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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

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THE NEW
YEAR WITH
HEALTHIER
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**ENDOMETRIOSIS
UNCOVERED**

What Every Woman Should Know

**BREAKING
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By Axel Ruiz, MD, DABFP, CWS

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ABOUT AXEL RUIZ MD, DABFP, CWS

Axel Ruiz MD, DABFP, CWS is a member of the American Academy and a Board of Regenerative Medicine Researcher. Axel has been harnessing the Power of Stem Cells in Joint Pain Management since 2024.

Axel Ruiz, MD, DABFP, CWS, brings over 20 years of dedicated experience to family medicine, with a passion for delivering exceptional patient care. Board-certified in Family Practice (DABFP) and specializing in wound care (CWS), Dr. Ruiz offers a comprehensive and compassionate approach to health and wellness.

He is known for his ability to explain conditions thoroughly and build strong, trusting relationships with his patients. Practices in Naples, Fort Myers and Lehigh Acres, FL. His commitment to ongoing learning and patient-centered treatment makes him an invaluable partner in your health journey.

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Endometriosis Uncovered: What Every Woman Should Know

Endometriosis is sometimes the culprit of chronic and severe pelvic pain in people who menstruate. We're here with AdventHealth board-certified gynecologist Dr. Jennifer D'Abarno to help you learn more about what it is, who's at risk, symptoms and treatment options to ask your doctor about.

What Is Endometriosis?

With endometriosis, tissue similar to that which lines the uterus — the endometrium — grows outside of the uterus. Endometriosis most commonly impacts the ovaries, fallopian tubes and the tissue that lines the pelvis.

This misplaced tissue acts like normal endometrial tissue does. It thickens, breaks down and bleeds with each menstrual cycle. But with no way to leave the body, it becomes trapped.



"Endometriosis pain tends to flare up the worst during certain points in the menstrual cycle as the tissue responds to the hormone fluctuations. It leads to bleeding inside the pelvis, inflammation, swelling and scarring of the surrounding normal tissue. It may also cause ovarian cysts, which can also be painful," shares Dr. D'Abarno.

There are four stages of endometriosis, based on the location, amount, depth and size of the endometrial tissue. However, the stage doesn't necessarily indicate how much pain someone might experience.

The endometriosis stages are categorized as:

Stage 1: Minimal

Stage 2: Mild

Stage 3: Moderate

Stage 4: Severe

Who is at Risk for Endometriosis?

Anyone can develop endometriosis. However, there are some risk factors that increase the chances of developing it, such as:

- Abnormal uterus tissue
- Being between ages 25 and 40
- Giving birth for the first time after age 30
- Having a first-degree relative (mother, sister, daughter) with the disease
- Having never given birth
- Higher-than-average estrogen levels

Endometriosis Symptoms

Some of the most common endometriosis symptoms include:

- Abnormal and/or heavy menstrual flow
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Excessively painful menstrual cramps in the abdomen and/or lower back
- Fatigue
- Infertility problems
- Nausea
- Pain during intercourse
- Painful bowel movements during periods
- Painful urination during periods
- Stabbing pains and/or dull aches in the pelvic region

Endometriosis Treatment Options

"Even though endometriosis is a chronic condition with no cure, there are ways to reduce the amount of pain with a number of treatment options. You don't have to suffer in silence," says Dr. D'Abarno.

Some typical endometriosis treatment options are:

- Hormone therapy like:
 - Oral contraceptives, with combined estrogen and progestin (a synthetic form of progesterone) hormones to prevent ovulation and reduce menstrual flow
 - Progestins alone
 - Gonadotropin-releasing hormone agonist, which stops ovarian hormone production, creating a sort of "medical menopause"
 - Danazol, a synthetic derivative of testosterone (a male hormone)
- Pain medication, such as:
 - Over-the-counter medications like Tylenol
 - Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen
- Surgical options like:
 - Hysterectomy
 - Laparoscopy
 - Laparotomy

Talking about your symptoms with your primary care provider or OB/GYN can help you understand which treatment method will work best for you.

Endometriosis Care with Your Whole Health in Mind

If you're experiencing pelvic pain and you think it might be from endometriosis, our caring teams are here to help diagnose and treat what's causing your pain. At every age and stage of life, we care for women in body, mind and spirit, treating you like we would our own daughters, mothers and sisters.

Learn more about our women's care and schedule an appointment with Dr. D'Abarno by visiting AdventHealthPortCharlotte.com or by calling: 941-833-1750.



STEP INTO THE NEW YEAR WITH HEALTHIER FEET

By Sahiba Singh, DPM, AACFAS

The new year is a time for renewing focus on health. While most people resolve to hit the gym or overhaul their diet, a crucial part of wellness is often overlooked: the health of your feet.

As a podiatrist in Port Charlotte, Florida, at Family Foot & Leg Center, I see the impact that neglect can have on these foundational structures. Your feet are complex biomechanical marvels, and they bear the brunt of every step. For our active Southwest Florida lifestyle—whether you're enjoying the Charlotte Harbor waterfront or walking a local nature trail—healthy feet are essential.

This year, I urge you to make a profound resolution: prioritize your foot health. It's not about dramatic changes; it's about establishing sustainable, foot-friendly habits. Here are the top five resolutions I recommend for a healthier year.

Resolution 1: Make Footwear a Foundation

Poor-fitting or unsupportive shoes are the primary cause of foot problems I diagnose, including **plantar fasciitis, bunions, and painful neuromas.**

Resolve to **purge your closet of worn-out or ill-fitting shoes.** Athletic shoes lose their shock absorption and support long before they look damaged—typically after about 400 miles, or six months of regular use. Wearing them risks an overuse injury.

Choose the right tool for the job. Don't wear flimsy sandals for a long walk. Invest in supportive, activity-specific shoes. When shopping, have your feet measured and shop later in the day when your feet are slightly swollen. Focus on comfort and support, ensuring room to wiggle your toes.

Resolution 2: Commit to Daily Foot Checks and Hygiene

It's easy to forget about your feet until they hurt, but daily inspection is your best defense against serious issues, particularly with conditions like diabetes.

Resolve to check your feet every day. Look for cuts, blisters, swelling, redness, or changes in the skin or nails. Early detection prevents minor issues from escalating. For instance, an unnoticed blister can become a serious infection, a concern relevant in our warm climate.

Your hygiene routine must be diligent:

- **Wash thoroughly**, paying extra attention to the areas between your toes.
- **Dry completely.** Moisture between toes encourages fungal infections like athlete's foot.
- **Moisturize** your heels and soles to prevent cracked skin, but avoid applying lotion between the toes.
- **Trim toenails straight across** to prevent painful ingrown toenails.

Resolution 3: Listen to Your Pain—Don't 'Walk It Off'

This is the hardest resolution for active Port Charlotte residents: **resolve to stop ignoring foot or ankle pain.**

Many believe that heel pain from running or a persistent ache is "normal." **Persistent foot pain is not normal.** Pain is your body's alarm system. Trying to "muscle through" can turn simple tendonitis into a chronic issue or a stress reaction into a fracture.

If you experience pain that lasts more than a few days, or if you notice significant swelling, numbness, or redness, schedule a professional evaluation. An early diagnosis of conditions like Achilles tendonitis or plantar fasciitis allows for conservative treatment, getting you back on your feet faster.

Resolution 4: Introduce Gentle Foot and Ankle Strengthening

As you pursue broader fitness resolutions, remember that your feet have muscles that need strengthening and stretching.

Resolve to dedicate five minutes a day to foot exercises. Simple routines can improve flexibility, stability, and reduce injury risk:

- **Towel Scrunches:** Use your toes to scrunch a towel on the floor toward you.
- **Ankle Alphabet:** Sit and "draw" the alphabet with your foot to engage the ankle's full range of motion.
- **Calf Stretches:** Use a wall or a stair step to stretch your calf and Achilles tendon, vital for preventing heel pain.

If starting a new high-impact routine, **pace yourself.** A sudden increase in activity can overload your feet. Gradually increase your mileage or intensity to allow your foundation time to adapt.



Resolution 5: Schedule a Foundational Foot Health Check

Your annual physical checks your heart and vision. This year, **resolve to schedule a check-up with a podiatrist.**

This is especially critical if you have diabetes, arthritis, or are over 50. Even without pain, a podiatrist can perform a biomechanical assessment, check circulation, evaluate the need for custom orthotics (to correct walking patterns), and detect subtle issues before they become major problems.

The new year is an opportunity to invest in your long-term mobility. By focusing on supportive footwear, diligent hygiene, recognizing pain, and building strength, you are safeguarding your ability to remain active and enjoy Florida Living in Charlotte County.

Your feet are your vehicle for life. This year, give them the care they deserve.

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.

Dr. Sahiba Singh is a podiatrist at Family Foot & Leg Center in Port Charlotte, Florida, specializing in complex wound care and deformity reconstruction. She is committed to helping the Charlotte County community remain active and healthy.



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MEMORY MATTERS

Holiday season is here! Holidays in Florida may look a little different for those of us originally from a northern state. For example, no snow, holiday lights on palm trees and not evergreens, but the spirit and joyfulness of the season transcends location. We also know that for many, along with the traditions, food and connections, anxiety and depression may occur during holiday time. Loss of loved ones, changes in one's financial situation and the pressure to have the mythical "perfect holiday" can be overwhelming and stressful.

For those who are caring for someone with memory issues, some of those challenging feelings can be intensified. Caregiving can be a 24/7 job. With the additional expectations of traditions, gift giving, festive meals and other celebrations, it may feel too much to achieve. Many times, we unknowingly add stress to our plates by setting expectations that would be impossible, even without our caregiving responsibilities. Although our rational mind knows that holidays do not have to be perfect, how many of us have the perfect Hallmark Channel holiday vision in our heads? If we think about it, was there ever a "perfect" holiday experience in our lives? If you can answer "yes," remember those times with appreciation and gratitude. Reframing the concept of "perfect" to "memorable" may be more realistic. Let's face it, perfection is overrated.

Take a deep breath and let those dreams of perfection float away like a feather. Let's explore some ways to have a memorable holiday when you are caring for someone with memory challenges. Do an honest assessment of your loved one's current condition. Examine the holiday traditions that are non-negotiable. The concept of less is more can be helpful in this situation. Let's start by assessing your loved one. Ask yourself these questions:

- What are the activities that they can partake in?
- What are the best times of day for my loved one?
- Do they get upset or frustrated with too much going on?
- How do they do when their routine is changed?
- What type of situations cause my loved one to get upset or agitated?
- How do they react with others, including family?



After you have done the evaluation of your loved one, take an objective look at your holiday events, celebrations, and traditions. Be candid in your assessment and know that everything can be changed if it needs to be. Questions to consider:

- What are the holiday traditions that mean the most to both of us?
- What are the activities that personally bring me joy and not stress? Keep them on the list!
- Is my loved one able to travel across town or across the country? Will the change in routine, particularly with longer travel times, have a negative effect on my loved one?
- Who can help me with some of the essential holiday tasks?
- Can someone else spend some time with my loved one regularly so that I can personally do some of the holiday activities I enjoy?

Of course, there is not one perfect solution all situations. We know perfection is unattainable. Celebrating at home or elsewhere. Christine LoConte, Executive Director of the Dubin Center has some suggestions as well. For caregivers, the holidays can be challenging, but simplifying traditions, setting realistic expectations, and preparing family can help. Focus on a few meaningful activities rather than trying to do everything. Inform visiting family members about the type of dementia your loved one has, so they're prepared and can interact with greater understanding and patience. Don't hesitate to ask for specific

help, like running errands or spending time with your loved one so you can take a break. Small adjustments like these can make the season more manageable and enjoyable for everyone.

The Dubin Center provides valuable support for caregivers during the holidays so that no one faces dementia alone. With a range of resources tailored to dementia care, the Center offers access to support groups, educational resources, and personalized consultations that help caregivers navigate holiday stress and challenges. Caregivers can reach out for guidance on simplifying holiday activities, managing family visits, and creating a comfortable environment for their loved ones. The Dubin Center can also connect caregivers with respite resources, allowing them to take much-needed breaks and enjoy time for themselves. Whether online or in person, the Center's compassionate support can make a meaningful difference during the holiday season. <https://dubincenter.com/> | 239-437-3007

If you or your loved ones seem to be forgetting a bit more, give the gift of peace of mind and schedule a free memory screen at NPRC by calling 239-939-7777. No insurance needed. Memories matter!



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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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Finding Calm in the Chaos: How to Cope with Holiday Stress

For many, the holiday season is painted as a time of joy, togetherness, and celebration. But beneath the twinkling lights and cheerful music, there's often another reality - one filled with long to-do lists, financial pressure, family tension, and the constant chase to make everything perfect. The truth is, while the holidays can bring happiness, they can also bring a heavy dose of stress.

If you've ever felt overwhelmed by December's demands, you're not alone. Studies consistently show that a large percentage of adults experience increased stress during the holidays. Between social obligations, disrupted routines, and emotional triggers, it's easy to lose sight of what the season is really about. The good news? With some mindfulness and planning, you can reclaim your sense of peace and actually enjoy the holidays again.

Holiday stress often stems from a combination of emotional, financial, and physical strain. The pressure to create magical experiences, from hosting dinners to finding the perfect gifts, can feel exhausting. Add in crowded stores, travel delays, family conflicts, or the sadness of missing loved ones, and it's no wonder so many people feel anxious or burnt out.

There's also the matter of routine disruption. Sleep, diet, and exercise often take a backseat to festivities, and these changes can leave us feeling physically depleted. Even positive stress like excitement and anticipation can take a toll when it's constant.

Holiday stress doesn't always announce itself dramatically. It often builds slowly, showing up as irritability, fatigue, headaches, difficulty concentrating, or feelings of guilt and inadequacy. You might also find yourself turning to unhealthy coping mechanisms such as overeating, overspending, or excessive drinking as a way to manage those emotions. Recognizing these warning signs early gives you a chance to reset before the stress snowballs.

You can't control every stressor, but you can control your approach. Here are some strategies to help you navigate the holidays with more calm, balance, and joy.

1. Set Realistic Expectations

Let go of the idea of a "perfect" holiday. Perfection is an illusion and chasing it will only drain your energy. Instead, focus on what's meaningful to you and your



loved ones. Maybe that means scaling back your decorations, skipping a few events, or saying no to extra commitments. It's okay to do less. Ask yourself: Will this matter in January? If the answer is no, it's probably safe to let it go.

2. Stick to a Budget

Financial strain is one of the biggest sources of holiday stress. Before the season kicks into full swing, set a spending limit and stick to it. Thoughtful, personal gifts often mean more than expensive ones. Consider homemade presents, shared experiences, or donations to a favorite charity in someone's name. Remember, generosity isn't measured by price tags.

3. Prioritize Self-Care

When life gets busy, self-care is often the first thing we abandon and the one thing we need most. Make sure you're getting enough sleep, staying hydrated, and moving your body regularly. Even a short daily walk or five minutes of deep breathing can help reset your nervous system. Schedule downtime just like you'd schedule any other holiday activity. Protect that time fiercely whether it's for reading, journaling, or simply sitting quietly with a cup of tea.

4. Manage Family Dynamics

Family gatherings can be both heartwarming and challenging. Old tensions may resurface, and differing opinions (especially around politics or lifestyle) can spark conflict. If certain conversations are triggering, prepare polite ways to redirect or excuse yourself. You don't need to engage in every

debate. Focus on shared values, laughter, memories, and gratitude, rather than disagreements. And if being around certain relatives is truly harmful to your well-being, it's okay to set boundaries or limit your time there.

5. Practice Mindfulness

Amid the chaos, mindfulness can be your anchor. Slow down and notice the present moment, the smell of pine needles, the sound of laughter, the warmth of a cozy blanket. Practicing gratitude can also shift your perspective. Try writing down three things you're thankful for each day, no matter how small. Even a brief pause to breathe deeply can help calm racing thoughts and bring you back to center.

6. Ask for Help

You don't have to do it all alone. Whether it's cooking, decorating, or organizing, share the workload with family and friends. Often, people are happy to help; they just need to be asked. If overwhelming emotion persists, talking to a therapist or counselor can provide support and clarity.

Ultimately, the holidays aren't about picture-perfect moments or elaborate gestures; they're about connection, kindness, and reflection. By easing up on yourself and focusing on what truly matters, you can transform the season from a source of stress into a time of genuine joy.

So this year, give yourself permission to slow down. Light a candle. Listen to your favorite song. Laugh with someone you love. In doing so, you might find that the best gift you can give — and receive — is a little peace of mind.

If you or someone you love is experiencing a mental health crisis, please know that immediate help is available. In moments of overwhelming anxiety, severe depression, addiction, or thoughts of self-harm, you don't have to face this alone. North Port Behavioral Health specializes in urgent psychiatric care and medical detoxification, offering a safe environment and expert support when every second counts. Reach out at (941) 613-5311 or walk in any time, night or day. Your mental well-being matters and hope is here.

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EMSCULPT NEO:

A Revolutionary Approach to Pain Management This December

By Dr. Michael Jonathan Clark

M ebruary marks National Pain Management Awareness Month, making it the perfect time to explore innovative solutions that address both body composition and chronic pain. At Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology, we're proud to offer EMSCULPT NEO, a groundbreaking technology that's transforming how patients approach pain management while achieving their wellness goals.

Understanding EMSCULPT NEO

EMSCULPT NEO represents the latest advancement in non-invasive body contouring technology, combining two powerful modalities in a single treatment. This FDA-cleared device simultaneously delivers high-intensity focused electromagnetic energy (HIFEM) and radiofrequency heating to build muscle and reduce fat. However, its benefits extend far beyond aesthetics, offering significant advantages for those managing chronic pain conditions.

The Connection Between Muscle Strength and Pain Relief

Chronic pain, particularly in the back, knees, and core areas, often stems from weak or imbalanced muscles. When muscles lack strength, surrounding joints and tissues compensate, leading to increased strain and discomfort. EMSCULPT NEO addresses this root cause by inducing approximately 20,000 supramaximal muscle contractions in just 30 minutes, equivalent to performing thousands of crunches or squats that would be impossible to achieve through conventional exercise.

This intensive muscle building helps stabilize joints, improve posture, and reduce the burden on pain-prone areas. Patients with lower back pain, for instance, often experience relief as their core muscles strengthen and provide better spinal support.

Benefits for Pain Management

Enhanced Muscle Support: Strengthened muscles provide better support for joints and the skeletal system, reducing strain that contributes to chronic pain. This is particularly beneficial for individuals with arthritis, joint instability, or degenerative disc disease.



Improved Mobility: As muscle mass increases and fat decreases, patients often experience improved range of motion and flexibility. This enhanced mobility can break the cycle of pain-induced inactivity that often worsens chronic conditions.

Non-Invasive Relief: Unlike surgical interventions or ongoing medication regimens, EMSCULPT NEO offers a non-invasive alternative with no downtime. Patients can resume normal activities immediately after treatment, making it an ideal option for those seeking pain relief without disrupting their daily lives.

Postural Correction: Poor posture is a significant contributor to chronic neck, shoulder, and back pain. By strengthening core and back muscles, EMSCULPT NEO helps patients maintain proper alignment naturally, reducing pain caused by postural dysfunction.

Inflammation Reduction: The radiofrequency component of EMSCULPT NEO generates controlled heating that can help reduce inflammation in treated areas, providing additional pain relief benefits.

Why Choose Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology

At Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology, we understand that pain management requires a comprehensive, personalized approach. Our experienced team evaluates each patient's unique needs

and develops customized EMSCULPT NEO treatment plans that align with their pain management goals.

This December, take control of your pain and wellness journey. EMSCULPT NEO offers a unique opportunity to build strength, reduce discomfort, and reclaim your quality of life without surgery or prolonged recovery periods.

Schedule a consultation with Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology today at 941-786-0386 to discover how EMSCULPT NEO can become an integral part of your pain management strategy. Let this Pain Management Awareness Month be the turning point toward a stronger, more comfortable you.

About Dr. Michael Jonathan Clark

Dr. Clark has surgical skills that encompass much of the head and neck, and really enjoys a challenge. Dr. Clark loves cochlear implants and their ability to replace the function of the inner ear by directly stimulating the auditory nerve. There is just something special about watching the face of someone hear for the first time in a long time. He also performs ossicular chain reconstruction, which repairs the tiny bones in the middle ear. It's pretty amazing, really. He removes thyroids and parotid glands that have gone awry, or tonsils that won't stop getting infected. Dr. Clark offers balloon sinuplasty in office (or in the OR if needed) that is comfortable and heals within a few weeks, giving people a whole new way to breathe easy. He also offers in office insertion of ear tubes, which he places with ease. Most importantly, Dr. Clark will explain any procedure he performs in detail and makes the patient feel confident and comfortable. He will also guide you through medical and lifestyle changes that may reduce your need for surgery. He really wants to find the best solutions for you and your family.



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Supporting Safety and Specialized Lymphedema Care Across Southwest Florida

By James Ferrara, OTR/L, CLWT, and Lexie Lundquist, OTD, OTR/L, CLWT

As people experience changes in routines — whether due to travel, visitors, shifting home layouts, or fluctuations in daily activity — mobility and balance needs naturally shift as well. These transitions can impact confidence, safety, and independence within the home. Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics supports patients through these changes by delivering mobile outpatient occupational and physical therapy services directly where they live. This approach removes barriers to care, strengthens functional ability, and ensures therapy aligns with each patient's real environment and daily demands.

Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics specializes in two primary areas: fall prevention with integrated neurological rehabilitation, and evidence-based lymphedema care through Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT). By combining accessibility with clinical expertise, the team helps patients maintain independence and improve their quality of life.

Fall Prevention & Neurological Rehabilitation: Promoting Safety in the Home

Small adjustments in daily life — hosting visitors, moving furniture, increased errands, or new patterns in activity — can all impact balance, endurance, and the way a person moves through their home. As a provider of mobile outpatient OT and PT services, Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics offers practical, personalized fall-prevention therapy designed to reduce risk and enhance confidence.

Our fall-prevention services include:

- Home safety and environmental assessments
- Balance and gait retraining
- Strengthening and functional mobility programs
- Transfer training for home and community mobility
- Footwear and assistive device recommendations
- Pacing and energy-conservation strategies for busy days

Because therapy is provided in the home, recommendations are specific to the patient's personal environment—not a simulated clinic layout. This allows therapists to address real fall risks and make immediate, applicable changes to support safety.

Neurological Rehabilitation Integrated Into Fall Prevention

Many individuals navigating changes in balance may also be managing neurological or sensory conditions. Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics incorporates evidence-based neurological rehabilitation into fall-prevention plans to strengthen underlying systems related to balance, coordination, and mobility.

Our occupational and physical therapists provide specialized treatment for individuals with:

- Stroke
- Parkinson's disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- Neuropathy
- Vestibular and balance disorders

Intervention focuses on neuroplasticity-based exercise, proprioceptive training, postural control, dynamic and static balance activities, and task-specific mobility work. By combining neurological rehabilitation with fall-prevention strategies, patients receive a well-rounded, functional approach to safety that supports long-term independence.

Specialized Lymphedema Management Through Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT)

In addition to fall-prevention and neurological rehabilitation, Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics provides gold-standard lymphedema treatment through Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT). Variations in routine, travel, dietary patterns, or daily activity can all influence swelling, making consistent, structured care especially important.

CDT includes:

- Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD)
- Compression bandaging
- Therapeutic exercise designed to support lymphatic flow
- Skin care and infection prevention

Each therapy plan is individualized to the patient's medical background—whether swelling is related to oncology treatment, vascular issues, surgery, or hereditary causes. By offering mobile outpatient OT and PT directly in the home, therapists can tailor education and treatment to the patient's actual lifestyle, helping them maintain comfort and stability.

Compression Garment Support, Simplified Through our DME Services

Ongoing compression is essential for maintaining CDT results, and many patients need assistance navigating garment choices, sizing, and usage. Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics provides in-home garment measuring, ordering, and training, ensuring a seamless process and improving long-term adherence.

Patients receive hands-on support with:

- Selecting appropriate day and night garments
- Donning and doffing techniques
- Assessing garment comfort and effectiveness
- Understanding wear schedules and garment care

For many individuals, the period before Medicare deductibles reset at the start of the year is an ideal time to update their compression garments—a process our therapists are fully prepared to assist with.

Clinician-Led, Patient-Focused Therapy Across Southwest Florida

Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics proudly provides mobile outpatient occupational and physical therapy to patients in Naples, Fort Myers, Bonita Springs, and Cape Coral. Co-Owners James Ferrara, OTR/L, CLWT, and Lexie Lundquist, OTD, OTR/L, CLWT, bring advanced clinical expertise and a commitment to improving accessibility for individuals who benefit most from in-home care. Their approach emphasizes education, independence, and personalized treatment, allowing patients to move more confidently and comfortably through the spaces where they live.

Helping Patients Stay Safe, Supported, and Independent

Whether the focus is preventing falls, improving neurological function, managing swelling, or strengthening mobility, Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics provides skilled therapy at home—where it is most effective and meaningful.

By offering specialized fall prevention, neurological therapy, and lymphedema management through a mobile outpatient model, the practice continues to elevate the standard of care across Southwest Florida.

We're Growing!

Mobile Rehab & Lymphatics is seeking an additional Physical Therapist (PT) to join our expanding mobile outpatient team! Referrals and inquiries are welcome.



Jim Ferrara



Lexie Lundquist

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CANCEL THE SURGERY!

HAVE THE BODY HEAL THE BODY INSTEAD

by Prof. William J. Cole, Jr., DO
Double Board-Certified in PM&R Interventions & Regenerative Medicine

“YOUR LIFE WITHOUT PAIN, DRUGS, OR SURGERY.”

DEAR PATIENT, if you're reading this, you're likely tired—tired of “one more pill,” “one more injection,” or “one more surgery” that never quite gives you your life back. THIS IS NOT YOUR FAULT. You've been offered the tools others know. But if all someone holds is a hammer, EVERYTHING LOOKS LIKE A NAIL. I'm writing to tell you there's a different path—one that respects your biology and aims at what you want most: **QUALITY OF LIFE**

*(FYI: COMMUNITY GIVE-BACK: SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY AND RECEIVE A **FREE WELLNESS GIFT** AT YOUR FIRST VISIT. Our way of saying “WELCOME—LET'S GET YOU BACK TO LIFE.” (One per patient; details at checkout.)*

WHAT I BELIEVE (AND WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU)

THE MESSAGE: Your Body Has an AMAZING ABILITY TO HEAL ITSELF!

THE MISSION: Provide PRECISION-GUIDED, DRUG-SPARING, SURGERY-AVOIDING proven solutions that TARGET ROOT CAUSES and RESTORE FUNCTION—so you can finally live again.

THE MOVEMENT: Across America, Patients are Telling their Doctors, “CANCEL THE SURGERY!” Instead, they choose to **HAVE THE BODY HEAL THE BODY**® with Dr. Cole, and with Great Success!

I trained for surgery for years until the catastrophic car crash that I survived. **I Know Pain** as a patient and doctor. But This Isn't About Me. **THIS IS ABOUT YOU—YOUR PROBLEMS, YOUR PAIN, YOUR FUNCTION, and YOUR FUTURE.** If drugs and surgery don't solve the problems, WHY REPEAT IT?

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

- * How Many Surgeries Have You Already Had?
- * How many surgeries are you willing to have before you say NO MORE?

- * How Many of You Are Still in Pain After These Surgeries?
- * How Would You Like to Avoid Surgery and Drugs?
- * Do You Agree That “Nothing Can Heal the Body Better Than the Body”?

Now, ASK THESE QUESTIONS TO YOUR DOCTOR:

- * WHICH DRUG OR SURGERY “HEALS MY BODY BETTER THAN MY OWN BODY?”
- * Are You Familiar with REGENERATIVE Stem Cell Therapy Studies That Prove THEY WORK?
- * Will You Hold My Surgery Until I Consult with Dr. Cole About Alternative Natural Treatments? Excuses, Misuse, And Abuse of Surgery for Patients “Believe What the Doctor Tells Them...”

I've met a patient with 21 SPINE SURGERIES—7 cervical, 3 thoracic, 10 lumbar, 1 sacral—still in agony and being guided to “one more surgery”, in Spite of Multiple Failed Surgeries before. Why not pursue a Custom Treatment Plan that is DESIGNED & TARGETED to YOU and YOUR NEEDS?

If we can REGENERATE Our Brain, Joints, Muscles, Tendons, Spine/ Nerves, Lungs, and Systems, WHY NOT REBUILD Our Body? Why Not Use Our God Given Gift of Healing?

WHAT MAKES DR. COLE & HIS CREW DIFFERENT? WE DON'T TREAT PICTURES ON A SCREEN. WE CHAMPION TRANSFORMATIONS. Here's how:

- * **DEEP LISTENING & FULL INVESTIGATION:** We take the time to get to know you, your history, your problems, your concerns—including injuries, surgeries, trauma, flares, fears, goals—because Every Decision About Your Health Should Try to Make You Healthier... Not Just Make Money for the Treatment Center.



• **ROOT-CAUSE CLARITY:** HANDS-ON EXAM, TARGETED IMAGING, and APPROPRIATE LABS to identify true pain centers—joints, muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, fascia, and the neuro-immune system.

• **STRAIGHT TALK:** show you WHAT'S WRONG, WHAT IT MEANS, and YOUR OPTIONS—so YOU decide with confidence.

• **THE REBUILD YOUR BODY™ (EXCLUSIVE):** Tailored protocols that may feature ULTRA-PRP™, ADVANCED CELLULAR BIOLOGICS, EXOSOMES, OZONE, ADVANCED IV IMMUNOBOOST, and NEUROLOGIC “REBUILD YOUR BRAIN™” —are all designed to DECREASE PAIN & INCREASE FUNCTION while helping you AVOID UNNECESSARY DRUGS AND SURGERY.

• **IMAGE-GUIDED PRECISION:** Ultrasound/ fluoroscopy guidance by a BOARD-CERTIFIED INTERVENTIONAL REGENERATIVE SPECIALIST—because PLACEMENT IS PARAMOUNT.

• **RE-TRAIN THE SYSTEM:** Protection periods, smart rehab, neuro-activation, and lifestyle upgrades to LOCK IN healing and produce better results and protect your gains.

• **MEASURE WHAT MATTERS:** FUNCTION, FREEDOM, AND JOY—because THAT'S THE POINT.

BOOK TODAY AND RECEIVE YOUR FREE WELLNESS GIFT AT YOUR FIRST VISIT. (Simple steps toward a different trajectory brings a Better Future You).

WHO WE HELP

- **ARTHRITIS & CARTILAGE LOSS** (knees, hips, shoulders, ankles, wrists, spine)
- **TENDON & LIGAMENT INJURIES** (rotator cuff, meniscus, ACL/PCL, plantar fascia)
- **NERVE PAIN / RADICULOPATHY and FAILED SURGERY SYNDROME** (We Specialize in Spine!)
- **NECK, MID-BACK, LOW-BACK PAIN** including facet and SI dysfunction (Even Failed Surgery Syndrome)
- **POST-CONCUSSIVE / NEURO-INFLAMMATORY** (issues affecting focus, sleep, and mood)
- **ATHLETES & ACTIVE ADULTS** who want to keep moving—without fear (Pickleball Anyone?)

No single therapy is for everyone. **THAT'S WHY YOUR TREATMENT PLAN IS TAILORED TO YOU.**

REALITY CHECK (READ THIS TWICE)

YOU CANNOT "PT AWAY" a torn tendon, advanced cartilage loss, scar tissue, or a compressed nerve. You also can't medicate your way toward Natural Biologic Healing that needs **ACTIVATION, STIMULATION, AND DIRECTION TO HEAL.** When we find THE ACTUAL SOURCE, we can **TREAT WITH PURPOSE.**

What is More Important Than "QUALITY OF LIFE"...? **NOTHING!**

WALKING WITHOUT FEAR, SLEEPING THROUGH THE NIGHT, TRAVELING AGAIN, WORKING OUT, PICKING UP A GRANDCHILD—CONFIDENTLY! That's why we do this.

ARE YOU SEEING THE RIGHT DOCTOR?

(This is an Essential Question in Your Quest for Less Pain and Better Function)

- Did they **LISTEN** to your history, problem list, mechanism of injury, and the full story?
- Did you get more than a "5-minute visit" with **HANDS-ON EXAM** of the exact problem areas?
- Did they order the **CORRECT LABS/IMAGING** for your case, or just the same old tests?
- Did a **BOARD-CERTIFIED PHYSICIAN** evaluate you (not just an assistant)?
- Were you offered **MULTIPLE TREATMENT OPTIONS**—including **ADVANCED REGENERATION**?
- Did they explain **RISKS, BENEFITS, AND ALTERNATIVES** clearly of Surgery vs Others?
- Do they measure **FUNCTION & QUALITY OF LIFE**, not just "pain level today, and here's your drugs"?

If not, **YOU'RE NOT IN THE RIGHT PRACTICE**, as You Deserve Better Care, Consideration, and Quality.

HOW TO START (COPY THESE)

Walk in prepared and ask:

- **WHICH DRUG OR SURGERY WORKS BETTER THAN GOD GIVEN ABILITY TO HEAL?**
- **HOW WILL YOU CORRECTLY DIAGNOSE MY UNDERLYING PROBLEMS?**
- **HOW WILL YOU TARGET THE TRUE PAIN GENERATORS—WITH GUIDANCE?**
- **PLEASE CANCEL MY ELECTIVE SURGERY WHILE I SEEK A "CLARITY CONSULT" WITH DR. COLE FOR ADVANCED REGENERATIVE OPTIONS.**

Bring your prior chart, image reports, lists, labs, and op notes. We'll review what was missed and outline a **CLEAR, STEPWISE PLAN** to Get You Back in the Game of Life!

WHAT PATIENTS REPORT

- **LESS PAIN, MORE FUNCTION**
- **BETTER SLEEP & MOOD**
- **CONFIDENCE TO LIVE LIFE AND BE ACTIVE—WITHOUT FEAR or PAIN**
- **REAL-LIFE WINNING STRATEGIES:** walk, work out, fish, golf, dance, & play Pickleball again!

No Outcome Is Guaranteed, but **SUPERIOR PROCEDURES, PRODUCTS, PRECISION, PATIENT-FIRST CARE ARE GUARANTEED EVERY TIME.**

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• **CLARITY • CUSTOM TREATMENTS**

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REGULATORY & ETHICS NOTE (PLEASE READ)

EDUCATIONAL ONLY; NOT MEDICAL ADVICE. Care decisions must occur in a **DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP** after proper evaluation. Some regenerative therapies are **NOT FDA-APPROVED FOR SPECIFIC ORTHOPEDIC INDICATIONS.** We practice within **STATE & FEDERAL GUIDELINES** and disclose **RISKS, BENEFITS, AND ALTERNATIVES.** **INDIVIDUAL RESULTS VARY.**

***FLORIDA IS A STEM CELL APPROVED STATE: Only for Those Physicians Who Qualify with Strict Regulations and Certifications, such as Dr. Cole, Are Qualified to Perform Stem Cell Procedures.**

(ALL BIOLOGICS ARE ETHICALLY SOURCED IN THE U.S. & PROCESSED IN AN FDA APPROVED LAB WITH STRICT PROTOCOLS IN AN ISO-7 LAB)

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HEALING HANDS ACROSS BORDERS:

DR. DENNIS SAGINI'S MISSION TO RESTORE UPPER EXTREMITY FUNCTION

In operating rooms far from the comforts of modern medical facilities, Dr. Dennis Sagini brings hope to patients whose hand and arm injuries might otherwise remain untreated. As an upper extremities specialist, Dr. Sagini has dedicated significant portions of his career to charitable orthopedic medical missions, traveling to underserved communities where access to specialized surgical care is limited or nonexistent.

Dr. Sagini's work focuses on conditions affecting the shoulders, elbows, wrists, and hands—injuries and conditions that can devastate a person's ability to work, care for themselves, and maintain their independence. In developed nations, these issues are routinely addressed through sophisticated surgical interventions. However, in many parts of the world, patients suffering from fractures, nerve damage, tendon injuries, and congenital deformities have nowhere to turn.

The impact of upper extremity disabilities in resource-limited settings extends beyond individual suffering. In communities where manual labor forms the backbone of economic survival, an injured hand or arm can push entire families into poverty. A farmer who cannot grip tools, a seamstress who cannot use her fingers, or a carpenter whose shoulder injury prevents him from working—these are the patients Dr. Sagini encounters on his missions.

Each year in July or August, Dr. Sagini embarks on his mission trip alongside 20-30 other dedicated volunteers, including surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, and support staff. These expeditions are made possible through the generous sponsorship of the Miarura Family Foundation and the International Orthopaedic and Anesthesia Foundation, organizations committed to bringing specialized surgical care to underserved populations.

During these charitable expeditions, Dr. Sagini performs a wide range of procedures, from repairing old fractures that healed improperly to reconstructing tendons damaged by workplace accidents. He treats children born with hand deformities, giving them the chance to develop normal function as they grow. He addresses nerve compressions like carpal tunnel syndrome that have progressed far beyond what would typically be seen in his regular



practice, and he repairs complex injuries that patients have lived with for months or even years due to lack of access to care.

The challenges of mission work are substantial. Dr. Sagini often works with limited equipment, basic anesthesia options, and in conditions that require creative problem-solving. Sterilization protocols must be adapted, surgical techniques modified, and follow-up care carefully planned with local healthcare providers who will monitor patients after the mission team departs. Despite these obstacles, the outcomes can be transformative—patients regaining the ability to work, children gaining independence, and families finding new hope.

Beyond the operating room, Dr. Sagini's missions include an educational component. He works alongside local physicians and healthcare workers, sharing techniques and knowledge that will benefit future patients long after he has returned home. This capacity-building aspect ensures that his impact extends beyond the individual surgeries performed during each trip.

The motivations driving physicians like Dr. Sagini to undertake this challenging work are rooted in a fundamental belief in healthcare as a human right. These missions represent medicine at its most essential—skilled practitioners using their expertise to alleviate suffering regardless of a patient's ability to pay or their geographic location.

For Dr. Sagini, each successfully restored hand, each shoulder that can once again bear weight, and each patient who returns to productive life represents not just a medical success but a fulfillment of medicine's highest calling. Through his charitable orthopedic medical missions, he exemplifies how specialized surgical skills can change lives and entire communities, one upper extremity at a time.

His work stands as a reminder that healing hands can reach across any border when guided by compassion and commitment to service.

Contact our office at 239-302-3216 to schedule a consultation and to learn more.



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, the American Association of Orthopedic Surgery and the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery.

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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FALLING DOWN: IT'S NOT INEVITABLE—IT'S PREVENTABLE THROUGH SCREENING

By RICK WEBER

Falls kill.

Those two words aren't designed for shock value—they're an increasing reality. Falls among adults 65 and older caused over 38,000 deaths in 2021, making it the leading cause of injury-related death for that group, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 2021, emergency departments recorded nearly three million visits for older adult falls.

It couldn't happen to you? If you're in that age group, there's a 25% chance you will fall this year.

Elizabeth Templeton's passion is to do something about it. Templeton, DPT, GCS, WCS, CEEAA, is a physical therapy professor in Florida Gulf Coast University's Department of Rehabilitation Sciences.

She believes falls in older adults are preventable when risk factors are identified early through proactive screening. Early detection and intervention are critical, not only for traditional physical risks like balance and strength deficits, but also for often-overlooked contributors such as continence issues and pelvic floor function.

"From my clinical experience, I have observed that older adults are unaware of the importance of fall prevention, while others may resist seeking help due to stigma," she says. "There is strong evidence that demonstrates individuals may resist seeking help due to denial or self-perception, and that sedentary lifestyles are associated with persistent inactivity and increased fall risk.

"By broadening our understanding of fall risk, we can create more comprehensive and effective prevention strategies."

Fall rates can decrease by approximately 23–24% in high-risk groups when older adults are evaluated for fall-risk factors—such as a history of falls, balance or gait impairments, medication side effects and potential hazards in the home—and receive personalized interventions such as exercise programs, home safety modifications or medication adjustments, according to the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

The American Geriatrics Society and British Geriatrics Society advise that all adults over 65 should be screened annually for a history of falls or balance impairment. Screening involves asking about previous falls, balance problems and related symptoms. If risk is identified, a multifactorial fall-risk assessment is performed, which evaluates the circumstances and frequency of falls, associated injuries, medications (including over-the-counter), comorbidities, activities of daily living, use of assistive devices and fear of falling.

Screenings can be accomplished through self-reported prescreen questionnaires or through an intake interview. The CDC has identified a group of objective screening tools that can be done quickly and safely by a medical professional such as a physical therapist, including gait speed measurement and the Timed Up and Go (TUG) test.

Templeton says primary care providers can screen for falls during an individual's Annual Wellness Visit, which is typically reimbursed by Medicare. Community-based programs, senior centers and public health initiatives may also offer fall-risk screening using validated tools such as the STEADI Stay Independent questionnaire, which was part of research Templeton conducted at FGCU.

"Based on the frequency of falls in older adults, they should take the results very seriously—gait speed isn't just a predictor for falls but also for mortality and frailty," she says. "Depending on the deficit identified, some recommendations may be to increase lighting their home, such as installing motion lights or nightlights, or removing throw rugs.

"If we identify a patient may be at risk for falls based on polypharmacy (taking five or more medications daily), as a doctor of physical therapy, I will recommend that the individual see their prescribing provider to review their medications and their effect on falls. If we are assessing the individual at a community event, we may recommend they seek out formal physical therapy or occupational services."

Templeton's initial clinical passion developed through specialized training in pelvic floor rehabilitation following graduate school. The pelvic floor—a complex group of muscles within the pelvis—plays a vital role in bowel and bladder control, sexual function and overall pelvic stability.

"Because it sits at the body's center, where the pelvis is connecting the upper and lower extremities, I quickly realized that the pelvic floor cannot be treated in isolation because it influences nearly every aspect of movement and function," she says.

Several years into her career, while working in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, as a geriatric clinical specialist across multiple assisted living facilities, she began noticing a pattern: Many resident falls occurred when individuals were walking to or from the bathroom. This observation became the bridge between her two areas of focus.

Drawing on her background in pelvic health, she started incorporating pelvic floor muscle training and practical behavioral strategies, such as limiting fluid intake a few hours before bedtime and reducing bladder irritants like caffeine and alcohol, into her fall-prevention programs.

"This integrated approach deepened my commitment to both pelvic health and fall prevention, recognizing how closely these systems are connected in promoting safety, independence and quality of life for older adults," she says.

Through her work with the Shady Rest Institute for Positive Aging at FGCU, she has been focusing on investigating how older adults perceive their risk of falling compared to what objective screening tools tell us about their actual risk.

"It's been fascinating to see how confidence, awareness and physical ability all come together in fall prevention," she says. "I'm fortunate to mentor a wonderful group of student researchers who are continuing this work and taking it a step further, exploring how pelvic floor health may also play a role in fall risk through subjective questionnaires. It's an area that doesn't get enough attention, and we're excited to bring more awareness to it."

FGCU

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2026 Annual Enrollment is Here!

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

VERY IMPORTANT: Regarding Medicare it is illegal for an insurance agent to call, text, e-mail, knock on your door, hang anything on your door or vehicle or approach you without your consent. If they do ask for their National Producer Number NPN, and you will hear a click and will be removed from their list. If they don't hang-up get their number and report them to Medicare. There is so much fraud where people are being switched to plans that they never approved or were miss led. Shop local, do background checks before you give anyone your personal information. You can google them, google reviews, check their Facebook, etc. Make sure that if you are working with someone you can call them personally if you have any questions or concerns.

Medicare Annual Enrollment is October 15 - December 7th for January 1st, 2026, effective. What can be changed at this time is Medicare Part D Drug Plans and Medicare Advantage Plans. The last day to make changes to PART D for 2026 December 7th, 2025!

Medicare Open Enrollment is January - March. What can be changed at this time of the year is Medicare Advantage Plans. You can make one change from one Part C Advantage Plan to another Advantage Plan from the same company or another. You can change from one Advantage Plan to a stand-alone Part D Drug Plan, this is not advised unless you have a secondary to Original Medicare, which is a Medigap and also called a Medicare Supplement. I always do the Medicare Supplement Applications 1st to make sure that the person is approved. Medicare Supplement has medical underwriting, and you may not qualify. There are certain Special Election Periods that may qualify you as a guaranteed issue. You can NOT change from one Part D drug Plan to another this time of year.

Medicare Part C / Advantage Plans, most carriers have raised out of pocket limits and copays along with decreased extra value benefits for 2026. Annually Medicare Advantage Plans make changes. They must all include the same features as Original Medicare but not at the same cost share. They can have a premium, Medical and or Prescription deductible, copays and coinsurance can change. Extra Value such as Vision, Dental, Over the Counter, Part B Give Back, transportation, etc. can all change or be eliminated. Medicare sets the annual in-network out of pocket maximum; in 2025 it is \$9,250 for in-network and \$13,900 out-of-network services combined. However, individual insurance plans may set lower limits.

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

If your plan was CANCELLED/DROPPED for 2026, you have a guaranteed issue into a Medigap/Medicare Supplement. This is huge and very important, know your options!

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

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

Logical Insurance Solutions is a SWFL Insurance Broker that works with most of the insurance carriers in your area, we are happy to help you through the maze. We offer Free Medicare Seminars, Personal Appointments & Virtual appointments. Please e-mail info@logicalinsurance.com to register or call 239-362-0855 for dates.

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HEALING AT THE INTERSECTION OF MIND, BODY & ROOT CAUSE:

A Deep Dive Into Mind Body Medicine of Florida

In the heart of Sarasota sits a wellness center that refuses to treat patients like a series of symptoms, and instead invites them into a journey of transformation. At 2805 Fruitville Road, Suite 250, the team at Mind Body Medicine of Florida stands as a beacon of integrative care—where functional medicine, IV therapy, contrast therapy, yoga, and root-cause detox protocols come together under one roof.



Under the leadership of **Mark Sylvester, MD** — whose own story of illness and recovery led him to challenge the conventional model of medicine — this practice champions a philosophy of whole-person healing. “We don’t just address the symptom; we uncover the cause,” the website declares. For patients grappling with unexplained fatigue, brainfog, hormone imbalances or simply a desire to live more vibrantly, this is a place of possibilities.

Tailored protocols, not templates

At Mind Body Medicine of Florida, no two journeys look the same. The intake process involves deep dives into labs, lifestyle, environment, trauma, and nutritional status. From there, a bespoke plan might include integrative diagnostics, heavy-metal or biotoxin screening, IV nutrient infusions, cold-plunge/infrared sauna contrast, yoga or mindfulness classes in the Roots Collective, neurofeedback, and much more.



For example, the Vesta Chelation Method—a program founded by Dr. Sylvester himself—targets heavy metal and mold biotoxin burden, spanning the entire US in its online scope. It uses advanced testing (such as hair-mineral analysis and mycotoxin panels) and personalized protocols designed around five “pillars” of cellular healing: detoxification, metabolic support, gut restoration, brain/inflammation reduction and sustainable lifestyle mastery.

On another front, the InfuZen IV Lounge offers infusion therapies for hydration, recovery, nutrient optimization, detox and performance support—all administered in a relaxing environment.

Philosophy meets practice

What sets this center apart is the seamless integration of mind, body and environment. Dr. Sylvester argues that conventional medicine often stops too soon—focusing on pills and procedures when the upstream causes remain unaddressed. At this clinic, the questions become: Are you exposed to toxins? Is your nervous system in “fight/flight” mode? Are you metabolically stuck? Are you sleeping well? Are your mindset and relationships supportive of your health?

Within a calm, spa-meets-clinic setting, patients might move from a contrast therapy session (infrared sauna followed by cold plunge) to a vitamin infusion lounge to a one-on-one neurofeedback session. The aim: restore resilience, awaken vitality and reconnect patients to the natural healing potential of their own bodies.

Who comes here – and why it matters

The profile of patients is broad: someone with chronic Lyme or mold exposure seeking root-cause healing; an executive looking for IV support, hormone balance and nervous system reset; an athlete recovering from injury; a wellness-minded person wanting to age with grace. The common thread: a sense that the standard model hasn’t worked, and a desire for deeper answers. The center’s tagline speaks clearly: “We treat the whole person—not just your symptoms.”

A word of perspective

While the integrative and root-cause model brings hope to many, it is worth noting that some of these therapies (such as chelation for non-acute exposures, or high-dose nutrient IVs) exist in a space where conventional medicine is still evolving. Patients should remain informed partners in their care, understand which parts are evidence-based and which are more pioneering, and always coordinate with their primary physician.

In summary

If you’ve been searching for a healthcare experience that sees you, not just your lab results, and that weaves together cutting-edge diagnostics, lifestyle transformation, mind-body practices and environmental medicine—then Mind Body Medicine of Florida may be for you. For those ready to stop managing symptoms and start living from a place of rooted, holistic wellness, the path may just begin at 2805 Fruitville Road.



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TBS: Osteo – Because Bone Structure Matters

Osteoporosis is a condition characterized by the weakening of bones, leading to an increased risk of fractures. Early detection and management of osteoporosis are crucial for preventing fractures and maintaining bone health. One innovative technology that has been integrated into imaging services for the diagnosis and management of osteoporosis is TBS iN Insight™.

TBS iN Insight™ is a software solution designed to assess bone microarchitecture, providing valuable insights into bone quality beyond what traditional bone density measurements can offer. TBS stands for Trabecular Bone Score, which refers to the evaluation of the microarchitecture of trabecular bone, the spongy bone tissue that makes up the interior of bones.

This technology enhances the screening process for osteoporosis and fracture risk by offering a more comprehensive understanding of bone health. Traditional methods, such as Dual-Energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) scans, primarily focus on bone mineral density. While bone mineral density is important in assessing bone strength, it doesn't provide a complete picture of bone quality.

TBS iN Insight™ works by analyzing the texture and pattern of trabecular bone in the spine. Trabecular bone is vital for maintaining bone strength, and changes in its microarchitecture can indicate osteoporosis-related issues. The software generates a TBS score, which is then used with bone mineral density measurements to assess overall bone health.

The integration of TBS iN Insight™ into imaging services brings several advantages to the table:

- 1. Improved Fracture Risk Prediction:** By assessing trabecular bone microarchitecture, TBS iN Insight™ enhances the fracture risk prediction beyond what traditional methods can achieve. This additional information is valuable for healthcare providers in identifying individuals at a higher risk of fractures.
- 2. Personalized Treatment Approaches:** Understanding bone mineral density and trabecular bone quality allows for more personalized approaches to osteoporosis management. Healthcare providers can tailor interventions based on a more comprehensive patient bone health assessment.



Ask your medical provider about Advanced Bone Densitometry with TBS!



50% of patients at risk of fracture are potentially missed by bone densitometry alone! You need additional information about your bone quality! This can be assessed by TBS.

3. Early Detection: TBS iN Insight™ contributes to the early detection of changes in bone microarchitecture, enabling proactive measures to be taken before significant bone loss occurs. Early intervention is crucial in preventing fractures and maintaining overall bone health.

In addition to the exciting integration of TBS iN Insight™ into our imaging services for osteoporosis diagnosis and management, some key points enhance the overall patient experience and accessibility to this advanced technology:

- **Availability Across Locations:** TBS iN Insight™ will be available at all three of our locations by mid-December. This widespread implementation ensures that patients can conveniently access this innovative screening technology, making it a seamless part of their healthcare journey.
- **Patient Empowerment:** To maximize the benefits of TBS iN Insight™, we encourage patients to proactively ask for TBS when scheduling their annual Bone Density/DEXA exams. This prompts a discussion between patients and healthcare providers about the relevance of TBS in their specific bone health assessment.
- **Insurance Coverage:** Good news for patients—insurance is covering the cost of TBS iN Insight™. While we have taken steps to facilitate insurance coverage, we still encourage patients to inquire with their insurance providers to ensure a clear understanding of the coverage details.
- **Efficiency and Safety:** Integrating TBS iN Insight™ into the screening process comes with no additional time requirements for the exam. Patients can expect the same efficiency level during their Bone Density/DEXA scans while gaining the added benefits of TBS iN Insight™. Importantly, there is no increase in radiation exposure associated with the inclusion of TBS iN Insight™, ensuring the safety of the screening process.

By disseminating this information, we aim to empower patients to participate in their bone health actively. The ease of access across our locations,

insurance coverage, and the seamless integration of TBS iN Insight™ into existing screening procedures underscores our commitment to providing comprehensive and patient-friendly healthcare services.

As always, readers are encouraged to discuss the inclusion of TBS iN Insight™ in their screenings with their healthcare providers. This collaborative approach ensures individuals receive personalized guidance based on their unique health needs and circumstances.

RAVE is a radiology practice that has been active for over thirty years. We currently consist of 14 board-certified radiologists, many of whom have postgraduate fellowships with subspecialty training. All of whom have years of full-time experience. Over 120 healthcare professionals are working with us to provide the best possible radiologic services in Sarasota County. In addition to our personnel, we have some of the best radiologic imaging devices available. Superior visualization helps us make your diagnoses accurate and timely, preventing potentially dangerous delays in initiating your therapy. At RAVE, you can have confidence you're getting top-notch professional assistance in your diagnosis and care.



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HOW ACUPUNCTURE WORKS: Understanding Its Role in Pain Management

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

Pain affects millions of people worldwide, disrupting daily activities and diminishing quality of life. While conventional pain medications remain popular, many individuals are turning to acupuncture as an effective complementary approach. This ancient Chinese practice, involving the insertion of thin needles into specific points on the body, has gained substantial recognition in modern medicine for its pain-relieving properties. Understanding the mechanisms behind acupuncture's effectiveness can help patients make informed decisions about incorporating it into their pain management strategies.

Acupuncture operates through several interconnected physiological mechanisms that work together to reduce pain and discomfort. One of the primary ways acupuncture alleviates pain is through the release of endogenous opioids. When needles stimulate specific acupuncture points, the body responds by releasing endorphins and enkephalins, natural pain-relieving chemicals produced in the brain and nervous system. These substances bind to opioid receptors throughout the body, producing analgesic effects similar to pharmaceutical pain medications but without the risk of addiction or severe side effects.

The gate control theory of pain also helps explain acupuncture's effectiveness. This theory suggests that non-painful input, such as the sensation created by acupuncture needles, can close the neural gates to painful input, preventing pain signals from reaching the central nervous system. By activating large nerve fibers through needle stimulation, acupuncture essentially blocks the transmission of pain messages carried by smaller nerve fibers, reducing the perception of discomfort.

Neuroimaging studies have revealed that acupuncture influences brain activity in regions associated with pain processing. Research using functional MRI scans demonstrates that acupuncture can modulate activity in the limbic system, which governs emotions and pain perception, as well as in other pain-processing areas of the brain. This neuromodulation helps explain why acupuncture can be effective for chronic pain conditions where the nervous system has become hypersensitive.



Inflammation plays a significant role in many pain conditions, and acupuncture has demonstrated anti-inflammatory effects. Studies indicate that acupuncture triggers the release of adenosine, a naturally occurring compound with anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties. Additionally, acupuncture can reduce pro-inflammatory cytokines while promoting anti-inflammatory responses, helping to address the underlying causes of pain rather than merely masking symptoms.

The autonomic nervous system, which regulates involuntary body functions, also responds to acupuncture treatment. By influencing the balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, acupuncture can reduce stress responses that often exacerbate pain conditions. This regulation promotes relaxation, improves blood circulation, and facilitates the body's natural healing processes.

Acupuncture has proven particularly effective for various pain conditions, including chronic lower back pain, osteoarthritis, migraines, tension headaches, and neck pain. Clinical trials have shown that patients receiving acupuncture often experience significant improvements compared to those receiving standard care alone. Many healthcare providers now recommend acupuncture as part of a comprehensive pain management approach, especially for patients seeking to reduce reliance on pain medications.

The cumulative effect of acupuncture treatments is another important consideration. While some patients experience immediate relief, others find that benefits increase progressively over multiple sessions. This cumulative response suggests that acupuncture creates lasting physiological changes rather than providing temporary symptom relief.

As research continues to unveil the complex mechanisms underlying acupuncture's pain-relieving effects, this ancient practice gains further validation in contemporary healthcare. Whether used independently or alongside other treatments, acupuncture represents a valuable tool in the multifaceted approach to pain management.

Modern pain management increasingly recognizes the value of integrative approaches that combine conventional and complementary therapies. Acupuncture fits naturally into this paradigm, offering a safe, low-risk option with minimal side effects. For individuals struggling with chronic pain, acupuncture provides hope beyond pharmaceutical interventions.

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

Dr. Pullen is a board-certified Doctor of Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine dedicated to holistic, patient-centered care. She earned both her Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences and Master's Degree in Oriental Medicine from the East West College of Natural Medicine, followed by a Doctoral Degree in Acupuncture with a specialization in Chinese Herbal Medicine from the Pacific College of Health and Science.

Licensed by the State of Florida and Nationally Certified through the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), Dr. Pullen also holds certification in Advanced Acupuncture Point Injection Therapy (APIT).

With over 26 years of experience in the massage therapy field, Dr. Pullen brings a rich background in holistic health and wellness. Her practice integrates the wisdom of traditional Eastern Medicine with modern biomedical understanding, allowing her to effectively address a wide range of conditions—including chronic pain, stress-related disorders, digestive concerns, women's health issues, headaches, autoimmune and preventive wellness.

Renowned for her compassionate and personalized approach, Dr. Pullen designs individualized treatment plans that may include acupuncture, herbal medicine, homeopathy, cupping, tui na (Oriental medical massage), and TCM nutrition. She is deeply committed to identifying and treating the root cause of illness rather than merely managing symptoms, empowering each patient to achieve lasting balance and well-being.

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COMPASSIONATE HOME CARE:

Empowering Independence in Southwest Florida

By Dennis Agrusti

When families face the challenging decision of how to best care for aging parents or loved ones with special needs, the desire to maintain dignity, comfort, and independence often leads to one clear solution: quality home care. Home Helpers Home Care of Southwest Florida understands this deeply personal journey and has dedicated itself to providing exceptional care that honors the fundamental belief that everyone deserves to age gracefully in the comfort of their own home.

A Philosophy Rooted in Compassion

"Giving Care The Way You Want To Be Cared For" isn't just a motto for Home Helpers Home Care of Southwest Florida – it's a guiding principle that shapes every interaction, every service, and every relationship they build with families throughout Fort Myers, Cape Coral, and the surrounding areas. This philosophy recognizes that receiving care shouldn't mean sacrificing independence or personal preferences. Instead, it should enhance quality of life while providing the support necessary to thrive at home.

The team at Home Helpers understands that choosing home care represents a significant decision for families. It often comes during times of transition, uncertainty, or health challenges when emotions run high and practical concerns feel overwhelming. Their approach acknowledges these realities while focusing on solutions that bring peace of mind to both clients and their families.

Personalized Care That Adapts to Life's Changes

What sets Home Helpers Home Care of Southwest Florida apart is their commitment to truly personalized service. Rather than offering one-size-fits-all solutions, their dedicated senior caregivers invest time in understanding each client's unique circumstances, preferences, and goals. This thorough assessment process ensures that care plans reflect individual needs rather than generic protocols.

The services offered span a comprehensive range of daily living support. Companionship services combat isolation and loneliness, providing meaningful social interaction that contributes to mental and emotional wellbeing. Light housekeeping maintains a clean, safe living environment without the physical strain that cleaning can place on seniors or



those with mobility limitations. Meal preparation ensures proper nutrition while accommodating dietary restrictions and personal tastes.

Transportation services prove invaluable for maintaining independence and social connections. Whether it's medical appointments, grocery shopping, or social outings, reliable transportation keeps clients engaged with their communities. Personal care services, delivered with utmost respect for dignity and privacy, assist with activities of daily living when needed.

The Extended Family Approach

Home Helpers Home Care of Southwest Florida operates on the principle that effective caregiving extends beyond completing tasks – it involves building genuine relationships. Their caregivers are trained not only in technical skills but also in the art of compassionate communication and emotional support. This approach transforms the caregiver-client relationship from a purely professional arrangement into something more meaningful: an extended family connection built on trust, respect, and genuine caring.

This philosophy proves particularly valuable for seniors who may feel vulnerable or uncertain about accepting help. When caregivers approach their work with warmth and authentic concern, clients feel more comfortable and confident in their care arrangements. Families, too, experience greater peace of mind knowing their loved ones are receiving not just professional service but genuine personal attention.

Supporting Independence Through Dependable Care

The ultimate goal of quality home care is to enhance independence rather than replace it. Home Helpers Home Care of Southwest Florida structures their services to support clients' existing

capabilities while providing assistance where needed. This balanced approach helps maintain self-esteem and personal autonomy while ensuring safety and wellbeing.

For families in Southwest Florida seeking compassionate, professional home care services, Home Helpers Home Care offers a partnership built on understanding, flexibility, and unwavering commitment to quality care. Their dedication to treating each client as they would want their own family members treated creates a foundation for successful, long-term care relationships that truly make a difference in people's lives.

About Dennis Agrusti, Owner

Dennis Agrusti has been a proud resident of the Fort Myers area for over 39 years, has two adult children and six amazing grandchildren and credits his faith in God for guiding his journey. As an Army veteran, Dennis feels a deep responsibility to support fellow veterans, which is why his company is a VA provider affiliated with several veteran programs. His professional background includes over 20 years as an Allstate agent and 10 years as a realtor, along with active community involvement.

After retiring from insurance to care for his ailing mother in Texas, Dennis experienced firsthand the challenges families face as caregivers. This personal experience, combined with his own perspective as a senior citizen, inspired him to open Home Helpers. He chose this reputable franchise with over 20 years of nationwide service because of their industry-leading training and commitment to excellence. Dennis's mission is helping seniors maintain independence in their homes while providing families peace of mind, truly "Making Life Easier" for everyone involved.

Call Home Helpers Home Care of Southwest Florida today at (239) 312-5759 to schedule your free, no-obligation home care assessment and discover compassionate support and a senior caregiver tailored to your family's needs!



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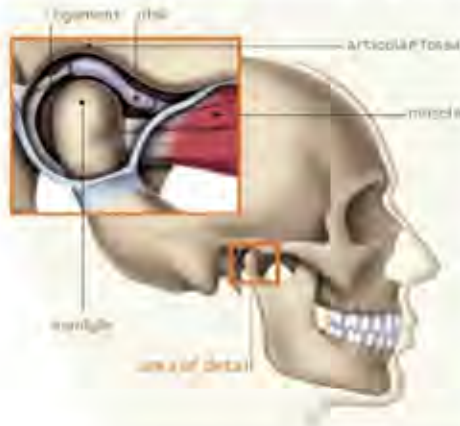
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The Daily "Grind"

By Dr. Joseph Farag

Too much stress can contribute to a wide range of health problems. From a dental perspective, stress often plays a role in the development of Temporomandibular Disorders, or TMD. Grinding of teeth which causes headaches, jaw soreness and pain, among many other symptoms can be exacerbated during times of high stress. The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is the hinge joint that connects the lower jaw to the temporal bone of the skull, which is immediately in front of the ear on the side of your head. The cause of TMD is not clear, but dentists believe that symptoms arise from problems with the muscles of the jaw. Severe cases can be caused by injury to the jaw. In more common cases, grinding or clenching of the teeth puts a lot of pressure on the TMJ and people feel tooth sensitivity, earaches, and neck tension and pain.



Treatment Options

If stress is causing you to grind your teeth, ask your doctor or dentist about options to reduce your stress. Also, avoid foods and drinks that contain caffeine, alcohol, and do not chew gum. Relax your jaw muscles at night by holding a warm washcloth against your cheek. When these

options do not relieve your pain, your dentist can offer a variety of treatment modalities for your specific case. An occlusal guard, often called a nightguard, can be fabricated by your dentist to allow your muscles to rest and protect your teeth from further wear.

Patients who present with TMD should also have an occlusal analysis

This helps determine if there are any bite discrepancies that may be corrected with a simple procedure to reshape how the teeth come together when you bite. Medications such as over the counter ibuprofen are helpful because they reduce inflammation to aid in the healing process. Occasionally, a mild muscle relaxant may be prescribed for a few days or weeks to help relieve pain. Surgery for TMD should only be considered after all other treatment options have been tried and you are still experiencing severe, persistent pain.

Relaxation Techniques May Help Alleviate TMJ Symptoms

Simply becoming more aware of tension-related habits — clenching your jaw or grinding your teeth — will help you reduce their frequency. Because stress can contribute to TMJ disorders, relaxation techniques like yoga, meditation and deep breathing may also help alleviate TMJ symptoms.

This season, survive the holiday grind with a little planning, prioritizing and perhaps a trip to your dentist. To learn more about TMD or to schedule an appointment, please call Dr. Joseph Farag at Port Charlotte Dentalcare, 941-764-9555.



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HEARING THE CALL

By Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D.

Imagine having no access to hearing healthcare. This is the case for 466 million people worldwide — of which 34 million are children. In the United States, untreated hearing loss may lead to isolation, depression, and lower earning potential. In many other countries, it may lead to ostracization, little or no education, and physical abuse. Now imagine promoting dignity, self-worth, and opportunity through the gift of hearing.

"Hearing the Call" is a nonprofit campaign bringing hope and healing to persons with hearing loss locally and globally. Through quality healthcare, we help people connect with family, education, and opportunities. We provide opportunities for audiologists, ENT doctors, students, and volunteers to travel to countries and areas such as Jordan, Palestine, Zambia, South Africa, Guatemala, Ecuador, and more. We also provide opportunities to help in our backyard through local organizations throughout the United States.

Help In Our Local Community

Hearing the Call Englewood is a project sponsored by Advanced Hearing Solutions that is designed to provide affordable hearing healthcare to qualified individuals in Sarasota and Charlotte Counties. Hearing loss can affect an individual physically, emotionally, socially, economically, and psychologically. We know that untreated hearing loss has a devastating impact on individuals, families, and communities and that is why we are here to help. Since 2006, Advanced Hearing Solutions has been improving the lives of residents by providing services that result in better communication. Now through affordable hearing solutions and our reduced cost/sliding scale fee hearing clinic, our campaign hopes to bring a better quality of life to qualified individuals with hearing loss.

Our Mission is to provide hearing healthcare to individuals in Sarasota and Charlotte counties and surrounding areas who cannot afford it on their own while providing them with opportunities to give back to the community through service to others. We also provide hearing healthcare globally to those in need.

Our vision is to improve the quality of life of low-income individuals in our community with hearing loss through affordable hearing healthcare and to create a "circle of giving" whereby the recipient of our services gives back to the community through service and gains a greater purpose while doing so.

We will do our best to enrich the lives of those in need of our services by having a meaningful impact on their quality of life and the culture of our community. We will provide hearing tests and fit and maintain hearing aids for those individuals in our community who need and qualify for our services.

1 in 5 Americans suffers from hearing loss to an extent that interferes with communication. We believe no one should miss out on participating fully in life because of hearing loss. Untreated hearing loss has a devastating impact on individuals, families, and communities. Sadly, even Medicare does not cover any of the costs of treating hearing loss, nor do many health insurance plans.)

Qualified participants will show proof of financial need, pay a small fee for their hearing devices, and give back volunteer hours in their community to say "Thank you" to the local companies, families, and friends that are donating to their care.

Should you feel led to help Hearing the Call: Project Englewood we will ensure that your donation stays right here in our local community. Your donation will go to Hearing the Call, a 501(c)(3) organization, and will be restricted to the Englewood project. The funds for this project will be used specifically to help promote hearing healthcare to qualified individuals in the Englewood area. Each donation, no matter the size, will help to get us one step closer to providing access to quality and affordable hearing healthcare to those who would otherwise go without. If you would like to donate you can visit our website at www.hearingthecall.org/englewood. Have a wonderful Holiday Season.



Advanced Hearing Solutions

Using the latest and most sophisticated technology, we determine if you have hearing loss—and, if you do, we determine the degree and type of hearing loss. If your hearing loss requires medical or surgical intervention, we can refer you to a physician (otologist or neurologist) for appropriate treatment. If your type of hearing loss can best be treated with the use of hearing aids and/or other assistive listening devices (which is true in the great majority of cases), we can select any of a wide range of hearing devices and custom fit them to your ear, programmed to augment your hearing at those frequency levels where your hearing loss is greatest.

PROFESSIONAL BIO

Dr. Noël Crosby, Au.D., owner and audiologist at Advanced Hearing Solutions in Englewood, FL is a licensed professional whose 30-year career has been devoted to helping people of all ages hear and understand more clearly. Dr. Crosby received her BS and MS degrees from FSU and her Doctorate in Audiology from UF. Her credibility as an authority grew during her tenure as the Director of Audiology at the Silverstein Institute in Sarasota, FL from 1991-1998. Today, in addition to managing a successful audiology practice, Dr. Crosby is involved in creating hearing loss awareness through her jewelry and accessory company AuDBling.com. She has served and is serving on various professional boards and committees and was president of the Florida Academy of Audiology in 2000 and 2001.

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BREAKING THROUGH CHRONIC PAIN:

How Myofascial Release Offers Hope When All Else Fails

By Michael Via, MSPT

For millions of people living with chronic pain, the journey to relief can feel endless. After exhausting traditional medical treatments, surgeries, medications, and conventional therapies, many find themselves trapped in a cycle of temporary fixes that never address the root cause of their suffering. However, there's a therapeutic approach that's offering new hope to those who have tried everything else: Myofascial Release.

Understanding the Hidden Culprit

Myofascial Release targets the body's fascial system—a continuous web of connective tissue that surrounds and supports every muscle, bone, nerve, and organ in your body. When trauma, inflammation, or surgical procedures damage this system, they create restrictions that can generate crushing pressures of up to 2,000 pounds per square inch on pain-sensitive structures.

The frustrating reality is that these restrictions often remain invisible on standard diagnostic tests like X-rays, MRIs, CT scans, or electromyography studies, leaving patients feeling dismissed and their pain unexplained. This diagnostic blind spot contributes to the stress and frustration experienced by countless individuals who know something is wrong but can't get concrete answers from traditional medical testing.

Think of these fascial restrictions as an internal straightjacket, creating a web of tension that pulls and compresses throughout your body. Restrictions in one area create compensatory patterns that can manifest as pain and dysfunction in seemingly unrelated parts of the body. While traditional medicine focuses on masking pain symptoms with medications, and conventional physical therapy treats only the surface effects, Myofascial Release addresses the underlying structural cause of the problem.

The Gentle Power of Sustained Pressure

The John F. Barnes' Myofascial Release Approach represents a paradigm shift in pain management that prioritizes safety, gentleness, and lasting effectiveness. This technique involves applying gentle, sustained pressure directly to fascial restrictions without oils, creams, or machinery. The direct skin contact enables therapists to accurately detect fascial restrictions and apply the appropriate amount of pressure needed for release.

The key lies in the "time element"—allowing the viscous properties of fascia to respond to low-load pressure applied slowly and consistently. During treatment, skilled therapists use their hands to detect restrictions and apply sustained pressure for extended periods, sometimes several minutes at a time. This approach leverages the piezoelectric phenomenon, where gentle, prolonged pressure allows the viscoelastic fascia to elongate and release naturally.

Unlike aggressive massage or forceful manipulation techniques, Myofascial Release works with the body's natural healing mechanisms rather than forcing change. Each treatment session is uniquely tailored to the individual, recognizing that every person's fascial restrictions and pain patterns are different.

Why Traditional Approaches Fall Short

The reason many patients experience only temporary relief with conventional treatments becomes clear when you understand fascial restrictions. Traditional physical therapy, massage, and medical interventions often treat symptoms while leaving the underlying fascial straightjacket intact. It's like trying to fix a house's foundation problems by only painting the walls—the cosmetic improvements are temporary because the structural issue remains.

Myofascial Release takes a whole-body approach, recognizing that restrictions in one area can create compensatory patterns and pain throughout the entire system. This comprehensive perspective explains why patients who have traveled from around the world seeking this treatment often find the lasting relief that eluded them through other methods.

A Beacon of Hope

The transformative power of Myofascial Release is consistently demonstrated in patient testimonials. Dawn Scheffer, who suffered from TMJ dysfunction, found success with this approach after tirelessly seeking treatment elsewhere without success. Peter Dorsa, himself a physical therapist with nearly three decades of experience who began studying Myofascial Release in 1994, describes the technique as "one of the most effective manual therapy treatments that exists."

These success stories reflect a broader pattern seen in patients who travel from around the world specifically seeking Myofascial Release treatment when traditional medicine, surgery, and conventional therapy have failed to provide lasting relief.

For those who have exhausted other options and feel trapped by chronic pain, Myofascial Release offers something precious: the possibility of authentic healing rather than temporary symptom management. By addressing the fascial system's restrictions at their source, this gentle yet powerful technique can break the cycle of chronic pain and restore the freedom of movement and quality of life that seemed lost forever.

If you're living with chronic pain and feeling hopeless about finding relief, Myofascial Release may be the comprehensive solution you've been searching for.

Call Now and SAVE \$25 OFF Initial Evaluation!

About

Michael Via, MSPT, is a licensed Physical Therapist who brings over 29 years of comprehensive physical therapy experience to his practice, including 10 specialized years in pelvic floor rehabilitation. He graduated from the University of Miami in 1994 with his Masters of Science in Physical Therapy (MSPT) degree and has since become expert-level trained in John F. Barnes Myofascial Release, a distinction that reflects his deep commitment to this transformative treatment approach. His extensive training also includes Herman and Wallace pelvic floor assessment and treatment certification, as well as completion of Titleist Performance Institute Level 2 Medical, Level 2 Fitness, and Level 2 Junior Training programs. As the owner of Michael Via Therapy and Training Services since 2012, Mike has built his practice around a passion that drives his daily work: providing clients with the incredible feeling of chronic pain relief, particularly when other treatment avenues have previously failed them, making him a beacon of hope for those who have exhausted traditional therapeutic options.

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It's A Wonderful Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Every year around this time the old classic Christmas movies start coming on television. It is easy to start a conversation at work by simply asking, "So, what's your favorite Christmas movie?" Mine is Frank Capra's *It's A Wonderful Life*.

Some of you might be able to relate to George Bailey this holiday season—lost, confused, stressed out, or at the end of your rope. Perhaps you are even thinking that it would be much easier to die than to go on living as you are.

Perhaps for you life isn't a joy right now. Maybe the debts are high and funds are low. It might even be difficult for you to even enjoy your family as you know you should. You may be wondering, "Is it really possible to live a wonderful life?"

I think the idea of a wonderful life is not that you can attain a wonderful life, but that it is an attitude that results from having certain issues settled in your life.

Truthfully, no one's life is wonderful—even Christ's life was filled with pain, hurt, loneliness, rejection, and sorrow. It is your attitude that determines how you "feel" about your life. You are the one responsible for settling the issues in your life and having an attitude of wonderment. So, what are the issues that need to be settled?

The first issue is to determine **what you are going to love**. To have a wonderful life, you start by having an

attitude of love toward God and others. I say this first because where you choose to direct your love is going to affect every other area of your life. Love is a decision we make to place a high value on someone or something.

God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die for us. Jesus died to prove how much He loved us. God desires more than anything else to have a loving relationship with His creation. We were created to love God and other people. Maybe this Christmas it would be good for you to find a person or family in need and help them by buying some food or gifts. If you want to feel loved... start by loving others.

The second issue to settle is... **how am I going to live?** To have a wonderful life, you need an attitude of joy. This attitude deals with how you look at life. Are you a positive person or a negative person? If you are a person with joy, it simply means that you are cheerful. Over 350 times the Bible talks about us having a spirit of joy or rejoicing.

Joy isn't a feeling that is produced only when good things happen. Joy is the attitude by which we look at the things that happen to us and then respond in a way that lets everyone know we are trusting in God's grace in spite of our circumstances. Remember the disciples in the Bible... they had many negative things happen to them, yet in spite of it all, they had joy.

I've heard it said that you don't feel your way into an action but rather act your way into a feeling. If you want to be a joyful person... start acting joyful around others and you will most likely begin to genuinely feel joyful.

The third issue to settle is...**who are you going to help?** If you want to have a wonderful life, you've got to get beyond serving yourself, and start serving others. Isn't that the lesson that George Bailey learned? His life was wonderful because of all the people he was able to help in his lifetime.

When Clarence showed him what life would have been like had he never been born he realized that he really was making a difference in the world! His life did have purpose! Mr. Potter only cared about making money. Violet only cared about pleasure. But George understood a greater truth: life is better when you are working to make other people's lives better.

Understanding these things can make all the difference in the world. You are not here to fall in love with money and things—you're here to love God. You're not here to point out all the things that are wrong with the world—you're here to spread the joy that God has placed in your heart. You're not here to serve yourself—you're here to serve God and others—thus making a huge difference in the world.



Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church Naples, located on the campus of Florida South Western State College in Naples, FL. For church times and other information, visit www.venturenaples.com or call (239) 775-5323.

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