

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


Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

April 2026

Lee Edition - Monthly

www.swfhealthandwellness.com

FREE 

 LEE HEALTH Bre

**PCOS:
ONE WOMAN'S
HEALTHCARE
JOURNEY**

 LEE HEALTH

Advanced Laser and Cataract Center: **PRECISION REDEFINED**

Bringing Clear Vision to Life


At Southwest Florida Eye Care, we know that restoring vision is not just about improving your sight – it's about enhancing your quality of life. We are proud to offer our patients convenient access to nationally renowned surgeons, compassionate staff members and cutting-edge technology.

Schedule your appointment today!

Services Include:

- Cataract Surgery
- LASIK Surgery
- Glaucoma Management and Treatment
- Family Eye Care



 A US EYE COMPANY

SWFLEye.com

11176 Tamiami Trail N | Naples, FL 34110 | (239) 594-0124
6850 International Center Blvd | Fort Myers, FL 33912 | (239) 768-0006
2221 Santa Barbara Blvd #107 | Cape Coral, FL 33991 | (239) 574-5406

Delivering Smiles For *Life*

HUSBAND AND WIFE DENTAL TEAM
DR. EUGENE TITOV | DR. OLGA TITOV

If you're seeking exceptional dentistry in Fort Myers and Naples, FL with full services under one roof, you've found the right practice. Top skills and our in-house lab enable us to deliver fully functional, beautiful smiles that will improve your quality of life!

When you visit our dental office, we encourage you to openly discuss your oral health challenges and work with us as a partner to determine the optimal treatment to meet your smile and budget needs.

**Because You Deserve An Above
And Beyond Dental Experience**

**Call Us to Find Out About Our
Full Mouth Dental Implant Options!**



NAPLES BEST ROBOT-ASSISTED IMPLANT OFFICE



239-300-0290

www.marshcovedental.com

6654 Collier Blvd., Ste 104, Naples, FL 34114
12431 Brantley Commons Ct, Fort Myers, FL 33907



CONTENTS APRIL 2026

- 6 The Link Between Alzheimer's Disease and Hearing Loss
- 7 PCOS: One Woman's Healthcare Journey
- 8 Women's Eye Health and Safety Month: Protecting Your Vision for a Lifetime
- 9 The Art of Aging Gracefully: Why Skin Checks Matter at Art of Dermatology
- 10 Inflammatory Lung Conditions and the Emerging Role of Stem Cell Exosomes
- 11 Summer Foot Health: A Guide to Choosing the Right Footwear
- 12 Alignment Matters: From Burnout to Balance Through the Pilates Method
- 13 When Vision Loss Progresses: Options for Maintaining Independence and Quality of Life
- 14 Memory Matters
- 15 Regenerative Frontier: MSC Exosomes Show Promise for Parkinson's and Beyond
- 16 Restoring Function and Strength: A Guide to Upper Extremity Exercise and Therapy

CONTACT US

OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Cristan Gensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

OWNER / CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sonny Gensing
sonnygensing@yahoo.com



Publishing • Advertising • Web Design • Graphic Design

Southwest Florida's Health & Wellness Magazine can be found in over 1,000 Southwest Florida medical facilities including, hospitals', doctors', chiropractors' and dentist offices. Find a copy of your FREE Southwest Florida's Health&Wellness Magazine in most grocery and convenience stores as well.

To get your article published and for ad rates, call 239.588.1200
Cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

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

©Copyright SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S HEALTH & WELLNESS Magazine 2026. All rights reserved. Any reproduction of the material in this magazine in whole or in part without written prior consent is prohibited. Articles and other material in this Magazine are not necessarily the views of SWFL Health & Wellness Magazine. SWFL Health & Wellness Magazine reserves the right to publish and edit, or not publish any material that is sent. SWFL Health & Wellness Magazine will not knowingly publish any advertisement which is illegal or misleading to its readers. The information in SWFL Health & Wellness Magazine should not be construed as a substitute for medical examination, diagnosis, or treatment.



Wimmer Regenerative Orthopedics

Stem Cells, PRP, Exosomes, Spinal Decompression



DEREK P. WIMMER, PA-C

Private Practice Owner
Orthopedics focusing in
most general orthopedic
conditions.

HOW WE HELP:

- Non-Surgical Regenerative Treatments have shown to prevent or delay the need for surgery!
- Reduced Point-of-Service Pricing.
- From Steroid Injections to Stem Cells. We also offer all Traditional and Regenerative Orthopedic Treatments.
- Preventative Care, Acute and Chronic Injuries, Chronic Illness Care, Wound Care.
- Focused Shockwave Therapy, Platelet Rich Plasma, PRP, Wharton's Jelly (contains Mesenchymal Stem Cells and umbilical cord matrix to help "patch" damaged tissues), Placental Allografts, Mesenchymal Stem Cell Exosomes and multiple other Biologic Injections performed with ultrasound or fluoroscopic guidance for greatest accuracy.
- Vitamin injections and IV Vitamin treatments.
- CareCredit Accepted.

SCHEDULE YOUR CONSULTATION TODAY!

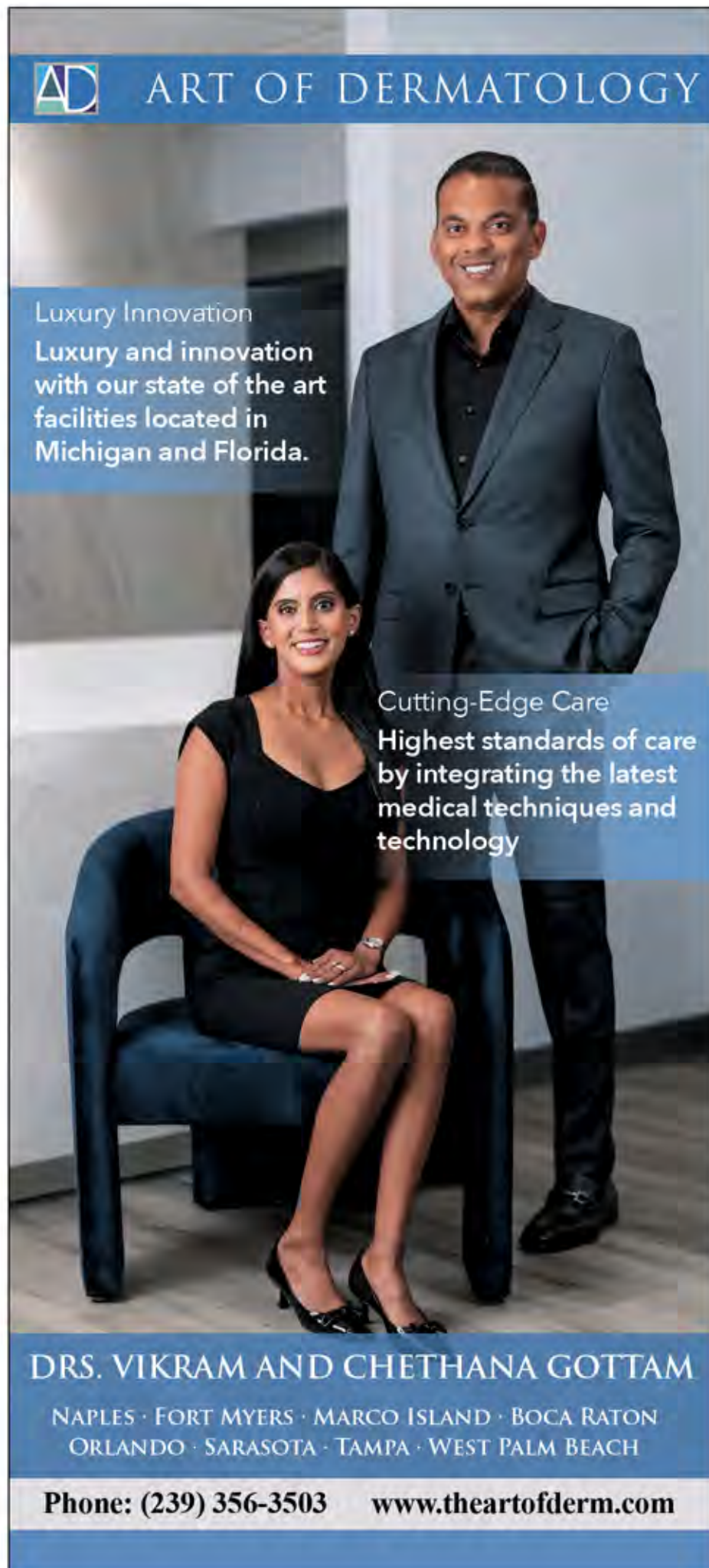
239.829.4300

wimmerorthopedics.com

3380 Woods Edge Circle #104, Bonita Springs, Florida 34134

"Concierge treatment without the concierge price."

- 17 Struggling to Walk? Understanding Spinal Stenosis and New Treatments
- 18 Understanding How Aging Affects Your Teeth
- 19 Peak Allergy Season in Florida: Surviving the Spring Pollen Storm
- 20 Step Into Spring: Celebrate National Foot Health Awareness Month
- 21 Exploring the Synergy of Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment and Nutrients in Biohacking
- 22 Marsh Cove Dental Brings Specialized Full-Arch Implant Expertise to Fort Myers
- 26 Stress Busters: Focus on Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Self-Compassion
- 28 The Relationship Between Hormones and Mental Health
- 30 Stress Management
- 32 Ladies, Don't Leave Your Pelvis In Just Anyone's Hands
- 34 Preservé Breast Augmentation: The Future of Natural Enhancement Is Here
- 36 Caring for a Loved One with Dementia: Practical Tips for Managing Anxiety
- 37 Health Insurance
- 38 Are You or Someone You Love Suffering from Long COVID or POTS?
- 39 Venous Insufficiency: Understanding the Condition and Finding Relief
- 40 Motion is Medicine: How to Protect Your Joints and Stay Active for Life
- 41 Natural Relief: Estero Family Chiropractic Addresses Headaches, Anxiety, and Insomnia
- 42 Eyes on the Road: April Is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month
- 43 Spiritual Wellness: Finding a Healthy Tempo for Life



AD ART OF DERMATOLOGY

Luxury Innovation
Luxury and innovation with our state of the art facilities located in Michigan and Florida.

Cutting-Edge Care
Highest standards of care by integrating the latest medical techniques and technology

DRS. VIKRAM AND CHETHANA GOTTAM
NAPLES · FORT MYERS · MARCO ISLAND · BOCA RATON
ORLANDO · SARASOTA · TAMPA · WEST PALM BEACH

Phone: (239) 356-3503 www.theartofderm.com

THE LINK BETWEEN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND HEARING LOSS

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

Alzheimer's Disease and hearing loss are two prevalent health issues that affect millions of people worldwide. While they may seem unrelated at first glance, recent research has uncovered a surprising connection between the two conditions. Understanding this link is crucial for early detection, intervention, and improved quality of life for those affected.

Alzheimer's Disease, a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, primarily affects memory, thinking skills, and behavior. It is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for approximately 60-80% of cases. Symptoms typically develop slowly and worsen over time, eventually interfering with daily tasks and functioning. While the exact cause of Alzheimer's remains unknown, various factors, including genetics, lifestyle, and environmental factors, are believed to contribute to its onset and progression.

On the other hand, hearing loss is a prevalent sensory impairment, particularly among older adults. It can result from age-related changes in the inner ear, exposure to loud noise, genetic predisposition, or medical conditions such as diabetes or cardiovascular disease. Hearing loss can significantly impact communication, social interaction, and overall quality of life if left untreated.

While Alzheimer's Disease and hearing loss may appear unrelated, emerging evidence suggests a potential connection between the two. Several studies have found that individuals with untreated hearing loss may have a higher risk of developing cognitive decline and dementia, including Alzheimer's Disease. One theory is that the brain's increased cognitive effort to process degraded auditory signals may contribute to cognitive decline over time, leading to conditions like Alzheimer's.

Furthermore, researchers have identified common underlying mechanisms that could link hearing loss and Alzheimer's Disease. These include vascular factors, inflammation, and structural changes in the brain. For instance, both conditions



have been associated with reduced blood flow to certain areas of the brain, which may exacerbate neuronal damage and cognitive impairment.

Moreover, social isolation and decreased engagement in cognitively stimulating activities due to hearing loss could also contribute to the development of Alzheimer's Disease. Communication difficulties resulting from hearing loss may lead to feelings of frustration, loneliness, and withdrawal from social interactions, all of which are known risk factors for cognitive decline and dementia.

Recognizing the potential link between Alzheimer's Disease and hearing loss highlights the importance of early detection and intervention for both conditions. Regular hearing screenings, particularly among older adults, can help identify hearing loss early on and facilitate appropriate management, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants. By addressing hearing loss promptly, individuals may mitigate its potential impact on cognitive function and reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease.

Additionally, promoting cognitive health through activities such as social engagement, physical exercise, and lifelong learning may help mitigate the risk of Alzheimer's Disease, especially in individuals with hearing loss. Maintaining a healthy

lifestyle, managing chronic conditions, and staying mentally and socially active are essential strategies for preserving cognitive function and overall well-being.

In conclusion, while Alzheimer's Disease and hearing loss are distinct conditions, they share intriguing connections that warrant further investigation. Understanding and addressing the interplay between these two health issues could have significant implications for early detection, prevention, and management strategies. By integrating hearing health into holistic approaches to brain health, we can potentially improve outcomes and quality of life for millions of individuals affected by Alzheimer's Disease and hearing loss.

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



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

Since 1967

Nobile
HEARING AIDS

www.nobilehearing.com

**FREE CONSULTATION
FOR ALL SENIORS AND
VETS FROM A VET!**

**Nobile Hearing Aids
231 Del Prado Blvd. S. Ste. 5
Cape Coral
239-323-7389**

PCOS: One Woman's Healthcare Journey

For many women, reproductive health challenges develop gradually. For Darla Billington, living with Insulin Resistant Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) became a long and deeply personal health journey that eventually led to surgical care at a Lee Health facility after months of debilitating symptoms.

Her experience highlights how coordinated medical care, skilled surgical teams, and compassionate recovery nurses can help patients reclaim their health, even after prolonged and exhausting medical challenges.

A Silent Turning Point with PCOS

In March of 2023, Darla experienced what was likely an early pregnancy loss — something deeply felt but not medically confirmed due to delayed care. Without medical confirmation, the experience left her with unanswered questions.

This unanswered question became the beginning of a slow health decline that would unfold over the next two years. What started as irregular periods evolved, and by fall of 2024, the prolonged bleeding intensified, stretching into episodes that lasted six and even eight months at a time. It became painfully clear that treatment was no longer working.



Fertility and Insulin-Resistant PCOS

According to Dr. Rachel Wykes, an Obstetrics & Gynecology specialist at Lee Physician Group, the primary challenge associated with PCOS is not infertility itself. "Irregular periods and anovulation can allow the uterine lining to continue

growing, which increases the risk of heavy, prolonged bleeding and can make pregnancy more difficult," Dr. Wykes said.

Many women with PCOS also experience insulin resistance, a metabolic pattern that can further disrupt hormonal balance and ovulation. Even so, Dr. Wykes emphasized that many women with insulin-resistant PCOS are still able to conceive with the right medical support that may include:

- Treating insulin resistance, often with medications that can help regulate cycles
- Using ovulation-induction medications to stimulate ovulation
- Supporting hormonal balance through lifestyle changes, including nutrition, physical activity, weight management, and healthy metabolic habits



A Battle Few Could See

For Darla, the experience was not only physically exhausting but emotionally isolating. She continued balancing daily responsibilities while managing severe symptoms behind the scenes. Excessive blood loss led her to develop severe anemia and she nearly went into hypovolemic shock. Treatment options were explored, including hormone therapy.

Diagnosis and a Path Forward

After months of worsening symptoms, Darla's provider recommended a procedure called dilation and curettage with hysteroscopy. The procedure would remove the built-up uterine lining, stop the hemorrhaging, and give her body an opportunity to reset hormonally. Following the procedure at Health Park Medical Center, Darla learned that her uterus had been functioning in multiple phases of the menstrual cycle at once — portions of the lining were building, others breaking down, others regenerating — a hormonal storm with no off switch.

Abnormal Bleeding and When to Seek Medical Evaluation

"Many women assume irregular cycles or heavy bleeding are just part of life and may not realize something could be wrong. It's important for patients to seek medical evaluation," Dr. Wykes said.

Fear can also play a role, particularly for younger patients. "Building a relationship with an OB-GYN early, when a young woman first begins menstruating, can help make future care feel much more comfortable."

Lifestyle demands also contribute. "Women are often caring for everyone else," Dr. Wykes said. "Their own health sometimes becomes the last priority."

Recovery and Recommitment

After Darla's surgery, the bleeding stopped, and her anemia improved. With continued treatment, her menstrual cycles began to regulate as her strength returned. Her recovery to health was steady and intentional.

She recommitted every day to walking, often alternating between walking and jogging until she reached 10,000 steps. She focused on nutritious meals and supporting her health with supplements sometimes used in PCOS management, including magnesium, calcium, vitamin D, and myo-inositol.

Over time, Darla lost 45 pounds and reached milestones that once felt impossible.

Her recovery also included building a coordinated care team — a primary care physician, OB-GYN, and endocrinologist — who supported her long term health. Together, they focused on monitoring her hormones, improving metabolic health, and managing PCOS in a sustainable way.

A Message for Other Women with PCOS

Darla said the support she received from other women played a powerful role in her recovery. "I'm most grateful for the women who supported me throughout this journey," she said. "They believed in me and created space for my healing."

Darla hopes her experience encourages other women with PCOS to listen to their bodies and seek care when something feels wrong. "Healing is possible when sought, coordinated, and managed," she said.

Whatever your battle, compassionate care and support can make a difference. Lee Health Women's Services offers a wide range of services, including obstetrics and gynecology, maternity care, breast care, minimally invasive robot-assisted surgeries, and specialized support for women's health conditions.

For appointments with a Lee Health Women's Services provider, call 239-481-4111 or schedule an appointment online on MyChart.



WOMEN'S EYE HEALTH AND SAFETY MONTH: PROTECTING YOUR VISION FOR A LIFETIME

April marks Women's Eye Health and Safety Month, a crucial time to focus on an often overlooked aspect of women's health. Women face unique eye health challenges throughout their lives, from hormonal fluctuations to higher rates of certain eye conditions. Taking proactive steps today can preserve your vision for decades to come.

Women are disproportionately affected by several eye conditions. According to recent studies, women account for nearly two-thirds of all cases of visual impairment and blindness worldwide. This disparity stems from both biological factors and lifestyle considerations that uniquely impact women's eye health.

Hormonal changes throughout a woman's life can significantly affect vision. Pregnancy often brings temporary vision changes, while menopause may increase dry eye symptoms. Birth control and hormone replacement therapy can also influence eye health, sometimes increasing the risk of conditions like cataracts.

Autoimmune disorders, which affect women at higher rates than men, frequently impact eye health. Conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and Sjögren's syndrome can cause inflammation and damage to delicate eye tissues. Regular screenings become even more vital for women managing these conditions.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of vision loss in older adults, affects women more severely than men. Women also experience higher rates of dry eye syndrome, with post-menopausal women particularly vulnerable due to hormonal changes that reduce tear production.

Cosmetic use presents another unique consideration for women's eye health. Mascara, eyeliner, and other eye makeup can introduce bacteria if used improperly or kept beyond their shelf life. Proper makeup hygiene and regular replacement of products are simple yet effective preventive measures.

Protecting your eye health doesn't require dramatic lifestyle changes. Small, consistent habits can make a significant difference:



Schedule comprehensive eye exams annually, even if your vision seems unchanged. Many serious eye conditions develop without noticeable symptoms until significant damage has occurred.

Wear UV-protective sunglasses year-round. Sun exposure contributes to cataracts and macular degeneration, making proper protection essential regardless of season.

Maintain a nutrient-rich diet with plenty of dark leafy greens, colorful fruits, and omega-3 fatty acids. These foods support eye health by providing essential vitamins and antioxidants that protect against cellular damage.

Manage screen time mindfully by following the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. This reduces eye strain from prolonged digital device use.

Stay hydrated and consider using preservative-free artificial tears if you experience dry eye symptoms, particularly in air-conditioned environments or during extended screen use.

If you smoke, seek support to quit. Smoking dramatically increases the risk of cataracts, macular degeneration, and optic nerve damage.

This April, during Women's Eye Health and Safety Month, make vision care a priority. Your future self will thank you for the gift of clear, healthy vision throughout your lifetime. Remember that many eye conditions are preventable or manageable with early intervention—the key is taking action before symptoms appear.

Your vision connects you to the world around you. Protect it today for a brighter tomorrow.



Albert Smolyar M.D.
LASIK, CATARACT & LENS
REPLACEMENT SURGEON

Dr. Smolyar is a board-certified cataract and refractive surgeon with over 25 years of experience. He received his medical degree from Kursk State Medical University in the former Soviet Union. He completed an ophthalmology residency at the University of Louisville and a fellowship in Neuro-Ophthalmology at Michigan State University. He completed another ophthalmology residency at Ben Gurion University in Israel prior to coming to the United States.

Dr. Smolyar specializes in premium cataract and lens replacement surgery, as well as laser vision correction with LASIK, photorefractive keratectomy (PRK), and phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK). He also has significant expertise in cosmetic and reconstructive eyelid surgery. Dr. Smolyar is certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology. He was in private practice in Louisville, Kentucky, for many years, where he also served as a clinical Associate Professor at the University of Louisville Department of Ophthalmology.

He has been living in Fort Myers since 2018 with his wife and dogs; they have raised three children together. In his spare time, Dr. Smolyar enjoys swimming, scuba diving, kayaking, and fishing. He has dedicated time to providing free surgical eye care in underserved countries and considers that to be one of his passions.



 A US EYE COMPANY

239-768-0006 | SWFLeye.com

6850 International Center Blvd., Fort Myers

THE ART OF AGING GRACEFULLY: WHY SKIN CHECKS MATTER AT ART OF DERMATOLOGY

Our skin tells the story of our lives—every laugh line, sun-kissed moment, and year of experience. As we age, maintaining skin health becomes increasingly important, not just for aesthetics but for overall wellbeing. At Art of Dermatology, we believe that healthy aging skin begins with proactive care and regular professional assessment.

Understanding Skin's Aging Process

Skin ages through two distinct processes: intrinsic aging (determined by genetics) and extrinsic aging (influenced by environmental factors). While we cannot control our genetic timeline, we can significantly impact how external factors affect our skin.

With age, our skin naturally produces less collagen and elastin, leading to thinner, less resilient skin. Cell turnover slows, and moisture retention diminishes. Meanwhile, years of sun exposure, pollution, and lifestyle choices accelerate these changes, potentially leading to premature aging and increased risk of skin conditions, including cancer.

The Crucial Role of Regular Skin Checks

Regular dermatological examinations serve as the cornerstone of proactive skin health management. These checks provide much more than peace of mind—they can be lifesaving. Consider these compelling reasons to schedule regular visits to Art of Dermatology:

- **Early Detection of Skin Cancer:** With over one million Americans diagnosed with skin cancer annually, early detection dramatically improves treatment outcomes. Professional dermatologists can identify suspicious changes that might go unnoticed during self-examinations.
- **Personalized Aging Management:** Everyone's skin ages differently. Regular assessments allow dermatologists to craft personalized treatment plans that address your skin's unique needs, from addressing sun damage to managing age-related conditions like rosacea or seborrheic keratosis.
- **Tracking Changing Moles and Spots:** What appears as a harmless freckle today could develop concerning characteristics over time. Consistent monitoring creates a valuable baseline for detecting meaningful changes.



- **Expert Guidance on Products and Treatments:** The skincare industry overwhelms consumers with countless anti-aging products. Your dermatologist can recommend evidence-based solutions truly appropriate for your skin type and concerns.

Healthy Habits for Aging Skin

Between professional visits to Art of Dermatology, maintaining these daily habits supports optimal skin health:

- **Sun Protection:** Apply broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen daily, regardless of weather conditions. Wear protective clothing and seek shade when possible.
- **Hydration:** Both internal hydration (drinking water) and external moisturizing help maintain skin's barrier function and elasticity.
- **Gentle Cleansing:** As skin becomes more delicate with age, harsh products can cause irritation. Opt for gentle, pH-balanced cleansers.
- **Antioxidant-Rich Diet:** Consuming foods high in vitamins C, E, and omega-3 fatty acids supports skin's natural repair processes.
- **Quality Sleep:** During deep sleep, skin undergoes essential regeneration and repair processes critical for healthy aging.

The Art of Dermatology Difference

At Art of Dermatology, we combine medical expertise with aesthetic sensibility. Our comprehensive skin examinations include advanced technologies

for detecting subtle changes invisible to the naked eye. Our dermatologists take time to understand your concerns, family history, and lifestyle factors affecting your skin health.

Rather than simply treating visible problems, we partner with you in preventative care—identifying risk factors and potential issues before they manifest. This approach not only supports graceful aging but potentially prevents serious health complications.

Don't wait for visible problems to appear. Schedule your comprehensive skin check at Art of Dermatology today and take the first step toward lifetime skin health. Remember, healthy aging isn't about fighting time—it's about supporting your skin's natural processes with expert care and attention.

Your skin's journey deserves the art of professional dermatology.



Art of Dermatology is the premier choice for comprehensive Dermatology, Surgical, and Aesthetic services. We are dedicated to offering exceptional care for the diagnosis, treatment, and enhancement of your overall skin health.

AD ART OF DERMATOLOGY
MEDICAL • SURGICAL • COSMETIC

239-356-3503
theartofderm.com
14290 Metropolis Ave #2
Fort Myers, FL 33912



Inflammatory Lung Conditions and the Emerging Role of Stem Cell Exosomes

By Axel Ruiz, MD, DABFP, CWS

Inflammatory lung diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, post-viral respiratory syndromes, pulmonary fibrosis, and environmental hypersensitivity pneumonitis pose ongoing challenges for patients and clinicians alike. Traditional treatments such as bronchodilators, corticosteroids, and biologic therapies are effective for managing symptoms and acute exacerbations, but many individuals continue to experience persistent inflammation and impaired lung function.

In recent years, researchers and clinicians have explored next-generation biologic approaches that aim to influence the underlying immune and tissue responses in the lung. One area of interest is stem cell-derived exosomes — microscopic vesicles released by stem cells that carry regulatory molecules involved in intercellular communication.

What Are Exosomes?

Exosomes are tiny extracellular vesicles that carry microRNAs, growth factors, and signaling proteins between cells. Unlike living stem cells, they are not capable of replicating but can influence the behavior of other cells by modulating immune responses and tissue repair processes.

Routes of Delivery: Systemic and Local Approaches

Two principal methods of administering exosome-based therapies are under investigation:

- **Intravenous delivery:** Introduces exosomes into the bloodstream, where they may interact with systemic immune pathways and support vascular and inflammatory regulation throughout the body.
- **Nebulized delivery:** Converts exosomes into an aerosol that can be inhaled directly into the airways, potentially enabling local interactions with airway epithelial cells and the surrounding immune environment.

Inflammatory Lung Conditions of Interest

- **COPD:** COPD extends beyond airflow obstruction; it encompasses chronic inflammation, oxidative stress, and progressive structural changes in the lungs. Exosome-based approaches are being investigated for their capacity to influence immune signaling and support tissue homeostasis in this context.



- **Asthma:** Adult-onset and difficult-to-control asthma involve complex immune hypersensitivities. There is emerging interest in whether exosomes might help regulate aberrant immune signaling without broad suppression.
- **Post-Viral Lung Syndromes (Post COVID Syndrome):** Persistent respiratory symptoms following viral infections — including long-term post-viral inflammatory states — may be linked to ongoing immune activation even after the virus has cleared. Immune modulatory signals from exosomes are under study in this setting.
- **Pulmonary Fibrosis:** In fibrosis, chronic inflammation can lead to irreversible structural changes in lung tissue. Exosomes are not expected to reverse established fibrosis but may interact with inflammatory pathways associated with early or ongoing fibrotic processes.
- **Environmental Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis:** This immune-mediated inflammatory response to inhaled antigens highlights the need for environmental management. Biologic modulators like exosomes are being examined for their potential to support immune recalibration once triggers are removed.

Scientific Context and Future Direction

It is important to emphasize that stem cell-derived exosomes are an area of scientific exploration, not established therapies. Rigorous clinical trials and regulatory evaluation are needed to clarify safety, efficacy, appropriate delivery methods, and long-term

outcomes. Current research draws from preclinical models and early clinical investigations demonstrating the biological activity of exosomes in immune regulation and tissue response.

As research continues, the concept of biological regulation — influencing how cells communicate and respond to stress and injury — may offer new avenues for understanding and potentially supporting lung health in inflammatory conditions.

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.

For more information or to schedule a consultation, please call (855) 734-3620.



Regenerative and Anti-Aging Therapies
DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR

InHomeRegen.com
inhomeregen@gmail.com
(855) 734-3620 | (855) REGEN 20

14171 Metropolis Ave. Suite # 203
Fort Myers, FL 33912
FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
By appointment only



SUMMER FOOT HEALTH: A GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT FOOTWEAR

By Dr. Joe Altepeter, DPM - Family Foot & Leg Center

As the temperature rises in Fort Myers, we all want to get outside and enjoy everything Southwest Florida has to offer. Whether you are hitting the pavement for a morning run, strolling through the shops, or spending a day at the beach, your choice of footwear is the foundation of your mobility. This is especially vital for those of us with a history of foot, ankle, or lower extremity issues. To help you stay active and pain-free this season, I've outlined some essential principles for selecting the right shoes and understanding your unique foot type.

Master the Basics of Shoe Shopping

Before you fall in love with a pair of shoes for their style, ensure they pass a few clinical "must-haves." Always shop for shoes toward the end of the day to accommodate the natural swelling that occurs as you move. When being measured, ensure you are standing with your full weight on a Brannock device, as a foot in the air is smaller than one supporting your body. It is also helpful to bring the specific socks you intend to wear with the new purchase to ensure the fit is accurate. Finally, check that the toe box is wide enough for your forefoot and that the shoe can comfortably house an arch support or custom orthotic if you use them.

Identifying Your Foot Type

Understanding your foot mechanics is the first step in preventing injury, especially during exercise. If your footprint looks "filled in" under the arch, you likely pronate and will benefit most from stability and motion control shoes. Conversely, if there is a break in your footprint along the outside of the foot, you are a supinator and should look for shoes with extra cushioning to assist with shock absorption. A "classic" footprint indicates a neutral type, which requires a balanced blend of both cushioning and stability. While a quick evaluation at the beach or pool using your wet footprints can provide a clue, a professional consultation at our office is the best way to be certain.

Managing Toe Deformities and Material Choice

If you struggle with bunions or hammertoes, the material of your shoe is just as important as the size. Rigid materials like heavy leather, canvas, or suede can irritate bony prominences. Instead, look for wider and taller toe boxes to reduce pressure.



Selecting flexible materials like mesh or soft, stretchy fabrics that "give" rather than rub will be much friendlier to your feet throughout the day.

Navigating Summertime Footwear

While warmer weather often calls for sandals and heels, these styles can present unique challenges to your foot health. Here is how to navigate the seasonal trends safely:

- **Support for Flats and Slides:** Many flats and slides provide inadequate support, which can lead to persistent arch and heel pain. Look for options with appropriate arch contact and soles that are difficult to bend or twist.
- **Material Choice for Strappy Sandals:** Intricate straps may cause irritation between the toes, leading to painful calluses. Prioritize soft, supple materials that won't dig into the skin.
- **Stability in Wedges and Heels:** Higher wedges and heels increase the risk of ankle instability and forefoot pain. To stay balanced, seek out wider, lower heels and options with improved traction.
- **Relief for Peep-Toes:** If you are susceptible to irritation from bunions or hammertoes, it is best to limit the use of peep-toe sandals, as they can put unnecessary pressure on those sensitive areas.

Ready to Step Into Summer Pain-Free?

Don't let foot discomfort sideline your summer plans in Southwest Florida. Whether you need a professional gait analysis or a recommendation for the perfect pair of shoes, I am here to help. Let's Keep You Walking!

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.

Joe Altepeter, DPM, AACFAS

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



1645 Colonial Blvd.
Fort Myers, FL 33907

(239) 430 - 3668 (FOOT)
www.NaplesPodiatrist.com



ALIGNMENT MATTERS:

From Burnout to Balance Through the Pilates Method

By Shannon Willits, Master Pilates Educator

Stress is often treated as a mental or emotional experience. In reality, it is deeply physical. It accumulates in tissues, alters breathing patterns, changes joint loading, and reshapes how the brain interprets movement and safety.

From a physiological standpoint, stress is not the problem. The human system is designed for it. The issue is accumulation without resolution.

When stress becomes chronic, the body adapts in predictable ways. Breathing shifts upward into the chest. The diaphragm loses excursion. The rib cage stiffens. Muscle tone increases, particularly in the neck, shoulders, and hip flexors. Fascia, the connective tissue network that supports and connects muscles throughout the body, becomes less elastic and more restricted. This is not random. It is protective.

The brain is constantly asking one question: Am I safe?

When the answer is uncertain, the nervous system biases toward protection. This means more tension, less variability, and reduced movement options. Over time, this protective strategy becomes the default. What began as a useful response becomes a baseline state.

This is where stress begins to impact performance, recovery, and even metabolism.

The Physiology of Accumulated Stress

The autonomic nervous system regulates the balance between sympathetic activity (mobilization) and parasympathetic activity (recovery). Chronic stress skews this balance.

When sympathetic drive remains elevated:

- Heart rate stays slightly elevated
- Breathing becomes shallow and rapid
- Blood flow prioritizes survival over repair
- Cortisol remains chronically elevated

This has downstream effects. Recovery slows. Sleep quality decreases. Tissue repair is compromised. The body becomes efficient at doing more with less, but at a cost.

From a metabolic perspective, this matters. Chronic stress influences insulin sensitivity, appetite regulation, and fat storage patterns. The body begins to interpret the environment as unpredictable. It conserves.

This is why more exercise is not always the solution. In a system already under load, adding intensity without restoring balance can reinforce the problem.

Fascia and Why It Matters for Stress

Fascia is the connective tissue that wraps around and weaves through your muscles, joints, and organs. Think of it as the body's internal web.

It is not just structural. It is highly sensitive. It constantly sends information to the brain about tension, pressure, and movement.

When you are under chronic stress or moving in limited ways, this tissue can become stiff and less responsive. You may feel this as tightness, restriction, or that "always sore" sensation.



Photo: Lead Pilates Instructor, April Doyle at Club Pilates Bonita Springs 27800 Bonita Grande Dr., Bonita Springs, Florida, 34135

When fascia does not move well, the brain receives less clear information. And when the brain gets unclear information, it increases tension as a safety strategy.

The opposite is also true.

Slow, controlled movement and intentional breathing help this tissue become more fluid and responsive again. This improves how the body moves and how the brain perceives safety.

When the brain feels safe, it lets go of unnecessary tension.

Breath Mechanics and Vagal Tone

Breathing is one of the most direct ways to influence the nervous system.

The diaphragm is not only a respiratory muscle. It is also a regulator of pressure, circulation, and neural signaling. When breathing is shallow and confined to the upper chest, the diaphragm contributes less to these systems.

Pilates restores breathing as a three-dimensional process.

Posterior rib expansion, lateral rib movement, and coordinated pelvic floor response create a dynamic pressure system within the body. This has several effects:

- Improves oxygen exchange
- Enhances venous and lymphatic return
- Stimulates the vagus nerve

The vagus nerve is a key component of the parasympathetic nervous system. Increased vagal tone is associated with improved heart rate variability, better emotional regulation, and more efficient recovery.

This is where the connection between breath and performance becomes clear.

A system that can shift efficiently between activation and recovery performs better. It produces force more effectively, coordinates movement with greater precision, and recovers more quickly between efforts.

Movement as a Regulator, Not a Stressor

The Pilates method is uniquely positioned in this conversation because it does not rely on intensity to create change. It relies on precision, control, and awareness.

Controlled movement provides the nervous system with clear, consistent input. This reduces uncertainty.

Exercises performed with attention to alignment and breath create variability within a safe range. The body learns that it can move without threat. This expands movement options and reduces the need for protective tension.

From a motor control perspective, this is significant. Efficient movement is not about strength alone. It is about timing, coordination, and adaptability.

Pilates trains these qualities simultaneously.

The result is a system that is both strong and adaptable. This is the foundation of resilience.

The Link to Metabolism and Fat Loss

The conversation around fat loss is often dominated by calories and intensity. While these factors matter, they are incomplete without considering the nervous system.

A chronically stressed system is less efficient at utilizing energy. Hormonal signals that regulate hunger and satiety become less reliable. Recovery processes that support lean tissue development are compromised.

By improving autonomic balance, Pilates creates an internal environment more favorable to metabolic health.

This does not mean Pilates replaces other forms of exercise. It means it improves the body's response to them.

When breathing is efficient, when fascia is responsive, and when the nervous system can shift out of a constant state of stress, the body becomes more adaptable. Adaptability is what drives long-term change.

Reframing the Goal

The goal is not to eliminate stress. It is to improve the body's ability to process it.

Pilates offers a framework for doing exactly that.

Through breath, it restores pressure regulation and neural signaling.

Through movement, it improves sensory input and motor control.

Through consistency, it retrains the nervous system to recognize safety.

The result is not just reduced tension. It is improved performance, better recovery, and a more efficient metabolic system.

In a culture that often prescribes more effort as the solution, this is a shift in perspective.

You do not need more output.
You need better regulation.

As Joseph Pilates famously said:

"After 10 sessions, you'll feel the difference. After 20, you'll see the difference. And after 30, you'll have a whole new body."

Shannon Willits, Master Pilates Educator

Shannon Willits is a Master Pilates Educator with over 25 years of experience in functional movement and athletic performance. As the owner of 5 growing Club Pilates studios in Lee County, FL, she trains and certifies aspiring instructors in contemporary comprehensive Pilates. She is STOTT-certified, a Fellow of Applied Functional Science (FAFS), and a Functional Golf Specialist, bringing expertise to both rehabilitation and sport-specific training. Shannon is the creator of Pilates for Pickleball and, in her spare time, is the host of the Alignment Matters Podcast (found on YouTube).



WWW.CLUBPILATES.COM

WHEN VISION LOSS PROGRESSES: OPTIONS FOR MAINTAINING INDEPENDENCE AND QUALITY OF LIFE

How low vision rehabilitation helps people stay active, engaged, and independent—even when standard treatments are no longer enough

By Dr. Dennis Denick, OD, Dipl ABO, FIALVS - Founder, Low Vision of Southwest Florida

Have You Been Told “There’s Nothing More That Can Be Done”?

If you have macular degeneration, geographic atrophy, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, or another eye condition—and glasses or surgery are no longer helping—you’re not alone.

Many patients feel frustrated or discouraged at this stage.

Low vision rehabilitation focuses on helping people make better use of the vision they still have. Using specialized devices and personalized training, many patients are able to return to activities that are important to them and maintain their independence.

Vision Loss Affects More Than Just Eyesight

One of the first things many people notice is that reading becomes harder.

You may still be able to see the words—but they don’t come together as easily. Reading feels slower, more tiring, and less enjoyable. Even activities like crossword puzzles or watching television can become frustrating.

Over time, vision loss can lead to reduced independence, social withdrawal, and feelings of depression. Staying visually active—especially with reading—helps keep the mind engaged and supports emotional well-being.

Vision Changes in Parkinson’s Disease

In recognition of Parkinson’s Awareness Month, it’s important to understand that vision problems are not always caused by eye disease alone.

Parkinson’s disease can affect how the eyes and brain work together. People may notice reduced contrast (things appear faded), difficulty tracking lines of text, decreased blinking leading to dry eyes, and problems judging distances.

These changes can make everyday activities—like reading, walking safely, or navigating new environments—more difficult, even if an eye chart still looks fairly good.

Simple strategies such as improved lighting, increased contrast, and appropriate magnification can make a meaningful difference. In some cases, working alongside occupational therapy can further improve daily function.



A Fort Myers Success Story

Jane L., an 84-year-old Fort Myers resident who lives independently, began noticing worsening vision from macular degeneration. Even with new glasses, she continued to struggle.

She no longer felt safe driving and began avoiding trips to the grocery store and medical appointments. Over time, she became more isolated and discouraged, as she was no longer able to visit friends or maintain her usual routine.

After a low vision evaluation, she was prescribed a custom bioptic telescope to assist with distance vision. With proper fitting and training, she experienced significant improvement in her ability to see detail and road signs while driving.

“I can see detail and street signs so much better,” she reported.

She also noticed improved ability to recognize faces and watch television more comfortably.

For near tasks, a telemicroscope was prescribed to help with reading and cell phone use, allowing her to stay connected and manage daily activities more easily.

Jane reports feeling more confident, less isolated, and better able to maintain her independence.

Individual results may vary based on diagnosis and remaining vision.

What Is Low Vision Care?

When glasses or surgery are no longer enough, low vision care focuses on improving how you use your remaining vision.

A key part of the evaluation is identifying your goals—whether it’s reading, watching television, recognizing faces, or continuing to drive or work. Solutions are customized based on your vision and your daily needs.

Advanced Low Vision Technology Available in Southwest Florida

Today’s low vision tools go far beyond simple magnifiers.

Options may include bioptic telescopic glasses, reading microscopes, telemicroscopes, electronic magnification systems, prism side-vision awareness lenses, and contrast-enhancing filters.

With the right tools, many patients experience meaningful improvements in what they can see and do.

A Team Approach to Better Vision

Low vision care works alongside your eye doctor’s medical treatment.

While your ophthalmologist and optometrist focus on preserving eye health and managing disease, low vision rehabilitation focuses on helping you function more comfortably and effectively in daily life.

In some cases, collaboration with other professionals—such as occupational therapists—can further enhance safety, confidence, and independence.

Seeing Better. Living Better.

Vision loss can change how you see the world—but it doesn’t have to mean giving up the things you enjoy.

With the right evaluation, tools, and guidance, many people are able to stay active, independent, and engaged.

Early help is important, as changes in how you use your vision may not always show up on a standard eye chart.

Schedule Your Comprehensive Low Vision Evaluation:
Dr. Dennis Denick, OD, Dipl ABO, FIALVS



**LOW VISION OF
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**

(941) 799-8044

www.lowvisionofswfl.com

(Located inside Eye Centers of Florida)
4101 Evans Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33901

If you have been told “nothing more can be done,” a Low Vision evaluation may help you explore additional options.

Appointments are limited.



IALVS
International Academy
of Low Vision Specialists

Specialized care for macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and other vision-limiting conditions.

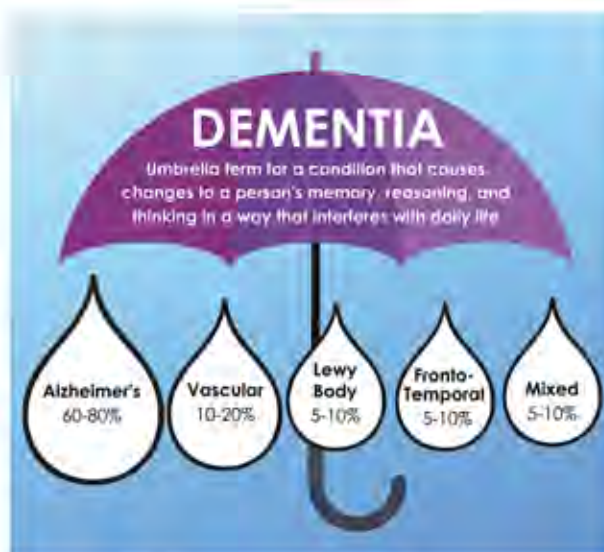
MEMORY MATTERS

Wow, it is already April! How many of you remember the saying “April showers bring May flowers”? It was always important to have your umbrella handy. That is not necessarily true here in Florida, but I remember it distinctly growing up in NW Ohio. We needed a little pep talk to get through the gray, rainy and cloudy days of April with the promise that in May, our gardens would be blooming with the beauty of spring. Lilacs, lilies of the valley, the later blooming tulips all put on a gorgeous show in NW Ohio in May. After a long, cold and sometimes snowy winter, May’s flowers bring hope and happiness.

How do showers and flowers relate to this month’s article? We are going to explore in more detail the topic of dementia, and how it serves as an umbrella term for different types of dementia. The beauty of May’s flowers bring hope, just like research can bring hope to those who are living with Alzheimer’s disease.

Let’s look at the term “dementia” in a bit more detail. The national institute of Aging describes dementia as the loss of cognitive functioning, thinking remembering and reasoning to such an extent that is interferes with a person’s daily life and routine. Personality changes can also be part of the dementia experience. Dementia is not a specific disease, but more of a general term. The Alzheimer’s Association notes that dementia can be thought of as a general term for loss of memory, language, problem solving and other thinking abilities that interfere with daily life.

How does this connect to an umbrella? Dementia can be thought of as an “umbrella” term, where there are many different types of conditions that fall under the umbrella. There are likely over 100 different types of forms of dementia, and the most well known type is Alzheimer’s disease.



Here is a quick overview of the most common types of dementia from the National Institute

Alzheimer’s Disease

Alzheimer’s disease is the most common type of dementia with an estimated 60 – 80% of dementia being of the Alzheimer’s type. In Alzheimer’s disease abnormal deposits of proteins form amyloid plaques and tau tangles throughout the brain. Symptoms include repetitive questions, getting lost in familiar places and as the disease progresses, problems recognizing friends and family, along with impulsive behavior and significant communication issues. Alzheimer’s disease typically impacts individuals in their mid 60s and older, although there are instances of individuals with younger onset Alzheimer’s (occurring before age 65).

Frontotemporal Dementia

In Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD), abnormal amounts or forms of tau and TDP-43 proteins accumulate inside neurons in the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain. Two types of FTD are Primary Progressive Aphasia and the Behavioral variant. There can be difficulty planning and organizing, impulsive behavior, changes in personality as well as apathy. In primary progressive aphasia, there are language challenges such as issues with both verbal communication and understanding speech. This type of dementia is typically diagnosed at a younger age, between mid 40s and 65.

Lewy Body Dementia

In Lewy Body dementia, abnormal deposits of a protein called alpha-synuclein, also called “Lewy bodies” impact the brain’s chemical messengers. Difficulty concentrating, illogical ideas, visual hallucinations, sleep disorders, including vivid nightmares, and challenges with movement can be part of Lewy Body dementia, which typically impacts individuals over the age of 50.

Vascular Dementia

Vascular dementia is a result of damage to the blood vessels in the brain which disrupts blood flow. Symptoms can vary depending on the area of the brain impacted due to the impaired blood flow. Some common symptoms can include confusion, problems with concentration, difficulty with planning, organization and difficulty following directions and learning new information. Hallucinations may be a symptom along with poor judgment. This type of dementia is more common over the age of 65.

Mixed Dementia

Individuals may have more than one type of dementia. In those cases, the person is considered to have mixed dementia.

If you or someone you know is experiencing one or more of these symptoms, it is time to get checked out. We can help! Knowing your cognitive status via an easy and free memory screen is a service we provide to the community. See our ad to learn more. We also offer free memory screens at other times if that is more convenient. Just call us at 239-939-7777. **Memories matter!**

References:
Alzheimer’s Association | Alzheimer’s Disease & Dementia Help
Understanding Different Types of Dementia | National Institute on Aging (nii.gov)



239-939-7777 | NPRC-SWFL.COM
14271 Metropolis Avenue., Fort Myers, FL



Regenerative Frontier: MSC Exosomes Show Promise for Parkinson's and Beyond

By Derek P. Wimmer, PA-C

Recent scientific breakthroughs have positioned Mesenchymal Stem Cell (MSC) exosomes as potential game-changers in the treatment of neurodegenerative conditions, with Parkinson's disease showing particularly encouraging results. While Parkinson's represents a critical but relatively limited market, emerging research suggests these powerful cellular messengers may have broader applications across neurodegenerative disorders and even general health optimization.

Parkinson's Breakthrough: What Studies Reveal

Parkinson's disease affects approximately 10 million people worldwide, characterized by progressive loss of dopamine-producing neurons. Traditional treatments primarily manage symptoms rather than addressing the underlying neurodegeneration.

Recent studies demonstrate that MSC exosomes—tiny vesicles released by stem cells that transport proteins, lipids, and genetic material—can cross the blood-brain barrier and deliver regenerative cargo directly to damaged neural tissues. In pre-clinical models, these exosomes have shown remarkable abilities to:

- Reduce neuroinflammation associated with Parkinson's progression
- Promote survival of dopaminergic neurons
- Enhance mitochondrial function in affected brain regions
- Stimulate neurogenesis and improve neural circuit connectivity

A 2023 study published in *Stem Cell Research & Therapy* reported significant motor function improvement in Parkinson's models after MSC exosome administration, with effects lasting considerably longer than conventional therapies.

Expanding Horizons: Applications Beyond Parkinson's

The therapeutic potential of MSC exosomes extends well beyond Parkinson's disease, potentially transforming treatment approaches for multiple neurodegenerative conditions:

Alzheimer's Disease: Affecting over 50 million people globally, Alzheimer's represents a substantially larger market. Preliminary research indicates

MSC exosomes may reduce amyloid-beta and tau aggregation while supporting neural regeneration and cognitive function. A Phase I clinical trial showed promising safety profiles and cognitive stabilization in early-stage patients.

Multiple Sclerosis: Studies suggest MSC exosomes can modulate the immune response that drives MS pathology, potentially reducing demyelination and promoting remyelination of damaged nerve fibers. This dual neuroprotective and regenerative approach addresses both inflammatory and degenerative aspects of MS.

Vascular Dementia: By improving cerebral blood flow, reducing oxidative stress, and enhancing neural repair mechanisms, MSC exosomes show promise for vascular cognitive impairment, the second most common form of dementia.

Holistic Health Applications

Beyond neurodegenerative conditions, MSC exosomes demonstrate potential for overall health optimization:

Cognitive Enhancement: Early research suggests these biological messengers may support healthy brain aging by improving neural plasticity, reducing age-related inflammation, and enhancing cognitive reserve even in non-pathological states.

Immune Modulation: MSC exosomes contain powerful immunomodulatory factors that may help balance immune function, potentially benefiting conditions ranging from autoimmune disorders to chronic inflammation.

Cellular Rejuvenation: The regenerative signals carried by these vesicles appear to activate tissue repair pathways throughout the body, supporting cellular health from the molecular level upward.

Market Outlook and Challenges

While the Parkinson's market alone might present limitations (estimated at \$5.7 billion globally by 2028), the combined neurodegenerative disease space represents over \$45 billion in market potential. Adding applications for healthy aging and immune optimization expands possibilities significantly.

Challenges remain in standardization, scalable production, and regulatory pathways. However, recent technological advances in exosome isolation, characterization, and loading techniques are addressing many of these hurdles.

Conclusion

The therapeutic versatility of MSC exosomes positions them as a promising platform technology rather than a single-disease treatment. Their ability to deliver multiple regenerative signals simultaneously, cross the blood-brain barrier effectively, and promote tissue repair represents a paradigm shift in how we approach neurodegenerative conditions and health optimization.

As research continues to validate their efficacy across broader applications, MSC exosomes may soon transition from experimental treatments to standard therapeutic options—offering new hope for conditions that have long challenged conventional medicine.

Experienced Medical Professionals

Wimmer Regenerative Orthopedics offers a broad array of services geared to address most chronic conditions and acute injuries with a non-surgical approach. We know there is no such thing as one-size-fits-all cure, so we never use a one-size-fits-all approach to your diagnosis or treatment.

Compassionate Healthcare

Our mission is to provide you with personalized, high-quality care. Be seen at your appointment time. Spend your entire visit with Derek Wimmer, PA. Private care unlike anywhere else. We are dedicated to not only improving but also to maintaining your health through preventative care and education while treating your chronic conditions.

Call today for more information.



Wimmer Regenerative Orthopedics

Stem Cells, PRP, Exosomes, Spinal Decompression

239.829.4300

wimmerorthopedics.com

**3384 WOODS EDGE CIRCLE #104
BONITA SPRINGS, FLORIDA 34134**

RESTORING FUNCTION AND STRENGTH: A GUIDE TO UPPER EXTREMITY EXERCISE AND THERAPY

By Dennis O. Sagini, MD

The upper extremities—comprising the shoulders, arms, elbows, forearms, wrists, and hands—are essential for nearly every activity we perform throughout the day. From typing on a keyboard to lifting groceries, cooking meals to embracing loved ones, our upper limbs enable us to interact with the world around us. When injury, surgery, or chronic conditions compromise upper extremity function, targeted exercise and therapy become crucial for recovery and maintaining quality of life.

Understanding Upper Extremity Dysfunction

Upper extremity problems can arise from various sources. Rotator cuff injuries, tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, and arthritis are among the most common conditions affecting these structures. Additionally, stroke, nerve injuries, fractures, and post-surgical rehabilitation often necessitate comprehensive therapeutic intervention. Without proper treatment, these conditions can lead to decreased range of motion, muscle weakness, chronic pain, and significant functional limitations.

The Role of Therapeutic Exercise

Upper extremity exercise therapy focuses on restoring strength, flexibility, coordination, and functional capacity. A well-designed program addresses multiple components simultaneously. Range of motion exercises help maintain or improve joint flexibility, preventing stiffness and contractures. Strengthening exercises rebuild muscle power, enabling patients to perform daily activities with greater ease and confidence. Proprioceptive training enhances spatial awareness and coordination, which is particularly important after neurological injuries.

Key Components of Upper Extremity Therapy

Effective therapy begins with a thorough assessment by qualified healthcare professionals. Physical and occupational therapists evaluate strength, range of motion, pain levels, and functional abilities to develop individualized treatment plans. Early mobilization, when appropriate, helps prevent complications such as frozen shoulder or muscle atrophy.

Progressive resistance training forms the cornerstone of strengthening programs. Starting with gentle exercises using minimal resistance, patients



gradually advance to more challenging activities as their condition improves. Resistance bands, light weights, and therapeutic putty are commonly employed tools that provide adjustable resistance levels.

Flexibility exercises are equally important. Gentle stretching routines maintain tissue elasticity and joint mobility. For conditions like adhesive capsulitis or post-fracture stiffness, dedicated stretching protocols can significantly improve outcomes.

Functional Training and Real-World Application

The ultimate goal of upper extremity therapy extends beyond isolated exercises. Functional training incorporates activities that mirror real-life tasks, ensuring that improvements translate into practical benefits. Reaching overhead to retrieve objects, manipulating buttons and zippers, writing, and food preparation are examples of functional activities integrated into therapy sessions.

Home Exercise Programs and Long-Term Success

Consistency is paramount in rehabilitation. While supervised therapy sessions provide expert guidance and motivation, home exercise programs empower patients to take an active role in their recovery. Compliance with prescribed exercises accelerates healing and helps maintain gains achieved during formal therapy.

Conclusion

Upper extremity exercise and therapy represent powerful tools for restoring function and improving quality of life. Whether recovering from injury, managing chronic conditions, or regaining abilities after surgery, a comprehensive approach that combines professional guidance with patient dedication yields the best outcomes. If you're experiencing upper extremity limitations, consult with your healthcare provider to determine whether therapeutic intervention could benefit you.

With proper treatment and commitment, most individuals can achieve significant functional improvements and return to the activities they value most. Contact our office at 239-302-3216 to schedule a consultation and take the first step toward pain-free movement and improved quality of life.



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.



SAGINI MD
HAND, WRIST & ELBOW SURGERY

239-302-3216 | SAGINIMD.COM

13691 Metro Pkwy, Suite 400
Fort Myers, FL 33912

A MEMBER OF
PRECISION



Struggling to Walk?

Understanding Spinal Stenosis and New Treatments

By Amanda N. Sacino, MD-PhD • Neurosurgeon and Managing Partner

Spinal stenosis is a condition characterized by the narrowing of the spinal canal, which can compress the spinal cord and nerves, leading to pain, weakness, and mobility issues. This condition primarily affects older adults, as it is often caused by degenerative changes in the spine, though it can also result from congenital factors, trauma, or other spinal disorders. As the spinal canal narrows, pressure on the nerve roots and spinal cord increases, leading to symptoms that can range from mild discomfort to severe impairment.

Symptoms, Causes, and Diagnosis

Spinal stenosis symptoms vary depending on the location of the narrowing. When it occurs in the cervical spine (neck), individuals may experience neck pain, numbness, tingling, or weakness in the arms and hands. In more severe cases, spinal cord compression can cause balance difficulties and problems with fine motor skills. Lumbar spinal stenosis, which affects the lower back, is more common and typically leads to lower back pain, leg pain, and difficulty walking. Many patients find relief when bending forward or sitting, as these positions reduce nerve pressure.

The primary cause of spinal stenosis is age-related degeneration. Over time, spinal discs lose water content and become less flexible, leading to bulging or herniation. The facet joints can develop arthritis, forming bone spurs that encroach upon the spinal canal. Ligaments may also thicken and contribute to the narrowing. Less commonly, congenital factors, tumors, traumatic injuries, or conditions such as Paget's disease can cause spinal stenosis.

Diagnosis typically involves a medical history review, physical examination, and imaging studies. X-rays, MRIs, and CT scans help confirm the diagnosis by providing detailed views of the spine and revealing nerve compression. MRI is especially useful for visualizing soft tissue changes, while CT scans may be used when MRI is not an option.

Conservative Treatment Options

Treatment depends on symptom severity. For mild to moderate cases, conservative management is the first approach. Physical therapy strengthens spinal-supporting muscles, improves flexibility, and enhances



posture. Core stability exercises help reduce nerve pressure. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or naproxen can relieve pain, while muscle relaxants or neuropathic pain medications like gabapentin may address nerve discomfort.

Interventional Pain Management

When conservative measures are insufficient, interventional treatments may be considered. Epidural steroid injections reduce inflammation and pain by delivering corticosteroids into the epidural space. While they do not cure spinal stenosis, they provide temporary relief and improve function. Radiofrequency ablation is another option that uses heat to target and disable pain-transmitting nerves.

Surgical Treatment Options

Severe symptoms that significantly impact daily life may require surgery. The most common procedure is laminectomy, which removes part of the vertebra to create space for the spinal cord and nerves. This procedure is highly effective in relieving symptoms and improving mobility. In cases of spinal instability, spinal fusion may be performed alongside laminectomy, connecting vertebrae with bone grafts or implants for stability. Though fusion limits flexibility, it prevents further degeneration and movement-related pain.

Minimally Invasive Surgical Options

Minimally invasive spine surgery techniques offer faster recovery and reduced post-operative discomfort. These procedures use small incisions and specialized instruments to remove bone spurs or thickened ligaments, relieving nerve pressure while minimizing tissue disruption. This results in less blood loss, shorter hospital stays, and quicker rehabilitation.

Robotic-guided surgery has further advanced minimally invasive spine procedures by increasing precision and reducing risks. Using advanced imaging and real-time navigation, robotic systems assist surgeons in placing implants and performing decompression procedures with extreme accuracy. This technology minimizes tissue damage, improves surgical outcomes, and accelerates recovery. Many patients undergoing robotic-assisted spine surgery experience less post-operative pain and a quicker return to daily activities compared to traditional methods.

Recovery and Lifestyle Modifications

Recovery varies based on the procedure performed and the patient's overall health. Physical therapy is often recommended post-surgery to restore strength and mobility. Patients are encouraged to engage in low-impact activities such as walking or swimming to promote healing and prevent stiffness. Maintaining a healthy weight, practicing good posture, and staying active can help prevent symptom recurrence.

Conclusion

Spinal stenosis can significantly impact quality of life, but various treatment options are available to alleviate symptoms and restore mobility. Conservative approaches such as physical therapy, medications, and lifestyle modifications help many patients manage symptoms effectively. For severe cases, interventional treatments and surgery provide long-term relief. If you are experiencing persistent back pain, leg pain, or difficulty walking, seeking expert evaluation is essential. The neurosurgeons at Apex Brain & Spine specialize in advanced treatment options tailored to each patient's needs. Contact Apex Brain & Spine today to schedule a consultation and explore the best solutions for your spinal health.



Apex Brain & Spine
Neurosurgical Specialists

239-422-APEX (2739)

3530 Kraft Road, Suite 203 • Naples, FL 34105

www.apexbrainandspine.com



UNDERSTANDING HOW AGING AFFECTS YOUR TEETH

By KELLY M. DAINIAK, DMD, GENERAL DENTIST

As the clock ticks, our body's natural aging process doesn't spare our teeth and gums. While we often focus on wrinkles and gray hair as signs of aging, our dental health deserves just as much attention. Here's a closer look at how aging affects our teeth and what we can do to combat these changes.

THE IMPACT OF AGING ON TEETH

1. Enamel Wear: Over the years, the constant chewing, grinding, and exposure to acidic foods and drinks can wear down the enamel, the hard, protective outer layer of our teeth. Thinner enamel makes teeth more susceptible to decay and sensitivity.

2. Gum Recession: Age can cause the gums to recede, pulling back from the teeth. This exposes more of the tooth and its root to potential decay and can lead to sensitivity and pain.

3. Dry Mouth: As we age, we may produce less saliva, leading to dry mouth. Often, dry mouth is also a side effect of medications. Saliva is crucial for washing away food particles and neutralizing acids produced by bacteria. Without it, the risk of tooth decay and gum disease increases.

4. Discoloration: Teeth naturally yellow as we age. The dentin, or inner layer, darkens, and as enamel wears thin, the yellowed dentin shows through more prominently.

5. Shift in Teeth Alignment: Over time, our teeth can shift, leading to changes in our bite and making teeth more difficult to clean, which can contribute to decay and gum disease.

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY SMILE THROUGH THE YEARS

Preventive Dental Care: Visiting your dentist regularly for cleanings and checkups is crucial. They can catch and address issues early on. If you suffer from bruxism, or teeth grinding, get a preventive nightguard to prevent enamel wear and cracks over time.

Proper Oral Hygiene: Brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, a soft bristle toothbrush, flossing daily, and using a therapeutic mouthwash can help protect your teeth and gums from the effects of aging.

Stay Hydrated: Drinking plenty of water can help combat dry mouth and keep your mouth moist and clean.

Healthy Diet: Eating a balanced diet rich in vitamins and minerals supports gum health and helps prevent tooth decay.

Quit Smoking: Smoking accelerates many aging effects on teeth and gums, including increasing the risk of gum disease and oral cancer.

KEEP YOUR SMILE BRIGHT AND YOUTHFUL IN ESTERO, FL

Aging is a natural process that affects all parts of our body, including our teeth. However, with proper care and maintenance, your smile can remain bright and healthy throughout your life.



Remember, it's never too late to improve your dental health. If you're concerned about how aging is affecting your teeth or just want to ensure your smile stays as youthful as you feel, contact our office today to schedule an appointment. Together, we can work towards improving your smile and ensuring your teeth stand the test of time!



Dr. Kelly M. Dainiak is a Hospital Residency trained General Dentist who takes pride in caring for her patients' well-being.

APRIL SPECIAL

\$250.00 OFF

ZOOM CHAIRSIDE WHITENING



239-992-0325

www.premierdentalstudio.com

20321 Grande Oak Shoppes Blvd.
Suite 316 | Estero, FL 33928



PEAK ALLERGY SEASON IN FLORIDA:

Surviving the Spring Pollen Storm

As spring unfolds across the Sunshine State, millions of Floridians brace themselves for the annual allergy season that reaches its crescendo in April and May. With its warm climate and diverse vegetation, Florida creates the perfect environment for pollen production, leaving residents battling itchy eyes, runny noses, and persistent sneezing fits.

Why April and May Is Florida's Allergy Peak

The two months mark the height of Florida's spring allergy season primarily due to tree pollen, which blankets the state in a fine yellow dust. Oak trees, which are abundant throughout Florida, are particularly prolific pollen producers. Joining them are pine, cypress, and bayberry trees, creating a potent airborne cocktail that triggers allergic reactions.

The state's unique climate compounds the problem. While northern states may still be thawing from winter, Florida's warm temperatures and early spring conditions prompt plants to release pollen earlier and for longer periods. Add in Florida's high humidity, which allows pollen to cling to surfaces and remain suspended in the air, and you have the perfect storm for allergy sufferers.

Signs You're Experiencing Seasonal Allergies

- Persistent sneezing and nasal congestion
- Itchy, watery, or red eyes
- Scratchy throat and coughing
- Fatigue and headaches
- Skin rashes or hives in severe cases

Unlike cold symptoms, allergies don't typically cause fever and tend to persist for weeks rather than days.

Effective Strategies to Combat April Allergies

AT HOME

Create a pollen-free sanctuary: Keep windows closed during peak pollen times and use air conditioning with HEPA filters. Remove shoes at the door and change clothes after being outdoors to prevent bringing pollen inside.

Maintain clean surfaces: Regularly wash bedding in hot water, vacuum carpets with a HEPA-filtered vacuum, and use damp cloths for dusting to trap pollen rather than dispersing it.

Consider air purifiers: High-quality air purifiers with HEPA filters can significantly reduce airborne allergens in your home.

PERSONAL HABITS

Track pollen counts: Florida's Department of Health provides daily pollen forecasts. Plan outdoor activities for low-pollen days, typically after rainfall when pollen has been temporarily washed away.

Time your outdoor activities: Pollen counts are highest between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m., so schedule outdoor exercise for late afternoon or evening when possible.

Shield your eyes and airways: Wear wraparound sunglasses to reduce eye exposure and consider using a mask when gardening or doing yard work.

MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS

Over-the-counter remedies: Antihistamines, decongestants, and nasal corticosteroids can provide relief for many allergy sufferers. Start medications before symptoms appear for best results.

Consult an allergist: For severe allergies, an allergist can provide targeted treatments, including prescription medications and immunotherapy options like allergy shots.

Consider saline rinses: Nasal irrigation with saline solution can flush pollen from nasal passages, providing natural relief.

Long-term Solutions

For those with severe reactions, immunotherapy might be the answer. This treatment gradually introduces small amounts of allergens to your system, helping build tolerance over time. While it requires commitment, many Floridians find it transforms their spring from a season of suffering to one they can finally enjoy.

Though April and May allergies in Florida can be challenging, with proper preparation and management strategies, you can minimize symptoms and reclaim the beautiful spring season. By creating safe indoor spaces, modifying outdoor behaviors, and seeking appropriate medical treatment, even the most sensitive allergy sufferers can navigate Florida's peak pollen season with greater comfort.



Dr. Price Sonkarley is a Board Certified Otolaryngologist Head and Neck Surgeon and will be continuing Dr. Montgomery's practice providing excellent care to all patients. He will be performing both medical and surgical aspects of the specialty and is accepting new patients.

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



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



WELCOME
Rachel Gregoroff ARNP

Do you suffer with a chronic cough? Throat irritation? Hearing loss? Nasal congestion? Ear fullness? Allergy sufferers, ask us about our alternative solution to allergy shots.

We are always accepting new patients. Don't trust something as important as your hearing to just anyone. Call us and make an appointment today!

Serving all of Southwest Florida
9240 Bonita Beach Rd. SE #1106, Bonita Springs, FL 34135
Sunshine Professional Center (across from Spanish Wells)
239.495.6200
Mon-Thurs 8am until 6pm • drmarkmontgomery.com

For the Protection and Health of Our Patients and Employees,
We Strictly Follow all CDC Safety Guidelines.

Step Into Spring: Celebrate National Foot Health Awareness Month

April is here, and with it comes National Foot Health Awareness Month, a reminder that the foundation of your body deserves attention. Your feet carry you through every step of life, yet they're often the last thing on your mind until discomfort strikes. This spring, it's time to give your feet the care—and support—they truly deserve.

Everyday Steps Toward Healthy Feet

Healthy feet start with small, simple habits. Wash them daily, keep nails trimmed, and moisturize to avoid cracks and dryness. Choose shoes that support your arches and rotate them to give both your feet and your footwear a break. Socks matter too: moisture-wicking pairs prevent friction and fungal infections, especially as temperatures rise.

Movement is essential. Stretch your calves, wiggle your toes, roll your feet over a tennis ball, or take short walking breaks during the day. These little practices improve circulation, release tension, and help prevent common foot problems.

But sometimes, even with the best habits, aches linger, and not just in your feet, but in your knees, hips, and back. That's where arch support comes in.

Why Good Feet Is Different

Not all arch supports are created equal. The Good Feet Store offers something different: our 3-Step Arch Support System, designed to build a strong, stable foundation. Unlike off-the-shelf inserts, our arch supports are:

- Semi-rigid and structured, not soft and collapsible
- Made from a proprietary, medical-grade polymer blend
- Designed for long-term biomechanical support
- Personally fitted as part of a multi-stage system
- Backed by a lifetime warranty

This isn't a quick fix or a one-size-fits-all product; it's a foundation built for your unique feet. When your foundation is properly supported:

- Movement feels more stable
- Stress is better distributed
- The kinetic chain functions more efficiently

We don't sell alignment. We sell support that holds. Alignment happens because of it.



A Foundation That Supports Your Whole Body

Generic inserts may give temporary relief, but they often collapse under pressure. Good Feet arch supports, with their semi-rigid structure, provide lasting support that lets your feet function naturally. This stability carries up through your knees, hips, and back, easing aches and making daily movement more comfortable.

The 3-Step Arch Support System ensures that each support is personally fitted and integrated into your life. From your first step into the store to your first walk with your new supports, the experience is personal, human, and focused on results that last. When your feet are properly supported, simple things like walking around the office, running errands, or enjoying a spring hike feel easier. Your posture improves naturally, your body functions more efficiently, and your aches begin to ease.

This April, Put Your Feet First

National Foot Health Awareness Month is the perfect excuse to prioritize your foundation.

Combine daily foot care, gentle movement, and custom arch supports from Good Feet, and you're giving your body the stability it needs to thrive.

Your feet carry you everywhere. Give them the care, support, and attention they deserve. With Good Feet, you're not just supporting your arches, you're supporting your whole body, naturally, efficiently, and for the long haul.

This spring, step into comfort, step into confidence, and step into life with feet that are truly ready to carry you forward.

The Good Feet Store®

America's Arch Support Experts®

(239) 541-6368 | www.goodfeet.com

12640 S Cleveland Ave Suite 202

Fort Myers, FL 33907

Arch Support Specialists are ready to help you take the first step toward greater comfort and improved mobility.

Exploring the Synergy of Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment and Nutrients in Biohacking

In the realm of biohacking, where individuals seek to optimize their physical and cognitive performance through lifestyle interventions, the integration of innovative therapies and nutrients has gained considerable attention. Among these, hyperbaric oxygen treatment (HBOT) is promising, particularly when combined with specific nutrients like Methylene Blue, Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide (NAD), and Phosphatidylcholine. Let's delve into the synergistic potential of these elements in the pursuit of enhanced well-being.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment (HBOT): Enhancing Cellular Oxygenation

HBOT involves breathing pure oxygen in a pressurized environment, typically within a hyperbaric chamber. This therapy aims to increase the oxygen supply to body tissues, promoting healing, reducing inflammation, and enhancing overall cellular function. Research suggests that HBOT may have various applications, including wound healing, neurological conditions, and sports recovery.

Methylene Blue: A Mitochondrial Powerhouse

Methylene Blue, a synthetic dye with antioxidant properties, has garnered attention for its potential role in biohacking. Studies have indicated its ability to enhance mitochondrial function, the powerhouse of our cells responsible for producing energy. Methylene Blue can optimize ATP production by acting as an electron carrier in the electron transport chain, thereby boosting cellular energy levels and supporting cognitive function.

Moreover, Methylene Blue has neuroprotective effects, making it a promising candidate for conditions like Alzheimer's disease and cognitive decline. Its antioxidant properties help combat oxidative stress, a common feature of aging and neurodegenerative disorders.

Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide (NAD): Fueling Cellular Metabolism

NAD is a coenzyme found in all living cells, playing a crucial role in cellular metabolism and

energy production. As we age, NAD levels decline, impacting various physiological processes, including DNA repair, cellular communication, and energy metabolism.

Supplementation with NAD precursors like nicotinamide riboside (NR) or nicotinamide mononucleotide (NMN) has emerged to replenish NAD levels and potentially mitigate age-related decline. NAD optimization may enhance vitality and longevity by supporting mitochondrial function and cellular repair mechanisms.

Phosphatidylcholine: Building Blocks for Cellular Membranes

Phosphatidylcholine, a phospholipid found in cell membranes, is integral to cellular structure and function. It is a precursor for acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter essential for cognitive function and memory.

Supplementation with phosphatidylcholine has been linked to improved cognitive performance, liver health, and lipid metabolism. Additionally, phosphatidylcholine plays a role in emulsifying fats and aiding in their transport and metabolism, making it relevant for individuals pursuing weight management and metabolic optimization.

The Synergy of HBOT and Nutrients: Optimizing Biohacking Strategies

Combining HBOT with targeted nutrient interventions like Methylene Blue, NAD, and Phosphatidylcholine holds promise for synergistic health benefits. By enhancing cellular oxygenation, mitochondrial function, and cellular integrity, this integrative approach may support cognitive performance, physical recovery, and overall well-being.

It's important to note that while preliminary research is promising, further studies are needed to fully elucidate the mechanisms and long-term effects of these interventions. Additionally, individual responses to biohacking strategies may vary, highlighting the importance of personalized approaches and consultation with healthcare professionals.

Integrating hyperbaric oxygen treatment and specific nutrients represents a novel frontier in biohacking, offering potential avenues for optimizing health and performance. As research in this field continues to evolve, individuals are encouraged to explore these strategies under the guidance of qualified practitioners, prioritizing safety, and evidence-based practices in their quest for vitality and longevity.

Call us at 239-425-2900 to learn more about these innovative approaches and how they may contribute to improving your health and well-being.



Doreen DeStefano, PhD, APRN, DNP

Dr. DeStefano is also a lifelong student. She holds a bachelor's degree in nursing and another in exercise physiology. She has a Master's (ABT) in criminology, a master's in public business administration, and a master's in nursing. She holds a doctorate in natural health and is a licensed Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. She holds numerous licenses and certifications from advanced practice training. She attends educational seminars in integrative and functional medicine twice yearly to stay abreast of the most recent, cutting-edge therapies available.

Her practice is centered on naturopathic principles, including healing the whole person on various levels and avoiding pharmaceutical intervention unless necessary. She believes your health is within your control. Her goal is to help you achieve maximum health.

Contact Root Causes to discover how Nutrient IVs or injections can benefit you!



12734 Kenwood Lane, Ft Myers, FL 33907

239-425-2900 | www.rtcausesmd.com



Marsh Cove Dental Brings Specialized Full-Arch Implant Expertise to Fort Myers

By Dr. Eugene Titov and Dr. Olga Titov

Residents of Fort Myers and surrounding communities will soon have access to world-class dental implant care as Naples-based Marsh Cove Dental announces the opening of their new specialized facility. Unlike traditional dental expansions, this new location will focus exclusively on providing revolutionary full-arch dental implant treatments, bringing their cutting-edge technology and unparalleled expertise to Lee County.

Specialized Full-Arch Implant Center

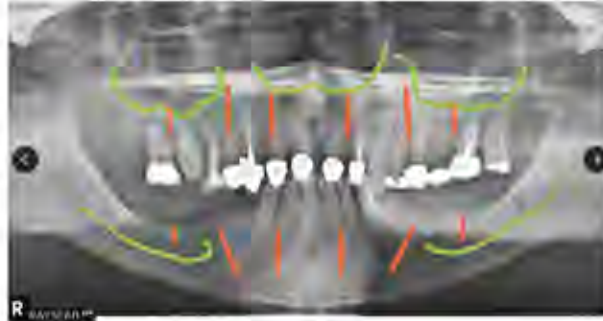
The new Fort Myers location will exclusively focus on full-arch dental implants – also known as All-On-4, Teeth-In-A-Day, or Same-Day Teeth – making them Southwest Florida's premier destination for this life-changing procedure. By concentrating solely on full-arch treatments, Marsh Cove's specialized team performs these complex procedures daily, offering a level of expertise unmatched by offices that only occasionally offer such services.

"Our decision to focus exclusively on full-arch dental implants in Fort Myers stems from recognizing a significant gap in specialized care in the area," explains Dr. Titov, the practice's leading implant specialist. "We're bringing an alternative to corporate chain offices that often treat patients as just another number. Our patients consistently tell us how different their experience feels with our personalized approach."

State-of-the-Art Technology Under One Roof

The Fort Myers facility will house Marsh Cove's complete suite of advanced technology, including their 3D CBCT scanner, RayFace Scanner, 3Shape digital scanner, and in-house dental lab. Additionally, the revolutionary Yomi robot-assisted implant system will be coming to the Fort Myers office, bringing the precision of robotic guidance to select implant procedures. This FDA-cleared robotic system provides real-time guidance during implant surgery, ensuring placement accuracy to within fractions of a millimeter while allowing Dr. Titov to maintain complete control throughout the procedure.

A standout feature of their approach is the in-house manufacturing capability. Using digital scans taken before and during surgery, the team designs and creates temporary arches on their 3D printer within hours of implant placement, ensuring every patient



leaves with functional teeth the same day as surgery. Final restorations are milled in their on-site lab using zirconia, dentistry's strongest material.

Advanced Solutions for Complex Cases

Marsh Cove Dental has built a reputation for successfully treating patients previously told they weren't candidates for full-arch implants due to bone loss. While less experienced providers might require extensive sinus lifts and bone grafting, Dr. Titov often employs zygomatic implants, anchoring into the cheekbone and eliminating the need for sinus procedures.

"We routinely welcome patients who've been turned away elsewhere," shares Dr. Titov. "Our advanced techniques allow us to provide solutions even in challenging cases with significant bone loss."

Comprehensive Care with Patient Safety Focus

Another distinguishing element of their approach is the use of dedicated anesthesia professionals. Unlike many practices where the dentist manages both sedation and the surgical procedure, Marsh Cove partners with licensed anesthesiologists and CRNAs, allowing Dr. Titov to focus exclusively on the dental procedure while ensuring optimal patient safety.



"Having dedicated anesthesia professionals is especially valuable for medically compromised patients," explains the practice manager. "It also significantly reduces sedation time, as Dr. Titov can work efficiently without dividing his attention."

The new Fort Myers location will maintain Marsh Cove's signature comprehensive care model, from complimentary consultations with transparent treatment planning to personalized support throughout the healing process. Patients can schedule a consultation to view before-and-after transformations, hear patient testimonials, and experience firsthand the difference specialized care makes.

For Fort Myers residents seeking an alternative to corporate dental chains for full-arch implant treatment, Marsh Cove Dental offers the rare combination of specialized expertise, advanced technology, and personalized care, all under one roof. Schedule your complimentary consultation today at (239) 300-0290 to discover how our life-changing full-arch implant solutions can restore both your smile and confidence—and see why our patients consistently recommend us as Southwest Florida's premier dental implant specialists.



239-300-0290

www.marshcovedental.com

12431 Brantley Commons Ct., Fort Myers, FL 33907
6654 Collier Blvd. Ste 104, Naples, FL 34114

See What Our Patients Say



REGINA M.

After five disappointing consultations elsewhere, Regina found hope at Marsh Cove Dental who provided detailed explanations and complete transparency about her 4-on-4 dental implant surgery. Despite suffering from dental anxiety, she never felt anxious during any visit with the caring staff who treated her like family. With her brand new smile, Regina has gained new confidence and can finally enjoy foods she hasn't been able to eat for a long time.



DANIEL B.

My name is Daniel and for me Marsh Cove Dental is the best dentist office I've ever been to - their knowledgeable staff took time to explain procedures, answer all my questions, and they've gone above and beyond my expectations.



CHRIS S.



PAMELA F.

Pamela enthusiastically recommends Dr. T and the staff at Marsh Cove for dental implants, highlighting their exceptional care, the doctor's perfectionism, and how the experience transformed her smile and life.



KAREN W.



CHERYL D.



JOHNNY

My name is Johnny I was very happy with my experience at Marsh Cove Dental... **so happy in fact,** I brought my friend in to have his teeth fixed also.

The Doctor has a very discerning eye and my outcome was **aesthetically pleasing and most importantly functional.** Dr. Titov has state of the art digital technology and an on-site lab. The staff very knowledgeable, kind and caring and make you feel like one of the family.



PAMELA

My name is Pamela and I **give Marsh Cove 5 Stars!!!** From my first visit to my most recent visit I have only great things to say. Everyone is so friendly and knowledgeable, patient and kind. **All my questions were answered and my anxiety was addressed not only in person but also via telephone.** I had 17 teeth pulled and permanent implant supported "dentures" placed. Following all directions and taking products provided I had very little swelling, no bruising and returned to work in 5 days!

I highly recommend Dr. Titov and all his group at Marsh Cove Dental and Implant Center.



TOBY R.



MIKE S.



InHome Regen LLC

Regenerative and Anti-Aging Therapies DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR

InHome Regen brings regenerative and anti-aging procedures directly to your home. We focus on helping you look and feel your best using advanced wellness therapies — all from the comfort of your own space.

Our Services Include:

- **Endolift: The Minimally-Invasive Path to Skin Tightening and Rejuvenation.** Endolift is a laser-assisted procedure that works under the skin (endo-tissutal) to target sagging, loose skin, and localized fat deposits.
- **NAD+ Therapy, Peptides and Vitamin Cocktails:** Boosts your energy, mental clarity, and overall vitality.
- **Exosome Microneedling:** Promotes skin regeneration and a youthful appearance using cutting-edge cell-derived technology.
- **Wharton's Jelly Joint Injections:** Helps relieve joint discomfort and enhance mobility using naturally sourced regenerative materials, guided by advanced ultrasound technology.
- **Stem Cell Procedures:** Tailored support for rheumatological, neurological, and wellness applications including vitality and intimate health enhancement.

InHome Regen offers personalized, professional care designed for busy individuals who want the benefits of advanced medical procedures without going to a clinic.



ARE YOU READY TO GET STARTED?

Axel Ruiz, MD, DABFP, CWS
Board Certified & Member of American Academy and Board of Regenerative Medicine

InHomeRegen.com
inhomeregen@gmail.com
(855) 734-3620

14171 Metropolis Ave #203, Fort Myers, FL 33912
Friday and Saturday by appointment only.



DISCOVER THE BENEFITS
OF WORKING WITH
CLUB PILATES!

There's another level to Pilates. A deeper understanding of movement changes everything.

Our comprehensive Pilates Teacher Training is designed for individuals who want to deepen their understanding of the body and movement in a more intentional way.

You will learn how to:

- See movement with a more trained eye
- Understand the "why" behind each exercise
- Apply principles that improve how people move and feel

All within a structured, supportive environment that values education, precision, and long-term growth.



Scan Me

What sets up apart is our:

- ✓ Science-based curriculum
- ✓ Step-by-step guidance and support
- ✓ Flexible path forward
- ✓ Opportunities within our studios

OPENING SOON

Bonita Springs East
27800 Bonita Grande Dr.
Bonita Springs, FL 34135

NOW OPEN

Bonita Springs West
8200 Health Center Blvd. #101
Estero, FL 34135

Club Pilates Ft. Myers West
13211 McGregor Blvd, Unit 102-2
Fort Myers, FL 33919
(239) 603-7300

Club Pilates Ft. Myers Central
6891 Daniels Parkway, Suite #145
Fort Myers, FL 33912
(239) 603-7222

Club Pilates Estero
20321 Grande Oaks Shoppes Dr.
Estero, FL 33928
(239) 288-5521

Club Pilates Cape Coral West
2390 Surfside Blvd
Cape Coral, FL 33991
239-291-9090



Shannon Willits
Master Pilates Educator

This New Hearing Treatment Technology Just Restored My Ability to Hear Well in Noise!

Don't Buy a Hearing Aid Until You've Spoken with Me,
Your Fellow Senior, and Hearing Instrument Specialist



If you've been avoiding treating your hearing loss because you don't trust the hearing aids sales people or think that modern hearing aids are not affordable we should meet for a **FREE CONSULTATION!**

Here Are The **Top-3** Reasons I Treat My Own Hearing Loss:

1. Improve my hearing in noisy situations so I can keep enjoying social activities
2. Reduce my Risk of Cognitive Decline so I can keep working and living
3. Reduce Tinnitus "Ringing in Ears" Symptoms so I can sleep well and live better
4. Specialize in Treating Tinnitus

WHY CHOOSE NOBILE?

1. Deal direct with owner
No salesman
2. Free Lifetime Service
3. Over 50 5★ Reviews



**FREE SERVICE
FOR ALL VETS
FROM A VET!**

NOBILE
HEARING AIDS

www.nobilehearing.com

United Healthcare Provider



Since 1967

Nobile Hearing Aids

231 Del Prado Blvd. S. Ste. 5

Cape Coral - Call 239-323-7389

John Nobile

HAS (Hearing Aid Specialist), BC-HIS, ACA

Like you, I struggle hearing in noise, when multiple people speak, or trying to decipher modern day TV news.

**WINNER
BEST OF
CAPE CORAL
LAST 3 YEARS**



STRESS BUSTERS: Focus on Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Self-Compassion

By Rick Weber

The word “stress” has a negative connotation. But stress can be good—to a certain point.

Stress motivates us to take action and perform at an optimal level. As the Yerkes-Dodson law dictates, performance increases with physiological or mental arousal. Moderate stress is ideal for peak performance. If we don’t have enough stress present, we may be less likely to take action or be a little too comfortable. If we have too much stress present, we may be more likely to become overwhelmed and anxious—and our performance declines.

“Developing habits to manage stress takes time and experimentation to see what works best for you,” says Dr. Allison Jedinak, PsyD, Senior Director of the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) unit in Florida Gulf Coast University’s Marieb College of Health and Human Services.

“You may also find you need different tools in different environments. When we approach change, we may become discouraged when we don’t see immediate results. Change is difficult! We tend to engage in familiar patterns as a comfort even if these patterns are dysfunctional or unhelpful. Progress will not likely be linear. Consider what you can do to become 1% better each day. (Check out *Atomic Habits* by James Clear for more on becoming 1% better every day!) Focus on tried-and-true strategies for general health and stress management, including proper sleep, nutrition and physical movement.”

April is Stress Awareness Month, and that is one of CAPS’ main jobs on campus for FGCU students. Incorporating techniques from person-centered, cognitive-behavioral and dialectical behavior therapies, Jedinak specializes in working with college students and has experience treating anxiety, depression and relational concerns.

But many of the practices being utilized with her students for their successful academic journeys could also be applied to everybody’s lives.

“An important first step in developing emotional and relational intelligence is awareness,” she says. “Can you name what you are feeling in the moment? What might this emotion signal to you? If you are feeling angry, reflect on what may be happening for you on a deeper level.”

“For example, if someone cuts you off in traffic, you may feel angry and frustrated. This may connect to deeper values related to fairness, or past experiences of being ignored or dismissed. In relationships, consider what makes you engage versus retreat. What relationship conditions make you more likely to communicate openly and honestly? Thriving relationships tend to involve emotional safety, active listening and presence, ability to resolve conflict, reliability, empathy and validation.”

There are many approaches to therapy. One modality, used in college counseling centers, is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), developed by Dr. Marsha Linehan. We can learn about ways to manage stress through:

- **Mindfulness.** “According to DBT, mindfulness is intentionally living in awareness of the present moment and not judging or rejecting the present moment. To increase your ability to be in the moment, consider grounding yourself using the five senses. What can you see, feel, hear, smell and taste?”

- **Emotion regulation.** “Emotion regulation is understanding, managing and reducing the intensity of overwhelming emotions to improve resilience. Be aware of emotion myths such as: emotions are bad/weak and should be avoided; there is a ‘right’ way to feel in a given situation; and being emotional means being out of control. To manage emotions, which can lead to increased stress, check the facts. Emotions are set off by our thoughts and interpretations of events instead of the events themselves.

How to check the facts:

1. What is the emotion I want to change?
2. What is the event prompting my emotion?
3. What are my interpretations, thoughts and assumptions about the event?
4. Am I assuming a threat?
5. What’s the catastrophe?
6. Does my emotion and/or its intensity fit the actual facts?

- **Distress tolerance.** “At times, we may need to rapidly shift our emotions from a heightened or crisis state to function in a present moment. TIPP skills from DBT may help: temperature change, intense exercise, paced breathing and progressive muscle relaxation. To engage in temperature change, use cold water or ice packs on your face/eyes for 20-30 seconds to trigger the dive reflex, which instantly lowers heart rate and brings calm. An example of intense exercise is to do jumping jacks to dissipate adrenaline and stress. Paced breathing activates our parasympathetic nervous system. Consider the 4-7-8 method or box breathing methods.

- **4-7-8:** inhaling through the nose for four seconds, holding the breath for seven seconds and exhaling fully through the mouth for eight seconds, repeated four times to reduce stress, anxiety and aid sleep.

- **Box breathing:** inhaling, holding the breath, exhaling and holding again, typically for four seconds each, creating a 16-second cycle.

- **Self-compassion.** Self-compassion is the act of being kind to oneself. It is a muscle we must exercise. Self-talk tends to be critical and may connect to messages that were communicated about us or our performance from our parents, teachers, coaches, bosses, etc. Self-compassion involves three components, self-kindness, acknowledging common humanity and mindfulness. Put self-compassion into action by using kind and comforting words toward oneself when struggling, recognize that failure is a part of being human, balance perspective instead of over-identifying problems and proactively comfort and soothe yourself.” She recommends checking out more information about self-compassion, including resources for practice, on Dr. Kristin Neff’s website (self-compassion.org).

FGCU

Marieb College of
Health & Human Services

10501 FGCU Boulevard South, Fort Myers, FL 33965
(239) 590-1000 | fgcu.edu



LOW VISION OF
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA



DON'T ACCEPT "NOTHING MORE CAN BE DONE"

If you're struggling with
vision loss, there **IS** hope.

Millions of Americans are living with reduced vision that glasses, surgery, or standard treatments can't fix. They've been told by their eye care providers that nothing more can be done—and they've stopped doing the activities they love.

But that's not the end of your story.

Low Vision Care: Where Hope Continues

Low Vision Care is the continuum of care that begins where traditional ophthalmology and optometry leave off.. Dr Dennis Denick at Low Vision of Southwest Florida utilizes the vision your ophthalmologist had helped preserve and helps you make the most of it—enhancing remaining sight to restore function, confidence, and independence.

Our patients often say:

"Why didn't anyone tell me about this sooner?"

We Can Help You:

- Maximize your remaining vision with specialized custom glasses and devices
- Regain independence in daily activities
- Restore confidence and quality of life
- Access rehabilitation therapies designed specifically for low vision

You don't have to give up the life you love.

CALL TODAY! 941-799-8044

Low Vision of Southwest Florida
(Located inside The Eye Associates, formerly Eye Centers of Florida)
4101 Evans Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33901
www.lowvisionofswfl.com



Specialized care for macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and other vision-limiting conditions.

NPRC



Neuropsychiatric Research Center



Memories Matter

Unlock a brighter future with
a **FREE** Memory Screen!

Visit nprc-swfl.com, scan the QR
Code, or call us at 239.939.7777





The Relationship Between Hormones and Mental Health

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

Mental health is crucial for a good quality of life, and declining mental health can cause individuals to withdraw from the activities they once enjoyed. In other cases, someone may feel too tired or anxious to care for themselves and nurture their needs, impacting their emotional well-being.

Many factors can affect mental health, but hormones remain a driving force. Despite this, hormone dysregulation is often overlooked when it comes to identifying and treating mental health conditions. This is because many traditional doctors only consider the physical implications of hormone dysfunction and not the emotional toll that can occur.

The relationship between hormone levels and mental health is complex, which is why we have broken it down into the many different components, such as the different hormones influencing mental health and the direct and indirect ways they can do this.

HORMONES AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH

Listed below are some of the different hormones that can affect mental health and their roles in the body.

Cortisol

Also known as the stress hormone, cortisol is produced by the adrenal glands and causes someone to feel stressed due to its role in the body's fight-or-flight response.

Actions controlled by cortisol include:

- sugar levels in the bloodstream
- metabolism regulation
- blood pressure regulation
- the body's sleep-wake cycle

Estrogen

While estrogen is most commonly known as a female sex hormone, responsible for producing female secondary sex characteristics and regulating a woman's menstrual cycle, it can also impact mental health by increasing anxiousness and irritability when it declines.

The role of estrogen in mental health lies in its role in regulating neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin, norepinephrine, and epinephrine, which all play a role in mood regulation. In particular, estrogen



increases the production of serotonin, which is the "feel good" chemical, while also increasing the activity of serotonin receptors in the brain.

Estrogen also plays a role in regulating endorphins, another type of hormone that brings a rush of happiness when released.

Progesterone

Yet another female sex hormone is progesterone, which is predominantly found at higher levels during the second part of a woman's menstrual cycle following ovulation. However, this rise in progesterone may also lead to increases in depressive thoughts or an overall lowered mood.

The general role of progesterone is to prepare the endometrium for a potential pregnancy after ovulation. It does this by thickening the lining of the uterus and preventing muscle contractions in the uterus that can cause the body to reject the egg.

If the body conceives, progesterone levels remain high, stimulating the blood vessels in the endometrium to feed the growing fetus and prepare the breasts for milk production.

DHEA

Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) is a precursor to other hormones in the body, including testosterone and estrogen. It is a hormone produced in the adrenal gland, and its levels typically peak in early adulthood and then gradually decline with age.

T3 and T4

Two hormones released by the thyroid, T3 and T4, affect metabolic rate, impacting our emotions and energy levels.

Melatonin

Produced in time with your circadian rhythm and light/dark cycles, melatonin increases sleepiness, helping your body prepare for bed.

How Hormones Affect Mental Health

Responsible for regulating actions within the body, hormones also significantly affect mood and mental health. When too much or too little of these hormones are produced, mental health symptoms can worsen.

HORMONES CAN AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

Increases Mood Disorders

Specific hormone-related conditions have a higher rate of anxiety and depression. For example, those with PCOS are 3 times more likely to be affected by anxiety or depression. Additionally, a study on endometriosis patients found that 87.5% of the patients presented with anxiety symptoms and 86.5% with depressive symptoms.

Hormone imbalances unrelated to specific conditions can also increase the risk of mood disorders. For example, those with significantly high levels of cortisol can often develop anxiety disorders.

Additionally, while high estrogen levels are typically associated with a better mood, if estrogen levels are overly high while progesterone levels are low, a condition called estrogen dominance can occur, with symptoms of depression and irritability. In some cases, estrogen dominance may also cause anxiety.

Mental health problems can also occur when progesterone is too high, as this is associated with increased amygdala sensitivity. The amygdala is a part of the brain responsible for the body's fight or flight response, so amygdala sensitivity can lead to a greater likelihood of anxiety, depression, or just feeling off.

Depression has also been reported in those with low levels of DHEA. A study even found that treating older patients with depression through DHEA supplements helped address their depressive symptoms.

Impacts Sleep

Many hormones, such as estrogen, melatonin, and cortisol, can make it hard to fall or stay asleep, depending on their levels. When the body does not get enough sleep, your mental health can suffer; this has been proven by research showing that brain activity during sleep significantly affects someone's emotional and mental health.

In particular, REM sleep aids the brain in processing emotional information, and a lack of sleep can impact how much positive emotional content is consolidated. This has been shown to increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

Sleep and mental health share a connection in both directions, meaning lack of sleep can increase the risk of mental health disorders, but sleep may also suffer from existing mental health problems, further worsening symptoms.

Based on this evidence, it is clear that hormonal imbalances affecting the body's ability to fall or stay asleep can then have detrimental effects on mental health.

Causes Mood Swings

One complication of too little estrogen is mood swings, which is why they are a common symptom of women going through menopause. With this stage of life, the amount of estrogen a woman's body produces significantly declines, sometimes resulting in mood swings. This symptom is especially common at the beginning of menopause, when estrogen levels fluctuate.

Lowers Self Esteem

Besides the direct effect of hormones on our mental health, they can also indirectly influence mental health through the way that they change the body. For example, hormonal imbalances can cause physical transformations such as hair thinning, weight gain, acne, and unwanted hair growth. These factors can contribute to your body image and may diminish your self-esteem.

Many doctors overlook how much the physical changes from hormonal imbalance can influence your self-esteem and emotional well-being, which is why seeing a doctor who specializes in hormones, and understands how drastically they affect the body, is essential.

Increases Stress

Besides cortisol, other hormonal imbalances can cause stress to the body in other, less direct ways.

When there is a hormonal imbalance, the body senses it through the insular cortex, a part of the brain that can sense the body's internal state. When hormone levels are incorrect, the insular cortex perceives it, resulting in physiological stress.

Essentially, when your hormones are out of balance, your body "feels off," which can influence your mental well-being.

Affects Fertility

Specific hormones such as estrogen, DHEA, and progesterone can also affect fertility when they are imbalanced. For couples looking to start or grow their family, an inability to do so can significantly affect their emotional well-being.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

There are many actions you can take to help improve your mental health, such as:

Exercise Regularly

Exercising regularly can be good for more than just your physical health; it can also improve your mental health by helping to regulate hormones.

Cortisol, in particular, can become high and build up in the body without regular exercise. By exercising, your body is able to use up some of the cortisol, leaving less behind.

Endorphins such as dopamine also increase when exercising, further improving your mood.

Improve Sleep Hygiene

While hormones can affect your sleep, you can also take action to improve your sleep hygiene and increase your chances of falling and staying asleep.

Some ways to improve sleep hygiene include:

- doing calming activities before bed
- limiting screen time in the hour before bed
- going to sleep and waking up around the same time
- sleeping in a cool, dark, and quiet room

Improving your sleep hygiene helps to regulate your circadian rhythm, which then influences hormone levels.

Correct Imbalanced Hormones

While the above actions can help bolster your mental health, if your mental health decline is due to hormone dysfunction, the most crucial step will be to correct these imbalances.

Hormonal supplements can significantly improve your mental health. For example, a study on depression and thyroid function found that supplementing T3 significantly reduced depressive symptoms in the participants, even relieving some participants of depression entirely.

Many hormones are available in a supplement form and can be found in a pill, tablet, or cream, depending on the hormone being supplemented. Meeting with a physician specializing in hormones is an important step in identifying hormonal imbalances and receiving the correct treatment to correct them.

Receive Help for Your Mental Health Struggle

Mental health issues are not uncommon, and it is estimated that 1 in 4 adults struggle with a mental health condition at some point in their life. When it comes to correcting mental health conditions, it is often most helpful to correct the underlying cause, which is often hormonal.

If you are struggling with symptoms of anxiety, depression, or insomnia or are experiencing irritability, difficulty concentrating, or problems with weight or appetite, you may be experiencing a hormonal imbalance.

Hormonal imbalances can dramatically affect many parts of your health and well-being. However, that also means that identifying and remedying the imbalance can return peace to your life.

References

Brutocao, C., Zaiem, F., Alsawas, M., Morrow, A. S., Murad, M. H., & Javed, A. (2018). Psychiatric disorders in women with polycystic ovary syndrome: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Endocrine*, 62(2), 318–325. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12020-018-1692-3>

Sepulcri, R., & de Amaral, V. F. (2009). Depressive symptoms, anxiety, and quality of life in women with pelvic endometriosis. *European journal of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive biology*, 142(1), 53–56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejogrb.2008.09.003>

Jozuka, H., Jozuka, E., Takeuchi, S., & Nishikaze, O. (2003). Comparison of immunological and endocrinological markers associated with major depression. *The Journal of international medical research*, 31(1), 36–41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/147323000303100106>

Walker, M. P., & van der Helm, E. (2009). Overnight therapy? The role of sleep in emotional brain processing. *Psychological bulletin*, 135(5), 731–748. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016570>

Berner, R., Kim, I., Iwata, N., & Perlis, M. (2015). Sleep Disturbances as an Evidence-Based Suicide Risk Factor. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 17(3). doi: 10.1007/s11920-015-0554-4

Abraham, G., Milev, R., & Stuart Lawson, J. (2006). T3 augmentation of SSRI resistant depression. *Journal Of Affective Disorders*, 91(2-3), 211-215. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2006.01.013

Mental Health Disorder Statistics. (2019). <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/mental-health-disorder-statistics>



9250 Corkscrew Rd. STE 15, Estero, FL 33982

239-351-5663

info@sextys.com | drmelirvine.com



Stress Management

By Neetu Malhotra, MD

Have you ever felt overwhelmed? Are you feeling stressed out? The holidays can sometimes be quite stressful, whether it be making the house ready, making sure you have gotten all the presents for your loved ones/friends, but you might want to take some time for yourself too. In fact, the holidays are known to bring out all sorts of ailments and health problems, more than any time of year. The stress of the holidays is real and not something to be ignored and brushed under the rug. Stress Management is truly something we all have to deal with at one point or another. Not all stress is bad, but when you start to feel overwhelmed and feel a loss of control, that's when stress can wreak havoc in your life.

The first part in managing your stress is to identify the stressor, for example-whether it be certain negative people, going through a divorce, being told of a new diagnosis or fear of losing your job. Whatever that stressor is, it's important to identify it, talk it over with a close friend/relative or perhaps write it in a stress journal. It is crucial to not keep the feelings/emotions bottled up because that in itself is truly, I believe the heart of many health problems. Stress has been linked to heart disease, depression/mental illnesses, inflammatory conditions (ie arthritis, autoimmune illnesses, etc) and even some forms of cancer.

The second part of stress management is coming up with a plan or solution to dealing with the problem that is creating the stress/turmoil in your life. This is where taking a step back for a moment can often help. Sometimes, taking a deep breath and talking out loud is all that may be needed. I also believe it is extremely important to have outlets or hobbies in your life. Some people find getting up early and meditating is a way to relax and recharge your mind. Others may find playing an instrument, listening to a Ted talk, gardening or reading a book keeps them relaxed and content. The point is, you have to find some activity that makes you happy and feel relaxed. This in itself, helps you think of the solution as a third party and coming up with a new perspective on the problem/situation creating the stress in your life.



I think it is important to have general lifestyle principles and routines embedded in your life such as the 5 steps below:

1. It is important to stay positive and surround yourself with people that will bring positivity in your life as well.
2. Exercising regularly and maintaining a healthy diet also helps with keeping the stress levels manageable.
3. Staying well hydrated and avoiding excessive consumption of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages also help you manage your stress.
4. Learn also how to say "no" to unnecessary requests. You need to know your limits and stick to them. It is important to know the difference between the "shoulds" and the "musts" and when needed to say "no" to taking on too much, whether

it be in your personal or professional life. Taking on too much is indeed a recipe for disaster and the root of stress for most people.

5. Lastly, getting enough sleep is also vital to stress management. Most of us are not getting the recommended 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night.

In the end, it is always important to ask oneself, "Is this going to make a difference in the grand scheme of things?" "Is it really worth getting upset over?"

ASSOCIATES IN NEPHROLOGY

239-939-0999

www.associatesnephrology.com

FORT MYERS 14560 Hope Center Loop Fort Myers, FL 33912	BONITA SPRINGS 9550 Bonita Beach Rd, 108 Bonita Springs, FL 34134
CAPE CORAL 1320 SE 8th St Cape Coral, FL 33990	LEHIGH ACRES 3400 Lee Blvd, #112 Lehigh Acres, FL 33971

PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD

FAMILY FOOT & LEG CENTER



Dr. Joe Altepeter

COMMON CONDITIONS

FOOT & ANKLE PAIN	WOUND CARE
INGROWN TOENAILS	SPORTS INJURY
MORTONS NEUROMA	BUNIONECTOMY
PLANTAR FASCIITIS	HEEL PAIN

SAME DAY APPOINTMENTS

Serving Southwest Florida Since 2005!

Naples. Marco Island. Estero. Cape Coral. Fort Myers. Port Charlotte. Sarasota.

CALL TODAY!

239-430-3668 (FOOT)
NAPLESPODIATRIST.COM

Joe Altepeter, DPM, AACFAS

1645 Colonial Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33907



WE KEEP YOU WALKING



ACHIEVE VIBRANT HEALTH AND LONGEVITY

Protect your body and your brain with cutting edge integrative therapies.



ROOT CAUSES
Holistic Health & Medicine

239-425-2900

www.rtcausesmd.com

Natural Hormone Replacement

- Infusions of vitamins, minerals and fluids
- Advanced Anti-aging Solutions
- Bio Identical Hormone Therapy for Men & Women
- Thyroid & Adrenal Hormone Evaluation
- Functional Medicine Evaluations
- Genetic Testing for Nutrition and Drug Metabolism

CALL FOR SPECIAL PACKAGE PRICING TODAY!

12734 Kenwood Ln #56, Fort Myers, FL 33907

Ear, Nose & Throat

Price Sonkarley, MD

Head & Neck Surgical Specialist

Specializing in Ear, Nose and Throat Disease, Allergy, Hearing Care and Hearing Aids



Dr. Price Sonkarley



Kathleen Rocuant,
Au.D FAAA



Rachel Gregoroff,
ARNP

Do you suffer with a chronic cough? Throat irritation?

Hearing loss? Nasal congestion? Ear fullness?

Allergy sufferers, ask us about our alternative solution to allergy shots.

- HEARING LOSS • EAR CARE • NASAL HEALTH
- THROAT PROBLEMS • HEAD & NECK MASSES • PEDIATRIC ENT

Don't trust something as important as your hearing to just anyone.

Serving all of Southwest Florida

We are always accepting new patients. Call us and make an appointment today!

9240 Bonita Beach Rd. SE #1106, Bonita Springs, FL 34135 • 239-495-6200
Sunshine Professional Center (across from Spanish Wells) Mon-Thurs 8am until 6pm • drmarkmontgomery.com

LADIES, DON'T LEAVE YOUR PELVIS IN JUST ANYONE'S HANDS

By Joseph Gauta, MD, FACOG

Your pelvic health is one of the most intimate and vital aspects of your overall well-being — yet it's one of the most overlooked. Millions of women silently endure symptoms that disrupt their daily lives, from unexpected leaks to persistent pelvic pain, assuming these issues are simply a normal part of aging, childbirth, or hormonal changes. The truth is, these conditions are not something you simply have to live with. And more importantly, the specialist you choose to treat them matters enormously.

Know When to See a Urogynecologist

Not every physician is trained to manage the complex landscape of female pelvic health. If you are experiencing any of the following conditions, it is time to seek the care of a **Urogynecologist** — a specialist with advanced training in both gynecology and urology, specifically focused on disorders of the female pelvic floor:

- **Pelvic organ prolapse** — when pelvic organs such as the bladder, uterus, or rectum drop from their normal position
- **Urinary incontinence** — involuntary leakage of urine during activity, sneezing, or urgency
- **Fecal incontinence** — difficulty controlling bowel movements
- **Frequent urinary tract infections (UTIs)** — recurring infections that suggest an underlying structural or functional issue
- **Chronic pelvic pain** — persistent discomfort that affects quality of life and daily function
- **Complex female pelvic disorders** — conditions that require specialized diagnostic tools and expertise to properly evaluate and treat

These are not problems to brush aside or manage alone. A Urogynecologist brings a level of precision and subspecialty expertise that general practitioners or even OB-GYNs may not be equipped to offer for these specific conditions.

The Florida Bladder Institute: Advanced Care for Women

At the Florida Bladder Institute, women with pelvic floor disorders have access to some of the most advanced diagnostic and treatment tools available in modern medicine. Whether your condition can be



managed conservatively or requires surgical intervention, the Institute offers a full spectrum of care tailored to your individual needs.

From non-surgical options such as pelvic floor physical therapy, behavioral modifications, pessary fittings, and minimally invasive procedures, to advanced surgical techniques, the Florida Bladder Institute is equipped to guide you through every step of your treatment journey. The goal is always to restore your comfort, confidence, and quality of life using the most effective and least invasive approach possible.

Surgery Doesn't Have to Mean a Hospital Stay

Many women assume that if surgery is necessary, a hospital admission is unavoidable. That assumption could not be further from the truth — and clinging to it may actually put your health at greater risk.

Hospital-acquired infections (HAIs) are a serious and well-documented concern. Each year, patients undergoing in-hospital procedures face exposure to resistant bacteria and pathogens that simply do not exist at the same levels in outpatient surgical centers. For women already managing pelvic health challenges, an avoidable infection can significantly complicate recovery.

Dr. Gauta at the Florida Bladder Institute performs all of his surgeries on an outpatient basis, meaning you can receive expert surgical care and return home the same day — without an overnight hospital stay. His team also utilizes a dedicated home health care team to support your recovery in the comfort and safety of your own environment, where the risk of infection is dramatically lower.

A Smarter Choice for Your Wallet, Too

Beyond safety, choosing a surgery center over a hospital setting can result in substantial cost savings for patients. Hospital overhead, facility fees, and administrative costs consistently drive up the price

of procedures performed in traditional hospital settings. Outpatient surgery centers operate with greater efficiency, and those savings are passed directly to you.

For women who are navigating both a health challenge and financial concerns, this distinction matters. High-quality, specialized pelvic care should not come with an overwhelming price tag.

Take Control of Your Pelvic Health

Your pelvic floor supports your bladder, bowel, and reproductive organs. It plays a role in nearly every movement you make and every function your body performs. When something goes wrong in this region, it affects everything — your confidence, your comfort, your relationships, and your freedom.

You deserve a specialist who understands that. Don't settle for generalized care when subspecialty expertise is available. Don't accept unnecessary hospital risk when safe, effective outpatient options exist. And don't let cost be a barrier when smarter, more affordable paths to healing are within reach.

The Florida Bladder Institute is here to help you reclaim your life — because your pelvis deserves to be in expert hands.

To learn more about your pelvic health please go to our website at www.FloridaBladderInstitute.com.
Call 239-449-7979



Joseph Gauta, MD



Gabrielle Wright PA-C

It's time to start living your life to the fullest. Regain control of your life.


**FLORIDA BLADDER
INSTITUTE**
Excellence in Women's Pelvic Health
239-449-7979

www.FloridaBladderInstitute.com

NAPLES:
1890 SW HEALTH PKWY., SUITE 205

info@floridabladderinstitute.com

The Good Feet Store®

America's Arch Support Experts®

Book your FREE personalized arch support fitting today



(239)541-6368

12640 S. Cleveland Ave. Suite 202
Fort Myers, FL 33907

PERSONALIZED CARE FOR LIFELONG SMILES



WHAT WE OFFER:

- Modern Office with Digital Impressions and Digital X-rays.
- Highest Level of Infection Control.
- Caring Doctor and Dental Team.
- Same Day Emergencies!
- Porcelain Crowns and Bridges.
- Esthetic Composite Fillings / Botox
- Oral Surgery: Extraction, Bone Grafts, Infections
- Professional in House Dental Whitening.
- Clear Correct Custom Retainers (skip the braces)
- Custom Digital Removable Dentures and Partials.
- Custom Mouth Guards and Sleep Apnea Appliances.
- Botox



239-992-0325

www.premierdentalstudio.com

**ZOOM IN HOUSE
WHITENING
\$250.00 OFF**

Feel comfortable at the dental office again. Solo practitioner with 30 years of experience with private practice in Bonita/Estero for the last 20 years, friendly and caring staff, personalized dental experience. Where you are treated like we would want to be treated...

PREMIER DENTAL & IMPLANT STUDIO
20321 Grande Oak Shoppes Blvd, Suite 316
Estero, Florida 33928



TOP-TIER ORTHOPEDIC CARE, SPECIALIZING IN:

- CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME
- TRIGGER FINGER
- ARTHRITIS OF THE THUMB
- TENNIS ELBOW
- GOLFER'S ELBOW
- ROTATOR CUFF
- FRACTURES
- HAND ARTHRITIS
- TENDINITIS
- MANY OTHER CONDITIONS OF THE HANDS, WRISTS, & UPPER EXTREMITIES



SAGINI MD
HAND, WRIST & ELBOW SURGERY

DENNIS O. SAGINI, M.D.

Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon
Hand, Wrist and Elbow Specialist

239-302-3216

SAGINIMD.COM

13691 Metro Pkwy, Suite 400
Fort Myers, FL 33912

A MEMBER OF



ASSOCIATES IN NEPHROLOGY

PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE KIDNEY CARE AND TRANSPLANT SERVICES IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA FOR OVER 40 YEARS



Neetu Malhotra, MD

Our multidisciplinary team provides treatment for kidney disease with follow up care, as well as kidney transplant services. We work collaboratively with a patient's primary care physician and specialists to slow the progression of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and prevent or manage complications.

**Now Accepting
New Patients
(ages 18 and older)**

239.939.0999
associatesnephrology.com
Most major insurances accepted.

CAPE CORAL
1320 SE 8th St
Cape Coral, FL 33990

FORT MYERS
14560 Hope Center Loop
Fort Myers, FL 33912

LEHIGH ACRES
3400 Lee Blvd, #112
Lehigh Acres, FL 33971

BONITA SPRINGS
9550 Bonita Beach Rd, 108
Bonita Springs, FL 34134

Providing comprehensive kidney care & transplant services since 1984.

PRESERVÉ BREAST AUGMENTATION: The Future of Natural Enhancement Is Here

When it comes to breast augmentation, most women want the same thing: beautiful, natural-looking results that feel like their own, achieved without unnecessary trauma to their body. For decades, traditional breast augmentation has delivered dramatic outcomes, but often at the cost of significant tissue disruption, longer recovery times, and visible scarring. That is changing. At Naples Aesthetic Institute, Dr. Kiran Gill is proud to offer Preservé breast augmentation, a revolutionary minimally invasive technique that is redefining what is possible in aesthetic breast surgery.

What Is Preservé Breast Augmentation?

Preservé is a minimally invasive approach to breast augmentation designed to limit tissue disruption while maximizing natural-looking results. Unlike conventional techniques that require more extensive incisions and internal dissection, Preservé uses a carefully refined method to create a precise implant pocket with significantly less trauma to surrounding tissue. The result is a procedure that honors the anatomy of the breast rather than working against it.

The technique prioritizes preserving the natural structures of the breast, including glandular tissue, nerves, and blood supply, which contributes to better healing, more natural movement, and a lower risk of certain complications. For women who want to enhance their figure while maintaining the integrity of their breast tissue, Preservé offers a compelling solution.

Dr. Kiran Gill:

An Exclusive Opportunity to Offer Preservé

Preservé was created and developed by Manuel Chacón, M.D., a world renowned plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgeon who pioneered this advanced, minimally invasive breast surgery approach with a focus on preserving natural tissue and enhancing long-term breast health.

To offer Preservé, surgeons must complete specialized training through Motiva, the company behind the technique. Dr. Kiran Gill is one of only approximately 100 plastic surgeons in the entire country to perform Preservé breast augmentation. While all physicians undergo Motiva's rigorous training, Dr. Gill had the distinct privilege of training directly under Dr. Chacón himself, placing her among a very select group with firsthand experience from the pioneer of the technique. It is not a procedure available at every practice, and Dr. Gill was among a very select group to receive this opportunity.



Her ability to offer Preservé to her patients throughout Naples, Fort Myers and the broader Southwest Florida region, reflects her ongoing pursuit of the very best options available in plastic surgery, not just what is common, but what is truly exceptional.

The Benefits of Preservé

Patients who choose Preservé breast augmentation at Naples Aesthetic Institute can expect a range of meaningful advantages over traditional approaches. Perhaps most striking is the recovery time. Preservé patients typically recover in roughly half the time of a traditional breast augmentation. For active women and young moms who simply cannot afford weeks of downtime, this is a significant advantage. Less time recovering means a faster return to the gym, to chasing after kids, to the lifestyle you have worked hard to maintain.

Because the technique minimizes trauma to the breast tissue, most patients experience reduced swelling and less discomfort in the days following surgery. Whether you are a fitness enthusiast, a busy professional, or a mother juggling a full schedule, the Preservé approach is designed to fit into your life, not put it on hold.

The results also tend to look and feel more natural immediately following surgery. By working carefully within the natural architecture of the breast, Dr. Gill is able to position implants in a way that moves and settles beautifully with the body. Patients frequently report that their results feel like a natural extension of themselves rather than an obvious surgical enhancement.

Preserving breast tissue also has long-term implications. Women who wish to breastfeed in the future, those concerned about sensation changes, or patients who want to minimize their risk of capsular contracture may find that Preservé aligns well with their personal health priorities. Every detail of the technique is designed with the patient's long-term wellbeing in mind.

Who Is a Good Candidate?

Preservé breast augmentation is an excellent option for women who are in good overall health, have realistic expectations, and are seeking enhancement that looks and feels natural. It is particularly well-suited for active women and young moms who need a shorter, more manageable recovery. With downtime roughly half that of traditional breast augmentation, life does not have to be put on hold for long. It is also ideal for patients who prioritize a minimally invasive approach or have concerns about tissue disruption associated with traditional methods. During a personalized consultation at Naples Aesthetic Institute, Dr. Gill will evaluate your anatomy, discuss your goals, and help determine whether Preservé is the right fit for you.

Experience the Difference at Naples Aesthetic Institute

Naples Aesthetic Institute has built a reputation for delivering exceptional results in a comfortable, patient-centered environment. Serving Naples, Fort Myers, and all of Southwest Florida, our practice combines advanced surgical expertise with a genuine commitment to each patient's unique vision. With Dr. Gill's rare access to the Preservé technique, patients in our region have an opportunity that few have access to anywhere in the country.

If you are considering breast augmentation and want to explore a smarter, gentler approach to enhancement, we invite you to schedule a consultation with Dr. Kiran Gill. Discover how Preservé can help you achieve the natural, beautiful results you have always envisioned, with the care and precision your body deserves.



DR. KIRAN GILL

Naples Aesthetic Institute

Boutique Plastic Surgery & Med Spa

3025 Airport Pulling Road North, Naples, FL 34105
239-596-8000

NaplesAestheticInstitute.com

Get Answers to Your Neurological Issue from Specialized Neurosurgeons



Gregory Cannarsa, MD Amanda Sacino, MD, PhD



Fellowship-Trained Neurosurgeons from Johns Hopkins Hospital, University of Maryland/Shock Trauma Center now in Naples, Florida

- Offering appointments on an expedited basis, accepting most major health insurances
- Treating patients at both Physician's Regional Medical Center and NCH System
- Comprehensive appointments with relevant imaging viewed together with patient and explained in detail



Apex Brain & Spine
Neurosurgical Specialists

239-422-APEX (2739)

3530 Kraft Road • Suite 203 • Naples, FL 34105

www.apexbrainandspine.com



24/7 Availability



Neurosurgical Specialists



Caring for the Patient as if they were family

SW Florida's Premier Board Certified Urogynecology Practice

UROGYNECOLOGY AND RECONSTRUCTIVE PELVIC SURGERY



Specializing in the treatment of:

- Urinary & Fecal Incontinence
- Overactive Bladder
- Complex Pelvic Disorders
- Cosmetic Gynecology
- Pelvic Organ Prolapse
- Recurrent Urinary Tract Infections
- Heavy Bleeding
- Emsella



Joseph Gauta, MD



Gabrielle Wright PA-C

(239) 449-7979

www.FloridaBladderInstitute.com

1890 SW HEALTH PKWY., SUITE 205
NAPLES, FL

BEAUTY, WELLNESS & SEXUAL HEALTH



DR. MEL IRVINE

Dr. Mel Irvine, DNP and Clinical Sexologist specializes in sexual medicine and beauty in Naples, Estero and Fort Myers Florida Areas.

FOR HIM

Self-discovery and improvement for him covering a wide range of topics tailored to men's sexual health and enhancement.

FOR HER

Self-discovery and improvement for her covering a wide range of topics tailored to women's sexual health and enlightenment.

239-351-5663

info@sextys.com | drmelirvine.com
www.youtube.com/watch?v=vR5BgNItKmc

9250 Corkscrew Rd. STE 15, Estero, FL 33928



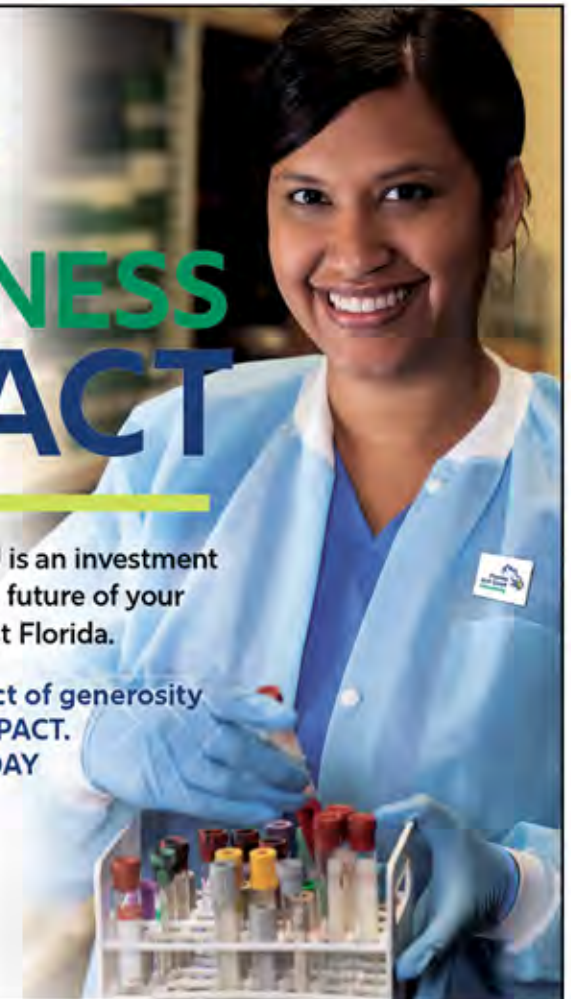
WELLNESS IMPACT

An investment in FGCU is an investment in our students and the future of your healthcare in Southwest Florida.



Your single act of generosity makes an **IMPACT**.
DONATE TODAY

fgcu.edu/marieb-donate





CARING FOR A LOVED ONE WITH DEMENTIA: Practical Tips for Managing Anxiety

By Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

Caring for a loved one with dementia can be a challenging and emotional journey. As a caregiver, you play a crucial role in providing support and comfort to your loved one as they navigate the complexities of this progressive neurological condition. One common challenge faced by individuals with dementia is anxiety, which can manifest in various ways and significantly impact their well-being and yours. In this article, we will explore practical tips for managing your loved one's inevitable anxiety, understand why they experience it, and examine how your own anxiety as a caregiver can affect them.

Anxiety is a common symptom experienced by individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's and can be triggered by a variety of factors, including:

• Cognitive Decline

As dementia progresses, individuals may experience memory loss, confusion, and difficulty understanding their surroundings. These cognitive changes can lead to feelings of uncertainty and fear, contributing to anxiety.

• Environmental Changes

Any changes in the environment, such as moving to a new place, changes in routine, or unfamiliar faces, can trigger anxiety in individuals with dementia. They may struggle to adapt to new situations and feel overwhelmed by the unfamiliarity.

• Loss of Independence

Dementia can gradually strip away a person's independence, leading to feelings of frustration, helplessness, and anxiety. Tasks that were once routine and effortless may become challenging, causing distress and anxiety.

• Communication Difficulties

Individuals with dementia may have difficulty expressing their needs and understanding verbal cues. Certainly, most experience slower processing abilities and may also have lowered hearing ability. This can lead to feeling isolated and misunderstood, further exacerbating their anxiety.

As a caregiver there are strategies you can employ to help manage your loved one's anxiety and promote their well-being:

• Establish a Calm and Familiar Environment

Create a soothing and familiar environment for your loved one by minimizing noise, clutter, and other potential stressors. Maintain a consistent daily routine to provide stability and predictability, which can help reduce anxiety.

• Practice Effective Communication

First, slow your communication down. Provide time for your loved one to follow the conversation and process what you have shared or asked. Use clear, simple language and nonverbal cues to communicate. It can be helpful to comment on their emotions which can help them identify how they are feeling. For example, "Mom, it seems like you might feel nervous...." If your loved one's language skills remain intact, your ability to voice and hold space for their emotions can help them connect with their own emotions. Validate their feelings. Reassure them they are not alone.

• Engage in Meaningful Activities

Encourage your loved one to participate in activities that they enjoy and find meaningful. Engaging in hobbies, music therapy, art therapy, or gentle exercise can help distract them from their worries and reduce anxiety. Loneliness and anxiety breed loneliness and anxiety. As the disease progresses, they will need more help initiating activity.

How Caregiver Anxiety Affects Your Loved One:

It is essential to recognize that as a caregiver, your own anxiety and stress can impact your loved one's stress.

• Emotional Contagion

Individuals with dementia are highly attuned to the emotions of those around them and may notice your anxiety and stress. If you are feeling anxious, your loved one may mirror those emotions, leading to increased agitation and distress for you both. They may not be able to articulate it but if your loved one feels extra stressed or anxious, check in with yourself regularly. Is your loved one picking up on your emotions?

• Reduced Quality of Care

Caregiver anxiety can impair your ability to provide effective care. When you are feeling overwhelmed or anxious, you may be less patient, attentive, and compassionate, which can negatively impact your



loved one's well-being. Chronic caregiver stress and anxiety can strain your relationship with your loved one, leading to increased tension and conflict. This can further exacerbate their anxiety and make it challenging to maintain a supportive and nurturing environment.

Managing Caregiver Anxiety

Taking care of your own mental and emotional well-being is essential for effectively caregiving. Reach out to friends, family members, or support groups for emotional support and encouragement. Talking to others who understand what you are going through can provide validation and comfort. It may be difficult, but maintain connection to your life outside of caregiving and dementia. Accept that you cannot control dementia nor provide perfect care. Set realistic expectations for yourself. Give yourself time to rest and recharge by taking regular breaks from caregiving duties. Enlist the help of other family members, friends, or respite care services to give yourself a much-needed break.

In conclusion, caring for a loved one with dementia requires patience, compassion, and understanding. By implementing practical strategies to manage anxiety and taking care of your own well-being, you can create a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes your loved one's overall quality of life. Remember that you are not alone, and there are resources available to help you navigate this challenging journey.



Senior Living and Care Solutions

239-330-2133 | www.scanyfl.com



Health Insurance

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

It is illegal for an insurance agent to call you regarding Medicare,

Do not talk to someone you have not given permission to call. Ask them for their **National Producer Number** and report them to Medicare for an unsolicited call.

CMS has made many changes for Medicare recipients. If you want to enroll or review your plan over the phone, you need to agree to be recorded, and Medicare requires us to keep the recording for 10 years. In person, appointments do not have that requirement, but you need to sign a scope of appointment that authorizes us to talk to you about Medicare Advantage or a Drug Plan. It does not allow us to do anything but talk to you about these topics.

One of the biggest changes for 2026 related to Medicare Part D Prescriptions whether withing a Part C Advantage plan or a stand-alone Part D drug Plan. Your yearly Part D out-of-pocket costs will be capped at \$2,100 in 2026. You must buy medications using your plan and the medication must be **in formulary** to go toward the cap. You will also have a payment option to pay out-pocket costs in monthly amounts over the plan year, instead of paying when you receive the medications. This is done through the insurance company that you purchased your plan.

When you turn 65 you are eligible for Medicare, once you have worked 40 quarters roughly 10 years there is no cost for Medicare Part "A". Part A covers Hospitals, Skilled Nursing, Home Health & Hospice. Medicare Part B you can choose to take at 65 or you can hold off if you are still working and have credible coverage. If you do not have group health insurance that is considered qualified, and then you want it you would have a late enrollment penalty for each month you did not have Part B & Part D and that penalty will last for the rest of your life. Part B covers doctors, imaging, blood work, ambulance, durable medical equipment, etc. Part D is a Medicare Drug Plan and covers medications. During your initial enrollment period it is especially important to understand your options! Medicare Supplements/Medigap Plans are NOT guaranteed issue you may need to medically qualify. You can purchase a Medigap Plan during your 1st 6 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?

Special Enrollment Periods – You moved out of your plans service area, New to Medicare, Retiring and coming off your employer group plan, Going into or out of Skilled Nursing, Medicaid and other's may apply.

We offer **Free Medicare in person consultations,** please e-mail info@logicalinsurance.com to schedule or call 239-362-0855. Medicare's website is www.Medicare.gov.

Travel Insurance – Did you know that most health insurance does NOT cover you outside of the country and that includes a cruise, in international waters (4 miles out). Travel insurance is not just about trip cancelation but most importantly what if you got sick or had an accident on your trip. Medical Trip insurance is very important and most of the time not very costly when you are out way the benefits.

Life Insurance – You are never too young to have life insurance, and many types offer living benefits. As an example, I purchase life insurance for my grandchildren almost as soon as they are born. Their policy continues to build cash value that they can use during their lives, for education, wedding or even a 1st home purchase. The younger you are the lower the cost. There are many types of life insurance, and it is important to understand the differences between them. You also have payment options, such as 10-Pay, this type of policy you can pay the premium in full in 10 years, there are other terms available as well.

Long Term Care Insurance – Overall, 48.7% of older adults with ADL difficulties (or an estimated 3 million persons aged 70 and older) reported needing some sort of personal assistance with one or more ADLs, and, of those individuals with need, 20.7% (or an estimated 629,000 persons) had an unmet need. Long Term Care Insurance helps pay for in-home or facility-based needs, such as assistance with acts of daily living or help with paying for a facility. Start shopping for this insurance in your 40's, but it's never too late to try. Your overall health will pay a major roll in the cost of the plan's premium. The sooner than later for affordability. You have payment options such as a single payment, 10-Pay where the premium is paid-in-full in 10 years. You also get a discount with most companies doing a joint policy with your spouse. Remember Medicare is NOT meant for Nursing Home Care/Skilled Nursing.

Logical Insurance Solutions is a SWFL Insurance Broker that works with most of the carriers, we are happy to help you through the maze. This is what we do daily, it is second nature to us. We offer virtual seminars, one on one Webex, phone and in-person appointments.

To learn more about your options call to schedule an appointment contact: Logical Insurance Solutions for all your insurance needs, I am licensed in 36 states.

**Logical
Insurance
Solutions USA**

239.362.0855

www.Logicalinsurance.com

info@Logicalinsurance.com

ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU LOVE SUFFERING FROM LONG COVID OR POTS?

Brain Rejuvenation Clinic of Naples

Long COVID and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) are increasingly understood as complex conditions involving Autonomic Nervous System dysfunction, chronic inflammation, mitochondrial impairment, and reduced oxygen delivery at the cellular level. These conditions reflect a body "stuck" in a low-energy, dysregulated state, where healing mechanisms are impaired rather than absent.

At Brain Rejuvenation Clinic of Naples, we offer effective and non-invasive modalities which help in treating the symptoms of Long Covid / POTS. These are some of the modalities we offer:

- PEMF Therapy
- Molecular Hydrogen Inhalation
- Ultra Sonic Vibration
- Photo biomodulation
- Hyperbaric Chamber
- Nano- supplement Protocol

PEMF- Pulsed Electromagnetic Field



Several therapies aim to support the body and restore balance. Pulsed Electromagnetic Field (PEMF) therapy may help improve blood flow, reduce inflammation, and support how cells communicate and produce energy. Hydrogen inhalation therapy works as a gentle but potent antioxidant, helping to reduce harmful oxidative stress without interfering with normal healing processes.

Ultrasonic Vibration Device



Sonic or Vibrational therapies, including sound wave stimulation, may help regulate the Autonomic Nervous System by activating the Parasympathetic response, which is often suppressed in POTS. Meanwhile, Photo-Biomodulation (red and near infrared light therapy) directly supports mitochondrial function by stimulating cytochrome c oxidase, leading to increased ATP (energy) production and improved tissue repair.

Hyperbaric Chamber



Among these approaches, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) shows the strongest clinical promise. By delivering oxygen under pressure, HBOT enhances oxygen availability in tissues, reduces inflammation, and improves neurological and cognitive symptoms.

Photo-Biomodulation



These therapies reflect a broader naturopathic strategy: restoring energy production, improving circulation, reducing inflammation, and rebalancing the nervous system to support the body's innate healing capacity. At Brain Rejuvenation Clinic of Naples, we create a protocol that is tailored to your specific needs. Reach out for more information!



Brain Rejuvenation Clinic of Naples

239-877-2900

BrainRejuvenationClinic.com

1729 Heritage Trail, # 901 Naples, FL 34112



Venous Insufficiency:

Understanding the Condition and Finding Relief

By Russell Becker, DO

If you frequently experience heavy, aching legs, swollen ankles, or unsightly varicose veins, you may be living with chronic venous insufficiency (CVI). This common yet often underdiagnosed vascular condition affects millions of Americans, reducing quality of life and, when left untreated, leading to serious complications. At Vascular Center of Naples, our dedicated team of vascular specialists provides comprehensive, compassionate care to help patients understand and manage venous insufficiency at every stage.

What Is Venous Insufficiency?

Venous insufficiency occurs when the valves inside the veins of the legs stop functioning properly. Normally, these one-way valves open to allow blood to flow upward toward the heart and then close to prevent it from falling back down. When the valves become weak or damaged, blood pools in the lower legs, a process known as reflux. This buildup of pressure strains the vein walls, causing them to stretch and bulge, and over time results in the symptoms that many patients recognize as varicose veins or leg discomfort.

Venous insufficiency is not merely a cosmetic concern. It is a progressive circulatory disorder that can worsen significantly without treatment. The condition ranges from mild spider veins to advanced stages involving chronic skin changes and venous ulcers that are difficult to heal.

Common Symptoms to Watch For

Because venous insufficiency develops gradually, symptoms can be easy to dismiss as normal signs of aging or fatigue. However, persistent or worsening symptoms should always be evaluated by a vascular specialist. The most common signs include aching, heaviness, or cramping in the legs, particularly after prolonged sitting or standing. Patients also often notice swelling around the ankles and feet that tends to worsen throughout the day. Varicose veins — twisted, rope-like veins visible just beneath the skin — are another hallmark sign. As the condition advances, some individuals develop skin discoloration or thickening around the lower legs and ankles, itching or irritation over affected veins, and in severe cases, open sores called venous ulcers that form near the ankles and are slow to heal.



Who Is at Risk?

Several factors increase the likelihood of developing venous insufficiency. Age plays a significant role, as vein valves naturally weaken over time. A family history of varicose veins or venous disease raises risk considerably, suggesting a strong genetic component. Women are more frequently affected than men, in part due to hormonal changes associated with pregnancy and menopause. Pregnancy itself places increased pressure on leg veins, and multiple pregnancies can compound that effect over time. Occupations requiring long periods of sitting or standing — such as healthcare workers, teachers, and office professionals — also contribute to venous disease. Obesity, prior blood clots, and a sedentary lifestyle round out the most common risk factors.

Diagnosis and Treatment at Vascular Center of Naples

At Vascular Center of Naples, diagnosis begins with a thorough medical history and physical examination. A duplex ultrasound — a non-invasive imaging study — is then used to map the venous system in detail, identifying any reflux or obstruction. This painless test gives our specialists a clear picture of how blood is flowing and where treatment is needed most.

Treatment plans are individualized based on the severity of the condition and the patient's goals. Conservative management, including compression stockings, leg elevation, and regular physical activity, is often the first line of treatment for mild cases. For patients with more significant venous disease, our team offers a range of minimally invasive procedures. Endovenous laser ablation and radiofrequency ablation use heat energy delivered through a thin catheter to close diseased veins with

minimal discomfort and a quick recovery. Sclerotherapy involves injecting a solution directly into affected veins, causing them to collapse and fade. Microphlebectomy is an option for removing larger surface varicosities through tiny incisions that require no stitches.

Why Early Treatment Matters

Venous insufficiency is a progressive disease, and waiting too long to seek care can lead to complications that are far more difficult to treat. Chronic inflammation, skin breakdown, and non-healing ulcers can significantly impair mobility and independence. Early intervention not only relieves symptoms and improves appearance but also prevents the disease from advancing to these more serious stages.

Schedule Your Evaluation Today

You do not have to live with the discomfort and worry that venous insufficiency brings. The experienced vascular team at Vascular Center of Naples is here to provide expert evaluation, accurate diagnosis, and effective treatment tailored to your needs. Whether you are just beginning to notice symptoms or have been struggling for years, we are committed to helping you regain healthy circulation and improve your quality of life. Contact us today at 239-431-5884 to schedule a consultation and take the first step toward healthier veins.

It's no stretch to say that Russell Becker, DO, a fellow-trained vascular surgeon practicing at Vascular Center of Naples in Naples, Florida, gets into things for the long run. Dr. Becker, who runs marathons in his free time, has experience and interest in all areas of vascular and endovascular surgery, including treatment of conditions like carotid artery disease, hemodialysis access creation and maintenance, and diseases of the veins.



Vascular Center
of Naples

1875 Veterans Park Dr. Suite 2203
Naples, FL 34109
239-431-5884
www.VascularCenterNaples.com



MOTION IS MEDICINE: HOW TO PROTECT YOUR JOINTS AND STAY ACTIVE FOR LIFE

By Dr. Ivan Bracic, Clinical Director – Novaré® Medical and Wellness

Why Movement Matters More Than Ever

As spring turns into summer, many of us feel the pull to get outside — walking the beach, traveling, golfing, gardening, or simply staying active with family and friends. Yet for many adults over 45, movement comes with hesitation. Stiff joints, lingering aches, or fear of flare-ups can quietly limit how much we enjoy daily life.

Here's the truth: It's not age that takes away mobility — it's the gradual loss of joint support, coordination, and recovery.

And the most powerful way to protect your joints isn't rest alone — it's **intentional, supported movement**.

What Really Limits Joint Health as We Age

Joint pain rarely starts in the joint itself. More often, it develops when the systems that protect the joint begin to weaken. Over time, several changes occur:

- Muscle strength around joints declines
- Core and pelvic stability weaken
- Nervous system signaling slows
- Stress and inflammation increase
- Recovery after activity takes longer

When muscles don't activate properly or reaction time slows, joints absorb more force than they're designed to handle. The result is stiffness, discomfort, and reduced confidence with movement.

This is why pain is often the last symptom — not the first problem.

The Brain-Joint Connection

Every step you take, every reach, every rotation starts in the brain. The nervous system coordinates muscle firing, balance, posture, and joint protection in real time.

When stress, poor sleep, or mental fatigue overload the brain, movement becomes less efficient:

- Muscles don't engage at the right moment
- Balance reactions slow
- Protective tension patterns develop
- Joints take on excess strain

This is why restoring mobility requires more than stretching or strengthening alone — it requires improving **brain-body communication**.

Novaré's Integrated Approach to Mobility

At **Novaré® Medical & Wellness**, we take a proactive, whole-body approach to joint health and recovery. Our goal isn't just to reduce pain — it's to restore confidence, stability, and freedom of movement. We do this by addressing **how the brain, muscles, and joints work together**.

"Strong muscles protect joints – but a balanced brain makes movement effortless."

Exomind™ — Restoring Neuromuscular Control

Movement starts in the brain. **Exomind™** uses gentle, non-invasive magnetic stimulation to help rebalance the brain regions responsible for stress regulation, focus, and coordination.

When the nervous system is calm and responsive:

- Muscles fire more efficiently
- Protective tension decreases
- Movement feels smoother and more controlled

Patients often report feeling more confident in their movements — less guarded, less stiff, and more fluid overall. This improved neuromuscular control plays a critical role in protecting joints during daily activity.

Emsculpt Neo® — Strengthening Joint Support

Strong muscles are the body's natural joint protectors.

Emsculpt Neo® builds muscle around key joint areas such as the hips, knees, glutes, and core while also reducing fat.

By improving muscle strength and endurance:

- Joints absorb less impact
- Posture improves
- Movement becomes more stable
- Recovery after activity accelerates

For many patients, this means returning to walking, golfing, or traveling without fear of overdoing it.

Emsella® — Stabilizing the Core and Pelvis

The pelvis and deep core muscles form the foundation of all movement. Weakness here can contribute to back pain, hip strain, knee stress, and balance issues.

Emsella® strengthens these deep stabilizers effortlessly, improving:

- Postural control
- Gait mechanics
- Balance and confidence

A stable core allows the rest of the body to move efficiently — protecting joints from unnecessary strain.

Chiropractic Care & Recovery Therapies

Joint health also depends on proper alignment and mobility. Our chiropractic and recovery therapies help restore joint motion, reduce nerve interference, and improve circulation — allowing the body to heal and move as designed.

Recovery is not inactivity. True recovery happens when the nervous system shifts out of "fight or flight" and into repair mode — a process Exomind® helps support.

Real-Life Movement Wins

We see the impact of integrated mobility care every day:

- A 62-year-old golfer regained hip rotation and stamina for full rounds again.
- A grandmother traveled comfortably for the first time in years, walking confidently without fear.
- A former runner returned to regular movement without the constant worry of flare-ups.

The common thread isn't just less pain — it's **renewed confidence in movement**.

Reframing Mobility and Aging

Mobility is one of the strongest predictors of longevity and independence. Staying active isn't about pushing harder — it's about moving smarter. When the brain is balanced, muscles are strong, and joints are supported, movement becomes natural again. That's the essence of functional wellness — and the foundation of living fully at any age.

Motion isn't optional. It's essential.

Move Into Summer With Confidence

If stiffness, joint discomfort, or fear of injury is holding you back, now is the time to act — before summer activities are in full swing.

At **Novaré® Medical & Wellness**, we help patients restore mobility, rebuild strength, and recover with confidence — without surgery or downtime.

Call **239-497-9355** to schedule your complimentary mobility consultation at our Fort Myers or Lehigh Acres locations.

Follow [@novare.wellnessandaesthetics](https://www.instagram.com/novare.wellnessandaesthetics) for expert insights on movement, recovery, and age-defying wellness.

NOVARÉ®

MEDICAL AND WELLNESS

239-497-9355

NovareWellness.com

15880 Summerlin Road, Ste 114
Fort Myers, FL 33908

NATURAL RELIEF: Estero Family Chiropractic Addresses Headaches, Anxiety, and Insomnia

In today's fast-paced world, headaches, anxiety, stress, and insomnia have become increasingly common complaints that significantly impact quality of life. While many people turn to medication for relief, Estero Family Chiropractic offers natural, effective alternatives through acupuncture and chiropractic care that address the root causes of these interconnected conditions.

Understanding the Connection

Headaches, anxiety, stress, and insomnia often form a vicious cycle. Chronic stress triggers tension headaches and anxiety, which in turn disrupts sleep patterns, leading to insomnia. Poor sleep quality then exacerbates stress levels, perpetuating the cycle. The practitioners at Estero Family Chiropractic recognize these connections and provide comprehensive treatment approaches that address multiple symptoms simultaneously.

Chiropractic Care for Holistic Healing

Chiropractic adjustments focus on correcting spinal misalignments that can contribute to various health issues. When vertebrae are misaligned, they can irritate nerves, restrict blood flow, and create muscle tension throughout the body. At Estero Family Chiropractic, skilled chiropractors perform precise spinal adjustments that help restore proper alignment and nervous system function.

For headache sufferers, particularly those experiencing tension or cervicogenic headaches, chiropractic care can provide remarkable relief. By addressing misalignments in the cervical spine and reducing muscle tension in the neck and shoulders, many patients experience significant reduction in headache frequency and intensity.

The nervous system plays a crucial role in stress response and sleep regulation. Chiropractic adjustments help optimize nervous system function, promoting the body's natural ability to manage stress and maintain healthy sleep-wake cycles. Many patients report feeling more relaxed and sleeping better after beginning regular chiropractic care.

Acupuncture:

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Problems

Acupuncture, an integral component of traditional Chinese medicine, involves inserting thin needles at specific points on the body to restore balance and



promote healing. Estero Family Chiropractic incorporates this time-tested therapy to complement chiropractic treatments.

Research supports acupuncture's effectiveness for treating headaches, with studies showing it can reduce both frequency and severity of tension-type and migraine headaches. The treatment works by releasing endorphins, improving blood circulation, and reducing inflammation.

For anxiety and stress, acupuncture helps regulate the body's stress response system. The treatment stimulates the production of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, which naturally improve mood and promote relaxation. Many patients describe feeling notably calmer and more centered following acupuncture sessions.

Acupuncture has shown particular promise for insomnia sufferers. By addressing underlying imbalances and promoting relaxation, acupuncture helps regulate circadian rhythms and improve sleep quality without the side effects associated with sleep medications.

A Personalized Approach at Estero Family Chiropractic

What sets Estero Family Chiropractic apart is their commitment to individualized care. Understanding that each patient's experience with headaches, anxiety, and insomnia is unique, their practitioners develop customized treatment plans combining chiropractic adjustments and acupuncture based on specific needs and health goals.

Conclusion

If you're struggling with headaches, anxiety, stress, or insomnia, Estero Family Chiropractic offers natural, drug-free solutions that address the

underlying causes rather than simply masking symptoms. Through the powerful combination of chiropractic care and acupuncture, patients can break free from the cycle of pain, stress, and sleeplessness, reclaiming their health and vitality naturally.



Expert Care from Qualified Practitioners

Dr. Leila Motta, D.O.M, AP, Dipl. O.M., ADS, a Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine and board-certified licensed acupuncture physician, Dr. Motta graduated from Maryland University of Integrative Health with both Masters and Doctoral degrees in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Dr. Motta holds Diplomate Certification from the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), maintains a Florida state license, and is a Nationally Board-Certified Acupuncturist. Her specialization in Neuro Acupuncture through the Neuro Acupuncture Institute adds advanced expertise. She is also a certified Acupuncture Detoxification Specialist.

With over 15 years in healthcare, Dr. Motta specializes in pain management and primary care. Her diverse skillset effectively treats chronic and acute pain, stress including PTSD, headaches, anxiety, digestive issues, and other health concerns. She integrates therapeutic techniques including acupuncture, herbal medicine, cupping therapy, and light therapy.



Integrative Healthcare Approach

Dr. Larry Wallen brings a holistic chiropractic perspective to comprehensive cancer support. A Midwest native from Illinois, Dr. Wallen's passion for helping people developed after witnessing his father's unsuccessful surgeries for chronic neck and back pain. His own positive experience with chiropractic care revealed a natural approach to addressing root causes rather than masking symptoms.

Dr. Wallen graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign with a Bachelor's Degree in Integrative Biology before attending Palmer College of Chiropractic. He graduated in 2010 with highest honors including Pi Tau Delta Chiropractic Honor Society membership, Presidential Scholar status, and Summa Cum Laude honors.

ESTERO FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

Free Consult for All New Patients!

Call Today to Schedule Your Appointment
at 239-676-9116.

EYES ON THE ROAD:

April Is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Every April, communities across the United States pause to reflect on one of the most preventable causes of traffic fatalities: distracted driving. National Distracted Driving Awareness Month serves as a powerful reminder that the simple act of keeping your eyes on the road — and your mind on driving — can save lives. Here at Southwest Florida's Health & Wellness Magazine, we believe that safety is the foundation of a healthy life, and that starts long before you reach the gym or the doctor's office. It starts the moment you get behind the wheel.

What Is Distracted Driving?

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts your attention from the primary task of driving. There are three main types of distractions: visual (taking your eyes off the road), manual (taking your hands off the wheel), and cognitive (taking your mind off driving). Texting while driving is particularly dangerous because it involves all three types simultaneously.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), thousands of people are killed and hundreds of thousands are injured in distraction-related crashes every year in the United States. In the time it takes to glance at a text message — roughly five seconds — a vehicle traveling at 55 mph covers the length of an entire football field. That is five seconds of driving completely blind.

Distractions Come in Many Forms

Most people think of cell phones when they hear "distracted driving," and while phones are among the most common culprits, they are far from the

only ones. Eating and drinking behind the wheel, adjusting the radio or GPS, reaching for items in the back seat, grooming, and even engaging in emotionally charged conversations with passengers can all pull a driver's focus away from the road.

Here in Southwest Florida, our beautiful scenery — from the sparkling Gulf waters to the stunning sunsets along Tamiami Trail — can itself become a distraction. Tourists and longtime residents alike have been known to take their eyes off the road to take in the view. While our surroundings are breathtaking, they deserve to be appreciated safely, not from behind a moving steering wheel.

Protecting Yourself and Others

The good news is that distracted driving is entirely preventable. Small, intentional habits can make a tremendous difference in road safety for you, your family, and your neighbors:

- **Silence your phone** before you start driving, or use a hands-free setting to reduce the urge to check notifications.
- **Set your GPS before you pull out** of the driveway so you are not fumbling with directions mid-route.
- **Pull over safely** if you need to make a call, send a message, or handle something urgent.
- **Avoid multitasking** — finishing your coffee or breakfast before you leave home takes only a few minutes and eliminates a major distraction.
- **Lead by example.** If you have children or young drivers in the household, model the behavior you want them to carry into adulthood.



A Wellness Issue, Not Just a Traffic Issue

At Southwest Florida's Health & Wellness Magazine, we see road safety as an essential pillar of community health. The physical and emotional toll of traffic accidents extends far beyond the individuals directly involved. Families are devastated. Communities grieve. Recovery from serious injuries is often long, costly, and life-altering.

Choosing to drive without distractions is one of the most meaningful wellness decisions you can make each day. It protects your body, supports your mental peace, and contributes to a safer environment for everyone sharing our roads — whether they are walking, cycling, or driving alongside you.

Our Commitment to You

This April, we encourage every reader in Southwest Florida to take the No Phone Zone pledge and commit to distraction-free driving. Share the message with friends, post a reminder on your social media, and start a conversation with your family at the dinner table. Awareness begins with each of us.

Drive safely, Southwest Florida. Your wellness — and the wellness of those around you — depends on it.

Southwest Florida's Health & Wellness Magazine is dedicated to helping our community live longer, healthier, and safer lives.

Logical Insurance Solutions USA

239.362.0855

Save Money. Gain Peace of Mind.

We specialize in:

MEDICARE Plan Options

Medical Insurance for Individuals / Families
Employer Health & Wellness Benefits

We are contracted with most insurance companies and our services are **FREE** to you!

Phone, WebEx, Seminars Available
In Person Appointments Available

Make the logical choice and contact us today for all your insurance needs.

2161 McGregor Boulevard
Suite C, Fort Myers, FL 33901
info@logicalinsurance.com

239.362.0855

www.LogicalInsurance.com
Family Owned and Operated Since 2007.

Other services but not limited to:

- Homeowners
- Flood Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Long Term Care
- Disability Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Pet Insurance
- Supplemental Policies
- Dental & Vision Plans

Cynthia Perthuis, CDP, CADDCT, CSA

Owner of Senior Care Authority of New York and Southwest Florida.

Has supported over 10,000 families across the US.

239-330-2133

cynthia@seniorcareauthority.com

- Eldercare Consulting
- Placement Assistance
- Advocacy
- Beyond Driving With Dignity

Senior Living and Care Solutions

www.scanyfl.com

FINDING A HEALTHY TEMPO FOR LIFE

By Pastor Tim Neptune

In today's fast-paced world, everyone seems constantly busy and exhausted. Technology, meant to simplify life, has only accelerated our schedules, allowing us to pack even more into each day. We are not only busy—we are tired.

Many can relate to Job's ancient words: "I have no peace, no quietness; I have no rest, but only turmoil" (Job 3:26). What many of us need to do is discover a sustainable rhythm for life. It is time to step off the merry-go-round of overcommitment and find a pace we can maintain for the long haul.

Jesus' words to the Pharisees in Matthew 23:25-26 remind us that internal health matters as much as external appearance. We spend hours perfecting our looks—clothes, hair, makeup, workouts—yet often neglect the soul and spirit that define who we are. Just as musicians use a metronome to set the proper tempo, our lives need a balanced rhythm. Living life at full throttle leads to burnout; our bodies require rest.

The story of Martha and Mary in Luke 10:38-42 illustrates this truth perfectly. As Jesus visited their home, Martha hurried about with preparations while Mary sat at the Lord's feet, listening. Frustrated, Martha complained that her sister had left her to do all the work alone. Jesus replied gently, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."



Martha was doing good things—serving and hosting—but at the wrong time. In the presence of Jesus, the most important priority was sitting and listening to Him. This encounter was the last time Jesus would visit their home on earth. Sometimes we must choose between two good options, and the better choice is the one that draws us closer to God.

An unhealthy pace affects more than our bodies. It drains us mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, making it difficult to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). Solomon warned, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23).

Who is setting the tempo of your life? Cultural expectations, family pressures, and personal ambitions can push us into unsustainable rhythms. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or exhausted, ask yourself: What is truly important now? Eliminate non-essentials and focus on what matters most.

If we lose our "why," we eventually lose our way. Busyness can lead to barrenness, leaving us empty inside. The invitation is to slow down, guard our internal life, and choose the better part—like Mary did.

Take a moment to ponder whether your current pace is healthy and sustainable. Put away distractions, especially phones, and make the most of precious moments with family. Technology is useful, but it should never replace real connection. Finding a healthy tempo allows us to endure for the long haul and experience the full life Jesus offers.

Tim Neptune is the Lead Pastor of Venture Church located at 14601 Tamiami Trail E. Naples. For service times, visit venturenaples.com or call (239) 775-5323.

 **VENTURECHURCH**
Naples
www.venturenaples.com

Estero Family Chiropractic

Everyone needs a chiropractor on their health care team

Dr. Larry Wallen

Dr. Leila Motta

239-676-9116

21740 S Tamiami Trl #103
Estero, FL

NEW PATIENT SPECIAL

\$50 OFF
ACUPUNCTURE
TREATMENT



Learn how Chiropractic care at Estero Family Chiropractic has helped people with pinched nerves/sciatica, bulging discs, neck and back pain, headaches, posture, auto accidents, and general Wellness, Sports injuries: pickleball, golf tennis and more.

THE PATIENT AND ANY OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT HAS A RIGHT TO REFUSE TO PAY, CANCEL PAYMENT, OR BE REIMBURSED FOR PAYMENT FOR ANY OTHER SERVICE, EXAMINATION, OR TREATMENT THAT IS PERFORMED AS A RESULT OF AND WITHIN 72 HOURS OF RESPONDING TO THE ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE FREE, DISCOUNTED FEE, OR REDUCED FEE SERVICE, EXAMINATION, OR TREATMENT

RESTORE. RENEW. RADIATE.

NOVARÉ[®]

MEDICAL AND WELLNESS

- Core Balance and Strength
- Neuropathy Treatments
- Sexual Health and Vitality
- Non-Invasive Aesthetics
- Brain Health & Performance (Exomind)

239-497-9355

NovareWellness.com

FREE
CONSULTATION!

DR. IVAN BRACIC

15880 Summerlin Road, Ste 114, Fort Myers, FL 33908



85 Reasons to Trust Us. One Reason We Do It. *You.*



Our physicians, advanced providers, and medical staff have been honored for raising the bar in patient care, safety, innovation, and experience.

But the real measure of our work isn't a trophy on a shelf — it's a patient who feels heard, a family that feels supported, and a community that feels stronger because exceptional care is available when they need it.

We're proud of every accolade. Grateful for every recognition.
And motivated by something even greater.

Because while 85 awards speak volumes, ***your health is what truly matters.***

Every Lee Health Hospital Awarded America's 50 Best



Visit [LeeHealth.org](https://www.LeeHealth.org)
to learn more.