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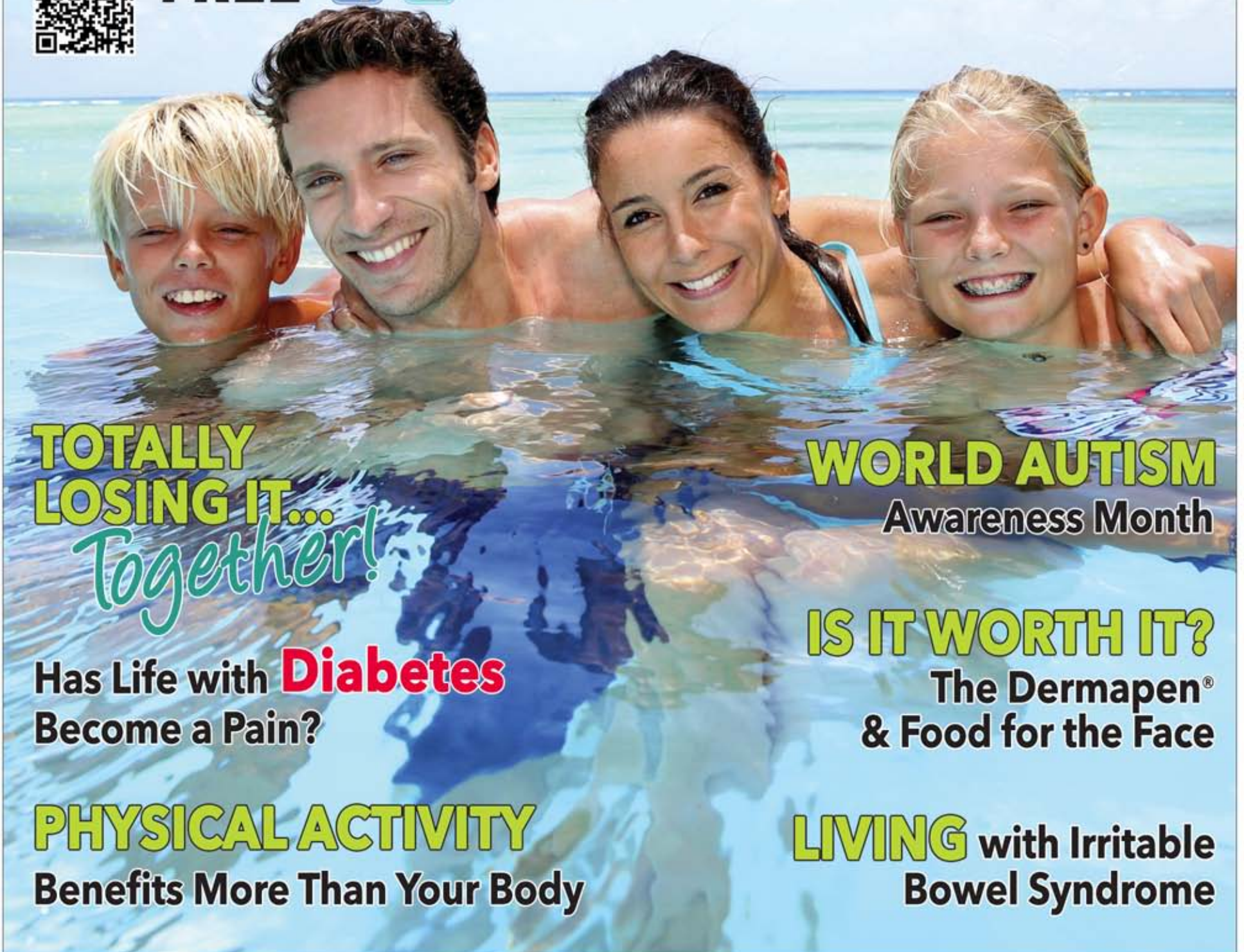
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Lee Edition - Monthly

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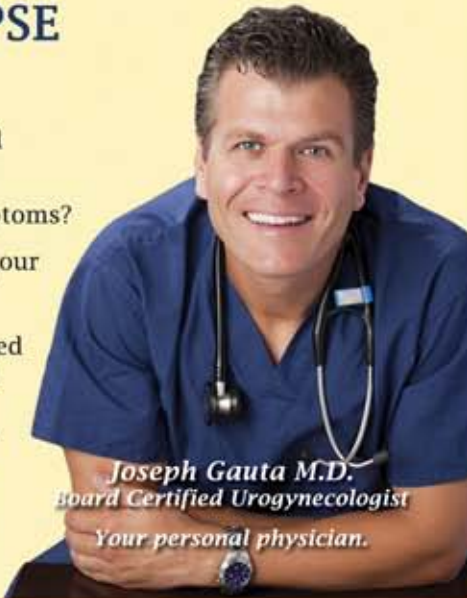


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# How to Find the **RIGHT SPECIALIST**

By Joseph Magnant, MD, FACS

**J**ulian had seen half a dozen physicians of different specialty backgrounds over the course of 10 years searching for the answer to his question of why his right leg was swelling. He never thought he had received a logical explanation and had resigned himself to live with the problem. Fortunately, he had a friend who had come across an article regarding venous insufficiency as a potential cause of limb swelling. Since he did not have any external bulging varicose veins, he and others had concluded that his leg swelling was not in any way related to a vein problem. He read the article in a local medical newspaper and then went to the internet to delve further into the possible mechanism of this.

## Self Education and Self Advocacy

In addition to his complaint of leg swelling, his vein evaluation unearthed other symptoms of achiness and night time leg cramps, right worse than left, symptoms of restless legs and frequent night time urination. His symptoms had been minimally improved by compression hose therapy over the course of years. Ultrasound evaluation subsequently revealed severe bilateral great saphenous vein insufficiency and he soon thereafter underwent staged endovenous ablation (sealing) of the great saphenous veins with immediate and near complete resolution of his original symptoms. His 15 year quest for a cause and solution to his symptoms came to a successful conclusion as a result of self education and self advocacy.

Today, more than ever, it is important for patients to take an active role in researching their medical care. Fortunately, the internet has provided the means by which to perform research on individual health care providers, health conditions as well as available treatment options.

## Lost in the Maze of Provider Choices?

"In this day of advances in medical treatments with improvement and refinement in technology, patients have almost unlimited access to health-related information in print media, on television networks, and through the internet," observes Dr. Magnant. "However, because of this plethora of information, patients can, at times, find themselves lost in the maze of provider choices. Rather than remaining frustrated by dead-end answers or the absence of diagnosis for their physical complaints, patients are taking to their own research."



## Primary Care Physicians Can Provide Specialist Referrals

Dr. Magnant confirms that primary care physician recommendations may be useful in choosing the right specialist: "Even references from physicians other than your own, such as a friend's primary care physician, may prove helpful. Primary care physicians have a broad exposure to patient problems and are probably the best source for specialist referrals."

## Practice Websites Provide Depth of Content and Physician Training Record

Another good starting place when researching specialty providers is their practice website, says Dr. Magnant. "Its depth of content and the completeness of each physician's training record are important aspects to review. From a good website, patients should be able to determine what percentage of the practice is dedicated to the physician's area of specialty training and whether that area is applicable to the patient's own health issues."

## Take Advantage of Free In-Office Screenings

"But perhaps the most important piece of homework patients can do is to take advantage of free in-office screenings when offered or take advantage of online health screenings, such as that offered by our practice on our website [weknowveins.com](http://weknowveins.com) and through our screening site [eveinscreening.com](http://eveinscreening.com). These enable patients to meet the doctor and the staff, and to gather information regarding the treatments they offer and any literature regarding the physician's practice and training. Any other information they glean regarding their specific condition and treatment options should be considered a bonus."

Dr. Magnant is a board certified vascular surgeon who specializes 100% on vein evaluation and modern treatments for the entire spectrum of vein problems. Many of his patients have a family history of venous insufficiency or varicose veins. Mothers of children of any age, nurses, teachers, hairstylists, police officers, dancers, athletes, pharmacists, students, and people from every other imaginable walk of life may have vein problems. Many of these patients were once considered untreatable since the stripping procedure was so invasive and "dangerous."

Since stripping no longer is performed, and the techniques Dr. Magnant has to offer can be performed in the office under local anesthesia with minimal downtime, many of these patients are great candidates for endovenous closure as the definitive cure for their vein problems. So whether you suffer from the most common presenting symptoms of venous insufficiency which is painful bulging varicose veins, or you are one of the other millions of patients in the USA with more obscure presenting complaints such as swollen & achy legs, discolored skin in the lower leg, non-healing leg ulcers, history of varicose vein bleeding, or nighttime symptoms such as Charlie horses, cramps, restless legs or frequent urination, you deserve a risk free diagnostic leg vein ultrasound to rule out correctable venous insufficiency.

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They offer body contouring treatments that stimulates weight loss and fat reduction with most clients seeing instant results. They also offer skin rejuvenation and anti-aging treatments to help restore your natural glow and slow the aging process. Swan Centers offer a wide range of customized services to help our clients look younger, thinner and more vibrant. Many of the services that they offer can only be found only at Swan Age Reversal Centers because they use custom manufactured devices, proprietary serums and exclusive products.

Swan Age Reversal Centers takes body enhancement where it was meant to be, combining health and beauty with cutting-edge science and impeccable service. They're driven by innovation in aesthetic beauty and are able to deliver an intimate and relaxing experience, complete with all the perks that only a premium establishment can offer. They specialize in laser, radio frequency, ultrasonic anti-aging and fat reduction technologies, and offer a complementary assessment to all first-time customers.



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# Challenging the Status Quo with Stem Cells

By Cara Tompot, Staff Writer

Looking back on history, we remember a time when women didn't have the rights that they do now. Prior to 1919, women didn't have any way to express their thoughts and desires through public policy. Thanks to first-wave feminists questioning the status quo, 1920 marked the first year that women could vote. This social change marked a moment in history when women finally had the right to take control of their own life. In many ways, the history of women's suffrage is similar to the road to regenerative medicine advancements.

Much like women fighting for equality, patients have been fighting for a new way to treat their chronic lung disease. Now, with the advancement of stem cell therapy, sufferers of chronic lung disease are no longer limited to the confines of traditional medicine—which involve managing symptoms rather than the disease. Stem cell therapy, like women's voting rights, helps people take control of their life by giving them a voice.

For years, people accepted the status quo, and for people suffering from chronic lung diseases like COPD, the status quo meant a constant struggle for oxygen. As an incurable disease, most sufferers felt that they didn't have any options. But now, everything has changed.

One state-of-the-art clinic, the Lung Institute, developed an alternative. Stem cell therapy helps sufferers finally breathe easier. People are no longer forced to accept the fate of continual disease progression or an invasive lung procedure. Stem cell therapy harnesses the healing power of a patient's own stem cells to help regenerate damaged lung tissue.

Today, lung disease can be treated with adult stem cells harvested from the patient's own fat, blood or bone marrow to replace damaged lung cells with healthy ones. According to the clinic's website, [www.lunginstitute.com](http://www.lunginstitute.com), this innovative procedure slows the progression of the disease, in addition to, restoring lung function and reducing inflammation. The result is the ability to breathe easier.

Similar to the fight for women's rights, doctors and patients have been diligently looking for a new way to treat lung disease. Now, with the advancement of stem cell therapy, patients can finally combat disease progression. As with any change, some physicians and patients may be slower to adopt new ideas while clinging to traditional approaches; however, just as social change made it possible for women to have a voice in the government, clinical advancements like stem cell therapy make it possible for patients to have a voice in their healthcare. If the fight for equality is any sign of the future of stem cell therapy, there is no doubt that stem cells will become the status quo for treating lung disease.

If you or a loved one suffers from a chronic lung disease, the specialists at the Lung Institute may be able to help. You can contact the Lung Institute at (855) 914-3212 or visit [lunginstitute.com/health](http://lunginstitute.com/health) to find out if these new treatments are right for you.





# Surgical and Nonsurgical Treatments for Rotator Cuff Injuries

By Dr. John C. Kagan, M.D.

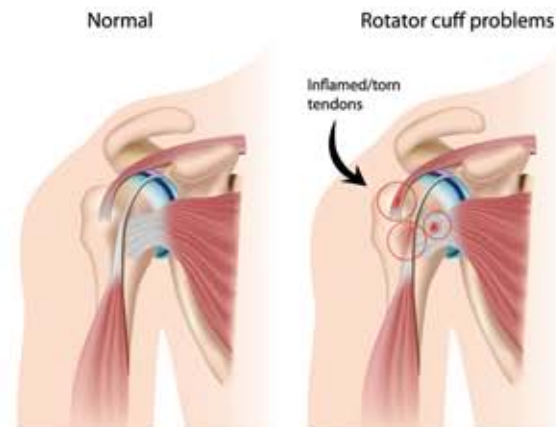
**R**otator cuff tears are some of the most common causes of pain among adults in the United States. Torn rotator cuffs lead to shoulder weakness, which can make it difficult to complete daily tasks like getting dressed. Depending on the type and severity of the rotator cuff injury, surgery may need to be performed to alleviate symptoms and restore full range of motion.

The rotator cuff is made up of four muscles that are joined with tendons to create a covering around the head of the humerus bone at the top of the arm. A rotator cuff tear occurs when one of the tendons are torn, no longer fully attaching to the humerus. There are multiple types of rotator cuff tears, including a partial tear, which damages the soft tissue but doesn't sever it, and a full-thickness tear, which splits the soft tissue into two separate pieces. The full-thickness tear is essentially a hole in the tendon.

Common symptoms of rotator cuff injuries include pain and weakness, while lifting and lowering the arm in specific movements, a crackling sensation when moving the shoulder, and pain at night. While sudden injury, such as a fall, may be an obvious reason for pain, rotator cuff tears can also develop slowly over time due to overuse and over-rotation of the shoulder.

Because of the nature of these wear-and-tear injuries, people over the age of 40 are most at risk of rotator cuff injuries. Others at risk include those whose occupations require them to do work above their heads, such as painters, plumbers and carpenters, and athletes such as tennis and baseball players, whose repeated motions can cause damage. While the pain may start out being manageable with over-the-counter medications and rest, small tears often grow larger and more painful before they have a chance to heal on their own. A decrease in blood supply to the tendon also decreases with age, which inhibits the body's ability to repair small tears.

If you suspect a rotator cuff injury, your physician will diagnose the issue by having you move your arm through a wide range of motions and will check for tenderness, deformities and overall arm strength. Your doctor may also examine your neck closely to ensure the pain is not being referred and to check for arthritis and other conditions. Imaging tests such as X-rays, MRIs or ultrasound may also be used to diagnose the problem.



Depending on the severity and type of the rotator cuff injury, nonsurgical treatment may be an option. Nonsurgical treatment options include rest and limited motion, over-the-counter pain medications such as naproxen sodium and ibuprofen, physical therapy, and injection of steroids such as cortisone at the site of the tear. While nonsurgical treatment options avoid the risks of surgery, which include infection, stiffness, and lengthy recovery time, they can also be limited in their effectiveness and may require permanent limitations in enjoyable activities, such as tennis, which exacerbate the injury.

Surgery may be the best option to restore full motion and relieve pain from rotator cuff tears. Depending how long and complex the tear is, the surgeon may be able to perform arthroscopic surgery, or they may need to make a regular incision. A third option, mini-open repair, uses new technology to repair the rotator cuff through a smaller incision than traditional surgery.



Regardless of the type of surgery performed, rehabilitation and physical therapy are essential to restore strength and motion. Your arm will likely be immobilized in a sling for the first four to six weeks following the surgery. Once the surgeon decides it is safe to move the arm, a physical therapist will guide you through a series of passive and active exercises. Complete recovery will likely take four to six months, but with proper rehabilitation, you can expect relief from pain and full use and strength of your arm and shoulder.



**JOHN C. KAGAN M.D.**  
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If you have concerns about rotator cuff injuries or other orthopedic disorders, Dr. John C. Kagan and his staff are ready to answer your questions. Dr. Kagan has more than 30 years of experience as an orthopedic surgeon and sports medicine specialist treating patients in Southwest Florida. He specializes in treating patients with knee, shoulder and hip pain, as well as general orthopedics and hand surgery. For more information, visit [www.kaganortho.com](http://www.kaganortho.com) or call 239-936-6778.



# Prostate Enlargement

By Harry Tsai, M.D.

**P**rostate enlargement is known as BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia). This simply means that the cells of the prostate gland have increased in size and urination becomes difficult with frequency, urgency, getting up at night, difficulty emptying, and occasionally blood.

## Cause

BPH occurs as the gland enlarges and begin to constrict the urethra. The noncancerous cells begin to grow as men age and some men will notice symptoms in their 40's and 50's.

## Symptoms

Symptoms usually start gradually and can include weak urinary stream, trouble starting the flow of urine, stopping and starting, incomplete emptying, urinating at night, sudden urges to urinate, leaking or dribbling after urinating, and straining to urinate.

## Detection

Detection is usually based on the degree of severity of the symptoms. Once the patient is referred to or sees a urologist, several tests are performed. First a careful history and physical exam is performed including a digital prostate exam. Urinalysis is performed to look for blood, infection, or cancer. We then perform a cystoscopy which is a fiberoptic scope that is passed into the urethra. Careful inspection of the prostate gland and bladder is then performed. Another test is the uroflow and post void residual. Patients report to the office with a full bladder and are asked to void into a special machine. This uroflow machine can measure the volume of urine, force of urine, and then the residual is measured with a bladder scanner.

## Treatment

If the symptoms are mild, most men choose not to be treated. However, if the symptoms are bothersome, men can choose from medications, office procedures, and surgical procedures to manage their BPH symptoms.

There are many supplements that men can take such as saw palmetto, herbal extracts which can help.

Medications include alpha blockers (tamsulosin, rapaflo) which help relax the prostate muscles to improve urine flow.



Harry Tsai, M.D.

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5-alpha reductase inhibitors such as finasteride and dutasteride block a hormone related to testosterone and can shrink the prostate gland.

Nonsurgical options include two office procedures which are performed in the office.

1. Cooled thermotherapy (CTT); [www.urologix.com](http://www.urologix.com). This is a 30 minute procedure which is performed through a special catheter.

2. Transurethral needle ablation (Prostiva); [www.urologix.com](http://www.urologix.com). This is a shorter procedure which is performed with a special probe that is inserted into the urethra and radiofrequency energy is employed.

Surgical procedures includes the traditional transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP), greenlight laser photovaporization (PVP), and the plasma button procedure.



## Prevention

It is important to urinate when the urge is present and not to delay until the bladder is full. Eating healthy is also very important. It is essential to avoid alcohol and caffeine at night. Certain medications especially antihistamines can tighten the muscles and make urination more difficult.



# Benefits to Staying **ACTIVE** as *You Age*

**A**s you age, staying active is actually more important than it was in your younger years. Not only will you have more energy, but the overall quality of your life will greatly improve. Joints and muscles will become stronger, as well as your brain, which in turn can add years to your life and make you feel great. At American House Senior Living Communities, we take pride in offering enriching programs to all of our residents. Here are a few tips on getting started, figuring out which activities are right for you and some of the amazing benefits of staying active.

## Starting a Routine

Whether you are a 55 year old or a high school football player, starting a routine is the most challenging part of any work out. Some say it takes up to three weeks of daily exercise to make it a habit. Although that may be statistically true, it can be very difficult, not just for seniors. Instead of trying to go “all out” right off the bat, it’s good to work your way up to a routine. Start by doing an activity a few times a week at the same time each day. Eventually you’ll start to feel the need to do it more and more.

## Finding the Right Activity

When most people hear the term “get active”, words like working out and gym are the first to come to mind. This is not the case at all! While gyms are a great way to stay active and fit, there are a lot of other options. Keep in mind; it’s best to consult with a doctor or fitness professional before you start any routine. Below are a few ideas to get the ball rolling:

- Taking the stairs more
- Hit the links! Join a golf league around your community (and try using a pull cart)
- Try low impact exercises, like yoga or aerobics
- Simply go for a walk on nice days



The most important thing, as a senior, is to find something you enjoy so it doesn’t even feel like an exercise. Also, take it slow at the start. As you age your body needs a little bit of time to warm up before you jump right into a routine.

## Benefits

The benefits to staying active are incredible. Here are just a few things you can expect:

- Increased mobility and balance
- Avoided weight gain
- Improved immune system
- Sharpened and more active brain
- Increased self confidence

*Growing older doesn’t have to mean winding down. In fact, now is the time to get active!*

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# Life Care Center of Estero

**L**ife Care Center of Estero has been serving the Southwest Florida Community for 11 years and strives to provide the best nursing and therapy services in the area. We have physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, dietitian services, a physiatrist for pain management and an onsite physician to meet individual patient needs. Life Care Center of Estero has several specialization programs including orthopedics, vestibular therapy, wound care and lymphedema therapy. We routinely performs home evaluations and we host a support group for Parkinson's Disease and a Caregiver support group. Life Care Center of Estero strives for continuing education of its staff (including trainings in strength and conditioning, stroke and Parkinson's disease treatment and neurodevelopmental theory certifications) with state of the art equipment (including the Alter G treadmill, Alter G Bionic Leg, ACP modalities and the Biodex balance system), to be at the cutting edge in today's healthcare. If you are in need of a rehabilitation stay, consider the family of Life Care Center of Estero.

## REHAB FACTS FOR 2015

### To Sit or to Stand?

A recent study in the August 2014 issue of Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise showed significant higher cardiovascular disease risk factors in the group who sat for 3 hours straight. Another study from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas found that sitting for 2 hours negated the effects of 20 minutes of exercise. Take home message: don't sit for prolonged periods, it's bad for your health! Try to take walking breaks in between prolonged sitting activities like:

- Doing office work
- Taking long car rides
- Reading
- At the movies
- Air travel

### What's worse? Obesity or lack of Exercise

A January 2015 article in the American Society for Nutrition looked at this very question and found that while obesity came with a host of health challenges, the mortality rate was the highest in the lack of exercise group. But the good news is that risk factors were dramatically reduced with only a slight increase in physical activity. The best type of exercise continues to be researched (cardiovascular vs resistance exercise) but any exercise seemed to improve health in this study. So talk to your doctors and try to find any activities that you can do daily and you find enjoyable- walking, swimming, biking etc. Do it for your health!



### What's the First sign of knee Arthritis?

The January 2015 edition of Arthritis Care & research found that knee pain with stairs was the most common symptom of early osteoarthritis. The results of the study can be used to identify individuals at the early stages of osteoarthritis and help treat them with conservative intervention strategies like physical therapy. Often times treatable tightness and/or weakness in the hips, knees or ankles can cause poor mechanics of the legs and forcing the knee to take too much stress. So if you have pain with stairs or climbing curbs talk with your doctors. Treat it early before it prevents you from enjoying an active healthy lifestyle.





# Has life with **DIABETES** *become a pain?*

**D**iabetic peripheral neuropathy (DPN) is a type of nerve damage caused by chronically high blood sugar and diabetes. It leads to numbness, loss of sensation, and sometimes pain in your feet, legs, or hands. It is the most common complication of diabetes.

About 60% to 70% of all people with diabetes will eventually develop some level of peripheral neuropathy, although not all suffer pain. Yet this nerve damage is not inevitable. Studies have shown that people with diabetes can reduce their risk of developing nerve damage by keeping their blood sugar levels as close to normal as possible.

Peripheral neuropathy is the most common form of diabetic neuropathy. What causes peripheral neuropathy? Chronically high blood sugar levels damage nerves not only in your extremities but also in other parts of your body. These damaged nerves cannot effectively carry messages between the brain and other parts of the body. Your feet and legs are often affected first, followed by your hands and arms. Signs and symptoms of peripheral neuropathy are often worse at night, and may include:

- Numbness or reduced ability to feel pain or temperature changes
- A tingling or burning sensation
- Prickling
- Pins and needles sensation
- Sharp pains or cramps
- Increased sensitivity to touch — for some people, even the weight of a bed sheet can be agonizing
- Muscle weakness
- Loss of reflexes, especially in the ankle
- Loss of balance and coordination
- Serious foot problems, such as ulcers, infections, deformities, and bone and joint pain

## DIAGNOSIS

Doctors diagnose neuropathy on the basis of symptoms and a physical exam. During the exam, the doctor may check blood pressure, heart rate, muscle strength, reflexes, and sensitivity to position changes, vibration, temperature, or light touch.

## FOOT EXAMS

- Your health care provider should look at your feet at each office visit to check for injuries, sores, blisters or other problems.
- As a reminder, take off your shoes and socks when you're in the exam room.
- Have a complete foot exam once a year. If you already have foot problems, have your feet checked more often. A complete foot exam includes a check of the skin on your feet, your foot muscles and bones, and your blood flow. Your provider will also check for numbness in your feet by touching your foot with a monofilament. It looks like a stiff piece of nylon fishing line or a bristle in a hairbrush.
- Other ways to check your nerves include using a tuning fork. It may be touched to your foot to see if you can feel it moving

## NERVE CONDUCTION STUDIES AND ELECTROMYOGRAPHY (EMG)

- If the doctor thinks you might have nerve damage, you may have tests that look at how well the nerves in your arms and legs are working. Nerve conduction studies check the speed with which nerves send messages. An EMG checks how your nerves and muscles work together.



## TREATMENT

To treat nerve damage, you will need to keep your blood glucose levels in your target range, manage your pain and protect your feet. Many people get depressed when they have nerve damage and may need medication for depression as well as counseling.

## MEDICATIONS

Medications to relieve pain and reduce burning, numbness and tingling are available. Some of these are known for their use in other conditions but they still seem to help those with nerve damage.

Speak with your doctor to find out what treatments are best for you. Ask your doctor about clinical research studies focusing on DPN.

## HOPE THROUGH RESEARCH

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) conducts and supports research to help people with diabetes.

Participants in clinical trials can play a more active role in their own health care, gain access to new research treatments before they are widely available, and help others by contributing to medical research. For information about current studies, visit [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov) or [www.clinicalstudycenter.com](http://www.clinicalstudycenter.com).

Volunteering for a clinical study enables you to take an active role in your own health, while helping others with your condition as well!

## NOW ENROLLING!

### CLINICAL STUDY FOR PATIENTS WITH DIABETIC PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

The Clinical Study Center of Fort Myers is seeking volunteers for participation in a clinical research study to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of an investigational DPN medication. If you are 18 years of age or older with diabetes, you may be eligible to participate.

#### Qualified participants will receive at no cost study-related:

- Evaluations, physical exams, routine lab work
- study medication

Compensation for time and travel will be available for the study. Participants who qualify and complete the study can earn **\$50 per study visit**. No medical insurance is necessary. Contact the Clinical Study Center today to find out more information on this DPN study.

Call the Clinical Study Center today to enroll in the Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy study or to learn about current and upcoming clinical studies that you might qualify for.

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# Totally Losing it.....

with Richard L. Bloy, M.D.

# Together!

**Y**ou and your sweetie-pie are both looking to shed some pounds and move toward a healthier lifestyle. Is it better to go it alone or to join forces in the quest for a better life? While there are certainly some challenges in tackling weight loss together, the benefits are far greater. Here are some keys to totally losing it...together!

### 1. Decide Why

After you've motivated yourselves to get started, you may notice a decrease in your desire to press forward. This isn't the time to cut back, but rather to push forward with even more dedication. Decide at the onset why you want to make the change toward a healthier life. Have an honest conversation about your motivations and your goals – both immediate and long term. Having (and reviewing) these goals will prove to be great motivation as you continue to move toward a healthier lifestyle.

### 2. Mars and Venus

One of the biggest hurdles in a tandem weight loss journey is the results at the scale. Most experts agree that men will lose weight more efficiently than women. This difference is due, in part, to the fact that men typically have a higher concentration of water in their bodies. These "water pounds" are the first to go! Ladies, don't get discouraged if your beau is losing weight more quickly than you. Think long-term!

### 3. Keep Your Roles Equal

Often times, one partner will take the role of "Food Police," while the other adopts the part of the "Exercise Monitor." Try not to fall into the trap of false competition. You're not in a race. Accountability is necessary for success but don't let the process put any strain on the bond you share with your partner. Make it a point to share the responsibility of encouragement and inspiration. Plan meals together, construct your exercise routine together, and if there's ever a lapse, just pick up where you left off and keep going.

### 4. Be Supportive

This is a bit of a two-edged sword, as being supportive of your partner also involves a good bit of transparency and honesty. Do your part in being upfront about your struggles. If you're prone to bouts of binge-eating while you're bored, it's important your partner is aware. If there are struggles you face when you're away from each other, be honest about them. After you share your concerns, it will become easier for your partner to be able to support you in the right way.



### 5. Spur It On

Mutual accountability is about more than just support. Motivation and determination are equally important. You should be determined not only to see your own goals to fruition, but also the goals of your sweetheart! Motivate each other with notes, praise, and affection. Likewise, never punish or belittle your loved one because of a shortcoming. Commit yourselves to each other and to living a longer, happier, and more productive life!

In other words, if you're going to lose it ... lose it together!

*Dr. Richard Bloy has served the Fort Myers and Naples communities for more than 25 years. Over the past few years he has expanded his services to include Medi Weightloss Clinics for outstanding medically supervised weight-loss, bio-identical hormone replacement, skin care, and aesthetics. More information can be found at drbloy.com and mediweightlossclinics.com*

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# Is it worth it?

## The Dermapen & Food for the Face

By Yollo Wellness

**T**hat moment when we wake up and look at ourselves in the mirror and realize "I'm beyond a dapple of this and that on my face." The fact that I'm in my late 40's is showing on my face.

It's not so much that I've got deep wrinkles, I don't feel like the Grand Canyon quite yet. It's more a combination of pigmentation from my pregnancies and my skin's texture. Everything is starting to drop. I'm noticing the crows feet from squinting.

Is there anything that can be done about this? Something that will even out the surface so my face feels less like train tracks, more like a smooth pond. I need something more hard-core than a facial but nothing "invasive". Just the word makes me shudder, and I want the results to last longer than a movie marathon.

Beauty industry, are you listening?

Apparently, they are. Here's what I tried.



**THIS WEEK:** I walked into YOLLO Wellness, which promises "the most technologically advanced and innovative non-surgical Pure PRP Skin Rejuvenation Therapy." That sounds exactly like what I'm after. After a thorough consultation, it's decided I'll start with a Dermapen treatment using my own Pure Platelet Rich Plasma.

// ...an automated-micro needling therapy that vertically pierces the skin to naturally stimulate collagen and elastin with minimal epidermal damage."



**WHAT IS IT:** Essentially, it's a pen with tiny, super-fine needles on the end of it. The needles roll over your skin, pinning holes in it as they go. They can penetrate the skin up to 2 millimetres. This definitely sounds more hard-core than a facial. The PRP part was really cool. They did a simple blood draw and spun it out a couple of times in a really high tech centrifuge.

**WHAT THE HECK FOR?** Apparently, causing controlled damage to your skin will prompt it to produce a bunch of collagen, which is the building block of skin. The more collagen you have, the more elastic, less wrinkled and better textured your skin will be.

**WHO IS IT GOOD FOR?** Anyone with sagging skin, fine lines, wrinkles, scarring.

**WHY I'M GETTING IT:** To improve the texture of my skin and try and get its bounce back. I've got a few fine lines, but my skin is definitely starting to slacken. Also as I mentioned before after my two pregnancies I can see some pigment changes going on.

**WHAT THEY DID:** First, they sanitized my face with saline and alcohol solution. I was laying down, relaxing on a table when Debbie painted my face with my own Pure Platelet Rich Plasma. The next step happened so fast I couldn't believe it was over. Wendy used the Derma Pen on my forehead, side of my eyes, under my eyes, my cheeks, side of my face, upper lip, on my lips, chin, neck decolletage. Virtually every nook and cranny of my face, neck and chest. It was over in 10 minutes! I couldn't believe it. I kept asking if they were sure they got it all. Wendy explains there will be some bleeding as she is basically pinning holes in my face. She moves the pen all over, working on it section by section, checking in every now and then to see if it's painful. Next, Debbie painted a layer of my Plasma Poor Protein all over the controlled injured areas to allow more proteins to penetrate my skin to help build even more collagen.





**HOW DOES IT FEEL?** Surprisingly, fine. Kind of like a mixture of a sunburn and the shower water hitting it.

**AFTERWARDS:** My face feels very hot and a bit stinging. My skin is quite red and sensitive. They applied a layer of vitamins onto my skin which I immediately felt my skin begin to cool and be soothed. Then they applied a collagen cool gel mask I relaxed on the table under a warm snuggly blanket for 15 minutes. I had the option of going into their oxygen anti-aging chambers. They are supposed to take the collagen building to the next level. I didn't have time to get my doctor's note to do it so I will the next time around. I like to take things slow at first anyways when I don't quite know what to expect. I was told to not wash my face tonight but I could apply any of the anti-aging products I purchased from them. The next morning I'm quite tight and dry and still very red, like I've sat with my face in the sun for a whole day. I washed my face as usual and I slather on sunscreen because one thing I've learned after visiting anti-aging salons to research this piece, is that it's really our only defense against aging. It is not recommended to put makeup on for a couple of days and only use the collagen building creams and serums they recommended because it will all be soaked up into my skin and could alter my results. By day three however I can go back to my routine of a little tinted foundation.

**DID IT WORK?** After a couple of hours from leaving YOLLO Wellness I noticed my fine lines were filled in. My skin is clearer after a week. The pigmentation I have around my lips from my pregnancies has already almost disappeared. I'm feeling more confident without make-up. They tell me my face will continue to improve up to three months!

**CAN I GET THIS RESULT AT HOME?** There's no equivalent product at home to a Dermapen as it's essentially damaging your skin to encourage it to produce collagen.



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**HOW MUCH IS IT:** \$799 per treatment.

**TIME TAKEN:** 50 minutes.

**IS IT WORTH IT?** Absolutely. I can imagine that after the suggested four treatments my skin would look pretty amazing. Besides I keep getting asked if I did something to my face because I look radiant even after one treatment!

Only you can decide whether you want to go beyond a regular facial treatment. At \$799 it's not cheap, but there is no downtime and it's less invasive than a laser, plus the results will last longer. I'm looking at it like an expensive coat, which is an investment in looking good. And I've decided my face is more important than a coat!

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Space is limited to 10 people. If you would like to take advantage of being part of the demo and receive \$300.00 off (regularly \$799) that day please call (239)275-0039. RSVP to attend the event.



# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY HELPS INDIVIDUALS LIVE LIFE TO ITS FULLEST



**A**pril is a month designated to celebrating Occupational Therapist. Occupational therapy enables people of all ages live life to its fullest by helping them promote health, prevent—or live better with—injury, illness, or disability. It is a practice deeply rooted in science and is evidence-based, meaning that the plan designed for each individual is supported by data, experience, and “best practices” that have been developed and proven over time.

Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants focus on “doing” whatever occupations or activities are meaningful to the individual. It is occupational therapy’s purpose to get beyond problems to the solutions that assure living life to its fullest. These solutions may be adaptations for how to do a task, changes to the surroundings, or helping individuals to alter their own behaviors.

When working with an occupational therapy practitioner, strategies and modifications are customized for each individual to resolve problems, improve function, and support everyday living activities. The goal is to maximize potential. Through these therapeutic approaches, occupational therapy helps individuals design their lives, develop needed skills, adjust their environments (e.g., home, assisted living facilities, or work) and build health-promoting habits and routines that will allow them to thrive.

By taking the full picture into account—a person’s psychological, physical, emotional, and social makeup as well as their environment—occupational therapy assists clients to do the following:

- Achieve goals
- Function at the highest possible level
- Concentrate on what matters most to them
- Maintain or rebuild their independence
- Participate in daily activities that they need or want to do.

Qualifying Medicare recipients can qualify for an occupational therapist to come into the home to evaluate, educate, provide rehabilitation treatments, and modalities to improve functional independence. This service may be appropriate for but not limited to seniors that are deconditioned, secondary to acute or chronic orthopedic and/or neurologic disorders, have memory or cognitive impairment or suffer from low vision. Each patient is evaluated to determine their condition and an appropriate care plan is designed to meet that patients goals. If you have questions about occupational therapy and specialty services please contact Nurse On Call at (239) 590-3016.

HHA: 299991763



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By Carl McAloose

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## *Benefits More Than Your Body*

**W**e all remember having PE in school. I dare say that when asked what your favorite part of the school day was, many of us said "PE." And why not? PE was fun. You got to play games, jump, run and best of all, you weren't sitting at your desk. You got to burn off that extra energy, and that made being in the classroom easier. Study after study shows the correlation of physical activity, whether it's PE, sports or just riding your bike around your neighborhood, helps improve your overall health. These studies also show that physical activity helps you mentally.

The annual *Sports & Fitness Industry Association* survey found that over 21 million youth ages 6-17 play team sports on a regular basis, with an additional five million occasionally involved in sports. We all know that regular physical activity provides many benefits, like maintaining healthy muscles, bones and joints, not to mention helping with your weight. Your doctor tells you this and more each year when you have your physical.

For our kids, playing sports means they are eight times more likely to still be active at the age of 24 compared to those who don't participate in sports. (*Perkins study*). The benefits extend to academics. Several studies have concluded that physical activity helps improve academic achievement, from grades to standardized test scores. Think about it. Don't you feel more relaxed and focused after physical activity? It's easier to concentrate and learn.

Additionally, studies have shown that physical activity can also positively impact our youth in the areas of self-esteem, goal-setting and leadership. As a parent, just spending some time with your kids playing catch, shooting baskets or any other sport or game gives you quality time with them in a fun setting. It also sets a good example of the importance of physical activity.

Kids who participate in sports learn to manage their time better. They get an extra sense of confidence because they can balance the demands of school and sports. Playing a sport also teaches them the value of teamwork, cooperation and leadership.

The benefits of sports are more than physical. They are also mental. Studies show physical activity can help with things like improving your mood. Whether you like to play sports, work out in the

gym, or take your dog for a brisk walk, physical activity helps stimulate brain chemicals that make you feel more positive.

We all have some level of stress in our lives. Too much of that can lead to many problems, both mental and physical. When you're exercising, you help reduce your levels of stress hormones – namely adrenaline and cortisol. Physical activity helps distract your mind from negative thoughts, which allows you to think more creatively. Simultaneously while exercising, your body produces endorphins, which naturally make you feel happier and relaxed.

Studies have also shown that regular physical activity helps improve your level of concentration. Mental skills such as thinking, using good judgment and learning stay sharp as you age if you do a mix of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. And those types of activities are common in sports!

I know that when I exercise, I sleep better. We know that exercise helps you relax and get rid of stress and tension, so it makes sense that would help you get a good night's sleep.

As a parent, all three of my children have been involved in sports in some form. I have seen how it has helped them not only physically, but also academically, mentally and socially.

Not every child participating in sports will go on to be a professional athlete, but they will all treasure the memories of family time together and the friendships they made along the way. Most importantly, they have learned that physical activity is lifelong fun!



Carl McAloose is the Athletic Director at Florida SouthWestern State College. The Buccaneers will debut their softball and baseball teams in the fall 2015, followed by men's and women's basketball in fall 2016. More information is available at [www.FSW.edu/athletics](http://www.FSW.edu/athletics).

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# LIFE-THREATENING SLEEP APNEA AND THE CPAP ALTERNATIVE

By Dr. Rich Gilbert

**T**he word apnea literally means without breath. During sleep, the muscles and tissues of the upper airway can collapse and narrow or totally block the opening in the throat for air. The narrowing of the upper airway can produce sound - snoring. However, when the upper airway becomes completely obstructed breathing stops. This condition is called Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) and the resulting oxygen deprivation is life threatening!

## SNORING VS. SLEEP APNEA

Snoring is generally considered a mild condition resulting in limited daytime symptoms. Disruption to the sleep of the snorer's bed partner is the most common and irritating side effect.

OSA is a much more severe, life-threatening, condition in which the sufferer stops breathing repeatedly throughout the night. As a result, oxygen saturation levels in the bloodstream often drop to dangerous levels. Sleep patterns are disrupted because the body must fight to breathe and frequently arouse the sufferer from sleep. Besides fatigue there are much more grave health consequences associated with OSA that you should be aware of so that you understand the necessity of proper OSA treatment.

## SERIOUSNESS OF OSA

Having Obstructive Sleep Apnea means that you actually stop breathing multiple times during the night. The lack of oxygen to your brain jolts your body awake briefly so you can take the necessary breath and then fall back to sleep. This apneic episode has very serious health ramifications. Your brain, heart and other organs are being oxygen starved repeatedly throughout the night, usually between 5-15 times per hour! Sleep patterns like this mean you're limiting rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, the essential sleep stage that helps recharge your



body's internal battery. The next day, your body compensates for its lack of rest, resulting in fatigue and poor productivity. During the day your concentration is easily broken and you suffer from daytime sleepiness and irritability.

You may realize that your productivity suffers at work, but what you may not realize is what's going on inside your body. Specifically, when you stop breathing your body experiences a drastic drop in oxygen saturation, from 97% to as low as 60%. This can lead to significant health problems and even death.

### *Here's a list of the most common concerns that untreated sleep apnea can cause:*

**Car Accidents** - a deadly side effect of daytime sleepiness, people with untreated OSA are 5 times more likely to fall asleep behind the wheel.

**Heart Disease/Stroke** - the low oxygen levels caused by obstructed sleep apnea stress the body, making suffers of OSA more likely to have a heart attack or die in the middle of the night. The oxygen disruption makes it hard for your brain to regulate the flow of blood to arteries and to the brain itself.

**High Blood Pressure** - frequent awakenings during the night cause hormonal systems to become hyperactive, which can result in a dangerous elevation in blood pressure.

**Weight Gain** - obstructive sleep apnea goes hand-in-hand with obesity because fatty deposits in the neck block adequate breathing during sleep increasing your risk of OSA. In addition, the lack of oxygen and sleep deprivation causes the endocrine system to increase production of several hormones. Specifically, the hormone Cortisol which increases your appetite and the hormone Ghrelin which increases cravings for carbohydrates and sweets. Both of which contribute to weight gain. Thus resulting in a vicious cycle of sleep deprivation and weight increase.

**Type 2 Diabetes** - since Type 2 Diabetes is often brought on by obesity, up to 80% of diabetics also suffer from some form of obstructed sleep apnea. Research shows that sleep deprivation can be a contributing factor to insulin resistance, which is the body's early warning system indicating susceptibility to Type 2 Diabetes.

**Other serious health concerns that can be linked to OSA:** depression, gastric reflux, insomnia, muscle pain, loss of short term memory, fibromyalgia, cardiac arrhythmia, intellectual deterioration, inefficient metabolism, severe anxiety, memory and concentration impairment, mood swings, and impotence.



Drs. Rich and Lacy Gilbert

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### TREATMENT OPTIONS

Although OSA can create severe health impairments - treatment can prevent most of these risks. It is even possible to cut down on blood pressure medication because getting adequate rest can lower blood pressure. Treatment is crucial. Often times that means CPAP therapy, a machine that sits beside your night table and applies positive airway pressure to the respiratory system to prevent apnea episodes. CPAP therapy has proven to be very effective in the treatment of OSA when used as prescribed. However, due to the invasive and obtrusive nature of CPAP therapy patient compliance is extremely poor. As a result, industry leaders now accept dental appliance therapy as standard practice.

In 2006, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommended that oral appliances be used as a first line of treatment for mild to moderate OSA. FDA approved oral appliances used to treat OSA work by advancing the mandible, thus holding the jaw in a forward position. This increases the free space in the back of the throat and prevents upper airway tissues from obstructing and causing an apnea event.

### SCREENING FOR OSA AT THE DENTIST OFFICE

Attentive dentists are in a perfect position to screen for OSA because they routinely visualize their patients' upper airway, which may show an anatomical predisposition for obstruction. Additionally, dentists are privy to subjective signs and symptoms of OSA and can screen as part of medical history updates.

Often times, patients who believe they "snore" may in fact actually suffer from the more serious condition of OSA. If you or your bed partner suffers from symptoms of OSA, please call us to learn more about how oral appliances can prevent potentially serious health conditions that occur as a result of sleep apnea.

Dr. Rich Gilbert is well versed in all the different sleep apnea oral appliances available. After a brief consultation, Dr. Gilbert will explain which type of oral appliance will best suit you and why. All of Pelican Landing Dental's oral appliances are completely custom fabricated from molds of your mouth and are thereby effective and easy to wear. Most find that it typically only takes a few nights to get used to wearing. Soon, you won't ever want to sleep without it.



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# Personalized Hormone Therapy via PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOUNDING

**B**io-identical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT) is the process of restoring and maintaining hormone balance with hormones that are biologically identical to hormones produced by the human body. BHRT is commonly used to treat menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, vaginal dryness, mood swings, sleep disorders, decreased libido, and an increased risk of fractures due to osteoporosis.

The use of hormones that are structurally identical to those found in the body has seen a steady increase. These hormones are known as bio-identical hormones. Many believe that bio-identical hormones have fewer side effects than synthetic hormones. The synthetic hormones contain side chains that alter their chemical structure in relation to hormones found in the body. The goals of BHRT include relief from symptoms due to decreasing hormone production, protection from conditions that natural hormones usually protect against, and the establishment of hormonal balance. The hormones are primarily derived from the yam and soybean plants before being altered in the lab to create the bio-identical hormones. BHRT has been used for over 40 years in Europe and has been extensively studied.

Bio-identical hormones have been available and used in hormone treatments for decades. They can be custom compounded to match each patient's unique needs and body chemistry, instead of the "one size fits all" approach used with off-the-shelf hormones



Hormone therapy requires appropriate testing, examination and discussion of symptoms with a healthcare practitioner. The pharmacists at Creative Scripts can answer your questions about bio-identical hormones and how BHRT can help with hormone imbalances such as:

- Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)
- Infertility
- Postpartum Depression
- Menopause and Perimenopause
- Female Sexual Dysfunction
- Testosterone Deficiency
- Osteoporosis
- Chronic Fatigue
- Fibromyalgia
- Endometriosis
- Andropause (Male Menopause)
- Hypothyroidism
- Hypoadrenalism

Hormone replacement therapy via medications made in a compounding pharmacy, specifically targeted for particular chemical deficiencies can help balance hormone levels within the body.

Nutritional supplements can also help the body to regulate/process and restore hormones. While there are plenty of supplements advertised that "claim" to increase hormone levels, there are really only a few that can actually help. DHEA, pregnenolone and saw palmetto, taken in appropriate amounts after checking with your physician, can help with hormone related

symptoms. For those patients that cannot have hormones, there are other supplements that MAY help to relieve unwanted symptoms. For further information, feel free to stop by and speak with one of our knowledgeable pharmacists regarding your specific needs.

Myerlee Pharmacy offers various compounded medications and supplements. Unlike off-the-shelf medications, our prescriptions are compounded to meet your specific and individual needs, as directed by your physician. We employ state-of-the-art technology and meet or exceed the industry's strictest quality and safety standards.

No two people are exactly the same internally, which is where the benefit of being able to tailor the exact amount of each hormone needed for individuals is most beneficial.

Bio-identical hormone therapy requires experience and skill that Myerlee Pharmacy is confident in providing. Patients with the following conditions may be candidates for bio-identical hormones, so please connect with us for any of your questions.

For more information about hormone compounding and the conditions that can be treated using hormone replacement therapies, please call Myerlee Pharmacy at 239-482-3022, or speak to your physician.



  
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# “HEEL” Your Pain with Proper Footwear

By Christopher M. Cole, L.Ped

**H**eel pain is a common complaint among adults. It is often associated with having flat feet and a condition called plantar fasciitis. Many people ask what shoes are best for this condition to relieve their pain and prevent it from recurring without having to avoid their usual routines. Learn more about what factors to consider when buying the best shoes for heel pain and plantar fasciitis.

## Heel Pain and Plantar Fasciitis

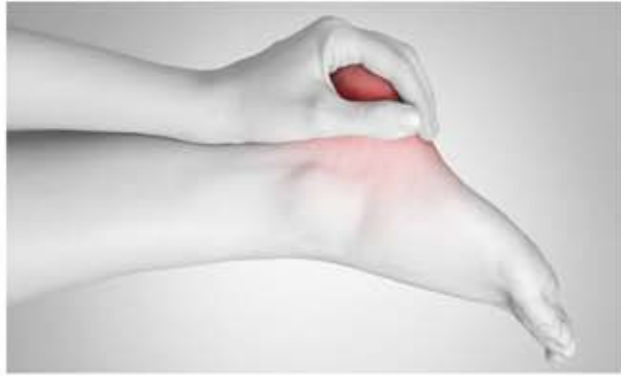
Heel pain that is more severe in the morning or after a long period of rest is characteristic of plantar fasciitis. The plantar fascia is the thick ligament which supports the bottom of the foot, just underneath the skin. When the plantar fascia is damaged and inflamed due to constant pressure and strain, plantar fasciitis develops. Heel pain associated with plantar fasciitis occurs more commonly in the morning because as one rests at night, the plantar fascia, which has been stressed during the day contracts at night, is suddenly stretched as one gets out of bed. Even long periods of rest, such as after sitting or long standing, can result in severe pain.

## What Causes Heel Pain

While the heel pain experienced by some people may be mild, to others it may be more intense and debilitating. Factors that increase one's risk for heel pain include:

- having flat feet, a condition where the medial arch of the foot collapses and stretches the plantar fascia
- over pronation of the feet, where one's weight is unduly placed in the inner side of the foot
- having tight, weak calf muscles which pull on the heel and stretches the fascia
- other conditions like arthritis, gout and nerve problems
- walking barefoot
- wearing incorrect shoes

**What to Consider when Selecting Footwear**  
Shoes that do not fit properly and those whose soles are too soft are more likely to result in heel pain.



Incorrectly fitted shoes and shoe types that do not offer enough support to the arch of the feet can contribute to over pronation, which can eventually lead to the collapse of the arch. People with plantar fasciitis need to wear better quality shoes that can support their medial arch.

Selecting appropriate shoes for plantar fasciitis depends on the degree of over pronation and what type of activity the shoes are going to be used. Active people, like runners with flat feet normally over pronate, so they need motion-control shoes that control pronation.

The more the foot over pronates, the greater pronation control technology is required to set the foot back to its neutral position. There are mild, moderate, and maximum support shoes available for people of various frame sizes who demonstrate a minimum to moderate over pronation. Motion-control shoes are ideal for runners with maximum over pronation. They are also good for runners with large frames and exhibit moderate over pronation.

Arch Support/Orthotics are critical when addressing heel pain, especially plantar fasciitis. Most supportive shoes, although offering motion control, and medial support, do not actually support the arch inside the shoe. It is the combination of the correct shoe and correct arch support for each individual foot type that truly addresses the problem. Supportive shoes can slow over-pronation and offer stability, but it is the arch support that actually regulates how much you pronate.

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In buying the best type of shoe for heel pain and plantar fasciitis, it is important to remember that there is not one type of shoe that best for everyone. People have different foot structures, varying degrees of over pronation and different types of activities. To customize your shoes further, you may need to place some orthotic device or an over-the-counter arch support to fully relieve your pain.

With so many footwear options available, it is difficult knowing which brands and types are best for your feet. The footwear experts at Foot Solutions in Estero perform complimentary Pedorthic evaluations in order to properly assess your feet and arches, as well as your balance and gait. This thorough evaluation is needed to accurately determine which footwear can eliminate your pain and is best for your needs.

Foot Solutions Estero not only offers premium off the shelf arch supports and orthotics, they can make them custom to each individual and to the precise differences between ones feet. After a thorough one-on-one evaluation including the use of state of the art scanners, foot solutions ensures each client receives the proper shoe and right arch support. If you are experiencing any foot problems and have questions, please contact the staff at Foot Solutions in Estero. They are located at 21301 S. Tamiami Trail – Ste 300, Estero FL 33928 and can be reached at **(239) 495-8911**.



**Christopher M. Cole, L.Ped**

Chris is a Licensed Board Certified Pedorthist and owner of Foot Solutions Estero, a BOC Accredited Facility. Chris graduated from Clemson University and has taken advanced course study in Mass Position Theory, CAD/CAM Technology for Prescription Foot Orthotics, Pedorthic Care of Diabetic Foot, Heel Pain Syndrome, Obesity among older Americans, Fall Prevention, and Shoe Construction and Modification.





# Hope for Irritable Bowel Syndrome Sufferers

By Zorayda "Jiji" Torres, MD

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common gastrointestinal disorder that manifests as abdominal pain or discomfort, spasms, bloating, gas, and abnormal bowel movements with alternating diarrhea and constipation. It affects up to 20% of adults and even children, and is usually a frustrating problem for those afflicted. The usual stool and blood tests, and even invasive tests like upper endoscopy and colonoscopy, are frequently unrevealing of causes.

IBS has multiple causes including stress, food sensitivities/allergies, repeated antibiotic use, parasites, insufficient beneficial gut bacteria, overgrowth of bacteria in the small intestine, and hormonal changes. Frequently, IBS cases start with a bacterial, viral, and parasitic infection, and then the symptoms continue but no cause is found on routine testing. Patient may suffer for months to years and eventually accept this condition as untreatable.



My practice of functional medicine greatly values the health of the gut so I seriously pursue cases of chronic IBS even if previous conventional tests have not yielded any helpful information. I order comprehensive digestive and stool analysis with parasite screening, usually on 3 days of stool samples, from special laboratory tests in the country. The yield with these specialized stool tests is so much better. In one study, *Blastocystis hominis*, a parasite, was found four times more in IBS patients, and symptoms resolved in 80% of IBS patients when this parasite was treated.

An entity that can cause IBS that is often overlooked is one called Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth, or SIBO for short. SIBO is a condition in which abnormally large numbers of bacteria are present in the small intestine, and the types of bacteria in the small intestine resemble more the bacteria in the colon than those of the small intestine. Common symptoms of SIBO are gassiness and bloating, diarrhea, greasy stools, weight loss, and nutrient deficiencies (e.g. Vitamin B12, A, D and E, iron, thiamine, niacin). Causes of SIBO include low stomach acid, use of acid-blocking drugs, poor gut motility from diseases like diabetes, collagen vascular diseases, immune deficiency states, bowel surgeries, and advancing age. SIBO can lead to many health problems like food intolerances and sensitivities, uncomfortable bloating after meals, nutrient and fat malabsorption, inflammation like arthritis and neuropathies, chronic fatigue, and restless leg syndrome. Therefore, diagnosing and successfully treating SIBO is important. Diagnosis is not through stool tests but through breath tests that measure gases emitted after ingesting lactulose, a sugar solution.

Treatment of SIBO is targeted to the underlying cause, and can include antibiotic therapy, herbs, prokinetic agents, removal of acid-blocking drugs (if safe to do), use of digestive enzymes and hydrochloric acid supplements, stress management, and dietary changes (like FODMAPs and SCD diets).



In conclusion, irritable bowel syndrome is a common entity that is frustrating for patients and conventional doctors to evaluate and treat as it has many possible but elusive causes. Hidden parasitic infections, imbalance or overgrowth of gut bacteria in the small intestines are among diagnosable and treatable causes. These conditions, left untreated, can lead to more health problems. Therefore, do not give up if you have irritable bowel syndrome and have not found answers even after exhaustive conventional medicine consults. Seek the opinion of a functional medicine physician like myself. I can offer you highly scientific tests that often yield more results, and treatment modalities that make sense and provide hope.



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*Dr. Torres is a board-certified internist with 17 years of experience. She knows the limitations of conventional internal medicine. Functional medicine is a new way of navigating through a person's illness. Its main goal is to find the root causes of diseases and tackle those causes, rather than just naming the disease and prescribing the latest FDA-approved drug or procedure.*



# Compression Devices 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](http://www.AcuteWoundCare.com) or call

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and speak with a specialist.



# Ladies, Find Out What the New Subspecialty “Urogynecology” Means to You



Incontinence and pelvic floor problems are remarkably common but many women are reluctant to receive help because of the embarrassment associated with these conditions. Until recently, when women would seek help for these conditions there were few good options to treat them. Due to the tremendous advancements made in the last decade in the diagnosis and treatment of these conditions a new subspecialty of OB/Gyn was created called Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery (A.K.A. Urogynecology).

## What is Urogynecology?


Many women experience problems that overlap between the fields of gynecology and urology and they often bounce back and forth between the two specialties. Urogynecology bridges that gap and allows for both of these issues to be addressed by one physician. The field of Urogynecology is a subspecialty within Obstetrics and Gynecology and is dedicated to the study and treatment of pelvic floor disorders in women. If you suffer from any of the following symptoms, you may benefit from a consultation with a Urogynecologist.

## Expert Treatment for the Following Symptoms:

- **Incontinence:** Loss of bladder or bowel control.
- **Prolapse:** Displacement of the pelvic organs (uterus, bladder and rectum) beyond the normal position of the vaginal walls. Symptoms include a visible bulge and pelvic pressure. This condition is sometimes referred to as a "dropped bladder."
- **Overactive bladder symptoms:** Frequent need to urinate, urgency, incontinence and nighttime frequency.
- **Emptying Disorders:** Difficulty urinating or moving bowels.
- **Pelvic (or bladder) Pain:** Discomfort, burning or spasm within the bladder, urethra or vagina. May also manifest as pain with sexual intercourse.
- **Bowel Control Conditions:** Constipation and bowel control issues/incontinence.

Board certification means that a Urogynecologist has obtained training and experience beyond that of a general

## Joseph Gauta M.D. Board Certified Urogynecologist



Dr. Gauta is now the first physician in S.W. Florida dual board certified in Urogynecology and Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Gauta's practice, The Florida Bladder Institute, is solely dedicated to Urogynecology. One out of every six women suffers from overactive bladder and half of all women will suffer from pelvic organ prolapse. A challenge for women seeking treatment is that they would go to a urologist for one problem, a gynecologist for another and a gastroenterologist for another. Dr. Gauta explains "A Urogynecologist has the skill and experience to assess the entire pelvic region including the uterus, bladder, vagina, rectum as well as the muscles, ligaments, connective tissue and nerves that support those systems. Evaluating your pelvic system as a whole ensures the best treatment and outcome". Some of the newer treatment options include bio-feedback, electrical stimulation, Botox, and minimally invasive outpatient surgery. In addition to providing the most advanced medical care for his patients, Dr. Gauta is a preceptor for Boston Scientific, Medtronic and Olympus and trains other physicians from around the world on how to do the most advanced Urogynecology procedures. He is the recipient of the prestigious Castle Connolly's Top Doctors award, and is amongst the top 1% of physicians in the country who are honored with the Patient's Choice Award for 5 years in a row. Dr. Gauta received his training at Tulane University in New Orleans mentored by world renowned Urogynecologists David Herbert M.D. and Thomas Elkins M.D.





OB/Gyn or Urologist. Urogynecologist deal only with the evaluation and treatment of conditions that affect the female pelvic organs, muscles and connective tissue that support these organs. The additional training focuses on the surgical and non-surgical treatment of non-cancerous gynecologic problems.

**When Should I See a Urogynecologist?**

If you're struggling with pelvic floor dysfunction, pain, or incontinence, you should seek treatment immediately. Consulting with a Urogynecologist can help to achieve an accurate diagnosis of your condition and provide information on the full spectrum of treatment options available. Specialized training enables a Urogynecologist to blend elements of gynecology, urology and gastroenterology to treat the entire pelvic floor.

Treatments may include conservative (non-surgical) or outpatient surgical therapy to cure or relieve your symptoms. While your primary care physician, Urologist or OB/Gyn may have knowledge about these problems, a Urogynecologist can manage all these pelvic floor conditions comprehensively.

**Urogynecology Treatment Options**

A Urogynecologist can recommend a variety of therapies to cure or relieve symptoms of prolapse, urinary, gas or fecal incontinence, or other pelvic floor dysfunction symptoms. He may advise conservative (non-surgical) or surgical therapy depending on your wishes, the severity of your condition and your general health. Conservative options include medications, pelvic exercises, behavioral and/or dietary modifications and vaginal devices (also called pessaries).

Biofeedback and Electric Stimulation are two newer treatment modalities that your Urogynecologist may recommend. Safe and effective outpatient surgical procedures are also utilized by the Urogynecologist to treat incontinence and prolapse. A Urogynecologist will discuss all of the options that are available to treat your specific problem(s) before you are asked to make any treatment decisions.

It's easy to become embarrassed by pelvic and bladder disorders, but you do not have to suffer with these problems or associated pain. Florida Bladder Institute provides compassionate, thorough urogynecological care for all women. Whether you face pelvic issues as a result of aging, delivering babies, illness, or trauma, we can provide proper treatment and counseling so you can enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle.

Call **239-449-7979** today to schedule an appointment with Joseph Gauta M.D. to learn how proper urogynecological care can benefit you. Don't suffer in silence any longer; there is help available.

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# World Autism Awareness

**T**he month of April is dedicated to Autism Awareness. By declaring April 2 as the official World Autism Awareness Day the United Nations hopes to bring the world's attention to autism, which is a disorder that affects tens of millions of people.

By now everyone has heard of Autism and chances are you know someone either directly or indirectly that has been diagnosed with the disorder. For those who are unsure as to what Autism actually is and what some of the signs and symptoms are, please continue to read below.

## Basic explanation of Autism:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Autism is a form of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD's), which are a group of developmental disabilities that cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that typically lasts throughout a person's lifetime.

It is reported that an average of 1 out of 110 children in the United States have some form of ASD. Studies have shown boys are more susceptible to having Autism. In fact, one in 70 boys and one in 315 girls are diagnosed with Autism every year. Alarming, government statistics have found the rate of Autism is rising from 10-17 percent annually. According to the CDC, this is the most prevalent developmental disorder to date.

Autism is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain. Scientists do not know yet exactly what causes these differences for most people with ASD. However, some people with ASD have a known difference, such as a genetic condition. There are multiple causes of ASD, although most are not yet known.

## Signs & Symptoms:

There is often nothing about how people with ASD look that sets them apart from other people, but they may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other people. The learning, thinking, and problem-solving abilities of people with ASD can range



from gifted to severely challenged. Some people with ASD need a lot of help in their daily lives; others need less.

## Possible red flags, according to the CDC a person with ASD might:

- Not respond to their name by 12 months of age
- Not point at objects to show interest (point at an airplane flying over) by 14 months
- Not play "pretend" games (pretend to "feed" a doll) by 18 months
- Avoid eye contact and want to be alone
- Have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings
- Have delayed speech and language skills
- Repeat words or phrases over and over (echolalia)
- Give unrelated answers to questions
- Get upset by minor changes
- Have obsessive interests
- Flap their hands, rock their body, or spin in circles
- Have unusual reactions to the way things sound, smell, taste, look, or feel

## Screening & Diagnosis:

Since there are no medical test (for example; blood test), to determine if a child has Autism it is sometimes hard to diagnose. The doctor will look at the child's behavior and development to make a diagnosis.

Children with ASD develop at different rates in different areas. They may have delays in language, social, and learning skills, while their ability to walk and move around are about the same as other children their age. They might be very good at putting puzzles together or solving computer problems, but they might have trouble with social activities like talking or making friends. Children with an ASD might also learn a hard skill before they learn an easy one. For example, a child might be able to read long words but not be able to tell you what sound a "b" makes.

Children develop at their own pace, so it can be difficult to tell exactly when a child will learn a particular skill. But, there are age-specific developmental milestones used to measure a child's social and emotional progress in the first few years of life

## Is there a cure for Autism?

According to AutismSpeaks.com unfortunately, experts have been unable to find a cure for Autism just yet. There is hope though; Scientist are working hard every day to help find a solution for the growing problem.

If you are concerned about a loved one's behavior and development, please seek professional medical advice and address your concerns with a physician. The sooner a diagnosis is made, the more successful therapies can be.

Please join Urgent Care Centers of SWFL in wearing blue as often as possible during the month of April to help support Autism Awareness!!!



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# PREVENT SURGERY with Knee Injections

By Physicians Rehabilitation

**T**he knee is notorious for pain and injury. Knee pain can occur from an injury or a condition like osteoarthritis, and can impact activities of everyday life. There are many remedies for this condition, including rest, anti-inflammatory medications and using knee braces. For individuals whose knee pain progresses or does not respond to other types of treatment, injections may be an option to help relieve pain and discomfort without requiring surgery.

When regular treatments are not working well enough such as medication management with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories along with physical therapy, intra-articular injections can be a great option.

There is a substance known as hyaluronic and that is naturally found in the synovial fluid of human knee joints. It works to lubricate and cushion the knee joint, being the human equivalent of "motor oil". In 1997 the FDA approved the first hyaluronic acid preparation made from rooster combs for usage in knee injections for osteoarthritis.

Currently there are multiple FDA approved hyaluronic acid preparations, which are all extracted from rooster combs. They have trade names such as Hyalgan, Synvisc and Orthovisc. While each company counts the benefits of their individual product, research studies have shown that all of them work consistently well while no one particular brand has shown superiority.

These injections are also called viscosupplementation as they restore the normal viscoelastic properties to synovial fluid. This can help protect cartilage, lubricate the joint and improve the shock absorbing effect of the knee. It is also suspected that hyaluronic acid injections may protect cartilage cells and actually promote the formation of more cartilage. This is the subject of a lot of speculation and has not been definitively proven.



Numerous clinical studies have been performed regarding the effectiveness of hyaluronic acid formulations. One of the largest studies in the US showed beneficial effects in 80% of patients for over six months it appears that the combination of joint lubrication along with the anti-inflammatory effects that both come from hyaluronic acid work together to create such effective results.

Knee injections are typically extremely effective. Specifically, hyaluronic acid injections have shown over 80% satisfactory results as well which was maintained for over a six-month time period. These results are often good enough to delay the need for a knee replacement surgery or avoid it altogether. If you suffer from the pain due to osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis or post traumatic arthritis, Physicians Rehabilitation can help.



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# LIVING WITH CATARACTS

By Jonathan M. Frantz, MD, FACS

**M**any of us feel that our eyesight is the most precious of all of our senses. How beautiful is it to look into the eyes of a child, to see the sunrise or sunset in brilliant color. Watching plays, movies, TV or simply reading a book are all things we value greatly. When a cataract develops, it interferes with our ability to enjoy these things. Even more devastating, vision loss from cataracts or other causes can take away our independence, making it impossible to drive to work, the grocery store, or to visit a friend or family member.

Cataracts are a major cause of preventable blindness, and yet many people aren't sure what a cataract is or how it is treated. When surgery is needed, keep in mind that not all cataract surgeons possess the same skill, nor do they have the same success rate. Modern technology is critical to successful cataract surgery and lasers have superseded blades as the safest and preferred method for cataract surgery.

Technology, and surgeon skill are incredibly important factors in surgical outcomes. Think back to the technology that we had 20 years ago. I remember back then, my cell phone came with a suitcase to house all of the required electronics. Now, cell phones are compact and possess such great advances in capabilities. One would never think about going back to the technology of 20 years ago, when there was no Internet!

Yet, many surgeons continue to perform cataract surgery with the same old techniques and technology that is 20 years old. We now have the capability with skillful microsurgical techniques, lasers, advanced measuring devices and the latest technology in intraocular lenses to not just remove a cataract, but to do it in such a way as to minimize one's need for glasses. Our Cataract Refractive Suite incorporates the Bladeless Laser Cataract surgical technique into a system of highly advanced measuring and surgical planning devices such as VERION, ORA with VerifEye, along with the Centurion system that has the most advanced fluidics in the world to make cataract surgery even more safe.

Our commitment to you at Frantz EyeCare is to stay on the cutting edge of technology to provide you the best possible results with care and compassion. It is very gratifying to me that I can restore people's sight every day. It is a gift that has been given to me to be able to do these wonderful things and offer these revolutionary technologies to the people of Southwest Florida. We are honored by the trust and confidence that people have in us.

Eyesight is truly a precious commodity and there are more sunsets, and a life full of beautiful pictures and memories waiting. So, if you have been diagnosed or think you may have cataracts, call our office for a cataract evaluation to learn about the difference between traditional cataract surgery and Bladeless Laser Cataract Surgery, as well as the various intraocular lens options that are available to you. We also host informative seminars throughout the year. These are listed on our website at [www.BetterVision.net](http://www.BetterVision.net) where you can also schedule your appointment. You may also call our main office in Fort Myers at 239.418.0999.



*Jonathan M. Frantz, MD, FACS, is named in The Guide to America's Top Ophthalmologists. He and his team of doctors at Frantz EyeCare offer a broad spectrum of patient-focused comprehensive care from eye exams and eyewear to bladeless laser cataract removal, treatment of eye diseases, bladeless WaveLight LASIK laser vision correction, and eyelid surgery with office locations in Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Punta Gorda, Lehigh Acres, and Naples.*

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# SAFETY FIRST

By W.L. "Hunter" Huntley, III, HAS., BC-HIS

**R**aising awareness is a primary concern for individuals with untreated hearing loss. Hearing inadequacies can cause a plethora of problems. Complications from not hearing "properly" can sometimes jeopardize an individual's ability to hear in complex or dangerous situations, or even locate and identify which direction sounds are coming from. Simply walking across the street can be perilous, or determining the direction and speed of oncoming traffic. Locating an approaching siren from emergency or law enforcement vehicles is imperative. In addition, other people's safety and lives need to be considered as well. Injuring or causing a fatality would be devastating for all parties involved. Such tragedies could be avoided if the instigator of the unfortunate accident was able to hear more accurately, and reacted swiftly enough to prevent the mishap from ever occurring in the first place.

Hearing loss can occur in a multitude of ways, or even a variety of ways for the same individual. Heredity, noise exposure, infections, high fevers, blows to the head, ototoxic medications, surgical procedures, stroke, diabetes, heart problems, high blood pressure, thyroid issues; or even the natural deterioration from aging (presbycusis).

People still working find they are more at risk to perform all the necessary duties, or even keep their jobs by underperforming, making their status



on the job more uncertain. Recent studies show employees with untreated hearing loss earn significantly less on average, than those that wore hearing instruments. This could have a huge and devastating impact on the lifestyle and well-being for thousands of families by putting the bread winners career in jeopardy.

Finally, Johns Hopkins Medical University concluded in recent studies: individuals with even mild hearing loss are twice as likely to contract dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Those with severe impairment were five times as likely to suffer from the aforementioned maladies. This is due to the auditory cortex of the brain (responsible for interpreting speech) losing function and atrophying due to lack of "proper" stimulation.

Since brain atrophy is the loss or damage of brain cells, there is no treatment available to cure the complication. This means that the illness must be prevented with the use of hearing devices and an active, healthy lifestyle.

This shows one more reason why treating hearing loss should not be overlooked. Hearing instrument technology has vastly improved over the years, and people with hearing loss can find devices that best suit their daily activities easily.

Having a simple hearing screening can determine whether or not your hearing is still within normal limits. The National Better Speech and Hearing Institute recommend an annual check up for everyone, especially for people over fifty-five years of age, or if you suspect your hearing may not be as good as it used to be. The only way to be sure is to have a hearing screening. Remember, early detection is the key to solving most problems.

**If you, or anyone you know may have a problem, call (239)997-8288 for a Free hearing screening today!**



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W.L. "Hunter" Huntley, III, HAS, BC-HIS, Board Certified, attended Edinboro State College, Edinboro, PA, on a football scholarship and finished his education at the University of FL before entering training with Beltone Electronics in Chicago, IL. He was a Beltone hearing instrument dispenser from 1986 to 1992. Hunter is also a 2 time brain cancer survivor in 1993 & 1994. He has operated Leonardi Hearing Center, Inc., since 1994. Voted one of the best Hearing Healthcare Professionals in the Nation by the Hearing Review magazine for two years in a row. He is also a Hearing Healthcare member in good standing with the International Hearing Society for over 20 years.

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# LIVING WITH IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

By James J. O'Mailia, M.D., Gastroenterologist

I am often asked by my patients about their symptoms of **Irritable bowel Syndrome, or IBS**. I have known of this affliction for nearly 40 years, since I first entered Medical School, and have seen it used to explain multiple gastrointestinal symptoms – sometimes accurately, many times inaccurately. IBS has had various other names: spastic colon, nervous colon and mucous colitis – in order to describe symptoms of diarrhea, constipation, alternating diarrhea and constipation, abdominal cramps, etc. Once diagnosed accurately, IBS is treatable, but not curable, not at this time. IBS can occur at any age and present itself seemingly without rhyme or reason. It is an all-too-common malady that ranks just below the common cold as a reason for absenteeism at work and school. It is a misery that can lead to a distressed lifestyle.

IBS is not a disease, like Ulcerative Colitis or Crohn's Disease, nor is it Colon Cancer, and it is not life-threatening. As its name states, IBS is a "syndrome" involving symptoms, not necessarily the structural health of the colon. In fact, many patients with IBS have perfectly normal structural anatomy of their entire gastrointestinal tract. As an analogy, it's like buying a new Ferrari (structural anatomy), but has no gasoline (functional symptoms). Thus, as disruptive as IBS symptoms may be, they do not evolve into a significant threat or complication.

Although everyone has had a bout with IBS – before a first date, at a job interview, meeting a deadline or onstage at a public performance event – *true IBS sufferers* endure symptoms on a chronic, almost daily basis, regardless of circumstances. Besides diarrhea and constipation, other symptoms include bloating, excessive gas, increased mucus in stools, abdominal cramps and pain, and the urgent need to have a bowel movement. Although these same symptoms can be brought on by poor diet and bad habits like smoking and excess alcohol, *true IBS symptoms* usually worsen after eating and are relieved by a bowel movement or passing gas. They generally don't occur while asleep, but can awaken sufferers in early morning with an urgency to have a bowel movement. At other times, they will have several bowel movements with a sense

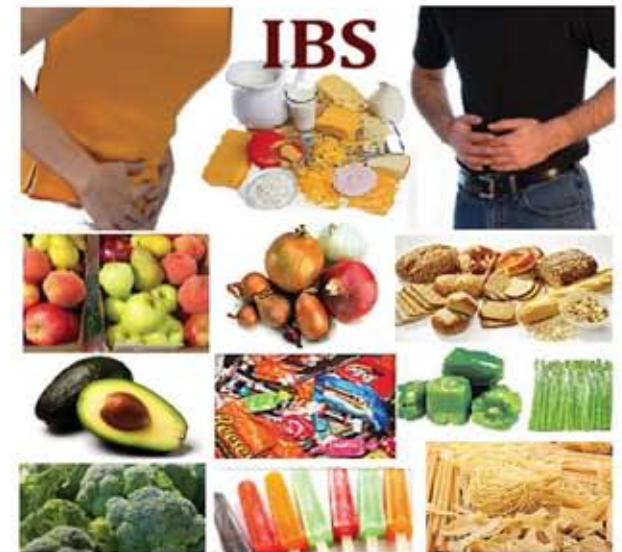
of incomplete evacuation, sometimes followed by hard, dry stools, like "hard pebbles" or like "pencil-thin". The symptoms of IBS wax and wane, when under stress, when least expected, and then retreat until the next inevitable bout.

To live with IBS, patients will alter their lifestyles routinely. They will prepare for an important event by not eating for a length of time prior to the event, or they will take anti-diarrhea therapy prophylactically, to ensure confident control. They will study the layout of a restaurant or store to learn the location of the bathroom. They will calculate the distance from a destination back to their home should they need to leave in a hurry if a bout comes on, with the nearly incapacitating cramping, abdominal pain, nausea and sometimes vomiting due to IBS.

Despite extensive research and clinical studies, the full medical understanding of the causes of IBS remains elusive. What we do know is that the core cause of IBS symptoms is what is termed "dysfunctional gut motility", which is a disorganized squeezing of the gut, and not a more ordered, rhythmic movement - like a farmer milking a cow.

Extensive IBS studies point to hormonal and chemical neurotransmitters as the source of the dysfunction, but much more research is needed. Stress clearly plays a role in IBS, as it can trigger the symptoms. One important distinction: IBS is *not* "in your head", but rather "in your gut". It is real. Although stress relievers (anti-stress medications and quieting techniques) can help alleviate the symptoms of IBS, symptoms many times present themselves absent of stress.

To treat IBS, your doctor must first obtain an accurate diagnosis. Since there is no specific test for this, all other afflictions with similar symptoms must be ruled out. Diagnosing IBS may require a combination of history and physical examination, laboratory tests, x-rays and possibly a flexible sigmoidoscopy/colonoscopy to "see" the lining of the colon. If the diagnosis is IBS, treatment can begin.



There is no specific treatment for all presentations of IBS. However, your doctor can significantly help control your symptoms and therein improve your quality of life. Other than the aforementioned stress relievers, IBS is treated with diet changes and symptom relievers.

A recently developed dietary plan, known as the Low FODMAP diet, restricts certain carbohydrates and can drastically improve symptoms. Yet, in my years of treating IBS, I have found that diet changes are always individualized with basic, common-sense eating rather than purely micromanaging a diet verbatim, as some patients on so-called "healthy diets" can have the worst IBS symptoms. Medications help relieve symptoms, but are constantly changing - and what works for some patients may not work for others.

It generally takes time and effort between the doctor and the patient to reach a good outcome. This includes education, understanding and determination in working together, and staying compliant. As IBS research continues to find an absolute cure, there is the other great hope that better therapies, including diet, natural products and standard medications, will one day lead to maximized control of symptoms and *living without IBS*.

*Be well and stay well.*



**JAMES J. O'MAILIA, M.D., P.A.**  
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# HOW TO CHOOSE A PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

**S**electing a primary care physician (PCP) is one of the most important health decisions you'll make. And thanks in part to the Affordable Care Act, which has dramatically increased the number of people with health insurance, more people than ever are now searching for a physician they can call their own.

Your primary care doctor is your medical "home." It's the doctor you visit for most medical needs, including wellness visits and preventive exams, non-emergency illnesses like earaches and sore throats, as well as chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure. They will assess your symptoms, direct you to the right specialist, if necessary, and oversee all of the care you get.

Here are five tips for choosing a primary care physician:

### 1. Find a Physician who is Board Certified in Family Practice.

Family practice physicians treat patients of all ages, from newborns to the elderly and have training in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, and Psychiatry. They treat a wide variety of conditions, and often can also treat ailments you'd normally see a specialist for, like sports injuries or women's health needs.

### 2. Verify the Physician is "In-Network" with your insurance, or has affordable self-pay fees.

Ensuring that you select an "in-network" doctor will help you avoid a surprise "out-of-network" charge or having to pay in full out of pocket because the doctor you've selected doesn't accept your insurance plan.

### 3. Ask for referrals.

Many people feel most comfortable visiting a physician who is recommended by someone they know, like a family member, coworker or friend. Google can also be your friend. Most doctors have at least some degree of online presence and a website that can give you valuable insights.

### 4. The best Physicians are the caring ones.

A caring physician: Listens to patients' concerns, makes eye contact, and asks and cares about patients' personal stories; discusses the plan for the visit and the future, offers a warm smile and empathizes; and avoids or explains unfamiliar medical terms.

### 5. Visit the Doctor.

Nothing can really give you a feel for whether you've selected the right doctor like an office visit and a face-to-face meeting. Be sure you feel comfortable in the office and with the physician and nurses.



Your primary care physician should be someone you trust and can rely on to help manage your healthcare.

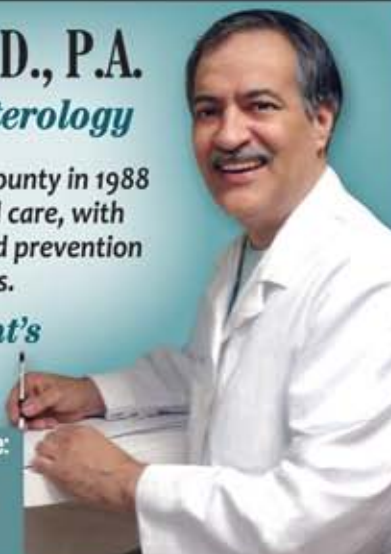
Don't wait until you get sick to choose a PCP. Primary Care Physicians may see their patients regularly and look for symptoms a patient may not notice. For example, a routine health exam may uncover conditions such as high blood pressure or even hormonal imbalances due to glandular problems. Health problems like these can go unnoticed by the patient for years and could result in serious chronic health issues. Annual exams may help your PCP guide you toward healthy lifestyle habits that may decrease the likelihood that you'll need expensive specialty care.

Developing a relationship with your Primary Care Physician can help keep illnesses at bay. Remember the old adage: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.



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# Cardiac Care Group, LLC



## WHY ARE CARDIAC STRESS TESTS SO IMPORTANT?

Louis J. Scala, M.D.

**W**hen a diagnosis needs to be made looking for heart disease of any kind, a cardiologist's most important resource is the stress test. When performing stress tests, doctors must work with specially trained technicians to achieve the best possible results. There are several different types of stress tests, and each one has its own individual requirements and conditions. These tests influence the integrity of the diagnosis. One thing doctors want to discover is just how much stress the heart can take before it impacts the behavior or functionality of the heart. The exercise stress test, while best suited for a specific application, is the one that most people are familiar with.

The heart must have regular capacity but also the ability to function well, even in stressful conditions with an excessive load. There are many reasons a doctor orders a stress test, but all of them are to ensure you have a normal, healthy heart.

Nowadays, the medical field uses the non-nuclear, or exercise stress test quite often. This involves the use of treadmills, stationary bikes, and other equipment. During the test, leads are connected to the chest to measure the electrical activity of the heart. An electrocardiogram will help determine whether the heart is healthy and normal. The electrocardiogram will also reveal if there are problems with the heart.



This basic stress test is a process that is not as complex as other kinds of stress tests. During the administering of a general test such as the treadmill or bicycle test, the patient's heart will be examined via an EKG or ECG monitor. The patient walks at a decent pace on the treadmill. Over time, the treadmill speed is increased to stress the heart and raise the blood pressure, which is observed and monitored at all times. The doctor is always nearby in case of an emergency.

Another traditional kind of stress test is the nuclear stress test. This test utilizes a small amount of radioactive isotopes. The many different areas of the heart will absorb the isotope and create images that show low blood flow and heart muscle damage. This can give the doctor some indication about possible blockages.

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When a doctor is diagnosing a patient's heart, or determining whether certain treatments are effective, the nuclear test can give the doctor vital information regarding:

- the size of the chambers in the heart
- how well the heart is pumping blood
- the heart itself, whether any of it, for example muscle, is damaged
- the health of arteries that provide blood to the heart (coronary arteries), whether they have narrowed or are blocked due to coronary artery disease
- how effective a current treatment has been (heart surgery, angioplasty, medications, etc.)
- what to expect after having a heart attack.

The test may also help the doctor determine whether the patient is suitable for a cardiac rehabilitation program, and if so, how hard he/she should exercise.

It is clear that nuclear stress tests are an important tool for doctors in the diagnosis of various forms of heart disease. If you need to have one performed, then be absolutely sure that you ask as many questions as possible and that you get answers from your doctor. The more questions you ask, the better your knowledge of the situation will be as well as what your condition is.



### Our Cardiologist

*Dr. Louis J. Scala* has been voted TOP DOCTOR three consecutive years by Castle Connolly. He received his medical degree at the State University of New York Health Science Center. He completed his Residency at Brown University, and Cardiology Fellowship at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center at UCLA. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and specializes in Cardiovascular Disease.

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## HELLO FRIENDS & COLLEAGUES! ESTATE PLANNING & WHY TO AVOID JOINTLY TITLING ASSETS WITH YOUR ADULT CHILDREN?

By Steven J. Gibbs, Esq.

**T**his week's topic is about a common estate-planning blunder that may seem like common sense to many individuals and couples. Although putting the kids' names on your assets may seem like a viable strategy, this approach has some very serious drawbacks which are discussed below.

I always pose a simple fateful question when this issue arises in estate planning consultations, which goes something like, "is your son/daughter more or less responsible than you?" This question elicits a few predictable responses which range (on one end of the spectrum) from a glowing report of how accomplished and bright little Johnny is, to (the other end of the spectrum) a shake of the head and a deep sigh...enough said.

The seriousness of placing assets in the kid's names is due to the risks inherent in being young and the many life changes that can occur. Unfortunately, life changes generate risk that can jeopardize your hard earned assets. What kinds of life changes am I referring to? Well, the big risk factors include divorce, bankruptcy, IRS problems, problems with the law, injuries and illness. These life events are described below and are most likely to create chaos with your estate and livelihood in your retirement years.

### 1. Divorce

Divorce is at the top of my list because it can financially devastate the participants and generally splits the assets in half. Spouses may be deemed one of two "super creditors" along with the IRS discussed below. So if divorce happens, all the adult child's assets are in jeopardy. If a well-meaning parent placed assets in the adult child's name, it could very well be subject to the divorce and this cannot be undone.

### 2. Bankruptcy

Similar to divorce, a bankruptcy places all the adult child's assets at risk only this time it is the bankruptcy trustee who wants to take a swipe at them instead of the spouse. The same situation applies in that the parent cannot simply take the assets back.

### 3. IRS

Adult children, especially business people, can face tax problems in their lifetime and when this happens the sweeping powers of the IRS spring into action and can result in tax liens on all assets.

### 4. Legal Problems

This could be anything; however, issues such as accidents due to DUIs are the worst and civil and criminal judgments could result in judgment liens for substantial amounts of money which would again jeopardize all assets in the adult child's name.

### 5. Health Concerns and Injuries

Younger people may be subject to injuries due to an active lifestyle or may experience medical emergencies such as heart attacks and medical bills can pose substantial risk to the estate assets.

*Why does the Revocable Trust solve this problem?*

Simply put, the Revocable Trust allows the parents to retitle the assets in the name of the Trust rather than placing the adult child's name on them. The adult child or children may still be beneficiaries of the Trust and yet there is zero risk that the assets will be exposed to any of the adult child's creditors or super creditors for that matter. There are also asset protection advantages for your Trust beneficiaries so that the adult child can be protected by the Trust even after your death.

You may be asking whether all of this matters because the elderly parents would also have risks? This is a valid concern, especially where the parents may be facing the need to plan for long-term medical assistance and/or Medicaid planning. Still, the fact is that most of the risks mentioned above have been weeded out of the parents lives by the time the estate planning discussion ensued AND there are other ways to plan for long term medical care and protect the adult children by using Revocable and Irrevocable Trusts.

As always, I hope this is helpful and . . .

Until next time...

Steven J. Gibbs, Esq.



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Steven Gibbs founded the Gibbs Law Office in January 2009, committed to providing client-centered legal services.



*Steve as he would rather be called, is not your typical attorney. If you appreciate the staunch egotistical mannerism of most firms, you will be delighted with Steve's unpretentious approach to educating and then assisting his client. Instead of giving you his complacent and lofty ideas, he would rather pursue your expectations with professional conversation about resolving your concerns under the Law. It's your life and it's his job to make your legal expectations come true while using years of his guidance and knowledge.*

*Steve was admitted to the Minnesota Bar in 1999, the Florida Bar in 2007 and was recently admitted to the California bar. Keeping abreast of law changes in these three States, as well as the United States, assists him in all aspects of the types of law the firm practices.*

*Along his career path, he was an associate attorney for an insurance defense law firm; an in-house real estate negotiator for Target Corporation; and corporate counsel for Civix, LLC and Vice President for North American Properties where he was responsible for various real estate transactions, including legal issues and negotiating unresolved business issues. Prior to opening Gibbs Law Office, PLLC, he was an associate with the firm of Roberts & Engvalson, P.A. where he gained his knowledge of trusts, estate planning and Wills. He opened his own firm in 2008 and now focuses on laws that will enrich the needs of his clients throughout their lives and those of their children. The firm has developed a practice dealing only with Trusts and Estate Planning, Wills, Medicaid Planning, Elder Law, Real Estate, Business Law and Probate.*

*Quoting from Steve "I decided to practice in areas that families will need as they progress down life's path. To help them with a solid foundation that will carry them throughout their lives is a rewarding experience for me and my staff."*



# STOP DIABETES

Provided by The American Diabetes Association

**D**iabetes is a serious disease, and you probably know someone who is affected by it. Nearly 30 million\* children and adults in the U.S. are living with diabetes. About eight million of those people don't know they have it, which means they're not getting the care they need to stay healthy.

About 5% of people in the U.S. with diabetes have type 1 diabetes, in which the body attacks and destroys its insulin-producing cells. There is no way to prevent or cure type 1 diabetes at this time.

With type 2 diabetes, which represents 90-95% of all diabetes cases, diagnosis often comes 7 to 10 years after the onset of the disease, after disabling and deadly complications have had time to develop. Therefore, early diagnosis is critical to successful treatment and delaying or preventing complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney disease, stroke, amputation and early death.

Everyone should be aware of the risk factors for type 2 diabetes. People who are overweight, under active and over the age of 45 should consider themselves at risk. African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, people who have a family history of the disease, and people who have prediabetes also are at an increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

There are steps you can take to help prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. Studies indicate that it can be prevented or delayed by losing just 7 percent of body weight through regular physical activity (30 minutes a day, five days a week) and healthy eating.



To learn more about your risk for type 2 diabetes, take the American Diabetes Association's diabetes risk test at [diabetes.org/risktest2015](http://diabetes.org/risktest2015). It's free, quick and easy to share with friends and family who may also be at risk.

\*That's more than the entire populations of Alaska, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Montana,



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# “NO” Health Insurance in 2014?

## Now facing a TAX penalty? You may have a “Special Enrollment Period”

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

### You may still be able to enroll in 2015 coverage “IF”:

- You didn't know until after Open Enrollment ended on February 15, 2015 that the health care law required you and your household to have health coverage, or you didn't understand how the requirement would impact you and your household
- You owe the fee for not having coverage in 2014
- You aren't already enrolled in 2015 coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace

If all of these apply to you, you can enroll in a 2015 plan between March 15 and April 30, 2015. So there is still hope and we find that many people have gotten frustrated, received misguided information and also did not understand what Modified Adjusted Gross Income is. Working with a Qualified Licensed Market Places Insurance Agent that is licensed with multiple carriers can be a big help.

**Did you know: If you are the only person in your household:** Your yearly income is between \$11,670 and \$29,175, you may qualify for lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs for Marketplace insurance. Income up to \$46,680, you may qualify for lower premiums on a Marketplace insurance plan. **If there are 2 people in your household:** Your yearly income is between \$15,730 and \$39,325, you may qualify for lower premiums and out-of-pocket costs for Marketplace insurance. If your yearly income is up to \$62,920, you may qualify for lower premiums on a Marketplace insurance plan. The list goes on, so hopefully you get the more people in the household the more income you can earn and still qualify for premium tax credit.

Big misunderstanding is that receiving the tax credit gives you less medical coverage or less access to care and doctors. In most cases the plans offered on the Market Place (Exchange) are also offered OFF where you do not receive tax credit. Now there are more plans offered OFF of the Market Place than ON but there are many plans offered and in most cases I find my clients choose the same plan on and off, or tax credit or not. Another big misunderstanding is that your assets are considered, NO just your Modified

Adjusted Gross Income. I am not an accountant and you should check with the IRS Rules or your CPA. Good rule of thumb is it is you're W2 Wages less pre-qualified deductions, now if you own a business or receive a 1099 you can flow through losses. Again check with the IRS [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or CPA. If you miss this Special Election Period and you don't enroll in health insurance now, you may be penalized up to 2% of your earnings in 2015. Also you CAN'T BUY qualified health insurance for the rest of this year unless you have a special election period. Other Special Election Periods are loss of coverage; marriage; child birth or adoption; divorce, etc. visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) for rules, timelines and exceptions.



**This month is Alcohol Awareness Month:** The Affordable Care Act has made addiction as part of the health insurance plans. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration SAMHSA is a perfect reference source. From their website: Get the facts on alcohol and the impact abusing alcohol can have on people.

Slightly more than half of Americans aged 12 or older report being current drinkers of alcohol. SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reports that in 2013 there were 136.9 million current alcohol users aged 12 or older, with 22.9% classified

as binge drinkers and 6.3% as heavy drinkers. About 17.3 million of these, or 6.6%, met criteria for an alcohol use disorder in the past year. Excessive alcohol use, including underage drinking and binge drinking (drinking 5 or more drinks on a single occasion for men or 4 or more drinks on an occasion for women), can increase a person's risk of developing serious health problems, including brain and liver damage, heart disease, hypertension, and fetal damage in pregnant women. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), alcohol use causes 88,000 deaths a year. Many Americans begin drinking at an early age. According to the SAMHSA report Behavioral Health, United States, 2012, about 24% of eighth graders and 64% of twelfth graders used alcohol in the past year.

### According to the NSDUH:

- Men are more likely to report heavy alcohol use (binge drinking for 5 or more of the past 30 days) than women, 9.5% to 3.3%.
- People reporting two or more races had the highest rate of heavy alcohol use at 8.9%, and 7.3% of non-Hispanic whites reported heavy alcohol use. African Americans reported heavy alcohol use at 4.5%, and Hispanics reported it at 4.8%. At 2%, Asian Americans had the lowest rate of heavy alcohol use.
- Only 7.7% of adults with an alcohol use disorder received treatment in the past year.

For more information on alcohol facts and its effects on your brain and body, visit the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

For more information about the treatment of alcohol use disorders, including medication-assisted treatment, visit the Behavioral Health Treatments and Services topic. For more information about alcohol use disorders, see the Mental and Substance Use Disorders topic.

To learn more schedule an appointment contact:

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# A BRIGHTER SMILE

By Dr. Ricardo S. Bocanegra, DDS

**S**tains can build up on your teeth over time and cause your smile to lose its sparkle. With age, one of the first things to go is the freshness of your smile. At about thirty, tooth color begins to dim. There is a natural tendency for dentin- just beneath the enamel- to become yellow. If you smoke or overindulge in coffee or cola, darkening can be dramatic.

No doubt about it, we're living longer and we're living better. All that effort put into diet and exercise is paying off. And while you're going through your paces on the treadmill, your smile might need a bit of improvement. But don't despair, our teeth whitening systems can deliver white teeth on demand and help you keep them white for life.

Tooth-whitening systems take many forms. There are gels and solutions accelerated by light; the laser is used to "jump-start" the whitening process. Results can be subtle and take time to achieve a bright white smile, or they can be immediate- with a whiter smile with just one treatment. Professional teeth whitening options vary with either a one-time in-office visit (approximately one to two hours) or the at-home whitening system, which is a two-week process.



There are also many over-the-counter types of home bleaching products, but they do not have the whitening concentration that the professional products contain. There are also many over-the-counter whitening toothpastes available. These toothpastes contain mild abrasives that take off surface stains. They do not change the overall color or internal shade of your teeth, like the professional products dental offices provide.

Before beginning any whitening process, allow a dentist to examine your teeth and gum tissue to make sure they are healthy. You should complete any restorative work (your cavities must be taken care of first) before you whiten your teeth. If you become a candidate for tooth bleaching or whitening, your dentist will suggest which whitening procedures will be most effective for you and give you your options. In any case, the result is visible in days and, with touch-ups, can last for years.

So as the summer season approaches, why not consider giving a gift that enhances your or someone else's smile? A smile says a thousand words.... Why not make it a beautiful bright smile?



Ricardo S. Bocanegra, D.D.S.

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## Hairpieces and Toppers

By LaDonna Roye, Hairstylist

**H**air loss is not always as complete or dramatic as chemotherapy induced hair loss or Alopecia Universalis. These conditions usually require a full wig to camouflage the hair loss.

Conditions such as thyroid disease, diabetes, or hormonal changes cause a diffused hair loss or thinning on the top of the head. For this type of hair loss the best solution may not be a wig at all. Instead a "top of the head" hairpiece or "topper" may be what is needed.

"Toppers" come in various sizes and shapes. The most common rang from 2½"x2½" to 8"x10". As with wigs, they can be synthetic or human hair, hand tied or machine made, or lace front. These hairpieces can be custom made to fit your hair loss area.

*There are several benefits of wearing a "topper".*

- 1. Comfort:** Wearing a top of the head hair piece is lighter and more comfortable than a full wig. When attached correctly you may forget you have it on.
- 2. Natural appearance:** Since only a little hair is added to the top of the head and blending that with the rest of the hair, it can be virtually undetectable.
- 3. Versatility:** If you like to wear your hair "up" the topper allows your hair to be pulled up or back using your own hair at the sides and back.
- 4. Added fullness where you need it:** Whether you want more bangs, additional height in the crown, or to cover up that pesky spot on the back of your head that parts and lies flat, a topper can accomplish that and more.
- 5. Saves time:** Many people find that color re-touches as not required as often because the top of the head is usually the first to show re-growth. Additionally, daily routines of styling can be drastically lessened when not trying to camouflage hair loss.



There are several ways to attach a top of the head hairpiece. The most common is with pressure sensitive clips. These comb/clips attach to your natural hair holding the piece in place. These hairpieces should be removed before sleeping, showering or swimming.

Another technique is to create a small braid around the perimeter and sew the hairpiece to the braid. Thus allowing the wearer to wear the hairpiece at all times until it requires maintenance.

Bonding the hairpiece to your scalp with medical grade adhesive is an option preferred by many. This works well for people who have advanced hair loss

on the top and not enough hair to clip or braid the piece in. Bonding allows the hairpiece to be worn while sleeping, showering and swimming. This method does require maintenance after a few weeks.

*It is important that you seek qualified medical advice if you are experiencing unusual or extensive hair loss.*

After learning the cause of your hair loss you may want to consult a hair loss professional regarding options to camouflage your thinning hair. If you find a full wig uncomfortable, a topper may be just what you are looking for.



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- **Buoyancy** of the water reduces body weight by approximately 90% while you enjoy your deep soak, relieving pressure on joints and muscles, while creating the relaxing sensation of floating in space. It abolishes gravity, allowing the body to float amplifying the power in the muscles.

- **Massage** is the secret to effective hydrotherapy. This energized warm-water stream relaxes tight muscles and stimulates the release of endorphins, the body's natural pain killers. Jet driven massage gently eases tension directly out of your muscle groups to relieve soreness from your back, hips, legs, and the symptoms of arthritis.



 The New England Journal of Medicine

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# April is Youth Sports Safety Month

## CONCUSSIONS IN YOUTH SPORTS

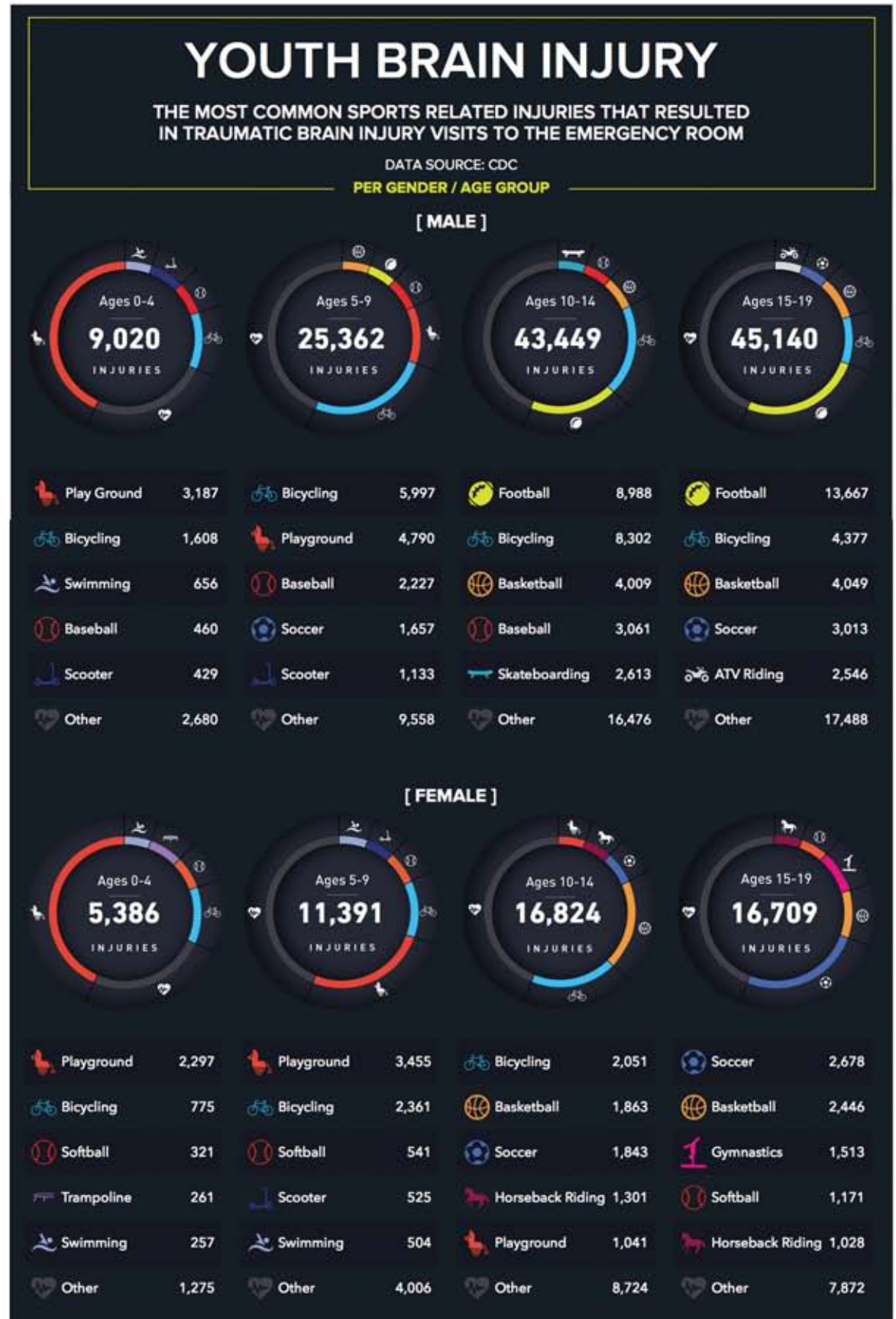
**A**s the number of reported cases of traumatic brain injury (TBI) increases in professional sports, so too does awareness of concussions at the college and amateur levels. The NFL now takes helmet to helmet contact as a serious offense after coming under intense scrutiny for allowing players to reenter the game after sustaining brain jarring hits. Professional leagues have their reputation and financial interests to consider, but what about little league players or high school athletes looking to advance their game to the next level?

The following interactive data visualization breaks down the total number of traumatic brain injuries sustained by children under 19 years of age between the years of 2001 and 2009. The data, taken from a 2011 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is categorized according to gender, age range, and sport/activity.



No matter your level of expertise on the subject, the numbers have a way of speaking for themselves. Go to [www.tnhealthandwellness.com](http://www.tnhealthandwellness.com) and click on the article to review the interactive graph details.

Article source: Safer-America





# THE RECEIPT.

By Russell S. Howard, Executive Pastor

**T**hat Sunday morning saw history's defining moment. Simply put, it was the finale' of the most important series of events that ever happened.

*But before we get to Sunday morning . . .*

On the previous Friday, outside the city of Jerusalem, an innocent man hung suspended on a cross. He had come through a farce of a trial, and He had been convicted based on false testimony from paid witnesses. He was nailed in place through all four limbs, brutally wounded from a variety of beatings and abuses, and His scalp was shredded by a crown of thorns.

His execution was carried out by a Roman death detail, trained and proficient in their gruesome art. And, probably about 3:00 in the afternoon, they shoved a spear into his torso and pronounced Him dead.

Had you been there that afternoon, you might have experienced some remarkable things. There was a protracted period of darkness, and a number of other distinctly supernatural events. However, you might have wondered what it all meant.

Years later, the Apostle Paul would sum it up with these words, on the cross, God the Father "made the One who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:18, HCSB). A substitutionary death, His life given for us. Our sin given to Him. Payment made for the sins of mankind.

They placed his dead body in a cave tomb, and they rolled a big rock over the mouth of the cave.

Have you ever swiped your debit card when you weren't quite certain you had enough in your account to cover the cost? You know that moment when you wait for the receipt, wondering if it's going to print? Saturday was like that. Payment had been made, and the universe waited to see if the transaction would clear.



*If Friday was the payment, Sunday morning was the receipt.*

In the pre-dawn hours of Sunday, Jesus of Nazareth simply did not stay dead. It was not a metaphorical event, a mystical event, or a mythological event. It was a miraculous event. His heart began to beat again. His eyes came open, and He was alive. And He walked out of His grave under His own power.

Today, someone has wisely said that if Jesus Christ remained dead, then nothing really matters. But if Easter Sunday happened (and hundreds of first-century witnesses say it did), then nothing else matters.

One has died. And His death will cover the eternal penalty for every mistake and wrongful act you've ever committed, if you will only follow Him. Today, He is alive, forever, to keep us reminded that His one-time death was eternally enough.

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*But what God FORETOLD by all the prophets...*  
**He thus FULFILLED.**  
Acts 3:18

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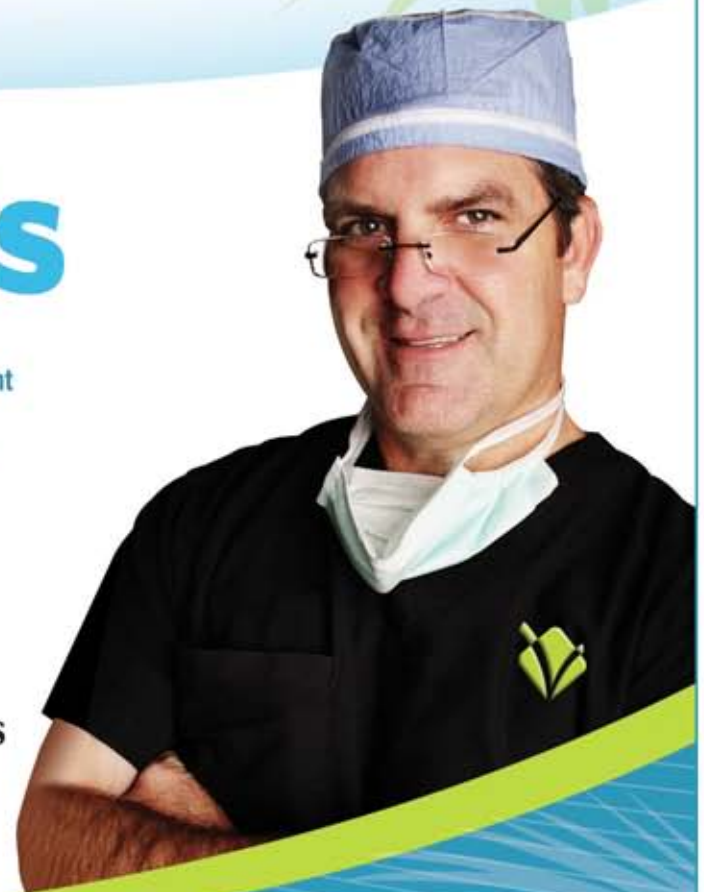
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