### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S

# April 2023 MAGAZINE Lee Edition - Monthly

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# APRIL IS DISTRACTED DRIVER AWARENESS MONTH

LET'S PUT DOWN THE PHONE, AVOID MULTITASKING, AND KEEP OUR FOCUS ON THE ROAD, TOGETHER WE CAN CREATE SAFER ROADS THAT LEAD US STRAIGHT TO HEALTH

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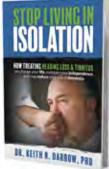
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# CONTENTS APRIL 2023

- 6 April is Distracted Driver Awareness Month
- 7 Confidence Check Garramone Plastic Surgery's All-In-One Mommy Makeover
- 8 Hearing and Memory Loss Are Connected
- 9 Understanding Head and Neck Cancers
- 10 Senior Living That Keeps Couples with Varying Needs Together
- 11 Allergy Season is Here: Don't Suffer Without Treatment
- 12 Peyronie's Disease
- 13 Stay On Your Feet This Summer
- 14 Are Your Legs Ready for Spring?
- 15 Innovative Treatment Improves Quality of Life
- 16 2023 SWFL Parkinson's Disease Spring Symposium: WELLNESS
- 17 Is It Possible To Overdose On THC?
- 18 Finish What You Started With The Wheel

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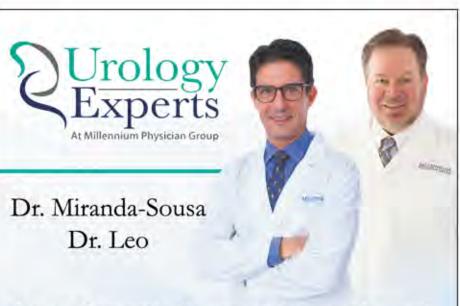
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- 19 April Is Rosacea Awareness Month
- 20 The Benefits of Real Intravenous (IV) Nutrient Therapy
- 24 The Relationship Between Hormones and Mental Health
- 26 Stress Management
- 28 Shoulder Pain & Injuries Can Be Healed Without Surgery
- 32 New Technology to Resolve Symptoms From Neuropathy And Chronic Joint Pain
- 34 A Personalized Approach to Healthcare During a Pandemic
- 36 Fort Myers Just Got Cooler: Experience The Benefits of Cryotherapy
- 37 In Office Hysteroscopy
- 38 Health Services Brought to You Premier Mobile Health Services
- 39 Osteoporosis Prevention Through Holistic Approaches
- 40 Don't Be An April Fool and Get Caught in the Guardianship Process
- 41 A Coping and Life Skills Summer Camp for Teens
- 42 Living With Rheumatoid Arthritis
- 43 The Promising Role of CBD in Treating Autism
- 44 Reflections of an Adult Child
- 45 Arthritic Knee Pain: Do You Really Need Surgery?
- 46 A New Way to Treat Treatment-Resistant Depression
- 47 C5 Nerve Masquerading as Shoulder Pain
- 48 Health Insurance Important Dates!
- 49 Evidence of Growing Confidence in the Naples Real Estate Market
- 50 Spiritual Wellness: When You Are At Your Wits End



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# **April is Distracted Driver Awareness Month**



Let's put down the phone, avoid multitasking, and keep our focus on the road, together we can create safer roads that lead us Straight To Health

By Dr. Danielle Zappile



pril is Distracted Driver Awareness Month, which means it's time to put down your phone, avoid multitasking, and keep your focus on the road. As a chiropractor, I have seen firsthand the impact that auto accidents can have on the musculoskeletal system. Whiplash and traumatic brain injuries are common injuries resulting from distracted driving, and they're no laughing matter. So, let's have some fun and learn how we can avoid these injuries by staying focused while driving.

First, let's talk about the dangers of distracted driving. With the prevalence of smartphones and other mobile devices, it's easier than ever to get distracted while driving. Texting, checking emails, and scrolling through social media can take your eyes and mind off the road, putting you and other motorists in danger.

The consequences of distracted driving can be severe, ranging from minor sprains and strains to life-threatening injuries such as spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, and even paralysis. But let's not get too serious yet; let's talk about some simple ways to avoid these injuries. For starters, put down your phone. Yes, we know it's hard to resist the urge to check your notifications, but your safety is more important. Plus, do you really need to know what your ex from 10 years ago is up to right now? No, you don't.

Next, avoid multitasking while driving. Eating a burger and fries, putting on makeup, and even flossing (yes, people do this) are all distractions that can take your focus off the road. And let's be honest, who wants to see someone flossing while driving? No one.

Another way to avoid distractions is to keep your attention focused on the road. If you're prone to daydreaming, try singing along to the radio or even talking to yourself (in your head, of course). Just don't start a heated argument with yourself; that's a distraction in itself.

Now, let's talk about what to do if you've been involved in an accident caused by a distracted driver. As a chiropractor, I can tell you that seeking medical attention as soon as possible is crucial. Even if you feel fine, you may have sustained injuries that can cause chronic pain and other long-term complications.





Chiropractic care is a safe and effective treatment option that can help reduce pain and inflammation, improve range of motion, and promote healing after an accident. If you've been injured in an auto accident, a chiropractor can conduct a thorough evaluation to assess any injuries you may have sustained and develop a personalized treatment plan that's tailored to your specific needs and goals.

But let's not forget that prevention is the best medicine. By staying focused while driving, we can reduce the number of accidents caused by distracted driving and create safer roads for everyone. Plus, it'll give you a chance to practice your singing skills and have some fun on your daily commute.

In conclusion, April is Distracted Driver Awareness Month, and it's time to put down your phone, avoid multitasking, and keep your focus on the road. Distracted driving can lead to serious injuries, but by following these simple tips, you can stay safe and avoid accidents. And if you've been injured in an auto accident, seek medical attention promptly, and consider chiropractic care to alleviate pain and promote healing. So, let's stay focused, sing along to the radio, and make the roads a safer place for everyone. Together we can create safer roads that lead us Straight To Health.

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# **CONFIDENCE CHECK**

Garramone Plastic Surgery's all-in-one Mommy Makeover reunites women with their pre-baby selves by addressing multiple post-pregnancy body concerns.

RALPH R. GARRAMONE, MD, FACS

woman's body image can decline with loss of breast volume, which can result in sagging, irregularly shaped, and droopy breasts. After pregnancy, localized abdominal stretching, excess skin, fatty deposits, and stretch marks may be the hallmarks of pregnancy, but they aren't irreversible." says Ralph Garramone, M.D., a board-certified cosmetic and plastic surgeon and founder of Garramone Plastic Surgery, where he's been helping women in the Fort Myers area get back to their pre-baby selves since 2002.



"While there's no denying the joy of pregnancy, child-birth, and nursing, the resulting physical changes can take a toll on a woman's body and psyche, which can result in decreased self-esteem. Every woman can have excellent body confidence," says Dr. Garramone.

In addition to offering a cache of face, breast, and body procedures, as well as skincare treatments with his team of award-winning, medically trained Aestheticians, the prac-tice developed the Mommy Makeover for women of all ages who want to experience a single recovery instead of multiple downtimes from individual surgeries.

Patients coming in for this procedure, Dr. Garramone notes, usually have excess skin, stretch marks, and underly-ing fascia fatigue (the tough, muscular layer unresponsive to exercise). To address these issues, the Mommy Makeover may involve abdominoplasty, or a tummy tuck, and an array of breast surgeries to address individual concerns with attention to post-pregnancy problem zones simultaneously.

"We aim to give each patient the best results by listening to what bothers them most," says Dr. Garramone.

### GREAT EXPECTATIONS

"Plastic surgery is a life-changing, personal experience," Dr. Garramone says, "and we take a detail-oriented approach to procedural explanations while providing realistic post-surgical expectations."

As for the procedure at the practice's state-of-the-art, accredited surgical facility, patients should plan on 2.5 to 4.5 hours for surgery with additional time spent in recovery.

According to Dr. Garramone, recovery isn't what it used to be 20 years ago. Dr. Garramone uses a long-lasting nerve blocker to aid in patients' discomfort; patients can expect to rest for approximately 10 to 14 days before returning to normal daily life, including work or athome activities. Most patients are back to 90% of their normal daily activities within a month.

Having performed thousands of surgeries for adults and children throughout his career, Dr. Garramone approaches every case with familiar ease. Forever humble, he's received numerous accolades, contributes to many medical publica-tions, and enjoys the creative aspect of his work. He feels it is an honor to use his skills to change lives for the better.

"It's an exciting field to work in because there's always some wonderful new technology on the horizon," he says.

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# **HEARING AND MEMORY LOSS ARE CONNECTED**

By John Nobile - HAS (Hearing Aid Specialist), BC-HIS, ACA



### Hearing Loss Affects the Brain

Hearing loss doesn't just mean an older adult needs to turn up the TV. It's been linked to a range of health problems, including dementia. The latest aging research not only shows the two are connected but also leads scientists to believe that hearing loss may cause dementia. If you have hearing loss, you have a greater chance of developing dementia, according to a 2020 Lancet commission report that lists hearing loss as one of the top risk factors for dementia.

### **Brain Strain and Social Isolation**

Hearing loss can make the brain work harder, forcing it to strain to hear and fill in the gaps. That comes at the expense of other thinking and memory systems. Another possibility is hearing loss causes the aging brain to shrink more quickly. A third possibility is that hearing loss makes people less socially engaged, which is hugely essential to remain intellectually stimulated. If you can't hear very well, you may not go out as much, so the brain is less engaged and active.

### **Quantifying Hearing Loss's Impact**

Hearing loss is estimated to account for 8% of dementia cases. This means that hearing loss may be responsible for 800,000 of the nearly ten million new cases of dementia diagnosed each year. Studies from the National Institute of Health show an association between hearing impairment and dementia while supporting the hypothesis that hearing impairment contributes to cognitive dysfunction in older adults.

### **Reducing the Risk of Dementia**

Johns Hopkins is leading a large National Institute on Aging study to see if hearing aids can safeguard seniors' mental processes. The study has multiple locations and has recruited nearly 1,000 people ages 70–84 with hearing loss. One group is provided hearing aids, while another group receives aging education. By early 2023, the study should provide definitive results on whether treating hearing loss reduces cognitive decline risk. In essence, we'll know whether the use of hearing aids can potentially reduce brain aging and the risk of dementia.

### **Other Effects on Health**

Hearing loss has long-term effects on health. It's believed to increase the risk for falls and depression. It also leads to higher health care costs:

People with hearing loss have, over ten years, a 47% increased hospitalization rate. Hearing loss is associated with an increased risk of institutionalization, an increased risk for dementia, and increased health care costs overall for all ages.

### In Summary

Individuals with hearing loss are at an increased risk for developing cognitive decline and dementia. New research finds that treating hearing loss is the single most modifiable risk factor for reducing the risk of dementia. While your risk increases with the degree of hearing loss, it is essential to note that even mild hearing loss can increase your risk by as much as 200%! If you or a loved one struggles to hear clearly, we can help reduce your risk of dementia in Cape Coral and Fort Myers, FL., with our 5-star-rated hearing care.

John Nobile, HAS, BC-HIS, ACA is a licensed hearing aid specialist and an ACA-certified audioprosthologist who is also board-certified in hearing instrument sciences. With over 55 years of experience, he has transformed thousands of lives in Cape Coral



and Fort Myers, FL, by providing his patients with the gift of sound. He is also a former veteran committed to providing all veterans with free services.

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# **UNDERSTANDING HEAD AND NECK CANCERS**

By Dr. Alan Brown

hen patients receive a cancer diagnosis, they typically ask how it developed. Pinpointing a cause can be difficult.

Risk factors for head and neck cancer can often be attributed to use of tobacco products and alcohol, viral infections, genetics or exposure to occupational hazards like sawdust, asbestos or radiation, among other factors.

April is Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Month, and the board-certified radiation oncologists at Advocate Radiation Oncology join their colleagues nationwide in raising awareness about the risks, symptoms and treatment options for head and neck cancer, which accounts for nearly 4% of all cancers in the U.S.

Advocate's world-class physicians are experienced in treating the gamut of head and neck cancers, as well as breast, prostate, lung, brain, rectal, liver, bone, cervical and other types of cancers.

### Brain Cancer vs. Head and Neck Cancer

Brain tumors can grow quickly, have a multitude of severe symptoms and disrupt the way your body functions, so it's understandable that a brain cancer diagnosis is worrisome. However, brain cancer is different than head and neck cancer, a broad term describing a group of cancers affecting the throat and sinuses. According to the American Cancer Society, there are five primary types of head and neck cancers:

- Laryngeal and Hypopharyngeal Cancer: voice box and lower throat
- Oral Cavity and Oropharyngeal Cancer: mouth and middle throat
- Nasopharyngeal Cancer: upper throat behind nose
- Nasal Cavity and Paranasal Sinus Cancer: nose and openings behind nose
- Salivary Gland Cancer: glands that make saliva



The variety of head and neck cancers also means symptoms can vary. Common signs and symptoms include lumps, hoarseness, sores, pain swallowing, nasal congestion or difficulty breathing, numbness, ear pain, ear infections, loosening of teeth, weight loss and loss of hearing, taste or smell.

Survival rates vary by cancer type and stage, but can be high if detected and treated early.

### **Treatment Options**

Radiation therapy is a popular treatment option that uses targeted doses of radiation to kill cancer cells by damaging the genetic material inside them. This treatment prevents cancer cells from growing and spreading.

Radiation oncologists work collaboratively with otolaryngologists, medical oncologists, surgeons and other medical professionals to develop a personalized treatment plan based on an individual's medical history, the cancer's present state and other factors.



### www.AdvocateRO.com

PORT CHARLOTTE OFFICE 3080 Harbor Blvd. Port Charlotte, FL 33952 (941) 883-2199 NAPLES OFFICE 1775 Davis Blvd. Naples, FL 34102 (239) 372-2838

CAPE CORAL OFFICE 909 Del Prado Blvd. S Cape Coral, FL 33990 (239) 217-8070 BONITA SPRINGS OFFICE 25243 Elementary Way Bonita Springs, FL 34135 (239) 317-2772 FORT MYERS OFFICE 15681 New Hampshire Ct. Fort Myers, FL 33908 (239) 437-1977 Radiation therapy can be used as the sole treatment option or in combination with chemotherapy treatments and surgery.

Because head and neck cancers affect our critical senses – hearing, taste, smell and sight – there is no room for error during treatments. Advocate has invested in the most innovative, precise cancerfighting equipment on the market today, including Varian's Halcyon, TrueBeam and Identify machines that measure precision within a millimeter. Such precise treatments minimize damage to surrounding tissue, and thus lessen potential side effects of radiation while reducing treatment times.

We know our bodies best. If you suspect something is wrong or have a concern, the first step is immediately contacting your primary care physician. From there, Advocate will partner with you and your physician to develop a comprehensive plan to defeat cancer.



### About the Author

Dr. Alan Brown is a board-certified radiation oncologist at Advocate Radiation Oncology. For more information, please visit AdvocateRO.com.

Spanish-fluent doctors and care staff

# Senior Living That Keeps Couples with Varying Needs Together

hether it's time for you or a loved one to retire or you are simply planning for the future, there's one option that stands out among the rest – a senior living community like The Terraces at Bonita Springs.

If you're looking for a senior living option that helps you remain with your loved one in sickness and in health, with opportunities to make the most of each day together, this might just be the perfect choice for you. Learn more about why a move could be right for you and how we can help keep you close to your spouse or significant other.

## Signs that moving to a senior living community is right for you

Are you and your loved one unsure whether a senior living community is the right move for you? At first, many question this; however, once they make the move, they tend to wish they'd done so sooner rather than later on.

Moving early can come with a lot of perks and benefits, so evaluating whether a move is right for you is key. Here are some of the top signs that moving could be the correct decision.

- You're both in good health but would prefer a plan for the future
- Your family members would like the peace of mind knowing care is available if needed
- You and your loved one's care needs are beginning to differ
- Socialization is beginning to decline, and isolation is occurring
- Poor eating habits are starting
- You're tired of caring for your home

## Why couples benefit from moving to a senior living community

How can couples benefit from moving to a senior living community like The Terraces? Some of the top perks you could enjoy include:

- A carefree, maintenance-free lifestyle
- More time to spend together
- Time to pursue your hobbies and interests as a couple
- Opportunities to grow your circle of friends

- Spouse or significant other no longer needs to be a primary caregiver
- Couple can remain together, improving physical and mental health

## How The Terraces keeps couples with different needs together

The Terraces not only offers the enriching, engaging lifestyle you've planned for in retirement, but our community also allows you the unique opportunity to remain with your spouse, no matter what the future may hold. Learn more about what The Terraces provides couples, below.

### Life-Enriching Independent Living

Couples thrive in independent living. With a range of programs and activities; wellness plans; cultural, social, educational and recreational events; and more, there are plenty of things for couples to do each day.

Even better, they have the assurance of being able to transition to higher levels of care if or when they're needed.

### Dedicated Health Care for Every Need

With a variety of levels of care, all your supportive care needs can be met in one place with a simple transition to Renaissance at The Terraces. This ensures you or your loved one won't need to move to a new community to receive the care that's needed while you remain under one roof, only steps away from your loved one.

Assisted living is here for couples who either have one spouse who needs support with activities of daily living, or both do. Memory support is also available for those who are dealing with cognitive decline.

If a loved one requires long-term care, like skilled nursing, or short-term support, like rehabilitation, we can help with that, too, right on site.

### Floor Plans To Suit Your Needs

Couples at The Terraces enjoy a range of floor plans to meet their preferences. Whether you and your significant other would prefer a one-bedroom residence, or you'd like a two- or three-bedroom residence allowing extra room for grandchildren and family members to stay, we have the right options for you. For couples who have different care needs, you can remain in your residence while your loved one receives care in their own residence only steps away:

Age gracefully with your spouse in Bonita Springs, FL If you are searching for senior living that ensures you and your loved one can continue to live together, with the added benefit of personal care options to meet changing needs now and in the future, you'll find it here.

We offer quality health services and exceptional hospitality under one roof with easy accessibility, so couples can support each other all day, every day, while spending time together.

Visit us to see how we keep the love alive for older adult couples who live in our community, or contact us to learn more about how you and your significant other will thrive at The Terraces.



### Join us for next event on May 10 at 3 p.m. Call for more details!

The Terraces at Bonita Springs 26455 S. Tamiami Trail Bonita Springs, FL 34134

Join us for an immersive experience with The Murder Mystery Company that is filled with excitement, fun, and audience participation!

Space is limited. Valet parking will be available. Please RSVP by Wednesday, 5/3/2023.

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!





Allergic reactions can cause asthma symptoms Allergy season is in full swing! Many people will experience allergies from different sources, such as pollen, dust or even stress.

An allergic response occurs when antibodies mistakenly identify a harmless substance, such as tree pollen, as an invader. Antibodies attach to the allergen to protect your body from the substance. The chemicals released by your immune system can lead to allergy signs and symptoms, such as nasal congestion, runny nose, itchy eyes or skin reactions. This same reaction also affects the lungs and airways for some people, leading to asthma symptoms.

### Allergies and asthma are treated differently

Most treatments are designed to treat either asthma or allergic rhinitis, also known as seasonal allergies. But a few treatments help with both conditions. Some examples of treatment include:

 Leukotriene modifier. This type of medication can ease both seasonal allergies and asthma symptoms. It is a daily pill that helps control immune system chemicals released during an allergic reaction. Montelukast, known as Singulair, is the leukotriene modifier that can treat asthma and seasonal allergies.

 Allergy shots (immunotherapy). Allergy shots can help treat asthma by gradually reducing your immune system response to certain allergy triggers. Immunotherapy involves getting regular injections of a tiny amount of the allergens that trigger your symptoms.

Your immune system builds up a tolerance to the allergens over time, and your allergic reactions diminish. In turn, asthma symptoms decrease as well. This treatment generally requires regular injections over a set amount of time.

 Anti-immunoglobulin E (IgE) therapy. When you have an allergy, your immune system mistakenly identifies a substance as harmful and releases antibodies, known as IgE, against the culprit allergen.

The next time you encounter that allergen, the IgE antibodies sense it and signal your immune system to release a chemical called histamine, and other chemicals, into your bloodstream. The medication Xolair interferes with IgE in the body and helps



prevent the allergic reaction that triggers asthma symptoms. This treatment is typically used for more severe allergic asthma.

You may need other medications to treat allergies or asthma, especially if your symptoms sometimes worsen. However, recognizing and avoiding the substances that trigger your symptoms is an important step you can take.

#### **Risk of allergic asthma**

A family history of allergies is a major risk factor for allergic asthma. Having hay fever or other allergies also increases your risk of getting asthma.

During an asthma attack, the airways become swollen and inflamed. The muscles around the airways contract and the airways produce extra mucus, causing the breathing (bronchial) tubes to narrow.

During an attack, you may cough, wheeze and have trouble breathing. Symptoms of a minor asthma attack get better with prompt home treatment. A severe asthma attack that doesn't improve with home treatment can become a life-threatening emergency.

Recognizing and treating an asthma flare-up early is the key to stopping an asthma attack. Be proactive and follow the treatment plan you created with your doctor. Your treatment plan should include what to do when your asthma starts getting worse, as well as how to deal with an asthma attack in real-time.

### Allergies do not cause all asthma

Though allergic asthma is very common, there are other types of asthma with different kinds of triggers. Exercise, infections, cold air, acid reflux, or stress can provoke some people's asthma. Many people have more than one kind of asthma trigger.

### Getting symptoms under control

Know what triggers your allergy and asthma symptoms and learn how to limit your exposure to them. Work with your doctor to find the best treatment to manage your symptoms, and check in with them regularly.

Because allergy and asthma symptoms can change over time, you may need to adjust your treatment accordingly. Learn the signs that your asthma may be flaring up, and make sure that you know what to do when it does.

#### Allergy shots

Allergy shots are regular injections over a period of time — usually three to five years — to stop or reduce allergy attacks. Allergy shots are a form of treatment called immunotherapy. Each allergy shot contains a small amount of specific substances that trigger your allergic reactions. These are called allergens. Allergy shots contain enough allergens to stimulate your immune system — but not enough to cause a full-blown allergic reaction.

Your doctor steadily increases the dose of allergens in each of the allergy shots. This helps get your body used to the allergens. Your immune system then builds up a tolerance to the allergens, causing your allergy symptoms to slowly diminish.

#### **Contact IntuneHealth**

If you'd like to speak to a trusted healthcare professional about how allergies can affect your life, contact IntuneHealth today! At IntuneHealth, we provide proactive, preventive primary care designed to keep you healthy.

IntuneHealth takes the hassle out of care by giving you direct access to your PCP, a personal care team coordinating all aspects of your wellness, and an all-in-one app to manage your health. From same-day and virtual visits to in-office and at-home appointments, access to care is conveniently available when and where you need it. Schedule an appointment today to meet your new partner in health.

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# Peyronie's Disease

By Mark Leo, MD

t is hard to spend time watching television or reading a magazine lately, without seeing or hearing about a condition called Peyronie's disease (PD). The strange name actually comes from the surname of the first surgeon of an old French king. Descriptions ranging from "crooked stick" to "bent carrot" are certainly effective in raising interest in this very sensitive and still poorly understood condition.

The development of PD is related to the way a mans penis responds to tissue injury, where trauma to the penis can cause scar-like (plaque) tissue to develop. This can happen in a dramatic way, when in a single event, the penis is forcibly bent or even ruptured. This can result in the sudden onset of pain and swelling. More commonly, less intense episodes of discomfort and microscopic injury occur over time, and ultimately result in the same type of scarring, or plaque formation. These plaques form in the erectile tissues of the penis, and are very different than plaques which form in arteries or blood vessels, like occur with heart disease. In fact, they commonly occur in young, sexually active men.

These penile plaques can initially be painful, but normally the pain subsides over time. They can also cause the penis to change shape. This can be noticed as a curve, like a "bent carrot", or sometimes an indentation, like an "hourglass". Because of these changes, shortening of the penis is a common complaint. In some cases, these changes can make it difficult, or even impossible for a man to have successful intercourse.

It is imperative that any patient who experiences these changes sees or talks to a urologist who specializes in treating this unique condition. Not all urologists are trained in the procedures and techniques associated with treating this condition. In general, the sooner a patient gets treated, the better the outcome in the long run.

### PD occurs in two distinct phases.

1) Acute (active) phase - This is when most of the changes in the penis occur, within the first 12 months after onset. It is when pain typically occurs. Pain with erections can sometimes be intense, and is caused by inflammation in the area of the developing plaques.



2) Chronic (Stable) phase - After 12-18 months of the onset of symptoms, the scarring and curvature, if present, will stabilize, and not become noticeably worse. Unfortunately, most of the time, they will not get better either. In a small percentage of cases, around 15%, the condition does spontaneously resolve. This is the period of time when erections may become more difficult to obtain.

### How is Peyronie's Disease Diagnosed?

Most of the time, the condition is diagnosed by patient history and physical examination. Often, ultrasound testing is performed to evaluate the penile tissues further to evaluate the scarring and presence of plaque tissue. It can be associated with other connective tissue disorders, like Dupuytren's contractures.

How is Peyronie's Disease (PD) Treated? Men with very small plaque, or no plaque, no curvature, no pain, and no problems obtaining erections may not require any treatment at all. If the condition involves any of the above, there are treatment

### **Oral Medications**

options.

Despite being prescribed for years, there has never been any proven benefit to using any oral medications for PD. In the past these have included Vitamin-E, Potaba, anti-oxidants, L-carnitine, pentoxifylline, and Co-Q-10.

### Penile Traction Therapy

The use of penile straightening devices has evolved over the past few years, and numerous studies have shown that the regular use of these straighteners on a daily basis can be very effective and when used correctly, can improve curvature, pain, and erectile quality. They offer an inexpensive, non-invasive method for treatment.

### **Penile Injections**

Injecting a medication directly into the plaque tissue of PD offers a way of breaking down the scar tissue, and ultimately results in softening of the plaque and straightening of the penis. The currently available medication known as Xiaflex, or collagenase is the most commonly used agent.

### Surgery

Depending on the degree of curvature, the presence of indentations, and the presence of erectile dysfunction, there are a number of different surgical options available. Doctors will usually wait until symptoms are stable and there has been no worsening of curvature for at least 12 months.

Importantly, patients should know that PD is a common condition that affects many men, and many couples, and that it can be diagnosed and treated very effectively in most cases, with or without surgery.



### Alejandro Miranda-Sousa, MD Mark Leo, MD

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



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# STAY ON YOUR FEET THIS SUMMER

hether you are a runner, a walker, a shopper, a beach goer, or somewhere in between, making sure you are in the right shoe gear is an important part of keeping it moving. This is especially imperative for those of us who have a history of foot and ankle or any lower extremity issues.

A couple of the more basic principles to keep in mind when shopping for shoes would include:

- Always have your feet measured while you are standing with full weight on that foot.
- Try to go shopping towards the end of the day to accommodate for any amount of swelling.
- Bring and wear the socks he will be using with the shoes you are purchasing.
- Make sure the toe box is wide enough for the front of your foot, and that the shoes accommodate an arch support or orthotic if you wear them.

Having an understanding of your foot type is a great place to start when selecting appropriate shoe gear particularly for exercise. Understanding if you are a pronator or supinator, or have a neutral foot type can put you down the right path for selecting the right pair. A great place to start in determining your foot type would be to consult your local podiatrist. You could also consider a simple at-home, at-pool, or at-beach evaluation of your foot prints. If you notice the classic appearance of a footprint you may have a neutral foot type, if you notice there is a break in the imprint along the outside of your foot you may have a supinated foot type, if you notice the area under your arch is filled in then you may have a pronated foot type. If you fall into the supinated category you may benefit from more cushioned shoes to help shock absorption and if you fall in the pronated category you may benefit more from supportive shoes with stability and motion control. If you are in the neutral category, look for a balance between stability and cushion.

It is also important to take into consideration any deformities of the toes. Shoes that have wider toe boxes made with more forgiving materials will be much friendlier to the prominences of bunions and hammertoes.



These rules can be applied to summertime and formal footwear as well. There are plenty of supportive and cushioned sandals on the market that can be particularly helpful for your feet.

### Some specific types of sandals have unique problems associated with them.

- Flats and slides may provide inadequate support, causing arch and heel pain. Look for options with appropriate arch contact for your foot and for soles that you are unable to bend and twist as easily.
- Strappy sandals may cause irritation between the toes allowing for callus and dead skin buildup at the skin to strap interface. Look for materials that are soft and supple.
- Wedges and heels but you at higher risk of instability and subsequent injuries, and pain in the ball of the foot. Try to find options with better traction and a wider and lower wedge or heel then provide a little more stability.

 Peep-toe sandals may cause irritation of the toes especially in the presence of bunions and hammertoes. Try to limit the use of these if you are susceptible to irritation.

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.

### Joe Altepeter, DPM, AACFAS

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# Are Your Legs Ready for Spring?

pider veins are like varicose veins, except for smaller ones. These small red, purple, and blue "threadlike" veins are visible on the skin's surface. They occur on the legs but can also be found on the face. Spider veins vary in size and often look like a spider's web or a tree branch. Spider veins are purely cosmetic issues and pose no threat to a person's health. Aside from an unpleasant appearance, they can also cause various symptoms, such as itching, burning, heaviness, and cramping. Since they are usually not associated with deeper vein issues, ultrasound tests are not required for routine cases.

### Common Risk Factors for Spider Veins

- Heredity family history of varicose veins
- Gender- Women are at a higher risk than men
- Pregnancy- especially during the late-term
- Obesity
- Excessive standing and sitting

### **Diagnosing Spider Veins**

We will conduct an initial consultation to determine whether unsightly veins are spider or varicose. In some cases, spider veins could be see ondary to varicose veins. We will ask you questions during the consultation to help determine your vein issues. Spider veins in the leg, hand, and face are caused by unhealthy valves inside feeder veins, allowing blood to flow backward instead of upwards toward the heart. Some of this backed-up blood can lead to non-functional, "dead-end" veins that appear underneath the skin's surface as spider veins.

### **Treatment options for Spider Veins**

We treat spider veins with sclerotherapy and cutaneous laser treatment. Unfortunately, this is a lifelong battle for most patients. Even after successful treatment, the body tends to continue producing them. For this reason, most patients need intermittent maintenance treatments to keep their legs spider-vein-free.

*Sclerotherapy:* Sclerotherapy is a minimally invasive treatment for varicose veins and spider veins. Your healthcare provider injects a chemical solution into your vein to close it off. This chemical solution irritates your blood vessel lining, expanding, sticking together, and forming a scar. This closes off your vein, making it look and feel better.



This in-office treatment works well for many people, especially on smaller varicose veins. Recovery is quick but can take weeks or months to see results. The procedure itself is usually done in under one hour.

### Advantages of sclerotherapy include:

• *No anesthesia*. There is little pain with enough compression from the bandage on the vein. Compression also may help with bruising and swelling.

• Good results for most people. Sclerotherapy works especially well on smaller varicose veins. A session may eliminate an estimated 50% to 80% of injected veins. In about 10% of cases, sclerotherapy doesn't work. If this happens, your healthcare provider can try different solutions or methods, such as laser therapy.

• Fairly quick results for small veins. Spider veins usually respond to treatment in three to six weeks, but it may take three to four months for larger veins.

• With successful treatment, varicose veins or spider veins won't reappear. However, you may need treatment for new varicose veins that form.

• Cutaneous Laser Therapy is an effective treatment for Spider Veins. At the Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons, we use a cutaneous laser to treat veins in the legs and face. Laser therapy uses a highly concentrated beam of light to heat and close the vein. This treatment does not cause damage to the skin and requires no downtime.

### -www.swfHealthandWellness.com-

### Advantages of Using Laser Vein Therapy:

There are no risks involved with these treatments, whereas methods such as sclerotherapy can cause slight bruising and patients can sometimes react to the saline solution. We find lasers to be a better option on facial spider veins, where the skin is more delicate. Lasers also are faster and more efficient when treating larger groups of spider veins.

Cutaneous Laser Therapy is a very efficient solution to superficial spider veins. This procedure has many benefits, including:

- Fast recovery
- Non-surgical
- Quick and effective treatment
- Generally painless

It should be noted that this treatment is effective only for superficial spider veins that appear on the skin's surface. This treatment does not treat more severe, underlying issues. Be sure to speak with your doctor about all your options.

The Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons is one of the first and most respected vein clinics in Southwest Florida. Our surgeons, Dr. Abraham Sadighi and Dr. Johan Escribano have performed thousands of vascular and vein surgeries over the past 28 years. We focus on diseases of the vascular system that can range from harmless but unattractive spider veins to dangerous conditions such as peripheral artery disease. Our caring and dedicated team will help you identify problems and offer the best treatment options for you at any of our three locations.



### 877-LEG-PAIN gulfcoastsurgeons.com

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# **Innovative Treatment Improves Quality of Life** LASENE REDUCES COMPLICATIONS OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE, EARLY STAGES OF ALZHEIMER'S, AND BRAIN TRAUMA

he human brain is a marvel of nature, possessing incredible abilities that continue to astound scientists and researchers. Its remarkable complexity and versatility enables us to perceive, think, reason, remember, and create. Despite the casual use of words like "awesome" and "amazing" by some, they are entirely appropriate when discussing the brain. Its true wonder lies in its capacity to regulate and coordinate countless physiological and cognitive processes in our bodies.

"Most of the medical society would tell you we know very little about the inner brain," stated Charles Lindsey McAlpine, CEO and COO of LASENE, Naples. "It's only through recent technological advances that we can look to ways of helping the brain achieve even its simplest needs of sleep and memory."

The company, LASENE, provides laser technology and proprietary advanced treatments for fostering functional improvement in patient's living with Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, brain trauma, and other neurological degenerative ailments. They bridge the gap between the world's finest laser technology and advanced treatment protocols to improve quality-of-life by reducing the many complications of these diseases.

"In coming years, we will all live longer, which is great, but the HOW we live is just as important." McAlpine said. No one really wants to live long and not properly function, do they? So being involved with a therapy that allows for the best quality of life, and clearer thinking is very exciting.

"I went through my original program over a year ago. I recently went to my neurologist and my Doctor continues to see the improvement I saw throughout my treatment and after. I would highly recommend LASENE to anyone seeking a better quality of life." -Patient Karen



The company's mission is to bring the best of technologies and protocols together for the sole purpose of reducing the suffering associated with neurodegenerative and neuromusculoskeletal conditions, and to bring people back to a more active and productive life.

"I have found a treatment that has really helped me, LASENE. They have improved my Quality of Life and I am back to doing what I love....I highly recommend it, go do it." – Patient Judy

Watching the aging process with my own father, who suffered with dementia and early stages of Alzheimer's, was sad to witness, It was tough seeing a bright, happy, articulate person lose those functions," McAlpine said. Being involved with the solutions that LASENE offers would have certainly benefited him, but now the ability to share those positive results with others is a gift.

LASENE does not promise a cure for degenerative complications. However, over a typically six-month care program, the company can provide laser technology and methodology to rehabilitate areas of nerve, muscle and skeletal systems that are affected by these neurological ailments. Through the company's proprietary methodology, a patient can experience a significant reduction or remission in a variety of quality of life symptoms specific to their condition.

"Results are what the overwhelming majority of the patients who come to LASENE experience," McAlpine said. "We see hugely positive results that quickly resonate into all parts of their lives. The individual therapy itself is noninvasive, painless, and brief. Most patients say 'I had some initial fear, but wow I wish I'd have done this sooner.'

"I was diagnosed with advanced symptoms of Parkinson's disease in 2015. Symptoms included shuffling gate, severe forward posture, muscle rigidity, loss of voice projection and volume, tongue and mouth tremors, whole body tremors, right hand severe tremors, constipation, insomnia, nightmares, low energy, decreased libido and erectile dysfunction, and brain fog. I began Lasene in June 2022. Light changes began to surface during the first 30 days. Now I have normal gate and posture, no mouth tremors, no body shaking, only a slight right-hand tremor that occurs a couple of times a day, restored sleep, no nightmares, normal bowel movements, restored libido and sexual function, voice projection restored, no more brain fog." Dr. DL

"Sleep is the most impressive and consistent progress patients report. Their sleep patterns and quality of sleep. We measure this both objectively through sleep tracking devices and subjectively through interviews and medical observation." We have many patients that also see a reduction in their tremors, an improvement in their walk/gait, and an improvement to their mood and cognitive ability.

Working with the amazing and awesome human brain brings rewards to those at LASENE and the patients they work with.



www.lasene.com

# WELLNESS

*We often hear and use the word "wellness" without necessarily considering its meaning.* By Ramon A. Gil, M.D., Medical Director, Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

Simply put: wellness is the opposite of illness. As parents, it is logical to assume that we all want our children to be healthy. We are therefore very involved in caring for their wellness. We pay attention to what they eat. We make sure that they play and exercise. We make sure they go to bed and sleep for an adequate amount of time. We make sure that they interact with other children and develop proper social skills. We strive to ensure that they receive an education that is second to none. We include religion in their lives. We instill confidence in the fact that working hard to stay healthy pays off.

Yet, today we are an obese country. Why have we forgotten about wellness? Why are children becoming more sedentary? Why are we all becoming less social, more isolated? Why have we allowed the quality of education in our nation to decline to levels never seen before? Why have we neglected spirituality and religion? In this absent-mindedness, we now find ourselves obese, ill and depressed. As per February of 2021, United States was the world's 10th most obese country and the most obese country in North America with 36.2% of its population having a body mass index of over 30.0.

Only Covid was able to stop the steady rise in the number of bariatric surgeries in this country from 2011 to 2019. Six out of the ten most prescribed drugs in the USA last year were to treat diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure, all associated with obesity. Sadly, 15% of adults aged 18-39 are taking antidepressant drugs, and that number increases to 20% for those aged 60 and over. In 2022, 42% of adults and 20% of children in this country are obese. Scientists and health professionals have worked hard to determine the cause. It really isn't that hard: Americans eat more calories than they burn, and the excess energy is stored as fat.

### How is this connected to Parkinson's Disease (PD)?

Very simple, obesity is known to be the main risk factor to developing type II diabetes, and diabetes has a markedly negative effect in PD patients. In a study published in 2022, researchers demonstrated that type II diabetes is associated with faster disease progression in Parkinson's ("The Impact of Type 2 Diabetes in Parkinson's Disease". Athauda, Evan, Wernick et al. Movement Disorders, Vol. 37, No. 8, 2022). Furthermore, according to the American Heart Association, obesity is the most important risk factor to developing sleep apnea. Significant sleep apnea is present in 40% of obese individuals, and 70% of sleep apnea patients are obese. Last year, the NIH reported (once again) that sleep apnea is associated with a significantly increased risk of dementia, particularly for Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinson's Disease patients. Several studies have previously demonstrated sleep apnea as a high risk factor for dementia.

During the days of Covid, we had more PD patients in our center dying from PD complications than because of actually contracting Covid. Some of the most critical factors were social isolation, physical deconditioning, loss of appetite with limited nutrition, and worsening of depression and psychosis, leading to the downward spiral that eventually took their lives.

Wellness should therefore be a central priority for all of us. As healthcare professionals, we should be promoting wellness more than any other intervention in the treatment of PD. You, as patients and care partners, must acknowledge your responsibility in caring for yourselves. You must direct your energies and efforts to achieving physical, mental, social, spiritual, and emotional wellness. The good news is that this treatment does not cost much, there are no negative side effects, and you don't need a doctor's prescription or insurance authorization.

We care deeply about all of you. To that end, we dedicate this program, not to medications or surgical treatments for PD, but to the daily practice of healthy habits in attaining better physical and mental health outcomes. Instead of just surviving, our aim is to see you thriving. Consider it an even better way to define "wellness".

Welcome to our 2023 Parkinson's Disease Spring Symposium.

### Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL in partnership with Charlotte County Medical Society proudly presents...

### 2023 SWFL Parkinson's Disease Spring Symposium: WELLNESS

Friday, April 21, 2023 9:00 am to 4:00 pm • Kings Gate Golf Club 24000 Rampart Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL

### **Presentations:**

### "Nutrition in Parkinson's Disease"



Glorivel Koury de Ramos, M.D. Medical Director, "RK Healthy Life", Atlanta, GA Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine Diplomate, American Board of Obesity Medicine Certified by American Board of Lifestyle Medicine

### "Why Exercise is the Best Medicine for Parkinson's Disease"



Diplomate, American Academy of Psychiatry and Neurology

Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine Medical Director, Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

### **Breakout Sessions:**

"Yoga as Part of Your Treatment" Shebani Abdulnour, Yoga Therapist

"Dance Therapy for PD" by Sarah Latotskyy, Patricia De L'Ossa, RPT and Sergio Valdivia, RPT

### "Fitness" by Jay Woods

**"Rock Steady Boxing and Pedaling for PD"** by Lisa Heid, Christy Barfield, RSB, Tabatha Stepensky, RSB, and Terri Hughes, PFP from the Punta Gorda YMCA



For more info or to register contact Jennifer at Dr. Gil's Office: Phone (941) 743-4987 | Fax (941) 743-4486 office@parkinsonsfl.com



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# **IS IT POSSIBLE TO OVERDOSE ON THC?**

ne of the most common questions among medical marijuana patients and their loved ones is *can you overdose on THC?* Below, you'll discover everything you need to know when consuming too much medical marijuana.

### Is it Possible to Overdose on THC?

It is *theoretically* possible to consume enough THC, the primary psychoactive component in cannabis, to cause an overdose, but it is *highly* unlikely.

A study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that the THC necessary to overdose is around 1,500 pounds of marijuana consumed within about fifteen minutes. This is significantly more than any person could consume in such a short period of tim and is far beyond the levels of THC that are typically found in marijuana. Additionally, the symptoms of a THC overdose are primarily psychological and do not pose significant physical risks. These symptoms include anxiety, paranoia, and hallucinations. Therefore, it is practically impossible to overdose on medical marijuana and THC.

### Is it Possible to Reduce or Counteract the Effects of THC?

CBD, also known as cannabidiol, is a non-psychoactive compound found in cannabis that can counteract some of the effects of THC, the primary psychoactive component in cannabis.

CBD can counteract the anxiety and paranoia that high levels of THC can cause by increasing the levels of a neurotransmitter called GABA in the brain. GABA is responsible for regulating the activity of neurons and is known to have an inhibitory effect on neurotransmission, which can help to calm the nervous system.

Additionally, CBD can also interact with other receptors in the body, such as the CB1 receptors, which are responsible for the psychoactive effects of THC, and modulate their activity, which can reduce the overall psychoactive effects of THC.

It is important to note that while CBD and THC have different effects, they both have therapeutic potential and can enhance each other's effects when used in a balanced ratio, commonly known as the entourage effect.

### How to Counteract the Effects of THC Naturally

Consuming too much THC can produce effects that can scare beginners and seasoned medical marijuana patients. Although it's practically impossible to overdose, most people want to avoid unwanted consequences.

### There are a few natural ways that may help to decrease the intensity of the effects of THC:

1. Hydration: Drinking water can help to alleviate dry mouth and eyes, which are common side effects of THC.

 Sleep: Getting enough can help reduce fatigue and disorientation, which are also common side effects of THC.

3. Food: Eating a balanced diet can help to reduce the intensity of the "munchies" and other side effects of THC.

 Exercise: Light exercise or yoga can help to reduce anxiety and paranoia, which high levels of THC can cause.

5. CBD: As previously discussed, CBD, a non-psychoactive compound found in cannabis, can counteract some of the effects of THC by increasing the levels of GABA in the brain and modulating the activity of the CB1 receptors.

Time: The effects of THC will decrease over time as the body metabolizes the compound.



It's important to remember that these methods may not work for everyone, and the effects of THC can vary depending on the individual, the dose, and the method of consumption.

### What are the Side Effects of Consuming Too Much Medical Marijuana?

The side effects of THC-dominant medical marijuana can vary depending on the individual, the dose, and the method of consumption. Common side effects can include:

- Increased appetite, often referred to as "the munchies"
- Dry mouth and eyes
- Increased heart rate
- Coordination and balance problems
- Short-term memory impairment
- Anxiety, paranoia, or other psychological distress in some people, particularly those prone to these conditions or consuming high doses.

It's worth noting that the side effects of THC can be more pronounced if consumed in large amounts, if ingested by people who are not used to it, or by those with a history of mental health issues.

### Enjoy Medical Marijuana Safely in Florida With an MMJ Card

Now that you understand that it's nearly impossible to overdose on THC — it's time to get in touch with a medical marijuana doctor in Florida.

From best practices to recommended MMJ strains, qualified medical marijuana doctors are an excellent source of information on staying safe while consuming THC-dominant products. With hundreds of qualifications and uses for medical marijuana, there's no better time than now to educate yourself on cannabis safety to ensure an exceptional experience.



# **FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED** WITH THE WHEEL

By Dr. Melissa Houston

t's been a while since you took your last college class. You're so close to earning your bachelor's degree, but life got in the way and you had to put that plan on hold. You have that thought in the back of your head that someday, you'll go back to school and finish what you started. You can join hundreds of others who were in the same boat, and decided now is the time to earn their bachelor's degree.

Hodges University offers you an accelerated path to a bachelor's degree: The Wheel. Did you know that one of the most flexible degrees you can earn is in management? Think about it. Every organization has a need to managers with the knowledge and skills to oversee daily activities, and plan for long-term success. We've designed the bachelor's degree in organizational management to provide you the focused knowledge you need to be successful in a management role.

You may be thinking this sounds great, but when will you find the time? We designed this degree so that you come to class one evening a week, or on Saturday. In addition, you choose which location works best for you: Fort Myers, Naples, or Port Charlotte.

This helps with balancing the other demands in your life: work, family, and living your life. Plus, with your previously earned credits, you could graduate in as little as one year.

By bringing your credits from other institutions, and yes, the military, you can be well on your way to that bachelor's degree. We take this degree a step further to include classes in leadership. This degree will provide you with the knowledge you need to be an impactful and effective manager-leader.

The Wheel is designed to be engaging, inspiring, and laser-focused. This degree will help you learn to make informed, strategic business decisions, gain a full understanding of the most important functions of business and management, and learn effective leadership skills for advancement. You'll



learn more than any book teaches - you'll get practical, real-world experience knowledge, so it's not just about learning the theory, but also applying that theory to your personal and professional life.

The Wheel is designed with you in mind. You're already balancing the demands of a full-time job and family, so classes are held in the evenings and on Saturday. Plus, you'll be taking your classes with the same fellow students, so you also have the opportunity to build that sense of camaraderie and connections that can be useful in your career.

To find out more about The Wheel, you can visit Hodges.edu, stop by the Hodges University campus at 4501 Colonial Blvd. in Fort Myers, call (239) 938-7700, or email Admissions@hodges.edu. Scholarships and financial aid are available.

www.swfHealthandWellness.com



Dr. Melissa Houston is the lead faculty for The Wheel bachelor's in organizational management degree at Hodges University.

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# **APRIL IS ROSACEA AWARENESS MONTH**

By Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

### What is rosacea?

Rosacea is a common skin condition that occurs on the face. It causes redness and small bumps that are similar to acne.

### Symptoms of rosacea?

The first sign of rosacea often is redness. It may appear like a blush or sunburn across your nose, cheeks, forehead, or chin. Other symptoms include red or pus-filled bumps and small blood vessels. For some people, the skin of their nose may become red, thick, and swollen. This is caused by excess tissue and called rhinophyma. Rosacea also can affect your eyes, making them red or watery. It may irritate and inflame your eyelids and the white part of your eye. This is called conjunctivitis.

#### Who Gets Rosacea?

Rosacea is common. According to the U.S. government, more than 14 million people are living with rosacea. Most people who get rosacea are:

- Between 30 and 50 years of age
- Fair-skinned, and often have blonde hair and blue eyes
- From Celtic or Scandinavian ancestry
- Likely to have someone in their family tree with rosacea or severe acne
- Likely to have had lots of acne or acne cysts and/or nodules

Women are a bit more likely than men to get rosacea. Women, however, are not as likely as men to get severe rosacea. People of all colors and ages can get rosacea.

#### What Causes It?

Doctors don't know exactly what causes rosacea. A few things that may play a role are:

Your genes. Rosacea often runs in families.

**Blood vessel trouble.** The redness on your skin might be due to problems with blood vessels in your face. Sun damage could cause them to get wider, making them more visible.

Mites. They're tiny insects. A type called Demodex folliculorum normally lives on your skin and usually isn't harmful. Some people, though, have a heightened sensitivity to the mites, or more of these bugs than usual. Too many mites could irritate your skin.



Bacteria. A type called H. pylori normally lives in your gut. Some studies suggest this germ can raise the amount of a digestive hormone called gastrin, which might cause your skin to look flushed.

#### Can rosacea be prevented or avoided?

Since the cause of rosacea is unknown, you cannot prevent it. However, there are things you can do to avoid flare-ups. These include changes to your lifestyle and environment. Triggers vary by person and may take time to identify. Common triggers include:

- · Direct or indirect heat, such as the sun or hot baths
- Weather, such as hot or freezing temperatures and strong winds
- Harsh skin care products
- Exercise or sweating
- Stress or anxiety
- Alcohol
- Certain foods
- Menopause
- Other skin or health conditions

#### **Rosacea treatment**

Medicine is the most common form of treatment for rosacea. The type of medicine your doctor recommends will depend on your symptoms. Medicines may include special antibiotics in the form of pills, gel, or cream. These work well at improving pimples and bumps. Skin redness is harder to treat.

It may take 2 months or more for treatment to work. As your symptoms improve, the amount of medicine you take may be cut down or stopped. It is hard to know how long you will need treatment for rosacea. Each person's skin is different, and your doctor may want to adjust your treatment.

For severe cases of rosacea, surgery may be an option. It is most often done to treat rhinophyma. Enlarged blood vessels on your face can sometimes be removed with a fine electric needle or laser surgery.

### Living with rosacea

Rosacea cannot be cured, but treatment can help relieve symptoms and improve skin appearance. Remember to always wear sunscreen. Avoid known triggers to prevent flare-ups. If left untreated, rosacea can get worse over time. This can have emotional and social effects. Some people lose self-esteem and don't like to be seen in public because of the way they look. It is important to work with your doctor to treat symptoms and improve your quality of life.

### Questions to ask your doctor

- How do I know if I have rosacea?
- What treatment is best for me and how does it work?
- How long does treatment last?
- Is it possible that my rosacea will go away on its own?
- How do I keep my symptoms from flaring up?
- What skin care routine is best for me?
- · Will I always have rosacea?

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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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# THE BENEFITS OF REAL INTRAVENOUS (IV) NUTRIENT THERAPY

By Dr. Doreen DeStefano, NhD, APRN, DNP

utrient IV therapy places are popping up everywhere. They offer cheap, catchy sounding IV's. It seems like a great money saver. But like with all things, you get what you pay for. Let's look at a few reasons why getting your intravenous nutrients are best done in an office that specializes in nutrient IV therapy and has a highly trained and certified staff.

Intravenous nutrient therapy has significant health benefits, and some risks as well. Generally, intravenous nutrient therapy can help with detoxification, relaxation, anxiety, mood, energy, feeling rejuvenated, or immune system enhancement. Therapeutically, intravenous nutrients can target specific organs, organ systems and dis-ease states to make a profound impact on true wellness.

When we take nutrients by mouth, the digestive process can decrease the amount of nutrient we actually get into our blood. With aging and for many reasons, our digestion weakens and decreases our nutrient absorption. Many nutrients, like glutathione, are completely destroyed in the digestive process. Higher doses needed for therapeutic action can upset the stomach and GI tract, cause discomfort, nausea, or diarrhea. These same nutrients given intravenously can have potent health impacts with no GI effects because the digestive system is bypassed.

Why go to a medical establishment that specializes in IV nutrient therapy? For expertise and safety! At Root Causes patients see a practitioner first. We collect a health history and conduct a physical exam before nutrients are administered. We also draw blood to ensure that your organ systems are in good enough shape to process high doses of nutrients. Dr. DeStefano, the practitioner at Root Causes, has 15 years of specialized training and experience, and numerous certifications in IV nutrient therapy. Our nurses are also highly trained and certified in the administration of nutrient IV therapies. This is very different from going to an IV bar and picking your IV off a menu.



Our expert knowledge is applied to you personally after getting a thorough work up. At IV bars and casual IV centers, they give very low doses of nutrients. They have to, because they don't have your history and haven't examined you. It would be dangerous to give high concentrations of nutrients without that information. They also have very limited offerings because they are catering to a general population. They are not using nutrients therapeutically. They are using them like most people use oral nutrients: to feel better, maybe/hopefully. At Root Causes, Dr. D recommends powerful nutrient combinations most beneficial and effective for achieving your health goals.

The quality of the nutrients is also very important. At Root Causes, we use only the highest quality of nutrients available. For example; we only use methylated B-vitamins. These are much higher quality and cost than the typically used cyanocobalamin or folic acid B vitamins. Did you know that cyanocobalamin is derived from cyanide? Quality matters! We use only the best!

When looking for nutrient IV therapy, it is best to go to experts who know your health status, have formal training and experience, and use quality nutrients. That's Root Causes. **Call us today and start feeling better naturally!** 

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Dr. DeStefano, of Root Causes Holistic Health & Medicine in Ft Myers, FL, incorporates IV & Chelation therapy with hyperbaric chamber sessions to combat multiple chronic conditions and disease states.

#### Doreen DeStefano, NhD, APRN, DNP

Dr. DeStefano came to Fort Myers in the early 1980's, leaving and coming back again several times until finally settling here in 2001. She has a lifelong background in health and wellness that began in middle school when she started running.

Dr. DeStefano is also a lifelong student. She holds a bachelor's degree in nursing, and another in exercise physiology. She has a Masters (ABT) in criminology, a Master's in public business administration and a Master's in nursing. She holds a doctorate in natural health and is a licensed Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. (DNP), a doctorate in nursing. She holds numerous licenses and certifications from advanced practice training. She continues to attend educational seminars in integrative and functional medicine twice a year to stay abreast of the most recent, cutting edge therapies available.

Her practice is centered on naturopathic principles that include healing the whole person on various levels and avoiding pharmaceutical intervention unless absolutely necessary. She believes your health Is within your control. Her goal is to help you achieve maximum health.

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### 24 Health & Wellness April 2023 - Lee Edition

# The Relationship Between Hormones and Mental Health

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

ental health is crucial for a good quality of life, and declining mental health can cause individuals to withdraw from the activities they once enjoyed. In other cases, someone may feel too tired or anxious to care for themselves and nurture their needs, impacting their emotional well-being.

Many factors can affect mental health, but hormones remain a driving force. Despite this, hormone dysregulation is often overlooked when it comes to identifying and treating mental health conditions. This is because many traditional doctors only consider the physical implications of hormone dysfunction and not the emotional toll that can occur.

The relationship between hormone levels and mental health is complex, which is why we have broken it down into the many different components, such as the different hormones influencing mental health and the direct and indirect ways they can do this.

### HORMONES AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH

Listed below are some of the different hormones that can affect mental health and their roles in the body.

### Cortisol

Also known as the stress hormone, cortisol is produced by the adrenal glands and causes someone to feel stressed due to its role in the body's fight-or-flight response.

Actions controlled by cortisol include:

- sugar levels in the bloodstream
- metabolism regulation
- blood pressure regulation
- the body's sleep-wake cycle

### Estrogen

While estrogen is most commonly known as a female sex hormone, responsible for producing female secondary sex characteristics and regulating a woman's menstrual cycle, it can also impact mental health by increasing anxiousness and irritability when it declines.

The role of estrogen in mental health lies in its role in regulating neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin, norepinephrine, and epinephrine, which all play a role in mood regulation. In particular, estrogen



increases the production of serotonin, which is the "feel good" chemical, while also increasing the activity of serotonin receptors in the brain.

Estrogen also plays a role in regulating endorphins, another type of hormone that brings a rush of happiness when released.

### Progesterone

Yet another female sex hormone is progesterone, which is predominantly found at higher levels during the second part of a woman's menstrual cycle following ovulation. However, this rise in progesterone may also lead to increases in depressive thoughts or an overall lowered mood.

The general role of progesterone is to prepare the endometrium for a potential pregnancy after ovulation. It does this by thickening the lining of the uterus and preventing muscle contractions in the uterus that can cause the body to reject the egg.

If the body conceives, progesterone levels remain high, stimulating the blood vessels in the endometrium to feed the growing fetus and prepare the breasts for milk production.

### DHEA

Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) is a precursor to other hormones in the body, including testosterone and estrogen. It is a hormone produced in the adrenal gland, and its levels typically peak in early adulthood and then gradually decline with age.

### T3 and T4

Two hormones released by the thyroid, T3 and T4, affect metabolic rate, impacting our emotions and energy levels.

### Melatonin

Produced in time with your circadian rhythm and light/dark cycles, melatonin increases sleepiness, helping your body prepare for bed.

### How Hormones Affect Mental Health

Responsible for regulating actions within the body, hormones also significantly affect mood and mental health. When too much or too little of these hormones are produced, mental health symptoms can worsen.

### HORMONES CAN AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

### Increases Mood Disorders

Specific hormone-related conditions have a higher rate of anxiety and depression. For example, those with PCOS are 3 times more likely to be affected by anxiety or depression. Additionally, a study on endometriosis patients found that 87.5% of the patients presented with anxiety symptoms and 86.5% with depressive symptoms.

Hormone imbalances unrelated to specific conditions can also increase the risk of mood disorders. For example, those with significantly high levels of cortisol can often develop anxiety disorders.

Additionally, while high estrogen levels are typically associated with a better mood, if estrogen levels are overly high while progesterone levels are low, a condition called estrogen dominance can occur, with symptoms of depression and irritability. In some cases, estrogen dominance may also cause anxiety.

Mental health problems can also occur when progesterone is too high, as this is associated with increased amygdala sensitivity. The amygdala is a part of the brain responsible for the body's fight or flight response, so amygdala sensitivity can lead to a greater likelihood of anxiety, depression, or just feeling off.

Depression has also been reported in those with low levels of DHEA. A study even found that treating older patients with depression through DHEA supplements helped address their depressive symptoms.

### Impacts Sleep

Many hormones, such as estrogen, melatonin, and cortisol, can make it hard to fall or stay asleep, depending on their levels. When the body does not get enough sleep, your mental health can suffer; this has been proven by research showing that brain activity during sleep significantly affects someone's emotional and mental health.

In particular, REM sleep aids the brain in processing emotional information, and a lack of sleep can impact how much positive emotional content is consolidated. This has been shown to increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Sleep and mental health share a connection in both directions, meaning lack of sleep can increase the risk of mental health disorders, but sleep may also suffer from existing mental health problems, further worsening symptoms.

Based on this evidence, it is clear that hormonal imbalances affecting the body's ability to fall or stay asleep can then have detrimental effects on mental health.

#### Causes Mood Swings

One complication of too little estrogen is mood swings, which is why they are a common symptom of women going through menopause. With this stage of life, the amount of estrogen a woman's body produces significantly declines, sometimes resulting in mood swings. This symptom is especially common at the beginning of menopause, when estrogen levels fluctuate.

### Lowers Self Esteem

Besides the direct effect of hormones on our mental health, they can also indirectly influence mental health through the way that they change the body. For example, hormonal imbalances can cause physical transformations such as hair thinning, weight gain, acne, and unwanted hair growth. These factors can contribute to your body image and may diminish your self-esteem.

Many doctors overlook how much the physical changes from hormonal imbalance can influence your self-esteem and emotional well-being, which is why seeing a doctor who specializes in hormones, and understands how drastically they affect the body, is essential.

#### **Increases Stress**

Besides cortisol, other hormonal imbalances can cause stress to the body in other, less direct ways.

When there is a hormonal imbalance, the body senses it through the insular cortex, a part of the brain that can sense the body's internal state. When hormone levels are incorrect, the insular cortex perceives it, resulting in physiological stress.

Essentially, when your hormones are out of balance, your body "feels off," which can influence your mental well-being.

### Affects Fertility

Specific hormones such as estrogen, DHEA, and progesterone can also affect fertility when they are imbalanced. For couples looking to start or grow their family, an inability to do so can significantly affect their emotional well-being.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

There are many actions you can take to help improve your mental health, such as:

### Exercise Regularly

Exercising regularly can be good for more than just your physical health; it can also improve your mental health by helping to regulate hormones.

Cortisol, in particular, can become high and build up in the body without regular exercise. By exercising, your body is able to use up some of the cortisol, leaving less behind.

Endorphins such as dopamine also increase when exercising, further improving your mood.

### Improve Sleep Hygiene

While hormones can affect your sleep, you can also take action to improve your sleep hygiene and increase your chances of falling and staying asleep.

### Some ways to improve sleep hygiene include:

- doing calming activities before bed
- limiting screen time in the hour before bed
- going to sleep and waking up around the same time
- sleeping in a cool, dark, and quiet room

Improving your sleep hygiene helps to regulate your circadian rhythm, which then influences hormone levels.

### **Correct Imbalanced Hormones**

While the above actions can help bolster your mental health, if your mental health decline is due to hormone dysfunction, the most crucial step will be to correct these imbalances.

Hormonal supplements can significantly improve your mental health. For example, a study on depression and thyroid function found that supplementing T3 significantly reduced depressive symptoms in the participants, even relieving some participants of depression entirely.

Many hormones are available in a supplement form and can be found in a pill, tablet, or cream, depending on the hormone being supplemented. Meeting with a physician specializing in hormones is an important step in identifying hormonal imbalances and receiving the correct treatment to correct them.

### **Receive Help for Your Mental Health Struggle**

Mental health issues are not uncommon, and it is estimated that 1 in 4 adults struggle with a mental health condition at some point in their life. When it comes to correcting mental health conditions, it is often most helpful to correct the underlying cause, which is often hormonal.

If you are struggling with symptoms of anxiety, depression, or insomnia or are experiencing irritability, difficulty concentrating, or problems with weight or appetite, you may be experiencing a hormonal imbalance.

Hormonal imbalances can dramatically affect many parts of your health and well-being. However, that also means that identifying and remedying the imbalance can return peace to your life.

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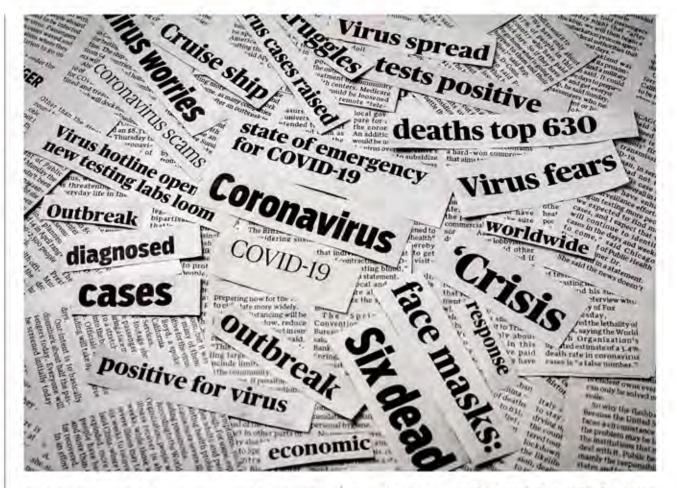
# **A Stress Management**

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

ave you ever felt overwhelmed? Are you feeling stressed out? The holidays can sometimes be quite stressful, whether it be making the house ready, making sure you have gotten all the presents for your loved ones/friends, but you might want to take some time for yourself too. In fact, the holidays are known to bring out all sorts of ailments and health problems, more than any time of year. The stress of the holidays is real and not something to be ignored and brushed under the rug. Stress Management is truly something we all have to deal with at one point or another. Not all stress is bad, but when you start to feel overwhelmed and feel a loss of control, that's when stress can wreak havoc in your life.

The first part in managing your stress is to identify the stressor, for example-whether it be certain negative people, going through a divorce, being told of a new diagnosis or fear of losing your job. Whatever that stressor is, it's important to identify it, talk it over with a close friend/relative or perhaps write it in a stress journal. It is crucial to not keep the feelings/emotions bottled up because that in itself is truly, I believe the heart of many health problems. Stress has been linked to heart disease, depression/mental illnesses, inflammatory conditions (ie arthritis, autoimmune illnesses, etc) and even some forms of cancer.

The second part of stress management is coming up with a plan or solution to dealing with the problem that is creating the stress/turmoil in your life. This is where taking a step back for a moment can often help. Sometimes, taking a deep breath and talking out loud is all that may be needed. I also believe it is extremely important to have outlets or hobbies in your life. Some people find getting up early and meditating is a way to relax and recharge your mind. Others may find playing an instrument, listening to a Ted talk, gardening or reading a book keeps them relaxed and content. The point is, you have to find some activity that makes you happy and feel relaxed. This in itself, helps you think of the solution as a third party and coming up with a new perspective on the problem/situation creating the stress in your life.



I think it is important to have general lifestyle principles and routines embedded in your life such as the 5 steps below:

1. It is important to stay positive and surround yourself with people that will bring positivity in your life as well.

2. Exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy diet also helps with keeping the stress levels manageable.

3. Staying well hydrated and avoiding excessive consumption of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages also help you manage your stress.

4. Learn also how to say "no" to unnecessary requests. You need to know your limits and stick to them. It is important to know the difference between the "shoulds" and the "musts" and when needed to say "no" to taking on too much, whether

it be in your personal or professional life. Taking on too much is indeed a recipe for disaster and the root of stress for most people.

5. Lastly, getting enough sleep is also vital to stress management. Most of us are not getting the recommended 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night.

In the end, it is always important to ask oneself, "Is this going to make a difference in the grand scheme of things?" "Is it really worth getting upset over?"

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### 28 Health & Wolfness April 2023 - Lee Edition



# SHOULDER PAIN & INJURIES CAN BE HEALED WITHOUT SURGERY

By Dr. Sebastian Klisiewicz, D.O.

### PLATELET RICH PLASMA (PRP) OR BONE MARROW STEM CELLS MAY BE THE ANSWER

he shoulder is a complex joint with many moving parts. It has more mobility than any other joint in the body, and because of this it is vulnerable to injuries and chronic pain. Conditions such as tendonitis, rotator cuff tears and arthritis are common in the shoulder, often leading to pain, weakness and a limitation of function. Unfortunately, many people just bare the pain without seeking medical care. Often they are scared that surgery or medications are their only options. But there is another option, latest research has shown that Regenerative Medicine can heal the shoulder and stop the pain.

#### The "Old" Standard Treatment for Shoulder Pain

Traditional treatment for most shoulder conditions typically involves physical therapy, steroid injections or surgery. Physical therapy is a great first line treatment, but often it is inadequate by itself to treat many shoulder conditions. Steroid injections are frequently offered as the next step. Unfortunately, these only mask the pain and come with an array of unwanted side effects. Steroid injections can actually weaken the tendons and ligaments and increase the progression of tendon tears and arthritis. Surgeries such as a rotator cuff repair or a joint replacement are often offered as "the only option left". These are serious medical procedures with long recovery times and potentially serious complications. Luckily for shoulder pain sufferers, there is a new non-surgical option that is natural, safe and effective.

#### The New Frontier of Non-Surgical Shoulder Care

The shoulder, like all other tissues in our body, can heal naturally without surgery. It can do so with the right stimulus and a proper healing environment. Regenerative Medicine injections with Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) or Bone Marrow Stem Cells are that stimulus that can start the healing process. When Regenerative injections are combined with physical therapy and proper nutrition, the torn tendons, ligaments and cartilage can actually heal. This can resolve pain and restore normal function, without surgery or other toxic medications!

PRP or Stem Cells can be thought of as a gift from your own body as they stimulate the body's natural immune system to help you heal. PRP is a solution



of concentrated platelets made by spinning your own blood in a centrifuge. The platelets are packed with growth factors that kick start the healing response. Stem cells are the "master orchestrators" of regeneration. They sense the environment and release growth molecules that stimulate tissue healing and decrease inflammation. The best and most studied stem cells for orthopedic conditions are safely obtained from the bone marrow of the pelvis. Unlike other "stem cell like" products, these are real living cells that come from your own body.

The choice of using PRP or Bone Marrow Stem Cells is based on the severity of the injury and other physiologic factors. These products are carefully injected into the injured area under ultrasound guidance. Once injected, they stimulate regeneration of tendons, ligaments and joint cartilage. This increases joint stability, decreases pain and improves overall function. Regenerative Medicine injections with PRP or Stem Cells don't just mask the symptoms, they heal the shoulder and provide long term results.

### An Integrated Team Approach Provides Best Results The most effective way to treat shoulder pain and injuries is to combine Regenerative Medicine injections with specialized physical therapy and proper nutrition. The injections stimulate the healing, but specific therapeutic exercises and manual therapy support the healing process. A well-balanced diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables and high-quality proteins can also support tissue regeneration and decrease unwanted inflammation. Sometimes specific nutritional supplement may also be needed to prepare the body for the healing journey.

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At Integrative Rehab Medicine, we specialize in non-surgical ways to heal the body. Our medical and therapy staff are highly trained in the most advanced Regenerative techniques to help you heal, eliminate pain and restore function. We are leading experts in the use of PRP and Bone Marrow Stem Cells in Southwest Florida. If you are tired of pain stopping you from living the life you want to live, schedule your consultation today and find out if PRP or Stem Cells can help you get your life back.

### DR. SEBASTIAN KLISIEWICZ, D.O. Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

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

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



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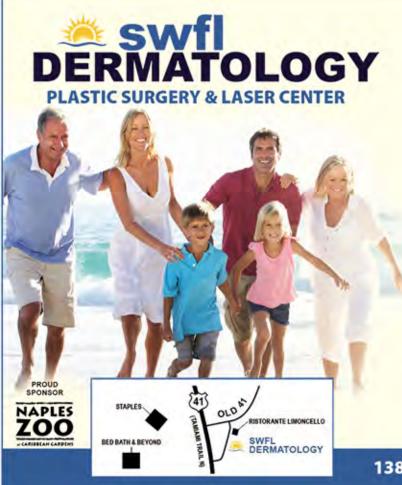
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### 32 Health & Wellness April 2023 - Lee Edition

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



### **TESTIMONIALS**

I have been a patient of Dr. Larry Johnson for over ten years for different low back and various joint pains. However, last year I started to suffer with pain and tingling in both of my legs and feet that would keep me from sleeping. Dr. Johnson explained to me that I was dealing with neuropathy and he could help to resolve my pain with a laser light therapy machine that he has used many times before for my condition. After six treatments, my pain was starting to go away and was finally gone after a few more treatments. I have always relied on Dr. Johnson to help me for any problems I have encountered over the years and I have always recommended him to my family and friends. Shirley W.

I travel a lot as a Realtor in Lee County, and also very active with physical activities. On a couple of occasions in the past, my feet would burn and hurt with walking and riding my bike. I was referred to Dr. Johnson by my father who had been a patient for several years. He used a light therapy treatment that eliminated my pain. I have always been very happy with the care I have received and the staff are very knowledgeable, caring and friendly. I would recommend his clinic to anyone suffering with any type of pain. Cathy S.

When I first came to DR. Larry Johnson's office everyone was very friendly and made me feel so welcomed. I could hardly walk, but after a couple weeks of vitamin injection and Sanexas treatments I improved dramatically. I now recommend him to everyone. Ken F.

I came to Dr. Larry Johnson at the end of November 2022 with severe pain on my right knee. I was not able to walk without a walker because the pain was so bad. After receiving Sanexas treatments, along with Chiropractic care, I was able to walk without any assistance in about 3 weeks. I am still receiving weekly treatments and I have seen big improvements. I am very pleased with the results and I continue to feel better every day. Thank you to Dr Larry and his amazing staff. Tomi B.

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cally-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.

### **TESTIMONIAL**

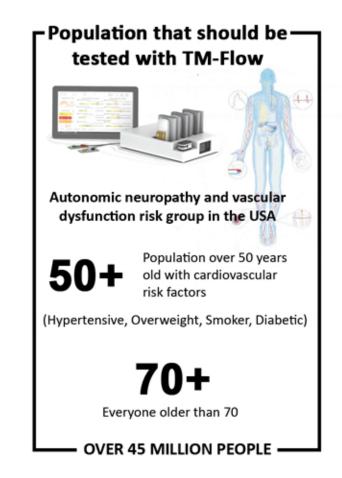
A few years ago, I began to lose the feeling in my feet. This progressed into a pain so severe it interfered with my ability to walk. When my wife told Dr. Johnson about my condition, he called me into his office and said, "David, you know I can treat that." Actually, I didn't know he treated neuropathy, and besides that, I was cynical. My understanding was that the success rate for reversing neuropathy is abysmal. The reality was I didn't think he... or anyone else, for that matter, could do anything about it. But Dr. Johnson and I have been friends for twenty-eight years, so telling him I didn't think he could ease my pain was ot an option.

Well, surprise for me the old cynic. From the very first treatment, the result was so dramatic that because of my disbelief, I did not say a word to anyone. Not a comment until I knew this treatment was the real deal. I started to experience relief, and by the end of the third week, I was asymptomatic.

Your milage may vary, but that's how my body responded. Now, I am able once again to walk my dog two to five miles a day, five days a week. Great staff. Thanks for all your care. David R.

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# **A Personalized Approach to Healthcare** During a Pandemic

he COVID-19 pandemic has transformed every aspect of our lives including introducing new challenges in accessing healthcare services. Due to the challenges presented, primary care physicians have had to utilize telemedicine services more over the last three years than previously. Although this was instrumental in moving forward with essential healthcare access at the time of the pandemic, it is crucial that we get back to basics and see patients in the office setting.

Telehealth services have proven to be effective for a wide range of primary care needs. Patients can consult with their doctors about acute illnesses, chronic conditions, mental health issues, and more. Doctors can also use telehealth services to follow up with patients after in-person visits, ensuring continuity of care.

The benefits of telehealth services are numerous, but they are not without their challenges. One of the biggest challenges is ensuring that patients have access to the necessary technology. Not all patients have reliable internet access or the equipment needed to use telehealth services. This can create a barrier to care for some patients, especially those who are elderly, disabled, or low-income.

Another challenge is maintaining the same level of quality of care as in-person visits. Telehealth services rely heavily on communication, and doctors must be able to communicate effectively with their patients to diagnose and treat their conditions. Doctors must also be able to manage the technology and ensure that the patient's privacy and confidentiality are protected.

Despite these challenges, telehealth services have become a vital tool for primary care doctors during the pandemic. They have enabled doctors to continue providing care to their patients while minimizing the risk of exposure to contagious illnesses.

However, the pandemic has also created stress and anxiety in the healthcare world. Healthcare providers have been working tirelessly to care for COVID-19 patients, putting their own health and safety at risk. They have also been dealing with unprecedented levels of stress, anxiety, and burnout.



The pandemic has underscored the need for a more equitable healthcare system that ensures that everyone has access to high-quality care, regardless of their income or race. It has also highlighted the importance of investing in public health infrastructure, including telemedicine services, to ensure that we are prepared for future public health emergencies.

In person, physical exams provide a number of benefits that may not be available with telemedicine and are an important part of quality. Without a physical exam important signs and symptoms of illness may be missed. Although we prefer in office, face to face evaluations, we understand the limitation of access to health care in the community and will continue to provide telehealth services when needed.

The entire premise and growth of telemedicine is a consequence of "damage control". This is entirely based on reactive medicine. Good healthcare is based on preventive medicine and risk mediation, ie: managing obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and various other chronic issues that is deeply impacted by lifestyle modification and appropriate screening. We know that when chronic health issues are not prevented or treated, the patient is more susceptible to acute illnesses.

Here at Axel Health Primary Care our physicians are aspiring to be compassionate partners in a patient's health and well-being. This faith in a physician can only be achieved over time and with understanding of the patient's environment and healthcare needs.



### Daniel Stanciu, MD

Dr. Stanciu is certified in Internal Medicine by the American Board of Physician Specialties as well as the American Board of Internal Medicine and has been practicing medicine since 2003. Dr. Stanciu earned his medical degree from the

University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Timisoara, Romaina. He completed his resident training in internal medicine at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn New York.

Prior to coming to Axel Health Primary Care, Dr. Stanciu practiced as an internal medicine hospitalist. He is passionate about providing comprehensive, holistic, integrative care. By providing concierge services, Dr. Stanciu has the opportunity to spend an unlimited amount of time with each client to ensure an individualized plan of care that meets each clients' healthcare goals. He is currently working on his functional medicine certification. Dr. Stanciu enjoys educating each client regarding the best approach to health screenings, risk assessments, early treatment, and appropriate interventions. In his free time, Dr. Stanciu is athletic and enjoys multiple sports and spending time with his family.

### Joel Pelissier, MD



Dr. Pelissier is certified in Internal Medicine by the American Board of Internal Medicine and has been practicing medicine since 1996. Dr. Pelissier completed his residency training at Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center. He

also had the opportunity to study abroad receiving further training in France and Spain. He has been providing medical services to the Fort Myers Community for over 10 years and is passionate about providing comprehensive, integrative care and working with patients to ensure they obtain their healthcare goals. Dr. Pelissier is also a Certified Medical Examiner for the Department of Transportation (DOT). He is passionate about medical education and is a board review question writer for the Society of Hospital Medicine. Dr. Pelissier is fluent in Haitian Creole, French, English, and Spanish. He is also conversational in Portuguese. In his free time Dr. Pelissier enjoys spending time with his daughter, his family, exercising, and reading.



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# FORT MYERS JUST GOT COOLER EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS OF CRYOTHERAPY

ryotherapy is a treatment that uses extreme cold temperatures to reduce inflammation and pain in the body. This therapy has gained popularity in recent years as a method to reduce inflammation in athletes and those suffering from chronic pain.

Inflammation is the body's natural response to injury or infection, but sometimes this response can become chronic and lead to ongoing pain and tissue damage. Cryotherapy works by reducing inflammation in the body, which can have a number of benefits for overall health.

One of the primary benefits of cryotherapy is pain relief. The extreme cold temperatures used in cryotherapy can numb pain receptors in the body, providing immediate relief for those suffering from acute or chronic pain. This is particularly useful for athletes who are recovering from injuries or experiencing muscle soreness after a workout.

In addition to pain relief, cryotherapy can also improve muscle recovery. By reducing inflammation in the body, cryotherapy can help to speed up the healing process after a workout or injury. This means that athletes can recover faster and get back to their training more quickly.

Cryotherapy has also been shown to improve circulation in the body. The extreme cold temperatures cause the blood vessels to constrict, which then causes them to dilate once the treatment is over. This increased blood flow can help to deliver more oxygen and nutrients to the muscles, which can improve their overall function and performance.

"Icebox is a great addition to total body recovery. 3 minutes of cryo a couple ti mes a month has improved my breathing, sleep, and performance. What really stands out is their customer service; everyone is extremely respectful and helps you out with whatever you need. Definitely recommend them." - Michael

Another benefit of cryotherapy is improved sleep. Inflammation in the body can disrupt sleep patterns, leading to insomnia and other sleep disorders. By



reducing inflammation, cryotherapy can help to improve sleep quality and duration, which can have a number of positive effects on overall health.

Cryotherapy has also been shown to improve mood and reduce stress levels. The extreme cold temperatures used in cryotherapy can trigger the release of endorphins, which are the body's natural painkillers and mood elevators. This can help to reduce stress and anxiety levels, and improve overall mood and well-being.

One of the most exciting potential benefits of cryotherapy is its ability to boost the immune system. By reducing inflammation in the body, cryotherapy can help to improve the function of the immune system, which can help to protect against a range of illnesses and diseases.

There are a number of different types of cryotherapy available, including whole body cryotherapy and localized cryotherapy. Whole body cryotherapy involves standing in a chamber filled with extremely cold air for a short period of time, typically between two and four minutes. Localized cryotherapy involves applying cold temperatures to a specific area of the body, such as the knee or shoulder.

While cryotherapy is generally considered safe, there are some potential risks and side effects to be aware of. These can include skin irritation, numbness, and tingling sensations. It's important to talk to a healthcare provider before trying cryotherapy, especially if you have any underlying health conditions or concerns.

Cryotherapy is a powerful treatment that can help to reduce inflammation and pain in the body. From pain relief to improved muscle recovery and circulation, cryotherapy offers a number of benefits for overall health and well-being. While there are some potential risks and side effects, the benefits of cryotherapy make it an exciting treatment option for athletes, chronic pain sufferers, and anyone looking to improve their overall health and wellness.



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# IN OFFICE HYSTEROSCOPY

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

### What is a hysteroscopy?

Hysteroscopy is a procedure that can be used to both diagnose and treat causes of abnormal bleeding. The procedure allows your doctor to look inside your uterus with a tool called a hysteroscope. This is a thin, lighted tube that is inserted into the vagina to examine the cervix and inside of the uterus. Hysteroscopy can be a part of the diagnosis process or an operative procedure.

### What is diagnostic hysteroscopy?

Dr. Gauta normally performs a diagnostic hysteroscopy in the office. The patient receives analgesia so they will be comfortable during the test. It is used to diagnose conditions such as abnormal uterine bleeding, adhesions, fibroids, polyps or to locate displaced intrauterine devices IUDs.

One of the newest technologies he uses in the office and in conjunction with the hysteroscope is RESECTR™. RESECTR allows Dr. Gauta to gently remove and eliminate intrauterine fibroids without the need to remove or even cut the uterus and without harming your uterine lining. This is especially important if you want to have children in the future. The procedure is performed under local analgesia and most patients experience only mild to moderate cramping. Patients go home the same day and on average, a 3 cm fibroid (about the size of a grape) can be removed in approximately 10 minutes.

### What is operative hysteroscopy?

Operative hysteroscopy is used to correct an abnormal condition that has been detected during a diagnostic hysteroscopy. If an abnormal condition was detected during the diagnostic hysteroscopy, an operative hysteroscopy can often be performed. Many conditions can be treated in the office using advanced technologies such as RESECTR which eliminates the need for a second visit and is a cost savings to the patient.

The time it takes to perform a hysteroscopy can range from less than five minutes to more than an hour depending on your specific condition. If an operative hysteroscopy is required Dr. Gauta will determine if it should be done in the office or surgery center. The choice is yours however where you would like your procedure done.



When is operative hysteroscopy used? Your doctor may perform a hysteroscopy to correct the following uterine conditions:

- · Polyps and fibroids: Hysteroscopy is used to remove these non-cancerous growths found in the uterus.
- · Adhesions: Also known as Asherman's Syndrome, uterine adhesions are bands of scar tissue that can form in the uterus and may lead to changes in menstrual flow as well as infertility. Hysteroscopy can help your doctor locate and remove the adhesions.
- · Septums: Hysteroscopy can help determine whether you have a uterine septum, a malformation (defect) of the uterus that is present from birth.
- · Abnormal bleeding: Hysteroscopy can help identify the cause of heavy or lengthy menstrual flow, as well as bleeding between periods or after menopause. Endometrial ablation is one procedure in which the hysteroscope, along with other instruments, is used to destroy the uterine lining in order to treat some causes of heavy bleeding.

### When should hysteroscopy be performed?

Your doctor may recommend scheduling the hysteroscopy for the first week after your menstrual period. This timing will provide the doctor with the best view of the inside of your uterus. Hysteroscopy is also performed to determine the cause of unexplained bleeding or spotting in postmenopausal women.

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### How is hysteroscopy performed?

Prior to the procedure, your doctor may prescribe a sedative to help you relax. You will then be given analgesia appropriate for where you are having the procedure done. The procedure itself takes place in the following order:

- . The doctor will dilate (widen) your cervix to allow the hysteroscope to be inserted.
- · The hysteroscope is inserted through your vagina and cervix into the uterus.
- · Carbon dioxide gas or a liquid solution is then inserted into the uterus, through the hysteroscope, to expand it and to clear away any blood or mucus.
- · Next, a light shone through the hysteroscope allows your doctor to see your uterus and the openings of the fallopian tubes into the uterine cavity.
- · Finally, if surgery needs to be performed, small instruments are inserted into the uterus through the hysteroscope.

### What can I expect after a hysteroscopy?

Most patients require nothing more than tylenol or ibuprofin to help with mild cramping.



Joseph Gauta, MD

Nicole Houser, PA-O



# HEALTH SERVICES BROUGHT TO YOU...

By Nadine "Deanie" Singh, APRN - Founder & CEO

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Founded in 2018, we are a 501(c)3 organization based in Fort Myers, FL. As Founder and CEO, I am an Autonomous, Registered, Board-Certified Nurse Practitioner with over twenty years of nursing experience in various health practices.

While pursuing my master's degree, I wrote my dissertation about owning a mobile medical clinic after retiring. A few years later, while working in the hospital, I found that many young African American males were on dialysis in local hospitals. Many others had chronic, preventable diseases that could have been avoided with earlier medical care. With a sense of urgency to care for the vulnerable, I bought my first mobile medical clinic with my personal savings from eBay. Premier now operates 2 mobile medical clinics and a walk-in clinic. The mobile clinics are a vital part of our operation and currently travel to 8 marginalized communities.

Premier is your #1 source for primary care, disease prevention and health advocacy. Our life-impacting services include free health screenings for early detection and treatment, free school and sports physicals, blood pressure and diabetes screens with foot exams, drug screens, physicals with lab testing, lipid panels, basic metabolic profiles, prescriptions, flu and strep swabs, HIV, STD, INR, and TB testing plus comprehensive men's and women's wellness visits. We manage chronic diseases such as: hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, and hyperlipidemia. We offer Covid19 testing and vaccines, flu and pneumonia vaccines and ongoing blood work to manage and prevent immune compromising conditions. We provide medical supplies, medication reviews, smoking cessation education, and nutrition consultation. We aim to improve your quality of life, achieve your wellness goals, and bring health and longevity.



We have an onsite laboratory in our walk-in clinic so we can test in-house for RSV, hemoglobin, hemoglobin AIC micro albumin, pregnancy, hepatitis C, HIV, strep, influenza A & B, lipid panels and urinalysis. This is indeed a game-changer for the uninsured and underinsured patients in Lee County. It ensures that we get quick lab results, making the treatment planning process timelier since patients no longer have to wait for their test results to come back for a second visit.

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### Are You Suffering from Long Covid Symptoms?

We were recently awarded an American Rescue Plan Act Grant (ARPA) through the United Way of Lee County for our Health Improvement with Care (HIWC) program. This program is for individuals suffering from long Covid symptoms which include cardiac and respiratory illnesses, such as heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and blood clots post Covid. We also help patients suffering from depression from job loss, deaths of family members or friends or their own health issues due to infection from COVID-19. Call us today to see if this program is right for you.

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#### Disaster Response Services

Never in our wildest dreams did we anticipate responding to a disaster the magnitude of Hurricane lan. As a local 501c3 non-profit organization, Premier Mobile Health Services is committed to providing its services for the long term by continuing to mobilize its mobile medical clinics to the areas that need the most help. Since September 28, 2022, our efforts have helped over 4,000 individuals.

We get up every day and do what we do for the love of our community. Our fully staffed mobile medical clinics can travel to any disaster location in the State of Florida. We can bring licensed medical staff, medications, vaccines, and basic supplies where needed most. We provide lifesaving medical care but also bring love, hope, compassion, and a sense of well-being to the individuals we serve during the worst time of their lives.



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### **Osteoporosis Prevention Through Holistic Approaches**

steoporosis is a condition that affects millions of people worldwide, particularly women who are postmenopausal. It is a degenerative disease that weakens bones and increases the risk of fractures. This happens because as we age, our bodies lose bone density and strength. When this process is accelerated, it leads to osteoporosis. However, there are holistic ways to prevent this condition.

Firstly, it's important to understand the causes of osteoporosis. Genetics, hormonal imbalances, and certain medications can contribute to osteoporosis. However, lifestyle factors are the biggest culprits. A diet lacking in calcium, vitamin D, and other essential nutrients can weaken bones. Sedentary lifestyles, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption can also contribute to the development of osteoporosis.

One holistic way to prevent osteoporosis is to eat a diet that is rich in nutrients essential for bone health. Calcium is the building block of bones, and vitamin D is necessary for calcium absorption. Foods such as milk, cheese, yogurt, and leafy green vegetables are excellent sources of calcium. Vitamin D can be obtained from sunlight, but it's also present in fatty fish, egg yolks, and fortified foods such as milk and orange juice.

It's important to note that calcium and vitamin D supplements should only be taken under the guidance of a healthcare professional. Supplements can interact with other medications and cause adverse effects.



Another way to prevent osteoporosis is through regular exercise. Weight-bearing exercises such as walking, jogging, dancing, and strength training can help maintain bone density and strength. Exercise also improves balance and coordination, which can reduce the risk of falls and fractures.

In addition to diet and exercise, there are other holistic approaches to preventing osteoporosis. Stress management techniques such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing can help reduce cortisol levels, which can contribute to bone loss. Acupuncture, massage, and chiropractic care can also be beneficial in improving overall bone health.

It's important to also limit or avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. Smoking reduces bone density, and excessive alcohol consumption can interfere with the body's ability to absorb calcium and other nutrients essential for bone health. In conclusion, osteoporosis is a condition that can be prevented through holistic lifestyle changes. A diet rich in calcium and vitamin D, regular exercise, stress management techniques, and limiting or avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption are all essential for maintaining strong and healthy bones. As with any health condition, it's important to consult with a healthcare professional before making any significant lifestyle changes or taking supplements.

> The Greatest Wealth is Health The key to staying healthy includes good preventive care.

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## DON'T BE AN APRIL FOOL AND GET CAUGHT IN THE GUARDIANSHIP PROCESS

By Kelly L. Fayer, P.A.

ast month we talked about the importance of establishing a power of attorney before it becomes necessary for the court to intervene and make decisions for your family. This month let's look at what happens when guardianship must be decided on behalf of your loved one.

Sometimes guardianship is temporary, due to an emergency. Oftentimes, however, legal guardianship (by a family member) is sought after if a senior loved one has been diagnosed with some type of cognitive impairment such as dementia or Alzheimer's and is unable to care for themselves.

### What is Guardianship?

According to Florida courts, a guardian is a surrogate decision-maker appointed by the court to make personal and/or financial decisions for a minor or for an adult with mental or physical disabilities. The term used for the subject of a legal guardianship is a "ward."

Florida law requires the court to appoint a guardian for minors in circumstances where the parents die or become incapacitated, or if a child receives an inheritance or proceeds of a lawsuit or insurance policy exceeding the amount allowed by statute.

Adult guardianship is the process by which the court finds an individual's ability to make decisions so impaired that the court gives the right to make decisions to another person. Guardianship is only warranted when no less restrictive alternative, such as durable power of attorney, is found by the court to be appropriate and available.

Florida law allows both voluntary and involuntary guardianship. A voluntary guardianship may be established for an adult who, though mentally competent, is incapable of managing his or her own estate and who voluntarily petitions for the appointment.

Accordingly, Florida law provides for limited as well as plenary adult guardianship. A limited guardianship is appropriate if the court finds the ward lacks the capacity to do some, but not all, of the tasks necessary to care for his or her person or property; and if the individual does not have pre-planned, written instructions for all aspects of his or her life. A plenary guardian is a person appointed by the court to exercise all delegable legal rights and powers of the adult ward after the court makes a finding of incapacity. Wards in plenary guardianships are, by definition, unable to care for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

### **Duties of a Guardian**

A guardian has a duty of care toward a vulnerable adult or minor. In plain terms, this means that the guardian must put the interests of the ward first.

### The guardian may have many responsibilities, such as:

- · Deciding where the person will live
- · Keeping them healthy
- · Preparing a budget based on their finances
- Arranging for recreation and social contact

To give you an idea of the many responsibilities involved, most states' handbooks for appointed guardians are generally over 300 pages.

#### **Pitfalls of Guardianship**

There are several pitfalls to be aware of before making the decision to go through guardianship proceedings.

The process of seeking guardianship can be long and involved. There are many hoops to jump through along the way.

• A guardianship case requires the filing of numerous legal documents. There will be at least one court proceeding and/or hearing, but probably more.

• The adult children/petitioners will have to prove the proposed ward is incapacitated, unable to care for themselves, or make their own decisions – thus in need of a guardian. They will have to present evidence about the ward's mental capacity, as well as their health. Can the ward handle their financial affairs? What about their ability to provide for their own personal care, perform activities of daily living (toileting, dressing, eating, etc.) or maintain safe living conditions?



 The appointment of a guardian can be expensive.
 If a senior parent opposes the appointment of guardians (or a sibling or other person objects), court approval will take much longer and will become more expensive.

 Becoming a guardian of the person means you will be in control of every facet of the ward's world.
 Researching and making difficult decisions on behalf of the ward may be stressful and draining on your own health and emotional well-being.

 A guardian has a legal responsibility to make at least one annual report to the court. You'll have to provide information about financial matters (which bills were paid from which bank accounts, tax returns, asset inventories, etc.).<sup>2</sup>

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.

 Robin Schiltz, C.D.S. (2022) What is guardianship of an elderly parent?, Senior Safety Advice. Senior Safety Advice. Available at: https://seniorsafetyadvice.com/what-is-guardianship-of-an-elderlyparent/.

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Guardianship, Florida Office of State Courts Administrator. Available at: https://www.flcourts.gov/Resources-Services/Office-of-Family-Courts/Family-Courts/Guardianship.

### Lee Edition - April 2023 Health & Wellness 41

## A Coping and Life Skills Summer **Camp for teens**

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### LIVING WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS **Sage Infusion Can Provide Relief** A short 30-minute infusion is given as two starter

ver 1.3 million people live with Rheumatoid arthritis (RA), according to the American College of Rheumatology. Women are about two to three times more likely to get RA than men. Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disorder affecting your joints and causes swelling and pain. In some people, the condition can damage various body systems, including the skin, eyes, lungs, heart, and blood vessels.

An autoimmune disorder, rheumatoid arthritis, occurs when your immune system mistakenly attacks your own body's tissues. Unlike the wear-and-tear damage of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis affects the lining of your joints, causing a painful swelling that can eventually result in bone erosion and joint deformity.

The inflammation associated with rheumatoid arthritis is what can damage other parts of the body as well. Patients traditionally are prescribed oral medications to treat their symptoms. And while new types of medications have improved symptoms and treatment options dramatically, patients with severe rheumatoid arthritis can still develop physical disabilities, find that their medication is simply not working or can have a difficult time taking oral medications.

Luckily for patients there is another treatment option - infusion therapy. Infusions target the immune system and prevent inflammation that causes RA symptoms. This treatment can start to provide relief from symptoms and or patients start to notice an improvement within weeks to months of getting their first infusion. Some infusion treatment options that have shown results are:

### Actemra

Actemra is a prescription medicine called an interleukin-6 (IL-6) receptor antagonist. Actemra is used to treat adults with moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis (RA) after at least one other medicine called a disease-modifying antirheumatic drug (DMARD) has been used and did not work well. One dose of Actemra is given every four weeks to treat patients.

Actemra infusions have been studied in five key clinical trials, including over 4,000 people living with moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis (RA).



These studies tested how well infusions worked for people with RA, and the side effects associated with receiving Actermra.

- 70% of people getting Actemra infusions achieved an ACR20 response after six months
  - That means they saw a 20% improvement in their swollen and tender joints and other **RA** symptoms
- 53% of patients taking methotrexate alone as their RA treatment achieved that same response

### Orencia

Orencia assesses signs and symptoms of moderate to severe Rheumatoid Arthritis in adults 18 years and older. Taking Orencia may prevent further damage to your bones and joints and may help your ability to perform daily activities. Orencia may help those who are not getting the results they need with other medicines for RA. In adults, Orencia may be used alone or with other RA treatments other than Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitors or biological disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (bDMARDs), such as tumor necrosis factor (TNF) antagonists.Patients receive the first three infusions two weeks apart from each other (Weeks 0, 2, and 4). After that, they receive an infusion every four weeks.

 In a clinical study of 256 people with RA, 41% of people achieved a low level of disease activity with Orencia and methotrexate compared with 23% of people taking methotrexate alone based on disease scores.

### Simponi Aria

Simponi Aria is a prescription medicine used to treat moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in adults, used in combination with methotrexate and active psoriatic arthritis (PsA) in people 2 years of age and older. Simponi Aria targets, binds with, and blocks excess TNF-alpha (tumor necrosis factor-alpha), an underlying cause of inflammation.

doses four weeks apart. Then the patient receives infusions every eight weeks.

- In a medical study of 395 patients with RA, 59% of patients treated with Simponi Aria® when taken with methotrexate (MTX) had a 20% improvement in symptoms of RA (joint pain, stiffness, and swelling) at 14 weeks, compared to 25% of the 197 patients treated with MTX alone.
- 71% of 395 patients treated with Simponi Aria<sup>®</sup> when taken with MTX had no further joint damage as seen on X-ray at 24 weeks, compared to 57% of the 197 patients treated with MTX alone.

### Sage Infusion Can Help

At Sage Infusion, we provide expert patient-centered infusion care in a contemporary boutique environment. Sage Infusion offers RA infusion treatments to patients and will handle the care coordination process with the referring physician, 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.



(239) 533-5962 sageinfusion.com/swwellness 8880 Gladiolus Drive, Suite C-200 Fort Myers, FL 33908

### The Promising Role of CBD in Treating Autism

utism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition that affects social interaction, communication, and behavior. It is estimated that one in 54 children in the United States has ASD, and the prevalence of the disorder has been increasing in recent years. While there is no cure for autism, various therapies and medications are available to manage its symptoms. However, some parents of children with autism have turned to cannabidiol (CBD) as a natural alternative to traditional treatments. In this article, we will explore the effectiveness of CBD in treating autism and its potential as a therapeutic option.

CBD is a non-psychoactive compound found in the cannabis plant. Unlike tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), another compound in cannabis, CBD does not produce the "high" associated with marijuana use. Instead, CBD has been found to have a range of therapeutic benefits, including pain relief, anxiety reduction, and anti-inflammatory properties. CBD works by interacting with the body's endocannabinoid system (ECS), which is involved in regulating mood, appetite, pain, and other physiological functions.

While there is limited research on the use of CBD in treating autism specifically, some studies have shown promising results. One study published in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders found that CBD-enriched cannabis extract improved the symptoms of autism in 80% of the participants. The study involved 60 children with autism who were given a daily dose of CBD-enriched



cannabis extract for six months. The researchers found that the children experienced significant improvements in their behavioral symptoms, including anxiety, communication problems, and disruptive behaviors.

Another study published in the Frontiers in Veterinary Science journal looked at the effects of CBD on dogs with idiopathic epilepsy, which shares some similarities with autism in terms of its underlying mechanisms. The study found that CBD reduced the frequency of seizures and improved the dogs' behavior and quality of life. While this study was not conducted on humans with autism, it suggests that CBD may have potential as a treatment for neurological conditions.

CBD has also been found to be safe and well-tolerated in humans. A 2018 review of existing research on CBD found that it was generally safe and had few side effects, even at high doses. However, it is important to note that CBD can interact with some medications, so anyone considering using CBD for autism should consult with a healthcare provider first.

While the evidence for CBD's effectiveness in treating autism is still limited, it is clear that more research is needed in this area. As with any treatment, it is important to approach CBD with caution

and to only use it under the guidance of a healthcare professional. However, the potential benefits of CBD in managing the symptoms of autism are worth exploring, particularly given the limited treatment options currently available.

CBD shows promise as a natural alternative to traditional treatments for autism. While there is limited research on its effectiveness specifically in treating autism, some studies have shown promising results in improving behavioral symptoms. CBD's safety and well-tolerance in humans also make it an attractive option for those seeking natural therapies. However, further research is needed to fully understand the potential benefits and risks of using CBD for autism. As with any treatment, it is important to consult with a healthcare professional before starting CBD.

### 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 massotheraphy 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, stop by, or call us to find out more at (239) 676-0915.



## **Reflections of an Adult Child** Some would call the term "adult child' an oxymoron. I would call it my life.

By Guest Author, Bruce Nathanson, Advisor, Senior Care Authority

he truth is, so long as we have a parent—and no matter how old we are—we are locked into the role of being a child. For better or for worse.

Caregiving for a parent instantly propels us into the unknowns of aging, complete with its anxiety, frustration, and unpredictability. And, just as we learned as little kids, while we can't always control a situation, we can certainly exert a powerful influence upon it.

Only now, the stakes are so much higher; the pressures, so much greater.

Here is my story. While working as an executive for the largest nonprofit nursing home in New York State, I was the lead caregiver for two aging parents. They were on very different trajectories. Dad, beset with cancer and cardio issues, was physically breaking down. Mom, who held it together while Dad declined, experienced a fall shortly after his death. This resulted in a broken hip, which in turn hastened the progressive dementia which followed. While my siblings were there to help, as the "aging specialist," I became the health care proxy and clinical point of contact.

I learned a few things along the way.

First, have the conversation—or better yet, a series of conversations— about what really matters in the final chapters of life....and end of life. This process may take some time to get rolling. Discomfort, avoidance, and denial are always present. However, try to engage your parents as early as possible, involve your siblings, and be open to everyone's thoughts and feelings. Listen hard to what is being said. Facilitate, but do not be too quick to put your stamp on the outcome. Consider reading and discussing Atul Gawande's wonderful book Being Mortal, if that type of dialogue works for your family. Evaluate all options and choices that need to be made.

Second, get your ducks in a row. Organize the things that you can control, recognizing that aging and caregiving are unpredictable journeys.



Jack and Florence Nathanson

Get the basics in order, including legal affairs, finances, insurance, medical care, and safe housing.

Third, don't try to go it alone. Use professional resources that are readily available, and get trusted, third-party advice. Talk to friends, participate in support groups. At work, consider speaking with your supervisor and the Human Resources/Benefits Departments about your situation and the stresses that you face. They are there to support you and to enhance your well-being. Even with all the support from friends and family, work colleagues and Human Resources, I could have used even more help. I wish I knew then about Senior Care Authority.

Finally, take care of yourself even as you take care of someone else. Caregiving can be all-consuming. Don't let it be. Make time for yourself and your family. Find time to exercise—even if it's a short walk—and eat as healthily as possible. Breathe.

After seven years of caregiving for two frail, aging parents, to say I felt fatigued would be an understatement. At the same time, I was honored to be able to help my parents when they needed it most. What was most meaningful were the gifts that they both gave me in their final years; the time spent, the stories told, the chance to be together when it really mattered. After all, I was still their child and that's what parents do for their kids. Being a caregiver just made it possible.

I often wonder, in retrospect, how could I have been a better caregiver? As my parents slowed down, I needed to move faster just to keep up with their needs. I had so many questions...and hardly had the time to find the answers. What I really needed was a personal consultant like a Care Advisor from Senior Care Authority, someone experienced and trustworthy who could instantly provide guidance and support.

### Senior Care Authority can answer questions like:

- 1. What type of senior living community would be the right place?
- 2. How do I know when it's time?
- 3. How do I keep my promises while making sure they get the best care?
- 4. How do we build consensus as a family so nobody feels left behind?

Fast forward to today, I am pleased to be associated with Senior Care Authority and to provide these advisory services to older adults and their families. It is my pleasure to help navigate the maze of care and housing issues. If you need assistance, please contact me at bruce@seniorcareauthority.com or call 914-419-1302 or anyone in our Florida location at (239) 300-2133 or by emailing info@scanyfl.com.

**Bruce Nathanson** is an Advisor with Senior Care Authority NY FL. In addition to working directly with clients, he also consults with small and mid-sized companies on a benefits program for employees who are juggling the demands of caregiving for older relatives. The program is called EASE— Employee Assistance Solutions for Eldercare.



Senior Living and Care Solutions

## ARTHRITIC KNEE PAIN: DO YOU REALLY NEED SURGERY?

By Physicians Rehabilitation

alking, standing and exercising put a lot of strain on our knees. For example, a person that weighs 150 lbs. walking up a flight of stairs will put approximately 500 lbs. of pressure on their knees with each step. Not only is the knee one of the most intricate of all the joints in the body, but they are also the most susceptible to arthritis. Multiple types of arthritis affect the knees, but osteoarthritis is by far the number one type that surpasses all others.

### What is Osteoarthritis (OA) of the Knee?

Positioned between the three bones of the knee (the femur, tibia, and patella) the articular cartilage provides a smooth gliding surface and acts as a shock absorber. This cartilage is smooth and resilient but susceptible to wear and tear. Once the cartilage begins to break down it is difficult to stop and often the cartilage breaks down completely and wears away. This can cause soreness, swelling, and stiffness, and it is the beginning stages of osteoarthritis, or bone rubbing against bone, which in turn causes bone spurs and a great deal of discomfort.

Articular cartilage has no blood supply. The cells that make the cartilage are nourished by the synovial fluid, and hydrostatic pressure of the joint influences the health and pathological condition of arthritis. The wear and tear process can be slowed often by weight reduction, strengthening the muscles surrounding the joints, and by minimizing or reducing activities that put excessive weight on the knee joints. However, there are well-known non-invasive treatments that have helped numerous people regenerate knee joint function and tissue. Osteoarthritis develops slowly, and the often the pain becomes worse with time. This type of arthritis is also known as degenerative joint disease, because it is often associated with the aging process. But occasionally, this process can also affect younger people too. The pain can be debilitating and interfere with daily activities, affect your ability to work and create limited range of motion in your life.

### MANY PHYSICIANS WILL RECOMMEND SURGERY, BUT DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

#### Knee Replacement Surgery is Permanent

Starting with a more conservative approach is a better choice. Knee replacement is a very extreme measure to take without considering all of your options for a condition as common as knee arthritis. <u>Physicians</u> <u>Rehabilitation has an effective knee program that</u> <u>entails several non-invasive treatments that can alleviate pain, increase weight bearing and strength, and</u> <u>regenerate tissue.</u>

### Physicians Rehabilitation's Knee Therapy

- **Program Includes:**
- PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma)
- Physical therapy
- Bracing
- Rehabilitation
- · Supplementation and more

#### Viscosupplementation

Viscosupplementation is an FDA approved, guided, hyaluronic acid injection. It is a gel like substance that is very similar to the synovial fluid in our joints, which reduces inflammation and increases cushioning and lubrication of your knees immediately. This treatment protocol is used to treat the symptoms associated with arthritis. Viscosupplementation (also known as hyaluronic acid injection) involves injecting a lubricating fluid into the knee joint to promote more comfortable knee movement, reduce friction in the joint, and slow the progression of arthritis. This treatment is also commonly paired with physical therapy to help strengthen the joint and improve range of motion. At Physicians Rehabilitation, we perform viscosupplementation with the guidance of advanced fluoroscopic technology to achieve enhanced precision and provide our patients with optimal results. Viscosupplementation is considered to be a safe procedure, and is covered by Medicare and most insurances.

#### 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.

Research studies and clinical practice have shown PRP therapy is 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**

We are a leading provider of nonsurgical orthopedic solutions in the Florida. We cater to patients of all ages and lifestyles who are at their wit's end with symptoms of osteoarthritis and other debilitating joint conditions. If you're ready to find meaningful relief from your knee pain, we encourage you to consult with our board-certified physicians about your nonsurgical treatment options – even if other doctors have told you that surgery is the only answer.



### **A New Way to Treat Treatment-Resistant Depression**

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

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<sup>®</sup> (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-ofpocket, 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.



Dr. S. Mann, M.D. Lyndsay Henry, PhD Chief Medical Officer

Dr. H. Layman VP of Clinical Psychiatrist



Services

14150 Metropolis Ave., Fort Myers, FL 33907 1-239-237-5473| https://whitesandstreatment.com

If you or someone close to you is struggling with treatment resistant depression, anxiety, PTSD, mood disorders, or depressive disorders, get in touch with WhiteSands Treatment today at 239-237-5473, or visit https://whitesandstreatment.com

## **C5 Nerve Masquerading as Shoulder Pain**

By Dale Segal, MD

he C5 nerve is the power line of the upper arm. It is the electric circuit that transmits signals back and forth from your brain to your shoulder.

When you raise your arm above your head it's your C5 nerve that sends an electric impulse from your brain through your spinal cord to your shoulder muscles. When you feel someone tapping on your shoulder to get your attention; that's your C5 nerve sensing pressure on your shoulder and transmitting that signal into your consciousness.

When you experience shoulder pain, it is your C5 nerve responsible for sensing that miserable feeling.

Common sense tells us that shoulder pain is caused by a problem in the shoulder. Shoulder arthritis, rotator cuff tears, biceps tendinitis, subacromial impingement are all common causes of shoulder pain. Less commonly considered is compression of the C5 nerve causing referred pain to the shoulder. Spine specialist commonly see patients with shoulder pain that are treated with therapy, injections, and surgery with limited success. There may be overlapping effects where shoulder treatment only partially alleviates symptoms with patients continuing to experience residual pain. These patients only come to find out later that their problem was a C5 nerve compression in the cervical spine all along.



Cervical radiculopathy is a condition caused by a compressed or pinched nerve in the neck. Cervical radiculopathy of the C5 nerve is a common cause of shoulder pain. Shoulder pain from C5 radiculopathy can occur with or without neck pain. If shoulder pain is not responding to conventional treatment, then a neck MRI should be obtained to evaluate the C5 nerve.

Clues that shoulder pain may be caused by a C5 radiculopathy include associated numbness or tingling in the arm or muscle weakness. Pain may be triggered by certain neck movements.

An orthopedic spine specialist can examine both the shoulder and neck to determine whether symptoms are the result of shoulder or cervical spine pathology. If compression of the nerve is identified, then treatment can be initiated and can result in complete resolution of shoulder pain. Clinicians and patients should always consider C5 radiculopathy in the diagnosis and treatment of shoulder pain.



### 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.

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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 gualify. 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 to register or call 239-362-0855 for dates. Medicare's website is 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, 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.



www.Logicalinsurance.com info@Logicalinsurance.com

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.



### EVIDENCE OF GROWING CONFIDENCE IN THE NAPLES REAL ESTATE MARKET

By Robert Nardi, Broker/Owner

vidence of growing confidence in the Naples real estate market revealed itself in January as new sellers entered the sales market. New listings in January rose 74.5 percent. compared to December 2022 and 3.2 percent to 1,338 new listings from 1,297 new listings a year ago, according to the January 2023 Market Report by the Naples Area Board of REALTORS® (NABOR®), which tracks home listings and sales within Collier County (excluding Marco Island). But the rise in home options during January did not stymy home values as median closed prices rose 11.1 percent to \$600,000 from \$540,000 in January 2022. An even number of single-family homes and condominiums made up the increased inventory. Therefore, Buyers have more options. Closed sales in January decreased 33.8 percent to 555 homes from 839 in January 2022. But the spike in new listings is a good turn of events as they pushed inventory up 122.7 percent to 2,699 properties from 1,212 properties in January 2022.

Pending sales in January were remarkably higher than pending sales not only in December (682) but also compared to January 2019 (660) and January 2020 (892). Compared to last January's phenomenal sales activity, pending sales decreased 20.5 percent to 1,092 pending sales from 1,373 pending sales in January 2022.

Pent-up demand was evident in January. While showings decreased 20 percent compared to January 2022, they nearly doubled compared to December's reported showings. Of course, another factor contributing to increased contracts (pending sales) during January was the 1,092 price decreases reported for the month, which brought the overall percent of current list price value down to 95.8 percent, a 4.2 percent decrease from 100 percent in January 2022. The first price reductions occurred with investors. They wanted to move their inventory.

The NABOR® January 2023 Market Report compares single-family home and condominium sales (via the Southwest Florida MLS), price ranges, and geographic segmentation and includes an overall market summary. NABOR® sales statistics are in chart format and if you wish to receive a copy, please e-mail Robert@NardiRealty.com.

### What does this all mean?

Buyers have more of an opportunity to purchase with a more considerable inventory. However, depending on the property location, they may still have competing offers. Beachfront or near-the-beach properties are at high demand. It astounds me the number of multiple offers these properties can manifest. What is also apparent is most offers are all cash. We are talking about properties \$2 million or less. Paying cash used to be "king," but now everyone is offering it. So, it does not set an offer apart from others. Hence, having an experienced REALTOR® is essential who can create a strategy that will produce an accepted offer.

#### Interest Rates

Interest rates continue to inch up, and when this happens, it mentally prevents people from making a move unless an incident in life pushes the decision along, like birth or death. Generally, potential Buyers want to avoid making a move because their current mortgage rates are relatively low, generally from 2.75% to 3.75%. The higher interest rates are a deterrent. Luckily, this does not affect Florida like other states because we are primarily a secondary market. Hence, our market continues to push forward while other housing markets in the United States are stalling.

#### Do you think about a rental for next season?

Having a rental for the season is a great way to "test the waters." It is less expensive than purchasing property and allows people to explore Naples and its surrounding areas. Nardi Realty will be able to start booking rentals for next season starting Mid-April. The reason is that we give the current tenants the "first right of refusal." If they pass on their current rental, it will become available and offered to "next in line." Therefore, if you are interested in seasonal rentals, call Sheri Martin, Rental Administrator, at 239-571-6189. You will be placed on a list and contacted if the rental becomes available. Seasonal rates can go from \$4000 to \$100,000 monthly (Yes! \$100,000 is not a typo). Other expenses include Tourist Tax (any rental less than six months and one day is considered a short-term rental and will be taxed at 12%), application, background check, and cleaning fees.

Enjoy and have a fantastic April!

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# When You Are At Your Wits End

ave you ever been at your wits' end? Have you ever been so confused that you didn't really know which way was up? Have you ever had the feeling, "I know I need to do something...but I don't know what 'something'to do."

The Bible tells the story of a group of sailors who went out to sea and encountered a huge storm that almost killed them:

<sup>23</sup>Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. <sup>24</sup>They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep. <sup>25</sup>For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. <sup>26</sup>They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. <sup>27</sup>They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were <u>at their</u> <u>wits' end.</u> <sup>28</sup>Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. <sup>29</sup>He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. <sup>30</sup>They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. <sup>31</sup>Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Psalm 107:23-31

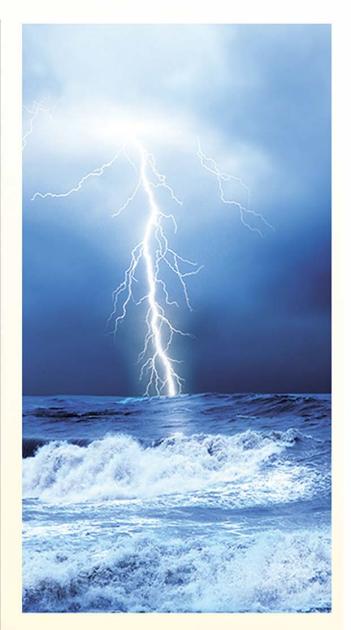
**Can you relate to this group of sailors?** Maybe the circumstances in your life have caused your courage to melt away. Perhaps you are going through a storm of your own. You may find yourself at your wits' end without any clear direction as to what to do next. If so, follow the example of the sailors in the Bible.

There first thing they did was cry out to the LORD in their trouble. Don't underestimate the power of prayer. An old gospel song says, "when God is all you have, you'll find He's all you need." God responded to the sailor's prayer by bringing them out of their distress. In fact, it says he stilled the storm to a whisper and the waves of the sea were hushed. God can do that in your life and in your situation as well. Call out to him. His timing is not always as quick as we may like but He knows what is best for each of us.

When the storm was over, the text says that God guided the sailors to their desired haven. They found their place of rest and peace. Storms don't last forever... and neither will yours. Keep your faith in God. Cry out to Him in your pain. Trust that He knows what's best and keep praying and seeking your desired haven... it may be just around the corner.

And then, don't forget to thank God when He does bring you through the storm. The story concludes by saying, "Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men."

Storms, crises, pain and problems are an unfortunate reality of life. We grow through the pain and learn valuable lessons during these times. Don't give up, give in, or quit. When you find yourself at your wits' end...hang on, cry out to God, and look for His deliverance.



Spiritual Mellness

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.



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