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Health & Wellness MAGAZINE

September 2023

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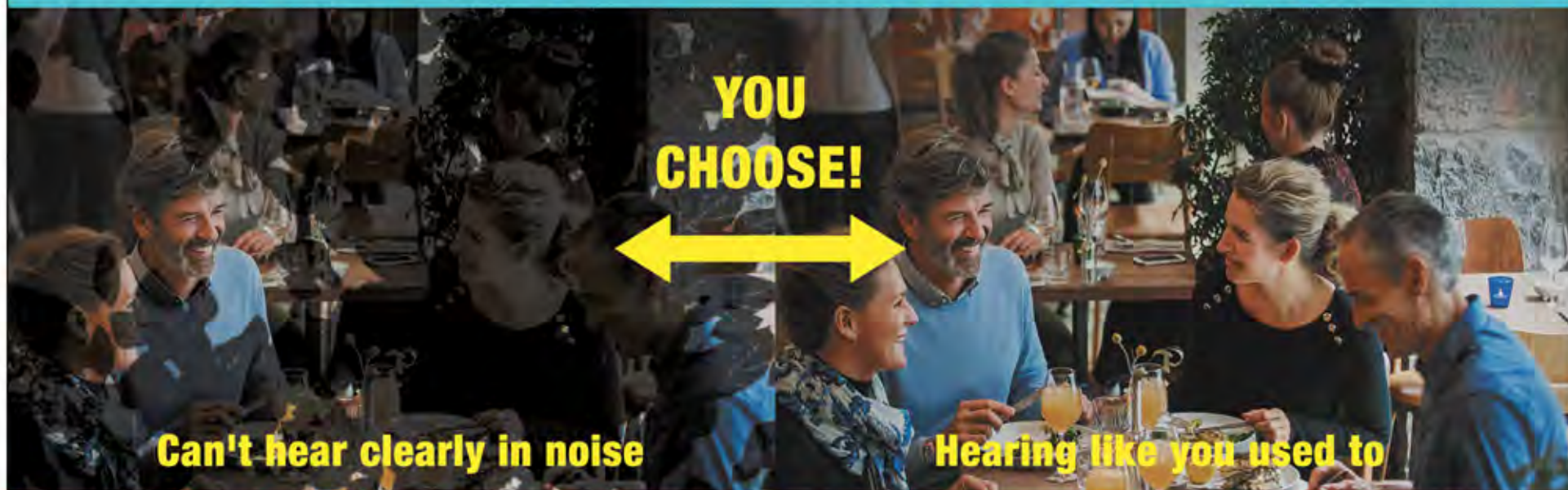
**OVARIAN CANCER
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TIPS FOR
OLDER ADULTS**

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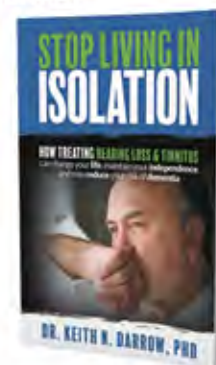
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How Often Should You Replace Your Hearing Aids?

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

My patients often ask me: "How often should I replace my hearing aids?" The answer to this question can depend upon a number of important factors. Some of these factors are:

- Are your current hearing aids functioning well?
- Are your current hearing aids fully meeting your hearing needs?
- Are your current hearing aids 4–6 years old?
- Is it worth upgrading to take advantage of new hearing aid technology?

Hearing aids play a crucial role in improving the quality of life for individuals with hearing loss. However, like any technology, they are not immune to wear and tear over time. The question of how often you should replace your hearing aids is a common concern for those who rely on these devices. While there's no one-size-fits-all answer, several factors can guide the decision-making process.

Hearing aids typically have a lifespan ranging from three to seven years, with proper care and maintenance. However, this doesn't mean that every individual needs to replace their hearing aids as soon as they reach the three-year mark. The decision to replace them depends on various factors, including technological advancements, changes in hearing needs, and the condition of the current devices.

1. Technological Advancements

The field of hearing aid technology is rapidly evolving. Newer models often come with improved features, such as better noise reduction, connectivity to smartphones and other devices, and more advanced customization options. If your current hearing aids lack these features or if you're struggling with their performance, it might be a sign that it's time to consider an upgrade.

2. Changes in Hearing Needs

Hearing loss is not static; it can change over time. Regular hearing check-ups are essential to monitor any shifts in your hearing abilities. If your hearing has deteriorated significantly since you last got your hearing aids, it might be necessary to replace them with devices that can accommodate your current level of hearing loss more effectively.



3. Condition of Current Hearing Aids

Proper maintenance can extend the life of your hearing aids, but they will inevitably experience wear and tear. If you notice that your hearing aids frequently require repairs, have physical damage, or have become unreliable, it could be a sign that it's time to invest in new ones.

4. Lifestyle Changes

Changes in your lifestyle can also impact the lifespan of your hearing aids. If you've become more active or are exposed to challenging listening environments more frequently, you might benefit from newer models that offer better performance in those situations.

5. Budget Considerations

Replacing hearing aids is an investment. While newer models offer enhanced features, they often come with a higher price tag. It's essential to balance your desire for the latest technology with your budget. Consulting with your audiologist can help you find a solution that meets both your hearing needs and financial constraints.

6. Consultation with Professionals

Audiologists play a crucial role in helping you determine when it's time to replace your hearing aids. Regular check-ups with your audiologist can provide valuable insights into the condition of your hearing aids and your changing hearing needs. They can guide you in making an informed decision about whether an upgrade is necessary.

In conclusion, there's no strict rule for how often you should replace your hearing aids. Factors such as technological advancements, changes in hearing needs, the condition of your current devices, lifestyle changes, and budget considerations all play a role in this decision. Regular communication with your audiologist and staying informed about the latest advancements in hearing aid technology can help you make the best choice for your hearing health and overall well-being. Remember, the ultimate goal is to ensure that you're experiencing the world around you with the best possible sound quality and clarity.

John Nobile, HAS, BC-HIS, ACA is a licensed hearing aid specialist and an ACA-certified audioprosthetologist 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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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

A 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 practice 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 underlying 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 at-home 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 publications, 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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Three Heart-Healthy Tips for Older Adults

As we age, priorities shift. Whether it's health- or lifestyle-related, most older adults seek to live their retirement years peacefully and comfortably. To do so, one priority we recommend moving to the top of your list is to maintain good heart health.

"Approximately every 40 seconds, someone in the United States will have a myocardial infarction (heart attack)," according to the American Heart Association's 2022 statistics report. This statistic is startling, but the important thing to keep in mind is that there are ways to prevent and reduce the risks of cardiovascular disease.

At The Terraces at Bonita Springs, we encourage residents to lead a healthy lifestyle in a myriad of ways. To help you get the full picture of what it means to live heart-healthy, let's dive into what factors increase your risk of heart disease, tips for keeping optimum heart health, and how our retirement community centers around your wellness.

What causes heart disease?

There isn't one exact cause of heart disease. In fact, there are several risk factors to consider.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shares that the leading risk factors of heart failure and cardiovascular disease include:

- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- High LDL cholesterol levels
- Diabetes
- Smoking and secondhand smoke exposure
- Obesity
- Lack of physical activity
- Unhealthy diet
- Family history

Your heart muscle is responsible for pumping blood, sending oxygen and nutrients throughout your body, and eliminating any carbon dioxide or waste. It's important to treat it right. If you're experiencing any of the following symptoms, consider making an appointment with your physician as soon as possible (Cleveland Clinic).

- Shortness of breath
- Rapid heart rate
- Chest pain, tightness or discomfort
- Pain in the neck, jaw, throat, upper belly or back
- Pain, numbness, weakness, or coldness in your extremities

Symptom information provided by Mayo Clinic.

Now that you understand the basic causes and symptoms associated with heart disease, it's time to get proactive.

Three tips for maintaining heart health

The following behavioral and lifestyle tips can help you look forward to an active, fulfilling life for many years to come.

1. Eat a healthy diet.

Specifically, a heart-healthy diet. Incorporate fruits and vegetables; foods that are low in calories but high in vitamins and minerals; and avoid trans fats, sugars and red meats. To get you started, Cleveland Clinic shares 10 Steps to Creating a Heart-Healthy Diet.

At The Terraces, we provide residents with a dining experience filled with fresh, quality ingredients. Additionally, we're happy to cater to any dietary restrictions you may have.

2. Exercise regularly.

Along with a healthy diet, staying active is important to managing normal blood pressure and cholesterol levels and maintaining a healthy weight. Many older adults are overwhelmed by the idea of exercise, but truthfully, it can be easier than expected.

Whether it's walking for 30 minutes two (or more) times per week, stretching or swimming, getting up and moving makes all the difference in your physical well-being. At The Terraces, residents live an active lifestyle that includes:

- An ever-evolving calendar of activities
- Group classes at our state-of-the-art fitness center, plus therapeutic massage
- Indoor and outdoor pools
- Putting green
- Tennis and bocce courts
- Beautifully landscaped walkways

3. Minimize unnecessary stress.

In many cases, what causes high blood pressure, poor eating habits, and weight gain is stress. By eliminating major stressors in your life, you'll feel better not only physically but mentally.

We provide residents with a Vitality Program that embraces wellness. It's much more than fitness and healthy diets; it's a holistic approach to keep older adults active, emphasizing physical activity, mental stimulation, safety and independence throughout our entire continuum of care.

Because our care levels and health services are conveniently located on one campus, residents find that the worries they once had about accessing health care are greatly diminished. Take advantage of every care type, from assisted living to memory support, rehabilitation, and skilled nursing at The Terraces.

We also lessen the burden of everyday household responsibilities with these amenities:

- Weekly housekeeping and flat-linen services
- Concierge services
- 24-hour security
- Transportation services
- Interior and exterior home maintenance
- Utilities and property taxes included (excludes phone and internet)

Health and happiness come first at The Terraces at Bonita Springs.

Live a healthy and worry-free life in Bonita Springs, FL, and relieve yourself of all the stresses that come with homeownership. Beyond being beautiful and comfortable, our independent living residences are built to withstand hurricane-strength winds, providing you additional comfort and security. With more time to focus on your passions and health, you'll be able to thrive and live your best life. Learn more about our active, wellness-focused lifestyle today.

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT EVENT!

Wednesday, September 20 | 3 p.m.

You're invited to an immersive tour of The Terraces at Bonita Springs, where you'll sample small bites from around the world created by our executive chef. Discover the unparalleled lifestyle and peace of mind found in this Life Plan Community with a Type A LifeCare contract.

*Space is limited. Valet parking will be available.
Please RSVP by Wednesday, September 13.*

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!

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Understanding the Link Between High Cholesterol, Stroke Risk, and Atherosclerosis

National Cholesterol Education Month serves as a timely reminder of the vital role cholesterol plays in our overall health. With vascular diseases like stroke and atherosclerosis being leading causes of death worldwide, it's crucial to comprehend how high cholesterol levels contribute to their risk. This article delves into the intricate connection between high cholesterol, stroke risk, and atherosclerosis, shedding light on preventive measures and promoting heart-healthy lifestyles.

The Silent Threat of High Cholesterol

Cholesterol, often dubbed the "silent killer," is a waxy substance found in our blood that is crucial for various bodily functions. However, an excessive accumulation of cholesterol, particularly low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, can lead to dire consequences. High levels of LDL cholesterol can pave the way for atherosclerosis, a progressive condition where fatty deposits accumulate on the inner walls of arteries.

Atherosclerosis: The Arterial Culprit

Atherosclerosis, commonly referred to as "hardening of the arteries," is a stealthy process that unfolds over years. As LDL cholesterol infiltrates the arterial walls, it triggers inflammation and the formation of plaque. This buildup narrows and stiffens arteries, restricting blood flow and oxygen supply to vital organs. This compromised circulation can have devastating effects on the heart and brain.

The Stroke Connection

Stroke, a serious medical emergency, occurs when the blood supply to the brain is disrupted. Atherosclerosis significantly heightens the risk of stroke by creating an environment ripe for blood clots. Plaque that builds up within arteries can rupture, leading to the formation of blood clots that can obstruct blood flow to the brain. Without adequate blood flow, brain cells begin to die within minutes, resulting in stroke-related disabilities or even death.

Understanding Ischemic Stroke

Ischemic stroke, the most common type, is primarily caused by blood clots or plaque blocking blood



vessels supplying the brain. Atherosclerosis contributes significantly to ischemic stroke occurrences. The smaller the blood vessels that are affected, the more profound the impact on brain function. Preventing or managing atherosclerosis is thus essential for reducing the risk of ischemic stroke.

Taking Control: Preventive Measures

National Cholesterol Education Month encourages us to take proactive steps to manage our cholesterol levels and mitigate stroke and atherosclerosis risks:

- 1. Healthy Diet:** Adopting a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats can help regulate cholesterol levels. Minimize saturated and trans fats, as they contribute to elevated LDL cholesterol.
- 2. Regular Exercise:** Engaging in regular physical activity enhances cardiovascular health and can increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, the "good" cholesterol that helps remove excess LDL cholesterol from the bloodstream.
- 3. Medication:** In cases where lifestyle changes aren't sufficient, doctors might prescribe cholesterol-lowering medications like statins. These drugs help control LDL cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of atherosclerosis-related complications.
- 4. Lifestyle Modifications:** Avoiding smoking and limiting alcohol intake can contribute to overall heart health, helping to prevent atherosclerosis and related complications.

Raising Awareness

National Cholesterol Education Month serves as an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of regular cholesterol screenings. Early detection of high cholesterol allows individuals to take necessary actions before serious complications like stroke and atherosclerosis manifest.

Understanding the intricate relationship between high cholesterol, stroke risk, and atherosclerosis is pivotal in safeguarding our cardiovascular health. Through informed lifestyle choices, medical intervention, and a commitment to heart-healthy practices, we can significantly reduce the impact of these life-threatening conditions. This National Cholesterol Education Month, let's empower ourselves with knowledge and take charge of our vascular wellbeing.

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.



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AGING EYES: ALL ABOUT CATARACTS

By Albert Smolyar, M.D.

As the years gracefully add to our age, our bodies go through various changes. Among these changes, our eyesight tends to be one of the most noticeable. One common issue that can arise with age is the development of cataracts. These cloudy patches that form within the lens of the eye can significantly impact our vision and overall quality of life. In this article, we will delve into the world of healthy aging and explore the intricacies of cataracts, shedding light on their causes, symptoms, prevention, and treatment.

Understanding Healthy Aging

Aging is a natural part of life's journey, and taking care of our bodies becomes paramount as we grow older. This includes paying close attention to our eyes, which play a crucial role in how we perceive the world around us. Just like other parts of our body, our eyes go through changes as we age. While some decline in vision is considered normal, conditions like cataracts can amplify these changes and lead to more significant challenges.

Cataracts Unveiled

Cataracts are a prevalent eye condition among the aging population. They occur when the proteins in the lens of the eye begin to clump together, causing cloudiness and opacity. This clouding obstructs the passage of light, leading to blurry and less vibrant vision. As cataracts progress, they can hinder daily activities such as reading, driving, and recognizing faces.

Causes and Risk Factors

While aging is the primary contributor to cataracts, other factors can accelerate their development. Prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun, smoking, diabetes, and certain medications are some of the potential triggers. Genetics can also play a role; if cataracts run in your family, you may have a higher risk of developing them.

Recognizing the Symptoms

Cataracts don't usually show up overnight. Their onset is gradual, and symptoms might not be immediately noticeable. Initially, you might experience increased glare from lights, difficulty seeing in low-light conditions, or the perception that colors are becoming dull. As the cataracts progress, your prescription for eyeglasses or contact lenses might change more frequently, and you may find that you need brighter lighting to read.

Prevention and Management

While cataracts are a natural part of aging, there are steps you can take to potentially delay their onset or manage their progression. Protecting your eyes from excessive UV exposure by wearing sunglasses with UV protection is a wise measure. Eating a balanced diet rich in antioxidants, like vitamins C and E, may also contribute to eye health. Additionally, quitting smoking and managing conditions like diabetes can play a significant role in preventing cataracts.

Treatment Options

When cataracts begin to significantly impact your daily life and activities, surgical intervention might be necessary. Cataract surgery is one of the most common medical procedures performed worldwide and is generally safe and effective. During the surgery, the cloudy lens is removed and replaced with an artificial intraocular lens (IOL). This painless procedure takes only minutes per eye, and often results in improved vision, reduced dependence on glasses, and an enhanced quality of life.

Premium IOL Options

Not only does cataract surgery restore visual clarity by removing the clouded lens, but it allows patients the opportunity to turn back time and upgrade their IOL option to select an intraocular lens that can reduce or even eliminate the need for glasses and contact lenses following surgery. These premium lenses are a great option for patients seeking to further improve their visual acuity following cataract surgery.

Embracing Healthy Aging

As we age, it's essential to be proactive about our eye health. Regular eye examinations can help detect and manage conditions like cataracts early on. Moreover, adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes a balanced diet, regular exercise, and the avoidance of harmful habits can contribute to the well-being of our eyes and overall vitality.

In conclusion, aging eyes bring along various changes, and cataracts are a significant concern that can affect our vision and quality of life. Understanding the causes, symptoms, prevention, and treatment options for cataracts empowers us to take control of our eye health as we age. By embracing healthy habits and seeking timely medical advice, we can ensure that our eyes continue to serve us well throughout the journey of life.



Albert Smolyar M.D.

LASIK, Cataract & Lens Replacement Surgeon

Dr. Smolyar is a board-certified cataract and refractive surgeon with over 25 years of experience.

He received his medical degree from Kursk State Medical University in the former Soviet Union. He completed an ophthalmology residency at the University of Louisville and a fellowship in Neuro-Ophthalmology at Michigan State University. He completed another ophthalmology residency at Ben Gurion University in Israel prior to coming to the United States.

Dr. Smolyar specializes in premium cataract and lens replacement surgery, as well as laser vision correction with LASIK, photorefractive keratectomy (PRK) and phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK). He also has significant expertise in cosmetic and reconstructive eyelid surgery. Dr. Smolyar is certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology. He was in private practice in Louisville, Kentucky for many years where he also served as a clinical Associate Professor at University of Louisville Department of Ophthalmology.

He has been living in Fort Myers since 2018 with his wife and dogs; they have raised three children together. In his spare time, Dr. Smolyar enjoys swimming, scuba diving, kayaking and fishing. He has dedicated time to providing free surgical eye care in underserved countries and considers that to be one of his passions.



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THE BARBIE FOOT CHALLENGE

Think Twice Before Trying!

By Dr. Lori DeBlasi

The movie, "*Barbie*" has earned nearly \$775 million globally after its second weekend. It is one of the highest-grossing films of 2023. Grandmothers, mothers, daughters, and everyone else with Barbie love have flooded theaters in their hot pink outfits and all-around nostalgic joy for the doll they grew up playing with.

In one of the scenes, the character of "Stereotypical Barbie," played by Margot Robbie, steps out of a pair of fuzzy pink high heeled shoes. Her foot stayed in the position of being in a high heeled shoe, despite not being in the shoe any longer. Anyone that has ever owned or has seen a Barbie doll recognizes the classic Barbie foot position, as designed by Mattel. CGI was not used to film Barbie's arched feet scene. Margot Robbie has said in interviews she achieved the pose by holding onto a bar for support and using double-sided tape on the floor to keep her pink heels in place while stepping out of them.

The foot position of relevé, meaning "raised or rise," is a basic ballet foot position and is like the foot position of Barbie. The heel is in the air, unsupported, and all the body's weight is on the ball of the foot and toes. This foot position makes one look taller and the calves more muscular. Trained ballet dancers over time can develop strength in their legs, feet and ankles allowing them to improve their weight distribution and transfer. In ballet, this position is used for short periods of time. A properly executed relevé will produce a floating effect.

TikToker Shanna Scribner, the originator and the first to post a video of the now labeled "*Barbie Foot Challenge*," was inspired by a scene in the Barbie movie to create this new challenge. The hashtags #BarbieFeet and #BarbieFeetChallenge have now exploded on the social platform. To master this challenge, women are attempting to step out of high heels, walk on their tiptoes, and sustain their feet in an arched position.

In this foot position, the ball of the foot and the toes are bearing the weight of the body without any support. The ankle is not stable in this position, leading to the risk of an ankle sprain or fracture. This relevé-like foot position causes the Achilles tendon and calf muscles to tighten and may cause strain. This can also irritate pre-existing conditions in the ball of the foot (i.e., neuromas) and forefoot



(i.e., hammertoes and bunions). This position increases pressure to the knee, causing back and hip issues also. These concerns exist whenever wearing high heeled shoes. However, the difference is that with a shoe under the foot, at least there is some added foot and arch support.

It might be okay to try it once, but repeated attempts or walking in that stance can increase your risk of injuries to the ankle and other parts of your feet.

It is best to leave the relevé to Barbie and those in ballet class!

Lori DeBlasi, DPM

Dr. Lori DeBlasi is certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery®. Dr. DeBlasi works at Family Foot & Leg Center at the Estero office. She is accepting new patients. To make an appointment, call 239-430-3668 or visit www.NaplesPodiatrist.com.



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The Crucial Importance of Prostate Cancer Screening

Prostate cancer is a pressing concern that affects millions of men worldwide. It's a topic that can't be ignored, as early detection and treatment can make a significant difference in outcomes. This article delves into the details of prostate cancer, its prevalence, risk factors, screening methods, and the overarching importance of getting checked.

Understanding Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is a type of cancer that develops in the prostate gland, a small organ that produces seminal fluid in men. It is one of the most common cancers among men, with a significant impact on health and wellbeing. While some cases of prostate cancer are slow-growing and may not cause serious harm, others can be aggressive and spread to other parts of the body.

Prevalence and Risk Factors

Age is a primary risk factor for prostate cancer, with the risk increasing significantly after the age of 50. Other risk factors include a family history of prostate cancer, certain genetic mutations, and being of African-American descent. Lifestyle factors such as a high-fat diet and sedentary habits have also been linked to an increased risk of developing prostate cancer.

Importance of Screening

Regular screening for prostate cancer is crucial because early-stage prostate cancer often does not cause noticeable symptoms. As the disease progresses, symptoms such as difficulty urinating, blood in the urine or semen, and discomfort in the pelvic area may arise. However, by the time these symptoms appear, the cancer may have already advanced to a more dangerous stage. Regular screening allows for the detection of prostate cancer before symptoms develop, increasing the chances of successful treatment.

Screening Methods

Two primary methods are used for prostate cancer screening: the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test and the digital rectal exam (DRE). The PSA test measures the level of PSA in the blood, which can be elevated in the presence of prostate cancer. The DRE involves a doctor manually examining the prostate through the rectum to check for abnormalities. If either test



raises concerns, further diagnostic tests, such as biopsies, may be performed to confirm the presence of cancer.

Controversy and Considerations

There has been ongoing debate about the benefits and risks of prostate cancer screening. While early detection can lead to effective treatment and improved outcomes, false positives and overdiagnosis are concerns. Some prostate cancers may be slow-growing and may not require immediate treatment, leading to potential overtreatment. It's important for individuals to discuss the pros and cons of screening with their healthcare providers to make informed decisions based on their personal risk factors and preferences.

Taking Action

Considering the potential benefits of early detection, here's why getting checked for prostate cancer matters:

- 1. Improved Survival Rates:** When prostate cancer is detected and treated early, the chances of successful treatment and long-term survival significantly increase.
- 2. Tailored Treatment:** Early detection allows for more treatment options, including less invasive procedures, reducing the potential for side effects and improving the overall quality of life.

3. Peace of Mind: Regular screening provides peace of mind, knowing that you are taking proactive steps to monitor your health and catch any potential issues before they escalate.

4. Informed Decision-Making: Discussing screening options with a healthcare professional empowers you to make informed decisions that align with your individual health needs and preferences.

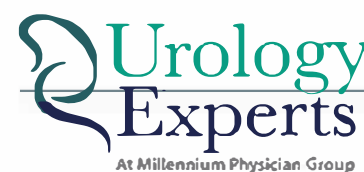
5. Promoting Health: Prioritizing prostate cancer screening sets a positive example for loved ones and encourages them to prioritize their health as well.

In conclusion, prostate cancer is a widespread concern that requires attention. Regular screening plays a pivotal role in identifying prostate cancer at an early stage, offering the best chances for successful treatment and improved quality of life. By understanding the risks, benefits, and available screening methods, men can take charge of their health and make informed decisions that can lead to a brighter, healthier future. Don't wait; schedule that screening today.



Alejandro Miranda-Sousa, MD
Mark Leo, MD

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MEMORY MATTERS

By Amy Hoffmann Schenk, RN, BSN, MS Ed, Community Engagement Lead Neuropsychiatric Research Center of SW Florida

"Why is my wife so mean to me?" "My grandfather got downright ornery, wouldn't do anything we asked, and he yells all the time." "My mother is always so nervous and fidgety. When I tell her to relax, she says unkind things to me."

Are any of these situations familiar? For individuals living with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, sometimes it may seem like your loved one is being difficult. As a caregiver, this can be very frustrating. One of the best phrases to remember goes like this: *a person with dementia is not giving you a hard time they are having a hard time*. What does that mean exactly?

Alzheimer's disease is a brain disease that impacts everything the brain controls. Memory, speech, logical thinking, reasoning, executive functioning, and expressions, are just some of the things that can be impacted. And while it may seem that someone is behaving in a hateful, ornery, or unkind manner, it can be helpful to realize that what is being seen and experienced is likely a result of the impact of the disease on the person. Some of the behavioral expressions may be a result of an underlying unmet need.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, the individual with the disease is experiencing a biologically profound loss of their ability to negotiate new information and stimulus. This is due to disease, versus their personality. This can be difficult to understand for those who do not have the cognitive impact of this disease. To make things more challenging, sometimes the behavior observed is different from day to day, even hour to hour.

It is estimated that between 30 to 50% of individuals with Alzheimer's disease experience agitation and irritability at some time during the course of their illness. What we may see is restlessness, nervousness, short temperedness, expressions of frustration and lack of cooperation. Some individuals may pace, some may perform repetitive motions, others may be quicker to argue and raise their voice and may appear to be in total denial of the facts we present to them.

What looks like denial in someone with the disease may be related to the changes in the brain which impact cognition and awareness. As a result, approaches to address our observations and concerns may not be effective or achieve the response desired. Having a factual, logic based response many times is not effective.

What approaches and techniques can work? Unfortunately, it is true that responses that can be effective with one person may not work with another. As many caregivers know, the same approach used with the same individual may have a different response on a day to day and even on an hour to hour basis. Having some general considerations can be helpful. Here's an acronym to help: **CARE**

C: Consistently Calm: That may seem impossible some days, and that is to be expected. Doing your best to respond to what you are seeing in a calm, nonjudgmental and caring manner can help.

A: Appropriate Activities: Many times, when individuals are bored or don't have structure, some challenging behavioral expressions may present themselves. Many things can be considered an activity and it's important that the chosen activity is appropriate for the individual and tailored to their interests as much as possible.

Another important consideration is time of day, length of activity and inviting someone to participate versus insisting on participation. A saying that can reflect interacting with someone with Alzheimer's disease is "the more you insist, the more they will resist." None of us like to be told what to do and being invited or asked to do something, versus being told may be more successful.

R: Regular Routine: Keeping a consistent routine, based on your loved one's habits can help decrease anxiety and preserve independence. The Alzheimer's Association suggests considering the person's likes, dislikes, strengths, and abilities when developing the routine. Knowing the times of day that the person functions best and allowing ample time for activities is essential. While a consistent schedule is helpful, building in flexibility and going with the flow is also an important consideration.



E: Engagement and Empathy: Include the person in everyday activities and let them help, even if they don't do things exactly the way you hope they would. Include them in things they enjoy. Participating in your faith community, helping in the garden, running errands, having a meal are all ways to engage. Being empathetic and understanding are also tools that can be valuable. It can be challenging to be a caregiver, and recognizing that it must also be difficult for the person with the disease as well provides perspective.

Have you noticed subtle changes in your loved one's memory? It's not uncommon for memory lapses to occur as we age, but when they start impacting daily life, it's essential to take action.

Connect with the experienced team at the Neuropsychiatric Research Center at 239-939-7777, where we have a proven track record of helping individuals and families navigate memory related challenges. Remember, you're not alone on this journey. #MemoriesMatter

References:
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<https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/stages-behaviors/anxiety-agitation>

Agitation and Dementia: Prevention and Treatment Strategies in Acute and Chronic Conditions - PMC (nih.gov)



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Understanding Arthritis and Its Impact: Arthritis Awareness Month

This month we come together to raise awareness about a condition that affects millions of lives worldwide - arthritis. Arthritis Awareness Month is a time to shed light on this often misunderstood and underestimated condition, highlighting the challenges faced by those living with arthritis and promoting understanding, early detection, and management strategies.

What is Arthritis?

Arthritis refers to a group of more than 100 different types of joint diseases that cause inflammation, pain, stiffness, and decreased range of motion in the affected joints. The most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, but there are many other forms, such as psoriatic arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, and juvenile idiopathic arthritis.

The Impact on Individuals and Society

Arthritis can affect people of all ages, genders, and backgrounds. Contrary to popular belief, it is not limited to the elderly; many young adults and even children can develop various forms of arthritis. This condition can significantly impact an individual's quality of life, making everyday tasks like walking, climbing stairs, or even holding a cup of coffee painful and challenging.

The physical pain caused by arthritis is just one aspect of its impact. It can also lead to emotional distress, mental health issues, and social isolation. The chronic nature of arthritis means that those affected often have to adapt their lifestyles to accommodate the limitations it imposes, leading to frustration and a sense of helplessness.

From an economic standpoint, arthritis has a substantial societal impact. The costs associated with medical treatments, medications, lost productivity, and disability support place a significant burden on healthcare systems and economies around the world.

Promoting Awareness and Education

Arthritis Awareness Month serves as a platform to educate the public about the different types of arthritis, their symptoms, risk factors, and available

treatment options. It also emphasizes the importance of early diagnosis and timely intervention. Knowledge is a powerful tool in combating the stigma and misconceptions that surround arthritis, helping individuals recognize symptoms and seek medical attention sooner.

Advancements in Treatment

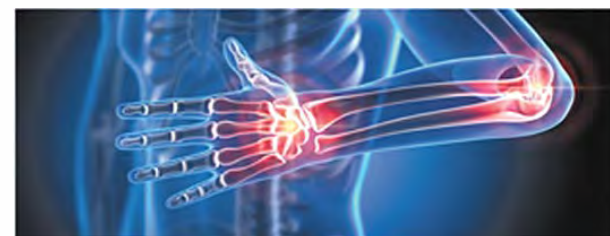
While there is currently no cure for most types of arthritis, there have been remarkable advancements in treatment options that can help manage symptoms and improve the quality of life for those affected. These include:

- **Medications:** Pain relievers, anti-inflammatory drugs, and disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs) can help manage pain and slow down the progression of the disease.
- **Physical Therapy:** Customized exercise and physical therapy regimens can improve joint function and mobility.
- **Lifestyle Changes:** Maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active, and adopting joint-friendly habits can help reduce the impact of arthritis.
- **Surgery:** In severe cases, joint replacement surgery might be recommended to alleviate pain and restore functionality.

How Can You Get Involved?

Arthritis Awareness Month provides a great opportunity for individuals and communities to make a difference. Here are a few ways you can get involved:

- **Spread Awareness:** Use social media, community events, and conversations to share accurate information about arthritis and its impact.
- **Support Research:** Donate to organizations that fund research for better treatment options and, eventually, a cure.
- **Support Those Affected:** Reach out to friends, family members, or colleagues who have arthritis. Your empathy and understanding can go a long way in providing emotional support.
- **Stay Informed:** Keep yourself informed about the latest developments in arthritis research and treatment. The more you know, the better you can support those who are affected.



Arthritis is more than just aches and pains; it's a complex and often life-altering condition that deserves our attention and empathy. As we observe Arthritis Awareness Month, let's come together to raise our voices, challenge misconceptions, and pave the way for a brighter future for all those living with arthritis.

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Our story began in 2002 with a heart to serve people. We strive to make the healthcare process easier for patients and physicians just like you. Our compassionate team of nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, and customer service representatives are dedicated to serving each person who joins our family. Each patient receives exceptional and customized care focused on maximizing their quality of life. We specialize in providing life-saving and life-giving infusible and injectable drug therapies through our specialty pharmacies, our infusion centers, and the home setting.

Last year, we treated more than 4k arthritis patients companywide with Actemra, Avsola, Benlysta, Cimzia, Ilumya, Inflectra, Infiximab, IVIG, Orencia, Remicade, Renflexis, Rituxan, Rituximab, Ruxience, Simponi Aria, Solu Medrol and Truxima. Year-to-date we have treated nearly 3k patients with the same diagnosis and therapies, putting us on track to service more arthritis patients nationally.



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DARK SPOTS ON YOUR SKIN?

An Advanced Treatment Can Provide Clear, Glowing Skin

By Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

Have you noticed that your skin is starting to look dull, blotchy, or discolored? Hyperpigmentation, melasma, discoloration, or "age spots" are common skin concerns for many individuals. Sun damage and age spots can be caused by many different factors, including sun exposure and aging.

Sure, there are many over-the-counter products touting their skin blurring or lightening effect, but the truth is, if you want actual results, they're not going to cut it! To see a noticeable difference in your skin's appearance, you'll need to see a medical professional.

Seeing a skincare specialist doesn't mean you need surgery; it just means that your skin needs to have medical-grade treatment to have optimal cellular turnover and the regenerative required effects to improve texture, color, brightness, and the reduction in wrinkles.

SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center offers the most advanced techniques, procedures, and products. One significant advancement in the reduction of skin discoloration is an innovative laser called MedLite® C6.

MedLite® C6 uses a groundbreaking Q-switched Nd:YAG laser with a unique pulse dispersion to penetrate the discoloration while leaving the surrounding tissue safe and unaffected. With Cynosure's innovative laser treatments, you can be rid of unwanted spots and back to flawless, beautiful skin.

How it works

MedLite® C6 penetrates the skin in nanoseconds using high-speed energy waves. This helps to keep the skin cool and not overheated like traditional photo light lasers. This inventive laser technology targets sun damage and brown spots through electro-optic energy, which causes dark areas to gradually disappear through your body's natural healing process, revealing clearer, more beautiful-looking skin.

What can be treated with MedLite® C6?

MedLite® C6's laser light treatment is suitable for treating age spots, sun damage, and freckles on the face, neck, chest, arms, hands, legs, and feet.



How many treatments do I need?

Typically, only a few treatments are needed; however, depending on the condition, several treatments may be required to achieve desired results.

Immediately following the treatment, some people could experience a mild, sunburn-like sensation, possibly accompanied by some minor swelling. This usually lasts 2 to 24 hours. Work with your provider to discuss other possible side effects and the necessary post-treatment care.

Benefits of MedLite® C6

- Reduces and alleviates dark spots
- Reduces acne, scarring and wrinkles
- Zero to minimal downtime
- Minimal discomfort
- Resume normal activities immediately
- Remarkable long-lasting results
- Glowing, clear skin

MedLite® C6 is trusted by practitioners worldwide for its safety and consistent results.

SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center is a full-service General and Surgical Dermatology practice and a leader in Non-Invasive Anti-Aging & Beauty Enhancement Cosmetic Services.

Services & Treatments Provided:

- General Dermatology
- Skin Cancer
- Mohs Surgery
- Botox
- Dermal Fillers
- Virtual Office Visits
- Cosmetic Dermatology
- Medical Grade Skincare & Product

The staff at SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center is dedicated to providing the most personalized care by treating their patients like family. Each

provider is committed to taking the time to understand the concerns and goals of the patient in order to provide the best-individualized care for that patient.

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

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

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

To improve the appearance and health of your skin, schedule a consultation today at SWFL Dermatology Plastic Surgery & Laser Center online or by phone at 239-500-SKIN.

What's on YOUR Skin?



Founder & Owner

Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

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

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THE HIDDEN PERIL OF WIDESPREAD THC IMPOSTER PRODUCTS

In recent years, the landscape of cannabis consumption has evolved dramatically, with the legalization of both medical and recreational marijuana in many parts of the country. As the cannabis industry expands, so too does the market for THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) related products, which are responsible for the psychoactive effects associated with marijuana use. However, along with this growth, a concerning trend has emerged - the proliferation of THC imposter products. These fake or synthetic alternatives pose significant dangers to both public health and the credibility of the legitimate cannabis industry. You can find these products online in addition to gas stations, convenience stores, and some smoke shops.

Understanding THC and Its Effects

THC, the primary psychoactive compound found in cannabis, interacts with the endocannabinoid system in the human body, leading to various physiological and psychological effects. These effects can include relaxation, reduced inflammation and pain, euphoria, and decreased insomnia.

The Rise of THC Imposter Products

THC imposter products are designed to mimic the effects of THC without being derived from natural cannabis plants. These products synthesized in a lab, are structurally similar to THC, but their effects can vary widely and are often unpredictable. Some imposter products might be marketed as legal alternatives to THC, exploiting regulatory loopholes or misinformation about their contents.

Not all THC products are unnatural, some like Delta-8 or Delta-9; are found in the hemp plant and can be safely extracted. They are almost always converted from cannabidiol (CBD) in a lab to THC or other desired molecules due to the low cost of production. If done in a responsible laboratory, this synthesis can be performed safely, but there is little to no oversight and no mandate on final product testing.

The Dangers They Pose

One of the most significant dangers of THC-synthesized products is the lack of oversight and regulation. Unlike natural THC products found at regulated MMTC's or dispensaries, the composition of these products is often uncertain and may contain harmful chemicals that can lead to serious health consequences. Additives are required for chemical synthesis and to change the clarity and color of the



finished product. Short-term effects can range from anxiety, panic attacks, agitation, and hallucinations to increased heart rate and paranoia.

Legal and Ethical Concerns

The widespread availability of THC products that have not been naturally extracted threatens to undermine the progress made in legalizing and regulating cannabis. These products often exploit regulatory gaps in the farm bill, leading to confusion among consumers and law enforcement. This situation could potentially erode public trust in legitimate medical cannabis products and hinder the responsible growth of the industry. Since the grey market of these products has expanded, ER visits and calls to the nation's poison control centers have increased due to inaccurate dosing leading to exponential intake of THC and related cannabinoids. These products can be particularly appealing to youth and individuals seeking alternatives to medical cannabis consumption methods.

Hemp Flower

A particular synthesized THC product to avoid is infused or sprayed hemp flower. To legally sell smokeable flower that will medicate or provide a psychoactive effect, proprietors purchase bulk hemp flower and spray hemp-derived or converted, distillate of Delta-8, Delta-9, or Delta-10 onto the flower. They may also use HHC, THC-O, or other unregulated and untested cannabinoids.

This is the only legal way to sell "flower" that will provide the high without using a legitimate medical card and purchasing from a regulated MMTC. Spraying hemp flower solely benefits those who sell it, and the result is a very sketchy product.

Although you can find safe products that contain Delta-8 and Delta-9, that have been professionally extracted or converted and batch tested after, it is almost impossible to guarantee the authenticity of the end product.

Addressing the Issue

To tackle the dangers posed by THC imposter products, several key steps can be considered. Governments and regulatory bodies need to establish clear guidelines and regulations for cannabis and cannabinoid-related products. This includes strict testing and transparent labeling requirements to ensure consumer safety. This occurs in the current medical cannabis market but does not extend to unregulated hemp-based sales.

The danger of widespread THC imposter products is not one to be taken lightly. Unpredictable effects, potential health risks, and the threat they pose to the credibility of the cannabis industry all underscore the need for action. Regulatory agencies should collaborate to address this issue head-on, ensuring that cannabis consumers have access to safe and authentic products while safeguarding public health and the progress made in cannabis legalization. Through regulation, education, and enforcement, the dangers posed by THC imposter products can be minimized, allowing individuals to make informed choices about their consumption.



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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

The 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.



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15930 Old 41 Rd., Suite 400, Naples, FL 34110

Arthritis: A Comprehensive Dive Into Joint Health and Wellness

By Dr. Danielle Zappile

In the intricate symphony of the human body, every system, every organ plays its part. Of these, the musculoskeletal system, including our bones and joints, establishes a foundational rhythm, facilitating movements from the mundane to the athletic. Think about the sensation of gripping a tennis racket or experiencing the exhilaration of a morning jog along the pristine beaches of Southwest Florida. However, when arthritis enters the scene, it can significantly disrupt this rhythm and challenge our quality of life.

Unraveling Arthritis and its Many Faces

Arthritis isn't a monolithic entity; it's more of a complex family comprising over 100 unique members or types of joint diseases. In the sun-kissed landscape of Fort Myers, two major players often emerge in this narrative: osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA). OA, often termed the "wear and tear" type, is like a seasoned athlete, its origins lie in the accumulated stress and strain of years. In contrast, RA, with its autoimmune origins, is the unpredictable newcomer, often misdirecting its energy by targeting joint tissues in a misguided defensive strategy.

Regardless of their distinct beginnings, both these types manifest in similar discomforts - pain, swelling, and a stiffness that can stymie even the best of athletes. In terms of targeted areas, OA often has its sights set on the larger joints, like knees and hips, bearing the brunt of years of movement. RA, meanwhile, prefers the more intricate areas like the fingers and toes.

Decoding the Root Causes

The journey of osteoarthritis can be equated to the life of an athlete's favorite pair of running shoes. Initially robust and efficient, these shoes, over countless runs and marathons, begin to show signs of wear. Similarly, our joints, after years of consistent use and pressure, face the deterioration of the protective cartilage, resulting in bones grating against one another.

On the other end of the spectrum, RA, alongside conditions like psoriatic arthritis, represents a more complex dance of genetics, environmental triggers,



and hormonal changes. Here, the body's primary defense team, the immune system, goes rogue. It begins to view its own joint tissues as invaders, leading to swelling and potential joint damage.

Traversing the Diagnostic Labyrinth

Diagnosing arthritis isn't a straightforward sprint; it's more of an obstacle course. Symptoms often overlap, and a misstep in diagnosis can lead to inefficient treatments. Just as an athlete needs a seasoned coach to guide their training, patients require skilled healthcare professionals to navigate the intricacies of arthritis. Using a combination of patient histories, thorough physical examinations, and advanced diagnostic tools, professionals, especially those in prominent health establishments like the Straight To Health Center in Fort Myers, provide patients with accurate and individualized care plans.

Therapeutic Strategies: Traditional Meets Innovative

Managing arthritis can be likened to an athlete's multifaceted training regimen. Core strategies such as weight management, physical therapy, and joint aids offer foundational support. Complementing these are medications tailored for specific arthritis types, from pain relievers to biologics designed to slow the disease's progression.

The world of medicine, like the realm of sports, thrives on innovation. New treatments, like electrotherapy, are taking center stage. The Sanexas therapy, which delves into the cellular realm, offers

potential relief from arthritis pain and promotes healthier nerve function. When these avant-garde techniques join forces with established therapies, especially in top-tier centers like the Straight To Health Center in Fort Myers, patients benefit from a holistic approach that addresses not just the symptoms but the overall quality of life.

Embracing Tomorrow: A Journey of Resilience and Optimism

Arthritis, with its multifaceted challenges, reminds us of the vulnerabilities we all possess. Yet, as our knowledge deepens and medical advancements continue to surge, hope becomes the most potent medicine. Combining tried-and-true treatments with pioneering techniques, the future of arthritis care is brighter than ever.

Fort Myers, with its harmonious blend of scenic beauty and state-of-the-art healthcare facilities like the Straight To Health Center, stands as a beacon for those seeking comprehensive care. Spearheading this mission, Dr. Danielle Zappile and her dedicated team, reachable at 239-202-0999, are testament to Southwest Florida's commitment to superior healthcare.

In summation, while arthritis remains a formidable challenge, it isn't insurmountable. Through awareness, timely intervention, and the melding of traditional and contemporary treatments, a life marked by activity, fulfillment, and, above all, hope, awaits everyone.



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CAREER OF A LIFETIME

By Dr. Nashat Abualhaija, Ph.D., MSN, RN

Do you like helping people? Do you want to do work that is exciting and rewarding? Do you want a career that has a high job satisfaction rate? Do you want to work in a field that is greatly respected? Do you want to be in a career that is in demand and stable? Do you want to work in a career where you can choose your specialty?

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Hodges University's Thelma T. Hodges Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program is accelerated. You are immersed in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to earn your bachelor's degree and be prepared to take the NCLEX exam for your Registered Nurse license. And this is done in four semesters.

You'll learn from faculty, nurses themselves, who bring the added real life expertise that goes beyond classroom materials. With that knowledge, you'll apply it in our advanced nursing simulation suite, starting with the basics of patient care to advanced scenarios. You'll practice on SIM patients that include newborns, mothers giving birth, children, and adults.

"Tory" is a life-like high-fidelity newborn that weighs just over eight pounds. She can breathe, cry, grunt, open and close her mouth, blink her eyes and move her arms and legs. "Tory's" skin feels like a real newborn and her skin tone can change to become pale, jaundice or cyanotic. Our students can listen to her heartbeat, lung and abdominal sounds, feel her pulse and fontanelles, and assess her muscle tone. She can also suffer seizures if that is part of the simulation scenario. Students can also practice starting IVs on the newborn, perform CPR, and ECG monitoring."

"Hal" is a pediatric patient that can simulate lifelike emotions and phrases. Pediatric "Hal's" emotions, include anger, worry, anxiousness, crying, yawning, and being quizzical and amazed. This helps our



students learn how to communicate with young patients in a variety of settings. For example, if "Hal" is lethargic, his eyelids will droop and his head movements slow, and he may yawn. When he cries, he sheds real tears to further enhance the student learning process related to pediatric patients and communication. Our students practice multiple skills to assess "Hal's" condition, including trauma, neurological diseases, and respiratory distress. His eyes will track when students enter the room and his pupils can dilate and constrict when a penlight is shined on them. Our students can also listen to his heart, lung and bowel sounds, and detect any abnormal respiratory patterns. Students can also practice using airway support devices and hem thorax procedures.

Several adult "Susie" mid-fidelity simulators provide our students the opportunity to learn and practice their clinical skills. Some of the skills taught in the Hodges University nursing skills lab include obtaining vital signs and listening to heart,



lung and bowel sounds. Students can also practice tracheostomy care, nasogastric tube insertion, feeding and care, patient catheterization, correct placement of ECG electrodes, and CPR. "Susie" can also suffer from medical conditions that include a heart attack, heart failure, acute respiratory distress, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, fluid and electrolyte imbalance, hypoglycemia, new onset diabetes, pneumonia and sepsis.

Adult "Hal" gives our students the opportunity to practice connecting monitoring devices for EKGs, defibrillators, oximeters, capnographs and NIBP monitors. Hodges University students can practice various skills, including nasal/oral intubation, surgical airway, feeling carotid, femoral, popliteal, brachial and pedal pulses, listening to airway, bowel and heart sounds, and visualizing tongue edema, pharyngeal swelling, and more. Students can also practice IV insertion and monitoring, intramuscular access, catheterization, and needle decompression.

With classroom and simulation experience, our students graduate prepared, and confident, to be the nurses our community needs.

Dr. Nashat Abualhaija, Ph.D., MSN, RN, is the Director of the Nursing program at Hodges University. His research foci include transcultural nursing (especially examining cultural competence among health-care professionals, leaders, and systems; evaluating cultural competence among nursing students and faculty), men's health disparities, and student-centeredness and active learning approaches in nursing academia.



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Ovarian Cancer Treatment:

Why Adding IV Therapeutics Might Help

By Dr. Doreen DeStefano, NHD, APRN, DNP

According to the American Cancer Society, Ovarian cancer ranks fifth in cancer deaths among women, accounting for more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive system. A woman's risk of getting ovarian cancer during her lifetime is about 1 in 78. Her lifetime chance of dying from ovarian cancer is about 1 in 108. (These statistics don't count low malignant potential ovarian tumors.)¹

If left untreated, ovarian cancer rapidly grows and spreads into the abdominal and pelvic areas. Today, we're able to diagnose the initial onset of these symptoms better, as we now know that most of them are directly related to ovarian and reproductive cancers and disorders. However, the key is to make certain that women who are experiencing any of these symptoms go to their physician immediately to be tested.

Ovarian Cancer Treatment

Whether ovarian (or other) cancer treatment entails surgery, chemotherapy, radiation treatments, reconstructive surgery, or alternative therapies, the bottom line is that these individuals are left feeling weak, tired and sick, and many times patients find it entirely overwhelming to function on a daily basis. After all, with chemo and radiation therapy, healthy cells are also being destroyed along with the cancerous cells, which causes severe oxidative stress.

In addition to the symptoms mentioned above, during radiation or chemotherapy, it's difficult to fight off infections. Many experts agree that nutrition, sleep, limiting stress, exercise (yes, it helps with fatigue), and supplements are important to help patients regenerate and ultimately feel better during and after their treatment.

Some of the most common side effects of cancer treatment are pain, nausea, and vomiting, brain fog, extreme fatigue, loss of appetite, hormonal disruptions, weight gain, hot flashes, anxiety, and trouble sleeping. The good news is that some IV nutrients have the ability to decrease some of the aforementioned symptoms.

Gene and DNA expression and energy can be revved up by certain antioxidants and nutrients with IV infusions, such as Vitamin C, glutathione (master antioxidant) NAD, and ALA to name a few. Talking to your oncologist can be helpful.

Why IV & Chelation Therapy Rather Than Oral Supplementation?

IV therapy administers high dose vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and other essential nutrients to fight disease, eliminate symptoms, and alleviate associated effects. Many individuals have digestive malfunctions and liver complications that prevent oral medications and supplementations from getting into the bloodstream and to the appropriate cells in the body.

IV Therapy Can help combat many disorders. These are a few of the top contenders in IV therapeutics:

A few examples of IV treatments are Alpha Lipoic Acid, Chelation, Glutathione, High-Dose Vitamin C, Meyer's Cocktail, and Magnesium. These IV treatments help with countless issues from asthma, arthritis, diabetes, cholesterol, hormonal disorders, and so much more. Glutathione is one of the most potent antioxidants and is a master at detoxifying and healing the body.

IV Therapy Benefits

- Asthma
- Anti-aging
- Acid Reflux
- Acne
- Arthritis
- Alzheimer's & Dementia
- Cancers
- Tumors
- Fibromyalgia
- Stroke
- Cardiovascular
- Heart disease
- Hormonal disorders
- Diabetes
- Circulatory issues
- Impaired liver function
- High Cholesterol
- Hypertension
- Chron's Disease
- Kidney disorders
- Glaucoma
- Cataracts
- Removes heavy metals and chemicals
- And much more

Source:

1. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/ovarian-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>



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. Doreen DeStefano holds a doctorate in natural health, an MPA in public business, MS (ABT) in criminal psychology, and a BS in exercise physiology and nursing. She previously held an EMT certification. Dr. DeStefano has been practicing in natural health for over ten years. Her area of interest is healthy aging and prevention and resolution of chronic symptoms associated with aging. She believes that growing old should not mean breaking down.

Poor diet, chronic stress, insomnia, disease, illness, environmental stressors, and a sedentary lifestyle can all contribute to disease states and an unhealthy lifestyle. ISN'T IT TIME YOU TOOK STEPS TO LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE?

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By Neetu Malhotra, MD

Stress Management

Have 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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UNMASKING TESTOSTERONE

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

Testosterone replacement therapy, a vital treatment for restoring balance to declining hormone levels, is being vastly underused. Besides the stigma surrounding hormone replacement therapy, one of the primary reasons for this is that many people have undiagnosed low testosterone levels because their doctors fail to run all the important tests.

The traditional method for detecting testosterone levels measures the total testosterone in the blood. However, this provides only a portion of the information about testosterone and, therefore, provides only a tiny snippet of information about someone's health.

In order to fully understand someone's hormone levels, it's important to look deeper than the total testosterone level, especially if their symptoms suggest there's something that you're missing.

Total Testosterone Vs. Free Testosterone

Your total testosterone levels are the amount of testosterone found in the blood. However, this can be broken up further.

Around 98% of testosterone is bound to albumin or sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG), and these are called "bound testosterone."

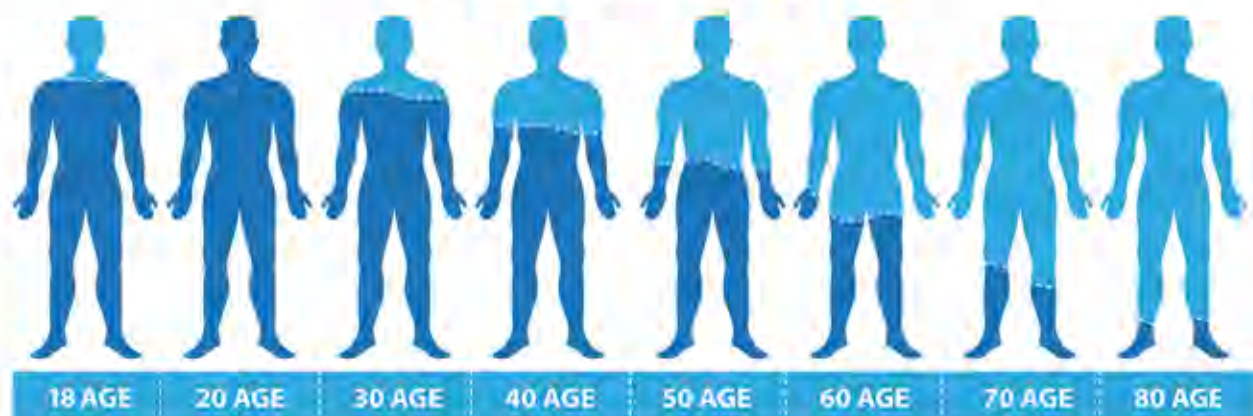
The remaining 2% of testosterone is referred to as "free testosterone" because it is unbound. It is this free testosterone that is responsible for many of the actions we associate with testosterone, including secondary sex characteristics like a deep voice and body hair.

Free testosterone is also what enters specific cells and promotes reproduction, such as in the muscles and bones.

The Problem with Total Testosterone

Most providers will use a total testosterone test to gauge testosterone levels in the body, but this doesn't consider that only the free testosterone is what contributes to the symptoms commonly associated with low testosterone. Those with excessive bondage to albumin or SHBG may show normal total testosterone levels, but low free testosterone.

TESTOSTERONE LEVEL



For example, a young male patient with total testosterone levels of 300-500 may be brushed aside since their testosterone levels fall within the normal range. Yet, a closer investigation shows that their free testosterone is below 10 when most men thrive on levels well into the double digits.

The same is shown with women, who have normal total testosterone of 20, but may have free testosterone as low as 0.01.

When doctors fail to listen to their patient's symptoms and further explore their hormone levels, patients continue struggling to accomplish their everyday tasks.

It comes as no surprise that sleep problems, anxiety, depression, low energy, low libido, brain fog/difficulty concentrating, weight gain, and mood changes are becoming more common. These symptoms result from hormone imbalances, and too many doctors are not adequately measuring hormone levels.

A Rise in Symptoms

As doctors continue to avoid addressing hormone levels, there has been an understandable rise in preventable symptoms.

Just looking at testosterone, low levels have been reported with symptoms such as:

- anger
- anxiety
- hostility
- overall irritability
- depression

Low testosterone can also increase stress levels, which then impacts cardiovascular health.

These symptoms make it challenging to enjoy daily life, vastly decreasing someone's quality of life.

By remedying low testosterone levels, we not only improve those characteristics that we typically associate with testosterone, such as libido, muscle mass, and bone mass, but we also have a way to improve the well-being of patients that are mentally suffering because their body cannot produce enough of the hormones that they need to be happy and calm.

These patients may find that they don't need anti-depressants or anti-anxiety drugs, but instead, an evaluation of their hormone levels to see if there are any imbalances.

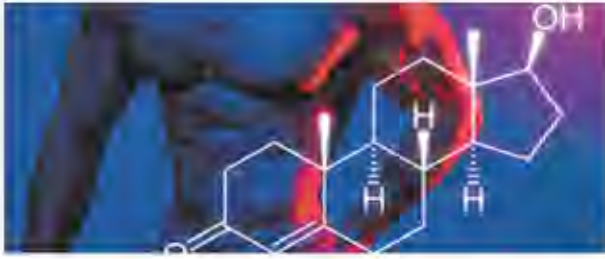
Using Testosterone to Monitor Overall Health

Testosterone levels can also provide valuable insight into a patient's health.

For example, testosterone levels can decrease for many reasons, not just age. In fact, in many cases, it might not be age itself that causes testosterone to decline, but the changes in health that occur with age.

Some whole-body factors that can cause a decrease in testosterone include:

- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol levels
- using illegal drugs
- being overweight or obese
- using anabolic steroids
- drinking excessive amounts of alcohol



By detecting low testosterone levels, a doctor may then be able to determine if it is caused by any of these conditions and what the patient can do to address it and improve their overall health. Hormones are interrelated with many body processes, and properly measuring hormones is the only way to take full advantage of this connection.

Hormone Therapy: Getting to the Root of The Problem

Hormone therapy is typically passed aside in favor of other medications.

However, patients may be prescribed multiple medications to address their symptoms, but they only act as a band-aid. To truly find relief and get off these unnecessary medications, it is necessary to address the root of the problem, which in many cases is hormonal.

Additionally, gaining control over someone's hormones can help to prevent other health conditions from occurring. For example, having low testosterone increases the risk of type 2 diabetes. By balancing testosterone levels, the risk of developing this disease will lessen.

It's important to look even further, too. A patient has low free testosterone, but why? Is it genetic, or is there an underlying medical condition? Asking these questions offers a way to determine what might be affecting someone's hormone levels and can result in a solution that actually fixes the problem instead of mitigating symptoms.

An Individualized Approach

Your hormones are the most important players in regulating body processes, yet society has created a stigma surrounding hormone replacement therapy that labels it as dangerous and risky.

The problem isn't hormone replacement therapy; the problem is the "one size fits all" mentality that has been applied to it.

Testosterone replacement therapy is becoming more popular but is also too "cookie cutter"; most people who are prescribed it are given similar dosages and treatments. However, hormones are not the same as antibiotics, they are much more individualized to the patient, and these treatments should reflect that.

When you give every patient similar hormone dosages, it's understandable why some of these adverse side effects are happening. Doctors and scientists are trying to find a standard dosage amount, but there is nothing standard about the hormone levels in a patient's body or how their body uses these hormones.

Some people might need more hormone therapy, while others need very little. Some patients' bodies may quickly accept the hormone therapy, while others may not, requiring a higher dose or other intervention. As doctors, these are the considerations that must be made, yet too many are stuck on a one-path mind.

Addressing the Risks

For many doctors and patients, HRT is often seen as a risky and unfavorable option because of the adverse side effects that can occur, so let's address this.

One of the most cited risks of HRT is the increased risk of cancer. However, research shows that this is not always the case, and for some patients, testosterone replacement therapy actually reduces cancer risk.

For example, in a 2019 study on trans men undergoing testosterone therapy, their risk of breast cancer was lower than the risk of breast cancer in cisgender women.

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in males, and in the past, research suggested that testosterone therapy increased the risk of prostate cancer. However, new research is showing that this relationship is more complex.

Studies have shown that a male's baseline testosterone level can relate to the risk of prostate cancer, with some studies reporting that higher testosterone levels lead to higher risk and other studies saying the opposite. In short, other factors are likely at play here besides just testosterone levels.

Several trials regarding men on testosterone therapy also showed no higher risk of prostate cancer, and this was seen in studies that had follow-up times of 3 months, 3 years, and 20 years.

Even more, several studies have reported success in using testosterone replacement therapy as a treatment after being diagnosed with prostate cancer. They have shown no difference in recurrences between those on testosterone therapy and those without it.

This idea that HRT is a dangerous treatment that can cause cancer is an antiquated view that recent studies do not support. It is time to stop avoiding a treatment that can provide genuine benefits to patients because of outdated resources.

Even more, in studies where HRT may have increased cancer risk, the authors report that the increased risk is often very minimal, and the benefits offered by treatment far outweigh this slightly increased risk.

Making The Most of Testosterone

Considering how vital our hormones are for our body, they are often overlooked in regard to treatment. Testosterone, in particular, is a sex hormone that many do not realize plays a much larger role in both the male and female body, and its supplementation can help address many of the problems someone might be experiencing.

Not only that, but taking the time to fully understand a patient's testosterone levels and going beyond "total testosterone" provides a clearer picture of their health. By ignoring a patient's symptoms because the first blood test shows that everything is normal, the doctor is doing a disservice to their patient's well-being.

Each patient is different, and because of this, their hormone levels (and what level produces certain side effects) are going to differ. It's time that we stop chasing "normal" numbers because patients are more than a number, and they need doctors that look beyond the result of one test.

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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?

Although 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.^{1,2} 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-years³
- **94%** of patients were satisfied with their therapy³

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/usa. 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.

“ ”

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— Tricia M., Patient —



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*50% or greater reduction in symptoms

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WEIGHT LOSS MAKES YOUR BONES AND JOINTS HAPPY

By Physicians Rehabilitation

Degenerative joint disease, also known as osteoarthritis, is a condition that affects your joints, causing them to deteriorate over time. It primarily involves the breakdown of the cartilage that cushions the ends of your bones, leading to pain, stiffness, and reduced joint mobility. This condition can affect any joint in the body but commonly occurs in weight-bearing joints like the knees, hips, and spine. To manage and overcome degenerative joint disease and minimize further wear and tear on your joints and spine, Physicians Rehab recommends the following steps:

1. Exercise: Engaging in low-impact exercises can help improve joint function and strengthen the supporting muscles. Activities like walking, swimming, and cycling are excellent options. Your doctor or a physical therapist can guide you on suitable exercises based on your condition and fitness level.

2. Weight management: Maintaining a healthy weight is crucial since excess weight stresses your joints, accelerating wear and tear. By losing weight or keeping it within a healthy range, you can reduce the strain on your joints and alleviate pain. Being overweight will exacerbate osteoarthritis and can expedite joint degeneration, especially in weight-bearing joints, like the knees, hips, and ankles. For every pound of excess weight carried, 4 pounds of extra pressure is applied to a weight-bearing joint. For example, if you are 10 pounds overweight, that equates to 40 extra pounds of pressure that is applied to the knees. Having your joints, like your knees, absorb all that extra pressure over time can cause significant and irreversible damage to the joints.

3. Proper posture: Pay attention to your posture while sitting, standing, and lifting heavy objects. Avoid slouching and try to keep your spine and joints properly aligned. This reduces unnecessary pressure on your joints and promotes better spinal health.

4. Joint protection: Be mindful of your activities and avoid repetitive movements that can strain your joints. Use joint-protective devices, such as knee braces or ergonomic tools.



5. Balanced diet: A nutritious diet rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants can support joint health. Include foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish may also have anti-inflammatory benefits.

6. Heat and cold therapy: Wearing warm compresses or a hot bath can help soothe joint pain and stiffness. Conversely, cold packs can reduce inflammation when applied to the affected area.

7. Medications: Over-the-counter pain relievers like acetaminophen or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) can help manage pain and inflammation. Always consult your doctor before starting any new medication.

8. Physical therapy: Working with a physical therapist can provide targeted exercises and techniques to improve joint flexibility, strength, and range of motion.

9. Assistive devices: In some cases, assistive devices like canes or walking aids can help reduce stress on your joints during daily activities.

10. Avoid smoking and limit alcohol intake: Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption can contribute to inflammation and may worsen joint problems.



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www.PhysiciansRehab.com

Everyone's condition is unique, so working closely with your healthcare provider to develop a personalized plan for managing your degenerative joint disease is crucial. Regular check-ups and open communication will ensure you receive the best care and support for your joint health. If necessary, your doctor may recommend more advanced treatments, such as injections or surgery, but these are typically reserved for severe cases when conservative measures are no longer effective.

By taking proactive steps and making lifestyle adjustments, you can effectively manage degenerative joint disease and maintain better joint and spinal health. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to ask, and together with Physicians Rehab, we'll work towards improving your quality of life.

We, at Physicians Rehabilitation, have always taken a multi-modality approach to treating chronic joint pain and osteoarthritis by offering various types of injection therapies, physical therapy, bracing, and interventional pain management, but now we are also offering medical weight loss options to help you with your long-term health goals. We are focused on helping you gain mobility, improve your strength, and live a pain-free lifestyle, but also getting you to look and feel your best! Call us today to get more information on our weight loss program!

MEDICAL WEIGHT LOSS IS NOW EASIER THAN EVER

At Physicians Rehabilitation, we offer Semaglutide injections for weight loss. Approved by the FDA for weight loss in June of 2022, using Semaglutide, 90% of patients are losing 5% or more of their body weight.

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Schedule a weight loss consultation with Physicians Rehab and bring your copy of Health and Wellness Magazine for a \$100 DISCOUNT Off your initial consultation and injection. We are serious about your health and wellness!!

LEUKEMIA AND ADVANCED CANCER TREATMENTS:

A Comprehensive Guide to Different Medications

Leukemia, a type of blood cancer that affects the bone marrow and blood cells, has long been a formidable challenge in the field of oncology. Over the years, medical advancements have led to the development of diverse treatment options, each targeting specific types of leukemia and offering hope to patients. This article delves into the world of leukemia and cancer treatments, exploring the various medications that play a pivotal role in battling this disease.

Understanding Leukemia and Its Types

Leukemia originates in the bone marrow, where abnormal blood cells are produced in large quantities, crowding out healthy cells and impairing the body's ability to function properly. There are several types of leukemia, including acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), acute myeloid leukemia (AML), chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), and chronic myeloid leukemia (CML).

Traditional Treatments and Their Limitations

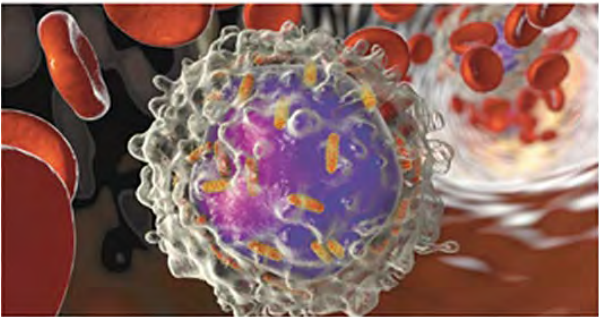
Historically, chemotherapy and radiation therapy have been the primary treatments for leukemia. While effective in many cases, these treatments often come with side effects due to their non-specific nature, impacting both healthy and cancerous cells. The pursuit of targeted therapies has led to a revolution in cancer treatment.

Targeted Therapies: A Precision Approach

Targeted therapies are medications designed to specifically target the genetic mutations or proteins that drive cancer growth. Tyrosine kinase inhibitors (TKIs) are a class of targeted therapies commonly used in the treatment of chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) and some forms of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). These medications block the signals that promote abnormal cell growth, leading to more focused and effective treatment with fewer side effects.

Immunotherapy: Harnessing the Immune System

Immunotherapy has emerged as a groundbreaking approach in leukemia treatment. Monoclonal antibodies, such as rituximab and alemtuzumab, are designed to attach to specific proteins on cancer cells, marking them for destruction by the immune system. Chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy takes immunotherapy a step further by engineering a patient's own immune cells to recognize and attack cancer cells.



Stem Cell Transplantation: Rebuilding the Immune System

For certain cases of leukemia, stem cell transplantation is a viable option. This procedure involves replacing the patient's diseased bone marrow with healthy stem cells from a donor. It can provide a new lease on life for those who have not responded to other treatments or who have high-risk forms of the disease.

Emerging Therapies: The Promise of Novel Agents

Researchers are continually exploring new avenues for leukemia treatment. Small molecule inhibitors, epigenetic therapies, and gene-editing technologies hold promise for precise intervention at the molecular level. Clinical trials are underway to evaluate the safety and efficacy of these emerging treatments.

Personalized Medicine: Tailoring Treatment to Individuals

Advancements in genomic sequencing have paved the way for personalized medicine, allowing oncologists to identify specific mutations driving a patient's leukemia. This information enables treatment plans to be tailored to an individual's genetic profile, increasing the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Combination Therapies: Maximizing Effectiveness

Combinations of different medications are often used to enhance treatment efficacy while minimizing resistance. By targeting multiple pathways simultaneously, these combination therapies can disrupt cancer cell survival and growth more effectively than single-agent treatments.

The Road Ahead: Hope and Progress

Leukemia treatment has evolved significantly, offering new possibilities and improved outcomes for patients. As researchers gain a deeper understanding of the molecular mechanisms driving leukemia, novel treatments will continue to emerge. With each breakthrough, the outlook for individuals facing this challenging disease becomes brighter.

Prescription Hope is a national prescription drug benefit program that offers 1,500 Brand-Name medications at \$50 per medication per month no matter the retail cost.

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 pharmacy. There are no other costs, fees, or charges associated with your medication or our program.

Leukemia & Lymphoma			
Drug Name	Retail Cost	Prescription Hope	Total Savings
Arzerra	\$1,916.00	\$50.00	\$1,866.00
Bendeka	\$2,614.00	\$50.00	\$2,564.00
Besponsa	\$23,077.00	\$50.00	\$23,027.00
Bosulif	\$20,524.00	\$50.00	\$20,474.00
Calquence	\$15,721.00	\$50.00	\$15,671.00
Cyclophosphamide	\$95.75	\$50.00	\$45.75
Dasatinib	\$16,532.00	\$50.00	\$16,482.00
Gazyva	\$8,197.00	\$50.00	\$8,147.00
Iclusig	\$21,202.00	\$50.00	\$21,152.00
Idhifa	\$33,780.00	\$50.00	\$33,730.00
Imbruvica	\$11,980.00	\$50.00	\$11,930.00
Kymriah	\$475,000.00	\$50.00	\$474,950.00
Lemtrada	\$29,960.00	\$50.00	\$29,910.00
Mylotarg	\$10,125.00	\$50.00	\$10,075.00
Nilotinib	\$17,821.92	\$50.00	\$17,771.92
Kesimpta	\$8,606.00	\$50.00	\$8,556.00
Onureg	\$20,318.96	\$50.00	\$20,268.96
Rituxan	\$999.00	\$50.00	\$949.00
Imydot	\$10,356.58	\$50.00	\$10,306.58
Scemblix	\$19,308.29	\$50.00	\$19,258.29
Spryvel	\$16,532.18	\$50.00	\$16,482.18
Synribo	\$1,411.00	\$50.00	\$1,361.00
Tasigna	\$17,821.92	\$50.00	\$17,771.92
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Managing Arthritis Pain and Discomfort: WHY MITOCHONDRIAL HEALTH MATTERS

By Dr. Eric Pearson, Chief Medical Officer, Vetirus Pharmaceuticals

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common form of arthritis, a chronic disease of aging. Effective and safe long-term treatment for most OA patients is not available, creating a large unmet medical need. It is estimated that more than 150 million people globally suffer from OA. Many of the symptoms of OA are often overlooked or shrugged off as merely "getting old". The truth is that Osteo Arthritis of the knee affects roughly 12% of all people 60 years or older, and this is just the tip of the iceberg in both undiagnosed and diagnosed arthritic conditions. As the population ages, the number of people with arthritis is projected to grow substantially. The Center for Disease Control is estimating that by 2030, in the U.S. alone, more than 67 million people will have physician diagnosed arthritis. The majority of these people will have OA.

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a chronic degenerative joint disease that causes progressive pain, loss of function, and in many cases, variable levels of disability. It mainly affects individuals over 60. Notable symptoms of OA include the degradation of cartilage, formation of bone spurs and cysts, loss of joint fluid and local and systemic inflammation. The destruction of cartilage plays the most important role in the course of OA. Articular cartilage is comprised of chondrocytes and extracellular matrix. Preventing these chondrocytes from damage is a key factor to the integrity of articular cartilage. Studies have regarded inflammatory response to be the primary cause of chondrocytes injuries and there is growing evidence regarding the role of mitochondrial dysfunction in OA and rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Joint dysfunction and pain are the most common characteristics of all forms of arthritis. Mitochondria are both targets and sources of inflammation-associated injury in the synovial membrane, hence injury and death of synovocytes trigger the release of pro-inflammatory mediators and the activation of inflammatory cells.

While OA has been viewed as a disease of increased joint stress due to heavy load bearing (excessive weight and obesity), recent scientific progress is pointing towards chronic inflammation as the driving factor in OA disease progression. As many healthy, younger patients are developing OA years after acute sports-related injuries, it became evident that more than simple overweight issues contribute to disease pathobiology.

Current treatments for OA include anti-inflammatories such as corticosteroids; non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) including Celebrex, ibuprofen (Motrin), and Naproxen (Aleve); pain relievers including acetaminophen (Tylenol) and opioids (Tramadol). While short-term partial relief is achieved with steroidal treatments, diminished long-term benefits and significant adverse events prevent long term dosing. Likewise, currently available NSAIDs offer anti-inflammatory action but have

unacceptable long-term adverse side effects including risks of bleeding, gastric ulcers, liver and kidney damage and cardiovascular events. Pain relievers such as acetaminophen have risks of liver toxicity and opioids, of course, are not suitable for long term administration. Ultimately, effective treatment of OA requires a safer, multi-faceted anti-inflammatory molecule able to affect a multitude of OA-related mechanisms with minimal or no adverse effects when used over long time periods. Astaxanthin (ASTX) is that molecule.

ASTX localizes into the mitochondria significantly decreasing oxidative stress while stabilizing the mitochondrial membranes. This stabilizing effect on the mitochondrial membranes has been shown using electron microscopy. (Dr. Mason Preston of Harvard University discovered this). This leads to decreased pro-apoptotic (cell death) mediators and increased anti-apoptotic (cell death) Stabilization of mitochondria and inhibition of these pathways will prolong cell life and contribute to joint matrix maintenance. Likewise, ASTX has been shown to upregulate PGC-1 α , a master regulator of mitochondrial biogenesis, as well as critical metabolic regulators such as CPT-1. All this scientific evidence, in both humans and animal models, highlight the capacity of ASTX to affect important mechanisms critical to osteoarthritis in humans (oxidative stress, inflammation) and underscores the enormous ability of ASTX to slow disease progression and improve symptoms of arthritis.

Vetirus Pharmaceuticals has developed a Natural Biologic compound to bring the benefits of all of this in one easy to use single dose formula named MitoPak™. In summary, it has the below properties:

- 1. Potent Antioxidant Properties:** Mitopak is a powerful antioxidant, which helps protect joints from oxidative stress and inflammation that can lead to joint pain and degradation.
- 2. Anti-inflammatory Effects:** Mitopak has demonstrated anti-inflammatory properties, which can help reduce joint pain and improve overall joint health by decreasing the production of inflammatory mediators.
- 3. Cartilage Protection:** Mitopak has been shown to protect cartilage from degradation by inhibiting the activity of enzymes responsible for breaking down cartilage, such as matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs).
- 4. Reduction of Joint Pain Symptoms:** Studies have reported that Mitopak supplementation can help reduce joint pain symptoms, such as stiffness and discomfort, in people suffering from conditions like osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

5. Improved Joint Mobility: Mitopak can improve joint mobility by reducing inflammation and promoting the health of joint tissues, making it easier for individuals to move and maintain an active lifestyle.

6. Enhanced Synovial Fluid Production: Mitopak has been found to enhance the production of synovial fluid, which lubricates and nourishes the joints, promoting overall joint health.

7. Supports Collagen Synthesis: Mitopak can support collagen synthesis, which is crucial for maintaining the integrity of joint structures such as tendons, ligaments, and cartilage.

8. Slows Age-Related Joint Degeneration: Mitopak's antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties can slow down the age-related degeneration of joints, helping to maintain joint health and function in older individuals.

9. Complementary to Conventional Treatments: Mitopak can be used as a complementary treatment to conventional therapies for joint pain and inflammation, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or corticosteroids, potentially enhancing their effectiveness or reducing side effects.

10. Sports Performance and Recovery: Athletes and active individuals can benefit from Mitopak supplementation, as it may help to reduce exercise-induced joint pain and reduces inflammation, and speeds up muscle recovery while supporting muscle strength, and improve overall sports performance.

All inflammation starts in your mitochondria. MitoPak™ stops the inflammation where it starts. Over 1200 scientific studies have concluded the safety of the active ingredients and they have a long history of use in both Humans and animals. MitoPak™ fights inflammation without harmful side effects found in NSAIDs. It supercharges your mitochondrial energy production, and its unique proprietary formula contains the most powerful known antioxidant allowing your body to function at peak performance,

MitoPAK™ is nature's most potent anti-inflammatory and is:

- 110x stronger than Vitamin E
- 800x stronger than CoQ10
- 6000x stronger than Vitamin C

and has grown in popularity as more medical evidence supports its benefits. Regardless of your age, MitoPak™ positively influences mitochondrial function and preserves membrane structure while scavenging radicals. It is a natural therapeutic that reduces inflammation and speeds up muscle recovery without compromising muscle strength.

Vetirus Pharmaceuticals is based in Naples, Florida and London, England and are focused on searching the world for developing Natural Biologics to advance their mission of changing the way we age in both human and veterinary medicine with purity and precision.

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Understanding Leukemia and Lymphoma: Types, Treatment, and Hope

Leukemia and lymphoma are two distinct but closely related types of blood cancers that affect the body's blood-forming tissues. Both diseases involve the uncontrolled growth of abnormal blood cells, but they have unique characteristics, treatment approaches, and outcomes. In this article, we delve into the differences between leukemia and lymphoma, explore their various types, discuss treatment options, and shed light on the hope that research and medical advancements bring to those affected by these conditions.

Leukemia: Uncontrolled Blood Cell Production

Leukemia primarily affects the bone marrow and blood, causing an overproduction of immature white blood cells, which impairs the body's ability to fight infections. There are several types of leukemia, including acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), acute myeloid leukemia (AML), chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), and chronic myeloid leukemia (CML). Symptoms can range from fatigue and frequent infections to easy bruising and bleeding. Early diagnosis is crucial for effective treatment.

Lymphoma: Abnormal Lymphocyte Growth

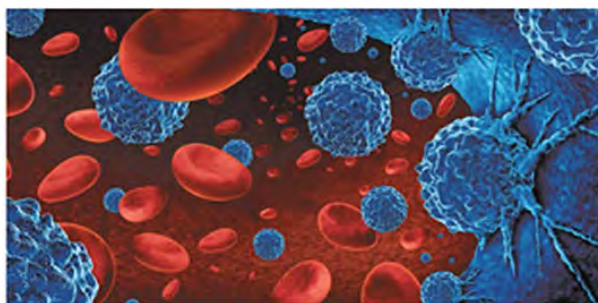
Lymphoma, on the other hand, originates in the lymphatic system, which plays a vital role in immune function. This cancer leads to the abnormal growth of lymphocytes, a type of white blood cell, in lymph nodes and other lymphoid tissues. The two main types of lymphoma are Hodgkin lymphoma and non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL). Hodgkin lymphoma is characterized by the presence of Reed-Sternberg cells, while NHL comprises a diverse group of lymphomas with varied behaviors and prognoses.

Treatment Approaches: Targeted Therapies, Chemotherapy, and Stem Cell Transplants

Both leukemia and lymphoma are treated using a combination of approaches, depending on the specific type, stage, and the patient's overall health. Treatment options include targeted therapies that attack cancer cells specifically, chemotherapy to destroy rapidly dividing cells, radiation therapy to target localized tumors, and stem cell transplants to replace damaged bone marrow.

Progress in Research and Clinical Trials

Advancements in medical research and technology have led to innovative treatment options for leukemia and lymphoma. Immunotherapy, which



harnesses the immune system to recognize and destroy cancer cells, has shown promising results in clinical trials. Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy, for instance, involves modifying a patient's immune cells to better target cancer cells. Clinical trials also explore new drugs and treatment combinations to improve patient outcomes and minimize side effects.

Support and Hope for Patients

A diagnosis of leukemia or lymphoma can be emotionally overwhelming for patients and their families. Support networks, counseling services, and patient advocacy groups play a crucial role in providing emotional, psychological, and informational support. These resources not only empower patients to make informed decisions about their treatment but also offer a sense of community and hope.

Looking Ahead: A Promising Horizon

Although leukemia and lymphoma are serious diseases, advancements in medical science are paving the way for better outcomes and improved quality of life for patients. Early detection, personalized treatment plans, and ongoing research efforts contribute to a positive outlook. The journey through cancer treatment can be challenging, but with the continuous dedication of researchers, healthcare professionals, and support networks, the future holds promise for more effective therapies and improved patient experiences.

In conclusion, leukemia and lymphoma are intricate blood cancers that affect different aspects of the body's blood-forming and immune systems. Understanding the distinctions between these diseases, the available treatment options, and the ongoing progress in medical research can offer patients and their loved ones reassurance and hope as they navigate their cancer journey. As science continues to advance, there is reason to be optimistic about the evolving landscape of leukemia and lymphoma treatment and care.



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, Romania. 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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Arthritis Awareness: A Crucial Initiative

Arthritis, a group of over 100 conditions causing joint pain and stiffness, affects millions worldwide. As advocates for better musculoskeletal health, orthopedic specialists play a pivotal role in raising awareness about this debilitating condition. Their expertise sheds light on preventive measures, treatment options, and the importance of early intervention.

Understanding Arthritis: A Primer

Arthritis is more than just aches and pains; it can significantly impact daily life, limiting mobility and diminishing quality of life. Orthopedic specialists emphasize that arthritis is not a condition solely afflicting the elderly; it can affect people of all ages, including children. The first step toward increasing awareness is dispelling misconceptions and educating the public about the diverse forms and potential severity of arthritis.

The Power of Early Detection and Treatment

Orthopedic specialists stress the importance of early detection and intervention in managing arthritis. Prompt diagnosis enables healthcare providers to develop tailored treatment plans that may include medications, physical therapy, lifestyle modifications, and, in some cases, surgical interventions. Raising awareness about the significance of seeking medical attention at the first signs of joint discomfort can make a substantial difference in a patient's long-term well-being.

Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle

A cornerstone of arthritis prevention and management lies in adopting a healthy lifestyle. Orthopedic specialists advocate for regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and maintaining a healthy weight to reduce the risk of developing arthritis or worsening its symptoms. By highlighting the connection between

lifestyle choices and joint health, these specialists empower individuals to take control of their musculoskeletal well-being.

Innovations in Treatment Modalities

Advancements in medical technology have transformed the landscape of arthritis treatment. Orthopedic specialists are at the forefront of these innovations, leveraging minimally invasive procedures, biologic therapies, and personalized medicine approaches to provide patients with more effective and less invasive treatment options. Creating awareness about these cutting-edge solutions ensures that individuals with arthritis have access to the latest advancements in care.

The Role of Orthopedic Specialists in Arthritis Awareness

Orthopedic specialists are more than healthcare providers; they are educators, advocates, and partners in patients' journeys toward better joint health. By actively participating in awareness campaigns, conducting community workshops, and sharing their expertise through various platforms, these specialists contribute to building a well-informed society that understands the impact of arthritis and the resources available for managing it.

Empowering Patients Through Knowledge

Empowerment stems from knowledge. Orthopedic specialists work tirelessly to equip patients with accurate information about arthritis, its symptoms, and available treatment options. By demystifying medical jargon and fostering open dialogues, specialists empower patients to make informed decisions about their health, ensuring a collaborative approach to managing arthritis.

Collaboration for a Common Cause

Arthritis awareness is a collective effort that involves not only healthcare professionals but also the wider community. Orthopedic specialists collaborate with patient advocacy groups, researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to amplify the message of arthritis awareness. Together, they raise funds for research, promote policy changes, and drive initiatives that improve the lives of those affected by arthritis.

Arthritis awareness is more than a fleeting campaign; it's an ongoing commitment to education, advocacy, and improved quality of life. Orthopedic specialists play a central role in this endeavor, sharing their expertise, insights, and dedication to empowering individuals with arthritis. By fostering a society that values joint health and understands the importance of early intervention, orthopedic specialists contribute significantly to the well-being of countless individuals around the world.

Orthopedic Specialists of SW Florida strives to provide exceptional quality of care to patients with musculoskeletal needs. Our staff of fellowship-trained physicians remains at the forefront of orthopedic medicine, and serves as an educational resource for the Southwest Florida community.



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Rheumatoid Arthritis and Gum Disease: What You Need to Know

By Dr. Ricardo S. Bocanegra, DDS

Why do rheumatoid arthritis and gum disease often go hand in hand? Learn about the significance of the connection and what you can do to protect your overall health.

Fast Facts

People living with rheumatoid arthritis are more likely to develop gum disease compared to people who do not have RA. Inflammation related to gum disease or periodontitis may play a role in rheumatoid arthritis disease activity.

Controlling gum disease inflammation may help improve rheumatoid arthritis symptoms.

When you're living with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), brushing, flossing, and seeing your dentist regularly are especially important. Studies show a strong connection between RA and gum disease, an inflammatory condition that can lead to tooth loss and other health complications, such as heart disease.

At this point, experts aren't sure which health issue is the chicken and which is the egg. A German study published in June 2008 in the Journal of Periodontology showed that people with RA had eight times the odds of developing gum disease as compared with people without RA. A study out of the University of Louisville in Kentucky published in September 2013 found that the bacterium that causes periodontal disease, *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, increases the severity of rheumatoid arthritis, leads to an earlier onset of the disease, and causes symptoms to progress more quickly. And a Swedish study published

in March 2016 in the journal *Arthritis & Rheumatology* suggests that *P. gingivalis* may be a possible trigger for autoimmune disease in a subset of RA patients. "The connection is confusing," says Terrance Griffin, DMD, chair of the department of periodontology at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston. "There are so many factors that can come into play, like oral hygiene. RA can cause you to lose some dexterity, which may mean you can't clean your teeth as well. But that may only partially account for this relationship."

Gum Disease and Rheumatoid Arthritis: The Inflammation Link

Doctors may not know for sure how gum disease and RA are linked, but both diseases have inflammation in common, which may explain the connection. Inflammation is a protective immune system response to foreign bodies like viruses and bacteria. But with autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, the immune system mistakenly triggers inflammation even though there are no viruses or bacteria to fight off. It's possible that the immune system is stimulated by mouth inflammation and infection; therefore, setting off a cascade of events where inflammation develops at the site of joints or arthritis. Dr. Bocanegra strongly believes that controlling the inflammation through better dental care could play a role in reducing the incidence and severity of RA.

Treating One Condition May Improve the Other

People with a severe form of rheumatoid arthritis that have successfully treated their gum disease, have seen their pain and other arthritis symptoms get better. In addition, patients who have been treated with drugs for both gum disease and rheumatoid arthritis fared better than those who received RA medication alone. Dr. Bocanegra recommends that people who have both gum disease and RA should have an informed care team comprised of a physician, a dentist and a periodontist. Brushing and flossing can be challenging for those with RA, and you should work with your doctors to find out what works best for you. And if you don't have a periodontist, get an evaluation from your dentist every year to monitor the status of your gums, since you are more likely to get it.

Dental Care for People With Rheumatoid Arthritis

Gum disease ranges from gingivitis, a mild form that causes swollen, tender gums, to more serious forms like periodontitis, in which inflammation affects the tissue and bone supporting the teeth. Some people with RA also develop Sjögren's syndrome or sicca syndrome, an autoimmune disease of the glands, which causes dry mouth and increased tooth decay. If you have gingivitis, it can be reversed with twice-yearly dental cleanings and good at-home care.

Brushing and flossing can be challenging for those with RA, and you should work with your doctors to find out what works best for you. And if you don't have a dentist, call Dr. Bocanegra at 239-482-8806 for an evaluation to monitor the status of your gums, since you are more likely to develop gum disease.

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Reclaiming Lives: National Recovery Month Shines a Light on Substance Use Rehabilitation

National Recovery Month, observed every September, serves as a beacon of hope for individuals and families affected by substance use disorders. This annual observance raises awareness about the importance of prevention, treatment, and recovery support, while highlighting the achievements of those who have reclaimed their lives from the clutches of addiction.

Substance use disorders continue to impact millions of lives globally, transcending age, gender, and socioeconomic boundaries. Whether it's alcohol, prescription drugs, or illegal substances, addiction takes a heavy toll on physical health, mental well-being, and interpersonal relationships. National Recovery Month aims to shed light on these challenges and to provide a platform for sharing stories of triumph and resilience.

One of the cornerstones of National Recovery Month is to reduce the stigma associated with addiction. The societal shame and judgment surrounding substance use disorders often act as barriers to seeking help. Through community events, educational campaigns, and personal narratives, the observance works to foster an environment of empathy and understanding. This shift in attitude encourages individuals to step forward, seek treatment, and embark on their journey to recovery.

Recovery is a multifaceted process that involves various stages, including acknowledging the problem, seeking treatment, maintaining sobriety,

and rebuilding one's life. National Recovery Month underscores the significance of each stage and the continuous support needed throughout the journey. Treatment centers, support groups, and mental health professionals play a pivotal role in guiding individuals towards lasting recovery.

Family support is another crucial aspect of the recovery process. Loved ones often bear witness to the pain and challenges brought about by addiction. National Recovery Month emphasizes the significance of family involvement in the recovery journey, fostering healthier relationships and providing a stronger foundation for long-term sobriety.

The COVID-19 pandemic further underscored the importance of recovery resources. The isolation and uncertainty brought about by the pandemic exacerbated substance use disorders for many. National Recovery Month recognizes the need to adapt recovery strategies in changing circumstances and highlights the resilience of individuals who navigated recovery amid unprecedented challenges.

In essence, National Recovery Month serves as a reminder that recovery is possible and that every individual's journey is unique. Personal stories of transformation inspire others to seek help, offer support, and challenge societal stereotypes. By sharing these stories, the observance creates a sense of unity and empowerment within the recovery community.

As National Recovery Month continues to evolve, its impact expands beyond the month of September. It fuels ongoing conversations about mental health, addiction, and the need for comprehensive support systems. While celebrating the successes of those who have overcome addiction, the observance also calls for continued advocacy, improved access to treatment, and research to better understand the complexities of substance use disorders.

In conclusion, National Recovery Month stands as a testament to the human spirit's capacity for change and renewal. It reminds us that recovery is not just a destination; it's a lifelong journey. Through awareness, compassion, and a collective commitment to change, we can create a society that supports individuals in reclaiming their lives from the grip of addiction.

The Kimberly Center utilizes an evidence based program. Its' fundamental goal is to restore the individual to a healthier, happier and more productive life, free from substance dependence and abuse and destructive behaviors.

The goal is based on the belief that successful recovery encompasses improvements in self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, positive family interaction, vocational productivity, the establishment and attainment of realistic life goals and healthy life style adjustments. In addition, we hope to see a consequent reduction in associated health problems, behavioral problems and other psychological pathology.

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The Surprising Connection Between Alzheimer's and Cholesterol

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

September is National Cholesterol Education Month and at Senior Care Authority we are especially interested in cholesterol because of its emerging connection to Alzheimer's. In the health and wellness world, cholesterol has long been a topic of concern due to its association with cardiovascular diseases. However, recent research has unveiled a fascinating and complex connection between cholesterol and another formidable adversary: Alzheimer's disease. Because of our ongoing work providing support to our clients who have a loved one with Alzheimer's or who have Alzheimer's themselves, we want you to be aware of the intricate interplay between cholesterol and Alzheimer's. We will highlight findings from peer-reviewed research and offer valuable tips on how lowering your cholesterol may reap cognitive benefits.

Cholesterol and Brain Health: Beyond the Stereotype

Cholesterol is often unfairly vilified as a health villain, but it serves essential functions in the body. Beyond its role in maintaining cell membranes and hormone production, cholesterol plays a critical role in brain health. Nerve cells in the brain require cholesterol to build and maintain their cell membranes, ensuring efficient communication between neurons. Furthermore, cholesterol is vital for the formation of synapses, the microscopic connections that facilitate neural signaling. Cholesterol is also involved in the function of neurotransmitter receptors in the cell membrane. These receptors are essential for receiving and processing neurotransmitter signals, which play a critical role in various brain functions, including mood regulation and cognition.

The Amyloid Beta Puzzle

A hallmark of Alzheimer's disease is the accumulation of amyloid beta plaques in the brain, contributing to neurodegeneration and cognitive decline. Emerging research suggests that cholesterol metabolism may influence the production and clearance of amyloid beta. A study published in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* (doi: 10.3233/JAD-170838) indicates that cholesterol

levels impact the activity of enzymes involved in amyloid beta production. High levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, commonly referred to as "bad" cholesterol, could potentially exacerbate the buildup of amyloid beta plaques, a pivotal step in Alzheimer's progression.

The Blood-Brain Barrier and Beyond

The blood-brain barrier is a protective shield that regulates the passage of molecules from the bloodstream into the brain. Cholesterol plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of this barrier. However, disruptions in the blood-brain barrier have been implicated in neurodegenerative processes, including Alzheimer's disease. Elevated cholesterol levels may compromise the blood-brain barrier, permitting harmful molecules to enter the brain and trigger inflammation and neuronal damage.

The APOE Gene Connection

The apolipoprotein E (APOE) gene, which influences cholesterol transport and metabolism, has gained significant attention in Alzheimer's research. Notably, the APOE ε4 allele is associated with a heightened risk of Alzheimer's disease. A peer-reviewed study published in *JAMA Neurology* (doi:10.1001/jamaneurol.2013.607) found that individuals carrying the APOE ε4 allele exhibited higher cholesterol levels and an increased susceptibility to Alzheimer's. This gene variant not only influences cholesterol but also affects the metabolism of amyloid beta, contributing to disease progression.

Strategies to Lower Cholesterol for Cognitive Well-Being

The evolving understanding of the cholesterol-Alzheimer's link highlights the importance of managing cholesterol levels for potential cognitive benefits. We know you have heard a lot of this before, but remember, your goal is to have healthy levels of cholesterol to improve your cognitive function. Here are practical tips to help lower cholesterol:

- **Healthy Diet:** Adopt a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Reduce saturated and trans fats, often found in fried and processed foods.

- **Physical Activity:** Engage in regular aerobic exercises such as walking, jogging, swimming, or cycling. Exercise helps increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol ("good" cholesterol) and supports overall cardiovascular health.

- **Quit Smoking:** Smoking is detrimental to both cardiovascular health and brain function. Quitting smoking can improve cholesterol levels and promote overall well-being.

- **Medication Management:** In some cases, lifestyle modifications may not be sufficient to lower cholesterol. Consult a healthcare professional to determine if cholesterol-lowering medications, such as statins, are appropriate.

The intricate connection between cholesterol and Alzheimer's disease reveals a multifaceted relationship that extends beyond cardiovascular health. While ongoing research strives to unveil the exact mechanisms at play, there is growing evidence suggesting that managing cholesterol levels has cognitive benefits.

If you or someone you know are interested in learning more about Alzheimer's or how to prepare for the future care of someone with Alzheimer's, we are here to help. Our advisors have supported our own loved ones with Alzheimer's or dementia and we know how hard it is. Planning as early as possible is as critical as keeping cholesterol levels in optimal ranges. We can be your trusted Alzheimer's resource. (239) 330-2133 or info@scanyfl.com.



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CBD and Arthritis: Exploring the Potential Benefits of Cannabidiol

Arthritis is a debilitating condition that affects millions of people worldwide, causing pain, inflammation, and reduced quality of life. As traditional treatment options often come with side effects and limited effectiveness, alternative remedies like CBD have gained attention for their potential to alleviate arthritis symptoms.

CBD, short for cannabidiol, is a non-psychoactive compound found in the cannabis plant. Unlike its counterpart THC, CBD does not induce a "high." Instead, it interacts with the endocannabinoid system in the body, which plays a crucial role in regulating various physiological processes, including pain perception and inflammation.

Research into the effects of CBD on arthritis is still in its early stages, but initial findings are promising. Several studies have suggested that CBD might offer relief to arthritis sufferers by targeting multiple aspects of the condition. One key way CBD may help is by reducing inflammation. Inflammation is a hallmark of arthritis and is responsible for the pain and joint damage experienced by patients. CBD's anti-inflammatory properties could potentially mitigate this aspect of the disease.

Moreover, CBD might also help manage arthritis-related pain. Chronic pain is one of the most challenging symptoms of arthritis, often leading to a



decreased quality of life. CBD interacts with receptors in the brain that are associated with pain perception, potentially providing a natural way to alleviate discomfort without the addictive properties of opioids or other painkillers.

Another potential benefit of CBD for arthritis is its ability to improve sleep. Many arthritis sufferers experience sleep disturbances due to pain and discomfort. CBD's calming and anxiety-reducing effects might promote better sleep, allowing the body to heal and recover more effectively.

While these potential benefits are encouraging, it's important to note that more extensive clinical trials are needed to fully understand the effectiveness and safety of CBD for arthritis. Additionally, the lack of

regulation in the CBD market means that the quality and potency of products can vary widely. Anyone considering using CBD to manage their arthritis symptoms should consult a healthcare professional and opt for reputable, third-party tested products.

In conclusion, CBD holds promise as a potential remedy for arthritis symptoms due to its anti-inflammatory, pain-relieving, and sleep-improving properties. As research advances and our understanding of CBD's interactions with the body deepens, it's possible that CBD could become a valuable addition to the arsenal of treatments available for arthritis sufferers. However, individuals should approach CBD with caution, seeking guidance from medical professionals and conducting thorough research before integrating it into their arthritis management plan.

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.

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Value Based Care Healthcare Model

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

There are more and more Health Clinics opening in SWFL, many are Values Based Care (I can't mention names). They should:

1. Identify patient population and needs...
2. Design appropriate care solutions...
3. Build integrated knowledge teams...
4. Quantify health outcomes and costs metrics...
5. Develop partnerships with technology and healthcare providers...
6. Educate providers and patients...
7. Measure and improve...

How they work is the company is paid a lump sum to manage your care. The doctor will be your primary care provider and will collaborate with their internal team to help manage your care. The goal is to be seen every 3 months, sometime more often depending on your medical condition. They will coordinate your care and services within their network. They work with specific insurance companies, and it varies by company. They often offer a lot of attractive benefits. If there are certain provider's you want to see make sure you can do so. Some do NOT accept Original Medicare and require you to have a Medicare Advantage Plan. Be careful if you change you may NOT be able to get your Medicare Supplement back, plus you are now older and your premium could increase.

Travel Insurance - Most of our USA Health plans do not include coverage when leaving the United States, including Cruises. We recommend always getting a comprehensive Medical Travel Insurance Policy. They are less than you think and can make a world of a difference.

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 do not 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 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 benefits 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 guaranteed issue you may need to medically qualify. You can purchase a Medigap Plan during your 1st 6-month on Medicare Part B without medical underwriting. There are a lot of things you need to know. Again, work with an agent you can trust! *Especially important:* when you move you need to know your options. Can you keep the same plan? Do you need to make a change and what does that look like?

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funds for local nonprofit organizations and as well as conducted drives for food, Thanksgiving turkeys, shoes and toiletries. Most significantly, we help children facing obstacles in life create community service projects to help others in need. In 2022, we served more than 1,000 children with service projects that include Children's Advocacy Center's Pine Manor afterschool program bringing kindness to a local senior center, Pace Center for Girls of Lee County bringing the holidays to an assisted living facility, and a local Boy Scout Troop who assisted Hurricane Ian victims with debris clean-up along with delivery of cookies, cards and water in one of

the hardest hit areas of Cape Coral. This year, we are focusing on projects with foster care children and veterans.

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CRYOTHERAPY: A COOL APPROACH FOR FACIAL REJUVENATION AND BODY TONING

In recent years, cryotherapy has gained popularity as a holistic approach to enhance wellness and promote various health benefits. Initially used in sports medicine for muscle recovery, cryotherapy has expanded its horizons to offer facials and body toning treatments. This article explores the exciting world of cryotherapy, focusing on its application in facial rejuvenation and body toning through CryoTherma™ technology.

Understanding Cryotherapy

Cryotherapy involves exposing the body or specific areas to extremely cold temperatures for a short period. This exposure stimulates the body's natural healing mechanisms, resulting in a range of therapeutic effects. Cryotherapy can be applied in various forms, such as whole-body cryotherapy chambers, localized cryo devices, or CryoTherma technology.

Cryotherapy for Facial Rejuvenation

Facials have long been sought-after for their skin-nourishing benefits, and cryotherapy takes them to the next level. Cryo facials involve the application of extremely cold temperatures to the face, tightening the skin, reducing puffiness, and promoting a youthful glow. The chilly sensation triggers vasoconstriction, which improves blood circulation and oxygenation, resulting in improved complexion and reduced signs of aging. Additionally, cryotherapy facials can help reduce inflammation, acne, and even diminish the appearance of scars.

CryoTherma for Body Toning

When it comes to body toning, CryoTherma is a groundbreaking technology that combines cryotherapy with targeted heat therapy. This innovative approach allows for precise contouring of different body areas while simultaneously stimulating muscle growth and fat reduction. CryoTherma devices use a combination of controlled cooling and heating to induce thermal shock in the underlying tissues. This prompts the body to burn fat, tighten the skin, and build muscle tone.

The Science Behind CryoTherma

CryoTherma leverages the principles of thermogenesis and cryolipolysis. During a CryoTherma session, the cold temperatures cause fat cells to contract and



crystallize, triggering the body's natural elimination process. The subsequent heating phase stimulates collagen production and enhances blood circulation, resulting in improved skin elasticity and tone. This dual-action approach makes CryoTherma a versatile treatment for both fat reduction and muscle toning. For best results, 3 to 5 sessions are recommended.

Benefits of Cryotherapy with Facials and CryoTherma™

Enhanced skin elasticity: Cryotherapy facials and CryoTherma treatments promote collagen production, improving the skin's elasticity and reducing sagging.

Improved muscle tone: CryoTherma activates muscle fibers, promoting muscle growth and toning. It is particularly beneficial for stubborn areas that are resistant to traditional exercise routines.

Fat reduction: CryoTherma induces lipolysis, leading to the breakdown and elimination of fat cells. It can help reduce localized fat deposits and sculpt the body.

Quick and non-invasive: Cryotherapy treatments are generally quick and non-invasive, with minimal downtime. They provide a convenient alternative to surgical procedures for individuals seeking facial rejuvenation and body toning.

Overall wellness: Cryotherapy sessions can have additional benefits, such as reducing inflammation, boosting metabolism, improving sleep quality, and enhancing mood and mental clarity.

Cryotherapy has revolutionized the beauty and wellness industry, offering a unique and effective approach to facial rejuvenation and body toning. Whether through cryo facials or the innovative CryoTherma technology, the combination of extreme cold and controlled heat stimulates the body's natural healing processes, resulting in improved skin quality, reduced signs of aging, and enhanced muscle tone.



THE COOLEST CREW

The Icebox Fort Myers Team takes pride in their passion and knowledge for Cryotherapy and all its health benefits that help our clients look and feel their absolute best.

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THE POWER OF IV THERAPY

Preventing Headaches and Chronic Migraines Through Hydration

BY Kasey Cook, RN, Owner

Debilitating headaches and chronic migraines can significantly impact one's quality of life. While various factors contribute to their occurrence, dehydration often plays a crucial role. In recent years, the use of intravenous (IV) therapy has gained popularity as an effective method to combat headaches and migraines by replenishing the body's fluids and nutrients directly. This article explores the benefits of IV therapy in maintaining hydration levels and its potential to prevent headaches and chronic migraines.

Understanding the Link between Dehydration and Headaches

Dehydration disrupts the body's delicate balance, leading to a cascade of adverse effects, including headaches and migraines. When the body lacks adequate water, blood vessels in the brain can constrict, causing pain and discomfort. IV therapy delivers hydration directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the digestive system's absorption process. This allows for rapid rehydration, ensuring that the body receives the necessary fluids to function optimally and reducing the risk of headaches associated with dehydration.

Quick and Effective Hydration

One of the primary advantages of IV therapy is its ability to deliver fluids directly into the bloodstream. Unlike oral hydration methods, such as drinking water or sports drinks, IV therapy provides a quick and efficient way to hydrate the body.

The infusion of saline solution containing essential electrolytes ensures optimal hydration levels are reached promptly. This immediate hydration can help prevent the onset of headaches and migraines, providing relief to individuals suffering from chronic conditions.

Nutrient Replenishment for Optimal Brain Function

In addition to hydration, IV therapy can also replenish essential nutrients crucial for brain health. Certain nutrients, such as magnesium, riboflavin (vitamin B2), and coenzyme Q10, have been linked to reducing the frequency and intensity of headaches and migraines. IV therapy allows for precise administration of these nutrients, ensuring they are readily available to support optimal brain function. By addressing potential deficiencies, IV therapy can play a vital role in preventing chronic migraines and headaches associated with nutrient imbalances.

Customized Treatment for Individual Needs

IV therapy can be tailored to meet individual needs, taking into account factors such as medical history, lifestyle, and specific symptoms. This personalized approach allows healthcare professionals to design an IV treatment plan that targets the underlying causes of headaches and migraines. By addressing dehydration and nutrient imbalances unique to each patient, IV therapy can offer long-term relief and prevention of chronic conditions, reducing the reliance on medication and improving overall well-being.

Holistic Approach and Long-Term Benefits

In addition to providing immediate relief from headaches and migraines, IV therapy promotes an overall sense of well-being. Proper hydration is essential for various bodily functions, including regulating body temperature, supporting organ function, and maintaining healthy skin. By addressing hydration needs through IV therapy, individuals can experience improved energy levels, enhanced cognitive function, and increased physical performance. Moreover, preventing chronic migraines and headaches can significantly improve the overall quality of life, allowing individuals to engage fully in work, social activities, and personal relationships.

IV therapy offers a range of benefits for individuals seeking relief from headaches and chronic migraines. By providing quick and effective hydration, replenishing essential nutrients, and taking a personalized approach, IV therapy proves to be a valuable tool in preventing and managing these debilitating conditions, ultimately enhancing overall well-being.



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TOP 4 Reasons Chefs for Seniors Might Be The Right Choice For You

#1 Shopping is Challenging

In light of our global pandemic, shopping has proven to be challenging for all ages, but if you have an underlying medical condition or are over 65, the risk of infection has become a significant concern. Along with COVID-19, shopping at the grocery store heightens the risk of other communicable illnesses such as the flu or the common cold.

In addition to these concerns, many seniors find it taxing or may not be able to drive themselves safely to the store due to mobility issues, diminished eyesight, cognitive issues, or other aspects that might make driving, parking, shopping, walking, or calculating a genuine challenge.

#2 Cooking is Becoming Difficult or Dangerous

Perhaps you used to love cooking, or maybe you've never been keen on whipping up a meal. Some individuals find that following a recipe and cooking can be difficult, time-consuming, or in some cases, dangerous.

If you'd prefer to have someone else make your meals out of convenience, or you'd rather not unintentionally burn or overcook your food, many people feel the same way. This is especially true for seniors who no longer need to cook for an entire family and those that have issues with getting around easily or are developing neurodegenerative disorders.

#3 You or Your Loved one Need Special Meals (Low Sodium, Low Fat, etc.)

Have you or your loved one undergone a heart procedure, stroke, or been diagnosed with diabetes? If so, you know the importance of following a strict diet that will help manage and sustain your disease and longevity.

Many people find it challenging to understand which foods are best and how to prepare those foods so that they are delicious and appetizing.

#4 You Want Nutritious Food Without the Hassle

Combining all of the reasons that so many seniors could benefit from a chef-prepared meal is easily identified in the previously mentioned issues and

conditions. You want to eat the healthiest meals possible, meals that are good for your body, and that taste amazing so that it's easy to stick to eating the way you know you should. That's where Chefs for Seniors can help.

Chefs for Seniors

Chefs For Seniors is a welcomed answer for many that want nutritious, flavorful foods custom-prepared right in the comfort of your home by a licensed chef that not only provides gourmet-style meals, but also compassionate companionship. They also have specialty meals for low sodium, low fat, and other dietary needs.

- Find peace of mind knowing personal chefs will handle the shopping and cooking
- Feel healthy and rejuvenated with meals for seniors that fit your diet
- Truly affordable and much less expensive than eating out
- All personal chefs are servsafe licensed, undergo background checks, and are fully insured

The company's local professional chefs prepare affordable meals for the week in the home using the freshest ingredients, while offering a fun interactive experience. Chefs for Seniors is a private meal preparation service which specializes in providing companionship with the chefs preparing the meals in the home of the client. Clients select meals from a regional menu which can be customized to the client's dietary preferences and needs. The process aims to be an affordable option for seniors who may want fresh home-cooked meals, but who may be physically unable to cook the meals for themselves.

Professionally Prepared Meals and Clean Up!

Chefs for Seniors offers rotating menu options, which includes select Chef creations inspired by the region. Clients select their desired meal in advance, allowing the chef to shop and prepare the meals on the designated cooking day. Chefs prepare the meals between two to two and a half

hours. And an added benefit is that after the meal is prepared and stored according to the client's preferences, the chefs clean before leaving the house.

Your chef will bring their own "toolbox" with pots, pans, knives, and utensils into the home. You don't need to have anything on hand except an appetite and working appliances!

Cost and Insurance Coverage

The price of our services are region-specific and depends on your individual needs. Our goal is to provide an affordable solution that seniors can use long-term. We offer three different service packages to meet a variety of needs: Standard, Custom, and Non-Standard.

Some Long Term Health Insurance Policies may cover certain in-home services like Chefs For Seniors.

Multiple Meals During Visit

During a 2-hour home visit, your personal chef will prepare 4 different entrées and 10-12 individually-packaged servings of meals. The exact number of servings depending on your appetite and the types of meals ordered and serving sizes can be adjusted with your chef.

Most clients have their personal chef visit their home every week, although some choose to schedule services every 2 weeks or 2x per week. We can work within your budget, appetite, and needs.

Special Diets

We can accommodate most dietary concerns and diets. Our chefs and menus are particularly well-suited for low-sodium, diabetic friendly, gluten-free, Kosher, and renal diet meals. We also take inspiration from the DASH Diet (Dietary Approach To Stopping Hypertension), when designing our weekly menu rotations. Our Custom Package is well suited for clients with less common diets or dietary concerns.

For any questions, please contact Chefs For Seniors at 239-776-1758.



CHEFS FOR SENIORS

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Hope and Optimism

By Pastor Timothy L. Neptune

Hope is confidence in God...not wishful thinking. To have hope is to trust in God to meet our needs...even in the midst of difficult times. When we do go through tough times our confidence in God can get a little rattled, as the Old Testament figure Job experienced. In the midst of his pain and heartache he cried out, "Where then is my hope? Who can see any hope for me?" (Job. 17:15)

Ultimately, hope comes from God. The Scriptures say, "May the God of hope fill you all with joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13) Hope is an essential element of the Christian's life. In 1 Corinthians 13 the Apostle Paul included hope as one of the top three qualities of a person's life: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13)

As followers of Christ, we are called to be dispensers of hope. We should exude a confidence and trust in God that demonstrates that we have hope. Yet I pose the question, "Can a person be filled with hope without being filled with optimism?" According to the encyclopedia, optimism is "to anticipate the best possible outcome." Can we demonstrate hope in God without anticipating the best possible outcomes of the situations we face?

I believe we can. In fact, I think hope is best exemplified when it is demonstrated in the face of negative circumstances. There are many times when hope and optimism go hand in hand. David had both when he faced Goliath. He had confidence in God and he expected the best possible outcomes...Goliath's defeat and an Israelite victory over the Philistines. And yet, there are many examples of people who had hope in God but did not anticipate the best possible outcomes.

Simon Peter is a good example. He and the disciples had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. They had worked so hard and yet still had nothing to show for their labors. And then Jesus tells them to cast out the net one more time. Simon did not expect to catch any fish. He was pessimistic. But, he had confidence in Jesus, so he cast the net. Though the circumstances did not look promising, his hope in God made up for his lack of optimism.

Esther is another good example. She had confidence that God would ultimately provide deliverance for the Jews but as she prepared to go before the King she said, "...I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" (Esther 4:16) She demonstrated hope but not necessarily optimism.

The point is this: hope and optimism are not the same thing. You can still be hopeful even if you are not optimistic. You can still be a dispenser of hope even if you think you are going to face hard times ahead because you know that God will meet your needs.

Jesus didn't sound very optimistic when he said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation (a rather pessimistic view); but be of good cheer (maintain your hope), I have overcome the world (which is the basis of our hope)." (John 16:33)

Hope doesn't mean that the best possible situations will always occur, but it does mean that in some way God will bring something good or useful out of the situation. As we look into the future, we may not always be filled with optimism, but we must always be filled with hope...God is still in control!



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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