

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

# **Health & Wellness** MAGAZINE

July 2023

Charlotte/South Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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**POST-TRAUMATIC  
STRESS DISORDER  
(PTSD)  
YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

**THE VITAL  
BENEFITS OF  
HYDRATION  
AND IV THERAPY FOR  
SUMMER WELLNESS**

**THE CONNECTION  
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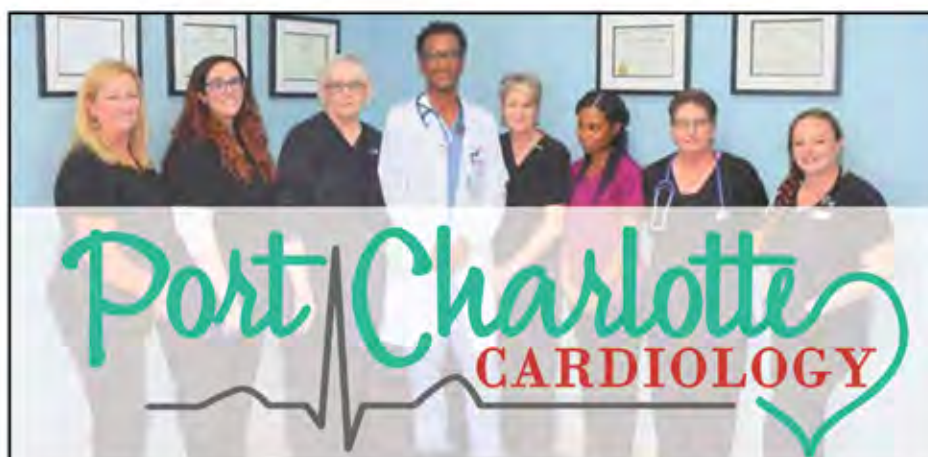
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# Affordable Medication Management Solutions Delivered To Your Door

**P**rescription Hope has provided access to prescription medications for Americans from all walks of life for over a decade. Since 2006, thousands of individuals and families have trusted Prescription Hope for their monthly prescription medications. For the set price of \$50 per month per medication, our Advocates order, manage, track, and refill your prescription medications through patient assistance programs for those who qualify. We manage your enrollment with these programs throughout the year, working with over 180 pharmaceutical manufacturers and their pharmacies. No other costs, fees, or charges are associated with your medication or our program. ***Prescription Hope is a national prescription drug benefit program that offers access to over 1,500 FDA-approved prescription medications at a price you can afford.***

## **An Example of How Prescription Hope Works:**

Myasthenia Gravis is a chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disorder affecting communication between nerves and muscles.

In a healthy body, nerve cells transmit signals to the muscles, which allow them to move. In MG, your immune system mistakenly produces antibodies that attack the receptors on your muscle cells. These receptors are called acetylcholine receptors, essential for transmitting nerve impulses to your muscles.

The antibodies in MG disrupt the normal functioning of acetylcholine receptors, leading to muscle weakness and fatigue. MG's most affected muscles are those that control eye and eyelid movements, facial expressions, chewing, swallowing, and speaking. However, MG can also affect muscles in other body parts, including the limbs.

The hallmark symptom of MG is muscle weakness that worsens with activity and improves with rest. This means you may experience fatigue and weakness in the affected muscles after using them for some time. For example, you may find it challenging to keep your eyes open, have difficulty chewing or swallowing, or experience slurred speech after talking for a while. Weakness can also affect your limbs, making lifting objects or climbing stairs more difficult.

It's important to note that MG symptoms can vary from person to person. Some individuals may have mild symptoms that only affect specific muscle groups, while others may experience more severe and generalized weakness.

Diagnosing MG typically involves a combination of clinical evaluation, physical examination, and specific tests. Your healthcare provider may conduct tests such as electromyography (EMG), blood tests to check for specific antibodies, and a medication called edrophonium (Tensilon) test to observe how your muscles respond.

Although there is currently no cure for MG, the condition can be effectively managed. Treatment options aim to improve muscle strength, minimize symptoms, and prevent complications. The most common approach involves medications that enhance the transmission of nerve signals to your muscles. These medications may include acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, immunosuppressants, or corticosteroids.

**Cellcept®** is the brand name for the medication mycophenolate mofetil, commonly used in treating Myasthenia Gravis (MG). It belongs to a class of medications called immunosuppressants.

Cellcept works by suppressing the activity of the immune system, specifically the production of certain immune cells called lymphocytes. By reducing the immune response, Cellcept helps to decrease the production of the antibodies that attack the acetylcholine receptors in MG.

## **The benefits of using Cellcept for MG include:**

**1. Improved muscle strength:** Cellcept can help reduce the symptoms of muscle weakness and fatigue associated with MG. By suppressing the immune response, it helps to prevent the destruction of acetylcholine receptors, allowing for better nerve-to-muscle communication.

**2. Symptom control:** Cellcept can help manage and control the symptoms of MG, including weakness in the muscles involved in eye movements, facial expressions, swallowing, and limb movements.

**3. Reduced frequency of MG exacerbations:** By modulating the immune response, Cellcept can help decrease the frequency and severity of MG exacerbations, which are periods of increased symptoms.

If you don't have medical insurance, the price of Cellcept is out of reach for many who are prescribed it. This is where Prescription Hope can help.

## **Your Benefits**

- A set price of \$50 monthly for each medication through Prescription Hope's medication access service.
- A team of Patient Advocates to assist you with any questions.
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- An individual earning around \$50,000 per year.
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- Guidelines increase with each additional dependent in households earning a combined income of up to \$200,000 annually.

## **Who Saves**

- Are you paying more than \$50 a month for each medication? If so, join the thousands of other individuals and families saved with Prescription Hope over the last decade.

## **No Enrollment Period**

- Unlike insurance programs there are no enrollment periods for Prescription Hope. This means you can enroll anytime.



Visit, [www.PrescriptionHope.com](http://www.PrescriptionHope.com) today to see if you qualify.



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# LAPIPLASTY: A NEW WAY TO FIX YOUR BUNION

By Dr. Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM, FACPM

**B**unions or hallux valgus (medical term) is a "bump" on the side of the big toe, but did you know the root cause of a bunion is located in the middle of the foot. Its causes from an unstable joint in the middle of the foot that allows your toe to become misaligned creating the visually and commonly painful "bump".

Traditionally, bunions were corrected by a 2-D osteotomy (cutting the bone). This procedure had a high recurrence rate meaning that the bunion would most likely return within a few years. Today, many

people fear having their bunion corrected because they know people or have heard of people who's bunion returned after surgical correction. The good news is: there are new and innovative ways to correct your bunion. One new method is a procedure called the Lapiplasty by Treace Medical.

The Lapiplasty is a 3-D bunion correction procedure. The patented procedure is designed to permanently correct your bunion. This means your bunion will not return. A 3-D bunion correction means the procedure corrects the deformity in all 3

planes by addressing the root cause, resulting in permanent correction of the bunion. Another advantage of this procedure is the patients can resume walking with a boot in two weeks. The surgery is performed under general anesthesia, allowing patients to return home that same day. Minimal pain is associated with recovery, but everyone is different. Your experience may not always be the same as someone's else's. During the recovery period, you will be placed in a boot during your first post op appointment. Patients will avoid walking and putting pressure on the foot for 1 – 2 weeks. Again, the patient will use a boot following the procedure for a duration of 6-8 weeks. If your right foot is the surgical foot, no driving for at least 4 weeks. Swelling and numbness are the most common complaints after surgery. Swelling is expected after any foot surgery and can last for a year. Numbness should resolve over time, but permanent numbness to areas around the surgical site or your big toe can be permanent. This should not affect your daily activities if you do develop any numbness.

To learn more about bunion correction procedures and if you are a candidate for the Lapiplasty procedure, please contact your local foot and ankle surgeon.

*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.*

While the bump appears here...

...the root of the problem, is actually located HERE



## The 3 dimensions of your bunion problem



### Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM, FACPM

Isin Mustafa, DPM, is a Podiatrist at Family Foot & Leg Centers in Port Charlotte, FL. She is a Fellow of the American College of Foot & Ankle Surgeons. Call 239-430-3668 or visit [www.NaplesPodiatrist.com](http://www.NaplesPodiatrist.com) to make an appointment. Visit [FootHealthFacts.org](http://FootHealthFacts.org) to learn more about foot and ankle conditions.



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# Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

## You Are Not Alone

By Steven Stein, MD - Board-certified Psychiatrist

**P**ost-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is one mental health condition that falls under a category of conditions that develop in response to life stress or traumatic events called Trauma and Stressor Related Disorders. It can occur at any age and any person who experienced or witnessed a traumatic event. Other similar disorders arguably on a spectrum with PTSD include Acute Stress Disorder and Adjustment Disorder. The management of these disorders can be similar, but often vary depending on the severity of symptoms, duration of time and impact on daily life. Identifying there is a problem is the first step in developing a solution and then the healing process can begin. Treatment typically involves a combination of therapy, medication, self-help strategies, and support from friends and family. The goal of this article will be to raise awareness of traumas/microtraumas, PTSD and similar Trauma and Stressor Related Disorders, identify some of the common triggers and traumatic events, and offer guidance on what may help the healing process and overall management.

As mentioned, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can develop after an individual experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. These events may include sexual or physical assault, natural disasters, combat, accidents, or any real or perceived life-threatening situations. Symptoms can arise immediately or soon after the event, but for some can be more insidious and even delayed months, if not years, after a trauma or series of traumas. Just like every individual is a unique person, there are no identical presentations of this disorder, but there are characterological similarities. Some of these include:

**1) Intrusive thoughts,** where the person often experiences disruptive and unwanted thoughts, memories, or nightmares related to past trauma. They may also have intense emotional or physiological reactions when exposed to reminders of the trauma, called triggers. These thoughts often come unannounced and are involuntary but can even be so severe that the person falls into a state where they relive or re-experience the traumatic event emotionally, physically and/or with the senses like sight and sound. These often-horrific events are called flashbacks.

**2) Avoidant behaviors:** People with PTSD may actively avoid reminders of the traumatic event such as places, people, activities, or conversations that could trigger distressing memories. They may

withdraw from social interactions and isolate themselves to prevent further distress. This can further lead to other mental health conditions like depression and anxiety.

**3) Negative Alterations in Cognition and Mood:** A person with PTSD often has changes in their thoughts and feelings after the trauma which may include a more pessimistic attitude/more negative thoughts, distorted thoughts about oneself or the world, feelings of guilt or shame, and a loss of overall pleasure or enjoyment in life.

**4) Hyperarousal:** Those with PTSD often exhibit heightened arousal, which can manifest as difficulty sleeping, irritability, hypervigilance, exaggerated startle response, and problems with concentration. They may feel constantly on guard and have trouble relaxing.

It's important to mention that not everyone who experiences a traumatic event will develop PTSD. The risk factors for PTSD can vary among individuals, including the severity of the trauma, inherent personal factors, social support, and pre-existing mental health conditions. Some may not meet criteria also based on severity of symptoms or the duration of time the symptoms have occurred. This can apply to the following two similar but separate diagnoses **1) Acute Stress Disorder:** also known as acute stress reaction, is a psychological condition that can occur immediately after a traumatic event. It shares similarities with PTSD, but the main distinction is that ASD occurs within a shorter timeframe, typically within three days to one month after the traumatic event, whereas PTSD symptoms may persist for months or years. **2) Adjustment Disorder** is another similar diagnosis that develops in response to a change in life considered stressful, where the person develops a change in emotions or behaviors that cause impairment in overall functioning. This can be seen or experienced as decreases in mood/depression, increases in anxiety, disturbances to conduct, emotional instability or often a combination.

Some common triggers for trauma reactions, adjustment difficulties and PTSD include:

**1. Survivors of physical or sexual assault:** Individuals who have experienced physical or sexual assault, whether in childhood or adulthood, are more likely to develop PTSD.

**2. Victims of domestic violence or abuse:** People who have been subjected to ongoing domestic violence or abuse may develop PTSD because of the trauma they have endured.

**3. Natural disaster survivors:** Those who have lived through natural disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, or wildfires may experience symptoms of PTSD.

**4. Accident survivors:** People who have been involved in severe accidents, such as car crashes or plane crashes, can develop PTSD.

**5. Medical trauma:** Individuals who have undergone major surgeries, life-threatening illnesses, or medical procedures can develop PTSD due to the traumatic nature of their experiences.

**6. Military personnel:** Soldiers and veterans who have experienced combat or other traumatic events during their service are at higher risk for developing PTSD.

**7. First responders and emergency personnel:** Police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and other first responders who frequently witness traumatic events may be at increased risk of developing PTSD.

**8. Witnesses of violence or traumatic events:** Individuals who have witnessed violent acts, terrorist attacks, or other traumatic events may experience symptoms of PTSD.

**Here are some key approaches to manage PTSD and the other discussed Trauma and Related Disorders:** For starters, seek professional help. It's important to consult a mental health professional experienced in treating PTSD. They can provide an accurate diagnosis and develop a tailored treatment plan based on your specific needs. This may include:

**1. Psychotherapy:** Trauma-focused therapies, such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), are effective in addressing traumatic experiences, managing symptoms, and promoting healthy coping strategies.

**2. Medications** such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or other psychiatric medications may be prescribed to manage specific symptoms like depression, anxiety, or sleep disturbances.

**3. Self-Care and Support:** Engaging in self-care practices, building a strong support network, and seeking support from friends, family, or support groups can be beneficial in the healing process.

If you or someone you know has experienced a traumatic event and is struggling with symptoms of PTSD, please know that you don't have to be alone in this struggle. There are things you can do and steps you can take to start feeling better, improve your symptoms and start living life the way you want to live it on your terms. Learning more about PTSD and understanding its effects can empower you to better manage your symptoms. Remember, managing PTSD is a gradual process, and it may take time, but it is effort well spent.

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# Protect Your Skin from the Sun

Information provided by Freedom Health Inc.

**F**lorida is the Sunshine State and we are lucky to enjoy sunny weather year-round. Healthy skin is not the one that looks tanned. On the contrary, it is the skin that is more protected from the damaging UV rays. Enjoy our beautiful beaches, springs, and state parks while protecting from the sun. Pay attention to changes in your skin and talk to your doctor.

The American Academy of Dermatology has declared skin cancer as the most common cancer in the United States. One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, and nearly 20 Americans die from melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, every day. When found early is highly treatable.

## What can you do to protect your skin?

Exposure to the sun's potent UV rays is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer. Protect your skin by:

- Seeking shade.
- Wearing a wide-brim hat that covers your ears and neck area.
- Wearing sunglasses.
- Wearing sun-protective clothing, like the ones made for fishermen.
- Applying sunscreen to all your skin not covered by clothing.
- Applying sunscreen to dry skin 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors.
- Never use tanning beds or sunlamps.

Sunscreen is one of the main elements to avoid sun damage. We understand that buying sunscreen can be confusing, there are several options in the market at different price ranges with and without tint or fragrance. Keep in mind these 2 main types of sunscreens:

- **Physical Sunscreen:** This sunscreen works like a shield; it sits on the surface of your skin, deflecting the sun's rays. Look for the active ingredients zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide. Opt for this sunscreen if you have sensitive skin. It is also known as mineral sunscreen.
- **Chemical sunscreen:** This sunscreen works as a sponge, absorbing the sun's rays. Look for one or more of the following active ingredients: oxybenzone, avobenzone, octisalate, octocrylene, homosalate and octinoxate. This formulation tends to be easier to rub into the skin without leaving a white residue.

If it's broad-spectrum, water-resistant, and has an SPF of 30 or higher, it can effectively protect you from the sun.

Keep in mind that the American Academy of Dermatology recommends choosing a sunscreen that says:

- **Broad Spectrum-** This means a sunscreen protects the skin from ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays, both of which can cause cancer.
- **SPF 30 or Higher-** How well a sunscreen protects you from sunburn.
- **Water resistant or very water resistant-** For up to 40 or 80 minutes. Sunscreens are not waterproof or sweatproof and need to be reapplied every two hours or after swimming or sweating.

**Remember:** Make sure you reapply it every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.

**Hint:** One ounce of sunscreen, enough to fill a shot glass, is considered the amount needed to cover the exposed areas of the body. For Medicare beneficiaries, check with your plan if sunscreen lotion is included in your over-the-counter items benefit. **For Freedom Health members:** check out our plan over-the-counter items catalog to order a sunscreen lotion. For more information check at [www.FreedomHealth.com](http://www.FreedomHealth.com) or call the number on the back of your ID card.

## Check your own skin.

People of all colors, including those with brown and black skin, get skin cancer. Even if you never sunburn, you can get skin cancer. *According to the American Academy of Dermatology, people with dark complexions are less likely to get cancer than those with lighter complexions.* Performing monthly skin self-exams can help you find cancer early when a cure is likely.

Do a full body exam of your skin using a full-length mirror and a partner or a handheld mirror every month. Look at your skin from head to toe by examining hard-to-see areas like the top of your head and back. Check places that get little sun like the bottoms of your feet, toenails, lower legs, groin, and buttocks. If you have questions about areas on your skin that have changed appearance, please talk to your doctor.

Source of information: American Academy of Dermatology



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# RN 2.0



By Nashat Abualhaija, Ph.D., RN

*"As a nurse, we have the opportunity to heal the heart, mind, soul, and body of our patients, their families, and ourselves. They may not remember your name, but they will never forget the way you made them feel."* – Maya Angelou

Interestingly, Maya Angelou was never a nurse, yet she had a deep understanding of what it takes to be one.

The need for nurses to provide compassionate care is part of the equation. With all the advancements in treatments, nurses need to have a deeper knowledge of their craft in order to provide their patients with holistic and complex care.

That's just one of the advantages nurses have when they earn their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN).

Other advantages of BSN-prepared nurses include:

- A better and faster track to pursue senior positions, including nurse managers and nursing directors
- Faster increases in hourly pay than those with an ASN
- A path to graduate nursing degrees

Additionally, state and regulatory agencies, including the Veterans Administration, have mandates for BSN-prepared nurses. Many healthcare facilities now require RNs to have a BSN for entry level nursing positions. As the population ages, the need for nurses with a BSN grows. Studies show that nurses with a BSN can provide a higher level of care because they have a higher level of competency in the nursing practice, increased skills in communication, leadership, professional integration, plus research and evaluation. In all, that leads to better patient outcomes.\*

We're offering RNs the opportunity to earn their BSN with us. This isn't your average RN to BSN program. We have specially designed this program to build on the knowledge you already have and take you to the next level of expertise. The classes are online, so you can still work while you're earning your BSN with us. Plus, you can graduate in just one year.



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*Dr. Nashat Abualhaija, Ph.D., RN, is the nursing program director at Hodges University.*

\*The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) "The Impact of Education on Nursing Practice (AACN, 2014)"



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# Treating Venous Ulcers at Joyce Vein & Aesthetic Institute

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

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

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



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

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

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

## PATIENT TESTIMONIAL

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

Michael C.



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

### SPECIALITY

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

### DEGREES

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

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

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

### TRAINING

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

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

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



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# PULMONARY HYPERTENSION

## Symptoms and Treatment Insights from a Cardiologist

By Dr. Aneley Yegezu Hundae, M.D., FACC

**P**ulmonary hypertension (PH) is a complex cardiovascular condition that affects the arteries in the lungs, leading to increased pressure within the pulmonary circulation. As a cardiologist, I have witnessed the impact of this disease on patients and their loved ones. In this article, we will delve into the realm of pulmonary hypertension, exploring its symptoms, understanding its underlying mechanisms, and shedding light on the latest advancements in its treatment.

### Understanding Pulmonary Hypertension

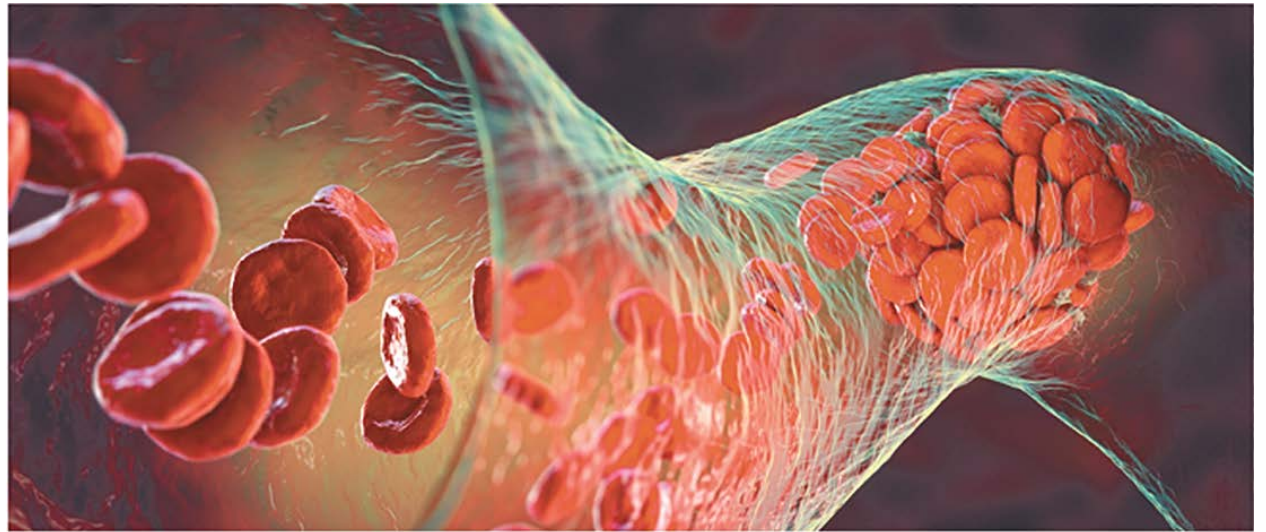
Pulmonary hypertension is characterized by high blood pressure within the pulmonary arteries, which supply blood from the heart to the lungs. This increased pressure can cause the arteries to narrow and stiffen, leading to reduced blood flow and oxygen delivery to the lungs. Common symptoms of pulmonary hypertension include shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain, dizziness, and swelling in the ankles, legs, and abdomen.

### Diagnosing Pulmonary Hypertension

Diagnosing pulmonary hypertension requires a comprehensive evaluation, including a detailed medical history, physical examination, and a variety of diagnostic tests. Echocardiography, pulmonary function tests, blood tests, and right heart catheterization are commonly employed to confirm the diagnosis and assess the severity of the condition. Early detection is crucial, as untreated pulmonary hypertension can lead to significant complications and reduced quality of life.

### Treatment Approaches

The treatment of pulmonary hypertension aims to alleviate symptoms, slow disease progression, and improve patients' quality of life. A multidisciplinary approach involving cardiologists, pulmonologists, and other healthcare professionals is essential. Medications such as calcium channel blockers, loop diuretics, prostacyclin analogs, endothelin receptor antagonists, and phosphodiesterase-5 inhibitors are commonly prescribed based on the underlying cause and severity of the condition. These medications help relax and widen blood vessels, reduce inflammation, and improve overall heart function.



In severe cases, surgical interventions like atrial septostomy or lung transplantation may be considered. Additionally, lifestyle modifications such as regular exercise, avoiding high altitudes, and maintaining a healthy weight can contribute to managing symptoms and slowing disease progression.

### Emerging Therapies and Hope for the Future

Recent advancements in research have paved the way for novel therapies in pulmonary hypertension. Targeted therapies that aim to address specific molecular pathways involved in the disease process are currently being explored. Additionally, gene therapies and stem cell treatments show promising potential for the future. These breakthroughs offer hope for improved outcomes and a better quality of life for individuals living with pulmonary hypertension.

Pulmonary hypertension poses significant challenges for patients and clinicians alike. Recognizing the symptoms and seeking early medical attention are vital for timely diagnosis and appropriate management. As a cardiologist, I remain committed to raising awareness about this condition and providing effective treatment options to improve patients' lives. With ongoing research and advancements in therapeutic interventions, we can continue to make strides in understanding and managing pulmonary hypertension, ultimately offering hope and a brighter future for those affected by this complex cardiovascular condition.



**Dr. Aneley Yegezu Hundae, M.D., FACC**

**INVASIVE CARDIOLOGY  
AND ADVANCED HEART  
FAILURE MANAGEMENT**

Dr. Hundae received his Premedical and Doctor of Medicine Degree from Jimma University School of Medicine. He completed his Internal medicine Residency at Mercer University School of Medicine. His Heart Failure/Heart Transplant fellowship at the University of Miami Cardiovascular Fellowship Program. Cardiovascular fellowship at Baylor University Medical Center.

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# Using CBD to Help Manage Anxiety

Occasional feelings of anxiety and panic are nothing to be alarmed about. Nearly everyone will experience these unwanted feelings at some time or another. However, when the frequency and intensity of your anxiety begin to interrupt your day-to-day life, it may be time to get help. While avoiding certain places and situations may be helpful, sometimes it is impossible. That's when having something to help calm your fears and worries can be beneficial.

Cannabidiol (CBD) is a cannabinoid from the Cannabis sativa plant. It, along with tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), has been researched extensively and has been shown to bind to cannabinoid receptors in the brain. CBD, unlike THC, does not produce a "high" and offers a variety of health benefits. Among those benefits is the treatment of anxiety.

## Benefits of CBD

CBD acts on opioid and glycine receptors in the body. These receptors are mostly found in the central and peripheral nervous systems. They regulate pain in the body. It also acts on the neurotransmitter serotonin, which helps us feel good in general. Low serotonin levels are closely associated with depression and may also cause anxiety.

Research has shown that some of the benefits of CBD can include:

- Reducing seizures
- Reducing inflammation
- Reducing pain
- Regulating the immune system
- Reducing anxiety

Conventional medicines generally used to treat low serotonin are called serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRI). Their common trade names are Zoloft and Prozac. These are only available by prescription. However, some studies have shown that instead of using SSRIs to treat anxiety, some patients may be able to manage their condition with CBD instead. (Always speak to your doctor before making any changes to prescribed medications.)



## How to use CBD for anxiety

Since CBD has not yet been given clear FDA guidance, the best way to use CBD for anxiety varies from person to person. Someone may find that a certain type and certain dosage works, while the same type and dosage has little effect on someone else. A bit of trial and error may be necessary in order to reach optimal effectiveness. (This is also true with conventional medicines too, so no need to be alarmed.)

The following are some of the forms in which CBD is available:

- Vapes heat CBD oil giving off an inhalable vapor.
- Flowers (dried hemp plants) can be smoked.
- Gummies are chewable and sweet like the popular candies.
- Oils and tinctures are consumed orally usually from droppers.
- Sprays can be sprayed into the mouth, usually under the tongue.
- Capsules or tablets are taken orally.
- Creams and gels are absorbed through the skin.

Again, trying different types and doses may be necessary. For example, you may find that vaping is more effective than gummies while another may find smoking to be most effective. Trying the different types will help you find what is right for you.

Usually the effects of oral CBDs, such as gummies or capsules, are felt within 30 minutes or a little more. Smoking or vaping usually has a more immediate effect.

The various forms can be used throughout the day to relieve anxiety. Some find it helpful to take them in the morning with breakfast.

## About Green Doc

We believe in improving the wellbeing of others through the proven and natural benefits of cannabis, and with GreenDoc the medical card process couldn't be easier.

We started GreenDoc for two reasons.

To share the healing qualities of marijuana with our community, and in doing so, begin to remove the stigma that has long been accompanied with the medicine.

Our family has a long history of military service, and it was painful to watch many of the veterans in our family and community suffer from chronic pain while being treated with an endless supply of opioid prescriptions pushed by greedy pharmaceutical companies.

We began looking into the research of marijuana and its medicinal qualities and knew this could be a solution for our family and friends. We wanted to make sure that anyone who qualified for, and could use medical marijuana, would be able to find a qualified doctor. Exploring the benefits of cannabis also led us to the new and exciting world of alternative cannabinoids – the other, often psychoactive, compounds in the cannabis plant.

While we are passionate about what medical marijuana and alternative cannabinoids can do for individuals, we understand the negative stigma they still carry. We are also aware that many are afraid to seek the relief that these products can provide because of the stigma. That is why support marijuana education and advocacy in the communities in which we operate.

We're both a medical marijuana facility as well as a no-card-required dispensary, and we seek to provide relief as nature intended.



## GreenDoc

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# The Vital Benefits of Hydration and IV Therapy for Summer Wellness

**A**s the scorching heat of summer arrives, it becomes crucial to prioritize hydration and take necessary measures to combat dehydration. In hot weather, our bodies lose significant amounts of water through perspiration, making it essential to replenish fluids regularly. While drinking water is fundamental, sometimes it may not be enough to restore electrolyte balance and provide adequate hydration. In such cases, intravenous (IV) therapy emerges as a valuable option to quickly rehydrate the body and replenish essential nutrients. This article explores the important benefits of hydration and IV therapy during the hot summer months.

## Efficient Rehydration

One of the significant advantages of IV therapy is its ability to deliver fluids directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the digestive system. This allows for rapid rehydration, especially beneficial for individuals experiencing severe dehydration or heatstroke. By administering a balanced solution of fluids and electrolytes intravenously, IV therapy ensures swift absorption and distribution throughout the body, effectively restoring hydration levels. Such efficiency is particularly crucial during hot summer months when the risk of dehydration is heightened.

## Electrolyte Balance Restoration

Excessive sweating during summer not only depletes water from our bodies but also leads to the loss of vital electrolytes like sodium, potassium, and magnesium. These electrolytes play a crucial role in maintaining the body's fluid balance, muscle function, and overall well-being. IV therapy offers a precise and controlled way to replenish electrolytes, as healthcare professionals can customize the solution based on an individual's specific needs. By restoring electrolyte balance, IV therapy aids in preventing muscle cramps, fatigue, and other symptoms associated with electrolyte imbalances, ensuring optimal functioning of the body.

## Enhanced Nutrient Absorption

In addition to hydration and electrolyte replenishment, IV therapy provides an avenue for delivering essential nutrients directly into the bloodstream. Nutrient deficiencies can be common, especially during hot weather when appetite might decrease.



## IV Therapy

- Fast Delivery
- 100% Absorption
- May Prevent Illness
- Restore Vitamin Levels
- Complete Rehydration
- Restore Your Energy

IV therapy allows for the administration of key vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants to support overall health and well-being. Whether it's Vitamin C for immune support, B-vitamins for energy, or antioxidants for cellular protection, IV therapy ensures efficient absorption and utilization of these vital nutrients, bypassing the digestive system's potential limitations.

## Faster Recovery and Energy Boost

Summer activities, such as outdoor sports and exercise, can take a toll on the body, leading to muscle fatigue and decreased energy levels. IV therapy, by providing quick rehydration and nutrient replenishment, accelerates recovery and boosts energy levels. The direct delivery of fluids and nutrients to the bloodstream helps in revitalizing the body's systems, enhancing physical performance, and reducing the time required for recovery. Whether you're an athlete or an individual seeking a quick energy boost, IV therapy can be an effective solution to regain vitality during the hot summer months.

Hydration plays a crucial role in maintaining our overall health and well-being, particularly during the hot summer months when the risk of dehydration is high. While regular water intake is essential, IV therapy offers additional benefits, ensuring efficient rehydration, restoring electrolyte balance, enhancing nutrient absorption, and expediting recovery. By bypassing the digestive system, IV therapy delivers fluids, electrolytes, and essential nutrients directly

into the bloodstream, maximizing their effectiveness. Whether it's to combat dehydration, recover from physical exertion, or boost energy levels, IV therapy emerges as a valuable tool for maintaining optimal wellness during the scorching summer days. Prioritizing hydration and considering IV therapy when necessary will help you enjoy the season while keeping your body healthy and well-hydrated.

## About Restoration Bar

Restoration Bar is the Anti Aging aspect of our medical office. Our belief is that through regeneration we can achieve restoration. As local medical providers, we have found that many office and hospital visits could be avoided had the patients maintained hydration and / or optimal oxygenation. A key component for our human body to function is adequate perfusion to all systems. Hydration and Oxygenation are critical for this.

At Restoration Bar, we offer IV fluids, vitamins and minerals to help with hydration status. In addition, we offer customized IV formulations to address specific goals. Our recreational oxygen offers 20 minutes of highly concentrated oxygen with or without plant based aromatherapy. Often, taking the time during this session to focus on inhalation and exhalation serves as a reminder of how we often 'forget to breathe' during our busy lives.

In addition, we offer a multitude of aging interventions. It is our belief that for our bodies to accept and respond to any of our services, being of optimal hydration and oxygenation is essential.

Ready to feel amazing?



SCAN ME

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**RESTORING THE HUMAN BODY**  
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# How a Calcium Score Test Can Offer Significant Hope for Your Cardiovascular Health

Individuals with cardiovascular and peripheral vascular disease have blood flow disruptions that can occur in the feet and legs, brain, arms, and heart. When the blood vessels are narrowed or damaged, the blood flow becomes obstructed, and other complications can coincide. Individuals with arterial and venous disease are very often related to atherosclerosis (plaque buildup in the arteries and veins). Atherosclerosis can lead to stroke, heart attacks, and other blood vessel conditions like DVT's (Deep Vein Thrombosis), venous insufficiency, and pulmonary embolisms.

Atherosclerosis issues affect 3 million Americans each year. Plaque is made up of fats, cholesterol, and other substances in and on your artery walls. If the plaque breaks off, it can cause a blood clot. If it narrows and blocks blood flow, you can go into cardiac arrest or other conditions.

If you are someone that struggles with high cholesterol, diabetes, pre-diabetes, venous insufficiency, varicose veins, PAD, or PVD, you might be interested in a non-invasive procedure that can measure the amount of plaque in your arteries. It's called a calcium score.

To precisely measure and detect plaque, a computerized tomography (CT) calcium score scan is an innovative technology that offers detailed results and is a precise way to detect atherosclerosis. Knowing the level of plaque a patient has provides their physician with significant information regarding the patient's risk factors for blockages, episodes of stroke or cardiovascular disease, and other associated conditions. It also is a great tool to help get patients motivated about their health, their diet, taking medications, and making lifestyle changes.

RAVE offers this advanced diagnostic imaging for their patients. Call today to schedule your appointment.

## RAVE Imaging

RAVE Imaging, Radiology Associates of Venice & Englewood, understands the importance of providing the best technology and the most advanced diagnostic tools for their patients.

RAVE is a radiology practice, which has been active for over 50 years. They currently consist of 10 board certified radiologists, many of which have postgraduate fellowships with subspecialty training, all of whom have years of fulltime experience. There are over 130 health care professions working with RAVE to provide the best possible radiologic services in Sarasota County. In addition to their personnel, they have some of the best radiologic imaging devices available. Superior visualization makes your diagnoses accurate and timely, preventing potentially dangerous delays in the initiation of your therapy. At RAVE, you can have confidence you're getting top-notch professional assistance in your diagnosis and care.

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As mentioned, it's imperative not to put off any screenings, such as breast mammography, lung CT's, Brain imaging, or any other services or surgical procedures that are crucial to monitor and maintain your health at the highest level. Some cancers and conditions can rapidly proliferate or wreak havoc on your health if they are not examined and evaluated in a timely manner.

You can Trust that RAVE Imaging is here for you through these uncertain times, and their top priority is your health and safety.

To schedule your appointment or for more information, please visit their website at [www.RaveRad.com](http://www.RaveRad.com).



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# Shopping for the Best Incontinence Underwear?

There Might be a Better Solution

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

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

## What is Overactive Bladder?

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

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

You may be suffering from overactive bladder if:

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

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

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

## What is Axonics Therapy?

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

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

## What are the benefits of Axonics Therapy?

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

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

### Clinically proven results:

- **93%** of treated patients achieved clinically significant improvements\* at 2-years<sup>3</sup>
- **94%** of patients were satisfied with their therapy<sup>3</sup>

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

Take the first step towards symptom relief. Call us at 239-449-7979 to schedule your Axonics Therapy consultation today.

“ ”

Brilliant. Amazing staff. Incredible results. Totally life changing. I am going to retire and work on my bucket list instead of settling for 'I have issues'.

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\*50% or greater reduction in symptoms

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

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

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

## Psoriasis Symptoms:

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

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

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

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



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

## Luminary Dermatology *Trust an Experienced Provider Team*

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

## Look and Feel Your Very Best

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

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

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

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

To schedule your appointment please call 941-271-0021 or visit [luminarydermatology.com](http://luminarydermatology.com).



Cary L. Dunn, M.D.



Janet Delaney, ARNP-BC



Cynthia Spencer, APRN-BC



Michael Van Vliet, M.D., FACS



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**DERMATOLOGY**

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# The Connection Between Brain Health and Hearing Loss

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

**W**hen we think of hearing loss, we often focus solely on the ears and the impact on communication. However, emerging research has shed light on the profound connection between brain health and hearing loss. It turns out that our brains play a crucial role in processing sound and maintaining optimal hearing abilities. In this article, we will explore the intricate relationship between brain health and hearing loss, highlighting the importance of taking care of both aspects for overall well-being.

## The Brain's Role in Hearing

Contrary to popular belief, hearing is not solely a function of the ears. The process of hearing begins with the ears collecting sound waves, but it is the brain that transforms these sound waves into meaningful information. The auditory cortex, a region in the brain, processes and interprets sound signals, allowing us to comprehend speech, recognize sounds, and navigate our auditory environment. However, when hearing loss occurs, the brain receives less auditory input, resulting in a decrease in stimulation to the auditory cortex. This lack of stimulation can lead to the deterioration of the brain's ability to process sound, potentially affecting speech perception, cognitive function, and overall brain health.



## The Impact of Hearing Loss on Brain Health

Studies have shown that untreated hearing loss can have detrimental effects on brain health. When the brain receives less auditory input, it can lead to cognitive decline, including difficulties with memory, attention, and executive function. Individuals with untreated hearing loss may also experience social isolation, depression, and an increased risk of developing conditions such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease. This is because the brain relies on regular stimulation from hearing sounds to maintain its neural connections and plasticity.

## Preserving Brain Health through Hearing Care

Fortunately, proactive steps can be taken to promote brain health in individuals with hearing loss. The most effective approach is early intervention, seeking diagnosis and treatment for hearing loss as soon as possible. Hearing aids, for example, amplify sound signals and provide the brain with the necessary stimulation, helping to maintain its processing abilities. Additionally, adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes regular

exercise, a balanced diet, and cognitive activities can support brain health. Engaging in activities that challenge the brain, such as learning a new language or playing a musical instrument, can also provide positive cognitive stimulation.

The connection between brain health and hearing loss cannot be overstated. By recognizing the brain's role in hearing and understanding the impact of untreated hearing loss, we can prioritize both our hearing and brain health. Seeking early intervention, using hearing aids, and adopting a healthy lifestyle can help preserve cognitive function and reduce the risk of associated cognitive decline. Let us remember that our brains are at the heart of our ability to perceive and understand the world around us, and by taking care of our hearing, we are also nurturing our brains for a better quality of life.

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**Noël Crosby**  
Doctor of Audiology



**Karen Draper**  
Doctor of Audiology

# NO DRUGS - NO PRESCRIPTIONS - NO SURGERY JUST RELIEF

By Physicians Rehabilitation

**H**ave you seen doctor after doctor for your pain with little to no relief? Do they spend three minutes listening to your symptoms and then write you an RX for daily pain meds and only move on to the next patient? Then you look at that script and wonder, what are the side effects? Is this addictive? Is this even safe?

For the past 10 years at Physicians Rehabilitation, we have made it our mission to get people out of pain and back into an active lifestyle. Our goal is for you to be pain-free without any surgery or prescription medications. We do this by finding the root cause of your pain. Physician's Rehabilitation focuses on reducing inflammation with injections, regenerating worn tissues with regenerative medicine, and training with physical therapists on proper form and function. These three key components all increase activity levels and decrease pain levels.

New offerings in the specialty of "Interventional Pain Management" combine injections to remove pain with therapy to increase motion and movement without drugs or prescriptions. Physician's Rehabilitation offers procedures for pain management in our office. Some of our most successful treatments are discussed below.

## Medial Branch Block for the Facet Joints

Medial branch nerves are very small nerve branches that carry pain messages from facet joints to the brain where they are experienced. The facet joints are small joints in the back of the spine that form connections between each vertebra. If these nerves are blocked or numbed, they will not be able to transfer the painful sensation from the joints to the brain. Therefore, this procedure is completed to see if your back pain is caused by the facet joints. The effect will last several hours or more. This is strictly a diagnostic block to test if the facet joints are the source of some of your pain.

## Facet Joints

The facet joints are small joints in the back of the spine that form connections between each vertebra. If these joints are blocked or numbed, they will not be able to transfer the painful sensation to the brain. Therefore, this procedure is completed to see if your back pain is caused by the facet joints.



## Sacroiliac Joint dysfunction

Sacroiliac joint dysfunction is an injury or inflammation of the sacroiliac (SI) joint which causes pain in the lower back region. The SI joint is formed by the connection of the sacrum with the ilium. This injection is used to both diagnose and treat your low back pain caused by inflammation of the joint. The effect might last a few hours to a few weeks or much longer. Pain relief in the first couple of hours after the injection is the most important as this tells us our diagnosis of SI joint-mediated pain is correct. If the symptoms do return, we will discuss other options available for extended pain relief.



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## Epidural steroid injection

An epidural injection is an injection of steroids into the epidural space. The epidural space is located in the spine between the vertebrae and the dural sac, which surrounds the spinal cord. Theoretically, the steroid reduces the inflammation of the nerve roots as they exit the spine, which can help alleviate pain in the neck, back, and/or limbs.

## Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)

Radiofrequency Ablation is an injection that uses a specialized machine that generates a radiofrequency current. The current is then passed through a special needle placed next to the nerve (medial branch) which carries pain from the facet joints to the spinal cord. The current generates heat or other physical forces which interrupt the transmission of pain. Radiofrequency ablation is performed after the patient has benefitted from diagnostic medial branch nerve blocks. The effect will hopefully last for an extended period (one year on average). You will likely experience some increase in your neck or back pain over the next several days and then your pain should improve.

## Physicians Rehabilitation

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

Our goal is to identify the source of your pain, promote healing and eliminate your pain. We begin by giving you a thorough examination and quickly address outward symptoms of pain, such as inflammation while gathering your medical history and evaluating your symptoms to get to the root of your pain and dysfunction. Our therapists have found that these advanced technologies, along with a specialized physical therapy program specific to the individual condition, make for extremely successful pain relief treatments. If you or a loved one is suffering from pain, please call our office at (855) 276-5989, or visit us online at [www.PhysiciansRehabilitation.com](http://www.PhysiciansRehabilitation.com) for more information.



# Coping with Childhood Obesity

## A Parent's Guide

By Michelle Locke - Master Life and Mindset Coach

**C**hildhood Obesity Month serves as a reminder of the growing concern surrounding the health and well-being of our children. With the rising prevalence of childhood obesity, parents play a vital role in addressing and managing this issue. This article aims to shed light on the significance of Childhood Obesity Month and provide practical strategies to help parents cope with and support their obese children.

### Understanding Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is a complex health condition that occurs when a child has excess body fat, which can have long-term detrimental effects on their physical and mental well-being. Several factors contribute to its development, including genetics, unhealthy eating habits, sedentary lifestyle, and environmental influences.

### The Importance of Childhood Obesity Month

Childhood Obesity Month, observed annually in September, is dedicated to raising awareness about the causes, consequences, and prevention of obesity among children. It serves as a call to action for parents, educators, healthcare professionals, and policymakers to address this pressing issue and promote healthier lifestyles for children.

### COPING STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS

**Educate Yourself:** Gain knowledge about childhood obesity, its causes, and the associated health risks.



Consult healthcare professionals, read credible resources, and seek support from organizations dedicated to childhood obesity.

**Encourage Healthy Habits:** Foster a supportive environment at home that promotes healthy eating and physical activity. Involve the whole family in meal planning, cooking nutritious meals together, and engaging in regular physical activities like family walks, bike rides, or sports.

**Be a Role Model:** Children learn by example, so set a positive example by adopting healthy habits yourself. Encourage balanced eating, limit sugary drinks and processed foods, and engage in regular exercise.

**Avoid Blame and Shame:** It is essential to approach the topic of obesity with sensitivity and empathy. Focus on health improvement rather than weight loss alone. Avoid stigmatizing or shaming the child, as it can lead to low self-esteem and further emotional distress.

**Seek Professional Help:** If your child's weight issue persists or if you need guidance, consult a healthcare professional, such as a pediatrician or registered dietitian. They can provide personalized advice and develop a tailored plan to address your child's specific needs.

### AVOID:

- Blaming yourself and feeling guilty
- Blaming your child and placing shame
- Asking "why us?" and feeling sorry for yourself or your child
- Giving up

### EMBRACE:

- Forgiving yourself for your mistakes
- Encouraging your child to make small changes
- Focusing on gratitude for what is right with your child (health, character, intelligence, etc.)
- Taking massive action to learn and implement change

Childhood Obesity Month serves as a reminder for parents to take proactive steps in addressing childhood obesity. By educating themselves, encouraging healthy habits, leading by example, avoiding blame and shame, and seeking professional help when needed, parents can effectively cope with and support their obese children. Together, we can create a healthier future for our children and combat the growing concern of childhood obesity.

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# All in one

## Dental Visit with CEREC

By Dr. Joseph Farag

New technologies are making our lives simpler and easier everyday and dentistry has certainly not been left behind. Thanks to a great new system called CEREC, you can now have a high-tech smile in a single visit.

In days gone by, you may have needed to visit the dentist two or three times to have a quality, white ceramic restoration. The dentist would need to take a special impression to make a plaster model for the dental laboratory to generate an extra replica of your tooth in order to hand-make your porcelain restoration. The craftsmanship of the laboratory technician is highly regarded, but generally requires a minimum turn-around time of two weeks, leaving you to function with a temporary, generally plastic, restoration.

Instead of multiple dentist appointments and weeks for a complete restoration, CEREC allows the dentist to achieve the same, if not better, results in a single visit.

CEREC is an acronym for Chairside Economical Restoration of Esthetic Ceramics. Translated, it means that a dentist can economically restore damaged teeth in a single appointment using high-quality ceramic material that matches. CEREC uses the latest Computer-Aided Design and Manufacture (CAD-CAM) technology incorporating a camera, computer and milling machine in one instrument to give you perfect, white fillings, veneers or crowns, all in a fraction of the time it used to take.



### Here's how it works.

Once your dentist determines that CEREC is the correct course of treatment, your visit will begin by preparing the tooth. Any decay, if present, is removed, leaving as much possible of your healthy tooth to support the CEREC restoration. Next, your dentist will use a specially designed electronic camera that makes a digital 3D model of your tooth in seconds.

You can then watch your dentist design your new restoration on a computer screen, right beside the dental chair using the 3D image created by the camera. The virtual filling is then transferred into reality, again using CEREC. A solid block of porcelain ceramic is inserted into the CEREC milling unit. Special tools then sculpt your restoration to the finest detail based on the restoration designed on the CEREC computer.

The perfect-fit restoration is completed and placed in your mouth with the whole process only taking around an hour! CEREC fillings are natural looking, smooth, white and hard-wearing, just like the enamel surface of the rest of our teeth. The ceramic material is biocompatible and is not effected by hot or cold.

The office of Dr. Joseph Farag offers CEREC restoration. For more details and CEREC or to schedule an appointment for a check-up please call (941) 764-9555 today.



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*Before and after: CEREC restorations look and feel better than amalgam (above and gold (below), and can be completed in a single appointment*



# IRA SECURE ACT 2.0

By James W. Mallonee

In 2019, the SECURE ACT regarding IRA's (Traditional and Roth) were updated to increase the age barrier and allowing catchup for specific qualified plans. The SECURE ACT has once again been updated to 2.0. Below are the highlights of the changes.

Increase in age for required minimum distributions (RMD). Under the SECURE ACT 2.0, the age commencing RMD's increased from 72 to 73 effective January 1, 2023. That age limitation will increase again to 75 as of January 1, 2033. Thus, taxpayers born between 1951 and 1959 will need to begin their minimum distributions at age 73. Taxpayers born in 1960 or later will need to begin taking the minimum distributions at age 75, unless congress changes the dates again.

**Can I continue to make regular annual contributions?** Taxpayers aged 50+ in age may make regular annual contributions of up to \$22,500 to their Employer-sponsored 401K, 403b or 457b plan along with an additional annual "catch-up" contribution up to \$7,500.00. As of January 1, 2025 individuals aged 60 to 63 may make an additional bonus catch up contribution of up to \$10,000.00 per year to their employer plans.

IRA owners who use an employer plan and who are over the age of 50 may make regular annual contributions up to \$6,500.00 to their IRA account as well



as an additional catch-up contribution of up to \$1,000.00 per year. This amount will be indexed for inflation beginning in January, 2024.

Effective January 1, 2023, if you fail to take the required minimum distribution, the excise tax on your required minimum distribution is 25% which can be reduced to 10% provided a timely correction is instituted. In order to meet the timely correction, the remaining RMD amount not taken must be distributed before the earlier of (1) the mailing date of a notice of deficiency, (2) the date the 25% excise tax is assessed, or (3) the end of the second taxable year after the tax was imposed.

**What if I contribute too much while trying to catchup?** The excise tax that typically would be appointed is eliminated in 2024 provided the contributor corrects the amount deposited into the IRA account. This correction is usually in the form of a withdrawal of the amount exceeded.

**What if I need to withdraw an amount for an emergency?** Effective January 1, 2024, you may withdraw from a traditional IRA account (e.g. 401K, 403B and 457 plan) for a personal or family emergency without causing the 10% early withdrawal penalty. There is no requirement for certification of the emergency; administrators can rely on the taxpayer's self-certification. The amount withdrawn can be replaced within 3 years as opposed to 60 days.

As you can see there have been some significant changes to your IRA plans. There have also been updates to your ROTH plans. If you have a ROTH plan check with your financial institution or planner to inform you of those changes. Bear in mind that these are some of the significant changes to the law regarding employer retirement plans. You should note that these changes are trying to encourage you to save for your retirement years and not be totally dependent on social security.

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

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# OBESITY & MEDICALLY ASSISTED WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

**O**besity affects millions of Americans. Over the last couple of decades, it has spread from the adult population to adolescents and children. Although it is often attributed to poor eating habits and a lack of exercise, the truth is really a bit more complicated than that. The process by which the body converts food into energy can be influenced by chemicals in the environment, over which we have little control, and by genetics, over which we have zero control. It is a complex combination of genetic susceptibility, biological pathways related to metabolism and body weight regulation, and environmental factors.<sup>1</sup>

## World Health Organization Fast Facts on Obesity

- Worldwide obesity has nearly tripled since 1975.
- In 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight. Of these over 650 million were obese.
- 39% of adults aged 18 years and over were overweight in 2016, and 13% were obese.
- Most of the world's population live in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight.
- 39 million children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese in 2020.
- Over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016.
- Obesity is preventable.<sup>2</sup>

## Health effects from obesity

People affected by obesity have a higher chance of developing serious health problems, including:

- Asthma
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Cardiovascular disease
- Stroke
- 13 types of cancer

Together, these are among the leading causes of preventable or premature death.



## Combating obesity through medically assisted weight management

As many patients struggle (and often fail) to lose weight on their own, many physicians have developed a helpful solution to offer obese patients: medically assisted weight-loss programs. These programs are designed to help patients overcome their weight-loss challenges in a safe, healthy way that includes a customized diet plan, exercise routine, prescribed medication(s) and medical supervision to help promote healthy weight loss based on their individual needs.

Medically supervised weight-loss programs provide patients with the resources needed to lose weight and maintain it, as well as sustain a healthier lifestyle. Many patients who have taken advantage of these programs have experienced an improved quality of life and are now at a much lower risk for obesity-related illnesses — many of which can be life-threatening.

## What Does a Medically Assisted Weight-Loss Program Monitor?

The best medically assisted weight loss programs monitor things like:

- Caloric intake
- Water intake
- Exercise routine
- Blood pressure
- Sugar levels
- Heart rate
- Reactions to medication
- Psychological state of mind
- Emotional state of mind

In Southwest Florida there are obviously many options for weight loss programs. Finding a doctor who genuinely cares for his patients is important. Dr. John Devine, MD, at Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health in Venice is currently accepting new patients looking to manage their weight in a safe and effective way. Patients visit Dr. Devine's office for an initial consultation to discuss their current weight, their goal weight, current eating habits, exercise, diet and what they have tried in the past in terms of weight management. In this consultation, a diet and exercise plan is discussed. After this initial meeting, the patient is then sent for a blood work panel to assure they are healthy and able to take the medications that Dr. Devine will prescribe to aid in weight loss. The medication is a compound created in a specialty pharmacy that is tailored to meet each individual patient's needs. After beginning the medications, the patient will return after a month to see if any adjustments are necessary and discuss progress. At this time, another blood panel is done to assure that everything is going well. After this, the patient will only need to come back every 3 months for checkups.

## John B. Devine, MD

If you'd like more information, please visit  
Dr. Devine's website at:  
[www.johndevinemd.com/contactus](http://www.johndevinemd.com/contactus)

# Failure is a Part of Growth

By Pastor Timothy L. Neptune

**T**he Apostle Peter was a bold man. He stepped up when others stepped back. He was often the first to speak in a group setting. Because of his faith, he was able to walk on water. And, like most risk takers, he experienced his share of failures.

Faith involves risk. Failure is a possibility. But that's okay. Step out of the boat anyway. I love a small part of a speech given by President Teddy Roosevelt back in 1910. He said,

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

I would rather die on the playing field engaged in the battle than rot in the grandstands as a spectator.

Did Peter fail when he started to sink? Yes, he failed. But I think there were 11 bigger failures sitting in the boat afraid to even try to walk on water.

We need men and women of courage today. High-impact people who are willing to take risks and trust God with the results.

Failure is an indispensable part of growth.

The greatest lessons I've learned in life are from the many mistakes I've made along the way.

If you want to be a high-impact person, you too, will make some mistakes and need God to bail you out.

Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and his faith began to waver. But give Peter some credit... he was in the middle of a really big storm, he was outside of his boat in the darkest part of the night. Can you imagine how scary that must have been? I get nervous just standing at the back of cruise ship at night looking out at the sea!

Nevertheless, if we keep our eyes on Christ, what do we really have to fear?

As followers of Jesus Christ, we've been called to live a life of adventure that requires great risk and great faith.

Perhaps you've tried before but failed. That's okay. Admit your lack of faith and move on.



Whatever you do, don't give up, give in, or quit.

You lose more often than you win in life. There are more bad days than good days. You fail more often than you achieve. Remember that God is sovereign and always in control. Nothing can happen to you except by divine permission or divine directive.

Don't live with regrets and second guesses. Learn from your mistakes and then move on. It does no good to dwell on the past and wish you could do it over. Just keep moving forward... that's how your faith grows.

*Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church Naples, a new church located on the campus of Florida SouthWestern State College in Naples, FL. For church times and other information, visit [www.venturenaples.com](http://www.venturenaples.com).*

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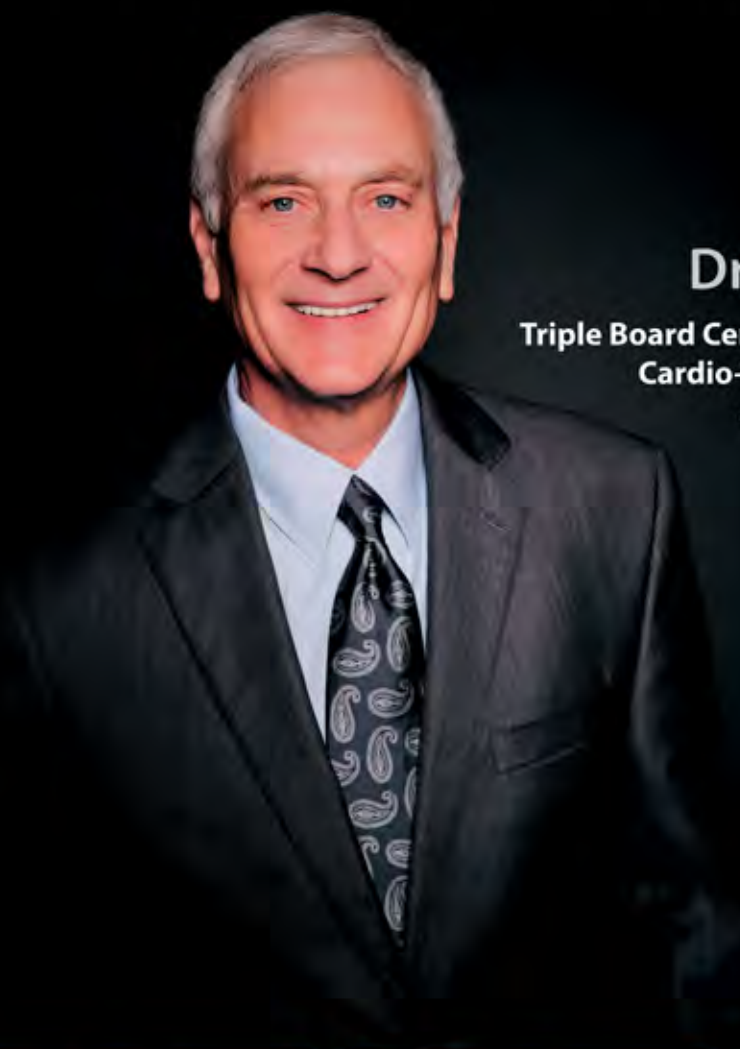
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