

S O U T H W E S T F L O R I D A ' S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

October 2024

Lee Edition - Monthly

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 **FREE**

ALIGNMENT MATTERS

Recover and Rally

HORMONAL IMBALANCE

and Its Effect on Skin Health

UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF LONGEVITY

Our Guide To Creating Your Own Blue Zone

SARCOPENIA BAD... EMSCULPT NEO GOOD!!!

BREAST CANCER MYTHS

What Seniors Need to Know

HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY AND BREAST CANCER

Risk or Hype?

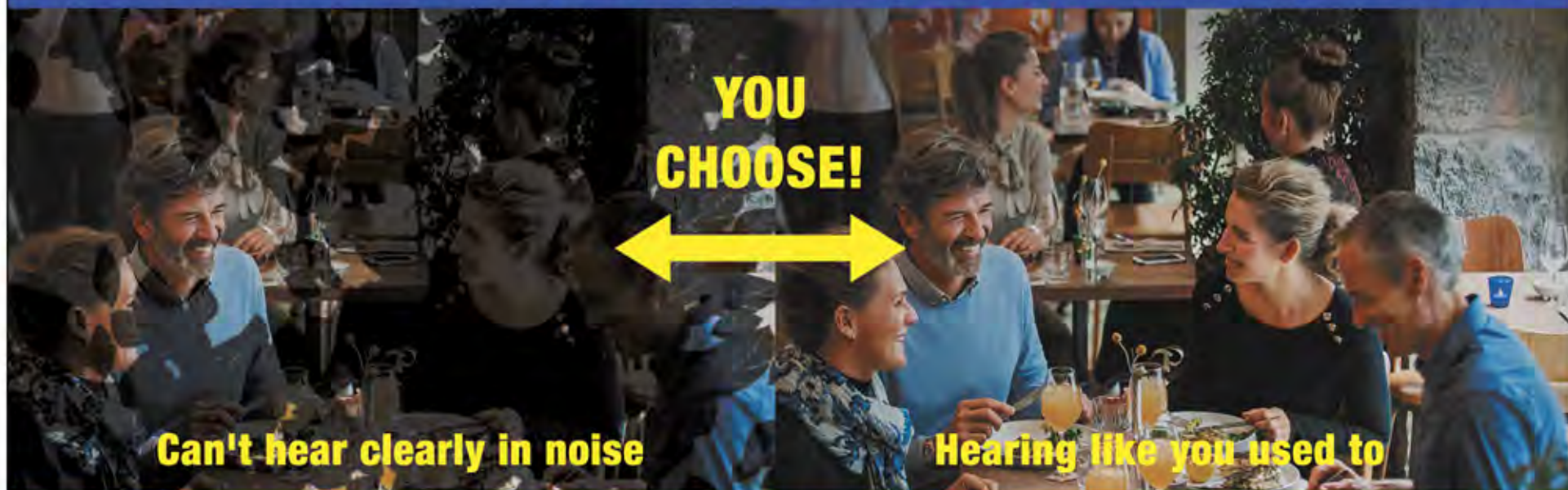
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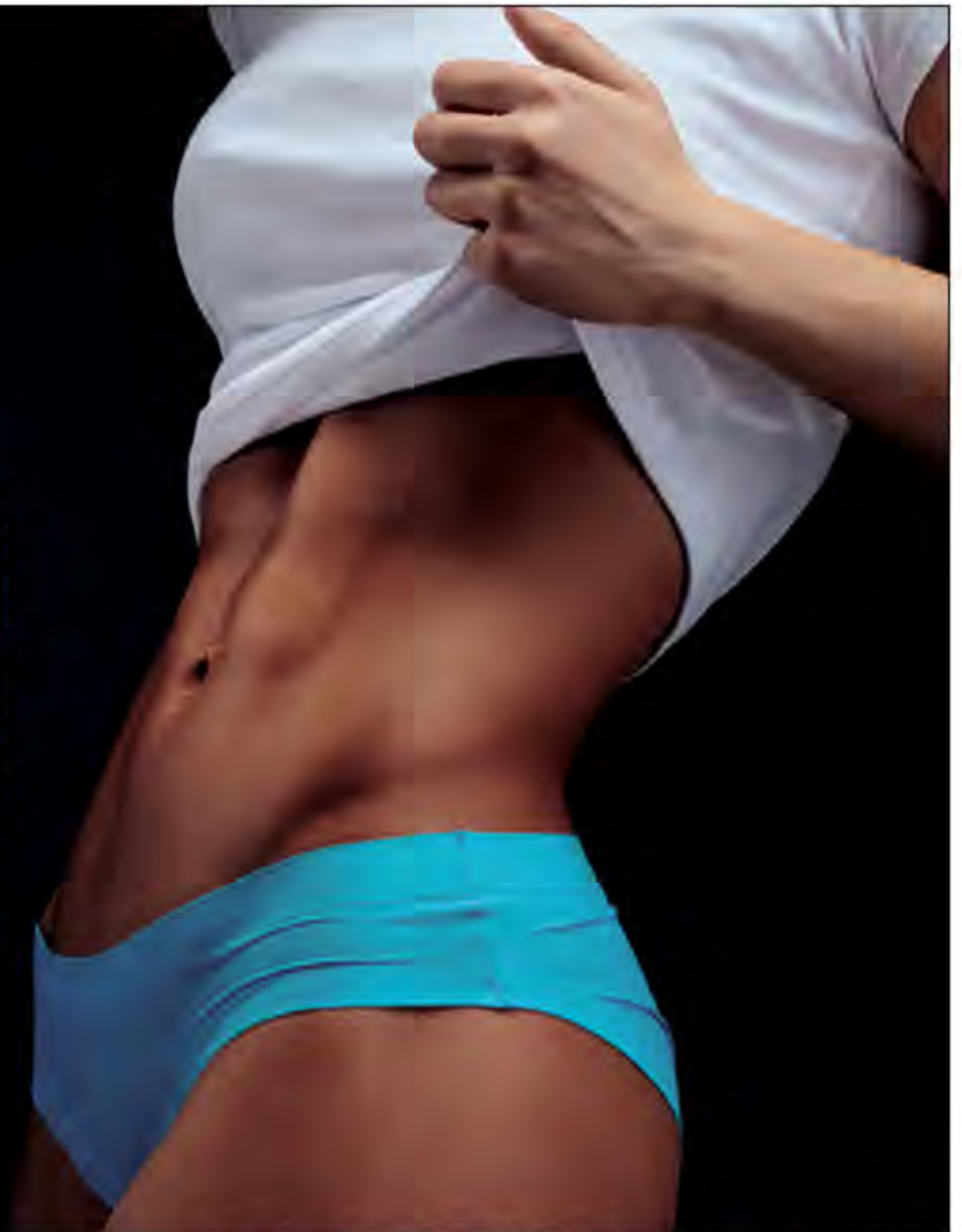
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CONTACT US

OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Cristan Gensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

OWNER / CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sonny Gensing
sonnygensing@yahoo.com



Publishing • Advertising • Web Design • Graphic Design

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Cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

G WHIZ Marketing, LLC | 1630 Caxambas Court | Marco Island, Florida 34145

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NEW TECHNOLOGY TO RESOLVE SYMPTOMS FROM PAIN CAUSED BY NEUROPATHY AND CHRONIC JOINT PAIN

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The neoGEN-Series® system is a state-of-the-art, technically-innovative medical device for producing electric cell signaling energy waves (EST and ESI). The system is used to successfully treat circulatory issues, all types of acute and chronic pain, long-term (intractable) pain and drug-resistant pain. The neoGEN-Series® also offers specific-parameter signaling for efficacious neuro-muscular reeducation, muscle strengthening and relaxation of muscle spasm activity.

WHAT IT TREATS

- Neuropathy/radiculopathy pain
- Improve nerve health and regeneration
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- Muscle spasms relaxation
- Increased local blood circulation
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- Acute/chronic pain conditions
- Post-traumatic pain syndromes
- Aids in treatment in post-surgical pain conditions
- Improved tissue/organ function

Peripheral neuropathy is a neurological disorder characterized by damage to the peripheral nervous system, which connects the brain and spinal cord to the rest of the body. This condition can result in a range of symptoms, including numbness, tingling, burning sensations, and weakness, typically affecting the hands and feet. Common causes include diabetes, chemotherapy, autoimmune diseases, and certain medications. The chronic pain associated with peripheral neuropathy can significantly impact a patient's quality of life, often proving challenging to treat effectively with conventional methods.

In recent years, innovative technologies have emerged to address the limitations of traditional treatments for neuropathic pain. One such advancement is the neoGEN-series system, a cutting-edge approach to managing peripheral neuropathy symptoms. This technology utilizes a form of electrical stimulation that goes beyond conventional transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) or electrical muscle stimulation (EMS) methods.

Initial clinical studies and patient reports suggest that the neoGEN-series system may offer significant pain relief and improved sensation for many individuals suffering from peripheral neuropathy. Some users have reported reduced reliance on pain medications and enhanced overall function in daily activities. However, as with any medical treatment, results can vary among individuals, and the effectiveness of the neoGEN-series system may depend on factors such as the underlying cause and severity of the neuropathy.

While promising, it's important to note that more extensive research is needed to fully establish the long-term efficacy and safety profile of the neoGEN-series system. Patients considering this treatment option should consult with their healthcare providers to determine if it's appropriate for their specific condition and to develop a comprehensive management plan.

I have been a patient of Dr. Larry Johnson for over ten years for different low back and various joint pains. However, last year I started to suffer with pain and tingling in both of my legs and feet that would keep me from sleeping. Dr. Johnson explained to me that I was dealing with neuropathy and he could help to resolve my pain with a new technology called E-NERVESTIM. He has used this therapy on several patients with great success. After six treatments, my pain was starting to go away and was finally gone after a few more treatments. I have always relied on Dr. Johnson to help me for any problems I have encountered over the years and I have always recommended him to my family and friends. - Shirley W.

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2025 Annual Enrollment Coming Soon, What You Need to Watch for.

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

Medicare Annual Enrollment is October 15-December 7th for January 1st, 2025, effective. What can be changed at this time is Medicare Part D Drug Plans and Medicare Advantage Plans. Approximately mid-month of September you will receive a Notification of Change from your current insurance plan. This outlines the current to the new change, as an example if your primary care provider cost \$10 now it might say \$15 in 2025 (no correlation just an example).

Big changes to Medicare Part D, stand alone drug plans as well as Advantage Plans won't have to pay more than \$2,000 in out-of-pocket costs, which include deductibles, co-pays, coinsurance. It is very important to check your plans formulary as medication must be in formulary to be capped. There is a lot of speculation still as to the cost of the plans & copays, deductibles will be capped at \$590.00. As a reminder the cost of the plan is not as important as the cost plus your medications, that's what you look at, the total cost. It is important to know what the medication is used for to determine if it is covered by the plan. Example Wycovy may be covered but in order to be covered it must be used for a Heart conditions or Diabetes, Medicare does not cover weight loose medications at this time.

Medicare Part C / Advantage Plans annually Medicare Advantage Plans make changes. They must include all the same features as Original Medicare but not at the same cost share. They can have a premium, Medical and or Prescription deductible, copays and coinsurance can change. Extra Value such as Vision, Dental, Over the Counter, Part B Give Back, transportation, etc. can all change or be eliminated. Medicare set's the annual in-network out of pocket maximum, in 2024 it is \$8,850 and \$13,300 for in-network and out-of-network services combined. However, individual insurance plans may set lower limits. These limits apply to Part A and B services only, and do not apply to Part D cost share.

The old saying if it's not broken don't fix it DOES NOT apply to Annual Enrollment. Every year I see many people that have not checked/compared their current plan to what's new. I have saved so



many people hundreds and in many cases thousands of dollars. You should be working with a broker that represents many insurance companies. Make sure you check them out, especially if you are going to allow someone in your house. I recommend meeting in their office. For myself we represent most carriers in our area and to carry all their literature with me is almost impossible. We use 3 large screens so that our clients can clearly see and compare the differences between the plans. The minimum information always needed is all your doctors, medications: names, milligrams and dosage. We load your current plan and then compare it to all the other companies in your area. What companies have all your doctors, the price for your medication normally makes a big difference. Then the Extra Value what is most important to you. We do NOT CHARGE for our review and if warranted to change your insurance plan. Ethics is most important and if you are on the best plan we will tell you, plus you can see for yourself.

We start now by sending our clients notification to send us their doctors and medications. On October 1st we can see the new 2025 plans and we review with clients; on October 15th we can start making the changes for January 1st effective.

As a reminder it is illegal for an insurance agent to contact you unless you give them permission. There are specific forms that you should sign, such as a Scope of Appointment which outlines what you want to talk about. This form should be signed at least 48 hours prior to your meeting or if you walk into their office, prior to speaking about Medicare.

Medicare Seminar's they are good for general information. A one-to-one appointment where you can dive into your doctors and medication is best, plus you can then compare other companies in one place.

When you turn 65 you are eligible for Medicare, once you have worked 40 quarters roughly 10 years there is no cost for Medicare Part "A". Part A covers Hospitals, Skilled Nursing, Home Health & Hospice. Medicare Part B you can choose to take at 65 or you can hold off if you are still working and have credible coverage. If you do not have group health insurance that is considered qualified, and then you want it you would have a late enrollment penalty for each month you did not have Part B & Part D and that penalty will last for the rest of your life. Part B covers doctors, imaging, blood work, ambulance, durable medical equipment, etc. Part D is a Medicare Drug Plan and covers medications. During your initial enrollment period it is especially important to understand your options! Medicare Supplements/Medigap Plans are NOT guaranteed issue, you may need to medically qualify. You can purchase a Medigap Plan during your 1st 6-month on Medicare Part B without medical underwriting. There are a lot of things you need to know. Again, work with an agent you can trust! **Especially important:** when you move you need to know your options. Can you keep the same plan? Do you need to make a change and what does that look like?

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SARCOPENIA BAD... EMSCULPT NEO GOOD!!!

As we age, our bodies undergo numerous changes, some of which can significantly impact our quality of life. One such change is sarcopenia, a progressive condition characterized by the reduction of muscle mass and strength. This age-associated phenomenon leads to a decline in physical ability, affecting millions of people worldwide.

Sarcopenia's impact extends far beyond mere muscle loss. It contributes to an increased risk of falls, heightened frailty, decreased balance, and a general decline in overall quality of life. In severe cases, sarcopenia can even lead to increased mortality rates among older adults. As our global population continues to age, addressing this condition has become increasingly crucial for maintaining health and independence in later years.

Traditional approaches to combating sarcopenia have primarily focused on exercise and nutrition. While these methods remain important, they may not always be sufficient or feasible for everyone, particularly those with limited mobility or other health constraints. This is where cutting-edge technology steps in to offer a groundbreaking solution: Emsculpt NEO.

Emsculpt NEO represents a significant leap forward in non-invasive body contouring and muscle-building technology. It is the first and only treatment of its kind to simultaneously harness the power of two advanced technologies: Radio Frequency (RF) and High-Intensity Focused Electromagnetic (HIFEM+) energy. This unique combination allows Emsculpt NEO to effectively address sarcopenia while simultaneously reducing fat, offering a two-pronged approach to body transformation.

The science behind Emsculpt NEO is both fascinating and promising. The RF technology works by delivering controlled heating to the treatment area, targeting fat cells beneath the skin's surface. This process, known as apoptosis, triggers accelerated fat cell death. The damaged fat cells are then naturally eliminated from the body over time, resulting in a noticeable reduction in fat thickness.

Simultaneously, the HIFEM+ technology induces powerful muscle contractions that are not achievable through voluntary muscle action alone. These supra-maximal contractions force the muscle tissue to adapt, resulting in increased muscle fiber growth and enhanced muscle tone. This dual-action approach not only builds muscle but also helps to counteract the effects of sarcopenia by strengthening existing muscle fibers and promoting the growth of new ones.



The effectiveness of Emsculpt NEO has been demonstrated through various clinical studies and imaging techniques. MRI scans have revealed significant increases in muscle size across various body areas, including the biceps, triceps, lower leg muscles, and even calves. These improvements were accompanied by a measurable reduction in fat thickness, showcasing the treatment's ability to sculpt and tone the body comprehensively.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence of Emsculpt NEO's efficacy comes from real-world results. In a recent case study, a subject underwent a series of four 30-minute sessions targeting the abdomen, inner and outer thighs, and buttocks. These treatments were administered once a week for four consecutive weeks. The before and after photos, taken at the start of treatment and three months after the final session, revealed remarkable transformations. Notably, the subject reported no changes to their lifestyle or dietary habits during this period, highlighting the potent effects of Emsculpt NEO as a standalone treatment.

As we continue to search for effective ways to combat sarcopenia and its associated health risks, Emsculpt NEO emerges as a promising tool in our arsenal. By offering a non-invasive, time-efficient alternative to traditional exercise, it opens up new possibilities for individuals seeking to maintain or improve their muscle mass and overall body composition. While it should not replace a healthy lifestyle, Emsculpt NEO provides a valuable supplement to existing fitness and wellness routines, potentially helping countless individuals reclaim their strength, confidence, and quality of life in the face of sarcopenia.



Ivan R. Bracic, D.C.

Dr. Ivan Bracic is a board-certified Chiropractor, licensed in both Florida and Illinois, with over 30 years of experience serving patients in both states. He earned his Doctorate of Chiropractic from Life College in 1992.

In 2017, he achieved the Certified Independent Chiropractic Examiner credential from the American College of Independent Medical Examiners and the American Board of Independent Medical Examiners. In 2018, he was recognized as a Trauma Team Member by the Academy of Chiropractic Post-Doctoral Division at Cleveland University-Kansas City, College of Chiropractic, after completing an extensive program in triaging the injured, MRI spine interpretation, spinal orthopedics, early detection for stroke, spinal biomechanical engineering, and accident reconstruction for motor vehicle accidents. In 2021, he earned a National Certification in Spinal Decompression.

Dr. Bracic is highly qualified in both spine and joint health, with considerable experience in non-surgical treatment of chronic neck, back and joint pain. Dr. Bracic believes in leveraging the best technological advancements, non-invasive treatments, and body mechanics to help individuals get and stay healthy. He has extensive training in reading MRIs, which allows him to provide the most accurate diagnoses for his patients. By utilizing state-of-the-art equipment, his vast expertise, and a network of doctors and specialists, Dr. Bracic consistently achieves superior outcomes for his patients.

Spine and Joint of Southwest Florida is the leading whole-body wellness practice in the area. If you're looking for non-invasive treatment options for back pain, joint pain, knee pain, or want to look and feel younger by restoring balance, eliminating fat, building muscle, and maintaining a healthy weight and lifestyle, look no further. Dr. Bracic's practice improves your musculoskeletal health from the inside, while also supporting physical wellness with aesthetics and body treatments.

Are you ready to get back to doing the things you love and look the way you've always wanted? Book your consultation today by calling **239-579-4444**. Let us guide you on your wellness journey and help you defy the aging process!

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Unmasking the Truth About Spider Veins:

A GUIDE TO VEIN HEALTH

As the seasons transition and the air gains a refreshing chill, it's an opportune time to shed light on a common but often misunderstood issue – spider veins. These delicate, web-like networks of red and purple veins that appear on our legs and sometimes other parts of our bodies can be a source of concern for many. In this article, we will explore the world of spider veins, discovering their causes, prevention, and treatment options.

The Web of Spider Veins

Spider veins are small, dilated blood vessels close to the skin's surface. They often present as fine, twisted lines, reminiscent of spider webs but without the spooky connotations. While they might not be as intimidating as Halloween's haunted houses, understanding them is essential for maintaining both vein health and overall well-being.

These visible veins are caused by a variety of factors, including genetic predisposition, hormonal changes, and prolonged periods of standing or sitting. As we age, our veins can lose their elasticity, making it harder for blood to circulate efficiently. This can lead to the development of spider veins, particularly in areas where the veins are closest to the skin's surface, such as the legs.

The Role of Genetics

Genetics often plays a significant role in the development of spider veins. If you have a family history of these visible veins, you may be genetically predisposed to experiencing them as well. Research has shown that certain genetic variations can affect the structure and function of the veins, making some individuals more susceptible to the formation of spider veins.

However, it's crucial to remember that genetics is just one factor among many, and there are steps you can take to minimize their occurrence. Understanding your genetic predisposition can help you be proactive in addressing the issue and adopting preventive measures.

Preventive Measures

There are several effective ways to prevent or reduce the appearance of spider veins, and it doesn't involve any magical spells or Halloween-themed potions. Regular exercise is a key component, as it helps improve blood circulation



throughout your body. Activities that promote healthy blood flow, such as walking, swimming, or cycling, can greatly reduce the risk of spider veins developing.

Maintaining a healthyweight also reduces the strain on your veins, which can help prevent spider veins from forming. Incorporating simple lifestyle changes, such as elevating your legs when resting and avoiding prolonged periods of standing or sitting, can further reduce the risk. Additionally, wearing compression stockings can provide support and help minimize the development of spider veins.

Exploring Treatment Options

If spider veins have already made an appearance, various treatments are available to address them. One common procedure is sclerotherapy, in which a solution is injected into the affected veins to gradually fade and eliminate them. This process involves a series of injections, and the results can be seen within a few weeks. It's a safe and effective medical procedure that doesn't require any magic wands or incantations.

Another option is laser therapy, which employs the power of light to break down the pigmentation in spider veins, causing them to fade over time. This non-invasive treatment is suitable for those who prefer a more gentle approach to addressing their spider veins. It's a safe and effective method for improving the appearance of your skin.

Embrace a Vein-Healthy Lifestyle

Spider veins might not be the stuff of Halloween nightmares, but they can still affect your self-esteem and overall health. As we embrace the changing seasons, let's also take the time to embrace a vein-healthy lifestyle. By staying active, eating a healthy diet, and maintaining a balanced weight, you can lessen the risk of spider veins, varicose veins, and other vascular conditions.

In conclusion, spider veins are a common concern, and understanding them is key to addressing this issue. While they may not have a direct connection to Halloween, taking care of your vein health is a year-round endeavor that can lead to a healthier and more confident you. By being proactive and exploring the available treatment options, you can take control of your vein health and enjoy the changing seasons with renewed confidence.

A complimentary virtual vein screening at gulfcoast-surgeons.com makes it possible for you to get a preliminary vein evaluation from the comfort of home.

After you fill out and submit the questionnaire our vascular experts will inform you if your condition requires an in-office vein evaluation.

The Vascular and Vein Center at Gulfcoast Surgeons is one of the first and most respected vein clinics in Southwest Florida. Our surgeons, Dr. Abraham Sadighi and Dr. Johan Escribano have performed thousands of vascular and vein surgeries with consistently positive outcomes. We focus on diseases of the vascular system that can range from harmless but unattractive spider veins to dangerous conditions such as peripheral artery disease. Our caring and dedicated team will help you identify problems and offer the best treatment options for you.



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FOCUSING ON EYE SAFETY: CONTACT LENS AND EYE INJURY PREVENTION MONTH

As we observe Contact Lens and Eye Injury Prevention Month, it's crucial to shine a spotlight on the importance of maintaining optimal eye health and safety. Our eyes are irreplaceable organs that deserve utmost care and attention. This month-long awareness campaign serves as a reminder to both contact lens wearers and the general public about the significance of proper eye care practices and injury prevention measures.

Contact lenses have revolutionized vision correction for millions of people worldwide. However, improper use and care of these tiny optical devices can lead to serious eye problems. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 45 million people in the United States wear contact lenses. While these lenses provide excellent vision correction, they also come with responsibilities.

One of the primary focuses of this awareness month is educating contact lens wearers about best practices. Proper hygiene is paramount when handling contact lenses. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your lenses or your eyes. This simple step can significantly reduce the risk of introducing harmful bacteria into your eyes.

It's also essential to follow the recommended wear schedule for your lenses. Overwearing contact lenses, especially sleeping in them when not approved by your eye care professional, can increase the risk of eye infections and corneal ulcers. Always remove your lenses before sleeping, swimming, or exposing your eyes to water, as these activities can introduce harmful microorganisms to your eyes.

Regular cleaning and disinfection of contact lenses are crucial. Use only the solutions recommended by your eye care professional, and never reuse or top off old solution. Replace your lens case every three months to prevent bacterial buildup. These habits can go a long way in preventing eye infections and ensuring the longevity of your lenses.

Beyond contact lens care, this month also emphasizes the importance of preventing eye injuries in various settings. Whether at work, home, or during sports activities, eye protection should always be a priority. According to the American Optometric Association, about 90% of eye injuries are preventable with proper safety eyewear.

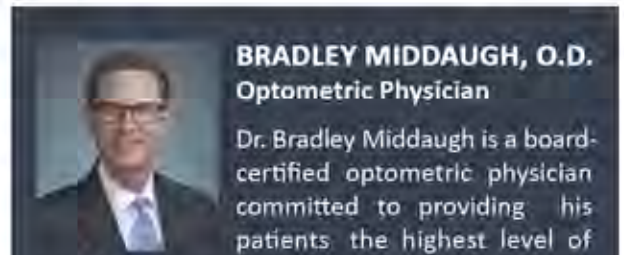
In the workplace, especially in industries involving construction, manufacturing, or laboratory work, wearing appropriate safety goggles or face shields is crucial. At home, be cautious when using cleaning products, performing DIY projects, or working in the yard. Simple precautions like wearing safety glasses can prevent devastating eye injuries.

Sports enthusiasts should also take note. Activities like basketball, baseball, and racquet sports pose significant risks to the eyes. Wearing sports goggles or protective eyewear can prevent traumatic eye injuries and potential vision loss.

This awareness month also serves as a reminder for everyone, regardless of whether they wear contact lenses, to schedule regular comprehensive eye exams. These check-ups can detect early signs of eye diseases and ensure your vision prescription is up to date.

As we navigate through Contact Lens and Eye Injury Prevention Month, let's commit to making eye safety a year-round priority. By adopting proper contact lens care habits, using appropriate eye protection, and staying vigilant about potential eye hazards, we can significantly reduce the risk of eye injuries and maintain healthy vision for years to come.

Remember, your eyes are windows to the world – treat them with the care and respect they deserve. Whether you're a contact lens wearer or not, take this month as an opportunity to reassess your eye care routine and make any necessary improvements. Your future self will thank you for the gift of clear, healthy vision.



BRADLEY MIDDAGH, O.D.
Optometric Physician

Dr. Bradley Middaugh is a board-certified optometric physician committed to providing his patients the highest level of care through innovative technology and a focus on providing an excellent patient experience. Dr. Middaugh has extensive training in ocular disease, vision testing, eyewear prescriptions, specialty contact lenses and the diagnosis and treatment of eye disorders for patients of all ages, from pediatric to geriatric.

Dr. Middaugh graduated from Wake Forest University and earned his doctorate at The University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has been in private practice since 1988 and founded The Fort Myers Eye Center in 1993. In 2020, he joined the Center For Sight team to offer his patients direct access to the some of the finest cataract, LASIK, glaucoma, cornea, retina, and oculo-plastics specialists in Southwest Florida.

Dr. Middaugh has served on the Lee County School Board as a member of the Health Care Advisory Panel and the Early Intervention Health Care Panel. He is also an active member of the Southwest Florida Optometric Association, the Florida Optometric Association, and the American Optometric Association, and Above Board Chamber. In addition, he enjoys leading Medical Mission teams annually to El Salvador.

Dr. Middaugh and his wife, Meg, enjoy raising their two boys. The family is very active in their church, Walk to Emmaus, Kairos Prison Ministry, and enjoy serving on medical mission teams.

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ELEVATING FOOT HEALTH THROUGH PHYSICAL THERAPY

By Patrick Bartholomew Jr., DPM, AACFAS

October is National Physical Therapy Month, a time to recognize the vital role physical therapists play in improving mobility and quality of life. As a podiatrist, I've seen how physical therapy significantly enhances patient outcomes for foot and ankle conditions. The collaboration between podiatrists and physical therapists creates a holistic approach to foot care, benefiting patients through rehabilitation, pain management, and prevention.

The Role of Physical Therapy in Foot Health

Physical therapy is crucial in treating many foot and ankle issues. It offers non-invasive relief, improving function and reducing the need for surgery. As a podiatrist, I often see how physical therapy can complement medical and surgical interventions to enhance recovery. Here are some conditions where physical therapy plays a key role:

- 1. Plantar Fasciitis:** A common cause of heel pain, it is treated with stretching exercises, manual therapy, and strengthening routines. Physical therapists address the biomechanics, providing relief and restoring function.
- 2. Achilles Tendonitis:** Stretching and strengthening exercises for the calf and Achilles tendon are central to physical therapy, reducing pain and promoting long-term healing.
- 3. Ankle Sprains:** Repeated sprains can lead to chronic instability. Physical therapy focuses on restoring balance, strength, and range of motion to prevent future injuries.
- 4. Post-Surgical Rehabilitation:** After surgeries for bunions, hammertoes, or other foot deformities, physical therapy helps patients regain strength, flexibility, and proper walking patterns.
- 5. Flat Feet and Overpronation:** Physical therapy strengthens the arch muscles and corrects gait, preventing complications such as shin splints or knee pain.



Enhancing Mobility and Quality of Life

One of the most valuable contributions of physical therapy is improving patient mobility. Many patients struggle with walking or standing due to foot and ankle conditions, and physical therapy offers solutions that help them regain these abilities. Recently, I treated a patient with chronic plantar fasciitis who had tried rest and over-the-counter remedies without success. After I recommended physical therapy, she followed a program of targeted exercises and manual therapy. Within weeks, her pain diminished, and she was able to return to daily activities, such as walking her dog, with ease.

This case exemplifies how physical therapy, combined with a proper podiatric diagnosis, can address the root causes of pain rather than merely managing symptoms.

Collaboration Between Podiatrists and Physical Therapists

A strong partnership between podiatrists and physical therapists is essential for optimal patient care. While podiatrists diagnose and treat conditions, physical therapists implement rehabilitation strategies that ensure long-term success. This collaboration is especially important for non-surgical treatments of chronic conditions, such as arthritis, or for post-surgical recovery.

At Family Foot & Leg Centers, we take a comprehensive approach to foot health by offering in-office physical therapy, specifically focused on treating foot and ankle conditions. Our physical therapists specialize in foot health and work closely with our podiatrists to create personalized treatment plans for each patient. This unique collaboration allows us to provide seamless care, ensuring faster recovery, improved mobility, and long-term

relief from foot and ankle pain. By having physical therapy integrated into our practice, we can offer the most effective solutions to help our patients maintain healthy, pain-free feet.

Preventative Care Through Physical Therapy

Our specialized physical therapists focus on proactive strategies to prevent future foot and ankle injuries. They guide patients through targeted exercises designed to improve flexibility, strength, and balance. For instance, patients prone to ankle sprains benefit from balance training, while those with flat feet engage in exercises to strengthen their arch muscles. This preventative approach helps patients avoid many common foot problems before they even begin.

While podiatrists typically see patients once pain or injury has occurred, our collaborative approach with physical therapists empowers patients to take charge of their foot health early on, reducing the likelihood of future issues.

If you're experiencing foot or ankle pain, don't wait for it to worsen. Our expert team of podiatrists and in-office physical therapists are here to provide comprehensive care and personalized treatment plans to get you back on your feet. Whether it's an injury, chronic condition, or discomfort affecting your daily life, we have the expertise to help. Schedule an appointment with us today and take the first step toward pain relief and better foot health!

Patrick Bartholomew Jr., DPM, AACFAS

Dr. Bartholomew works at Family Foot & Leg Center at the Cape Coral office. He is accepting new patients.

To make an appointment, call 239-430-3668 or visit www.NaplesPodiatrist.com.



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UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF LONGEVITY: Our Guide To Creating Your Own Blue Zone

Did you know that Bonita Springs is located within a certified Blue Zone? These rare pockets around the world are where people live the longest, healthiest lives, often reaching 100 years or more.

But what's their secret? It's not just luck or genetics – it's a unique combination of lifestyle factors that promote longevity and well-being. The good news is, you don't have to live in a far-off land to experience the benefits of Blue Zone living. You can bring those healthy lifestyle practices into your life!

In this guide, we'll uncover the secrets of the Blue Zones, exploring the diet, habits and mindset that contribute to a longer, healthier, and more fulfilling life.

We'll show you how to personalize these principles to fit your unique needs and preferences and explain how The Terraces at Bonita Springs can support you on your journey to optimal well-being.

Embrace the Blue Zone Rhythm: Simple Habits for a Vibrant Life

In the world's Blue Zones, daily routines are anything but routine. They're filled with movement, laughter, connection and purpose. You can embrace this rhythm, too, with a few simple habits:

Move Naturally

Those who live in the Blue Zone stay active by incorporating movement into their daily lives. Think gardening, walking with friends, dancing, or even just taking the stairs. Find activities you enjoy that get your body moving.

Connect Deeply

Strong social ties are a cornerstone of Blue Zone living. Whether it's sharing meals with loved ones, volunteering in the community, joining a club, or simply enjoying a lively conversation, connection is key. Prioritize spending time with people who uplift and inspire you.

De-Stress Daily

While a little stress is normal, chronic stress can take a toll on our health. Individuals in Blue Zones have mastered the art of relaxation, whether it's through meditation, prayer, spending time in nature, or enjoying hobbies. Find what helps you unwind and make it a part of your daily routine.



Find Your Purpose

People living in Blue Zones often have a strong sense of purpose that fuels their days. It could be volunteering, mentoring, pursuing a passion project, or simply enjoying time with family. Explore your interests and discover what brings you joy and fulfillment.

Embrace a *Blue Zone-Inspired* Lifestyle at The Terraces at Bonita Spring

At The Terraces at Bonita Springs, we understand the power of these habits and have designed our community to make them easy and enjoyable to embrace.

Our Mediterranean-inspired architecture blurs the lines between indoors and out, encouraging natural movement and connection with nature, and our monthly activity calendar is packed with opportunities for learning, exploring new hobbies, and deepening social bonds.

Savor the Flavors of Longevity: Your Guide to the Blue Zone Diet

Imagine a diet that doesn't feel like a diet at all – a way of eating that's not just about restriction, but about savoring vibrant flavors, nourishing your body, and celebrating life's simple pleasures. That's the essence of the Blue Zone diet.

Rooted in the traditional eating patterns of the world's longest-living communities, the Blue Zone diet is a plant-based approach that emphasizes whole, unprocessed foods, with a focus on:

Vibrant Vegetables and Fruits

Fill your plate with a rainbow of colorful produce. Think leafy greens, tomatoes, berries, melons, and everything in between. These nutrient-packed powerhouses are loaded with antioxidants, vitamins and minerals that support overall health and vitality.

Whole Grains

Swap refined grains for hearty whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, oats, and whole-wheat bread. These complex carbohydrates provide sustained energy, fiber, and essential nutrients.

Legumes

Lentils, chickpeas, beans and peas are protein-packed staples of the Blue Zone diet. They're also excellent sources of fiber, which promotes digestive health and helps you feel full and satisfied.

Nuts and Seeds

A handful of nuts or seeds a day can provide a healthy dose of protein, fiber, and heart-healthy fats. Almonds, walnuts, chia seeds, and flaxseeds are all great choices.

Healthy Fats

Olive oil, avocados, and fatty fish like salmon are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for brain health, heart health, and reducing inflammation.

Wine (in Moderation)

Blue Zone residents often enjoy a glass of wine with meals. It's thought that the antioxidants in wine, particularly resveratrol in red wine, may contribute to longevity.

Open the Door to More Open House Wednesday, October 23 3 p.m.

Join us for happy hour and a discussion to discover the convenience and benefits of our boutique Life Plan Community, including:

- Enhanced services, programming, activities, chef-prepared meals, and amenities
- Long-term care protection for life with our Type A LifeCare contract
- Maintenance-free living in an elegant residence
- Everything under one roof

Cocktails and appetizers will be served.
Space is limited. Valet parking will be available.
Please RSVP by Wednesday, October 16.

Are you interested in learning more about The Terraces at Bonita Springs?

Schedule a community tour today by calling 239-204-3469 or take a virtual tour right now! Please join us for our next event!

The Terraces
at Bonita Springs
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Experience a *Blue Zone-Inspired* Diet at The Terraces

At The Terraces at Bonita Springs, we've embraced the Blue Zone diet philosophy, creating a dining experience that nourishes your body and delights your taste buds. Our executive chef and culinary team craft an ever-changing menu inspired by the

Mediterranean, using only the freshest seasonal ingredients.

Whether you're enjoying a complimentary fresh fruit with your morning coffee, savoring a light lunch at our casual bistro, or indulging in a four-course dinner with friends and family, you can trust that every meal is thoughtfully prepared with your well-being in mind. Explore a sample menu to discover how delicious healthy eating can be.

Your Blue Zone, Your Way: Personalizing for Your Unique Needs

The beauty of the Blue Zone lifestyle is its adaptability. It's not a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather a framework that can be tailored to your individual needs, preferences, and health conditions. Here are some tips for creating your own Blue Zone:

- **Listen to your body:** Pay attention to how different foods and activities make you feel. Notice what energizes you and what drains you. Use this awareness to guide your choices.
- **Start small:** Don't feel pressured to overhaul your entire lifestyle overnight. Begin with small, manageable changes. Maybe it's adding a few more vegetables to your plate, taking a short walk each day, or finding a new social activity to enjoy.
- **Find what works for you:** There's no single "right" way to embrace the Blue Zone lifestyle. Experiment with different activities, recipes and routines until you find what fits your unique personality and lifestyle.
- **Seek support:** Don't be afraid to ask for help. Talk to your doctor about any health concerns, consult a registered dietitian for personalized nutrition advice, or join a group fitness class to stay motivated.

At The Terraces at Bonita Springs, our Vitality Program is dedicated to helping you create a personalized plan for well-being. We offer a variety of resources, including:

- **Individualized wellness assessments:** Our team will work with you to assess your current health status, goals and preferences.
- **Personalized nutrition:** Our registered dietitian can help you create a meal plan that aligns with your dietary needs and taste buds.
- **Customized fitness programs:** Our fitness experts can design a workout routine that matches your fitness level and interests.
- **Ongoing support and guidance:** We're here to cheer you on, offer encouragement, and help you stay on track.

Ready to create your own Blue Zone-Inspired Life at The Terraces?
Call 239-204-3469 or contact us online to schedule a personalized visit.



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MEMORY MATTERS

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

Do you or someone you know experience times when you do not enjoy activities or interests as much as you have in the past? Have you had sleep disturbances, difficulty concentrating or feelings of low energy and fatigue?

While it is important not to assume what is happening, sometimes these can be symptoms of depression or even early memory concerns. How do you know what is causing your feelings? What are some of the signs to look for?

If you are having some of the symptoms noted, it is very important for you to see your health care provider. Take notes on when you are having these concerns. There are many things that may need to be addressed from a health perspective, and consulting with your provider is step one. Sometimes the signs of depression can look like some of the early symptoms of Alzheimer's or another dementia. Guessing about what is going on or consulting "Dr. Google" is not the most effective approaches.

In 2024, October 10th is National Depression screening day. There are simple and quick tools your health care provider can use to identify if your symptoms are due to depression. As the National Institute of Aging notes, depression can impact the way you think, feel and act. While depression can occur as we age, it is not a normal part of aging. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) reports that between 1 – 5 % of adults in the general community may be depressed. The numbers rise for older adults who are hospitalized to around 11.5% and the impact is even greater for older adults who need home health care, or around 13.5%. There are a number of potential causes and risk factors for depression as we age. Chronic medical conditions, decreased mobility and functional ability, and chronic pain can all be contributing factors. Social isolation, loneliness, and stress, including caregiver stress, are also risk factors.

Here are some common signs of depression. Persistent sadness, feelings of guilt and/or worthlessness, changes in appetite and recurring thoughts of death are examples of symptoms that should be checked out. Additional signs include apathy, lack of interest in activities or events that were previously



enjoyed, fatigue, low energy, irritability, difficulty concentrating, and slower speech or movement. The last seven symptoms may also be early signs of Alzheimer's or another dementia. Since symptoms can overlap, it's essential to be screened to know the difference.

Can people with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, also have depression? According to the Alzheimer's Association, it is estimated that up to 40% of individuals with Alzheimer's disease also have depression. As you can imagine, identifying depression in someone with Alzheimer's disease can be difficult. As outlined earlier, there is some overlap in symptoms.

What are the reasons that people do not choose to get a screening for depression? Interestingly, those reasons are similar to why people choose not to get screened for memory issues. The perceived stigma of mental health issues, as well as memory issues, can prevent people from seeking out diagnostic testing. Addressing the stigma of depression and dementia have some common approaches.

- Talk openly about the topic, be it memory loss or depression. These are medical issues not shameful conditions
- Use person centered, positive language such as a person living with dementia or depression instead of someone "suffering" from dementia or a "depressive" or depressed person
- Respond to misperceptions and misunderstandings with facts and credible resources, such as The Alzheimer's Association www.alz.org and The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) <https://www.nami.org/home>

Last month, I introduced you to Lee Belanger, who is currently living with Alzheimer's disease and is participating in a clinical trial at NPRC. I wanted to know her perspective on the barriers to getting screened, and this was her response:

"Denial and fear can get in the way. People can be afraid of receiving a diagnosis, and also may worry about possibly losing independence and control over personal decisions. Sometimes, people may know there is something wrong, but refuse to tell anyone, including their spouse or partner, their closest friend and/or their health care practitioner."

If you are worried about changes in your memory, mood and/or others are noticing changes, it's essential to contact your primary care provider for a health assessment. There are simple depression screenings that can be conducted in your health care provider's office. If you are concerned about your memory, connect with the experienced team at the Neuropsychiatric Research center at 239-939-7777. We have a proven track record of helping individuals and families navigate memory related challenges. Remember, you're not alone on this journey. **#MemoriesMatter.**



Contact NPRC at 239-939-7777
today for your free memory screen.

HEARING AND MEMORY LOSS ARE CONNECTED

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



Hearing Loss Affects the Brain

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

Brain Strain and Social Isolation

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

Quantifying Hearing Loss's Impact

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

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

Reducing the Risk of Dementia

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

Other Effects on Health

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

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

In Summary

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

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



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

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ALIGNMENT MATTERS: RECOVER AND RALLY

By Shannon Willits, Master Pilates Educator

As pickleball's popularity soars, so does the risk of injuries. With sudden pivots leading to sprains or repetitive swings causing strains, the physical demands of pickleball are catching many players off guard. Although the sport is exciting, Pickleball often pushes players—especially older adults—beyond their limits without them realizing it until injury strikes.

In 2023, Pickleball injuries generated more than \$350 million in medical costs. According to a *Journal of Emergency Medicine* study, analysts predicted more than 66,750 emergency department visits and 366,000 outpatient visits linked to pickleball injuries. The most frequently reported injuries include sprains, strains, and fractures, with adults aged 50 years and older accounting for 90% of cases.¹

Among these injuries are knee issues, which affect an estimated 20-30% of players. These are often due to the rapid starts and lateral movements integral to the game. Pre-existing conditions like arthritis frequently exacerbate these injuries.^{2,3} Shoulder problems, particularly rotator cuff injuries and tendonitis, account for around 15-20% of pickleball-related physical therapy cases, largely driven by repetitive overhead actions like serving.^{4,3}

Wrist injuries, primarily from bracing falls or overuse, impact roughly 10% of players, while ankle sprains, resulting from quick directional changes, represent 12-18% of reported injuries.^{4,2} Another common ailment is tennis elbow, which affects 10-15% of players and is often caused by repetitive forearm swings.³

For those recovering from such setbacks, a balanced, low-impact exercise regimen like Pilates is crucial. Known for its emphasis on core strength, flexibility, and body alignment, Pilates complements physical therapy and improves athletic performance.

Why Pilates is Ideal After Physical Therapy

Healing is not linear. Physical therapy often lacks the time to incorporate full-body movement, making post-rehabilitation a challenging phase for maintaining and recovering progress. Pilates offers controlled movements, breathing coaching, and alignment, essential for injury recovery. Additionally, Pilates strengthens muscles without additional stress on the joints and can be tailored to specific recovery needs, like enhancing shoulder stability for a player recovering from a rotator cuff injury.

Core Strength and Stability

Core strength is essential for pickleball, supporting nearly every movement on the court, from serving to quick lateral movements. A strong core enhances balance, improves posture, and facilitates more powerful and controlled shots. Continuing to build core strength post-therapy is important. Pilates exercises like the plank, pelvic curls, and the hundreds engage the deep abdominal muscles, obliques, and lower back, providing a stable base for athletic movements and protecting against common injuries such as lower back strain.

Flexibility and Range of Motion

Flexibility is important for optimal pickleball performance. A limited range of motion can affect a player's ability to reach for shots, serve effectively, or move swiftly across the court. Pilates emphasizes muscle lengthening alongside strengthening, which enhances flexibility. Exercises like spine stretches, leg circles, and quad stretches increase flexibility in key areas like the spine, hips, and legs. This not only aids players in moving more freely but can also improve their range of motion post-injury, such as recovery from knee or hip issues.

Improved Body Awareness and Alignment

A fundamental principle of Pilates is the emphasis on body awareness and alignment. Understanding and ensuring proper movement alignment is crucial for injury prevention. Post-therapy, athletes can develop compensatory movement patterns to protect injured areas, potentially leading to new issues. Pilates corrects these patterns by reinforcing proper alignment and balanced muscle use, reducing future injury risks.

Enhanced Balance and Coordination

Balance and coordination are critical in pickleball, especially for players recovering from injuries. Pilates exercises often incorporate balance challenges that enhance stability and coordination, essential for the quick lateral movements and direction changes in pickleball. Improved proprioception helps players maintain balance during dynamic movements, reducing the likelihood of falls or missteps.

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Breath Control and Endurance

Breathing is a core component of Pilates, emphasizing deep, controlled breaths that reduce tension, improve concentration, and increase oxygen flow to muscles. For pickleball players, efficient breathing not only helps in recovery but also improves endurance on the court. Pilates teaches players to coordinate breath with movement, keeping the body energized and focused even during extended play.

Long-Term Injury Prevention

One of the most significant benefits of integrating Pilates into a post-physical therapy routine is its role in long-term injury prevention. Pilates strengthens muscles around vulnerable joints, improves flexibility, and enhances overall body mechanics. This comprehensive approach reduces the likelihood of re-injury and helps players maintain their physical health over time.

For pickleball players, this means fewer setbacks due to injuries and the ability to enjoy the sport for years more. Whether dealing with shoulder, knee, or back issues, Pilates offers a safe, effective way to keep the body strong, flexible, and resilient, ensuring optimal performance.

Maximize Your Recovery with Pilates

Pilates is indispensable for pickleball players who have completed physical therapy and wish to maintain and build upon their recovery. With its focus on core strength, flexibility, alignment, and injury prevention, Pilates provides a well-rounded approach that supports overall athletic performance and long-term health. By integrating Pilates into their regular fitness routine, players can enhance their game, reduce the risk of injury, and continue enjoying Pickleball.

Shannon Willits, Master Pilates Educator

Shannon is a Master Pilates Educator and owner of 4 local Club Pilates studios. As a career Pilates instructor and functional movement specialist, Shannon has mastered the science and art of her craft. She shares her knowledge by certifying aspiring Pilates instructors. Shannon's unique approach to developing an apprenticeship has led to the establishment of the Southwest Florida Pilates Academy. She holds prestigious certifications in STOTT Pilates and Gyrotonic® Method, completed a fellowship in Applied Functional Science (FAFS), and is a Functional Golf Specialist.

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Hormonal Imbalance and Its Effect on Skin Health

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

The skin is no unsubstantial organ. In fact, it's the body's largest and a significant defender from outside contagions. Beyond the protection it offers your body, the skin also offers a unique ability for you to gauge your internal health purely by looking at it.

However, with an organ so large, many things can affect it, one of which is your hormones or, more accurately, an imbalance in them.

Hormonal Imbalance

Much as the name suggests, a hormonal imbalance occurs when your hormones are no longer balanced, either because a hormone is secreted too much or too little.

Hormonal imbalance can be disastrous for your well-being because your hormones regulate many different processes in the body, including your development, metabolism, and reproduction. So, if you're producing too much or too little hormones, it can also affect these processes.

Some of the impacts of hormonal imbalance include primary ovarian insufficiency, early menopause, and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) in women, and prostate cancer in men.

Symptoms of Hormonal Imbalance

While the symptoms of hormonal imbalance can vary based on the hormone out of balance, some of the general symptoms of hormonal imbalance include:

- increased stomach issues
- sudden weight loss/gain
- weakness
- skin dryness
- fatigue
- body aches
- increased urination
- persistent thirst
- anxiety
- mood swings
- changes in appetite
- hair loss
- infertility

If you notice any of these symptoms, it's best to visit a doctor specializing in hormones to pinpoint the cause of the imbalance and correct it. Often, hormonal imbalance can be an indicator of an even bigger issue, and choosing to ignore the symptoms may cause life-threatening risks, which is why it is always recommended to address hormonal imbalances as soon as you notice them.

Luckily, hormonal imbalance can often manifest on your skin, helping you see if something is unbalanced internally. If you're aware of what to look for, and what skin conditions may be due to hormonal imbalances, you have the advantage of knowing when there is a need to look more closely into your hormone levels.

How Hormonal Imbalance Affects Your Skin

As we know, the skin is the largest organ in your body, so its health relies on many things. However, one of the most important components of your skin comes from the sebaceous glands under your skin that produce sebum, a natural oil secreted through the pores of your skin.

Sebum helps protect the skin from UV radiation, locks in moisture, and transports fat-soluble antioxidants to the surface of the skin, which can then help prevent oxidative skin damage.

However, as with all things, too much can be a problem. In fact, too much sebum production is often the cause of various skin issues like inflammation and acne. One reason for excess sebum production? An imbalance of androgen, or male sex hormones that are present in those of both genders.

Sebum is not the only important part of the skin, either. Your skin is composed of the protein collagen, which is a building block of your skin. It is collagen that helps to give your skin a youthful appearance, and when your collagen production is down, your skin may start to sag.

Estrogen, a female sex hormone, is crucial in producing collagen and helps keep your skin thick and hydrated. If your estrogen levels are low, such as the case with older women entering menopause, skin can become thinner and more sensitive.



It's not just those entering menopause who see these results of low estrogen, though. A survey found that 2 out of 5 women still getting a period each month report unusually sensitive skin before and during their menstruation, which is generally the time when estrogen levels drop. Many women also notice an increase in sebum production before and during their menstrual cycle, which can contribute to acne.

When we look at the effects of hormonal changes on the body, it's clear that hormonal imbalance can manifest in changes to your skin.

Hormonal Imbalance as Skin Manifestations

Let's take a look at the different skin imperfections that can result from hormonal imbalances.

Under Eye Dark Circles

The constant companion for college students staying up all night to study, under eye dark circles are a skin problem resulting most often from adrenal fatigue.

When you experience more stress, your body produces more of the stress hormone cortisol. However, excess cortisol production can cause poor sleep at night because it tends to make people feel restless. If you continually suffer from poor sleep, dark circles can appear around your eyes.

Furthermore, if you're suffering from low estrogen levels, the skin under your eyes can become thinner, which can make the darkness even more prominent.

Dry Skin

While common during the dry and cold winter months, dry skin can also occur to those with hormonal imbalances, specifically if hormones such as estrogen decline. This is because a reduction in estrogen can cause a decrease in sebum production. Sebum is essential for retaining moisture in your skin, so if your body is not producing enough sebum, it will not stay hydrated enough and can experience dryness, roughness, and flakiness.

In addition to estrogen, thyroid hormones also stimulate the oil glands, but instead of increasing sebum production, they reduce it. So, if you suffer from hyperthyroidism, or an overproduction of thyroid hormones, you may experience dry skin.

Acne

It can be frustrating to experience acne in your 20s and 30s, with most people assuming it is an affliction only for teenagers. However, hormones can significantly influence your body's sebum production, leading to acne, regardless of age.

For women, estrogen and progesterone, which are key players in your menstrual cycle, can increase the amount of sebum produced, clogging your skin's pores and leading to acne. As for men, an excessive amount of testosterone can also produce excess sebum.

For those experiencing acne due to hormonal imbalance, they most often appear on the chin, forehead, and nose.

Skin Tags

Skin tags are small skin-colored growths on the skin of your neck or eyelids, resulting from a compromise in your insulin and glucose hormonal balance. When these hormones start changing, estrogen can dramatically reduce, which affects your skin's elasticity and can cause overlapping in your skin layers. When these skin layers experience constant friction, skin tags can occur.

In general, skin tags are most often associated with metabolic syndrome, PCOS, and diabetes.

Pale or Yellow Skin

Hormonal imbalance can affect your blood vessels, making your skin appear pale and waxy. However, hormonal imbalance is not the only cause of this appearance, with liver failure also lending itself to pale or yellow skin. If you notice that your skin or eyes appear yellow, check in with a doctor to determine the cause.

Balancing Hormones and Regulating Skin Health

If your skin is suffering from imbalanced hormones in the form of dry, thin, sensitive, or pale skin, correcting the hormonal imbalance is the best way to address the root of the problem and see improvements in your skin as a result.

The following are some of the possibilities for correcting a hormonal imbalance:

Oral Contraceptives

Oral contraceptives can help correct hormonal imbalance in women and, in some cases, are prescribed to treat acne. Oral contraceptives help to target the hormones that peak at ovulation, which is generally when those experiencing hormonal acne may see an increase in breakouts. Oral contraceptives keep hormone levels more even, lessening breakouts.

However, oral contraceptives are not for everyone, with those with a history of breast cancer, high blood pressure, or blood clots potentially unfit for this treatment. Talk to your doctor to determine if this is an adequate treatment for your skin and hormonal needs.

Anti-Androgen Drugs

As discussed, high levels of androgens, such as testosterone, can increase sebum production in some people, increasing the odds of clogged pores and acne breakouts. Anti-androgen drugs help to keep androgens from rising too high, which can help manage skin issues.

Testosterone Replacement

On the opposite end of the spectrum are medications that help address low testosterone, including testosterone gels and patches. These therapies help to fight the decline in testosterone production seen in some in men.

Check Your Lifestyle

While medications and therapies can help with hormonal imbalance, it is also best to ensure your lifestyle reflects healthy habits aimed at keeping your hormones balanced. Some of these habits include:

- exercising regularly
- getting enough sleep each day
- having a balanced diet
- drinking enough water
- managing stress levels
- reducing alcohol consumption
- avoiding smoking

These habits help keep your hormone levels regular while also supporting healthy skin.

The Influence of Hormones on Your Skin

Hormones are chemical messengers used throughout your body, and one area they can impact is your skin. Stress hormones such as cortisol and sex hormones like estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone can all cause unwanted skin reactions if unbalanced, such as acne, dry skin, sagging skin, or increased sensitivity.

If you're noticing skin problems and can't determine their cause, it might be something more internal. Reach out to a hormone specialist to get a reading on your hormone levels, see if there is an imbalance, and devise a treatment plan to help restore the equilibrium that your entire body, including your skin, will benefit from.

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FGCU Enhancing the Lives of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Initiative Aims to Improve and Expand Resources Available

A new Florida Gulf Coast University initiative with a well-known name attached aims to help improve the quantity and quality of resources available to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

The Golisano Intellectual and Developmental Disability Initiative (GIDDI) was established in FGCU's Marieb College of Health & Human Services through funding by the Golisano Foundation. The foundation's other philanthropy in the region includes Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida and Golisano Children's Museum of Naples.

The Golisano initiative at FGCU positions the university as a regional conveyor of supports and services related to improving the lives of people with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) on campus and throughout Southwest Florida. It has already begun efforts to increase and amplify communication among the many regional agencies serving intellectually and developmentally disabled individuals of all ages.

The initiative also seeks to identify needs for supports and services for this population. The information gathering includes formal and informal conversations, "think tanks," community visits and surveys with caregivers as well as those living with IDD.

Once needs are identified, FGCU will work with area organizations to assist in building programming, services and infrastructure to improve the quality and amount of services and supports offered to those in need. These regional partners include LARC, God's Protected Harbor, STARability Foundation, Gigi's Playhouse and Special Olympics, as well as on-campus supports and student organizations such as FGCU R.I.S.E., Adaptive Services, Career Services, All Ability Sports and Recreation and Best Buddies.

Marieb College continues to build on its strong relationships with colleagues at Lee Health, as well as the expansive medical community found in Rochester, New York, where the headquarters of the Golisano Foundation is located.

What are intellectual and developmental disabilities?

Intellectual and developmental disabilities are usually present at birth and can affect an individual's physical, intellectual and/or emotional development. Many of these conditions affect multiple body systems, such as the nervous system, the senses and metabolism.

Developmental disabilities include diagnoses that result in impairments in physical, learning, language or behavior areas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recent estimates show that 1 in 6, or about 17%, of American children 3 to 17 years old have one or more developmental disabilities, such as autism or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. The CDC reports the incidence of children with IDD rose from 7.4% to 8.5% in recent years. Those with IDD are living longer, with many living well into older adulthood.

In Southwest Florida, 24,000 to 27,000 individuals live with IDD, based on 2023 census data, according to Ellen K. Donald, PT Ph.D. She is program director of Golisano Intellectual and Developmental Disability Initiative and assistant professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences in FGCU's Marieb College.

Individuals with IDD and their families face many challenges, Donald says. Barriers to maximizing their independence and success can include affordable housing, appropriate healthcare, learning opportunities beyond K-12 programs, recreation, employment, transportation and, simply, acceptance from the communities in which they live, she says.

The most common reasons for unmet need in healthcare are cost, accessibility and lack of appropriate providers, according to Donald.

"There are excellent programs and services available. There are just not enough of these resources in our rapidly growing Southwest Florida region," she says. "While these issues exist nationally, Southwest Florida is challenged by its relative 'youth' as well as the staggering costs and growth."

Cultivating a welcoming culture

The purpose of FGCU's Golisano Intellectual and Developmental Disability is threefold, according to Donald.

The first is to create a campus community that welcomes and includes individuals with IDD. Existing supports for students with disabilities will be enhanced by offering additional training and support for faculty and staff, as well as developing a culture of inclusion in the student population through engagement activities.

Secondly, faculty within Marieb College and the broader university community will work toward improving students' exposure and training so they graduate better equipped to work with, care for, educate and live alongside individuals with IDD. Students in many academic fields may interact with the IDD community as they pursue careers including social work, occupational therapy, special education, nursing, counseling and physical therapy.

Lastly, GIDDI will partner with on- and off-campus groups and agencies to provide continuing professional and community education related to IDD, as well as partner to develop new programs and services for those with IDD.

"We hope to contribute to a culture, both on and off campus, where those with disabilities and their families find FGCU and Southwest Florida a desirable place to live, play and learn."

For more information about the Golisano Intellectual and Developmental Disability Initiative or how to support it, visit fgcu.edu/moriebcollege/giddi.



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Date	Time	Location	Location Address
October 12	10:00 AM	Logical Insurance Solutions	2161 McGregor Blvd STE C, Ft Myers
October 15	4:30 PM	Pinchers Crab Shack	2360 W First St, Fort Myers, FL
October 17	4:30 PM	Perkins	103620 N Cleveland Ave, NFM
October 19	10:00 AM	Logical Insurance Solutions	2161 McGregor Blvd STE C, Ft Myers
October 22	4:30 PM	Perkins	103620 N Cleveland Ave, NFM
October 24	9:00 AM	Alliance of the Arts	10091 McGregor Ave, Ft Myers, FL
October 26	10:00 AM	Logical Insurance Solutions	2161 McGregor Blvd STE C, Ft Myers
October 29	4:30 PM	Pinchers Crab Shack	2360 W First St, Fort Myers, FL

Hormone Replacement Therapy & Breast Cancer: Risk or Hype?

By Dr. Doreen DeStefano, NHD, APRN, DNP

As we age, women will start to experience symptoms of hormonal imbalance, which is interconnected to perimenopause, menopause, post-menopause or reproductive conditions.

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) has been used for decades; however, it's well known that synthetic HRT leads to blood clots, heart disorders and breast cancer in women. Unfortunately, you won't often hear about this from your primary care physician or gynecologist. In fact, it's not uncommon for many physicians to prescribe HRT to women over 50 in the form of birth control to help regulate their heavy bleeding or spotting. Along with birth control there are other oral hormones such as estrogen, progesterone and testosterone that are widely available in patches, creams and pellets that have numerous adverse effects.

A study published in JAMA, entitled, Unopposed Estrogen Therapy and the Risk of Invasive Breast Cancer, sheds light on the dangers of synthetic unopposed hormones.

They concluded that, breast cancer risk increased with duration of unopposed estrogen use among longer-term users with the highest risk seen in cancers positive for estrogen receptor (ER+) and progesterone receptor (PR+). The study population was expanded every 2 years to include women who subsequently became postmenopausal and had a hysterectomy, so that 28 835 women were included in the final follow-up period (2000-2002). Estrogen use was assessed from self-reported data on biennial questionnaires. The main outcome was invasive breast cancer.

Bio-Identical Hormones—A Safer Option

Regulating hormones to create balance is important and women need options that do not cause harm. That is why many practitioners rely on bio-identical hormones, which are safer and more widely accepted by the body.

Hormone levels can be adjusted through bio-identical hormone therapy, which alleviates or in many cases, eliminates the associated symptoms and life fluctuations surrounding hormones. There are even studies now that suggest bio-identical hormones can help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and dementia.



In the U.S., bio-identical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT) has been used since the 1930s. And based on hundreds of current medically thorough studies, the results for patient's overall quality of life and dramatic changes in their hormonal symptoms are astounding.

BHRT is equal to our body's natural hormones on a molecular level. The difference between synthetic and identical hormones is that synthetic hormones do not match human hormones on a biological level.

Bio-identical hormones are made from plant sources and are readily received by the body as natural and normal. They are much more therapeutic and effective than synthetic hormonal substances.

Measuring BHRT for Women

The typical bio-identical hormone replacement therapy for women are Estrogens (Estradiol and Estradiol), Progesterone, Testosterone, and DHEA. These precise components of each woman's therapy need to be determined upon completion of a physical examination, medical history, and laboratory testing ordered by your doctor.

Progesterone for Women

Bio-identical progesterone provides the most efficient way to integrate with the body's natural progesterone receptors. This is critical because body receptors are structure specific. A few of the benefits from bio-identical progesterone are an increase in bone health, protection against breast cancer and endometrial growth, an antidepressant effect, controlling blood clotting, and increased libido.

Source: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/410252>

On the contrary, Progestin (synthetic) doesn't have quite as many benefits. In fact, it has more negative effects, like, miscarriages, weight gain, decreased sex drive, increased risk of breast cancer, high risk of fractures and osteoporosis, increased blood clotting risks, anxiety, depression, migraine headaches, and other health-related disorders.

Correct ratios and customized blends are critical
With personalized medicine, Bio-identical hormones can be compounded and made specifically for each patient's needs. Bio-identical estrogen and DHEA offers similar benefits.

*Creams are thought to be a safer choice than pellets since it can be better controlled.

Dr. DeStefano, of Root Causes Holistic Health & Medicine in Ft Myers, FL, incorporates IV & Chelation therapy with hyperbaric chamber sessions to combat multiple chronic conditions and disease states.



Doreen DeStefano, NHD, APRN, DNP

Dr. Doreen DeStefano holds a doctorate in natural health, an MPA in public business, MS (ABT) in criminal psychology, and a BS in exercise physiology and nursing. She

previously held an EMT certification. Dr. DeStefano has been practicing in natural health for over ten years. Her area of interest is healthy aging and prevention and resolution of chronic symptoms associated with aging. She believes that growing old should not mean breaking down.

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

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Breast Cancer Myths:

WHAT SENIORS NEED TO KNOW

Lisa Mattingly, M.D.

Breast cancer is a significant health concern, particularly for older women. As the second most common cancer among women, it's essential to understand the facts and dispel the myths that surround it. Read on to learn about common breast cancer myths so you know the facts.

Myth: If I Don't Have a Family History of Breast Cancer, I'm Safe

One of the most prevalent myths is that only women with a family history of breast cancer are at risk. While having a family history of breast cancer does increase the risk, most women diagnosed with breast cancer do not have a family history of the disease. According to the American Cancer Society, only about five to ten percent of breast cancer cases are linked to inherited genetic mutations. The truth is that every woman, especially as she ages, should be vigilant about breast cancer screening, regardless of family history.

Myth: Breast Cancer Only Affects Older Women

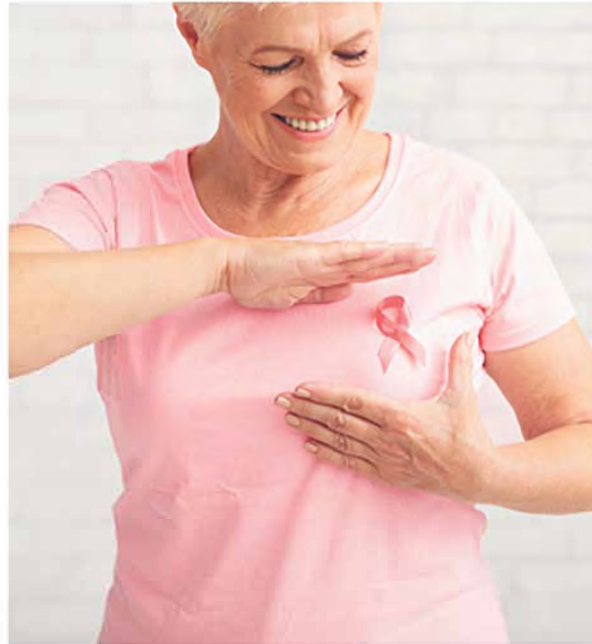
While age is a significant risk factor, breast cancer can occur at any age. However, the risk of breast cancer does increase with age. Women aged 40 and above should be particularly attentive to breast cancer screening recommendations. As women age, especially after 50, the frequency and necessity of screenings may increase due to the heightened risk.

Myth: Small Breasts Lower the Risk of Breast Cancer

The size of a woman's breasts does not determine her risk of developing breast cancer. This myth likely arises from the misconception that smaller breasts have less tissue to develop cancer. In reality, breast cancer occurs in the cells of the breast tissue, and all women, regardless of breast size, have breast tissue. Thus, the risk of breast cancer is present in all women.

Myth: Only Women Get Breast Cancer

While it's true that breast cancer is far more common in women, men can develop breast cancer too. Men have breast tissue, and although their risk is much lower, they are not immune.



Myth: A Lump is the Only Sign of Breast Cancer

A lump in the breast is one of the most common signs of breast cancer, but it's not the only one. Other symptoms can include changes in breast size or shape, dimpling of the skin, nipple discharge that isn't breast milk, and redness or scaling of the nipple or breast skin. Additionally, some women diagnosed with breast cancer may not have any noticeable symptoms, which is why regular breast cancer screening is so vital, especially as you age.

Myth: Mammograms Cause Cancer

Some fear that the radiation exposure from mammograms can increase the risk of breast cancer. However, the level of radiation used in a mammogram is extremely low. The American Cancer Society emphasizes that the small amount of radiation exposure from a mammogram does not significantly increase breast cancer risk.

Myth: If You've Been Diagnosed With Breast Cancer, It's a Death Sentence

Thanks to advances in medical technology, treatment options, and early detection, being diagnosed with breast cancer is not an automatic death sentence. Many women live long, healthy lives after breast cancer treatment. The survival rates for breast cancer have improved significantly over the years, especially when the cancer is caught early.

Myth: Antiperspirants and Bras Can Increase Breast Cancer Risk

There's no scientific evidence that antiperspirants or bras cause breast cancer. These myths have circulated widely, but extensive research has found no link between wearing a bra, especially underwire bras, or using antiperspirants and an increased risk of breast cancer.

Myth: Healthy Lifestyle Completely Eliminates the Risk of Breast Cancer

While maintaining a healthy lifestyle can reduce your risk of breast cancer, it does not entirely eliminate it. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and limiting alcohol intake can indeed lower the risk, but they cannot guarantee immunity.

Myth: Breast Cancer Always Requires a Mastectomy

A mastectomy, or the removal of the entire breast, is not the only treatment option for breast cancer. Depending on the stage and type of cancer, many women may be eligible for a lumpectomy, which removes only the tumor and some surrounding tissue. This option is often followed by radiation therapy. The treatment plan for breast cancer is highly individualized and should be discussed thoroughly with a healthcare provider.

Understanding the facts about breast cancer is crucial, especially for seniors who are at an increased risk due to age. Dispelling common myths can help you make informed decisions about your health. Schedule an appointment with your local VIPcare provider to discuss your breast cancer risk and the proactive steps you should be taking. Call 239-747-7202.

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Pain, Dryness & Irritation: How Women Are Rejuvenating Their Lives

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

Who doesn't want to feel better and more confident about their sexual health? Many women try to hide their condition from their partner, or suffer in silence because they believe it's "normal" for them. That couldn't be further from the truth. Whether your pain is caused by endometriosis, pelvic conditions, vulvovaginal atrophy, hormonal dysfunction, or from medications, there are answers.

Female Sexual Dissatisfaction Has Many Causes

Natural processes like aging, childbirth and menopause can have deleterious effects on a woman's sexual well-being and sensations. Since we all tend to avoid anything that doesn't feel good, a woman's sexual desires and success in achieving them are inversely related to the atrophy and scarring in the vaginal canal that these life-events can create, like tearing of the vagina during childbirth, dryness of the vaginal tissues after menopause, and the laxity of the vagina causing decreased sexual sensation. Sexual satisfaction can be negatively impacted by hormonal changes after menopause, but many women cannot take vaginal estrogens or do not find this treatment to be effective or convenient enough. This is where laser energy comes in: CO2 laser energy has been proven to regrow normal collagen (a necessary protein found in all of our organs) in the vaginal and vulvar tissues leading to improved "accommodation" and "stretchiness" of the vagina which in turn leads to greater sexual satisfaction and lubrication and a decrease in discomfort during and after sex.

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- 91% reported an improvement in dryness

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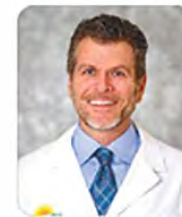
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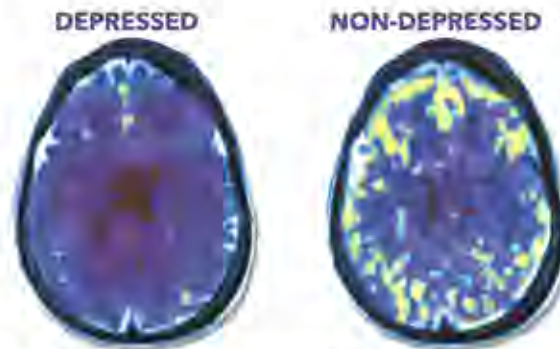
In a significant development for mental health treatment, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has expanded the approval of NeuroStar Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) therapy to include patients aged 15 and up for the treatment of major depressive disorder (MDD). This groundbreaking decision marks a crucial step forward in addressing the growing concern of adolescent depression while continuing to provide effective treatment options for adults.

NeuroStar TMS, developed by Neuronetics, Inc., is a non-invasive treatment that uses magnetic fields to stimulate specific areas of the brain associated with mood regulation. The therapy has been FDA-approved for adult depression since 2008, but this recent expansion to include younger patients opens up new possibilities for treating depression in adolescents who may not have responded well to traditional treatments.

The decision to extend the approval to patients as young as 15 comes after rigorous clinical trials demonstrated the safety and efficacy of NeuroStar TMS in adolescent populations. These studies showed promising results, with many young patients experiencing significant improvement in their depressive symptoms and overall quality of life.

Depression among teenagers has been on the rise in recent years, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the issue. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, an estimated 3.8 million adolescents aged 12-17 in the United States had at least one major depressive episode in 2021. The approval of NeuroStar TMS for this age group provides a much-needed alternative for those who have not found relief through traditional treatments such as psychotherapy and medication.

One of the key advantages of NeuroStar TMS is its non-invasive nature and relatively mild side effect profile compared to some pharmaceutical interventions. The treatment involves the patient sitting comfortably in a chair while a magnetic coil is placed against their head. The coil delivers magnetic pulses to stimulate nerve cells in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, an area of the brain



PET scan images show adult brain activity.
Source: Mark George, MD, Biological Psychiatry Branch, Division of Intramural Research Programs, NIMH 1993.

involved in mood regulation. Each session typically lasts about 20-30 minutes, and a full course of treatment usually consists of 5 sessions per week for 4-6 weeks.

Parents and healthcare providers alike have expressed enthusiasm about this new option for adolescent depression treatment. Dr. Sarah Thompson, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, commented, "Having NeuroStar TMS available for our younger patients is a game-changer. It offers hope to those who haven't responded well to other treatments and can be a crucial tool in preventing the long-term impacts of untreated depression in adolescents."

The expansion of NeuroStar TMS to younger age groups also highlights the importance of early intervention in mental health treatment. Addressing depression in adolescence can potentially prevent more severe mental health issues in adulthood and improve overall life outcomes. By offering an effective treatment option earlier in life, healthcare providers can help set young patients on a path toward better mental health and well-being.

However, it's important to note that while NeuroStar TMS has shown promising results, it is not a one-size-fits-all solution. The treatment is typically recommended for patients who have not achieved satisfactory improvement from antidepressant medications. As with any medical treatment, the decision to use NeuroStar TMS should be made in consultation with a qualified healthcare provider, taking into account the individual patient's medical history, symptoms, and overall treatment plan.

The approval of NeuroStar TMS for ages 15 and up also underscores the evolving landscape of mental health treatment. As our understanding of the brain and its functions continues to grow, new technologies and approaches are being developed to address mental health disorders more effectively. This progress offers hope to millions of people struggling with depression and other mental health conditions.

As the medical community continues to embrace innovative treatments like NeuroStar TMS, it's likely that we'll see further advancements in the field of mental health care. The expansion of this treatment to younger age groups is just one step in the ongoing effort to improve mental health outcomes for people of all ages.

In conclusion, the FDA's approval of NeuroStar TMS for patients aged 15 and up represents a significant milestone in the treatment of depression. By offering a non-invasive, effective option for both adolescents and adults, this therapy has the potential to transform lives and contribute to better mental health outcomes for millions of individuals struggling with depression. As research continues and technology advances, we can look forward to even more innovative and effective treatments in the future, bringing hope to those affected by mental health disorders.

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Examining Long-Term Care Options in Florida: Medicaid Waiver, ICP Medicaid, and PACE

By Carl Zacharia

After working as an elder law attorney for many years, I can honestly say that I am still surprised by the number of people who are unaware of the long-term care options available to them. Unfortunately, this particular topic is usually not on someone's radar until they are faced with making a care decision for themselves or a loved one, and then it becomes overwhelming. I am often asked about the programs available to help seniors and individuals with disabilities access the care they need. In this article, we'll explore three key options: Medicaid Waiver, ICP Medicaid, and the PACE program, with a special focus on the latter and its local provider, Hope PACE. This article does not outline every available option, but instead focuses on benefit programs that will pay, or help to pay, for long term care through Medicaid.

Medicaid Waiver

The Medicaid Waiver program, also known as the State-wide Medicaid Managed Care Long-Term Care Program (SMMC LTC), is designed to provide home and community-based services to eligible individuals who would otherwise require nursing facility care. This program allows recipients to receive care in their homes or communities, often delaying or preventing the need for institutional care. Eligibility for this program is based on both financial criteria and the level of care needed.

Key features of the Medicaid Waiver program include:

- Personal care services
- Home health aide services
- Homemaker services
- Adult day care
- Respite care
- Medical equipment and supplies

ICP Medicaid

Institutional Care Program (ICP) Medicaid is designed for individuals who require long-term care in a nursing home setting. This program covers the cost of nursing home care for eligible individuals who meet both financial and medical criteria.

ICP Medicaid provides:

- Nursing home care
- Physician services
- Hospital services
- Prescription drugs

While ICP Medicaid is essential for those who require intensive, round-the-clock care, many seniors prefer to avoid or delay nursing home placement if possible.

PACE Programs

The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) is an innovative model that provides comprehensive medical and social services to certain frail, elderly individuals who qualify for nursing home care but wish to remain in their communities. PACE represents a shift towards more integrated, person-centered care that aims to keep seniors independent for as long as possible.

Key aspects of PACE include:

- Comprehensive medical care
- Social services
- In-home care and support
- Adult day care
- Transportation to medical appointments
- Prescription drug coverage
- Therapy services (physical, occupational, and speech)
- Meals and nutritional counseling
- Recreational and social activities

One of the most significant advantages of PACE is its all-inclusive nature. Unlike traditional fee-for-service models, PACE providers receive a set amount per participant to provide all needed care. This incentivizes keeping participants healthy, and in the community, rather than in costly institutional settings.

Hope PACE: Our Local PACE Provider

In our area, Hope PACE is the designated provider for the PACE program. Hope PACE has established a strong reputation for delivering high-quality, compassionate care to eligible seniors in the community.

Hope PACE offers:

1. **A team-based approach:** Each participant works with a dedicated team of healthcare professionals who collaborate to provide personalized care.
2. **PACE Center:** A central location where participants can receive medical care, participate in social activities, and enjoy nutritious meals.
3. **In-home services:** For those who need assistance at home, Hope PACE provides necessary services to help maintain independence.
4. **Flexibility:** Care plans are regularly reviewed and adjusted based on the changing needs of each participant.
5. **Family support:** Hope PACE recognizes the importance of family caregivers and provides education and support to help them in their roles.

To be eligible for Hope PACE, individuals must:

- Be 55 years or older
- Live in the service area
- Be certified by the state as needing a nursing home level of care
- Be able to live safely in the community with PACE support

It's important to note that while enrolled in PACE, participants agree to receive all their health care services through the PACE organization, except in emergencies.

Choosing the Right Option

Deciding between Medicaid Waiver, ICP Medicaid, and PACE depends on individual circumstances, including:

- Level of care needed
- Desire to remain in the community
- Family support system
- Financial situation

As someone who is familiar with all of the different options, I recommend thoroughly exploring all of them and consulting with an elder law attorney, healthcare providers and family members before making a decision.

For many seniors in our area, Hope PACE offers an excellent balance of comprehensive care and community living. It's worth considering for those who qualify and wish to maintain their independence while receiving all-inclusive care.

Remember, the goal of all these programs is to ensure that seniors and individuals with disabilities receive the care they need in the most appropriate and least restrictive setting possible. Whether through Medicaid Waiver, ICP Medicaid, or PACE, Florida offers several great options to support our aging population and their caregivers.

For more information on long term care and estate planning issues, contact Zacharia Brown's Bonita Spring office at 239.345.4545



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KIDNEY CANCER: Are You at Risk?

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Treatment

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

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

Associates in Nephrology

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

Chronic Kidney Disease Program

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

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

Source:

1. https://www.nfcr.org/cancer-types/kidney-cancer/?gclid=CjwKCAIAYc2BBhAaEiwA44-wW9qTM7gXbIKsBU1ldxNN-rM7OKwmG3j43bZni6h175MIIQCzwNsKORoCE5QQAvD_BwE

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

Services Provided

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

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

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

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Don't Let Dental Anxiety Keep You Away from the Dentist

In 2024 with all of the advances in dentistry, any people still have anxiety about dental treatment. Advances that make your experience more pleasant include digital radiographs (more efficient, less radiation and less chair time), digital 3 dimensional scans (no more messy impressions), topical anesthetic (less feeling with local anesthetic injection), and numbing gels (used for dental cleaning if needed), just to name a few.

Dental anxiety may have come from childhood experiences, discussions between family/friends or general negativity from movies, comedians or social media. It can also be from fear of the unknown.

Dentists are well equipped today with many aides to help ease your mind and have a more pleasant experience. First, you should find an experienced, confident, efficient dentist who has the time to discuss your dental needs as well as your dental anxiety. In my practice, I start with an initial consultation which includes a comprehensive examination and radiographs. There are times that a dental cleaning causes anxiety and must be addressed first.

Your dental experience can be more comfortable today in a relaxing dental environment with plenty of time to voice your concerns so the doctor can develop a personalized comprehensive oral health plan. Once an oral health plan is developed the visits are often listed in order of the patients needs. Environmental aides that help: good communication with your dental provider, listening to relaxing music, deep breathing, watching relaxing videos, pillows and blankets. There are also medical aides such as prescription medication for the dental visit, nitrous oxide or IV Sedation. In my office, if you are an animal lover, you can request our service dog to stay beside you. The most important thing is you must be able to talk to your provider and feel comfortable with your dental team.



**KELLY M. DAINIAK, DMD,
GENERAL DENTIST**

Dr. Kelly M. Dainiak provides all services mentioned in article. Dr. Dainiak graduated from The University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine in 1995 and went on to finish a Hospital Residency at The University Hospital in Stonybrook, NY in 1996. She has been practicing in Southwest Florida since 2001, having her own solo practice since 2005.



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ADHD Awareness Month:

CYPRESS WELLNESS PHARMACY SUPPORTS YOUR TREATMENT JOURNEY

By Justin Ceravolo, PharmD

October marks ADHD Awareness Month, a time to shed light on Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and support those affected by this common neurodevelopmental condition. As we focus on understanding, accepting, and effectively managing ADHD, Cypress Wellness Pharmacy stands ready to assist patients on their treatment journey.

UNDERSTANDING ADHD

ADHD affects millions of children and adults worldwide, impacting their ability to focus, control impulses, and regulate activity levels. While often diagnosed in childhood, many adults struggle with undiagnosed ADHD, facing challenges in work, relationships, and daily life.

The condition manifests differently in each individual, with symptoms falling into three main categories:

1. Inattention
2. Hyperactivity
3. Impulsivity

Some people may primarily experience one type of symptom, while others contend with a combination. Recognizing these varied presentations is crucial for proper diagnosis and treatment.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS

ADHD Awareness Month serves several vital purposes:

- Educating the public about ADHD symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options
- Reducing stigma surrounding the condition
- Encouraging those who suspect they may have ADHD to seek professional evaluation
- Promoting understanding and support for individuals with ADHD in schools, workplaces, and communities

By fostering awareness, we create an environment where those with ADHD can thrive and access the resources they need.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

While there's no cure for ADHD, various treatment strategies can effectively manage symptoms and improve quality of life. Common approaches include:



- Medication (stimulants and non-stimulants)
- Behavioral therapy
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Educational support and accommodations
- Lifestyle modifications

Often, a combination of these treatments yields the best results, tailored to each individual's needs and circumstances.

CYPRESS WELLNESS PHARMACY: YOUR ADHD TREATMENT PARTNER

At Cypress Wellness Pharmacy, we understand the complexities of ADHD and are committed to supporting patients throughout their treatment journey. Our dedicated team offers a range of services to ensure you receive the best possible care:

1. **Medication Management:** We work closely with your healthcare provider to ensure you receive the right medication at the correct dosage. Our pharmacists can answer questions about potential side effects, drug interactions, and proper usage.
2. **Compounding Services:** For patients who struggle with standard medication forms or dosages, we offer customized compounding. This allows us to create tailored formulations that meet your specific needs.
3. **Adherence Support:** We provide tools and strategies to help you stay on track with your medication regimen, including pill organizers, reminder apps, and educational resources.
4. **Holistic Approach:** Our team can advise on complementary treatments and lifestyle modifications that may enhance your ADHD management plan.
5. **Ongoing Education:** We stay up-to-date with the latest ADHD research and treatment options, sharing valuable information to empower you in your healthcare decisions.

6. **Compassionate Care:** Our pharmacists offer a judgment-free environment where you can discuss your concerns and receive personalized support.

YOUR JOURNEY TO BETTER ADHD MANAGEMENT

This ADHD Awareness Month, take the first step towards better symptom management by partnering with Cypress Wellness Pharmacy. Whether you're newly diagnosed or looking to optimize your current treatment plan, our team is here to guide you every step of the way.

Remember, ADHD is a manageable condition, and with the right support and resources, you can lead a fulfilling, productive life. Let Cypress Wellness Pharmacy be your ally in navigating the challenges of ADHD and unlocking your full potential.

Visit us today to learn more about how we can support your ADHD treatment journey. Together, we can work towards a future where ADHD is better understood, accepted, and effectively managed.

Justin Ceravolo, PharmD - Owner & Pharmacist

Justin Ceravolo, also known as J.T., earned his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Florida A&M University's College of Pharmacy in 2012. That same year, Justin began working in Florida's Panhandle before becoming a new member of the Cypress Wellness Pharmacy family in October of 2012. Cypress Wellness Pharmacy believes that each patient, whether he or she is a human or pet, should be given their own special attention and service. In 2024 Justin became the owner of Cypress Wellness Pharmacy and is committed to advancing the pharmacy's phenomenal reputation for personalized service with a focus on education and well-being for all patients and customers. Whether you need your medication in another compounded form or you simply need advice, Justin and his team will ensure fast and efficient service that goes above and beyond your average pharmacy.



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Revolutionary Weight Loss:

THE FUTURE OF BODY TRANSFORMATION

In the ever-evolving world of weight loss and body sculpting, a groundbreaking program has emerged, combining cutting-edge pharmaceutical interventions with state-of-the-art technology. This innovative approach integrates GLP-1 receptor agonists like semaglutide and tirzepatide, 3D body scanning, and advanced light therapy to offer a comprehensive solution for those seeking to shed pounds and transform their physique.

The Power of GLP-1 Receptor Agonists

At the heart of this revolutionary program are GLP-1 receptor agonists, specifically semaglutide and tirzepatide. These medications, originally developed for type 2 diabetes management, have shown remarkable efficacy in promoting weight loss.

Semaglutide, marketed under brand names like Wegovy for weight loss, works by mimicking a hormone called glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1). This hormone plays a crucial role in regulating appetite and food intake. By activating GLP-1 receptors, semaglutide helps individuals feel fuller for longer periods, naturally reducing calorie intake.

Tirzepatide, a newer entry in this class of medications, goes a step further. It acts as a dual GIP (glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide) and GLP-1 receptor agonist. This dual-action approach not only suppresses appetite but also enhances metabolic function, potentially leading to even more significant weight loss results.

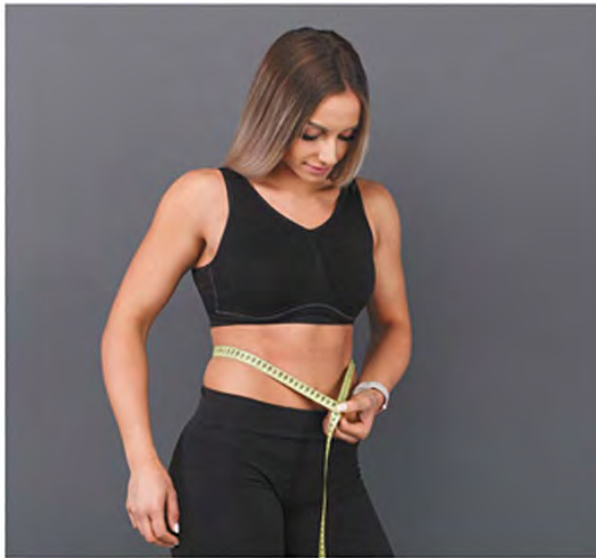
Precision Tracking with 3D Body Scanning

To complement the pharmaceutical approach, this program incorporates cutting-edge 3D body scanning technology. This non-invasive imaging technique provides a detailed, three-dimensional representation of an individual's body composition.

The 3D scanner captures hundreds of measurements in just seconds, offering a level of precision that far surpasses traditional methods like calipers or tape measures. This technology allows participants to:

1. Visualize their progress in vivid detail
2. Track changes in body composition, including muscle mass and fat distribution
3. Set more precise, personalized goals based on their unique body structure

By providing such detailed insights, the 3D body scanner serves as a powerful motivational tool, helping individuals stay committed to their weight loss journey.



The Magic of Light: Red Light Therapy and Invisa-RED

To further enhance body contouring and skin tightening, the program incorporates advanced light therapy techniques:

Red Light Therapy

Red light therapy, also known as low-level laser therapy (LLLT), uses low-wavelength red light to treat various skin issues and promote overall skin health. In the context of weight loss, red light therapy offers several benefits:

1. Increased cellular energy production, potentially boosting metabolism
2. Reduced inflammation, which can aid in recovery from workouts
3. Improved circulation, enhancing the delivery of nutrients to skin cells

Invisa-RED Technology

Invisa-RED takes light therapy to the next level. This non-invasive treatment combines multiple wavelengths of light with gentle electrical stimulation to:

1. Target and shrink fat cells
2. Tighten and tone skin
3. Reduce the appearance of cellulite

The Invisa-RED system is particularly effective for spot reduction and body contouring, helping to refine areas that may be resistant to diet and exercise alone.

A Holistic Approach to Body Transformation

What sets this program apart is its comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to weight loss and body sculpting. By combining the appetite-suppressing

and metabolic effects of GLP-1 receptor agonists with the precise tracking of 3D body scanning and the toning benefits of light therapy, participants can achieve remarkable results.

The program doesn't just focus on weight loss; it's designed to reshape the body, improve skin texture, and boost overall confidence. Participants benefit from:

1. Significant and sustainable weight loss through medication-assisted appetite control
2. Precise progress tracking and goal-setting with 3D body scanning
3. Enhanced skin tightening and body contouring through advanced light therapies
4. A more comprehensive understanding of their body composition and how it changes over time

As with any medical intervention, it's crucial for individuals to consult with healthcare professionals before starting this program. The use of GLP-1 receptor agonists should be carefully monitored, and the entire regimen should be tailored to each participant's unique needs and health status.

In conclusion, this innovative weight loss program represents a paradigm shift in how we approach body transformation. By harnessing the power of cutting-edge pharmaceuticals, precise imaging technology, and advanced light therapies, it offers a holistic solution for those seeking not just to lose weight, but to comprehensively reshape their bodies and boost their confidence.

Call Simply U MedSpa today to find out how our clinically proven, doctor-prescribed weight-loss medication can help you. We can help you schedule an appointment or answer any questions you may have about the program.

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MIGRAINES AND THE ROLE OF CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY & MANUAL LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE

By Dr. Mary Lambert, AP, DOM

Migraines are more than just headaches—they're a debilitating neurological condition that affects over 1 billion people worldwide. Characterized by throbbing pain, nausea, and sensitivity to light and sound, migraines can drastically affect a person's quality of life. While traditional treatments such as medications and lifestyle adjustments are commonly used, people are exploring alternative therapies to manage the condition. Two popular therapies are Craniosacral Therapy (CST) and Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD), both of which are specialized modalities that focus on the body's fluid systems and nervous system.

Migraines are complex and not fully understood, but research has identified several contributing factors. Migraines are believed to be influenced by both genetics and environmental factors, with changes in brain chemistry playing a central role. Recent studies also indicate that the lymphatic system plays a role in migraines. The brain's lymphatic system, which removes waste and fluid from the central nervous system, may become impaired during a migraine, contributing to the buildup of inflammatory substances. This is where therapies like CST and MLD come into play, as they target both the cerebrospinal and the lymphatic systems to support fluid drainage and reduce inflammation.

Craniosacral Therapy (CST) is a gentle, non-invasive technique developed by osteopath Dr. John Upledger in the 1970s. It focuses on manipulating the craniosacral system, which consists of the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. CST practitioners, like Jenn Lambert of Lambert Wellness, use light touch to release restrictions in these tissues, thereby improving the flow of cerebrospinal fluid and promoting the body's natural healing processes.

Research on CST has demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing migraine symptoms. In a study published in the *Journal of Headache and Pain* in 2011, researchers evaluated the impact of CST on 20 individuals suffering from chronic migraines. The participants received 10 treatments over a five-week period. At the end of the study, participants reported a significant reduction in the frequency and intensity of their migraines, along with improved overall quality of life.



Another study published in *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* in 2016 found similar results. This randomized controlled trial involved 25 participants with migraines who underwent CST treatments for eight weeks. The researchers found that CST led to a decrease in both the duration and severity of migraine attacks. Additionally, patients reported reduced reliance on medication.

Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD) is another gentle technique that focuses on improving the flow of lymphatic fluid, which plays a key role in the body's immune and detoxification processes. MLD was developed by Dr. Emil Vodder in the 1930s as a way to reduce fluid buildup in the body, commonly used for conditions like lymphedema and post-surgical recovery.

However, recent research suggests that MLD may also help manage migraines by facilitating the removal of toxins and inflammatory substances from the brain and body, which are often associated with migraine attacks. The lymphatic system helps clear waste products, but impaired lymphatic drainage can lead to inflammation, worsening migraine symptoms.

A study published in the *International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine* in 2014 explored the effects of MLD on migraine patients. Over a four-week period, 20 individuals with migraines received regular MLD sessions. The study found that MLD significantly reduced the frequency of migraines, as well as the severity of headache pain and associated symptoms like nausea and light sensitivity.

Further research published in *Lymphatic Research and Biology* in 2020 highlighted the potential for MLD in treating neurological conditions, including migraines. This study emphasized how MLD supports the brain's glymphatic system (a specialized waste-clearing network) and enhances cerebrospinal fluid drainage. By improving the efficiency of this system, MLD helps reduce the buildup of substances that trigger migraine attacks.

While both Craniosacral Therapy and Manual Lymphatic Drainage have been shown to provide migraine relief independently, at Lambert Wellness we combine the two treatments for greater efficacy. The combination of CST and MLD can improve fluid flow throughout both the craniosacral and lymphatic systems, promoting better waste removal, reducing inflammation, and easing tension in the muscles and tissues surrounding the brain. These therapies are particularly beneficial because they are gentle, non-invasive, and suitable for most individuals, including those seeking alternatives to medication.

Migraines are a complex and often debilitating condition, but therapies like Craniosacral Therapy and Manual Lymphatic Drainage offer promising alternatives for relief. With growing research highlighting the role of the lymphatic and craniosacral systems in migraines, these gentle, hands-on techniques may help reduce the frequency and severity of migraine attacks. If you suffer from migraines and are looking for natural, effective treatments, consider exploring CST and MLD as part of your holistic health plan. With more than 20 years of experience in manual therapies, Jenn Lambert specializes in the advanced techniques of Manual Lymph Drainage and Craniosacral Therapy. She is here to support your migraine management. Book a session today by calling us at **239-776-4055** and experience the benefits for yourself. MA43338 MM40606



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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.

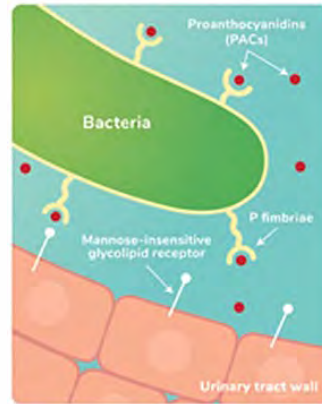
3. The Growing Concern of Antibiotic Resistance:

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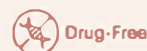
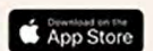
Recurrent UTIs can be a constant battle in the clinic. In an attempt to minimize the use of antibiotics, I always consider natural options to help reduce the frequency of UTIs in my patients. Utiva is a trusted brand which provides a great, clean cranberry product which has been very effective in preventing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

Dr. Yana Barbalet
Urologist, Lahey Health, Massachusetts



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UNDERSTANDING DIZZINESS, VERTIGO & BALANCE DISORDERS

What Is a Balance Disorder?

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

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

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

Balance and the Inner Ear

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

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

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

Common Vestibular Disorders

Autoimmune Inner Ear Disease (AIED)

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



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

Acoustic Neuroma

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

Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV)

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

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome (MdDS)

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

Ménière's Disease

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

Vestibular Neuritis

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

Perilymph Fistula

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

Diagnosing Vestibular Disorders

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

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



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

Treating Vestibular Disorders

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

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

Be Safe When Feeling Dizzy

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

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

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

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

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

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Navigating Sexual Health in the Over-85 Population

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

The term sexual health is rarely considered in discussions focusing on older adults over the age of 85. However, engagement in sexual relations or being emotionally intimate may continue to be of great value to older age groups. In the present context, as people's lifespan increases and cultural norms change, it becomes essential to think about the sexual health concerns of this age group.

Understanding Sexuality Beyond 85

With regards to sexuality of older adults, it is not only about having sexual acts—it also involves emotional relationships, physically being close to someone, and caring about them. For many people over 85 years it may be important to help and sustain such intimate relationships as it contributes to positively beautiful enhancement of life satisfaction and mood. Sadly, negative social norms and beliefs regarding ageing often create a false impression that the older generation is devoid of any sexuality or does not wish for any such engages, which is not the case.

A considerable number of these adults still have sexual fantasies, indulge in sexually related actions, or even seek people in intimacy although they face problems of old age that hinder sexual health. These problems include, amongst others, medical illnesses, cognitive ageing, the adverse effects of treatment, and lack of other people's participation.

Common Sexual Health Concerns in the Over-85 Population

1. Physical Changes and Sexual Function: Changes related to the normal aging process can affect sexual function. The most common sexual problem in older men is erectile dysfunction. For women, there may be insufficient lubrication, pain during intercourse, or decreased interest in sex due to lower levels of estrogen. Nonetheless none of these changes entail per se the cessation of orgasmic activity. All medications, lubricants and other interventions can address these problems.

2. Chronic Illness and Sexual Health: It is not unusual for some of the people over 85 to have chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease, or arthritis among others that have bearing on the sexual act. More so, the treatment of these conditions may require certain medications whose side effects may interfere with sexual drive or performance. Still, many elderly people adjust and manage to be intimate with others, be it through non-sexual skin contact, talking to someone or other ways of sexual expressions.

3. Cognitive Decline: Cognitive impairment, such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease, can lead to difficulties in relationships, especially the physical aspects of such relationships. Furthermore, although this is uncommon, patients who experience cognitive decline may act out sexually inappropriately or exhibit states of confusion or other changes regarding their sexual interests. In all situations where sexual health needs are to be addressed, it is rather critical that family and caregivers understand these matters compassionately and ensure that dignity is preserved.

4. Psychological Factors: Factors such as social isolation, the death of a partner, geriatric depression, and anxiety are problems that can be noted in these older people and also have an adverse effect on sexual health. These emotional issues might trigger a drop in intimacy levels. It helps to combine support from practitioners with social activities.

5. Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs): Older adults are likely to believe that they are not at risk of infections. Despite this myth, older population is also prone to STIs. Also, there has been a rise of STDs among older people due to lack of information and methods to prevent. With a doctor's recommendation, these lessons should not be contraindicated to people aged 85 years and above.

Promoting Sexual Health and Well-being

Those over 85 require an integrated response which addresses sexual health and includes health practitioners, family, care providers and patients.

1. Open Communication: Discussing sexual health issues is mostly forgotten when one advances in age. Society needs to blatantly create the need for these conversations. Healthcare workers are to include sexual health without being directed on how to include it in the routine visits as sexual health is central to one's wellbeing irrespective of their age.

2. Education and Awareness: Enlightening seniors on how to practice safe sex, how the body functions sexually, and how medications work can ensure their participation in relevant activities. Stereotypes that associate old age with certain characteristics can also be suppressed by campaigns that seek to raise awareness of the harm of old age.

3. Tailored Healthcare: Patients' treatment plans must integrate sexual wellness into the wider picture of healthcare. This might mean providing patients with means of addressing erectile disorders or prescribing post-menopausal hormone therapies or other forms of mental wellbeing support.

4. Emotional and Social Support: Older individuals are encouraged not to isolate themselves and look for activities that boost self-esteem, and even relationships, which can promote a healthy sexual atmosphere.

Conclusion

Sexual health cannot be ruled out even in elderly persons above 85 years of age. By taking care of the various spheres of a person on a particular age, we are able to achieve a better health and quality of life among a specific group of people. Societal misunderstandings should be disregarded and the notion that older persons are not entitled to any sexual care should be disbanded. This view enables better facilities and improvements in the quality of life for elderly people.

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CBD: A NATURAL REMEDY FOR DENTAL ANXIETY AND ORAL HEALTH

Dental anxiety affects millions of people worldwide, often leading to delayed or avoided dental treatments. Fortunately, a natural solution has emerged in recent years: cannabidiol, or CBD. This non-psychoactive compound derived from hemp plants has shown promising results in managing dental anxiety and promoting oral health.

Alleviating Dental Anxiety

CBD interacts with the body's endocannabinoid system, which plays a crucial role in regulating mood, pain perception, and stress responses. By influencing this system, CBD can help reduce anxiety and promote a sense of calm. For dental patients, this means:

1. Reduced fear and stress before and during dental procedures
2. Improved ability to relax in the dentist's chair
3. Decreased likelihood of canceling or postponing appointments

Many patients report feeling more at ease when using CBD products before their dental visits, allowing them to receive necessary treatments without overwhelming fear or discomfort.

Pain Management and Inflammation Reduction

Beyond its anxiety-reducing properties, CBD has shown potential in managing pain and reducing inflammation – two common concerns in dental health. Studies suggest that CBD may:

- Alleviate post-procedure discomfort

- Reduce swelling and inflammation in the gums and oral tissues
- Help manage chronic conditions like temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders

By addressing these issues, CBD can contribute to a more comfortable recovery process and improved overall oral health.

Promoting Oral Healing

CBD's anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties may also play a role in promoting oral healing. Research indicates that CBD could:

- Accelerate the healing of wounds and surgical sites in the mouth
- Support gum health by reducing inflammation associated with gingivitis
- Potentially inhibit the growth of harmful bacteria in the oral cavity

These benefits can lead to faster recovery times and improved long-term oral health outcomes for patients.

Incorporating CBD into Dental Care

As interest in CBD's dental applications grows, more dentists are exploring ways to incorporate it into their practices. Some methods include:

- Recommending CBD oil or capsules for patients to take before appointments
- Using CBD-infused mouthwashes or toothpaste for daily oral care
- Applying topical CBD products to surgical sites or areas of discomfort

While research is ongoing, many patients and dental professionals are reporting positive experiences with CBD in managing dental anxiety and promoting oral health.

It's important to note that patients should always consult with their dentist before using CBD products, especially if they are taking other medications or have underlying health conditions. As with any emerging treatment, more research is needed to fully understand CBD's long-term effects and optimal usage in dental care.

In conclusion, CBD shows promising potential as a natural remedy for dental anxiety and oral health concerns. By addressing both the psychological and physical aspects of dental care, CBD may help more patients access the treatments they need for optimal oral health.

About Hemp Joi

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

We were inspired by family members, in the massage industry, that kept getting requests from clients to use CBD oils because of their natural healing properties.

We felt this was a great and underserved need, so we began our search for the most natural most authentic CBD oils and lotions.

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By Ricardo S. Bocanegra, D.D.S.

Is Invisalign Treatment Right for You?



Four million people in the United States have braces at any one time. According to statistics, 25% of them are adults.

However, most adults would prefer not to have train track-style braces, as it can impact their self-esteem and detract from a professional appearance. But how can those who don't want the appearance of braces have their teeth fixed?

Enter Invisalign. With this method, you can fix any crooked teeth without ever looking like you've had braces at all. But, not everyone is a candidate.

In this article, we'll go over some of the signs that you are an Invisalign candidate, and can speak to your dentist or orthodontist about starting the process.

What Is Invisalign?

Invisalign is a series of clear trays that change your teeth's positioning over time. You'll get a custom mold made of your teeth and then you'll receive the first tray. This will shift the shape of your teeth slightly. Then, you'll receive another tray that will change your teeth ever so slightly even more.

After a series of trays, you'll have the straight teeth you originally set out to achieve. This way, you get the benefit of braces without having to wear them visibly.

Next, we'll go over some of the signs that you're a candidate for Invisalign.

1. Your Case Is Straightforward

Most cases of crooked teeth can be fixed with Invisalign. The system can work for those who have underbites, overbites, crossbites, open bites or those who have gaps or crowded teeth. But, that doesn't mean it works for everyone.

Your dentist or orthodontist will be able to assess your case and let you know if Invisalign is right for you. In more complex cases, you may require dental surgery, or you may not be able to have your teeth straightened without the use of traditional braces.

2. You're Responsible

One reason Invisalign is only for people over a certain age is that you must commit to wearing them for them to work. Invisalign trays are removable, meaning you can take them out if you wish. The system relies on you wearing them on your teeth for a set number of hours per day. In some cases, this means you'll have to wear them all of the time, except when you eat.

Because you can remove them, some people decide they won't bother wearing them. They may even lose them. These types of people likely won't progress very far with Invisalign, because they'll stall their own results.

If you aren't very committed to changing your teeth, or you know you lose important items easily, Invisalign probably isn't the solution for you.

3. You've Got All of Your Adult Teeth

Most orthodontists won't treat teeth cosmetically unless you have all of your adult teeth. That's because they can't predict how children's adult teeth will grow in.

In order to have Invisalign, you must have all of your adult teeth. In some cases, there are adults who still have a baby tooth or two that is lingering. If this is the case, you may require further orthodontic work before you're able to start the Invisalign process.

4. You've Got Good Oral Hygiene

Having good oral hygiene is a must for Invisalign trays. Not only must your mouth be healthy, but you must be able to take care of your trays so that they don't cause infections or further issues.

This goes along with the point that you must be responsible in order to wear Invisalign trays. You must clean them at regular intervals and take good care of the trays. Otherwise, you may have to pay quite a bit to replace them.

Additionally, you will need to ensure your mouth is free of disease or other problems and that you brush regularly before a dentist or orthodontist will consider you.



5. You Don't Smoke

As your Invisalign trays will be in most of the day, you can't smoke or use tobacco. This can interfere with the trays themselves, as well as make them dirty. If you smoke too often and remove your trays while you smoke, you may find that your Invisalign isn't as effective as it could be because you aren't wearing them for enough time during the day. Additionally, smoking is incredibly unhealthy for not just your teeth, but your entire body. If you want to have Invisalign and smoke, now might be the best time to quit.

6. You're Old Enough

Not only do you need to have all of your adult teeth, but you also need to be old enough to wear Invisalign. There is no upper age limit, and you can have your teeth straightened at any point in your life. But, most orthodontists aren't keen to give sets to young teens or children, regardless of if they have all of their adult teeth.

This is partially because the Invisalign trays are removable and must be looked after. This gives the wearer an added responsibility that they may not have with traditional braces that cannot be removed.

Am I an Invisalign Candidate?

Are you an Invisalign candidate? If you meet the six points listed above, there is a good chance that you'll benefit from the Invisalign system. Your dentist or orthodontist may have more to discuss with you about your individual case, so be prepared when you make your appointment for yourself, or for your teenager.

After reading this article, if you feel you might be interested in starting the Invisalign system, contact us to set up an appointment. We can assess your situation and discuss whether you're an appropriate candidate.

You may reach us at 239-482-8806 or email us at info@portofinodental.org

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HUNGRY HEART

By Alex Anderson

The songwriter and performer Bruce Springsteen was right when he wrote,

"Everybody's got a hungry heart..."

Inside of every human is this need or hunger. Sometimes we try to fill it with love for another person, but for some reason...another person is not the answer.

Sometimes the hungry heart destroys the very things we love and want.

Springsteen goes on to sing,

"We fell in love, I knew it had to end...we took what we had and we ripped it apart...everybody's got a hungry heart...don't make no difference what nobody says...ain't nobody like to be alone...everybody's got a hungry heart."

I do believe our hungry heart is about loneliness, not for another human...but for God himself. We were created in the very image of God (Genesis 1:26) but when man left God...man missed, and still misses, God. They had a bond that filled man with joy and satisfied his heart like nothing else.

C.S. Lewis calls this the, "Numinous Awe." It seems to be built into mankind, this *ravenous hungry heart to know God*. And it's so strong nothing can fill it but God himself.

Psalms 34:8 says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good."

And the truth is... If you don't get that deep ravenous hunger in your heart satisfied by Jesus you will starve to death spiritually, while eating everything else.

So how do you do that? How do you find the true satisfaction that calms your hungry heart?

If you are a Christ-follower, then you know how to do this. You...'do again'...something that you have already experienced when you asked God to be your Lord and Savior. You "make up" with God and you're back to stay.

You are so glad to be back together. Glad that God owns you and your life. So you decide to be happy because God owns you and is your life partner (Philippians 4:4).

Feel the pleasure, the joy and the delight again about Jesus being your master. Let this fact cause you happiness, pleasure and delight.

Be full of joy because Jesus paid a high price for your life. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Let the reality of what He has done sink over you.

Not only are you in His family now, but you can live the life of a victorious and joyful person of God; with all the rights and privileges of a child of rich royalty.

"You are my child says the Lord...my very rich child says the Lord...let the riches of your heart begin to overflow into all of your life." (3 John 2)

You can, should, and must rejoice always in the Lord...way before anything changes physically in your life.

The seed of hope and joy is there if you have become one with Jesus Christ. His seed is within you. If your hope is nonexistent then find the seed once planted deep in your heart by the Holy Spirit.

Like a precious pearl search for it (Matthew 13:45).

When you find it (that small seed), clean it up. Polish it and put it in the center room of your heart, shine the brightest light you can find on it and let its magnificent beauty captivate you. Stare at it with intentional focus as though you are searching and waiting for hope itself.

Its magnificent light will light up your life.

For it will change everything about you as you clearly see and feel the love that God has shed in your heart...that is for you (Romans 5:5).

It is so worthy of your time my friend to mediate and think about Jesus, again.

Whether things in your life are going well or not...you have the power of a Christ-follower to focus on Jesus...the author and finisher of your faith and the centerpiece of your heart.



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