

S O U T H W E S T F L O R I D A ' S

# **Health & Wellness**®

MAGAZINE

January 2022

Lee Edition - Monthly

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# contents

## JANUARY

- 6 Kidney Cancer: Are You at Risk?
- 7 World-Class Doctors, Cutting-Edge Technology Defeat Cervical Cancer
- 8 The Problem with Bonds
- 9 3 Silent Vascular Killers-Detectable With 1 Screening
- 10 Glaucoma & Vision Loss
- 11 Aspire to a Beautiful Retirement
- 12 Are You Surprised? Common Myths About Hospice Care
- 13 Do You Have A Weakened or Tight Pelvic Floor?
- 14 Golf and Your Feet - Part 2
- 16 Start the New Year with a Full Body Exam
- 17 Improve Your Balance

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†AHCA 2019-2020 data, retrieved 10-01-21



- 18 New Technology to Resolve Symptoms from Neuropathy and Chronic Joint Pain
- 20 A Positive Mindset
- 21 Are Bladder Leaks Disrupting Your Normal Life?
- 24 Senior Living Options: What You Need to Know
- 26 Integrative Medicine: What Kind of Hippie Dippie Stuff is That?
- 28 A Cure for Neuropathy Regenerative Medicine Can Heal Sick Nerves
- 30 OCD: Participants Needed
- 31 Physical Activity and Exercise Are Critical for Managing Blood Glucose Levels
- 32 Are You Still Trying to Quit Smoking? Why it's Time to Make It Stick
- 33 Thyroid Disorders are Often Connected to Intestinal Permeability, Hormonal Imbalance and Stress
- 34 Healthy Aging: What Does It Really Require?
- 35 Health Insurance-2022 Enrollment Periods and Exceptions Don't Wait: Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment ends March 31
- 36 Implant Dentistry Can Give You A New Smile!
- 37 Need Help Losing Those Love Handles and Squishy Bits?
- 38 What to Do If You Think You Have Hearing Loss
- 39 Surgical and Nonsurgical Treatments for Rotator Cuff Injuries
- 40 What are Advance Directives in Florida?
- 42 Spiritual Wellness: Slowing the Pace of Your Life



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# KIDNEY CANCER: Are You at Risk?

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

**T**he kidneys are a major part of our detoxifying system. These two small bean-shaped organs clean the blood and filter waste products and toxins from the body through the urine. Kidney cancer is one of the ten most prevalent cancers. The lifetime risk for developing kidney cancer is about 1 in 46 in men and 1 in 82 in women.<sup>1</sup>

The symptoms of kidney cancer often go unnoticed or don't begin to show until the tumor(s) has grown. However, some of the key indicators are as follows:

- Blood in the urine
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Fever or infection
- Swollen abdomen
- Lump on the side of the abdomen (with or without pain)
- Anemia
- Swollen legs and ankles
- Chronic inflammation
- High blood pressure
- Shortness of breath

If you have symptoms or your physician finds a lump during a physical examination, they will order diagnostic testing such as a renal arteriogram, MRI, CT Scan, blood and urine analysis, and a needle biopsy may be necessary.

There are some increased risk factors, which make some individuals more susceptible to renal cancer. The risks factors included:

- Being over the age of 40
- Being male
- Being black
- Smoking
- Obese
- Overuse of NSAIDs and other prescription medications
- Family History
- Chemical Exposures
- Kidney disease

Most kidney cancer appears first in the tubules of the kidneys. When the malignant cells form a tumor(s) the growth rate is typically slow, so the

likelihood of an early diagnosis is increased, and the treatment can usually be performed before the tumor has metastasized into any other organs.

## Treatment

Depending on the stage and size of the tumor(s), your physician will develop a specific treatment plan tailored to your needs.

Typically, performing a nephrectomy treats kidney cancer. There are three main types of this surgical option. The first is a Partial nephrectomy, which removes the tumor and some of the surrounding tissue. The second is a Simple nephrectomy, which removes the entire kidney, and the third treatment method is a Radical nephrectomy, which removes the kidney, adrenal glands, lymph nodes, and any questionable surrounding tissue margins. These procedures can usually be done laparoscopically. Some patients may also require radiation or chemotherapy treatments.

## Associates in Nephrology

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

## Chronic Kidney Disease Program

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

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

Source:

1. [https://www.nfcr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAyc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1dxNN-rM7OKwmg3J43bZni6h175MIIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.nfcr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAyc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1dxNN-rM7OKwmg3J43bZni6h175MIIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD_BwE)

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

## Services Provided

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

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

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

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# 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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# 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.**

For more information go to [taxfreefortmyers.com](https://taxfreefortmyers.com) to see my upcoming webinar schedule or to download a complimentary copy of my book.

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>

iShares 7-10 Year Treasury Bond ETF (IEF) <https://yhoo.it/3oYTA73>

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# 3 Silent Vascular Killers—Detectable With 1 Screening

## Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms (AAA) are life-threatening. In fact, they are the 15th leading cause of death in the U.S. in people over the age of 65, but it can happen to much younger individuals as well depending on their risk factors and lifestyle. The larger they grow, the more likely a rupture will occur. Approximately 200,000 individuals are diagnosed with an abdominal aortic aneurysm every year.

### AAA Symptoms

- Intense Abdominal pain
- Back pain
- Chest pain
- Flank pain
- Dizziness nausea
- Shortness of breath
- Belly button pulsations
- Foot feels cold to touch
- Black or blue toe
- Infection (fever, weight loss)

Large aneurysms or those that are proliferating will likely need surgical repair. Smaller, slow-growing aneurysms can usually be monitored every few months.

## Carotid Artery Disease

Plaque in the arteries (atherosclerosis) can cause many issues, but when the carotid arteries are blocked, the stakes are higher due to the likelihood of plaque breaking off or total occlusion of the artery, which can cause an ischemic stroke. When vascular surgeons are attempting to clean out, repair the carotid artery, and place a stent, the risk of stroke is also higher. It is a very intricate procedure that should only be performed by highly qualified surgeons.

A carotid endarterectomy, where the plaque in the major blood vessel to the brain is cleaned out and repaired, is a surgery meant to prevent stroke. This should be performed via a TCAR procedure, which is a minimally invasive Transcarotid Artery Revascularization. The TCAR procedure significantly reduces the risk of stroke during the surgery as compared to conventional stenting.

## PAD

Individuals with peripheral arterial disease (PAD) have blood flow disruptions, usually in the feet and legs, but it can also occur in the brain, arms, and heart. When the blood vessels are narrowed or damaged, the blood flow becomes obstructed, and other complications can coincide. PAD can lead to severe medical conditions. Currently, 8.5 million Americans have peripheral artery disease.

## Symptoms of PAD

- Claudication (Pain after walking or exercising in calf, hips or thighs)
- A change in the color of your skin on feet or legs
- Erectile dysfunction (males)
- Hair loss or diminished hair growth on feet and legs
- Impeded toenail growth
- Leg numbness or weakness
- Leg or foot feels cold compared to opposing limb
- No pulse or a weak pulse in your legs or feet
- Non-Healing ulcers on feet or legs
- Shiny or thickened skin on your legs

## Diet and Exercise

Maintaining a healthy diet is critical for keeping your lipid levels in proper balance, coordinately it will assist in supporting the vascular structures through nutrient and antioxidant-dense foods. Preventing atherosclerosis, or the hardening of the arteries due to plaque build-up can be achieved through medications as well. However, if the blockage from PAD is severe and life-threatening, a medical procedure will be necessary to open and repair the artery to allow blood to flow normally again.

## PAD Treatment

- Peripheral Vascular Stent
- Angioplasty
- Bypass Grafting
- Worst-Case May Require Amputation

## Special Free Lifestyle Screening at Our Bonita Springs Location (regularly \$99.00)

### Lifestyle Screening

Our Lifestyle Screening is a simple non-invasive ultrasound scan. We will check for three of the deadliest silent killers that could be lurking in your body. The exam only takes 15 minutes and could save your life.

**Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)** – A weak lining of the artery wall can cause an abdominal aortic aneurysm. These fragile bulging arteries can rupture without warning and can cause sudden death.

**Carotid Artery Disease (Stroke)** –The carotid arteries supply blood flow directly to the brain. A blockage can develop in the artery. This blockage can cause small clots to form on the plaque surface.

These small clots can “break off” into the bloodstream and up to the brain causing a stroke.

**Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)** – Peripheral Arterial Disease is the narrowing of the arteries to the arms or legs. PAD can cause poor circulation and the decrease in blood to your arms or legs may result in pain, non-healing infections, or wounds that can

even result in amputations. Nearly 40% of people with PAD are at risk of having a heart attack within 5 years.

If you or a loved one has any of the venous symptoms or risk factors discussed above, you must seek medical attention immediately. Making an appointment with a vascular surgeon specializing in venous disease is critical.

## Vascular & Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons

The Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons is one of the first and most respected vein clinics in Southwest Florida. Their surgeons, Dr. Abraham Sadighi, Dr. Michael Novotney, and Dr. Johan Escobiano, have performed thousands of vascular and vein surgeries over the past 28 years.

They focus on diseases of the vascular system that can range from harmless but unattractive spider veins to dangerous conditions such as peripheral artery disease. Their caring and dedicated team will help you identify problems and offer the best treatment options for you.

The Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons offer a fully equipped vascular lab and state-of-the-art Angio suite to provide a higher level of service and care for their patients. You'll find comfort in knowing that they have a long-standing reputation for positive surgical outcomes that allow you to get back to healthy living.

*Call the Vascular & Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons today at (239) 344-7061 to make an appointment with a vascular surgeon who specializes in arteries and veins.*



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# GLAUCOMA & VISION LOSS

By Duane Wiggins, M.D.

Board Certified Ophthalmologist, Cataract & Refractive Surgeon 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.aaao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-glaucoma#treatment>

### 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.



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(239) 466-2020 | [www.QuigleyEye.com](http://www.QuigleyEye.com)

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 (239) 466-2020 or visit [www.QuigleyEye.com](http://www.QuigleyEye.com).**

### About Quigley Eye Specialists

Dr. Wiggins is a board-certified Ophthalmologist, Cataract and Refractive Surgeon 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.





## Aspire to a Beautiful Retirement.

**T**here's more to The Terraces at Bonita Springs than meets the eye, say Frank and Lucille LaBarbera, residents at The Terraces. Beyond the beauty of the Addison Mizner-inspired architecture, boutique setting, luxury retirement lifestyle and maintenance-free residences are incomparable ease and peace of mind.

This is a Life Plan Community that offers the best of both worlds – the active, vibrant lifestyle seniors want today with the confidence of knowing that if health needs change, care and support are available on site. Independent living, assisted living, memory support, respite care, skilled nursing and rehabilitation therapy are provided under the same roof. "The Terraces is an ideal choice for couples who want to age in style and in place," claims Lucille LaBarbera.

### Security and Savings

For the ultimate in confidence, The Terraces offers the financial and long-term health care security of LifeCare. With LifeCare, residents pay a one-time entrance fee (available in refundable and nonrefundable options), then a monthly service fee that covers the cost of every amenity, convenience and service offered. If needs change, residents enjoy seamless and priority access to any on-site health care services. Best yet, the care is covered by the monthly fee, offering predictable costs and protecting hard-earned assets.

### Age in Style. And in Place!

The Terraces is an ideal choice for couples who want to age in style and in place. With spacious, elegantly appointed residences, resort-quality amenities and exceptional dining options, the community offers a

rich, robust lifestyle. If, in time, one spouse requires assisted living, memory support, rehabilitation or skilled nursing, there's no need to move to a new community. Comprehensive care is offered in Renaissance at The Terraces. Visiting is as easy as walking down the hall.

Schedule a community tour and private lunch or dinner today by calling **239-204-3469** or take a virtual tour right now!





# Are You Surprised? Common Myths about Hospice Care

Discover the Truth about Getting the Care You Deserve if You're Living with Serious Illness

As part of National Hospice and Palliative Care Month in November, Hope Hospice is providing community education so that people living with serious illness have the information they need to make choices that align with their goals of care.

Hope Hospice is well-known for providing exceptional care and support, but sadly, many people delay getting this vital help because of fear or misconceptions. Learn the truth about hospice care so that you or your loved ones receive the full benefits that are available to you.

**Myth:** *Your doctor will tell you when it's time to consider hospice.*

**Truth:** Your medical team might not begin this essential conversation. It's important to let your physician know that you are interested in hearing more about hospice care. Many families say they wish they had learned about hospice sooner. When your doctors know that you're open to discussing hospice, they can provide options that respect your goals, preferences, and wishes.

**Myth:** *Hospice means nothing more can be done for someone with serious illness.*

**Truth:** In fact, hospice means that you can receive state-of-the-art pain and symptom management, as well as practical, emotional, and spiritual support for the entire family.

**Myth:** *Hospice is primarily for people with cancer.*

**Truth:** It's true that many people who enroll in hospice care have can-

cer, but care is available to anyone facing the end of life. People with heart disease, Alzheimer's, dementia, lung, kidney, and liver diseases, and any other life-limiting illness can get the support they need through hospice care.

**Myth:** *Hospice is a place.*

**Truth:** Hospice is a type of care. Most hospice patients receive comforting care in the place they call home — including private residences, assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities.

Hope Hospice also provides support in four Hope Care Centers located in Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, and Lehigh Acres – for people who need more help with pain or symptoms. Friends and families are always welcome 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Myth:** *Your doctor won't be involved in your care after you enroll in hospice care.*

**Truth:** On the contrary, your personal physician or specialist will continue to be involved in your care. The hospice team works closely with your doctor while creating your personalized care plan.

**Myth:** *Hospice means my loved one will die soon.*

**Truth:** Research suggests otherwise. Hospice care neither hastens death nor prolongs life. In some cases, people may even live *longer* with hospice care by avoiding futile treatments, hospitalizations, or emergency room visits.



**Myth:** *Hospice is only for the last few days of life.*

**Truth:** People receive the most benefit by receiving hospice care for six months or longer. You are able to remain in hospice care as long as you meet the eligibility guidelines.

**Myth:** *Hospice is about giving up hope.*

**Truth:** Hospice provides comfort and compassion for people in life's closing chapter. Each person can discover new ways find hope – hope for a peaceful ending, hope for relief from pain, or hope to spend more special time with loved ones.

**For Hope Hospice Care:**

**Call 239.482.4673**

**Toll-Free 800.835.1673**

**Visit [HopeHospice.org](https://www.hopehospice.org)**



# Do You Have A Weakened or Tight Pelvic Floor?

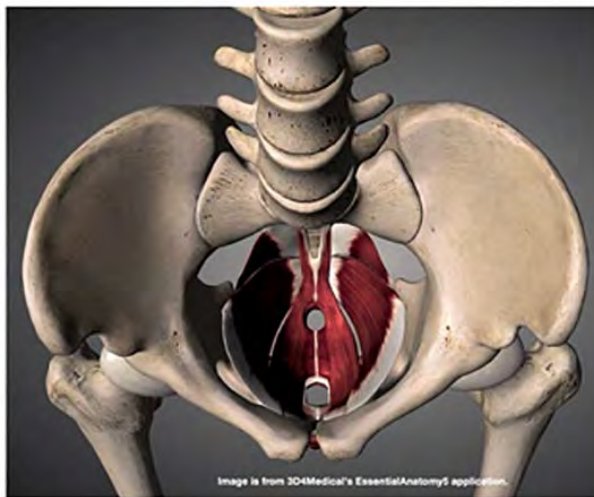
## What You Should Know

By Alejandro Miranda-Sousa, M.D.

**T**he muscles of the pelvic floor are a group of muscles that support the pelvic organs. These muscles support the bladder, rectum, prostate in men, and vagina and uterus in women. As we age, our muscles tend to weaken or get too tight. Conditions that involve this chronic pelvic pain in both men and women are often caused by muscle tightness. When these muscles don't behave appropriately, they can enter into a spasm or a cramp and this could mimic other conditions. Because of this, the organs supported by these muscles do not work properly and can cause urinary and/or fecal incontinence and sexual dysfunction in men and women along with many other symptoms.

This condition is frequently underdiagnosed and can greatly affect your quality of life. Many people suffering from pelvic floor dysfunction do not want to leave their home due to their symptoms and can have frequent unnecessary visits to the emergency room. Many of our patients even suffer in their personal relationships due to their symptoms. There are many reasons why these muscles do not work correctly including a fall, trauma, surgery or stress. Stress can cause you to unknowingly clench your pelvic floor muscles, which can lead to knots or trigger points in the muscle and cause pain or discomfort.

Fortunately, we have a minimally invasive treatment available to treat the muscles thereby improving your quality of life. You can expect to see a 70-80% or more improvement in symptoms.



**If you suffer from any of the following symptoms, pelvic floor therapy might be the right treatment for you:**

- **Stress Incontinence-** leaking urine with coughing, sneezing, heavy lifting, or laughing
- **Urge Incontinence-** leaking urine when you get a strong desire to urinate
- **Urinary Frequency-** getting the desire to urinate many times during the day
- **Nocturia-** getting a strong desire to urinate many times at night
- **Frequent urinary tract infections**
- **Fecal Incontinence-** leaking of stool
- **Constipation/Diarrhea**
- **Incomplete bladder emptying**
- **Vaginal Pain**
- **Penile Pain**
- **Pain with intercourse**

### Alejandro Miranda-Sousa, MD



Dr. Miranda-Sousa is a board certified urologist. He is an author and co-author of multiple research and clinical peer-reviewed medical articles. He received Best Abstract from the

American Urological Association in 2007 and is Fellowship Trained in Urodynamics and Neurourology.

Our providers are highly-qualified, skilled experts in the area of urinary and bladder disorders, pelvic floor prolapse, prostate cancer, along with many other related disorders. Dr. Miranda-Sousa and his staff are ready to answer any of your urological questions and concerns, as they treat all of their patients with the utmost of care.

*For more information, please visit our website [www.UrologyExperts.com](http://www.UrologyExperts.com) or call Urology Experts today at (239) 226-2727 or email [info@UrologyExperts.com](mailto:info@UrologyExperts.com) to schedule your consultation!*

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# GOLF AND YOUR FEET - PART 2

## Common Foot Injuries in Golf:

In my previous article, Golf and Your Feet Part 1, I spoke about how your feet affect the mechanics of golf. In Part 2, I want to highlight common golf related injuries podiatrists will see. Golfers may not realize the amount of time they spend on their feet while playing 18 holes of golf. The average round of 18 holes totals several miles of walking. It's no surprise this can lead to foot and ankle pain. Many golf related conditions involving the feet can be due to overuse injuries. They are caused by the recurring motion of swinging the golf club in the same or similar form with each swing. Listed below are common foot problems associated with golf and their recommended remedies. Often, adjustments you can make with your feet can address many of these problems.

**1. Neuromas** — Neuromas are a thickening or enlargement of nerve tissue. The most common neuroma in the foot is a Morton's neuroma, which occurs between the third and fourth toes. It can occur in other locations too. A neuroma is usually the result of compression and irritation of the nerve. This compression creates enlargement of the nerve, eventually leading to permanent nerve damage. In golf, as your body transfers its weight from one foot to the other while swinging the club, the nerve can become compressed and cause pain. The irritation of the nerve is more noticeable on longer shots, such as a drive, than on shorter shots, like putts.



## Common symptoms of neuromas are:

- Tingling, burning, or numbness starting in the front of the foot and shooting pain into the toes
- Pain in the ball of the foot
- A feeling that something is inside the ball of the foot
- A feeling that there is something in the shoe or the feeling a sock is bunched up underneath the toes

Treatment options for neuromas consist of NSAIDs, prednisone taper, steroid injection, alcohol sclerosing injections, orthotics/inserts, and stiffer shoes. When conservative measures fail, surgery may be considered.

Many of the golf-related neuromas may resolve with a change in stance. By adjusting the mechanics of the swing, less irritation can be experienced on the nerve. The adjustment consists of turning the front foot inward 45 degrees. This shift in the foot at the beginning of the swing affects the position of the foot at the end of the swing to decrease nerve irritation.

## 2. Plantar fasciitis/Achilles tendonitis/Heel pain

Plantar fasciitis is a type of heel pain that will occur at the bottom and/or arch of the foot. The pain occurs from an inflammation of the band of tissue that connects the bones in the ball of your foot to the heel bone. It can be a very sharp pain that is typically worse after periods of inactivity.

The first few steps are very painful, and the pain can ease with walking. There is often a tightness in the arch too. Achilles tendonitis is heel pain that occurs to the back of the heel. This also can feel like a sharp pain and tightness to the back of the heel after periods of inactivity. When you walk on uneven surfaces, such as the golf course, the foot needs to accommodate and balance the feet. This can make heel pain worse. Plantar fasciitis and Achilles tendonitis can occur together. These types of heel pain can make it difficult to maintain a solid stance during the golf swing.

Treatment options include supportive golf shoes, orthotic/shoe inserts, stretching exercises, icing and medications to decrease inflammation.

Wearing a stable golf shoe should help to balance and support your feet. This can help to improve your posture and weight distribution during your swing. Twisting your foot inward can irritate and inflame the plantar fascia ligament. Consult with a golf pro who can help you to practice proper form. Using a golf cart to decrease walking also helps with heel pain.

## 3. Subungual hematoma (Blood under the nail)

Blood can form under a nail when excessive repetitive pressure is placed on the big toe during the golf swing. This usually happens at the end of the follow through when the big toe slides forward and hits the top and end of the shoe in the dominant foot. The recurring trauma with each swing will damage the big toenail and underlying tissue allowing blood to get trapped underneath the nail. The blood is trapped underneath the nail and pressure builds up. This can be very painful due to the pressure the blood exerts on the nail bed. The nail coloration also becomes altered with the blood underneath it. Often, the skin surrounding the nail will be red and swollen. Occasionally, the blood will drain from the end of the nail. This will relieve some of the pressure and pain, however, the nail itself will not reattach to the tissues.

Treatment options for a subungual hematoma may include drainage of the blood under the nail, and possible removal of the nail plate. If the nail is removed, it will grow back.

## Lori DeBlasi, DPM

Dr. Lori DeBlasi is a board-certified podiatrist at Family Foot & Leg Center at the Colonial Blvd. office. She is accepting new patients. To make an appointment, call 239-430-3668 or visit [www.NaplesPodiatrist.com](http://www.NaplesPodiatrist.com).



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Since this injury occurs during the golf swing, the swing can be modified to decrease nail irritation and possibly stop injury from reoccurring. This is accomplished by moving the back foot slightly away from the target. This decreases the pressure to the end of the toe during the follow through. The pressure gets shifted to the inside of the foot rather than focused on the toe region.

#### 4. Extensor tendonitis – aka Golf Cart Tendonitis

The Extensor tendons are located on top of the foot and ankle. They work to raise your foot and toes upwards at your ankle. Extensor tendinitis typically occurs only in the right foot of the driver of the golf cart. There are two sections to the brake on a golf cart. The top piece needs to be pressed firmly downward when engaging the brake. With repetitive pressing down of the parking brake, the tendons on top of the foot gets stretched and can be irritated if the brake is used excessively. This can be seen on regular course terrain, but often more frequently happening after playing rounds on hilly golf courses.

Symptoms of extensor tendonitis include generalized pain to the top of the foot. There may be some swelling to the top of the foot also. Pain will be present with walking or bending of the foot.

This condition can be treated with medications to diminish inflammation, ice, stiff shoes and decrease irritation to the tendons. Ultimately, making modifications to applying the parking brake while driving the cart may reduce recurrence of this condition. Patients are encouraged to alternate using the left and right foot on the brake. Using the back of the foot (heel) to engage the brake can also help to decrease the irritation of the tendons. Park the golf cart in areas of flat ground since the force required to push down the parking brake on a hill is greater. Another option is to rotate driving responsibilities with your partner every other hole.

**5. Metatarsalgia** - Metatarsalgia is a general term used to describe pain across the ball of the foot. Excessive pressure of a golf spike under the ball of the foot can cause this type of pain. It will be localized to the area underneath the problematic spike.

Removal of a spike or purchasing golf shoes that allow multiple spike placement helps with this condition. Padding the area and orthotics/inserts have also been successfully utilized to decrease the pain associated with metatarsalgia.

**6. Blisters** - Blisters are a frequent problem at the end of a round of golf due to the rubbing and friction that occurs during play. It is recommended not to pop the blister. Apply a well-padded bandage. If the blister has already popped, apply an antibiotic cream and bandage for healing. If the blister is too large and/or causes pain, a visit to the podiatrist is warranted. Proper fitting of the golf shoes is key to minimize this problem. Also, always wears socks. There are anti-friction socks, pads, and balms available over the counter for those prone to forming blisters.

It is best to know the underlying cause of your foot pain. By seeing a Podiatrist, they can evaluate your symptoms and institute a treatment plan to resolve your foot pain. Remember foot pain is not normal. Don't put up with foot pain – get it fixed so you can keep on playing and enjoying your rounds of golf.

*I can't promise to bring your handicap down, but at least you won't be able to blame foot pain as your handicap!*



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**4 New Facts About Your Feet & Ankles**

**1** Heel pain in the morning can be easily resolved.

**2** Diabetic infections kill more people than breast cancer and AIDS. If diabetic, must see us now.

**3** Ingrown toenails can lead to bone infection; we treat them fast.

**4** Top pickleball injuries seen include foot fractures from ankle sprains.



Moving  
Forward



# Start the New Year with a Full Body Exam

By Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

**D**id you know that melanomas can proliferate very quickly? In just six weeks, they can become life-threatening. In our practice, it's not uncommon to see patients that have melanomas on their scalp, ears, bottom of the feet and other hard to detect areas of the body. You might think that you don't see any new or unusual lesions or moles, but are you 100% certain?

## Dermascope: Detailed Diagnoses

We use a dermascope, which is a handheld magnification device that allows dermatologists to see beneath the outermost layer of skin, which is called the epidermis. This enables us to see deep within the layer of the skin to decipher whether your mole or lesion is of concern, or if it's within normal limits.

Under the dermascope, a mole that may appear normal to the naked eye, may show signs of abnormality, such as having irregular borders. On the contrary, a mole that may have appeared to be irregular to the naked eye may show to be completely normal under the scope and alleviate the need for an unnecessary biopsy.

Getting your screening now at the beginning of 2022, will allow you to rest assured for the remainder of the year. If we do spot a sign of skin cancer, melanoma, or other skin conditions, we take assurance in knowing that if it is caught early, your treatment and outcomes will be ideal.

## Don't wait to schedule

With the "season" nearly fully upon us, and the influx of new residents and snowbirds, now is the time to call to schedule your full body exam. Don't wait to schedule, call for your appointment today.

**SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center**  
Whether you want to focus on antiaging and esthetic procedures or medical dermatology for the health of your skin, or a combination of both, SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center has the most comprehensive options. Not only are there numerous services, but you can trust that you are in the best hands with the most experienced practitioners.



SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center is a privately owned, all-inclusive dermatology practice specializing in adult and pediatric general dermatology and Mohs surgery for skin cancer. The team provides care to patients of all ages experiencing embarrassing, unwanted, and potentially life-threatening skin conditions.

## Services & Treatments Provided:

- General Dermatology
- Skin Cancer
- Mohs Surgery
- Botox
- Medical Grade Skincare Products

The staff at SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center provides the most personalized care by treating their patients like family. Each provider is committed to taking the time to understand the concerns and goals of the patient in order to provide the best-individualized care for that patient.

The expert and dedicated team offers specialized and individualized treatment options for skin conditions such as acne, alopecia, contact dermatitis, eczema, rosacea, shingles, sunburn, and urticaria.

SWFL Dermatology is an extension of All Island Dermatology Plastic Surgery, MedSpa and Laser Center which has serviced patients in the greater Garden City and Glen Cove communities in Long Island, New York since 1995.

The office is conveniently located at 13800 Tamiami Trail N, Naples, Florida, and serves the greater Collier and Lee County areas.

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## Founder & Owner

**Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD**

Dr. Onorato has over 25 years of experience practicing dermatology and is board certified. He serves as SWFL Dermatology's medical director, encouraging his team to provide the best skin care services in the area. He focuses on general dermatology and dermatological surgery including laser treatments, chemical peels, and injectable fillers.

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# Improve Your Balance

By Marek Zajac, FootXperts Founder and CEO

**T**he ability to sense the surfaces underneath our feet is called proprioception. Countless electrical impulses move along the nerves to your brain providing the feedback we depend on in order to stand, walk, run, jump, maintain balance and freely move our body and limbs in every external environment. Having this awareness is important for day-to-day living and vital for a healthy mobility. If you've ever noticed the difference between grass, sand or cement on the bottom of your feet you've experienced proprioception.

This never-ending loop of informational exchange between the receptors in our feet and our central nervous system, delivers the information based on which our brain is able to control the muscular tension in lower extremities. Age-related changes, injuries or medical conditions can affect the nerves, cause long-term or permanent proprioception impairment and lead to balance issues. Common medical conditions that cause a proprioceptive deficit and imbalance are:

- Neuropathy
- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- Parkinson's disease
- Cognitive disabilities
- Herniated disc
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Huntington's disease
- Joint injuries and replacements, such as hip replacement or knee replacement

Custom foot orthotics, designed individually, from a specialist with additional knowledge in proprioception can help with postural awareness and balance issues. Special modules on the surface of the orthotic give additional impulses and increase the amount and quality of information our feet provide and our brain can process. This type of foot orthotics work on a neurological level and can help with imbalance and muscular issues in lower extremities.

"Foot Stores" chains do not offer these solutions. You can only receive true Expert Foot Orthotics from a professional with appropriate equipment and training.



Every module on the surface of this orthotics needs to be designed and placed individually to address the unique needs and foot shape of every patient.

Our body works as a chain of muscles, tendons, joints and electrical impulses that provide the right information to make that network work like a clockwork. Custom Foot Orthotics can be so much more than just arch supports. The right impulses in the right place, sent from your feet to your brain, can e.g. change the muscular tension in calf muscles and help toe walking patients to walk normally.

In over 20 years of work in the field of biomechanics and orthopedics we could help countless clients with more balance and stability, with pain relief and more quality of life.

We've equipped people of all ages from 4y to 90y, walker, runner and top athletes. We work with podiatrists, orthopedic clinics, physical therapists and chiropractors. There are no limitations in age or grade of mobility.

We use state-of-the-art 3D scanning systems, we check your posture and we analyze your gait as well. We take measurements of your shoes to ensure a perfect fit and we can design custom foot orthotics for your sandals. There are huge differences in quality and knowledge in the market. Make sure the foot orthotics you decide on are really designed and produce to address your individual needs and cover the differences of your left and right foot.



**FOOTXPERTS**  
**LOCATED IN CAPE CORAL**

**Marek Zajac, Founder and CEO**

20 years of experience in the field of biomechanics and orthopedics combined with state of the art German engineering. Our vision is it to provide the best possible custom foot orthotics for patients and clinics.

## Who we are and how we work:

Our clients (from top athletes to people of all ages and kids) all suffer from different painful symptoms or will develop them over time because of misaligned feet and legs, joint problems, bad posture and balance issues.

We help them through a special type of Custom Made Foot Orthotics that goes beyond the typical arch supports. We design and produce every pair (even the left and the right side) 100% individually.

## Our solutions help with

- Foot Pain - Knee Pain - Hip Pain - Back Pain (related to foot shape and leg axis)
- Balance and Perception Issues (Neuropathy, Parkinson's, Kids with special needs)
- Muscle- and Joint Problems (muscular over tension, muscular dystrophy)
- Posture and Stability (Poor posture, bad gait)

**ARE YOU EXPERIENCING ANY OF  
THE ABOVE MENTIONED  
CONDITIONS? VISIT US!**

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# NEW TECHNOLOGY TO RESOLVE SYMPTOMS FROM NEUROPATHY AND CHRONIC JOINT PAIN

## Symptoms of Peripheral Neuropathy Depend on the Peripheral Nerve Affected

### Sensory nerve damage



Unusual sensations



Pain from light touch



Burning



Tingling



Pain from light touch



Numbness



Balance problems

### Motor nerve damage



Muscle cramping



Twitching



Reflex abnormalities

### Autonomic nerve damage



Excess sweating



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Heat intolerance



Impotence



Orthostatic hypotension (dizziness or fainting after standing up)

## SANEXAS

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SANEXAS Electric Cell Signaling Machine uses electrical signals to treat pain and circulatory conditions. This electric cell signaling device is much like a traditional TENS unit, but it is larger in size and penetrates deeper which is more effective in reducing pain. The pharmaceutical strength, frequencies, and associated harmonics are greater than the typical TENS unit, which is why trained medical professionals are present when it is in use.

### WHAT IT TREATS

The SANEXAS Electric Cell Signaling Treatment treats (but is not limited to) the following:

- Neuropathy/radiculopathy pain
- Improve nerve health and regeneration
- Neuromuscular reeducation and training
- Creates relief of chronic intractable pain (osteoarthritis)
- Muscle spasms relaxation
- Increased local blood circulation
- Prevents the retardation of disuse atrophy
- Acute/chronic pain conditions
- Post-traumatic pain syndromes
- Aids in treatment in post-surgical pain conditions
- Improved tissue/organ function

### HOW MANY TREATMENTS

The average person will start noticing changes after 10-18 treatments. Some may notice changes earlier than later depending on the person and area receiving treatment, but it is necessary to receive a series (multiple) treatments for the SANEXAS treatment to be effective.



## NEUROPATHY CAUSES

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## SANEXAS TREATMENT

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Regenerative medicine is used for the management of pain, sports injuries, to expedite the healing from surgery, hair loss, sexual health and even to combat the signs of aging.

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# A POSITIVE MINDSET

By Dr. Mary Nuosce

**T**he past two years have shined an especially bright light on mental health. And that is a good thing. However, it also demonstrated the need for more professionals who are educated and trained to be a valuable community resource.

Thankfully, gone are the days where people would go to great lengths to ignore or hide mental health issues because of the stigmas associated with it. Today, people can talk more openly about mental health. For professionals in the field, there are many avenues where they can apply their knowledge and skills, and it's not just in an office.

Our Bachelor's degree in Applied Psychology includes classes, projects, and discussions about the study of human behavior and how to motivate others. This will help you strengthen your oral and written communication skills, plus you'll further develop critical thinking skills and apply psychological concepts to problem-solve a variety of situations. You'll participate in live chats, discussions and simulations that are interactive, which teach you to apply what you learn. These are skills that managers and leaders in organizations find not only useful, but also valuable.

Some of the classes you'll take include general, social, educational, abnormal, cognitive, organizational, and experimental psychology. Additional classes include the principals of developmental psychology, the psychology of conflict management, and the principles of analytic techniques. These are your core classes, and with general education and electives, you'll gain a well-rounded education.

During your journey with this degree, you'll develop a solid foundation for careers that include human services and management.

Additionally, we offer a certificate in substance abuse awareness and treatment. It's another layer of knowledge that naturally builds upon the bachelor's degree. Classes for this certificate include basic counseling skills, screening and assessment,



basic counseling skills, treatment modalities, advanced professional addiction knowledge, professional ethics in alcoholism/chemical dependency counseling, and applied practice in addictions. You can complete this certificate in eight months, and it meets the academic training requirements for the Certified Addiction Professional (CAP) certification. The Florida Certification Board explains additional requirements needed in order to earn the full CAP.

With this degree, you can apply it in many settings, including community agencies, hospitals, hospices, case management, and if you earn the certificate, the substance abuse counseling area. The people you help can range from children and adolescents to adults, the elderly and veterans. You can make a positive impact on people, whether

as a manager or a leader of an organization, to clinical settings. And that impact will likely extend to that person's family and friends.

For more information, visit **Hodges.edu**. Classes start every month.

*Dr. Mary Nuosce, LMHC, NCC, is a core faculty member for Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Hodges University.*



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# Are Bladder Leaks Disrupting Your Normal Life?

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

**Do you get sudden, strong urges to urinate and are unable to control it? Do you go to the restroom 8 or more times a day? Do you have accidental leakage before you make it to the restroom? If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, you may suffer from overactive bladder or urinary incontinence.**



## What causes bladder leaks and incontinence?

**B**ladder leakage, urinary incontinence or overactive bladder symptoms are not a normal part of aging. Millions of people worldwide suffer from these life-altering symptoms.<sup>1,2</sup> These symptoms may occur because of abnormal communication between the brain and the bladder. This may lead to the feeling of an urgent need to urinate and an unwanted bladder contraction. You may also experience a need to rush to the restroom and leak or lose urine before you make it in time.

The good news, there are treatment options available to help regain control of your bladder.

The Doctors at Florida Bladder Institute are now offering Axonics® Therapy, a long-lasting solution that is clinically proven to improve bladder control and deliver clinically meaningful improvements in quality of life\*.

## What is Axonics Therapy?

Axonics Therapy is an advanced treatment option that is used for treating symptoms of overactive bladder (including urinary urgency incontinence), fecal incontinence and urinary retention.<sup>1</sup>

Axonics Therapy works by providing gentle stimulation to the nerves that control the bladder and bowel, which can restore normal control and result in symptom improvement.

If you and your doctor believe you are a candidate for Axonics Therapy, you will first try the therapy for a brief test period that allows you and your doctor to see if the therapy provides satisfactory reduction of your symptoms. If it is determined that the therapy is right for you, you will have an outpatient procedure where a miniaturized Axonics implant is placed just beneath the skin in the upper part of your buttock.

## What are the benefits of Axonics Therapy?

Axonics Therapy provides the possibility of saying goodbye to bladder leaks!

**Long-lasting symptom relief:** Designed to provide therapy for at least 15 years, providing a long-term solution for your symptoms

**Relief without compromise:** An implant that will not limit your access to full-body MRI's\*.

### Clinically proven results:

- 89% of treated patients achieved clinically significant improvements at 1-year<sup>3</sup>
- 93% of patients were satisfied with their therapy<sup>3</sup>

\*50% or greater reduction in symptoms

### References:

1. Coyne KS, Sexton CC, Thompson CL, et al. The prevalence of lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) in the USA, the UK and Sweden: results from the Epidemiology of LUTS (EpiLUTS) study. *BJU Int*. 2009;104(3):352-360.
2. Census Reporter website. <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/01000us-united-states/>. Accessed July 19, 2019.
3. Benson K, et al. *NeuroUrol and Urodyn*. 2020

Important Safety Information: Implantation and use of the Axonics System incurs risk beyond those normally associated with surgery, some of which may necessitate surgical intervention. Results and experiences may vary and are unique to each patient. No promise or guarantee is made about specific results or experiences. For more information about safety and potential risks, go to: [www.axonics.com/si](http://www.axonics.com/si). Caution: Federal law (USA) restricts this device to sale and use by, or on the order of, a physician. © 2020 Axonics Modulation Technologies, Inc. All rights reserved.



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## A Positive Mindset!



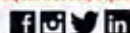
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# Senior Living Options: What You Need to Know

As we age, our needs change. Maybe the responsibilities of homeownership have become overwhelming. You no longer want to mow the lawn, make repairs, or be so far away from loved ones and friends. In other cases, a spouse might need daily care due to a specific condition, or perhaps your loved one has a neurodegenerative disorder, such as dementia or Parkinson's disease and requires 24-hour care.

Whether you need independent living, assisted living or memory care, or perhaps your spouse needs memory care, and you want to live in a community that provides independent living for yourself and memory care for them, finding the right place to suit your needs can be difficult.

Wanting or needing a more manageable lifestyle is common, and your options should be explored. However, most people feel lost when it comes to making these decisions. Finding a safe place for mom or finding a lively community that's full of social activities in a great location can be challenging. That's why seeking help from a senior advisor group is essential.

Senior advisors take the guesswork out of finding the right senior living community that suits your needs. They also specialize in helping caregivers find and utilize well needed respite care.



Oasis Senior Advisors are highly sought after due to their expertise, caring standpoint, and their complimentary, free service they provide.

The best part is you can explore your options without being bombarded by a community trying to oversell you on their specific location.

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##### *Free, Community-Based Senior Housing Services*

When it comes to selecting the right senior living for your elderly loved one, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the process. With tens of thousands of senior housing communities across the United States, and a wide range of different types of housing options to choose from, it's not always easy to know where to begin. That's where we come in. At Oasis Senior Advisors®, we are committed to making senior housing simple. We offer free senior housing services for individuals and their families from coast to coast. We take the time to understand your unique goals and needs, offering compassionate, personalized support and guidance every step of the way.

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At Oasis, we take a dedicated, one-on-one approach when it comes to our senior housing services. We understand that this transition can be difficult—at any stage of life—which is why we strive to provide the caring support you and your family need.

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We don't believe in a one-size-fits-all solution; instead, we take the time to learn about you and your loved one. We take into account things like independence level, medical needs, lifestyle, personal preferences, location, and more when helping you select the right senior housing option. Our advisors are incredibly knowledgeable of the different types of senior housing communities, as well as the specific options in your area and they use this knowledge to help you make the right choice for your family.

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# OCD Clinical Trial

## DO YOU SUFFER FROM OCD?

We're studying an investigational drug to potentially help treat the symptoms of OCD.



Adults with OCD who are not satisfied with their current medication may be eligible to participate in a study with an investigational medication that would be added to their current medication.



## What is OCD?

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a mental health disorder that affects 1 in 100 people and occurs when a person gets caught in a cycle of obsessions and compulsions

**OBSSESSIONS**  
Repetitive and unwanted images, thoughts or urges.

**COMPULSIONS**  
Behavior that you repeatedly perform to reduce distress.

**DISTRESS**  
You feel like the thoughts must be significant, and they bother you.

**TEMPORARY RELIEF**  
The compulsions only make you feel better for a little while.

**biohaven**  
pharmaceuticals

## Why Participate?

Clinical trials represent the latest research about your condition and may offer new treatment options. People participate in clinical trials for a variety of reasons:

- Participants might want to try something new.
- Participants might be interested in receiving investigational medication, and study-related care.
- Some participants feel that by volunteering they are contributing to advancing science by helping researchers find better treatments for individuals who suffer from OCD.

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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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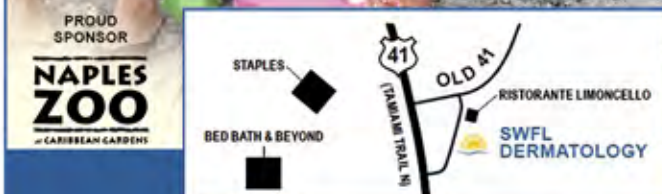
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# A CURE FOR NEUROPATHY?

## Regenerative Medicine Can Heal Sick Nerves

Dr. Sebastian Klisiewicz, D.O.

**N**europathy is a painful and disabling condition that affects many Americans. Until recently, many patients have been told there is no cure for their neuropathy and the few treatments that are available are not very effective. Luckily for neuropathy sufferers, there are new natural treatments that are safe and effective. The latest research has shown that Regenerative Medicine treatments such as platelet rich plasma also known as PRP, cold laser therapy and proper nutritional support can heal sick nerves. An integrated approach that includes these cutting-edge treatments can now help patients eliminate neuropathy symptoms, improve their function and regain their quality of life.

Neuropathy is a general medical term for sick or dysfunctional nerves. Nerves are like electrical wires within our body that carry information to and from our brains to sense our environment and move our extremities. In neuropathy, damage occurs to the nerve fibers and blood vessels that support them. This causes a disruption of the electrical signals within the nerves leading to the dreadful symptoms of pain, burning, pins & needles, cramping, numbness, weakness, heaviness and loss of balance.

Neuropathy can be caused by several different mechanisms. Nerves can be damaged by mechanical forces such as compression, friction, or stretch. Nerves can become severed or cut during traumatic injuries or surgeries. Neuropathy can also be caused by metabolic factors such as elevated blood sugar, abnormal thyroid function or lack of nutrients such as B vitamins. Toxins such as alcohol and some medications can also contribute to nerve damage. Often, multiple factors are involved in the development of neuropathy. For example, patients with diabetes, B vitamin deficiencies and chronic alcohol use are more likely to experience nerve damage from mild compression at the wrists, elbow and feet. This is because their nerves are already inflamed, dysfunctional and vulnerable to damage.

The standard treatment for neuropathy involves the use of medications such as gabapentin or Lyrica. Unfortunately, these medications can cause side effects including fatigue, depression, constipation, etc. Opiate pain medications are also used but

these can be dangerous and often ineffective. Steroid injections, another available treatment, can sometimes provide short term pain relief, but do not actually heal the nerves and can have unwanted side effects. Surgery is a last resort for some neuropathy sufferers, but again this comes with significant risks. Luckily, there are new alternatives to these toxic medications, steroid injections and invasive surgeries.



An integrative approach that includes regenerative medicine, physical therapy and nutritional support can often treat neuropathy safely and effectively. Contrary to previous belief, nerves can heal and regenerate when given the right stimulus and a proper healing environment. One of the newest treatments available is ultrasound guided injections of platelet rich plasma (PRP) around sick and injured nerves. PRP is made by spinning the patient's own blood within a centrifuge to concentrate the platelets in a plasma solution. Platelets are packed with growth factors that mobilize the immune system to start the healing process. They are also full of anti-inflammatory and pain reducing compounds. Best of all, they are natural, safe and made by your own body.

PRP has been classically used to treat tendon injuries and arthritis. But recently, research studies have shown that PRP injections around nerves can promote regeneration of the nerves and the protective covering or myelin, increase growth of supporting blood vessels, decrease inflammation, and increase muscle growth through the mobilization of healing stem cells.

The use of cold laser therapy has also been shown to improve nerve function and regeneration. When combined with PRP, cold laser therapy works synergistically to heal sick nerves. With a series of PRP and laser treatments, many nerve conditions can resolve. This often results in the elimination of pain, a gain in strength and improved balance.

Nerve regeneration and healing is best when accompanied with proper nutritional support and nerve specific physical therapy. A diet high in antioxidants, vitamins and minerals along with healthy fats can support the healing process. At times, specific supplements such as turmeric, fish oil and alpha-lipoic acid can aid in this process as well. Specific neuro therapy is utilized to retrain the nervous system as the nerves heal allowing the body to function at its best.

At Integrative Rehab Medicine, we specialize in treating neuropathies with Regenerative Medicine. Dr. Sebastian and our team of highly trained professionals are pioneers in healing nerves. Our Integrative Advantage™ is the most comprehensive neuropathy treatment in Southwest Florida. Neuropathy patients now have a safe and effective option to eliminate symptoms, improve function and regain quality of life.

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#### Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

*Dr. Sebastian is a leading physiatrist in Estero, Fort Myers and Bonita Springs (Southwest Florida). He is the founder and medical director of Integrative Rehab Medicine in Estero, FL. He combines his extensive knowledge in Regenerative Medicine, Osteopathic musculoskeletal medicine, Physical Rehabilitation and Functional & Natural medicine to create personalized and integrated treatment plans for each patient.*

*Dr. Sebastian completed his medical studies at the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (CCOM) followed by a residency in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R) at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. After residency, he worked as an Assistant Professor for Loyola University Medical Center in Chicago. In 2014, he moved his family to Southwest Florida to work at Lee Health's Spine Center. In August 2019, Dr. Sebastian opened his private clinic, Integrative Rehab Medicine. Dr. Sebastian has extensive training in prolotherapy, PRP injections and Bone Marrow Stem Cells. During his time in Florida, he further advanced his knowledge in Integrative Medicine through course work with the Institute for Functional Medicine. Since, he has educated doctors and the public on the Integrative approach at numerous medical conferences and community events.*



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# OCD: PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

ARHI | Clinical Trial | Biohaven Pharmaceuticals

**D**uring the past year and a half due to the pandemic, people have become much more obsessed with hygiene. Many have joked about having OCD due to how many times they wash their hands each day, but for a person with OCD, it is no laughing matter. The distress that comes with the anxiety, urges and abnormal compulsions plague the majority of their day.

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a mental health disorder that affects 1 in 100 people and occurs when a person gets caught in a cycle of obsessions and compulsions.**

**O**- Obsession  
**C**-Compulsions  
**D**-Distress

## There are different types of OCD

- Checking
- Contamination
- Mental Contamination
- Hoarding
- Ruminations
- Intrusive Thoughts

An example of the symptoms of OCD are checking to make sure the stove is off over and over again and worrying that when you leave the house, you have forgotten. Along with checking throughout the day, it's not uncommon for those suffering with "checking" disorders to have to come back home to check on an issue multiple times, or to get out of bed to check.

**OCD can be triggered by stress, abuse, trauma, depression or crisis.**

If you are between the ages of 18 and 65, there is a new clinical trial for those that think they may have or have been diagnosed with OCD.

At ARHI (Advanced Research for Health Improvement), they are studying an investigational drug to potentially help treat the symptoms of OCD. Adults with OCD who are not satisfied with their current medication may be eligible to participate in a study with an investigational medication that would be added to their current medication.



## What You Should Know About Clinical Trials

Clinical trials or medical research studies offer a way for researchers to bring new therapies, medications, vaccines, and devices quicker to patients that need them. When a trial is held, rigorous protocols are always in place to protect the patient's best outcome. Before phase one of any medical trial is brought to humans, they conduct thorough laboratory testing.

The IRB (Institutional Review Board) monitors all clinical trials to make certain that patients are protected. This independent committee of medical professionals and advocates keep track and make sure that federal regulations, ethics, and patient's rights are upheld throughout the process.

## How Clinical Trials Help

Disease states, illnesses and disorders are able to launch innovative and the most advanced treatments when clinical trials show positive outcomes. The average clinical trial allows advanced treatment options to be implemented in patient therapy protocols in an advantageous manner. Clinical trials also have helped countless individuals stave off disease states while under medical care during their researched disorder.

At Advanced Research for Health Improvement, they believe that clinical studies will advance medicine and help people live better lives. With this mentality, they strive for greatness in each area of work that they do.

## CURRENT STUDIES

**Are you interested in participating in a clinical trial? ARHI is currently accepting participants for multiple studies.**

To find out more, please contact them today at, 239-230-2021, or email them at [info@arhiusa.com](mailto:info@arhiusa.com).



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# Physical Activity and Exercise Are Critical for Managing Blood Glucose Levels

Denise A. Pancyrz - Diabetes Reversal & Holistic Lifestyle Coach, Speaker, Author

It's well known that exercise and physical movement are primary pillars for healthy aging and overall health in general. For those individuals with diabetes, it's not an option, it's critical. However, depending on your health and fitness level, exercise should be implemented for your specific needs and with caution. If you need to start out with a mild to moderate routine, this is best, as you can work your way up to higher intensity and endurance levels.

The American Diabetes Association recently published a paper in their Diabetic Care Journal on the effects of exercise and glucose levels.

Blood glucose control in those with type 2 diabetes is better regulated in individuals that exercise regularly.<sup>1</sup> Exercise reduces insulin resistance, cardiovascular risk, helps aid in weight loss and improves overall health.<sup>1</sup> Exercising on a regular basis is thought to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. It also helps to improve muscle strength and increases energy production. It's no surprise that those with type 1 diabetes also benefit greatly from exercise.<sup>1</sup>

## Aerobic Exercise Benefits

Aerobic training increases mitochondrial density, insulin sensitivity, and compliance and reactivity of blood vessels, lung function, immune function, and cardiac output.<sup>1</sup>

Moderate to high volumes of aerobic exercise are associated with substantially lower cardiovascular and overall mortality risks in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes.<sup>1</sup> In type 1 diabetes, aerobic training increases cardiorespiratory fitness, decreases insulin resistance, and improves lipid levels and endothelial function.<sup>1</sup> In individuals with type 2 diabetes, regular training reduces A1C, triglycerides, blood pressure, and insulin resistance.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, high-intensity interval training (HIIT) promotes rapid enhancement of skeletal muscle oxidative capacity, insulin sensitivity, and glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes and can be performed without deterioration in glycemic control in type 1 diabetes.<sup>1</sup>



## Cardiovascular Risk

In recent years, metabolic syndrome has become a commonly identified risk factor for cardiovascular disease because a vast number of Americans are overweight, and their bodies become inflamed; this inflammatory response affects their vascular structures. When the vessels are circulating high-glucose blood, atherosclerosis occurs at a greater intensity. Atherosclerosis is a build-up of plaque and causes a hardening of the arteries.

Regular exercise, which should be daily or no more than 2 consecutive days of no exercise is best to help regulate insulin levels.

Denise Pancyrz understands your diabetic challenges, frustrations, and life-threatening health risks. She was once in your shoes but discovered a breakthrough and reversed her disorder. She now coaches others to help them get their lives back.

## Reference:

1. S. Colberg, Physical Activity/Exercise and Diabetes: A Position Statement of the American Diabetes Association. *Diabetes Care* 2016 Nov; 39(11): 2065-2079. <https://doi.org/10.2337/dcl6-1728>, <https://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/39/11/2065>

## DENISE A. PANCYRZ'S STORY

*National Diabetes & Holistic Lifestyle Coach - Speaker - Author*

I was a diabetic who was angered being burdened with diabetes. I was tired of taking medications and four insulin shots per day that did NOT make me feel better. The food I was taught to eat as a diabetic was not bringing me to a state of optimal health. It was keeping me medicated and constantly visiting Walgreen's, Diabetes Educators and the doctors.

I wanted my life to be different and the medical community told me it was highly unlikely. In fact, I was told the amount of medication and insulin would increase as I age. However, I learned that you could improve or eliminate disease with proper nutrition, not with unnecessary medication.

I feel better and stronger in my 50s, than I did in my 40s. I have more energy, reversed diabetes, eliminated inflammation that was leading me to heart disease, eliminated IBS and intestinal issues ~ no more stomach aches after meals, my seasonal allergies are gone and a slight skin issue on my elbow healed. I almost forgot, I lost weight in the process.

I know it sounds too good to be true that proper nutrition was able to heal me—I'm living proof. As a national coach, speaker and author, my mission is to help others to achieve optimal health through holistic lifestyle changes. Certified in holistic nutrition and homeopathy, I can bring awareness to diabetics to make lifestyle changes for a lifetime and reverse the effects of diabetes.

**If you are tired of living with diabetes and are worried about your future and your health, contact Denise for personalized coaching and accountability to live your best life in optimal health.**



Diabetes & Holistic Lifestyle Coach  
Speaker • Author

**To find out more please visit**  
**ReverseMyDiabetes.net, call 888-848-1763**  
**or email Denise at Info@ReverseMyDiabetes.net.**





# Are You Still Trying to Quit Smoking?

## Why it's Time to Make It Stick

**Dr. Joseph Freedman MD, MBA**

**S**moking is no longer a popular pastime; however, many people still struggle with the addiction. If you are one of them, it's time to stop. Cigarettes are toxic to your health and living without them is so much better on all levels and aspects of your life.

Most people are familiar with the negative effects that smoking has on their lungs and the increase in cancer related diseases, but often are unaware of the detriment that smoking does to your heart.

Smoking cigarettes and other forms of tobacco causes toxic chemicals to enter your lungs and travel throughout your body. All smoking, no matter how long you've done it, or how much in quantity you've smoked, affects your heart negatively and causes damage. But the good news is, no matter how long or how much you've smoked, quitting will benefit you immensely. It's never too late to stop smoking.

**Smoking correlates to the heart and vascular issues following:**

- Causes inflammation in the arteries
- Increases heart rate
- Causes sticky plaque buildup in your arteries (both coronary & peripheral)
- Raises LDL (bad cholesterol)
- Lowers HDL (good Cholesterol)
- Blood vessel walls become stiff and damaged
- Creates abnormal heart rhythms
- Increases blood pressure
- Creates undue stress on your heart
- Causes blood to thicken
- Lowers oxygen levels in blood

The chemicals in the smoke are what cause atherosclerosis (arterial plaque). These chemicals negatively affect cholesterol levels and fibrogen levels, which is a blood-clotting agent. These disturbances can lead to stroke, aortic aneurysms, peripheral vascular disease, heart attack and abdominal aortic aneurysms just to name a few.



**Realistic advice to help you quit smoking:**

- Make a decision and pick a date to quit
- Get rid of all tobacco & lighters
- Plan ahead-Talk to your doctor now about smoking cessation programs, treatment options and medications.
- Let your family and friends know that you're quitting
- Find a new hobby to stay busy
- Avoid the same old routine that allowed you the convenience of smoking
- Keep track of the money you save, write it down every day and make a tally
- At the end of each week that you continue to not smoke, treat yourself to something nice.
- Don't give up! It's not easy, but it's worth it to quit.

By quitting smoking, you reduce your risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, and cardiovascular disease.

**Benefits and Statistics of Quitting According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:**

- Within 20 minutes of quitting, your heart rate will decrease
- Within 12 hours of quitting, the carbon monoxide levels in your blood will decrease to normal
- Within 3 months of quitting, your risk of a heart attack decreases, and your lungs will begin to work better
- After 1 year, your added risk of coronary artery disease is half that of someone who smokes
- After 5 years, your risk of stroke is the same as that of a nonsmoker
- After 10 years, your lung cancer death rate is about half that of someone who smokes
- After 15 years, your risk of coronary artery disease is the same as that of a nonsmoker

At Cardiac Care Group, they take your symptoms seriously and are prepared to see you and to discuss your conditions. They specialize in providing a wide range of services that focus on the prevention, prompt diagnosis and state-of-the-art treatment of cardiovascular disease.

**Joseph Freedman, M.D., Cardiac Care Group**

Dr. Freedman brings many years of experience as a cutting edge cardiologist specializing in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of all cardiac disease. He trained at the prestigious Cleveland Clinic, continually ranked #1 in Cardiovascular Care, where he focused on cardiac imaging. He achieved five board certifications in Internal Medicine, Cardiology, Comprehensive Adult ECHO, Nuclear Cardiology and Cardiac CT. During his tenure as the lead noninvasive cardiologist at Florida Medical Center in Ft. Lauderdale, he helped lead the hospital to achieve Level 5 chest pain certification, the highest designation of cardiac excellence.

He has spoken on national health care radio programs and has appeared on local news, highlighting the latest in cardiovascular care. Dr. Freedman prides himself on being an advocate for the patient. Every patient is unique, and he works carefully with leading local and national experts to make sure patients receive the best specialty procedural care possible for that particular case. Dr. Freedman has done research in cardiac MRI studies of the heart, in nuclear scanning, and has participated in the research trials of several leading cholesterol-lowering drugs. Dr. Freedman also has extensive experience in pulmonary hypertension and ran a large clinic in Broward County for these specific and often undiagnosed patients. *Dr. Freedman speaks Spanish.*



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*This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor or health care provider. We encourage you to discuss with your doctor any questions or concerns you may have.*



# Thyroid Disorders are Often Connected to Intestinal Permeability, Hormonal Imbalance and Stress

**D**id you know that 90% of women that have thyroid problems that are on medication still have symptoms? Getting to the root cause is essential, yet most practitioners, just prescribe you a pill. Our protocol is unique and scientifically founded. 90% of our patients get results with our protocols.

## WE RESTORE THYROID FUNCTION AND HEALTH BY HEALING FROM THE INSIDE OUT.

The evidence is compelling for Leaky Gut Syndrome's (intestinal permeability) capacity to dismantle the immune system and cause numerous illnesses and disorders. The natural functioning of our intestinal wall is to allow nutrients to pass through, but with Leaky gut, large openings enable dangerous substances to enter the bloodstream. This happens when the TJs, or tight junctions in the intestinal wall open and cause seepages.

Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, declared, "All disease begins in the gut." We now understand which proteins, microbiota, and microorganisms are responsible for the mucosal and epithelial damage and leaks.

## The Cause of Thyroid Disorders and Other Conditions are Often Linked to Leaky Gut

When the gut lining is damaged, toxins, antigens, undigested food particles, and bacteria can leak through the intestinal lining and into the bloodstream. When this happens, your immune system tries to overcompensate and works in overdrive to attack the toxic substances in the blood. It can also



exacerbate the immune system and turn it against the body, causing it to attack itself because it confuses its own cells with the foreign substances; this is called molecular mimicry.

## Why Thyroid Disorders are Grossly Undiagnosed

Countless people are unknowingly suffering from thyroid conditions because many thyroid issues go undiagnosed due to the lab results giving a false negative. Why? A standard test is taken from the blood, and any abnormality in hormone levels are usually undetectable. For most patients, TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone) levels do not rise or show prevalence in the bloodwork even when thyroid dysfunction is prevalent. Standard T3 and T4 testing are too limited, and an in-depth panel is necessary to diagnose the disorder in most cases.

## Hormonal Imbalance

While both men and women experience stress and exposure to environmental toxins, women are more vulnerable to thyroid imbalances due to hormonal changes throughout their lifetime (puberty, birth control pills, pregnancy, menopause, HRT). When the thyroid functions properly, hormonal imbalance often will reset naturally.

## Stress

Stress adversely affects the body in many ways. And while it is not a cause of thyroid issues, it does impact the thyroid directly. Stress slows metabolism, which is why stress often induces weight gain. Stress slows the thyroid function and thyroid hormones are disrupted. T3 and T4 hormone levels plummet during stress, and the conversion of T4 to T3 is often hindered, which causes too high of levels of reverse T3. Because stress exacerbates thyroid conditions, managing stress is essential.

## Treating Thyroid Disorders from the Inside Out is Critical

By getting the root cause of the thyroid disorder, our protocols of stress reduction, dietary changes, supplementation and hormonal regulation, help reduce and alleviate thyroid conditions in 90% of our patients.

At Integrative Medicine & Rehab, we know that treatment is not a one-size-fits-all. Our doctor customizes a treatment plan depending on your specific injury. Our office focuses on individualized treatment and one-on-one customer service. A comprehensive treatment facility specializing in chiropractic care for auto accidents & injuries! **Schedule with Dr. Drew-Montez Clark today!**

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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.





# Health Insurance – 2022 Enrollment Periods and Exceptions

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

By UllaUndine 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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# Implant Dentistry CAN GIVE YOU A NEW SMILE!



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If you're missing teeth, implant dentistry may be the best option to get a new smile. Dental implants can improve your smile in a variety of ways, and some of them may even be surprising. Here's what you need to know.

## Understanding the Basics of Implant Dentistry

Implant dentistry has existed since the 1980s, but it's really gained popularity in the last decade. Essentially, when you get a dental implant, we put a small metal post in your jaw bone. The jaw bone ossifies around the post, and then we place a crown on the post. The result is a prosthetic tooth that looks and feels just like a natural tooth.

## Replacing One or More Teeth

The most noticeable way that implant dentistry helps to preserve your smile is by replacing missing teeth. You can replace one or multiple missing teeth with implant dentistry. If you just need to replace a single tooth, the process is exactly as described above. Typically, if you are missing several teeth, we will place implants in different locations in order to distribute the pressure of the bite. The hybrid denture is when they place a bridge between the implants. There are also full dentures that can work with implant dentistry. With this option, the implants work as anchors for your dentures, and you just snap the dentures into place. This creates a more secure, natural feeling fit.

## Preventing Future Decay

On an aesthetic level, implant dentistry helps to improve your smile, but implants also help your smile in other, indirect ways. When you are missing teeth, other teeth often began to move into those areas. Your mouth has a natural tendency to fill those gaps. As that happens, your teeth come out of alignment. This can lead to issues with chewing, headaches, and even TMJ syndrome. On top of that, when your teeth rub against each other due to misalignment, that can trap food debris and lead to cavities. By choosing implant dentistry, you help to minimize some of the risk of future decay.

## Preserving the Integrity of Your Jaw Bone

Implant dentistry can also help to preserve the integrity of your jaw bone. When you are missing teeth, your jaw bone starts to deteriorate. You can see this effect in many people who have lost all their teeth. Their jaw line loses its strength, and the mouth almost seems to collapse in on itself. Basically, this happens because when there aren't any teeth with roots to stimulate the jaw bone leading to the atrophy and resorption of the jaw bone. Dental implants mimic the role of the root of the teeth. They convince the jaw bone that it is still integral to the body's function. This prevents the jaw bone from deteriorating and safeguards your smile.



Dental implants are changing the way people live. With them, people are rediscovering the comfort and confidence to eat, speak, laugh and enjoy life. For more information about dental implants or to schedule a consultation appointment, call our office in Fort Myers, FL at 239-482-8806.



Ricardo S. Bocanegra, D.D.S.

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# Need Help Losing Those Love Handles and Squishy Bits?

## 100% Natural THCV Suppresses Appetite

**W**eight loss isn't a quick jaunt; it's often a very long expedition with many turns, twists, and bumps in the road. At this time of year, many of us are making New Year's resolutions to lose those extra few pounds. But we've tried it before, only to regain them. Is there something else that can help? Something that we haven't tried yet, something to keep us on track and motivated by seeing real results on the scale—Enter THCV.

THCV has been dubbed the "diet weed" and while that is a catchy title, the science behind THCV and the fact that it's NOT "marijuana" deserves a more serious connotation, but for the sake of simplicity, let's dive into its mechanism of action and details.

The main advantage of THCV over THC (cannabis) is the lack of psychoactive effects. THCV has been studied and shown to reduce appetite, increase satiety, and up regulate energy metabolism. In previous studies, THCV has shown to induce glucose metabolism, glycemic control, and energy regulation. In type 2 diabetes, THCV also showed reduced fasting plasma glucose concentration, as well as dyslipidemia and glucose control.

THCV is an antagonist of the CB1 receptor. It acts as an appetite suppressor and may be helpful in helping people lose weight. THCV has also been known to help individuals maintain focus and clarity, and to reduce stress. What a great way to help you get through the day all while reducing your cravings to snack and overindulge.



### The Endocannabinoid System

Our brain and nerve cells have cannabinoid receptors, so our bodies naturally react to CBD. The structure of these interacts directly with our cells. Our natural endocannabinoid system works synergistically with CBD, creating a multitude of beneficial reactions in the body. The endocannabinoid cells have tiny receptors that take in chemicals and produce responses. This natural system in our bodies regulates things like mood, sleeping, immunity, pleasure, memory and much more. This intricate system also regenerates the body via the cannabinoid's anti-inflammatory effects. CBD is known to bind to receptors and is thought to regenerate cells and brain function.

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It all started back in 2019, we set out to change the way the world deals with chronic aches and pains. Having a background in functional medicine and a passion for entrepreneurship, we set out to bring quality products to the greater SW Florida area and beyond.

We were inspired by family members, in the massage therapy industry, that kept getting requests from clients to use CBD oils because of their natural healing properties.

We felt this was a great and underserved need, so we began our search for the most natural most authentic CBD oils and lotions.

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# WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS

**M**ost people who have hearing loss aren't born with it. Instead, hearing loss creeps up on us over time, usually caused by exposure to loud noises, aging, or some combination of the two.

Statistics show that the prevalence of hearing loss doubles for every decade of life, which explains why one out of three people 65-74 have hearing loss, nearly half over 75 have it, and four out of five people 85+ have hearing loss.

In other words, for most of us, hearing loss is normal and natural — just part of living a long, eventful life. What should you do if and when you start to feel you have a hearing loss?

## 1. Get your hearing tested

If you think you have hearing loss — either by exhibiting common signs, which you can find here, or because your spouse, friends, coworkers or family members keep questioning your hearing ability — you should get your hearing tested.

To do that, you can start with an online hearing test or you can visit a hearing healthcare professional to get a thorough, definitive hearing evaluation.

## 2. Choose between ignoring it...

If it turns out you have hearing loss, you have a choice — you can ignore it and deal with the challenges, or you can treat it.

Some of the challenges of hearing loss are subtle and barely noticeable, like needing things to be repeated, or missing out on small everyday sounds.

Some are more obvious and impactful, like mishearing important information, or feeling left out of conversations and activities.

Still others can be profound, health-related issues, like how hearing loss is linked to increased risks of depression, anxiety, falls and hospitalizations, social isolation, and even dementia.

## ...or treating it

But doctors and scientists from institutions including Johns Hopkins Medicine and Columbia University have long noted that treating hearing loss can help with many of these challenges, and studies have shown that

for people with hearing loss, using a hearing aid is associated with a reduced risk of falls, depression, anxiety and dementia.

## 3. Visit a hearing healthcare professional

When you are ready to treat your hearing loss — and Johns Hopkins' Dr. Frank Lin recommends treating it "sooner rather than later...before these brain structural changes take place" — you can start by talking to your doctor or general practitioner. Or, go directly to a hearing healthcare professional, like an otolaryngologist (ENT doctor), audiologist or hearing aid specialist.

## 4. Get to the bottom of your hearing loss

Your appointment with a hearing healthcare professional is your chance to get all your questions answered about your hearing loss. While not every practice or clinic will do things exactly the same, you should expect some common procedures when you go in for your first visit.

- Fill out paperwork — including intake papers with health history and hearing questionnaire.
- Complete a hearing evaluation — this typically includes a visual inspection of your ears and a hearing test in a sound booth.
- Review your audiogram — the results of your test will be in the form of an audiogram, which is a graph that measures your specific hearing loss.
- Discuss treatment options and next steps — this may include a technology demonstration and hearing aid recommendation.

## 5. Ask to try hearing aids

If hearing loss is confirmed during your appointment, hearing aids will most likely be recommended. Hearing aids are by far the most common way to treat hearing loss. They can help a majority of people who have hearing issues, especially if the hearing aids have been fit by an experienced professional, and programmed and customized to the individual's unique hearing and lifestyle needs.

Most states require a 30- to 60-day trial period for hearing aids. And even in states that don't, most hearing professionals will offer it. This is an ideal opportunity to try them for yourself and experience the difference they can make in your everyday life.

## 6. Request ones that are tailored to you

Hearing aids are not one-size-fits-all. That's why getting them in person from a licensed professional is the way to go. The two of you will work closely to select the right hearing aids for you, which will be based on many factors including your degree of loss, personal style and feature preferences, how active you are, and more.

We're admittedly biased, but we recommend you ask to try a pair of Evolv AI hearing aids, our best-sounding, most advanced hearing aids yet.

## 7. Experience the difference they make

Once you get your hearing aids, take advantage of the trial period and wear them at home, outside, during work, while watching TV or enjoying leisure activities, and around your friends and loved ones.

See and experience for yourself why so many hearing aid wearers say that wearing them changed their life and how they wish they had treated their hearing loss much, much sooner.

## 8. Hear better and live better!

Then, after the trial period is over, decide for yourself — go back to the way it was without hearing aids, or with hearing aids!

If hearing loss is making life more challenging or less fun, now is a good time to do something about it.

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# Surgical and Nonsurgical Treatments for Rotator Cuff Injuries

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

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

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

Because of the nature of these wear-and-tear injuries, people over the age of 40 are most at risk of rotator cuff injuries. Others at risk include those whose

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

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

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

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

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

*To schedule your appointment, please call  
Orthopedic Associates of Southwest Florida at  
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for a referral.*



**Edward R. Dupay, Jr., DO**  
Board Certified

*Dr. Dupay graduated from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. He received his Doctor of Osteopathy at the University of Health Sciences, College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kansas City, Missouri.*

*Dr. Dupay completed his Internship and Orthopedic Surgery Residency at Flint Osteopathic Hospital in Flint, Michigan. Dr. Dupay has been in the Fort Myers / Cape Coral area since 1987. Dr. Dupay enjoys seeing the "Weekend Warrior" athlete, as well as all patients suffering from crippling osteoarthritis.*



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# WHAT ARE ADVANCE DIRECTIVES IN FLORIDA?

By Steven J. Gibbs, Esq.  GIBBS LAW OFFICE, PLLC

**A** solid Florida estate plan addresses more than just finances. While organizing assets efficiently and providing for the smooth transfer of wealth is vital, you also need to make important decisions about non-financial matters. One area of non-financial matters typically involves decision making that is "medical in nature" AND medical matters in this country are regulated heavily by HIPAA. Thus, today's topic is a critical one that asks whether your Florida estate plan is HIPAA compliant and we will address this question and the essentials to look it in detail.

Non-financial medical questions typically consider questions such as: What kind of memorial services do you want? How should your final remains be disposed? And, of course, what kind of end-of-life medical treatment do you want to receive? That last question is typically addressed through documents known as "advance directives" also known as "healthcare directives", "medical directives" or any combination of these terms such as "advance healthcare directives".

In Florida, advance directives usually come in the form of a Florida living will and designation of healthcare surrogate, both of which are created as part of a comprehensive estate plan. A living will identifies the forms of medical treatment you want to receive (or do not want to receive) in the event you become incapable of communicating your preferences. And a designation of healthcare surrogate (sometimes called a "medical power of attorney") authorizes someone else to make healthcare decisions on your behalf if you can no longer decide for yourself.

Advance directives are intended to make things easier on your family members in what is almost certainly a stressful time and to ensure that your healthcare preferences are honored. To successfully accomplish those goals, the documents need to be clearly written and they need to comply with statutory requirements. And, especially with a medical power of attorney, you need to make sure your designated surrogate has access to all of the information he or she needs to make informed decisions. That means accounting for HIPAA, a federal law governing disclosure of healthcare information.

## What is HIPAA

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) was enacted in 1996 to promote medical privacy and allow for portability of health insurance. HIPAA advances privacy interests by restricting access to personally identifiable healthcare information relating to a patient's physical or mental health condition, medical treatment, or payment for medical treatment. Under HIPAA regulations, healthcare providers can only release protected information to third parties to the minimum extent necessary for treatment and payment processing. Otherwise, disclosure is limited to the patient him or herself, or to someone the patient has expressly authorized to receive the information.

A HIPAA authorization (or release) must meet all regulatory requirements to be effective. The document must be in writing, signed and dated by the patient, and state an expiration date. Moreover, it must specifically identify the protected information authorized for release and the person to whom disclosure is permitted. HIPAA has serious penalties, so healthcare providers are reluctant to disclose any information based on a release that does not clearly satisfy the regulatory requirements. And, for the most part, providers will refuse to release any records or information to any third party (including the patient's spouse) absent a compliant release or court order.

While medical privacy is generally a good thing, HIPAA raises some potential complications in estate planning. Sometimes, an estate plan in Florida relies on a third party—such as a trustee or a healthcare surrogate—having access to medical records or information about a patient's condition. So, a HIPAA-compliant release is quite often integral to the proper functioning of an estate plan in Florida.

## How Can HIPAA Affect Estate Planning in Florida

Estate plans frequently include provisions for healthcare and financial decisions in the event of incapacity. That is, if you are no longer capable of making decisions for yourself, your estate plan has documents automatically appointing an individual chosen by you to act on your behalf. However, if HIPAA prevents that person from obtaining information about your health status, including the simple fact that you have become incapacitated, the incapacity provisions in your estate plan will be at least temporarily thwarted.

This situation most commonly arises with healthcare surrogate designations and living trusts in Florida and elsewhere. In the former case, the surrogate is empowered to make healthcare decisions if you become incapacitated. But, at the same time, if you're incapacitated, you won't be able to execute a HIPAA release. As a result, your doctor can't even inform the would-be surrogate that you're no longer competent, and, even if there is no doubt about capacity, the surrogate won't be able to access the medical records necessary to make informed decisions.

Along the same lines, a Florida estate plan might include a Florida durable power of attorney ("POA") or similar document empowering an agent to make certain identified financial decisions and transactions for the principal (i.e., the person executing the POA). This could include simple but important tasks like paying bills. Absent a HIPAA release, the agent won't be able to review healthcare billing and insurance information necessary to ensure medical bills are correctly processed.



Similar problems can arise with living trusts. A popular estate-planning approach (in Florida) is to transfer assets into a Florida living trust that names the grantor as trustee and beneficiary. Then, upon the grantor-trustee's incapacity or death, a successor trustee named in the trust instrument takes over administration and distribution of assets. But if the grantor becomes incapacitated and the healthcare provider doesn't receive a HIPAA release, the provider won't be able to inform the successor trustee of the incapacity. Before taking over, the successor trustee needs to establish the initial trustee's incapacity, but that requires access to medical records. As a result, the successor lacks authority to administer the Florida trust, and trust assets are effectively in limbo.

In these scenarios, the successor trustee, agent, or a relative of the grantor may need to petition a court for a formal ruling on incapacity or for a court order permitting healthcare providers to release medical information to the family or designated agent. The resulting delay can be a big problem if the situation calls for swift decisions, and the need for judicial intervention adds expense and additional legwork in what is already a stressful, difficult state of affairs.

### Addressing HIPAA within an Estate Plan

The solution to these potential HIPAA-related pitfalls is to include a HIPAA release within your estate plan—whether through an authorization built into any relevant instruments or through a separate, stand-alone document.



If drafted correctly, a healthcare surrogate designation in Florida can qualify the named agent as a "Florida personal representative" under the HIPAA regulations. A "personal representative" essentially stands in the shoes of the patient, able to access any records the patient could receive and approve disclosures to other parties. If this approach is used, it's imperative that the designation comply with both Florida's Health Care Advance Directives statute (Fla. Stat. §765.202) and the relevant HIPAA regs.

For financial transactions, Florida law assumes that a POA is revoked upon the principal's incapacity unless the document expressly states otherwise. And Florida law also does not recognize "springing POAs," which purport to become effective upon incapacity. Thus, if you want an agent to handle your

financial affairs in the event of your incapacity, you'll need a durable POA set up to survive incapacity and, if the delegated powers include issues related to healthcare (including billing), a HIPAA-compliant release.

A HIPAA release accompanying a durable POA can limit disclosure to medical records related to billing and insurance, or it can be written more broadly, depending upon the agent's duties. Notably, Florida law requires agents to act consistently with a principal's estate plan to the extent it is known to the agent.

As with surrogate designations and powers of attorney, a Florida living trust can be drafted to include a HIPAA authorization, or it can rely on a separate document. Either way, the authorization needs to enable the successor trustee (or anyone else charged with determining incapacity in the trust's succession clause) to access records sufficient to demonstrate incapacity.

Under Florida law, a HIPAA authorization cannot be effective for more than 24 months. So, practically speaking, it is often preferable to create one HIPAA-compliant release covering all disclosures necessary to accomplish an estate plan's objectives. If your estate plan includes multiple instruments relying on HIPAA authorizations, periodically updating a single HIPAA release is simpler than separately updating all the other documents.

HIPAA is one of many laws and regulations that can potentially affect a Florida estate plan. An experienced Florida estate planning attorney familiar with relevant state and federal rules can assist in developing an estate plan that accomplishes your objectives and satisfies all the relevant legal requirements.

*Steven J. Gibbs is a trust and estate planning attorney who provides complete Estate Planning, Trust Planning, Business Planning, Asset Protection, Elder and Medicaid Planning, Real Estate, Probate and Trust Administration legal services in Florida and California. Steve's main offices are located in Fort Myers, Florida, and San Juan Capistrano, California. Estate planning legal services are provided statewide in these locations.*

*The Gibbs Law Office was founded by Steven Gibbs in January 2009 upon the commitment to provide client-centered legal services.*

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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.



**VENTURECHURCH**  
*Naples*

*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).*



## Do you live with **SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-19?**

You may be able to join a clinical trial testing a possible treatment to prevent illness after exposure to COVID-19.

### What is the purpose of this trial?

Researchers will test a trial drug in people who live with someone who has COVID-19. They want to learn:

- How safe it is
- How well the drug works to prevent the spread of COVID-19

### Who can join?

You may be able to join this trial if you are at least 18 years old and:

- Live with someone (adult or child) who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 5 days (which means they have it) AND had at least one symptom of COVID-19 within the past 5 days.

Other adult members of your household may also be able to join this trial. Consider asking them if they also want to join the trial. The trial doctor or staff will tell you about other rules to qualify for this trial and the possible risks and benefits of participation.

### What happens if I take part?

If you qualify, you will get the trial treatment (trial drug or placebo) and trial-related tests at no cost. The total time you will take part in the trial is up to 35 days. You will have up to 7 visits at the site or virtually.

## ¿Vive con **ALGUIEN QUE TIENE COVID-19?**

Es posible que pueda participar en un ensayo clínico en el que se prueba un posible tratamiento para prevenir la enfermedad después de la exposición a COVID-19.

### ¿Cuál es el objetivo de este ensayo?

Los investigadores probarán un medicamento en estudio en personas que viven con alguien que tiene COVID-19. Quieren aprender:

- Lo seguro que es
- Lo bien que actúa el medicamento para prevenir la propagación de COVID-19

### ¿Quién puede participar?

Es posible que pueda participar en este ensayo si tiene al menos 18 años y:

- Vive con alguien (adulto o niño) que dio positivo en la prueba de COVID-19 en los últimos 5 días (lo que significa que tiene la enfermedad) Y que tuvo al menos un síntoma de COVID-19 en los últimos 5 días.

Puede que otros adultos que viven en su hogar también puedan participar en este ensayo. Considere preguntarles si también desean unirse al ensayo.

El médico o el personal del ensayo le informará sobre otras reglas para poder acceder a este ensayo y los posibles riesgos y beneficios de la participación.

### ¿Qué sucede si participo?

Si reúne los requisitos, recibirá el tratamiento del ensayo (medicamento en estudio o placebo) y las pruebas relacionadas con el ensayo sin costo alguno para usted. El tiempo total de participación en el ensayo es de hasta 35 días. Tendrá hasta 7 visitas en el centro o virtualmente.

Para obtener más información, comuníquese con:

**For more information please contact:**

Advanced Research for Health Improvement, LLC  
214 1st Street South  
Immokalee, Florida 34142

info@arhiusa.com



WWW.ARHIUSA.COM



@ARHIUSA



239-657-5800



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Scan the code to learn more and see if you qualify:



MOVE-AHEAD



## Does your MAC lung infection take your breath away and make you feel exhausted?

The ARISE & ENCORE studies are investigating the effects of a study treatment on symptom improvement in people with a new diagnosis of MAC lung infection.

Talk to your doctor to see if you qualify today.

The ARISE & ENCORE Studies are currently recruiting adults who have been recently diagnosed with Nontuberculous Mycobacterial (NTM) lung infection caused by Mycobacterium avium complex (MAC) ("NTM lung disease caused by MAC").

### ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR THESE STUDIES?

You must meet these (and other) eligibility criteria:

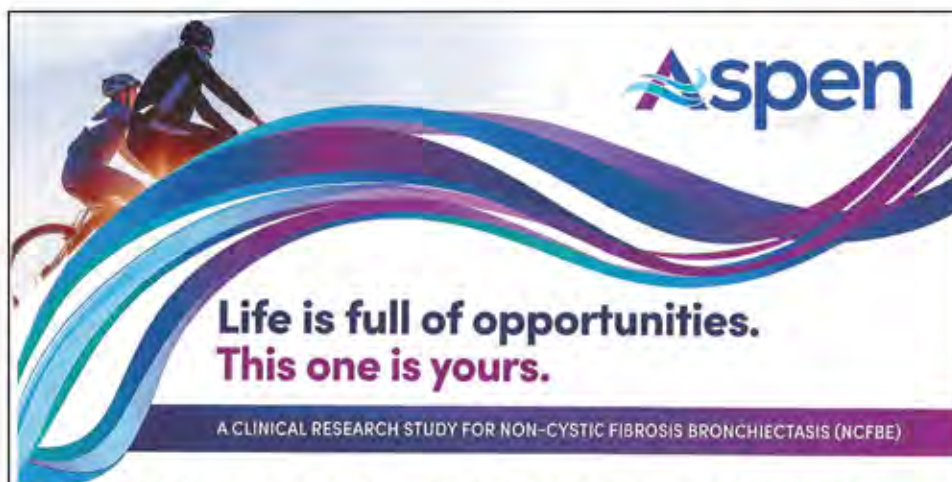
- Be at least 18 years old and recently diagnosed with NTM lung disease caused by MAC
- Be able to produce sputum (phlegm from your lungs)
- Have your sputum sample test positive for MAC within the 6 months prior to the study screening and also at the time of the study screening
- Have had a CT scan of your chest within 6 months prior to screening. If you don't have one, it will have to be done during screening.
- Have any other underlying conditions, such as COPD, managed and under control for at least 4 weeks before the study screening

*These studies are being conducted by Insmed Incorporated and have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board/Ethics Committee and/or Competent Authority in this country.*

For more information about the ARISE & ENCORE Studies please call **239-230-2021** or visit [NTMStudy.com](http://NTMStudy.com)

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**Life is full of opportunities.  
This one is yours.**

A CLINICAL RESEARCH STUDY FOR NON-CYSTIC FIBROSIS BRONCHIECTASIS (NCFBE)

**The ASPEN Study is currently recruiting adult patients with Non-Cystic Fibrosis Bronchiectasis (NCFBE).**

### ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR THE STUDY?

Patients must meet, at least, these (and other) eligibility criteria:

- Be 18 to 85 years old, and have a diagnosis of Non-Cystic Fibrosis Bronchiectasis (NCFBE)
- Be a non-smoker
- Have had at least 2 pulmonary exacerbations (flare-ups) that required antibiotics in the last 12 months
- Be currently coughing up mucus (sputum)
- Have a history of coughing up mucus (sputum) for at least 3 months in the past year

*This study is being conducted by Insmed Incorporated and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board/Ethics Committee and/or Competent Authority in this country.*

For more information about the ASPEN Study please call **239-230-2021** or visit [NCFBEASPEN.com](http://NCFBEASPEN.com)  
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# Are You Ready to END the Pain, Numbness & Tingling in Your Hands or Feet Caused by Neuropathy?



HANCOCK HEALTHCARE GROUP

**DR. LARRY JOHNSON**

1510 Hancock Bridge Pkwy, Unit 6, Cape Coral, FL 33990

*(1 Block West of Del Prado Blvd. on Hancock Bridge Pkwy)*

## TESTIMONY:

*I have been a patient of Dr. Larry Johnson for over ten years for different low back and various joint pains. However, last year I started to suffer with pain and tingling in both of my legs and feet that would keep me from sleeping. Dr. Johnson explained to me that I was dealing with neuropathy and he could help to resolve my pain with a new technology called Electric Signal Treatment, using the Sanexas machine. He has used this therapy on several patients with great success. After six treatments, my pain was starting to go away and was finally gone after a few more treatments. I have always relied on Dr. Johnson to help me for any problems I have encountered over the years and I have always recommended him to my family and friends. Shirley W.*



## NON-INVASIVE AND PAINLESS TREATMENT FOR NEUROPATHY PAIN AND CHRONIC JOINT PAIN

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