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# Health & Wellness<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE

January 2023

Lee Edition - Monthly

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## CONTACT US

OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE  
**Cristan Gensing**  
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

OWNER / CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
**Sonny Gensing**  
sonny@gwhizmarketing.com



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G WHIZ Marketing, LLC | 1630 Caxambas Court | Marco Island, Florida 34145

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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 to 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.

### 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.

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.

### 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.

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



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# Your Weight Affects Your Vascular Function

**P**eople with obesity are known to be at increased risk for a host of medical issues. A new study shows obesity may also increase the chance of developing peripheral artery disease.

Peripheral Arterial Disease, or PAD, is the narrowing of the arteries to the arms or legs. It occurs when atherosclerotic plaque adheres to the lining of the arteries, which then blocks the path of blood flow. 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. PAD is also a well-known marker of atherosclerotic plaque in the coronary (heart) arteries and nearly 40% of people with PAD are at risk of having a heart attack within five years.

Published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore analyzed data on nearly 14,000 black and white men and women enrolled in the ongoing Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study, which began in 1987. They found that people who were obese were 1.5 times more likely to develop peripheral artery disease with critical limb ischemia than those who were normal weight.

*"With increasing obesity, you have an increased risk of [both diseases], which means an increased risk of limb loss,"* said Dr. Caitlin Hicks, the study's lead author. *"Everybody knows about diabetes and hypertension and their relationship to obesity, but now we're connecting the risk of lower extremity issues to obesity."*

Dr. Hicks said their findings show why it is important for doctors to advise patients with peripheral artery disease who are obese to lose weight. But she admitted that losing weight can be particularly hard to accomplish for those with the condition.

*"It's a vicious cycle, because as people get obese [and develop peripheral artery disease], they have trouble walking ... which makes it harder to lose weight, because they're not active,"* said Hicks, an assistant professor of vascular surgery and endovascular therapy at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.



Coronary artery disease develops when the arteries that supply blood to the heart become stiff and narrow. Peripheral artery disease affects the arteries that supply blood to the arms, legs or feet and often leads to pain or cramping in the legs or hips while walking or climbing stairs.

At least 6.8 million Americans ages 40 and older have peripheral artery disease. If left untreated, peripheral artery disease can advance to critical limb ischemia, a severe blockage in the arteries that, in some cases, can only be treated by having the affected limb amputated. Experts say previous studies have found that smoking, diabetes, and high cholesterol increase a person's risk of developing peripheral artery disease. Still, the role that obesity plays in the disease is clear.

Reducing weight will impact the risk of peripheral artery disease, as it does with other cardiovascular diseases. Many patients with advanced peripheral artery disease are awaiting surgery to amputate a limb. There are steps you can take to prevent PAD and limb loss now. Literally, steps. Take more of them.

Schedule a consultation with the Vascular and Vein center today to learn more about how your weight affects your vascular and whole-body wellness.

#### References:

Associations of Obesity With Incident Hospitalization Related to Peripheral Artery Disease and Critical Limb Ischemia in the ARIC Study

Caitlin W. Hicks MD, MS, Chao Yang MS, Chiadi E. Ndumele MD, MHS, Aaron R. Folsom MD, MPH, Gerardo Heiss PhD, James H. Black III MD, FACS, Elizabeth Selvin PhD, MPH, and Kunihiro Matsushita MD, PhD kmatsus@jhu.edu

Matsushita, C. (2018, August 9). Associations of Obesity With Incident Hospitalization Related to Peripheral Artery Disease and Critical Limb Ischemia in the ARIC Study. *Aha Journals*. <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/JAHA.118.008644>

We have options to help you reduce weight and improve your vascular function and blood flow. Your overall wellness starts in your veins.

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# NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR BETTER HEALTH

The majority of New Year's resolution made by American revolve around health and weight loss. Sadly, less than half of those who make such resolutions will keep them even a full month! This is often because we set goals that are unrealistic and unsustainable. This is why many of us make the same resolutions year after year, never really attaining our goals.

To break that cycle, it's important to make resolutions that can not only improve health but also be followed for life. Here are some New Year's resolutions you can actually keep.

## CUT BACK ON SODAS AND SWEETENED DRINKS.

Cutting back on sweetened beverages is a smart idea considering that sugary drinks are linked to an increased risk of obesity, fatty liver, heart disease, insulin resistance, and cavities in both children and adults.

Though quitting sweetened beverages cold turkey is always an option, gradually minimizing your intake may help you kick your sugary drink habit for good.



## GET MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Nothing changes your quality of life like physical activity. It reduces stress, improves your mood, and reduces risks of nearly every physical and mental condition you can think of.

You don't need to join a gym, train for a marathon, or even work out for an hour a day. Fifteen-to-twenty-minute blocks of activity daily will do wonders. Whether is playing with your kids, going for a walk, or dancing in the living room, get up off the couch more this year than you did last year and see the difference it makes.

## GET MORE QUALITY SLEEP

Sleep is an essential part of overall health, and sleep deprivation can lead to serious consequences. For instance, lack of sleep may increase your risk of weight gain, heart disease, and depression.

There are many reasons why people don't get enough sleep, so it's important to focus on your schedule and lifestyle to determine the best ways to improve sleep quantity and quality.

Decreasing screen time before bed, reducing light pollution in your bedroom, cutting back on caffeine, and getting to bed at a reasonable hour are some simple ways to improve sleep hygiene.



## EAT MORE WHOLE FOODS

One of the easiest and most sustainable ways to improve overall health is to eat more whole foods. Vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, whole grains, and fish, contain a plethora of nutrients that your body needs to function at an optimal level.

Research shows that following a whole-foods-based diet may significantly reduce heart disease risk factors, body weight, and blood sugar levels, as well as decrease your risk of certain diseases, such as type 2 diabetes.

## CUT BACK ON ALCOHOL

Drinking alcohol in excess affects the brain's neurotransmitters and can increase the risk of depression or memory loss. What's more, chronic heavy drinking boosts your risk of liver and heart disease, hypertension, stroke, mental deterioration, and even cancers of the mouth, throat, liver, and breast.

## TAKE UP A HOBBY

It's common for adults to let once-loved hobbies fall by the wayside as they get older due to busy schedules or lack of motivation. However, research shows

that partaking in a hobby that you love can help you live a longer, healthier life. Make a resolution to try out a hobby that you've always been interested in — or pick back up a hobby that used to bring you joy.

## FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS

How you nurture personal relationships depends on you. Does it mean you add a weekly lunch with a friend to your schedule? Join a local club or sports team? Plan a monthly date night with your partner? Eat meals at the dinner table with your family more often? Make Saturdays family days without distractions? You decide, but don't underestimate the importance of those activities to good health and well-being. The need for attachment starts in infancy and never goes away. Humans are social creatures. We are biologically hard-wired to form attachments. Nurture relationships.

Though most New Year's resolutions are only kept for a short period, the healthy resolutions listed above are sustainable ways to improve your physical and emotional health that can be followed for life.

Creating a healthier relationship with food and taking better care of your body and mind can drastically improve your health in various ways.

This New Year, try out a few of the resolutions in this article to help make this year — and the years that follow — the healthiest and happiest possible.

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# CERVICAL CANCER AWARENESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING SCREENED

By Dr. Amy Fox

**C**ervical cancer starts in the cervix, which connects the vagina to the uterus. In the United States, for every 100,000 women, there are 8 new cervical cancer cases each year. The good news is that when cervical cancer is found early, it is very treatable, and most women have a high survival rate. Two tests can help prevent or detect cervical cancer early: The Pap test, also known as a Pap smear, and a human papillomavirus (HPV) test.

It is recommended that women begin screening for cervical cancer as early as age 21. Both screening tests can be done in a doctor's office or clinic and are completed during a pelvic exam. A Pap test looks for changes in the cells of the cervix that may become cervical cancer if not properly treated. An HPV test looks for the virus, which usually is the cause of cell changes in the cervix. If your test results are normal, you can typically wait three to five years before your next screening, depending on which test was performed. This is because changes to cervical cells happen slowly.

If your Pap test comes back abnormal or unclear, this does not necessarily mean you have cancer. There are many reasons why a test may not come back as normal. Most likely, your doctor will recommend additional testing.

Similarly, a positive HPV test does not mean you have cervical cancer. But it could be an early warning. Your physician will need to identify the type of HPV before determining treatment and the next steps.

A prognosis of cervical cancer depends on a few factors: the size of the tumor, whether cancer has spread, the type of cervical cancer, your age and overall health. If you are diagnosed with cervical cancer, ask to be referred to a gynecologic oncologist, a physician specializing in treating cancers within a woman's reproductive system. They will work with you to create a treatment plan that may include surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. Be sure to speak to your cancer team about the risks and benefits of each treatment and any concerns you may have about the effect on your fertility.



It is important to note that almost all cervical cancers are caused by HPV. Spread through skin-to-skin contact, HPV is common and usually has no symptoms, so it is essential to get screened. A way to reduce your HPV risk and chances of getting cervical cancer is to get the HPV vaccine. The vaccine protects against most HPV types that cause cancer – in both women and men. HPV vaccination is recommended for children aged 11 or 12, but they can receive it as early as 9 years of age.

If you have one goal this year, schedule an appointment with your doctor for your wellness screening. Even if you feel fine now, make a list of any unusual symptoms you may have experienced and mention them to your doctor. If you cannot afford to see a doctor, are underinsured, or uninsured, check with your state or local health departments to see if you qualify for a low-cost or free screening. Remember, you are your health's greatest advocate.



*Amy Fox is a physician at Advocate Radiation Oncology. Advocate Radiation Oncology's board-certified oncologists provide expert, customized patient care. With locations across Southwest Florida, patients have*

*access to state-of-the-art cancer-fighting machines. Our individualized cancer treatment plans are guided by the most up-to-date data, appropriate evidence-based care, and the latest technologies available.*



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# 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.

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# 6 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR YOUR FEET

By Dr. Lori DeBlasi

## #1: WEAR PROPER SHOES/FOOTWEAR

Make sure your shoes are properly fitted and have a high and wide toe box to accommodate the front of your foot and toes. Periodically, measure the size and width of your foot when shopping for new shoes. Use the size and width as your starting point. Every shoe brand is not the same and consistent in sized and widths. A size 8 and one brand may be a quite different fit than a size 8 in another brand. Always shop for shoes later in the day as your feet will swell as the day goes on. If you purchase them too early in the day, they may be too tight later in the day when you are trying to wear them.

## #2: WEAR APPROPRIATE SOCKS

Wearing nonslip socks can help avoid painful blisters. Also, socks made from bamboo and wool blend socks are more absorbent and are more efficient at keeping moisture away from the feet. Some socks are more cushioned, and others may provide some extra arch compression. Always wear the same type of sock you plan to wear the shoes in. This also can contribute to the proper fit.

## #3: START NEW WORKOUT AND EXERCISE ROUTINES GRADUALLY

Always start the time and/or distance of your workouts gradually and increase it as your stamina allows. Too much too soon can lead to overuse injuries such as stress fractures, tendon strains or sprains.

## #4: STRETCH!

Stretching is beneficial both before and after exercise. Stretching prior to exercise and workouts is a good habit to start. Preworkout stretching improves blood flow and allows preparation for the muscles to know that they are about to work out. Warming up the muscles and tendons also can lead to decrease in overuse injuries. Stretching after a workout, when your muscles are already warmed up, is the best opportunity to improve flexibility.

## #5: SET REALISTIC GOALS

Start out with small and achievable goals. This gives you your best chance of success for maintaining a long-term exercise routine. You should be able to build on your exercise plan as you achieve these goals. Success in achieving these goals will also keep you motivated to continue. You may need to adjust your goals to make them achievable.



## #6: Listen to your body

When you are working out, remember harder and faster is not necessarily better. Be very mindful of your limits because you are not used to working out every day. If you feel any pain or discomfort, stop and rest before continuing. Pushing through the pain is not recommended, as this can lead to injuries. High impact exercises can sometimes lead to injuries. If your foot hurts, find a low-impact alternative, such as swimming, cycling, or aqua jogging.

*Disclaimer: This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.*

**Lori DeBlasi, DPM**

Dr. Lori DeBlasi is certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery. Dr. DeBlasi works at the Estero office of Family Foot & Leg Center. 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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# How To Make a One-Bedroom Senior Apartment Work for You

**A**re you getting tired of cleaning rooms you no longer use? Do you feel overwhelmed by tending to outdoor landscaping? Have you had it with hiring and paying professionals for home repairs?

If you're an older adult who's answered "yes" to any of the above questions, a fresh start in a smaller space could be the reprieve you've been looking for.

The Terraces at Bonita Springs is a retirement community offering a variety of living options that meet your desire for worry-free living.

Learn the benefits of downsizing to a cozier living space and tips for making the most out of your new one-bedroom apartment, below.

## The benefits of downsizing to a senior living community

Downsizing may seem like a challenge, but it's actually quite liberating. Here are just a few ways in which you can benefit from the process:

### • No more home maintenance.

At our senior living community, all indoor and outdoor maintenance is taken care of for you. No additional fees for repairs or utilities. This means you'll be able to spend more time taking part in activities you enjoy without worrying about daily household chores.

### • Less stuff.

Have you been an empty nester for a while? If so, your family home may be filled with furniture, decor, tools and clothing you no longer use. Downsizing is the perfect time to eliminate clutter and keep objects that have sentimental value instead.

Consider donating items to charity or passing them along to family members – or throwing them away. You'll feel better knowing they're being used and enjoyed by others. And let's face it, we've all accumulated items that might just be better off in the dustbin.

### • True, worry-free living.

With every service and amenity and different levels of senior care – including assisted living and memory care – provided in one convenient location, the end result of downsizing will be worth the move. No more property taxes to pay, either. Just the comfort of a perfectly sized residence met with a fulfilling independent lifestyle and unlimited access to support – today and for the rest of your life.



Now that you understand the major benefits of downsizing, you can feel more confident making the move to a senior living community.

## How to make the most out of one-bedroom senior living in Bonita Springs, FL

Rest assured there are ways to make a senior living apartment feel grand. At The Terraces, residents choose from five independent living one-bedroom floor plans. The best part? Each apartment has a terrace with a screened lanai to let in natural light.

Here are some of our expert tips for making even more out of your one-bedroom residence:

### 1. Bring the essentials.

A bed, seating, and a small dining table are the only major pieces of furniture necessary for moving into a one-bedroom. Including too much furniture will cramp the space.

### 2. Go big with multipurpose items.

If you need more storage than what's already provided in our roomy closet spaces, implement multipurpose furniture. Storage benches and tables that double as desks or craft spaces are helpful.

### 3. Limit artwork and decor.

We encourage all residents to make their new apartment feel like home, but we recommend utilizing pieces to help open up the space like mirrors or one piece of artwork that acts as a focal point.

### 4. Go vertical.

Vertical bookshelves and stackable storage containers take up less floor space. If ever you need help getting something down from a shelf, our staff is always available to assist.

## Discover the perfect place and space to retire.

At The Terraces at Bonita Springs, we take the maintenance and worry out of everyday life. Choose from a variety of floor plans to feel right at home, satisfying dining options, and engaging social activities. Learn more and begin to picture your future here when you take a virtual tour of our most popular residences. Call 239-204-3469 to learn more about how you can receive free Pack-and-Move services for ease and convenience.

Are you interested in learning more about The Terraces at Bonita Springs? Schedule a community tour and private lunch or dinner today by calling **239-204-3469** or take a virtual tour right now!

**The Terraces**  
at Bonita Springs  
A SantaFe Senior Living Community







# How to Discuss Long-Term Care and Diminished Capacity with Your Children

By Amy Rohde, CFP®, CFTA, Senior Relationship Manager

**L**ong-term care and diminished capacity are critical topics that every family must tackle. While these can be sensitive subjects to discuss, parents who provide their children with insight help secure the financial future of the entire family.

## *Recommendations for starting the conversation with your children*

### **What are the events that would trigger a long-term care or diminished capacity plan?**

Have an open and honest conversation with your children about the life stages and events that would activate a plan to address long-term care needs or diminished capacity. Discuss specific health scenarios — for example, does your family have a history of degenerative illnesses, such as Alzheimer's?

### **What are your long-term care preferences, and which option might be right for you?**

Be vocal with your children regarding your long-term care preferences, and inform your advisor of those preferences. Whether you choose in-home care, living with a relative or an assisted living facility, having the conversation now will ensure an easy transition later.

### **Have you created the appropriate legacy and estate planning documents?**

Remember that some decisions require formal documents to be created—such as a will or a trust.

### **Where are your important documents located? Are they all up-to-date?**

Important documents range from property deeds to credit card statements, from insurance policies to retirement plan information. Be sure you keep your important documents up to date, and talk to your children about how and when to access them.

### **Who are your and your adult children's emergency contacts? Who has financial and healthcare power of attorney?**

Identify which of your children or family members should serve as your emergency contact, as well as who should hold the power to make financial and healthcare decisions on behalf of you and your adult children. Talk to them about your specific wishes in the event of a medical emergency or death.



### **What are the ongoing financial responsibilities and priorities that your children will take on?**

Be specific about the recurring financial duties that your children must handle on your behalf. Consult with your advisor to create a detailed list of monthly, quarterly, and annual financial responsibilities. If you have specific goals— for example, college savings—now is the time to discuss.

### **What are your preferences for communicating with and involving your advisor in financial decisions?**

Your financial advisor has a full view of your family's finances and plays an essential role in helping you plan for the future. Sit with both your children and your advisor to agree on the involvement and responsibilities of your advisor as you age.

### **How often will you revisit this conversation?**

Work with your advisor to create a timeline and schedule regular financial touchpoints.

**Amy Rohde** is a Senior Vice President and the Key Private Bank Senior Relationship Manager in Naples. She is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and Certified Trust and Fiduciary Advisor (CTFA) professional. She can be reached at (239) 659-8812 or amy\_rohde@keybank.com.

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# 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.

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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.

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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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# FOR 2023, I RESOLVE TO ...

By Dr. Mary Nuosce, LMHC, NCC, Core Faculty, Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at Hodges University

**A**s we close in the last weeks and days of 2022, many people start thinking about New Year's resolutions with either hope, determination, or dread. Of course there's the typical "I'm going to lose weight, drink less, get more sleep," but the beauty of welcoming a new year is the perfect time to take a new approach to your resolutions.

Some of the aforementioned resolutions are based on negative statements. How about resolutions that focus on a positive frame of mind?

## Here are some examples of resolutions that can help you maintain a positive mindset.

- Physical activity is good, but make the focus on how much better you feel rather than allowing the scale to decide. Bring that good feeling home by getting rid of clutter. Having clutter around your home actually adds to your stress.
- In the realm of technology, go an entire day without checking your email. If someone really needs to reach you, they will call. As a matter of fact, go a whole day without checking your social media. If you're working to get eight hours of sleep, then one-third of an entire day without email or social media is done while you're sleeping.
- One way I've found to raise spirits is as simple as giving one, sincere compliment to someone every day. The smile you bring to another person's face is rewarding. That can also lead to doing one random act of kindness a day. It doesn't have to be a production; just a simple act that spreads joy to others, and back to you. Pay it forward.
- For those of you who like to travel, take a trip on small budget. Not all trips have to be about fancy hotels. Plus, you just might have your eyes opened to new experiences.
- Try a new restaurant. Our world is filled with so many wonderful flavors, and you could discover a new, favorite type of food or dish.



- Start your day by making your bed. Your day is already off to a successful start just by doing this simple thing.
- Do something that is scary to you. Let me quickly clarify it doesn't mean something wild and death-defying. It could be giving a speech, riding a rollercoaster, or really cutting your hair – not just a trim.
- Avoid people who complain all the time. As a matter of fact, avoid people that are toxic to you. Negativity spreads, impacting you mentally, spiritually, and yes, even physically. Protect your well-being and health.

With these positive resolutions, take a minute to write them down. Statistically speaking, your chance of success increases by 42%.

*Happy New Year!*

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# MAKING MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY IN 2023

By Dr. Leonard A. Lado, MD, ABPN

New Year's resolutions are a big part of US culture. Nearly half of us set goals at the start of every new year. However, a recent study has shown that less than half of us keep those resolutions for even as long as six months.<sup>1</sup> So, what can we do to be in the other half? How can we make resolutions and stick to them?

One thing we need to do is keep our resolutions realistic. When setting resolutions, it is important to think about what is important to you and what you can realistically achieve. By making resolutions that are attainable, you are more likely to keep working toward achieving them instead of giving up.

This applies to any type of resolution, but especially to resolutions about your mental health. Improving your mental health should always be a priority and it takes daily work. Taking small steps toward better mental health will help you in every aspect of your life.

## Small steps toward improved mental health

**1. Make self-care a priority.** Make a list of activities that you could do daily, weekly, or monthly that make you happy. Maybe a daily walk would be helpful, an hour or two a week to relax and watch your favorite series, or a night out with friends once a month. Set goals that are reasonable. If your life is hectic and sitting in front of the tv every day isn't possible, don't set that as a goal. If you'd like to go to the gym daily, but it isn't possible, maybe shooting for 3 times a week would be better.

**2. Make sleep a priority.** Sleep and mental health are connected. If you are not getting enough quality sleep, take steps toward improving that very important issue. Between 65 and 90 percent of people suffering from major depression have sleep problems. The two issues go hand in hand. Make sleep a priority.

**3. Create a new morning routine.** Start your day by taking your thoughts under control. Spend time in prayer or meditation. Create a mantra that you repeat.



Say words of affirmation to yourself in the mirror. Practice optimism. Accomplish one small thing: make your bed.

**4. Avoid watching or reading too much news.** Politics, climate change, and a steady stream of bad news can affect your outlook on the world. While it is important to be aware of what is happening in the world, being connected to 24/7 news can add stress to your life. Limit the time you spend looking at these things and maybe shift your focus to learning something new or starting a new hobby.

**5. Find a fitness routine that works for you.** Being active is simple way to improve your mental health. Do an activity that you enjoy. Do you hate running? Do something different. Don't force yourself to do something you absolutely loathe. Find something you do enjoy and stick with it.

**6. Avoid the winter blues by staying socially connected.** When the holiday bills start to roll in and the long nights make you want to stay home this can have a negative impact on your mental health. Look for ways to get out and be among others. You could join a book club or volunteer at a soup kitchen in your city. Giving back is always a boost to one's mental health!

**By following some of these tips, we hope you can walk into 2023 a healthier and happier person.**

At Lado Healing Institute, you can find a team of medical professionals dedicated to the best possible

patient care. **Dr. Leonard A. Lado, MD**, is the Founder and Medical Director of Lado Healing Institute is a board-certified Psychiatrist serving the population of Marco Island, Fort Myers, Naples, and Southwest Florida, since 2002. He and his team would be honored to help you and your loved one as you walk the difficult road of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Leonard Lado, MD, is partners with multiple nursing homes in Florida. Call our office to see if he is a partner with the facility your loved one resides to be evaluated at **239.948.4328**. Their website is also filled with information about the services they offer and about their team of professionals. Visit their page at [www.ladohealingpeople.com](http://www.ladohealingpeople.com) or email them for information at [email@ladomd.com](mailto:email@ladomd.com).

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**Leonard A. Lado, MD, ABPN**  
9410 Fountain Medical Ct., Suite 200  
Bonita Springs, FL, 34135  
**239-948-4325**  
[www.Ladomd.com](http://www.Ladomd.com)





# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA ON GLAUCOMA

**J**anuary is National Glaucoma Awareness Month, where we recognize the disease responsible for a large amount of vision loss. Glaucoma is a medical condition where the eye's intraocular pressure (IOP) increases to dangerously high levels. Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of vision loss and blindness in the United States. There are roughly 3 million Americans who suffer from this condition, along with another 57 million worldwide. Previous research studies suggest that marijuana may not suit everyone; however, it might be worth considering if you are among those who struggle and suffer from glaucoma.

Medical marijuana has historically been used to relieve various medical conditions, from cancer to chronic pain. Old and new studies infer that marijuana may effectively treat glaucoma by significantly decreasing pressure within the eye. Multiple studies discovered that cannabinoids found in marijuana help reduce eye pressure levels regardless of the method of consumption. Research focusing on various consumption methods showed equal benefits whether taken orally or inhaled. Surprisingly, however, when researchers placed cannabinoids onto the eye directly, little to no effect was identified.



## It Has Potential To Lower Intraocular Pressure

With the ability to lower intraocular pressure, marijuana has been studied as a therapy for glaucoma. Patients interested in using cannabis for glaucoma relief will learn what form and how much to take when consulting with the proper healthcare provider. These answers may vary according to individual factors such as eye strain or duration of exposure time. In most trials, a single dose of marijuana or cannabinoid was shown to maintain the desired effect and lasted three to four hours. However, to effectively control optic nerve damage resulting from glaucoma, an individual would need between six and eight doses per day for effective management.



While marijuana lowers IOP, it has some drawbacks and is not risk-free. Since the lower IOP is not long term, most patients still require prescription drops for extended pressure control.

## It Helps a Debilitating Condition

Glaucoma is a debilitating medical condition classified into three types – open-angle, angle-closure, and normal-tension.

Open-angle glaucoma occurs when the drainage duct gets clogged. Open-angle glaucoma (OAG) is the most common of the types and affects roughly 90% of patients. Healthcare providers can treat OAG with FDA-approved eye drops that work well if taken as prescribed to maintain visual health!

**Angle-closure glaucoma, aka closed-angle glaucoma,** can occur suddenly (acute angle-closure) or gradually (chronic angle-closure). In acute angle-closure glaucoma, the drainage duct suddenly becomes fully occluded, and this occlusion prevents fluid outflow from the eye, leading to dangerously high IOP. Acute closed-angle glaucoma is a true medical emergency resulting in permanent blindness if not treated soon enough. These patients will experience severe eye pain, headache, and vision loss due to the elevated IOP. This condition will require timely surgical intervention for relief.

**Normal-tension glaucoma** is a unique form of glaucoma that is not fully understood. Normal-tension glaucoma results in damage to the optic nerve despite normal IOP. It is thought to occur due to either increased nerve sensitivity or alterations in blood flow. Sometimes, these patients are treated with medicated eye drops that lower the IOP below the normal range.

## Treatment With Marijuana

Several different drugs are effective at managing glaucoma and IOP. New research studies on medical marijuana usage and glaucoma have documented improvement in some patients. Still, due to the requirement to manage pressure 24 hours a day, Medical Marijuana is usually not a standalone solution for glaucoma.

There is still no FDA-approved form for medical use in America. Scientists and researchers can't say what ingredients might trigger reactions differently among individual patients.

Various options exist to lower IOP, such as prescription eye drops, laser treatment, and surgery such as trabeculectomy. Trabeculectomy involves removing pieces of tissue from inside the eye and inserting an artificial tube called a shunt into the drainage channel.

## The Positive & Negative Aspects

Medical marijuana can control the pressure in your eyes to reduce damage to the optic nerve. Studies have shown that cannabis can lower IOP for glaucoma patients and those without glaucoma. Experts aren't sure how this works yet. No evidence suggests daily use will help prevent or slow down the progression of disease-related vision loss such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD). The good news is scientists continue to research and study the benefits that medical marijuana may hold.

## Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)

The benefit of medical marijuana in glaucoma sufferers is related to the endocannabinoid system, cannabinoids, and delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC contains high concentrations of various cannabinoids that have effectively lowered IOP.

Although glaucoma is a qualifying condition in Florida for Medical Marijuana usage, it is important to note that not all researchers agree with the findings. Many insist more long-term testing needs to be conducted before we can say anything definitive about how cannabis might affect one's vision over time.



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# The Importance of Sexual Health

By Murilo Lima, M.D.

In today's society we hear plenty about physical and mental health but we don't seem to hear too much about sexual health. Maybe that is because there is still some level of embarrassment when talking about the topic. It isn't exactly a dinner table topic. Or maybe it is due to the fact that it is so hard to define. If I asked you about your sexual health, how would you even answer that question?

One way of defining sexual health would be to say it is the ability to embrace and enjoy our sexuality throughout our lifetime. Sexuality is part of being human. Love, affection and intimacy all play a role in healthy relationships from childhood through old age. Achieving sexual health allows for healthy relationships, planned pregnancies, and disease prevention.

It's essential to be well-informed about all aspects of sexual health and what it takes to have a fulfilling sex life. Similarly, it's important to be aware of factors that can complicate your sexual health. You shouldn't allow embarrassment to keep you from bringing up concerns or asking your doctor or health care provider questions.

## The ability of men and women to achieve sexual health and well-being depends on their:

- Access to comprehensive, good-quality information about sex and sexuality;
- Knowledge about the risks they may face and their vulnerability to adverse consequences of unprotected sexual activity;
- Ability to access sexual health care;
- Living in an environment that affirms and promotes sexual health.

Sexual health-related issues are wide-ranging, and encompass sexual orientation and gender identity, sexual expression, relationships, and pleasure.

## They also include negative consequences or conditions such as:

- Infections with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and reproductive tract infections (RTIs) and their adverse outcomes (such as cancer and infertility);



- Unintended pregnancy and abortion;
- Sexual dysfunction;
- Sexual violence; and
- Harmful practices (such as female genital mutilation, FGM).<sup>1</sup>

## Who can I talk to about my sexual health?

*Primary care providers*, such as internists, family doctors, general medicine doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and nurse-midwives are trained in general medicine and to care for the whole body. They work in private doctors' offices, clinics, community health centers, family planning clinics, STI clinics, and college health systems. Even if they do not specialize in sexual health, they can be a good starting point and refer you to a specialist, if needed.

Specialists, such as obstetricians and gynecologists (OB/GYNs), urologists, and women's health nurse practitioners focus on reproductive health. They work in private doctors' offices, community health centers, and family planning clinics.

Health educators work in clinics, community-based programs, schools, and colleges. They might offer sexual health counseling and educational materials to inform and equip people to make healthy decisions.

Mental health professionals, such as therapists, counselors, psychologists, social workers, sex therapists, and psychiatrists, can address the emotional and mental health issues related to sexual concerns and problems. You will find them at college campuses, private practices, clinics, community health centers, and social service agencies.<sup>2</sup>

## Preventative sexual health services

Detecting and treating potential problems early is of utmost importance when talking about our sexual health. Under the Affordable Care Act, many sexual health services are now available at no cost or are covered by your insurance.

## Preventative services might include:

- STI/STD screenings
- Vaccines, such as the HPV vaccine which decreases a women's risk of cervical cancer as well as oral, anal, or penile cancer in men
- Counseling about ways to protect yourself or your partner from STIs or unwanted pregnancy

If you are experiencing a sexual health problem, it's essential to talk with your primary care doctor about treating any symptoms you experience — and just as important to prevent or manage symptoms by taking good care of yourself. It is also important to have a doctor who takes the time to listen to your comments and discusses your overall health. At Lima MD Direct Primary Care & MedSpa, we offer a revolutionary concept to put patients and doctors in charge of their health...NOT insurance companies. Direct Primary Care is the single best alternative to regular "fee per care" medicine. It is a medical practice that does not deal with insurance companies, and focuses on providing convenient, affordable and the highest quality medical care directly to patients without any third parties being involved.

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1. Sexual health, World Health Organization. World Health Organization. Available at: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/sexual-health>.  
2. Take charge of your sexual health, [www.ncshguide.org](http://www.ncshguide.org). Available at: <https://www.ncshguide.org/provider-visit/types-of-providers>.



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# The Effect of Nutrition on Essential Hormones

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

**W**hile we typically eat whatever foods seem the most appealing, the foods that we put into our body can significantly affect many aspects of our health, including hormonal balance.

**Hormones are chemical messengers for the body and control almost every process that it completes, including:**

- immunity
- metabolism
- reproduction
- menstrual cycle
- mood

In order for these areas to operate as they should, your hormone levels need to be in the correct balance. However, certain things, such as the food you eat, can affect this.

## Hormones Affected by Food

There are over 50 hormones that have been identified in the body, but there are a certain few that are consistently researched and referenced, especially in relation to food.

### Estrogen

Estrogen is also known as the female sex hormone, although it is also present (and important) in men.

In women, estrogen is essential in developing pubic hair and breasts, and in causing the hips to widen. However, in both men and women, estrogen is also vital for blood clotting, bone formation, and skin and nail health.

Estrogen levels can become too low or too high, with low estrogen contributing to feelings of depression. However, when estrogen levels fluctuate, such as during menopause, symptoms such as low libido, hot flashes, and weight gain can occur.

### Testosterone

While estrogen is the female sex hormone, testosterone is the male sex hormone. Besides contributing to the typical male attributes such as body hair and a deeper voice, testosterone is also important in both men and women for improving sexual function, gaining muscle mass, and boosting strength.

Changes in testosterone have also been associated with conditions such as type 2 diabetes, obesity, heart problems, and metabolic syndrome.



Many factors affect testosterone regulation, including diet, which can help keep testosterone levels from dropping too low.

### Insulin

Most often associated with those who have diabetes, insulin is a hormone essential for regulating metabolic processes, including balancing blood sugar levels.

Insulin accomplishes this by allowing your liver, organs, and fat to absorb glucose. However, if the body does not generate enough insulin or if you have developed insulin resistance (making it difficult for your body to use insulin well), blood sugar levels can rise.

The foods you eat can affect how sensitive insulin is, with different foods causing insulin sensitivity to increase or decrease.

### Cortisol

More commonly referred to as the stress hormone, cortisol plays a vital role in the fight-or-flight response. However, it can be dangerous if cortisol remains at high levels chronically.

#### Consistent high cortisol levels can cause:

- weight gain
- anxiety
- heart problems
- migraines
- brain fog
- sleep disturbances

While some of the most popular ways to control stress, and thus control cortisol, include regular exercise, removing the stressor, and breathing exercises such as meditation or yoga, diet can also affect cortisol levels.

### Foods And Supplements to Eat

The following food and supplements have been shown to help balance certain hormone levels.

#### Protein

Protein is an important source of amino acids, which the body cannot make on its own. However, protein is also essential for making peptide hormones, which are protein-derived.

*The endocrine gland makes peptide hormones from amino acids, and they play a crucial role in body processes such as:*

- appetite
- energy metabolism
- stress
- growth
- reproduction

For example, studies have shown that eating protein decreases ghrelin, also known as the hunger hormone. Protein also helps to stimulate hormone production for glucagon-like peptide-1 and peptide YY, which are two hormones that help you feel full.

### Healthy Fats

Consuming healthy fats can help to reduce insulin resistance and appetite.

Healthy fats include medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs), and what makes them “healthy” fats is that they are more likely to be taken up by the liver for immediate energy usage versus being stored in the fat tissue.

Research has shown that MCTs are less likely to promote insulin resistance and can also help increase insulin sensitivity.

For those under chronic stress, research also suggests that omega-3s, a type of healthy fat, may help keep cortisol levels from increasing.

### Fiber

Fiber is an essential part of your diet, and this includes its effect on hormones.

Studies have shown that fiber helps to increase insulin sensitivity.

Additionally, both soluble and insoluble fiber can help stimulate the production of hormones that increase feelings of fullness. This then helps to prevent overeating, which can lead to obesity.

### Mediterranean Diet

As for specific diets, the Mediterranean diet has been shown to reduce estrogen levels that can become too high when following the Western diet, which primarily consists of animal products and sugars. These higher estrogen levels are also listed as risk factors for ovarian and breast cancer.

While estrogen is an essential hormone for female and male reproductive health, bone and heart health, blood sugar balance, brain function, and immune health, too much of it can pose the risk of acute and chronic health conditions, such as metabolic disorders, obesity, and various cancers.

Because of this, it is crucial to keep estrogen levels within a normal range, and the Mediterranean diet can help with that.



The Mediterranean diet focuses on whole grains, fish, seeds, cruciferous vegetables (e.g., broccoli, cauliflower), and legumes.

### Soy Products

Soy products contain phytoestrogen, which is a bioactive substance that acts like estrogen in the body. For those who are suffering from low estrogen levels, such as those going through menopause, soy products may help to balance estrogen levels and relieve symptoms.

Soy has also shown promise in reducing the risk of certain health conditions that occur with menopause, such as improving blood cholesterol levels, lowering the risk of ischemic heart disease, and relieving hot flashes.

Research has also shown that soy products regularly can help reduce testosterone levels. The exact mechanism behind this is still under research, but scientists suspect that it is because the phytoestrogens it possesses can reduce testosterone levels.

### Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables produce a phytochemical called indole-3-carbinol, which is important in promoting liver function. This then helps the liver support hormone balance by removing the waste products and “spent” hormones.

Because of this, cruciferous vegetables play an important role in balancing your hormonal system.

### Some examples of cruciferous vegetables include:

- broccoli
- bok choy
- cauliflower
- cabbage
- brussels sprouts
- kale
- radish

### Magnesium

Magnesium is a mineral that can be found in food or taken as a supplement, and benefits those with hormone imbalance in many ways.

Magnesium helps to increase insulin sensitivity, which leads to lower blood sugar. It also helps to support quality sleep, which is an important component of finding hormonal balance.

Magnesium also helps to reduce excess cortisol production, effectively relaxing the nervous system. It also helps those with thyroid imbalances by decreasing inflammation that can cause this autoimmune response.

### Some foods with magnesium include:

- almonds
- leafy greens
- chocolate
- sunflower seeds
- sesame seeds

### Foods to Avoid

Some of these foods should be avoided in general for hormone balance, but there are also some products that should only be avoided if your body overproduces or underproduces a hormone. For example, estrogen is one hormone that can be high or low in someone's body, and what foods to avoid (or consume more of) will depend on your estrogen levels.

### Sugar

Sugar doesn't need to be cut entirely out of your diet, but it is important to minimize added sugar. This is because added sugar can negatively affect hormone function, which then contributes to diabetes and obesity.

Added sugar can promote insulin resistance, with insulin being an essential hormone for regulating blood sugar levels. If you develop insulin resistance, you can then develop diabetes.

Added sugar may also fail to stimulate leptin production, which is the fullness hormone. This can lead to decreased calorie burning, which can contribute to weight gain.

### Red Meat

While protein helps regulate hormone levels, consuming too much red meat may increase your body's estrogen production to abnormal levels. This is because red meat is rich in hydrogenated and saturated fats.

### Dairy Products

Dairy products can result in inflammation in the gut, which can impact your hormone levels.

### Soy Products

Soy products are one of those offerings that can benefit some but cause more severe symptoms in others. This is because they contain phytoestrogens, so if your estrogen levels are already high, soy products may raise them even further, which can impact your ovulation cycle and reproductive health.

Along those same lines, since phytoestrogens can decrease testosterone, soy products should be avoided in those who already have low testosterone levels.

### Caffeine and Alcohol

Both caffeine and alcohol can cause increases in cortisol secretion.

When cortisol levels are chronically high, it can increase your stress levels, visceral fat, and blood pressure. So, it's best to keep cortisol levels low when you're not in a stressful situation, and avoiding these two things can help.

### Balancing Hormones: Nutrition is Just a Part

In addition to the food you eat, it is also crucial to only eat as much as your body needs to function optimally. Overeating can result in weight gain, which can cause all the problems associated with obesity.

Additionally, combining exercise with your nutrition can further help with hormone balance and return all hormones to a level that promotes optimal functioning.

Overall, having the correct balance of hormones in your body significantly contributes to how your body functions and, thus, how you feel. By giving your body the proper fuel, you can considerably improve how you feel, leading to a greater quality of life.

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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



Numbness



Balance problems

### Motor nerve damage



Muscle cramping



Twitching



Reflex abnormalities

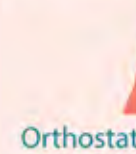
### Autonomic nerve damage



Excess sweating



Getting full quickly



Orthostatic hypotension (dizziness or fainting after standing up)



Heat intolerance



Impotence

## SAFE, EFFECTIVE, NON-INVASIVE TREATMENT

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The neoGEN-Series® system is a state-of-the art, technically-innovative medical device for producing electric cell signaling energy waves (EST and ESI). The system is used to successfully treat circulatory issues, all types of acute and chronic pain, long-term (intractable) pain and drug-resistant pain. The neoGEN-Series® also offers specific-parameter signaling for efficacious neuro-muscular reeducation, muscle strengthening and relaxation of muscle spasm activity.

### 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

- Overweight
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Post Chemotherapy
- Malnutrition
- Herniated Discs



# WHAT IS THE TM-FLOW SYSTEM?

Artery and autonomic nerve dysfunction or damage can occur due to complications from smoking, being overweight, having chronic metabolic diseases - such as diabetes, hypertension, hepatitis, thyroid dysfunction and/or aging.

## TM-FLOW REPORT OVERVIEW ASSESSMENT

Patient Name: (Actual Patient)  
Gender: Male Height: 5' 8"  
DOB: 2/9/1952 Weight: 194 lbs  
Age: 70 BMI: 29.4  
Physician Name: Mairelis De La Cruz  
Clinic or Hospital: Hancock Healthcare  
Address: 1510 Hancock Bridge Pkwy  
Referral:

TM-Flow is a medical device that non-invasively tests your nerves and arteries.



### VASCULAR ASSESSMENT

BLOOD PRESSURE  
MILD HYPERTENSION

ARTERIAL STIFFNESS  
NORMAL RANGE

ESTIMATED CASP  
NORMAL RANG

ENDOTHELIAL FUNCTION  
SEVERE IMPAIRMENT

ANKLE BRACHIAL INDEX  
BORDERLINE

CASP = Central Aortic Systolic Pressure



### LIFESTYLE ASSESSMENT

ESTIMATED BODY COMPOSITION  
OVER WEIGHT

VITAL SIGNS  
BORDERLINE

EXERCISE CAPACITY  
BORDERLINE

### AUTONOMIC ASSESSMENT

CARDIAC AUTONOMIC  
VASOVAGAL S.

### MICROCIRCULATORY RESPONSE

NORMAL RANGE

SWEAT RESPONSE  
NORMAL RANGE

### ASSESSMENT COLOR CODE

NORMAL RANGE INITIAL STEP 1/ACCEPTABLE INITIAL STEP 2/BORDERLINE DEFINED SEVERE

### CLINICAL CONTEXT

Tingling in the toes  
Numbness  
Hypothyroidism  
Anti Lipidemic Agent  
Thyroid Treatment

### CMR SCORE

**54 %**

SCORE 0% - 100% \*

### CMR COLOR CODE

SCORE  $\geq 80\%$  | Low Risk Profile  
SCORE  $\geq 60\%$  and  $< 80\%$  | Borderline Risk Profile  
SCORE  $< 60\%$  and  $\geq 40\%$  | Moderate Risk Profile  
SCORE  $< 40\%$  | High Risk Profile

Physician's Signature

*Mairelis De La Cruz Hernandez*

CMR = Cardiometabolic Risk

## SPECIFIC TEST FOR NEUROPATHY SYMPTOMS

Population that should be tested with TM-Flow



Autonomic neuropathy and vascular dysfunction risk group in the USA

**50+** Population over 50 years old with cardiovascular risk factors  
(Hypertensive, Overweight, Smoker, Diabetic)

**70+**

Everyone older than 70

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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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# 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-rM7OKwmgG3j43bZni6h175MIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.nfcr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAYc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1dxNN-rM7OKwmgG3j43bZni6h175MIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD_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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# Shopping for the Best Incontinence Underwear?

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**Do you experience accidental bladder leaks before making it to the restroom? Are you on the search for the best incontinence underwear?**

**A**lthough incontinence underwear may help conceal leaks you experience or prevent leaking to your clothes, it does not treat your underlying symptoms. If you struggle with bladder control or leaks, this may be a sign that you have overactive bladder.

## What is Overactive Bladder?

Overactive bladder is an umbrella term that includes the frequent and urgent need to empty your bladder. One of the most common symptoms of overactive bladder is a sudden urge to urinate, resulting in unintentional urine loss which is referred to as incontinence.

Overactive bladder can affect 1 in 3 people in the United States over the age of 40.<sup>1,2</sup> Though this bladder control issue may occur more often as people get older, it is not a normal part of aging.

You may be suffering from overactive bladder if:

- **Urgency** - You experience a sudden or compelling need to urinate with inability to hold urine or control it
- **Urgency Incontinence** - You experience an urgent need to urinate and have urinary leakage accidents or trouble holding urine before making it to the restroom
- **Frequency** - You go to the restroom to urinate so often that it disrupts your life—typically 8 or more times a day
- **Nocturia** - You wake up more than 1 time per night because you need to urinate

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

**Bladder Institute** is now offering **Axonics® Therapy**, a long-lasting solution that is clinically proven to help regain bladder control and deliver clinically meaningful improvements in quality of life\*.

## What is Axonics Therapy?

Axonics Therapy is an advanced treatment option that works by providing gentle stimulation to the nerves that control the bladder and bowel, which can help 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!

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- **94%** of patients were satisfied with their therapy<sup>3</sup>

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/isi](http://www.axonics.com/isi). Caution: Federal law (USA) restricts this device to sale and use by, or on the order of, a physician.  
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\*50% or greater reduction in symptoms

### References:

1. Coyne KS, 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 International*. 2009;(104): 352-360. US Census Reporter <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/01000US-united-states/>
2. Census Reporter website. <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/01000us-united-states/>. Accessed July 19, 2019.
3. Pezzella A, McCrery R, Lane F, et al. Two-year outcomes of the ARTISAN-SNM study for the treatment of urinary urgency incontinence using the Axonics rechargeable sacral neuromodulation system [in press]. *NeuroUrol Urodyn*. 2021.





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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.

### DR. SEBASTIAN KLISIEWICZ, D.O.

#### Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

*Dr. Sebastian is a leading physiotherapist 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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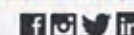
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## MAKE ESTATE PLANNING PART OF YOUR NEW YEARS' RESOLUTION

By Kelly L. Fayer, P.A.

New Year's resolutions are promises that we make to ourselves at the start of a new year. According to Statista.com, the top three new year's resolutions are 1) Exercise more at 44%, 2) Eat Healthier at 42%, and 3) Spend more time with family and friends at 34%. Estate Planning didn't even make the top ten list. Planning for what happens to our possessions after our demise, or who will make decisions for us if we are not able to make our own, is not something most of us want to think about.

Regardless of your present situation, you need to see estate planning as non-negotiable. Whether you are single or married, divorced or in a relationship, a very young person, or an only child. There are benefits to creating an estate plan. Even a fresh college graduate needs an estate plan. Now is the best time to get started with your estate planning and adjust over the years.

Having estate planning documents in place allows YOU to determine how your family is provided for in your absence and designate who will make decisions for you if you are unable to care for yourself. The consequences of not planning can be devastating to your family and could create additional stress and the unnecessary expense of dealing with the court system.

### Some thoughts to consider:

- What if you have no estate planning documents? Who will make medical or financial decisions when you are unable?
- What if you have estate planning documents from another state? Are they valid in Florida?
- What if you have estate planning documents made before October 2011? Did you know the laws changed regarding powers of attorney for finances?
- What if you have estate planning documents with outdated information? Will your estate be handled the way you wish?
- What if you have beneficiaries who receive government benefits? Will they be disqualified from receiving those benefits if they receive an inheritance?



- What if you have beneficiaries with creditor issues? Can you protect their inheritance?
- What if you wish to provide for minor children? Do you have arrangements made for their care?

Consulting with the right attorney can help you answer these questions and provide for the well-being of your family. Ask lots of questions before selecting the right Estate Planning Attorney. You don't want to end up in the office of an attorney who can't help you. Start with the initial phone call. It is not unusual to speak to a secretary, receptionist, or office manager during an initial call or before actually meeting with the attorney. If so, ask this person your questions.

- How long has the attorney been in practice?
- Does his/her practice emphasize a particular area of law?
- How long has he/she been in this field?
- What percentage of his/her practice is devoted to estate planning law?
- Is there a fee for the first consultation and if so, how much is it?
- Given the nature of your situation, what information should you bring with you to the initial consultation?

The answers to your questions will assist you in determining whether that attorney has those qualifications important to you for a successful attorney/client relationship. If you have a specific legal issue that requires immediate attention, be sure to inform the office of this during the initial telephone conversation. When you have the opportunity to meet with the attorney, follow up with these questions and make sure the attorney cares about helping you.

A positive and open relationship between attorney and client benefits everyone. The key to getting it is communication. The communication starts with asking the kinds of questions contained in this article. Use the answers to the questions as a guide not only to the attorney's qualifications but also to determine whether you can comfortably work with this person. If your concerns are not valued, if you don't like the answers to these questions, if you don't like the attorney's reaction to being asked all those questions, or if you simply do not feel relaxed with this person, **DO NOT HIRE THAT ATTORNEY.** Only if you are satisfied with the attorney you have hired from the very start will you trust him or her to do the best job for you. Only if you have established a relationship of open communication will you be able to resolve any difficulties that may arise between you. If you take the time to make sure that you are happy right at the beginning, you can make this a productive experience for both you and the attorney. You will thank yourself, and your attorney will thank you.

The Law Office of Kelly L. Fayer, P.A. was established to serve members of our community. Whether you need assistance now or are planning for the future, it would be a privilege to help you. We strive to provide quality service while offering personal attention to each of our clients.



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# THYROID DYSFUNCTION:

## SCREENING AND PREVENTION

**H**ave you ever wondered why your doctor places their hand on your throat and asks you to swallow? This common test allows the doctor to check for thyroid nodules. Although thyroid nodules are extremely common and usually benign, there are growing numbers of people with thyroid cancer and other thyroid issues.

The thyroid is a butterfly shaped gland. It produces two main hormones that regulate body temperature, metabolism, heart rate and other factors. These two hormones are T3 and T4.

Along with cancer and Hashimoto's disease, thyroid nodules could suggest that that you may suffer from hyperthyroidism or hypothyroidism. If left untreated, thyroid issues can lead to dangerous conditions like AFIB, blood disorders and heart disease.

### Hyperthyroidism Symptoms:

- Overactive appetite
- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Nausea
- Lack of concentrate

With hyperthyroidism, an overproduction of the T3 and/or T4 hormones causes the body to react to the over secretion of the thyroid hormones in negative ways. The most common form of this disorder is Grave's disease, which is an autoimmune disease. Grave's causes the body to attack it's own thyroid gland. Other causes can be from genetic mutations (can run in families), and tumors in the ovaries or testes.

### Hypothyroidism Symptoms:

- Tendency to be cold
- Dry itchy skin
- Swollen eyes
- Forgetfulness
- Lack of concentration
- Lack of appetite
- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Menstrual changes
- Hair loss
- Depression & anxiety

With hypothyroidism, the thyroid is underactive, producing too little T3 and/ or T4 hormones. The causes of hypothyroidism are autoimmune diseases, like Hashimoto's, surgical removal of the thyroid (cancer patients), environmental radiation exposure, or radiation treatment of the thyroid. Although there is no cure, there are many different medications available to successfully treat hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism.

### There is no standard or routine screening test for thyroid cancer.

There is no standard or routine screening test used for early detection of thyroid cancer. Thyroid cancer that does not cause symptoms may be found during the following:

- A routine physical exam when the doctor checks the patient's neck for lumps (nodules) or swelling in the neck, voice box, and lymph nodes, or anything else that seems unusual.
- Surgery that is done for another condition.
- An ultrasound that is done for another condition.

### Prevention

There are a number of things recommended to prevent thyroid problems. Let's look at the top 5 as mentioned on thyroidcancer.com.

**1. Minimize radiation exposure.** Large amounts of radiation exposure to the head/neck area or chest, typically from treatment of another cancer (lymphoma, breast cancer, etc.) increases the risk of thyroid cancer. Some people also get exposure due to their line of work (x-ray technician, fluoroscopy technician, etc.). Also, there have been some major exposures due to nuclear accidents (Chernobyl, 3 Mile Island) and atomic bombs (World War II).

**2. Be aware of your family history.** Similar to all other cancers, genetics plays a roll. While some of the genetics of thyroid cancer involve changes in genes at the cellular level (mutations), inherited genetic risk does occur occasionally with thyroid cancer. A family history of thyroid cancer in a close family member (parent, grandparent, sibling, or child) increases the risk of thyroid cancer. This occurs even if there is no known genetic condition, syndrome, or change (mutation) that causes thyroid cancer. In most cases, we do not know what the inherited gene or gene mutation is that increases the thyroid cancer risk in families.

**3. Do self-checks.** Self-checks are an important part of cancer screening and prevention. Similar to breast cancer and testicular cancer, self-checks of your neck can help diagnose thyroid cancer. The vast majority of thyroid cancers are very subtle and do not cause symptoms. Additionally, 95% or more of thyroid cancers cannot be diagnosed with a blood test.

**4. Get an ultrasound.** A thyroid ultrasound done by a skilled and experienced team is the foundation in evaluation and diagnosis of thyroid cancer. Often, an excellent ultrasound is enough to make the diagnosis of cancer because many thyroid cancers have a very characteristic appearance on ultrasound. During ultrasound, the technician must thoroughly examine the thyroid and all the areas of lymph nodes in both sides of the neck that can be involved with thyroid cancer. If your ultrasound is not comprehensive and does not include these important components, cancer may be missed (and left behind after surgery).

**5. Live a healthy lifestyle.** Controlling the aspects of your health and lifestyle that you can is crucial for thyroid cancer prevention. Diet, exercise, and avoidance or cessation of smoking are important, modifiable factors related to thyroid cancer. Obesity also increases your risk of thyroid cancer. The risk goes up as the body mass index (calculated formula relating one's weight to their height) goes up. It would follow then that diet and exercise are important in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and reducing the chance of thyroid cancer. A well-rounded, balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fiber, well-sourced protein, and antioxidants (substances that slow or prevent damage and death of cells by unstable molecules in the body) is key. Lastly, dietary iodine is a factor to pay attention to as well. Not enough iodine is associated with Follicular Thyroid Cancer, and too much iodine is associated with Papillary Thyroid Cancer.



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# New Year's Resolutions for A Healthy Smile

By Dr. Ricardo S. Bocanegra, DDS

**A** new Year, new you! There's no better way to solve dental issues by avoiding them in the first place so why not include your oral health in your list of resolutions for this new year. After all, with the cost of dental care on the rise, prevention is key to savings!

The New Year is an opportunity to make positive changes in your life and your dental health is no exception. Establishing a habit of visiting the dentist for regular check ups and periodontal cleanings will benefit your overall health. By enhancing your oral care routine, avoiding harmful behaviors, and making balanced dietary choices, you'll be making a huge impact on your long-term dental health.

**Helpful tip:** Consistency is key when it comes to establishing new habits.

## Power Up Your Habits

With practice as part of your normal routine, a widely-avoided activity like flossing your teeth can evolve from a low point in your day to something you enjoy. As you clean between your teeth and brush regularly, you may surprise yourself by observing that your gums become less sensitive, you bleed less, and you enjoy the unique feeling of a fresh smile.

Proper dental care is easier than you may imagine because the simple choices you make can cause profound changes to your oral health. Here are a few habits that are beneficial:

- Gently brush for two minutes twice a day using a soft-bristled toothbrush to avoid damaging your enamel.
- When using a toothbrush, hold it at a 45-degree angle to your gumline and clean each surface of your teeth.
- Use a toothpaste with fluoride to help keep your teeth healthy.
- Thoroughly clean between your teeth once a day.
- You can use a flossing device, floss, or an interdental brush—whatever you feel most comfortable using!
- Rinse using mouthwash or an antiseptic mouthrinse after brushing.



Practicing your oral care routine twice a day will have a profound effect on your mouth's health. However, there are a few more important steps to take to ensure your oral care isn't suffering in other areas. Keep reading below for more ideas for other changes you can make.

## Healthier Dietary Choices

Your diet is crucial when it comes to keeping your smile in top shape. What you eat can become food for bacteria in your mouth and potentially contribute to cavities, gum disease, and other conditions.

**Steps to choose a healthier diet may include:**

- Limit your consumption of sugary or acidic foods and beverages
- Reduce snacking between meals
- Rinse with water after meals or sugary drinks
- Aim to eat lots of fruits, vegetables, and other items packed with nutrients
- Talk to your dental or medical professional to ensure your diet includes enough vitamins and nutrients to keep your teeth strong

## Dental Restorations and Orthodontics

Today is the perfect time to address any dental problems requiring your attention, like an improper bite, damaged tooth, or cavity. Your dental professional can recommend the appropriate restoration to potentially treat the underlying cause of your concern, prevent future problems, and improve your smile's appearance at the same time!

## Say No To Dry Mouth

Your saliva has a vital function in maintaining the health of your teeth, gums, and mouth. It provides the enamel of your teeth with minerals, neutralizes the pH level (also known as acidity), and helps wash away food matter and debris. Dry mouth leads to many oral health problems.

**You can reduce dry mouth by incorporating these practices:**

- Chew sugar-free gum to promote saliva production
- Consume milk or dairy products to increase saliva production
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption or using illegal drugs that can cause dry mouth
- Ask your medical or dental professional if any over-the-counter or prescription medications you're taking may be associated with decreased saliva production
- Stay hydrated by drinking water regularly, especially before bed
- Quit Tobacco Products
- Tobacco stains your teeth and increase your risk of many dental problems.

## Routine Dental Visits

We recommend visiting your dental professional at least twice a year or every six months. The best way to prevent dental issues in their tracks is to detect them early or stop them from happening in the first place. Regular visits to your dentist will help ensure that no dental issues go unnoticed or worsen to something more serious and more costly.

A positive step is to budget for regular dental visits and save money if any unforeseen injuries or dental visits occur. A small cost of maintenance and regular visits upfront will help prevent issues that can be far more expensive in the long run. Our office offers a dental Saving plan that helps you save money in preventative and restorative services. Call our office at 239-482-8806 for more information on how we can make your new year's resolution affordable and get you up to date with your oral health!

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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.

CBD derived from Hemp Oil is becoming a trusted source by many individuals for its multiple benefits.

### The Quality of Hemp Products is Critical

Strict analysis and product quality through highly regarded labs such as Kaycha. This process and certification make certain that your hemp products are clean, free of mycotoxins, heavy metals and other harmful substances.

Hemp Joi offers multiple varieties of products from gummies to tinctures and salves. Hemp Joi is also a carrier of the highly sought out Delta 8 products.

### About Hemp Joi

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.

Please visit us at [hempjoi.com](http://hempjoi.com), stop by, or call us to find out more at (239) 676-0915.





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# January is Thyroid Awareness Month

## Check Your Thyroid Today

**T**he thyroid is a small gland responsible for producing hormones that play a crucial role in many of the body's systems — from cells and tissues to organs like the heart, brain, liver, and kidneys. Dysfunction occurs when the thyroid produces either too much or too little thyroid hormone. Either can disrupt the healthy functioning of vital organs — leading to a wide range of symptoms. The good news? Once diagnosed and treated, it's entirely possible to live a normal, healthy life.

### 5 Reasons to Check your Thyroid

**1. It's a small gland with a major impact:** The thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland at base of the neck that produces thyroid hormones; these influence how all other cells, tissues, and organs function.

**2. Thyroid dysfunction can have hundreds of possible symptoms:** Symptoms vary widely and diagnosis can be difficult, so keeping detailed records will be a significant help to your doctor.

**3. It affects millions in the U.S. alone:** It's estimated that over 30 million Americans have thyroid dysfunction, yet at least half of these cases are undiagnosed and, consequently, untreated.

**4. Anyone can be affected by thyroid dysfunction:** Although women are five times more likely to develop thyroid problems than men, it can happen to anyone.

**5. Diagnosis is the key:** Good news: With a proper diagnosis, thyroid dysfunction can be successfully treated so you can enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

#### Brenda's Story: Grave Challenges

In 2015, Brenda felt that something was off. Her heart rate was too high. To others, she just didn't seem like her usual self. Her doctor diagnosed her with Graves' disease, an autoimmune disorder that causes the thyroid to make too much of a hormone called thyroxine.

Her symptoms eventually subsided, but in 2018 she experienced new ones. This time Graves' manifested in the form of Thyroid Eye Disease (TED), an inflammation of the eye muscles, eyelids, tear



glands, and fatty tissues behind the eye. Brenda now suffered from constant headaches and double vision, which made it impossible to read or watch TV.

The first treatment Brenda tried involved 12 straight days of radiation which did little to improve her symptoms. The next option appeared to be surgery until the FDA approved Tepezza, a new treatment for TED administered through infusion therapy. Sage Infusion partnered with the drug's manufacturer, Horizon Pharmaceuticals, to become a preferred site of treatment.

Brenda decided to drive two-and-a-half hours each way from her home in Cape Coral to Sage Infusion Tampa, where she received Tepezza infusions. While it was a haul, it was worth it. Brenda has described the Tampa facility as "beautiful" and the staff as "wonderful". Brenda's friend would come with her to each appointment, and they could sit together in a private space while she received her infusion. After completing 8 rounds of Tepezza infusions at Sage, Brenda experienced a significant improvement in her condition.

"Patients love the facility," says Brenda's doctor. "It's been a great experience for our office as well as the patients. It's miraculous how well these patients are doing even after the first injection".

Brenda hopes that she won't need further treatment for Graves', but if she does, she says "it will be at Sage". With the opening of Sage Infusion Fort Myers, Brenda will have a much shorter drive if needed on her journey back to health.

#### The Right Diagnosis is Key

Thyroid eye disease is a rare, autoimmune disease characterized by proptosis (a condition where the eyes are pushed forward and bulge outward) leading to eye pain, double vision, and difficulty closing the eyelid.

Tepezza (teprotumumab-trbw) is a medication used for the treatment of thyroid eye disease. Tepezza reduces eye bulging and double vision. It also improves the signs and symptoms of Thyroid Eye Disease (TED), including eye pain, redness, and swelling.

In clinical trials: more than 8 out of 10 patients taking Tepezza experienced a visible reduction in eye swelling, 7 out of 10 patients saw improvement in double vision; and 5 out of 10 patients saw their double vision completely go away.

At Sage Infusion, we provide expert patient-centered infusion care in a contemporary boutique environment. Sage Infusion eases your medical burdens by handling the care coordination process, including insurance authorization and patient progress updates. Our flexible scheduling meets our patient's needs with extended hours. Day, night, and weekend appointments are available. Our physician assistants and nurse practitioners follow the National Infusion Center Association guidelines and our proprietary clinical protocols. Sage Infusion offers a variety of comforting amenities and patients can choose to receive treatment in the open lounge or a private room.

With locations in Fort Myers, Clearwater, Orlando, Sarasota, Tampa, and The Villages, Sage Infusion offers the best infusion and administration facilities in the Sunshine State. At Sage Infusion, we've reimagined patient care. From a quick start to upfront pricing and financial assistance, to compassionate care by our clinical experts in a serene environment, you will experience infusion therapy like never before. Sage Infusion accepts most insurance providers and will complete your prior authorization process making it easy to focus on your health.



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Fort Myers, FL 33908



# MORPHEUS8 BODY

## What is MORPHEUS8 BODY?

Morpheus8 Body is a safe and effective minimally invasive modular radio frequency fractional solution for body subnormal adipose (fat) remodeling.

## Morpheus8 Body offers innovative body contouring

Lift & tighten your skin, minimize stretch marks and melt fat with Morpheus 8 Body. This state-of-the-art technology is a fractional skin tightening treatment that stimulates collagen production of the underlying layers of the dermis. By targeting the subnormal layers of the skin (up to 8mm deep), tissues of the arms, belly, and thighs can be remodeled to reveal a smoother, tighter, and more sculpted appearance. This patented bi-polar technology along with the level of depth we can reach, is what makes Morpheus8 Body the industry's gold standard!

## How does Morpheus8 Body work?

Equipped with "Burst Mode" technology, Morpheus8 Body automatically delivers radiofrequency (RF) energy to multiple depths in a single pulse through its gold-plated microneedles. The ability to target tissue at three different levels in millisecond intervals allows for a significant reduction in treatment time, minimizes skin injury, increases uniformity, and enables customized full-body procedures. The Morpheus8 Body system is effective for skin tightening, fat-melting, and treating cellulite and sagging skin.

## What to expect during a Morpheus8 Body treatment session

Although this is considered a minimally invasive treatment, the deep penetration of the pins that deliver the radio frequency can make the procedure uncomfortable for the patient. We want our guests to be as relaxed and comfortable as possible at their appointment. Our doctor will prescribe oral sedation upon request; however, every patient will receive topical numbing before the treatment. The entire session (including numbing time) takes about one hour and 30 minutes. Once the procedure is complete, your practitioner will apply defense serum or PRP (platelet rich plasma).

## Minimal recovery

Immediately after treatment, you will experience erythema (redness) for 3-7 days. However, for more aggressive treatments, this may last longer. Slight to moderate swelling and a mild sunburn sensation are also common post treatment and may last 3-7 days as well. In some cases, bruising may occur. Skin may crust and peel depending on the patient and treatment settings. In most cases, you will experience itching as the area heals. Specific aftercare instructions will be given to the patient the day of the appointment.

## Key benefits include:

- Equipped with advanced settings, Morpheus8 automatically deploys bipolar radio frequency energy to multi-level treatment depths in a single treatment.

- Morpheus8 delivers the deepest fractional treatments available, penetrating sub-dermal tissue up to 8mm.
- The ability to target tissue sequentially at three levels, in millisecond intervals, allows for a significant reduction in treatment times, minimizes skin injury, increases treatment uniformity, and enables customized full body fractional procedures.
- Patented fractional tips with different microneedle configurations allow us to customize the body treatments in order to reach specific goals.
- Morpheus8 Body can reduce unwanted volume (or fat), minimize stretch marks, improve skin texture, lift and tighten skin.

## Results

You will notice some improvements within the first week after your treatment. However, the most significant results are more apparent after about a month, and continue to improve for up the three months as your body rebuilds fresh, firmer skin with natural collagen and elastin.

Results last between 2-4 years, depending on various factors such as your age, the initial condition of your skin, your lifestyle and skincare routine.

## Where can I find trusted professionals using Morpheus8 Body?

If you feel like Morpheus8 Body is right for you, contact VELO Med Spa at one of their two locations in Jensen Beach and Bonita Springs. Whether you are seeking to enhance your beauty needs or you wish to escape on your own for rejuvenation, VELO Med Spa provides the ideal environment for one's physical and mental renewal. From the beautiful aromas that scent the air to the sound of tranquil music, every detail sets the stage for a truly peaceful and relaxing experience.

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# Health Insurance IMPORTANT DATES!

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



**HEALTH INSURANCE** is more important than ever! There is no way to determine when something will happen or when you could be diagnosed with a serious medical condition. So, saying I am healthy, so I don't need health insurance makes no sense. Insurance is moving the financial risk from you to the insurance company. There are always options for about every budget. Work with a professional that is contracted with many carriers and offers multiple options. Many plans are available year-round, the government plans such as the Marketplace and Medicare have specific times that you can enroll unless you have a Special Enrollment Period due to, as an example loss of coverage, marriage, moving out of the plans service area, etc.

## **MEDICARE – Annual Enrollment Period October 15-December 7th, 2022, for January 1st, 2023, effective. Medicare Advantage – Part C & Part D Prescription Plans**

Most of the plans in your area have made many changes and things you might not notice, especially important, are your doctors still in network, what tier are your medications and maybe the tier changed, copays, coinsurance. What extras are the plans offering? Maybe you need extra dental, vision, hearing aids. Many plans include some wonderful extra benefits, but it is also particularly important to know how to use the benefit and if they work for you.

CMS has made many rules for 2023 Medicare season. If you want to enroll or review your plan over the phone or on a Webex, you need to agree to be recorded and Medicare requires us to keep the recording for 10 years. In person appointments do not have that requirement, but you need to sign a scope of appointment that just authorizes us to talk to you about what you checked, such as Medicare Advantage or a Drug Plan it does not allow us to do anything but talk to you about these topics. Many plans have decreased the cost of Insulin which will be a huge savings for so many in 2023. Talk about maximum of \$2,000 drug cost in a year, is not valid in 2023 but hopefully in 2025. Many changes are happening year after year. Find an agent that will be there for you, year after year.

When you turn 65 you are eligible for Medicare, once you have worked 40 quarters roughly 10 years there is no cost for Medicare Part "A". Part A covers Hospitals, Skilled Nursing, Home Health & Hospice. Medicare Part B you can choose to take at 65 or you can hold off if you are still working and have credible coverage. If you do not have group health insurance that is considered qualified, and then you want it you would have a late enrollment penalty for each month you did not have Part B & Part D and that penalty will last for the rest of your life. Part B covers, doctors, imaging, blood work, ambulance, durable medical equipment, etc. Part D is a Medicare Drug Plan and covers medications. During your initial enrollment period it is especially important to understand your options! Medicare Supplements/Medigap Plans are NOT guarantee issue you may need to medically qualify. You can purchase a Medigap Plan during your 1st 6-month on Medicare Part B without medical underwriting. There are a lot of things you need to know. Again, work with an agent you can trust! **Especially important:** when you **move** you need to know your options. Can you keep the same plan? Do you need to make a change and what does that look like?

We offer **Free Medicare Seminars** in Lee & Collier County please e-mail [info@logicalinsurance.com](mailto:info@logicalinsurance.com) to register or call **239-362-0855** for dates. Medicare's website is [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov).

## **MARKETPLACE – Obama Care/Affordable Care Act – open enrollment starts November 1st- December 15th for January 1st effective. December 16th to January 15th will have February 1st, 2023, effective.**

The website is [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov), your local insurance agent can help you through the maze. The government also changes each year what how much you can earn to receive subsidy to help lower your cost for insurance. Many people are not aware that they do not need to forgo having health insurance and there are affordable options for them. Insurance is not just about the price of the premium but particularly important the network of doctors, hospital, etc. that you can have access to. Be careful carriers that are selling in your area might not have a good network, so the price might be right but if your hospital and your doctors are not in their network that is a problem. So always check the network!

Understanding deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, what applies to the deductible? Do I have to pay the deductible before the plan pays? This differs by each plan, Copays vs. coinsurance if you do not understand ask, become informed about what you are buying and how it works.

**Individual/Family Health Insurance** – Being young and healthy does not mean you do not need health insurance. Do you know anyone that knew when they were going to be diagnosed with cancer, or when they were going to have a heart attack or even a serious accident? I do not, it happens, and insurance is there to help you get the care you need and limit your financial exposure. What are your insurance options, and what is best for you? Employer Group Coverage, Individual Medically Underwritten Health Insurance, Medicaid, or the Government Market Place Guaranteed Issue Health Insurance. There is a lot to know about the differences, as well as the cost. The monthly premium should not be your only consideration. *You do not know what you do not know so ask the experts, which do know about all of plans and can help educate and guide you thru the enrollment process. When it comes to medically underwritten plans most of them you can enroll all year long, but you can also be denied based on medical underwriting.*

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

*To learn more about your options call to schedule an appointment contact: Logical Insurance Solutions for all your insurance needs, we I am licensed in 30 states.*

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*We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.*



# Loss of Balance is Not a Normal Part of Aging

By Dale Segal, MD

**T**here is a misconception that loss of balance is a normal part of aging. This is not true. While decreased strength and agility occurs with physiologic aging, progressive loss of balance can be a sign of a serious underlying health problem.

Loss of balance or gait instability is one of the most common symptoms of cervical myelopathy. Cervical myelopathy refers to damage to the spinal cord that is caused by neural compression or spinal stenosis. Cervical myelopathy is most commonly caused by age-related degenerative changes to the cushioning discs and supporting ligaments between the bones (i.e., vertebrae) of the cervical spine. These degenerative changes (alternatively referred to as "degenerative disc disease," "spondylosis," or "arthritis") can create bulging discs, bone spurs, ligament thickening, and even unstable motion between the vertebrae, all of which may then lead to a narrowing of the space available for the spinal cord, otherwise known as "cervical stenosis." Myelopathy occurs when the stenosis is significant enough to compromise normal spinal cord function.

Patients with cervical myelopathy commonly complain of unsteadiness when walking. Other common complaints are loss of hand dexterity; for example, difficulty buttoning shirts or opening jars and bottles. Cervical myelopathy is a common and frequently underdiagnosed medical condition which tends to occur in adults over 60 years of age. Cervical myelopathy can be difficult to diagnose because it is not always associated with neck and



arm pain. In addition, early, milder stages of myelopathy can present with subtle loss of function that may mistakenly be attributed to "getting older," when in fact it is due to spinal cord compression and resulting nerve damage.

While balance loss is one of the most common symptoms of cervical myelopathy, not all balance loss is caused by cervical myelopathy. Deconditioning and natural physiologic aging can result in loss of flexibility and agility. Having a fitness routine that includes core muscle strengthening is paramount to maintaining balance and healthy posture. Cardiovascular training and yoga are excellent for promoting balance health and well-being.

If loss of balance develops suddenly, is progressively worsening or is associated with loss of hand dexterity, neck pain, arm pain or hand numbness then it is important to seek evaluation from a spine specialist. An MRI will be ordered to ensure that there is no evidence of cervical myelopathy. If left untreated cervical myelopathy can cause permanent impairment. However, if cervical myelopathy is identified and treated in a timely manner, it can result in significant improvement in quality of life.



## Dale Segal, MD

Dr. Segal is a fellowship-trained spine surgeon specializing in minimally invasive and complex spine surgery. He completed a spine fellowship at Harvard University- Massachusetts General

Hospital and Brigham & Women's Hospital. He grew up in New York and graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Albany with a degree in biochemistry and molecular biology. He was awarded the John T. MacDonald scholarship to attend Florida International University where he obtained his medical degree and graduated with Alpha Omega Alpha honors. He completed his residency at Emory University and served as chief resident at the Emory Orthopedics and Spine Hospital. As a dedicated spine surgeon, he devotes his practice to the diagnosis and treatment of spinal disorders. His interests include minimally invasive, motion sparing techniques, degenerative diseases, navigation and robotics, deformities, fractures, and complex revisions. He has authored numerous peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters and presented at national and international conferences. He is a member of several spine and orthopedic societies including NASS, AAOS, AOA. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family, watersports, scuba diving, and hiking.

*Call to schedule your appointment today.*

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# Educational Opportunity: Certified Dementia Practitioner Class

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA



Whether it's done from a place of love and devotion, or from necessity because it's your job, caring for those with Alzheimer's takes a tremendous amount of patience, acceptance, and understanding. Eventually, every caregiver, paid or unpaid, learns the truth of the statement, "All behavior is communication." When someone with dementia is repeating the same story, again, for the third time or accusing you of stealing their money, what they are really trying to communicate is their world no longer makes sense and they need help.

Maybe they've forgotten how to go to use the toilet or, maybe they don't want to listen to your medical opinions, or maybe they are happier than they've ever been, but can't take their own medication anymore. In these kinds of situations, the caregiver's world doesn't make sense either. A challenging part about being a caregiver, is adjusting our **OWN** beliefs, behaviors, and expectations as the care provider. The best way to do that is to learn new knowledge and new skills.

How do you learn to not respond with anger or defensiveness when you're accused of hiding their favorite socks? What do you say instead of, "Remember, I told you...." when you've told them 5 times already and they don't remember?

If you're ready to learn new ways of caring for your loved one with dementia and yourself, or better understand anyone with dementia that you come into contact with at your job, register now to attend the Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar on Jan 27, 2023 from 9 am to 5 pm. This class will be held via Zoom and is an interactive course for those who care for and work with people diagnosed with dementia. Your instructor, Cynthia Perthuis, is a licensed Certified Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Trainer with years of experience working with families and providers to teach them the art of caring for those with these diagnoses. She has also spent a great deal of time around her father, grandmother and great-grandmother who all suffered from dementia as they aged.

## Topics covered will include:

- Diagnosis
- Prognosis
- Treatment
- Repetitive Behavior
- Communication
- Feelings
- Depression
- Paranoia
- Hallucinations
- Wandering
- Hoarding
- Aggressive Behaviors
- Personal Care
- Pain
- Nutrition
- Catastrophic Reactions
- Activities
- Environment
- Spiritual Care
- Intimacy & Sexuality
- Staff & Family Support
- Diversity & Cultural Competence
- End of Life

After this class, for those that want to, you are invited to take the path to certification as a Certified Dementia Practitioner through the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. This is an excellent opportunity for healthcare workers, front-line staff, and professionals who work with older adults to gain valuable education and skills and help your company stand out. The Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar is the required seminar for those pursuing CDP certification through the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. This course qualifies for 7 CEUs.

**To register for the class or request more information, please visit our website at:**

**[www.seniorcare-nyfl.com/alzheimers-disease-and-dementia-care-seminar.html](http://www.seniorcare-nyfl.com/alzheimers-disease-and-dementia-care-seminar.html)**

Everyone at Senior Care Authority has been or currently is, a caregiver to a family member. The entire team has also been through the Certified Dementia Practitioner seminar. We are ready to assist you if you need expert advice on navigating the care choices your loved one deserves.

Sometimes families need help with navigating challenging transitions and a complex healthcare system. This can include facilitating essential conversations between family members, locating an assisted living community or skilled nursing facility, home care agency or caregiver selection, long-distance caregiving, finding the right resources and learning how to access them, or regular visits to your loved one, providing you with "peace of mind" when you are unable to visit.

Having someone on your care team, outside the family's emotional landscape, can be a lifesaver. Imagine a go-to person you can turn to who will do the research, talk to providers, organize paperwork, or find those "needle in a haystack" resources. Senior Care Authority Advisors is ready to help. You and your Advisor can get to know each other and decide if working together is an excellent fit to meet your needs.

**For a free consultation, contact Senior Care Authority at 239-330-2133 or visit the website at [www.scanyfl.com](http://www.scanyfl.com).**



Senior Living and Care Solutions



# Improve Your Workout with Omega-3 Fish Oil

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

Is there a relationship between taking fish oil and exercise performance?

That was our hypothesis when we started giving Well-pride® fish oil to Thoroughbred racehorses nearly two decades ago. The theory held water. Trainers reported that their horses had better endurance and recovered faster after racing.

Today, we know a lot more about how omega-3 fatty acids support the body during exercise (both in animals and people). The growing body of research presents a compelling case for why workout junkies should consider adding omega-3s to their exercise program.

## Improved Muscle Mass

Omega-3 fish oil isn't going to land you on any doping drug list, yet there are many reasons why getting an effective daily dose could significantly improve your workout. One of the most surprising benefits is the omega-3 fatty acids' impact on muscle mass and strength:

- A 2012 study from Brazil revealed that women in their 60s experienced greater improvements in muscle strength when they consumed 2000 mg of EPA/DHA and exercised each day. This was compared to women who completed the training without omega-3 supplements.
- A 2015 double-blind study focused on 60 to 85-year-olds found that consuming 3360 mg of EPA/DHA for 6 months increased muscle mass and strength, independent of exercise.

While the above studies focused on older adults, younger individuals may experience similar benefits, too.

One study conducted on healthy adults (aged 25-45) found that supplementing with 4000 mg of EPA/DHA increased muscle protein synthesis. Another study on the same age group discovered that – when they took 3000 mg of EPA/DHA every day – study participants improved the number of bicep curls they could perform.

## Reduced Muscle Soreness

Studies have also looked at how omega-3s can impact muscle soreness after exercising, which is known as Delayed Onset of Muscle Soreness (DOMS). Omega-3s have anti-inflammatory benefits and may reduce the risk of muscle cell injury by improving cell flexibility and elasticity.

A fair amount of research has been done on this topic, so we have picked a few favorites:

- A 2014 study found that healthy college students with higher omega-3 levels had a decreased incidence of DOMS compared to students with lower omega-3 levels.
- A 2018 study from New Zealand found that when professional rugby players took 1500 mg of omega-3s, they experienced less muscle soreness and fatigue compared to when they took a protein-based placebo.
- A 2018 study from researchers at Harvard Medical School explored how omega-3s impacted people with coronary artery disease. After one year, patients who received 3360 mg of EPA/DHA daily had better physical function, fewer joint replacements, less pain and stiffness, and exercised more per week compared to the control group.

## What to Consider Before Taking Omega-3s

Before your rush out to buy fish oil capsules, remember that the benefits of omega-3s depend on dose and quality.

In one review, researchers found that supplements providing only EPA or only DHA did not reduce several markers for DOMS. This is likely because these fatty acids have a synergistic effect in the cells and work together to produce the best results. So it is important to make sure you are getting a full range of omega-3s, rather than just one fatty acid.

Secondly, getting an optimal omega-3 dose matters. In the studies referenced above, the researchers used between 1500 mg to 4000 mg of EPA/DHA daily to achieve positive effects. Unfortunately, many fish oil capsules contain only 300 mg of EPA/DHA. Depending on the brand and concentration, this means that you would have to swallow between 5 – 13 capsules daily to get an effective dose.

Alternatively, fresh, full-spectrum liquid fish oils, like Omega Cure®, can make it easier to get a higher omega-3 dose without having to swallow umpteen capsules. Just remember to read the nutrition facts to ensure you get enough EPA/DHA per serving.

*This article was abbreviated from a longer version published on omega3innovations.com. For the full text and references, visit:*

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/improve-your-workout-with-omega3-fish-oil/>

## About Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

Born and raised in the United States, Dr. Chalmers graduated from Brown University and completed her medical training at the University of Oslo in Norway. Dr. Chalmers practiced emergency, family, and preventive medicine in Norway for many years. Today, she serves as president of Omega3 Innovations.

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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.



# New Year's Resolution for Your Pet

**M**any Americans have set New Year's resolutions regarding their weight. After the holidays, many of us find ourselves with a few extra pounds and understand the need to get to or maintain a healthy weight. Obesity is a national epidemic and we are seeing the toll it is taking on society in health care costs and other ways. But did you know that obesity is also affecting our pets?

Recent statistics show that as many as 56% of dogs and 60% of cats in the US are overweight or obese.<sup>1</sup> Dogs are considered overweight when they weigh 10-30% above their ideal body weight. Anything above 30% is considered obese. Cats also follow a similar standard. Sadly, this is a health crisis for our beloved pets, but it is a problem that is all too often overlooked.

Just like us, an overweight dog or cat may have problems with many diseases and health concerns such as:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoarthritis
- High blood pressure
- Skin disease
- Thyroid problems
- Seizures
- Heart and respiratory disease
- Kidney disease
- Certain types of cancer
- Decreased life expectancy (up to 2.5 years)

So, how do we help our beloved pet lose weight? What can we do to ensure that Fido or Fifi lives a long and healthy life? Here are some tips to get the new year off to a better start for your pet.

## Visit Your Vet

First, have your pet evaluated by your veterinarian and routine bloodwork performed to rule out systemic disease. Many times, weight gain can be caused by systemic illnesses such as hypothyroid.

## Measure Meals

Have your veterinarian establish the ideal body weight that your pet should be at and make that your pet's goal weight. Once the ideal body weight has been established, feed your pet the recommended amount according to his ideal body weight to help your obese dog shed the extra pounds.

## Establish a Feeding Schedule

Many obese dogs graze on food all day that is left out for them. With overweight pets, measure out the exact amount of food they should be getting, and give it to your pet at scheduled times throughout the day.

## Cut Down on Treats

This is a tough one, but people do not realize how many calories treats can contribute to their pet's diet. Just cutting out the treats alone, or switching to low-fat treats, can result in weight loss for your pet.

## Exercise, Exercise, Exercise!

Just like us, pets need to exercise to lose weight – especially overweight dogs. Dog toys can help encourage exercise for your obese dog. Taking walks with them is also good for both your pet and for you!

## Consider Switching Diets

Finally, if your pet is not responding to decreasing the treats, or the proper amount of food and exercise, please speak with your veterinarian regarding a low-fat diet. There are a number of pet foods on the market that can help your pet get the right nutrients while cutting calories at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

## How can the right diet help your pet's overall health?

At Animal Oasis Veterinary Hospital, we can help you make the right dietary changes for your pet so that they can stay on track living their happy and healthy lives. A healthy diet and good nutrition can reduce or even eliminate the following problems:

- Pet allergies
- Itching and scratching
- Dull coat
- Arthritis
- Joint and hip problems
- Intestinal disorders

Skin and coat supplements are a great way to keep your pet looking and feeling their best. Arthritis and joint supplements can be helpful for many pets as they age.

1. Understanding obesity and weight loss in dogs and cats, A Growing Problem – Obesity and Weight Loss in Dogs and Cats | Morris Animal Foundation. Available at: <https://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/article/weight-loss-in-cats-and-dogs>.

2. Editorial, C. (2021) Your pet's New Year's resolution weight loss plan, BeChewy, Chewy. Available at: [https://be.chewy.com/your-pets-new-years-resolution-weight-loss-plan/?utm\\_id=401549963](https://be.chewy.com/your-pets-new-years-resolution-weight-loss-plan/?utm_id=401549963).

Animal Oasis Veterinary Hospital in Naples offers the most up to date and progressive veterinary services for your pets. Ranging from laser surgery, ultrasound, dental X-rays, radiology, full pharmacy, and in house diagnostics, Animal Oasis Veterinary Hospital provides your pets with the necessary options for treatment.

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# A New Way to Treat Treatment-Resistant Depression

A New and Highly-Effective Therapy Designed to Help Those With Depressive Disorders, Anxiety, and PTSD

**F**or those who struggle with Treatment-Resistant Depression (TRD), depressive disorders, PTSD, or clinical anxiety, ketamine therapy is a rapid and robust modality having antidepressant effects. Standard treatments for these mental health disorders do not always work, and not only do they take a long time for patients to feel its effects (up to 2 months), but they also do not stay in the system if the medication is not taken regularly. Ketamine, however, is unique in that it enables and promotes connectors in the brain to foster and regrow. Through repairing the connections in the brain responsible for depression, ketamine promotes regrowth and repair of these connections. It is this reaction that is responsible for the efficacy of ketamine, not the presence of the drug in the body as other traditional forms of medications work.

Those with depressive disorders, everyday tasks can be unbearable, affecting their overall quality of life. If the disorder is not managed at a core level, the individual will suffer the anguish that emotional and often physical symptoms can have. The introduction of ketamine in conjunction with behavioral therapy can help patients manage their condition.

## What is Ketamine Therapy and What is it Used to Treat

Ketamine therapy is an evidence-based modality prescribed and recommended to those with Treatment-Resistant Depression (TRD), treatment and management of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and/or underlying mental disorders. Ketamine-assisted treatment has proven to be highly effective in mitigating the side effects and symptoms of depressive disorders and comorbidities, whereas other pharmacological and first-line treatment methods have failed, or the patient has not responded well to the treatment.

*WhiteSands Recovery & Wellness is now offering ketamine therapy at their outpatient offices for those who qualify and meet the criteria.*

Offering a full continuum of care and customized treatment options means introducing the latest therapies to patients who struggle with underlying disorders. WhiteSands' inpatient programs provide the most comprehensive, all-inclusive treatment at every level of care. Being at the forefront of the newest and most advanced mental health and substance abuse treatment methods, WhiteSands is

proud to introduce ketamine therapy to help patients heal from depressive disorders like Treatment-Resistant Depression.

## How Ketamine is Offered and Administered

WhiteSands Recovery & Wellness administers Ketamine therapy in two ways:

- IV Infusion Therapy
- Nasal spray - SPRAVATO® (esketamine)

Patients considering ketamine therapy are first seen and assessed by a board-certified Psychiatrist and Registered Nurse where they will complete a blood test and urinary analysis (UA). Patients must pass all requirements of these tests before beginning ketamine therapy. A ketamine therapy plan is arranged for each patient so they are aware of where and when their next session is.

Ketamine therapy is administered seven times over four weeks. The procedure, which takes approximately 45 minutes, is completed in a comfortable and quiet room at a WhiteSands outpatient office where patients are administered their dose in a controlled environment. Once the process is complete, they are monitored for the proceeding hour by a Registered Nurse to ensure they are not experiencing any adverse reactions or side effects. Since patients cannot drive once they have completed their therapy session, we arrange a ride home for them.

## Efficacy of Ketamine Therapy in Treatment of Depressive Disorders

Or

## How Effective is Ketamine Therapy?

With the introduction of Ketamine for a range of depressive disorders, clinical trials and research indicate that 70-80% of patients who undergo the therapy no longer experience the negative emotions, moods, and symptoms of the depressive disorder they once did.

Ketamine therapy is becoming widely considered a treatment option for TRD for its rapid action and lasting effects. After just a single ketamine therapy session, patients reported a significant improvement in their anxiety and depressive symptoms.

## Ketamine has shown to:

- Mitigate chronic pain
- Alleviate depression
- Reduce suicidal ideation
- Dramatically lessen the symptoms of depression

With the COVID-19 pandemic taking a toll on mental health and exacerbating depressive disorders, the need for effective and safe therapy is crucial now more than ever. To maximize patient success in managing depressive disorders, it's important that patients are not provided with a 'band-aid' method, but with safe, non-dependency therapies. Ketamine therapy can provide that.

## Pricing

Ketamine IV therapy can be funded on an out-of-pocket, self-pay basis and is not covered by health insurance. WhiteSands Recovery & Wellness offers in-house payment plans, as well as third-party financing options.

SPRAVATO® is covered by major insurance providers. We accept all major medical insurance providers. SPRAVATO® can also be paid out-of-pocket for those who do not have health insurance.

Get in touch with our admissions team to discuss your financial needs.

## Location

Ketamine-assisted treatment is offered at several WhiteSands Treatment outpatient locations. The facility has 17 outpatient locations throughout Florida, having on-site licensed medical staff and registered nurses who facilitate and monitor all ketamine therapy sessions.



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# Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Philippians 4:11-13

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

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

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

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

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

If you find yourself making statements like this:



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

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

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



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



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The screenshot shows the homepage of the Health & Wellness Magazine website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Charlotte Edition, Collier Edition, Lee Edition, Advertise with Us, H&W Archives, and Contact Us. The main content area features a large article titled "Skincancer" with a photo of a woman wearing a sun hat. Below this, there's a section for "Read Our Flip Book Version" showing three magazine covers. To the right, there's a "Sign Up For Our Newsletter" form with fields for Name and Email. Further down, there's a "Featured Article" section titled "The Other Side of Parkinson's Disease" with a photo of an elderly couple.





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