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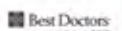
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MEMORY CARE, PERSONALIZED FOR YOU

Parkside's Gender-Specific Approach to Alzheimer's Treatment Sets Area Standard

Parkside Assisted Living and Memory Care has established itself as a pioneering force in dementia care by implementing a unique, gender-specific memory care model that stands alone in the area. This innovative approach recognizes that men and women with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia often experience different behavioral patterns, communication styles, and comfort levels, making gender-specific care environments potentially more therapeutic and calming.

Understanding the Gender-Specific Model

At Parkside's memory care cottage, male residents live on one dedicated floor while female residents occupy another, creating distinct living environments tailored to each gender's specific needs. This separation isn't about discrimination—it's about optimization. Research indicates that individuals with dementia often feel more comfortable and exhibit fewer behavioral challenges when surrounded by others who share similar life experiences and communication patterns.

The male-focused floor features activities and décor that resonate with traditional masculine interests and experiences. Common areas might showcase sports memorabilia, workshop-style activity spaces, and programming centered around topics like automobiles, military service, or professional trades. Meanwhile, the female-focused floor incorporates elements that often appeal to women of the residents' generation, such as kitchen-style gathering spaces, garden themes, and activities involving cooking, crafts, or family-centered discussions.

The Science Behind Gender-Specific Care

Memory care professionals understand that Alzheimer's and Dementia affects men and women differently, both neurologically and behaviorally. Women with dementia often maintain social connections longer and may feel more comfortable in nurturing, relationship-focused environments. Men, particularly those from older generations, may feel more at ease in environments that honor traditional masculine roles and interests.

This gender-specific approach can reduce anxiety, agitation, and confusion that sometimes occur in mixed-gender settings. Often, men may inadvertently intimidate women by entering their apartments uninvited while searching for their own rooms.



When individuals with dementia feel more comfortable in their environment, they often experience improved sleep patterns, better appetite, reduced sundowning behaviors, fewer non-consensual sexual encounters, and enhanced overall quality of life.

Comprehensive Memory Care Services

Beyond the unique living arrangement, Parkside provides comprehensive memory care services designed to support residents at every stage of their journey. The community employs specially trained care-partners who understand the complexities of dementia care and use evidence-based approaches to provide compassionate, dignified care.

Memory care programming includes cognitive stimulation activities, physical therapy, medication management, and behavioral support. Each Cottage maintains its own dining areas, activity spaces, and outdoor access, ensuring residents can enjoy structured routines while feeling secure in familiar surroundings.

The nursing team receives ongoing education in dementia care best practices, including techniques for managing challenging behaviors, communication strategies for different stages of cognitive decline, and methods for maintaining residents' dignity and independence as long as possible.

Family-Centered Approach

Parkside recognizes that memory care extends beyond the individual to encompass entire families. The community provides extensive family education and support services, helping loved ones understand the progression of dementia and learn effective communication techniques. Regular family meetings ensure care plans remain aligned with each resident's changing needs and preferences.

Setting the Standard for Innovation

As the only memory care community in the area to implement this gender-specific memory care model, Parkside demonstrates commitment to innovative, person-centered care. This approach challenges traditional memory care models and shows how communities can adapt their environments to better serve residents' unique needs.

The success of Parkside's model may inspire other communities to consider how gender-specific programming and environments could enhance their own memory care services. By prioritizing resident comfort and implementing evidence-based environmental modifications, Parkside has created a new standard for memory care excellence that puts individual dignity and comfort at the forefront of treatment.

For families seeking memory care options, Parkside's innovative approach represents a thoughtful alternative that recognizes the complex, individual nature of dementia care while providing the specialized support that residents and families deserve during this challenging journey.

To learn more about Parkside Assisted Living and Memory Care's groundbreaking gender-specific memory care program and how it might benefit your loved one, call 941-207-8609 today. Their experienced team is ready to discuss your family's specific needs and provide a personalized tour of their unique facilities.

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It's Back to School Time! The Human Eye and Retina:

A Window to Vision and Lifelong Learning

By Beth Richter, MD, PhD and George Skopis, MD



The human eye is a magnificent structure of biological engineering, allowing us to perceive the world in vivid color and details. At the crux of this organ lies the retina—a delicate, light-sensitive layer thinner than an index card which lines the back of the eye. The retina plays an essential role in vision by converting light into neural signals, which are then transmitted through the optic nerve to the brain. The retina and eye structures form the first step in the complex process of seeing.

Basic Anatomy of the Eye and Retina

The eye functions much like a camera. Light enters through the clear cornea, passes through the pupil (controlled by the iris, like a camera aperture), and is focused by the internal lens onto the retina. The retina contains two types of photoreceptor cells: rods, which are sensitive to light and allow for movement and night vision, and cones, which detect color and detail in bright light. The central part of the retina, known as the macula, is responsible for sharp central vision. At the very center of the macula is the fovea, where cone density is highest, allowing our most detailed vision. Damage or disease affecting the retina—such as macular degeneration, retinal detachment, or diabetic retinopathy—can severely impair vision. This emphasizes the importance of eye health in maintaining quality of life.

Lifelong Learning Principles and Neural Plasticity

Just as the retina transmits information to the brain, the brain constantly interprets, integrates, and learns from visual input. This capacity for learning and changing—known as neuroadaptation—remains active throughout life. Lifelong learning refers to the ongoing, voluntary pursuit of knowledge and skills. This is rooted in the brain's ability to form new neural connections in response to experiences or other input. Learning can be formal, like taking classes in school, or informal, like reading, observing, or engaging with others. Vision plays a key role in most learning experiences, especially in early development. However, even in adulthood, activities like reading, observing art, completing puzzles, or exploring new environments continue to stimulate cognitive growth.

Connecting Vision and Learning

Healthy vision supports effective learning, and ongoing learning supports brain health. The interaction between the eye and brain is more than mechanical—this is a dynamic system that determines how we navigate and understand the world. By protecting our vision and nurturing our curiosity, we cultivate both our sensory and intellectual well-being for a lifetime.

We at Retina Group of Florida are here to help with any of your retinal or macular care needs. We know the importance of sight and hope to help you achieve the best vision possible for your goal of lifetime learning.

MEET THE PHYSICIANS

George Skopis, M.D.

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

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

Elizabeth Richter, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Richter joined the Retina Associates of Sarasota after completing her two-year fellowship in vitreoretinal disease and surgery at the renowned Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA in Los Angeles, California. As a native of the southeast, she is an engineer-trained retina surgeon originally from Georgia. She earned dual undergraduate degrees in mechanical engineering (summa cum laude) from Georgia Institute of Technology and biology from Emory University, and her M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the Medical College of Georgia. There, her thesis was in a laboratory that focused on virology and its effects on the retina in diseases such as Acute Retinal Necrosis.



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Revolutionary Face and Body Transformation: The Power of EMFACE® and EXION™ Combination Therapy

By Stéphane Calvino, MD

In the ever-evolving world of aesthetic medicine, breakthrough technologies continue to reshape how we approach facial rejuvenation and body contouring. Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness is proud to introduce a groundbreaking combination therapy featuring EMFACE® and EXION™, two cutting-edge treatments that work synergistically to deliver unprecedented results in non-invasive aesthetic enhancement.

The Science Behind the Synergy

EMFACE® technology represents a paradigm shift in facial rejuvenation by simultaneously targeting both muscle and skin tissue. Using a unique combination of synchronized RF (radio frequency) and HIFES (High-Intensity Facial Electrical Stimulation) energies, EMFACE® works to lift and tighten facial features while rebuilding natural collagen and elastin. This revolutionary approach addresses multiple signs of aging in a single treatment, offering a comprehensive solution for facial rejuvenation.

Complementing EMFACE®'s facial focus, EXION™ technology brings advanced body contouring capabilities to the treatment protocol. EXION™ utilizes precise thermal energy delivery systems to target stubborn fat deposits and stimulate muscle conditioning, resulting in improved body composition and enhanced muscle definition. The technology's sophisticated temperature control ensures optimal results while maintaining patient comfort throughout the treatment.

When combined, these innovative technologies create a comprehensive approach to aesthetic enhancement that addresses both facial aging and body sculpting concerns.

Comprehensive Benefits of the Combination Therapy

The EMFACE® and EXION™ combination therapy offers multiple advantages that set it apart from traditional aesthetic treatments:

1. Enhanced Results Through Synchronized Treatment

The simultaneous application of different energy modalities creates a multiplier effect, enhancing overall results beyond what each treatment could achieve independently. This synergistic approach optimizes treatment outcomes while potentially reducing the total number of sessions needed.



2. Non-Invasive Excellence

Both treatments are completely non-invasive, requiring no needles, surgery, or downtime. This makes the combination therapy an ideal choice for busy professionals seeking significant improvements without disrupting their daily routines.

3. Natural-Looking Outcomes

Unlike more aggressive treatments, EMFACE® and EXION™ work with your body's natural processes to enhance and rejuvenate. The results appear gradually and naturally, avoiding the artificial or "overdone" look that can sometimes occur with other aesthetic procedures.

4. Comprehensive Treatment Approach

While EMFACE® focuses on facial rejuvenation, addressing multiple aging concerns simultaneously, EXION™ complements these results by improving body contours and muscle tone. This head-to-toe approach ensures harmonious results across the entire treatment area.

The Treatment Experience at Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness

At Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness, each combination therapy session is tailored to meet individual patient needs and goals. The treatment process begins with a comprehensive consultation to assess your unique concerns and develop a customized treatment plan.

During the treatment, patients can relax comfortably while the advanced technologies work simultaneously. The procedure is virtually painless, with

many patients describing it as feeling similar to a warm massage with mild muscle contractions. Most sessions last between 45-60 minutes, making it convenient to fit into even the busiest schedules.

Long-Lasting Results and Maintenance

One of the most compelling advantages of the EMFACE® and EXION™ combination therapy is the longevity of results. While individual experiences may vary, many patients report seeing initial improvements within weeks of their first treatment, with results continuing to develop over the following months as collagen production increases and muscle tone improves.

To maintain optimal results, our specialists at Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness will work with you to develop a personalized maintenance schedule. This typically involves periodic touch-up treatments to ensure your results remain fresh and natural-looking over time.

The Future of Aesthetic Medicine

The introduction of the EMFACE® and EXION™ combination therapy at Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness represents a significant advancement in non-invasive aesthetic treatment options. This innovative approach offers patients the opportunity to address multiple concerns simultaneously, with natural-looking results and no downtime.

For those seeking a comprehensive solution to facial aging and body contouring, this combination therapy provides an exciting new option that leverages the latest technological advances in aesthetic medicine. Contact Calvino Family Medicine & Wellness today to schedule a consultation and discover how this revolutionary treatment combination can help you achieve your aesthetic goals.



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SUMMER FOOT CARE TIPS

From Your Friendly Neighborhood Podiatrist

By Ravnik Singh, DPM, AACFAS

As the warm summer months arrive, our feet finally get the spotlight they deserve—sandals come out, pool days become routine, and barefoot walks on the beach are irresistible. As your local podiatrist, I love to see people enjoying their summer adventures, but I also want to ensure your feet are safe, healthy, and comfortable all season long. Summer brings unique challenges for foot care, and with just a few simple habits, you can stay one step ahead of potential problems.

Don't Overlook Skin Cancer on Your Feet

Let's start with something many people overlook—skin cancer on the feet. The feet are often neglected when it comes to sunscreen and skin checks, but they're just as vulnerable to UV damage as the rest of your body. It's important to be aware of both benign and malignant skin lesions that can show up. Common benign skin conditions include seborrheic keratoses (waxy, wart-like growths), dermatofibromas (firm nodules often caused by minor injuries), and nevi (ordinary moles). Though harmless, they can sometimes resemble more serious conditions, so regular monitoring is key.

When it comes to malignant skin cancers, the most common types are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Basal cell carcinoma often appears as a pearly bump and rarely spreads, but it can cause local damage. Squamous cell carcinoma may look like a red, scaly patch or open sore and has a higher risk of spreading. Melanoma is the most dangerous, and when it appears on the foot—especially under the toenail or on the sole—it can go unnoticed until it's advanced. That's why I encourage everyone to inspect their feet regularly and never hesitate to schedule a visit if something looks or feels off.

Keep Moisture at Bay

Another summer concern is moisture. Warm weather means sweating, and your feet—especially inside shoes—can become a breeding ground for fungal infections like tinea pedis, commonly known as athlete's foot. This itchy, peeling rash loves damp environments. To reduce



your risk, opt for moisture-wicking socks, change them daily (or more often if they get damp), and let your shoes dry out between wears. When possible, let your feet breathe at home—air them out, and always wear sandals in shared spaces like pools or gyms.

Choose Breathable Footwear

One great summer habit is choosing aerated or breathable shoes. Think breathable or partial mesh sneakers, and open-toe sandals with good arch support. These types of footwear improve airflow and reduce moisture buildup. If you need to wear closed shoes for work, consider rotating between two pairs so each can dry thoroughly between uses. You can also sprinkle a bit of antifungal powder inside for extra protection.

Tackle Excessive Sweating

Excessive foot sweating can also lead to other complications, including blisters, maceration of the skin, and odor. Keeping toenails trimmed, washing and drying your feet daily (especially between the toes), and applying an antiperspirant formulated for feet can go a long way. If you notice persistent issues, such as cracking skin, thickening nails, or ongoing odor despite good hygiene, don't wait—these are all things I can help you manage comfortably and effectively.

Don't Forget Sunscreen for Your Feet

And finally, don't forget about sun protection for your feet! We often apply sunscreen to our face,

arms, and legs, but feet—especially the tops and toes—are frequently forgotten. A broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher is best, and make it part of your daily routine if you're wearing sandals or spending time outdoors. Reapply after swimming or sweating, just as you would for the rest of your skin.

I truly enjoy helping people put their best foot forward—literally! Whether you're dealing with a specific issue or just want to stay on top of your foot health, I'd love to meet you. Healthy feet are essential to an active, enjoyable summer, and I'm here to support you every step of the way. Don't hesitate to call or visit if you have questions or concerns. Wishing you a safe, sunny, and comfortable summer!

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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UNDERSTANDING HAND INFECTIONS: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

By Dennis O. Sagini, MD

Hand infections represent one of the most serious conditions affecting the upper extremity, requiring immediate medical attention to prevent permanent disability. As an orthopedic surgeon specializing in hand and upper extremity surgery, I frequently encounter patients who underestimate the severity of hand infections, often leading to complications that could have been prevented with early intervention.

Common Types of Hand Infections

Hand infections can manifest in various forms, each requiring specific treatment approaches. Cellulitis, the most common superficial infection, affects the skin and subcutaneous tissue, typically presenting with redness, warmth, and swelling. Deep space infections, however, are far more concerning as they involve the fascial compartments within the hand, potentially causing severe functional impairment.

Paronychia, an infection around the nail fold, is frequently seen in patients who bite their nails or have poor nail hygiene. While seemingly minor, untreated paronychia can progress to involve deeper structures. Felon infections affect the fingertip pulp and can cause significant pain and swelling. These infections are particularly dangerous because the tight fascial compartments in the fingertip can lead to tissue necrosis if pressure is not relieved promptly.

Causes and Risk Factors

Most hand infections result from bacterial contamination through breaks in the skin. Common causative organisms include *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus* species. Penetrating injuries, such as puncture wounds from thorns, needles, or animal bites, create direct pathways for bacterial invasion. Human bites, often occurring during altercations, are particularly concerning due to the high bacterial load in human saliva.

Certain populations face increased infection risks. Diabetic patients experience impaired wound healing and compromised immune responses, making them more susceptible to severe infections. Immunocompromised individuals, including those receiving chemotherapy or long-term steroid therapy, require heightened vigilance for signs of infection.

Recognition and Early Warning Signs

Early recognition of hand infections is crucial for successful treatment. Patients should seek immediate medical attention if they experience progressive swelling, increasing pain, red streaking up the arm, fever, or inability to move fingers normally. The classic signs of infection - redness, warmth, swelling, and pain - may be subtle initially but typically worsen rapidly.

One particularly concerning sign is the loss of normal finger cascade, where fingers no longer curl naturally when the hand is relaxed. This may indicate deep space infection or tendon involvement, requiring urgent surgical intervention.

Treatment Approaches

Treatment depends on the infection's severity and location. Early cellulitis may respond to oral antibiotics and elevation, while deep space infections typically require surgical drainage. As a specialist in hand surgery, I emphasize that timely surgical intervention can mean the difference between full recovery and permanent disability.

Surgical drainage involves making precise incisions to access infected spaces while preserving vital structures like tendons, nerves, and blood vessels. Post-operative care includes aggressive hand therapy to prevent stiffness and maintain function.

Prevention and Long-term Outcomes

Prevention remains the best strategy. Proper wound care, including thorough cleaning and appropriate dressing of cuts and scrapes, significantly reduces infection risk. Patients should avoid biting nails and maintain good hand hygiene.

With prompt recognition and appropriate treatment, most hand infections heal completely without long-term consequences. However, delayed treatment can result in permanent stiffness, chronic pain, or even amputation in severe cases. This underscores the importance of seeking immediate medical attention for any concerning hand symptoms.

If you suspect a hand infection or are experiencing any of the warning signs mentioned above, don't wait. Early intervention is critical for preserving hand function and preventing complications. Contact our office immediately at 239-302-3216 to schedule an urgent evaluation and begin appropriate treatment.



Dennis O. Sagini, MD

Dr. Sagini is an orthopedic surgeon with specialization in hand and upper extremity surgery. He specializes in arthritis of the hand, nerve compression, muscle and tendon injury, fracture care, and upper extremity dysfunction.

He completed his Bachelors of Science in Microbiology from the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma in 1998 and his Doctor of Medicine at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA in 2002. It was during medical school training that Dr. Sagini developed an interest in orthopaedic surgery. His residency in orthopaedic surgery was completed at Howard University Hospital, Washington, DC. Dr. Sagini completed his fellowship training in Hand and Upper Extremity surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, PA.

Dr. Sagini is a member of the Lee County Medical Society as well as a Board-Certified Diplomate of the American Board of Orthopedic Surgeons.

Dr. Sagini is active in research and community service and has a passion for overseas medical mission work. He also enjoys running, traveling, listening to music, cooking, tennis, and spending time with his family and friends.



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HOW ACUPUNCTURE CAN NATURALLY BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

By Dr. Angelina Pullen, DAcCHM, LAc, BS, Dipl. OM, LMT

In today's fast-paced world, maintaining a robust immune system is more important than ever. While many people turn to supplements and medications, an ancient healing practice offers a natural, time-tested approach to immune support: acupuncture. At Lotus Holistic Wellness, we've witnessed firsthand how this traditional Chinese medicine technique can significantly enhance your body's natural defense mechanisms.

Understanding the Immune-Acupuncture Connection

Acupuncture works by stimulating specific points along the body's energy pathways, known as meridians. When fine needles are inserted into these carefully selected points, they trigger a cascade of physiological responses that can strengthen immune function. Research has shown that acupuncture treatments can increase the production of white blood cells, enhance the activity of natural killer cells, and improve the body's overall inflammatory response.

The practice essentially acts as a reset button for your immune system, helping to balance overactive responses while strengthening weakened defenses. This dual action makes acupuncture particularly effective for people who experience frequent infections or those dealing with autoimmune conditions where the immune system attacks healthy tissue.

The Science Behind Immune Enhancement

Modern scientific studies have revealed several mechanisms through which acupuncture boosts immunity. The treatment stimulates the nervous system, which in turn influences the production of neurotransmitters and hormones that regulate immune function. Acupuncture has been shown to increase levels of interferon, a protein that helps fight viral infections, and boost the activity of T-cells, which are crucial for adaptive immunity.

Research published in peer-reviewed journals demonstrates that acupuncture can increase the production of immunoglobulin A (IgA), the body's first line of defense against pathogens entering through mucous membranes. This antibody plays a critical role in preventing respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, making acupuncture particularly valuable for those prone to seasonal illnesses.



Additionally, acupuncture treatments help reduce cortisol levels, the stress hormone that can suppress immune function when chronically elevated. By managing stress and promoting relaxation, acupuncture creates an internal environment where the immune system can function optimally. Studies have also shown that regular acupuncture sessions can improve sleep quality, another crucial factor for maintaining strong immunity.

Specific Immune Benefits

Regular acupuncture sessions can provide numerous immune-related benefits. Many patients report fewer seasonal illnesses, faster recovery times from infections, and improved energy levels. The treatment is particularly effective for respiratory health, helping to strengthen the lungs and reduce susceptibility to colds, flu, and other respiratory infections.

Acupuncture also supports digestive health, which is intimately connected to immune function since approximately 70% of immune cells reside in the gut. By improving digestion and promoting healthy gut bacteria, acupuncture indirectly but powerfully supports overall immunity.

For individuals with chronic conditions like allergies, asthma, or frequent infections, acupuncture offers a natural alternative that addresses root causes rather than just managing symptoms. The treatment helps regulate the immune system's response, reducing hypersensitivity reactions while maintaining the ability to fight genuine threats.

A Holistic Approach at Lotus Holistic Wellness

At Lotus Holistic Wellness, we understand that true immune health requires a comprehensive approach. Our experienced acupuncture physician combine acupuncture with herbal medicine and homeopathy to create personalized treatment plans that address each patient's unique needs.

This integrative approach, rooted in traditional healing wisdom and supported by modern research, offers Southwest Florida residents a natural path to enhanced immunity.

Our herbal medicine expertise allows us to complement acupuncture treatments with carefully selected herbs and homeopathic remedies that further support immune function, work synergistically to strengthen the body's vital force and promote natural healing.

Taking the Next Step

If you're ready to explore how acupuncture can boost your immune system naturally, the team at Lotus Holistic Wellness is here to guide you. Our holistic approach recognizes that immune health is connected to every aspect of your wellbeing, from stress levels and sleep quality to nutrition and emotional balance.

During your initial consultation, our practitioner will conduct a thorough assessment of your health history, current symptoms, and lifestyle factors that may be affecting your immunity. This comprehensive evaluation allows us to develop a personalized treatment plan that may include specific acupuncture point combinations, customized herbal formulas, and targeted homeopathic remedies.

Many of our patients begin to notice improvements in their energy levels and overall sense of wellbeing within just a few sessions. However, building lasting immune strength is a process that requires consistency and patience. We typically recommend a series of treatments over several weeks to achieve optimal results, followed by maintenance sessions to sustain the benefits.

Located in Southwest Florida, we're committed to helping our community achieve optimal health through time-tested natural therapies. Contact Lotus Holistic Wellness today to schedule a consultation and discover how acupuncture, herbal medicine, and homeopathy can work together to strengthen your immune system and enhance your overall vitality.

LOTUS HOLISTIC WELLNESS

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PLAY IS SERIOUS WORK!

Parents can help child development with therapeutic playgroups

By RICK WEBER

One in six children in the United States between the ages of 3 and 17 has a developmental disability—and those from low-income households are even more susceptible (one in five).

The latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that approximately one in 31 (or 3.2%) 8-year-old children in the U.S. are identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)—an increase from the 2020 estimate of 1 in 36 children.

But there is demonstrable hope.

“Early intervention provides critical support that can significantly enhance a child’s development, improve educational outcomes and foster healthier family dynamics,” says Sarah E. Fabrizi, PhD, OTR/L, a professor and program director of Occupational Therapy at Florida Gulf Coast University’s Marieb College of Health & Human Services.

Fabrizi has a passion for changing those raw statistics through her research, teaching and service focus on playfulness, social participation and early-childhood play development, emphasizing play as a vital childhood occupation. She collaborates with early-childhood providers and families to foster joyful play opportunities at home and in the community.

With her team of early childhood champions, she has developed and implemented therapeutic playgroups to promote playful interactions, support children’s social skills and emotional growth, and guide monitoring of developmental milestones during play—drawing from numerous articles and chapters she has authored on therapeutic playgroups, social play, friendship and playfulness.

“Parents want to know how they can best support their child, and value practical tips and strategies they can use in their everyday routines at home and in the community,” Fabrizi says. “Setting up a playful environment, using simple objects, can be effective in increasing play opportunities and independent play. The social and community connections families make through therapeutic playgroups have a spinoff effect, creating additional opportunities for playdates and sharing of resources and parenting strategies.”



Therapeutic Playgroups, her collaborative work with Early Steps of Southwest Florida, provides social play opportunities for families who have infants and toddlers, aged birth to 36 months, who have or are at-risk for developmental disabilities or delays.

Her therapeutic playgroup program highlights specific developmental topics providing targeted developmental information to families and utilizes high-quality play activities that can be easily replicated at home: shared reading, sensory play, constructive play, pretend play, and songs and music.

Her work with Therapeutic Playgroups began by developing a play program that could be facilitated by early-childhood providers in the community to support child playfulness and parent engagement. She also has spent the past 10 years mentoring graduate students to learn to provide these group interventions and monitor outcomes in families.

Her work, as highlighted in “State of the Science” in the American Journal of Occupational Therapy (AJOT), underscores the critical role of play as a fundamental occupation in child development and advocates for a deeper understanding of its application in occupational therapy. Through her study, “Setting the Stage for Play Using the SEE Me Therapeutic Playgroup Teaming Approach,” she has examined how interaction strategies during caregiver-child play in therapeutic playgroups foster social-emotional growth in early intervention.

Her research on therapeutic playgroups shows notable improvements in children’s playfulness, demonstrating their importance in promoting play opportunities in the communities where families

live. Moreover, her Splashing Our Way to Playfulness project illustrates how playfulness in autistic children can be boosted by aquatic playgroups, which show promise as an opportunity to promote swim safety, share resources for swim lessons and explore water activities for play and leisure.

“Play is serious work!” Fabrizi says. “Play is critically important in promoting health in early childhood, and so is providing play opportunities for children and families in the community. There’s huge value in supporting parents and teachers by providing education about what to watch for in play and how to join in for joyful engagement. The amount of time children spend in play is declining, yet time spent in play supports development across all domains.”

How can infants and toddlers be identified as having or being at-risk for developmental disabilities or delays? This is where the “Learn the Signs. Act Early” program enters the picture.

Fabrizi, the Florida Ambassador for the program that is funded by the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), encourages parents and other care providers to learn the signs of healthy development, track their young child’s developmental milestones and act early if there is ever a developmental concern. From birth to 5 years, every child should reach milestones in how they play, learn, speak, act and move.

“It is a worthwhile investment to take the time to play with your child, to notice what they enjoy, to set up opportunities for free play at home and in the community,” Fabrizi says. “Parents, you know your child best. If you are concerned about your child’s development, talk to your child’s doctor. Don’t wait. Acting early can make a real difference!”

FGCU

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Are YOU "Sick and Tired of Being Sick ...and Tired?"

By Contributing Author William J. Cole Jr., DO, FAACP, Regenerative Medicine Expert with RegenaMed.US® and Interventionist with OrthoMed® Pain & Sports Medicine

Let me ask you something, and **Be Honest...**

Do you wake everyday exhausted as you did when you went to sleep...?

Do you dread going to as sleep because you know you're not going to sleep anyway but lay there staring at the ceiling, waiting for the Sandman, who never arrives...?

Do you ever feel like you're fighting your body to do daily activities, and more challenging tasks are almost impossible...?

You make excuses to family and friends not to Go outside, join social events, do activities with the family, exercise, or do the things that you enjoy... Right?

You were told by your doctors that the reason you are **"So Damn Tired"** because:

You are "Just Getting Old", "You're a Female", "That's the way it is for women"...

And because "You're Not Exercising, Overweight, Too Lazy"...

"It's Genetic, and you can't do anything about it"... "You "Beat Your Body Up Too Long, and I can't fix it"...

You're just "Too Sick, Too Lazy, Take Too Many Meds", so they can't help you...

Then they whip out the "Tried and True" Defense for Their Incompetence... The Worst Thing a Doctor Can Say to You... They use "The F- Word"... **FIBROMYALGIA...!?!**

(What the hell is "fibromyalgia" anyway? Is it a "Real Diagnosis"...? NO! It's a "File 13" for People Who Don't Know Why You're Sick and Tired!)



Let me give you a **"REALITY CHECK!"**

These Doctors who "Spend 3-5 Minutes" with you on a "So-Called Office Visit", are NOT going to figure out the "who, what, when, where, why, how, how long, what diagnosis", or anything that even resembles a comprehensive evaluation and treatment plan for You and Your Specific Medical Issues and Problems...!

(YOU Deserve Better...Yes?)

When's the last time a doctor actually did a "Real Physical Evaluation"? (You remember those, don't you?) When doctors actually had to do physical diagnostic testing for that painful knee or shoulder joint, or checked the multiple areas of pain generators in your spine for an accurate and treatable diagnosis... Do you remember those days?

When was the last time your "Professional Health Care Practitioner" actually prescribe something that was **"Not Drugs or Surgery..."**

Anyone...? Anyone...? Bueller...? Bueller...?

So, we now know that the "Who" is YOU, and the Doctor, the "What" is the Correct Diagnosis and Treatment Plan, "When" is at your many health care appointments, the "Where" is at the doctors' office, and "How Long" is the mere 3-5 minutes that most doctors spend with each their patients.

That leads us to "Patient Need to Know WHY" this is the case, and this is where it starts to get Very Interesting... "Why" is American Health Care So Badly Broken...?

Could it be because "Regular Doctors Only Prescribe Drugs and Surgery" that have an Incredibly High Failure Rate, only to "Prescribe MORE Drugs and Surgery"...? No Autonomy, Time, Inclination, or Allowance for anything other than the **"Tired Old Traditional Treatments"** that do not work...

They will tell you excuses: "Oh, it's the economy", "it's the rules", "it's your insurance", or "that's just the way it is"..., but **it's actually GREED!**

Pure and simple. This is a very old problem, with a new twist... "American Capitalist" at its' best! Please let me explain...

During the pandemic Doctors were told that they have to see "Double the Number of Patients" in the same amount of time (from about 25-30 to 50-60 per day), because the Medical Group Owners Experience the **10% pay cut across the board** for all doctors, nurses, hospital, and nursing homes, which was passed on by the Health Insurance Companies, which was imposed by Dr Fauci, who somehow they thought was a good idea to slash healthcare payments in the middle of the Covid pandemic... (Thanks Anthony... GREAT Idea! What were you thinking???)

Then, **"Who Suffers the Most"** when Healthcare fees and programs are cut by the government...? Is it the Health Care Groups, the Doctors, the Nurses, or the American People...?

I believe **"They All Suffer"** in one way or another from the continuous barrage of "Substantial Yearly Healthcare Pay-Cuts" by All Government and Private Health Insurance Companies, because of what again...? **GREED, Which is Not Good!**

This then results in under staffed and overworked medical personnel with a very high burnout rate. So, Good Healthcare Staffing is Hard to Find these days, and very expensive, further taxing a system that is already broken for all Americans, and our Brave Veterans. Our government has the audacity

to send our Most Revered Citizens, Our Veterans, to even Worse Facilities with Tighter Budgets and Less Actual HEALTH Care at our VA facilities...

And people wonder why it's called "Sick Care" in America...

THIS is Unacceptable, and We Can Do Better!

Ultimately, we end up with patients who have absolutely nowhere to go and end up in the ER with the incredibly diverse and complex urgent and chronic medical problems that receive the "Treat-Em and Street-Em" emergent care.

Therefore, as a consequence, patients just keep adding layers of problems, pain, and dysfunction, year by year, on top of the current insufferable diseases, with no ability to simply live a healthy life, which result in patients being literally:

"Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired!"

American Healthcare is an Oxymoron, with an emphasis on "moron", and a joke around the world... American Health Care "Doesn't Make You Healthy, and They Don't Care...!"

Why, Because America Buys (up to) 95% of its' medications from Big Foreign Pharma Companies... And at (up to) 10 Times Normal Prices!!!

They are Literally Laughing at How Stupid We Are....!

These Foreign Entities "Just Pay the Politicians" (LEGALLY!?!), as ALL American Politicians have "Nothing to Lose" without term limits... Right? (Tell me I'm wrong... You Can't!)

So, How Do Americans Get Real Health Care...? First things first.

First, we have to know What Does "Real Medical Care" Look Like, and Who Actually Practices These Rare and Highly Sought After Services...? (I know a guy... ME!)

I am Dr. William J. Cole, Jr. and I have the privilege of working with Dr. Sandeep Kola, as we are Osteopathic Board Certified in PMR Intervention (which means we can target just about any spot in the body within 1/2mm) Dr. Kola and I take the time to actually gather the "Full Historical Picture" of your injuries, illnesses, diseases, disorders, dysfunctions, accidents, surgeries, family history, prior treatments, and then do "Comprehensive Physical Diagnostic and Testing", to find the "Pattern of Pain"... (The body tells you what's wrong with it... We just have to pay attention!)

These "Pain Patterns" are the same for all of us, as we are basically made with the Same, Neurologic and Musculo-Skeleton Wiring and Blueprint. There are always variations, but the Patterns Don't Change "Follow the Pattern to Find the Pain Source"... Easy Peasy!

The body always tells you what's wrong with it...
"You just have to listen!"

And you have to "Listen to the Patient", because "Nobody Knows Their Body Better Than the Actual Patient". (Also, my grandma said that I should always listen... Because I have two ears and one mouth, for a reason!)

With our comprehensive "Physicians Based Care", you will receive the time, care, and consideration that "You Desire, and Deserve", to assist you in getting the diagnosis and treatment plan right the first time.

Why is this important? Because "You Can't Fix What You Don't Know", Right!

Then we "Prioritizing the Patients Disorders", so we can establish a "Comprehensive and Effective Treatment Plan" to start "Fix the Worst First", so that no matter what, once your treatments begin, your "Quality of Life Improves!"

And isn't that what Matters the Most? Quality of Life... Yes?

Did you know that "Stem Cell Are Now Legal in Florida", but ONLY by a Physician Experienced in Ortho, Pain Management, or Wound Care Specialties...? Did you know that I, Dr. Cole, and Dr. Kola are The Only Regenerative Physicians locally who Meet All State and Federal Requirements to Practice "Real Stem Cell Therapies"...?

Did you know that I, Dr. Cole, am "Double Board Certified", and have achieved "Regenerative Medicine Board Certification", which now makes me "One of Five" in the World with my Regenerative Credentials. THAT is my level of commitment to "Bringing the Future of Medicine" to my patients and Veterans, as there is no end to the sicknesses that can affect all of us, and Regenerative Medicine can assist in the resolution of just about all of them.

There are literally "Hundreds of Disorders, Diseases, and Dysfunctions" that can affect the human body that can be Successfully Treated with Regenerative Medicine! From wear and tear, autoimmune, metabolic, genetic, trauma, injury, acquired, Exposure, Failed Surgery Syndrome, misdiagnosis.

Hence, "You Need a Caring Healthcare Partner" to be evaluated properly, diagnosed correctly, explain to the patient, and only treated with what is appropriate, effective, economic, and will actually "Make YOUR Life Better". Otherwise, what's the point?!?

You need to know about MTHFR, EBV, Long-Covid Syndrome, Lupus, Lyme Disease, Red-Head Syndrome, Restless Legs, Chronic Pain, Failed Surgery Syndrome, Low Back Pain, Pinched Nerves, Unhealed Fractures, MS, Parkinsons, Dementia, Heavy Metal Toxicity, Gulf-War Syndrome, PTSD, Medical-Grade CBD/ CBA/ CBS/ CBN/ CGB, Ozone Therapy, Exosomes, Master Stem Cells, Wharton's Jelly, Advanced IV Immunoboost, Supplements, Peptides, NeuroStim, How to Rebuild Bodies and Brains Naturally with Life-Changing Results, and YOU DESERVE TO KNOW!

Your healthcare needs to be done by someone who will assist you to "Be Healthy and Guide You" toward "Effective Health Care", as we are "Highly Trained Medical Experts" with incredible skills, knowledge, and have over 30 years of experience "Decreasing Pain, and Increasing Function, without unnecessary drugs or surgery". However, "You will not care about how much we know, until you know how much we care."

So, if you too are "Sick and Tired... of Being Sick and Tired"...?

"It's About Time"... Your Time, and we only have so much of it, so "Why Be Miserable?!?"

Call Us Now to Get Back Your Life! You're going to be Pleasantly Surprised by our Wonderful Staff and Caring Physicians who want nothing more than you "Bragging to Your Friends" about how "We Changed Your Life!"

"WE LOVE WHAT WE DO!!!" And You Will Love What We Do For You...

Appointments are Limited, So Don't Wait, Don't Procrastinate, and Don't Be Late!



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MEMORY MATTERS

There are many reasons to live in southwest Florida. The wonderful weather, beautiful beaches, no state income tax, and many activities to enjoy. And while the weather may be a big draw, we know in the dog days of summer, like August, it is extremely hot and humid. One of the things that can impact our quality of life is becoming dehydrated in the summer heat. As we age, we are at higher risk for dehydration. Our brain can be impacted by dehydration, so we want to ensure we are staying hydrated because a hydrated brain is a happier brain. Let's look at some of the reasons for this, and also identify some tips to stay hydrated.

So how do you know if you are dehydrated? There are a number of ways, but one of the easiest ways to identify if you may be dehydrated is noting the number of times you go to the bathroom. According to Dr. Dana Cohen, the co-author of *Quench*, a book about the science behind hydration, going to the bathroom every two to three hours is an indicator of adequate hydration. Simply stated, if you are not urinating, you are not drinking enough.

That begs the question, well if I drink when I am thirsty, I should be hydrated, right? Unfortunately, that is not the case. Particularly as we get older, not only does our body composition change, but by the time we feel thirsty, we may already be in the early stages of dehydration. Those of us over the age of 65 have less water in our bodies than younger adults or children. Many of us simply do not drink enough fluid, for a variety of reasons.

Water is important and necessary for almost every bodily function. Lubrication of joints, pumping blood through our body and regulating body temperature all need adequate water. According to a report by the National Institute of health, it's estimated that between 17% and 28% of older adults are hospitalized due to dehydration! Signs of dehydration can go unrecognized, or may be attributed to another condition. A few symptoms of dehydration include fatigue and weakness; dizziness and/or loss of coordination; dry mouth and/or dry cough; headache and muscle cramps and chills or heat intolerance.



Another area of concern is that in some cases, dehydration can cause confusion, memory loss and anxiety. Some studies have shown that dehydration can have an impact on one's ability to perform complex cognitive tasks, as well as challenges with attention, executive function, and coordination. Women tend to be more sensitive to the impact of dehydration, and older women are particularly vulnerable. When our bodies lose more water than is replaced, dehydration will occur, and optimal brain function is affected.

Having a healthy brain is one of the things we care about at NPRC. Here are some tips to help you stay hydrated. Please note if you have other health conditions, be sure you are discussing fluid intake with your health care provider.

- **Keep track of what you are consuming.** 8 – 10 servings of 8 ounces of fluid a day is a good guideline. There are a number of apps you can add to your phone to help you. Keeping track manually works as well.
- **If water is not your favorite beverage, look at other options.** Perhaps water is more palatable with some fresh fruit added in. Or you can add a splash of juice to your water. Be mindful that some fruit juices contain added sugar, which can be a concern if you are pre-diabetic or have diabetes.
- **Enjoy beverages with caffeine in moderation** as they can have a mild diuretic effect.

• **You don't have to just drink, you can eat foods high in water content.** Some examples include watermelon, cucumbers, lettuce, celery, tomatoes, zucchini, strawberries, melon, and bell peppers are all good choices.

Be mindful of your fluid intake here in beautiful and hot southwest Florida to keep your brain in tip top shape. Do you have concerns about your memory or cognitive functioning? To make it easy to get a memory screen, the Neuropsychiatric Research Center of Southwest Florida (NPRC) offers free memory screens at our office. **To schedule your free memory screen, contact us at 239-939-7777.** Please bring a list of your current medications to your appointment. The screening and all services provided at our center are at no cost to you and we do not ask for any insurance information. At the Neuropsychiatric Research center there are many innovative clinical studies that are focused on addressing memory issues. Take charge of your brain health and schedule your free memory screen today! **#Memoriesmatter**

References:
[Brainadvance.org:Water and the Brain](https://brainadvance.org/Water-and-the-Brain)
nia.nih.gov
ncoa.org



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



Understanding Polycystic Kidney Disease

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

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

Polycystic kidney disease is the fourth leading cause of kidney failure and 600,000 people in the United States have the disorder. Polycystic kidney disease (PKD) affects the kidneys with cysts that grow and are filled with fluid. These cysts can damage the kidneys, and essentially take over the kidney's ability to work properly, especially if there are numerous cysts growing at one time. These cysts can severely reduce kidney function.

Poly cystic kidney disease can also affect other organs in the body including the spleen, ovaries, liver, pancreas, bowels, brain, and heart. Most people don't develop PKD until middle age, and the symptoms can range from mild to severe.

The primary symptoms of PKD are as follows:

- High blood pressure
- Back or side pain
- Swollen abdomen
- Blood in the urine
- Frequent bladder and/or kidney infections
- Fluttering or pounding chest
- Chest pain
- Headaches

50 to 60 percent of individuals with PKD will develop kidney failure.

PKD Treatment

Individuals with PKD will need dialysis and a possible kidney transplant. There are also medications that can help treat the disorder and certain diets that will help to prevent the growth of the cysts, which can stop the progression of the disease. PKD can be genetic, so it's best to speak to your physician about your children's health or any planned pregnancies.

How Can the Progression of Kidney Disease Be Delayed?

1. Keeping blood pressure under 130/80 or if you have diabetes or protein in the urine, under 125/75.
2. Taking certain types of medications called ACE-Inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers.

3. If you are diabetic, keeping blood sugars tightly controlled (HbA1c less than 7.0).
4. Avoiding medications that harm your kidneys such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. (NSAIDs). Examples are Motrin, ibuprofen, Aleve, Advil, Naprosyn. A Cox-2 inhibitor called Celebrex is also harmful.
5. Avoiding, if possible, IV contrast dye used for CT scans and heart catheterizations and gadolinium used in MRIs.
6. Controlling your cholesterol.
7. Quit smoking.
8. If overweight, losing weight.
9. Treating anemia if present.
10. Avoiding Fleet phospho-soda (oral) and Fleet enemas for patients in Stage 4 and 5 chronic kidney disease.

Associates in Nephrology

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

Chronic Kidney Disease Program

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

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

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

Services Provided

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

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

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

ASSOCIATES IN NEPHROLOGY

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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 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 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).

Prostate MRI

Prostate MRI is a specialized magnetic resonance imaging technique that provides detailed images of the prostate gland and surrounding tissues. This advanced imaging method helps physicians detect, locate, and assess prostate cancer with greater precision than traditional methods. Prostate MRI can help guide biopsy procedures, evaluate the extent

of disease, and assist in treatment planning. The test is non-invasive and provides valuable information for both screening and monitoring of prostate conditions.

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. Trabecular Bone Score (TBS) is an advanced analysis that can be performed alongside standard DEXA scans to provide additional information about bone quality and texture. TBS evaluates the microarchitecture of trabecular bone, helping to assess fracture risk independent of bone mineral density and providing physicians with a more comprehensive understanding of bone health.

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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PREPARING FOR A HURRICANE

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

Hurricanes are natural disasters that require thorough preparation to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals and their families. This becomes even more crucial for those with hearing loss, who face additional challenges during such emergencies. Moreover, individuals relying on rechargeable hearing aids need to take specific precautions to ensure uninterrupted hearing assistance throughout the hurricane's duration. This article aims to provide a comprehensive guide on preparing for a hurricane, with a particular focus on considerations for individuals with hearing loss and the proper care and management of rechargeable hearing aids.

1. Develop an Emergency Plan

When preparing for a hurricane, it's vital to have a well-thought-out emergency plan in place. Ensure that your plan accounts for the specific needs of individuals with hearing loss. Communication strategies should include visual cues, such as written or signed instructions, to compensate for potential hearing difficulties during high-noise or power outage situations.

2. Stock Up on Essential Supplies

Gather necessary supplies, including non-perishable food, water, medications, batteries, flashlights, and a battery-powered weather radio. Remember to include extra batteries for hearing aids, cochlear implants, or any other assistive devices that rely on battery power.

3. Secure Your Home

Take steps to protect your home and surroundings. Trim trees and secure loose objects that may become projectiles in high winds. Reinforce windows, doors, and other vulnerable areas to minimize damage. Consider installing a backup power generator to ensure continuous power supply for vital equipment.

4. Establish Communication Channels

Create a network of trusted individuals who can assist you during emergencies. Inform them about your hearing loss and the best methods of communication for you. Establish alternative means of contact, such as text messaging or social media, to stay connected when traditional communication methods are unavailable.

5. Safeguard Your Rechargeable Hearing Aids

If you use rechargeable hearing aids, ensure they are fully charged well before the hurricane's arrival. Consider purchasing a portable power bank or backup charger to keep your hearing aids powered during extended power outages. Store them in a waterproof and protective case to prevent damage from water, debris, or other hazards.

6. Maintain Proper Hearing Aid Care

Regularly clean and maintain your hearing aids to ensure optimal performance. Keep them away from excessive moisture and humidity, as these

conditions can impair their functionality. If water damage occurs, immediately seek professional assistance to prevent further complications.

7. Stay Informed

Stay updated with the latest weather reports, emergency alerts, and evacuation orders through accessible sources. Utilize closed captioning or visual notifications provided by local news channels or emergency management agencies.

Preparing for a hurricane is essential for everyone, but individuals with hearing loss and rechargeable hearing aids face unique challenges. By developing an emergency plan, stocking up on supplies, securing your environment, establishing communication channels, and taking care of your hearing aids, you can be better equipped to face the uncertainties of a hurricane while safeguarding your hearing needs.

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Noël Crosby
Doctor of Audiology

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Doctor of Audiology

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
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Dealing With Life's Painful Situations

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

On Father's Day in 2005 my dad came to my office to visit and talk about how things were going. In the course of our discussion he mentioned that he experienced a terrible night's sleep because his back was causing him so much pain. I told him that it was time to go to the ER and get checked out to find out what was causing all of his pain. He did, and that started a two-year battle with pancreatic cancer. My dad fought an incredible fight with this terrible cancer but passed away in August of 2007.

Many people have faced the pain of having to bury a loved one. The question is, "How do I deal with the pain?" We may have confidence that our loved one is in a better place, but do we do with the pain that we still feel?

As you read this, maybe your pain is not in the loss associated with death, but rather you have faced the end of a relationship, or perhaps have received bad news regarding your own health. The question still remains, "what are we to do with these painful situations?"

As we turn through the pages of Scripture, we find that the thoughts and writings of the Psalmist David bring comfort and hope to those in pain. David understood painful situations for he faced many of them in his own life. He too, buried many loved ones and faced enormous family problems. How did he get through these challenges? He turned to God for help.

David tells us in the book of Psalms, ¹⁸ *The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalms 34:18*

You are never closer to God than when you are hurting. David knew that from personal experience. David took his pain and his problems to the Lord and asked for His help. In Psalm 142:1-2 David wrote, *"I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble."*

Our natural tendency is to suffer in silence. We put on a smile and pretend that everything is fine in our lives. Yet in reality, we know that ignoring our pain does not bring relief. We hope that time will heal all wounds but we know it does not. In fact, time often makes matters even worse.

Pain is our body's way of letting us know that we need to deal with something. Whether it is physical, emotional, or relational, pain should not be ignored. And yet still, we try to run from it.

It is human nature to run from painful situations. By law, all doors in public buildings swing out. When people panic, they run. They try to escape. When we face pain, loss and hurt, we look for ways to escape. We dream



of running away from reality in hopes of finding peace and comfort over the next rainbow. Sometimes people try to escape by turning to alcohol, drugs, food, or even inappropriate relationships. Running from your problems never brings resolution.

David went on to say in Psalm 142:3 that ³ *"When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who knows my way..."* God knows the pain we feel and He wants us to run to Him with our troubles.

As you read his Psalms, you will quickly notice that David was very open about what he was going through. And yet, through it all, he learned to trust and depend on God.

When dealing with the pressures and strains of life and the emotional challenges we face, we can learn much from David's example. Stop pretending that you can handle everything in your own strength and turn to God who loves you and cares about you. He specializes in mending broken hearts.

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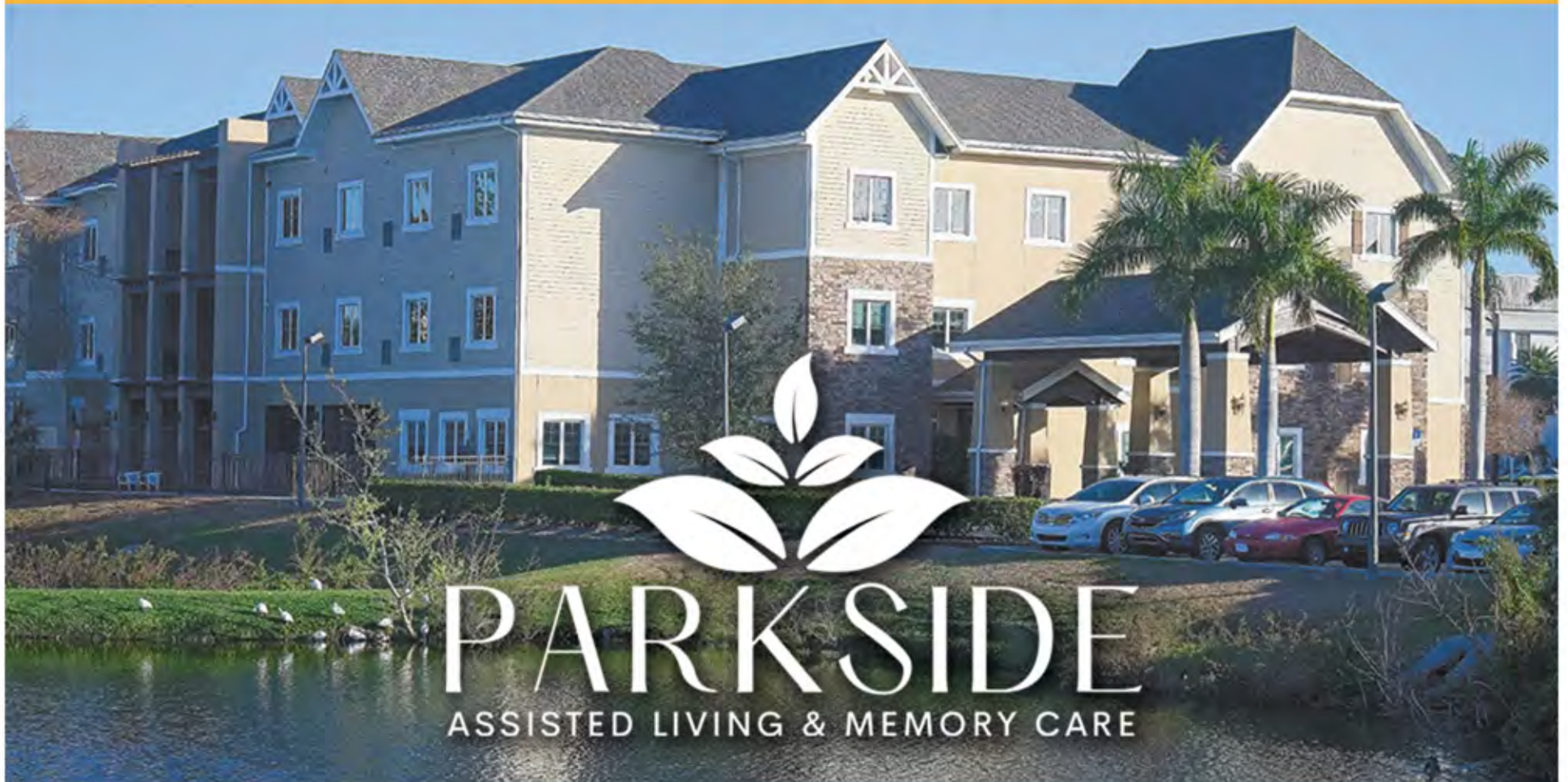


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