levels.

The study showed that while exercise is good for your overall health, only one exercise had a significant impact when it came to improving overall cognitive skills. That exercise – you guessed it – is frequent dancing.

Let Your Brain Tango!

Scientists found that dancing combines many beneficial facets as we age including recreational benefits and creative thinking. Dancing enhances health through stress reduction, increased serotonin level, and a love of life.

It turns out dancing incorporates several simultaneous brain functions including rational thinking skills, pattern recognition, spatial awareness, and the release of endorphins, which promote an emotional sense of well being.

How does dancing actually improve brain health? The cerebral cortex and hippocampus of our brains are very elastic which means they "rewire" themselves after each use. Dancing stimulates these areas, thereby contributing to the reconfiguration of nerve signals.

Other studies have shown that areas of the brain most affected by aging can be engaged, rewired

and utilized before they are lost. We know that many areas of brain tissue exhibit plasticity, which means these areas are not set in stone. The stimulation resulting from dancing can engage these areas in a positive way.

If you try new activities, like dancing, researchers say you are opening up new pathways in the brain that improve mental capabilities. In keeping many neural pathways active and simultaneously generating new pathways, you are able to maintain your brain's health and fitness.

No matter what brain activity you engage in – simple art projects with kids or grandkids or studying ancient philosophers like Plato, your brain will benefit.

Put dancing on the docket too, and not only is your brain benefiting, but your body will thank you for the fun physical activity!



The more you work out your brain, the better you'll be able to process and remember information. Novelty stimulation, like learning a new type of dance, is essential to exercising the brain.

For improved long-term brain health, challenge the brain and stimulate those pathways for long-term better brain health.

When you memorize new dance steps, you stimulate seemingly unconnected neural pathways – important for good health as you age.

We are creatures of habit – and there is nothing wrong with doing what we are good at doing. If you're a passionate chess player, don't stop, but try something new, too.

So dust off those dancing shoes and get going!

For more information about lessons, classes, workshops and dance parties call **239-908-9492** today! What are you waiting for?

Enchanted Ballroom Bonita Springs is a proud member of the Bonita Springs Community. We are located in the beautiful Promenade at Bonita Bay, in the heart of Bonita Springs, Florida. Enchanted Ballroom Bonita Springs is tailored to fit everyone from beginners to advanced dancers. People come for all kinds of reasons – preparing for a special event, rehabilitating an injury and getting in shape, looking for a fun exercise, or seeking new friendships. We teach American Smooth and Rhythm as well as International Standard and Latin dancing, social dance, line dance, and Argentine Tango.

Has the dancing bug bitten you? Would you like to learn how to dance like the contestants on "Dancing With the Stars" and be able to use those skills when you attend social events? If so, look no further than Enchanted Ballroom Bonita Springs. Stop in any time, by yourself or with friends to give dancing a try or to spruce up your moves!

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CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER

How Does Caregiving Put Caregivers at Risk?

By Lynn Schneider, Director of Community Relations, Park Royal Hospital

Having a spouse who is battling a serious illness can bring about a multitude of emotions. Estimates have shown that families provide 80% of the long-term care for chronically ill individuals in the United States. When someone has a spouse who is suffering from a serious illness, he or she often finds him or herself taking on the role of primary caregiver. These people want to be there for their loved ones in their time of need, but they do not always realize the immense amount of physical and psychological stress that they are imposing on themselves by doing so.

Studies have shown that caregivers consistently report experiencing greater feelings of depression and other mental health conditions than do individuals who are not providing care for loved ones. Additionally, research has shown that between 40% and 70% of caregivers display clinically significant symptoms of depression, with approximately half of those individuals meeting diagnostic criteria for a clinical diagnosis of depression. When caregivers are suffering from depression, they are highly susceptible to experiencing other emotional and behavioral disturbances. These individuals are more likely to experience the onset of coexisting mental health conditions, such as an anxiety disorder. Additionally, people who are depressed and who are responsible for providing care to their spouse may find that they can experience a sense relief from their own symptoms by using drugs and/or alcohol.

Caregivers also consistently report feeling extreme levels of stress as a direct result of having to provide ongoing care for their loved ones. In many cases, in addition to caring for their spouses, these individuals are also responsible for financially supporting their loved ones. These people often have to maintain steady, full-time employment in order to keep their families financially afloat. In such instances, these people have no choice but to work full-time, only to then come home and once again take on the role of caregiver. The amount of

pressure that these individuals are under can understandably elicit ever-increasing levels of stress. They ultimately find that they do not have any time to relax, which leads to their feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Not only does this affect them psychologically, often increasing their feelings of depression and anxiety, but it can also begin to negatively impact them physically. The presence of chronic stress, in addition to lacking the ability to rest, can ultimately result in the onset of physical illnesses. Yet, despite becoming physically ill, the responsibilities that these individuals have placed on them do not cease, meaning that they continue to provide care for their loved one. The physical strain of continuing to provide care despite being sick can further perpetuate the feelings of stress, depression, and anxiety.

Another trial that caregivers face is that they often begin to question their own ability to provide care to for their loved one. When they are consistently caring for their spouse and do not see any positive results from that caregiving, they can easily begin to feel as though they are failing their loved one. Now, in addition to the stress, depression, and anxiety that these individuals experience from the actual task of caregiving, they are faced with decreasing feelings of self-worth and uncertainty as they doubt their own effectiveness at helping their spouse. Such feelings ultimately exacerbate the already present feelings of emotional distress.



Additionally, as caregivers witness the suffering that their loved one is going through, their own level of distress is heightened. They may begin to blame themselves that they are unable to relieve their loved one's suffering.

So what can be done to help alleviate some of the pressure that caregivers are under? Perhaps the biggest thing for these individuals to remember is that there is no shame in asking for help. Because they are caring for their spouse, they may feel as though it is solely their responsibility. However, seeking out support from other family members or other individuals in your loved one's life can make a monumental difference in regards to alleviating some of the stress that they are under. Additionally, it is imperative that caregivers take care of themselves. If symptoms of anxiety and depression are present, seeking treatment from a mental health professional is the most beneficial way of addressing such concerns.

Park Royal Hospital, a premier provider of behavioral healthcare services, offers a number of treatment options for individuals who may be suffering from the distressing emotional symptoms that may arise as a result of being a loved one's primary caregiver. With a holistic approach to treatment, the highly trained and qualified staff at Park Royal can help these individuals address their concerns, find relief from their distress, and ultimately work towards rebuilding their sense of self-worth, allowing them to be the best help, support, and source of caregiving for their loved one.



PARK ROYAL
Behavioral Health Services

239-985-2760

www.parkroyalhospital.com



What Motivates You to Give?

By Arlene Knox, Senior Director of Development, Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation

I have a pile of envelopes on my desk. Some are multi-colored, some with pictures of children and families, others with printed messages of hope, and still some with beautiful stamps and graphics. It is the holiday season, and while many are from friends and family, many were mailed to me from non-profits seeking donations.

Have you received these yet? Maybe you get them year-round. In the next six weeks, non-profits will spend millions of dollars on mailings, and some will supplement these with additional emails and phone calls to seek charitable support from donors. As the end of the year approaches, it is commonly believed that most donors want to receive a tax-deduction before December 31.

But study after study shows that a tax-deduction is one of the least motivating factors as to why donors

give to a charitable cause. A cross-section of national studies shows that donors have a multitude of motivations for giving, and tax benefits are rarely ranked high.

Here is a sampling of some of the top motivations for giving, gleaned from a variety of surveys of donor behavior:

To Honor or memorialize a loved one. Parents, teachers, coaches, neighbors, aunts, uncles, grandparents—we all have at least one person who has helped us along the way, and often times, we want to honor them for the impact they have on our lives.

To respond to a critical need. Hurricanes. House fires. Health emergencies. We are hard-wired as humans to help each other and alleviate suffering, especially when we see vivid images of people in desperate situations.



To help fulfill your life's goals and passions. As we age, we become more reflective about our life journey, and our time is precious. Giving to charity is an intentional act of caring and concern, and helps us to focus on the values that are truly important.

To connect with others who share your interests and passions. Have you heard the expression “birds of a feather flock together?” Non-profits are a great way to meet other people who share similar values, and humans like to be a part of something bigger than themselves.

December 18, 2014 –
January 1, 2015

Florida SouthWestern State
College will be closed for the
Winter Break

January 7, 2015
First Day of FSW Spring Classes

To pay back. We all have varied backgrounds and circumstances that led us to our present situations. Many donors express an overwhelming feeling of gratitude for succeeding in life, however this is defined. Donations are a way of “paying back” those who helped us in the past.

Think about why you give to a charity. Did a friend ask you? Did you see a person in need? Have you volunteered for an organization? When you can determine your real motivations for giving, this will help you in future decision-making about the impact of your gift.



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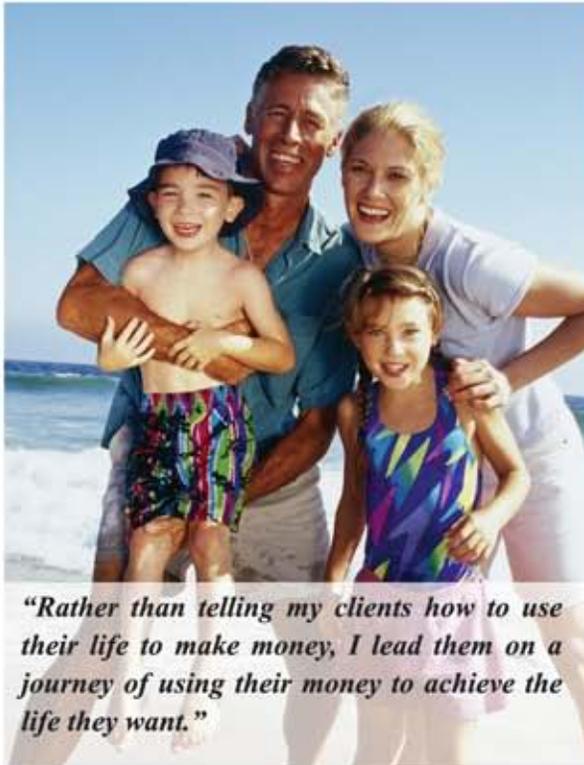
Do You Need FINANCIAL LIFE PLANNING?

By Sandy Keir, CFP®, Suncoast Advisory Group

I met a lovely woman at a charity function last week and we started talking about our families, where we came from and how we ended up on Florida's Suncoast. She told me that she owns her own company and that she's very excited about the good year it's having. I congratulated her on her success and asked her about some of the challenges she's facing. She admitted that she's having a hard time hiring talented people, not sure how to take her company to the next level and is feeling guilty because she's not spending as much time with her husband and friends.

Then she turned to me and asked me what I did for a living. I told her that I've spent the last 25 years helping professional women just like her determine what's important to them and then managing their financial resources to support their vision. She still wasn't sure what I actually did, so she asked me to give her an example of how I could help her.

I told her that I'm a financial planner who integrates life planning and financial planning and, if we worked together, I would need to have a good understanding of the dreams, hopes and aspirations she has for her business and her life before we could talk about her investments. Then I'll put together a business plan for her company, identify the best way to finance growth, and a plan to ensure the company's survival if something happens to her. I'll determine how much she needs to save for retirement, decide how to invest the money so she and her husband can afford to retire when they're ready and identify ways she can leave a legacy to her favorite charities.



"Rather than telling my clients how to use their life to make money, I lead them on a journey of using their money to achieve the life they want."

She decided that she needs to work with me to achieve her goals. We made plans to sit down over coffee next week to get started. She admitted that she's been waking up at night worrying about these things and she's already feeling relieved to know that she has a partner to work with. And the better we get to know each other, the more she'll realize that her happiness and satisfaction in life is my first priority—not her money.

If you're interested in learning how Sandy can help you plan for the future, call her at 941/201-1231 or email her at sandy@suncoastadvisorygroup.com.

**Join Sandy's next Financial Life Planning workshop
Thursday, January 15, 5:30 pm,
at The Francis.
RSVP to (941) 201-1231**



Investment advice and advisory services offered through Suncoast Advisory Group, a Registered Investment Advisor.

Sandra "Sandy" Keir, CFP®, CRPC, CLTC

Sandy's "aha" moment came at an early age. She had a wonderful childhood in Duluth, Minnesota. Her father was a good provider. Her mother was a devoted wife and mother. But when it came to the household finances, her father was the decision-maker. Sandy made the connection that the breadwinner was the boss. Money was power. "I decided that I always wanted to be in control of my own destiny," she says.

A lifelong wealth advisor, Sandy's passion is to help other women pursue the financial independence she has gained. "As women, many of us are going to be on our own at some time in our lives," Sandy says, "so we either need to gain an understanding of money and finances or we need to partner up with a financial advisor who can guide us. Many of the decisions we make, such as when to start taking Social Security, are irrevocable. However, only about 30 percent of women currently seek advice before making those decisions."

During her 25 years in the wealth management industry, Sandy has worked for such companies as Merrill Lynch, Lincoln Financial Group and Transamerica Capital. She lived in Sarasota for 15 years before moving to Pennsylvania in 2009, to become the Regional Sales Manager of Western Pennsylvania for Kades-Margolis Corp. She returned to Sarasota in 2014 to join Suncoast Advisory Group.

In addition to being a Certified Financial Planner, of which only 23 percent are women, she holds the Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor (CRPC) and Certified in Long-Term Care (CLTC) designations. She earned her bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.



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Sandy has dedicated her career to helping professional women plan for the future. Sandy will:

- 1 Take the time necessary to learn about your values, goals and vision
- 2 Put together a plan that takes you from today through retirement
- 3 Invests your money to achieve the life you want



Sandra "Sandy" Keir
CFP®, CRPC, CLTC
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“ How am I going to live today in order to create the tomorrow I'm committed to? ” -ANTHONY ROBBINS



Avoiding Animal Emergencies This Holiday Season

By Dr John Rand, D.V.M.



This time of year the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (1-888-426-4435) receives considerably more phone calls than usual. Friends and relatives who come to visit may leave bags out where pets may have access to their medications. Keep any and all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, safely away from your pets at all times. The innumerable cold medicines, vitamins, supplements, pain killers, cold medicines, blood pressure drugs, etc. that may find their way into your home can easily lead you and your pet into a serious situation.

In addition to drugs, protecting your pets from ingesting various human foods is a must. Everyone should know by now that chocolate is toxic to pets - especially baker's chocolate, dark chocolate, and semi-sweet varieties. Furthermore, pets are also much more sensitive to even tiny amounts of coffee, onions, alcohol, and salts. Avoid giving your animals any foods that are fatty, rich, or spicy. While they may eagerly devour them, these types of foods can incite serious inflammation of the pancreas that can require intensive hospitalization. Cooked poultry bones are also a no-no, as their splintered edges can pierce the stomach and intestines as they pass.

Although not typically thought of as edible, several plants bare mentioning. Many holiday flower arrangements contain various lilies: all *Lilium* species (Tiger, Easter, Stargazer, Asian, etc.) are **HIGHLY** toxic to cats. Even nibbling on a leaf or petal warrants a trip to the vet. If not treated quickly, the kidney damage would be irreversible. Every year poinsettias get a bad rap as far as their danger

to pets. The truth of the matter is, though, poinsettias (along with mistletoe and holly) have an over-hyped potential for poisoning. If ingested, the sap of these plants will usually only cause some irritation to the mouth and skin, along with some potential for vomiting and diarrhea.

Perhaps the biggest plant to be wary of is the Christmas tree. The tree itself poses a risk to cats that may climb, fall from, or be toppled by it. Another problem is the water at the base of live trees; if drunk, it can cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea from the fertilizers and bacteria within. Tinsel on trees can be quite tempting for cats to play with and eat. When eaten, the tinsel poses a very common cause for becoming lodged in the intestines, a surgical emergency.

If any of these situations happen while you are out of town, be sure that you have spoken with your pets sitter so they know what to do. Informing your veterinarian as to who will have authority for making decisions for your pet in your absence is always recommended, too. Know your veterinarian's holiday hours, as well as the number and location of your nearest veterinary emergency clinic. Follow these general tips with some good common sense, and you should have a happy holiday season.

Disclaimer: No article, journal, webpage, breeder, or friend of a friend can take the place of personalized, veterinary medical advice. If you have any questions, always consult with your veterinarian.



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The Gift Of Joyful Thought

By Alex Anderson, Senior Associate Pastor at Bayside Community Church

My Uncle Mutt always smiled. His real first name was Eugene, but everyone called him Mutt. Late at night, sitting around a pot of Maxwell House coffee, my Dad and Uncle Mutt would tell jokes and “side splitting” hunting and fishing stories until around 2:00 am. Glued to every word and facial expression these two giant storytellers would dish out, I would fight as long as a ten year old could, at the kitchen table to stay awake.

These men loved coffee and each other. For gifts, they would buy for each other the most ridiculous coffee cups they could find. Then when together, they would fill these goofy cups with boiling black coffee.

I remember one Friday night around 10:00 pm as my dad was pouring himself yet another cup he said, “Well Mutt, it looks like we have ran out of coffee.” I jumped to my feet to make a pot so they could keep the stories rolling. When the coffee was finished I poured some for Uncle Mutt and as he looked into the cup with a hairy wrinkled unibrow, he paused, then looked back at me and said, “Is this suppose to be coffee?” I said, “Yes sir” proudly and he said, “It can’t be.” I was deflated and asked, “Why not Uncle Mutt?” He said, “Cause I can see the bottom of the cup.” And he smiled his famous Cheshire Cat grin.

Back at the stove, and very determined, I dumped about ¼ lb. of Maxwell House Coffee grounds in the same pot while they turned back and continued laughing and chuckling. When the pot boiled I flooded my uncle’s cup again, held my breath and waited. He peered into the cup then poured a little of the scalding aromatic brew into a saucer. He gave it a fan with his hand then he raised the saucer to his lips and slowly sucked the coffee from the edge. Only after downing a couple of saucers did he then turn to me, cocked his head slightly, winked and said, “Now that my boy, is a cup of coffee.” I grinned from ear to ear. I loved my Uncle Mutt.

That memory is over 43 years old. I remember it like it was yesterday. I have many wonderful memories and many depressing ones. But I have



chosen to become the curator of this amazing library of my yester-years. I have learned to find the good and the cheerful. I have turned villains into heroes and monsters into saints.

Why would I do such a thing? Wouldn't it make a lot of sense to be “real?” Well actually, I am being real. I have chosen to galvanize my mind to the thoughts that create true and admirable movies in my heart. Using my memories, I am the producer, the director and the screenwriter. Granted it's been as tough as nails at times and I've wanted to send the heroes and saints back to the evil place I found them in my past. It also took a lot of hunting and pecking around my memories, but I found enough to create my version of *It's A Wonderful Life*.

After I realized that I had the power, not the villains and monsters, to create my own blockbuster movies in my heart, I could choose to make a Jimmy Stewart, Oscar-Winner or a trashy “C” movie that's a waste of time, with no life-giving value.

Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable.
~Philippians 4:8 NLT

It's also to my advantage to nose around my memories and find something, even if it is small, to “fix my thoughts on.” I've known some pretty mean rascals, and yet every one of them had something admirable that I could pull off the shelf of my heart and put into my basket to create my Oscar winner. See ‘I become’ like the movies I watch over and over in my heart. Over time they shape my actions and I become either bitter or better.

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. ~Proverbs 4:23 NLT

The movies I play in my mind affect how I feel. If I want to be depressed and unmotivated then I play the C movies of pain and shame. If I want to feel motivated and full of joy, I play my version of Jimmy Stewart's, *It's A Wonderful life*.

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength ~Proverbs 17:22 New Living Translation

This holiday season give yourself “*The Gift of Joyful Thought*.” If you do, you'll feel awesome and will have a Merry Christmas.

To your spiritual health, Alex E. Anderson
Author, *Dangerous Prayers*



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