SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S

Heath Style Inesse March 2024 March 2024 March 2024 March 2024 March 2024







Abraham Sadighi, MD, FACS



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MARCH MATNESS WITH CLUB PILATES

- March 15 at 6pm: Backyard Pilates at Chocolattes FREE Pilates mat class located at Chocolattes Coffeehouse with 10% off food and drink afterwards.
- March 16 at 1pm: Healing Through Sound Workshop at Club Pilates Central Ft. Myers -Workshops with Dr. Lee Angle: Healing through Sound Informative presentation on what SoftWave Tissue Regeneration is and what it can do for you and your pain with demonstrations on all participants. This is not a Pilates Class.
- March 19 at 2pm: Mat Fundamentals Workshop at Club Pilates Estero.
- March 21 at 6:30pm: MELT Method for Members with MELT Method creator, Sue Hitzmann located at Club Pilates Ft. Myers West.
- Walk, Wiggle, Wag & Run 5k at 11am: 5K Run or Walk and Fundraiser for Cape Coral Animal Shelter with local vendors and pop-up Pilates tent and prizes located at Cape Coral Animal Shelter.
- March 27 at 2pm: Mat Fundamentals Workshop at Club Pilates Cape Coral West.
- March 30 at 11am: FREE Pilates mat class at Ding Darling Wildlife Preserve and with a nature walk to follow class.
- March 30 at 3pm: Healing Through Sound Workshop at Club Pilates Pt. Myers West –
 Workshops with Dr. Lee Angle: Healing through Sound (Informative presentation on what
 SoftWave Tissue Regeneration is and what it can do for you and your pain with
 demonstrations on all participants. This is not a Pilates Class.

*Club Pilates partners with a number of healthcare providers including Optum, part of UnitedHealth Group, and American Specialty Health (ASH). Please contact any of our four studios for more information.



Club Pilates Ft. Myers West 13211 McGregor Blvd, Unit 102-2

Fort Myers, FL 33919 (239) 603-7300 Mon & Tue & Wed & Thu & Fri: 6am-9pm Sat & Sun: 8am-2pm

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20321 Grande Oaks Shoppes Dr. Estero, FL 33928 (239) 288-5521 Mon & Tue & Wed & Thu & Fri: 6am-8pm Sat & Sun: 7:30am-2pm

Club Pilates Cape Coral West 2390 Surfside Blvd

Cape Coral, FL 33991 239-291-9090 Mon & Tue & Wed & Thu: 6am-8:30pm Fri: 6am-2pm Sat & Sun: 7:30am-2pm 20 The Florida Bladder Institute is Growing

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RELIEF FOR CHRONIC NERVE PAIN

f you're struggling with persistent pain, especially in your legs and feet, the cause could be NEUROPATHY. Peripheral nerve damage is a condition that often goes unnoticed, and individuals may endure prolonged pain without understanding the root cause. Neuropathy is a condition that affects millions of Americans which often leads to symptoms such as tingling, numbness, and loss of balance

Causes of Peripheral neuropathy can include: (but not limited to)

- Diabetes: Elevated blood sugar levels over time can damage nerves.
- 2. Trauma or Injury: Physical injuries, accidents, or trauma can lead to nerve damage.
- 3. Infections: Certain infections, such as shingles or Lyme disease, may affect the peripheral nerves.
- 4. Toxins: Exposure to certain toxins, like those found in some medications or environmental substances, can cause neuropathy.
- **5. Autoimmune Diseases:** Conditions where the immune system attacks the body's own tissues may lead to nerve damage.
- Genetics: Some individuals may be genetically predisposed to peripheral neuropathy.

How do you know if you have Neuropathy?

Peripheral neuropathy can manifest with a variety of symptoms that can significantly impact an individual's well-being and overall quality of life. Patients often report sensations of tingling or numbness, akin to experiencing "pins and needles" in the affected areas, numbness, pain when walking, difficulty sleeping due to foot discomfort, muscle weakness and even sensitivity to touch. All affect quality of life- starting out gradually and gradually getting worse if not treated.

Furthermore, nerve damage can affect coordination and balance, leading to challenges in maintaining stability. These diverse symptoms underscore the complexity of peripheral neuropathy and highlight the importance of seeking professional medical evaluation for an accurate diagnosis and tailored treatment plan. It is crucial



for individuals to be vigilant about any changes in sensation, movement, or pain, and to promptly consult with a healthcare provider for comprehensive assessment and treatment options.

Treatments

There are traditional treatments for Neuropathy limited to a narrow range of pain medications. Often these only provide temporary relief and can contribute to further complications.

At Jaffe Sports Medicine, our innovative all-inclusive approach to treating pain combines various therapeutic techniques with advanced treatments to reduce pain and inflammation associated with peripheral nerve damage. What sets our Clinics apart is the comprehensive treatment approach consisting of Interventional Pain Management, Physical Therapy, Sports Medicine and Orthopedic Surgery. In addition, nerve testing and procedures play an important part of your care along with IV Vitamin Infusion Therapy and Acupuncture. Customized Vitamin infusions and Acupuncture treatments are based on individual needs and level of pain and are an excellent complement to your medical treatments. Our program's primary goal is to alleviate pain and numbness and actively work towards restoring, and rebuilding your overall quality of life. Our Physician -led team understands pain can impact various aspects of your life, from daily activities to your emotional well-being. The goal at Jaffe Sports Medicine is for you to Live, Work & Play Pain Free! Our team is here to support you on your journey to living a fulfilling life.

We currently accept new patients at our three Southwest Florida locations conveniently located in Cape Coral, North Naples, and Downtown Naples. Most major insurances, including Medicare and many HMO plans, cover treatment at Jaffe Sports Medicine, making our comprehensive care accessible to a broader spectrum of individuals.

It's crucial to understand that while our treatments aim to alleviate discomfort, the information provided here is for informational purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for professional medical advice. Every individual's situation is unique, and consulting with your healthcare provider is paramount for personalized guidance and recommendations for living a pain free life.

To learn more about our services and schedule an appointment, visit our website at JAFFESPORTSMEDICINE.COM.



Asma Siddiqui, M.D. Board-certified Pain Medicine & Rehabilitation

Jaffe Sports Medicine blends rehabilitative medicine, pain specialist and therapeutic services under one roof to provide a complete, thorough, and customized treatment plan for each patient.

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SCULPTING YOUR IDEAL BODY

The Power of Body Contouring

RALPH R. GARRAMONE, MD, FACS

n the pursuit of a healthy and fit body, diet and exercise are undoubtedly crucial factors. However, there are instances when persistent areas defy even the most disciplined lifestyle choices. At Garramone Plastic Surgery, we proudly offer a range of body contouring procedures designed to help you achieve the body of your dreams.

Body contouring encompasses a variety of procedures, addressing different areas of the body. While many parts respond well to healthy living, there are those resilient areas that resist improvement through exercise and diet alone. Body contouring surgery becomes an invaluable option for individuals whose skin and underlying tissues have lost natural elasticity due to factors such as significant weight loss, pregnancy, aging, sun damage, genetics, or other reasons.

If certain areas of your body have been affected by age or drastic weight loss, Dr. Garramone's body contouring procedures provide a potential solution. Our options can eliminate excess, loose, or sagging skin, along with stubborn fat deposits, creating more even body contours.

Body contouring not only enhances the tone of underlying tissues but also addresses cellulite, providing a smoother and more even skin appearance. It effectively targets areas prone to sagging or drooping, ultimately contributing to a more sculpted and youthful physique.

TYPES OF BODY CONTOURING:

SmartLipo:

Utilizing advanced laser technology, SmartLipo targets and eliminates stubborn fat deposits with precision, promoting a more contoured appearance.

Zwave Cellulite Treatment:

This innovative treatment tackles cellulite, reducing its appearance and leaving the skin smoother and more toned.

Sculptra:

A non-surgical option, Sculptra stimulates collagen production, helping to restore volume and improve skin texture over time.

CoolSculpting:

FDA-cleared for various body areas, CoolSculpting offers a non-invasive approach to fat reduction, allowing for targeted treatment without surgery.

Evolve Body Contouring:

A comprehensive body contouring solution, Evolve combines different technologies to sculpt and tighten the body.

Breast Augmentation:

For those seeking enhancement in the chest area, Dr. Garramone specializes in breast augmentation procedures.



Crafting Your Custom Treatment Plan:

During your consultation with Dr.
Garramone, we will discuss your specific concerns, goals, and desired outcomes.
Depending on your individual needs, a tailored treatment plan may include one or more of the mentioned procedures. While some cases may require a single session, multiple sessions could be recommended based on factors such as overall health, procedure types, and desired outcomes.

Dr. Garramone will guide you through every aspect of your treatment plan, ensuring that you are fully informed and comfortable at each step of the process.

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HEARING AND MEMORY LOSS ARE CONNECTED

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



Hearing Loss Affects the Brain

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

Brain Strain and Social Isolation

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

Quantifying Hearing Loss's Impact

Hearing loss is estimated to account for 8% of dementia cases. This means that hearing loss may be responsible for 800,000 of the nearly ten million new cases of dementia diagnosed each year.

Studies from the National Institute of Health show an association between hearing impairment and dementia while supporting the hypothesis that hearing impairment contributes to cognitive dysfunction in older adults.

Reducing the Risk of Dementia

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

Other Effects on Health

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

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

In Summary

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

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



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



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The Crucial Link Between Vascular **Health and National Kidney Month**

n the realm of healthcare, the intricate network of blood vessels plays a pivotal role in maintaining overall well-being. As we delve into National Kidney Month, it becomes imperative to spotlight the profound connection between vascular health and the optimal functioning of our kidneys.

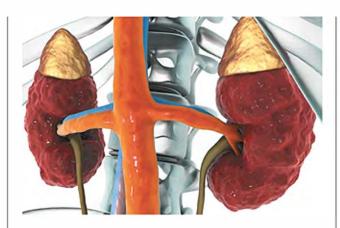
Our vascular system, comprised of arteries, veins, and capillaries, serves as the lifeline for every organ in our body, including the kidneys. These bean-shaped organs, tucked away beneath the ribcage, are the unsung heroes responsible for filtering waste and excess fluids from the blood, producing urine, and regulating essential substances like electrolytes.

Vascular health is paramount for the kidneys to carry out these functions effectively. The arteries that deliver blood to the kidneys must remain clear and unobstructed to ensure a continuous supply of oxygen and nutrients. Conditions like atherosclerosis, where arteries become narrowed due to the buildup of plague, can impede blood flow to the kidneys, leading to complications.

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is a major contributor to vascular issues that adversely impact kidney health. The delicate network of blood vessels in the kidneys can be damaged when exposed to prolonged high blood pressure, compromising their ability to filter and regulate fluids. It's no coincidence that National Kidney Month aligns with an emphasis on vascular health, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between the two.

Understanding the importance of vascular health involves acknowledging the preventative measures that can be taken to safeguard both the cardiovascular system and the kidneys. Lifestyle choices, such as maintaining a healthy diet low in sodium, regular physical activity, and avoiding tobacco use, contribute to optimal vascular function.

Regular monitoring of blood pressure is a key element in preserving vascular and kidney health. By identifying and managing hypertension in its



early stages, individuals can mitigate the risk of vascular damage and subsequent kidney complications. National Kidney Month serves as a timely reminder for routine health checkups, encourage ing individuals to take charge of their vascular well-being.

The vascular system's impact on kidney health extends beyond the prevention of diseases. Adequate blood flow ensures that the kidneys receive the oxygen and nutrients they need to function optimally. The intricate balance maintained by the vascular system in regulating blood pressure is crucial for the kidneys' ability to filter waste efficiently. It's a delicate dance orchestrated by the cardiovascular system, with the kidneys as its graceful partner.

As we spotlight the interdependence of vascular health and kidney function during National Kidney Month, it is vital to consider the broader implications for public health. Awareness campaigns aimed at educating the public about the correlation between vascular health and kidney function can pave the way for healthier communities.

Government initiatives, healthcare providers, and advocacy groups can collaborate to disseminate information on preventative measures, symptoms to watch for, and the importance of early intervention. By fostering a collective understanding of the intricate relationship between vascular health and kidney function, we empower individuals to make informed choices that positively impact their overall well-being.

In conclusion, the nexus between vascular health and kidney function underscores the need for a holistic approach to healthcare. National Kidney Month provides a platform to illuminate this connection, emphasizing the importance of maintaining vascular health to safeguard the intricate filtration system housed within our kidneys. As we navigate the vital channels of our vascular system, let us recognize the profound impact it has on the unsung heroes working diligently to keep our internal environment in balance—the kidneys.

Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons has been one of the most respected vein clinics in Southwest Florida for over 30 years. Our surgeons, Dr. Abraham Sadighi, Dr. Johan Escribano, and Dr. Vijayakumar Tanjavur have performed thousands of vascular and vein surgeries with consistently positive outcomes.

We focus on discases 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.



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MARCH IS WORKPLACE EYE SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH CLEAR VISION – SAFE WORKPLACE

arch marks Workplace Eye Safety Awareness Month, a crucial period dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of safeguarding our eyes in the work environment. As our eyes play a pivotal role in our daily lives, prioritizing workplace eye safety is not only a matter of personal well-being but also a fundamental aspect of maintaining a productive and secure work environment.

The workplace is a dynamic setting where various activities and hazards can pose threats to our eyes. From flying debris and chemicals to digital eye strain caused by prolonged screen exposure, the potential risks are diverse. This month serves as an opportunity to educate individuals and organizations about these risks and promote proactive measures to prevent eye injuries.

One of the key aspects of workplace eye safety is the implementation of proper eye protection. Different occupations demand specific types of eye protection, such as safety glasses, goggles, or face shields. Employers should ensure that employees have access to and consistently use the appropriate eye protection based on the nature of their work. Regular training programs can further reinforce the importance of this practice, fostering a culture of safety within the workplace.

Digital eye strain, commonly known as computer vision syndrome, has become increasingly prevalent with the rise of technology in the workplace. Prolonged exposure to screens can lead to discomfort, dryness, and fatigue. Workplace Eye Safety Awareness Month encourages organizations to address this issue by promoting the 20-20-20 rule – taking a 20-second break to look at something 20 feet away every 20 minutes. Additionally, proper lighting, ergonomic workstations, and regular eye examinations contribute to minimizing digital eye strain.

Beyond physical hazards, chemical exposures in the workplace can have severe consequences for eye health. March serves as a reminder to evaluate and update safety protocols related to handling chemicals. Emergency eyewash stations and quick access

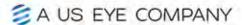


to first aid are essential components of an effective safety plan. Regular maintenance of equipment and proper storage of chemicals further contribute to a safer work environment.

Creating a workplace culture that prioritizes eye safety involves collaboration between employers and employees. Employers should establish clear safety policies, provide necessary resources, and actively engage employees in safety discussions. Employees, on the other hand, play a crucial role in adhering to safety guidelines, reporting hazards promptly, and participating in training programs.

The consequences of neglecting workplace eye safety can be severe, ranging from temporary discomfort to permanent vision loss.





239-768-0006 | SWFLeye.com 6850 International Center Blvd., Fort Myers 11176 N. Tamiami Trail, Naples 2221 Santa Barbara Blvd., #107, Cape Coral As Workplace Eye Safety Awareness Month unfolds, let us collectively commit to fostering a safer work environment. Through education, training, and the consistent implementation of safety measures, we can ensure that every individual leaves their workplace with the same clear vision they entered. March serves as a reminder that the path to a safer workplace begins with a shared commitment to prioritizing eye safety for all.



SARAH JOHNSON, O.D. Optometric Physician

Dr. Johnson completed her undergraduate studies at The University of South Florida, Tampa and received her Doctor

of Optometry in 2008 from Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, where she graduated with honors.

Her Clinical Internships include Fort Lauderdale Eye Institute, Braverman Eye Center, Pediatric Ophthalmology Consultants of Plantation, and The Eye Institute of Nova Southeastern University.

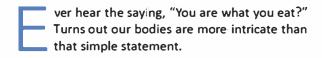
Dr. Johnson has been practicing optometry for fifteen years. She began her practice at Tallman Eye Institute, in Lawrence, Massachusetts. After relocating to Florida in 2014, Dr. Johnson practiced at Collins Vision. She then went on to establish her own optometrist office. In addition to Johnson Eyecare, Dr. Johnson continues to devote her time one day per week working at Bonita Springs Lions Club Eye Clinic, a non-profit foundation that provides eye care to low-income patients with no medical insurance.

Dr. Sarah Johnson was born in Costa Rica and was raised in both Costa Rica and Fort Myers, Florida. As a result, not only is Dr. Johnson fluent in both English and Spanish, but Dr. Johnson experienced a multi-cultural upbringing. Dr. Johnson is grateful to have the opportunity to be able to provide her knowledge, skills and experience to the Fort Myers community and surrounding areas.



ALIGNMENT MATTERS: Your Body's Nutritional Aquarium

By Shannon Willits

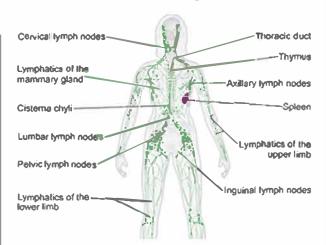


In the health and wellness industry, we encourage eating a whole food diet, avoiding sugar and processed foods and drinking half of your bodyweight in water daily.

We can eat healthy, follow a nutrition plan and still hit a health plateau. There is more to your health than just "eating right." Being stagnant in wellness is more common than we care to admit and can have nothing to do with our food. Our problem may be the other end of the equation. Instead of what you're putting into your body, take a moment to focus on how your body is removing cellular waste. Your lymphatic system is a fluid-based waste management system and its main function is to get rid of waste in order to make room for new nutrients. The lymphatic system deserves more attention and credit in the health and wellness world. We can eat organic whole foods, but if our bodies are not efficiently getting rid of cellular waste then we cannot optimally absorb the nutrients supplied. Simply articulated with this Osteopathic principle: "drainage proceeds supply." Meaning in order for oxygenated blood and nutrition to be collected by tissue cells, the lymphatic system must get rid of cellular waste, toxins and excess fluid.

A well-explained analogy comes from Dr. Perry Nickelston, comparing our bodies to an aquarium and correlating our lymphatic system to a tank's filtration system. You can have the healthiest fish, the best fish food and the cleanest coral inside your aquarium. However, without a good filtration system your tank will get toxic and impact the health of the entire ecosystem. We want our filters to be clear and promoting circulation of the water. You can replace fish, food and coral, but will still end up in the same problematic cycle if you're not addressing filtration.

Within the lymphatic system are lymph nodes, which are like tiny toilets that flush waste. Without flushing, the cells are living in their own filth. This often manifests in symptoms like skin conditions that won't go away, unexplainable brain fog, swelling and pain in one arm or one side of the neck,



bloating in the belly or around the face, morning stiffness, chronic pain, inability to lose body fat and autoimmune issues.

What Causes "Poor Posture?"

"The lymphatic system cleans our cells, organs, and tissues. But if our posture is poor, it can interfere with the flow of lymph through the vessels and nodes just like a kink in a garden hose will interfere with the flow of water going through the hose. Ideal postural alignment contributes to an efficient lymphatic system." Jack Ryan, Neuromuscular and Lymphatic Drainage Therapist (located in Sarasota).

Poor posture isn't a sign of laziness. Nowadays weight issues are common, and weight gain changes how our skeleton and muscles support themselves. Poor posture is caused by many things including high heels, stress, accidents or injuries, foot problems and even low self-esteem, grief or sickness. When you slouch, so does your spine, leading to poor circulation and lymphatic flow. Fluid cannot flow where tissue is tight.

There are many reasons for tight tissue and blockages to exist in the lymphatic system. In Pilates, we concentrate on ideal postural alignment to improve flow through the main lymphatic drainage points.

Simple Pilates Movements for the Lymphatic System Breathing properly promotes effective oxygenation of blood and lymphatic flow. It focuses the mind on the body and releases tension particularly in the neck, shoulders and mid-back. Exhaling deeply helps activate the body's deep support muscles.

A three-dimensional diaphragmatic breath pattern is encouraged. Inhale expanding the ribcage in all directions simultaneously, like a balloon, without neglecting the sides or back portions of the torso. Exhale softening the neck, shoulders and ribcage.

Shrugs: Inhale as above shrugging the shoulders up for a count of five, keep the shoulders up for a count of five and then lower the shoulders. The shrugging up squeezes the lymph nodes and lowering the shoulders promotes movement of lymphatic fluid. Be as tension free as possible.

Ankle Pumps: Standing in a split stance with the left foot forward, the right foot slightly back on the ball of the foot and the spine angled slightly forward with hands on the wall. Inhale lift the back heel; exhale lower the back heel. Move slowly and be sure the back foot is pointing forward.

Rebounding: Breathing diaphragmatically, lift and lower the heels quickly while lightly bouncing up and down. It is not necessary to jump only to lightly bounce. Do 30 seconds, 3-5x.

Rolling Like a Ball: Sitting on the floor (carpet or mat) with knees pulled in toward the chest and arms around the shins. Inhale to roll back to the shoulder blades, exhale return to sitting.

These movements are safe for most people. Rolling like a ball is contraindicated for many spinal conditions like herniated and bulging discs and osteoporosis. As with any exercise program, consult your doctor first.

An efficient lymphatic system is beneficial for our entire body's aquarium to be healthy and compliments any health goal. By focusing on your body's filtration and waste management system our internal ecosystem can thrive easier. So, make the most out of your nutrition efforts and work on your lymphatic system.

Shannon Willits, Master Pilates Educator

Shannon is a trained movement specialist holding prestigious certifications in STOTT Pilates, a fellowship in Applied Functional Science (FAFS) and is a Functional Golf Specialist. Shannon is a master trainer for Club Pilates, Barre Above and Relief Through Rolling, which focuses on self-myofascial release. She is also certified in other movement modalities including TRX, the MELT Method, BOSU, Gyrotonic and more. Shannon shares her expertise and passion by mentoring aspiring and growing Pilates instructors through her teaching training academy.



FIX FEET FOR WEIGHT LOSS SUCCESS

any of the estimated 70 million obese Americans are trapped in a life-threatening vicious cycle: Obesity aggravates foot problems, like heel pain and flat feet; sore feet make it hard to exercise and lose weight; and without exercise, obesity worsens and exacerbates progression of diabetes, heart disease and other serious health threats.

It's unfortunate obese adults get caught up in the vicious cycle of avoiding physical activity due to foot or ankle pain, thereby permitting cardiovascular disease and other life-threatening conditions to worsen as a result. For example, in many cases, chronic heel pain occurs from carrying too much weight. Left untreated, it becomes an impediment to physical activity and meaningful weight loss.

Even more commonly, patients suffer with onset of stress fractures. I call these individuals "weekend warriors". They begin hard and aggressively an exercise regimen that puts so much stress on the foot bones that are not yet used to the activity, causing pain, time off the foot and recuperation before beginning an exercise regimen again. Pair the sudden increase in activity with poor shoe gear choice and obesity, the bones are likely to fail.

Another common problem comes from lack of stretching and strengthening the musculoskeletal system prior to beginning exercise. Similarly, this adds abnormal stresses on the joints and tendons which respond by becoming inflamed and painful, requiring potential immobilization, period of rest, and anti-inflammatories to resolve the issue.

There's no reason foot or ankle pain should stop obese patients from exercising. The first step toward breaking that vicious cycle is an evaluation by a foot and ankle surgeon. Many causes of foot pain can be relieved without surgery through stretching exercises, orthotics and athletic shoes with good shock absorption and support. If a bunion, heel pain or other condition requires surgery, patients can participate during their recovery in non-weight-bearing activities, such as riding a stationary bike, swimming or weight training.

For those moderately to severely overweight, a thorough physical examination is mandatory before beginning an exercise program.



Once cleared by your physician to begin exercising, don't try to do too much too soon. Follow a gradual routine until your body adjusts to the stress of regular physical activity. For example, I counsel overweight patients to avoid working out on treadmills or elliptical machines to minimize pounding and stress on their joints.

Shedding excess pounds helps diabetic patients control their disease, but many who experience foot ulcerations and vascular problems caused by diabetes might think they shouldn't exercise. Every diabetes patient needs regular foot exams to check for possible sore spots and assess nerve sensation. And with proper diabetic foot care and the right footwear, most patients can follow an exercise regimen that is safe and appropriate for them.

Sahiba Singh DPM, AACFAS

For more information, you may contact Dr. Sahiba Singh at Family Foot & Leg Center at (239) 430 - 3668 (FOOT).
Family Foot & Leg Center has 8 locations throughout Collier, Lee, & Charlotte Counties to quickly resolve all your foot and ankle problems.

FAMILY FOOT & LEG CENTER 6846 International Center Blvd, Suite B Fort Myers, FL 33912 (239) 430 - 3668 (FOOT) www.NaplesPodiatrist.com

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

WHAT'S ON YOUR SKIN?

Perhaps You're Due for a Skin Check-Not All Physicians Have the Same Expertise

By Joseph Onorato, MD, FAAD

iving in Florida year-round or even for just a few months out of the year, is beautiful and we're blessed to have so many sunny days, but with all of the sunshine, there is the looming possibility of skin damage and cancer. Most people know that it is critical to wear sunscreen, avoid overexposure, and get skin treatments and checkups, but not all take this advice.

No judgment-We've all had days where we've inadvertently gotten a little burnt, not to mention our younger years when we would bask in the sun for hours. The earlier the diagnosis of skin cancer or other conditions, the better.

Every hour a person dies of melanoma, and this year alone, over 76,000 new cases of melanoma will be diagnosed. On average skin cancer screenings take about 10 minutes, which could potentially save your life.

Along with the unfortunate diagnosis of melanoma, there are many other concerns and cancers that can be detected in your dermatologist's office with a thorough, proper, skin cancer screening. On a regular basis, you should have a screening at least once a year. And, because some forms of skin cancer grow very rapidly, if you are experiencing any new forms of lesions, bumps, moles that are of concern, you should schedule a dermatology appointment immediately.

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

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

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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.



What's on YOUR Skin?

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



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.



SWFLDermatology.com 13800 Tamiami Trall N, Sulte 112 Naples, FL 34110





9 Anti-Aging Superfoods for Seniors

ouldn't it be amazing if you could slow down the aging process just by incorporating certain foods into your diet? We have some good news for you. It's possible!

At The Terraces at Bonita Springs, we encourage older adults to age gracefully through a variety of outlets – from engaging activities to healthy dining. In this blog, we'll focus on the dining aspect of our lifestyle, introduce anti-aging foods, and explore the many health benefits that come with consuming superfoods.

Start the year off on a health-positive note when you dive into the world of superfoods below.

What Are Superfoods?

"Superfoods" is a term used to describe foods that are rich in vitamins and nutrients, and are believed to have health benefits due to their high content of vitamins, minerals, powerful antioxidants, and anti-inflammatory properties.

These foods are often promoted as having the potential to improve overall wellness, boost the immune system, reduce the risk of heart disease, lower cholesterol, and even prevent cancer (Cleveland Clinic).

There is no strict scientific definition of superfoods. However, you'll find that many of them are fruits, vegetables, seeds, and nuts that are rich in antioxidants and high in protein, and can be easily found at the grocery store.

At The Terraces, we incorporate superfoods into daily meals in order to provide different sources of vitamins and nutrients.

The 9 Best Superfoods

While there's no magic food that can stop the aging process, certain foods are rich in nutrients and antioxidants that may contribute to healthy skin and overall well-being. Here are nine superfoods that are often associated with anti-aging benefits:

1. Berries

Blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries are rich in antioxidants, which help combat oxidative stress and inflammation.

2. Fatty fish

Salmon, mackerel, and other fatty fish are high in omega-3 fatty acids, which are beneficial for skin health, may help reduce inflammation, and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

3. Nuts and seeds

Almonds, walnuts, chia seeds, and flaxseeds are good sources of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals that support skin health.

4. Leafy greens

Spinach, kale, and other leafy greens are packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that promote overall health and skin vitality. Leafy greens are also linked to better brain health (Harvard Health Publishing – Harvard Medical School).

5. Avocados

Rich in healthy monounsaturated fats, avocados can help moisturize and nourish the skin. They also contain vitamins E and C, which have antioxidant properties.

6. Green Tea

Green tea is high in polyphenols, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. It may help protect the skin from sun damage and improve skin elasticity.

7. Turmeric

Curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It may help protect the skin from aging and damage, as well as reduce the risk of developing blood clots.

8. Yoguri

Probiotics in yogurt support gut health, and a healthy gut is linked to improved skin health. Additionally, yogurt contains lactic acid, which can help exfoliate the skin.

9. Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate with high cocoa content contains antioxidants, such as flavonoids, which may benefit skin health. However, moderation is key due to its calorie content.

It's important to note that a balanced and varied diet, along with other healthy lifestyle choices such as staying hydrated, getting enough sleep, and avoiding excessive sun exposure, plays a crucial role in overall well-being and can contribute to a more youthful appearance.

You're always welcome to consult with our culinary team in order to create the best superfood diet plan for you.

How To Cook Superfoods

Whether cooking your own meals at home or dining with us at The Terraces, it's important that the superfoods that are being prepared are cooked properly.



Below are some pro tips on how to prepare and cook superfoods:

- Use olive oil as much as possible when frying/ sauteing/dressing, as it has many health benefits (Healthline).
- We recommend grilling and baking over frying.
- Use natural sweeteners like raw honey or date syrup.
- Be generous with herbs and spices.

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT EVENT!

Maximize Your Wealth and Minimize Your Tax Burden: Planning for Major Estate and Income Tax Changes Set To Expire in 2025

Are you prepared for the sunsetting of major federal tax exemptions?

The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is set to expire, or "sunset," at the end of 2025. This change is notable because federal estate and income tax exemptions are set to decrease by 50% for high-net-worth individuals.

Join Zacharia Brown Estate Planning Attorneys and Morgan Stanley Financial Advisors for an informational panel regarding how to plan for the sunsetting.

Attorney Carl Zacharia and Financial Advisor Keith Philippi, CFP, will discuss the four major provisions that are changing and why planning is vital to protecting your wealth from tax burden. In addition, they will address how wealth managers and estate planning attorneys partner to maximize your estate plan and protect your wealth for the future.

Wednesday, March 20 | 3 p.m.

Space is limited. Valet parking will be available. Please RSVP by March 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!





How The Terraces at Bonita Springs Prioritizes Healthy Eating

Director of Culinary and Dining Services, Alan Sayles, at The Terraces, shares multiple dining goals the team puts together for residents. The number one goal is to keep residents happy and healthy and provide a pleasant dining experience. Residents look forward to dining not just because of the food but also because it is a time to socialize and be amongst friends and family. Another goal is to add variety and change menus seasonally so that meals stay fresh and exciting.

How does the team consistently serve the freshest ingredients? Sayles says, "We source local produce, fish, meats, ice cream, and bread products. They are sourced on a daily basis because we choose to never use frozen products. We buy local because we choose to support local businesses."

He adds that it's easy to introduce new and trendy healthy foods into the menus at The Terraces because menus change weekly.

"Residents at The Terraces are made up of world travelers and adventurous personalities, so they are very open to trying new and trendy healthy products. Our executive chef keeps on top of new trends in the market by communicating regularly with other chefs in the area."

If there isn't an item or ingredient on the menu that residents are interested in, the culinary team is always willing to accommodate requests. "We seek out each resident's likes and dislikes so we can be more effective in dining. This is their home, so we prepare what they like. The culinary team is in our dining rooms daily asking for input and suggestions. We adjust when possible and also add their suggestions to menus," adds Sayles.

At The Terraces, fresh and local products are cooked to order. The exceptional kitchen staff runs each dining area like a high-end restaurant.

"We pride ourselves on fresh, exceptional food preparation and receive our products up to 14 times per week to ensure quality and freshness. We never use frozen products. The number one complaint in senior living dining is that the food is cold because it's made in advance. We cook to order so that meals are always hot and perfectly presented. Our waitstaff goes through extensive training to add to a quality dining experience as well."

Recharge and Live a Super Lifestyle at The Terraces

Eating a nutritious diet, staying active, and being involved in the community have never been easier at The Terraces at Bonita Springs. Call us today at 239-204-3469 to schedule a visit to our community.

A Floor Plan With More **Living Room.**A Life Plan With More **Breathing Room.**

With a move to The Terraces at Bonita Springs, you'll not only live in comfort and style, but you'll also delight in the social and service-rich lifestyle and resort-quality amenities of this vibrant community. Thoughtfully designed and elegant accommodations are among the many distinctions loved by our residents. Choose from more than a dozen spacious floor plans, each carefully constructed with luxury and comfort in mind.

As a Life Plan Community offering a Type A LifeCare contract, The Terraces welcomes you to breathe easy, knowing that you've got a secure plan that protects you and your estate.

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- Complimentary valet parking
- · A screened lanai
- · A large walk-in closet



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Dr. Fara Castillo: Healing with Compassion and Curiosity

rimary care providers serve as crucial figures in the lives of their patients, embodying roles beyond those of mere doctors. They act as health advocates, attentive listeners, trusted confidentes, educators, and counselors. Dr. Fara Castillo epitomizes these multifaceted roles in her practice at VIPcare Estero.

Dr. Castillo is a highly experienced physician with a deep passion for medicine and patient care. She brings over 29 years of experience practicing medicine and is bilingual.

Who is Dr. Fara Castillo?

Dr. Fara Castillo's journey into the world of medicine began in the vibrant streets of Cuba, where her innate curiosity and compassionate nature bloomed from a young age. As a child, she was drawn to the art of healing, often attempting to mend her dolls with makeshift remedies and eagerly absorbing the medical tales spun by her uncle, a pediatric orthopedist.

"Before I was able to read or understand the science of medicine, I found it fascinating to look at his anatomy books," she said. "In the evenings, my uncle would share exciting stories about how deformities could be improved with casts, braces, and devices. His excitement about the advances in medicine and patients' lives being improved or healed through his care really touched me as a child."

Her path to becoming a physician took root at the University of Medical Sciences in Havana, where she earned her medical degree. Initially embarking on an anesthesiology residency, Dr. Castillo's passion for long-term patient relationships led her to transition to family medicine. Over eight years in primary care, she forged deep connections with her patients, guided by a profound understanding of the importance of continuity in healthcare.

"Primary care is a personal choice for me as I have watched my grandparents, parents, and relatives age," she said. "Their health has been affected by a wide variety of circumstances, and I have seen how



important it is to have a long-term primary care doctor who understands a patient's personal medical history."

In 2008, Dr. Castillo embarked on a new chapter, immigrating to Florida with her family. Enthralled by the boundless opportunities and the promise of cutting-edge medical advancements in the United States, she embraced the challenge of adapting to a new healthcare landscape.

Joining VIPcare marked a significant milestone in Dr. Castillo's career, aligning perfectly with her ethos of compassionate, patient-centered care. She views her role not only as a healer but also as a supportive ally in her patients' healthcare journey, striving to understand their physical and emotional needs to empower them to take charge of their well-being.



Fara Castillo, M.D.



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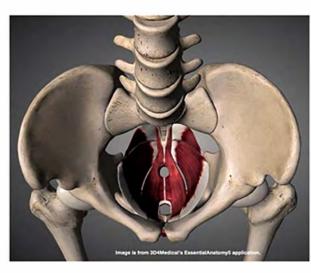
Do You Have A Weakened or Tight Pelvic Floor?

What You Should Know

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

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

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



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

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

Alejandro Miranda-Sousa, MD



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

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

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

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



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MEMORY MATTERS

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

arch is Women's History Month! This tribute to the contributions of women actually began in the early 1980s as Women's History week and in 1987, Congress passed a resolution that March would be proclaimed Women's History Month. Women's history month celebrates the accomplishments of women in a variety of different fields that have positively impacted history. This month also serves as a celebration of women's efforts to continue to fight for equality, justice and opportunities in the world.

In the early 1900s, Dr. Alois Alzheimer identified the characteristic plaques and tangles in the brain of a 51 year old woman. He had followed her disease progression and when she died, he was able to provide analysis of her brain, where he was able to make the discovery of these histological alterations. Dr. Alzheimer's patient was a woman named Auguste Deter, who also has a place in the history of Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's disease impacts women more than men. Approximately twice as many men have Alzheimer's disease than men. Why is this? Age is the number one risk factor for Alzheimer's disease. Women live longer than men. As noted in a recent JAMA article, the gap between men and women's life expectancy increased to 5.8 years. Life expectancy is one consideration, but are there other things at play?

One of the world's leading experts and researchers in the area of Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Reisa Sperling is working on trying to understand what other factors contribute to Alzheimer's disease in women. As highlighted in an Alzheimer's Association profile, Dr. Sperling, who is a professor at Harvard Medical school and the Director of Alzheimer's Research and Treatment at Brigham and Women's Hospital, is not only a pioneer in Alzheimer's disease research, she has mentored many women who are dedicated to dementia science. She is also the Director of Neuroimaging Core at the Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease research center at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Sperling was in medical school when her grandfather died with Alzheimer's disease. Her father was also diagnosed with the disease, which also fueled her focus on finding approaches to stopping the disease.



The Alzheimer's Association has also highlighted several other prominent female researchers. Dr. Marilyn Albert, the Director of the Division of Cognitive Neuroscience and the Director of the John's Hopkins Alzheimer's Research Center has focused on the lifestyle changes that may preserve cognitive abilities as we age. Her current research is focused on early identification and ways to monitor disease progression.

Another accomplished researcher, Dr. Malu Tansey has focused her research on the role of inflammation and the immune system in brain health and the development of Alzheimer's disease. Currently, Dr. Tansey is the Professor of Neuroscience and Neurology and the Director of the Parkinson's Foundation Research Center of Excellence at the University of Florida.

Several other prominent female scientists are leading the charge at the Alzheimer's Association. Dr. Maria Carillo is the Chief Science Officer and medical affairs lead who sets the strategic vision for global research in the area of Alzheimer's disease. Among her many leadership responsibilities, Dr. Carillo is a co-investigator for the Association led US Pointer Study, a lifestyle intervention trial to prevent cognitive decline. She has also received numerous awards and in 2020, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award in Alzheimer's Disease Therapeutic Research from the Clinical Trials on Alzheimer's Disease Conference.

Dr. Heather Snyder is the Vice President of Medical and Scientific Relations at the Association, and is recognized as an industry expert. Dr. Rebecca Edelmayer has more than 20 years of experience as a scientist and an educator and serves as the senior Director of Scientific Engagement. These amazing women are at the forefront of Alzheimer's disease research, forging relationships and connections with global leaders in the Alzheimer's research space. The President and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association is Joanne Pike, DPH. Dr. Pike has an extensive background in social support and public health initiatives.

These are just a few of the many outstanding female scientists and leaders working with Alzheimer's disease with a commitment to finding a cure for the disease. Here at the Neuropsychiatric Research Center, we are also dedicated to finding a cure and improving the lives of people with neurological diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease, through research and education. We understand the impact of Alzheimer's disease on those who have been diagnosed, and their family and friends. If you haven't been formally diagnosed with a memory condition, yet have noticed changes please contact us at 239-939-7777.

Would you like to have a free baseline memory screen? We can help! Brain health is critical for all

of us, and knowing your cognitive status via an easy and free memory screen is a service we provide to the community. Memories matter! NPRC 239-939-7777.



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Widening Gender Gap in Life Expectancy in the US, 2010-2021 | Health Disparities | JAMA Internal Medicine | JAMA Network



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SPRING CLEANING FOR YOUR MIND:

DECLUTTERING YOUR THOUGHTS AND EMBRACING MENTAL WELLNESS

pring is a season synonymous with renewal and rejuvenation. As nature awakens from its winter slumber, so too can individuals take the opportunity to declutter their minds and embrace mental wellness. In this context, the importance of mental decluttering and reducing stress becomes even more relevant, aligning with the spirit of spring and the vibrant celebrations of St. Patrick's Day.

The arrival of spring brings with it a sense of freshness and new beginnings. Just as we engage in spring cleaning to declutter our physical spaces, it is equally crucial to engage in mental decluttering. Our minds often accumulate unnecessary thoughts, worries, and stresses that can weigh us down. Mental decluttering involves consciously identifying and letting go of these burdens, creating space for positive and uplifting thoughts to flourish.

St. Patrick's Day, a celebration of Irish culture and folklore, can serve as a symbolic backdrop for this mental spring cleaning. The color green, often associated with luck and prosperity, can be a visual reminder to cultivate a mindset that fosters mental well-being. Embracing the essence of St. Patrick's Day, individuals can adopt a proactive approach to mental health, seeking to reduce stress and embrace a positive mental outlook.

Reducing stress is a fundamental aspect of maintaining mental wellness, and spring offers an opportune time to reassess and recalibrate. The longer days and increased sunlight during spring can positively impact mood and energy levels. Taking advantage of this natural boost, individuals can engage in activities that promote relaxation and stress reduction, such as outdoor walks, mindfulness exercises, or spending time in nature.

Spring's blooming flowers and revitalized landscapes can serve as a metaphor for the blossoming of mental wellness. Embracing the beauty of the season, individuals can engage in activities that bring joy and fulfillment. Whether it's pursuing a hobby, spending time with loved ones, or simply taking moments for self-reflection, these practices contribute to a positive mental state.



St. Patrick's Day festivities, often filled with lively parades and communal gatherings, offer an additional avenue for social connection. Social support is a crucial component of mental well-being, and the spring season encourages people to come together. Whether celebrating with friends or participating in community events, the shared experiences of St. Patrick's Day can strengthen social bonds and provide a sense of belonging.

Furthermore, the symbolism of St. Patrick's Day can be integrated into personal rituals aimed at mental wellness. Reflecting on the concept of luck and good fortune, individuals can cultivate a mindset of gratitude. Practicing gratitude has been shown to reduce stress and increase overall well-being. Taking a few moments each day to acknowledge and appreciate the positive aspects of life can contribute to a more resilient and optimistic mindset.

As spring unfolds, the season's vibrancy can inspire individuals to reassess their priorities and set positive intentions for the future. Setting realistic goals aligned with personal values can provide a sense of purpose and direction. Whether it's pursuing a new skill, adopting healthier habits, or cultivating meaningful relationships, spring's energy can fuel personal growth and contribute to mental well-being.

In conclusion, the importance of mental decluttering, reducing stress, and embracing mental wellness is heightened in the context of spring and

St. Patrick's Day. Just as the natural world undergoes a transformation during this season, individuals can take this opportunity to rejuvenate their mental landscapes. By consciously letting go of unnecessary burdens, reducing stress through intentional practices, and embracing positive mental habits, individuals can align with the spirit of spring and St. Patrick's Day to foster a renewed sense of well-being. As the flowers bloom and the days lengthen, let the season serve as a reminder to nurture not only the external environment but also the internal landscape of the mind.

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The Florida Bladder Institute is Growing

he news is out. Until recently, women who had complex pelvic disorders didn't know where to turn. The Florida Bladder Institute, a specialty Urogynecology clinic, was created to give options to these women and help them regain control of their lives.

To meet the needs for specialized health care for women in Southwest Florida, the Florida Bladder Institute has added two more providers to the practice. Dr. Mark has joined our team from southeast Florida and has over 25 years of experience treating women with complex pelvic and gynecologic disorders

Amy Goetz, PA-C, moved from Northeastern Florida to join our team for her "dream job" as our surgical liaison. Amy assists Dr. Gauta during surgery and can answer any patient questions pre- or post-operatively.

PATIENT TESTIMONIALS

"Dr. Mark is a sweet and loving person. She listened to me intently, and that is rare. Her great knowledge and way of explaining my problem were very comforting. I would not want to see anyone but her. Loved her."

"I am two weeks post-op and extremely pleased with the results of my surgery. Amy did an excellent job patiently explaining the procedure and answered all my questions today. I feel very comfortable checking in with her if needed in the next few weeks."

At the Florida Bladder Institute, we now have the "A TEAM" to treat female pelvic disorders such as pelvic organ prolapse, urinary and fecal incontinence, bladder dysfunction, endometriosis, fibroids, pelvic pain, vaginal dryness, sexual disorders, and cosmetic gynecology.

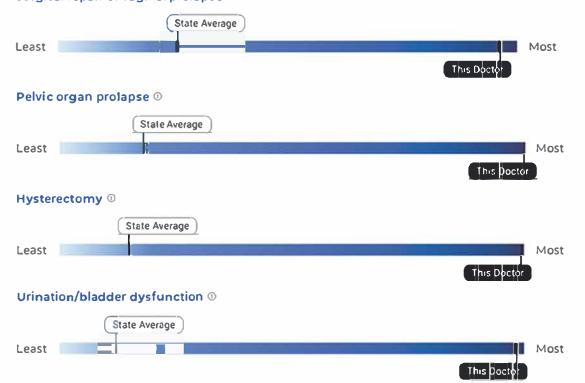
When choosing any healthcare provider, you want to ensure they are experienced and frequently treat your condition. At the Florida Bladder Institute, we've treated women worldwide for over 25 years and provided exceptional care and relief for their complex pelvic disorders.

To learn more, call 239-449-7979 to schedule an appointment today.

Areas of Expertise for Dr. Gauta

This doctor provides the following types of care. The more often a doctor has treated a particular condition or has performed a particular surgery, the more expertise they may have in treating patients with similar needs. Based on three years (2020-2022) of Medicare data, each scale below indicates the volume of episodes compared to other doctors who treat the same condition.

Surgical repair of vaginal prolapse 0



When choosing any healthcare provider you want to make sure they are experienced and frequently treat the condition you have. At the Florida Bladder Institute we've been treating women from around the world for over 25 years and providing exceptional care for their complex pelvic disorders.

Source: https://health.usnews.com/doctors/joseph-gauta-20582



Joseph Gauta, MD



Nicole Houser, PA-C



Lisa Mark, MD



Amy Goetz, PA-C



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Multiple Sclerosis Awareness and Breakthrough Treatments

n 2023, Paragon Healthcare emerged as a beacon of hope, administering over 7,500 infusions of cutting-edge treatments for Multiple Sclerosis (MS) patients. This marked a pivotal moment in the ongoing battle against MS, shedding light on the importance of awareness and the strides made in medical advancements.

Multiple Sclerosis, a chronic autoimmune disease affecting the central nervous system, continues to pose challenges for those diagnosed. However, the year 2023 witnessed a remarkable surge in awareness campaigns, spearheaded by organizations like Paragon Healthcare, dedicated to transforming the lives of individuals grappling with this complex condition.

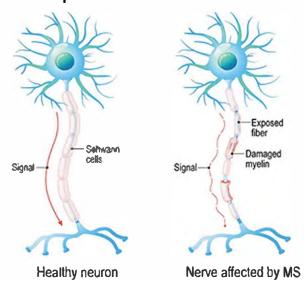
Paragon Healthcare's commitment to MS patients was underscored by the administration of various infusion therapies, including Briumvi, IVIG, Lemtrada, Ocrevus, Rituximab (and biosimilars), Steroids, and Tysabri. These treatments have proven instrumental in managing symptoms, slowing down disease progression, and improving the overall quality of life for MS patients.

Briumvi, a relatively new addition to the MS treatment arsenal, garnered attention for its innovative approach. Paragon Healthcare's administration of Briumvi infusions represented a significant leap forward in providing patients with more options for personalized care, offering a glimmer of optimism for those navigating the challenges of MS.

IVIG (Intravenous Immunoglobulin) infusions have long been a staple in MS treatment, showcasing their effectiveness in modulating the immune system and alleviating symptoms. Paragon Healthcare's dedication to administering these infusions exemplifies a commitment to holistic care and tailored treatment plans for each patient.

The infusion of Lemtrada, known for its disease-modifying capabilities, was another stride in the battle against MS. Paragon Healthcare's involvement in delivering Lemtrada infusions underscored the importance of staying at the forefront of medical advancements, ensuring that patients receive the most advanced and effective treatments available.

Multiple Sclerosis



Source: https://www.ohsu.edu/brain-institute/understanding-multiple-sclerosis

Ocrevus, a groundbreaking medication designed to target specific aspects of the immune system, found prominence in Paragon Healthcare's repertoire of MS treatments. Its infusion marked a turning point for patients, providing renewed hope and resilience in the face of a challenging disease.

Rituximab and its biosimilars, administered by Paragon Healthcare, showcased the continuous pursuit of precision medicine. Tailoring treatments to the individual needs of MS patients is essential in mitigating the complexities associated with the disease, and Rituximab infusions symbolized this commitment to personalized care.

Steroids, a conventional yet crucial component in managing acute MS relapses, were administered with precision and expertise by Paragon Healthcare. These infusions played a pivotal role in reducing inflammation and mitigating symptoms, contributing to the overall well-being of MS patients.

Tysabri, renowned for its efficacy in preventing relapses and disability progression in MS patients, further strengthened Paragon Healthcare's comprehensive approach to treatment. The administration of Tysabri infusions reflected a dedication to exploring diverse therapeutic options, ensuring that patients receive the most suitable interventions for their unique circumstances.

In conclusion, the year 2023 witnessed a transformative chapter in Multiple Sclerosis awareness and treatment, with Paragon Healthcare leading the charge. The administration of over 7,500 infusions underscored a commitment to personalized care, groundbreaking treatments, and unwavering support for MS patients. This collective effort serves as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path toward a future where the impact of Multiple Sclerosis is not only understood but effectively managed, offering a better quality of life for those affected by this complex condition.

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Understanding Colorectal Cancer: PREVENTION AND RISK FACTORS

olorectal cancer, a malignancy affecting the colon or rectum, remains a significant health concern globally. According to the American Cancer Society, it is the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States. While the risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age, it is not exclusive to older demographics. However, individuals aged 45 and older are at higher risk, with most cases occurring in this age group.

Statistics reveal the gravity of colorectal cancer's impact on public health. Each year, millions of people worldwide are diagnosed with this disease, and sadly, many lose their lives to it. In the United States alone, approximately 150,000 new cases are diagnosed annually, with over 50,000 deaths attributed to colorectal cancer. These numbers underscore the urgency of understanding risk factors and implementing preventive measures.

Several factors contribute to the development of colorectal cancer, including genetics, lifestyle choices, and environmental influences. While some risk factors, like age and family history, cannot be modified, others are within our control. Adopting a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins while limiting processed foods, red meats, and alcohol consumption can significantly reduce the risk of colorectal cancer. Regular physical activity also plays a crucial role in maintaining digestive health and minimizing cancer risk.

Emerging research suggests the potential benefits of nutrient IV therapy in colorectal cancer prevention, Nutrient IV therapy involves administering vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the digestive system for enhanced absorption. These intravenous infusions may include ingredients such as vitamin C, vitamin D, selenium, and glutathione, all of which possess antioxidant properties and contribute to immune function and cellular health.



Vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant, helps combat oxidative stress and inflammation, which are implicated in cancer development. Vitamin D plays a vital role in regulating cell growth and immune function, and deficiency has been linked to an increased risk of colorectal cancer. Selenium, another essential nutrient, exhibits anticancer properties by supporting DNA repair mechanisms and inhibiting tumor growth. Glutathione, known as the body's master antioxidant, aids in detoxification and immune system modulation, potentially reducing cancer risk.

While nutrient IV therapy shows promise as a complementary approach to colorectal cancer prevention, it is essential to emphasize that it should not replace conventional screening methods or medical advice. Screening tests such as colonoscopies remain the gold standard for early detection of colorectal cancer and precancerous polyps, allowing for timely intervention and improved outcomes. Individuals should consult their healthcare providers to determine the most appropriate preventive strategies based on their medical history and risk profile.

Colorectal cancer remains a significant public health concern, impacting millions of lives worldwide. While age and genetics play a role in predisposing individuals to this disease, lifestyle factors such as diet and physical activity can influence risk. Incorporating a healthy lifestyle and considering complementary approaches like nutrient IV therapy

may help reduce the likelihood of developing colorectal cancer. However, it is crucial to prioritize regular screening and medical guidance to detect and address any potential concerns promptly. Together, through awareness, prevention, and early detection, we can strive toward a future where colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rates are significantly reduced.

Sources:

· American Cancer Society. (2022). Key Statistics for Colorectal Cancer, Retrieved from https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectalcancer/about/key-statistics.html



Doreen DeStefano, NhD, APRN, DNP

Dr. DeStefano is also a lifelong student. She holds a bachelor's degree in nursing and another in exercise physiology. She has a Master's (ABT) in criminology, a master's in public

business administration, and a master's in nursing. She holds a doctorate in natural health and is a licensed Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. She holds numerous licenses and certifications from advanced practice training. She attends educational seminars in integrative and functional medicine twice yearly to stay abreast of the most recent, cutting-edge therapies available.

Her practice is centered on naturopathic principles, including healing the whole person on various levels and avoiding pharmaceutical intervention unless nec-She believes your health is within your control. Her goal is to help you achieve maximum health.

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Zacharia Brown Estate Planning and Elder Law: Preserving Your Past and Protecting Your Future

lease allow me to introduce myself and our law firm. My name is Carl Zacharia and I am the founding partner of Zacharia Brown. I have been a licensed attorney in Pennsylvania and Florida since 1994. I was born and raised in McKeesport, PA, a small steel mill city just outside of Pittsburgh. When I first became a lawyer in 1994, I was living in Sunny Isles in northern Dade County. Not long after settling in, my mother received a grave diagnosis and so my wife and I moved back home to take care of both sets of our parents. In 1995, I opened Zacharia Law Office in McKeesport and began my practice. While I was already experienced in some sophisticated estate planning techniques, I also started to receive calls from people who were scared to lose their home and life savings because a loved one needed nursing care.

Other attorneys in the area did not know what to tell these people, so I decided to do some research. As it turned out, there were many planning strategies that could help. In addition to my complex estate planning clients, I began taking on new clients who needed this help. In hindsight, I believe that I was one of the first few attorneys in western Pennsylvania to practice in the Elder Law area. A few years later, I connected with my cousin, Christine Brown, who was 17 years my junior and had just passed the PA Bar. She did not find her area of practice to be rewarding and wanted to help people in need. Shortly thereafter, she joined my practice and found her calling. In my opinion, she is now one of the best elder law attorneys that I have ever known! Our partnership at Zacharia Brown began and we have been together for over 20 years.

Zacharia Brown now has 4 offices in the Pittsburgh area and 3 offices in Florida. We have been in Lakewood Ranch for over 10 years, opened an office in Pompano Beach about 3 years ago, and this past fall, we opened our main Florida location in Bonita Springs at the Promenade Shops. We concentrate our practice in Estate Planning, Elder Law and Estate Administration, as well as VA Planning and Guardianships.

After practicing in this area of law for many years, our goal is to help people avoid common misconceptions that can result in costly mistakes. One such

mistake is that individuals are often looking for a product ("I need a Will" or "I need a Trust"), often because someone they know has recently passed away and they feel unprepared. However, the value in quality estate planning is not only about preparing quality documents. The true value is found in our planning consultations. You should not approach Estate Planning with the idea that you need a specific "product." What you need is a plan. Our in-depth consultations give us the opportunity to explore your specific needs and family dynamics. We are familiar with all the available options and can recommend a personalized plan based upon our knowledge and experience.

Another misunderstood area is Medicaid and Long-Term Care. Most people do not fully comprehend the different types of long-term care and are unaware of the benefits that may be available. Additionally, individuals develop preconceived notions from talking to others about their experiences. At a recent meeting, a client said that she never thought her husband would be eligible for Medicaid because they had too much money. Once we explained how the system works, we were able to help her husband to get the care he needs and also take care of her.

We invite you to come to our events and contact us. Knowing your options

is key. At Zacharia Brown, we know the available options and we just need to learn more about you to create a personalized plan.



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MARCH 2024 EVENTS

Thursday, March 7th- 5 Essential Documents To Protect Your Wealth

10:00am-11:30am First Congregational Church of Naples, 6630 Immokalee Road, Naples FL

Tuesday, March 12th - Ask The Experts: Elder Law Planning & Home Care Options

10:00am-11:30am Hodges Life Celebration Center - 26051 S Tamiami Trail, Bonita Springs, FL 34134

Presenter: Ehren Frey, Esquire RSVP to 952-457-0493 or Kelsy@ZacBrownLaw.com

Wednesday, March 13th - Legal Tune Up -**Essential Documents and Recent Law Changes**

11:30am-1:00pm

Avow Ispiri Center - 1205 Whippoorwill Ln, Naples, FL 34105 Presenter: Ehren Frey, Esquire

Thursday, March 14th - Ask The Experts: Estate Planning & Elder Law 101

12:00am-1:30pm Terrcina Grand - 6825 Davis Blvd, Naples, FL 34104 Presenter: Ehren Frey, Esquire

Monday, March 18th - Bonita Springs **Senior Center Expo**

8:00am-1:00pm Bonita Springs YMCA - 27200 Kent Rd, Bonita Springs, FL 34135

Wednesday, March 20th - Maximize Your Wealth and Minimize Your Tax Burden 3:00pm-5:00pm

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

Presenter: Carl Zacharia, Partner/Esquire RSVP: Call 239-977-5422 or visit TheTerracesAtBonitaSprings.com/Calendar

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APRIL: "PARKINSON'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH"

By Ramon A. Gil, M.D., Medical Director, Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

r. James Parkinson was born on April 11, 1765, in London, England. He was a highly educated man, who not only became a surgeon, but he was also a geologist, apothecary, paleontologist and a political activist. He was the author of "An Essay on the Shaking Palsy", published in 1817, describing the disease that many years ago received his name: "Parkinson's Disease". Honoring his birthday, we celebrate April as "Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month".

Back in the early 1990's, Dupont, makers of Sinemet and Sinemet CR, gave some of us a copy of its famous essay with a note that reads: "For those who search for ways to make life better for people living with Parkinson's Disease. A gift of appreciation". Those words continue to be a simple source of inspiration for many of us. Today, more than ever, we see the fruits of so many years of research leading to remarkable progress in this field, helping to enhance the quality of life of our PD patients and easing the load of the care partners.

Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL, in association with the Charlotte County Medical Society proudly presents our 2024 Spring Symposium. It will be held on Friday, April 5th. Admission is FREE, but registration is strongly recommended, as seating is limited. Those attending the program will enjoy four interesting and educational presentations. I will open the program with a lecture to help you with the challenges of being hospitalized. Tips to help you how to survive your hospitalization will be shared with you and your care partners.

Sleep disturbances are part of PD. Sleep Apnea and REM Sleep Disorders (RBD) will be presented by Dr. Ernesto Eusebio, Sleep Medicine specialist from Lee Health. Untreated, Sleep Apnea will cause excessive daytime somnolence and tiredness, tends to worsen depression and most important it will accelerate cognitive decline leading to dementia. RBD (acting your dreams) is associated with injuries sometimes not just to you, but to your bedpartner.



We are delighted to have Dr. Jean Hubble with us. At this point she is a medical consultant, and she is a former medical director of the Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence & Movement Disorders Clinic at the Ohio State University Medical Center. She has a vast experience in the pharmaceutical industry, since upon retirement from medical practice, she worked in the medical divisions of several companies, participating in the development of new drugs in the field of Neurology, particularly in movement disorders. She will review for us the history of treating PD, highlighting the great progress achieved over the past 5 decades.

Finally, Dr. Adolfo Ramirez Zamora, Associate Professor of Neurology, Program Director and Division Chief of Movement Disorders at the Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases at the University of Florida in Gainesville will present the surgical treatment of PD, illustrating who, why and when patients should consider surgery (deep brain stimulation) as part of the treatment of PD.

Let's celebrate the special birthday, let's all learn together. Let's quote Dr. Rana in our final line: "Those who fight Parkinson's with knowledge always find solutions."

Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL in parmorship with Charlotte County Medical Society promise promote...

2024 SWFL Parkinson's Disease Spring Symposium

April: Parkinson's Awareness Month Friday, April 5, 2024

9:00 am to 3:00 pm • The Isles Yacht Club 1780 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda, FL



Ramon A. Gil, M.D. Diplomate, American Academy of Psychiatry Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine Medical Director, Parkinson's Disease Treatment

AGENDA

9:00 am to 9:45 am....Registration and Refreshments

9:45 am to 10:00 am....Opening Remarks

10:00 am to 11:00 am....Hospitalizations and PD Ramon Gil, M.D., Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL

11:00 am to 12 noon....Sleep Apnea and REM Sleep Behavior Disorder in PD.

Ernesto Eusebio Morales, M.D., Sleep Medicine Dept., Lee Health:

12 noon to 12:45 pm..... Lunch Break

12:45 pm to 1:45 pm....The History of Treating PD Jean Hubble, M.D., former Medical Director of the Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence & Movement Disorders Clinic, Ohio State

University Medical Center 1:45 pm to 2:45 pm....Deep Brain Stimulation: Who, Why and When?

Adolfo Ramirez Zamora, M.D., Movement Disorders Program, UF, Gainesville

2:45 pm to 3:00 pm.....Raffle and Closing Remarks



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



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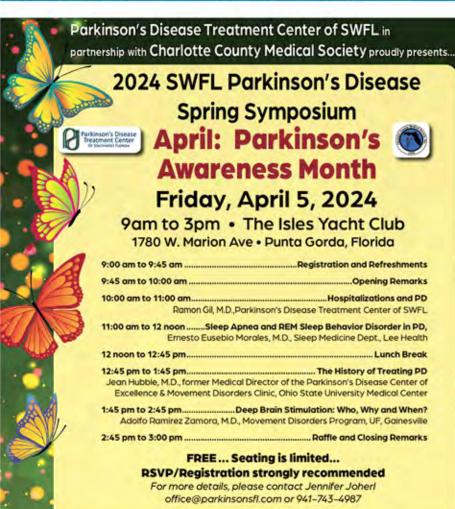
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Understanding Polycystic Kidney Disease

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

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

Polycystic kidney disease is the fourth leading cause of kidney failure and 600,000 people in the United State have the disorder. Polycystic kidney disease (PKD) affects the kidneys with cysts that grow and are filled with fluid. These cysts can damage the kidneys, and essentially take over the kidney' ability to work properly, especially if there are numerous cysts growing at one time. These cysts can severely reduce kidney function.

Poly cystic kidney disease can also affect other organs in the body including the spleen, ovaries, liver, pancreas, bowels, brain, and heart. Most people don't develop PKD until middle age, and the symptoms can range from mild to severe.

The primary symptoms of PKD are as follows:

- High blood pressure
- Back or side pain
- Swollen abdomen
- Blood in the urine
- Frequent bladder and/or kidney infections
- Fluttering or pounding chest
- Chest pain
- Headaches

S0 to 60 percent of individuals with PKD will develop kidney failure.

PKD Treatment

Individuals with PKD will need dialysis and possible a kidney transplant. There are also medications that can help treat the disorder and certain diets that will help to prevent the growth of the cysts, which can stop the progression of the disease. PKD can be genetic, so it's best to speak to your physician about your children's health or any planned pregnancies.

How Can the Progression of Kidney Disease Be Delayed?

- 1. Keeping blood pressure under 130/80 or if you have diabetes or protein in the urine, under 125/75.
- 2. Taking certain types of medications called ACE-Inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers.

- 3. If you are diabetic, keeping blood sugars tightly controlled (HbA1c less than 7.0).
- 4. Avoiding medications that harm your kidneys such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. (NSAIDs). Examples are Motrin, ibuprofen, Aleve, Advil, Naprosyn. A Cox-2 inhibitor called Celebrex is also harmful.
- 5. Avoiding, if possible, IV contrast dye used for CT scans and heart catheterizations and gadolinium used in MRIs.
- 6. Controlling your cholesterol.
- 7. Quit smoking.
- 8. If overweight, losing weight.
- 9. Treating anemia if present.
- Avoiding Fleet phospho-soda (oral) and Fleet enemas for patients in Stage 4 and 5 chronic kidney disease.

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Chronic Kidney Disease Program

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

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

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

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- Hypertension
- Injections of Aranesp for Anemia related to Kidney Disease
- Kidney Transplant Services: Patient and Donor Evaluations, Post-Transplant Follow-up Care
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- Nephrotic Syndrome
- Pyelonephritis
- Polycystic Kidney Disease
- Recurring kidney stones
- Renal Failure
- Renal Insufficiency

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DOES MEDICAL MARIJUANA HELP REDUCE CHRONIC PAIN?

ccording to the CDC, over 50 million adults live with chronic pain in the United States.

Chronic pain is a high-impact condition that decreases the quality of life and increases the prevalence of psychiatric issues, such as depression and anxiety. However, medical marijuana has been extensively researched by scientists worldwide to answer the question: does medical marijuana help reduce chronic pain?

Below, we'll discuss everything you need to know about medical marijuana and how it works with your mind and body to assist with various forms of chronic pain.

What is Chronic Pain and How Does Medical Marijuana Help?

Chronic pain is defined as pain that persists for more than 12 weeks and can be caused by various conditions such as arthritis, fibromyalgia, and nerve damage.

Medical marijuana, also known as medical cannabis, is a treatment option that has been gaining attention in recent years for its ability to relieve chronic pain.

One of the main active compounds in medical marijuana is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is responsible for its pain-relieving properties. THC binds to receptors in the brain and spinal cord, known as CB1 receptors, which are involved in pain perception. When THC binds to these receptors, it can reduce the sensitivity to pain and increase the release of natural pain-relieving chemicals in the body.

Another active compound in medical marijuana is cannabidiol (CBD), which has also been found to be effective in reducing chronic pain. Unlike THC, CBD does not bind to CB1 receptors; instead, it interacts with other receptors in the body, such as the vanilloid receptor (TRPV1), which is involved in the perception of pain.

Studies Reveal How Medical Marijuana Reduces Chronic Pain

A review of studies published in the Journal of Clinical Pharmacology in 2018 found that medical marijuana can effectively reduce chronic pain caused by conditions such as neuropathy, fibromyalgia, and rheumatoid arthritis.



The review included 29 studies involving more than 2,500 patients and found that, on average, medical marijuana reduced chronic pain by 30%.

Another study published in the European Journal of Pain in 2017 found that medical marijuana can effectively reduce chronic pain caused by nerve damage. The study included 57 patients and found that those who received medical marijuana significantly reduced pain compared to those who received a placebo.

Lastly, a study published in the Journal of Pain in 2016 found that medical marijuana can effectively reduce chronic pain caused by conditions such as multiple sclerosis. The study included 48 patients and found that those who received medical marijuana significantly reduced pain compared to those who received a placebo.

Overall, these three medical studies are only a drop in the bucket regarding medical marijuana research.

What are the Best Medical Marijuana Strains for Chronic Pain?

If you live in a state that allows medical marijuana — you'll notice everything is sold under a medical banner.

However, not all cannabis strains are created equal. With this in mind, you'll want to search for specific marijuana strains geared toward chronic pain relief. To the surprise of many, it's not the highest THC content you should seek — it's the terpene content.

Below, we'll dive into the basics of terpenes and how they can assist you in finding the best medical marijuana strain for chronic pain.

How to Use Terpenes to Find the Best Medical Marijuana Strains for Chronic Pain

Terpenes are a class of organic compounds found in many plants, including cannabis.

Although terpenes are responsible for the unique aroma and flavor of different cannabis strains — they have a hidden characteristic that's catapulted them in importance among medical marijuana patients.

Some studies have shown that certain terpenes, such as caryophyllene and linalool, have anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties. These terpenes interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, which helps regulate pain, inflammation, and other physiological processes.

Should You Consume Medical Marijuana for Chronic Pain?

Chronic pain is a life-altering condition that forces individuals to choose — to take prescription medication or try medical marijuana.

The downsides of prescription painkillers are:

- · Increased risk of dependency/addiction
- Overdose
- Sedation
- Nausea
- Depression

Alternatively, medical marijuana is not linked to dependency or overdose risk. Furthermore, medical marijuana sold in Florida is natural and lab-tested, making it a much less risky option for reducing chronic pain.

Ultimately, it's your decision to consume medical marijuana for chronic pain. From consulting your primary physician in Florida to contacting a medical marijuana doctor, you'll gain everything you need to make an informed decision.



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DIABETES AND NEUROLOGY: The Unseen Impact on Brain Health

hen we hear the word "diabetes," our thoughts often drift toward blood sugar management, dietary changes, and diligent monitoring of what we consume. However, what might come as a surprise to many is that diabetes has a profound impact on our brain health. It's a connection that is often underestimated and under-treated, yet it plays a significant role in our overall well-being.

Diabetes and Brain Health: A Complex Relation-

Diabetes, both type 1 and type 2, is a complex condition that affects multiple systems in the body. One of the lesser-known aspects of this condition is its intricate relationship with neurological health. Here are some essential points to consider:

- 1. Increased Risk of Stroke: For those with diabetes, the risk of stroke is not just elevated; it is doubled. This alarming statistic underscores the importance of managing diabetes effectively to reduce the risk of this life-altering event.
- 2. Greater Risk of Dementia: Another startling connection between diabetes and neurology is the increased risk of dementia. Research has shown that individuals with diabetes are more likely to develop cognitive impairments and neurodegenerative conditions like Alzheimer's disease.

Taking Control of Your Brain Health

While the connection between diabetes and neurology may seem daunting, there are several proactive steps you can take to protect your brain health.

- 1. Maintain a Healthy Weight: Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is vital in diabetes management. It can significantly reduce the risk of complications, including those affecting your brain.
- 2. Follow a Healthy Eating Plan: Adhering to a balanced, diabetes-friendly diet can help stabilize blood sugar levels and positively impact brain health. Minimize the consumption of white flour, white sugar, and hydrogenated fats in your diet.



- 3. Engage in Regular Exercise: Physical activity is a key component of diabetes management. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise five times a week, incorporating a mix of aerobic, strength, flexibility, and balance exercises.
- 4. Monitor Your Blood Sugar: Consistently monitoring and managing your blood sugar within recommended levels can have a direct impact on your brain health and reduce the risk of neurological complications.
- 5. Take Medication as Prescribed: If your healthcare provider has prescribed medication to manage your diabetes, ensure you take it as directed. Consistency in medication is crucial for maintaining optimal blood sugar control.

Nurturing Your Brain: Beyond Diabetes Manage-

Beyond these fundamental diabetes management strategies, you can take additional steps to protect and enhance your brain health:

- Include protein in every meal to support brain function.
- Control portion sizes to manage caloric intake effectively.
- Embrace a well-rounded exercise routine that combines various forms of physical activity.
- Challenge your brain with cognitive exercises like puzzles, games, or learning new skills, such as playing a musical instrument.

Lasene Neural Therapeutics: A Beacon of Hope

In the quest to safeguard your brain health while managing diabetes, it's essential to have a reliable ally. Lasene Neural Therapeutics understands the complexities of neurological deficits and offers solutions designed to improve your quality of life. Their commitment to enhancing neurological well-being can provide much-needed support and guidance on your journey.

In conclusion, diabetes is not just about blood sugar it extends its influence into the realm of neurology. The risks of stroke and dementia are significant concerns for those with diabetes. However, by proactively managing your diabetes, following a healthy lifestyle, and seeking the right support, you can protect and enhance your brain health. Remember, your brain deserves as much attention as your blood sugar levels in your pursuit of a healthier, happier life.

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Lasene is bridging the gap between the world's finest Therapeutic Light Treatments technology and proprietary advanced treatment protocols for rapid management of chronic pain and functional restoration of quality-of-life metrics for our patients living with Parkinson's, sleep disorders, deterioration of executive function, and other neurological degenerative ailments.

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Health Insurance – Important Dates!

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

MEDICARE Open Enrollment Period January 1st- March 31st, effective the 1st of the following month. Medicare Advantage – Part C

If you change/enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan Part C if you are not happy with the one you have. You can make a 1 time change from one Advantage Plan to another, you can go back to Original Medicare and buy a standalone drug plan. I personally don't feel you should have Original Medicare without a Medicare Supplement because your financial exposure is unlimited. Medicare Supplements are NOT guaranteed to accept you, there are a few exceptions. But in general, you need to pass medical underwriting. There are Medicare Supplements Letters A-N, each pays in conjunction with Original Medicare. There are a lot of companies and plans that you need to understand the plans and the differences in companies, it's not just about the price today.

Most of the plans in your area have made many changes for 2024 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. If the insurance company, you are with comes up with a better plan they will NOT switch you to it automatically. Your insurance agent should be making you aware of a better option. It is illegal for an insurance agent to call you regarding Medicare, do not talk to someone you have not given permission to call. Ask them for their National Producer number and report them to Medicare for an unsolicited call.

CMS has made many rules for 2024 Medicare season. If you want to enroll or review your plan over the phone, 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 authorizes us to talk to you about 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 2024. Part D after you, the plan and the pharmaceutical company paid \$8,000 you no longer have a cost for your medications for the rest of the 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?

We offer Free Medicare Seminars in Lee & Collier County please e-mail info@logicalinsurance.com to register or call 239-362-0855 for dates. Medicare's website is www.Medicare.gov.

Individual/Family Health Insurance – Being young and healthy does not mean you do not need health insurance. Do you know anyone that knew when they were going to be diagnosed with cancer, or when they were going to have a heart attack or even a serious accident? I'do not, it happens, and insurance is there to help you get the care you need and limit your financial exposure. What are your insurance options, and what is best for you? Employer Group Coverage, Individual Medically Underwritten Health Insurance, Medicaid, or the Government Marketplace Guaranteed Issue Health Insurance.

There is a lot to know about the differences, as well as the cost. The monthly premium should not be your only consideration. You do not know what you do not know so ask the experts, which do know about all the plans and can help educate and guide you through the enrollment process. When it comes to medically underwritten plans, most of them you can enroll all year long, but you can also be denied based on medical underwriting. The cost is the same as going directly with the insurance carrier, so why would you not seek free professional help with an agent that sells all or most of the companies in your area?

Travel Insurance — Did you know that most health insurance does NOT cover you outside of the country and that includes a cruise, in international waters (4 miles out). Travel insurance is not just about trip cancelation but most importantly what if you got sick or had an accident on your trip. Medical Trip insurance is very important and most of the time not very costly when you way the benefits.

Pet Insurance – Your 4-legged family members need insurance as well, especially for the big sudden emergency room services. The younger the pet the less the cost of insurance and there are unlimited benefits as well.

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TAURINE AND ITS POTENTIAL BENEFITS IN THE TREATMENT OF LONG COVID

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

ith how long COVID-19 has been a part of our lives, you may be surprised to learn that your symptoms might not end with the initial infection. Some people are reporting lingering or new-onset symptoms that last weeks or even months after they had COVID-19, and the cause behind them remains unknown.

This phenomenon, termed long COVID, can differ from person to person and does not always occur. However, for those unfortunate enough to develop it, the relentless symptoms can severely decrease their quality of life, creating a need for long COVID treatment.

Possible Causes of Long COVID

Long COVID, also known as long-haul COVID or post-COVID conditions, can have the following symptoms:

- fatigue
- · brain fog
- insomnia
- · changes in taste and smell
- anxiety
- depression
- · chest pain
- · shortness of breath
- dizziness

While many of these symptoms may seem minor, they can be a significant burden on your quality of life when they persist day after day. This is why treatment for long COVID is a new area of research. However, before getting into the potential treatments, it is first helpful to discuss the possible causes of long COVID, which are currently theories within the scientific community.

The first hypothesis is that long COVID results from lingering viral remnants, such as viral protein or RNA. These pieces of the virus can remain in the tissues and cause chronic inflammation.

Another theory is that long COVID results from an autoimmune reaction, which can occur with acute respiratory infections.

Finally, scientists speculate that long COVID symptoms can result from dysregulation in the gut microbiome, which can occur during infection.



With there being three possible causes, it can be hard to determine who may develop long COVID and who won't. However, predictive tests are in development.

The Power of Taurine

Taurine is an amino acid the human liver produces, and it is also found in meat and fish. It plays a vital role in regulating various physiological functions, including the immune system.

Researchers from the University of Alberta have found that long COVID patients with lower levels of taurine had more symptoms, were hospitalized more often, and were at a higher risk for mortality. However, the purpose of their study was not to analyze taurine's role in long COVID, but to create a predictive model.

Of the 117 patients enrolled in the study, the researchers analyzed blood samples for each, looking for changes in various proteins, metabolites, and markers of inflammation. Utilizing the results obtained on 20 molecules, they then created a predictive model that had an 83% accuracy rate when predicting adverse clinical outcomes after discharge from acute infection.

While 20 molecules were used in the predictive model, the researchers did find that the difference in taurine levels among the patients was the most prominent. Beyond the poorer clinical outcomes seen in those with low taurine levels, those with high taurine levels had much fewer ongoing symptoms.

The results of this trial suggest that there may be promise in taurine supplementation when it comes to treating long COVID. However, further study is needed to gauge the impact of taurine supplementation.

What is exciting about this discovery is that the treatment for long COVID may not require fancy drugs but instead simple supplementation to return balance in the body. This also matches up with the hormonal imbalances that can occur due to COVID-19, potentially evolving into long COVID. In these cases, restoring balance through hormone replacement therapy can also help to relieve symptoms.

Other Benefits of Taurine Supplementation

Taurine supplementation may offer the potential to help with more than just long COVID.

Taurine helps with the following:

- · forming bile salts, which help with digestion
- maintaining hydration and electrolyte balance in the cells
- · supporting the central nervous system and eyes
- regulating immune system health and the function of antioxidants
- · regulating minerals in the cells

Taurine deficiency on its own is rare because of the body's ability to produce it. Still, when you're ill or under stress, it is possible that your body needs more taurine, which is why supplementation may help.

Research has shown that taurine supplementation can help regulate blood pressure in those with heart conditions, enhance insulin sensitivity, and increase the amount of oxygen taken in by the body.

These findings show great promise in taurine supplementation, and as research into it continues, it may soon be a viable treatment for those with long COVID.

Hormonal Imbalance, Another Need for Supplementation

Women, in particular, are more susceptible to long COVID, and researchers speculate that this is because of their hormones or, more specifically, the way that the COVID-19 virus can potentially infiltrate the ovaries and lower estrogen production.

Unfortunately, this side effect will persist unless an effort is made to correct the amount of estrogen in the body, such as through hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Similar to taurine supplementation, HRT helps to bring estrogen back to normal levels. This not only relieves the resulting symptoms (which are often indicative of long COVID) but also allows the ovaries to heal so that they can resume normal estrogen production.

Recovering From Long COVID

With how persistent long COVID can be, it's essential to think of your recovery as a shift in your lifestyle. There is no overnight fix, which can be frustrating to many. However, if you keep in mind that your recovery will take time, it can be easier to push through it and, eventually, feel better.

You can make the following holistic lifestyle changes to ease your long COVID recovery and help your body return to balance.

Promote Gut Health

Within your gut are trillions of bacteria, most of them having crucial roles in your digestion and immune health. However, when we get sick, the balance of bacteria in our gut can shift, lowering the amount of helpful bacteria and allowing the number of harmful bacteria to increase. The result can be digestive troubles, such as diarrhea or bloating, alongside difficulty recovering from illness.

One of the theories around long COVID is that it results from dysregulation in the gut, so those looking to recover from long COVID should focus on improving and promoting their gut health. Nothing fancy is needed to do this, either; simply focus on consuming more plant-based foods such as fruits, veggies, nuts, and seeds, and prioritize getting a variety of different foods. The more variety, the more types of vitamins and nutrients you get, and thus, the healthier your body.

Alongside a balanced diet, it's also best to focus on consuming probiotic-rich foods such as yogurt or fermented foods like kefir or sauerkraut. Probiotic supplements are also available if you do not get enough probiotics from your diet.

By prioritizing the food you put into your body, you can help return balance to your gut, healing your body from the inside out.

Relax

One of the most common symptoms of long-COVID is fatigue. Even more frustrating is that this fatigue is often accompanied by sleep problems, meaning not only are you tired, but even when you try to sleep, you can't.

Relaxation techniques can help you to minimize your fatigue and finally get some much-needed sleep. Not only will sleep help minimize your daytime fatigue, but quality sleep also gives your body time to heal and repair itself, which can help fight any lingering infection or heal the damage sustained by your cells while sick with COVID-19.

Go Easy on Yourself

When you have long COVID, it's most important to remember that it's not something that will quickly get better. It's a process, but each healthy habit you implement can help you to feel better.

With long COVID, it's common for people to try to push through the symptoms and return to normal activity levels before their body is physically ready. No one wants to feel as though they are out of commission for too long, but pushing your body can cause more harm and increase the length of time that you are ill.

Instead, remember that you're healing, and your body doesn't need to be worked as strenuously. This can mean opting for low-impact workouts instead of something demanding; you can still move your body, but in a gentler way. This might also mean going to bed earlier each night to help you get more sleep.

Recovering from long COVID is a journey, so take note of what activities help you feel better and try adding more of them to your day.

Long COVID and Future Treatments

Long COVID is a health condition that follows COVID-19 infection in some individuals. It is characterized by continued or new onset symptoms that last weeks or months after infection. It does not affect everyone, and those who develop long COVID often experience different types of symptoms.

New research into predictive markers of long COVID revealed that taurine levels are dramatically different between those experiencing long COVID symptoms and those without. Specifically, those with low levels of taurine were more likely to experience severe symptoms, be hospitalized, and have a higher rate of mortality.

After seeing this potential connection between low taurine levels and long COVID, a logical conclusion would be that supplementing taurine can help treat long COVID. While this is not a verifiable treatment at this time, researchers are looking into its promise.

If you are suffering from long COVID, it's only natural to wonder what you can do to help ease your symptoms. Various lifestyle habits can help, such as eating a balanced diet, relaxing, and getting enough sleep and physical exercise. However, other interventions can also work, especially if you are experiencing a deficiency.

If your long COVID symptoms are not getting better, reach out to your doctor to schedule an appointment and go over what options you have to treat this condition and restore balance to your body.

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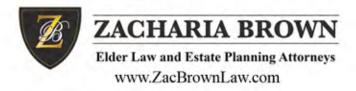
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JOSEPH GAUTA, MD





AMY GOETZ, PA-C

Family History and Hereditary Colon Cancer

By Andy Guinigundo, Director of Precision Oncology, Naples Cancer Advisors

o, you have a family history of colon cancer and are nervous about how to minimize your risk of the disease. You have questions. When should you get cancer screening? What kind of cancer screening should you be doing? How often should you do it? Do I or anyone in my family need genetic testing? And, what the heck is genetic testing anyway? Answers to these questions and more, keep reading!

Before we talk about being at high risk of colon cancer, let's first talk about what people with an average risk of colon cancer should be doing. The new age of first colonoscopy is 45 years old. In 2018, the American Cancer Society made this recommendation in response to research finding an increase in colon cancer diagnosed among younger individuals. If you are average risk, you do have options regarding how to screen. The gold standard remains the traditional colonoscopy. The advantage of colonoscopy is that it examines the entire colon and polyps can be removed. Polyps are most often a tiny clump of cells found in the lining of the colon. Given enough time, polyps sometimes become cancers. By removing them, a cancer might be prevented. The other advantage of colonoscopy comes if no polyps are found. Your next colonoscopy would be 10 years later! Other screening options include stool testing (blood or DNA), sigmoidoscopy, or CT colonography (CTC) sometimes called "virtual colonoscopy". Unfortunately, the bowel prep required for a traditional colonoscopy is still required for CTC.

How do I know if I have a higher than average risk for colon cancer? If you happen to fall in this category,

colonoscopy is the recommended test to get. First off, if you have a history of ulcerative colitis or Crohn's colitis, you are higher risk. I suspect, if you have one of those disorders, you are already getting frequent colonoscopies. If you have a personal history of the genetic disorder, cystic fibrosis, you need colon screening quite a bit earlier than 45 years. You may need a colonoscopy as early as 30 years old if you have undergone an organ transplant as a result of this disease. If you have a history of a childhood or young adult cancer, and received chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy, colonoscopy may be recommended to you as early as 30 years old and every 5 years thereafter. If you have had a colonoscopy and have a history of polyps, it may be recommended that you have a repeat colonoscopy as soon as a year later! There are pages within the guidelines devoted to describing polyps and re-screening recommendations. In general, how quickly you need your next colonoscopy depends on the type of polyp found, the number of polyps found, and the size of the polyp. In general, the more abnormal (compared to normal bowel tissue) it appears, the more in number, and the larger the polyp dictates how quickly you will need to repeat the colonoscopy. Finally, if you have a first degree relative (parent, sibling, child) with a history of colorectal cancer, you will need to get a colonoscopy earlier. The age at first colonoscopy should be 40 years old or 10 years before the earlier colorectal cancer, whichever is earlier. For example, if your dad had colon cancer at age 45, your first colonoscopy should be at 35 years old. It is also recommended that you get colonoscopy every 5 years even if your test does not find anything instead of the usual 10 years.



Comprehensive NCCN Guidelines Version 2.2023 Lynch Syndrome

CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF LYNCH SYNDROME BASED ON PERSONAL OR FAMILY HISTORY OF CANCER®

- An Individual with a LS-related cancer^b and any of the following:

 → Diagnosed <50 y

 → A synchronous or metachronous LS-related cancer^b regardless of age

 → 1 first-degree or second-degree relative with an LS-related cancer^b (lagnosed <50 y

 → ≥2 first-degree or second-degree relatives with an LS-related cancer^b regardless of age

- Family history^c of any of the following:
 > ≥1 first-degree relative with a colorectal or endometrial cancer diagnosed <50 y
 > ≥1 first-degree relative with a colorectal or endometrial cancer and a synchronous or metachronous LS-related cancer regardless of aga.
 > ≥2 first-degree or second-degree relatives with LS-related cancers. Including ≥1 diagnosed <50 y
 > ≥3 first-degree or second-degree relatives with LS-related cancers.

- Increased model-predicted risk for LS

 > An indy/duaj with a 25% risk of having an MMR gene pathogenic variant based on predictive models (ie. PREMM_g, MMRpro, MMRpredict)

 Individuals with a personal history of CRC and/or endometrial cancer with a PREMM_g score of 22.5% should be considered for MGPT.

 Excludibly Music with rule approach between 4 CRC and/or and and a considered for MGPT. considered not mean.

 For Individuals without a personal history of CRC and/or endumental cancer, some data have suggested using a PREMM, score threshold of ≥2.5%, rather than ≥5% to select Individuals for MMR genetic testing. Based on these data, it is reasonable for testing to be done based on the ≥2.6% score result and clinical judgment. Of note, with the lower threshold, there is an increase in sensitivity, but a decrease in specificity.
- Personal history of a tumor with MMR deficiency determined by PCR, NGS, or IHC diagnosed at any age^{b,d}

Who then should undergo genetic testing for hereditary colorectal cancer? Colon cancer is a cancer that moved toward what we call "universal genetic testing". This is testing for anyone with a diagnosis of the disease. If you have a history of colorectal cancer and have not had genetic testing, discuss having testing

with your cancer care provider. If you don't have cancer, but there is a known genetic colorectal cancer syndrome in your family, i.e. a known gene mutation, you should be tested. Your risk of having the same mutation is as high as 50%.

If you do not have a personal history of colorectal cancer, testing is based on family history. In general, the younger the folks with colorectal cancer were diagnosed, the closer to you genetically, and the higher the total number, the more chance you should be tested. See chart, but really a genetics professional should assist you with this assessment. There are several providers of genetics services in the Naples area. The cancer care professionals at Naples Cancer Advisors are able to perform a full genetic risk assessment for you.



Andy Guinigundo MSN, RN, CNP, ANP-BC

Andy Guinigundo brings more than 25 years of experience as an advanced provider in oncology services and as a cancer genetic risk assessment specialist

and an ICU registered nurse. Andy's areas of focus include lung cancer, breast cancer and overall improvement in quality cancer care. His advanced knowledge as a cancer genetics specialist allowed NCA to launch its genetic counseling service, further bolstering its lineup of free services provided to Southwest Florida cancer patients.

Andy's passion to help cancer patients started when he was an undergraduate. He participated in a student nurse externship where he worked in the bone marrow transplant unit. He discovered that the relationships he developed with his patients were very rewarding, and that he had the ability to make a positive impact in their lives. Andy's special interests include lung cancer, breast cancer, cancer research, and quality care improvement. He has advanced his profession and now serves as a cancer genetics specialist. He has a wide range of interests, including spending time with his family, serving as a member of the National Ski Patrol, visiting theme parks and writing about them.





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Urgent Care vs. Emergency Room for School and Sports-Related Injuries

By Alfonso L. Espinel, MD

n the realm of healthcare, understanding when to seek urgent care versus heading to the emergency room can make a significant difference in receiving prompt and appropriate treatment. This is particularly true when it comes to school and sports-related injuries, ranging from physical examinations to handling deep cuts, fractures, and more.

Understanding the Basics: Urgent Care and **Emergency Room**

Before delving into specific scenarios, it's crucial to distinguish between urgent care and the emergency room. Urgent care facilities are designed to handle non-life-threatening conditions that require immediate attention but fall short of being emergencies. On the other hand, emergency rooms are equipped to deal with severe, life-threatening situations.

Routine Physical Examinations: Urgent Care's

For routine physical examinations, such as school or sports physicals, urgent care is often the more suitable option. These facilities are adept at providing guick and thorough exams, ensuring that students and athletes meet the necessary health criteria for participation. Urgent care offers convenience and timely service without the prolonged waits associated with emergency rooms.

Sports Injuries: Urgent Care First, Emergency Room for Severe Cases

In the case of sports injuries, the severity of the injury often dictates where to seek medical attention. Urgent care is well-equipped to handle common sports injuries like minor sprains, strains, and contusions. However, if the injury involves severe pain, dislocations, or signs of a more significant issue, heading to the emergency room is imperative. Prompt intervention in these cases can prevent further complications and expedite the recovery process.

Addressing Deep Cuts and Stitches: Urgent Care

When it comes to deep cuts and the need for stitches, urgent care is usually the optimal choice.



Urgent care centers have the resources to assess and treat lacerations promptly. From cleaning and disinfecting wounds to administering stitches, these facilities ensure a swift response. It's important to note that if the cut is excessively deep. affecting vital structures, or is associated with severe bleeding, heading to the emergency room becomes necessary for comprehensive care.

Fractures and Sprains: A Tale of Urgent Care and **Emergency Room**

Fractures and sprains often leave individuals grappling with the decision of where to seek medical attention. Urgent care is proficient in diagnosing and managing minor fractures and sprains, providing necessary splints or braces. However, if the injury involves a visible deformity, severe pain, or the potential for complications, the emergency room is the more appropriate choice. Emergency rooms can conduct comprehensive imaging studies and offer immediate interventions for complex fractures.

X-rays with Immediate Results: A Boon in Urgent

One notable advantage of urgent care facilities is their capability to conduct X-rays with immediate results. This proves invaluable in cases of suspected fractures or injuries requiring quick diagnostic confirmation. The swift availability of X-ray results at urgent care centers facilitates prompt decision-making, allowing for timely initiation of the appropriate treatment.

EKG Testing: Emergency Room for Critical Cases Electrocardiogram (EKG) testing is exclusively conducted in the emergency room for critical situations related to the heart. Nevertheless, our urgent care facilities offer this service for college athletes undergoing sports physicals and for individuals experiencing symptoms like chest discomfort, rapid heart rate, or other relevant physical issues where an EKG aids in accurate diagnosis. In cases of a suspected heart attack or true cardiac emergency, seeking care in an emergency room is the most appropriate course of action.

In conclusion, understanding when to opt for urgent care versus the emergency room is crucial for timely and effective healthcare. For routine physical examinations, sports injuries, and minor cuts or fractures, urgent care stands as a convenient and efficient choice. However, in cases of severe trauma, deep cuts, or suspected cardiac issues necessitating EKG testing, the emergency room is the definitive destination. Making informed decisions based on the nature and severity of the condition ensures that individuals receive the most appropriate care tailored to their specific needs.

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EXPLORING THE EFFICACY OF ACUPUNCTURE IN LLEVIATING ENDOMETRIOSIS-ASSOCIATED PAIN

By Dr. Mary Lambert, AP, DOM

ndometriosis, a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the womb, affects millions of women worldwide, causing chronic pain and impacting their overall quality of life. While various treatment options exist, acupuncture has gained attention for its potential efficacy in managing endometriosis-associated pain.

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese medical art that involves the insertion of fine filiform needles into specific points on the body. The acupuncturist carefully selects points based on the individual's conditions with the intention of restoring balance, stimulate energy flow (Qi), and enhancing overall wellbeing. Proponents argue that acupuncture can help regulate hormonal imbalances, reduce inflammation, and alleviate pain, making it a complementary therapy for conditions like endometriosis.

Several studies have explored the impact of acupuncture on endometriosis-related symptoms, particularly pain. A study published in the Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology Research found that women receiving acupuncture reported significant reductions in pain compared to those who did not. The researchers suggested that acupuncture may influence pain perception and modulate inflammatory pathways, providing relief for endometriosis sufferers.



Furthermore, acupuncture is believed to have a positive impact on stress and anxiety, common factors exacerbating endometriosis symptoms. Acupuncture treatments release serotonin and norepinephrine (a neurotransmitter of the brain to regulate stress reduction) in order to calm the nervous system during treatments. Stress reduction can potentially contribute to better pain management and overall well-being for women dealing with this challenging condition.

Moreover, acupuncture is often considered a complementary therapy, meaning it works best when combined with conventional medical treatments. While acupuncture may help manage pain and improve quality of life, it is not a standalone cure for endometriosis. Women seeking relief from endometriosis-associated pain should consult with their healthcare providers to develop a comprehensive treatment plan tailored to their individual needs.

Understanding the potential benefits of acupuncture in managing endometriosis-associated pain requires acknowledging its holistic approach. Acupuncture doesn't merely target the symptoms; it aims to restore balance and harmony within the body.

This philosophy aligns with the traditional Chinese medicine perspective of Yin and Yang. This philosophy views health as a state of equilibrium between opposing forces to create a balanced whole.

In conclusion, the efficacy of acupuncture for endometriosis-associated pain remains a subject of ongoing research and debate within the medical community. While some studies suggest positive outcomes, others call for further investigation and standardization of acupuncture protocols. As with any medical intervention, individual responses may vary, and it's crucial for women with endometriosis to work closely with their healthcare providers to determine the most effective and personalized treatment approach.

Mary Lambert, AP DOM

Dr. Mary initially aspired to be a Doctor and chose a unique path, becoming a board-certified Acupuncture Physician after exploring skin care and massage therapy. Overcoming challenges, she embraced her journey, incorporating her skills to enhance her practice. Driven by a belief in holistic care, she combines acupuncture, herbs, and various modalities to improve individuals' overall well-being, emphasizing a personalized approach to healthcare. Her diverse expertise includes acupuncture, herbalism, injection therapy, pain management, and customized skin care.

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THE HEALING POWER OF A PLANT-BASED DIET IN PREVENTING AND TREATING COLORECTAL CANCER

By Lisa Brown, Plant-based Chef & Educator

In recent years, the impact of diet on overall health has become a focal point in medical research. One area of particular interest is the role of a plant-based diet in preventing and even treating various diseases, including colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer, affecting the colon or rectum, is a widespread and potentially deadly condition. However, emerging evidence suggests that adopting a plant-based diet can play a crucial role in both preventing and healing colorectal cancer.

The Link between Diet and Colorectal Cancer:

Numerous studies have established a clear connection between dietary choices and the risk of developing colorectal cancer. A diet rich in red and processed meats, saturated fats, and low in fiber has been associated with an increased likelihood of developing colorectal cancer. On the contrary, a plant-based diet, centered around fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes, has been linked to a lower risk of colorectal cancer.

Preventive Nature of Plant-Based Diets:

- 1. High Fiber Content: Plant-based diets are inherently rich in dietary fiber, a crucial component for maintaining digestive health. Fiber aids in the regular movement of bowels, preventing constipation and promoting a healthy gut environment. Moreover, fiber has been shown to have protective effects against colorectal cancer by binding to carcinogens, promoting their excretion, and reducing the time harmful substances spend in contact with the colon lining.
- 2. Antioxidant Properties: Fruits and vegetables, staples of a plant-based diet, are loaded with antioxidants that combat oxidative stress and inflammation in the body. Chronic inflammation has been linked to the development and progression of various cancers, including colorectal cancer. Antioxidants neutralize free radicals, reducing the risk of DNA damage and cellular mutations that can contribute to cancer formation.
- 3. Healthy Fats: Plant-based diets emphasize the consumption of healthy fats found in sources like avocados, nuts, and olive oil. These fats have anti-inflammatory properties and contribute to overall cardiovascular health. By maintaining heart health, plant-based diets indirectly support colorectal health, as cardiovascular issues are often linked to an increased risk of colorectal cancer.

Healing Potential of Plant-Based Diets:

- 1. Anti-Inflammatory Effects: Colorectal cancer often arises from chronic inflammation in the colon or rectum. Plant-based diets, with their abundance of anti-inflammatory compounds, can help mitigate inflammation and create an environment less conducive to cancer development. Incorporating foods like turmeric, ginger, and green leafy vegetables can specifically target inflammation, potentially aiding in the healing process.
- 2. Immune System Support: Plant-based diets provide essential vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients that support a robust immune system. A strong immune response is crucial for recognizing and eliminating cancerous cells. Foods like citrus fruits, broccoli, and berries are rich in immune-boosting nutrients, enhancing the body's ability to fight off cancer cells and aiding in the recovery from colorectal cancer.
- 3. Gut Microbiome Balance: The health of the gut microbiome is increasingly recognized as a key factor in preventing and treating colorectal cancer. Plant-based diets promote the growth of beneficial bacteria in the gut, fostering a balanced microbiome. This balance is essential for a healthy immune system, efficient digestion, and protection against harmful pathogens, contributing to the overall healing process.

Specific Foods with Colorectal Cancer-Fighting Properties:

- 1. Cruciferous Vegetables: Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts contain compounds such as sulforaphane, known for their anti-cancer properties. These vegetables have demonstrated the ability to inhibit the growth of colorectal cancer cells and may play a role in both prevention and treatment.
- 2. Berries: Berries, particularly blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries, are rich in antioxidants, including anthocyanins and quercetin. These antioxidants have been associated with a reduced risk of colorectal cancer and may aid in the healing process by combating inflammation and oxidative stress.
- 3. Garlic and Onions: Allium vegetables, such as garlic and onions, contain sulfur compounds with anti-cancer effects. These compounds have been shown to inhibit the growth of colorectal cancer cells and may contribute to the healing process when incorporated into a plant-based diet.



Conclusion:

Adopting a plant-based diet can be a powerful strategy in preventing and healing colorectal cancer. By focusing on nutrient-rich foods that promote digestive health, reduce inflammation, and support the immune system, individuals may reduce their risk of developing colorectal cancer and enhance their body's ability to heal if diagnosed. While a plant-based diet is not a cure-all, it can serve as a valuable component of a comprehensive approach to colorectal cancer prevention and treatment. As always, it is crucial to consult with healthcare professionals for personalized advice and guidance based on individual health circumstances.

For those seeking a seamless integration of a plant-based lifestyle into their journey of colorectal cancer prevention or recovery, consider the added convenience and expertise of my in-home personal plant-based chef services, providing delicious and tailored culinary experiences for optimal well-being.



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REVOLUTIONIZING KNEE PAIN RELIEF:

Exploring the Power of Regenerative Medicine and Non-Surgical Treatments

By Physicians Rehabilitation

n recent years, the field of regenerative medicine has emerged as a beacon of hope for those suffering from chronic knee pain, offering innovative alternatives to traditional surgical interventions. One such breakthrough in non-surgical treatments is the application of viscosupplementation and platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapies.

Viscosupplementation involves injecting hyaluronic acid into the knee joint, aiming to enhance lubrication and reduce friction. Hyaluronic acid is a natural substance found in the synovial fluid, which acts as a lubricant and shock absorber in the joints. By supplementing the joint with this viscous fluid, patients experience improved mobility and diminished pain, often delaying or eliminating the need for surgery.

Platelet-rich plasma therapy, on the other hand, harnesses the body's own healing capabilities. This treatment involves drawing a small sample of the patient's blood, processing it to concentrate platelets, growth factors, and other bioactive components, and then injecting it into the affected knee. The concentrated platelets stimulate tissue regeneration and repair, promoting healing in the damaged joint. This non-invasive approach not only addresses knee pain but also accelerates the body's natural healing processes.

These regenerative therapies signify a paradigm shift in the approach to knee pain, providing patients with effective alternatives to surgery.



Unlike traditional treatments that often focus on symptom management, regenerative medicine aims to address the underlying causes of knee pain and promote long-term healing.

Beyond the medical realm, the economic and lifestyle benefits of non-surgical interventions cannot be overstated. Patients undergoing viscosupplementation and PRP treatments typically experience shorter recovery times, enabling them to return to their daily activities sooner than those opting for surgery. This not only reduces the financial burden associated with prolonged recovery but also enhances the overall quality of life for individuals grappling with knee pain.

Moreover, these non-surgical approaches carry fewer risks and complications compared to invasive procedures. The avoidance of surgery-related complications, such as infections or prolonged rehabilitation, contributes to a safer and more patient-friendly treatment landscape. This makes regenerative medicine an attractive option for those who may be hesitant to undergo surgical interventions or are not suitable candidates for such procedures.

As research in regenerative medicine advances, the synergy between viscosupplementation and PRP therapies continues to show promise in treating a spectrum of knee conditions, including osteoarthritis and ligament injuries. The personalized nature of these treatments, tailored to individual patient needs, underscores the versatility and adaptability of regenerative medicine in addressing diverse knee pain scenarios.

In conclusion, the integration of regenerative medicine, specifically viscosupplementation and platelet-rich plasma therapies, has ushered in a new era in the management of knee pain. By offering non-surgical alternatives that focus on promoting healing and addressing the root causes of pain, these treatments provide a beacon of hope for those seeking effective, safe, and patient-centric solutions. As we embrace the transformative potential of regenerative medicine, we pave the way for a future where knee pain can be managed with precision, compassion, and a commitment to enhancing the overall well-being of individuals.

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

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Navigating Nutritional Wellness:

A Guide for Individuals with Chronic Kidney Disease During National Nutrition Month

ational Nutrition Month serves as a timely reminder for everyone to focus on their dietary choices and overall health. For individuals grappling with chronic kidney disease (CKD), this observance holds even greater significance. CKD necessitates a nuanced approach to nutrition, and understanding how to make informed dictary decisions is crucial for managing the condition effectively.

One of the primary considerations for those with CKD is controlling the intake of certain nutrients, especially phosphorus and potassium. High levels of these minerals can pose challenges for kidney function. National Nutrition Month provides an opportune moment to explore low-phosphorus and low-potassium food options, aiding individuals in crafting a kidney-friendly diet that promotes overall well-being.

Protein consumption is another critical aspect for those with CKD. Balancing protein intake is essential, as too little can lead to malnutrition, while excessive protein can strain the kidneys. National Nutrition Month offers a chance to spotlight lean protein sources such as fish, poultry, and plant-based proteins, empowering individuals with CKD to make informed choices that align with their health goals.

Hydration is paramount for kidney health. Adequate fluid intake helps flush out waste products from the body, easing the burden on the kidneys. During National Nutrition Month, individuals with CKD can focus on incorporating beverages like water, herbal teas, and limited amounts of juice into their daily routine, promoting optimal hydration and supporting kidney function.

The importance of portion control cannot be overstated for individuals managing CKD. National Nutrition Month encourages mindfulness about serving sizes, aiding those with CKD in preventing overconsumption of nutrients that may strain their kidneys. Emphasizing a balanced plate with a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables ensures a well-rounded diet that aligns with both the principles of National Nutrition Month and CKD management.



Educational resources play a vital role in empowering individuals with CKD to make informed dictary decisions. National Nutrition Month serves as a platform for raising awareness about the nutritional needs of those with CKD, fostering a community of support and providing access to reliable information that can enhance their well-being.

Moreover, adopting a personalized approach to nutrition is key for individuals with CKD. National Nutrition Month offers an ideal opportunity for healthcare professionals, dietitians, and individuals to collaborate in creating tailored dictary plans. This personalized guidance can address specific nutritional needs, ensuring that individuals with CKD receive the support necessary to navigate their dietary journey successfully.

In conclusion, National Nutrition Month serves as a timely and significant occasion for individuals with chronic kidney disease to prioritize their health through informed dietary choices. By focusing on low-phosphorus and low-potassium options, balancing protein intake, maintaining proper hydration, practicing portion control, and accessing educational resources, individuals with CKD can actively contribute to their overall well-being. This collaborative effort, involving healthcare professionals and the community, underscores the importance of National Nutrition Month as a catalyst for positive change in the lives of those managing chronic kidney disease.

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NAVIGATING CBD AWARENESS MONTH:

Safeguarding CBD Providers Amidst Florida's Legislative Challenges

n recent years, the popularity of CBD (cannabidiol) has surged, with an increasing number of people turning to this natural remedy for various health and wellness benefits. As the demand for CBD products continues to rise, it's crucial to shed light on CBD Awareness Month, a time dedicated to educating the public about the potential benefits and uses of CBD. However, this year, the celebration is marred by looming legislative challenges in Florida, where a proposed ban on certain CBD products threatens to disrupt the industry.

CBD Awareness Month, observed throughout the month of April, serves as a platform to inform consumers, healthcare professionals, and policymakers about the uses, benefits, and safety considerations of CBD. The goal is to foster understanding and acceptance of CBD, promoting responsible use and dispelling misconceptions surrounding this cannabinoid derived from the hemp plant.

Amidst the celebration, CBD providers in Florida find themselves in a precarious position as the state legislature contemplates a ban on certain CBD products. The proposed legislation raises concerns about the impact on both consumers and the burgeoning CBD industry. The need for a nuanced and well-informed approach to CBD regulation becomes increasingly apparent.

Proponents of the ban argue that it is essential to address potential safety issues and regulate CBD products more rigorously. Critics, however, emphasize the need for evidence-based decision-making.

pointing out that many reputable CBD products have undergone stringent testing and adhere to industry standards. Striking a balance between consumer protection and fostering a thriving CBD market is a delicate task that requires careful consideration.

CBD providers, ranging from local businesses to well-established brands, play a vital role in the industry's growth and sustainability. To protect these providers from the potential fallout of restrictive legislation, stakeholders must actively engage with lawmakers, sharing insights into the positive impact of responsibly produced CBD products, Highlighting the importance of transparency, quality control, and adherence to safety standards within the industry can contribute to crafting more nuanced legislation that preserves both consumer safety and economic opportunities for CBD providers.

Education remains a cornerstone of the efforts to safeguard the CBD industry in Florida, CBD Awareness Month provides an opportune moment to dispel myths and misinformation surrounding CBD. empowering consumers to make informed choices. By fostering a culture of awareness, CBD advocates can contribute to a more informed public discourse, steering away from knee-jerk reactions that may lead to sweeping bans without proper consideration of the nuances involved.

Engaging with healthcare professionals is equally crucial in this endeavor. By fostering a dialogue with medical practitioners, CBD advocates can help bridge the gap between the potential therapeutic benefits of CBD and the concerns of healthcare providers.

Collaborative efforts can lead to guidelines that ensure safe and responsible CBD usage, aligning the interests of the medical community with those of the CBD industry.

In conclusion, the intersection of CBD Awareness Month and the legislative challenges in Florida underscores the need for a balanced and informed approach to CBD regulation. By actively participating in the dialogue, CBD providers, advocates, and consumers can contribute to shaping policies that prioritize both safety and the potential benefits of CBD. Through education, transparency, and collaboration, it is possible to navigate these challenges, fostering an environment where the CBD industry can continue to flourish responsibly.

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

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Invisalign vs Braces: What's the Difference?

By Dr. Ricardo S. Bocanegra, DDS

oth Invisalign braces and the older traditional brace are intended to improve the alignment of your teeth to produce a straighter smile and smile and better oral health. While traditional braces have been used by orthodontists and dentists for decades, Invisalign is a newer concept intended to meet the needs of modern people. Invisalign has pros and cons like any other treatment but these are for the patient to decide upon.

Though there are some similarities between the Invisalign and braces, there are probably more differences.

Here are a few:

- Clear vs Visible: While Invisalign aligners are made from see-through BPA-free plastic, which renders them virtually invisible to other people, traditional braces are made from metal wires and elastic bands. This makes them more visible which can cause anxiety for some patients.
- Convenience: Invisalign braces can be removed from the mouth whenever necessary though guidelines suggest patients should wear their trays for 20 - 22 hours per day. In contrast, traditional braces cannot be removed as they are stuck to teeth by wires.
- Treatment Length: The Invisalign process is substantially shorter than the usual treatment period for traditional braces. Because of how Invisalign works, patients only have to wear the trays for 6 to 18 months whereas traditional braces have an average time of 2 years.
- Cost: The baseline cost for Invisalign braces tends to be higher than traditional metal braces, though the upper costs are not significantly different. Ceramic braces are usually more expensive. Speak to one of our dentists for an exact guide to Invisalign cost.

Who is Invisalign Suitable For?

Invisalign is suitable for almost anyone wanting to improve their smile or arrange their teeth in a more orderly fashion.



- Teens: The Invisalign can help correct most misalignments in teenagers' teeth. Invisalign braces are ideal for teens because they use clear aligners to achieve a glowing smile and improved dental health. This is particularly useful as teenage years are so often fraught with self-consciousness. With shorter treatment times and easier use, Invisalign is an ideal treatment for teenagers who want that winning smile.
- Adults: More and more adults are choosing correctional dental work and taking control overtheir own health. Invisalign is ideal for adults who want flexibility with their alignment procedure and want to achieve that improved smile without using a highly-visible metal brace.

Patients needing corrective work on their back teeth may not be suitable for Invisalign. To get a professional opinion on the suitability of yourself or a family member for the Invisalign treatment, simply contact our dental office in Fort Myers, FL at 239-482-8806.





Ricardo S. Bocanegra, D.D.S.

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THE POWER OF PROPER HYDRATION **DURING NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH**

BY Kasey Cook, RN, Owner

arch marks National Kidney Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about kidney health and encouraging preventive measures to maintain these vital organs' well-being. In this article, we delve into the crucial role of proper hydration and the innovative approach of IV therapy in supporting kidney health.

Our kidneys play a pivotal role in filtering waste products from the blood, regulating electrolyte balance, and maintaining overall fluid balance in the body. With such critical functions, it is imperative to prioritize kidney health, and one of the simplest yet often overlooked ways to do so is by ensuring proper hydration.

Adequate water intake is the cornerstone of kidney health. Water helps the kidneys remove toxins and waste from the blood, preventing the formation of kidney stones and other complications. Insufficient hydration can lead to concentrated urine, making it harder for the kidneys to perform their filtering duties efficiently. National Kidney Month serves as a timely reminder to adopt habits that prioritize hydration.

Beyond traditional methods of staying hydrated, such as drinking water regularly, the emerging trend of intravenous (IV) therapy has gained attention for its potential benefits in supporting kidney health. IV therapy involves the direct infusion of fluids, electrolytes, and nutrients into the bloodstream, providing rapid and efficient hydration.

IV therapy can be particularly beneficial for individuals struggling with chronic dehydration, a common concern that can strain the kidneys over time. By bypassing the digestive system, IV therapy ensures a swift and direct delivery of fluids to the bloodstream, rehydrating the body at a faster rate than oral intake.

During National Kidney Month, it is essential to highlight the importance of consulting healthcare professionals before considering IV therapy for kidney health. While it can be a valuable tool, its application should be tailored to individual needs and medical conditions under the guidance of qualified healthcare providers.

In addition to IV therapy, adopting a well-balanced diet contributes significantly to kidney health. Foods rich in water content, such as fruits and vegetables, can complement hydration efforts and provide essential nutrients that support kidney function. Potassium-rich foods, like bananas and leafy greens, can help regulate blood pressure, reducing the risk of kidney damage.

Educational campaigns during National Kidney Month can focus on dispelling myths surrounding hydration and kidney health. One common misconception is that thirst is the only indicator of dehydration. In reality, by the time thirst sets in, the body may already be experiencing mild dehydration. Encouraging proactive hydration habits can prevent this and benefit overall kidney function.

Public awareness initiatives can also stress the impact of lifestyle choices on kidney health. Avoiding excessive consumption of sugary beverages and limiting sodium intake can contribute to maintaining healthy blood pressure levels, reducing the strain on the kidneys.

In conclusion, National Kidney Month serves as a timely platform to underscore the importance of proper hydration for kidney health. Embracing traditional methods like drinking water regularly, adopting a kidney-friendly diet, and considering innovative approaches such as IV therapy under professional guidance can collectively contribute to maintaining optimal kidney function. By nurturing our kidneys through awareness and proactive measures, we empower ourselves to lead healthier lives and reduce the risk of kidney-related complications.

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Spiritual) fellness

Maintaining Healthy Friendships

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

The first step is to realize that you really do NEED friends.

Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived said, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

Prov. 27:17

That means that we make each other better. It seems pretty important to God that we have good friendships. The Bible is full of examples of this.

Think about the amazing friendship of Jonathan and David. Jonathan warned David that his life was in danger at the hands of Jonathan's own father, King Saul.

This warning allowed David to take action and avoid harm, and ultimately this act of true friendship allowed David to take the throne.

Friends look out for each other. They should have each other's back. Your friends are the ones who will be there for you when everything in your life is falling apart.

The second step is to be friendly and willing to meet new people. The Bible says, "A man who has friends must himself be friendly..." Prov. 18:24

Put a smile on your face, stick out your hand and meet new people. Opportunities abound for making new friends if you are willing to actively pursue new relationships. Get involved in a local church, join a social organization, volunteer at the local schools or another non-profit organization. These are all great ways to meet new people and do good in the community at the same time.

The third step to building relationships is to make yourself vulnerable even at the risk being rejected. The reality is that not everyone is going to like you. And, you are not going to like everyone.

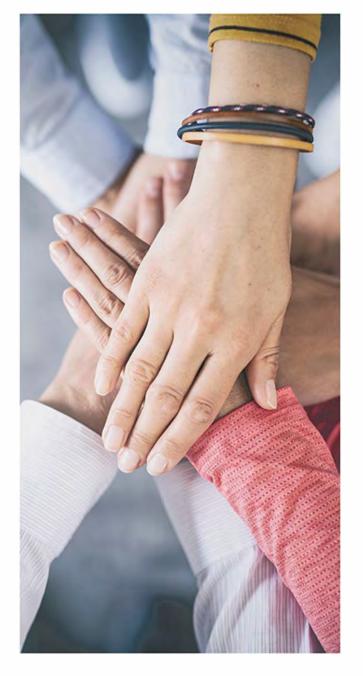
Look for people with similar interests or a common background. If you don't connect with someone, just move on. You will certainly find several good friends if you keep working towards making friends.

You will find the fourth step most helpful if you make it a natural part of your life: put other's needs ahead of your own. The Bible says it like this:

³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rother, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. Phil. 2:3-4

Have you ever met people who want you to listen to all of the details about their life but then they never bother to ask about yours? Be interested in other people. In humility, don't try to "one up" their stories. Just listen, smile, and ask genuine questions. Get to know them.

If you want to make friends, get interested in other people. Discover their story. Dale Carnegie writes, "You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you."



You might find it helpful to evaluate how you talk with other people. Are you genuinely interested in others or does every conversation revolve around you? Do you make yourself the hero of every story? Do find it necessary to talk about your successes and achievements? Are you trying to impress people or relate to people?

If you really want to make friends, get interested in other people. Learn about them. Listen to their stories and ask questions. If you listen and genuinely care about others, you'll have more friends than you can handle in a short time.

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