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January 2025

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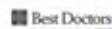
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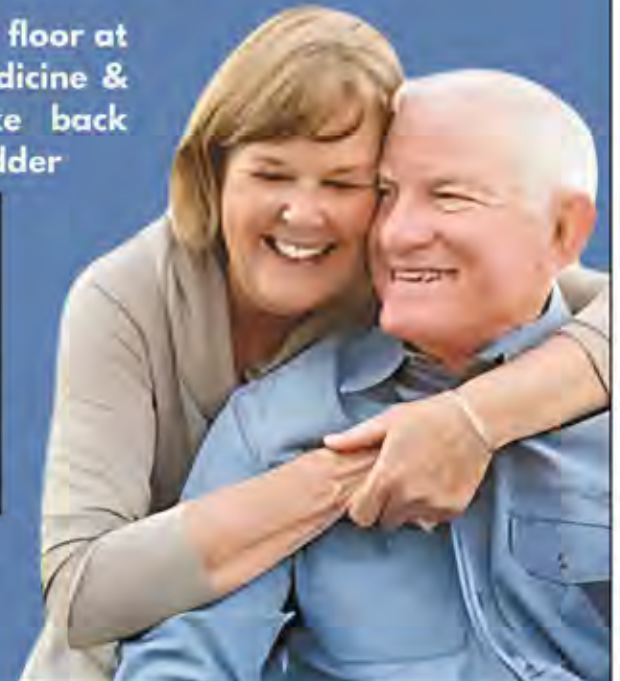
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By Dr. TC Lackey II

Vein Disease: Underdiagnosed & Undertreated

Our circulatory system keeps our body and its tissues healthy, but when that system goes awry, we develop a series of diseases, including vein disease and all its symptoms. Based on the latest scientific data, vein disease in the U.S. is underdiagnosed and undertreated, and it affects more than 40 million Americans. Unfortunately, less than one-half of one percent of Americans seek treatment and fewer than half a million ever receive treatment for vein disease.

Venous circulation in legs is a very important part of our overall daily health and can become a problem when vein reflux affects circulation. Vein reflux is a medical condition where leg veins are unable to properly transport blood back up to the heart. Medically, this is known as chronic venous insufficiency (CVI). Typically, CVI is associated with the development of spider veins or varicose veins in the legs. When CVI is not treated properly, it will lead to more serious consequences, such as ulcers, spontaneous bleeding, and life-threatening deep vein thrombosis (DVT). Here's some perspective, chronic venous insufficiency is twice as prevalent as coronary heart disease (America's #1 killer), and five times more common than peripheral artery disease.

What Causes Chronic Venous Insufficiency?

The short answer is malfunctioning valves inside the veins. When blood circulates inside the body, the heart pumps blood down the leg. To get the blood back up to the heart, however, the body relies on a combination of valves and muscle contractions to push blood upward. Healthy valves within the veins act as backflow prevention device in the legs to keep the blood from flowing backward and pooling in the legs. Faulty veins don't close completely, resulting in varicose veins, swelling, heaviness, itching, and a whole host of other life-changing symptoms.



Are You at Risk for Vein Disease?

Most likely, if you have any of these high-risk factors - a family history, obesity, prolonged sitting or standing, multiple pregnancies, you're older than 40 and/or you smoke or once did. Women are affected with vein disease more than men; however, men don't escape this dangerous disease.

What are the Signs & Symptoms of Vein Disease?

More common symptoms that develop over time include pain, heaviness, fatigue, aching, itching, restless legs, burning, and cramping. Physical findings are large areas of spider veins, varicose veins, leg swelling, discoloration, skin thickening, and ulcers.

What is the Treatment?

Luckily, treatment is in your favor. FDA-approved, minimally invasive treatments have a 99% success rate with far less risk and fewer side effects when compared to the now-antiquated vein stripping techniques of the past. At Florida Lakes Vein Center, all

treatments are performed in the office. There is no downtime, and normal activities can be resumed as soon as you leave our office.

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DRY JANUARY:

REFRESH YOUR BODY & MIND WITH THE POWER OF EXFOLIATION

As we transition into a new season, it's the ideal time to delve into the art of exfoliation—a transformative skincare ritual that symbolizes renewal, rejuvenation, and a fresh start. Exfoliation transcends beyond achieving a radiant complexion; it's a holistic experience that physically, mentally, and emotionally promotes personal growth and self-care. Dry January is the perfect time to start afresh - and start your year aglow!

1. The Physical Gratification:

By gently removing dead skin cells, unclogging pores, and promoting circulation, exfoliation reveals a fresh, vibrant complexion beneath. Incorporating exfoliating products into your skincare routine enhances the skin's natural renewal process, helping to prevent breakouts and improving the absorption of other skincare products. Beyond its physical benefits, the act of exfoliating provides a refreshing boost to confidence and self-esteem, as glowing skin is truly a source of pride.

To maximize the benefits of a body apply it liberally in the shower or bath on wet skin using gentle, circular motions. Pay special attention to dry areas like feet, legs, arms, and hands, where exfoliation can be particularly effective. After scrubbing, rinse thoroughly with water and pat your skin dry with a soft towel. For more intense hydration, allow the scrub's moisturizing ingredients to soak in for 1-2 minutes before rinsing.

Moreover, the rhythmic motion of scrubbing the skin can be a therapeutic experience. This mindful practice encourages relaxation and serves as a moment to reconnect with oneself amidst a busy day. By intentionally caring for your skin, you not only improve its health but also nurture your overall well-being, making exfoliation a cherished self-care ritual that revitalizes both body and mind.



2. An Emotional Transformation:

The art of exfoliation transcends mere skin care; it emerges as a therapeutic practice that fosters mindfulness and promotes self-connection. By dedicating time to this ritual, you can release not only physical impurities but also emotional burdens. Opt for products crafted with care, as their soothing scents and natural ingredients come together to create a serene pause in your hectic day, uplifting your mood and enhancing your overall sense of well-being.

Naples Soap Company's Vitamin C Orange Blossom & Vanilla Sugar Scrub offers a refreshingly light scent of orange blossoms, oranges and sweet vanilla. The fresh aroma of orange blossoms and oranges provides uplifting citrus aromatherapy, reducing stress and anxiety while boosting energy and motivation. Meanwhile, the sweet, warm scent of vanilla evokes comfort and tranquility, creating a calming atmosphere that fosters well-being.

3. The Mental Reset:

The act of exfoliation brings with it a mental reset. In a world filled with chaos and constant change, incorporating this simple yet effective practice can serve as a grounding routine. As individuals scrub away the old layers of skin, they can metaphorically release negative thoughts, stressors, and worries that weigh them down.

A-scented face scrub, such as Naples Soap Company's Coffee Face Scrub, is a fantastic addition to your morning routine, providing a refreshing start and serving as a mental reset. The invigorating aroma stimulates the senses, awakening your mind and boosting your energy for the day ahead. Gently massaging our Coffee Face Scrub polishes the skin and enhances circulation, giving your complexion a radiant glow. Formulated with finely ground coffee beans, cocoa butter, and fractionated coconut oil, it cleanses away dullness and rehydrates for a fresh look.



We invite you to explore the therapeutic benefits of exfoliation can facilitate this holistic journey of self-renewal. By integrating these practices into daily routines, individuals can refresh not only their skincare regimen but also their overall mindset and emotional well-being.



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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR YOUR FEET: FOOT HEALTH TIPS TO START THE YEAR RIGHT

By Ravnik Singh, DPM, AACFAS

As we usher in a new year, many of us make resolutions to improve our health and well-being. While common resolutions often focus on goals like losing weight, exercising more, or eating healthier, one area that tends to be overlooked is the health of our feet. Our feet carry us through life, yet they often don't receive the attention they deserve. In 2024, why not make a resolution to prioritize your podiatric health?

Podiatry is the branch of medicine focused on the care and treatment of the feet, ankles, and lower limbs. From preventing common foot problems to enhancing mobility and overall well-being, taking care of your feet can have a lasting impact on your health. Here are some important New Year's resolutions to consider that can improve your foot health in the year ahead.

1. Commit to Regular Foot Care

One of the simplest and most effective resolutions you can make for your feet is to establish a regular foot care routine. Proper hygiene is essential to maintaining foot health. This includes washing your feet daily with mild soap and warm water, drying them thoroughly (especially between the toes), and moisturizing to prevent dry, cracked skin.

Regular foot inspections are also important, particularly for those with diabetes or other conditions that affect circulation. Check for blisters, cuts, bruises, or signs of infection. Early detection of any problems can prevent more serious issues down the road.

2. Invest in Proper Footwear

The shoes you wear play a huge role in the health of your feet. Ill-fitting shoes, especially those with high heels or poor arch support, can lead to a range of foot problems, including bunions, hammertoes, plantar fasciitis, and blisters. A New Year's resolution to invest in properly fitting footwear is one of the best decisions you can make for your feet.

Choose shoes that provide adequate support, cushioning, and room for your toes to move freely. If you spend a lot of time on your feet, consider visiting a podiatrist to get custom orthotics that can provide additional support and reduce strain on your feet.

3. Exercise to Strengthen Your Feet

Foot strength and flexibility are often overlooked in fitness routines, but they are key to preventing

injuries and promoting long-term foot health. Simple exercises like toe stretches, calf raises, and foot rolling (using a tennis ball or foam roller) can improve circulation, strengthen the muscles of the feet and ankles, and enhance overall mobility.

For those who have existing foot issues like flat feet or high arches, a podiatrist may recommend targeted exercises or physical therapy to address specific concerns and reduce pain.

4. Maintain a Healthy Weight

Your weight affects every part of your body, including your feet. Excess weight puts additional pressure on the feet, which can lead to pain, discomfort, and conditions like plantar fasciitis, heel spurs, and arthritis. A healthy weight can help prevent or alleviate many foot-related problems.

Along with the standard diet and exercise resolutions that many people set for the new year, focusing on maintaining a healthy weight can make a significant difference in the comfort and longevity of your feet. If you're unsure about how to achieve or maintain a healthy weight, a healthcare professional or dietitian can provide helpful guidance.

5. Stay Active and Keep Moving

Physical activity is vital for overall health, and it's also crucial for maintaining foot health. Regular exercise helps improve circulation, maintain joint mobility, and reduce the risk of conditions like varicose veins and arthritis. Walking, swimming, and cycling are low-impact activities that are gentle on the feet while providing great cardiovascular benefits.

If you're someone who loves running or hiking, make sure to incorporate proper stretching, warm-up, and cool-down routines into your exercise regimen. Regular movement helps maintain healthy, strong feet and can reduce the risk of injuries.

6. Seek Professional Help When Needed

A key part of any health-related New Year's resolution is knowing when to seek professional help. If you experience persistent foot pain, discomfort, or notice unusual changes in your feet, it's important to consult a podiatrist. Whether it's an ingrown toenail, an injury, or a chronic condition like arthritis, a podiatrist can provide expert care and help you find the right treatment plan to address your concerns.

Regular check-ups with a podiatrist can also help prevent potential issues from becoming serious problems. For example, routine care for conditions like fungal infections, corns, or calluses can stop them from escalating into more painful or complicated conditions.

7. Practice Foot-Friendly Habits

Incorporating foot-friendly habits into your daily routine can go a long way toward maintaining foot health. Some simple tips include:

- Avoid going barefoot in public places (to reduce the risk of fungal infections).
- Wear socks made of breathable material to keep feet dry and reduce the risk of blisters.
- Take breaks if you're standing for long periods of time to relieve pressure on your feet.
- Stretch before and after physical activity to prevent strain or injury.

Final Thoughts

A new year brings a fresh start, and what better time than now to focus on the health of your feet? By making a commitment to foot care, investing in proper footwear, maintaining a healthy weight, staying active, and seeking professional help when necessary, you can ensure that your feet will carry you through the year and beyond with comfort and confidence. Don't wait, start the new year with a step in the right direction for your foot health!

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

Ravnik Singh, DPM, AACFAS

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



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New Year, New You: Transform Your Body with EmSculpt NEO

By Stéphane Calvino, MD

As the calendar turns and a fresh year begins, many of us are searching for innovative ways to reinvent ourselves and achieve our health and fitness goals. Enter EmSculpt NEO, a groundbreaking body contouring technology that's revolutionizing the way we approach personal transformation, offering a powerful solution for those seeking meaningful physical changes without invasive procedures.

The New Year's Resolution Revolution

Traditional New Year's resolutions often fall into a predictable pattern: ambitious goals, initial motivation, and then gradual burnout. EmSculpt NEO represents a different approach—a scientific, targeted method of body sculpting that combines cutting-edge technology with tangible results. Unlike endless hours at the gym or restrictive diets, this treatment offers a strategic path to body transformation.

How EmSculpt NEO Works

At the core of EmSculpt NEO's effectiveness is its innovative dual-action technology. The treatment simultaneously delivers radiofrequency heating and high-intensity electromagnetic energy, creating a unique approach to muscle building and fat reduction. This means you're not just losing fat; you're actively building muscle mass while eliminating stubborn adipose tissue.

Muscle Building Mechanism

The electromagnetic energy triggers supramaximal muscle contractions that are impossible to achieve through conventional exercise. In a single 30-minute session, your muscles experience thousands of powerful contractions, equivalent to performing an intense workout. These contractions stimulate muscle fibers, promoting significant muscle growth and strengthening.

Fat Reduction Process

Simultaneously, the radiofrequency heating raises the muscle temperature, creating a similar effect to a warm-up before exercise. This process disrupts fat cells, causing them to break down and be naturally eliminated by the body. The result? A more sculpted, defined physique without invasive surgical procedures.

Targeting Problem Areas

EmSculpt NEO is remarkably versatile, addressing multiple body areas that often resist traditional diet and exercise:



- **Abdomen:** Reduce belly fat and create more defined core muscles
- **Buttocks:** Lift and enhance muscle tone without endless squats
- **Arms:** Build muscle definition and reduce excess arm fat
- **Thighs:** Sculpt and strengthen leg muscles
- **Love Handles:** Target stubborn side fat effectively

Beyond Physical Transformation

The benefits of EmSculpt NEO extend beyond physical changes. As individuals see tangible results, they experience a significant boost in confidence and motivation. This psychological transformation is often as powerful as the physical one, inspiring continued health and wellness efforts.

Clinical Proven Results

Clinical studies have shown impressive outcomes:

- Up to 30% fat reduction in treated areas
- 25% increase in muscle mass
- Visible results after just four 30-minute sessions
- No downtime or recovery period required

A Personalized Approach to Wellness

What sets EmSculpt NEO apart is its personalized approach. Each treatment is tailored to individual body composition, fitness goals, and physical condition. This means whether you're an athlete looking to enhance muscle definition or someone beginning their fitness journey, EmSculpt NEO can be customized to your needs.

Making Your New Year's Resolution Stick

EmSculpt NEO offers more than a quick fix—it's a catalyst for lasting change. By providing visible, measurable results, it motivates individuals to maintain their health and fitness commitments.

The treatment works best when combined with a balanced diet and regular exercise, creating a holistic approach to personal transformation.

Consultation is Key

Before beginning any EmSculpt NEO treatment, a thorough consultation with a certified professional is crucial. They can assess your individual needs, discuss expectations, and create a personalized treatment plan.

As you embrace the "New Year, New You" mantra, consider EmSculpt NEO not just as a treatment, but as an investment in yourself. It's a powerful tool that bridges the gap between aspiration and achievement, helping you sculpt not just your body, but your confidence and potential.

Start Your Health Journey with Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness

Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness is committed to providing innovative wellness solutions that go beyond traditional healthcare approaches. The practice now offers cutting-edge body contouring and pelvic floor health treatments through EmSculpt Neo and Emsella technologies. EmSculpt Neo helps patients build muscle and reduce fat through advanced electromagnetic and radiofrequency treatments, while Emsella provides a non-invasive solution for improving pelvic floor strength, which can benefit both men and women experiencing urinary incontinence or seeking enhanced core muscle performance. By integrating these state-of-the-art treatments, Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness demonstrates its dedication to comprehensive patient care, empowering individuals to achieve their wellness and body confidence goals through advanced, non-surgical medical technologies.

Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness

Dr. Stéphane Calvino, originally from Switzerland, moved to the U.S. with his American wife, Stacy, after completing medical school. He finished his residency in St. Petersburg, Florida. The Calvino family have called Punta Gorda home since 2003 and are raising two children here. An enthusiast of photography, scuba diving and yoga, Dr. Calvino is eager to support your health journey through personalized patient centered care and innovative treatments that promote physical wellness.



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"He Saved My Life"

Sarasota Resident Nancy C. Shares Her Neuropathy Journey

Dr. Kenneth Carle - Chiropractic Physician

Nancy C., a Sarasota resident, had been living with the painful side effects of peripheral neuropathy for years. "My feet and even my legs were extremely painful," she recalls. "My doctor said there wasn't anything that could be done—I'd have to take gabapentin for the rest of my life."

Frustrated and desperate for relief, Nancy stumbled upon an article about Dr. Kenneth Carle and Renewed Life Wellness Center. It turned out to be the lifeline she needed.

Peripheral neuropathy, which affects over 20 million people in the U.S., is caused by nerve damage to the peripheral nervous system. It often results in symptoms like burning, tingling, and numbness in the feet and legs. For many, the condition progresses to balance issues, making daily activities like walking, shopping, or even standing for extended periods nearly impossible.

Peripheral neuropathy (PN) is a condition characterized by damage to the peripheral nerves outside the brain and spinal cord, especially in the feet and hands. These nerves transmit signals between the body and the central nervous system, controlling movement, sensation, and organ function.

There are over 100 causes of Peripheral Neuropathy; the most common include: Diabetes, Trauma or Injury, and Toxicity-Related Neuropathy. Certain medications used in chemotherapy can cause peripheral neuropathy as a side effect. This can damage the nerves and cause symptoms such as numbness, tingling, and weakness in the hands and feet, which can significantly impact the quality of life. Other drugs, such as statins, can cause neuropathy. Statins reduce the fats that build up in your arteries, but they also reduce the fatty myelin sheath of the nerves, which will cause the nerve to die.

Nancy's condition was no different. Her feet were so sensitive that wearing shoes became unbearable. "I wore sandals most of the time because it felt like I was walking on tacks," she says. Nights were especially tough, as the burning and shooting pains in her feet kept her awake.



Like many others with neuropathy, Nancy tried gabapentin. But the medication's side effects were intolerable, and she stopped taking it after a few months. To make matters worse, it didn't provide the relief she had hoped for.

Fortunately, her discovery of Renewed Life Wellness Center changed everything. After undergoing their specialized treatments—safe, non-surgical therapies designed to alleviate neuropathy symptoms—Nancy began to see improvements. "Now when I go to bed, I don't have those shooting pains," she shares. "The burning and numbness are gone, and I can even wear socks and shoes with little to no problem."

The treatments, Nancy says, have been "life-changing." In fact, she insists, "As far as I'm concerned, Dr. Carle and Renewed Life Wellness Center saved my life."

Dr. Carle is no stranger to stories like Nancy's. "Unfortunately, many of my patients are told there's no solution beyond medication," he explains. At Renewed Life Wellness Center, however, patients benefit from cutting-edge technologies tailored to treat neuropathy and its debilitating effects without relying on drugs or surgery.

Since 2017, Renewed Life Wellness Center has been helping patients find relief and reclaim their lives. The clinic also offers regenerative medicine options, including stem cell treatments, for various conditions.

If you or someone you love has missed too many tee times, or you passed on a walk on the beach because of pain or afraid of falling, it is time to call Renewed Life Wellness Center invites you to learn more at a free informational lunch on **Wednesday, January 15th**. Attendees will hear about the latest advances in neuropathy treatments and how they can take the first steps toward a pain-free life. Dr. Kenneth Carle and the team at Renewed Life Wellness Center is ready to help.



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NEW YEAR - NEW YOU!

Jump Start Your Journey to Wellness at Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness

As the calendar turns to 2025, millions of Americans will firmly resolve to finally lose weight and work towards wellness. Most will fail. Why? Because they do not develop the tools and support required to stick to a sustainable plan and develop the discipline required to reach their weight loss goals.

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Announcing our New Year, New You - 60-DAY JUMPSTART WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS

These discounted programs are available for a limited time to get you moving on your journey through weight loss to wellness in 2025. These plans feature the highly effective GLP-1 medications, semaglutide and tirzepatide. These proven treatment programs include a comprehensive health assessment, introductory session with a certified wellness coach, Harvard Public Health Institute Nutrition Plan, 60-day supply of our GLP-1 companion supplement and a 12-pack sample of our lean muscle-promoting Nirvana Super Water. After 60-days of treatment, you will receive a complimentary follow-up health assessment to set your course for sustainable success.

These affordable, prepaid plans offer all the tools and support our customers need to succeed while saving participants hundreds of dollars.

For two decades, Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness has empowered clients across Southwest Florida to achieve sustainable weight loss through personalized care and clinically proven treatment programs.

Embarking on a weight loss journey can be both exciting and daunting. While the initial motivation to shed those extra pounds may come easily, maintaining consistency proves to be the true challenge. Sticking to your weight loss plan requires dedication, strategic planning, and a solid support system.

1. Set Realistic Goals

One of the most important steps on your weight loss journey is to set achievable and realistic goals. Rather than aiming for a drastic weight loss target, strive for gradual changes that are manageable over time. Experts suggest aiming to lose 1-2 pounds per week, which allows your body to adjust to the changes without feeling overwhelmed.

2. Create a Structured Meal Plan

A well-thought-out meal plan is integral to a successful weight loss strategy. Planning your meals in advance helps you stay organized and reduces the temptation to opt for unhealthy options when hunger strikes. Focus on incorporating a balanced diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein, and healthy fats.

3. Find Physical Activities You Enjoy

Exercise is a vital component of weight loss, but it's also essential to find activities you genuinely enjoy. This will increase your chances of sticking with a routine. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate cardio each week, incorporating strength training exercises twice a week.

4. Foster a Supportive Environment

Creating a supportive environment is key to sustaining your weight loss journey. Surround yourself with family, friends, or support groups who encourage your efforts and share similar goals. Whether it's cooking healthy meals together or participating in group workouts, having a support system can provide motivation and accountability.

5. Monitor Your Progress

Tracking your progress not only helps in holding yourself accountable but also in celebrating your achievements—no matter how small. Use various methods to monitor your weight loss, including weekly weigh-ins, measuring your body measurements, or taking progress photos. Remember, the



scale is just one measure of progress; improvements in energy levels, mood, and overall well-being are equally important and validating.

6. Overcome Obstacle Mindsets

Weight loss is not devoid of setbacks; recognizing and addressing these potential obstacles is crucial. Stress, emotional eating, or social situations can hinder your commitment. Developing a repertoire of coping mechanisms to handle cravings, stress, or triggering environments can empower you.

7. Educate Yourself

Knowledge is power when it comes to weight loss. Understanding the nutritional content of foods, the science behind metabolism, and the principles of portion control can empower you to make informed decisions. Consider attending workshops, reading books, or following credible dietitians or health influencers who share evidence-based information.

8. Stay Patient and Adaptable

Lastly, patience is crucial in your weight loss journey. Results may not always manifest as quickly as you desire, but maintaining a long-term perspective is essential. Weight loss is not solely about numbers; it's about adopting healthier habits that lead to a balanced lifestyle. Be prepared to adjust your approach based on what works or doesn't work for you.

Let's Get Started!

Are you ready to start your 2025 wellness journey? Book a consultation today at one of our Florida locations in Bradenton, Sarasota, or Lakewood Ranch. Each Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness clinic is ready to support you with compassionate care, proven results, and personalized wellness plans tailored to you.

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Illuminating Vision: Understanding the Miracle of the Retina During National Eye Health Month

Jesse T. McCann, M.D., Ph.D.

In the intricate landscape of human biology, few structures are as remarkable and complex as the human eye, with the retina standing as a true marvel of natural engineering. As we observe National Eye Health Month, it's crucial to shed light on this extraordinary tissue that serves as the window to our visual world, transforming light into the vibrant images we perceive daily.

The retina is far more than a simple photographic surface. It is a sophisticated neural network that acts as an extension of our brain, processing visual information with incredible precision. Located at the back of the eye, this thin layer of tissue is approximately the size of a postage stamp but contains over 10 million photoreceptor cells that capture light and convert it into electrical signals our brain can interpret.

These photoreceptor cells, known as rods and cones, play distinctly different roles in our vision. Rods are responsible for low-light and peripheral vision, allowing us to navigate in dimmer environments. Cones, on the other hand, enable color perception and detailed central vision. This intricate system works seamlessly, allowing us to distinguish between subtle color variations, detect motion, and perceive depth with remarkable accuracy.

However, the retina is also vulnerable to numerous conditions that can compromise vision. Diseases like diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, and retinal detachment can significantly impact visual health. These conditions often develop gradually, making regular eye examinations critical for early detection and prevention.

Lifestyle factors play a significant role in maintaining retinal health. Nutrition, for instance, is paramount. Nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids, lutein, zeaxanthin, and vitamins A, C, and E are essential for supporting retinal function. Foods such as leafy green vegetables, fish, nuts, and colorful fruits can provide these crucial nutrients.



Technological advances have revolutionized our understanding and treatment of retinal conditions. Sophisticated imaging techniques like optical coherence tomography (OCT) now allow physicians to obtain detailed, cross-sectional images of the retina, enabling early diagnosis and precise monitoring of various eye diseases.

Protecting your retinal health extends beyond medical interventions. Simple practices can make a substantial difference. Wearing UV-protective sunglasses, maintaining a balanced diet, staying hydrated, avoiding smoking, and managing chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension can significantly contribute to preserving retinal integrity.

For individuals with a family history of eye diseases or those experiencing vision changes, proactive medical consultation is crucial. Annual comprehensive eye exams can detect early signs of retinal issues, potentially preventing significant vision loss.

As we commemorate National Eye Health Month, let us celebrate the remarkable complexity of the retina and commit to understanding and protecting this vital sensory organ. Our eyes are not just windows to the world but intricate biological systems that deserve careful attention, respect, and ongoing care.

Vision is a precious gift, and the retina is its masterful curator. By embracing knowledge, practicing preventive care, and seeking timely medical guidance, we can ensure that our visual journey remains clear, vibrant, and full of wonder.



Jesse T. McCann, M.D., Ph.D.

Originally from New York, Dr. McCann trained as a materials chemist with an undergraduate degree in chemistry from Dartmouth College followed by a Ph.D. from the University of Washington in materials chemistry. In graduate school, he worked on designing advanced nanoscale materials used in the aerospace and biomedical fields. He completed his medical degree (Alpha Omega Alpha) from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx and residency training in ophthalmology at New York University. His interest in ophthalmology was cemented after volunteering to help prevent night blindness caused by Vitamin A insufficiency in the Thar Desert region of India.

Dr. McCann is currently an active member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the European Society of Retina Specialists, and the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

Since becoming a retina specialist, Dr. McCann has volunteered internationally to expand eye care and diabetic retinopathy care in Bolivia with Retina Global. In his free time, Dr. McCann enjoys kayaking, swimming, rescuing parrots, and spending time outdoors in the Florida sunshine.

Education: Dartmouth College, University of Washington, Albert Einstein College of Medicine (Alpha Omega Alpha), Greenwich-Yale New Haven Health, New York University, Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospitals, Columbia University

Retina Group of Florida

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

Please call (941) 743-3937 today to schedule your eye exam. When necessary same day appointments can often be accommodated.



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FGCU's Transformative Impact on Community Health

The university's Marieb College prepares resilient professionals and resourceful caregivers for the well-being of Southwest Florida

Rehabilitation science is a multidisciplinary field that studies human function and disability and aims to help people achieve optimal health. It is a field evolving constantly and rapidly, resulting in therapeutic advances that professionals can apply in hospitals, clinics, fitness centers and other healthcare settings.

With that in mind, Florida Gulf Coast University prepares and inspires resilient professionals and resourceful caregivers capable of transforming community health and well-being through the latest best practices and technology in rehabilitation science.

FGCU's Marieb College of Health & Human Services offers highly successful degree programs in exercise science, occupational therapy and physical therapy that instill the kind of solutions-oriented curiosity that makes our students lifelong learners. Intensive fieldwork, community involvement and inter-professional learning guarantee students in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences have everything they need to deliver forward-thinking care — no matter what changes in the industry.

This approach enables our graduates to achieve licensure pass rates well above the statewide average — 100% in most cases — as well as 100% employment rates. Healthcare leaders consider our graduates Florida's best-prepared therapists, trainers and educators.

Occupational therapy: A record of success

Occupational therapists assess, plan and organize rehabilitative programs that help build or restore vocational and daily living skills and general independence to people with disabilities or developmental delays. The first occupational therapy students at FGCU enrolled in 1999, pursuing a bachelor's program that later transitioned to a master of science degree.

After they complete their studies and 24 weeks of fieldwork, graduates participate in a licensure exam hosted by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy. For 10 consecutive years,



Marieb OT graduates have upheld a 100% pass rate for this high-stakes exam. In fact, FGCU was the only state school to achieve that milestone for the most recent exam.

The program's outcomes, paired with FGCU's affordability and student support mechanisms, are truly second to none. The occupational therapy department is well-supported with eight full-time faculty members boasting over 200 years of practice experience combined. They have built a fully-accredited, cohesive curriculum, improved student learning outcomes and built collaborative relationships with practicing therapists in the community.

Physical therapy: Practitioners teaching practitioners

As with occupational therapy, graduates of Marieb College's physical therapy program maintain a 100% pass rate on the National Physical Therapy Examination. All states require physical therapists to be licensed, and a doctor of physical therapy degree like FGCU's is a standard requirement to practice in the field.

Many aspects set Marieb's doctorate apart from other schools. Smaller class sizes mean a better student-to-faculty ratio and more personalized learning. Problem-based learning promotes lifelong active learning skills. Classes are taught by

faculty, rather than teaching assistants or graduate students. And the majority of faculty members are still practicing clinicians, so they bring experience from the field directly into the classroom.

What's more, the college's state-of-the-art labs provide hands-on experience with current technology. Students perfect various therapeutic and diagnostic assessment techniques in cutting-edge sports medicine, human performance, musculoskeletal, neuromuscular and aquatics rehabilitation labs.

As a result, Marieb graduates are exceptionally prepared to help injured or ill people improve movement and manage pain in settings that include hospitals, clinics, private practices, patients' homes and nursing homes.

Exercise science: Promoting lifelong wellness

Exercise science embraces the study of the physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual dimensions of movement. At FGCU, students in this bachelor's degree program learn how the body responds to activity and exercise over the course of one's life and how individuals can attain a higher level of all-around wellness.

Interdisciplinary but strongly based in science, Marieb College's exercise science program emphasizes applied and critical thinking that prepares students for graduate studies in health-related fields or to start careers helping people improve their health and physical capabilities. In the college's human performance laboratory, students learn to use resistance training equipment, body composition analyzers, cardiac stress systems, anti-gravity and underwater treadmills and other state-of-the-art technology.

Graduates sit for national certification exams through the National Strength and Conditioning Association and the American College of Sports Medicine.

For more information about Marieb College's Department of Rehabilitation Sciences or other programs, go to fgcu.edu/mariebcollege.



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MEMORY MATTERS

By Neuropsychiatric Research Center of SW Florida

"Why is my wife so mean to me?" "My grandfather got downright ornery, wouldn't do anything we asked, and he yells all the time." "My mother is always so nervous and fidgety. When I tell her to relax, she says unkind things to me."

Are any of these situations familiar? For individuals living with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, sometimes it may seem like your loved one is being difficult. As a caregiver, this can be very frustrating. One of the best phrases to remember goes like this: *a person with dementia is not giving you a hard time they are having a hard time*. What does that mean exactly?

Alzheimer's disease is a brain disease that impacts everything the brain controls. Memory, speech, logical thinking, reasoning, executive functioning, and expressions, are just some of the things that can be impacted. And while it may seem that someone is behaving in a hateful, ornery, or unkind manner, it can be helpful to realize that what is being seen and experienced is likely a result of the impact of the disease on the person. Some of the behavioral expressions may be a result of an underlying unmet need.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, the individual with the disease is experiencing a biologically profound loss of their ability to negotiate new information and stimulus. This is due to disease, versus their personality. This can be difficult to understand for those who do not have the cognitive impact of this disease. To make things more challenging, sometimes the behavior observed is different from day to day, even hour to hour.

It is estimated that between 30 to 50% of individuals with Alzheimer's disease experience agitation and irritability at some time during the course of their illness. What we may see is restlessness, nervousness, short temperedness, expressions of frustration and lack of cooperation. Some individuals may pace, some may perform repetitive motions, others may be quicker to argue and raise their voice and may appear to be in total denial of the facts we present to them.

What looks like denial in someone with the disease may be related to the changes in the brain which impact cognition and awareness. As a result, approaches to address our observations and concerns may not be effective or achieve the response desired. Having a factual, logic based response many times is not effective.

What approaches and techniques can work? Unfortunately, it is true that responses that can be effective with one person may not work with another. As many caregivers know, the same approach used with the same individual may have a different response on a day to day and even on an hour to hour basis. Having some general considerations can be helpful. Here's an acronym to help: **CARE**

C: Consistently Calm: That may seem impossible some days, and that is to be expected. Doing your best to respond to what you are seeing in a calm, nonjudgmental and caring manner can help.

A: Appropriate Activities: Many times, when individuals are bored or don't have structure, some challenging behavioral expressions may present themselves. Many things can be considered an activity and it's important that the chosen activity is appropriate for the individual and tailored to their interests as much as possible.

Another important consideration is time of day, length of activity and inviting someone to participate versus insisting on participation. A saying that can reflect interacting with someone with Alzheimer's disease is "the more you insist, the more they will resist." None of us like to be told what to do and being invited or asked to do something, versus being told may be more successful.

R: Regular Routine: Keeping a consistent routine, based on your loved one's habits can help decrease anxiety and preserve independence. The Alzheimer's Association suggests considering the person's likes, dislikes, strengths, and abilities when developing the routine. Knowing the times of day that the person functions best and allowing ample time for activities is essential. While a consistent schedule is helpful, building in flexibility and going with the flow is also an important consideration.



E: Engagement and Empathy: Include the person in everyday activities and let them help, even if they don't do things exactly the way you hope they would. Include them in things they enjoy. Participating in your faith community, helping in the garden, running errands, having a meal are all ways to engage. Being empathetic and understanding are also tools that can be valuable. It can be challenging to be a caregiver, and recognizing that it must also be difficult for the person with the disease as well provides perspective.

Have you noticed subtle changes in your loved one's memory? It's not uncommon for memory lapses to occur as we age, but when they start impacting daily life, it's essential to take action.

Connect with the experienced team at the Neuropsychiatric Research Center at 239-939-7777, where we have a proven track record of helping individuals and families navigate memory related challenges. Remember, you're not alone on this journey. #MemoriesMatter

References:
Anxiety & Agitation | Alzheimer's Association
<https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/stages-behaviors/anxiety-agitation>

Agitation and Dementia: Prevention and Treatment Strategies in Acute and Chronic Conditions - PMC (nih.gov)



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New Year's Resolutions: Transforming Joint Pain Management with Biologic Treatments

By Derek P. Wimmer, PA-C

As the new year approaches, many individuals find themselves confronting a persistent challenge that threatens their resolution to become more active and healthy: chronic joint pain. Traditional approaches often involve temporary relief methods like steroid injections, but emerging biologic treatments offer a more comprehensive and long-term solution to managing joint discomfort and improving overall mobility.

The Limitations of Conventional Pain Management

For years, patients have relied on conventional pain management techniques that primarily mask symptoms rather than address underlying causes. Steroid injections, while providing temporary relief, are a short-term solution that can potentially mask progressive joint damage. These treatments offer quick but fleeting comfort, often leading patients into a cycle of repeated interventions without addressing the root of their joint issues.

The Hidden Costs of Temporary Solutions

Repeated steroid injections come with significant drawbacks:

- Potential cartilage deterioration
- Increased risk of joint infection
- Temporary pain relief that doesn't resolve underlying inflammation
- Potential weakening of surrounding tissues
- Masking of progressive joint damage

Biologic Treatments: A Revolutionary Approach

Biologic treatments represent a paradigm shift in joint pain management. Unlike traditional methods that simply cover up pain, these innovative therapies target the underlying mechanisms of joint inflammation and degradation. By focusing on the body's immune response and cellular processes, biologic treatments offer a more holistic and sustainable approach to joint health.

Key Advantages of Biologic Treatments

1. Targeted Inflammation Reduction: Biologics work at the cellular level to interrupt inflammatory processes, providing more precise and effective relief compared to broad-spectrum treatments.

2. Regenerative Potential: Many biologic treatments stimulate the body's natural healing mechanisms, potentially helping to repair damaged joint tissues rather than simply numbing pain.



3. Personalized Treatment: Advanced biologics can be tailored to an individual's specific genetic markers and inflammatory profiles, ensuring more effective and personalized interventions.

Implementing a Comprehensive Joint Health Strategy

For those making new year's resolutions focused on improved mobility and reduced pain, a multi-faceted approach is crucial:

Medical Interventions

- Consult with rheumatologists and orthopedic specialists
- Explore cutting-edge biologic treatment options
- Consider comprehensive diagnostic imaging to understand joint health
- Discuss personalized treatment plans

Lifestyle Modifications

- Incorporate low-impact exercises like swimming and cycling
- Maintain a healthy weight to reduce joint stress
- Practice regular stretching and mobility exercises
- Consume anti-inflammatory diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids

Emerging Treatment Options

- Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy
- Stem cell treatments
- Peptides
- Exosomes
- Advanced monoclonal antibody therapies
- Genetic and molecular targeted interventions
- Focused Shockwave therapy

The Psychological Impact of Effective Pain Management

Beyond physical relief, effective joint pain management can dramatically improve mental health. By providing hope and tangible improvements, biologic treatments help individuals reclaim their quality of life, enabling them to pursue new year's resolutions with genuine enthusiasm and confidence.

Conclusion

As medical science continues to advance, the approach to joint pain is evolving from mere symptom management to comprehensive healing. This new year presents an opportunity to embrace innovative treatments that offer real solutions, transforming joint health from a source of limitation to a pathway of renewed mobility and well-being.

Consulting with healthcare professionals remains the most critical step in developing a personalized joint health strategy that aligns with individual needs and goals.

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Vertigo or Meniere's Disease?

Aren't they the same?

By Dr. Drew Hall

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

What is vertigo?

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

Causes of Vertigo

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

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

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

Vertigo may also be associated with:

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



Symptoms of vertigo

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

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

Other symptoms that may accompany vertigo include:

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

What is Meniere's Disease?

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

Causes of Meniere's disease

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

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

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

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

Symptoms of Meniere's disease

Signs and symptoms of Meniere's disease include:

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

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

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

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

Schedule a no obligation FREE consultation in our office today!



Dr. Drew Hall



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HORMONAL HARMONY:

Balancing Body and Mind through a Holistic Approach

BY DR. KAROLINA BAKER, MD

In the intricate dance of human physiology, hormones play a crucial dual role - both physiological and psychological. These powerful chemical messengers are the conductors of our most fundamental bodily experiences, simultaneously regulating critical functions like metabolism and growth while profoundly influencing our mood, behavior, and overall mental well-being.

The Complex World of Hormonal Interaction

Many patients arrive at our clinic unaware that hormonal imbalances could be the root cause of their health concerns. These invisible conductors of our body's symphony can trigger a wide array of symptoms, from persistent fatigue and unpredictable mood swings to unexplained weight fluctuations and sleep disturbances.

The endocrine system operates as an intricate, interconnected network where each hormone potentially impacts our mental state in nuanced and profound ways. Consider cortisol, often dubbed the "stress hormone" - when chronically elevated, it can cascade into a complex web of physical and mental health challenges:

- **Physical manifestations:** Fatigue, weight gain, high blood pressure, digestive problems
- **Mental health impacts:** Irritability, anxiety, depression, impaired memory

Similarly, thyroid hormone imbalances can create a perfect storm of symptoms affecting both body and mind. Reproductive hormones like estrogen and testosterone further demonstrate this intricate dance, with their fluctuations potentially triggering mood swings, anxiety, and cognitive difficulties.

The Aging Factor: Hormonal Decline

As we age, hormone levels naturally decline, increasing our vulnerability to degenerative diseases and systemic inflammation. This process typically begins during menopause but can start earlier. The consequences of hormonal deficiency are comprehensive:

- **Physical changes:** Decreased muscle mass, reduced bone density, skin transformations
- **Cognitive impacts:** Forgetfulness, potential cognitive decline
- **Long-term health risks:** Heart disease, osteoporosis, decreased libido

Rebalancing Hormones: A Holistic Approach

Addressing hormonal imbalances requires a multifaceted strategy. Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) represents one approach, but it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. Comprehensive hormone management involves:

1. Lifestyle modifications
2. Stress management techniques
3. Nutritional optimization
4. Targeted medical interventions

Bioidentical vs. Synthetic Hormones: Understanding the Difference

Not all hormone replacement therapies are created equal. Bioidentical hormones, derived from plant sources like soy or yam, are molecularly identical to human hormones. Unlike synthetic alternatives, they are designed to restore normal physiological function with potentially reduced side effects.

The key differences lie in molecular structure and metabolic interaction. Bioidentical hormones are crafted to mimic the body's natural hormonal processes, potentially offering a more harmonious approach to hormone replacement.

The Evolving Landscape of Hormone Replacement

Historical perspectives on HRT have been complex and sometimes controversial. The landmark Women's Health Initiative study in 2000 initially raised concerns about increased health risks. However, subsequent research has refined our understanding, highlighting the importance of:

- Personalized treatment approaches
- Using natural, bioidentical hormones
- Considering individual patient profiles
- Employing appropriate delivery methods

A Holistic Well-being Framework

True hormonal harmony extends beyond medical intervention. It encompasses:

- Nutrition that supports endocrine function
- Regular physical activity
- Stress reduction techniques
- Quality sleep
- Emotional well-being practices

Mindfulness practices like meditation and yoga have demonstrated remarkable ability to regulate stress hormones and enhance emotional resilience. Regular exercise helps balance hormones like insulin and growth hormone while simultaneously releasing mood-enhancing endorphins.

ABOUT AVEN CLINIC

By using a combination of integrative medicine and functional medicine, we strive to give our patients a better understanding of the beautiful ecosystem that occurs within our bodies. When our bodies are not functioning optimally, this ecosystem is compromised. It is our mission to provide accurate knowledge on how to improve their health and lifestyle choices by identifying the root cause of "dis-ease" and healing the body with a balance of science and holistic modalities.

Aven Clinic is an Integrative Primary Care and Functional Medicine clinic. We specialize in addressing a full spectrum of health conditions, including: sexual health, aging, weight gain, hormone imbalance, chronic viral illness, immune system regeneration, autoimmune conditions, Lyme disease, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, and more. Our treatment services help to promote healthier cells and tissues for a better quality of life. We achieve this by improving energy and promoting overall well-being.

The functional Medicine approach addresses the underlying causes of disease by using a systematic approach while engaging both patients and practitioners in a therapeutic partnership. It is an evolution in the practice of medicine that better addresses the healthcare needs of the 21st century.

Functional Medicine addresses the whole person and sets out to treat the root cause of disease, not just mitigate symptoms with medication. This patient-centered approach involves a more thorough health evaluation, factoring in one's history, lifestyle, environment, genetic components, and emotional state, which is important to properly diagnose and treat. In this way, functional medicine supports the unique expression of health and vitality for each individual.

Our goal is to offer personalized and accessible functional medicine strategies for motivated, coachable, and committed individuals seeking to restore their health.



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Wound Care and Lymphedema: The Transformative Power of Compression Garments

By James Ferrara - Occupational Therapist and Certified Lymphedema Therapist

Navigating the complexities of wound care and lymphedema can be a daunting challenge, but the dedicated team at Functional Transformation Clinic is here to guide you through the process with compassion and expertise. By leveraging the power of compression garments, they are helping patients reclaim their quality of life and achieve remarkable results.

Wound care is a delicate and intricate process, requiring a personalized approach to address the unique needs of each patient. The experts at Functional Transformation Clinic understand that proper wound management involves more than just dressing the affected area. They take a holistic approach, considering the underlying factors that contribute to the development and healing of wounds. This includes evaluating factors such as circulation, nutrition, and overall skin health, which can all play a crucial role in the healing process.

One of the key tools in their arsenal is the strategic use of compression garments. These specialized garments apply targeted pressure to the affected limbs, promoting proper circulation and facilitating the efficient drainage of excess fluid. This, in turn, helps to reduce swelling, alleviate pain, and create an optimal environment for wound healing. Additionally, the compression provided by these garments can help to prevent the formation of new wounds by improving overall skin health and reducing the risk of further complications, such as skin breakdown and the development of pressure ulcers.

Lymphedema, a chronic condition characterized by the accumulation of fluid in the body's tissues, is another area where compression garments shine. Left untreated, lymphedema can lead to a host of complications, including increased risk of infection, reduced mobility, and a diminished quality of life. The clinicians at Functional Transformation Clinic understand the profound impact of this condition and are dedicated to providing comprehensive care.

Through a personalized assessment, the team at Functional Transformation Clinic works closely with each patient to identify the underlying causes of their lymphedema and develop a tailored treatment plan. By incorporating custom-fitted compression



garments into the regimen, they empower patients to take an active role in managing their condition and achieving long-term success. These garments not only help to reduce swelling and improve circulation, but they can also prevent further progression of the condition, minimizing the risk of infections and other complications. The team at Functional Transformation Clinic also educates patients on proper self-management techniques, ensuring they have the knowledge and tools to maintain their progress even after the initial treatment.

The transformative power of compression garments extends beyond just wound care and lymphedema management. These versatile tools can also be employed to address a wide range of other circulatory and vascular issues, such as deep vein thrombosis, chronic venous insufficiency, and even the prevention of further complications in individuals with diabetes. By promoting proper blood flow and reducing the buildup of fluid, compression garments can play a crucial role in managing these conditions and improving overall cardiovascular health. In some cases, the use of compression garments can even help to delay or prevent the need for more invasive interventions, such as surgery or the use of pharmaceutical medications.

At Functional Transformation Clinic, the patient's well-being is at the heart of everything they do. Their team of dedicated healthcare professionals collaborates seamlessly to ensure that each individual receives the personalized attention and

support they deserve. From registered nurses and physical therapists to certified lymphedema therapists and wound care specialists, the experts at Functional Transformation Clinic work together to develop a comprehensive treatment plan that addresses the unique needs of each patient.

By combining the latest advancements in compression therapy with a compassionate, patient-centered approach, the team at Functional Transformation Clinic is transforming the lives of those they serve. If you or a loved one are struggling with wound care, lymphedema, or any other circulatory or vascular condition, they are here to help. Schedule a consultation today and unlock the life-changing benefits of compression garments, where specialized care and compassion converge to empower you on your journey towards optimal health and wellness.



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PREMIERE WEIGHT LOSS OPENS THIRD LOCATION IN LAKEWOOD RANCH

Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness is proud to announce the grand opening of our third Sarasota/Manatee location in the heart of Lakewood Ranch. Conveniently located at 11532 Palmbrush Trail, our state-of-the-art weight loss and wellness clinic is open Tuesday-Friday from 9am to 5pm and Saturday from 9am-1pm.

For two decades, Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness has empowered clients across Southwest Florida to achieve sustainable weight loss through personalized care and clinically proven treatment programs.

Our affordable, expert-designed weight loss plans integrate the new-generation GLP-1 medications (semaglutide and tirzepatide), a comprehensive nutrition plan, and lifestyle coaching to ensure positive and sustainable outcomes. Clients benefit from comprehensive health assessments and individualized guidance, tailored to their unique goals.

At Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness, we know that achieving and maintaining a healthy weight can be challenging. Our southwest Florida clinics provide individualized, compassionate care designed to meet each patient's unique needs. With convenient locations in Bradenton, Sarasota, and now Lakewood Ranch, our weight loss and wellness centers are here to support you every step of the way.

Premiere is dedicated to helping Florida residents transform their lives. Since 2005, we have been providing science-based weight loss programs, nutrition counseling, and advanced health and wellness services. Our caring team of professionals works with each patient to create sustainable, realistic plans for achieving their goals.

Our certified wellness experts guide patients toward long-lasting health improvements. We offer custom health assessments, our Comprehensive Initial Health Assessment, and tailored treatment plans to support healthy, sustainable weight management. Each of our Florida locations is equipped with state-of-the-art diagnostic tools like the Styku body composition analysis to ensure effective and accurate tracking of your progress.

At Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness, we focus on a holistic approach to health, addressing lifestyle, diet, and exercise habits. We take the time to understand your specific needs and goals. Our teams are here to guide and support you with a personalized roadmap to better health.



Our customers' journey through weight loss to wellness begins with our Comprehensive Initial Health Assessment, which provides a full understanding of your current health and helps shape your personalized wellness plan.

Our assessment includes:

- **Diagnostic Lab Work:** A full blood panel to evaluate key health markers.
- **Styku Body Composition Analysis:** Advanced technology to measure and track body composition changes.
- **Personal Health Coaching:** One-on-one coaching with a certified wellness expert to set and reach your health goals.
- **Nutritional Guidance:** From the Harvard School of Public Health

How GLP-1 Medications work:

GLP-1 antagonists are now well-known for their effectiveness in diabetes management and safe, sustainable weight loss. GLP-1 treatments stimulate the receptor for the hormone glucagon-like peptide 1, which increase insulin production and satiety (the feeling of fullness). GLP-1 agonists release into the digestive tract after a meal and also impacts the hunger center of the brain, sending signals that the user is full. GLP-1 treatments also slow the movement of food through the stomach (delayed gastric emptying). This helps the user to feel full longer.

Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness offers the GLP-1 medications - semaglutide and tirzepatide. Both have been shown to offer effective and sustainable weight loss when utilized in conjunction with a sensible diet and exercise plan.

Are you ready to start your wellness journey?

Book a consultation today at one of our Florida locations in Bradenton, Sarasota, or Lakewood Ranch. Each Premiere Weight Loss + Wellness clinic is ready to support you with compassionate care, proven results, and personalized wellness plans tailored to you.

Our Sarasota/Manatee Locations:

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For plan and pricing information visit:
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Diagnostic Imaging Saves Lives

Medical imaging technology has revolutionized health care over the past 30 years, allowing doctors to find disease earlier and improve patient outcomes. Whether you are a young child with cancer or a grandmother who just wants to make sure she's in good health, medical imaging helps you detect and diagnose disease at its earliest, most treatable stages and guides physicians and patients in determining the most appropriate and effective care.

Radiology Associates physicians are board certified radiologists with training in all aspects of diagnostic imaging, including CT, Mammography, MRI, Ultrasound, X-ray, and Nuclear Medicine. Additionally, each has advanced subspecialty training in one or more areas of medical imaging or interventional radiology that we believe provides the basis for providing the highest level of patient care.

Our goal is to provide high quality patient care in a comfortable environment, using the latest imaging and interventional technology and working in close collaboration with referring physicians.

Radiology Associates of Venice and Englewood is pleased to offer the following diagnostic imaging services:

MRI Scan

Magnetic resonance imaging, commonly known as MRI is a medical test that aids physicians in diagnosis and treating medical conditions. This is a non-invasive and typically painless test.

Breast MRI

Breast MRI uses Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to look specifically at the breast. It is a non-invasive procedure that doctors can use to determine what the inside of the breast looks like without having to do surgery or flatten the breast (as in a mammogram).

MRA

Magnetic Resonance Angiography - Magnetic Resonance Angiography (MRA) uses the same MRI scanner to get its images, however it is a special type of MRI scan that looks at blood vessels and blood flow. MRA can help diagnose aneurysms, and also detect narrowing or blockages of blood vessels. If there is decreased or blocked flow leading to the



brain this can be the cause of a stroke. Additionally, it can be an ideal aid to the physician for surgical planning. Some MRA's, as with MRI's, require a contrast medium.

CT Scan

CT Scan sometimes called CAT scanning is a painless and a non-invasive medical test that helps physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions.

Ultrasound

A process that uses high-frequency sound waves to produce pictures of the inside of the body. Because ultrasound images are captured in real time, they are able to show blood flowing through the blood vessels, as well as the movement of the body's organs and its structure.

Nuclear Medicine

Nuclear medicine is a specialized form of radiology. Patients are given a radioactive substance either by mouth or intravenously that collects in specific body organs. Then the gamma camera detects the energy being emitted from that substance and an image can then be captured.

Digital X-Ray & Fluoroscopy

An X-ray is a painless and quick test for the patient to endure. It involves exposing the part of the body that is being examined to a small dose of ionizing radiation to produce pictures of the inside of the body.

3D Mammography

3D mammography is a new technology in the fight against breast cancer that allows doctors to examine your breast tissue one layer at a time. 3D mammography uses high-powered computing to convert digital breast images into a stack of very thin layers or "slices"- building what is essentially a "3-dimensional mammogram".

Bone Density DEXA

Bone density scanning, also called dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) or bone densitometry, is an enhanced form of x-ray technology that is used to measure bone loss.

PET Scan

Positron emission tomography, also called PET imaging or a PET scan, is a type of nuclear medicine imaging.

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



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Defeat Gum Disease

There is a silent oral disease affecting more than 80% of adults. Chances are you either have had or are currently battling periodontal (gum) disease. Unfortunately, in many cases, the disease goes undetected until painful symptoms begin occurring. At which time the disease and any adverse conditions have already set in. Because there are no early signs of periodontal disease, it often goes untreated until the physical symptoms surface and by then the concern is treatment not prevention. It is extremely important for everyone to have regular dental check ups at the recommended six month interval. Without these check ups and proper oral care, periodontal disease can silently cause not only oral health problems but can also contribute to other major health concerns.

Periodontal disease, also known as gum disease, is the chronic infection of the soft tissue around the teeth caused by plaque producing bacteria. The gums hold the teeth in place. As the gums become infected, they loosen their hold on the teeth and pockets are formed. These pockets collect debris and cause more infection and bone loss to the tooth. Gum disease is infectious and contagious. It can spread from tooth to tooth in the mouth and from one person's mouth to another through saliva.

As with other diseases, prevention is key to good oral health. It is important for everyone to practice diligent, thorough, and proper oral care by scheduling check ups every six months. At which time, your dentist will be able to detect and treat any signs of periodontal disease before symptoms begin to show and the damage is done. As mentioned earlier, most people do not know they have periodontal disease until they begin suffering from any combination of the following signs:

- Chronic bad breath
- Red or swollen gums
- Bleeding gums especially after tooth brushing
- Tender or sore gums
- Loose or shifting teeth
- Receding gums
- Sensitive teeth



If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, there are various treatment plans your dentist may recommend depending on the severity of your case. The most important action is meticulous at home daily oral care. Teeth must be brushed twice or more times each day for at least two minutes and flossed at least once per day. Other treatments include oral rinses, periodontal cleanings, and sometimes surgery.

Traditional periodontal surgery involves cutting and suturing of the gums and recovery time can be long and painful. With the advancement of modern laser technology, there is an alternative. Joseph H. Farag, DMD offers a better alternative for patients battling periodontal disease. Dr. Farag offers patients laser-assisted new attachment procedure (LANAP™) which is a no-cut, no-sew procedure to treat mild to advanced periodontal disease. The advancements in laser surgery techniques, have made treating periodontal faster and less painful. LANAP™ is much less invasive than traditional surgery, allowing patients to return to work the next day if desired.

Even with the benefits of LANAP™ it is obviously best to practice good oral care. The most important preventative measure to avoid the insidious gum disease is to take excellent care of your teeth. Proper cleaning at least twice a day is imperative. The goal is to keep the bacteria that cause the plaque at very low levels.

If your gums are painful, red, or swollen don't ignore the signs; make an appointment today that may save your teeth and gums. Treating periodontal disease sooner is always better than later.

Benefits of LANAP™

EASY - LANAP™ is about as EASY as erasing a blackboard - unlike older techniques, there is no cutting and no suturing of the gums.

MINIMAL DISCOMFORT - Both during and post procedure, the patient experiences very minimal discomfort with LANAP™ than with prior standard surgery techniques.

SHORTER PROCEDURE TIME - It takes less time to complete LANAP™ than traditional surgery. Typically it takes is two 2-hour visits to the office and two follow up visits. Traditional surgery requires four sessions of about one hour each, with subsequent visits for suture removal and additional check-ups.

LESS GUM LOSS - LANAP™ minimizes the loss of gum tissue, traditional surgery often involves removing a significant amount of gum tissue. This tissue loss can lead to sensitive teeth since your roots are exposed. Also, if the treatment needs to be performed again in the future, you have not removed the bone and gums during the first LANAP™ treatment. Typically with LANAP™, any gum tissue shrinkage is actually due to reduced swelling of the area that was previously diseased and inflamed.

SHORT RECOVERY - Many patients fully recover from LANAP™ within 24 hours. In most cases, patients feel just fine post surgery and daily activities are not interrupted. On the other hand, recovery after traditional surgery can take up to 4 weeks during which patients can experience considerable pain and swelling.

SAFE - LANAP™ with the PerioLase is SAFE for patients with health concerns such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or those taking medications such as Coumadin or Cyclosporine.

Dr. Joseph Farag - Port Charlotte Dentalcare

941.764.9555

3441 Conway Blvd, Port Charlotte

www.Drfarag.com

Hearing Better on the Phone: Technology's Transformative Solutions

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

In today's fast-paced digital world, staying connected through phone communication is crucial. For individuals with hearing challenges, technological advances have revolutionized how we listen and communicate, offering multiple innovative solutions to improve phone conversations.

Bluetooth: The Wireless Hearing Companion

Bluetooth technology has become a game-changer for phone communication. Modern hearing aids and cochlear implants now come with built-in Bluetooth capabilities, allowing direct audio streaming from smartphones. This means clearer, more direct sound transmission directly into your hearing device, eliminating background noise and improving overall sound quality.

Users can connect their devices seamlessly, adjusting volume and settings directly from their smartphone. Many hearing aids now function like wireless headphones, providing crisp, personalized audio experiences during phone calls, making communication more accessible and comfortable.

Caption Services: Reading Between the Lines

Caption services have dramatically transformed phone communication for those with hearing difficulties. Services like CapTel and CaptionCall provide real-time text translations of phone conversations, ensuring no word goes unheard.



CapTel phones display captions of everything said during a call, allowing users to read along while listening. CaptionCall offers similar technology, with free captioning phones for qualifying individuals. These services are particularly beneficial for those with moderate to significant hearing loss, providing a comprehensive communication solution.

Florida Relay: State-Supported Communication Access

For Florida residents, the Florida Relay service offers specialized communication assistance. This state-provided service helps individuals with hearing or speech disabilities communicate effectively by providing various relay options. Trained operators help translate conversations between hearing and non-hearing participants, ensuring everyone can communicate comfortably.

Innovative Caption Apps: Communication in Your Pocket

Smartphone technology has introduced numerous caption apps like InnoCaption, which uses advanced speech recognition to provide real-time captions. These apps work across multiple devices, offering flexibility and convenience. Users can choose from different captioning styles, making phone conversations more accessible than ever before.

Choosing Your Solution

When selecting a phone communication solution, consider your specific hearing needs, budget, and technological comfort level. Consult with audiologists, explore different technologies, and don't hesitate to try multiple options to find your perfect communication companion.

Technology continues to break communication barriers, ensuring everyone can stay connected, regardless of hearing challenges.

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

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

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Noël Crosby
Doctor of Audiology



Karen Draper
Doctor of Audiology

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

- Tingling
- Numbness
- Pins & Needles
- Burning
- Aching
- Limb Weakness
- Difficulty with Balance
- Muscle Cramps or Spasms
- Increased or Decreased Sensitivity

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.

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ESTATE ADMINISTRATION

By James W. Mallonee

How many personal representatives do you need to manage your estate following death. You can select any number of persons to serve as personal representative, but with that selection comes potential problems and litigation. You are limited (under Florida law) to who can serve as your personal representative but not as to quantity.

Florida law states that your personal representative must either be a family member or the spouse of one of the family members. It also allows any Florida resident to serve as personal representative and the individual selected must be over 18 years of age and have capacity.

The problems of selecting a personal representative normally comes into play when there are two or more nominees selected to serve at the same time. Generally speaking, the selection of multiple personal representatives is the result of Mom (or Dad) not wanting to hurt the feelings of someone and thus such persons are selected to serve together. This has the potential of causing a disaster when the personal representatives have differing agendas.

Consider the following facts:

Mom is dying and elects to have a Will drawn up. Her immediate family consists of three children, with one child living nearby and the other two living out of State. Because mom is concerned about hurting the feelings of the children by not selecting them as a personal representative, she insists that the Will give management of her estate to her three children. At mom's death, issues quickly escalate



over who has control over her real estate and bank accounts. The local child changes the locks on the real estate (in an effort to secure the property from possible vandalism). In addition, Mom's bank accounts (titled in Mom and the local child's name) are closed (supposedly in an effort to pay Mom's immediate expenses such as electric, water and insurance). Lastly, the local child removes Mom's car to secure it and keeps the keys.

So far everything seems to be moving in the right direction until one of the other children comes into town and wants to check on the house and other assets of the property. The problems quickly escalate when it is learned by the other two children that accounts were closed and there is no access to the residence.

The other two children want to enter the residence but the local child refuses and no information concerning the date of death values of the bank accounts are forthcoming. Suddenly, lines of animosity are drawn and the specter of litigation is beginning with each party claiming the other has stolen funds and items from the estate. What is worse is that there is no communication nor consent between the siblings.

The failure to communicate and gain consent among the siblings before taking action almost always assures a disaster. You should not depend on the attorney selected to manage the beneficiaries to play nicely. The question that gets asked at this point is, did this really have to happen?

The immediate answer is no. Had Mom selected only one of the children to serve then much of the animosity would not occur. What usually happens next is finger pointing and accusations which leads to litigation and expenses that simply did not have to happen. Thus, the recommendation is to have only one person serve as personal representative. Make certain that the individual you select is capable of communicating, is honest and can manage multiple things at once along with good monetary skills.

If you are unsure who would be in the best interest of your estate, have a conversation with the attorney of your choice to discuss the aspects selecting the best personal representative for your estate and the reason why you believe them to be a good choice. Being the oldest and local sibling is not always in the best interest of the family dynamics.

This article is intended for informational use only and is not for purposes of providing legal advice or association of a lawyer - client relationship.

James W. Mallonee, P.A.

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Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Remember the old merry-go-rounds on the playground when you were a kid? You would spin in circles until you felt like you were going to fly off. That's how life can feel if you don't make some necessary changes.

You live a much faster lifestyle than your parents did. Your children will live an even faster lifestyle than you did. As we enter a new year, perhaps it is a good time to evaluate the pace of your life and make some necessary adjustments. The Psalmist tells us:

In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.
Psalm 127:2

If you are getting up early and staying up late but still don't feel like you can get everything done... you are probably trying to do too much.

Living at a hectic pace comes at a price. You end up feeling more stressed because you are trying to cram too many things into your day. You end up having no margin in your life. As the margins get tighter the stress goes higher.

You have to take time to recharge your batteries. Here's a lesson I learned years ago: You have just enough time to do the will of God. If you can't get everything done on your "to do" list, maybe there are things on the list you shouldn't be doing.

I want to share with you two simple strategies to help you slow down the pace of your life so that you can enjoy life.

The first strategy is to learn to be content. If you're serious about slowing down, you don't start with your schedule—you start with your heart.

The Apostle Paul said this about contentment. *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*"
Philippians 4:11-13

If you're going to slow down your life, you have to learn contentment. Paul also said this about contentment: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it."* 1 Tim. 6:6-7

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things.

Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

I'm not waiting for *more* in order to be happy. I'm happy right now. I have dreams and I have goals but I don't need *more* in order to be happy. That's contentment.

Contentment will come easier when you realize two things: life is not a competition with other people and having *more* will not make you happier. This is not the message promoted by our culture, but it is true.

Jesus said it like this, *"Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'" Luke 12:15*

If you find yourself making statements like this:



- My life is a rat race.
- I don't know how I'm going to get it all done.
- I am just so exhausted.
- I don't know how much more of this I can take.
- I just want to escape.

These phrases are all warning signs that you are on the road to burn out. You need to slow down the pace. Perhaps as we begin this new year, taking an honest evaluation of your life and determine if some changes are necessary. Are you content in your life right now?

As the merry-go-round spins faster it is only a matter of time before you either get sick, or fall off. Or, better yet, just slow down, be content, and enjoy the ride.



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

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