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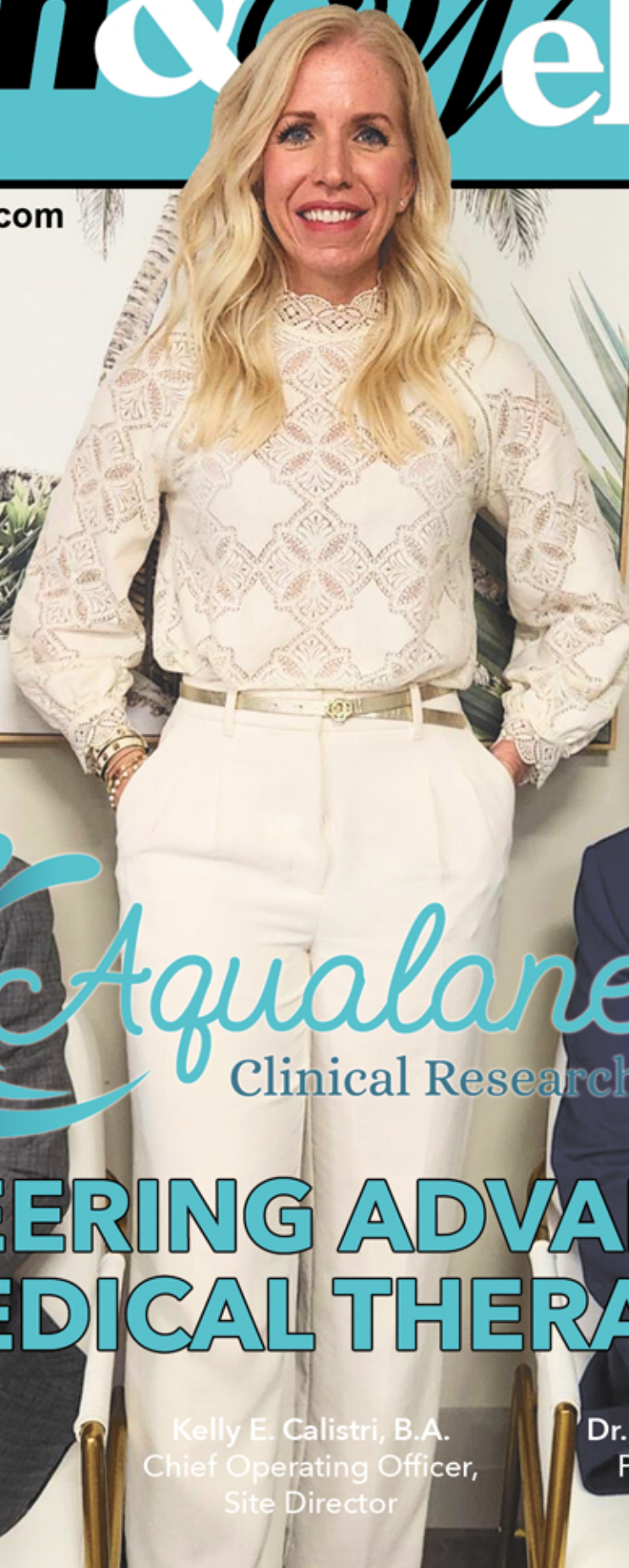
Collier Edition - Monthly

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“I was done with the PAIN!”

By Dr. Hetienne Macedo

Joe Massaro spent his working years creating and building a Fortune 500 IT sales and service company. The daily grind of managing employees and customer needs drove Joe to success and happiness. But a double root canal gone bad drove Joe to his knees in daily pain. “I would wake up every day with this immense pain in my mouth, but I would tell myself I had too much to do today to get to a new dentist. Finally, enough was enough. I was done with the pain!”

Who better to recommend a new dentist than your beautiful wife? “Carol was a patient at Park Dental already. She made me an appointment and said GO! So I went. And I am so glad I did. My previous dentist had botched two root canals. The daily pain was unbearable. When Dr. Macedo looked inside my mouth, she knew right away what needed to be done. Dr. Macedo is excellent. Her repair of my two previous root canals and a third one that needed to be done changed my life. Dr. Macedo’s work didn’t just improve my life; it changed my life. This was not an easy procedure, and she told me that up front too. But I no longer wake up in pain every day. I smile, and I’m glad to have so many things to smile about.”

Emergency Dental Care and Sedation

In dental emergencies, such as severe toothaches or infections, conscious sedation can provide the necessary comfort to address urgent issues promptly. If you are experiencing dental pain or an emergency, please get in touch with us immediately. Our emergency dental services are designed to provide rapid relief and appropriate treatment. Sedation can make the treatment process much more manageable for conditions like root canal infections, which may cause significant discomfort. Visit our Emergency Dentist and Root Canal Treatment pages for more detailed information on handling dental emergencies and what to expect from specific treatments.

At Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, we are dedicated to ensuring that every patient receives the highest level of care in a comfortable and supportive environment. If you experience dental anxiety, know that we have the tools and expertise to help you overcome it.

Overcoming Dental Anxiety with Sedation at Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry

Dental anxiety is a common concern that prevents many individuals from seeking the care they need. At Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, we understand dental anxiety’s challenges. Our goal is to make dental care accessible and comfortable for every patient, regardless of their level of anxiety. With each step you take towards maintaining your dental health, we are committed to providing you with the tools and support needed for a stress-free experience.

One of the most effective ways we enhance patient comfort is through sedation dentistry. We offer several sedation options, including nitrous oxide, to ensure that even the most anxious patients can receive the required dental care.

Nitrous oxide, or “laughing gas,” is a mild sedative administered through a face mask. This inhaled gas induces relaxation while keeping you aware of your surroundings. It is particularly beneficial for patients with difficulty achieving complete numbness with local anesthetics like novocaine,



as it enhances and maintains the numbing effect for longer periods. Nitrous oxide also helps patients feel calm and carefree during their dental procedures.

After your appointment, we will provide pure oxygen to breathe, which quickly reverses the effects of the nitrous oxide, allowing you to return to your normal state immediately. This means you can drive yourself home and resume your daily activities without delay.

Now offering metal-free dental implants

Dr. Macedo is excited to announce that metal-free implants are now being offered at Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry. These advanced ceramic implants provide a natural-looking, biocompatible solution for tooth replacement when a tooth cannot be saved, ensuring optimal aesthetics and health. With metal-free implants, patients can enjoy the benefits of a strong, durable implant without concerns related to metal sensitivities or aesthetic compromises. Dr. Macedo’s commitment to staying at the forefront of dental innovation allows us to provide the best possible care for our patient’s unique needs.

Biological Compatibility

One of the primary advantages of metal-free dental implants is their superior biological compatibility. Zirconia is inert, meaning it does not trigger any immune response or allergic reactions in the body. This is particularly beneficial for patients allergic to metals such as nickel or titanium. According to a study published in the *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Dentistry*, zirconia implants demonstrate excellent biocompatibility, showing no adverse effects on surrounding tissues and integrating well with the jawbone.

Benefits for Patients with Metal Allergies

For patients with known metal allergies, zirconia implants offer a safe and effective alternative. Metal allergies can manifest in various ways, from mild irritation to severe systemic reactions. Patients can avoid these adverse reactions by choosing zirconia and enjoy the benefits of dental implants without compromising their health. A study in the *International Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Implants* found that patients with metal sensitivities experienced significant improvement in their symptoms after switching to zirconia implants.

Aesthetic Advantages

Unlike metal implants, which can sometimes cause a grayish tint to the gums, zirconia implants are white and closely resemble the natural color of teeth. This makes them an excellent choice for patients concerned about the visual aspects of their dental restorations. The high translucency of zirconia also contributes to a more natural appearance, enhancing the overall aesthetic outcome of the implant procedure.

Reduced Risk of Peri-Implantitis

Peri-implantitis, an inflammatory condition affecting the tissues around dental implants, is a significant concern with

titanium implants. This condition can lead to bone loss and implant failure. Zirconia implants, however, have shown a reduced risk of peri-implantitis. The surface of zirconia implants is smooth and less prone to bacterial adhesion. This reduces the likelihood of bacterial colonization, which is a major in the development of peri-implantitis. Another consideration is that, unlike metal implants, zirconia does not corrode. Corrosion can lead to the release of metal ions, which can irritate surrounding tissues and contribute to inflammation and peri-implantitis.

Strength and Durability

Zirconia implants are biocompatible, aesthetically pleasing, and incredibly strong and durable. They have high fracture resistance and can effectively withstand the forces of chewing and biting. Research indicates that zirconia implants have comparable success rates to titanium implants, with long-term studies showing survival rates exceeding 90% over ten years. This durability makes them a reliable option for patients seeking a permanent solution to tooth loss.

Schedule an appointment today and take the first step towards a healthier, more confident smile.



Meet Dr. Hetienne Macedo

Originally from Brazil, Dr. Hetienne Macedo spent the first 15 years of her professional journey managing her own practice in the bustling city of Fortaleza. But in time, she and her husband, seeking to broaden their family’s horizons and provide their children a unique cultural and linguistic immersion opportunity, decided to uproot their lives and relocate to the United States. Dr. Macedo then pursued a dual DDS/AEGD Residency at the University of Rochester in New York to facilitate her integration into the American dental landscape. She was presented with the Gerald N. Graser Award by the Eastman Institute for Oral Health for outstanding work on a clinical case report.

Dr. Macedo is fluent in English, Portuguese, and Spanish, which helps her to serve our diverse patient community. She values her relationships with her patients, striving to establish open and transparent communication so they are well-informed and actively involved in their treatment decisions. The most rewarding part of her job is positively impacting the lives of her patients, whether in resolving their pain or boosting their self-confidence through better oral care.

In her free time, Dr. Macedo enjoys spending time with her husband and three boys and staying active through gym workouts, yoga, and outdoor running.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. DAVID ROCK: Advances in Breast Cancer Treatment at Magnolia Breast Center

Health and Wellness Magazine recently had the opportunity to sit down with Dr. David Rock, a board-certified general surgeon specializing in oncoplastic breast surgery, who has recently joined the Magnolia Breast Center in Bonita Springs, FL. Dr. Rock shared his insights on the advancements in breast cancer treatment and the personalized care approach he brings to the Magnolia Breast Center.

H&W: Dr. Rock, thank you for joining us. Can you tell us about your approach to breast cancer treatment and how it has evolved over the years?

Dr. Rock: Certainly. When I started in the 1990s, the treatment for breast cancer was quite uniform—everyone essentially received the same treatment. Thankfully, we've come a long way since then. Today, we understand that not all cancer patients are the same, and they shouldn't all receive the same treatment. Our approach is to individualize each patient's treatment based on their unique circumstances and the specific characteristics of their cancer.

H&W: How do you incorporate oncoplastic surgery into breast cancer treatment?

Dr. Rock: Oncoplastic surgery is a significant advancement in the field. It's not just about removing the tumor; it's also about reshaping the breast to maintain or even improve its cosmetic appearance. This technique allows us to ensure that patients not only have a successful oncological outcome but also feel positive about their appearance post-surgery. Many women view this as a silver lining—undergoing a reduction and reshaping that they may have desired for years, which would otherwise be considered cosmetic and not covered by insurance.

H&W: What other aspects of care are important in treating breast cancer patients at Magnolia Breast Center?

Dr. Rock: At Magnolia, we take an individualized approach to care, considering the whole person, not just their cancer. This includes integrating radiation oncology, medical oncology, exercise medicine, lymphedema therapy, and nutrition into the treatment plan. Nutrition and exercise are just as crucial as the surgical aspects. We involve patients in shared decision-making to ensure their needs and preferences are central to their treatment plan.

H&W: You mentioned de-escalating therapy in some cases. Can you explain what this means and its importance?

Dr. Rock: De-escalating therapy is about using less toxic treatment or less extensive surgery in women with early stage cancers who are unlikely to benefit from more aggressive treatment. For example, women over 70 with small Estrogen sensitive tumors are often able to omit lymph node surgery and avoid the risk of lymphedema

and decreased arm mobility. Those same women may be able to consider omitting radiation therapy with little increase in their risk of recurrence. In older patients with small areas of precancerous disease called DCIS, or even small estrogen sensitive invasive cancers, we may be able to treat them with a daily oral estrogen blocker and close xray follow-up rather than surgery.

H&W: Are there specific cases where you see medication playing a more significant role than surgery?

Dr. Rock: Absolutely. For example, in some cases, we see complete responses in 60 to 80% of patients where the tumor disappears with medication alone. This has led us to investigate whether we can follow these patients with imaging rather than immediately resorting to surgery. We might perform a needle biopsy around the area where the tumor was to ensure no cancer cells remain. This approach can potentially avoid surgery altogether for some patients.

H&W: How has the treatment for early-stage breast cancer changed over the years?

Dr. Rock: The cure rate for stage one breast cancer is now about 98%, which is incredible. Because of this high success rate, we no longer need to treat everyone as aggressively as we used to. We've shifted towards a "less is more" strategy, where we focus on minimizing side effects and long-term issues like neuropathy, chronic chest pain, lymphedema, cardiac toxicity, and brain fog which were more common with older, aggressive treatments.

H&W: What improvements have you seen in surgical techniques and patient recovery?

Dr. Rock: Advances in anesthesia and less invasive surgical techniques have significantly improved recovery times. Most patients who undergo surgery at Magnolia Breast Center can now go home the same day. This is a testament to the improvements in patient care and surgical methods, resulting in less pain and quicker recovery.

H&W: How do you see the future of breast cancer treatment evolving?

Dr. Rock: The future is promising. With ongoing research and advancements in medicine, we aim to further reduce the need for invasive procedures and enhance the quality of life for our patients. Our goal is to continue tailoring treatments to each patient's needs, improving outcomes while minimizing side effects.

H&W: Dr. Rock, thank you for sharing your insights with us. Is there anything else you would like our readers to know?

Dr. Rock: I want to emphasize the importance of personalized care and our holistic approach at Magnolia Breast Center. Listening to our patients and involving them in their treatment decisions is crucial. We're here to support them every step of the way, not just through their cancer treatment but in ensuring their overall well-being.

H&W: Thank you, Dr. Rock. It's been a pleasure speaking with you, and we look forward to seeing the continued advancements in breast cancer care at Magnolia Breast Center.

For more information or to schedule a consultation with Dr. David Rock at Magnolia Breast Center, please visit Magnolia Breast Center's website or call (239) 555-1234.

David T. Rock, MD, FACS
Board Certified Breast Surgeon



Dr. David T. Rock is a board-certified breast surgeon with more than 10 years' experience performing oncoplastic breast surgery that preserves and can even enhance the appearance of a woman's natural breast while safely removing cancerous tissue.

As part of Southern Crescent Breast Specialist in the Atlanta area, he helped pioneer Nipple Sparing Mastectomy and has helped refine that procedure to benefit more women who require or choose to have a mastectomy as part of their breast cancer treatment. Dr. Rock has used various techniques to help hundreds of women avoid unsightly, disfiguring scars, and was recently honored by receiving Hidden Scar Surgery Certification recognizing his expertise and contributions to the technique. In addition to minimizing the scarring associated with surgery, he has developed an Enhanced Recovery After Surgery program that minimizes or eliminates pain after surgery. Dr. Rock is involved in Breast Cancer clinical research and has presented his research at national breast cancer meetings.

Board certified in general surgery by the American Board of Surgery and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, he is also a member of the American Society of Breast Surgeons. Dr. Rock earned degrees in both Pharmacy and Medicine from the Medical College of Virginia. After Medical School, Dr. Rock completed his Residency training at East Carolina University. He has a special interest in Oncoplastic Surgery including Nipple Sparing Mastectomy techniques. He is involved in Breast Cancer clinical research and making sure that all his patients benefit from the latest techniques available for their treatment.



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Aqualane Clinical Research: Pioneering Advances in Medical Therapies

Aqualane Clinical Research stands at the forefront of medical innovation, dedicated to advancing therapies across a spectrum of human disease states. With a commitment to patient collaboration, ethical practices, and industry sponsorship, Aqualane Clinical Research plays a pivotal role in the exploration of treatments where none currently exist or where there's a pressing need for enhanced safety and efficacy.

ADDRESSING UNMET NEEDS

Alzheimer's Disease - Alzheimer's Disease, a relentless thief of memories and self-care abilities, remains a formidable challenge in the medical field. Aqualane Clinical Research actively engages in safe and ethical studies of emerging therapies, seeking to slow down, arrest, or halt the progression of this devastating condition.

Parkinson's Disease - While less common than Alzheimer's, Parkinson's Disease poses its own set of challenges, extending beyond its initial perception as a movement disorder. Aqualane Clinical Research recognizes the urgent need for improved treatments, acknowledging the impact of the disease on the entire nervous system and the body as a whole.

Essential Tremor - Early-onset tremors present a unique challenge, often remaining stable for years before complications arise. Aqualane Clinical Research delves into genetic associations with tremors, aiming to unravel the mysteries behind this condition and contribute valuable insights that can shape future treatment approaches.

Multiple Sclerosis - In the realm of Multiple Sclerosis, Aqualane Clinical Research actively recruits participants for trials focusing on therapeutic molecules penetrating the central nervous system. Integrating cutting-edge imaging and biomarker analysis, these studies aim to redefine monitoring and assessment methods for enhanced treatment effectiveness.

Migraine - Aqualane Clinical Research explores the complexities of migraine, a disorder rooted in pain processing. By understanding the multifaceted



nature of migraines, the research group endeavors to discover novel therapies that address not only the pain but also associated symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and sensory sensitivities.

Neuropsychiatric Conditions - Recognizing the intertwining nature of psychiatric symptoms with neurological diseases, Aqualane Clinical Research is actively involved in the pursuit of new therapies for conditions like depression and anxiety. Their holistic approach reflects a commitment to addressing the diverse challenges patients face.

PATIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH

At Aqualane, the patient is always the priority. Aqualane Clinical Research promises to educate potential participants and their families comprehensively, ensuring informed decision-making. Striving to make clinical trials a practical healthcare option, they provide a comfortable and compassionate environment, making the process accessible and supportive.

TRUST IN EXPERTISE

Founded by passionate individuals dedicated to advancing medicine, Aqualane Clinical Research boasts a team of neurologists and researchers with profound expertise in both research methodologies and the central nervous system. This collective knowledge ensures that participants receive the best possible opportunities for themselves or their loved ones.

In conclusion, Aqualane Clinical Research emerges as a beacon of hope in the medical research landscape. By actively engaging in diverse trials, fostering patient-centric values, and leveraging the expertise of its founders and team, Aqualane Clinical Research contributes significantly to the advancement of medicine and provides valuable opportunities for those seeking new treatment options.

Aqualane Clinical Research is a comprehensive clinical research group focusing on advancing medical therapies in a wide array of human disease states. We provide patients with the opportunity to participate in the discovery of treatments where none currently exist or where there is an unmet need for safety and more effectiveness. By collaborating with our patients, their care partners, and sponsors in the industry, we focus on the safe and ethical study of these emerging therapies.

Aqualane Clinical Research has trials open for people with:

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Parkinson's Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Myasthenia Gravis
- Essential Tremor
- Multiple System Atrophy
- Migraine
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Other Neuropsychiatric Conditions



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Celebrate Independence and Rejuvenation: FACELIFT OPTIONS FOR A CONFIDENT JULY

As we celebrate Independence Day and the summer month of July, it's a perfect time to embrace personal freedom and independence from the visible signs of aging. One way to achieve this is by considering a facelift procedure, which can help you look and feel your best by addressing concerns in the face and neck area. With a refreshed, rejuvenated appearance, you can confidently and independently take on new challenges and opportunities that come your way.

What is a Facelift?

A facelift, or rhytidectomy, is a surgical procedure that aims to improve visible signs of aging in the face and neck. It involves tightening underlying muscles and tissues, as well as removing excess skin for a smoother, more youthful appearance.

Types of Facelifts

There are several facelift options, each designed to target specific areas:

Traditional Facelift: Targets the mid-face, lower face, and neck areas by repositioning underlying tissues and removing excess skin.

Mini Facelift: Less invasive, addressing the lower face and jawline for early signs of aging or subtler results.

Mid-Facelift: Focuses on the cheek area, restoring contours and reducing sagging.

Neck Lift: Improves the neck contour and jawline by addressing sagging skin and excess fat.

Benefits of a Facelift

Beyond cosmetic improvements, a facelift can profoundly impact overall well-being and confidence. Patients often report feeling more self-assured and vibrant after their procedure.

A facelift allows you to look as youthful as you feel inside. As we age, our outer appearance may not match our inner vitality, which can be frustrating. Bridging this gap through a facelift presents a refreshed version of yourself.

Preparation and Recovery

Consulting a board-certified plastic surgeon experienced in facelifts is crucial. They'll evaluate your concerns, discuss goals, and recommend the appropriate technique.

Preparation may involve adjusting medications, quitting smoking, and arranging post-operative care. Recovery involves swelling, bruising, and discomfort



initially. Following your surgeon's aftercare instructions and attending follow-ups ensures proper healing and optimal results.

Embrace Independence and Rejuvenation

True independence encompasses feeling self-assured in your own skin. Investing in a procedure that can boost your self-esteem aligns with the spirit of independence and taking control of your own path forward.

If you're considering a facelift, consult with a reputable plastic surgeon with confidence, knowing that you're not just enhancing your outward appearance but investing in your overall well-being and independence. Spend this July reclaiming your youthful vigor and zest for life through the rejuvenating transformations a facelift can provide.



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Dr. Kiran Gill

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

Dr. Kiran Gill is a Board Certified Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon with specialty fellowship training in aesthetic surgery of the face, breast and body. Her surgical career commenced in her hometown of Chicago, Illinois, where she completed four years of General Surgery training at Rush University Medical Center.

Following this rigorous training, Dr. Gill carried out her Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery training at Cleveland Clinic, where she developed a keen interest in aesthetic surgery of the face, breast and body. To further hone her skills, Dr. Gill accepted the Aesthetic Surgery Fellowship at the prestigious Fein Institute in Chicago.

She is an active member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons.

As the one of the only female plastic surgeons in Naples, FL, Dr. Gill has garnered the respect of her patients, colleagues, and community. Her professional integrity, compassionate care, precise surgical technique and creative innovation along with her passion for style, artistry, and beauty has quickly elevated her into one of Naples premier plastic surgeons.

PHYSICIANS REGIONAL'S HEART CENTER EXPANDS TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR LEAKING VALVE

What was once an open-heart surgery to repair a leaking mitral valve can now be done via a relatively minor procedure, with patients going home the same day.

Mitral regurgitation, which occurs when the mitral valve doesn't close properly and allows a small amount of blood to flow backwards in the heart, is the most common valve disorder in the U.S., says the National Institutes of Health. More than 2 million individuals are affected, and one study suggests that more than 10% of those age 75 and older experience mitral regurgitation.

Not all cases of mitral valve regurgitation need treatment. Some can be minor, especially in the earlier stages, but if left untreated over time can lead to more serious conditions like heart failure. In addition, when treatment is sought, patients may not be the best candidates for surgery.

That's where a Transcatheter Mitral Valve Repair procedure can be beneficial. It improves quality of life for patients - especially those at high-risk. The interdisciplinary team at Physicians Regional's Heart Center recently completed the first procedure, which involves securing a clip to the mitral valve to help it close more completely. This helps restore normal blood flow within the heart, and to the rest of the body. The clip is connected to a catheter that is inserted through a vein in the leg and guided to the heart.

"We are excited to be able to offer this new treatment to not only help improve the quality of life for patients, but to help save lives for those at high-risk who may not have had a safe alternative," said Ron Caputo, M.D., interventional cardiologist and medical director of the Structural Heart Program at Physicians Regional. He performed the first case.

Transcatheter Mitral Valve Repair has been shown to reduce hospitalizations and reduce mortality rates among those who undergo the procedure.



"We are grateful for the dedication and experience of our multidisciplinary heart team," said Physicians Regional Market CEO Scott Lowe. "This advanced technology helps Physicians Regional Heart Center stay on the forefront of cardiac care in Collier County."



For more information about the structural heart program at Physicians Regional, visit PhysiciansRegionalHeartCare.com or call (239) 363-6181.



AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. CIARAN FAIRMAN: PIONEERING EXERCISE ONCOLOGY AT INSPIRE EXERCISE MEDICINE

Health and Wellness Magazine had the privilege of conversing with Dr. Ciaran Fairman, the newly appointed Chief Scientific Officer at Inspire Exercise Medicine. Dr. Fairman, with his unique journey and expertise in exercise oncology, shared his vision of introducing innovative approaches to cancer treatment through exercise and nutrition.

H&W: Dr. Fairman, thank you for joining us. Can you tell us about your background and how you came to specialize in exercise oncology?

Dr. Fairman: Certainly. My journey and expertise have led me to a specific focus on exercise oncology. I've dedicated my training to understanding how exercise and nutrition can significantly improve the lives of cancer patients, both during and after treatment. My postdoctoral training was a deep dive into the world of resistance training for cancer patients. It was a stroke of luck that I met Bruce, a kindred spirit who shares my passion for using strength training to enhance the quality of life for cancer patients. Our collaboration felt like a natural fit, given our shared interests in lifestyle medicine and oncology.

H&W: How did your partnership with Inspire Exercise Medicine come about?

Dr. Fairman: Bruce and I first connected during our joint work with the University of Miami. I was immediately captivated by his fervor for lifestyle medicine. Bruce, on the other hand, was fascinated by my background and training under Rob Newton. It was a perfect match. Bruce extended an invitation for me to visit his clinic, and I was astounded by their cutting-edge facilities and progressive approach. This sparked discussions on how we could collaborate to develop targeted exercise programs as an innovative adjuvant therapy for cancer treatment.

H&W: Can you explain the current state of exercise oncology and your role at Inspire?

Dr. Fairman: The field of exercise oncology is relatively young, about 30 years old. Initially, the focus was on determining the safety of exercise for cancer patients. Over the past 10 to 15 years, the focus has shifted to making exercise effective in managing the side effects of cancer and its treatments. There's a growing body of research showing that exercise is both safe and effective for cancer patients. At Inspire, my role as Chief Scientific Officer involves managing a trial aimed at tailoring exercise programs for cancer patients. This includes designing the study, managing it, and ensuring it adheres to high standards of integrity and rigor.

H&W: What is unique about the exercise programs you are developing at Inspire?

Dr. Fairman: Our focus is on resistance training to help people with cancer during and after their treatments. My training combines sports performance with clinical exercise physiology, specializing in oncology. There are very few experts in the world with this specific background, so it's exciting to bring this expertise to Inspire.

We aim to use exercise not just as supportive care but as an integral part of cancer treatment. We're using precise metrics to quantify and monitor exercise doses, and we're tracking physical activity, sedentary behavior, sleep patterns, and daily symptoms to tailor and adjust exercise regimens effectively.

H&W: How do you ensure the exercise programs are effective and individualized for each patient?

Dr. Fairman: We use both subjective and objective measures to assess physical function and quality of life. This includes gold-standard tests for physical function, strength, and body composition, paired with subjective assessments of quality of life, fatigue, and cancer-related burden. We're also taking blood samples to investigate biomarkers that could predict individual responses to exercise. This approach mirrors the precision medicine model used in cancer treatments, allowing us to tailor exercise programs to each patient's unique molecular profile.

H&W: What excites you most about your work at Inspire Exercise Medicine?

Dr. Fairman: The opportunity to work with someone like Bruce, who is so passionate about using lifestyle medicine, is incredibly exciting. Exercise oncology is still fighting for recognition in the broader field of cancer care, so having a partner who understands and values this approach is invaluable. Additionally, our focus on resistance training is somewhat unique and crucial, especially for older adults who experience muscle loss and physical decline due to cancer and its treatments. Seeing patients regain strength, improve their quality of life, and achieve milestones like lifting their grandchildren again is incredibly rewarding.

H&W: Can you share a personal story that influenced your career in exercise oncology?

Dr. Fairman: My interest in this field became personal when my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer while I was in college. I was initially interested in strength and conditioning, but seeing the physical toll that cancer treatments took on my mother—her weight loss, strength decline, and frailty—made me realize the potential of exercise to counteract these effects. A mentor helped me see the connection between exercise and cancer care, and this has driven my work for the past 15 years.

H&W: How do you see your role impacting the local community in Naples?

Dr. Fairman: Beyond the long-term research goals, our work at Inspire has an immediate impact on the Naples community. We are ensuring that cancer patients here receive the best possible care through exercise programs that are grounded in cutting-edge research. This combination of immediate and long-term benefits is what makes our work so fulfilling.

H&W: Dr. Fairman, thank you for sharing your insights with us. Is there anything else you would like our readers to know?

Dr. Fairman: I'm just incredibly grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this field and to work on such an exciting project. My journey from Dublin to here has been driven by a passion for helping people through exercise oncology, and I'm honored to be part of a team that shares this vision. We're committed to advancing the science and improving the lives of cancer patients through innovative exercise and nutrition programs.

For more information or to schedule a consultation with Dr. Ciaran Fairman at Inspire Exercise Medicine, please visit Inspire Exercise Medicine's website or call (239) 555-6789.

Ciaran Fairman, Ph.D., CSCS, CET
Chief Scientific Officer

Ciaran has more than a decade of experience conducting research and developing programs specifically designed to help people with cancer recover from cancer treatments and live a full life. Ciaran received his PhD in Kinesiology with a focus on exercise oncology from The Ohio State University. He continued his training in exercise oncology during his Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship in Exercise Oncology at Edith Cowan University in Australia.

Ciaran is also an assistant professor of exercise science at the University of South Carolina, where he is the director of an exercise oncology research lab. The lab's primary research focus is examining the impact of exercise and nutrition on improving the quality of life of individuals diagnosed with cancer during and after their treatment.

Ciaran has dedicated his life to better understanding how exercise can help manage the side effects of cancer treatments and allow you to live a full life. In his role, he is committed to ensuring the exercise program and assessments at Inspire Exercise Medicine are constantly updated using the latest cutting-edge research from the field of Exercise Oncology.

Outside of IEM, Ciaran is a mediocre athlete. He continues to play soccer and Gaelic football to live out his failed high school dreams. When not playing sports, you can find him in the mountains.

- BS in Health Science, Kentucky Wesleyan College
- MS in Kinesiology, Georgia Southern University
- PhD in Kinesiology, Ohio State University
- Postdoctoral fellowship, Edith Cowan University
- American College of Sports Medicine, Cancer Exercise Trainer
- National Strength and Conditioning Association, Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist



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How Does Muscle Loss Affect Your Heart?

Sarcopenic obesity is a dual condition characterized by the coexistence of sarcopenia (loss of muscle mass and strength) and obesity (excessive fat accumulation). This condition is increasingly recognized as a significant public health concern due to its association with various adverse health outcomes, including cardiovascular mortality. Understanding the relationship between sarcopenic obesity and cardiovascular mortality is crucial for developing effective prevention and management strategies for at-risk populations.

Definition and Pathophysiology

Sarcopenia is defined by the progressive loss of skeletal muscle mass and function, which typically occurs with aging. Obesity, on the other hand, is characterized by an excessive accumulation of body fat. When these conditions coexist, the resulting state is known as sarcopenic obesity. This condition is particularly concerning because the metabolic and mechanical consequences of both sarcopenia and obesity can interact synergistically, exacerbating the risk of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs).

The pathophysiology underlying sarcopenic obesity involves a complex interplay of factors. Chronic inflammation, insulin resistance, hormonal changes, and physical inactivity are central components. Obesity is associated with a pro-inflammatory state, which can exacerbate muscle degradation and reduce muscle synthesis. Additionally, adipose tissue in obesity can release adipokines and cytokines that promote insulin resistance, further impairing muscle protein synthesis and contributing to sarcopenia.

Cardiovascular Mortality and Sarcopenic Obesity

Cardiovascular diseases are a leading cause of mortality worldwide, and individuals with sarcopenic obesity are at an elevated risk. Several mechanisms explain this heightened risk. First, the combination of reduced muscle mass and increased fat mass negatively affects cardiovascular health. Muscle tissue plays a critical role in glucose metabolism and insulin sensitivity. Reduced muscle mass in sarcopenic obesity impairs these metabolic processes, leading to hyperglycemia and insulin resistance, both of which are risk factors for cardiovascular diseases.

Second, obesity, particularly visceral adiposity, is a well-established risk factor for cardiovascular diseases. Excess adipose tissue contributes to atherogenesis (formation of plaques in the arteries) through dyslipidemia, hypertension, and chronic inflammation. In sarcopenic obesity, the detrimental effects of adiposity are compounded by the lack of protective effects provided by adequate muscle mass.

Moreover, sarcopenic obesity is associated with physical inactivity, which is an independent risk factor for cardiovascular mortality. Physical inactivity not only

contributes to the development and progression of both sarcopenia and obesity but also directly affects cardiovascular health by promoting hypertension, dyslipidemia, and endothelial dysfunction.

Evidence from Epidemiological Studies

Epidemiological studies have provided evidence linking sarcopenic obesity to increased cardiovascular mortality. Studies have demonstrated that individuals with sarcopenic obesity had a higher risk of cardiovascular mortality compared to those with either sarcopenia or obesity alone.

Studies in older adults have found that sarcopenic obesity is associated with a higher incidence of cardiovascular events, such as myocardial infarction and stroke. The dual burden of muscle loss and fat gain exacerbate the risk of cardiovascular diseases, leading to higher mortality rates.

Clinical Implications and Management

The recognition of sarcopenic obesity as a distinct clinical entity with significant cardiovascular implications necessitates targeted interventions. Addressing this condition requires a multifaceted approach that includes lifestyle modifications, pharmacological treatments, and possibly surgical interventions.

1. Lifestyle Modifications: Lifestyle changes are fundamental in managing sarcopenic obesity. Regular physical activity, particularly resistance training, is crucial for maintaining and improving muscle mass and strength. Aerobic exercise can help reduce fat mass and improve cardiovascular health. A balanced diet rich in protein and low in refined sugars and unhealthy fats is also essential.

2. Pharmacological Treatments: Medications that address both obesity and muscle loss may be beneficial. For example, anabolic agents can help increase muscle mass, while weight loss medications can reduce fat mass. However, the use of pharmacological treatments should be individualized and closely monitored.

3. Surgical Interventions: In severe cases of obesity, bariatric surgery may be considered. This approach not only helps in significant weight loss but also has been shown to improve body composition and reduce cardiovascular risk factors. However, surgery should be accompanied by lifestyle changes to ensure long-term success.

4. Comprehensive Care: A multidisciplinary approach involving dietitians, physiotherapists, and healthcare providers is essential for effective management.

Regular monitoring and tailored interventions can help mitigate the risks associated with sarcopenic obesity.

5. Diagnostic and Risk Assessment Tools: At DexaFit Naples, we have the tools to examine your body composition and determine if you have this condition. We can provide an in-depth analysis of your individual cardiovascular risk. Our comprehensive assessments include advanced imaging techniques, such as dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA), which precisely measure body composition, including fat and muscle mass. We are also able to measure your handgrip strength and correlate it with a cohort of individuals similar to you. This allows us to identify sarcopenic obesity accurately and tailor a personalized management plan to reduce your cardiovascular risk.

Conclusion

Sarcopenic obesity is a complex condition that significantly increases the risk of cardiovascular mortality. The interplay between muscle loss and fat gain creates a metabolic environment

conducive to cardiovascular diseases. Understanding the mechanisms and implications of this condition is crucial for developing effective prevention and management strategies. By adopting a comprehensive approach that includes lifestyle modifications, pharmacological treatments, and surgical interventions, it is possible to reduce the cardiovascular mortality associated with sarcopenic obesity and improve overall health outcomes. DexaFit Naples is equipped to support individuals in identifying and managing this condition, thereby enhancing their cardiovascular health and overall well-being.



Julian Javier, MD - Leandro Perez, MD - Tracy Roth, MD - Sandraliz Solano, MD



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Understanding Spinal Injuries

By Dr. Michael Shaffer

Spinal injuries can significantly impact an individual's life, ranging from temporary discomfort to severe, life-altering conditions. These injuries often require immediate medical attention to prevent long-term complications. Chiropractic management offers care of nonsurgical spinal injuries. This may include spinal manipulation (spinal adjustments), physical therapy modalities, prescribed exercises to restrengthen and rehabilitate, and a review of proper body mechanics. Below, we delve into the various types of spinal injuries and introduce a nonsurgical treatment option known as spinal decompression.



COMMON TYPES OF SPINAL INJURIES

1. Whiplash

Whiplash, clinically called Cervical Acceleration-Deceleration (CAD) injury, occurs when the head is abruptly thrust backward and forward, commonly due to rear-end car collisions. This rapid motion can injure the cervical spine's muscles, ligaments, tendons, and discs (neck region). Symptoms may include neck pain, stiffness, headaches, and dizziness.

2. Sprains and Strains

A strain involves injury to muscles or tendons, while a sprain affects ligaments. Both injuries can result from overuse, overstretching, or sudden, forceful movements, such as those experienced in car accidents. Symptoms typically include pain, swelling, and reduced range of motion.

3. Slip and Fall Injuries

These injuries, often called slip, trip, and fall accidents, occur due to hazardous conditions like wet floors, uneven surfaces, or poor lighting. Such incidents can lead to fractures, sprains, strains, and even spinal injuries, necessitating prompt medical evaluation.

4. Repetitive Use or Overuse Injuries

Repetitive use injuries, also known as repetitive motion or stress injuries, are caused by continuous repetitive motions affecting muscles, nerves, ligaments, and tendons. These injuries can impact various body parts, including the back, shoulders, neck, and arms.

5. Sports Injuries

Athletes of all levels are susceptible to sports injuries, ranging from minor sprains and strains to severe fractures and ligament tears. These injuries can involve the spine and/or extremities.

6. Sleep Posture Injuries

Improper sleeping positions can lead to discomfort and injury in various body parts, including the neck, shoulders, back, hips, and knees. Ensuring proper sleep posture and using supportive bedding can help prevent these injuries.

7. Improper Lifting Injuries

Improper lifting techniques can cause spinal injuries ranging from mild strains to severe disc herniation. Proper training in lifting techniques and overall fitness are crucial in preventing these injuries.

8. Work Injuries

Occupational injuries can occur in diverse settings and range from minor cuts to severe accidents causing long-term disability. Common work injuries include repetitive strain injuries, falls, and herniated discs.

9. Tech Neck

"Tech neck" describes the strain and discomfort experienced in the neck and shoulders due to prolonged use of technology devices. This condition results from poor posture, characterized by a forward head position and rounded shoulders, which increases pressure on the cervical spine.

NONSURGICAL SPINAL DECOMPRESSION

Non-surgical spinal decompression treatment has been gaining popularity in the United States and worldwide in recent years. It's a non-invasive treatment that can help relieve back pain and other symptoms by gently stretching the spine and reducing pressure on the spinal discs, nerves, and surrounding structures. It can be used to treat a variety of conditions, including herniated discs, sciatica, degenerative disc disease, spinal stenosis, and facet joint syndrome.

HOW NONSURGICAL SPINAL DECOMPRESSION WORKS

1. Preparation: The patient is fitted with a harness around their pelvis and another around their trunk. They lie down on a table controlled by a computer to provide precise decompression.

2. Decompression Session: Decompression Session: The table gently stretches the spine, creating negative intradiscal pressure. This process can aid in repositioning bulging or herniated discs and promoting the movement of water, oxygen, and nutrient-rich fluids into the discs, facilitating healing.

3. Duration and Frequency: Each session lasts 30 to 45 minutes. A typical treatment plan may require 20 to 28 sessions over five to seven weeks.

BENEFITS OF NONSURGICAL SPINAL DECOMPRESSION

- **Pain Relief:** Decompression therapy can significantly reduce pain associated with herniated or bulging discs, sciatica, and other spinal conditions.
- **Improved Vitality:** By reducing disc pressure and nerve compression, patients often experience improved mobility and flexibility.
- **Non-Invasive:** As a non-invasive treatment, spinal decompression avoids the risks associated with surgery and has minimal recovery time.
- **Holistic Approach:** Often combined with other therapies such as physical therapy, exercise, and lifestyle modifications for comprehensive spine health.



CONSULT DR. SHAFFER

Spinal injuries, ranging from whiplash to repetitive stress injuries, can significantly impact daily activities and overall quality of life. Nonsurgical spinal decompression

offers a promising treatment option for various spinal conditions, providing pain relief and improved mobility without the risks associated with surgery. If you suffer from spinal pain or injury, consult with call Dr. Shaffer to explore your treatment options and begin your journey to recovery.

Dr. Shaffer has been serving Collier County since 1981. He specializes in spinal care, chronic and acute musculoskeletal conditions, injury, and rehabilitation. Most insurance is accepted as well as auto-accident and work-related injury cases. The staff will review and clarify your coverage. Non-Surgical Spinal Decompression is an elective procedure. To determine if you are a candidate, call for a complimentary consultation. (239) 793-3200.



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CARF ACCREDITATION: YOUR ASSURANCE OF EXCELLENCE IN SENIOR LIVING

By Jenny Bradley

As you or your loved ones consider the next chapter of life in a retirement community, one of the most critical factors to consider is the quality of care and services provided. Just as you would seek out a five-star hotel for your vacation, you should look for the highest standard in senior living: CARF accreditation.

CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. Their accreditation is the pinnacle of achievement for retirement communities, signifying a commitment to excellence that goes above and beyond industry norms.

Why CARF Accreditation Matters:

1. Third-Party Validation: CARF accreditation isn't a self-awarded pat on the back. It's a rigorous, unbiased assessment conducted by experts in senior care. This third-party review ensures that the community's claims of quality are substantiated by an objective, knowledgeable source.

2. Exceeding Industry Standards: To earn CARF accreditation, a community must not only meet but exceed recognized industry standards.

3. Comprehensive Evaluation: CARF looks at every aspect of the community - from resident care and safety to financial stability and governance.

4. Continuous Improvement: Accreditation isn't a one-time achievement. Communities must undergo reaccreditation every three years, demonstrating a commitment to ongoing improvement and adaptation to evolving best practices.

5. Transparency and Accountability: CARF-accredited communities voluntarily open their doors to a team of CARF surveyors. This transparency speaks volumes about their confidence in their services and their accountability to residents and families.

CARF-accredited communities offer numerous benefits. When you choose a CARF-accredited retirement community, you're not just selecting a place to live; you're opting for a lifestyle that prioritizes your well-being, dignity and quality of life.

Here's what that means for you:

• **Person-Centered Care:** CARF standards emphasize individualized care plans that respect your unique needs, preferences and goals. For example, at The Carlisle Naples, which has earned four consecutive three-year accreditations, the CARF survey team praised the active retirement community's 'truly person-centered approach to care that forms the foundation of everything that happens in the community' and noted that residents stated, 'Everyone knows my name' and 'They know what I like.'

• **Safety and Security:** From emergency preparedness to medication management, CARF-accredited communities adhere to stringent safety protocols, giving you and your loved one peace of mind.

• **Robust Programming:** From fitness classes to arts and culture, CARF-accredited communities offer diverse, enriching activities catering to residents' physical, mental and social well-being. The Carlisle Naples' Zest initiative was recognized for its 'variety of engaging activities to meet every interest while staying open to new ideas and opportunities that enhance offerings available to residents' and that the program promotes freedom and independence.

• **Financial Stability:** CARF evaluates the financial health of communities, reducing the risk of unexpected closures or changes in ownership that could disrupt your life.

• **Engaged and Qualified Staff:** These communities invest in their staff, ensuring they are well-trained, compassionate and committed to resident satisfaction. The Carlisle Naples' senior leadership and interdisciplinary teams were acknowledged in the most recent CARF accreditation, with surveyors finding they 'have formed a passionate and committed care team that continually demonstrates a philosophy of person-centered services.'

• **Community Engagement:** These communities foster strong connections with the broader community, offering opportunities for volunteering, lifelong learning and intergenerational activities.

• **Innovative Practices:** CARF pushes communities to embrace new technologies and methodologies that enhance resident care, from telemedicine to state-of-the-art therapy equipment. At The Carlisle, onsite health care providers, known as the MyCare Clinic and EmpowerMe Wellness, offer physical,

occupational and speech therapies. These preventative health care options support better health outcomes and provide peace of mind.

Choosing a retirement community is a significant decision. By selecting a CARF-accredited community, you choose one that has proven its dedication to the highest standards of care, service and resident satisfaction.

"Our accreditation is a testament to our commitment to upholding CARF's rigorous standards of excellence," said The Carlisle's Executive Director Bill Diamond. "It's a promise of quality, a commitment to continuous improvement, and a testament to our unwavering focus on what matters most: you."

Located at 6945 Carlisle Court in Naples, The Carlisle offers independent and assisted living lifestyles featuring spacious one-and two-bedroom residences, dedicated housekeeping and flat linen services, basic cable TV, all utilities except telephone, and elevated dining with daily, chef-prepared specials. The community is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), an important distinction that provides residents with the assurance that the highest standards of quality care, services and safeguards are maintained. For more information about the community, please call 239-221-0017 or visit www.TheCarlisleNaples.com.



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THE ULTIMATE PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY RELIEF PROGRAM

By Richard Hiler, DABCN

Peripheral neuropathy is a complex condition. Finding the root cause and the extent of damage and to what types of nerves or blood vessels is how a comprehensive plan is customized to regenerate a patient's nerves cells and tissues. Conventional medicine has no answers. It's either live with it or take addicting medications for the pain, most commonly gabapentin.

Very few physicians are trained to treat the condition. Success ideally involves collaboration of medical personnel, chiropractic and or physical therapy personnel, and functional neurology. At Feel Amazing Spine & Joint Institute this is what we offer.

What is the Ultimate Neuropathy Program?

There are several clinics in SWFL that propose a treatment for peripheral neuropathy. There are dozens of treatments that have shown to be beneficial for the diagnosis. Many clinics do one or two of these treatment options but very few can combine and offer dozens of these options.

At Feel Amazing Spine & Joint Institute, we were the original clinic to create a comprehensive Neuropathy program back in 2006. There was a learning curve and results varied at first. After 16 years of experience, becoming board-certified in functional neurology, and becoming medically integrated, my clinic now has it down to a science. In 2017 my office was one of the first in the country, and I believe still the only in southwest Florida, to offer regenerative medicine and natural biologics as options for peripheral neuropathy. To date this has been the most significant endeavor to enhance results for our clients.

All neuropathies are not the same and require different programs.

Because what works well for one person may not necessarily work well for another, it's never a good idea to depend on just one or two treatments. It is just as easy to combine many types of treatments to improve the chances and the amount of success. Also the treatment must be individualized and specific.

The Ultimate Neuropathy Program should include advanced technologies to be done at a physician's office as well as treatments for self-care at home. It may include vitamin and wellness infusions to



enhance the body's internal environment for healing. It may include light therapies, electrical therapies, sound and pressure wave therapies, Pulsed electro-magnetic field therapies, regenerative medicine options, as well as lifestyle and nutritional recommendations.

Many clinics do a Toronto Clinical Neuropathy assessment and score. Some will do an infrared heat map of the feet. However, without an extensive neurological training, the interpretation of the score and image is what is key.

What to do and what not to do, and when?

Is the neuropathy peripheral or central? Big nerves or small nerves? Motor, sensory, autonomic, or all the above? One nerve or many nerves? How will the treatment differ if it's both feet, both hands, equal damage bilaterally, or worse on one side? How will the treatment differ if there is burning pain, numbness, loss of balance, weakness, or complicated by back pain or stenosis? What if the neuropathy affects the entire body? Is there a treatment for that? Yes, there are several.

Our clinic has a very sophisticated computer analysis that measures peripheral nerve function, peripheral vascular function, and central nerve function with a score for each, and an extensive report breaking down the many physiological and metabolic components. The test can be repeated after a treatment regimen and the improvement measured and quantified.



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What modalities are used for improvement?

These are prescribed on an individual basis after a thorough assessment:

- Five different electrical therapies
- Four possible light therapies
- Four types of vibration therapy
- Class 4 high powered lasers
- Pulsed electromagnetic fields (PEMF)
- Soundwave/Shockwave/pressure waves
- Ozone therapy and/or peptide therapy
- Spinal decompression therapy (often not needed)
- Natural supplementation and/or vitamin-wellness infusions
- Injections or infusions of Natural Biologics including Wharton's jelly allografts, growth factors, and platelet rich plasma.

What kind of results can be achieved through the ultimate neuropathy treatment program at Feel Amazing Joint & Spine Institute?

Our patients report that better than 90% have excellent results. Most who undergo the treatment experience the following: reduced pain, reduced tingling and numbness, ability to experience normal touch without pain, reduce cold or burning sensations, improved balance and coordination, lowered dependency on medication, improved sleep, relief of restless legs, reduced swelling and inflammation, improved muscle function.

An important side benefit of the treatment is that it reduces the risk of falls significantly by improving balance and position awareness of the feet.

Feel Amazing Spine & Joint Institute is equipped to diagnose and help a wide range of conditions that include:

- Peripheral neuropathy
- Severe neck and back pain
- Shoulder, elbow, or wrist pain
- Hip, knee, ankle, or foot pain
- Headache, dizziness, vertigo, or balance problems
- Disc bulge, herniation, sciatica, or stenosis
- Auto accident, whiplash injuries

If you are in need of a highly experienced Chiropractic Neurologist in Naples, FL, look no further than **Feel Amazing Spine & Joint Institute**. For more information or to schedule your initial consultation, call us today!

Dr. Richard Hiler DABCN, is a board-certified Chiropractic Neurologist with more than 27 years of clinical experience. Dr. Hiler and his team offer a complementary telephone consultation. For questions or to schedule an appointment contact the office at 239.330.1000.

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO COMMON SUMMERTIME SKIN CONCERNS

By Svetlana Kogan, M.D. IFMCP

One of the challenges of living in a beach town is dealing with the UV light skin damage. As they age, many people find themselves "paying the price" for all those days spent in the sun without proper protection. Thousands of dollars are subsequently spent on cancerous lesion excisions, lasers, and skin resurfacing. All of this can be avoided if we remember the basic tenets of safe sunbathing. If you like going to the beach or playing tennis or golf or pickle ball - do it early in the morning and return back indoors at 11 am at the latest. Midday sun is very harmful in its carcinogenic UV content and if you want to return to the outdoors safely - do it after 5 pm.

Make sure you consult with your doctor about any of your prescription medications being potentially compromising to your skin in the sun. Believe it or not, but many prescription and over the counter drugs can lead to photo toxicity. What happens in photo toxicity is that sun's UV rays interact with a drug's chemistry to produce a skin reaction that looks and feels like sunburn. In that case, you can either ask the doctor to change you to a different medication, or simply avoid the dangerous midday sun, while applying SPF 70 or above when going outdoors in the morning or in the early evening.

Even if you are not taking any photosensitizing medication, there are some wonderful natural remedies that can help boost your resilience to sun's cancer-causing effects. One of them is vitamin C. This powerful nutrient helps skin bounce back from sun exposure by accelerating repair and neutralizing UV-activated free radicals. You can either take vitamin C in a pill form 500 mg twice a day, or choose to eat fruits or vegetables naturally high in vitamin C, such as strawberries, citrus fruits and bell peppers. Consult with your doctor about whether vitamin C is safe for you to take. It is not safe to take with some health conditions, such as certain kinds of kidney stones or high iron conditions such as hemochromatosis, and some others.



Another natural gift from Mother Nature is tomatoes. Tomatoes contain lycopene, an antioxidant which is proven to neutralize reactive oxygen species, commonly called free radicals - that cause skin cell damage following sun exposure. Cooking tomatoes actually helps to make this healing lycopene more bioavailable, so grilled tomatoes and tomato-based soups and sauces are your best bet. In fact, volunteers in one study who consumed 5 tablespoons of tomato paste daily, increased their skin sunburn resistance by 33%. Once again, tomatoes are not something everyone should be eating. If you are suffering from GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), gastritis, or rosacea - stay away from tomatoes.

Interestingly, while some foods possess skin-healing properties, others can be quite damaging. Consider lime, celery, and parsley for example. All of these wonderful veggies contain psoralens. When our hands' skin comes in touch with these veggies, the psoralens in them can induce phyto-photo-dermatitis - a sunlight-fueled reaction marked by hyperpigmentation. I recommend washing your hands thoroughly after prepping dishes which contain these trigger foods and not eating them in direct sunlight.

Photo sensitivity and photo allergy can also arise from using some skin creams, especially if they contain salicylates, cinnamates, benzophenone, and 6-methylcoumarin. When UV rays strike these chemicals on your skin, certain metabolites form in the skin itself. In some women, the immune system can respond by producing itchy redness, typically a few hours after sun exposure. So even if you develop a rash at night, try to avoid the ingredients above.

If you already happened to develop itchy redness on the sun-exposed skin, try using natural products which can help quell the inflammation. The most well-known remedy of course is Aloe Vera - it is widely available over the counter and in the drugstores in a lotion or gel form. Another good one is iced green tea. When taken internally, its polyphenols boost skin cell DNA's resistance to sun-induced mutations that set the stage for cancer. Additionally, iced green tea will also work beautifully as a topical soother. When applied as a cool compress, the polyphenols have an anti-inflammatory action that calms redness and stinging. Lastly, I find calendula ice cubes very helpful for this. Just brew a cup of calendula tea, cool and strain it. Pour it into the ice cube tray and freeze. Use a cube topically as needed to rescue skin from sun rash, sun allergy, and other photosensitive rashes.

And it's not only the sun rays themselves that can pose a threat to our skin in the summer. Skin infections caused by the drug-resistant strain of staphylococcus known as MRSA are 30 % more common in the summer, partly because the exposed skin is more prone to cuts. If you have stepped on a shell, and the wound is superficial, clean it with sterile water and hydrogen peroxide and then smear a thin layer of dark raw honey on the affected area. Traditionally dark unprocessed honey has anti-bacterial properties which can help ward off infections in uncomplicated cuts. Now that you know so much more about your skin's risks and remedies - have a safe and healthy summer!



Svetlana Kogan, M.D. IFMCP
The author of 'Diet Slave No More!', Svetlana Kogan, MD is a Board-Certified Internal Medicine, Holistic & Functional Medical Doctor with 25 years of experience. She has appeared as a health expert on prime-time TV and radio stations and has authored hundreds of holistic health articles for internet and print. She moved her Concierge Practice from Manhattan NYC to Naples in 2019. Her Functional Medicine Primary Care Practice is focused on prevention and holistic approach to illness, and longevity.

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JULY IS UV SAFETY MONTH: PROTECTING YOUR EYES FROM HARMFUL RAYS

As the summer sun reaches its peak intensity, July marks an important reminder of the need for UV safety. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun's rays can have severe consequences for our eye health, particularly when it comes to the development of cataracts. This UV Safety Month, it's crucial to understand the risks and take proactive measures to safeguard your vision.

The Threat of Excessive UV Exposure

UV radiation, categorized as UVA, UVB, and UVC, is an invisible form of electromagnetic radiation emitted by the sun. While UVC rays are largely blocked by the Earth's atmosphere, UVA and UVB rays can penetrate and cause harm to the eyes and surrounding skin.

Prolonged exposure to UV rays, especially without proper protection, can lead to various eye conditions, including cataracts. Cataracts are a clouding of the eye's natural lens, which can impair vision and, if left untreated, may eventually lead to blindness.

The Formation of Cataracts

The lens of the human eye is primarily composed of water and protein. When exposed to excessive UV radiation over time, the protein structures within the lens can become damaged and clump together, causing the lens to become opaque or cloudy. This cloudiness is what we refer to as a cataract.

Initially, cataracts may not significantly impact vision, but as they progress, they can cause blurred or double vision, sensitivity to light and glare, and a diminished perception of colors. Cataracts are a leading cause of visual impairment worldwide, and the risk increases with age, UV exposure, and other factors such as diabetes, smoking, and certain medications.

Protecting Your Eyes from UV Damage

The good news is that cataracts are largely preventable by taking appropriate precautions against UV exposure. Here are some simple yet effective strategies to incorporate into your routine:

1. Wear Sunglasses: Invest in high-quality sunglasses that offer 100% protection against both UVA and UVB rays. Look for sunglasses labeled as "UV400," which block all UV rays up to 400 nanometers in wavelength.

2. Use Hats and Shades: Broad-brimmed hats and shades can provide additional protection by blocking UV rays from entering the eyes from various angles.

3. Limit Midday Sun Exposure: The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so try to minimize outdoor activities during these peak hours or seek shaded areas when possible.

4. Apply Sunscreen: While sunscreen is primarily designed to protect your skin, it can also offer some protection for the delicate areas around your eyes. Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.

5. Consider UV-Blocking Lenses: For those who wear eyeglasses or contact lenses, consider investing in lenses with built-in UV protection to further shield your eyes from harmful rays.

Early Detection and Treatment

Regular eye exams are crucial for detecting cataracts in their early stages, when treatment options are more effective. If cataracts are diagnosed, your eye care professional may recommend various treatment options, including:

1. Prescription Eyeglasses or Contact Lenses: In the early stages, updated prescriptions may help improve vision while managing the cataract.

2. Cataract Surgery: For advanced cataracts, surgery to remove the clouded lens and replace it with an artificial intraocular lens is often recommended. This procedure is generally safe and effective in restoring clear vision.

By prioritizing UV safety during the summer months and throughout the year, you can significantly reduce your risk of developing cataracts and other eye-related issues. Remember, taking proactive steps to protect your eyes today can help ensure clear vision for years to come.

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JON R. BERLIE, M.D.
LASIK, Cataract & Lens
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Dr. Berlie is a board-certified ophthalmologist who specializes in LASIK and premium lens cataract surgery. He has been serving the Naples community for over 20 years. Dr. Berlie achieves superior visual outcomes for his cataract patients by utilizing the latest lens technology combined with state of the art equipment. His expertise in this area has led the Center For Sight Naples office to be recognized as the "Best Eye Center" in Naples, FL for the past 15 years. In addition to laser cataract surgery, Dr. Berlie performs vision correction procedures including All Laser LASIK, Epi-LASEK, Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE) and Implantable Contact Lenses. He is also skilled in reconstructive and cosmetic eyelid surgery. He has been honored as one of America's "Top Doctors" by the prestigious Top Doctors list, published annually by Castle Connolly Medical, Ltd.

Dr. Berlie completed his undergraduate training at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada and the California State University of San Bernardino where he received the California State University of San Bernardino Research Scholarship Award. He then attended Creighton University School of Medicine in Omaha, Nebraska where he graduated Cum Laude, was elected as Class President, and received the Senior of the Year Award. He completed his internship in internal medicine also at Creighton University Medical Center.

Dr. Berlie continued his education at the University of Nebraska Medical Center where he completed his ophthalmology residency and received the awards of Chief Resident and the Resident of the Year Award. Dr. Berlie then went on to Saint Anthony Hospital in Oklahoma City to complete his fellowship training in Oculoplastic and Aesthetic Laser Surgery.

Cord Blood Awareness Month:

Exploring the Benefits of Umbilical Cord Tissue and Stem Cells for Holistic Health

By Sonny Gresning

July is Cord Blood Awareness Month, a perfect time to delve into the incredible benefits of umbilical cord tissue and stem cells for holistic health. As more people seek natural alternatives to pharmaceuticals, the healing potential of stem cells offers a promising, safe, and effective option for addressing a variety of health concerns, including joint health, back pain, and systemic issues.

The Miracle of Stem Cells

Stem cells are unique because they are zero days old at the time of collection, meaning they are in their most potent state. These cells have the remarkable ability to differentiate into any type of tissue in the body, giving them limitless possibilities for healing and regeneration. Unlike traditional medications that often focus on symptom management, stem cells address the root cause of health issues, promoting true healing from within.

Joint Health and Pain Relief

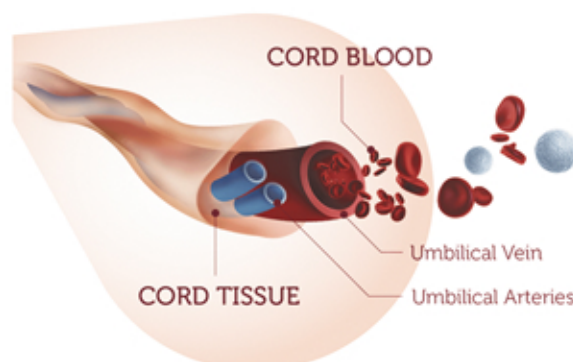
Joint pain, whether from arthritis, injury, or general wear and tear, can significantly impact quality of life. Traditional treatments often involve anti-inflammatory drugs or painkillers, which may come with side effects and only provide temporary relief. Stem cells, however, offer a natural approach to joint health. By injecting stem cells directly into the affected joint, the body's own repair mechanisms are stimulated, leading to the regeneration of damaged tissues and reducing inflammation. This process not only alleviates pain but also restores function and mobility, offering a long-term solution rather than a quick fix.

Back Pain Management

Back pain is another common issue that many people struggle with daily. While pain medications and invasive surgeries are common treatments, they often fail to provide lasting relief. Stem cell therapy, on the other hand, presents a non-invasive and natural alternative. By introducing stem cells into the damaged areas of the spine, the body can repair and regenerate the affected tissues. This regenerative process can significantly reduce pain, improve flexibility, and enhance overall spinal health without the risks associated with surgery or long-term drug use.

Systemic Health Benefits

The benefits of stem cells extend beyond joint and back health. Their regenerative properties make them a powerful tool for addressing systemic health issues. Research shows benefits when stem cells are used to ADDRESS (not treat) a variety of conditions, such as



autoimmune diseases, cardiovascular problems, and even some neurological disorders. By targeting the underlying causes of these diseases, stem cells can help restore balance and promote overall wellness.

A Natural Approach to Healing

One of the greatest advantages of using stem cells from umbilical cord tissue is their natural origin. Unlike synthetic drugs, stem cells work harmoniously with the body's own healing processes. This natural approach minimizes the risk of side effects and maximizes the potential for true, long-lasting healing. Moreover, because these cells are collected at birth, they are free from the aging effects and environmental damage that adult cells may have, making them incredibly potent.

Embracing True Regeneration

The focus on holistic health is about more than just managing symptoms; it's about achieving true regeneration and wellness. Stem cell therapy embodies this philosophy by offering a treatment that not only alleviates pain but also heals the body on a cellular level. This leads to better outcomes, improved health, and a higher quality of life.

Conclusion

As we celebrate Cord Blood Awareness Month this July, it's essential to recognize the transformative potential of umbilical cord tissue and stem cells. Their ability to regenerate and heal offers a natural, effective alternative to traditional pharmaceuticals. By embracing stem cell therapy, individuals can experience profound improvements in joint health, back pain, and overall systemic health, paving the way for a healthier, more vibrant life. If you're interested in exploring this holistic approach, consider consulting with a healthcare professional to learn more about how stem cell therapy can benefit you.

The Well Infused Path to Success

Well Infused is a pioneering health and wellness center that takes a comprehensive, personalized approach to address the root causes of your health

concerns. Their innovative and holistic methods are tailored to each individual's unique needs, whether you're seeking relief from joint pain, immune or autoimmune issues, low energy levels, hormone imbalances, or looking to unlock the ultimate anti-aging and biohacking solutions.

At the heart of Well Infused's approach is their signature 72+ Biomarker Functional and Hormone Lab Panel, which provides invaluable insights into every aspect of your health. This in-depth analysis ensures that their recommendations are precisely tailored to your most pressing concerns and goals. After reviewing your lab results with their expert providers, you can select a customized plan of action, often beginning with one of their specialized memberships in functional medicine, hormone optimization, or executive wellness.

Well Infused's commitment to results is unwavering. They regularly re-evaluate the biomarkers they aim to improve, continuously adjusting their action plan to ensure you achieve the desired outcomes. This iterative process, combined with their cutting-edge techniques and personalized care, sets Well Infused apart as a true pioneer in the realm of holistic health-care, offering a fusion of services that address the root causes of your symptoms and empower you to achieve optimal well-being.

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EXPLORING THE SPECTRUM OF NEUROTOXINS IN COSMETICS: ENHANCING BEAUTY SAFELY

In the world of cosmetics, the pursuit of beauty often involves exploring innovative ingredients and formulations. Among these, neurotoxins have gained attention for their potential to reverse the natural signs of aging, when used judiciously. However, the word "toxin" may evoke apprehension, conjuring images of danger and harm. The results of neurotoxin lie in the expertise of your injector, and results can be very natural, allowing you to look like the more relaxed version of yourself.

For those concerned about the safety of toxin, it is important to remember that it is used for medical purposes as well. While Botox may be most commonly known for its usefulness as a cosmetic anti-aging treatment, that was not the original intention for it. More units are injected for medical reasons than cosmetic reasons! Neurotoxin is used to treat neck spasms, sweating, over-active bladder, lazy eye, and migraine headaches.

One of the most widely recognized toxins in cosmetics is botulinum toxin, commonly known as Botox® Cosmetic. Derived from the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*, Botox is revered for its ability to reduce the appearance of wrinkles by temporarily paralyzing facial muscles. By inhibiting muscle contractions, Botox smoothes out lines and creases, offering a youthful, rejuvenated look. Its effectiveness and FDA approval in treating the crow's feet (laugh or smile lines), forehead furrows (horizontal creases across the forehead), and frown lines (the so called "11's") has made it a staple in cosmetic clinics worldwide. The results of toxin last, on average, 3-4 months in most patients.

There are now a wide variety of neurotoxins available. The differences between toxins are subtle, and all of them deliver a similar effect. The current lineup of toxins available in the United States are Botox, Dysport, Jeuveau, Xeomin, and Daxxify. Letybo, the leading neurotoxin brand in South Korea, is set to launch in the U.S. in the second half of 2024.



An expert injector will also be able to utilize toxin with more advanced techniques in other areas of the face. These off-label injection treatments can target the jelly roll under the eye, the bunny lines on the side of the nose, a gummy smile, the vertically oriented lines around the lips, or a downward turned smile.

These more advanced techniques require an injector with an understanding of complex facial anatomy, but can deliver nice results for these problem areas.

One of the latest trends in toxin injections is the "lip flip," especially for a patient who is apprehensive about getting filler injected in the lips. This technique involves injecting four to six units of Botox above the upper lip at the center and near the corners of the mouth. The primary effect of the lip flip is to relax the muscles that connect to the upper lip, allowing the lip to relax and curl outward, thereby appearing larger and more defined in shape. It is important to note that the results of a lip flip last less than

traditionally injected areas. A lip flip lasts 6-8 weeks, as these muscles are in constant motion from talking and chewing.

Neurotoxin injections are relatively easy to undergo, and have no down-time after the procedure. You may have tiny swollen areas (similar to mosquito bites) in the injected areas that will resolve within five to ten minutes after injections. There may be minor bruising in the injected areas. You should refrain from massaging the injected areas, remain upright for 4 hours after injections, and avoid heavy sweating for 24 hours post-procedure.

Neurotoxin injections can be highly customizable, and results can be tailored to suit your needs. Less toxin will achieve a more natural result, while more toxin will result in a more "frozen" appearance. It is important to express your desired result to your injector.

In conclusion, while the idea of toxins in cosmetics may initially spark concern, their judicious use under professional guidance can yield remarkable aesthetic benefits. From smoothing wrinkles to enhancing hair and nails, toxins play a multifaceted role in the pursuit of beauty. However, it's crucial to prioritize safety and informed decision-making when considering cosmetic treatments involving toxins, ensuring both efficacy and well-being go hand in hand.

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Ladies, If You Are Looking for a New Urologist, Consider a Urogynecologist

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

What is Urogynecology?

Many women experience problems that overlap between the fields of gynecology and urology, and they often bounce back and forth between the two specialties. Urogynecology bridges that gap and allows for both of these issues to be addressed by one physician. The field of Urogynecology is a subspecialty within Obstetrics and Gynecology and is dedicated to the study and treatment of pelvic floor disorders in women. Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery (a.k.a. Urogynecology) is a subspecialty that incorporates the tremendous advancements made in the last decade in the diagnosis and treatment of female pelvic floor disorders. If you suffer from any of the following symptoms, you may benefit from a consultation with a Urogynecologist.

Expert treatment for the following symptoms:

- **Incontinence:** Loss of bladder or bowel control (accidental loss of urine or stool).
- **Prolapse:** Displacement of the pelvic organs (uterus, bladder and rectum) beyond the normal position of the vaginal walls. Symptoms include a visible bulge and pelvic pressure. These conditions are sometimes referred to as a “dropped bladder”, “dropped uterus” or “dropped rectum”.
- **Overactive bladder symptoms:** Frequent need to urinate, urgency, incontinence and night-time frequency.
- **Emptying Disorders:** Difficulty urinating or moving bowels.
- **Pelvic (or bladder) Pain:** Discomfort, burning or spasm within the bladder, urethra or vagina. May also manifest as pain with sexual intercourse.
- **Bowel Control Conditions:** Constipation and bowel control issues/incontinence.
- **Recurrent urinary tract infections.**
- **Cosmetic Gynecology**
- **Sexual Dysfunction**

Board certification means that a Urogynecologist has obtained training and experience beyond that of a general OB/Gyn or Urologist. Urogynecologists deal only with the evaluation and treatment of conditions that affect the female pelvic organs, nerves,



muscles and connective tissue that support these organs. The additional training focuses on the surgical and non-surgical treatment of noncancerous gynecologic problems.

When Should I See a Urogynecologist?

If you're struggling with pelvic floor dysfunction, pain, or incontinence, you should seek treatment immediately. Consulting with a Urogynecologist can help to achieve an accurate diagnosis of your condition and provide information on the full spectrum of treatment options available. Specialized training enables a Urogynecologist to blend elements of gynecology, urology and gastroenterology to treat the entire pelvic floor.

Treatments may include conservative (non-surgical) or outpatient surgical therapy to cure or relieve your symptoms. While your primary care physician, Urologist or OB/Gyn may have knowledge about these problems, a Urogynecologist can manage all these pelvic floor conditions simultaneously.

Urogynecology Treatment Options

A Urogynecologist can recommend a variety of therapies to cure or relieve symptoms of prolapse, urinary, gas or fecal incontinence, or other pelvic floor dysfunction symptoms. He may advise treatments based on your personal needs and lifestyle, the severity of your condition and your general health. Conservative options include medications, pelvic exercises, behavioral and/or dietary modifications and vaginal devices (also called pessaries).

Biofeedback and Electrical Stimulation are two newer treatment modalities that your Urogynecologist may recommend. Safe and effective outpatient surgical procedures are also utilized by the Urogynecologist to treat incontinence and prolapse. A Urogynecologist will discuss all of the options that are available to treat your specific problem(s) before you are asked to make any treatment decisions.

It's easy to become embarrassed by pelvic and bladder disorders, but you do not have to suffer with these problems or associated pain. Florida Bladder Institute provides compassionate, thorough urogynecological care for all women. Whether you face pelvic issues as a result of aging, delivering babies, illness, or trauma, we can provide proper treatment and counseling so you can enjoy an active, healthy life-style.

Call 239-449-7979 today to schedule an appointment with Joseph Gauta M.D. to learn how proper urogynecological care can benefit you. Don't suffer in silence any longer; there is help available.



Joseph Gauta, MD



Nicole Houser, PA-C



Lisa Mark, MD



Amy Goetz, PA-C


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Happy Feet—Happy Life— How Foot Procedures Can Help

Michael J. Petrocelli, D.P.M., F.A.C.F.A.S., C.W.S.P.
Board Certified Ankle and Foot Surgeon and Board Certified Wound Care Specialist

If you have pain in your feet from issues such as bunions, plantar fasciitis, hammertoes or multiple other conditions, you may have tried different at-home remedies like self-massage, soaking, taping or bracing, but these often leave individuals still in pain and dealing with stiffness, immobility and the list goes on and on.

The force we place on our feet each day with every step is two to three times your body weight. To put it in perspective, if a person weighs 150 lbs., they can potentially be putting 450 lbs. of pressure on their feet! In this intricate body part, many things can cause foot pain.

Painful feet make daily living and activities challenging. The good news is, there are viable options to correct, regenerate, and improve your condition, and many of those are noninvasive.

Muscle Spasms | Sciatic Pain | Joint Pain Leg Pain | Foot & Ankle Pain

Deep tissue laser therapy is a noninvasive, advanced technology used to accelerate your body's own natural healing process. In a process called photo-bio-stimulation the laser sends photons into damaged cells, which increases blood flow, stimulates the healing process, and reduces inflammation by penetrating throughout the layers of tissue, ligaments, and muscles.

Using this non-invasive laser therapy will reduce the amount of tissue or joint pain in just one session, and after the 6th session it usually feels better, but 90% of healing usually comes after 10 sessions. The regenerative effects are long-lasting.

Heel Pain | Plantar Fasciitis | Heel Spur Achilles Tendonitis | Achilles tendinosis

Heel pain is one foot condition that strikes with surprise. You may be totally fine one day and then all of a sudden, your heel hurts with every step you try and take. Because several conditions can lead to heel pain, it's important to be seen by an experienced podiatrist.

You will need an examination of your foot and ankle using high-definition X-rays or an ultrasound. In some cases, Dr. Petrocelli or Collier Podiatry sends patients out for an MRI to confirm a tear or fracture.

• **Plantar fasciitis and heel spur:** If you notice pain and inflammation in your heel, you might have plantar fasciitis. If the condition worsens, it might develop into an abnormal heel bone growth called a heel spur.

• **Achilles tendonitis and Achilles tendinosis:** Achilles tendonitis is a condition where you feel pain in your Achilles tendon, which is located at the back of your leg near your heel. It can turn into Achilles tendinosis, where the tendon breaks down and tears.

If you think you may have one of these conditions, contact Dr. Petrocelli to identify the source of your pain and receive the best treatment.

After examining your foot and determining the precise cause of your pain, Dr. Petrocelli might recommend the following approaches, depending on your condition:

- Laser therapy
- Custom orthotics to help your feet absorb shock as you walk
- Surgical shoe or boots are used so that the fracture will heal
- Taping of the foot
- Physical therapy or gentle stretches
- Ice application for 24 to 48 hours and then heat application

If the condition does not improve, our doctor may recommend surgery, cortisone injections for plantar fasciitis or heel spur, and corticosteroid shots for Achilles tendonitis or Achilles tendinosis.

Bunions

Bunions are a type of foot deformity, caused by the joint of your big toe protruding. It is often caused by wearing pointed or ill-fitting shoes that squeeze your toes into unnatural positions.

Bunions can be treated by wearing proper shoes, or wearing specialty splints or orthotics, but sometimes surgery is needed.

Here are signs that you need to consider surgery:

- It Is Often Times Hereditary
- Pain That Limits Your Everyday Activities, Even with Proper Shoes
- Inability to Walk More than a Few Blocks Without Pain
- Toe Deformity
- Pain Persisting Even with Anti-Inflammatory Drugs
- Bunions Not Healing Even After a Change in Shoes or Medication
- If It Is Affecting Your Quality Of Life, We Recommend Surgery

Hammer Toe

When the muscles in your toes get out of balance, they can start contracting into a claw like position. This causes the toe to bend in an upward position in the middle joint of the toe. When this happens, it can create severe pain. Hammertoe can be genetic and many times occurs in people with either a high arch or a flat foot. Various forms of arthritis can contribute to this issue as well. And unfortunately, ill-fitting footwear can also cause hammertoe, due to pushing the toes out of their normal position for long periods of time.

Treatment

- Padding the toe
- Wearing more comfortable shoes
- Outpatient surgery (This involves redirecting the lower tendons of the toe to the top of the toe to help straighten it into the correct position)

The causes of foot pain are vastly numerous and depend on your specific circumstances. Consulting with a podiatric specialist is the best decision for a proper diagnosis and a successful treatment outcome.

Collier Podiatry

Dr. Michael Petrocelli has been practicing podiatric medicine for well over 20 years. He is an expert in his field and a leader to his peers. If you are experiencing any foot pain or foot conditions, please contact Collier Podiatry at (9239) 774-0019, or visit their website at www.collierpodiatry.com



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Prioritize Your Peepers: Four Essential Tips for Healthy Vision Month

Dr. Katia Taba, Board-Certified Ophthalmologist and Retinal Specialist

July marks the annual Healthy Vision Month, serving as a timely reminder to prioritize our precious eyes. These remarkable organs, responsible for capturing the world's vibrant hues and intricate details, deserve our utmost care and attention. By adopting simple yet effective habits, we can safeguard our vision and maintain our ability to fully appreciate life's visual wonders. In this article, we'll explore four essential tips to celebrate Healthy Vision Month and protect your eyes for years to come.

1. Embrace the Power of Sunglasses

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can be detrimental to our eyes, potentially leading to cataracts, macular degeneration, and other vision-related issues. Investing in high-quality sunglasses with 100% UV protection is a simple yet crucial step in shielding your eyes from harmful rays. Look for sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays, and opt for wraparound styles that provide comprehensive coverage. Remember, sun damage is cumulative, so make wearing sunglasses a habit, even on cloudy days.

2. Give Your Eyes a Break from Digital Screens

In our increasingly digital world, our eyes endure prolonged exposure to blue light emitted from computers, smartphones, and other electronic devices. This constant strain can lead to eye fatigue, headaches, and dry eye syndrome. To combat these issues, follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break and focus your eyes on something at least 20 feet away.

Additionally, consider investing in blue light-blocking glasses or adjusting your device's settings to reduce blue light exposure.

3. Nourish Your Eyes with a Balanced Diet

Just like the rest of our body, our eyes require essential nutrients to function optimally. Incorporate eye-friendly foods into your diet, such as leafy green vegetables rich in lutein and zeaxanthin, fatty fish like salmon and tuna packed with omega-3 fatty acids, and citrus fruits brimming with vitamin C. These nutrients can help protect against age-related macular degeneration and other eye conditions, while also promoting overall eye health.

4. Stay Hydrated and Blink Frequently

Dry eyes can be uncomfortable and, if left untreated, can lead to more severe eye problems. Staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water and blinking frequently can help maintain healthy tear production and lubricate your eyes. Additionally, consider using over-the-counter eye drops or investing in a humidifier to combat dry air, which can exacerbate dry eye symptoms.

By incorporating these four essential tips into your daily routine, you'll be taking proactive steps to protect your vision and celebrate Healthy Vision Month in the best possible way. Remember, our eyes are precious windows to the world, and taking care of them should be a priority. Embrace these habits, and you'll be rewarded with a lifetime of clear, comfortable vision, allowing you to fully appreciate the beauty that surrounds you.



Katia E. Taba, MD, is the board-certified ophthalmologist and retina specialist at Personalized Retina Care of Naples in Naples, Florida. Dr. Taba treats macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, macular holes, eye floaters and flashes, and other serious eye problems that can interfere with sight or steal vision without treatment. Patients know Dr. Taba as an extremely friendly and welcoming care provider who maintains great professionalism at all times.

Dr. Taba is a board-certified ophthalmologist in both her home country of Brazil and in the United States. She earned her medical degree at a leading medical school in Brazil and continued specialized vitreoretinal surgery training in Florida, New York, California, Louisiana, and many other locations in the U.S. Dr. Taba trained under the leading experts in the field of ocular disease.

Dr. Taba's extensive training and experience include many years as both a clinician and academician. She entered solo practice as a way to deliver consistently great care in a world where the environment and health care policies are always changing.

Dr. Taba wants to make sure that patients always get the most accurate diagnosis and most effective treatment, so she uses only the latest, state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment. Dr. Taba is the first retina specialist on the southwest coast of Florida to have wide-angle viewing imaging. Dr. Taba also makes sure that injections and treatments are pain-free so patients can always expect a comfortable experience.

Retina Group of Florida

If you are experiencing any changes in your eye health, whether it is blurry vision, pain, impaired vision, or any other visual irregularities, you should see an ophthalmologist right away. The earlier a disease is detected, the better the outcome and treatment options are for you. You will find a friendly and warm environment at Retina Group of Florida.

Please call (239) 325-3970 today to schedule your eye exam. When necessary same day appointments can often be accommodated.



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HORMONE THERAPY:

A Potential Shield Against Alzheimer's Disease

By Dr. Magdalena Kerschner

As the world's population ages, the prevalence of neurodegenerative disorders like Alzheimer's disease continues to rise. This devastating condition robs individuals of their memories, cognitive abilities, and ultimately, their independence. However, recent research has shed light on a promising avenue for prevention: the use of bioidentical hormone therapy, specifically estrogen and testosterone replacement.

Bioidentical hormones are molecules that are structurally identical to those produced naturally by the human body. Unlike synthetic hormones, which can have undesired side effects, bioidentical hormones are designed to mimic the body's natural processes, making them a potentially safer and more effective treatment option.

The Link Between Hormones and Brain Health

Estrogen and testosterone play crucial roles in brain function and cognitive health. Both hormones have been shown to exert neuroprotective effects, promoting neuronal survival, enhancing synaptic plasticity, and modulating neurotransmitter systems. As we age, our hormone levels naturally decline, which may contribute to an increased risk of cognitive decline and neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's.

The Estrogen Connection

Estrogen, in particular, has garnered significant attention for its potential role in preventing Alzheimer's disease. This hormone has been found to regulate various processes in the brain, including neuronal growth, synaptic function, and the metabolism of amyloid-beta, a protein that accumulates in the brains of individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

Several studies have suggested that women who undergo hormone replacement therapy (HRT) with estrogen during and after menopause may have a lower risk of developing Alzheimer's disease compared to those who do not receive HRT. However, it is important to note that the timing and duration of estrogen therapy may play a crucial role in determining its effectiveness.

The Testosterone Link

While estrogen has been the primary focus of research in this area, emerging evidence suggests that testosterone may also play a protective role against Alzheimer's disease. Testosterone has been

shown to enhance cognitive function, promote neuronal survival, and modulate the clearance of amyloid-beta from the brain.

In men, age-related declines in testosterone levels have been associated with an increased risk of cognitive impairment and dementia. Conversely, testosterone replacement therapy has been linked to improved cognitive performance and a reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease in some studies.

Personalized Hormone Therapy

It is important to note that hormone therapy is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Factors such as age, sex, medical history, and individual risk factors must be carefully considered when determining the appropriate treatment plan. Bioidentical hormone therapy should be tailored to each individual's unique needs and closely monitored by a qualified healthcare professional.

Furthermore, the potential risks and benefits of hormone therapy must be weighed carefully. While bioidentical hormones are generally considered safer than synthetic alternatives, they can still carry potential side effects, such as an increased risk of certain types of cancer or cardiovascular events.

Ongoing Research and Future Directions

While the research on the use of bioidentical hormone therapy for the prevention of Alzheimer's disease is promising, more work is needed to fully understand its mechanisms and optimal application. Larger-scale, long-term studies are necessary to validate the findings and establish guidelines for safe and effective use.

Additionally, researchers are exploring the potential synergistic effects of combining hormone therapy with other interventions, such as lifestyle modifications, cognitive training, and pharmacological treatments. By targeting multiple pathways involved in Alzheimer's disease, a multi-pronged approach may yield even better results in preventing or slowing the progression of this devastating condition.

As our understanding of the complex interplay between hormones and brain health continues to evolve, bioidentical hormone therapy emerges as a promising avenue for the prevention of Alzheimer's disease. By harnessing the body's natural processes and tailoring treatment to individual needs, we may be able to unlock a powerful tool in the fight against this debilitating condition.



Dr. Kerschner

Dr. Magdalena Kerschner is a board-certified Anesthesiologist and board-certified Interventional Pain specialist.

She completed her medical school education at Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit Michigan and subsequent anesthesiology residency at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY.

After many years of practicing traditional medicine and treating illness, Dr. Kerschner realized that preventing disease before it starts results in healthier and happier patients.

The concept of preventing illness has awakened in her an interest in weight management and bio-identical hormone replacement therapies as a modern way to promote physical and emotional wellness. Dr. Kerschner holds a certificate of training from Dr. Neal Rouzier – a nationally recognized authority in bio-identical hormone replacement therapies and preventive medicine as well as receiving a Certificate of Continued Medical Education in Wellness at Canyon Ranch.

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UV Safety Month:

Enhancing Health with Modern Therapies

July is UV Safety Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the dangers of ultraviolet (UV) radiation and promoting safe practices to protect our skin and eyes. In addition to traditional methods of UV protection, such as using sunscreen and wearing protective clothing, modern therapies like Ozone Therapy, Ultraviolet Blood Irradiation (UVBI), Red Light Therapy, and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) are gaining recognition for their potential health benefits and contributions to overall wellness.

Understanding UV Radiation

UV radiation, a form of electromagnetic radiation from the sun, can cause significant damage to the skin and eyes. Prolonged exposure to UV rays increases the risk of skin cancer, premature aging, and eye conditions like cataracts. UV Safety Month encourages individuals to take preventive measures to minimize UV exposure and protect their health.

The Role of Ozone Therapy

Ozone Therapy involves the administration of ozone gas, a form of oxygen, to enhance the body's immune response and promote healing. This therapy can be particularly beneficial in repairing skin damage caused by UV exposure. Ozone Therapy has anti-inflammatory properties, improves oxygen delivery to tissues, and accelerates the healing process of sunburned or damaged skin.

Ultraviolet Blood Irradiation (UVBI)

UVBI is a medical treatment that involves exposing a small amount of blood to UV light before reintroducing it into the body. This procedure can stimulate the immune system, improve circulation, and reduce the load of harmful pathogens. By enhancing the body's natural defenses, UVBI helps mitigate the adverse effects of UV radiation, promoting overall health and resilience.

Red Light Therapy: A Skin Savior

Red Light Therapy (RLT) uses low-level wavelengths of red light to penetrate the skin and promote cellular repair and regeneration. This therapy is particularly effective in reducing the appearance of sunburn, wrinkles, and other skin damage caused by UV exposure. RLT stimulates collagen production, improves skin tone, and accelerates the healing of UV-induced skin injuries.



Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy involves breathing pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber. This therapy enhances oxygen delivery to tissues, promotes healing, and reduces inflammation. HBOT can be beneficial for individuals with severe sunburns or other UV-related skin conditions, as it accelerates the recovery process and improves overall skin health.

Combining Modern Therapies for Optimal Health

While traditional UV protection methods remain essential, integrating modern therapies like Ozone Therapy, UVBI, Red Light Therapy, and HBOT can provide additional benefits for those affected by UV radiation. These therapies offer a holistic approach to healing and wellness, addressing both immediate and long-term effects of UV exposure.

Conclusion

As we observe UV Safety Month, it's crucial to stay informed about the risks associated with UV radiation and take proactive steps to protect ourselves. By incorporating advanced therapies such as Ozone Therapy, UVBI, Red Light Therapy, and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, we can enhance our health and well-being, ensuring a safer and healthier future. Remember to prioritize UV safety, seek out innovative treatments, and enjoy the benefits of these modern therapies. Stay safe, stay informed, and protect your health this UV Safety Month!

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Understanding Funeral Costs:

A GUIDE FOR SOUTHWEST FLORIDA RESIDENTS

Planning a funeral can be a daunting task, especially when you're already dealing with grief. One crucial aspect of this process is gaining a clear understanding of the costs involved. Funeral expenses can vary significantly, depending on factors such as the type of service, location, and additional elements like flowers or catering. This article is designed to empower you with a comprehensive overview of funeral costs in Southwest Florida, enabling you to make informed decisions and maintain a sense of control during this challenging period.

Components of Funeral Costs

Funeral costs can be broadly categorized into several components:

- 1. Basic Service Fees:** This fee encompasses the invaluable services provided by the funeral home staff. It covers administrative expenses, securing permits and death certificates, coordinating arrangements, and conducting the funeral service.
- 2. Transportation:** This includes the cost of transporting the body to the funeral home, hearse rental for the funeral service, and any additional transportation services.
- 3. Preparation of the Body:** This can include embalming, cosmetology, hairdressing, and dressing the body. Embalming is often necessary if there will be a public viewing.
- 4. Funeral Ceremony Costs:** These are the funeral or memorial service expenses. They include the use of the funeral home chapel, the presence of staff to facilitate the service, and any necessary equipment.
- 5. Casket or Urn:** The cost of a casket or urn can vary significantly based on the material and design.
- 6. Cremation or Burial:** The choice between cremation and burial significantly affects the overall cost.
- 7. Additional Services:** These can include obituary notices, flowers, catering for a post-funeral reception, and printed materials such as funeral programs.



Financial Assistance and Planning

Given the substantial costs, it is important to consider financial assistance options and pre-planning services:

- 1. Life Insurance:** Many people use life insurance policies to cover funeral expenses. Ensure that the policy provides adequate coverage for all anticipated costs.
- 2. Pre-Need Funeral Plans:** These plans allow individuals to prepay for their funeral services, often locking in current prices and reducing the financial burden on surviving family members.
- 3. Veterans Benefits:** Veterans may be eligible for funeral benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs, which can cover some or all funeral costs.
- 4. Social Security Benefits:** Social Security provides a lump-sum death benefit of \$255 to eligible survivors, which can help offset some funeral expenses.
- 5. Crowdfunding:** Some families turn to online crowdfunding platforms to raise money for funeral expenses. This can be an effective way to receive financial support from the community.

Understanding the costs associated with funerals can help you make informed decisions and plan appropriately. Whether choosing a traditional burial or cremation, knowing the breakdown of expenses in Southwest Florida ensures you are prepared for the financial aspects of funeral planning. Considering financial assistance options and pre-planning

can further alleviate the burden during an already difficult time. For personalized guidance, consult with a local funeral director who can provide detailed information and support tailored to your needs.

Palm Royale Funeral Home and Cemetery in Naples, Florida, is dedicated to helping individuals and families navigate the funeral pre-planning process. For more information or to start your pre-planning journey, contact Palm Royale today. This step can provide you and your loved ones with lasting peace of mind.

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Empowering Cancer Patients: The Vital Role of Naples Cancer Advisors

By Mercedes Mikalaitis

A cancer diagnosis is a seismic event, sending shockwaves through not just the patient's life, but the lives of their loved ones as well. It brings forth a flood of emotions, questions, and uncertainties. I intimately understand this, having walked alongside my father through his own battle with cancer. While he received excellent care, the lack of a guiding hand left us feeling lost. This personal narrative fuels my passion for the incredible work of Naples Cancer Advisors (NCA).

Naples Cancer Advisors: A Beacon of Hope

NCA is a lifeline and pillar of support for patients and their families in Southwest Florida, offering a range of services tailored to their unique needs—all at no cost. These services include access to leading oncologists, objective case reviews, clinical trial navigation, financial counseling, and genetic testing. The goal is to empower patients with the knowledge and support they need to confidently navigate their treatment journey and make informed decisions about their care.

Transforming Lives, One Case Review at a Time

At the heart of NCA's mission is providing free case reviews by a team of expert oncologists and healthcare professionals. These reviews offer critical insights into diagnoses, treatment options, and care plans, giving patients and their families clarity and empowerment. Patients receive thorough evaluations from specialists, helping them understand their condition and explore the best treatment options.

Comprehensive Support Beyond Medical Consultations

Beyond medical advice, NCA offers emotional support, educational resources, and assistance with navigating the healthcare system. This comprehensive approach helps alleviate some of the stress and uncertainty that comes with a cancer diagnosis, enabling patients to focus on their path to recovery.

Personal Reflection: A Missed Opportunity

Reflecting on my father's battle with cancer, I often think about how different his experience could have been with the support of an organization like NCA. His diagnosis came with many unanswered questions and uncertainty about the best course of action leaving us grasping for direction amidst the chaos.

Though he had a dedicated medical team, the comprehensive support and clarity that NCA offers would have provided invaluable peace of mind. Knowing that such a vital resource now exists in our community brings immense comfort, as it means others won't have to navigate this journey alone or in confusion.

Empowerment Through Community Engagement

Driven by my personal experience, I now proudly serve as the Community Engagement and Events Coordinator for NCA. I witness firsthand the transformative impact of our work through outreach efforts, educational initiatives, and community events. Our philosophy is that no one should face cancer alone. By fostering connections within the community and spreading awareness of our services, we ensure that everyone knows support is available.

Making a Difference in Southwest Florida

A significant part of my role involves organizing and coordinating events that raise awareness about cancer and provide a platform for individuals to access our services. From health fairs to fundraising galas, each event is an opportunity to connect with those affected by cancer and offer them the support they deserve.

A Mission of Hope and Empowerment

The importance of Naples Cancer Advisors in our community cannot be overstated. They serve as a beacon of hope and support for individuals and families grappling with a cancer diagnosis. Through community engagement, education, and advocacy, we empower individuals with the knowledge and support they need to navigate their cancer journey with strength and resilience.

Together, we are not just providing services; we are igniting hope, fostering empowerment, and transforming lives. Having witnessed the impact of cancer firsthand, I am grateful for the existence of NCA and passionately advocate for their continued support and expansion in our communities.

In memory of my father and for all those currently battling cancer, I am committed to making sure that no one has to face this journey alone.

JOIN US IN MAKING A MEANINGFUL IMPACT!

We invite you to participate by attending, sponsoring, or volunteering for our upcoming *Wine, Women & Shoes* gala in support of Naples Cancer Advisors. This amazing event is scheduled for February 8, 2025, at the picturesque Naples Yacht Club, running from 11 am to 3 pm.

Your presence and support will contribute significantly to our cause. For further details, please reach out to mercedes@naplescanceradvisors.org.



Mercedes Mikalaitis is the Community Engagement & Events Coordinator for Naples Cancer Advisors and the owner of Tulla Events in Naples, Florida. She holds a BS in International Relations and has 16 years of experience in patient administration and revenue cycle management. Driven by a profound sense of empathy and dedication to her community, Mercedes is deeply committed to advocating for patients' rights and facilitating access to essential healthcare services. Her relocation from Colorado to Naples, Florida, in 2022 marked a significant chapter in her life, allowing her to immerse herself in a vibrant coastal community where she and her family have been enjoying trips to the beach together since.



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July is Healthy Vision Month

What's the Connection Between Vision and Hearing?

By Sarah Sessler, Au.D. Doctor of Audiology/Ear Nerd

Ever wondered why people who wear glasses often have hearing issues too? A study by scientists at the University of Sydney and the National Acoustics Laboratories in Australia found that for every line a volunteer couldn't see on an eye chart, their likelihood of hearing loss increased by 18%. Some eye conditions, like age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, are linked to hearing loss. Likewise, those with hearing loss are 1.5 times more likely to have vision problems.

This correlation suggests that our sensory systems might be more interconnected than we realize. When one sense starts to deteriorate, it can impact the other, creating a compounded effect. It's not just about aging; it's about how our bodies are wired. Understanding this connection can help us take better care of our overall health and seek early interventions that could make a significant difference in our quality of life.

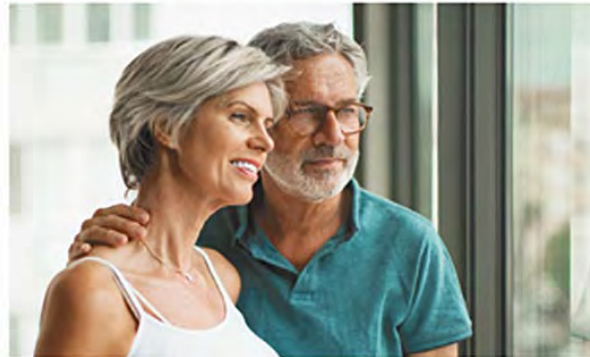
So, Am I Just Getting Old?

Not necessarily! While aging does increase the chances of vision and hearing changes, it's not the only factor. Common risks, like stress, smoking, hardening of the arteries, and diabetes, can affect both senses. For instance, stress can cause a host of problems including hypertension, which in turn can impact both your vision and hearing. Smoking, on the other hand, can damage the blood vessels in your eyes and ears, leading to a decline in their function.

Diabetes is another major player. High blood sugar levels can damage the tiny blood vessels that nourish your retina and inner ear. This can lead to diabetic retinopathy and hearing impairment. Hardening of the arteries, or atherosclerosis, can similarly restrict blood flow to your sensory organs, causing gradual deterioration.

It's Not Bad Enough Yet, Right?

Once you notice changes in your vision or hearing, it's crucial to seek treatment right away—delaying will only make it worse. Glasses and hearing aids act like rehab for your eyes and ears. They won't restore lost function, but they will help you see and



hear better. Plus, regular use can slow down further decline. Regular hearing tests show that hearing aid users maintain more stable hearing levels over time. Keeping your nerves and brain active with these aids helps prevent future loss.

Think of it this way: if you had a muscle injury, you wouldn't avoid physical therapy, right? Glasses and hearing aids function similarly. They keep your eyes and ears engaged, ensuring they perform at their best for as long as possible. Plus, using these aids can improve your quality of life significantly, allowing you to continue enjoying your favorite activities without the frustration of poor vision or hearing.

How Often Should I Get My Hearing Checked?

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) suggests adults get a hearing screening every decade until age 50, and then every three years after. If you have risks like family history of hearing loss, noise exposure, ear health issues, or medical conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, or have undergone cancer treatment, you should get checked sooner.

Hearing loss can be subtle at first, making it easy to ignore. You might find yourself turning up the volume on the TV or asking people to repeat themselves more often. These are signs that it's time to get your hearing checked. Early detection is key to managing hearing loss effectively.

Why Regular Check-Ups Matter

Routine check-ups are essential for catching potential problems before they become serious. Just as you wouldn't skip your annual physical, you shouldn't neglect your hearing or vision tests.

These senses are vital for your day-to-day life and keeping them in good shape is crucial for maintaining independence and enjoying life to the fullest.

For vision, regular eye exams can detect conditions like glaucoma, macular degeneration, and cataracts early, when they're most treatable. Similarly, regular hearing tests can catch hearing loss before it significantly impacts your life. If you've never had your hearing tested, or if it's been a while, consider scheduling an appointment.

Simple Steps to Protect Your Senses

In addition to regular check-ups, there are everyday steps you can take to protect your vision and hearing. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from UV damage and use ear protection in noisy environments to prevent hearing loss. Maintain a healthy diet rich in vitamins and minerals that support eye and ear health, like vitamin A for vision and magnesium for hearing.

Exercise is also important. It improves blood circulation, which can help maintain healthy eyes and ears. Avoid smoking, and if you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. Both habits can accelerate the decline of your sensory functions.

Ready to Take Action?

Taking proactive steps now can make a big difference in your sensory health later. Ready to set up your baseline hearing test? Give our office a call at 239-325-0596 to schedule your complimentary hearing test appointment today! Don't wait until it's too late—your future self will thank you for taking care of your vision and hearing now.

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UNVEILING THE REMARKABLE BENEFITS OF GHK-CU PEPTIDE

In the ever-evolving field of skincare and anti-aging solutions, researchers have uncovered a powerful compound that holds immense potential for revolutionizing the way we approach skin health and rejuvenation. This compound, known as GHK-Cu peptide, is a naturally occurring copper complex that has garnered significant attention due to its remarkable abilities to promote collagen production, wound healing, and overall skin vitality.

The Essence of GHK-Cu Peptide

GHK-Cu peptide, also referred to as copper tripeptide-1, is a small molecule composed of three amino acids: glycine, histidine, and lysine, combined with copper ions. This unique combination forms a potent antioxidant and regenerative compound that possesses a remarkable ability to stimulate various cellular processes essential for maintaining healthy, youthful-looking skin.

Boosting Collagen Production

One of the most notable benefits of GHK-Cu peptide lies in its capacity to stimulate collagen synthesis. Collagen, the primary structural protein in our skin, is responsible for maintaining its firmness, elasticity, and overall youthful appearance. As we age, our body's natural collagen production decreases, leading to the formation of fine lines, wrinkles, and sagging skin.

GHK-Cu peptide has been shown to stimulate the production of collagen and other essential skin components, such as elastin and glycosaminoglycans. By increasing the levels of these vital molecules, GHK-Cu peptide helps to restore the skin's structural integrity, reducing the appearance of wrinkles and promoting a more youthful, radiant complexion.

Accelerating Wound Healing

Beyond its anti-aging benefits, GHK-Cu peptide has demonstrated remarkable capabilities in promoting wound healing and tissue regeneration. This powerful compound has been found to stimulate the proliferation and migration of various skin cells, including keratinocytes, fibroblasts, and endothelial cells, which are crucial for the wound healing process.



By enhancing the production of growth factors and cytokines involved in tissue repair, GHK-Cu peptide accelerates the healing of cuts, burns, and other skin injuries. This property has garnered significant interest in the medical and cosmetic industries, where it is being explored as a potential treatment for various skin conditions and post-surgical recovery.

Antioxidant and Anti-Inflammatory Properties

GHK-Cu peptide also exhibits potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, which contribute to its overall skin-enhancing effects. Oxidative stress and inflammation are major contributors to premature skin aging, leading to the formation of fine lines, wrinkles, and uneven skin tone.

By neutralizing harmful free radicals and reducing inflammation, GHK-Cu peptide helps to protect the skin from environmental stressors, such as UV radiation and pollution. This protective action not only slows down the aging process but also helps to maintain a healthy, radiant complexion.

Versatile Application

One of the significant advantages of GHK-Cu peptide is its versatility in terms of application. It can be incorporated into a wide range of skincare products, including serums, creams, and lotions, allowing for targeted delivery and enhanced efficacy.

Furthermore, GHK-Cu peptide has shown promising results when used in combination with other active ingredients, such as retinoids, vitamin C, and hyaluronic acid, offering a synergistic approach to skin rejuvenation and overall skin health.

Ongoing Research and Future Potential

While the benefits of GHK-Cu peptide are well-documented, ongoing research continues to unravel its full potential and explore new applications. Scientists are investigating its role in hair growth, wound healing for burns and ulcers, and even its potential in addressing neurological conditions.

As our understanding of this remarkable compound deepens, it is likely that we will witness the development of innovative products and therapies leveraging the power of GHK-Cu peptide for a wide range of skin concerns and health-related issues.

In conclusion, GHK-Cu peptide represents a groundbreaking discovery in the realm of skincare and anti-aging solutions. With its ability to stimulate collagen production, accelerate wound healing, and provide antioxidant and anti-inflammatory protection, this remarkable compound offers a comprehensive approach to achieving radiant, youthful-looking skin. As research continues to unveil its full potential, GHK-Cu peptide is poised to become a game-changer in the pursuit of optimal skin health and rejuvenation.

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UNDERSTANDING STREP B: SYMPTOMS AND CAUSES

By Kathy V. Verdes, APRN, A-GNP-C

Group B Streptococcus, commonly known as Strep B, is a type of bacterial infection that can be particularly concerning for pregnant women and newborns. While it is often harmless in healthy adults, Strep B can pose serious risks to infants during childbirth and in the early weeks of life. Understanding the symptoms and causes of this infection is crucial for expectant mothers and their healthcare providers.

Symptoms of Strep B in Pregnant Women

In most cases, Strep B does not cause any noticeable symptoms in pregnant women. However, some women may experience the following signs:

1. Fever
2. Chills
3. Nausea and vomiting
4. Lower abdominal or pelvic pain
5. Frequent or painful urination
(signs of a urinary tract infection)

It's important to note that these symptoms can also be indicative of other conditions, so it's essential to consult with a healthcare provider for proper diagnosis and treatment.

Symptoms of Strep B in Newborns

While many babies born to mothers with Strep B remain healthy, some may develop serious infections shortly after birth. The symptoms of Strep B in newborns can vary depending on the type of infection, but may include:

1. Fever
2. Lethargy or poor feeding
3. Respiratory distress
(rapid or labored breathing)
4. Irritability or excessive crying
5. Seizures
6. Bluish tint to the skin (cyanosis)

If a newborn exhibits any of these symptoms, it is crucial to seek immediate medical attention, as Strep B infections can quickly become life-threatening if left untreated.



Causes of Strep B

Strep B is a type of bacteria that can be found in the digestive tract, urinary tract, and genital area of both men and women. It is estimated that approximately 25% of pregnant women carry Strep B bacteria in their bodies without experiencing any symptoms.

During pregnancy, the bacteria can be passed from the mother to the baby during childbirth. This can happen in several ways:

1. **Transmission through ruptured membranes:** If the amniotic sac ruptures before or during labor, the baby can be exposed to Strep B bacteria as it passes through the birth canal.
2. **Prolonged labor:** The longer the labor process, the higher the risk of Strep B transmission to the baby.
3. **Premature rupture of membranes:** If the amniotic sac ruptures more than 18 hours before labor begins, the risk of Strep B transmission increases significantly.

It's important to note that having Strep B does not necessarily mean that the baby will become infected. However, it does increase the risk, particularly if preventive measures are not taken.

Prevention and Treatment

To reduce the risk of Strep B transmission, healthcare providers typically screen pregnant women for the bacteria between 35 and 37 weeks of pregnancy. If a woman tests positive for Strep B, she will typically be given intravenous antibiotics during labor to help protect the baby from infection.

If a newborn develops a Strep B infection, prompt antibiotic treatment is crucial. The specific treatment plan will depend on the severity of the infection and may involve intravenous antibiotics or other supportive care measures.

In conclusion, understanding the symptoms and causes of Strep B is essential for expectant mothers and their healthcare providers. Early detection and appropriate treatment can help prevent serious complications and ensure the health and well-being of both the mother and the newborn.

Are you ready for a consultation?

Your treatment will be performed by a Certified Nurse Practitioner. Schedule your appointment now!

KATHY VERDES APRN, A-GNP-C

Kathy earned her Master's in Nursing Degree from Kaplan University in 2017. Kathy is certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) as an Adult- Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (A-GNP-C). Prior to her Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Degree (APRN), Kathy managed a weight loss clinic for over 6 years right here in Naples. Kathy has since then managed acute and chronic care illnesses in different settings, and she genuinely enjoys spending time with her patients.



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THE WHITCOMB BROTHERS EXPLAIN "THE COLOR OF EACH COMMUNITY."

Naples, Florida, is renowned for its stunning beaches, vibrant communities, and luxurious lifestyle. Navigating this prestigious real estate market requires expertise and an intimate understanding of the area's unique characteristics and opportunities. Enter the Whitcomb Group, a premier luxury real estate agency founded by brothers Stan and Scott Whitcomb, who bring a combined experience of over 50 years in the industry. Since forming their partnership in 2019, they have provided unparalleled service to buyers and sellers alike.

A Legacy of Experience

Scott Whitcomb boasts 30 years of experience in real estate, while his younger brother Stan has 22 years under his belt. Their deep roots in the industry and the local community make them an invaluable resource for anyone looking to buy or sell property in Naples. Their father, Stan Whitcomb II, was a builder and developer in Florida for over 50 years. Real Estate runs deep in the Whitcomb genes.

"You don't know what you don't know," says Scott Whitcomb, highlighting the importance of working with knowledgeable agents. This philosophy drives their approach, ensuring clients are well-informed and confident in their real estate decisions.

"You need a hanger for your plane? Have your eye on a particular golf course? Want the best schools for your kids? We know where to look before the buyer knows where to look. That's our advantage over generic websites run by AI search engines. The human connection is important when looking for your home."

Local Expertise and Connections

One of the key advantages of working with the Whitcomb Group is the brothers' extensive knowledge of Naples' diverse neighborhoods and communities. Having lived in the area their entire lives, Stan and Scott understand the "heartbeat" of each neighborhood, from the nuances of homeowners' association (HOA) fees and club memberships to flood insurance requirements and beyond.

"We know the beat of what is coming onto the market before it hits the market due to our strong alliance with other agents in the area, many of whom we have mentored," Scott explains. This

insider knowledge gives their clients a distinct advantage, whether buying their dream home or selling a prized property.

Understanding the Lifestyle

The Whitcomb brothers don't just know the logistics of Naples real estate—they understand the lifestyle of each community. This insight is crucial for clients looking for a home that matches their lifestyle preferences. Whether it's the bustling social scene of a gated golf community, the serene ambiance of a beachfront property, or the family-friendly atmosphere of suburban neighborhoods, Stan and Scott can guide clients to the perfect fit.

Benefits for Buyers

For buyers, working with the Whitcomb Group means accessing properties that may not yet be listed publicly. Whitcomb's strong network of local agents ensures they are often the first to know about new listings, giving their clients an early advantage in a competitive market.

Personalized Service

Stan and Scott take the time to understand each buyer's unique needs and preferences, tailoring their search to find properties that match not just their criteria but their lifestyle aspirations. Their comprehensive knowledge of the local market means they can provide detailed insights into the pros and cons of different neighborhoods, helping buyers make informed decisions.

Advantages for Sellers

Sellers benefit from the Whitcomb Group's extensive marketing expertise and connections. Stan and Scott leverage their network to attract qualified buyers quickly, often selling properties before they hit the open market. Their reputation and relationships with other agents and real estate professionals in the area ensure maximum exposure for listings.

Strategic Marketing

The Whitcomb Group employs a strategic marketing approach that includes professional photography, virtual tours, and targeted advertising to showcase properties in the best light. Their intimate knowledge of what buyers are looking for allows them to highlight the most appealing features of each property, attracting serious inquiries and expediting the sales process.

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

Many satisfied clients have praised the Whitcomb Group's exceptional service and results. One client shared, "Working with Stan and Scott was a game-changer. Their local knowledge and connections made all the difference in finding our perfect home. They guided us through every step with professionalism and care."

Another client noted, "The Whitcomb's sold our home faster than we expected and for a great price. Their marketing strategy was spot-on, and their advice was invaluable."

Make the Call

In the competitive and often complex Naples real estate market, having experienced and connected agents like Stan and Scott Whitcomb on your side is invaluable. The Whitcomb Group's deep local knowledge, extensive network, and commitment to personalized service set them apart. Whether buying or selling a luxury property in Naples, partnering with the Whitcomb Group ensures you have experts who truly understand the "heartbeat" of each community and can guide you through a seamless real estate experience.

For more information or to start your real estate journey with the Whitcomb Group, visit their website or contact them directly. Let Stan and Scott Whitcomb help you find your dream home or achieve your selling goals with confidence and ease.

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NAVIGATING TROUBLED WATERS: LEGAL RECOURSE FOR VICTIMS OF BOATING ACCIDENTS IN FLORIDA

By F. Scott Pauzar, III, Naples Personal Injury Attorney

For victims of boating accidents in Florida, recovering just compensation can be a critical step in the recovery process. Injuries from boating accidents can result in significant medical costs, pain and suffering, and other financial and non-financial losses, and these losses can be far more than what most people can bear on their own.

If you need to seek legal recourse for a boating accident in Florida, what can (and should) you do? The short answer is that you should speak with a lawyer as soon as possible. When you've been seriously injured in a boating accident, asserting your legal rights starts with determining who (or what company) is responsible for the accident. Depending on the circumstances involved, there could be several possibilities, and you need to make sure you file the right claim (or claims) in order to recover the financial compensation you deserve.

Determining Liability for a Boating Accident in Florida

When you engage a personal injury law firm to represent you, the firm should promptly investigate your boating accident in order to determine who (or what company) was at fault. Some examples of parties that you may be able to sue after a boating accident in Florida include:

- A boat captain (either the captain of the boat in which you were a passenger or the captain of another vessel)
- An owner of a boat involved in the collision (if the captain was not the owner)
- A passenger who distracted one of the captains or was otherwise negligent in causing the accident
- A company that owns or operates a commercial vessel involved in the accident
- A manufacturer of a defective component or piece of equipment that caused (or contributed to causing) the accident

Just like auto accidents, seeking just compensation after a boating accident in Florida usually involves dealing with the at-fault party's insurance company. While boat insurance isn't required by law in Florida, many recreational boat owners purchase insurance voluntarily, and lenders often require that owners pay for coverage. Commercial maritime



operators and boat manufacturers typically have liability insurance policies that cover accident-related claims as well. If you are entitled to insurance coverage, your law firm can deal with the at-fault party's insurance company on your behalf and work to obtain a settlement that fairly compensates you for your injuries.

Determining How Much You Are Entitled to Recover

Along with determining liability for your boating accident, another key step in pursuing legal recourse is determining how much you are entitled to recover. This is based on your present and future losses—including (but not limited to) your:

- Medical expenses
- Lost earnings
- Emotional trauma
- Pain and suffering
- Loss of enjoyment of life

The financial and non-financial costs of a boating accident can be substantial, so it is critical that you do not settle for less than you deserve. An experienced Florida boating accident lawyer will be able to help you make informed decisions with your long-term best interests in mind.

Request a Free Consultation at Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A.

Do you need to seek legal recourse after a boating accident in Florida? If so, we can help. Call 239-649-6555 or contact us online for a free, no-obligation consultation.



About the Author

F. Scott ("Scott") Pauzar, III is a litigation and personal injury law attorney in Woodward, Pires & Lombardo's Naples office. He has a broad base of

legal knowledge and skills cultivated through over 19 years of experience as a litigator in complex litigation in both state and federal courts. Previously, Scott was an Assistant State Attorney at the 20th Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office in Fort Myers. During his five years as a Prosecutor, Scott conducted over 30 jury trials. After leaving the Office of the State Attorney, Scott served as an insurance defense attorney for 11 years, where his practice focused on litigation of complex cases and catastrophic injuries. Scott now combines his jury trial and defense experience to successfully represent his clients in litigation and personal injury law matters.

Scott is a military veteran, having served on active duty in the United States Air Force between 1989 and 1993. He is a native of Naples, Florida. Scott received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Jacksonville University in 1996 and his Juris Doctor from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in 2004. He is a member of The Florida Bar, and is admitted to practice in the U.S. Middle District and U.S. Northern District of Florida.



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Filling the Need for Nurses

State funding fuels partnership with local healthcare systems

Florida Gulf Coast University, the state Legislature and the two largest healthcare systems in Southwest Florida are working together on a prescription to address the widespread nursing shortage.

For the past year, the School of Nursing in FGCU's Marieb College of Health & Human Services has benefited as a recipient of the Florida Legislature's Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) funding program.

To qualify for the grants, the school has to secure a dollar-to-dollar match from a healthcare partner. For 2023-24, NCH Healthcare System in Collier County and Lee Health in Lee County stepped up to fulfill this requirement. By doing so, the area's two major hospital systems demonstrated their commitment to FGCU and the program poised to educate more nurses for Southwest Florida.

FGCU a pipeline for the workforce

The LINE grant isn't the only way FGCU is strengthening the healthcare workforce. With a three-year, \$22.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration's Good Jobs Challenge, the university is offering workforce training programs designed to help unemployed and underemployed Southwest Floridians quickly obtain the qualifications for jobs in four of the region's primary industries – including healthcare.

According to the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics' employment projections, the healthcare sector is projected to create 45% of all projected new jobs from 2022 to 2032. Nurse practitioners are among the top three occupations in that sector to expect increased employment and rapid growth through 2032. The current shortages affecting hospitals nationwide are felt locally and caused by a lack of qualified nurses. Another factor: The Florida Center for Nursing reports that more than 40% of the state's nurses are baby boomers and expecting to retire in the next 10 years.

By 2035, Florida is expected to face an overall shortage of 59,000 nurses, according to a Florida Hospital Association analysis. Labor market conditions are pushing hospitals to unusual measures to retain staff and fill vacancies, including salary modifications to reflect the value of labor in the current economy.

Teaching the next generation of nurses

One goal of the LINE funding program is to increase the number of nursing graduates to combat the shortfall in the state. In addition to the bachelor's degree in nursing, FGCU's nursing school offers graduate programs for nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetologists and nurse educators.

Marieb College's undergraduate nursing students spend four to five semesters immersed in clinical settings where they apply their learning in professional patient-centered environments, gain an understanding of health system practices and develop confidence as compassionate caregivers. Those pursuing graduate degrees experience intensive hands-on internships in a variety of acute and primary healthcare settings. All of this helps the school maintain 100% graduate employment rates and excellent first-time certification pass rates.

Another key asset of the program is Marieb Hall's laboratory facilities, which house high-fidelity simulation and assessment labs. This is where students enjoy low faculty-to-student ratios and the individualized attention of our nurse educators. By the time they graduate, they feel confident and fully prepared to do the important work of delivering superior care to the community.

Brenda Hage, FGCU's School of Nursing director, says the LINE funds are already making a difference in addressing the need for more nurses through scholarships for financially challenged students that help keep them in school and on track for careers.

"Our students are working while they're going to school, and when they're trying to juggle so many

things it can detract from their ability to be successful," says Hage. "These scholarships have been so essential because they're allowing our students to focus more fully on their education."

More than \$145,000 has been awarded in the past year.

Another goal for NCH and Lee Health's partnership is to keep nursing graduates in Florida. As part of the LINE scholarship, recipients participate in an 18-month residency at Lee Health after graduation, which further supports new graduates as they enter practice.

Helping expand programs to teach more nurses

In addition to supporting students, LINE funds are used to purchase simulation equipment, recruit additional faculty and cover other essential one-time expenses to facilitate the expansion of Marieb College's nursing program.

The partnership with Lee Health and NCH extends beyond funding, providing opportunities for clinical rotations and fostering a commitment to producing top-notch graduates to address the healthcare needs of Southwest Florida residents.

Shawn Felton, Marieb College's dean, believes such collaborative community partnerships are invaluable.

"I think we're all in the business of making Southwest Florida the best community we can. And we have an obligation, from the university's perspective, to align the workforce talent for our clinical partners. This is just another example of great partners working together for a common goal," says Felton.



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As the summer heat intensifies, so does the risk of sunburn and other harmful effects of UV radiation. July is recognized as UV Safety Awareness Month, highlighting the importance of protecting our skin from the damaging effects of the sun. With longer days and more time spent outdoors, it's crucial to be well-informed about UV radiation, its potential risks, and effective sun safety practices. This article aims to raise awareness about the dangers of UV radiation and provide practical tips to safeguard your skin during the month of July and beyond.

Understanding UV Radiation

UV radiation is a form of electromagnetic radiation emitted by the sun. It consists of three types: UVA, UVB, and UVC. UVA rays can prematurely age the skin, leading to wrinkles and age spots, while UVB rays are the primary cause of sunburns. Both UVA and UVB rays contribute to the development of skin cancer. UVC rays are absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere and do not reach the surface. However, the depletion of the ozone layer has allowed more UV radiation to reach the Earth's surface, increasing the risk of skin damage.

Recognizing the Risks

Excessive exposure to UV radiation can have severe consequences for our skin and overall health. Sunburns are not only painful but also increase the risk of skin cancer. Prolonged UV exposure can lead to premature aging, skin discoloration, eye damage, and weakened immune system. It is essential to note that UV rays can penetrate clouds and are present even on overcast days. Additionally, UV radiation can reflect off surfaces like sand, water, concrete, and snow, intensifying the exposure. Therefore, it's crucial to take precautions regardless of the weather conditions.

Practicing Sun Safety

To protect your skin and enjoy the summer safely, follow these sun safety practices:

Apply sunscreen: Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 and apply it generously to all exposed areas of your body. Reapply every two hours or after swimming or sweating.



Seek shade: Avoid direct sunlight during peak hours, typically between 10 am and 4 pm when UV rays are the strongest. Seek shade under trees, umbrellas, or wear protective clothing like wide-brimmed hats and long-sleeved shirts.

Wear sunglasses: Protect your eyes from harmful UV rays by wearing sunglasses with 100% UV protection. This reduces the risk of cataracts and other eye conditions caused by prolonged sun exposure.

Cover up: Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that covers your arms and legs. Dark colors and tightly woven fabrics provide better protection.

Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration, especially when spending time outdoors in the sun.

July UV Safety Awareness Month serves as a reminder of the importance of protecting our skin from harmful UV radiation. By understanding the risks associated with excessive sun exposure and practicing sun safety measures, we can reduce the likelihood of sunburns, premature aging, and skin cancer. Remember to apply sunscreen, seek shade, wear sunglasses and protective clothing, and stay hydrated throughout the summer months and beyond. Taking these simple yet crucial steps will help ensure that you can enjoy the sunshine while safeguarding your skin and overall health.

Contact Well-Being Medical Center of Naples today at (239) 315-7801.



Dr. Ricardo Martinez

Dr. Ricardo Martinez is an internist in Naples, FL and is affiliated with NCH Baker Hospital. He received his medical degree from Superior Institute of Medical Sciences of Santiago de Cuba and has been in practice 20 years. He also speaks multiple languages, including Spanish. He specializes in hospital medicine, ambulatory care and is experienced in hospice and palliative medicine, bariatric medicine, diabetes mellitus, food allergy, and infectious disease. As of March 16th, 2020, Dr. Martinez has founded Well-Being Medical center in Naples Florida. He is looking forward to providing Medical care within primary care settings and urgent care service throughout the Naples Florida area.



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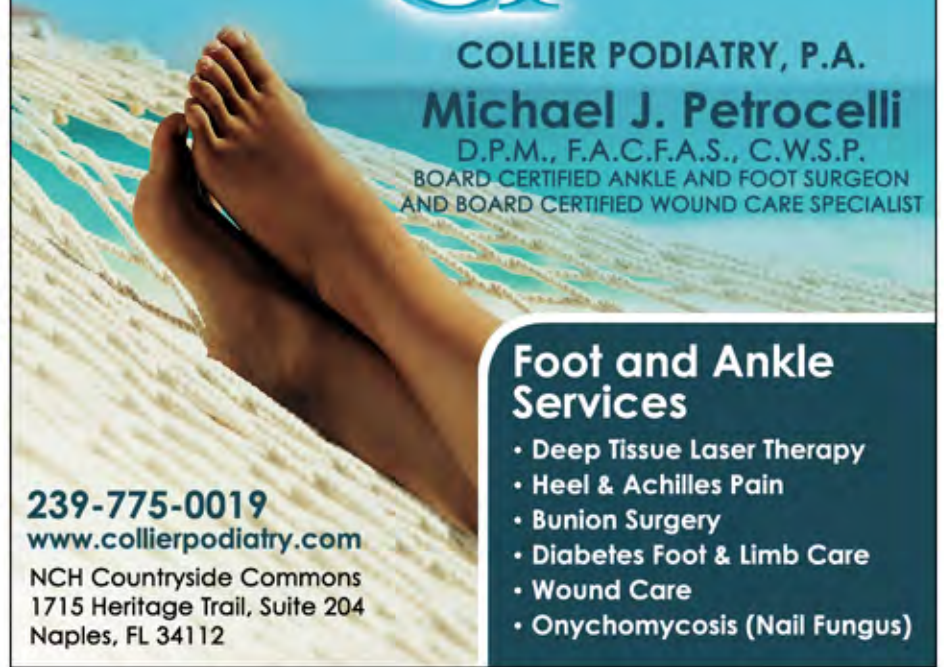
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The Relationship Between COVID-19 And Hair Loss

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

C OVID-19 sent out shockwaves through all aspects of society, many of which we still feel today. We all remember the toilet paper shortages and the social distancing requirements, but less known are the long-term effects that can come from those who had this virus, some of which we're still trying to understand.

Among these conversations about COVID-19's lasting impact is an increasing number of reports of hair loss, which many people notice only after they have had the virus. By logical reasoning, the question then arises of whether COVID-19 can cause hair loss and how to reverse it in the case that it does.

Hair Loss from COVID-19

COVID-19 is a virus most notably known for its effects on the respiratory system, where it likes to invade the lungs and interfere with breathing. This begs the question, though, of how this virus that prefers the lungs can result in hair loss. However, this hair loss might not be as central to COVID-19 as we expect.

Hair loss is normal after having any high fever or illness, and fever is a common symptom in those who have COVID-19 because of the body's desire to attack and rid itself of this outside contagion. So, hair loss has less to do with COVID-19 itself, and more to do with it being a virus that causes illness and fever in the body.

Furthermore, while many people may consider it hair loss, it's actually hair shedding, with the medical name of telogen effluvium. Still, the term hair loss is commonly used to depict the scenario.

A 2022 study into telogen effluvium found that of the 198 patients included in the study, 48 showed hair loss after having COVID-19, making it a prominent comorbidity, or lasting health complication, for those who had this virus.

Telogen effluvium (TE) is one of the most popular types of alopecia in women and can be provoked by:

- trauma
- stressful events
- hormonal imbalance
- malnutrition
- drugs



This condition occurs when more hairs than usual enter the shedding, or telogen, phase of the hair growth lifecycle at the same time.

So, while COVID-19 is not the only cause of TE, as a viral infection it is a possible culprit.

Why Does COVID-19 Trigger Hair Loss?

It can be a distressing situation to have undergone COVID-19 infection, something with aftereffects that are still largely unknown, only to begin experiencing hair loss. Furthermore, since hair shedding due to COVID does not occur immediately following infection, it can often be hard to narrow down if the cause is COVID, genetics, or something else entirely.

There are a few reasons why COVID-19 may cause hair loss, and they all primarily stem from stress. As for the type of stress, it can be physical stress on the body, or mental stress of the mind.

For physical stressors, those with COVID-19 often have a high fever, which is often associated with hair shedding following infection. While this stressor is mild, more serious physical stressors can also lead to

hair loss, such as being placed on a ventilator because of respiratory complications. Both of these complications place the body under physical stress, which may trigger TE.

COVID-19 also increases mental stress as you deal with the infection and how you feel because of it.

When you look at it this way, it is clear that COVID-19 infection can place tremendous stress on the body through various means, which is resulting in more cases of TE following infection.

Still, the severity of hair loss does not always relate to how severe the illness was. For instance, some people with severe COVID symptoms may not have any hair loss, while those with mild symptoms experience severe hair loss.

How Long Can It Last?

If you suffer from hair shedding due to COVID-19, or any other illness, it becomes most noticeable about two to three months after having the fever or infection. As for how long it lasts, it may take six to nine months before shedding stops and your hair begins to look normal again. However, some

studies on COVID-19-related hair shedding have seen that it stops sooner than this, sometimes in only two to three months instead of the six-month average.

Is COVID-19 Hair Loss Permanent?

The good news about TE from COVID-19 is that it is not permanent. The hair phase shifts to telogen more quickly than it should, but once the new strand begins growing in, the hair can return to normal.

This is because TE does not cause someone to lose their hair follicles, which is what occurs in the case of hair loss. While there might be a bit of time when the hair does not grow, since the hair follicle is still there, the hair will eventually regrow.

Still, as with most things, there is an exception. In less than 10% of cases, those experiencing hair shedding may suffer from chronic TE, which is when the hair shedding persists beyond six months. While the exact cause of chronic TE is unknown, in cases linked to COVID-19, it's suspected to be from the significant amount of stress you underwent while infected and the fact that you might not yet be back to normal even after six months. Even in this case, though, TE is not permanent, only longer lasting.

Reversing COVID-19-Related Hair Loss

If you are experiencing hair shedding due to TE, you do not have to worry about losing all of your hair, as the proportion of telogen hairs never exceeds 50%. Still, this is something that you likely want to avoid.

So, what can be done if you are suffering from hair loss? The following are some great steps:

Check For Other Causes of Hair Loss

Since TE is delayed from your COVID-19 infection, it can be hard to know if your hair loss is from COVID or something else. To be sure, you can check other possible causes of hair loss.

Nutritional deficiencies are one such possibility. Hair relies on a balanced amount of nutrients, and in some cases, your hair loss might be because you're suffering from a deficiency in one type.

A blood test can be used to check for any nutritional deficiencies that might be affecting your hair growth. Furthermore, focusing on a more well-rounded and healthy diet can increase your chances of getting all the nutrients your body needs from the food you eat.

Your hormones might also be the culprit, with thyroids that are unbalanced possibly being the cause of your hair loss. A laboratory test can check your thyroid hormones, and if they are unbalanced, medication can be prescribed to address the low or high levels.

Check Your Stress

If tests for nutrient deficiencies and unbalanced hormones show no problems in these areas, and TE is determined to be the cause of your hair shedding, the only thing that you can really do is wait it out.

However, it's easier said than done to give your hair months to hopefully regrow, but one very important thing that you can do in this time is focus on your stress levels and keep them as minimal as possible.

TE most often results from stress, whether the stress of your environment or stress placed on your body from the illness. To ensure that TE runs its course and does not stick around longer than you want, you want to ensure that your stress levels do not remain high.

If you experience stress in your life, whether from your work, home life, or even thoughts of your hair loss, you want to work hard to address these concerns to lower your stress. Finding a healthy way to work through your worries, such as meditation, exercise, or counseling, can also be influential.

As for stress due to illness, this involves providing your body with all it needs to properly care for itself and recover from illness. For instance, your body may require more sleep as it heals or a more balanced diet rich in vitamins and nutrients it can use to repair and damage.

Stress can keep TE around longer, so by actively working to reduce stress in all forms, you can increase the odds of your hair finally beginning the regrowth cycle.

Medication

Medication is not always the right choice, but sometimes it can be.

For those with acute TE, hair growth will recover spontaneously, and their hair will begin growing again. Because of this, and since it can be hard to know when to stop medication once it has been started, it's not often recommended for those with acute TE. However, once you have been experiencing hair shedding for four to six months, and it does not appear to be getting better, it might be time to look into medication.

Remember: It's Not Permanent

In most cases, hair shedding results because of stress. While it is usually from stress sustained by the body due to illness, any stress you experience from the current state of the world can also influence your hair's growth phase.

However, it's also common for hair shedding to then cause increasing stress, perpetuating the problem.

In these cases, it's important to remember that any hair loss due to TE is not permanent, and your hair will recover. Even chronic cases of TE, which last longer than 6 months, are still not cases of permanent hair loss. Once the body returns to balance, hair will begin regrowing again.

So, the best thing you can do to reverse hair loss is to remain calm, both in your mindset about any hair you have lost and in all other aspects of your life.

COVID-19 Hair Loss: Key Takeaways

Because of the increasing amount of physical and mental stress COVID-19 infection places on the body, more and more people are suffering from hair loss months after their infection.

Unfortunately, there's not much that can be done to reverse hair loss from COVID-19 beyond waiting for everything to sort itself out. If you find yourself at this point, remember that your hair will grow back, and this is only a temporary process.

Still, while COVID-19 can cause hair shedding, it may not be the cause of your hair loss, which is why it is best to reach out to a doctor to look into your health profile to determine if something else is to blame for your hair loss.

Remember, while hair is often considered only for its influence on physical appearance, it can provide a lot of information about your internal health. If your hair is shedding more than before, it may be wise to listen to your body and look into why this is happening with your doctor.

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OBESITY AND ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

By Robert Swift, D.O. | Board Certified Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine

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

World Health Organization Fast Facts on Obesity

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

Obesity and orthopedic conditions

Obesity is a growing concern in the health community because of the morbidities associated with it. There is also a higher occurrence of many orthopedic conditions among obese individuals than their non-obese counterparts. Obesity also worsens the progression of many of these orthopedic conditions. Studies have shown that obesity may have a negative impact on bone metabolism and may be implicated in the pathophysiology of some orthopedic conditions like osteoporosis, fractures, osteoarthritis and many soft tissue ailments by both reduction in bone mass and elaboration of proinflammatory cytokines. These contribute to preponderance of musculoskeletal co-morbidities among obese patients. Critical peri-operative issues which



include increased cardiopulmonary risks, issues of special equipment, instrumentation, surgical approach, patients' positioning and adjustments in medication should be acknowledged and meticulously addressed in operative management of orthopedic conditions in obese patients. Surgeries in obese patients are fraught with operative challenges and post-operative complications than in the non-obese and a good knowledge of the critical issues in surgical management of obese patients is necessary to facilitate decision making as well as rendering of effective and efficient orthopedic care.²

Does obesity exclude a person from orthopedic surgery?

Obese patients sometimes hear from their doctor that in order to undergo a needed orthopedic surgery, such as a knee or hip replacement, they'll need to lose 50, 75, or even 100 pounds. And sometimes the recommendation is to lose even more, as if that's an easy or realistic prospect. While the surgeon's recommendations may be disappointing, the rationale seems sound: people carrying a lot of excess weight have long been considered at higher risk for complications, and less likely to experience the profound pain relief expected from this major operation. Indeed, several studies describe higher rates of infections and dislocations and lower rates of good results after hip or knee replacement among the obese, especially the severely obese.

But there is promising news. The studies that doctors have long relied on to back up their recommendations were conducted decades ago. Newer studies are showing different results. The researchers conclude that "obesity in itself should not be a deterrent to undergoing total joint replacement to relieve symptoms." However, the potential for more complications must be considered as well, something this study did not formally examine.

Given the high and rising rates of obesity and arthritis in this country, the results of this study will likely apply to many people. And they suggest that surgeons should change expectations about what surgery has to offer obese individuals with severe arthritis.

Here are some of the new findings:

- Those who were the most obese (about 25% of those in the study) had more pain and poorer function prior to surgery than those who were leaner.
- The amount of functional gain in obese individuals six months after joint replacement was significant, and similar to that experienced by those who were not obese.
- Pain relief was greater among the most obese than other weight groups. After surgery, pain levels were similar in all weight groups.³

The bottom line is that obesity should be avoided. That is always going to be true. Obese patients DO need to lose weight and obesity CAN cause significant complications during and after surgery. However, this new study is at least promising. There is hope of relief for patients suffering from orthopedic conditions that limit their mobility.

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Transitioning from Hospital to Home: The Role of In-Home Care Professionals

David Ruiz - Client Care Liaison

When patients are discharged from the hospital, the transition back to their home environment can be challenging, regardless of age. Post-operative care is crucial for ensuring a smooth recovery and preventing complications. Whitsym's In-Home Care provides a comprehensive range of services, including Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), companions and homemakers, home health aides, registered nurses (RNs), and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) to support patients during this critical period. This article explores how these professionals can assist in recovery and highlight common post-operative conditions that benefit from in-home care.

The Importance of In-Home Care

In-home care offers personalized support tailored to the specific needs of each patient. The benefits include:

- 1. Continuity of Care:** Patients receive consistent care from the same professionals, fostering a sense of trust and security.
- 2. Personalized Attention:** Care plans are tailored to individual needs, ensuring that each patient receives the appropriate level of care.
- 3. Comfort and Convenience:** Patients recover in the comfort of their home, enhancing their overall well-being and speeding up recovery.
- 4. Reduced Risk of Readmission:** Professional monitoring and care help identify and address potential complications early, reducing the likelihood of hospital readmission.

Services Provided by Whitsym's In-Home Care Professionals

Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs)

CNAs provide essential daily care, including:

- Assisting with bathing, dressing, and grooming.
- Monitoring vital signs such as blood pressure and temperature.
- Helping with mobility and transfers to prevent falls.
- Assisting with basic exercises to aid recovery.

Companions and Homemakers

Companions and homemakers offer non-medical support, including:

- Providing companionship and emotional support.

- Assisting with household tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and laundry.
- Running errands and grocery shopping.
- Accompanying patients to medical appointments.

Home Health Aides

Home health aides (HHAs) provide a combination of personal care and health-related services, including:

- Assisting with personal hygiene and dressing.
- Helping with medication reminders and administration.
- Monitor patient conditions and report any changes to healthcare providers.
- Providing light housekeeping and meal preparation.

Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)

RNs and LPNs deliver specialized medical care, including:

- Administering medications, including injections and IV therapies.
- Performing wound care and dressing changes.
- Managing pain and other post-operative symptoms.
- Educating patients and family members on post-operative care and recovery strategies.
- Coordinating with physicians and other healthcare providers to adjust care plans.

Common Post-Operative Conditions Requiring In-Home Care

1. Orthopedic Surgery

Surgeries such as hip or knee replacements often require extensive rehabilitation and assistance with mobility. In-home care professionals can help with physical therapy exercises, pain management, and daily activities to ensure a safe recovery.

2. Cardiac Surgery

Patients recovering from heart surgery need close monitoring and assistance with medication management, wound care, and gradual physical activity. RNs and LPNs are vital in managing these aspects to prevent complications such as infections or heart failure.

3. Neurological Surgery

Recovery from brain or spinal surgeries can be complex, requiring assistance with mobility, daily activities, and cognitive tasks. In-home care helps patients regain their independence while ensuring their safety.

4. General Surgery

Procedures like appendectomies, hernia repairs, and gallbladder removals often necessitate in-home care for wound management, pain control, and monitoring for signs of infection or complications.

5. Cancer Treatment and Surgery

Patients undergoing cancer treatments or surgeries often face a lengthy recovery process. In-home care provides support with medication management, nutritional needs, and emotional support, which are vital for recovery.

6. Post-Stroke Recovery

Recovering from a stroke involves professionals assisting with therapy schedules, daily activities, and monitoring for any signs of recurrent strokes.

7. Chronic Illness Management

Patients with chronic illnesses like diabetes, COPD, or heart failure often require ongoing care after hospital discharge. In-home care helps manage symptoms, medication, and lifestyle adjustments to prevent readmission.

Let Whitsym's Help You

Transitioning from hospital to home is critical in a patient's recovery journey. Whitsym's In-Home Care offers a broad spectrum of services from CNAs to RNs and LPNs, providing comprehensive support tailored to each patient's needs. Whether it's post-operative care, chronic illness management, or rehabilitation after surgery, in-home care ensures patients receive the attention and care they need to recover safely and comfortably. If you or a loved one is preparing for a hospital discharge, consider the benefits of in-home care to facilitate a smooth and successful recovery. Contact Whitsym's In-Home Care to learn more about how their professional team can assist you.

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THE SURPRISING LINK BETWEEN ACUPUNCTURE AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

By Alik Minikhanov, DACM, AP

Forgetting can be more than a minor inconvenience, especially for Americans 65 and older.

Perhaps you have witnessed firsthand the struggles of a parent or a friend who isn't just forgetting car keys or random items at the grocery store but also important details like a friend's name, frequently misplacing things, or even forgetting how to perform once-familiar tasks like making a cup of coffee.

In Florida alone, Alzheimer's disease is projected to increase by a staggering 24.1% by 2025, highlighting the pressing need for effective treatments.¹

Unfortunately, due to the intricate nature of the human brain, Alzheimer's remains a challenging condition to address.

How does Alzheimer's affect the brain?

Alzheimer's can begin before there are symptoms.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, "An asymptomatic individual may have biological changes of Alzheimer's in their brain but no cognitive symptoms. Hallmarks of Alzheimer's, such as amyloid buildup, may be present up to 20 years before someone exhibits changes in memory, thinking, or behavior."²

Scientists believe Alzheimer's disease interferes with the normal functioning of cells, primarily due to the formation of abnormal developments called plaque and tangles.

- **Plaques**, known as beta-amyloid (BAY-tuh AM-uh-loyd), are accumulations of protein fragments that deposit in the gaps between nerve cells.
- **Tangles**, composed of a protein called tau (rhymes with "wow"), are twisted fibers that accumulate within cells.

Scientists do not fully understand the precise function of plaques and tangles in Alzheimer's disease.

However, experts widely believe these abnormal protein formations play a significant role in impeding

communication between nerve cells and disrupting vital cellular processes necessary for cell survival.³

While current treatments offer limited symptomatic relief, finding a cure or effective means to slow down the progression of the disease remains a significant challenge.

Consequently, researchers are actively investigating alternative therapies, among which acupuncture has emerged as an unexpected contender.

What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is an integral part of traditional Chinese medicine, dating back over 2,500 years. The practice involves inserting thin needles into specific points on the body to stimulate energy flow along meridians.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, disruptions in this energy flow can lead to various health conditions. Acupuncture aims to restore balance and promote overall well-being.

"As an important therapeutic technique in traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture has been proved effective in treating many neurologic diseases including AD. The efficacy of acupuncture is also acknowledged by the National Institutes of Health of the United States."⁴

The Link Between Acupuncture and Alzheimer's

Acupuncture treatments may provide multifaceted benefits that address several factors associated with the disease like the following:

- **Enhancing Neuroplasticity:** Neuroplasticity refers to the brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections.⁵
- **Enhancing Blood Flow:** Proper blood flow is crucial for delivering oxygen and nutrients to the brain.
- **Reducing Stress and Anxiety:** Acupuncture has been shown to stimulate the release of endorphins and serotonin, promoting relaxation and reducing stress levels.
- **Improving Sleep Quality:** Restorative sleep is crucial for cognitive function and overall wellbeing, and acupuncture may offer a complementary

approach to managing sleep-related issues in Alzheimer's patients.

How Does Acu-healing help?

At I Am Designed to Heal, Dr. Alik's signature Acu-Healing treatments consist of acupuncture, meridian massage, meditation, and energy healing.

These treatment options offer a range of benefits not exclusive to Alzheimer's.

Acu-Healing has a cumulative effect, meaning that the benefits of each session build on the previous ones. A study titled *Acupuncture for the prevention of episodic migraine* conducted in 2016 stated, "...the effect of true acupuncture was still present after six months."⁶

The emerging link between acupuncture and Alzheimer's disease is a promising development in pursuing effective treatments for this disease.

As the field of Alzheimer's research continues to evolve, exploring alternative therapies like acupuncture offers hope for individuals affected by this debilitating disease and their families.

How do you book an appointment with Dr. Alik?

Visit our website at www.iamdesignedtoheal.com/schedule/ or call 239.322.3817 to schedule your free initial consultation with Dr. Alik Minikhanov, DACM, AP.

Taking care of yourself early will only provide a lifetime of benefits. It's never too late to begin.

We cannot wait to help you simply feel better!

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KIDNEY CANCER: Are You at Risk?

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

The kidneys are a major part of our detoxifying system. These two small bean-shaped organs clean the blood and filter waste products and toxins from the body through the urine. Kidney cancer is one of the ten most prevalent cancers. The lifetime risk for developing kidney cancer is about 1 in 46 in men and 1 in 82 in women.¹

The symptoms of kidney cancer often go unnoticed or don't begin to show until the tumor(s) has grown. However, some of the key indicators are as follows:

- Blood in the urine
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Fever or infection
- Swollen abdomen
- Lump on the side of the abdomen (with or without pain)
- Anemia
- Swollen legs and ankles
- Chronic inflammation
- High blood pressure
- Shortness of breath

If you have symptoms or your physician finds a lump during a physical examination, they will order diagnostic testing such as a renal arteriogram, MRI, CT Scan, blood and urine analysis, and a needle biopsy may be necessary.

There are some increased risk factors, which make some individuals more susceptible to renal cancer. The risks factors included:

- Being over the age of 40
- Being male
- Being black
- Smoking
- Obese
- Overuse of NSAIDs and other prescription medications
- Family History
- Chemical Exposures
- Kidney disease

Most kidney cancer appears first in the tubules of the kidneys. When the malignant cells form a tumor(s) the growth rate is typically slow, so the

likelihood of an early diagnosis is increased, and the treatment can usually be performed before the tumor has metastasized into any other organs.

Treatment

Depending on the stage and size of the tumor(s), your physician will develop a specific treatment plan tailored to your needs.

Typically, performing a nephrectomy treats kidney cancer. There are three main types of this surgical option. The first is a Partial nephrectomy, which removes the tumor and some of the surrounding tissue. The second is a Simple nephrectomy, which removes the entire kidney, and the third treatment method is a Radical nephrectomy, which removes the kidney, adrenal glands, lymph nodes, and any questionable surrounding tissue margins. These procedures can usually be done laparoscopically. Some patients may also require radiation or chemotherapy treatments.

Associates in Nephrology

Associates in Nephrology has been providing comprehensive kidney care and transplant services in Southwest Florida since 1984. Our team of nephrologists, nurse practitioners, and medical assistants are engaged in all aspects of providing the most advanced services for kidney disease and kidney transplants.

Chronic Kidney Disease Program

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

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

Source:

1. https://www.nftr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAYc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1ldxNN-rM7OKwmg3j43bZni6h175MIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD_BwE

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

Services Provided

Associates in Nephrology provides treatment for many kidney related conditions, as well as kidney transplant services.

- All forms of Dialysis – Hemodialysis and Peritoneal
- Diabetic Kidney Disorder
- Dietitian Services for Kidney Patients
- Disorders of Blood Chemistry
- Electrolyte Disorders
- Fluid Overload, Edema (swelling)
- Glomerulonephritis
- Hypertension
- Injections of Aranesp for Anemia related to Kidney Disease
- Kidney Transplant Services: Patient and Donor Evaluations, Post-Transplant Follow-up Care
- Lupus Nephritis
- Nephrotic Syndrome
- Pyelonephritis
- Polycystic Kidney Disease
- Recurring kidney stones
- Renal Failure
- Renal Insufficiency

We work collaboratively with a patient's primary care physician and specialists to slow the progression of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and prevent or manage complications such as hypertension, anemia, and bone disease. Additionally, our multidisciplinary team of professionals can assist you in arranging a wide array of supportive services and education programs for patients in all stages of CKD. For patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD), our nephrologists can prepare them for all renal replacement therapies: in-center or home hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and kidney transplant.

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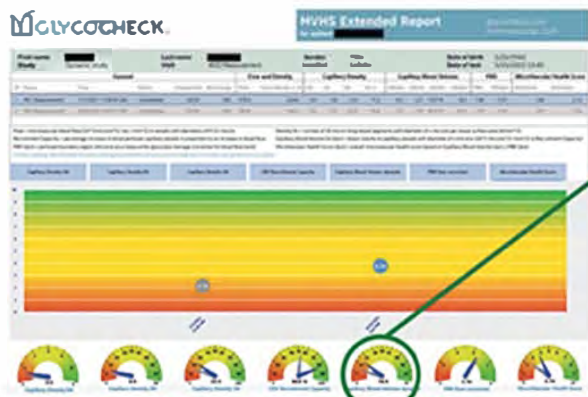
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Why is Measuring Your Microvascular System Is Important?

By Lisa H. Sprague MSS, PTA, LMT

In the last issue I introduced a revolutionary new medical device called GlycoCheck that was recently released to healthcare practitioners after 15 years in research hospitals and universities (research with the GlycoCheck is ongoing). This technology measures and analyzes the function of your entire microvascular system, therefore you can monitor the health of the endothelial glycocalyx lining inside your microvessels. I wanted to go a little deeper into the information that we get from the results and why you would want to get this scan.



How Does GlycoCheck Work and What Does It Measure?

GlycoCheck is a non-invasive, under-the-tongue test that shows the live movement of your red blood cells. This device produces a single Microvascular Health Score that reveals the health of the glycocalyx by measuring several critical parameters of the microvascular system:

- **Capillary Density:** Gives the capacity of your capillary network to get nutrients to organs and tissue cells. Higher numbers are better.
- **Capillary Blood Volume (CBV) Recruitment Capacity:** Shows the additional number of functional capillary blood vessels that can be engaged when flow increases. Higher is better.
- **CBV Dynamic:** When all available capillary blood vessels are engaged at high blood flow levels this tells the maximum functional capacity of the capillary network. Higher is better.
- **Perfused Boundary Region (PBR) Flow Corrected:** Indicates the level of damage to the endothelial glycocalyx. A lower number indicates a healthier glycocalyx.

- **Microvascular Health Score (MVHS):** This is your overall score based on capillary density, recruitment capacity, and glycocalyx health. A higher score means better microvascular health.

Lower Microvascular Health Scores are linked to:

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Heart disease
- Kidney disease
- Stroke
- Dementia
- Septic shock
- Inflammatory disorders
- Cancer metastasis
- Long-haul COVID-19 complications

Why have a GlycoCheck scan of your microvascular system?

There are many reasons but the I think these are the most important:

1. Know the health of your glycocalyx. Recent research indicates that impaired glycocalyx health contributes to loss of microvascular function in conditions and diseases such as diabetes, dementia, cancer metastasis, heart disease and more.
2. Knowledge of your true vascular health for you may look and even feel healthy on the outside, but inside, your microvascular system a completely different situation could be developing.
3. Valuable information you can give your doctor that will be an asset for your overall care.
4. Take action to repair and protect your microcirculation and change the health of your microvascular system therefore your health
5. Protect yourself from premature health decline
6. Peace of mind

Can You Can Restore, Regenerate, and Protect Your Glycocalyx?

Yes! No matter what your microvascular health score is, you can still improve the health of your vascular system! Clinically proven to repair the damage in your arteries, veins, and microcapillaries is a patented product called Endocalyx Pro.

Endocalyx Pro is made up of seven synergistic ingredients from three classes of compounds: polysaccharides (helps restore), amino sugars (helps regenerate), and antioxidants (helps protect). You can restore the health of your endothelial glycocalyx and capillary function with Endocalyx Pro and monitor your progress with GlycoCheck. As the health of your glycocalyx improves so improves all your other data that makes up your MicroVascular Health Score.

Without doubt lifestyle choices are just as important. Support the health of your glycocalyx by having a healthy lifestyle, reducing stress, exercising regularly, and eating an anti-inflammatory, Mediterranean-style diet.

If you're looking to enhance your quality of health/longevity or gain insight into your true cardiovascular potential and risk, then GlycoCheck is the answer. This is valuable information for your Physician to have also. It just might be life changing information, or a wakeup call for better health. GlycoCheck is a very interesting experience to have! See the live movement of your red blood cells as they move through your microcapillaries. The scan is a non-invasive and takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

For practitioners, the GlycoCheck is not only an objective tool to monitor changes in your patient's endothelial glycocalyx – it also allows you to monitor the impact of your treatments and the results are an asset for your overall plan of care.

It's not too late to slow down or reverse the breakdown of your glycocalyx. GlycoCheck provides objective data and the solution to a healthy microvascular system that ultimately enhances whole-body health.

You can connect with Lisa at 239-821-1223 or
Lisa@MVsolutions.pro.
 Please go to www.microvasculartesting.com
 & www.ScienceandArtofHealing.com
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Are You Practicing Mindful Wealth?

Courtesy of Nina Azwoir, First Vice President, Investments

If the past few months have given you more time for introspection, use it to improve your financial plan in a big-picture way. Even for the privileged among us who still have our jobs, are not on the front lines with the pandemic, and have not had anyone close to us felled by COVID-19, the current crisis has brought hardships big and small.

Parents have confronted the daily struggle of trying to do their jobs while also home-schooling. Adult children have not been able to visit their elderly parents. Graduations, weddings, and even funerals have been put on hold or "Zoomified." Yet as difficult as it has been, there have been a few silver linings too, especially for those of us lucky enough to not be touched directly by the crisis. One of the most valuable is that pressing pause on our usual routines has given many of us the opportunity to take a step back, get out of our ruts, and take stock. What do we really value? What do we really miss? What can we not wait to do when this is all over? What "necessity" of our past lives, whether the daily purchased latte or frequent meals in restaurants, are we finding that we are quite happily doing without?

Travel may be someone's greatest longing, while others miss cooking and entertaining big groups of family and friends. Talking about how the pandemic has changed our thinking on a topic, or made us want to do more of something else, can help us feel like we are using the present situation productively. The current sense of isolation will not be for naught, because it is shaping how we intend to use our lives in the future, when we once again have a full set of choices before us.

Are You Allocating Your Time and Money with Your Intentions?

It can be argued that now is a good time to put a fresh set of eyes on your financial plan, taking a similarly expansive view of it that you might not have been able to do when you were busy and mired in your day-to-day activities. Too often, one expert opined, financial plans (and planners) move straight to the "solution" phase, without stopping to ask some basic questions about what someone is trying to achieve and what their real problems are.

"Much of the scientific research about spending and happiness points to a clear connection between spending on experiences versus things."

What will constitute "success" for you over the next few years, not just in financial terms, but in life terms, too? Are you allocating your time and money in line with your intentions, what you find fulfilling, and what brings you joy? These questions are incredibly personal; no one else can answer them for you.

Whether you are well into retirement or early in your career, it can be easy to backburner questions like these and move straight to logistics, determining your asset allocation and minimizing taxes, for example. Those are all worthy pursuits, but if you find yourself with a bit of extra time to think a bit more broadly and introspectively about your financial plan, here are some of the key questions to ask yourself.

What Expenditures Bring You Happiness?

As most investors know, the biggest determinant of whether you achieve financial success is how much you spend versus how much you save. But as important as it is to make sure your intake exceeds your outgo, budgeting can seem like sheer drudgery. Here is a different way to think about budgeting. Simply begin to take note of how various discretionary expenditures make you feel. It can be incredibly illuminating. Much of the scientific research about spending and happiness points to a clear connection between spending on experiences versus things. Many would also argue that many of life's most memorable experiences cost very little.

How Are You Allocating Your Precious Resources?

Investors should strive to make smart allocations of financial capital across opportunity sets, not just saving versus spending but also debt pay down versus investing in the market, how much to allocate to retirement savings versus college, and so on. These are crucial topics worthy of significant analysis and introspection. Ultimately, the right answers are a matter of math (expected return on "investment") and personal preference.

Many of us pay much less attention to how we allocate an even more scarce resource, our time, even though that allocation will ultimately have an even greater impact on whether we feel like we have met our goals. Of course, some of our time expenditures are pre-ordained, the time we spend working or caring for children, for example. Even within those allocations it seems worthwhile to be more mindful, to help ensure that your allocation of time in a given day, week, or year aligns with your goals and vision for that period. An audit of how you are allocating your time currently is a good starting point. Technology tools can help you determine how much time you waste (uh, spend) on social media and other activities that could be detracting from your productivity and happiness.

What Is Your Definition of "Enough"?

Many of us are operating with an incredibly vague notion of how much we really need to save in order to achieve our financial goals and find security. Even financial planners might rely on rules of thumb when setting your retirement savings target. For example, they might assume that you will need 80% of your working income in retirement and extrapolate the rest of your plan from there.

As humans, we often have a natural tendency to reach for more more more, regardless of whether that "more" is actually bringing more happiness and security. Trying to keep up with the people around us, in terms of possessions and outward signs of success, can get exhausting and may not get us any closer to our life's goals. That is why, in this period of limited activity, spending, and social contact, it is worthwhile to think through your own definition of enough, both now and for the future.

What Do You Want Your Legacy to Be?

When taking a strictly financial and estate-planning perspective, leaving a "legacy" is one of those topics that can seem overly narrow. It is about leaving assets behind for children, grandchildren, and other loved ones, as well as charity if we so choose. It is about making sure we do not burden the people we care about. Those are crucial considerations and they are why everyone needs an estate plan that includes wills, powers of attorney, and beneficiary designations, among other key documents.

While you are at it, why not think big picture about your legacy, too? What do you hope people will say about you after you are gone? What life philosophy or pieces of wisdom do you hope that your loved ones will always associate with you? If you find yourself with a bit of extra time for introspection, write down a few ideas along these lines. And no, you are not too young to start thinking about this. You can find templates for creating a "personal legacy" online, but some good advice is not to overthink it. Balance more serious ideas with more lighthearted ones. We all have credos that we live by; make sure your loved ones know yours.

**Nina Azwoir, First Vice President of Investments,
Wintrust Wealth Management.**

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2. GPS Origins Ancestry Test:

Embark on a captivating journey through your ancestral lineage with our GPS Origins Ancestry Test. This comprehensive analysis delves into your genetic origins, revealing your ancestral migration routes and the fascinating stories behind your family's history. Uncover the rich tapestry of your heritage and gain a deeper appreciation for your cultural roots.

3. MTHFR PGx Panel:

Genes play a crucial role in shaping our traits, from physical characteristics to health predispositions. Our MTHFR PGx Panel analyzes genetic variations that can influence the metabolism of folate, a vital

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THE BOCOXTM PROCEDURE

ENHANCING PENIS HEALTH AND FUNCTION WITH BOTOX®

By Dr. Viviana Cuberos

When it comes to men's sexual health, the Bocox™ procedure has emerged as a revolutionary technique utilizing Botox® injections to improve penis health and function. Botox®, commonly known for its cosmetic applications, is now being employed as a minimally invasive solution to address various sexual concerns. In this article, we will delve into the details of the Bocox™ procedure, its potential benefits, and what men need to know about this innovative approach to enhancing their sexual well-being.

Understanding the Bocox™ Procedure

The Bocox™ procedure is a specialized technique that involves injecting Botox, a purified form of the botulinum toxin, into specific areas of the penis. The injections are strategically administered to target the smooth muscle tissue responsible for erectile function. By temporarily relaxing these muscles, Botox can alleviate conditions such as erectile dysfunction (ED), Peyronie's disease, and premature ejaculation. This groundbreaking procedure offers a non-surgical alternative to traditional treatment options, providing men with a safe and effective solution for improving their sexual health.

Benefits of the Bocox™ Procedure

The Bocox™ procedure offers several potential benefits for men experiencing sexual health issues. Primarily, it can aid in the treatment of erectile dysfunction by promoting better blood flow and relaxation of the penile muscles. Additionally, Botox injections can address the symptoms of Peyronie's disease, a condition characterized by the abnormal curvature of the penis, by relaxing the affected area and reducing pain during intercourse. Moreover, the Bocox procedure has shown promising results in combating premature ejaculation, extending sexual stamina, and enhancing overall sexual satisfaction. These benefits make the Bocox procedure an appealing option for men seeking to improve their sexual performance and regain confidence in the bedroom.

Procedure and Recovery

The Bocox™ procedure is typically performed as an outpatient procedure in a medical office or clinic. The process involves administering Botox injections into predetermined areas of the penis, guided by



ultrasound or other imaging techniques. The injections are relatively painless, and the entire procedure usually takes less than 30 minutes. After the treatment, patients may experience mild swelling, bruising, or discomfort, but these side effects are temporary and typically resolve within a few days. Full recovery is expected within a week, and patients can resume sexual activity as advised by their healthcare provider. The Bocox™ procedure's minimally invasive nature and quick recovery time make it an attractive option for those seeking to improve their sexual health without significant downtime.

Considerations and Potential Risks

While the Bocox™ procedure offers promising results, it is essential for men to approach it with realistic expectations and consult with a qualified healthcare professional. Like any medical procedure, there are potential risks involved. Some individuals may experience allergic reactions to Botox or encounter temporary side effects such as bruising, swelling, or pain. It is crucial to choose a reputable and experienced healthcare provider who specializes in sexual health to ensure safe and effective treatment. Open communication with the healthcare provider regarding medical history, expectations, and concerns is key to a successful outcome.

Nothing, including this procedure, works for everyone. Discuss the procedure with your provider & read the consent form which incorporates the possible side effects seen with both Botox and Viagra (since, in theory, the same side effects could occur with Bocox™).

WARNING: Treating erectile dysfunction is serious business; only providers trained & licensed by the Cellular Medicine Association® (indicated by their listing on our directory) can legally use the name, Bocox™, to describe a procedure offered in their office.

The Bocox™ procedure utilizing Botox injections represents an exciting advancement in the field of men's sexual health. With its potential to improve erectile function, alleviate Peyronie's disease symptoms, and enhance overall sexual satisfaction, this minimally invasive technique offers hope to men seeking effective solutions. By understanding the procedure, considering the benefits and risks, and consulting with a qualified professional, men can make informed decisions about their sexual well-being and explore the potential benefits of the Bocox procedure.

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Navigating Solo Aging

Advocating for Yourself and Preparing for the Future

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

As our population ages, an increasing number of older adults find themselves making decisions about their future independently, without the support of adult children or close relatives. This experience, known as solo aging, is becoming more prevalent in society. With projections indicating that one in five Americans will be retirement age by 2030, it is crucial for solo agers to understand the unique challenges they may face and take proactive steps to advocate for themselves and prepare for the future.

What is Solo Aging?

Solo agers are older adults who are navigating the aging process without immediate family support. This group includes individuals or couples without children, those who never married or had children, individuals living alone due to divorce or the death of a partner, and those whose children or relatives live far away or are not involved in their lives. Many solo agers associate living alone as they age with positive feelings such as independence, satisfaction, and happiness. However, they may also experience a sense of lacking companionship, feeling left out, and isolation compared to the general population aged 50 and above.

Challenges Faced by Solo Agers

While solo agers may have a positive outlook on their aging journey, they face unique concerns and challenges. Solo agers are more likely to fear dying alone, being moved somewhere against their will, and having someone appointed by the court to make decisions for them. Additionally, this group

tends to worry about losing their independence, being alone without family or friends around, and not being able to stay in their homes.

Lack of Preparedness

One of the significant issues faced by solo agers is a lack of preparedness for the future. Only about one-third of solo agers report having someone who could assist in managing their household or handle day-to-day expenses if they were no longer able to do so. Furthermore, a considerable number of solo agers have postponed making their end-of-life wishes known. Approximately half have an advanced medical directive, and even among those who have one, only a fraction have shared it with their primary care doctor. Additionally, a significant percentage of solo agers have not created a will or trust, nor made arrangements for their funeral or burial. Many have done little or no planning for living assistance as they age.

Empowering Solo Agers Through Advocacy and Preparation

Solo agers must be proactive in advocating for themselves and planning for their future. Here are some steps they can take to navigate solo aging successfully:

- 1. Building a Supportive Network:** Engage with community organizations, social groups, and online communities that cater to the needs of solo agers. These connections can provide companionship, support, and assistance when needed.
- 2. Communicating End-of-Life Wishes:** Create advanced medical directives, such as a living will or health care proxy, to ensure your medical preferences

are known and respected. Share these documents with your primary-care doctor and trusted individuals who may be involved in your care.

3. Legal and Financial Planning: Consult with an attorney to create a comprehensive estate plan that includes a will or trust, power of attorney, and other relevant legal documents. Regularly review and update these documents to reflect any changes in circumstances.

4. Long-Term Care Options: Educate yourself about various living options available for aging adults, such as assisted living, independent living communities, or home care services. Understand the costs, benefits, and eligibility criteria associated with each option.

5. Caregiver Support: Consider building a network of trusted individuals, such as friends, neighbors, or professional caregivers, who can provide assistance with day-to-day tasks, manage household responsibilities, and offer emotional support.

Solo aging presents unique opportunities and challenges for older adults. By embracing independence, building supportive networks, and taking proactive steps to plan for the future, solo agers can advocate for themselves and ensure a fulfilling and secure retirement journey. It is essential to address concerns, communicate end-of-life wishes, and make informed decisions about long-term care to enjoy a life that is meaningful, connected, and prepared for the years to come.

Senior Care Authority takes pride in understanding and supporting the solo aging process. Our advisors are trained to provide the tools you need to surround yourself with the right support and make a plan for the future. To contact us call (239) 330-2133, or visit our website at www.scanyfl.com.

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UNDERSTANDING DIZZINESS, VERTIGO & BALANCE DISORDERS

What Is a Balance Disorder?

Your sense of balance is critically important to help prevent falls and injury.

A balance disorder affects your body's ability to hold an upright, safe position and is often experienced as dizziness and vertigo. Dizziness is a feeling of being unsteady or having a distorted sense of your body in the space in the space around it. Vertigo involves a sense a movement, as if you or the environment around you is spinning. Dizziness and vertigo can be accompanied by light-headedness, blurred vision, confusion, disorientation, nausea, and vomiting. Dizziness and vertigo are symptoms of numerous conditions, including anxiety, dehydration, circulation issues, nervous system and brain conditions, medication side effects, and inner ear disorders.

An ENT can help you determine if your dizziness or vertigo is caused by an inner ear disorder.

Balance and the Inner Ear

Your sense of balance is guided by signals from your eyes, ears, and sensory receptors to your brain.

The part of your ears involved in balance is called the vestibular system, a structure of bone and soft tissue located in your inner ear. Within this structure are loopshaped canals that contain fluid hairlike sensors. When you move your head, the fluid in the vestibular system causes the hairlike sensors to bend, sending a signal to your brain that your head has changed position. With this information, your brain can send signals to other parts of the body, such as your eyes and muscles, to move your body's position and visual focus to help maintain your sense of balance.

When any part of the vestibular system is injured or malfunctioning, proper signals to your brain can be disrupted, causing you to feel imbalanced. When the vestibular system is the cause of your sense of imbalance, it is called a vestibular disorder.

Common Vestibular Disorders

Autoimmune Inner Ear Disease (AIED)

Autoimmune Inner Ear Disease is caused by a malfunctioning immune system that attacks healthy ear tissue. It affects both ears and causes hearing



loss and balance issues. Once symptoms are present, they typically progress quickly. AIED is rare, affecting 15 out of 100,000 people, and is most common in middle-aged women. It commonly occurs with other autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, scleroderma, and ulcerative colitis.

Acoustic Neuroma

Acoustic neuroma is a benign (non-cancerous) tumor that grows on the nerves in the inner ear that are responsible for hearing and balance. The pressure on the nerve from the tumor may cause hearing loss and imbalance.

Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV)

Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV) is one of the most common vestibular disorders. The structures in your ear that monitor your head's movements crystals that make you sensitive to gravity. These crystals can become dislodged for several reasons, such as serious trauma to the head or even minor trauma such as a violent sneeze or bumping your head into something. When the crystals become dislodged, they can move into the canals of the vestibular system and create a fall signal of head movement, causing dizziness. Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo can occur at any age but is most common in people over the age of 50.

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome (MdDS)

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome is a rare condition that causes a severe and often debilitating feeling of swaying or bobbing, much like motion sickness but without motion. It often follows boat or ship travel but can persist for months or longer. While it is a neurological condition rather than a vestibular condition as it does not involve the inner ear, patients often see ENT physicians for a diagnosis.

Ménière's Disease

Ménière's disease causes severe vertigo, ringing in the ears, hearing loss, and a feeling of fullness or congestion in the ear. In Ménière's disease, a buildup of fluid in the inner ear interferes with the vestibular nerve's ability to send signals that regulate balance to the brain. Ménière's disease usually affects only one ear but over time can progress to affect both ears.

Vestibular Neuritis

Vestibular neuritis, or vestibular neuronitis, is characterized by inflammation of the vestibular nerve in the inner ear. It causes a sudden case of severe vertigo, dizziness, balance problems, nausea and vomiting that can last for minutes or prolonged over several days. Vestibular neuritis is typically caused by a virus either in the ear or elsewhere in the body.

Perilymph Fistula

A perilymph fistula is a tear or defect in the membrane that separates the air-filled middle ear and the fluid-filled inner ear. This tear allows fluid from the inner ear to flow into the middle ear, causing a change in the ear pressure of the middle ear. This change in ear pressure can stimulate the balance structures in the inner ear. Sudden pressure changes, head trauma, or injury to the ear are common causes.

Diagnosing Vestibular Disorders

Price Sonkarley, MD and the audiologists are trained to performed diagnostic tests for vestibular function. Tests they may perform include:

- Hearing tests – To evaluate hearing functionality
- Electrocochleography (ECoG) – Measures inner ear fluid pressure
- Electronystagmography (ENG) or Videonystagmography (VNG) — Measures eye movement and the muscles that control them
- Head movement testing – Evaluates the effect of tilting your head
- Rotational chair testing – Measures eye movements while you sit in a computerized chair that moves
- Posturography – Measures your ability to maintain proper posture under different test conditions
- Subjective visual vertical test (SVV) – Measures how your inner ear senses gravity
- Vestibular evoked myogenic potential (VEMP) – Evaluates the functionality of the inner ear and vestibular nerve
- Blood tests – To check for infections



Your otolaryngologist may consult with other physicians such as neurologists to assess neurological conditions, and cardiologists to assess circulatory conditions.

Treating Vestibular Disorders

Your treatment plan will depend on which type of vestibular disorder you have. Options may include:

- Medications to treat an infection
- Medications to prevent vertigo and nausea
- Treatment of underlying conditions
- Surgery to repair inner ear function
- Dietary changes
- Activity changes
- Physical or occupational therapy

Be Safe When Feeling Dizzy

Dizziness and vertigo increase the risk of falling and injuries. To minimize this potential, consider taking these safety precautions:

- Minimize driving
- Minimize going up and down the stairs
- Walk with a cane or walker
- Install “grab bars” in the bathroom
- Wear low-heeled shoes

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Dr. Price Sonkarley is a Board Certified Otolaryngologist Head and Neck Surgeon and will be continuing Dr. Montgomery’s practice providing excellent care to all patients. He will be performing both medical and surgical aspects of the specialty and is accepting new patients.

Dr. Sonkarley grew up in the Midwest and received his Doctorate from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine. He completed his Otolaryngology Residency at the University of Oklahoma. He served in the US Marine Corps for 5 years and was awarded the Joint Services Achievement Medal after his tour in Iraq.

Kathleen Rocuant, Au.D FAAA received her Doctorate from the Arizona School of Health Sciences and is Board Certified by the American Board of Audiology. She Specializes in Hearing Evaluations Hearing Aids and Hearing Solutions. She is a Fellow American Academy of Audiology and a member of the American Academy of Audiology and the Florida Academy of Audiology.

Carly Treibits, PA-C is a graduate of Florida Gulf Coast University and is a Board Certified Physician Assistant. She is a member of the Florida Academy of Physician Assistants and the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

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Navigating the Healthcare Landscape: A Comprehensive Guide

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

In today's intricate societal fabric, healthcare often presents itself as a labyrinth. The common tendency is to focus on the cost and the additional services a health plan might offer. However, the real focus should be on access to care - the 'what if's'. What if you are diagnosed with cancer or a heart condition? The importance of a robust network cannot be overstated, as it ensures you receive the best care from the hospital and specialist you need.

Unfortunately, many individuals overlook their potential future needs, focusing solely on their current health status and the financial implications. It's crucial to understand that in Individual, Group, and Medicare Advantage insurance, a doctor or hospital can exit the network or be asked to leave, and this does not constitute grounds for changing plans.

The upcoming 2025 Medicare season will bring significant changes. It's imperative to conduct a thorough review and work with a broker who represents multiple companies in your area. You can review plans starting October 1-14 and enroll from October 15 to December 7, 2024, for 2025. Ensure you review doctors, hospitals, and other medical services to verify they are in-network. Remember, just because they are in-network now doesn't guarantee they will be in 2025.

Prescription medications will undergo substantial changes in 2025 due to the Inflation Reduction Act, which caps the annual out-of-pocket expenses at \$2,000 for Part D Medications. We anticipate an increase in Part D premiums and changes in the formularies. The cap ONLY applies to in-formulary medications. This also affects Advantage Plans.

If your insurance company has recently dropped your doctor, we may still have options. Contact us or a professional specializing in Medicare. As insurance agents, we are not notified when your doctor is no longer in the network. It's your responsibility to reach out to us so we can assist you before it's too late.



Under the new Biden administration rules for short-term health plans, plans issued or sold on or after September 1, 2024, will be limited to total durations of no more than four months, including renewals.

Short Term and Tri-Term Health Insurance plans are affordable options for many. The Affordable Care Act/Market Place/Obama Care is available to all residents at the regular price. Affordability comes into play if you receive a subsidy to help pay for a portion of your healthcare, based on your household income and if you have qualified group coverage that the government considers affordable to you.

Health insurance is complex, but you don't have to navigate it alone. We suggest you seek help from a professional. We don't charge for our services and neither do most in our industry.

Travel Insurance – Summer is a time when many of us are traveling within the USA, on a cruise, or abroad. Check to make sure your insurance has you covered. Travel Medical Insurance is not that expensive and if you were to need it, it's a very small investment in peace of mind.

Life Insurance – You are never too young, and you can never have enough. Life insurance also has living benefits. The younger you start, the more affordable it is. Your insurability is not guaranteed so the younger and healthier, the better.

Logical Insurance Solutions is a SWFL Insurance Broker that works with most of the carriers. We are happy to help you navigate the maze. This is what we do daily; it is second nature to us. We offer virtual seminars, one-on-one virtual via screen sharing, phone, and in-person appointments.

To learn more about your options, schedule an appointment with Logical Insurance Solutions for all your insurance needs. I am licensed in most states. Visit www.Logicalinsurance.com or call 239-362-0855. You can also reach us at info@Logicalinsurance.com.

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Childhood Obesity and Its Impact on Mental Health

By Richard J. Capiola, MD

Childhood obesity is a pressing issue that has far-reaching consequences, not only on physical health but also on mental well-being. As rates of overweight and obesity continue to rise among children and adolescents, it is crucial to understand the intricate relationship between excess weight and mental health in this vulnerable population.

One of the primary contributors to childhood obesity and its impact on mental health is the stigma and discrimination associated with being overweight or obese. Children and adolescents who are affected by obesity often face bullying, teasing, and social isolation from their peers, which can lead to low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. This negative social experience can create a vicious cycle, as emotional distress may lead to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as overeating or sedentary behaviors, exacerbating the problem.

Furthermore, obesity itself can have direct physiological effects on mental health. Research has shown that excess body weight is associated with inflammation and imbalances in hormones and neurotransmitters, which can contribute to mood disorders, including depression and anxiety. Additionally, obesity-related health conditions, such as sleep apnea and type 2 diabetes, can further compound mental health issues.



Mental health professionals and healthcare providers should be vigilant in identifying potential mental health concerns in children and adolescents affected by obesity. Early intervention is crucial, as untreated mental health issues can persist into adulthood and may contribute to the development of other chronic health problems.

Treatment options for addressing the mental health impacts of childhood obesity often involve a multidisciplinary approach, combining psychological support, nutritional guidance, and physical activity interventions. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) has been shown to be effective in improving body image, self-esteem, and coping strategies for children and adolescents struggling with obesity-related mental health issues.

Additionally, family-based interventions that involve parents or caregivers can be beneficial, as they can provide a supportive environment and promote healthy lifestyle changes within the household. Encouraging regular physical activity and promoting a balanced diet can not only improve physical health but also boost mood and self-confidence.

It is essential to address the mental health aspects of childhood obesity with sensitivity and compassion. Promoting a positive body image, fostering self-acceptance, and providing appropriate support systems can empower children and adolescents to develop healthy coping mechanisms and enhance their overall well-being.

In conclusion, childhood obesity and mental health are inextricably linked, and a holistic approach that addresses both physical and psychological factors is crucial for promoting the overall well-being of children and adolescents affected by this condition. By raising awareness, providing early intervention, and implementing comprehensive treatment strategies, we can support the mental health of our youth and help them navigate this challenging journey with resilience and confidence.

Dr. Richard J. Capiola is the Chief of Psychiatry for Physicians Regional Medical Center. He received his medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine and has been in practice for more than 20 years. Call Dr. Capiola today at 239-649-7494.

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COGNITIVE ISSUES WITH INDOOR MOLD GROWTH: A FOCUS ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

By Julie S. Hurst-Nicoll, MBA, CMI, CMR - President, American Mold Experts

Indoor mold growth is a significant concern for public health, given its potential to cause a wide range of health issues. Among these, the potential link between mold exposure and cognitive decline, particularly in relation to Alzheimer's disease, has garnered increasing attention. Understanding this connection is essential for preventing and mitigating the adverse effects of mold on vulnerable populations, including the elderly who are already at an elevated risk for cognitive disorders.

Understanding Mold and Its Health Impacts

Mold is a type of fungus that thrives in moist, humid environments. It reproduces by releasing tiny spores into the air. In addition, in less than 2 weeks mycotoxins, a byproduct of mold, will be released. Mycotoxins are a poison. Both can be easily inhaled. While mold is a common occurrence in many homes, prolonged exposure, especially to toxic molds that are known to produce mycotoxins, can lead to serious health problems.

1. Respiratory Issues: Mold spores can cause or exacerbate conditions such as asthma, bronchitis, and other chronic respiratory diseases.

2. Allergic Reactions: Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rashes.

3. Neurological Effects: Some molds produce mycotoxins, which have been linked to neurological symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, and memory loss.

Mold Exposure and Cognitive Decline

Emerging research suggests a possible connection between indoor mold exposure and cognitive decline. While definitive evidence is still developing, several studies indicate that mold exposure may exacerbate or even contribute to the development of cognitive disorders, including Alzheimer's disease.

1. Mycotoxins and Neurotoxicity: Mycotoxins, produced by certain mold species, can be neurotoxic. These substances can cross the blood-brain barrier and cause inflammation in the brain, potentially leading to cognitive deficits.

2. Inflammatory Response: Chronic exposure to mold can trigger a prolonged inflammatory response in the body. Inflammation is a known risk factor for various neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's.

3. Oxidative Stress: Mold exposure has been associated with increased oxidative stress, which damages cells and tissues in the body. Oxidative stress in the brain is a significant factor in the progression of Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's Disease and Vulnerability to Mold

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioral changes. The elderly are particularly susceptible to both Alzheimer's and the harmful effects of mold exposure for several reasons:

1. Age-Related Decline: Aging naturally weakens the immune system, making it harder for the body to fight off infections and environmental toxins, including mold.

2. Existing Health Conditions: Many elderly individuals have pre-existing health conditions that can be worsened by mold exposure, such as respiratory diseases and cardiovascular problems.

3. Neurological Sensitivity: Older adults may have an increased sensitivity to neurotoxins, including mycotoxins produced by mold, which can exacerbate cognitive decline.

Case Studies and Research Findings

Several case studies and research findings support the connection between mold exposure and cognitive decline:

1. Case Study in Neurotoxicology: A case study published in the journal "Neurotoxicology and Teratology" reported a link between mold exposure and cognitive impairment in a middle-aged woman. The study found that after remediation of mold in her home, her cognitive functions improved significantly.

2. Research by Dr. Ritchie Shoemaker: Dr. Shoemaker, a pioneer in biotoxin-related illness, has conducted extensive research on the effects of mold exposure. His findings indicate that individuals exposed to mold often show symptoms of cognitive dysfunction, which can mimic or exacerbate conditions like Alzheimer's.

3. Animal Studies: Research involving animal models has demonstrated that exposure to mycotoxins can lead to cognitive deficits, supporting the hypothesis that mold exposure can impact brain health.

Preventing Mold-Related Cognitive Issues

Given the potential risks, it is crucial to take proactive measures to prevent and mitigate mold growth in indoor environments, especially for those at risk of cognitive decline.

1. Maintain Proper Humidity Levels: Keep indoor humidity levels between 30% and 50% to inhibit mold growth. Use dehumidifiers and air conditioners during humid months.

2. Ensure Adequate Ventilation: Proper ventilation in kitchens, bathrooms, and basements can help reduce moisture levels. Use exhaust fans and open windows when possible.

3. Regular Inspections: Conduct regular inspections of your home for signs of mold, especially in areas prone to dampness. Address any leaks or water damage promptly.

4. Use Mold-Resistant Materials: In areas susceptible to moisture, consider using mold-resistant building materials such as drywall and paint.

5. Clean and Dry Quickly: Dry any wet or damp materials within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth. Clean areas prone to mold regularly using mold-killing products.

6. Professional Help: If you suspect a significant mold problem, consider hiring a professional mold remediation service to assess and address the issue comprehensively.

Conclusion

The potential link between indoor mold growth and cognitive issues, particularly Alzheimer's disease, underscores the importance of maintaining a mold-free living environment. While research is ongoing, the evidence suggests that mold exposure can have significant neurological effects, contributing to or exacerbating cognitive decline.



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The Matterhorn Method: Eliminating Pain and Inspiring Hope

By Angela Puchalla, MS, ATC, LAT

As we age, we are constantly fighting an uphill battle of pain and physical limitations. When our body starts to break down, we are unable to perform the activities that we want and the mental burden becomes as great as the physical one. Many patients bounce from doctor to doctor without ever getting to the root cause of their problem. This can be extremely frustrating and causes many to lose hope.

Naples based Matterhorn Fit, has a solution. Through their proprietary process, called the Matterhorn Method, they have been able to successfully treat over 70 professional athletes, 11 Olympians, and thousands of SW Florida residents in as little as two weeks. In their comprehensive initial evaluation, they will identify exactly where the root cause of your problem is coming from, create a plan to fix it quickly, and prevent it from returning.

“Many of our clients have lost hope. They have tried traditional treatment methods and are still in pain.. When you address pain, injury, and movement dysfunction from a neurological level, the results are fast and our clients become hopeful again,” says Matterhorn Fit CEO Ryan Vesce.

Ryan Vesce was on the verge of retirement from his professional hockey career after major back and hip surgery, but mentally he was not ready. Ryan teamed up with professional athlete strength coach, Sean Sullivan, to find a solution to his chronic pain. The team spent the next five years compiling various



techniques they had learned in professional sports into a systematic process and applied it to Ryan’s rehabilitation. The results were fast and it enabled Ryan to keep playing for an additional 5 years pain free. Ryan and Sean founded Matterhorn Fit in 2018 to bring their newly developed process, called the Matterhorn Method, to everyday people who struggle with pain.

“When I retired in 2018, we had to tell the world what we had discovered,” says Vesce. “We started testing on active seniors in the area (60-80 yr olds) and it worked. In fact, the Matterhorn Method

worked so well that our clients told all of their family and friends about it. That’s when we knew we had something really special. Within 2 weeks, virtually all of our patients were seeing a major reduction of pain and that has held true for thousands of our clients through today.”

The first step in Matterhorn Fit’s process is a comprehensive initial evaluation. Through their evaluation, they will be able to identify any neurological compensation in the client’s system. If they do find compensations, there is a very high probability that they can improve the client’s pain in two weeks.

“Through our initial evaluation we will be able to determine IF we can help you. If we do find something that we can fix, then we will start you with 6 sessions over a two week period to resolve your symptoms,” says Vesce. “Over 94% of our clients have reported a major reduction of pain within two weeks. After the symptoms are resolved, we build a personalized movement plan to prevent the problem from returning.”

To schedule an initial evaluation visit
matterhornfit.com or call the office at
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COMPOUNDED MEDICATIONS FOR PETS: TAILORED SOLUTIONS FOR BETTER HEALTH

By Jerry and Lisa Meloche, Pharm.D., Owners, Compounding Pharmacists

As a pharmacist specializing in compounded pet medications, I understand pet owners' unique challenges when ensuring their furry companions receive the necessary treatments. Regarding the health and well-being of our pets, one size does not fit all. That's where compounded medications come into play. In this article, we will explore why compounded medications are often the best choice for pets, considering our animal friends' distinct anatomy, physiology, and preferences. From transdermal medications for those hard-to-pill pets to allergen-free formulations and a plethora of tasty flavors, compounded medications offer tailored solutions that make medication administration easier and prioritize the safety and comfort of your cherished pets. Let's delve deeper into the world of compounded medications for pets and discover how they can significantly enhance your pet's healthcare journey.

1. Transdermal Medications for Hard-to-Pill Animals: For some pet owners, trying to give their pets pills can be a daily ordeal. This is especially true for animals notorious for spitting out or refusing to swallow medication. As discussed in a previous article, transdermal medications offer a practical alternative. These medications are applied topically to the skin, allowing for absorption through the skin barrier. They are particularly valuable for cats and other hard-to-pill animals, ensuring that the prescribed treatment reaches its target without causing stress for both pet and owner.

2. Combined Oral Medications for Ease of Administration: Sometimes, pets may require multiple medications to manage their health conditions. Combining these medications into a single, easy-to-administer form, such as a liquid or capsule, simplifies the dosing regimen. Liquid medications can be flavored to appeal to your pet's taste preferences, making the process more enjoyable for them and convenient for you. This approach minimizes the chances of missing doses and ensures that your pet receives the necessary treatment effectively.

3. Vet-Trained Compounding Pharmacists: One key advantage of choosing compounded medications for your pets is the expertise of vet-trained compounding pharmacists. These professionals have a broad

knowledge base and years of combined experience. Their "out-of-the-box" thinking and problem-solving skills are invaluable in tailoring medications to meet your pet's specific needs. Whether it's adjusting dosages, finding alternative delivery methods, or creating unique formulations, these pharmacists are dedicated to optimizing your pet's treatment.

4. Pets Are Not Humans: It's essential to recognize that pets have distinct anatomy, physiology, and metabolism compared to humans. This fundamental difference underscores the importance of tailored medications. One critical concern is xylitol, a sugar substitute in various human products like sugar-free gums and candies. Xylitol is toxic to canine kidneys, emphasizing the need for specialized medications that do not contain harmful ingredients for pets.

5. Weight-Based Dosing and Different-Sized Pets: The diversity in pet sizes, from tiny birds to large dogs, necessitates weight-based dosing and appropriately sized dosage forms. Compounded medications allow precision in creating small tablets, capsules, or liquid formulations suitable for small animals. This ensures that even the tiniest patients receive accurate and safe doses of their medication.

6. Flavored Medications: Compounded medications come in various flavors to make medication administration more palatable for pets. Options like beef, chicken, duck, liver, bacon, peanut butter, and salmon are available to cater to your pet's taste preferences. Fruit flavors can be used for exotic pets like birds and rodents. This wide array of flavors helps reduce medication resistance and ensure treatment compliance.

7. Allergen Control: Some pets may have food allergies or sensitivities, which can extend to the ingredients in their medications. Compounding pharmacists can control all the components in the preparation, allowing for the removal of allergens, fillers, colors, proteins, and any offensive or harmful chemicals. This customization ensures the medication is free from substances that may trigger adverse reactions in sensitive patients, promoting their overall well-being.



Compounded pet medications offer tailored solutions that address pet owners' unique challenges. These medications, crafted by vet-trained compounding pharmacists, ensure your beloved pets' safety, effectiveness, and comfort during their treatment journey. While this information provides valuable insights, consulting with your veterinarian for personalized advice and treatment recommendations for your pet's specific health needs is essential.

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CRYSTAL PERSONALIZATION AT HEALING CRYSTAL TUNNEL

What is the meaning of crystal personalization? Personalizing a crystal consists of aligning the vibrational frequencies of the crystal or in some cases a certain range of frequencies of the crystal with the frequencies of a specific person. All crystals, just like everything that exists in this and all universes, are fundamentally based on vibrational frequencies. From their unimaginable small beginnings, starting their process of alienation and transformation, more infinitely unimaginable small fractions of time. This "time" is nothing like we know here on earth. These vibrations are already pure energy, magnetism, existence and non-existence, creation and negation, in addition to being components of the whole in and of themselves.

During the process of crowding, combination, adaptation, mixing, alignment, and harmonic condensation, the vibrations increase their density. They share information to create the visible and invisible, the perceptible and the imperceptible. Within one of these billions of vibrational paths one can identify and define crystals. The crystals are capable of receiving, storing processing, and sharing information, which in turn is vibration moving at different frequency scales. All these crystals, even in their extremely pure form, already accumulate information. This information comes in the form of exploitation, recollection, transportation, storage, and all the extensive manipulation. The crystals ultimately absorb an especially wide range of emotional impressions contributed mostly unconsciously by those who came into direct contact with them. In our existence and within the immense dimensionality of vibrations of which we are composed, we share specific vibrational frequencies with each and every one of the crystals.

Crystals are possible to manipulate by creating a direct alignment with the vibrations of a specific imbalance due to multiple circumstances. It is also possible to program crystals so they interact directly by collecting, accumulating and processing low-density vibrations, which could be affecting an organ and/or organism. For this it is necessary to **FIRST:** perform an Energetic Cleanse, eliminating all possible vibrational contamination collected previously, during this process, communication with the crystal begins by opening one of its vortices, thus being able to enter the interior of his library, which is composed of multiple hallways, levels and sub-levels. Reading, visualizing and identifying the crystal's content. Once this intervention has been carried out, it is necessary to equalize the vibrations that are not its own. In this case we could assimilate as surgical energy blockages, proceeding to remove and eliminate all that unwanted information.

SECOND: Energization; which consists of raising the level of resonance through the spiral application of frequencies of the same intensity. As a result, the expansion or amplification of its energy level will be expressed in the form of sensory resonance so one can feel between other things during the alignment or personalization process.

THIRD: Personalization; consists of synchronizing the vibrational memory of the crystal with the cellular memory of the energy fields with whom the crystal has possession, specific and according to each particular case. Multiple steps taken through each case the harmonic alignment of high-frequencies vibratory impulses of the crystal, with the vibrational frequencies of an organic being that oscillate at the same energy levels of the crystal, creating a protective field that surrounds the organism or part of it with the crystal.

Giving the crystal a specialized and specified ability, depending on the necessity for collecting, blocking, minimizing and/or canceling possible negative interactions that could be influencing the individual's magnetic field.

Next, low energy levels; by intersecting the high energy sources of the clean and energized crystal with the vibrational imbalances of an organism or one of its organs, it is possible to raise the degree of energy by channeling the amplified emissions of the energetic level of the crystal. To summarize, in order to **PERSONALIZE** a crystal, it must go through the process of alignment, channeling, attunement of energy levels and intensity of vibratory frequencies of the crystal, which is connected with those of any organic being.

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

#1 Shopping is Challenging

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

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

#2 Cooking is Becoming Difficult or Dangerous

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

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

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

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

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

#4 You Want Nutritious Food Without the Hassle

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

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

Chefs for Seniors

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

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- Truly affordable and much less expensive than eating out
- All personal chefs are servsafe licensed, undergo background checks, and are fully insured

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

Professionally Prepared Meals and Clean Up!

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

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

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

Cost and Insurance Coverage

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

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

Multiple Meals During Visit

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

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

Special Diets

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

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



CHEFS FOR SENIORS

chefsforseiors.com

Phone: 239-776-1758

Email: bill.springer@chefsforseiors.com

What's the Difference Between Misir Pharmacy & the Big Chains?

We take the time to get to know our customers and treat them like family. They're not just another number. When you call here, a real person will answer. The key difference between Misir Pharmacy and large corporations is that large corporations services care primarily about their corporate profits, while Misir Pharmacy cares about their patients and the quality of care they are receiving.

Packaging to meet individual patient's need:

As well as online services, independent pharmacies can also make your life easier through additional options. For example, we can deliver your medication right to your house. So, if it's hard for you to get to the pharmacy, you don't have to. Convenient packaging, including blister packs, will also make it easier to remember to take the right dosages of your medications.

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for patients to take them on the go. Giving patients a safer, easier way to take their medications correctly is a convenience that helps them maintain their quality of life.

Your Local Pharmacy

You can always feel better about shopping at a locally owned and operated store. When shopping at big-box stores, your money increases a high-level executive's already immense salary. By shopping at a local business, your money will help

put food on a family's table or send their kids to camp. In other words, your money is recycled into your own community.

At independent pharmacies, you'll gain all the benefits of getting to know your pharmacist, and your pharmacist getting to know you. We can always take the time to greet you by name, hear your story, and answer your questions. Having a dedicated pharmacist who knows you and your needs also means there's less chance of an error occurring. At independent pharmacies, our main goal is to help you and make sure your visit to the pharmacy is a positive experience.

If you need to rush in, grab your medication and go, we understand, and with a simple phone call or notification through our online system, we can have your prescription ready for you. If you have questions or need us to go over your instructions once, or a few times, the pharmacists at independent pharmacies can give you as much time as you need. We understand that it's hard to remember how to take your medications sometimes and, to prevent taking them incorrectly, you need to have them properly explained to you.

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SUMMER PET SAFETY

July is full of pool parties, fireworks, patriotism, and barbecues. Humans enjoy their summer holidays in their backyard or around the water. Although these weekends are extra fun for humans, they are the riskiest for your pets. Humans will think of sunscreens and watch out for the kids but not enough will think of dangers that come with the summer to their pets.

Statistics from The American Humane Association show that one out of three pets is lost at some point in their lives. The same statistics show that about ten million pets, both dogs and cats, are stolen or lost in the US every year. Additional information from Coalition for Reuniting Pets and Families shows that less than twenty-five percent of these pets are reunited with their families.

Cases of pet death are also on the rise during the summer. These cases are caused by the increasing number of crimes towards animals and the uncondusive temperatures and weather conditions. Summer increases cases of heat stress-related injuries and possible deaths for both cats and dogs.

As sad as those statistics are, the summer also provides a perfect chance to be smart and creative with how you keep these cuties comfortable and safe. Here's a list of some summer dangers for pets and smart tips to avoid them.

Dehydration and Heatstroke

This is the first and the most overlooked pet danger that is very common during the summer. Dogs can become dangerously overheated, becoming sluggish, tired, and restless. They may also start to vomit and diarrhea or excessively salivate. During your summer outings with your pet, always check for dehydration. Pinching the skin to check whether it's elastic is a viable way of checking whether the pet is dehydrated. It's also important to provide shade, rest, and sunscreen to your pets. The nose, the ears, eyelids, and the paws are especially susceptible to sun burn. Pets are especially at risk if they are light colored (ginger/white) or have any thin fur/bald patches. It's important to protect your pet from sunburn, not only because it's painful but because it can also sometimes lead to skin cancer.

BBQ dangers

There are obvious risks of burning and some grave risks, such as overeating. This shows that you should be very careful with your children and pets



in case of outdoor cookouts. The dog can be invited to overeat or any other danger. The trash should be covered, and children strictly advised not to overfeed the dogs and cats. All bones are NOT the same! Bones can get stuck. Sometimes they get stuck across the roof of the mouth. This causes the dog to paw at their face and drool heavily. More worryingly, they can lodge of the back of the throat. The signs of this include breathing difficulties, choking noises, and heavy salivation. When a dog eats a lot of bone, there's a risk it knits together inside the intestine. That ball of bone then forms a blockage, much like hair clogging a drain. The consequences of a blocked gut are more serious. Firstly, food can't pass along so the dog vomits and becomes dehydrated. Then the stagnant gut contents release toxins, which poison the dog. And finally, the gut wall can die off. Avoid your pet eating poultry bones. If they do sneak a bone from a chicken or turkey, monitor your pet closely for signs of distress.

Pet drowning in swimming pools

As you enjoy your time in an outdoor swimming pool, be aware that it can only take a few seconds for a dog or a cat to drown. There are some breeds of cats and dogs that are at the greatest danger. This is an overstated summer danger because most people assume their dogs and cats are excellent swimmers. The fact remains that even excellent swimmers may fail to get out of the swimming pool safely. Puppies and Kittens are at the greatest danger of drowning.

Spiders and snakes

Another pervasive danger that comes with summer is one humans don't always see. Although the risks of a snake and spider bites are not common in all the places, some areas report more severe cases than others. This means that you should protect your pet from venomous animals such as rattlesnakes and black widow spiders. How serious a snake and spider bites is depends on several factors. Some common factors are the pet's age, size, weight, and breed. It's now essential to be on the lookout for slithering snakes and spiders when walking your dog in rural areas.

Solar dermatitis

Solar dermatitis is a common condition caused by prolonged exposure to direct sunlight. This condition is prevalent in cats and dogs that have pale and white patches on the skin. The condition usually affects the non-pigmented areas such as the ears, nose, and eyelids. We all know that the harmful rays of the sun can cause skin damages to humans. This is the same issue with cats and dogs. Remember, humans can wear sunscreens, unlike pets. So, always provide enough shade for your pets during those long summer outings.

Pool poison

You will probably be spending a lot of your time in the swimming pool with your dog. Although experts never disclose this, the ingestion of chlorine and other pool chemicals can cause more problems in pets than in humans. For example, dogs may experience stomach distress (diarrhea and vomiting in dogs) and kidney problems. Ingesting some of these chemicals can be hazardous for some pets and can cause serious heart diseases and kidney failure.

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5 Signs You Need a Better Cleaning Service

by **maidpro**

Hiring a professional cleaning service should make your life easier. However, not all cleaning services operate at the same standard of professionalism and cleaning quality. If you see these five signs that your current cleaning service isn't good enough, it's time for a change. When you hire the cleaning pros and MaidPro, you can feel confident that your home's cleaning needs are in professional hands.

1. Poor Timing

Your cleaning service should be able to clean your house when you need them to. This means having scheduling flexibility. You should be able to choose the day and time that works best for you. In addition, your cleaning service should arrive on time, every time. If your professional cleaner is not doing these things, they are not respecting your time as the client. At MaidPro, we work with homeowners to establish the best cleaning schedule for them. We then arrive on time, ready to work.

2. Outdated Equipment

The cleaning service you hire should have up-to-date equipment in good condition. That way, they can provide an effective cleaning service. If your cleaning service doesn't have the right equipment, it's broken, or outdated; then you need a better cleaning service. At MaidPro, we are committed to having the best. We take pride in outfitting our cleaners with the best equipment available. That way, our clients get the best clean possible in their homes.



3. Fast Not Thorough

While a fast cleaning service can initially sound appealing, this isn't necessarily good. A cleaner that moves through your home quickly is not paying attention to the details. A fast cleaner will miss things. The cleaners and MaidPro take the time necessary to clean your home thoroughly. We do this at each visit. This ensures cleaning consistency and thoroughness each time we visit.

4. Lack of Professionalism

Your cleaning service should be professional. This means dressing appropriately, being friendly, and respecting your personal items. If your cleaner isn't doing these things, they are not acting professionally. The cleaners at MaidPro pride themselves on being a service you can trust. We respect you and your home.

5. Doesn't Follow Instructions

Each home and homeowner is different. This means that no cleaning service is the same as another. Your cleaning service should know and understand this. If they routinely ignore your requests or special instructions, it is time to find a new service. When you hire the pros at MaidPro, we work with you to establish the cleaning service you need and want for your home. This could be an extra add-on service or instructions not to go in a specific room. Because we aim to have the same cleaner return to your home for each service, we can accommodate these special requests and ensure your instructions are followed.

Hire MaidPro Cleaning Service

If you see signs that your cleaning service isn't good enough, it's time to make a change. Your home is your family's sanctuary; your cleaning service should respect that. When you hire MaidPro cleaning services, you can trust that your cleaner will arrive on time, be professional, and thoroughly clean your home.

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Failure is a Part of Growth

By Pastor Timothy L. Neptune

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

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

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

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

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

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

Failure is an indispensable part of growth.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church Naples, a new church located on the campus of Florida SouthWestern State College in Naples, FL.

For church times and other information, visit www.venturenaples.com.



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