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January 2022

Charlotte/South Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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- 3 Ingrown toenails can lead to bone infection; we treat them fast.
- 4 Top pickleball injuries seen include foot fractures from ankle sprains.

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\*AHCA 2019-2020 data, retrieved 10-01-21





# The Problem with Bonds

By Adam Bruno, Author of *They Lied: The Real Cost of Your Retirement*



**A**s an Author, Business Owner, and Certified Financial Fiduciary®, it has been a very busy 2021 for me. As we approach the end of 2021, I believe it is fair to say that this year has been challenging if you are in retirement. The families we serve at Evolution Wealth Management and Evolution Retirement Services will tell you differently, because they are a bit spoiled! I love spoiling the families we serve.

The Private Wealth Management world allows us to do some pretty unique things for our families. Their entire retirement picture is addressed and taken care of. Whether it is Investment Planning, Income Planning, Estate Planning, Advanced Tax Planning, Medicare Planning, it is all taken care of for them with our team of highly vetted professionals.

Because of this, we have been able to identify an enormous problem retirees are facing today. The problem is BONDS!

If you are reading this, and like so many others in retirement, bonds are usually the first place you look to achieve safety. You have heard the old saying many times in your life. You buy bonds for safety; you buy stocks when you are willing to take risks. The balance between these two investments is usually adjusted to reflect how much risk you are willing to take as an investor.

For example, a more conservative investor potentially has a 30/70 split. Thirty percent (30%) of their investments are in stocks and seventy percent (70%) are in bonds. I don't need to give you a lesson in Finance 101. If you are reading this, the chances are high that you know the difference between a stock and a bond. Because of this, I would like to spend more time in this article addressing the problem with bonds today.

There is a very good chance that your bonds are either not performing or potentially costing you money. In a year where inflation as I am writing this is hovering at 6.8%, it is very dangerous for you to not realize the problems with the current bond market. No performance from your bonds means that you could have just had that money sitting in your bank account rather than pay the commissions and fees of the bond world. Either way, the result is the same. You are losing 6.8% of your purchasing power on your money.

Treasury Yield 10 Years (\*TNX) ☆  
ICE Futures - ICE Futures Real Time Price, Currency in USD



iShares 7-10 Year Treasury Bond ETF (IEF) ☆  
Financial Research - Nasdaq Real Time Price, Currency in USD



As you can see in the illustration below, interest rates on the 10-year treasury have increased significantly over the last year. It truly is a historical time in the investment world. Because of these increasing rates, take a look at the second illustration below. You will notice that the performance of bonds has dramatically decreased. This is a normal response in a rising interest rate environment, an environment that we haven't seen many times in history. This response can be devastating to your portfolio, especially when investments that are normally considered "safe" begin drawing negative performance.

You should understand that right now there are options and alternatives to bonds that can still provide you with safety and growth. We help families just like you create their own Bond Alternatives. You probably won't hear about these alternatives from the traditional big retail brokers and advisors. I want you to take a good hard look at your portfolio. You could say that your portfolio has been up, so you aren't worried about your bonds. Your portfolio has likely been up because the market has been up.

Do yourself and your loved ones a favor. Separate your bond investments from your stock investments. See what kind of performance you have gotten from your bonds alone. You might be very surprised. If you are, and you want to learn other strategies that successful families just like you are using right now, give us a call.

There is nothing more frustrating than money that is supposed to be safe, not performing or losing money. You have options, and you don't have to settle for poor bond performance anymore.

**If you have questions, please call my office at (239) 771-8696 and schedule your confidential visit with me.**

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Wishing you and your family a Happy New Year! Hug the ones you love and hang on for as long as you can, because we are never guaranteed tomorrow.

Treasury Yield 10 Years <https://yhoo.it/321QaYa>

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# WORLD-CLASS DOCTORS, CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY DEFEAT CERVICAL CANCER

By Dr. Graciela Garton

In 2021, the American Cancer Society estimated 14,480 new cases of cervical cancer, which ranked 20th among all cancer types. That was well below the estimated 284,200 newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer. Although cervical cancer is far down the list, any case above zero is one too many.

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month and Cervical Health Awareness Month, an opportunity to focus on a cancer that does not draw as much attention. Cervical cancer occurs within the cells of the cervix, the lower portion of the uterus that connects to the vagina.

The physicians at Advocate Radiation Oncology specialize in the treatment of breast, prostate, lung, brain, rectal, liver and bone cancer, head and neck, as well as cervical cancer. Our goal in treating patients with cervical cancer, like with all other cancers, is to minimize the impact of the disease on daily life while providing state of the art, compassionate, and personalized care.

There are three keys to a successful treatment and recovery from cervical cancer:

## Early Diagnosis

Screening tests can help detect cervical cancer and precancerous cells that may one day develop into cervical cancer. It is recommended that screening starts as early as 21 years.

Nearly all cases of cervical cancer are caused by human papillomavirus, or HPV, infections. Vaccines can prevent the majority of cases, but regular Pap smears and HPV tests can detect the disease in its precancerous stage. Because cervical cancer is slow to develop in comparison to other types of cancers, regular testing is that much more important.

Generally, women experience few noticeable symptoms in the early stages. However, later symptoms can include vaginal bleeding and discharge, and pelvic pain.



## World-Class Doctors

Advocate's nine board-certified physicians trained at some of the world's leading institutions, including Yale, Michigan, Harvard, Duke, Vanderbilt, and the Mayo Clinic. They have decades of clinical experience and their research has been published worldwide, and each has a passion for advancing cancer care in Southwest Florida and beyond.

Our doctors tailor each patient's specific clinical situation according to the most current scientific research and according to the latest national cancer care guidelines. They work closely with other cancer specialists and maintain frequent communication with the primary physician.

## Cutting-Edge Technology

Treatment for cervical cancer may include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy or a combination of three, according to the stage.

Radiation therapy uses high-powered energy beams, such as X-rays or protons, to kill cancer cells. Radiation therapy can be given externally, internally, or both.

Advocate Radiation Oncology invests in the best cancer-fighting equipment on the market. Patients enjoy access to Varian's Halcyon, Identify and

TrueBeam systems, which are incredibly precise in destroying tumors and cancer cells without damaging surrounding tissue. That level of precision – within a millimeter – reduces treatment times and decreases the side effects of radiation.

At one time, "medical tourism" was thriving as patients traveled around the country to ensure they received the best treatments from the best doctors in the best clinics. Today, Southwest Florida residents are blessed to live in paradise and have access to world-class cancer care right here in town.

The five-year survival rate for all women with cervical cancer is 66%. When detected early, however, that rate increases to 92%. Ultimately, we want the survival rate for all types of cancers to be 100%; to achieve this goal, our team will continue partnering with patients and working tirelessly to provide the best care possible.



## About the Author

*Dr. Graciela Garton is a board-certified radiation oncologist and founding partner at Advocate Radiation Oncology. For more information, please visit [AdvocateRO.com](http://AdvocateRO.com).*

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# It's Possible to Live a Quality Life - Even with Cancer

**T**he evolution of cancer treatment over the last 40 years has resulted in better outcomes for patients; today more people are living with cancer than ever before. Advanced treatments, such as targeted therapies and immunotherapies, along with breakthrough research and state-of-the-art technologies that allow pathologists and physicians to identify genetic mutations in different types of cancer, have brought faster and more effective techniques and methods of personalizing treatments for patients.

## How effective is cancer treatment today?

According to the American Cancer Society, there are more than 17 million Americans with a history of cancer who are alive today, and most oncologists feel that many types of cancer are becoming more like a chronic disease, such as diabetes or hypertension. In other words, even though no cure has been found for every type of cancer, often the disease is something that can be managed, and people can live with cancer for many years.

Through research, we have learned that each person's cancer is actually a unique disease because every tumor or malignancy has its own distinctive DNA. This discovery has resulted in many new and highly effective treatments that are based on a patient's unique genetic profile. Genetic sequencing of a patient's tumor can help identify which drugs or treatments will be most effective for that individual.

Early detection and diagnosis, as well as advances, such as immunotherapies and targeted treatments, most of which are available in pill form, are also making it possible to live with cancer and continue to have a good quality of life. Further, the development of secondary medications to manage side effects, such as nausea or fatigue, has helped improve the sense of well-being in patients.

## Impact of COVID-19 on people living with cancer

As difficult as it has been for all of us for almost two years, cancer patients have been particularly affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Cancer patients are especially vulnerable when it comes to contracting COVID-19 because cancer itself and the treatments for the disease can weaken the immune system. In addition, the pandemic has brought about numerous consequences, including reduced access in getting care for other illnesses, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).



At the beginning of the pandemic, certain non-urgent health care was suspended and many people either delayed or skipped getting their recommended cancer screenings, fearing exposure to COVID-19. Postponing cancer screenings led to delays in diagnosing cancer at an early stage when it is more treatable. That is one reason physicians are now encouraging patients not to skip their recommended cancer screenings. Early detection can often mean a much better outcome for patients.

Clinical trials for cancer have also been affected by the pandemic. Up to 60% of research programs halted screenings or enrollment for clinical trials in the first few months of COVID-19, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This interruption in clinical research may delay some of the newer promising treatments from being studied and potentially approved.

Now that three COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for use in the U.S., the risk of contracting serious illness or being hospitalized with coronavirus is much reduced for those who are vaccinated. The American Cancer Society also reports that medical experts are recommending that most people with cancer or a history of cancer should get the vaccine. The vaccine is safe for people with cancer, although it might be less effective because some cancer treatments can affect the immune system and render the vaccine less effective. People who are still in active treatment for cancer should talk with their physician for more information.

## World-Class Cancer Treatment Close to Home

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) has a statewide network of expert, board-certified physicians who bring world-class cancer treatments to local communities, both large and small, in locations throughout Florida. FCS is also a strategic partner with Sarah Cannon, one of the leading research and clinical trial organizations in the world. This alliance provides FCS patients access to the newest, most innovative and most promising new treatments.

Florida Cancer Specialists treats patients with all types of cancer and offers a number of services, including an in-house specialty pharmacy, an in-house pathology lab, financial counselors at every location and 24/7 access to Care Managers, who help deliver the most advanced and personalized care in your local community.



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# AVOIDING NAIL FUNGUS

It's now the New Year. It's time to enjoy some good food and time with your loved ones. You slide your feet into a new pair of shoes, but you are mortified to see your toenails are thick and discolored.

Most commonly, these changes are due to an infection of the nail cause by a fungus. Nail fungus can be difficult to treat, therefore the sooner you begin treatment the better chance you have of eradicating the fungus. Once the nail fungus has been present for an extended period of time, it is much more difficult to treat. Nail fungus also referred to as onychomycosis is an infection underneath the surface of the nail cause by fungi or yeast. When the fungi take hold, the nail becomes darker, debris can collect under the nail, and white discoloration may appear. Overtime, the affected nails become very thick and difficult to trim. The fungus can even spread to adjacent nails. You may have been exposed to the fungi when walking around damp areas barefoot like swimming pools, locker rooms, and showers. Injury to the nail bed, even pressure from shoes, will make it more susceptible to the fungi. Anyone can be affected but people with chronic diseases, such as diabetes, circulatory problems, or immune-deficiency conditions, are especially prone to developing a fungal nail infection. Other contributing factors may be a history of athlete's foot and excessive perspiration. Treatment can take months to a year to completely clear the fungus. Your healthcare provider will discuss treatments options with you to determine what the best option is for you. Unfortunately, recurrence is common. For these reasons, prevention is key.



Proper hygiene and performing daily foot exams including your toes are the first line of defense. Clean and dry feet can better resist infection by the fungus. Below are some tips to help you avoid nail fungus.

- Disinfect your shoes with an OTC antifungal sprays or powder's.
  - Wear moisture wicking and breathable socks. Socks made of synthetic fibers that wick moisture away from your feet are recommended. If your feet perspire than you should change your socks throughout the day. Don't share shoes or socks with others. Change your socks after exercise. You may also alternate gym shoes to allow the material to dry completely.
  - Don't share clippers or foot products with other people. Disinfect instruments use to cut your nails and other pedicure tools
  - Treat athletes foot if present
  - Avoid tight fitting shoes and use shoes made with breathable material.
  - If signs of nail fungus are present, avoid nail polish.
  - Keep nails trimmed and clean. Nails should be at the same length as the tip of the toe.
  - Wash your shoes, this includes hiking boots to sandals. Shoes that haven't been cleaned are a great place for fungus to thrive.
- For more information about preventing or treating nail fungus contact your local foot and ankle specialist.

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# GLAUCOMA & VISION LOSS

By Eric Liss, M.D. - Board Certified Ophthalmologist with Quigley Eye Specialists

**T**hree million Americans are suffering from glaucoma, which can rob them of their sight and nearly 1.5 million of them do not even know they have it. Glaucoma is referred to as a “silent sight stealer” because, unfortunately, there are minimal symptoms associated with the disease and the miniscule indicators can cause up to 40% of permanent vision loss before the person notices any vision changes.

The optic nerve transmits images to the brain. When this nerve becomes damaged or diseased, it loses the ability to create images, and therefore, communication to the brain is lost. A buildup of pressure in the eye is the most common cause. This pressure is known as IOP, or intraocular pressure. Disease or damage triggers this pressure in the eye and injures the optic nerve. Once IOP compromises vision, it creates irreversible blindness. Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness and usually affects the elderly.

The following treatment options information was published by According the American Academy of Ophthalmology.



## GLAUCOMA TREATMENT

### Medication

Glaucoma is usually controlled with eyedrop medicine. Used every day, these eye drops lower eye pressure. Some do this by reducing the amount of aqueous fluid the eye makes. Others reduce pressure by helping fluid flow better through the drainage angle.

Glaucoma medications can help you keep your vision, but they may also produce side effects. Some eye drops may cause:

- A stinging or itching sensation
- Red eyes or red skin around the eyes
- Changes in your pulse and heartbeat
- Changes in your energy level
- Changes in breathing (especially if you have asthma or breathing problems)
- Dry mouth
- Blurred vision
- Eyelash growth
- Changes in your eye color, the skin around your eyes or eyelid appearance

All medications can have side effects. Some drugs can cause problems when taken with other medications. It is important to give your doctor a list of every medicine you take regularly. Be sure to talk with your ophthalmologist if you think you may have side effects from glaucoma medicine.

Never change or stop taking your glaucoma medications without talking to your ophthalmologist. If you are about to run out of your medication, ask your ophthalmologist if you should have your prescription refilled.

### Laser surgery

There are two main types of laser surgery to treat glaucoma. They help aqueous drain from the eye. These procedures are usually done in the ophthalmologist's office or an outpatient surgery center.

Trabeculoplasty. This surgery is for people who have open-angle glaucoma and can be used instead of or in addition to medications. The eye surgeon uses a laser to make the drainage angle work better. That way fluid flows out properly, and eye pressure is reduced.

Source:  
<https://www.aaio.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-glaucoma/treatment>

### About Quigley Eye Specialists

Dr. Liss is a board-certified Ophthalmologist with Quigley Eye Specialists, a world-class eye care practice specializing in cataracts, laser cataract surgery, glaucoma, iLASIK, dry eye, eyelid surgery, retinal issues, corneal conditions, facial plastic surgery and routine eye care. Quigley Eye Specialists has served the region for more than 30 years with locations throughout Florida including Sarasota, Venice, North Port, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Cape Coral, Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres, Bonita Springs, Naples and Coral Gables.

### Surgery

Some glaucoma surgery is done in an operating room. It creates a new drainage channel for the aqueous humor to leave the eye.

Trabeculectomy. This is where your eye surgeon creates a tiny flap in the sclera. He or she will also create a bubble (like a pocket) in the conjunctiva called a filtration bleb. It is usually hidden under the upper eyelid and cannot be seen. Aqueous humor will be able to drain out of the eye through the flap and into the bleb. In the bleb, the fluid is absorbed by tissue around your eye, lowering eye pressure.

Glaucoma drainage devices. Your ophthalmologist may implant a tiny drainage tube in your eye. The glaucoma drainage implant sends the fluid to a collection area (called a reservoir). Your eye surgeon creates this reservoir beneath the conjunctiva. The fluid is then absorbed into nearby blood vessels.

Cataract surgery. For some people with narrow angles, removing the eye's natural lens can lower eye pressure. With narrow angles, the iris and the cornea are too close together. This can cover (block) the eye's drainage channel. Removing the eye's lens with cataract surgery creates more space for fluid to leave the eye. This can lower eye pressure.

Individuals with glaucoma need to stay in close contact with their ophthalmologist and visits are regularly every 3 to 6 months.



(855) 734-2020 | [www.QuigleyEye.com](http://www.QuigleyEye.com)

2529 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

2135 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

20600 Veterans Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33954

1428 S Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34239

Quigley Eye Specialists, founded in 1988, consists of more than 100 medical professionals, including surgeons, optometrists, retina specialists and technicians. Offices are conveniently located throughout Southwest Florida in Sarasota, Venice, North Port, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Cape Coral, Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres, Bonita Springs, Naples and Coral Gables.

For more information, call (855) 734-2020 or visit [www.QuigleyEye.com](http://www.QuigleyEye.com).



# RESET YOUR BRAIN FOR THE NEW YEAR AND FIND LONG-TERM RELIEF FOR DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY.

## Many Are Choosing to Prioritize Mental Health As Their Top 2022 Priority Using Neurofeedback To Improve Brain Function!

If you are struggling with holiday stress that has turned into episodes of depression and/or anxiety, you are not alone. Many studies have shown that anxiety and depression may peak around the holidays and this may signify previous brainwave imbalances, which can easily be corrected by retraining the brain. Neurofeedback is a non-invasive, drug-free therapy that targets imbalances in the brain by retraining it over time.

### Depression:

Did you know that depression is frequently related to brainwave imbalances? In fact, there is a specific pattern that relates to depression! These imbalances effect mood and can create negative thought patterns. An imbalance in certain brainwaves can cause you to become depressed more easily, feel hopeless, withdraw from people, and be more anxious. These imbalances can also be associated with a lower sex drive!

### Anxiety and Panic Attacks:

Anxiety symptoms can also be traced to brainwave imbalances. Studies have shown that anxiety and panic attacks can be experienced when your brain wave pattern is going too fast- which represents an imbalance in the way the brain is functioning. Neurofeedback therapy can not only bring relief to symptoms, but also address and modify underlying imbalances in the brain, promoting better brainwave forms that will in turn help alleviate symptoms and bring on a natural state of feeling more balanced and happier.

### Chronic Stress:

The long-term effects of chronic stress can disrupt nearly every system in your body. It can suppress your immune system, upset your digestive and reproductive systems, increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, speed up the aging process, and cripple your way of life. The impact of stress just doesn't 'go away,' but may be cumulative over time and ultimately create worsening anxiety, depression, inability to focus, etc. This is why it has never been more pertinent to address the root of the issue and to achieve long-lasting results through Neurofeedback.

### Recent Neurofeedback Study

*Resilient Retreat*, in Sarasota, Florida, asked *The Brain Wave Center* to collaborate in a study of first responders and those that have undergone abuse or emotional trauma. The study looked at numerous modalities to decrease stress and depression. The outcomes were significant. After a single round of Neurofeedback training, there was a decrease in depression by 52.79 % and a decrease in PTSD by 38.39%. There were also remarkable improvements in emotional responses such as feelings of self-worth and importance, emotional awareness and clarity, and an increased sense that participants mattered to others.

### How Does Neurofeedback Eliminate These Symptoms?

At *The Brain Wave Center*, we begin with a Brain Map to assess your brainwave patterns. We observe how they present in your brain and how your brain wave imbalances relate to your feelings of depression and/or anxiety.

Then, you will embark on a neurofeedback journey of retraining your brain. The therapy is both enjoyable and powerful. Your brain wave patterns are monitored to determine optimal function, and these are rewarded while you are watching a video of your choice. Over time, this retrains the brainwaves to stop staying in the imbalanced states and start moving towards more balanced states and healthy regulation.

Your brain responds to this treatment by creating new, healthier neural connections and resetting the old pathways. Over time, the use of neurofeedback can help your brain to stay in these balanced states, allowing you to think calmer, feel more positive, regulate your emotions, deal with stress, and in turn alleviate depression and anxiety symptoms.

Begin this New Year by clearing outdated brain-wave patterns and training your brain back to health! You can reset your brain for a lifetime of happiness in 2022 and beyond!



### A Better Brain Means a Better You!

*The Brain Wave Center* has helped many children and adults overcome common emotional health disorders using safe, noninvasive, and drug-free relief from chronic issues including:

- Anxiety / Depression
- PTSD / Stress / Trauma
- Memory Loss / Brain Fog
- Concussion / Brain Injury
- ADHD / Learning Disabilities
- Autism
- Migraines
- and more

Call *The Brain Wave Center* at 941-552-4500 to schedule your Complimentary Neurofeedback Consultation. Retrain Your Brain Today For Optimal Performance Tomorrow!

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**BRAIN WAVE CENTER**  
*Innovations in brain health for a better you!*

**941.552.4500**

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640 S. Washington Blvd., Sarasota, Florida 34236



# Psoriasis: Do You Have Dry Patches of Irritated Skin?

**P**soriasis is an outbreak that causes a “rash” on the skin, but it can also affect the nails, tendons, and joints. Some of the most common symptoms are red rashes or spots, dryness, cracking, flaking, peeling, depression, and joint pain. Depending on the severity of the disease, most people start seeing scaly skin patches on the knees, elbows, and scalp. The effects of psoriasis are both physical and emotional, as individuals are usually in a great deal of discomfort and may also be embarrassed by the way their skin appears.

Psoriasis is a common skin disorder that affects 125 million people globally; however, what many people don’t realize is that it is an autoimmune disease. When the body’s immune system is triggered, skin cells become overactive and produce more skin than what can naturally be sloughed off, so the end result is red, irritated skin with dry patches that eventually peel. It can affect the scalp, inner and outer ears, feet, limbs, and everywhere in between.

## Psoriasis Symptoms:

- Red, raised, patches with siler or white scales
- Dry skin (flakes, cracks, and bleeds)
- Pain
- Itching
- Burning
- Painful, swollen joints
- Pitted finger and toenails

Psoriasis is a lifelong disorder and can, in extreme cases, turn into psoriatic arthritis, which is an inflammatory arthritis (also autoimmune) condition. The typical treatments for this disorder, as well as psoriasis, are topicals, pain medications, steroids, Goeckerman therapy (coal tar and light therapy), immunosuppressants, and in advanced cases of psoriatic arthritis, surgery to replace the affected joints.

In the United States, psoriasis affects around 7.5 million. It’s commonly associated other disorders such as the following:

- Type II diabetes
- Heart disease
- Anxiety
- IBS
- Depression



Getting an accurate diagnosis and established treatment plan will help manage your psoriasis. Scheduling an appointment with an experienced dermatologist is essential.

## Luminary Medical Group *Trust an Experienced Provider Team*

Luminary Medical Group features an experienced team of providers dedicated to giving you total confidence in your skin and your health. Our team includes Doctors, Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners who work together to care for you from head to toe.

## Look and Feel Your Very Best

No matter your concern, you can trust our team to provide the treatment and guidance you need to look and feel radiant. At Luminary Medical Group, you will find services including:

- Medical Dermatology
- Medical Spa Treatments
- Primary Care
- GYN Services

We are here to help you live better, whether that means caring for your skin, elevating your look, or supporting your health and wellness goals now and in the future.

Luminary Medical Group began as Luminary Dermatology in Sarasota, FL, where the sun is hot, beaches are bustling, and someone always forgets to wear their sunscreen. The multi-specialty group was founded by board-certified dermatologist and fellowship-trained Mohs micrographic surgeon Dr. Cary L. Dunn. We now provide patient-centered medical care to Sarasota, Bradenton, Venice, and many other Southwest Florida communities as well as Edmond, Oklahoma.

Our mission is to provide compassionate care to the people of our community and beyond, with excellence in service, quality, and accessibility.

To schedule your appointment please call 941-926-6553 or visit [luminarydermatology.com](http://luminarydermatology.com).



Cary L. Dunn, MD

*Board-Certified Dermatologist and Fellowship  
Trained Mohs Micrographic Surgeon*



LUMINARY  
DERMATOLOGY

941.926.6553

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# How to make—and keep—a New Year's resolution to quit tobacco.

It is no secret that most New Year's resolutions tend to fail before they even have a chance to "get off the ground". However, something about the "clean slate" that a new year brings inspires every one of us to try anyway. We think about all the positive changes we want to make in our lives, get off to a great start, but get side-tracked by the busy-ness and pressures of life and lose focus. Despite our failures, we vow to ourselves that we will "do better next year".

The failure that many of us experience is often the result of failing to make a sustainable plan. Benjamin Franklin said it best when he said: "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!"

If you're planning to start off this new year tobacco-free, set yourself up for success by creating a plan, learning what it takes to quit and knowing what to expect from the process.<sup>3</sup>

When it comes to quitting and staying quit, you must have a plan.<sup>1</sup> Having a personalized plan will not only keep you on track, but it will also help get you through the challenging moments that will inevitably come your way. Here are six simple steps to create your quit plan that will set you up for success:<sup>4</sup>

## Step One: Mark your calendar.

With New Year's coming up, now is a perfect time to quit tobacco for good. Start 2021 off on the right foot by cutting out the #1 preventable cause of death and disease in the United States: tobacco use.<sup>1</sup> Set your quit date, but also tell your friends and family your plans to quit and explain how they can help you. Quitting tobacco is easier when people in your life support you.<sup>4</sup>

## Step Two: Calculate your savings.

Did you know a pack-a-day smoker can save over \$2,200 a year from quitting?<sup>4</sup> Cutting out tobacco use is an excellent way to build your savings back up now that the holidays are behind you.

## Step Three: Think about your reasons for quitting.

Whether your main reason for quitting is related to health, money, family, job, or social stigma, you are making the right decision for your health and the health of those around you by quitting tobacco use. Knowing your reasons for why you want to quit can keep you motivated and on track, especially in the difficult moments.<sup>4</sup>

### References:

1 Tools to Quit: Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Cessation Program Participant Toolkit. Area Health Education Centers. 2018.

2 <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/10-reasons-why-new-years-resolutions-fail.html>

3 <https://www.verywellmind.com/tips-to-quit-smoking-for-new-years-2824378>

4 <https://smokefree.gov/build-your-quit-plan>



## Step Four: Know your triggers.

Think about what things make you more likely to use tobacco, then develop strategies to keep you in control of those triggers.

Step Five: Fight your cravings.

When you get an urge to use tobacco, changing what you are doing or your physical location can make it easier to get your mind off of tobacco until the craving passes.

## Step Six: Set yourself up for success.

Choose strategies and tools to help you quit. Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC), as part of the Tobacco Free Florida AHEC Cessation Program — offers Group Quit, free tobacco cessation classes that are available to help someone quit all forms of tobacco. These group cessation classes, now held virtually, provide information about the effects of tobacco use, the benefits of quitting, and will assist you with developing your own customized quit plan. Free nicotine replacement therapy in the form of patches, gum or lozenges (if medically appropriate and while supplies last) are provided with the class. Attendees will also receive a participant workbook, quit kit materials, and follow up support from a trained tobacco treatment specialist. Contact us today at 866-534-7909 or visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/groupquitcalendar](http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/groupquitcalendar) to schedule a class or learn more about the program!

## QUIT TOBACCO with GROUP QUIT

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# Treating Venous Ulcers at Joyce Vein & Aesthetic Institute

Venous dysfunction in the legs can lead to painful chronic skin ulcers that will not heal. To resolve this kind of problem correctly, there's only one solution: consult someone with extensive expertise in the field like Douglas H. Joyce, DO, founder of Joyce Vein & Aesthetic Institute in Punta Gorda.

"There are two systems of veins in the leg," explains Dr. Joyce. "The main system, in the middle of the muscles, is called the deep system. The other system is made up of all the veins you see under your skin, and are called the superficial veins. These two systems are connected by perforator veins. If you picture a ladder, with the superficial system being the left rail and the deep system being the right rail, the perforator veins are the rungs on the ladder going across between the two sides. The superficial side of the ladder is under low pressure, and the deep system side is under high pressure. Each perforator vein has a one-way valve. When you relax, the perforator valves open, and blood passively drains from the superficial into the deep system. When you walk, the deep system is compressed, generating the high pressure that returns blood back to the heart against gravity. All the valves in the perforators snap shut, so that the high pressure blood does not move out to the skin veins. "When perforator veins malfunction, each leg movement causes blood to flow backward at high pressure into the superficial system. This increases the pressure in the superficial system dramatically causing damage to the delicate superficial veins and skin. We call this problem chronic venous insufficiency and it is the cause of venous ulcers. Severe intractable ulcers can make life nearly unbearable. Patients suffer with painful, draining wounds which will not heal despite skin grafts and compression. The answer is to remove the reasons for the increased skin vein pressure by treating the dysfunctional perforator veins themselves."

Dr. Joyce has developed a non-invasive laser treatment called single needle ablation to accomplish this. Done in the office setting this procedure is performed through a small needle stick and takes



less than fifteen minutes. "Combined with our other venous laser treatments, we can reverse serious venous disease and heal "untreatable" ulcers that have been present on some cases for over a decade," states Dr. Joyce.

"It's tremendously rewarding to help these patients," adds Dr. Joyce. "Relatively few physicians treat this level of venous disease. We are pleased to be able to provide this care through The Ulcer Center at JVAI, not only to residents of Florida, but also to others who travel from around the country and even overseas to benefit from these procedures.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Dr. Joyce at 941-575-0123 or visit [www.jvai.com](http://www.jvai.com)

## PATIENT TESTIMONIAL

*I saw my leg had a little ulcer. It is not going away unless you fix it internally. Dr. Joyce understands this disease. He is always interested in you the patient. I was eager to come here because I wanted it done and I wanted it done right.*

Michael C.



**Dr. Douglas H. Joyce, DO, FACOS, FACPh**  
Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery

### SPECIALITY

Triple Board Certified Phlebology (Venous Disease) Cardio-Thoracic & Vascular Surgery, and General Surgery

### DEGREES

**Bachelor and Masters of Science** The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

**Doctorate** Michigan State University, College of Osteopathic Medicine, East Lansing

**Diplomate** American College of Phlebology  
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons International College of Surgeons

### TRAINING

**Internship** and Surgical Residency Lansing General Hospital, MI

**Surgical Fellowship** Cardiovascular Thoracic Surgery, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, OH Special Fellow, Department of Cardiopulmonary Perfusion, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, OH Special Fellow, Congenital and Adult Cardiovascular-Thoracic Surgery, Deborah Heart and Lung Center, Browns Mills, NJ

**Former Assistant Clinical Professor** of Surgery Department of Osteopathic Medicine, Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, New Brunswick, NJ



**941-575-0123**

[www.jvai.com](http://www.jvai.com)

25092 Olympia Ave., Suite 500  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950





# NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS:

## MANY ARE WROUGHT WITH SHORT-LIVED ENTHUSIASM

### EXCLUSIVE SHAPE CAN HELP YOU REACH YOUR GOALS AND STAY THE COURSE.

**O**ur previous article aroused the interest of many readers, who decided to checkout our wellness studio in practical action. We see customer satisfaction with the first education-related exercise session, which is always rewarding.

We are always moved by the positive feedback of our customers about the effects, sensations, and results during and after Roll Massage, the Vacuum Treadmill with IR and Collagen lamps, the Vibration Platform stimulating the musculo-nervous system and the BEMER technology that stimulates the blood circulation system.

#### Everyone Has Different Needs and Objectives

All clients are unique with different needs and aspirations. Issues such as being overweight, having diabetes, hypertension, acidification of the body, cellulite, and post-covid problems related to motor coordination, balance, and muscle weakness. We have clients, especially women, who want to stay young and stop the aging process. They want to have smooth skin, without cellulite and unnecessary fatty tissue.

#### Referrals due to Results

Word of mouth recommendations are driving clients to our studio. This is due to the visible results. Clients who try our machines in practice, return to us systematically for the next sessions—Because it only makes sense—If you are getting the results and the desired health and aesthetic effect, why wouldn't you want to keep going? It is not surprising that the many ladies who come to us for biological regeneration, also bring their husbands to take care of their appearance and health, as well. And they tell their friends. Why? Again, because of the remarkable results.

#### Testimonials:

*"I highly recommend Exclusive Shape Studio. You can exercise smarter. After exercise on Roll Massage Machine my cellulite and fat was reduced and my body looks younger, stronger and smoother. Robert and Krzysztof - owners of Exclusive Shape are very helpful and always step away to assist you."*— Dagmara



*"Awesome machines! If you suffer from back pain or stress or muscle discomfort, you need to check this place out!! Knowledgeable staff to assist by appointment."*—Katie

#### Sticking with Your Resolutions and Goals

We have New Year's resolutions at the beginning of each year. Most people promise to stay healthy and start training. Unfortunately, this enthusiasm passes quickly and after a few weeks the motivation and strong will to continue with ambitious plans declines.

How do you deal with it and stick to the New Year's resolution? At the beginning, you should write a plan for the first 3 months together with a consultant (e.g., with us). The most important thing is self-discipline and the awareness of your pursuit of success. You should endure a minimum of 21 workouts in the training regime in order to develop a habit of a pleasant and useful duty.

#### We Track Your Success

Every two weeks we check the effects of our work, check the parameters of our body. Seeing the progress, we build even greater motivation to continue the implementation of our ambitious plan.

# Exclusive Shape



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[ExclusiveShape.com](http://ExclusiveShape.com)

#### Results without Endless Hours at a Gym

I have great satisfaction seeing our clients improve their body's efficiency, gain strength, reduce excess weight and have more and more energy. When you come to us, do not think about hard, exhausting training. Our machines work for you. Imagine you can burn over 600 Kcal in 30 minutes. This is our offer for you.

If you want to change your health for the better from the new year, come to our Wellness Studio for your first free educational session.

*We Wish all Readers a Healthy and Happy New Year!*

Please book a reservation on our website

[www.exclusiveshape.com](http://www.exclusiveshape.com), or call us at  
**941-960-9108.**

#### ABOUT ROBERT STAFECKI, CO-OWNER

My interests stem from my studies and active sports background. I graduated from the University of Physical Education in Warsaw. I can see now how useful the classes in anatomy, biology, physiology, biochemistry, psychology, pedagogy was for me to understand the issues related to the therapeutic effects of active ionized water. I am a consultant in this field and for the last 8 years, I have had real examples of improving the health of my clients. I educate and help people who are open to knowledge and persistent in their pursuit of success. Last year I received an offer to represent the Polish company on the American market. Innovative devices of this company for biological regeneration, massage and fitness interested me so much that this year, together with two partners, we opened the company Exclusive Shape LLC.

We have opened a wellness studio with Show Room in Sarasota, in November we will open a studio in Chicago. Currently, we offer an extraordinary package of health services in our studio. We offer active alkaline water for drinking, mechanical stimulation of the lymphatic and muscular system using the Roll Massage device as well as magneto-electric stimulation of the circulatory system with the Bemer technology. The combination of these elements strengthens the immune system, increases cell energy, lowers body weight, reduces body fat, and significantly reduces cellulite.

#### DISCLAIMER

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Please consult your health care provider before beginning any health-related program or protocol and before making any healthcare decisions or for guidance about a specific medical condition.



# ORTHOPEDIC SPECIALISTS RESPOND TO PICKLEBALL INTEREST

Prevention is Key | Expert Care is Essential

**D**id you know that pickleball has become the fastest growing sport in the U.S.? It's a fun sport that requires low-impact aerobic exercise, and the fact that it requires four players makes it an enjoyable, social event. However, with all of this fun-filled activity, injuries are bound to happen. Orthopedic surgeons and sports medicine physicians often report that pickleball and other racket sports result in numerous injuries.

## SOME OF THE MOST COMMON INJURIES ARE:

### Wrist Injuries

Due to the constant torquing of the arm and wrist in pickleball, wrist injuries are common. Often these are tendonitis issues, which is where the tendons become inflamed and swell.

A wrist sprain happens when stretching or tearing of the ligament occurs. The wrist ligaments are strong bands of connective tissue that connect the end of the hand and wrist bones. Your wrist ligaments stabilize and support the joints. When injured in sports such as pickleball, the sport should be halted and avoided until you are healed. Stabilization, rest and anti-inflammatory medications often help patients recover within a few weeks.

### Shoulder Injury

With pickleball, the shoulder is under a great deal of stress. Often, shoulder pain is due to small tears that occur in the rotator cuff. These tears can progress and may require conservative or surgical treatment. Overuse or injury that might dislocate the humerus bone from the socket can be a more severe diagnosis. With overuse or trauma, fractures or hairline fractures can occur in the bones that make up the shoulder. These will typically need to be stabilized in order to heal correctly. Arthritis can also exacerbate shoulder injury and pain.

### Ankle Injuries

Ankle injuries are very common in individuals who play pickleball due to the ballistic motions and torquing in the ankle that cause instability and tears. Achilles's tendon tears and ruptures are an example of this type of injury.



### Achilles Tendon Rupture

Although the Achilles tendon can withstand great stresses from running, twisting, and jumping, it is extremely vulnerable to injury. A rupture of the tendon is a tearing and separation of the tendon fibers, so that the tendon can no longer perform its normal function. It is a painful injury and often patients describe hearing a popping sound when it happens.

The Achilles tendon is the largest tendon in the body and connected to both the calf muscle and the heel bone and is a fibrous tissue that somewhat resembles twine. It is used when you walk, run, stand, jump, and is especially stressed when you move quickly from side to side. A rupture of the tendon is a tearing and separation of the tendon fibers, so that the tendon can no longer perform its normal function.

### Knee Pain

We put constant strain on our knees daily. If you weigh 180 pounds, then 540 pounds of pressure are on your knee joints with every step. When you're doing ballistic or jumping movements the weight and wear and tear on the knees is exacerbated and can lead to pain, injury and osteoarthritis. If you have knee pain, take a break, and give your knees a rest. Wear knee braces or kinesiology tape if necessary, and if your knee pain doesn't get better, you need to see an orthopedic surgeon to alleviate any progressive injuries or wear and tear.

When the feet, ankles, and knees are injured, it's not uncommon for hip and back pain to follow due to the body's misalignment. Don't ignore your pain. Seek help from experienced, board certified and fellowship trained orthopedic surgeons and sports medicine physicians.

## PREVENTING PICKLEBALL INJURIES:

### Warm Up

Warming up your ankles, knees, hips, wrists, and shoulders is essential before playing pickleball. Taking a pre-pickleball walk is a great way to get your muscles warm. Additionally, doing a few gentle ballistic movements, such as jumping side to side and front to back, or doing an invisible jump rope for a few seconds before stretching can help.

### Stretching

Doing rotational exercises and stretching will help to prevent injuries as well. After you are properly warmed up, stretching from your feet up to your neck are critical to avoid injury. Rotating the ankles, hips, wrists, and shoulders is helpful, as are deep runners stretches and side stretches to name a few.

### Hydrate

Drinking plenty of water throughout the day is imperative to stay hydrated. If you are thirsty or parched during pickleball or any exercise, you were most likely dehydrated beforehand. Drinking before and after is essential to replenish fluids and electrolytes. Sports drinks and electrolyte enhanced water is important after sweating.

### Protective Gear

Wearing supportive gear and clothing such as the correct footwear with good arch support and ankle support. Wearing back supports, knee or wrist braces are also especially important if you have any injuries or need to protect certain areas from reinjury.

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To alleviate your pain and get you back to doing what you love, Dr. Sforzo, Dr. Christopher Dillingham, Dr. Charles Stewart, and Dr. Philip Meinhardt specialize in both non-surgical and surgical treatment for the shoulders, hand, wrists, elbows, hips, knees, ankles spine and neck. This includes unparalleled expertise in fracture care, sports injuries, tendonitis, arthritis, bursitis, joint replacement, rotator cuff repair, carpal tunnel syndrome, reverse shoulder replacement, ACL reconstruction, reconstruction of spinal deformities, fusion procedures, knee replacement, total hip replacement both traditional and anterior approach. Additionally, the doctors offer the latest in regenerative treatments helping many patients eliminate the need for surgery.

You are more than your injury, more than your pain. And so, the true healthcare practiced at Sforzo | Dillingham | Stewart Orthopedics + Sports Medicine offers a much more personal approach.

## PHYSICIANS



**Christopher R. Sforzo, M.D.** is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon and fellowship-trained in hand and upper extremity surgery. He provides expert care in the treatment of problems involving the shoulder, arm, elbow, forearm, wrist, and hand. Including, carpal tunnel syndrome, joint replacement, fracture and tendon repair.



**Christopher L. Dillingham, M.D.** is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon and fellowship-trained in hand, shoulder, and arm surgery. He is an expert in the treatment of problems with rotator cuff disorders, carpal tunnel syndrome and nerve injury, joint replacement, arthritis surgery, fracture repair, tendon repair and total reverse shoulder surgery.



**Charles E. Stewart, M.D.** is a Johns Hopkins fellowship-trained and board-certified orthopedic surgeon specializing in adult complex reconstruction of the lower extremity. His specialties include lower extremity sports injuries, meniscal injuries, ACL reconstruction, partial knee replacement, total hip and knee arthroplasty (replacement), as well as, the reconstruction of failed hip and knee arthroplasties, and complete fracture care.



**Philip A. Meinhardt, M.D.** is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon and fellowship-trained spine surgeon. He specializes in adult spinal surgeries, including reconstruction of spinal deformities, minimally invasive/microscopic spinal procedures, decompression, spinal instrumentation, fusion procedures, and microscopic cervical disc replacements.

### You Have a Choice

Any physicians you choose to see are always your personal decision. It should never be mandated by policy or chosen for you without regard to your needs and best interest. When you choose Sforzo | Dillingham | Stewart Orthopedics + Sports Medicine, you can rest assured that you will be treated with respect and given the opportunity to ask questions. Your options will be explained in detail, and you will be in the hands of experienced surgeons with the utmost integrity, receiving optimal care.

Please call 941-378-5100 to schedule your appointment or visit [www.sforzodillingham.com](http://www.sforzodillingham.com) for more information.

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# New Year, New Skin!



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that will promote living a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle.



Southwest Florida's Health & Wellness Magazine is the most effective and affordable way to reach customers. More than 30,000 copies are distributed every month at hospitals, health and wellness centers, shopping plazas, grocery stores and many other locations.



# A PAINFUL BLADDER CONDITION

## What You Need to Know About Interstitial Cystitis

Interstitial Cystitis (IC/BPS) is a bladder condition that often gets misdiagnosed as a urinary tract infection (UTI) in the early stages. Interstitial Cystitis lingers and unlike a UTI, there is no infection present; however, it is a very painful disorder that causes pressure, discomfort, frequency, and an urgency to urinate. IC/BPS inflames and irritates the bladder and can cause scarring and stiffness. This disorder can affect both men and women. With interstitial cystitis, these pelvic nerves miscommunicate with the brain, and patients may feel the need to urinate more often and with smaller volumes of urine than normal.

It is estimated that approximately 12 million people have IC/BPS. It disrupts daily living activities and sleep, and it is a relentless disorder that is often gets underdiagnosed.

**The following is information provided by the Urology Foundation:**

### Causes of Interstitial Cystitis

Experts do not know exactly what causes IC/BPS, but there are many theories, such as:

- A defect in the bladder tissue, which may allow irritating substances in the urine to penetrate the bladder.
- A specific type of inflammatory cell, called a mast cell. This cell releases histamine and other chemicals that lead to IC/BPS symptoms.
- Something in the urine that damages the bladder.
- Changes in the nerves that carry bladder sensations, so pain is caused by events that are not normally painful (such as bladder filling).
- The body's immune system attacks the bladder. This is similar to other autoimmune conditions.

No specific behaviors (such as smoking) are known to increase your risk of IC. Having a family member with IC/BPS may increase your risk of getting IC/BPS. Patients with IC/BPS may have a substance in the urine that inhibits the growth of cells in the bladder tissue. So, some people may be more likely to get IC/BPS after an injury to the bladder, such as an infection.

There are ways to alleviate the pain, but the treatment options are done through phases to best treat the patient's individual symptoms and thresholds.



**These phases of treatment include:**

### Lifestyle Changes

- Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy
- Diet and Exercise
- Stress Reduction

### Medications

- Oral and intravesical drugs can be administered. Intravesical drugs are administered directly into the bladder via a catheter.

### Neuromodulation, Ulcer Cauterization, and Injections

- Neuromodulation delivers safe and harmless electrical currents to the damaged areas and nerves.
- Ulcer Cauterization-If there is an ulcer present, a urologist can cauterize it to remove and alleviate the issue.
- Injections can include steroid injections to alleviate pain, pressure and urgency or Botox injections to paralyze the muscles temporarily, which helps with urgency.

### Cyclosporine

- Cyclosporine is an immunosuppressant and is reserved for only advanced cases that are not responding to other treatment.

### Surgery

- Most patients do not require surgery. If necessary, a urologist will perform surgery to try and repair or strengthen the functions of the bladder.

Source:  
<https://www.urologyhealth.org/urology-a-z/i/interstitial-cystitis>

If you have pain, pressure, urgency, or frequent urination, don't put off seeing a urologist, as these conditions only progress with time. Getting a proper diagnosis and early treatment is critical.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health in Venice, Florida, provides comprehensive and personalized care in a relaxed, spa-like office. Under the care of John Devine, MD, a fellowship-trained urogynecologist, the practice specializes in women's pelvic health and urogynecology, providing care for women of all ages, from adolescents to adults.

Taking a patient-centric approach to care, Dr. Devine schedules ample time for patient appointments. He also makes himself directly available to his patients to answer any clinical questions.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health provides comprehensive evaluations of female pelvic health concerns. Services include gynecology care to manage general health and wellness, as well as the evaluation and treatment of conditions and symptoms arising from menopause.

The practice also specializes in urogynecology, which is an OB/GYN subspecialty that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of female urinary incontinence and pelvic floor disorders, like pelvic organ prolapse.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health also provides care to women struggling with interstitial cystitis or fecal incontinence. Additionally, Dr. Devine offers consultations and surgical treatment for women experiencing complications from mesh.

**For patient-centric care from an experienced physician with friendly and accommodating staff, call The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health, or request an appointment today. Please call 941-457-7700.**

Center for Urogynecology and  
Female Pelvic Health  
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**941.457.7700**  
[www.johndevinemd.com](http://www.johndevinemd.com)



# SmartCurve

**RAVE (Radiology Associates of Venice, Englewood and Sarasota) were the first to offer the SmartCurve breast stabilization system**, which is clinically proven to deliver a more comfortable mammogram without compromising image quality, workflow or dose, and the new Clarity HD high-resolution 3D™ imaging technology, which provides radiologists with the highest resolution 3D™ images to help identify cancers early. These innovations come as part of RAVE's ongoing commitment to superior breast cancer detection and providing an improved mammogram experience for our patients.

The technology increases diagnostic confidence with its exceptional images and has the potential to increase screening volume and compliance for the countless women who have reported avoiding regular mammograms due in large part to the fear of discomfort associated with breast compression.

The SmartCurve system and Clarity HD high-resolution 3D™ imaging technology are available exclusively with Hologic's Genius 3D Mammography exam, which is currently in use by RAVE and detects more invasive cancers, reduces false positives, and is FDA approved as superior, compared to conventional 2D mammography for all women, including those with dense breasts.

These new technologies not only enable us to improve the experience for our patients by providing them with a more comfortable mammogram they've been waiting for, but more importantly allow us to do so while maintaining clinical accuracy by providing our physicians with the industry's fastest, highest

resolution 3D™ images to accelerate screening and analysis said A.J. Vulgan, Director of Marketing and Physicians Liaison.

"Being able to arm doctors with the advanced ability to identify subtle lesions and fine calcifications and help pinpoint cancers in early stages, while also keeping patients more comfortable than ever before, is priceless," A.J. Vulgan, Director of Marketing and Physician Liaison added.



Traditional Mammograms:  
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SmartCurve  
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The SmartCurve system features a proprietary curved surface that mirrors the shape of a woman's breast to reduce pinching and allow better distribution of force over the entire breast. In a recent clinical study comparing the SmartCurve breast stabilization system to traditional flat paddle compression, the SmartCurve system improved comfort in 93 percent of women who reported moderate to severe discomfort with standard compression. In addition, 95 percent of those surveyed would recommend facilities that use the system.

"We're excited to provide these breakthrough technologies for all of our patients and remain committed to offering the women of our community the most advanced breast care possible alongside an improved mammogram experience."

We will be adding 3D Mammography with the SmartCurve system to our Sarasota location in early 2019 to accommodate our current and future patients.



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# HEALTHY AGING: WHAT DOES IT REALLY REQUIRE?

## Regenerative Medicine May Play a Larger Role in Healing Than Most People Realize

By Physicians Rehabilitation

**W**e hear so much about Blue Zone centenarians' lifestyles and thoughts on how they age so well without major disease or illness, but when it comes to healthy aging, it's not just about what we eat, exercise, and socialization, although these are definitely critical. However, it is important to mention that the medical treatment you receive is highly subjective to your outcomes, overall health and wellness.

What do we mean by that? Many doctors over prescribe medications to mask your symptoms but these usually fail to get to the root cause of your disorder. If you are injured or suffer from chronic pain, many surgeons will tell you surgical intervention is necessary, but is it? Often these treatment plans leave people sicker, with multiple other symptoms and surgery many times, doesn't relieve the problem long term.

Regenerative medicine is different because it helps the body heal from within on multiple levels. It is never a bandage approach, and it aims to treat the root cause of your condition.

If you want to age well, you might want to reconsider your thoughts on standard treatment. In the case of musculoskeletal conditions, it's always best to start with conservative approaches. Surgery is permanent; there is no going back once you have a knee or shoulder replacement. While those might be necessary in severe cases, they can be treated with regenerative therapies that offer significant optimal restoration.

### Regenerative Medicine

The purpose of Regenerative medicine is it to utilize the body's own ability to regenerate cells and tissues that have been damaged back to full functionality. When used in orthopedics, the goal is to regenerate soft tissues, cartilage, muscles, and tendons. Regenerative Medicine should be the first recommendation, and in many cases, it is the only treatment necessary when dealing with muscle strains, tears. When it comes to joint dysfunction or tears such as with sports injuries, physical therapy is also extremely beneficial as an add on treatment.



### AT PHYSICIANS REHABILITATION THE TWO PRIMARY REGENERATIVE MEDICAL THERAPEUTICS FOR MOST SPORTS INJURIES ARE VISCOSUPPLEMENTATION AND PLATELET RICH PLASMA (PRP) THERAPIES

#### Viscosupplementation

Viscosupplementation is an injectable substance that mimics the synovial fluid found naturally in the joint. Synovial fluid is a high concentration of Hyaluronic Acid (HA) and is used to help protect the joint, act as a cushion and protector against damage and most importantly acts as a lubricant to enable smooth function of the joint. As you age, your body supplements with less Hyaluronic Acid (synovial fluid) and an increasingly less viscous Hyaluronic Acid replaces your thick and very well lubricating HA. This lack of fluid creates dried out joints which leads to cartilage, tissue, muscle, and bone breakdown – leading to Osteoarthritis and making it easier to have tissue and muscle damage within and around the joint.



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The procedure can be done in our office and only takes a few minutes. After locally numbing the area of concern, the procedure is monitored under a fluoroscopic image, which is a live X-ray. This allows us to see the inside of your joint while it is in motion and during the injection process. Using the fluoroscope, the practitioner will have the ability to see exactly where the Hyaluronic Acid is being placed to make sure it is in the joint space – because if it is not, it will do NO GOOD! You'll receive approximately five injections at one week apart. The results of the cartilage enhancement will last for around six months or longer. Physicians Rehabilitation has become the expert on providing great results when this process is paired with physical therapy. Many of our patients report feeling pain relief immediately, while others cumulatively see results within a few short weeks.

#### PRP (Platelet-Rich Plasma)

Fortunately for our patients today, advances in science have allowed us to find new and targeted approaches to treating degeneration and injuries. Platelet-rich plasma or PRP is an "autologous blood therapy" that uses a patient's own blood components to stimulate a healing response in damaged tissues. PRP provides an alternative to surgery by promoting safe and natural healing by spiking your body's natural ability to heal by using your own growth factors and proteins in your blood!

Research studies and clinical practice have shown PRP therapy to be very effective at relieving pain and returning patients to their normal lives. Both ultrasound and MRI images have shown definitive tissue repair after PRP therapy, confirming the healing process. The need for surgery can also be greatly reduced by treating injured tissues before the damage progresses and the condition is irreversible.

#### Physicians Rehabilitation

Physicians Rehabilitation is a patient-focused practice that provides comprehensive care to eliminate your pain non-surgically. We evaluate each patient and implement an individual care plan specifically designed to alleviate your pain and dysfunction. Trained and licensed providers, with years of clinical experience, work together to provide this plan of care that addresses the specific concerns and problems of each patient.



# Are You Still Having Trouble Hearing, Even with Hearing Aids?

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

**D**o you wear hearing aids but still struggle to hear? Are you wondering if there is anything else that could help you hear better? You might be a cochlear implant candidate. Cochlear implants have come a long way in recent years and are making a difference in many people's lives, helping them reconnect to the world.

A cochlear implant is a small, complex electronic device that can help to provide a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard-of-hearing. The implant consists of an external portion that sits behind the ear and a second portion that is surgically placed under the skin.

## Signs that hearing aids may not be providing enough benefit

*With hearing aids, do you:*

- Have difficulty hearing conversations, especially with background noise?
- Often ask people to repeat themselves?
- Often misunderstand what people say?
- Have trouble hearing on the telephone?
- Turn up the volume on the TV louder than others in the room prefer?
- Feel people often mumble when they talk?

- Struggle to hear sounds of nature such as birds chirping or rain falling?
- Find yourself agreeing, smiling, or nodding during conversations when you're not sure what's been said?
- Regularly withdraw from conversations because it's too difficult to hear?
- Read lips to understand what people are saying?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, a cochlear implant might be the answer.

Come learn more about this amazing technology to determine if you or someone you know might be a candidate.

## Why you should see an Audiologist

If you are experiencing hearing loss, it's important to seek a qualified audiologist, because they are trained to get you the best outcome and resolution for your specific issue. If you've noticed that it's difficult to hear conversations in a noisy atmosphere, or you feel the need to adjust your television volume much higher than before, it's vital for you to have your hearing checked.

Perhaps you or your loved one keeps asking for people to repeat themselves, or you can't quite pick up where sounds are coming from; if this is



the case, don't wait until your hearing loss gets any worse, schedule your appointment as soon as you possibly can.

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# Defeat Gum Disease

**T**here is a silent oral disease affecting more than 80% of adults. Chances are you either have had or are currently battling periodontal (gum) disease. Unfortunately, in many cases, the disease goes undetected until painful symptoms begin occurring. At which time the disease and any adverse conditions have already set in. Because there are no early signs of periodontal disease, it often goes untreated until the physical symptoms surface and by then the concern is treatment not prevention. It is extremely important for everyone to have regular dental check ups at the recommended six month interval. Without these check ups and proper oral care, periodontal disease can silently cause not only oral health problems but can also contribute to other major health concerns.

Periodontal disease, also known as gum disease, is the chronic infection of the soft tissue around the teeth caused by plaque producing bacteria. The gums hold the teeth in place. As the gums become infected, they loosen their hold on the teeth and pockets are formed. These pockets collect debris and cause more infection and bone loss to the tooth. Gum disease is infectious and contagious. It can spread from tooth to tooth in the mouth and from one person's mouth to another through saliva.

As with other diseases, prevention is key to good oral health. It is important for everyone to practice diligent, thorough, and proper oral care by scheduling check ups every six months. At which time, your dentist will be able to detect and treat any signs of periodontal disease before symptoms begin to show and the damage is done. As mentioned earlier, most people do not know they have periodontal disease until they begin suffering from any combination of the following signs:

- Chronic bad breath
- Red or swollen gums
- Bleeding gums especially after tooth brushing
- Tender or sore gums
- Loose or shifting teeth
- Receding gums
- Sensitive teeth



If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, there are various treatment plans your dentist may recommend depending on the severity of your case. The most important action is meticulous at home daily oral care. Teeth must be brushed twice or more times each day for at least two minutes and flossed at least once per day. Other treatments include oral rinses, periodontal cleanings, and sometimes surgery.

Traditional periodontal surgery involves cutting and suturing of the gums and recovery time can be long and painful. With the advancement of modern laser technology, there is an alternative. Joseph H. Farag, DMD offers a better alternative for patients battling periodontal disease. Dr. Farag offers patients laser-assisted new attachment procedure (LANAP™) which is a no-cut, no-sew procedure to treat mild to advanced periodontal disease. The advancements in laser surgery techniques, have made treating periodontal faster and less painful. LANAP™ is much less invasive than traditional surgery, allowing patients to return to work the next day if desired.

Even with the benefits of LANAP™ it is obviously best to practice good oral care. The most important preventative measure to avoid the insidious gum disease is to take excellent care of your teeth. Proper cleaning at least twice a day is imperative. The goal is to keep the bacteria that cause the plaque at very low levels.

If your gums are painful, red, or swollen don't ignore the signs; make an appointment today that may save your teeth and gums. Treating periodontal disease sooner is always better than later.

## Benefits of LANAP™

**EASY** – LANAP™ is about as EASY as erasing a blackboard – unlike older techniques, there is no cutting and no suturing of the gums.

**MINIMAL DISCOMFORT** – Both during and post procedure, the patient experiences very minimal discomfort with LANAP™ than with prior standard surgery techniques.

**SHORTER PROCEDURE TIME** – It takes less time to complete LANAP™ than traditional surgery. Typically it takes is two 2-hour visits to the office and two follow up visits. Traditional surgery requires four sessions of about one hour each, with subsequent visits for suture removal and additional check-ups.

**LESS GUM LOSS** – LANAP™ minimizes the loss of gum tissue, traditional surgery often involves removing a significant amount of gum tissue. This tissue loss can lead to sensitive teeth since your roots are exposed. Also, if the treatment needs to be performed again in the future, you have not removed the bone and gums during the first LANAP™ treatment. Typically with LANAP™, any gum tissue shrinkage is actually due to reduced swelling of the area that was previously diseased and inflamed.

**SHORT RECOVERY** – Many patients fully recover from LANAP™ within 24 hours. In most cases, patients feel just fine post surgery and daily activities are not interrupted. On the other hand, recovery after traditional surgery can take up to 4 weeks during which patients can experience considerable pain and swelling.

**SAFE** – LANAP™ with the PerioLase is SAFE for patients with health concerns such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or those taking medications such as Coumadin or Cyclosporine.

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# Numerous Buyers Are Interested in Purchasing a New or Second Home in 2022

**W**ith the effects of COVID-19 still pressing on our lifestyle choices and demands, many potential home buyers are no longer waiting for things to return to “normal” but rather have accepted that the new way we live is why they are looking to purchase homes now.

The interest rate has been extremely low, and although researchers predict an increase, that will still be nominal compared to years past. The inventory is still meager; throughout the entire country, with approximately only 500,000 homes available, but that number is expected to increase as well.

Many homeowners that have been on the fence about selling are ready to do so now. The reason or motive behind selling are unique to each individual, of course, but they are typically due to making a notable profit on home sales, moving into a larger, more spacious home, or for seniors, downsizing or moving into a senior community.

Supply and demand are thought to even out more in 2022 than we saw in 2021, for the sheer fact that people realize that working and spending time at home is not going to change much. Even though we are expected to see a significant amount of people getting the vaccine by the year's end, we still have a ways to go to see real change, which could take years. Despite this optimistic look, we as a country and the world are going to see the virtual opportunities arise and the true staying power of technological advances.



Bidding wars are still presumed to grow, so if you are interested in buying, you need to be prepared to purchase. You must know your price range, and it's optimal to have preapproval for your loan or funding. If you see a home you love, you don't want to miss out.

If you are interested in buying or selling, it's imperative that you seek out a realtor that knows the area, the comps in your area of interest, and one that can leverage potential buyers with specific needs and desires.

Realtor Denise Henry explains, “There is still an ongoing exodus from our country's large metropolitan cities. People that come to Charlotte county fall in love with our small-town feel, privacy, and the paradise of the beach, water, and year-round sunshine.”

When you're buying or selling, keeping the transition stress free is one of Denise's top priorities. She offers attentive knowledge, exemplary customer service, and well-rounded knowledgeable insight. With years of experience and a proven track record, Denise has repeat customers who regularly refer family and friends. When you're making life changes like buying or selling real estate, you should always consult and work with the best.

*Contact Denise Henry Today.*

**Denise Henry** GRI, RENE  
Broker Associate

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# Integrative Medicine:

## What Kind of Hippie Dippie Stuff is That?

**I**ntegrative medicine is a partnership between a health care professional and a person seeking optimal health and wellness. The two parties work together to achieve optimal health for body, mind and spirit. There is active discourse aimed at achieving the goals decided upon. The patient is very active in the process, and ultimately achieves much more than the absence of disease. He or she achieves optimal health.

As health care costs rise, and insurance covers less, we must maintain our health as much as possible. We must decrease our need to enter the medical system. One way to do that is by achieving optimal health and reducing dependence on prescription medication. Dr. Doreen DeStefano, DNP, NHD can help you do just that. Check out her approach in the vignette below.

**Interviewer:** So I guess we'll start with the basics: What's your name?

**Doreen:** Oh good, an easy question! My name is Doreen DeStefano, NHD, APRN, DNP

**Interviewer:** That's a lot of letters after your name. What do they all mean?

**Doreen:** Haha, yes I know. They mean that I am a Nurse Practitioner with a Doctorate in natural health. I also have a Master's in Public Business Administration, Doctorate of Nursing, and of course, a Masters in Nursing.

**Interviewer:** So what does that mean, exactly?

**Doreen:** I am a fully licensed medical practitioner. I can order diagnostic studies, make a diagnosis and prescribe treatment, including medication. However, I believe in partnering with my clients and asking them to participate to a large degree in their health. I don't like to go straight to pharmaceutical support if we can use patient behavior, and naturally occurring things to accomplish the desired goal.

I like to use natural means to repair the body whenever possible. For example, if a patient has high cholesterol we are going to really work with nutrition, exercise, and nutrient supplementation

before we use pharmaceuticals to reduce cholesterol. Of course, it's patient specific. We always do what is in the best interest of the patient.

**Interviewer:** OK, so say I had high cholesterol I'm already taking medication for it. What would you do?

**Doreen:** First we would get a full health history, we would do a full physical exam, and I would look at your labs. I would do some of my own testing, like a Cleveland Heart Lab. We know that 50% of heart attacks occur in people with "normal" cholesterol levels. Research shows us that the inflammation of the blood vessel wall is a very important factor that we must measure, and if it's high, we need to lower it. Also, there are different types of cholesterol, some "good" and some "bad". Even within the good and bad cholesterol, there are subtypes that are "good" and "bad". Standard cholesterol testing doesn't tell us all that.

**Interviewer:** What do you do with all that information?

**Doreen:** Well, it's different for everyone. But in brief, we can teach our patients how to eat to lower inflammation and decrease "bad" cholesterol and increase "good" cholesterol. We find ways for the patient to move regularly. We find something that they like and can be consistent with. Even gardening is good exercise. We figure it out. We provide lifestyle modification options to create a healthier lifestyle, like maybe eating less red meat, or smoking cessation. We also have natural supplements that the patient can take at home to help decrease inflammation, lower bad cholesterol and increase good cholesterol. We have in office treatments like hyperbaric oxygen and intravenous vitamins and minerals that help to optimize patient health. If the patient ultimately needs a prescription medication, then we use them. But we find that motivated people can usually decrease their cholesterol and inflammation to healthy levels. Then they can reduce or eliminate the need for medication.

**Interviewer:** It sounds difficult. Is it?



Dr. Doreen DeStefano, NHD, ARNP, DNP

**Doreen:** Well honestly, integrative medicine isn't for everyone. It's a partnership in health. The patient actually does more work than the practitioner. Diet and lifestyle change isn't easy. Some people don't want to do it. But some people really enjoy it. There are challenges, but the spectacular way that you feel when you optimize your health is beyond comparison.

**Interviewer:** So essentially, you help people get healthier without drugs as much as possible.

**Doreen:** Yes. I find I am very much a teacher and a coach. It's a holistic approach. We don't look at anything all by itself. We look at people as part of several environments, their own internal and external environments, and the environment in which they live. Each of those things effects the other. We strive to integrate all those pieces into optimal health.

**Interviewer:** What is optimal health?

**Doreen:** That is the state in which you look your best and feel your best physically, emotionally, and spiritually. You are simply your best you.

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# FRAUDULENTLY SOLD PROPERTY IS THERE A REMEDY?

By James W. Mallonee

Imagine you own a house and your friend puts it up for sale without telling you. The authorization he used was a Durable Power of Attorney naming your friend as the agent. You either voluntarily or mistakenly allowed him to take possession of it while visiting one day.

A buyer comes along and says they will purchase the house and your friend (without telling you) sells the property. The property closes and the proceeds from the sale are deposited into the friend's account.

You find out about the sale when the automatic monthly mortgage payments deducted from your account stop being withdrawn by the mortgagee. You then find out that the property was sold. Naturally, you confront your friend who confirms the transaction. The problem takes a turn for the worse when you fail to take any action, such as contacting the police or any legal action to recover the property and the sale proceeds.

Nothing is done to recover the property. The new buyers then sell the property to another party who had no knowledge of the previous transaction. You make an attempt to reclaim the property via a lawsuit along with your rights, but sadly the new buyers will get to keep the property because of their lack of knowledge to the earlier misdeeds.

**So, what went wrong here and how can it be avoided?** The first thing to go wrong was giving the friend access and use of your Durable Power of Attorney. A Durable Power of Attorney creates an agency relationship where the named agent steps into your shoes and can do all the things you can do that are stated in the document. Many of those things will involve real estate transactions which is the very transaction discussed in this article.

The next thing to go wrong was the length of time before waking up to the fact that the real estate had been sold. Had there been notification to the Sheriff's Department or a lawsuit enacted shortly after learning of the sale, the whole transaction could have been stopped and reversed.

The last thing to go wrong was the failure to put a Lis Pendens on record (assuming a lawsuit is filed) concerning the transaction and preventing another buyer from claiming a lack of notice from purchasing property involving a lawsuit.

When confronted with cases like this, the court looks to see who is the least innocent party. In this case the least innocent party is the one who has no knowledge of the fraudulent transaction. Had a Lis Pendens been recorded, then knowledge would have been present of the fraudulent transaction making the new buyers aware of the possible lawsuit and not so innocent. As a result of all these failures, the new buyers will get to keep the property as their own.

What is there to learn from this? The first thing is not to let anyone use your Durable Power of Attorney unless you need someone to act on your behalf given some specific transaction. The next thing is not to wait a lengthy amount of time before contacting someone to protect your interest in a court of law. Failure to take timely action sets in motion a perception of not caring. The last thing to learn is immediately seek a means of providing notice to the world (recording in the public records) of the potential for a lawsuit involving the fraudulent transaction. This is usually provided when a lawsuit is filed involving real estate.

Although these types of transactions and problems rarely occur involving real estate, they often occur in financial transactions. This sometimes involves making withdrawals from someone's bank account or writing checks on an elderly person's account using a Durable Power of Attorney as authorization. The message to all of these transactions is to make absolutely sure the agent named in your Power of Attorney is a person you can trust. Better yet, do not allow the agent to take possession of your Power of Attorney until it is absolutely necessary.

If you believe you have been the object of misuse of your assets, contact the local Sheriff's office or the attorney of your choice and have that discussion. Just be sure not to wait too long.

*This article is intended for informational use only and is not for purposes of providing legal advice or association of a lawyer-client relationship.*

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# Health Insurance – 2022 Enrollment Periods and Exceptions

## Don't wait: Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment ends March 31

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

**D**id you know that if you're unhappy with your Medicare Advantage Plan (Medicare Part C), you have options? Each year, there's a Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period from January 1 – March 31. During this time, if you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan and want to change your health plan, you can do one of these:

- Switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan with or without drug coverage
- Go back to Original Medicare and, if needed, also join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan

If you switch Medicare Advantage Plans or go back to Original Medicare with or without a Medicare drug plan, your new coverage will start the first day of the month after your new plan gets your request for coverage. Keep in mind, if you go back to Original Medicare now, you may not be able to buy a Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) policy.

Your new plan will be effective the 1st of the following month.

### Special Enrollment Periods:

#### If any of the following occurs:

- You lose your current Coverage (nonpayment is excluded)
- You have a chance to get other coverage
- Your plan changes its contract with Medicare
- You become eligible for Medicare and Medicaid
- You qualify for extra help with Medicare Prescription Drugs
- You dropped a Medigap Policy for the 1st time within the last 12 months
- Special Needs Plans - New or no longer qualify
- MOVING out of the AREA or Moving to a NEW Area.

**Dates and deadlines for 2022 health insurance – Health Insurance Marketplace.**

**Important: 2022 Open Enrollment ends January 15**



If you don't act by January 15, 2022, you can't get 2022 coverage unless you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period\*. You must have enrolled by December 15, 2021, for coverage that starts January 1, 2022.

- **January 15, 2022:** Last day to enroll in or change plans for 2022 coverage. After this date, you can enroll or change plans only if you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period.
- **February 1, 2022:** 2022 coverage starts if you enrolled by January 15, 2022, and you've paid your first premium.

\* You qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain life events, including **losing health coverage, moving, getting married, having a baby, or adopting a child.** Depending on your Special Enrollment Period type, you may have 60 days before or 60 days following the event to enroll in a plan.

**Individual/Family** – There are other options available if you do not have pre-existing conditions. These plans can be a lot less expensive especially if you do not qualify for government subsidy. There are national carriers that offer very good plans with comprehensive coverage.

**International Travel** - Most of our US plans do not have us covered when leaving the United States, including Cruises. You should always take a comprehensive Medical Travel Insurance Policy. They are a lot less than you think and can make a world of a difference.

**Pet Insurance** – Our fur babies need insurance coverage too. The younger you start the less it costs. As vet bills escalate, most of us would do anything for our 4-legged loved ones. Why not cover them as well? There are a wide range of deductibles, copays, etc. In most cases coverage starts for less than \$1.00 a day. Pre-existing medical conditions in most cases are NOT covered. So, the earlier the better.

You should really work with a local broker to explore all your options. Don't invite strangers into your house or give them your personal information over the phone. With social media, i.e.: Facebook, WebEx solicitation, if you do not know them, please be careful. There are so many scams out there. Meet with or call a local agent, build a relationship and, if in the future you have a question, you can go back and see them.

Also remember when moving you may have a special enrollment period to apply or change your health insurance coverage. Also check your wills and trusts, and make sure they follow Florida's laws and guidelines. Establish yourself with a local Insurance Broker, Attorney and CPA. Ask a professional; most of the time your first consultation is at no charge.

**To learn more about your options, call to schedule an appointment:**

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# Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Philippians 4:11-13

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

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things. Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

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

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

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

If you find yourself making statements like this:



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

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

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



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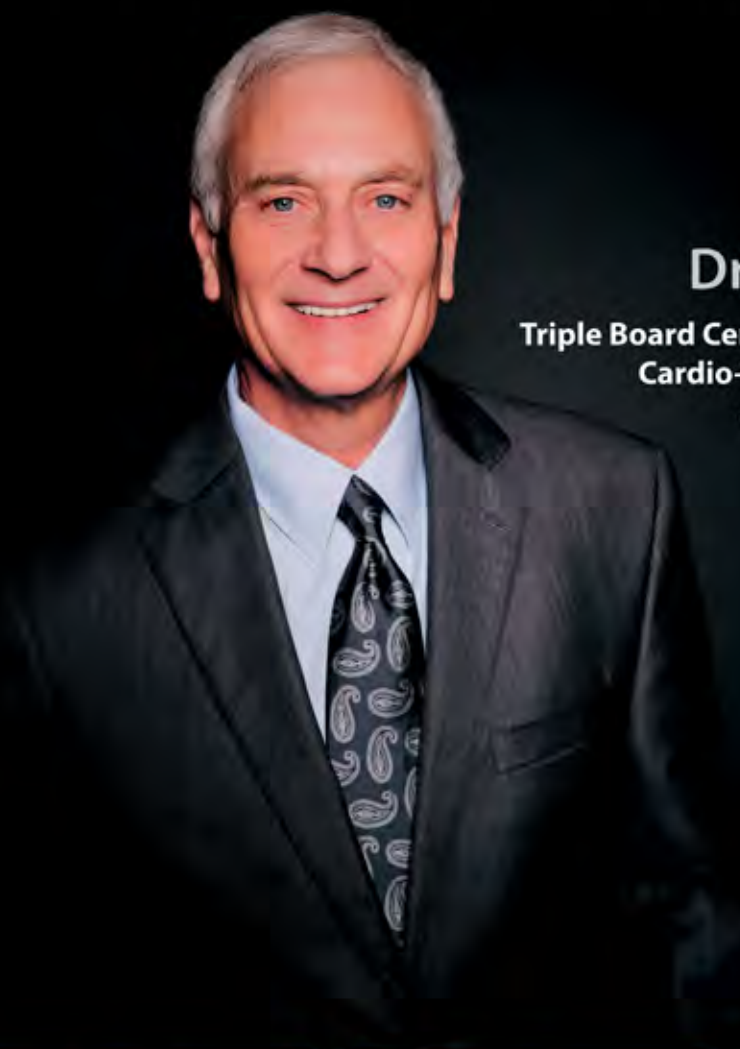
*Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church in Naples, Florida. Venture Church meets on the campus of FSW State College on Lely Cultural Blvd. in East Naples. For times and directions, visit [www.venturenaples.com](http://www.venturenaples.com).*



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