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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

July 2024

Manatee/Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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Transform Your Life with Medicare-Covered Lymphedema Therapy Compression Garments at Functional Transformation Clinic

Unlock Superior Comfort and Support with Our Lymphedema Therapy Compression Garments

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Why Choose Our Compression Garments?

Exceptional Quality

Crafted with the finest materials and precise measurements, our compression garments deliver superior comfort, durability, and therapeutic benefits. Experience relief from swelling, discomfort, and the risk of complications. We carry Medi, Jobst, Sigvaris, Juzo and Solaris.

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At Functional Transformation Clinic, we offer more than just compression garments. Our team of dedicated healthcare professionals is committed to providing you with comprehensive lymphedema therapy, education, and support every step of the way.

Medicare-Covered:

Our compression garments are Medicare-approved, ensuring that you receive the financial assistance you need to manage your condition effectively. We handle the paperwork, so you can focus on your health.

Transform your life and reclaim your confidence with our Medicare-covered lymphedema therapy compression garments. Contact us today to schedule a consultation and experience the Functional Transformation Clinic difference.

James Ferrara

Occupational Therapist and
Certified Lymphedema Therapist



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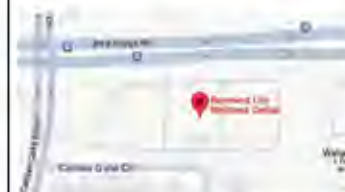
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Complications of Vein Disease

By Dr. Lackey

Millions of people have varicose vein problems, yet only one half of 1 percent seek treatment. Vein disease goes undiagnosed and therefore undertreated. Patients tell us that their physicians have reassured them that the leg symptoms they experience are a part of aging and that it is “nothing to worry about.” Ignoring daily leg swelling, pain, cramping, leg heaviness, fatigue, itching, and discoloration can lead to permanent changes. Vein disease is progressive, meaning it will worsen at a rate of 4 percent every year. This article will discuss the other complications that can lead to serious problems including bleeding, swelling, phlebitis, cellulitis, blood clots, and skin ulcers.

Skin Changes

Chronic venous insufficiency (CVI) can cause skin changes resulting in discoloration of the lower legs, which is known as hyperpigmentation. It appears as a darkening of the skin often with a rusty-orange color. Stasis dermatitis is inflammation of the skin caused by damage to vein close to the skin's surface. This can appear as a red, violet, or brown rash between the ankle and the knee. Stasis dermatitis is a precursor for the development of cellulitis. Cellulitis is an infection of the skin caused by bacteria. Bacteria normally are present on the skin, but when injured, the bacteria can spread and grow beneath the surface which is made much worse by poor blood flow in the legs or feet. Cellulitis is treated with antibiotics.

Phlebitis

Thrombophlebitis, a blood clot in a superficial vein, is a common complication of varicose veins. This occurs because the dilated vein makes it easier to injure but can often occur without trauma. It presents as a hot, tender, thickened area along the length of the vein. It is very painful and associated with fever and fatigue. If phlebitis extends

Stages of Vein Disease



far enough up the leg it can cause a clot in the deep veins, which is a risk for pulmonary embolism, which can be fatal.

Bleeding

Bleeding from large varicosities is typically from a bump or scrape to the area. Many elderly people with thin-walled veins are at increased risk and may be completely unaware of a vein rupture until they see blood running down their legs or feel faint from blood loss. Bleeding can be life-threatening if unrecognized. If caught early, it can be controlled with leg elevation and compression. Repeated bleeding can occur in the same area until proper treatment of vein disease is performed.

Swelling

Vein disease causes swelling in the ankles and lower legs which appears worse after a day of standing. In advanced disease the swelling can be present all the time. Typically, just above the ankle is where the swelling begins. If left untreated, this can worsen to lymphedema which is more difficult to manage and treat.

Skin Ulcers

One of the most challenging vein complications is a skin ulcer. This is an open sore resulting from trauma to the skin. Trauma and chronic vein disease results in skin breakdown where the area around the open sore becomes red, swollen, tender, and painful. These ulcers typically occur on the inner side of the ankle. Patients are often frustrated by

these ulcers as they are frequently sent for lifelong wound care with multiple dressing changes for a wound that never seems to heal. Unless the root cause of the ulcer, vein disease, is treated, the ulcers will recur in under 2 years. Vein treatment involving ablation and sclerotherapy can help these chronic ulcers to heal.

Blood Clots

A study published by the Journal of American Medical Association suggests that the presence of varicose veins may significantly increase the risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT), which is better known as blood clots. These can be life-threatening if they travel to the lungs or hearts. Some DVTs may not have any symptoms, but most cause dramatic pain, swelling, and warmth of the leg. Left untreated, people with extensive DVTs are at a higher risk of developing pulmonary embolism where a clot can break away and travel to the lungs where, it can be deadly.

Florida Lakes Vein Center offers convenient appointments in our Lakewood Ranch office Tuesday & Thursday 8am-5pm, Friday 8am-3pm. Call 941.866.8989 to schedule your free vein screening.



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Robotic Surgery Offers New Lease on Life for Ovarian Cancer Patient

Margie Palmer, 61, of Bradenton, Fla., had been suffering from severe digestive issues, bloating, stomach pain, migraines, and fatigue for 10 months.

"I saw several doctors, but was misdiagnosed with just a stomach ulcer and gastritis," explained Palmer. "I lost 10 pounds because it was hard for me to eat."

In October 2022, Palmer went to her local emergency room because her stomach was so bloated and full of fluid. A CT scan revealed tumors in her abdomen and pelvis. After her concerning diagnosis, Palmer was referred to Dr. Stacey South, gynecologic oncologist at Manatee Physician Alliance.

The Decision: Embracing Innovation

Dr. South informed Palmer that with this cancer, a traditional surgery called a laparotomy, followed by chemotherapy, was the standard treatment plan, however, Palmer opted for just a laparoscopic (minimally invasive) procedure using small incisions to remove the tumors and decided against chemotherapy at that time.

"The idea of a less invasive procedure, with potentially fewer complications and a quicker return to her normal life, appealed to Margie," explained Dr. South.



The Surgery: Precision and Care

On November 10, 2022, Palmer underwent debulking surgery, which removes as many tumors as possible, along with a complete hysterectomy to remove the ovaries and uterus. It was performed robotically using the da Vinci Surgical System® that allows for enhanced vision, precision, and control.

"The precision of the robotic arms meant that the cancerous tissue could be removed, while sparing as much healthy tissue as possible," Dr. South added.

Palmer stayed in the hospital for two nights, followed by a three-month recovery period in which she was not allowed to lift, pull or push anything heavy.

Unfortunately, her cancer did grow back, and in April of this year, Dr. South performed an additional robotic surgery to remove more nodules.

Her Road to Recovery

"I am so thankful to Dr. South and her team for saving my life by doing my surgery so quickly," added Palmer. "She and her staff are all very skilled, caring and loving, and the team at Manatee Memorial Hospital were truly my angels."

Palmer is now enjoying life to the fullest, studying the bible, boating, swimming, biking, and getting together with family and friends.

"Most of all, I enjoy spending time with my loving, caring, sweet husband and four sisters who all took great care of me after my surgery," said Palmer.



Stacey South, MD - Gynecologic Oncologist

To schedule an appointment with Dr. South, call 941-746-7507 or visit doctors.manateephysicianalliance.com.



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Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive, robotic surgery is right for you. Physicians are on the medical staff of Manatee Memorial Hospital, but, with limited exceptions, are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Manatee Memorial Hospital. The facilities shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the nondiscrimination notice, visit our website.



Transform Your Life with Medicare-Covered Lymphedema Therapy Compression Garments

By James Ferrara - Occupational Therapist and Certified Lymphedema Therapist

If you or a loved one is grappling with the debilitating effects of lymphedema, you know how challenging it can be to find effective and affordable treatment options. At Functional Transformation Clinic, we understand the physical and emotional toll this condition can take, which is why we are dedicated to providing comprehensive lymphedema management solutions, including Medicare-covered compression garments from leading brands.

Lymphedema is a chronic condition characterized by the accumulation of lymphatic fluid in the body's tissues, often resulting in swelling, discomfort, and an increased risk of infections. This condition can significantly impact your quality of life, making everyday activities a struggle. However, with the right treatment approach, you can regain control and experience a remarkable transformation.

At our clinic, we believe in empowering our patients to take charge of their health and well-being. Our team of experienced lymphedema therapists is committed to delivering personalized care tailored to your unique needs. We understand that every individual's journey with lymphedema is different, and our approach reflects that.

One of the cornerstones of our lymphedema management program is the use of high-quality compression garments. These specialized garments apply gentle, consistent pressure to the affected areas, facilitating the movement of lymphatic fluid and reducing swelling. By promoting improved lymphatic drainage, compression garments can alleviate discomfort, reduce the risk of complications, and enhance your overall quality of life.

What sets us apart is our commitment to making advanced lymphedema therapy accessible to all. We proudly accept Medicare coverage for our compression garments, ensuring that you can access the top-of-the-line products you need without breaking the bank. Our clinic partners with renowned brands like Medi, Jobst, Sigvaris, Juzo, and Solaris, ensuring you receive the highest quality and most effective compression garments available.

Our dedicated team will work closely with you to select the most suitable compression garments based on your specific needs, body measurements, and lifestyle requirements. We understand that proper fit and comfort are crucial for optimal treatment

outcomes, which is why we take the time to ensure your garments are perfectly tailored to your unique circumstances.

In addition to compression garments, our comprehensive lymphedema management program may also incorporate other therapeutic interventions, such as manual lymphatic drainage, exercise guidance, and lifestyle recommendations. Our goal is to address all aspects of your condition, empowering you to take control and achieve lasting relief.

At Functional Transformation Clinic, we believe that living with lymphedema should not hold you back from embracing life to the fullest. With our Medicare-covered compression garments and personalized care, you can embark on a journey towards improved well-being, increased mobility, and a renewed sense of confidence.

Don't let lymphedema define your life. Take the first step towards transformation by scheduling a consultation with our lymphedema experts today. Discover how our Medicare-covered compression garments and comprehensive care approach can unlock a world of possibilities, allowing you to reclaim your vitality and embrace each day with renewed energy and optimism.

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Medicare-Covered:

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AVOIDING NAIL FUNGUS

By Dr. Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM

It's the middle of summer, and the warm weather is perfect for spending time outdoors. You slip on your sandals, but you're mortified to see your toenails are thick and discolored.

Most commonly, these changes are due to an infection of the nail caused by a fungus. Nail fungus can be difficult to treat, therefore the sooner you begin treatment the better chance you have of eradicating the fungus. Once the nail fungus has been present for an extended period of time, it is much more difficult to treat. Nail fungus also referred to as onychomycosis is an infection underneath the surface of the nail caused by fungi or yeast. When the fungi take hold, the nail becomes darker, debris can collect under the nail, and white discoloration may appear. Overtime, the affected nails become very thick and difficult to trim. The fungus can even spread to adjacent nails. You may have been exposed to the fungi when walking around damp areas barefoot like swimming pools, locker rooms, and showers. Injury to the nail bed, even pressure from shoes, will make it more susceptible to the fungi. Anyone can be affected but people with chronic diseases, such as diabetes, circulatory problems, or immune-deficiency conditions, are especially prone to developing a fungal nail infection. Other contributing factors may be a history of athlete's foot and excessive perspiration. Treatment can take months to a year to completely clear the fungus. Your healthcare provider will discuss treatment options with you to determine what the best option is for you. Unfortunately, recurrence is common. For these reasons, prevention is key. Proper hygiene and performing daily foot exams including your toes are the first line of defense. Clean and dry feet can better resist infection by the fungus. Below are some tips to help you avoid nail fungus.

- Never go barefoot.
- Wear flip flops or shower shoes in public areas. For example, at public showers at the pool or gym. Walking around a public pool.
- Wash your feet with soap and water daily. Make sure to thoroughly dry your feet after washing, including between your toes. You may even want to wash your feet after the gym or going to a public pool.



- Disinfect your shoes with an OTC antifungal spray or powder's.
- Wear moisture-wicking and breathable socks. Socks made of synthetic fibers that wick moisture away from your feet are recommended. If your feet perspire, change your socks throughout the day. Don't share shoes or socks with others. Change your socks after exercise. You may also alternate gym shoes to allow the material to dry completely.
- Don't share clippers or foot products with other people. Disinfect instruments used to cut your nails and other pedicure tools.
- Treat athlete's foot if present.
- Avoid tight-fitting shoes and use shoes made with breathable material.
- If signs of nail fungus are present, avoid nail polish.
- Keep nails trimmed and clean. Nails should be at the same length as the tip of the toe.
- Wash your shoes, including sandals and water shoes. Shoes that haven't been cleaned are a great place for fungus to thrive.

For more information about preventing or treating nail fungus, contact your local foot and ankle specialist.

Isin Mustafa, DPM, MSHS, DABPM

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



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BE WELL WITH DR. MESA

THE HYDRAFACIAL EXPERIENCE

In the realm of skincare, few treatments have garnered as much attention as the Hydrafacial. This innovative and multi-step process has revolutionized the way we approach cleansing, exfoliation, and hydration, leaving skin refreshed, revitalized, and glowing with radiance.

The Hydrafacial experience is a unique combination of cutting-edge technology and personalized treatment tailored to each individual's skin concerns. It begins with a thorough cleansing process that gently removes impurities, makeup residue, and environmental pollutants that can clog pores and dull the complexion.

Next, the exfoliation stage takes center stage. Unlike traditional methods that rely on harsh abrasives or chemicals, the Hydrafacial utilizes a specialized Vortex-Fusion system. This advanced technology combines hydradermabrasion, which uses a gentle stream of water and sucking action to dislodge dead skin cells, with a simultaneous infusion of serums rich in antioxidants, peptides, and hyaluronic acid. The result is a profound yet gentle exfoliation that leaves the skin feeling smooth and refreshed without causing irritation or redness.

Following the exfoliation process, the Hydrafacial delivers a deeply hydrating treatment that quenches the skin's thirst for moisture. This step is crucial, as it not only replenishes the skin's hydration levels but also primes it for optimal absorption of nutrient-rich serums tailored to address specific concerns, such as fine lines, hyperpigmentation, or acne-prone skin.

One of the standout features of the Hydrafacial is its versatility. Depending on the individual's skin type and needs, the treatment can be customized with a range of specialized serums and boosters. For instance, those with aging concerns may benefit from the inclusion of vitamin C or retinol-infused serums, while those with acne-prone skin may opt for salicylic acid or botanical extracts to help control breakouts.

The Hydrafacial experience is not just about the immediate results; it also offers long-lasting benefits. By removing the buildup of dead skin cells



and impurities, the treatment allows for better absorption of skincare products, ensuring that the nourishing ingredients can penetrate deeper into the skin's layers. Additionally, the exfoliation process stimulates cell turnover, promoting a more youthful and radiant complexion over time.

As the treatment concludes, clients often report a noticeable improvement in their skin's texture, tone, and overall appearance. Fine lines may appear diminished, while the complexion takes on a luminous, healthy glow. Moreover, the hydrating effects of the Hydrafacial can last for several days, leaving the skin feeling plump, supple, and well-nourished.

The Hydrafacial experience is not just a treatment; it's a journey towards achieving optimal skin health and radiance. With its gentle yet effective approach, personalized serums, and long-lasting benefits, it offers a comprehensive solution for those seeking a refreshed, rejuvenated, and naturally beautiful complexion.

Mes Aesthetics Wellness offers NeoCutis Products microneedling for wrinkles, fine lines and acne scars as well as Hydrafacial for cleanse, exfoliation and hydration of the skin.

Over 20 years ago, NEOCUTIS was founded on the basis of extensive wound healing research performed in Lausanne, Switzerland. When our first wound healing technology was found to scarlessly heal burned skin, while making it appear healthier and more youthful, NEOCUTIS scientists began to explore how to apply the same principles to improve the appearance of aging skin.



Dr. Nathalia Mesa

I am Dr. Nathalia Mesa. I am a board-certified Family Physician originally from Colombia, with more than 20 years of experience. I am delivering care in Bradenton and Sarasota areas, Florida. I attended medical school at CES University in Medellin, Colombia, and graduated in 2003. I did my specialty at SJGH, and graduated from UC Davis as a Family Physician in 2015. I am a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Medical Association, Florida Medical Association, Florida Obesity Society, IAPAM, Empire Medical Training, National Hispanic Medical Association. I have been trained in Medical Weight Management and Aesthetic Medicine. I am fluent in Spanish and English. Medicine is a calling knowing that patient-physician relationship is paramount. I was trained to meet my patients' health needs with a culture of caring, professionalism, and compassion. I am here to provide excellent care with the time you need. Your health is my purpose. BE WELL WITH DR. MESA!



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Chronic Knee Pain – Now, No Surgery is Needed

Knee pain, a common complaint that can affect people of all ages, can be a source of discomfort and reduced quality of life. This article delves into the various causes of knee pain, the limitations of current treatments, and the potential risks associated with traditional approaches. However, it also shines a light on the promising horizon of cutting-edge, non-drug, non-surgical options for correcting chronic knee pain. These innovative solutions offer a beacon of hope, promising a pain-free life and a renewed sense of well-being.

Knee pain can arise from numerous sources, including:

- 1. Osteoarthritis:** The most common form of arthritis, where the cartilage in the knee joint gradually wears away, usually from an old injury.
- 2. Injuries:** Such as ligament tears (ACL, MCL), or meniscus tears.
- 3. Tendinitis:** Inflammation of the tendons around the knee, often due to overuse.
- 4. Bursitis:** Inflammation of the bursae, small fluid-filled sacs that cushion the knee joint.
- 5. Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome:** Pain around the kneecap, commonly seen in athletes.
- 6. Rheumatoid Arthritis:** An autoimmune condition that causes inflammation in the knee joint.

Current Treatments for Knee Pain

Knee pain can be managed through a variety of treatments, each with a specific approach:

- **Pain Medications:** Drugs such as NSAIDs (e.g., ibuprofen) and acetaminophen.
 - Reduce pain and inflammation.
- **Corticosteroid Injections:** Anti-inflammatory medication injected directly into the knee.
 - Provides rapid pain relief and reduce inflammation.
- **Physical Therapy:** Exercise and manual therapy regimen.
 - Strengthen muscles, improve flexibility, and restore joint function.
- **Surgery:** Procedures like arthroscopy or total knee replacement.
 - Repair or replace damaged knee structures.
 - Reduce knee strain and support joint health.
- **Assistive Devices:** Use of knee braces, orthotic inserts, or walking aids.
 - Support and stabilize the knee joint.
- **Chiropractic Adjustments:** Manual adjustments and manipulations by a chiropractor.
 - Correct joint misalignments, improve knee function and reduce pain.

Cutting-edge, Non-Drug, Non-Surgical Treatments for Chronic Knee Pain

Recent advancements offer promising alternatives for those seeking non-drug, non-surgical treatments to correct chronic knee pain. These innovative therapies aim to address the root causes and promote healing:

Stem cell therapy is an innovative and promising treatment for chronic knee pain. It leverages the body's natural healing processes to repair damaged tissues, offering a non-surgical and non-drug alternative. Stem cells are unique cells that can develop into various types of cells in the body. These cells can regenerate damaged tissues, making them ideal for treating conditions like chronic knee pain.

How Stem Cell Therapy Works

- 1. Extraction:**
 - **Source of Stem Cells:** Warton's Jelly inside the umbilical cord. Usually taken from a C-section delivery of a healthy mother and baby.
- 2. Processing:**
 - **Concentration:** The harvested stem cells are then processed in a laboratory to concentrate the cells. This ensures a higher number of stem cells are available for injection.
 - **Preparation:** The concentrated stem cells are then frozen and shipped for the doctors use.
- 3. Injection:**
 - **Targeted Delivery:** The concentrated stem cells are thawed and injected directly into the affected knee joint. This targeted delivery ensures the stem cells reach the damaged tissues that need repair.

Benefits of Stem Cell Therapy

- **Tissue Regeneration:** Stem cells also promote the repair and regeneration of damaged tissues, including cartilage, tendons, and ligaments. This can lead to significant improvements in joint function and a reduction in pain.
- **Reduction in Inflammation:** Stem cells also have anti-inflammatory properties that help reduce inflammation in the knee joint, alleviating pain and swelling.
- **Pain Relief:** Many patients experience substantial pain relief as the damaged tissues heal and the inflammation decreases.
- **Improved Mobility:** Stem cell therapy can enhance knee function and mobility by repairing damaged tissues and reducing pain.
- **Reduced Recovery Time:** Patients typically experience a shorter recovery time than surgical interventions, allowing for a quicker return to daily activities.

Applications of Stem Cell Therapy

Stem cell therapy can be beneficial for various knee conditions, including:

- **Osteoarthritis:** Degeneration of cartilage in the knee joint can be slowed or reversed, alleviating pain and improving joint function.
- **Meniscus Tears:** Stem cells can help repair torn meniscus tissue, reducing pain and improving mobility.
- **Ligament Injuries:** Injuries to ligaments, such as the ACL or MCL, can be effectively treated with stem cell therapy, promoting faster and more complete healing.
- **Tendinitis:** Inflammation of the tendons around the knee can be reduced, and tendon tissue can be regenerated.

Simple Steps to Regain Your Life

Stem cell therapy, in most cases, significantly improves the quality of life for those suffering from chronic knee pain. This cutting-edge treatment offers long-lasting pain relief and enhanced joint function by treating the cause of the problem with natural tissue regeneration and reducing inflammation. Patients often experience improved mobility, allowing them to return to daily activities, sports, and hobbies they love without the limitations of knee pain. With its minimally invasive approach and shorter recovery time compared to surgical options, stem cell therapy provides a viable and effective solution for achieving a pain-free, active lifestyle. If knee pain has been holding you back, stem cell therapy might be the key to reclaiming your freedom and enjoying life to the fullest. Consult with a specialist to explore how this innovative treatment can help you.



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Prioritize Your Peepers: Four Essential Tips for Healthy Vision Month

George Skopis, M.D.

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.



George Skopis, M.D., is a board-certified ophthalmologist and fellowship trained vitreoretinal surgeon. Dr. Skopis specializes in surgical and medical diseases of the retina and vitreous. He strives to utilize the most advanced imaging, medical and surgical techniques to diagnose and treat patients. Dr. Skopis has expertise in age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vascular occlusions, macular holes, macular pucker/epiretinal membranes, retinal detachments, proliferative vitreoretinopathy, and scleral fixated intra-ocular lenses.

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

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

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

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



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THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HEARING LOSS AND MEMORY DECLINE

As we age, it's common to experience some degree of hearing loss and cognitive decline, including memory problems. While these issues are often viewed as separate conditions, research suggests a compelling link between hearing impairment and a higher risk of developing dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Understanding this connection is crucial for maintaining overall health and well-being, particularly for older adults.

The Relationship Between Hearing and Memory

The human brain is a remarkable organ, capable of processing and interpreting a vast array of sensory information, including sound. When we struggle to hear clearly, our brains must work harder to fill in the gaps and make sense of the auditory input. This increased cognitive load can strain the brain's resources, leaving fewer resources available for other essential functions, such as memory formation and retrieval.

Studies have shown that individuals with untreated hearing loss experience a faster rate of cognitive decline compared to those with normal hearing or those who use hearing aids. This accelerated decline can manifest in various ways, including difficulties with concentration, problem-solving, and memory retention.

The Cognitive Load Theory

The cognitive load theory provides a plausible explanation for the link between hearing loss and memory problems. According to this theory, when our brains are overloaded with processing auditory information due to hearing impairment, fewer cognitive resources are available for encoding and storing new memories.

Imagine trying to have a conversation in a noisy environment with poor acoustics. Your brain must work overtime to filter out the background noise and focus on the speaker's voice. This increased cognitive effort can leave you feeling mentally exhausted, making it harder to remember what was discussed.

Social Isolation and Brain Health

In addition to the cognitive load theory, social isolation can also contribute to the connection between hearing loss and memory decline. Individuals with untreated hearing loss often withdraw from social situations due to the difficulty of communicating



effectively. This social isolation deprives the brain of stimulating interactions and experiences that are crucial for maintaining cognitive function and building new neural connections.

Loneliness and social isolation have been identified as risk factors for cognitive decline and dementia. By addressing hearing loss through the use of hearing aids or other assistive devices, individuals can improve their ability to engage in conversations and participate in social activities, which can help preserve cognitive function and reduce the risk of memory problems.

Early Intervention and Treatment

The good news is that early intervention and proper treatment of hearing loss can potentially mitigate the associated cognitive decline and memory problems. By using hearing aids or other assistive devices, individuals can reduce the cognitive load on their brains and better engage in social interactions, which can help maintain cognitive function.

Additionally, regular hearing evaluations and prompt treatment of any identified hearing issues can help prevent or slow the progression of cognitive decline associated with untreated hearing loss.

Conclusion

The connection between hearing loss and memory decline is a complex and multifaceted issue. By understanding the cognitive load theory, the impact of social isolation, and the potential benefits of early intervention and treatment, individuals can take proactive steps to protect their cognitive health.

Seeking professional help from audiologists and healthcare providers is crucial for addressing hearing impairment and reducing the risk of associated

memory problems. By prioritizing hearing health, individuals can not only improve their ability to communicate effectively but also potentially preserve their cognitive function and overall quality of life.



John Massey, Au.D./CCC-A

Following the completion of his Doctoral Externship, Dr. John Massey came to the Silverstein Institute in 2019. He is proficient in providing a wide array of services including diagnostic hearing testing, vestibular evaluations, electrophysiology, hearing aid evaluations and tinnitus evaluations and treatment.

Dr. Massey received a scholarship to perform research in the field of psychoacoustics and speech perception during an apprenticeship at the Boystown National Research Hospital. With a background as a professional audio engineer and producer, he brings a unique knowledge of acoustics and signal processing to the practice.

"When I decided to start this clinic, I wanted to use my sound engineering background to design a fitting and programming model that exceeds the status quo of reading words out loud in a sterile medical office. Part of the beauty of this clinic is the accuracy we achieve in our fitting and programming methods by performing said testing and programming in acoustically proofed spaces."

Dr. Massey is passionate about bringing his unique set of skills to the world of audiology in order to achieve the best outcomes for his patients. His goal is for his patients to hear their best and improve the quality of their lives.

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FINDING BALANCE

How Upper Cervical Chiropractic Can Alleviate Vertigo

By Dr. Drew Hall

Vertigo is a distressing condition that affects millions of people worldwide, causing dizziness, disorientation, and a spinning sensation. While there are various causes of vertigo, one alternative treatment approach that has shown promising results is upper cervical chiropractic. This specialized branch of chiropractic care focuses on the alignment of the uppermost bones in the neck, known as the upper cervical spine. In this article, we will explore how upper cervical chiropractic can help individuals suffering from vertigo and provide insights into its potential benefits.

Understanding Vertigo

Vertigo is characterized by a false sense of movement, where individuals may experience spinning, swaying, or tilting sensations even when they are stationary. It often occurs due to problems in the inner ear, specifically the vestibular system, which is responsible for our sense of balance. Conditions such as benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), Meniere's disease, and vestibular migraine can lead to recurring episodes of vertigo. While traditional medical approaches focus on managing symptoms through medications or physical therapy, many individuals are seeking alternative treatments like upper cervical chiropractic to address the underlying cause.

Causes of Vertigo

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

BPPV (benign paroxysmal positional vertigo) BPPV occurs when tiny calcium particles are dislodged from their normal location and collect in the inner ear. The inner ear sends signals to the brain about head and body movements relative to gravity. It helps you keep your balance. BPPV can occur for no known reason and may be associated with age.

Meniere's disease. This is an inner ear disorder thought to be caused by a buildup of fluid and changing pressure in the ear. It can cause episodes of vertigo along with ringing in the ears (tinnitus) and hearing loss.

Vestibular neuritis or labyrinthitis. This is an inner ear problem usually related to infection (usually



viral). The infection causes inflammation in the inner ear around nerves that are important for helping the body sense balance.

Vertigo may also be associated with:

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

The Upper Cervical Chiropractic Approach

Upper cervical chiropractic is a specialized branch of chiropractic care that emphasizes the correction of misalignments in the uppermost vertebrae of the neck, namely the atlas (C1) and axis (C2) bones. These two vertebrae play a crucial role in supporting the head's weight and facilitating the proper functioning of the nervous system. Misalignments or subluxations in this area can disrupt the communication between the brain and body, leading to various health issues, including vertigo.

By employing gentle and precise adjustments, upper cervical chiropractors aim to restore proper alignment and alleviate pressure on the nervous system. These adjustments are tailored to the individual's unique needs and involve no twisting or cracking of the neck. The goal is to facilitate the body's self-healing capabilities and promote overall well-being.



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Symptoms of Vertigo

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

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

Other symptoms that may accompany vertigo include:

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

Effectiveness in Managing Vertigo

Several studies have indicated the potential effectiveness of upper cervical chiropractic in managing vertigo symptoms. Misalignments in the upper cervical spine can affect the vestibular system's function, leading to vertigo. By realigning the vertebrae, upper cervical chiropractic may alleviate the pressure on the nerves and provide relief.

One case study published in the Journal of Upper Cervical Chiropractic Research reported a significant improvement in a patient suffering from chronic vertigo following upper cervical chiropractic care. The study highlighted the restoration of the normal function of the vestibular system after specific upper cervical adjustments.

Another study published in the Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics examined the impact of chiropractic care, including upper cervical adjustments, on patients with chronic recurrent vertigo. The results showed a reduction in both the frequency and severity of vertigo episodes, suggesting the potential benefits of this treatment approach.

It is important to note that upper cervical chiropractic is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and individual responses may vary. A thorough examination and evaluation by a qualified upper cervical chiropractor are necessary to determine the suitability of this approach for each patient.

Robotic Surgery: An Important Tool in Gynecologic Oncology

Robotic surgery represents an important advancement in the treatment of gynecologic cancers. It offers numerous advantages over traditional surgical methods.

Dr. Stacey South, MD, gynecological oncologist with Manatee Physician Alliance, explains the benefits of this type of surgery for cancers of the reproductive system.

Q: What is gynecologic oncology?

A: Gynecologic oncology is a specialized field of medicine that focuses on the diagnosis, treatment, and research of cancers that affect the female reproductive system. These cancers include ovarian, uterine, cervical, vulvar, and vaginal cancers.

Q: What is gynecologic robotic surgery?

A: Gynecologic robotic surgery is a minimally invasive technique that uses a narrow, lighted scope and miniature instruments controlled through a robotic system, such as the da Vinci Surgical System®. It focuses on female reproductive organs and provides an alternative surgical tool for minimally invasive gynecologic surgery.

Q: What are the advantages of robotic surgery over traditional surgical techniques?

A: There are a number of advantages of using the robot to assist in surgeries of the reproductive tract:

- This technology allows surgeons to operate with high precision through small incisions, enhancing their ability to treat various gynecologic cancers.
- The minimally invasive nature of robotic surgery results in less blood loss compared to open surgery.
- Patients typically experience shorter hospital stays and faster return to normal activities.
- High-definition, 3D imaging provides better visualization of the surgical area.

Q: What are some of the common procedures that use robotic surgery?

- **Hysterectomy:** Removal of the uterus, often performed to treat uterine cancer.
- **Oophorectomy:** Removal of the ovaries, typically for ovarian cancer.
- **Lymph Node Dissection:** Removal of lymph nodes to determine the spread of cancer.

Studies have shown that robotic surgery can lead to better, outcomes compared to traditional surgery. However, patient selection is important, and not all patients may be suitable candidates for robotic surgery.



Stacey South, MD - Gynecologic Oncologist



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To schedule an appointment with Dr. South, call 941-746-7507 or visit doctors.manateephysicianalliance.com.



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Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if minimally invasive, robotic surgery is right for you. Physicians are on the medical staff of Manatee Memorial Hospital but, with limited exceptions, are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Manatee Memorial Hospital. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the nondiscrimination notice, visit our website.





Alzheimer's and Dementia:

What's the Difference

Joseph Sassano, D.O.

In the realm of cognitive health, two terms often intermingle, causing confusion: Alzheimer's and dementia. While they are related, understanding their distinctions is crucial for proper diagnosis, treatment, and support. Grasping the contrast between Alzheimer's disease and dementia not only aids those living with these conditions but also offers invaluable guidance to caregivers. Read on to unravel this perplexity and shed light on the disparities between Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

What is Dementia?

Dementia isn't a specific disease but rather an umbrella term encompassing a range of symptoms affecting cognitive abilities such as memory, communication, and reasoning. Think of it as a collective noun under which various cognitive impairments reside. These impairments significantly interfere with daily life and function.

It's important to note that dementia is not a normal part of aging. It is caused by damage to brain cells and can stem from multiple underlying causes, including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, and frontotemporal dementia, among others. Each type presents distinct symptoms and progression trajectories.

Understanding Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is the most prevalent form of dementia, accounting for 60 to 80 percent of cases. It is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by the accumulation of abnormal protein deposits in the brain, namely beta-amyloid plaques and tau tangles. These neurobiological changes lead to the deterioration of brain cells and the subsequent decline in cognitive function.

Key Differences Between Alzheimer's and Dementia

Cause: Alzheimer's disease has a specific pathology involving the accumulation of beta-amyloid plaques and tau tangles, while dementia encompasses various conditions with diverse underlying causes, such as vascular issues or Lewy bodies.



Progression: Alzheimer's typically progresses gradually over several years, starting with mild memory loss and advancing to severe cognitive impairment and functional decline. Other types of dementia may have different progression patterns depending on their underlying causes.

Symptoms: While both Alzheimer's and dementia involve cognitive decline, Alzheimer's often presents with specific memory-related symptoms early in the disease process, whereas other forms of dementia may manifest with distinct symptoms such as visual hallucinations and tremors in Lewy body dementia or changes in behavior and language in frontotemporal dementia.

Treatments: While there is no cure for Alzheimer's or for most types of dementia, treatments and interventions may help manage symptoms and slow disease progression. However, specific treatments may vary depending on the type of dementia and its underlying cause.

Importance of Early Diagnosis and Intervention

Early detection of cognitive impairment is crucial for providing appropriate care and support to individuals affected by Alzheimer's or dementia. Diagnosis involves comprehensive evaluations of medical history, cognitive testing, neurological exams, and sometimes imaging studies. Timely intervention can enable access to treatments, support services, and lifestyle modifications that may improve quality of life and slow disease progression.

Support and Resources

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia can be challenging, both emotionally and practically.

Fortunately, numerous resources and support networks exist to assist caregivers and individuals living with these conditions. These include memory care facilities, support groups, respite care services, and educational programs aimed at enhancing understanding and coping strategies.

In the intricate landscape of cognitive disorders, Alzheimer's and dementia stand as prominent figures, each with its unique characteristics and challenges. By unraveling the differences between them, we empower ourselves to navigate this terrain with clarity and compassion. Through education, early intervention, and unwavering support, we can strive to enhance the lives of those affected by these conditions and advance our collective efforts toward finding effective treatments and, ultimately, a cure.

Empower yourself against Alzheimer's and Dementia

Take charge of your brain health today! Schedule an appointment with VIPcare and proactively assess your cognitive well-being. Call 941-271-7897. Let's tackle Alzheimer's and dementia together, starting with a proactive step towards a healthier future. Don't wait, act now!



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Pioneering the Future of Brain Health:

Cutting-Edge Therapies for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Diseases



By Max MacCloud, DO, ND, PhD

Miguel Rivera, MD, Adult Psychiatrist

The Age Reversal Technology Center is proud to announce a new division in partnership with Dr. Miguel Rivera. The Rivera Brain-Body Institute is committed to exploring the frontiers of brain health and pushing the boundaries of what's possible to develop effective treatments and solutions for those dealing with neurodegenerative conditions like Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. We will not sit idly by and continue to wait for conventional medicine / big pharma to develop a wonder drug that will likely never come. We are compelled to take action and that is what we are doing.

Our multidisciplinary team of clinicians/researchers is dedicated to investigating and developing cutting-edge, progressive therapies that hold the potential to slow, halt, and even reverse the devastating effects of these conditions.

One of the most promising areas of research we are actively pursuing is the use of stem cells and their derived exosomes. These powerful cellular components have demonstrated remarkable potential in promoting neurogenesis, reducing inflammation, and facilitating the repair of damaged neural pathways. Our institute is at the forefront of exploring innovative techniques to harness the regenerative capabilities of stem cells and exosomes, paving the way for groundbreaking treatments. There are many studies showing benefits, however, the current medical-industrial model is largely ignoring this amazing modality because they can't patent it.

Another exciting avenue we are exploring is the synergistic combination of exercise and oxygen therapy, known as EWOT (Exercise with Oxygen Therapy). This approach leverages the benefits of physical activity and increased oxygen delivery to the brain, potentially enhancing cognitive function, improving cerebral blood flow, and promoting neuroplasticity. Our researchers are developing cutting-edge protocols to optimize EWOT to enhance its impact on brain health.

Photobiomodulation, or transcranial light therapy, is another innovative modality that has captured our attention and also has a great deal of scientific research to support it. By utilizing specific wavelengths of light, this non-invasive technique has shown promise in improving mitochondrial function, reducing inflammation, and potentially stimulating

neuronal repair mechanisms. Our institute is actively investigating the therapeutic potential of photobiomodulation for neurodegenerative conditions.

Transcranial electromagnetic stimulation is another groundbreaking approach we are actively researching. By applying precisely controlled electromagnetic fields to the brain, this non-invasive technique has the potential to modulate neural activity, enhance neuroplasticity, and potentially improve cognitive function. Our team is dedicated to exploring therapeutic applications of this cutting-edge technology.

In addition to these innovative therapies, we are also exploring the potential of ketamine, a dissociative anesthetic, in the treatment of neurodegenerative conditions. Emerging research suggests that ketamine may have neuroprotective and neurorestorative properties, in addition to enhancing neuroplasticity, making it a promising candidate for further investigation.

There are others around the world that are delving into each of these therapies but none that we know of are putting them together into a comprehensive, synergistic program. We believe that there is no 'magic bullet' to prevent and treat these neurodegenerative conditions. We believe that it will take a multipronged approach to properly support the brain to repair itself.

Recognizing the importance of a holistic approach, our institute is also at the forefront of research into microvascular repair, mitochondrial enhancement, balancing metabolism, building metabolic reserve (muscle mass), detoxification strategies, and cutting-edge nutritional support. Nutrition alone shows tremendous promise to help slow, prevent, and reverse virtually every chronic disease known. This involves a properly designed eating system and supplementation regimen geared to the individual's unique biochemistry and needs. How many doctors that treat these conditions are paying attention to real nutrition?

By addressing the underlying mechanisms contributing to neurodegeneration from multiple angles, we are working to develop and refine comprehensive and personalized treatment plans tailored to each individual's needs.

It is important to note that while these therapies hold immense promise, they are still in various stages of research and development, therefore, we cannot make any claims as to their effectiveness. Alternatively, we will not sit back and allow these neurodegenerative conditions to progress without doing everything in our power, based on sound logic and research, to help those suffering since conventional approaches are essentially non-existent.

Our institute is committed to conducting rigorous scientifically-sound, therapeutic trials and adhering to the highest ethical standards to ensure the safety and efficacy of these approaches. We receive no government or big pharma funding, so all of our research and therapeutic trials are paid for by our patients.

At the Age Reversal Technology's Rivera Brain-Body Institute, we are driven by a relentless pursuit of knowledge and a deep commitment to improving the lives of those affected by neurodegenerative conditions. Through our cutting-edge research and innovative therapies, we are paving the way for a future where Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and other neurodegenerative conditions are no longer the devastating and debilitating conditions they are today.

We invite you to join us on this exciting journey, as we continue to push the boundaries of what's possible and pioneer the future of brain health. Together, we can unlock the secrets of the brain and unlock a world of hope and possibility for those affected by these challenging conditions. In addition to patient fees, research contributions are welcome and appreciated. There is always additional testing and treatment equipment needed. We have only begun to scratch the surface of what's possible and are extremely excited about the future, unobstructed by the limitations of the current medical industrial model.

Make an appointment today!
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WHY SENIORS ARE CHOOSING LIFE PLAN COMMUNITIES OVER AGING IN PLACE

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

THE REALITIES OF AGING IN PLACE

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

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

WHAT IS A LIFE PLAN COMMUNITY?

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

Maintenance-free Living

Owning and maintaining a home is a lot of work, and there may come a time in life when you'd rather be



relaxing or spending time with loved ones instead of doing chores around the house. When you move to a Life Plan Community, you can let the professionals take care of lawn mowing, housekeeping, meal preparation, home repairs and more. You'll have more time to enjoy what you've earned, and more freedom to travel without worrying about who will take care of your home while you're away.

Financial Security

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

Resort-like Lifestyle

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

Social Engagement

Maintaining social connections as you age is one of the best ways to protect your health and well-being. It's easy to expand your social circle when you choose to be part of a community filled with friendly and like-minded peers. Seniors who age in place at home are often at risk for social isolation, especially if they

aren't driving places to visit friends and socialize. Learn more about how senior living combats social isolation.

Peace of Mind for Your Loved Ones

You can't predict the future, but you can take control of your options now so your loved ones don't have to worry. Moving to a Life Plan Community means they won't have to rush to find health care if the unexpected happens and you suddenly need help with activities of daily living or round-the-clock care. Your family will have peace of mind knowing you'll have access to advanced levels of care, if needed, along with the safety of having staff available 24/7 should an emergency occur.

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



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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.

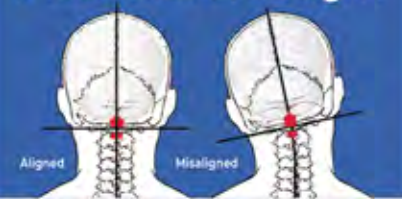
Shawn Felton, Marieb College's dean, believes such collaborative community partnerships are invaluable.

"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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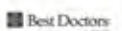
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Alzheimer's PET Imaging: A Window into Brain Changes

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder characterized by cognitive decline, memory loss, and changes in behavior. PET scans play a crucial role in understanding the underlying brain alterations associated with Alzheimer's. Let's delve into the studies that RAVE Imaging can provide:

1. Amyloid PET Scans:

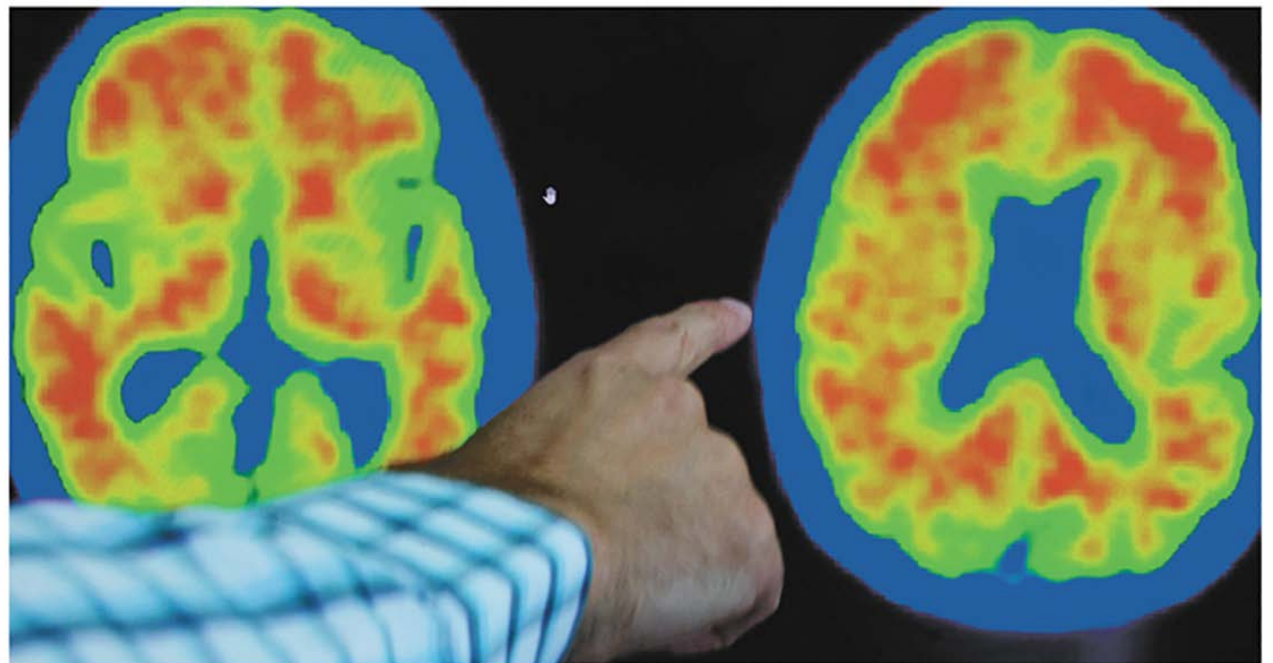
- **Purpose:** Detect amyloid plaques, which are abnormal protein aggregates in the brain.
- **How It Works:** A radiotracer (usually florbetapir or flutemetamol) binds to beta-amyloid plaques. The PET scanner captures signals emitted by the radiotracer, creating images.
- **Clinical Use:** Used to confirm or rule out Alzheimer's and assess disease severity.
- **Limitations:** Cannot differentiate between Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

2. FDG PET Scans:

- **Purpose:** Assess brain metabolism.
- **How It Works:** Measures glucose uptake in brain cells. Reduced uptake indicates impaired metabolism.
- **Clinical Utility:** Helps differentiate Alzheimer's from other dementias (e.g., frontotemporal dementia).
- **Advantages:** Widely available and less expensive than amyloid or tau PET scans.

3. Combining Information:

- **Multimodal Imaging:** Often, doctors combine PET scans with other imaging (MRI or CT) for a comprehensive view.
- **Clinical Decision-Making:** PET results guide treatment decisions and prognosis.



4. Challenges and Future Directions:

- **Early Detection:** PET scans may detect Alzheimer's-related changes before symptoms appear.
- **Standardization:** Efforts are ongoing to standardize protocols and improve accuracy.
- **Research:** Ongoing research explores new radiotracers and targets.

In summary, RAVE Imaging is able to provide our community with Alzheimer's PET scans to provide valuable insights into the disease process, aiding diagnosis and research. However, they are part of a broader diagnostic approach that includes clinical evaluation and other tests. If you or someone you know shows signs of cognitive decline, seek medical advice promptly.

Call us today if you have any questions about PET and how it may assist you or your loved ones in assessing whether you/they are struggling with Alzheimer's or dementia. And as always, we encourage you to discuss this with your physician as well to determine what course is best for you.



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Recurrent UTIs: Addressing the Risk of Antibiotic Resistance

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common bacterial infections that affect millions of individuals worldwide each year. While typically treated with antibiotics, the rising prevalence of antibiotic resistance poses a significant challenge in managing recurrent UTIs effectively. In this article, we'll explore the importance of addressing recurrent UTIs and strategies to mitigate the risk of antibiotic resistance, focusing on Utiva Cranberry PACs as a clinically effective prevention.

1. Overview of Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs):

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) occur when bacteria enter the urinary tract and multiply, leading to frequent urination, burning sensation during urination, and pelvic discomfort. UTIs can affect various parts of the urinary tract, including the bladder (cystitis), urethra (urethritis), and kidneys (pyelonephritis).

2. Importance of Addressing Recurrent UTIs:

Recurrent UTIs, defined as two or more infections within six months or three or more within one year, pose significant health risks and can profoundly impact quality of life. Individuals who experience recurrent UTIs often face frequent discomfort, disruption of daily activities, and an increased risk of complications such as kidney damage and sepsis.

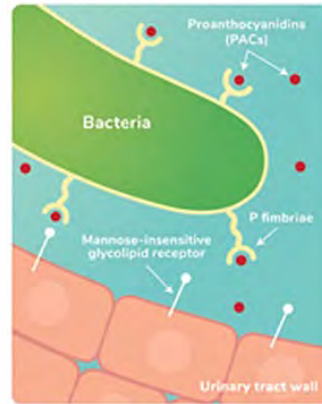
3. The Growing Concern of Antibiotic Resistance:

Antibiotic resistance has emerged as a global health threat, compromising the effectiveness of antibiotics in treating bacterial infections. Recurrent UTIs present a particularly challenging scenario, as they often result in repeated antibiotic courses, contributing to the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. A 2019 study published in the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) found alarming rates of antibiotic resistance among UTI-causing bacteria, with more than 92 percent resistant to at least one common antibiotic and almost 80 percent to at least two.

(Source: NCBI Study)

4. UTI Prevention: Strategies to Avoid Unnecessary Antibiotic Use:

Given the risks associated with antibiotic resistance, it's essential to explore preventive strategies to reduce the reliance on antibiotics for recurrent UTIs. Healthcare providers emphasize the importance of adopting lifestyle modifications and hygiene practices, such as staying hydrated, urinating after intercourse, and



practicing proper genital hygiene to prevent UTIs. Additionally, avoiding unnecessary antibiotic use for non-severe UTIs and considering alternative approaches for prevention are crucial in combating antibiotic resistance.

5. Utiva Cranberry PACs: A Clinically Effective Prevention:

Utiva Cranberry PACs offer a promising solution for UTI prevention without contributing to antibiotic resistance. Cranberry proanthocyanidins (PACs) have been extensively studied for their ability to inhibit bacterial adhesion to the urinary tract, preventing the colonization and proliferation of UTI-causing bacteria. A urogynecologist, Dr. Emily Rutledge emphasizes, "There is a lot of evidence that cranberry supplements are safe and effective. You can find all sorts of cranberry supplements but if they don't have that 36 mg PAC and are measured by DMAC/A2 then they are a waste of money." Utiva Cranberry PACs, with a standardized dose of 36 mg PACs measured by DMAC/A2, provide a clinically effective option for individuals seeking to reduce their risk of recurrent UTIs.

Recurrent UTIs pose a significant health concern, exacerbated by the growing threat of antibiotic resistance. Healthcare providers and patients play a vital role in addressing this challenge by adopting preventive strategies and exploring alternative approaches to UTI management. Dr. Colleen McDermott, another urogynecologist, recommends,

"Antibiotics are the first-line treatment, but there are clinically proven options to help prevent. When considering cranberry supplements, I recommend my patients select a product with 36 mg of PACs." Utiva Cranberry PACs offer a safe, evidence-based option for UTI prevention, empowering individuals to take proactive steps towards better urinary health and reduced reliance on antibiotics.

Sources:

- https://www.utivahealth.ca/blogs/resources/antibiotics-resistance?_pos=1&_sid=51bf18b74&_ss=r
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6436442/>



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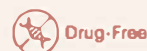
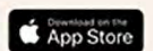
Recurrent UTIs can be a constant battle in the clinic. In an attempt to minimize the use of antibiotics, I always consider natural options to help reduce the frequency of UTIs in my patients. Utiva is a trusted brand which provides a great, clean cranberry product which has been very effective in preventing UTIs in many of my patients. ”

Dr. Yana Barbalet
Urologist, Lahey Health, Massachusetts



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Navigating Urinary Tract Infections in Postmenopausal Women

By Christine King, PA-C

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are a common concern among postmenopausal women, often posing significant discomfort and potential complications. The shift in hormone levels during menopause alters the urinary tract's environment, making women more susceptible to these infections. However, several preventive measures and treatment strategies can help manage and alleviate UTIs in this demographic.

Understanding UTIs in Postmenopausal Women

Postmenopausal hormonal changes result in reduced estrogen levels, impacting the urinary tract's defense mechanisms. The decline in estrogen compromises the lining of the urinary tract, weakening its ability to ward off bacteria. As a consequence, bacteria, primarily *E. coli*, can thrive and cause UTIs more easily in postmenopausal women.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

1. Hydration: Encouraging adequate water intake helps flush out bacteria from the urinary system, reducing the risk of infection.

2. Cranberry Products: While controversial, some evidence suggests that cranberry products may prevent bacteria from adhering to the urinary tract lining, potentially reducing UTI occurrences.

3. Maintaining Good Hygiene: Proper genital hygiene, including wiping from front to back after using the restroom, helps prevent the spread of bacteria to the urinary tract.

4. Avoidance of Irritants: Limiting consumption of caffeine, alcohol, and spicy foods can help minimize irritation to the bladder and urinary tract.

5. Regular Urination and Emptying Bladder Completely: Postmenopausal women should ensure regular, complete emptying of the bladder to minimize the chance of bacterial growth.

TREATMENT APPROACHES

1. Antibiotics: Most UTIs in postmenopausal women are treated with a course of antibiotics. However, antibiotic resistance is a concern, necessitating proper diagnosis and prescription by a healthcare professional.



2. Estrogen Therapy: Topical estrogen therapy can help restore the lining of the urinary tract, enhancing its defense against bacteria. It's an option worth discussing with a healthcare provider for some women.

3. Natural Remedies: Probiotics, D-mannose, and herbal supplements are being explored for their potential in preventing and treating UTIs. While further research is needed, some women find relief through these alternatives.

4. Home Remedies for Comfort: Applying a heating pad to the abdomen or using over-the-counter pain relievers can alleviate discomfort while waiting for medical treatment.

UTIs in postmenopausal women can significantly impact their quality of life, but preventive measures and effective treatment approaches exist to manage and reduce the frequency of these infections. It's crucial for women experiencing UTI symptoms to seek prompt medical attention to avoid complications and receive appropriate treatment tailored to their individual needs.

The Center for Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Health in Venice, Florida, provides comprehensive and personalized care in a relaxed, spa-like office.

Under the care of John Devine, MD, a fellowship-trained urogynecologist, along with practitioner, Christine King, the practice specializes in women's pelvic health and urogynecology, providing care for women of all ages, from adolescents to adults.

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

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

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

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As the summer sun beats down, UV Awareness Month reminds us to take precautions against the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation. Even with the best intentions, prolonged sun exposure can lead to dehydration, fatigue, sunburns, and muscle aches. Fortunately, Prime IV Hydration offers a restorative solution with their Afterburn drip, a potent blend of vitamins, minerals, and medications designed to help you recover and rejuvenate after a day in the sun.

The Afterburn drip is a comprehensive intravenous (IV) therapy that replenishes vital nutrients and provides targeted relief for sun-related discomforts. Among its key ingredients are:

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Magnesium: Assists in the transport of Vitamin C and dilates blood vessels to allow healing cells to get to work.

B-12: Helps fight fatigue after long sun exposure.

Vitamin D Injection: Reduces skin redness, irritation, and inflammation post sunburns, speed up healing time.



For customers feeling the effects of being in the sun all day, this drip will help fight fatigue and speed up the healing process of a sunburn or other UV-related skin damage.

In addition to these vital nutrients, the Afterburn drip also contains potent anti-inflammatory and anti-nausea medications to provide comprehensive relief. Toradol, a powerful anti-inflammatory, helps reduce inflammation and alleviate muscle aches and pains, while Zofran, an effective anti-nausea medication, combats nausea and vomiting that can sometimes accompany dehydration or sun overexposure.

The Afterburn drip is administered by trained medical professionals in a relaxing environment, ensuring a safe and comfortable experience.

Within 30 to 60 minutes, you'll begin to feel the restorative effects as essential fluids, electrolytes, and nutrients are replenished directly into your bloodstream.

This UV Awareness Month, don't let the sun's rays dampen your summer fun. If you've overindulged in outdoor activities, Prime IV Hydration's Afterburn drip can provide the rejuvenation you need to recover quickly and get back to enjoying the warm weather in full force. Prioritize your well-being and let the Afterburn drip be your secret weapon against the consequences of excessive sun exposure.

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Effective & Proven Chronic Pain Relief with VAX-D®

By Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC

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

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

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

How does VAX-D work?

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



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

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

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

Is VAX-D Right for Me?

You may be a candidate for VAX-D if:

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

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

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

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

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

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Dr. Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC



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

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

Dr. Aderholdt also holds certification in chiropractic adjunctive physiotherapy from New York Chiropractic College and completed extensive postgraduate training in therapeutic modalities at National-Lincoln School. He is a member of the Florida Chiropractic Association and American Chiropractic Association and is a certified VAX-D consultant. He was also voted a Bradenton Herald People's Choice Awards Winner for 2008, 2022 and is the Manatee Herald-Tribune Awards winner for 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020 and 2021 and Sarasota Herald-Tribune finalist for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023 and winner in 2019 and 2024.



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Benefits of Orthodontic Aligner Therapy

By Dr. Amanda Rizner

Orthodontic aligners have recently become a popular choice for teeth straightening and offer a host of benefits compared to traditional braces. These clear, removable trays have revolutionized orthodontic treatment, providing patients with a discreet, comfortable, and convenient option for achieving a straighter smile.

Aesthetics

One of the most prominent advantages of orthodontic aligners is their nearly invisible appearance. Unlike traditional braces which feature metal wires and brackets, aligners are made of a transparent plastic material. This discretion makes them particularly appealing to adults and teenagers who may feel self-conscious about wearing braces. Instead of placing metal brackets to help move the teeth, dentists can place a limited number of "composite attachments." These attachments are composed of the same material as tooth-colored fillings and are often invisible and easily removable. The trays can be easily inserted and taken out for a short period of time for any occasion the patient may have in order to optimize their smile while in treatment.

Removability

Aligners are designed to be removable, allowing patients to take them out for eating, drinking, brushing, and flossing. This flexibility means there are limited dietary restrictions, as there's no risk of damaging the aligners by consuming certain foods. Patients still need to be cautious with their composite attachments, as they can come off with very hard foods. This benefit of the aligner therapy also

allows for better home care. White spot lesions (which are the beginning of cavities) are less common with aligner therapy since patients can remove the trays to practice better hygiene. Their wireless configuration allows the patient to floss easily, preventing decay between teeth. Clear aligners reduce the risk of gum irritation, inflammation, and sores commonly associated with traditional braces. The absence of metal brackets and wire tend to be kinder to the soft tissue over time.

Comfortability

Aligner treatment typically requires fewer visits to the orthodontist compared to traditional braces. Patients are provided with multiple sets of aligners in advance and instructed to change them at home according to a predetermined schedule. This convenience is particularly advantageous for individuals with busy lifestyles who may struggle to accommodate frequent orthodontic appointments.

Bite Correction

Aligners not only help to straighten teeth, but they also aid in correcting a patient's malocclusion (the way the teeth come together). An uneven bite distribution can lead to tooth mobility, fracture, and eventual tooth loss. Malocclusions can cause eventual issues with the TMJ (temporomandibular joint) and can lead to tooth grinding if not corrected in a timely manner. Orthodontic therapy can also correct cross-bites and midline misalignments.



Conclusion

Not every patient is a candidate for this type of treatment. Despite all the advances in clear aligner therapy the past few years, traditional braces are still needed for select cases. Patients who have large skeletal malformations or significant crowding/spacing may still need traditional brackets and wires in order to move the teeth properly and efficiently. It is imperative to have each case carefully assessed by a professional in order to see which type of orthodontics is right for each person. It is also crucial to make sure all cavities and any gum disease is treated before beginning aligner therapy. With proper case planning and evaluation, clear aligners can be a very effective and aesthetic form of orthodontic treatment that many patients have grown to love.

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Securing Serenity:

How Strategic Retirement Planning Enhances Mental Health

By Steve Schneider, MBA - CEO, Securenet Financial, LLC.

The importance of proper retirement financial planning cannot be overstated, especially when considering its profound mental health impact during the later stages of life. A well-structured retirement plan not only ensures financial security but also contributes significantly to overall well-being and mental peace. This is critical because the retirement phase is often marked by significant lifestyle changes, including shifts in daily routines, social dynamics, and personal identity, all of which are inherently linked to one's financial stability.

Financial insecurity is a significant stressor at any age but becomes particularly impactful during retirement. The absence of a regular income stream can create anxiety, depression, and stress, particularly if unexpected medical expenses or inflation rates rise. Good mental health in retirement hinges on the absence of these financial worries, making a robust retirement plan essential.

Hallmarks of a Good Retirement Financial Plan.

A well-rounded retirement plan is comprehensive and should cover several key areas:

1. Income Planning: This involves understanding various income streams post-retirement, including pensions, Social Security benefits, annuities, and withdrawals from retirement accounts like 401(k)s and IRAs. A good plan strategically sequences these withdrawals to minimize tax liabilities and ensure a steady income flow. Investing with income in mind is very different than investing prior to retirement.

2. Investment Management: Effective management of investments to balance growth with risk and allocating specific assets for income is crucial as one approaches retirement. The focus typically shifts from accumulation to preservation of capital, emphasizing investments that offer stability and consistent yield rather than strictly achieving high growth.

3. Healthcare Planning: Considering the rising cost of healthcare, a retirement plan must address how to handle medical expenses, including Medicare coverage and supplemental insurance. Long-term care insurance is also a critical component, given the potential need for prolonged medical or custodial care.



4. Tax Efficiency: Planning for tax implications in retirement can significantly affect net income. Effective retirement plans incorporate strategies to minimize tax liabilities on withdrawals from retirement savings, optimizing financial resources available in retirement.

5. Estate Planning: Ensuring that assets are protected and passed on according to the retiree's wishes involves legal documentation such as wills, trusts, and power of attorney arrangements. This not only provides financial security but also peace of mind to the retirees and their family.

We at Securenet Financial, LLC. Are accustomed to dealing with the complexity of these areas. We bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise in navigating the nuances of retirement finance. We can tailor a plan that aligns with personal circumstances and goals, adjusting for factors such as life expectancy, health conditions, and family obligations.

Having a comprehensive and flexible retirement plan offers substantial psychological benefits. **Security and Peace of Mind:** Knowing that finances are secure can alleviate stress and anxiety, contributing to a happier and more stable mental state. **Sense of Control:** Effective planning empowers retirees, giving them control over their financial future and reducing feelings of helplessness and vulnerability. **Enhanced Quality of Life:** With financial worries set aside, retirees can focus more on hobbies, socializing, and personal development, which are vital for maintaining mental health and overall happiness. **Preparedness for the Unexpected:** Part of good retirement planning involves

preparing for unforeseen circumstances. Having contingency plans for unexpected expenses or changes in personal circumstances can prevent panic and despair during challenging times.

In essence, the correlation between well-planned retirement finances and good mental health is clear and compelling. The complexities of managing retirement finances necessitate not only careful planning but also the expertise of a professional specializing in retirement planning. By ensuring financial stability, a well-crafted retirement plan not only secures one's financial future but also significantly enhances mental and emotional well-being, thereby making a profound difference in the quality of life during the golden years.



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

By Dr. David S. Zamikoff

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

How Can GAINSWave Prevent & Treat ED?

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

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



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

Younger Men Should Seek Treatment Early

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

Men are Preventing ED with GAINSWave

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

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

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

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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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