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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

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Manatee/Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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Psychological Benefits of Quitting

Heart Attacks Do Not Discriminate

Understanding Anxiety

Navigating the Spectrum from Generalized Anxiety to Panic Attacks

Revitalizing Wellness

Unveiling the Power of IV Therapy for Optimal Health

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Gerardo Pedroza, M.D.

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Kenneth Carle, DC

Dr. Carle is a graduate of Riverview High School in Sarasota. He attended the University of Florida before graduating in 1983 from Palmer College of Chiropractic in Iowa. He established the Carle Chiropractic Clinic in 1985 and Renewed Life Wellness Center in 2015. Since then, Dr. Carle has continued to build a reputation as a highly qualified and experienced practitioner. Dr. Carle has pursued postgraduate diplomate status in scoliosis and thermography and is board-certified in both categories.



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PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF QUITTING

Quitting tobacco is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health.⁴ As soon as an individual quits, the body begins to heal³ however, the benefits of quitting are not limited to improvements in physical health – there are numerous psychological benefits as well.

According to the British Medical Journal, smoking cessation is associated with reduced depression, anxiety, and stress and improved positive mood and quality of life compared with continuing to smoke.¹ There may be some initial feelings of stress and anxiety as an individual adjusts to a tobacco free life, however, research supports that those feelings are a temporary result of changing habits and adjusting to new behaviors.

Tobacco cessation services provided during addictions treatment enhances rather than compromises long-term sobriety. In fact, participation in smoking cessation efforts while engaged in other substance abuse treatment has been associated with a 25% greater likelihood of long-term abstinence from alcohol and other drugs.²

Smoking is associated with suicide risk, and the heaviest smokers have the highest risk. Quitting smoking improves overall quality of life which positively impacts mental health, including suicide risk.⁵

In addition to improvements in mental health, there are numerous benefits to physical health that accompany quitting tobacco. Quit tobacco today and join many other ex-tobacco users as they savor these benefits for years to come!

Help quitting tobacco is free! Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC), as part of the Group Quit option of Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way program—offers free group quit sessions to help someone quit all forms of tobacco. These group sessions held virtually and in-person, provide information about the benefits of quitting, managing stress and triggers, and will assist you with developing your own customized quit plan. **Free** nicotine replacement therapy in the form



of patches, gum, or lozenges (if medically appropriate and while supplies last) is provided with the session. Attendees will also receive a participant workbook, quit kit materials, and follow up support from a trained tobacco treatment specialist. Contact us today at **866-534-7909** or visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/groupquitcalendar to schedule a class or learn more about the program!

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Heart Attacks Do Not Discriminate

On Christmas Eve, many in our community are performing last-minute holiday preparations before settling in for the evening. Other families are traveling to see family and friends near and far.

Lauren and Kahler Cox were on the road with their extended family as well. They had just spent a relaxing vacation on the Gulf Coast of Florida with local and out-of-town relatives. The newlyweds were happy to be spending the holiday season with their loved ones.

Kahler becomes ill

While making their way home to Apollo Beach, Kahler, 29, started to experience a severe case of acid reflux. His family thought nothing of it as they continued south on Interstate 275 toward the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. But Kahler's symptoms escalated quickly, and he began to experience pain in his chest and difficulty breathing. As the family crossed the Skyway, they knew they had to get him to a hospital quickly.

Kahler had experienced these symptoms before. He has a long list of family members who have suffered from various heart events over the years, including his father and uncle. Although he was a smoker and struggled with high cholesterol, Kahler never thought it would happen to him.

Manatee ER

The Coxes went to the ER at Manatee Memorial Hospital, where S. Jay Mathews, MD, MS, FACC, FSCAI, was on call that evening. A cardiologist with Bradenton Cardiology Center, he was on STEMI alert that night. STEMI, which stands for ST-elevation myocardial infarction, is a serious type of heart attack that has a greater risk of serious complications and death.

Within minutes of arriving, Kahler went into cardiac arrest. His left anterior descending artery was blocked. This artery provides about half of the arterial supply to the left ventricle and is considered the most important vessel supplying the left ventricle. Blockage of this artery is often called a *widow-maker infarction* due to a high risk of death. CPR



Lauren and Kahler Cox (center) reunited with Dr. Mathews, the Emergency Department team, and the Cath Lab team.



Kahler Cox is all smiles after thanking Dr. Mathews for saving his life.

was started, and Dr. Mathews was called for a STEMI alert. In less than an hour, Kahler was taken to the Cath Lab and four stents were placed in his heart.

"I was worried that it would happen again, maybe in surgery, because we just didn't know," Lauren recalls thinking as her family waited for an update on Kahler's health. A little more than an hour later, Dr. Mathews appeared with good news, shouting across the waiting area that Kahler was OK.

"Despite being so young, Kahler was in a serious situation just having had a cardiac arrest requiring a shock to his heart," said Dr. Mathews. "I was at home with the family when I got the call. We had to open up a clotted right coronary and blocked left anterior descending artery, conditions associated with an increased risk of death. Fortunately, I was able to reopen all of his arteries quickly with stents, and I had the pleasure of telling his new wife he would be home with his family. That was a Christmas present worth giving."

Kahler was discharged on Christmas Day. "I'm still in shock that it happened," he says.

Thanking the team that saved his life

Recently, the Coxes traveled back to the hospital to officially meet the ER team. It was their opportunity to thank the group that helped to save Kahler's life.

"We wanted to see them, and tell them thank you," Kahler says. During the reunion, many of the team who were there that evening were able to get closure. With Lauren and Kahler still fresh in their minds, it seemed that the Manatee Memorial family was most thankful.

"Patients come in and then they are either admitted to the hospital or leave. Most of the time, we never know what happens," says ER Nursing Manager Jill Ruff, who was on duty that night. "It was good to see him, thank him, and know that he is doing so much better."



Kahler and Lauren Cox had only been married for a year and a when the heart event occurred.

"We were so pleased with his care," Lauren reiterates. "We had a really good experience."

A better lifestyle

After a few follow-up appointments, Kahler is on his way to a healthier way of living. He has quit smoking, his cholesterol is in a more manageable range, and he has started to work out again.

"I am telling my buddies that I talk to every day to go get their blood work done, get tested!"

What is a CT Heart Score?

A computed tomography (CT) Heart Score is a non-invasive test that can identify heart disease in its early stages. Using our CT scanner, we are able to take rapid cross-sectional images of your heart. Those images can show calcium build-up in your arteries, a potential sign of coronary artery disease. These images can help you and your physician determine whether any lifestyle changes are needed to reduce or avoid the risks of heart disease.

Is the test right for you? Manatee Diagnostic Center values the appropriate use of medical testing. If you are a male, ages 35 to 70, or a female, ages 40 to 70, with any of the following risk factors, the CT Heart Score may provide valuable information to your physician about your heart health.

Heart disease risk factors:

- Diabetes
- Family history of heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Overweight
- Smoking

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The Role of Alcohol and Kidney Health: What You Need to Know

Alcohol consumption has been a part of human civilization for centuries, serving various cultural, social, and even medicinal purposes. However, while moderate alcohol consumption may have some potential health benefits, excessive or chronic use can wreak havoc on several organ systems, including the kidneys. The kidneys play a crucial role in filtering waste products from the blood and maintaining fluid balance in the body, thus making understanding the relationship between alcohol and kidney health so paramount for maintaining overall well-being.

The Basics of Kidney Function

Before going into the effects of alcohol on kidney health, it's essential to understand the basic functions of these vital organs. The kidneys are responsible for filtering waste products and excess fluids from the bloodstream, which are then excreted as urine. Additionally, they help regulate electrolyte levels, blood pressure, and the production of red blood cells. The part of the kidneys that does the work is called the nephron. It is a complex structure consisting of a glomerulus and a tubule, where filtration, reabsorption, and secretion processes occur.

Alcohol Consumption and Kidney Function

The impact of alcohol on kidney function depends largely on the amount and duration of consumption. Moderate alcohol consumption, defined as up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men, may not significantly affect kidney health in healthy individuals. In fact, some studies suggest that moderate alcohol intake, particularly red wine, may have protective effects on the cardiovascular system due to its antioxidant properties.

However, excessive alcohol consumption, or binge drinking, can lead to acute and chronic kidney injury. One of the primary ways alcohol harms the kidneys is through dehydration. Alcohol is a diuretic, meaning it increases urine production and can lead to dehydration if not counteracted by adequate fluid intake. Dehydration reduces blood flow to the kidneys, impeding their ability to filter waste products effectively.



Chronic alcohol abuse can also cause structural and functional changes in the kidneys, leading to conditions such as alcoholic nephropathy. This condition is characterized by inflammation, fibrosis, and impaired kidney function, ultimately increasing the risk of kidney failure. Additionally, alcohol abuse is a leading cause of hypertension (high blood pressure), which is a significant risk factor for chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Other Risk Factors for Kidney Disease

It's essential to recognize that alcohol consumption rarely occurs in isolation and often coexists with other risk factors for kidney disease. For example, heavy drinkers are more likely to smoke, have poor dietary habits, and engage in sedentary lifestyles, all of which contribute to poor kidney health. It's also important to note that alcohol interacts with various medications, including those used to treat hypertension and other comorbidities, potentially exacerbating kidney damage.

Protecting Your Kidneys

If you choose to consume alcohol, it's crucial to do so in moderation and with consideration for your overall health. Here are some tips for protecting kidney health while consuming alcohol:

- Stick to recommended guidelines for alcohol consumption to minimize the risk of kidney damage.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after consuming alcohol to counteract its diuretic effects and maintain adequate hydration.
- Maintain a balanced diet, engage in regular physical activity, and avoid smoking to reduce the burden on your kidneys.
- If you have risk factors for kidney disease or a history of heavy alcohol consumption, consider regular check-ups with your healthcare provider to monitor kidney function.



Drink Wisely for Better Kidney Health

While moderate alcohol consumption may not pose significant risks to kidney health in healthy individuals, excessive or chronic use can lead to several side effects, including kidney disease. Understanding the relationship between alcohol and kidney health is essential for making informed choices about alcohol consumption and prioritizing kidney health. By practicing moderation and following the other precautionary tips, you can mitigate the potential adverse effects of alcohol on your kidneys and overall well-being.

Take charge of your kidney health today! Don't delay—take the first step towards a healthier future by calling VIPcare today. Call 941-271-7897 to schedule your appointment.



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UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING MELANOMA IN THE FOOT AND ANKLE

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

Melanoma in the foot or ankle is often overlooked as a majority of people tend to neglect their feet. For these reasons, melanoma in the foot usually goes unnoticed during its earliest stages. When melanoma is diagnosed in the foot or ankle, it typically presents in a more advanced stage. Melanoma is cancer that develops in the cells that produce skin color (melanocytes). Treatment is easiest during the early stages and becomes more difficult as the melanoma advances. It's also important to know that melanoma can develop in the toenail. This is called subungual melanoma. Melanoma does not always have to be pigmented and can be amelanotic (unpigmented).

So who is at risk for melanoma? Anyone can have melanoma, including people with dark skin. However, there are characteristics that increase your risk of developing melanoma these include but are not limited to: having a fair complexion (people with freckles, light colored eyes or red hair), being exposed to natural sunlight or artificial sunlight; being exposed to certain factors in the environment (solvents, vinyl chloride, and PCBs); having a history of repeated sun burns; having several large or many small moles; having a family history of skin cancer; having a history of skin cancer; and having genetic predisposition.

Since early detection is crucial it's important for you to know what to look for. Performing routine foot exams will reduce the risk of your melanoma on the foot or ankle going undiagnosed. There are four signs to look for when examining your feet or other parts of your body for melanoma. These four signs are known as the ABCDs of melanoma (asymmetry, border, color, and diameter). These signs will help you when performing self-inspection of moles and other unusual spots on your feet. When performing self-inspection of the foot make sure you examine your toe nails for discoloration as well as between your toe. You may even want to take pictures to have as a way to compare their appearance overtime. If any of these signs are present on the foot, it is important to see a specialist right away.

In addition to performing routine self-inspection there are other precautionary measures one may utilize to reduce the risk of melanoma these include: wearing water shoes or socks with shoes,



using adequate sunscreen including on the soles and top of your feet, inspect all areas of the feet daily, including the soles, underneath toenails and between the toes, remove nail polish to examine underneath your nail, avoid UV radiation during the sun's peak hours (10:00am to 4:00pm) beginning at birth (sun exposure is especially damaging to children and adolescents), wear sunglasses that block 100 percent of all UV rays (UVA and UVB), and wear a wide-brimmed hat.



Asymmetry -- Melanoma is usually asymmetric, which means one half is different in shape from the other half.

Border -- Border irregularity often indicates melanoma. The border, or edge, is typically ragged, notched or blurred.

Color -- Melanoma is typically a mix of colors or hues, rather than a single, solid color.

Diameter -- Melanoma grows in diameter, whereas moles remain small. A spot that is larger than 5 millimeters (the size of a pencil eraser) is cause for concern.

Remember, early detection is crucial with malignant melanoma. If detected and treated before it spreads, the 5-year survival rate is over 95%. If you see any of the ABCD signs or if you have discoloration beneath a toenail be sure to visit a foot and ankle surgeon as soon as possible.

Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM, FACPM

Isin Mustafa, DPM, is a Podiatrist at Family Foot & Leg Centers in Sarasota, FL. She is a Fellow of the American College of Foot & Ankle Surgeons.

Call 239-430-3668 or visit www.NaplesPodiatrist.com to make an appointment. Visit FootHealthFacts.org to learn more about foot and ankle conditions.



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Varicose Veins vs. Spider Veins

By Dr. Lackey

Varicose veins are large, swollen, protruding blood vessels that twist and turn beneath the surface of your skin. Because they're raised and large, they're clearly visible. They will often cause swelling making your legs feel heavy or uncomfortable. They can also lead to more severe health conditions, like blood clots and leg ulcers.

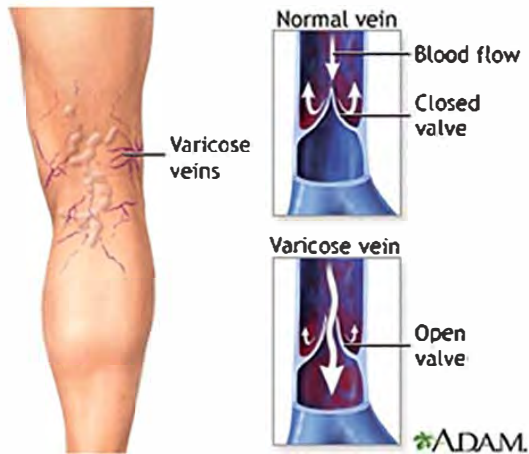
Several patients who suffer from varicose veins often complain of a cramping or aching sensation near the veins. Other typical symptoms include fatigue, itching, throbbing, cramping, burning, and tingling.

Varicose veins, however, shouldn't be confused with spider veins. Spider veins are the much earlier, gentler version of varicose veins. They're best described as tiny, blue, red, or purple vessels near the surface of the skin. Like varicose veins, spider veins also twist and turn, but they don't bulge or swell. Generally, spider veins aren't painful, and they are not associated with blood clots.

While it's possible to have both spider and varicose veins, it's not necessarily true that spider veins will indefinitely lead to varicose veins. However, having varicose veins and spider veins indicates the presence of underlying vein disease, also known as chronic venous insufficiency.

How Varicose and Spider Veins Develop

Varicose and spider veins develop naturally when blood flow issues are present. A healthy vein will carry blood to the heart through valves that allow blood to flow in only one direction keeping the blood moving through the right pathways and preventing backflow. These healthy veins do their job by effectively delivering blood from superficial veins to deeper ones that eventually lead to the heart.



However, when veins don't function properly, it can cause blood to collect inside your veins. When this happens, the blood pushes up against the walls within your vein, creating pressure weakening the vessel wall.

Ultimately, this pressure is what causes veins to twist and bulge.

Depending on how large the vein is and how swollen it gets, it will result in spider veins or varicose veins.

Treatment Options for Vein Disease

If you're eager to rid your legs of varicose and spider veins and regain your quality of life, there are several proven medical treatments for you to consider.

Polidocanol Injectable Foam (Varithena®) is a minimally invasive, nonsurgical treatment doesn't require incisions. The injection site is usually numbed, but no additional anesthesia is required. A catheter is inserted into the malfunctioning vein or sometimes a direct injection is used. The foam fills up the targeted part of the vein, and the diseased vein collapses. (For smaller branches with vein reflux, foam is injected directly into the vein to eliminate it.) Blood flow shifts to healthier veins nearby.

The VenaSeal™ Closure System uses an advanced medical adhesive to close and seal varicose veins. VenaSeal™ treatment minimizes patient discomfort and reduces recovery time, making it a good choice for many people. It's the only procedure approved for use in the United States that doesn't use heat, tumescent local anesthesia, or a sclerosant. Instead, VenaSeal™ uses a medical grade "glue" to shut down diseased veins.

Thermal Ablation, with this procedure, a small catheter is placed into the problematic vein, usually longer and larger veins. This catheter delivers radiofrequency into the vein wall, causing it to grow hot, collapse and close. It is an outpatient procedure that requires the administration of local anesthesia.

Ultimately, remember that vein disease is progressive and will get worse without treatment, so when you see signs of it, seek treatment.

Florida Lakes Vein Center offers convenient appointments in our Lakewood Ranch office Monday - Thursday 8a.m. - 5p.m. and Friday 8a.m. - 3p.m. Call **941.866.8989** to schedule your *free vein screening*.



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HOW OSTEOPOROSIS CAN BE REVERSED NATURALLY

Learn How OsteoStrong® Can Increase Bone Density, Strength and Balance

Osteoporosis happens when bones become weak and are more susceptible to fractures. The symptoms of your osteoporosis are generally not visible unless you have a fracture. You may not even know that you have the disease until you break a bone, or a test shows that you have low bone mineral density (DXA Scan). And if you've had one broken bone due to osteoporosis, your risk for having another goes up significantly.

Bone weakening is a common problem associated with aging. In most people, sometime during their 30s, bone mass will begin to decline gradually. For women, that bone loss can significantly speed up during the first 10 years after menopause. Those with osteoporosis are at increased risk of height loss, fractures of the hips, wrists, and vertebrae and chronic pain.

Why OsteoStrong?

Recent research shows that standard exercise isn't nearly as effective as had been traditionally believed at developing muscles and bones. A peer-reviewed study in 2012 found that for a person to increase bone density faster than they are losing it requires high levels of osteogenic loading, which is resistance of at least 4.2 times one's body weight. This research sent shockwaves, because it has been believed for over a century that simply increasing weight on the skeletal system would increase bone strength. For those concerned with osteoporosis, now knowing that a 4.2 resistance of ones own body weight might seem daunting, but not with OsteoStrong.

Based on this research, in 2011, Dr. Jaquish designed devices that could create the ideal set of triggers to achieve bone growth and to strengthen muscle development simultaneously. His patented machines take less than 10 minutes per week to use, yet are powerful enough to stimulate new bone and muscle growth quickly.

OsteoStrong® Benefits:

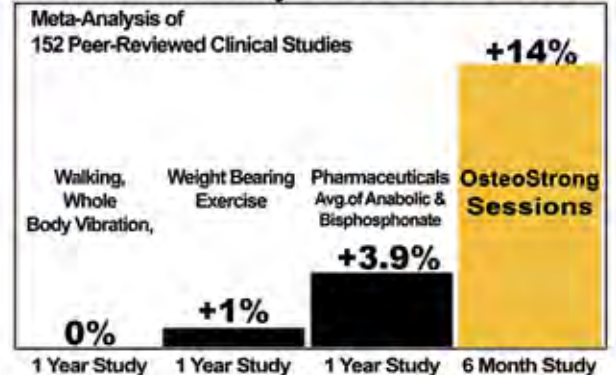
- Bone growth
- Muscle growth
- Improves Balance
- Reverses Osteopenia and osteoporosis

A Unique System For Developing Your Skeletal Strength known as OsteoStrong® is not a gym, diet, supplement, pharmaceutical, or a medical treatment.

Benefits of OsteoStrong:

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- Improved Balance
- Improved Athletic Performance
- Less Joint and Back Pain

BONE Density INCREASE



Subjects saw an average increase of 14% in bone density with osteogenic loading versus weight bearing exercise and pharmaceuticals. (supported by 152 Peer-Reviewed Clinical Studies)

Ten Minute Weekly sessions is all that it takes to build results. OsteoStrong® works for people at all ages and levels of activity to promote skeletal strength which impacts the entire body in many ways using a process known as Osteogenic Loading. Sessions are quick, painless, and results are measurable and happen quickly. There are a few things to know prior to coming in your first time so that you can make the best of the experience.

"OsteoStrong is especially beneficial for managing osteoporosis naturally, without drugs," says Clay Cannon, manager of OsteoStrong Sarasota. "And, once you are oriented to the machines, your session could take just 10 minutes. You can do the session in street clothes and continue on your day. No sweating required."

Clay Cannon added, "The four machines were specifically designed to work the whole body. You are always in control of how much you work. Our session coaches show you how to use each machine correctly and safely. One of the cool features of each machine is a computer readout that shows you in real time, how much load you're exerting, when you've reached the optimal load for bone growth, and tracks how your numbers improve over time."

If you or someone you know is suffering from a bone disorder or would like to find out more about OsteoStrong, please call 941-210-3832 to schedule your OsteoStrong consultation.

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Understanding Anxiety: Navigating the Spectrum from Generalized Anxiety to Panic Attacks

By Steven Stein, MD - Board-certified Psychiatrist

Anxiety, often misunderstood and underestimated, is a prevalent mental health issue affecting millions worldwide. While it's normal to experience occasional worry or stress, persistent and excessive anxiety can disrupt daily life and overall well-being. Understanding the various types of anxiety disorders is crucial for proper recognition, management, and support.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is characterized by excessive, uncontrollable worry about various aspects of life, such as work, health, and relationships. Individuals with GAD often anticipate disaster and may struggle to relax, even when there's no apparent reason for concern. Physical symptoms like muscle tension, restlessness, and difficulty concentrating are common manifestations of GAD.

Situational Anxiety is triggered by specific events or situations, such as public speaking, exams, or job interviews. While many people experience nervousness in such circumstances, situational anxiety can be debilitating, causing intense fear and avoidance behaviors. With proper coping strategies and support, individuals can manage situational anxiety effectively.

Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD), also known as social phobia, involves an intense fear of social situations and scrutiny by others. Individuals with SAD may avoid social gatherings, public speaking, or even everyday interactions out of fear of embarrassment or judgment. Physical symptoms like blushing, sweating, and trembling often accompany social anxiety, making it challenging to navigate social interactions.

Psychosomatic Symptoms refer to physical manifestations of psychological distress, often linked to anxiety. These symptoms can include headaches, stomachaches, fatigue, and insomnia, among others. While they may not have a clear physical cause, psychosomatic symptoms can significantly impact daily functioning and quality of life, underscoring the mind-body connection in anxiety disorders.

Panic Disorder is characterized by recurrent, unexpected panic attacks accompanied by intense physical sensations and overwhelming fear. Panic attacks can strike suddenly and peak within minutes, leading to feelings of impending doom or loss of control. Individuals with panic disorder may develop agoraphobia, avoiding places or situations where panic attacks have occurred in the past.



Panic Attacks are brief episodes of intense fear or discomfort, often accompanied by physical symptoms like rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling, and shortness of breath. While panic attacks can occur in various anxiety disorders, they can also occur independently, triggered by stress, trauma, or even without an apparent cause. Understanding panic attacks and learning coping mechanisms can help individuals manage and reduce their frequency and intensity.

Recognizing the differences between these types of anxiety disorders is essential for accurate diagnosis and effective treatment. While each disorder has its unique characteristics, there's often overlap in symptoms, making diagnosis challenging. Consulting with a mental health professional is crucial for proper evaluation and personalized treatment planning.

Treatment for anxiety disorders typically involves a combination of therapy, medication, and lifestyle changes. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is one of the most effective forms of therapy for anxiety, helping individuals identify and challenge negative thought patterns and develop coping strategies to manage anxiety symptoms. Medications such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or benzodiazepines may be prescribed to alleviate symptoms and facilitate therapy progress.

In addition to professional treatment, self-care strategies can play a significant role in managing anxiety. Regular exercise, adequate sleep, healthy eating, and stress management techniques like mindfulness meditation and deep breathing exercises can help reduce anxiety levels and improve overall well-being.

Raising awareness about anxiety disorders is crucial for reducing stigma and encouraging individuals to seek help. By understanding the various types of anxiety and their impact on daily life, we can foster empathy,

support, and effective interventions for those struggling with anxiety. Together, we can create a more compassionate and inclusive society where mental health is prioritized and supported.

Steven Stein, MD

I am a board-certified general psychiatrist who works with adolescents, adults, and geriatric patients. I specialize in the evaluation and treatment of a wide array of psychiatric conditions including depressive and mood disorders, anxiety and panic disorders, ADHD, OCD, PTSD, personality disorders, and bipolar and schizophrenia spectrum illnesses. I also offer intranasal esketamine (Spravato) treatments for treatment-resistant depression. My clinic provides comprehensive care with a patient-centered approach and concentration on psychopharmacological interventions, while implementing supportive and motivational psychotherapies. All my staff are highly qualified, professional and courteous.

I am originally from the Tampa Bay, FL area where I completed my master's degree at the University of South Florida. I attended medical school at Ross University School of Medicine and completed my psychiatric residency training at Tulane University School of Medicine.

I am based in Sarasota, FL and see patients in person or virtually. I also accept patients virtually throughout the state of Florida. Outside of TTMC, I continue to treat patients in the hospital setting. I believe that stable mental health is a fundamental cornerstone of achieving overall optimal health, vitality, satisfaction, success and purpose.

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AESTHETIC TREATMENTS: How Science and Philosophy Combine to Rejuvenate the Human Body

By Diana De Lorenzo - Corresponded by Dr. Jai Grewal

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about significant changes in our daily lives, including increased stress and accelerated aging. As we all strive to comfort ourselves and achieve recovery from all these stressors, it's best to make sure we have good self-esteem. One way to achieve this is by presenting ourselves the best way we can. We have new styles of clothing, more gym memberships to keep us healthy, and many cosmetic products to enhance our natural beauty. This era is more appreciative of what we have. But that doesn't mean we all want to accept the aging process that COVID-19 has sped up for many of us. There are ways now to turn back time with aging without surgical procedures or even changing the look of who we are. What are these magical procedures? Well, its neurotoxins (aka Botox, Dysport, Xeomin, and Daxxify), dermal fillers (Restylane, Juvederm), biostimulators (Sculptra, Radiesse) and Microneedling (SkinPen, SkinPen with Platelet-Rich Plasma). These products give consumers control of their aging process without changing their identity.

Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with the principles of beauty, art, and taste. With advances in science and technology, the field of aesthetics has developed state-of-the-art techniques that enable the rejuvenation of the human body, while maintaining a natural appearance. This approach is critical in restoring balance, movement, and proportion to the body without altering one's identity.

The goal of aesthetics is beauty, art, and taste. Combined, they produce a philosophy of capturing what is essential to aesthetics. Aesthetics has a history that goes back to Ancient Greece and is considered one of the main branches of philosophy. This has been held throughout time. We as humans have enjoyed and preserved many things such as art and traditional costumes without changing the true value of the subject. This is also true in today's world.

With the science that we have today, it empowers us to have more control over so many things. The science that has gone into aesthetics is state-of-the-art. We now can rejuvenate an already established art of the human body and make the effects look natural, just as "Mother Nature"



intended. The need to look natural and feel like ourselves is essential for bringing back proportion, movement, and balance to what was already once there. The effects that this can have on us emotionally can bring dramatic improvement to our self-esteem and confidence.

The injection of neurotoxins, such as Botox, Dysport, Xeomin, and Daxxify, relaxes specific muscles in the body to create a smooth appearance on the skin. Originally developed for therapeutic medical use, these products have been approved for aesthetic purposes, including the treatment of moderate to severe frown lines. Dermal fillers, such as Restylane and Juvederm, are made from hyaluronic acid, a natural substance that occurs in the skin. They are used to restore volume, fill in lines, and lift areas to create a youthful and natural appearance.

While some may argue that these injections alter one's appearance, the majority of patients seek to restore their youthful appearance, rather than change it. The use of these products requires skilled injectors who can analyze and compare form and style to achieve the desired results. The primary objective is to achieve a natural look that restores youthfulness without changing one's identity.

Injectors today are very skilled in analyzing and comparing form and style so patients can be themselves. This form of non-surgical rejuvenation has become increasingly popular, as it can achieve significant improvements with minimal downtime and less risk than surgical procedures. Patients who seek aesthetic treatments are no longer limited to celebrities or those with significant financial resources. Advances in technology and techniques have made these treatments more accessible and affordable to the general public. More importantly, the increasing demand for these treatments is driven by the desire to improve one's self-esteem, confidence, and overall well-being.

However, it is essential to note that these treatments are not a substitute for a healthy lifestyle. Proper nutrition, exercise, and stress management are critical for maintaining overall health and well-being. Aesthetic treatments can enhance one's natural beauty, but they cannot replace good health habits.

In conclusion, aesthetic treatments have become an essential part of our daily lives, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. They offer a non-surgical approach to rejuvenating the human body, restoring balance, movement, and proportion, and enhancing one's natural beauty. With advances in technology and techniques, these treatments have become more accessible and affordable to the general public. However, it is crucial to seek out skilled injectors and prioritize good health habits to achieve the best results and overall well-being. By combining science and philosophy, aesthetic treatments have revolutionized the way we approach aging and beauty, empowering us to take control of our appearance and feel confident in our own skin.

As we continue to navigate the challenges of the pandemic, it's essential to prioritize our mental health and well-being. Aesthetic treatments can play a significant role in this by improving our self-image and confidence. By embracing the philosophy of aesthetics and the science of modern technology, we can achieve a natural and youthful appearance that reflects our inner beauty and vitality. With proper care and attention to our health, we can maintain this appearance for years to come, living our best lives with confidence and grace.

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The Connection Between Anxiety and Eye Health: Understanding the Impact on Vision

George Skopis, M.D.

In the fast-paced world we live in, stress and anxiety have become almost commonplace. From work deadlines to personal responsibilities, it's easy to become overwhelmed by the demands of daily life. While the effects of stress and anxiety on mental health are well-documented, their impact on physical health, particularly eye health, is often overlooked.

Anxiety, a feeling of worry or nervousness, can manifest in various physical symptoms, including changes in blood flow to the eyes. This alteration in blood flow can lead to a range of eye-related issues, such as blurred vision, eye strain, and dry eyes. For individuals already prone to eye problems, such as glaucoma or dry eye syndrome, prolonged stress and anxiety can exacerbate these conditions, worsening their symptoms and potentially leading to further complications.

One of the most common symptoms of stress and anxiety-related eye issues is blurred vision. This occurs when the muscles in the eyes become tense due to heightened stress levels, affecting their ability to focus properly. As a result, objects may appear blurry or out of focus, making tasks such as reading or driving challenging and uncomfortable.

Eye strain is another prevalent issue associated with stress and anxiety. When we feel anxious or stressed, we tend to tense our muscles, including those in the eyes, leading to fatigue and strain. Staring at screens for extended periods, a common occurrence in today's digital age, can exacerbate this strain, causing discomfort, headaches, and difficulty concentrating.

Dry eyes are also a common complaint among individuals experiencing heightened levels of stress and anxiety. Stress can disrupt the natural balance of tear production and drainage in the eyes, resulting in inadequate lubrication and discomfort. Without sufficient moisture, the eyes may feel gritty, irritated, or excessively watery, impacting both comfort and vision quality.

Moreover, for individuals already dealing with underlying eye conditions such as glaucoma or dry eye syndrome, stress and anxiety can pose additional

challenges. Glaucoma, a group of eye diseases characterized by damage to the optic nerve, can be exacerbated by elevated intraocular pressure, which may occur during periods of stress. Similarly, stress-related changes in tear production can worsen the symptoms of dry eye syndrome, leading to increased discomfort and potential damage to the cornea.

Given the significant impact of stress and anxiety on eye health, it is essential to prioritize self-care and stress management strategies. Incorporating relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga into your daily routine can help alleviate stress and promote overall well-being. Additionally, taking regular breaks from screen time, practicing good eye hygiene, and staying hydrated can support optimal eye health and minimize the impact of stress-related symptoms.

Furthermore, seeking professional help and support is crucial for managing anxiety and its associated effects on both mental and physical health. Whether through therapy, medication, or holistic approaches, there are various resources available to help individuals cope with stress and anxiety effectively.

In conclusion, the relationship between stress, anxiety, and eye health is undeniable. From blurred vision and eye strain to dry eyes and exacerbation of existing conditions, prolonged stress can take a toll on our eyesight and overall well-being. By prioritizing stress management techniques and seeking appropriate support, we can protect our vision and cultivate a healthier, more balanced lifestyle. Let's raise awareness about the importance of mental health in preserving our precious sense of sight.



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George Skopis, M.D., is a board-certified ophthalmologist and fellowship trained vitreoretinal surgeon. Dr. Skopis specializes in surgical and medical diseases of the retina and vitreous. He strives to utilize the most advanced

imaging, medical and surgical techniques to diagnose and treat patients. Dr. Skopis has expertise in age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vascular occlusions, macular holes, macular pucker/epiretinal membranes, retinal detachments, proliferative vitreoretinopathy, and scleral fixated intra-ocular lenses.

Dr. Skopis grew up in Tarpon Springs, FL and graduated from Tarpon Springs High School. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from The University of Florida where he graduated cum laude.

Dr. Skopis earned his medical degree from the FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine in Miami, FL where he was elected to the prestigious Alpha Omega Alpha medical honors society for his academic achievement. While in medical school, Dr. Skopis received multiple teaching awards. He completed his internship in internal medicine at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, FL where he was voted "intern of the year" by both his co-residents and hospital medical faculty. Dr. Skopis completed his ophthalmology residency at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC where he served as chief resident. During residency, Dr. Skopis volunteered with the Prevention of Blindness Society of DC to perform glaucoma screening examinations and back-to-school eye exams for children in underserved communities. Following residency, he completed a 2 year fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery and medical retina at the combined Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary of University of Illinois Chicago/University Retina program.

Dr. Skopis is board-certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and is an active member in the American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Society of Retina Specialists, and Vit-Buckle Society. He has published manuscripts in peer-reviewed medical journals and authored multiple book chapters. During his time in fellowship he participated in clinical trials for the treatment of diabetic retinopathy, diabetic macular edema, retinal vascular occlusions, and age-related macular degeneration.

As a Florida native, Dr. Skopis is thrilled to return to southwest Florida and serve the community. He enjoys watching and playing soccer, cheering on the Florida Gators and grilling anything he can get his hands on. He is fluent in English and Greek.

Bringing Accessible Emergency Care to Our Community

Providing prompt and effective emergency medical attention to everyone in a community, regardless of circumstances, requires careful planning, collaboration, and dedication. Whether it's a visit to the hospital emergency room or a freestanding emergency department, or an educational program in a public space, emergency services are essential components of any community's infrastructure.

Emergency Care at MMH

Manatee Memorial Hospital's Emergency Care Center (ECC) plays an essential role in caring for the urgent health needs of our community, treating more than 80,000 children and adult patients each year. The expanded center was opened in 2018 to help accommodate Manatee County's growing population. It is just under 33,000 square feet, making it the largest ECC in the county.

Freestanding Emergency Departments

Manatee Memorial Hospital's desire to provide more convenient access to healthcare has led to the introduction of freestanding emergency departments. The FEDs are very similar to the emergency department at a hospital. They handle any emergency and are fully staffed with a doctor on site 24/7. In addition, they can perform CT scans as well as full X-rays, and there is a comprehensive lab.

"We're going out into the community, and in a place like Manatee County, that's critical," said Teresa Rawe, DO, medical director for emergency medicine at Manatee Memorial. "Manatee County has grown exponentially in recent years, and yet the hospitals are stationary. By going into the communities, we are making it easier for patients to access emergency care. Not only that, but the hospitals are very crowded. The freestanding emergency departments ease that crowding."

"Typically, our FEDs have a shorter waiting time to be seen," explained Tammy Sloas, Nursing Director, Manatee FEDs. "If an admission is necessary, we will transport a patient to Manatee Memorial for additional care and treatment. * We are staffed with physicians 24/7 and our nurses are trauma-trained and ready for all emergency situations."

FED vs. Urgent Care Centers

Urgent care centers have set hours, treat non-emergency issues, including routine cough and cold, nausea and vomiting, mild belly pain, scrapes, simple lacerations, or someone needing a tetanus shot. Some are also capable of treating small fractures and sprains. Most urgent care centers don't have comprehensive labs that can provide answers on site and are limited in radiology services.



Educating the Community

Knowing that emergency services are available and ready to respond instills a sense of security and peace of mind in Manatee residents.

The American College of Surgeons' STOP THE BLEED® program has prepared over 3 million people worldwide on how to stop bleeding in a severely injured person. Manatee Memorial takes this program to the community, teaching individuals the three methods of bleeding control using video demonstrations, interactive learning, and spontaneous quizzes.

"We are preparing the public to save lives by raising awareness of basic actions to stop life-threatening bleeding following everyday emergencies and man-made and natural disasters," said Jill Ruff, who oversees the program with Emergency Department Paramedic Ed Wheat. "Massive bleeding from any cause, but particularly in a situation where a medical response is delayed, can result in death."

"Offering education to the community is very important, not all wounds need medical attention from urgent care or the ER," added Shelly Lucchesi, Employee Health Manager. "Having the confidence to know that you are able to properly assess and wrap a wound is a great skill to have. During an emergency situation, being able to tend to a bleeding wound while waiting for EMS to arrive may be the difference between life and death."



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Manatee ER at Bayshore Gardens**
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Phone: (941) 751-7800

ER at Sun City Center**
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If you're having a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

For information, visit the hospital website at manateememorial.com/emergency

*Or arrange for transfer to a hospital of your choice.



**These emergency departments are part of Manatee Memorial Hospital. They are not urgent care centers. Their services and care are billed at hospital emergency department rates. Wait times may vary.

Physicians are on the medical staff of Manatee Memorial Hospital, but, with limited exceptions, are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Manatee Memorial Hospital. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the nondiscrimination notice, visit the hospital's website.

Peripheral Neuropathy: A Breakdown in Communication

Our bodies possess a vital communication network called the peripheral nervous system which is necessary for daily living. Peripheral nerves enable the communication between the central nervous system (the brain and the spinal cord) and different areas of the body, as well as its systems. However, like other bodily systems, this communication network can become damaged and significantly affect our quality of life. This damage is referred to as peripheral neuropathy.

"The nerves and surrounding blood vessels of this communication highway are critical in maintaining a healthy, productive life, but like so many of our vital internal systems, they are susceptible to damage," explains Dr. Kenneth Carle, Chiropractic Physician, Renewed Life Wellness Center (RLWC). "This damage can be caused by traumatic injuries, metabolic conditions such as diabetes, genetic factors, and exposure to toxins such as chemotherapy or certain drugs, like statins. There are more than a hundred known causes of neuropathy but the common denominators in all neuropathies are ischemia, which is the lack of proper blood flow, and hypoxia, which is the lack of proper oxygen. As the blood vessels surrounding the nerves are deprived of blood and oxygen, they shrivel up and start to die, preventing the nerves from receiving and sending necessary information. This process results in a communication breakdown."

Symptoms of peripheral neuropathy can include but are not limited to:

- Loss of balance
- Pain in the feet or hands
- Numbness or tingling
- The feeling of pins and needles
- Burning sensation.

Pain, numbness, tingling, and burning sensations are frequently experienced in the feet, but can also occur in the hands. Symptoms can vary from mild to disabling, depending on the nerves affected and the severity of the damage. They may develop over days, weeks, or years.

More than 20 million people in the United States are estimated to have some form of peripheral neuropathy, but this figure may be significantly higher because not all people with symptoms are tested, and tests do not diagnose all forms of neuropathy.



"Like any other disease, without treatment peripheral neuropathy will get worse over time," explains Dr. Carle. "Simple activities like walking, sleeping, and wearing shoes can become difficult and eventually impossible. The neuropathy may become so severe that a person will experience issues with balance. When this happens, a person may start to fall and have to use a cane, and say "no" to things they really want to say "yes" to," like golf, dancing, or walking on the beach."

Gabapentin, Lyrica, and antidepressants are the commonly used medications to treat neuropathy. However, it is important to note these drugs only try to alleviate the symptoms and do not address the root cause - an insufficient supply of blood and oxygen to affected areas. Unfortunately, if left untreated, neuropathy can lead to severe complications such as amputation of the toes, feet, or legs.

"Neuropathy doesn't have to put an end to your enjoyment of life. At RLWC, our approach to treatment starts with knowledge, compassion, and understanding," expresses Dr. Carle. "We take the time to learn more about the patient, their symptoms, challenges, prior treatments, and then conduct a 24-point neuropathy examination with comprehensive testing. We are certified in addressing peripheral neuropathy, and over the past few years, have effectively treated this debilitating condition using a combination of cutting-edge therapies and supplements without resorting to drugs or surgery. This approach has resulted in 100% of our patients feeling better, with each patient usually experiencing a 30-70% improvement."

Advanced therapies for the treatment of peripheral neuropathy can have a dramatic impact on a person's life. Tim O'Melia, a patient of Dr. Carle, was excited the day he purchased a motorcycle he named "Black Betty." Tim's dream was to add mileage traveling on the bike, but after a whirlwind tour of Florida, Tim had trouble controlling the bike. He was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy. Tim did not have any idea why he was inflicted with this condition. "All I know is that the pain and burning was just killing me," expressed O'Melia.

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Join our free lunch and learn seminar to see if you are a candidate for our breakthrough neuropathy treatment. Renewed Life Wellness Center and Dr. Carle can help you manage and overcome peripheral neuropathy symptoms like numbness, tingling, pain, and balance issues through these breakthrough treatments.

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At first, Tim experienced mild symptoms that included numbness on the tip of his big toe and the second toe on his left foot. A month-and-half later Tim started to feel the burning and tingling common with peripheral neuropathy. He saw his physician and was prescribed medication, but the medication had no effect. It was at that point Tim decided to see Dr. Carle at the RLWC. "There are four stages to peripheral neuropathy with stage 4 being the most severe," explains Dr. Carle. "Tim was in stage 2 which allowed us to develop a treatment protocol utilizing a variety of breakthrough treatments that had a positive impact on Tim's condition."

"When I first went to Dr. Carle, I was waking up every morning feeling as if someone had lit a match and set my feet on fire," O'Melia states. "Now I wake up singing because it's like somebody came along and put the fire out. Dr. Carle gave me my life back."

The damage to this communication highway can sometimes be severe but effective treatments and therapies can stop further damage and start to reverse many of the symptoms, which will result in getting your life back.



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The Surprising Root Cause of ALL Chronic Disease and Aging Itself; Why Everyone Has Gotten it WRONG!

By Max MacCloud, DO, ND, PhD (aka The Nutrition Ninja Doc)

Many of us lived through the last several paradigms about what causes chronic disease and premature aging. There was the germ theory, lack of medical access theory, insufficient vaccines theory; just kidding on these, even a 5th grader can see that those are ridiculous.

Here's a quick review of several of the top theories of what causes chronic disease and premature aging.

- **Inflammation:** One of the most popular current theories is that chronic low-grade inflammation is to blame. While this is quite damaging, keep reading to learn how it is a symptom and not the cause.
- **Oxidative Stress:** This theory suggests that an over-production of free radicals and insufficient antioxidant defenses are the root cause of oxidative damage to cells, proteins, and DNA. This is valid, but not the root cause.
- **Mitochondrial Dysfunction:** Mitochondria, the sub-cellular organelles responsible for many vital functions including energy production, are susceptible to damage and dysfunction. This theory posits that mitochondrial dysfunction contributes to aging and age-related diseases by compromising cellular energy metabolism and promoting oxidative stress. This is absolutely true, but it is not the root cause.
- **Genetic Factors:** Certain genetic variants can increase susceptibility to, although rarely cause, diseases. This is definitely not the root cause.
- **Epigenetics:** Epigenetics is the full expression of our genetics, it is the result of the interaction between our lifestyle, the environment & our genes. This turns certain genes on and others off, which can lead to either beneficial or harmful genetic expression.
- **Telomere Shortening:** Telomeres are protective caps at the ends of chromosomes that shorten with each cell division. Telomere shortening is considered a hallmark of aging, as it limits the replicative capacity of cells. Again, not the root cause of chronic disease and aging.
- **Glycation:** Glycation refers to the non-enzymatic reaction between sugars and proteins, leading to the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs). AGEs accumulate with age and are implicated in the pathogenesis of chronic diseases and aging. They are likewise not the root cause.

All of these things do play significant roles in the development of chronic disease and premature, unhealthy aging, but in my way of looking at the body,

the real issue lies with the 4Ms. The 4Ms stands for Microcirculation, Mitochondria, Metabolism, and Metabolic Reserve or Muscle.

- 1. Microvascular System:** This refers to the smallest blood vessels in the body, including arterioles, capillaries, and venules. These vessels play a crucial role in delivering oxygen and nutrients to tissues and removing waste products. It is the ONLY place that the exchange of nutrients and removal of waste products happens, period.
- 2. Mitochondria:** These "powerhouses" of the cell are also vital to several other crucial cellular processes like regulation of stem cells, cellular apoptosis, calcium channels, and more. 95% of our body's energy in the form of ATP is formed in the mitochondria. They are what has allowed for ALL higher life forms to exist and thrive.
- 3. Metabolism:** Metabolism encompasses all the chemical processes that occur within living organisms to maintain life (over 3,000 metabolic enzymatic reactions). This includes the breakdown of nutrients to produce energy (catabolism) and the synthesis of molecules needed for growth and repair (anabolism).
- 4. Metabolic Reserve:** This refers to the extra capacity of an organism to carry out metabolic processes beyond its basal metabolic rate. All organs have, or should have, metabolic reserve. Muscles are our largest organ system and are by far our greatest metabolic reserve (or at least they should be). This reserve becomes crucial during times of increased energy demand, such as exercise or periods of stress.

Now, let's explore their relationship to understand the **ROOT CAUSE** of ALL Chronic Disease:

- The microvascular system ensures that oxygen and nutrients reach all the tissues, cells, and therefore mitochondria of the body. This includes those with especially high metabolic demands like muscle and nerve tissue.
- Mitochondria, located within these tissues, utilize oxygen and nutrients to produce ATP through oxidative phosphorylation, a process that relies on the electron transport chain.
- Metabolism provides the necessary substrates (glucose, fatty acids, amino acids) to fuel mitochondrial ATP production. And this ATP is used by ALL the cells of the body to survive and carry out their respective functions.
- The metabolic reserve (primarily composed of muscle) acts as a buffer, allowing organisms to meet sudden increases in energy demand.

In summary, the microvascular system delivers substrates to mitochondria, where they are metabolized to produce ATP. The metabolic reserve ensures that energy demands can be met even during periods of increased activity or stress. This intricate interplay ensures the body's energy needs are met efficiently and effectively.

There is much more to each of these, however, the above provides a nice overview. The next vital thing is to actually address each of the 4Ms. They need to be assessed with lifestyle modification steps to improve them. That is the only way to both prevent chronic disease and build long term health. That's exactly what we do at the Age Reversal Technology Center.

Sadly, as we age and are subject to the thousands of stresses and strains of our modern hectic, toxic world, EACH of the 4Ms is negatively impacted.

When was the last time YOUR DOCTOR assessed your Microvascular system, your Mitochondria, your Metabolism, or your Metabolic Reserve? If you're like 99% of the population, NO ONE has ever tested any of those things properly.

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We can do the same for the other 3Ms as well, but the Microvascular system is where to begin because damage to it IS THE ROOT CAUSE of all chronic disease. Call us to learn more and book your Glycocheck test. The test, report, and program recommendations are all provided for just \$250. Of course, such an important, cutting-edge, preventative test is not covered by 'disease care' insurance. Most people confuse their disease care insurance with health insurance, it is not.



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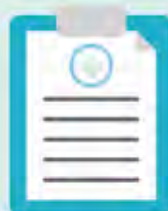
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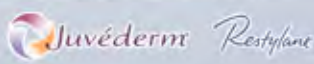
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WHY SENIORS ARE CHOOSING LIFE PLAN COMMUNITIES OVER AGING IN PLACE

Where do you see yourself in retirement? Will you be busy at home or branching out as part of a larger community? How will you spend your free time? If you're considering the options of aging in place at home or moving to a Life Plan Community – also known as a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) – it pays to look closely at the costs and benefits of each option. Keep in mind that perspectives may evolve and priorities may shift as you make plans for your future.

THE REALITIES OF AGING IN PLACE

The idea of aging in place in your home may sound appealing, but modifying your home with age-friendly features and/or potentially hiring in-home care can be expensive, labor-intensive, and stressful. Most private homes have to be modified to accommodate the needs of seniors, such as wider hallways, wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, and entryway ramps. People often assume the option of staying in their home will be less costly than moving to a Life Plan Community. However, you may be surprised to see how the costs add up in the long run.

Instead of living with the burden of home maintenance and the uncertainty of how to handle future health care needs, you can live in luxury and comfort when you choose a Life Plan Community. Plus, you'll enjoy the peace of mind that comes with having a solid plan for the future.

WHAT IS A LIFE PLAN COMMUNITY?

A Life Plan Community, also called a continuing care retirement community (CCRC), provides an exceptional value for older adults who want financial protection from the rising costs of senior care and guaranteed care for life. The entrance fee, which is paid upfront to secure your place in the community, ensures you'll have priority access to health care services offered by the community, such as assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care ... and that you can receive these services at prices well below market rates. If you're on the fence about moving to a Life Plan Community, here are some compelling reasons to choose a community like Freedom Village of Bradenton for your next home:

MAINTENANCE-FREE LIVING

Owning and maintaining a home is a lot of work, and there may come a time in life when you'd rather be relaxing or spending time with loved ones instead of doing chores around the house. When you move to a Life Plan Community, you can let the professionals take care of lawn mowing, housekeeping, meal preparation, home repairs and more. You'll have more time to enjoy



what you've earned, and more freedom to travel without worrying about who will take care of your home while you're away.

FINANCIAL SECURITY

Choosing a Life Plan Community with a Life Care contract can save you money by protecting you from the rising costs of senior care. Life Care gives you guaranteed access to higher levels of care at predictable monthly rates with little to no increase above the cost you pay for independent living.

RESORT-LIKE LIFESTYLE

With distinctive homes and floor plans to fit every lifestyle, you can customize your senior living residence to match your preferences. Plus, you'll enjoy a host of amenities and services that make each day fun and fulfilling. You can choose to be as active as you'd like, with an array of wellness activities, educational lectures, social events and more. Experience the benefits of a Gulf Coast retirement lifestyle at Freedom Village of Bradenton.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Maintaining social connections as you age is one of the best ways to protect your health and well-being. It's easy to expand your social circle when you choose to be part of a community filled with friendly and like-minded peers. Seniors who age in place at home are often at risk for social isolation, especially if they aren't driving places to visit friends and socialize. Learn more about how senior living combats social isolation.

PEACE OF MIND FOR YOUR LOVED ONES

You can't predict the future, but you can take control of your options now so your loved ones don't have to worry. Moving to a Life Plan Community means they won't have to rush to find health care if the unexpected happens and you suddenly need help with activities of

daily living or round-the-clock care. Your family will have peace of mind knowing you'll have access to advanced levels of care, if needed, along with the safety of having staff available 24/7 should an emergency occur.

DISCOVER TRUE FREEDOM

It's normal to feel hesitant about giving up the space you have at home to move into a senior living community. However, once you experience the expansive lifestyle waiting for you at Freedom Village of Bradenton, you'll see how your living space opens up to a whole world of opportunities that you don't want to miss.

To learn more about Freedom Village and the active lifestyle residents in independent living enjoy, call 941-798-8122. To learn more about upcoming educational events, please visit www.fvbradenton.com/events/.

Freedom Village of Bradenton EVENTS

Thursday, April 25, 2024

Downsizing and Moving Made Easy

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Single Seniors Friendship Table

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 2, 2024

Independent/Assisted Living Open House

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Leadership Roundtable Discussion

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Advance reservations are required for the luncheons by calling 941-231-7434.

If you prefer not to wait for one of our events, please call our community today and we'll be happy to have you visit our campus to learn more about designing your ideal retirement at Freedom Village of Bradenton.



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Vertigo or Meniere's Disease?

Aren't they the same?

By Dr. Drew Hall

If you've ever felt off-balance, dizzy, or like the room is spinning around you even though you're sitting down, you've probably experienced vertigo or Meniere's disease. The two are commonly confused since they both affect balance and/or hearing. But what's the difference? Aren't they the same thing?

What is vertigo?

Vertigo is a sensation of feeling off balance. If you have dizzy spells, you might feel like you are spinning or that the world around you is spinning. Dizziness is an altered sense of balance that can make you feel unsteady or lightheaded. In contrast, vertigo is a false sense of motion that you may experience while sitting, standing or even lying still.

Causes of Vertigo

Vertigo is often caused by an inner ear problem. Some of the most common causes include:

BPPV (benign paroxysmal positional vertigo) BPPV occurs when tiny calcium particles are dislodged from their normal location and collect in the inner ear. The inner ear sends signals to the brain about head and body movements relative to gravity. It helps you keep your balance. BPPV can occur for no known reason and may be associated with age. Meniere's disease. This is an inner ear disorder thought to be caused by a buildup of fluid and changing pressure in the ear. It can cause episodes of vertigo along with ringing in the ears (tinnitus) and hearing loss.

Vestibular neuritis or labyrinthitis. This is an inner ear problem usually related to infection (usually viral). The infection causes inflammation in the inner ear around nerves that are important for helping the body sense balance.

Vertigo may also be associated with:

- Head or neck injury
- Brain problems such as stroke or tumor
- Certain medications that cause ear damage
- Migraine headaches



Symptoms of vertigo

People with vertigo typically describe it as feeling like they are:

- Spinning
- Tilting
- Swaying
- Unbalanced
- Pulled to one direction

Other symptoms that may accompany vertigo include:

- Feeling nauseated
- Vomiting
- Abnormal or jerking eye movements (nystagmus)
- Headache

What is Meniere's Disease?

Meniere's disease is a disorder of the inner ear that can lead to dizzy spells (vertigo) and hearing loss. In most cases, Meniere's disease affects only one ear. It can occur at any age, but it usually starts between early to middle adulthood. It's considered a chronic condition, but various treatments can help relieve symptoms and minimize the long-term impact on your life.

Causes of Meniere's disease

The cause of Meniere's disease is unknown. Symptoms of Meniere's disease appear to be the result of an abnormal amount of fluid (endolymph) in the inner ear, but it isn't clear what causes that to happen.

Factors that affect the fluid, which might contribute to Meniere's disease, include:

- Improper fluid drainage, perhaps because of a blockage or anatomic abnormality
- Abnormal immune response
- Viral infection
- Genetic predisposition

Because no single cause has been identified, it's likely that Meniere's disease results from a combination of factors.

Symptoms of Meniere's disease

Signs and symptoms of Meniere's disease include:

- **Recurring episodes of vertigo.** You have a spinning sensation that starts and stops spontaneously. Episodes of vertigo occur without warning and usually last 20 minutes to several hours, but not more than 24 hours. Severe vertigo can cause nausea.
- **Hearing loss.** Hearing loss in Meniere's disease may come and go, particularly early on. Eventually, most people have some permanent hearing loss.
- **Ringing in the ear (tinnitus).** Tinnitus is the perception of a ringing, buzzing, roaring, whistling or hissing sound in your ear.
- **Feeling of fullness in the ear.** People with Meniere's disease often feel pressure in an affected ear (aural fullness).¹

1. Meniere's disease (2020) Mayo Clinic. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Available at: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/menieres-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20374910>.

After an episode, signs and symptoms improve and might disappear entirely for a while. Over time, the frequency of episodes may lessen.

If you're looking for reliable vertigo treatment or relief from Meniere's disease symptoms, visit Dr. Drew Hall at Sarasota Upper Cervical Chiropractic. Visit Dr. Hall to get to the root cause of your vertigo. In their office they take 3D cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) that allows the doctor to view the neck and joints that may be misaligned causing your vertigo. Don't guess at the cause of your problems.

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Unraveling the Complexity of Brain Diseases

The human brain is an intricate organ that governs our thoughts, emotions, and actions. However, within this complexity lies a vulnerability to various disorders that can profoundly impact an individual's quality of life. Brain diseases encompass a wide range of neurological disorders, each with its unique characteristics and challenges. This article will shed light on some of the most prevalent brain diseases, exploring their causes, symptoms, and potential treatment avenues, while emphasizing the importance of ongoing research in this field.

Alzheimer's Disease: Alzheimer's disease, a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, is one of the most common forms of dementia. It is characterized by memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioral changes. Researchers have identified certain genetic factors, such as mutations in the amyloid precursor protein (APP) and presenilin genes, as potential contributors to the development of Alzheimer's disease.¹ Additionally, the accumulation of amyloid-beta plaques and tau protein tangles in the brain has been linked to the pathology of this disease.² Although there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, ongoing research focuses on developing interventions to slow down its progression and improve patients' quality of life.

Parkinson's Disease: Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive movement disorder that affects millions worldwide. It is primarily caused by the loss of dopamine-producing cells in the substantia nigra region of the brain. Genetic mutations, exposure to environmental toxins, and oxidative stress have been implicated in the development of Parkinson's disease.³ Tremors, rigidity, bradykinesia, and postural instability are hallmark symptoms of this condition. Treatment options include medications to manage symptoms, deep brain stimulation, and physical therapy.⁴

Multiple Sclerosis: Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune disease characterized by the immune system mistakenly attacking the protective covering of nerve fibers, known as myelin, in the central nervous system. The exact cause of MS remains unknown, but it is believed to involve a combination of genetic and environmental factors.⁵ MS presents with a wide range of symptoms,

including fatigue, impaired coordination, muscle weakness, and cognitive difficulties. Disease-modifying therapies, rehabilitation programs, and symptom management strategies are the current approaches in managing MS.⁶

Autoimmune Encephalitis: Autoimmune encephalitis is a relatively rare but increasingly recognized group of brain diseases characterized by inflammation of the brain due to an autoimmune response. It occurs when the immune system mistakenly targets proteins within the brain, leading to neurological symptoms. Antibodies targeting specific proteins, such as NMDA receptors, LGI1, and GABAB receptors, have been identified in different forms of autoimmune encephalitis.⁷ Symptoms can range from psychiatric manifestations, such as psychosis and mood changes, to neurological symptoms, including seizures, memory problems, and movement disorders. Treatment typically involves immunotherapy, such as corticosteroids, intravenous immunoglobulins, and plasma exchange, to suppress the autoimmune response and reduce inflammation.⁸

Conclusion: Brain diseases continue to present significant challenges in the medical field, impacting the lives of millions of individuals worldwide. Understanding the underlying causes, symptoms, and available treatment options is crucial in advancing research and developing effective interventions. Ongoing research aims to unravel the intricate mechanisms involved in these brain diseases, ultimately leading to improved diagnostic tools, more targeted therapies, and the possibility of finding cures. By supporting scientific endeavors and raising awareness, we can foster progress in the battle against these complex neurological disorders, offering hope for individuals and their families facing these challenges.



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Some of the medication Paragon administers to treat the brain diseases described above, as well as others, include:

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- Radicava
- Rituxan (including biosimilar's)
- Soliris
- Solu Medrol
- Tysabri
- Ultomiris
- Uplizna
- Vyeptri
- Vyvgart

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Exploring the Role of Medical Marijuana in Enhancing Sleep Quality

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the potential benefits of medical marijuana, particularly in its ability to improve sleep quality. As an alternative remedy for sleep-related issues, medical marijuana has sparked conversations within both the medical and wellness communities. This article delves into the relationship between medical marijuana and better sleep, exploring its potential advantages and considerations.

Understanding the Components: THC and CBD

Medical marijuana contains two primary components that play a crucial role in its effects on sleep—tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD). THC is known for its psychoactive properties, inducing relaxation and sedation. On the other hand, CBD is non-psychoactive and is believed to have calming and anti-anxiety effects. The combination of these cannabinoids contributes to the potential sleep-improving properties of medical marijuana.

Addressing Insomnia and Sleep Disorders

One of the most prominent reasons individuals turn to medical marijuana for sleep is to address insomnia and other sleep disorders. Studies suggest that THC can help reduce the time it takes to fall asleep, particularly in cases of chronic insomnia. Moreover, the calming effects of CBD may alleviate symptoms of anxiety, a common contributor to sleep disturbances.

Pain Management for a Restful Night

Chronic pain can significantly impact sleep quality, leading many individuals to seek alternative pain management solutions. Medical marijuana, with its analgesic properties, has shown promise in providing relief from pain conditions such as arthritis or neuropathy. By alleviating pain, it not only improves overall well-being but also contributes to a more restful night's sleep.

Regulating Sleep Cycles: The Endocannabinoid System

The endocannabinoid system (ECS) plays a crucial role in regulating various physiological processes, including sleep. Both THC and CBD interact with the ECS, influencing its ability to maintain balance within the body. This modulation of the ECS may contribute to the regulation of sleep-wake cycles, potentially offering a natural remedy for those struggling with irregular sleep patterns.



Dosage and Timing: Key Considerations

While medical marijuana shows promise in promoting better sleep, finding the right dosage and timing is paramount. Individual responses to cannabinoids vary, and excessive THC intake may lead to adverse effects such as heightened anxiety or impaired cognitive function. Consulting with a healthcare professional experienced in medical marijuana is essential to determine the optimal dosage and administration method tailored to individual needs.

Potential Risks and Considerations

Despite its potential benefits, medical marijuana is not without risks. Side effects, such as dry mouth, increased heart rate, or short-term memory impairment, may occur. Additionally, long-term use of THC-rich strains may lead to dependency or impact cognitive function. It is crucial for individuals considering medical marijuana for sleep to weigh the potential benefits against these risks and make informed decisions.

Legal Landscape and Accessibility

The legal status of medical marijuana varies globally and within different regions. Some areas have embraced its medicinal use, allowing patients to access it with a prescription, while others maintain strict regulations or prohibit its use entirely. Understanding the legal landscape and accessibility in one's location is crucial for those considering medical marijuana as a sleep aid.

Conclusion: Navigating the Path to Better Sleep

As interest in medical marijuana for better sleep grows, it is essential to approach it with a nuanced understanding of its components, potential benefits, and associated risks. The interplay between THC and CBD, coupled with their impact on the endocannabinoid system, offers a unique avenue for addressing sleep-related issues. However, individuals should prioritize consultation with healthcare professionals to determine the most suitable approach for their specific circumstances.

In navigating the path to better sleep with medical marijuana, an informed and cautious approach ensures that individuals can explore its potential benefits while minimizing potential risks. As research in this field continues to evolve, the conversation surrounding medical marijuana's role in sleep improvement will likely gain further insights, providing individuals with additional tools to enhance their overall well-being.

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UNDERSTANDING THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF A HEALTHY GUT MICROBIOME

By Dr. Pamela Chapman, The Beauty and Wellness Institute

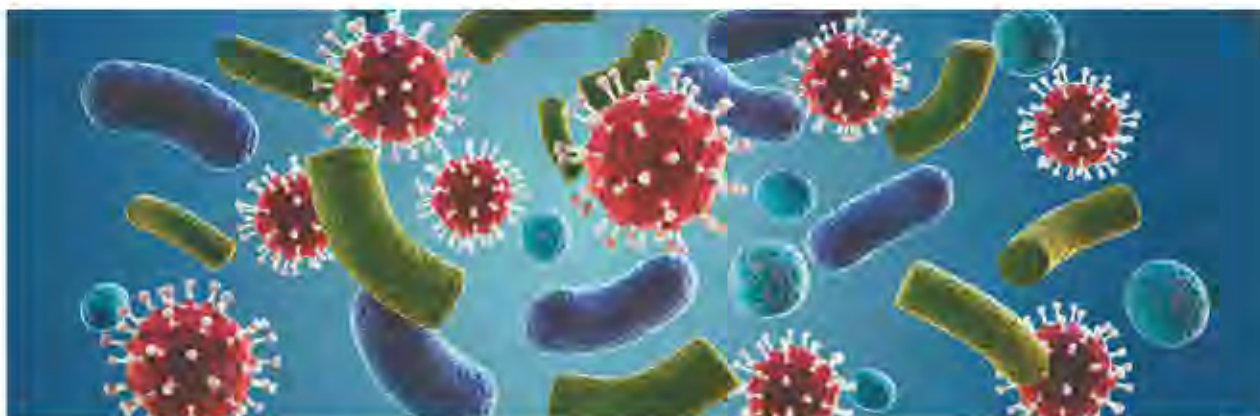
In the intricate tapestry of human health, the gut microbiome emerges as a vital player, influencing not only digestive processes but also overall well-being. The trillions of microorganisms residing in our digestive tract wield a profound impact on various aspects of health, from immune function to mental well-being. In the realm of functional medicine, understanding and optimizing the gut microbiome through targeted testing has become a cornerstone for proactive health management.

The gut microbiome, a diverse community of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other microorganisms, plays a pivotal role in maintaining a delicate balance within the body. It aids in digestion, nutrient absorption, and the synthesis of essential vitamins. Beyond these foundational functions, recent scientific discoveries highlight its involvement in regulating the immune system, influencing mood, and even impacting weight management.

A healthy gut microbiome contributes to the body's ability to ward off infections and diseases. By fostering a robust immune response, these microorganisms act as the first line of defense against pathogens. Imbalances in the gut microbiome, known as dysbiosis, have been linked to a myriad of health issues, including autoimmune diseases, allergies, and chronic inflammation.

Functional medicine, a holistic and patient-centered approach to healthcare, places a strong emphasis on identifying the root causes of health concerns rather than merely treating symptoms. Within this framework, gut testing has emerged as a powerful diagnostic tool. Comprehensive testing allows healthcare practitioners to assess the diversity and composition of the gut microbiome, uncovering imbalances that may be contributing to various health issues.

One key advantage of gut testing from the functional medicine perspective is the ability to personalize treatment plans. The results provide valuable insights into the unique microbial composition of an individual, allowing practitioners to tailor interventions that address specific imbalances. This personalized approach stands in stark contrast to traditional medicine, where one-size-fits-all treatments may not yield optimal results.



Moreover, gut testing can reveal the presence of harmful pathogens, such as pathogenic bacteria, parasites, or yeast overgrowth, that may contribute to gastrointestinal issues or compromise overall health. Armed with this information, functional medicine practitioners can prescribe targeted treatments, such as antimicrobial agents or probiotics, to restore a healthy balance in the gut.

Beyond physical health, the gut-brain connection has gained increasing recognition, underscoring the impact of the gut microbiome on mental well-being. Emerging research suggests that an imbalanced gut microbiome may contribute to conditions like anxiety and depression. Functional medicine practitioners utilize gut testing to explore this connection, identifying potential links between gut imbalances and mental health concerns.

Another advantage of gut testing is its role in uncovering food sensitivities and intolerances. Imbalances in the gut microbiome can contribute to a leaky gut, allowing undigested food particles to enter the bloodstream and trigger inflammatory responses. Through targeted testing, individuals can pinpoint specific foods that may be contributing to digestive discomfort or other health issues, enabling them to make informed dietary adjustments.

In conclusion, the health of the gut microbiome is intricately woven into the fabric of overall well-being. From immune function to mental health, the gut microbiome's influence is vast and profound. In the realm of functional medicine, gut testing emerges as a powerful tool, allowing practitioners to unravel the complexities of the gut microbiome and design personalized interventions that address the root causes

of health concerns. As we delve deeper into the symbiotic relationship between our bodies and these microscopic inhabitants, the path to optimal health becomes clearer, paving the way for a proactive and personalized approach to well-being.

At **The Beauty and Wellness Institute**, Dr. Chapman offers Functional Medicine and Aesthetics services to help women feel beautiful inside and out. Board Certified in Family Medicine and trained in Functional Medicine through the Institute of Functional Medicine, Dr. Chapman has combined her passion for health, aesthetics and community into a practice bringing women together to enjoy dynamic, youthful lives. She focuses on underlying root causes of chronic illness and encourages a holistic approach to healing through extended one on one visits as well as group visits that can promote support and accountability. Trained in Aesthetics, she also offers non-surgical cosmetic procedures including Botox, Fillers, Kybella, HIFU for skin tightening and targeted fat reduction, Vaginal Rejuvenation, Laser Hair Removal, and more.



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In an era where wellness is paramount, individuals are increasingly seeking effective and efficient solutions to enhance their overall well-being. Among the innovative approaches gaining traction is Intravenous (IV) Therapy – a game-changer that goes beyond traditional wellness practices. This article explores the multifaceted benefits of IV therapy, focusing on its ability to reduce inflammation, boost immunity, improve sleep, and foster an unparalleled sense of well-being.

At the core of IV therapy's efficacy lies its unique method of nutrient delivery. Unlike oral supplements, which typically offer a mere 10-15% absorption rate, IV therapy ensures 100% absorption. By directly infusing essential vitamins, minerals, and fluids into the bloodstream, this therapy maximizes the body's ability to receive and utilize these vital nutrients. The result is a rapid and comprehensive impact on overall health.

One of the primary advantages of IV therapy is its potent anti-inflammatory properties. Inflammation is a silent precursor to various chronic conditions, and addressing it is pivotal for long-term wellness. IV therapy delivers a powerful combination of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory agents directly into the bloodstream, mitigating inflammation at its source. This targeted approach not only alleviates existing inflammation but also acts as a preventive measure against its recurrence.

Another key facet of IV therapy is its role in boosting the immune system. The infusion of immune-boosting vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C and zinc,



directly enhances the body's defense mechanisms. This proactive approach equips individuals with the resilience needed to combat seasonal illnesses and chronic health challenges, promoting a robust and resilient immune system.

Beyond physical benefits, IV therapy extends its positive impact to the realm of mental wellness. The link between nutrient deficiencies and sleep disorders is well-established, and IV therapy addresses this connection head-on. By supplying the body with essential nutrients like magnesium and B vitamins, IV therapy supports a healthy sleep cycle, fostering restorative and rejuvenating sleep. This, in turn, contributes to improved cognitive function, mood stability, and an overall sense of well-being.

Hydration, a cornerstone of health, takes center stage in IV therapy. Dehydration can impair bodily functions, leading to fatigue, headaches, and decreased cognitive performance. IV therapy ensures optimal hydration by delivering a balanced

blend of fluids and electrolytes directly into the bloodstream. This efficient hydration contributes not only to physical vitality but also mental clarity, reinforcing the interconnectedness of overall wellness.

As individuals increasingly prioritize proactive health measures, the popularity of IV therapy continues to rise. Whether seeking relief from chronic conditions or aiming to optimize their health, people are drawn to the immediacy and comprehensiveness of IV therapy's benefits. The personalized nature of IV therapy allows for tailored solutions, catering to the unique wellness needs of each individual.

In conclusion, IV therapy emerges as a beacon of hope for those seeking a holistic approach to wellness. By addressing inflammation, fortifying the immune system, improving sleep, and ensuring optimal hydration, IV therapy paves the way for individuals to experience an unparalleled sense of overall well-being. As this transformative therapy gains recognition, it marks a paradigm shift in the pursuit of health, emphasizing not just the absence of illness but the flourishing of vitality at every level of mind and body.

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HYDRATION & WELLNESS

Cleerly Analysis - Using the Power of AI:

Revolutionizing Heart Disease Diagnosis to Lower the Risk of Heart Attack

Hear disease remains the leading cause of death globally, with millions of lives lost each year due to heart attacks and related complications. Despite advancements in medical technology, accurately diagnosing heart disease and assessing the risk of heart attacks remains a complex challenge. However, a promising solution has emerged in the form of Cleerly, a groundbreaking approach to heart disease diagnosis that aims to lower the risk of heart attacks through early detection and personalized risk assessment.

Cleerly represents a paradigm shift in cardiovascular imaging and risk assessment. Developed by a team of leading cardiologists, data scientists, and engineers, Cleerly harnesses the power of artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced imaging techniques to provide comprehensive insights into the heart's health. Unlike traditional methods that often rely on subjective interpretation and limited information, Cleerly utilizes state-of-the-art algorithms to analyze cardiac imaging data with unmatched precision and efficiency.

At the core of Cleerly's innovation is its ability to generate highly detailed 3D reconstructions of the heart and its blood vessels from standard cardiac imaging scans such as CT angiography. By employing advanced machine learning algorithms, Cleerly can accurately identify and quantify various aspects of heart disease, including plaque buildup, arterial blockages, and coronary artery disease. This comprehensive assessment allows healthcare providers to detect potential issues at an early stage, enabling timely interventions to prevent heart attacks and other cardiovascular events.

One of the key advantages of Cleerly is its ability to provide personalized risk assessment for each patient. Traditional risk scoring systems often rely on generalized population-based metrics, which may not accurately reflect an individual's unique risk profile. In contrast, Cleerly leverages AI to analyze multiple factors, including plaque composition, vessel geometry, and hemodynamic parameters, to generate personalized risk scores tailored to each patient's specific characteristics and medical history. This individualized approach enables healthcare providers to prioritize interventions and optimize treatment strategies based on each patient's unique risk profile, ultimately leading to better outcomes and reduced incidence of heart attacks.

TRACK YOUR HEART HEALTH.

Now, with Cleerly's compare feature, you and your doctor can see how the plaque in your heart has changed over multiple scans, empowering you to make decisions that truly transform your health.



Moreover, Cleerly's user-friendly interface and intuitive visualization tools empower healthcare providers to easily interpret complex cardiac imaging data and communicate findings effectively with patients. By enhancing communication and patient engagement, Cleerly fosters a collaborative approach to heart disease management, where patients are actively involved in their care and empowered to make informed decisions about their health.

The impact of Cleerly extends beyond diagnosis and risk assessment, as it also plays a crucial role in guiding treatment decisions and monitoring disease progression. By providing detailed insights into the underlying mechanisms of heart disease, Cleerly enables healthcare providers to tailor treatment plans to address specific pathophysiological processes and optimize therapeutic outcomes. Additionally, Cleerly's ability to track changes in cardiac morphology and function over time allows for early detection of disease progression and adjustment of treatment strategies as needed, further reducing the risk of adverse cardiovascular events.

In conclusion, Cleerly represents a transformative approach to heart disease diagnosis that has the potential to revolutionize cardiovascular care and lower the risk of heart attacks. By harnessing the power of AI and advanced imaging techniques, Cleerly provides comprehensive insights into the heart's health, enables personalized risk assessment, and facilitates informed decision-making for patients and healthcare providers alike. With its promise of early detection, personalized intervention, and improved patient outcomes, Cleerly offers new hope in the fight against heart disease and underscores the immense potential of technology to transform healthcare.

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For more information about the diagnostic imaging services available at Radiology Associates of Venice, Englewood and Sarasota. Call the Venice office at 941-488-7781 or the Englewood office at 941-475-5471 or the Sarasota office at 941-342-7283.

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ADVANCED URINARY INCONTINENCE PROCEDURES

Approximately 10 to 20 million people in the United States are suffering from urinary incontinence. If you have issues with leaking when coughing, jumping, or laughing, or if you have severe urgency to urinate day and night, you are not alone. Correct diagnosis of the type of incontinence is the first and most important step in developing an appropriate and effective treatment plan for incontinence.

There are several types of urinary incontinence:

- Stress incontinence
- Urge incontinence
- Mixed incontinence
- Overflow incontinence
- Functional incontinence

The good news is that you are not stuck with wearing pads or pull up for the rest of your life. There are viable treatment options from medications, Botox injections, nerve stimulators and implantable slings to name a few. Two of the more advance innovative procedures that are noninvasive are sacral neuromodulation and urethral bulking.

Sacral Neuromodulation

Sacral neuromodulation is an advanced procures that uses a tiny wire that is placed on the glut muscle with a quarter-size impulse device that sends messages to the brain to regulate urination. This procedure takes around 30 minutes to perform, and if the procedure does not work, or if a patient decides they want it removed, we can take it out quite easily. Other similar devices can also be placed on the sacral nerve to induce sacral neuromodulation to send small impulses to the bladder.

Bulkamid—Urethral Bulking

Bulkamid is a soft, smooth hydrogel that consists of 97.5% water and 2.5% polyacrylamide. Once injected, Bulkamid provides additional volume to the urethra and acts as a scaffold for cells to grow through helping to provide long lasting relief of stress urinary incontinence symptoms. Bulkamid is noninvasive and requires to surgery, It is injected directly into the closing mechanism of the urethra. More than 70,000 patients have been treated with Bulkamid.

What is urethral bulking?

Urethral bulking involves the injection of a soft hydrogel (the size of a pea) like Bulkamid, into 3 or 4 locations in the urethral wall using a small telescope. The total volume injected is around 2mls.

Bulkamid aims to restore the natural closing pressure of the urethra preventing urine from leaking out unintentionally during normal daily activities (e.g., when you cough, laugh, walk or exercise).

Short procedure

Urethral bulking takes around 10 – 15 minutes and is usually done in day surgery or out-patient clinic with a local anesthetic.

No Incisions

A series of small injections are used, you may feel a sting, however, no cuts are made.

Quick recovery

In most cases patients can get back to their normal activities within a day.

Source: <https://bulkamid.com/us/>

If you have pain, pressure, urgency, or frequent urination, don't put off seeing a urologist, as these conditions only progress with time. Getting a proper diagnosis and early treatment is critical.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health in Venice, Florida, provides comprehensive and personalized care in a relaxed, spa-like office. Under the care of John Devine, MD, a fellowship-trained urogynecologist, the practice specializes in women's pelvic health and urogynecology, providing care for women of all ages, from adolescents to adults.

Taking a patient-centric approach to care, Dr. Devine schedules ample time for patient appointments. He also makes himself directly available to his patients to answer any clinical questions.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health provides comprehensive evaluations of female pelvic health concerns. Services include gynecology care to manage general health and wellness, as well as the evaluation and treatment of conditions and symptoms arising from menopause.

The practice also specializes in urogynecology, which is an OB/GYN subspecialty that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of female urinary incontinence and pelvic floor disorders, like pelvic organ prolapse.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health also provides care to women struggling with interstitial cystitis or fecal incontinence. Additionally, Dr. Devine offers consultations and surgical treatment for women experiencing complications from mesh.

For patient-centric care from an experienced physician with friendly and accommodating staff, call The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health, or request an appointment today. Please call 941-457-7700.

CCTA + Cleerly Analysis – AI-assisted Cardio Imaging Innovation

Radiology Associates of Venice and Englewood (RAVE) has provided the highest level of patient care over the past 50 years. Being first to adopt advanced life saving imaging, RAVE were the first to use 3D mammography in the area, prostate MRI, lung and bone screenings, and much more.

We are excited to now offer Cleerly Analysis (Artificial Intelligence assisted analysis and reporting) in conjunction with your CTA to assist in characterization of plaque buildup in each of the heart arteries. DEXA scans with TBS can assess bone microarchitecture and works collaboratively with BMD measurements for fracture risk prediction.



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NEUROMODULATORS IN DENTISTRY: BEYOND COSMETIC ENHANCEMENT

By Dr. Amanda Rizner

Neuromodulators are known as wrinkle-relaxing injections and are comprised of the Botulinum protein. They are commercially known as Botox, Dysport, Xeomin, Jeuveau, and Daxxify. Botulinum has gained widespread recognition primarily for its cosmetic applications, particularly in reducing facial wrinkles. However, its utility extends beyond the realm of aesthetics into various medical fields including oral health. Dentists have begun integrating neuromodulators into their practice to address a range of orofacial conditions offering patients alternative treatment modalities and improved outcomes.

UNDERSTANDING NEUROMODULATOR INJECTIONS IN DENTISTRY

Botulinum toxin is a neurotoxic protein produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*, known for its ability to inhibit muscle contractions by blocking the release of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter involved in muscle movement. In dentistry, this is primarily utilized for its muscle-relaxing properties to address various functional and aesthetic concerns within the oral and maxillo-facial regions.

THERAPEUTIC APPLICATIONS

Bruxism and TMJ Disorders

Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders encompass a spectrum of conditions characterized by pain and dysfunction in the jaw joint and surrounding muscles. Neuromodulator injections can alleviate muscle spasm and reduce pain associated with TMD by inhibiting excessive muscle contractions, providing relief to patients experiencing chronic discomfort.

This is especially helpful for patients who experience bruxism, or teeth grinding. This common parafunctional habit can lead to dental wear, muscle fatigue, and temporomandibular joint problems. Injections into the masseter and temporalis muscles can weaken their contractions, effectively reducing the intensity of bruxism episodes and protecting teeth and restorations from damage. It is important to note that this type of treatment is only recommended after other traditional bruxism and TMD therapies have been initiated. A nightguard or "splint" is often the first line of treatment for these types of issues and neuromodulators must only be considered as an additive

therapeutic agent. A dentist must evaluate each patient to understand the true cause of their specific bruxism and TMJ issues in order to see if neuromodulators may be a good treatment option.

Gummy Smile

Neuromodulators have become widely popular as treatment for "gummy smiles." A gummy smile, characterized by excessive gingival display during smiling, can be a source of aesthetic concern for some individuals. Injections into the hyperactive muscles responsible for elevating the upper lip can reduce gingival exposure, achieving a more balanced and aesthetically pleasing smile.

Adjunctive Cosmetic Procedures

While dentists primarily focus on addressing functional issues, they also recognize the importance of aesthetics in overall patient satisfaction. Neuromodulators can complement various cosmetic dental procedures by enhancing facial harmony and optimizing treatment outcomes. Injections can achieve subtle yet impactful improvements in facial aesthetics, enhancing patients' confidence and self-esteem.

TYPES OF NEUROMODULATORS

Botox is the most widely known, recognized, and extensively studied neuromodulator on the market. Scientists began experimenting with Botox in the 1970s and it gained its first FDA approval in 1989 for treatment of eye misalignment. Patients normally see treatment initially set in within 5-6 days, with full effects in 2 weeks.

Dysport is similar to Botox but the protein formulation allows a quicker onset of results due to its smaller size. The smaller size allows for a broader range of treatment. Results can be seen in 2-3 days, with full results in 2 weeks.

Xeomin uses the same type of purified protein as Botox, however it does not contain accessory proteins, and can lessen the chance a patient will develop antibodies to its product. Results can be seen in 2-3 days and last up to 3 months.

Jeuveau is another neuromodulator on the market, with a formulation similar to Botox. Its composition has slightly smaller molecules, allowing for a faster 2-3-day onset.



Daxxify recently came into the market claiming to be the longest lasting neuromodulator on the market. What makes this brand unique is that its product is stabilized by a peptide, unlike most others which is stabilized by human serum albumin (a blood product). It's considered "vegan" as it has no animal or human byproducts. Because of this peptide, some patients are seeing results quickly, within 2 days, and lasting up to 6 months. This is unlike other neuromodulators which typically last around a 3-month period.

CONSIDERATIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

Despite its efficacy, the use of neuromodulators in dentistry requires careful consideration and adherence to best practices to ensure patient safety and optimal results. Dentists must undergo specialized training and certification to administer Botox injections, as well as possess a thorough understanding of facial anatomy and injection techniques. Additionally, proper patient assessment, informed consent, and post-treatment monitoring are essential aspects of responsible neuromodulator administration in dentistry.

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GAINSWave is Making Headlines Due to its Ability to Prevent & Treat ED

By Dr. David S. Zamikoff

With remarkable outcomes, GAINSWave is growing in popularity in regard to treating erectile dysfunction (ED) and Peyronies Disease, yet it's also used as a preventative treatment. GAINSWave treatment is available for any man looking to enhance sexual health and performance. A medical condition like ED or Peyronies disease does not have to be present for men to benefit. In fact, many healthy men without an issue opt for treatment to "biohack" or optimize their performance as a prevention method.¹

How Can GAINSWave Prevent & Treat ED?

The GAINSWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINSWave uses scientifically proven technology through soundwaves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. These soundwaves or 'shockwaves' also are beneficial in preventing the buildup of plaque and increasing blood vessel growth and circulation. Traditional treatments for ED, such as pills or injections, lose effectiveness over time and have to be used every time a man wants to engage in sexual activity. GAINSWave helps men to feel like themselves again and to enjoy their lives.

GAINSWave utilizes high frequency, low-intensity soundwaves to improve blood flow to the penis, remove micro-plaque, and stimulates the growth of



new blood vessels. GAINSWave uses a specific protocol designed to optimize efficacy, safety, and results. Over 80% of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) issues are caused by reduced blood flow. GAINSWave has developed a protocol to treat ED and Peyronies disease (scar tissue) as well as enhance sexual performance.

Younger Men Should Seek Treatment Early

Men who are just beginning to see ED warning indicators should seek the earliest treatment possible. The reason is that it has been well documented that if early diagnosis and treatment are started when a man is younger (the 30s, 40s, 50s) there is an increased chance that the ED will very likely no longer need medical treatment and their arteriosclerosis can dissipate. There have been multiple peer-reviewed studies that indicate that GAINSWave treatment can potentially cure ED in some patients. The sooner you intervene with treatment, the better your outcome will be.

Men are Preventing ED with GAINSWave

Many men are now understanding the importance of this technology and how it can benefit them in the long term. GAINSWave offers immediate results that are cumulative. Much like living a healthy lifestyle, starting GAINSWave treatments early is another way men can be proactive about their health.

SEEK EARLY TREATMENT & DON'T JUST MASK YOUR SYMPTOMS—TREAT THE ROOT CAUSE!

Source: GainesWave
<https://www.biospace.com/article/releases/mobility-spine-and-sports-is-helping-men-wave-goodbye-to-erectile-dysfunction-with-cutting-edge-gainswave-treatment/>

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Empowering Parkinson's Patients: Coastal Breeze Home Health's LSVT BIG Exercise Program

Parkinson's Awareness Month is a crucial time to shed light on innovative approaches to managing this neurodegenerative condition. Among the many interventions available, Coastal Breeze Home Health stands out for its dedication to providing comprehensive care, including the LSVT BIG exercise program. This specialized regimen offers hope and improved quality of life to individuals living with Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's disease affects millions worldwide, causing tremors, stiffness, and impaired movement. While there's no cure, effective management strategies can alleviate symptoms and enhance mobility. LSVT BIG, an evidence-based program developed specifically for Parkinson's patients, focuses on enhancing movements, balance, and overall function.

Coastal Breeze Home Health recognizes the importance of personalized care for Parkinson's patients. Through the LSVT BIG program, their team of skilled therapists delivers tailored exercises designed to address each patient's unique needs. These exercises emphasize amplitude, encouraging patients to make bigger, more controlled movements to counteract the effects of Parkinson's rigidity and bradykinesia.

One of the hallmarks of LSVT BIG is its intensive nature. Patients undergo sessions multiple times a week for several weeks, allowing for concentrated practice and skill acquisition. Coastal Breeze Home Health's therapists guide patients through exercises that target everyday activities like walking, reaching, and getting up from a chair. By practicing these movements in therapy, patients can transfer their newfound skills to real-life situations, improving independence and confidence.

Moreover, the LSVT BIG program extends beyond physical exercises. It incorporates cognitive components to enhance attention, problem-solving, and multitasking abilities—skills often impaired in Parkinson's patients. Coastal Breeze Home Health's holistic approach ensures that patients receive comprehensive support to address both motor and non-motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's Awareness Month serves as an opportune time to highlight the transformative impact of the LSVT BIG program. By participating in this specialized exercise regimen, patients experience tangible improvements in their mobility and overall well-being. Enhanced movement capabilities translate to greater freedom and a higher quality of life for individuals living with Parkinson's disease.

Coastal Breeze Home Health's commitment to Parkinson's care extends beyond the therapy sessions. They provide education and support to patients and their families, empowering them with the knowledge and tools to navigate the challenges associated with Parkinson's disease. By fostering a collaborative and compassionate environment, Coastal Breeze Home Health ensures that patients feel supported every step of their journey.

Furthermore, Coastal Breeze Home Health leverages technology to enhance the delivery of LSVT BIG exercises. Through telehealth platforms, patients can access therapy sessions from the comfort of their homes, eliminating barriers to care and increasing accessibility for those with mobility limitations. This innovative approach ensures continuity of care and promotes adherence to the exercise program, ultimately leading to better outcomes for patients.

As Parkinson's Awareness Month unfolds, Coastal Breeze Home Health continues to advocate for the importance of early intervention and comprehensive care in managing Parkinson's disease. Through their dedication to the LSVT BIG program, they empower patients to reclaim control over their lives and pursue meaningful activities with confidence.

In conclusion, Parkinson's Awareness Month serves as a reminder of the resilience and determination of individuals living with Parkinson's disease. With programs like LSVT BIG offered by Coastal Breeze Home Health, there is hope for a brighter future. By prioritizing personalized care, education, and innovation, Coastal Breeze Home Health remains at the forefront of Parkinson's care, enriching the lives of patients and their families across communities.

Coastal Breeze Home Health

We provide customized personal care to each of our patients under the supervision of a Registered Nurse:

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

By Alfonso L. Espinel, MD

In 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 Domain

For routine physical examinations, such as school or sports physicals, urgent care is often the more suitable option. These facilities are adept at providing quick 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 Expertise

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 Care

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.

PrimeHealth Urgent Care has Board Certified physicians and providers with 20+ years' experience to provide you with efficient, quality and affordable healthcare. PrimeHealth offers a wide range of services to provide treatment for both routine and complex illnesses and injuries. PrimeHealth accepts appointments and welcomes walk-in patients. We participate with most major insurances and offer affordable discounted rates to self-pay patients. PrimeHealth has both English and Spanish speaking providers and staff.

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Effective & Proven Chronic Pain Relief with VAX-D®

By Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC

VAX-D, short for Vertebral Axial Decompression, is a patented non-surgical therapy proven to successfully treat chronic low back pain, caused by prolapsed, bulging, herniated or degenerative discs, facet syndrome, stenosis and sciatica. Even post-surgical patients and those suffering from central canal or foraminal stenosis have reported significant pain relief with VAX-D therapy. Over a series of relaxing treatment sessions, patients experience powerful pain reduction and healing. Some patients even notice relief after just one visit.

VAX-D's proven and patented technology is currently being utilized by leading physicians in orthopedic medicine, pain medicine, neurology and other specialties in hundreds of clinics around the world. Many doctors choose VAX-D over other devices because it employs the original, patented technology from which decompression therapy was born. VAX-D effectiveness is backed by clinical research. Back pain has grown to be a \$54 billion industry and has literally become a national epidemic. Due to the astounding array of varied treatment options, finding a back pain solution can be a daunting task. Knowing that a product backs its claims with clinical research makes all the difference, and that is what VAX-D offers. A recently completed 2 1/2 year study has demonstrated that VAX-D achieved a remarkable 88% success rate in the 283 chronic back pain patients studied! The patients selected for the study had been unsuccessful at finding relief with at least two previous non-surgical treatments.

VAX-D is not to be confused with traction. VAX-D lengthens and decompresses the spine, reversing high intradiscal pressure through the application of negative pressure via a patented "slow ramp-up" process. This reversal of pressure creates a vacuum inside the discs that not only takes pressure off of pinched nerves, but helps to reposition bulging discs and pull extruded disc material back into place. Simultaneously, nutrients, oxygen and fluids are drawn into the disc to create a revitalized environment conducive to healing. VAX-D stimulates the body's repair mechanism, providing the building blocks needed to actually mend injured and degenerated discs. VAX-D's process is the only patented treatment clinically proven to decrease disc pressures to the negative levels needed to facilitate healing!

How does VAX-D work?

High intradiscal pressures cause discs to bulge out and press painfully on nerve roots. They also make for a compressed, anaerobic environment unsuitable for healing. Decompression produces and sustains negative pressures within the disc, creating a vacuum effect which draws in nutrients and fluids to promote the repair of injured discs and surrounding tissues. This vacuum has also been shown to aid in the retraction of escaped cushioning gel from herniated discs. Much like gauging the air pressure in a car tire, scientists have been able to use pressure sensors to



measure the various pressures put on spinal discs while lifting, standing, sitting, lying down, undergoing traction, and during VAX-D Therapy. Like other pressures found in the body such as blood pressure, intradiscal pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg). While traction, physical therapy and manipulation may reduce disc pressures to as low as 40mmHg, only VAX-D has been shown to achieve negative pressures within the spine. Clinical studies have shown that, with VAX-D Therapy, negative pressures as low as -160 mmHg* are created within the injured disc during the treatment session!

The key to the "distraction" of VAX-D is achieved through an intricately timed series of pulls, holds, and releases over the course of a treatment session. VAX-D's biofeedback system adjusts this curve of tension specifically to each patient's needs, making every session a truly individualized treatment.

VAX-D Therapy involves three phases that repeat fifteen times throughout a treatment session: the Decompression Phase, the Retraction Phase, and finally, the Rest Phase. During the Decompression Phase, tension slowly mounts, lengthening the spine; up to 99 pounds of tension may be exerted directly on the injured discs. This is where spinal pressures drop and decompression actually occurs. During the Retraction Phase, tension is slowly decreased and the spine is retracted slowly. This is followed by a short Rest Phase.

Is VAX-D Right for Me?

You may be a candidate for VAX-D if:

- You have chronic and/or severe back and/or neck pain caused by bulging or herniated discs. Degenerative disc disease, sciatica, and/or facet syndrome.
- You have been diagnosed with a clinically unstable low back.
- You have failed back surgery syndrome.
- You have been told to consider surgery.

Many patients have experienced more than a 50% reduction in pain after their first treatment! For those suffering from herniated and degenerated discs, the escaped nucleus pulposus may be partially or completely retracted back into the disc after just the first session (though usually it takes longer), relieving a great deal of pain. However, pain reduction does not indicate full recovery, and a full

recovery is essential to preventing re-injury. Each treatment session lasts approximately 45 minutes. A typical VAX-D treatment regimen consists of about 20 sessions. Some conditions require fewer visits; some require more. Many patients report relief from their pain and other symptoms during the first few treatment sessions, and most experience dramatic pain relief after completion of their prescribed VAX-D Therapy program.

VAX-D therapy is a non-surgical procedure to reduce pain by decompressing your spine and reducing the stress and pressure on your discs and spinal nerves. Contact Dr. Craig Aderholdt, at 941-756-5528 for a **free consultation** to see if you are a candidate for this revolutionary procedure. We hope you enjoy the information within and share it with others.

Contact Dr. Aderholdt today to find out if you can finally relieve your pain and suffering with this proven safe and effective nonsurgical breakthrough for neck and back pain.

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Second Location: 7345 International Place, Suite 101
Lakewood Ranch, Sarasota 34240

Dr. Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC



At Back Pain Institute of West Florida, located in Bradenton, FL, our number one concern is to help our patients with a natural approach to pain treatment. Dr. Craig Aderholdt, BSc, DC, received his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State

University State College, and his Doctor of Chiropractic from life University School of Chiropractic in Marietta, GA. He then later graduated Cum Laude.

Dr. Aderholdt also holds certification in chiropractic adjunctive physiotherapy from New York Chiropractic College and completed extensive postgraduate training in therapeutic modalities at National-Lincoln School. He is a member of the Florida Chiropractic Association and American Chiropractic Association and is a certified VAX-D consultant. He was also voted a Bradenton Herald People's Choice Awards Winner for 2008, 2022 and is the Manatee Herald-Tribune Awards winner for 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020 and 2021 and Sarasota Herald-Tribune finalist for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023 and winner in 2019.



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THE LINK BETWEEN PARKINSON'S DISEASE & HEARING LOSS

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder that primarily affects movement, causing symptoms such as tremors, stiffness, and impaired balance. However, recent research suggests that Parkinson's may also be associated with other health conditions, including hearing loss. While the connection between these two conditions is still being investigated, understanding their relationship could lead to better management and treatment for individuals living with Parkinson's.

Hearing loss is not typically considered a primary symptom of Parkinson's disease. However, studies have shown a higher prevalence of hearing impairment among individuals with Parkinson's compared to the general population. One study published in the journal JAMA Neurology found that people with Parkinson's were more likely to experience hearing loss, particularly in higher frequencies, even after controlling for age-related factors.

The exact mechanism linking Parkinson's disease and hearing loss remains unclear, but several theories have been proposed. One possibility is that both conditions share underlying pathological processes, such as inflammation and oxidative stress, which can damage both the auditory and motor systems. Another theory suggests that certain neurotransmitter imbalances associated with Parkinson's may also affect auditory function.

Furthermore, some researchers believe that certain medications used to treat Parkinson's could contribute to hearing loss. For example, dopamine agonists, agonists, which are commonly prescribed to alleviate

motor symptoms, have been associated with auditory side effects in some cases. However, more research is needed to determine the extent of this potential association.

The impact of hearing loss on individuals with Parkinson's disease can be significant. Communication difficulties can exacerbate social isolation and decrease quality of life for those already coping with the challenges of a progressive neurological disorder. Additionally, hearing impairment may complicate the management of Parkinson's symptoms, as it can affect a person's ability to follow instructions from healthcare providers and participate in rehabilitation programs effectively.

Recognizing the potential link between Parkinson's disease and hearing loss underscores the importance of comprehensive healthcare for individuals with Parkinson's. Routine hearing screenings should be integrated into the standard care protocol for Parkinson's patients to detect any auditory issues early on. Moreover, healthcare providers should be vigilant in addressing hearing-related concerns and providing appropriate interventions, such as hearing aids or auditory rehabilitation, when necessary.

In addition to clinical implications, understanding the relationship between Parkinson's disease and hearing loss may also have broader implications for research and treatment development. Investigating common underlying mechanisms could lead to the

identification of novel therapeutic targets that address both motor and auditory symptoms simultaneously. Furthermore, insights gained from studying the intersection of these conditions could inform our understanding of neurodegenerative processes more broadly, potentially paving the way for innovative approaches to managing Parkinson's and related disorders.

In conclusion, while the connection between Parkinson's disease and hearing loss requires further investigation, emerging evidence suggests that there may be a meaningful association between these two conditions. By exploring this relationship, healthcare providers can better support individuals living with Parkinson's by addressing their auditory needs alongside their motor symptoms. Moreover, continued research in this area holds promise for advancing our understanding of both Parkinson's disease and hearing loss, ultimately improving outcomes for affected individuals.

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Noël Crosby
 Doctor of Audiology



Karen Draper
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When You Are At Your Wits End

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



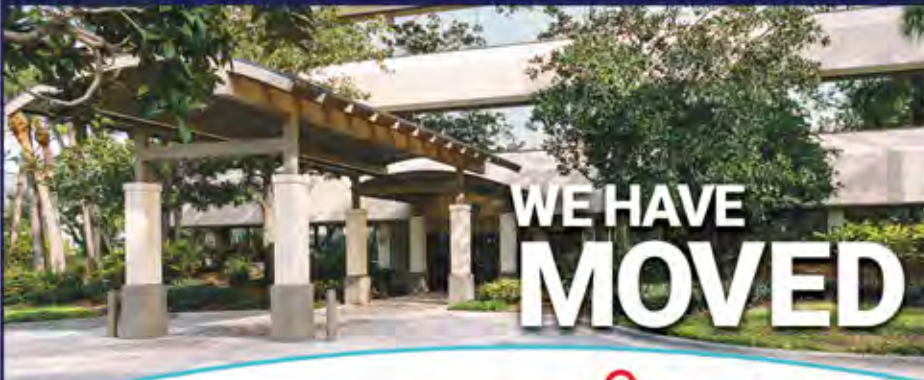
Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church in Naples, Florida. Venture Church meets on the campus of FSW State College on Lely Cultural Blvd. in East Naples. For times and directions, visit www.venturenaples.com.



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