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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

April 2026

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FREE 



THE HIDDEN HEALTH RISK WITHOUT SYMPTOMS

HOW FULL BODY MRI IS CHANGING
EARLY CANCER DETECTION

See Page 7

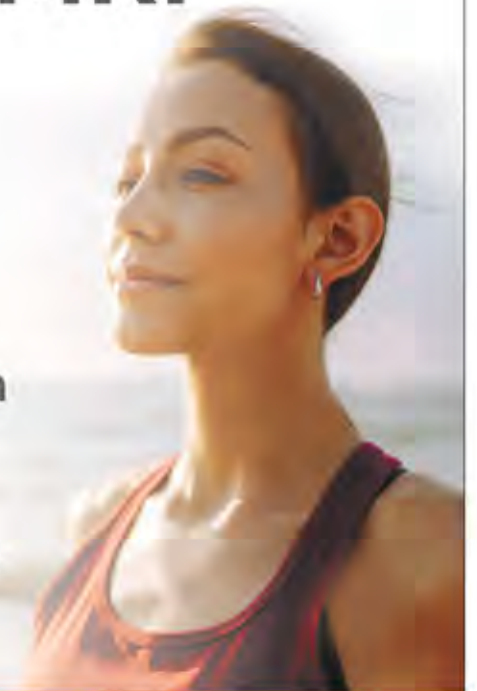
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Cancer
Diagnosis**



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5-year
survival

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Cancer
Diagnosis**



>20%
5-year
survival

Disclaimer: These figures are general averages and vary by cancer type. Survival rates vary significantly based on cancer type, individual health factors, and available treatments. The statistics referenced are general averages across multiple cancer types and should not be interpreted as specific medical guidance. For personalized health assessments, please consult a licensed medical professional.

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Learn more about all of Tobacco Free Florida's tools and services at tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway.



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Accessible Emergency Care For Our Community

Whether a visit to the hospital emergency room or a freestanding emergency department (FED), emergency services are essential components of any community's infrastructure.



What's the difference between an FED and an urgent care center?

FEDs

- ✓ Physician on site 24/7
- ✓ Providing stabilizing care for life-threatening injuries
- ✓ Providing stabilizing care for stroke
- ✓ Advanced life-saving measures including full-service imaging (CT Scans, X-rays, Ultrasounds)
- ✓ Broken bones, severe cuts or lacerations
- ✓ Providing stabilizing care for chest pain
- ✓ Trouble breathing

VS

Urgent Care Centers

- ✓ Set hours
- ✓ Physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner
- ✓ Non Life-threatening injuries
- ✓ May or may not have x-ray capabilities
- ✓ Sprains or strains
- ✓ Minor cuts
- ✓ Allergies or wheezing

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An Extension of Manatee Memorial Hospital

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Bradenton, FL 34207
941-751-7800

 **ER at Sun City
Center**
An Extension of Manatee Memorial Hospital

16504 South U.S. 301
Wimauma, FL 33598
813-642-1000

 **Manatee ER**
at Palma Sola
An Extension of Manatee Memorial Hospital

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Bradenton, FL 34209
941-750-1301

*These emergency departments are part of Manatee Memorial Hospital. They are not urgent care centers. Their services and care are billed at hospital emergency department rates. Wait times may vary. Physicians are on the medical staff of Manatee Memorial Hospital, but, with limited exceptions, are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Manatee Memorial Hospital. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the nondiscrimination notice, visit our website. 264360846-4554413 3/26

NICOTINE'S EFFECT ON THE BRAIN

Mark Twain once said “quitting smoking is easy. I should know, I have done it a thousand times.” Many tobacco users may be able to relate to this statement as it often requires multiple attempts to kick the habit for good.

There are several reasons quitting smoking is challenging. First, it is legal for adults to use tobacco products; therefore, there is less legal risk with tobacco than with other illegal substances. Second, nicotine is available for purchase at many convenient locations. The third and most significant reason is due to nicotine’s effect on the brain. In fact, research has shown that nicotine is as addictive as alcohol, heroin, and cocaine and is often more difficult to quit.¹

When an individual smokes a cigarette, nicotine is delivered to the brain within seven seconds. Once in the brain, nicotine activates seven different neurotransmitters – many of which are responsible for pleasure, appetite suppression, reduction of tension and anxiety and increased focus. These outcomes can be perceived as positive and rewarding which strengthens the addiction to nicotine. It is important that individuals find other ways to get these same benefits without the tobacco products when quitting. Quitting tobacco involves “retraining” the brain’s reward pathway as nicotine levels are reduced during the quit process.

The addiction to nicotine itself accounts for the biological component of addiction; however, addiction can happen on the psychological and cultural level as well. Tobacco can be used as a coping mechanism during challenging situations and as self-medication. Developing a dependence on tobacco during the tough times can make quitting even harder. Tobacco may also be promoted as part of social activities and norms.

Although quitting tobacco can be challenging, it can be done! According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, more than three out of five adults who have ever smoked cigarettes have quit. It is important to seek out support when quitting tobacco as those that attempt to quit on their own have a success rate of about 5-7%. **Group sessions** through Gulfcoast South AHEC and Tobacco Free Florida address all aspects of nicotine addiction, in addition to helping you develop a quit plan and identify your quit date. Studies have shown that group sessions plus the use of Nicotine Replacement Therapy can more than double your chances of quitting and staying quit.²

Quitting tobacco for good comes with many benefits to your **physical** and **psychological** health. These benefits are numerous and will greatly improve the quality of life for individuals who quit for many years to come.



*Help quitting tobacco is free! Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC), as part of the Group Quit option of Tobacco Free Florida’s Quit Your Way program—offers free group quit sessions to help someone quit all forms of tobacco. These group sessions held virtually and in-person, provide information about the benefits of quitting, managing stress and triggers, and will assist you with developing your own customized quit plan. **Free** nicotine replacement therapy in the form of patches, gum, or lozenges (if medically appropriate and while supplies last) is provided with the session. Attendees will also receive a participant workbook, quit kit materials, and follow up support from a trained tobacco treatment specialist. Contact us today at **866-534-7909** or visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/groupquitcalendar to schedule a class or learn more about the program!*

References:
1 https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/cessation/smoking-cessation-fast-facts/index.html
2 Tools to Quit: Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Cessation Program Participant Toolkit. Area Health Education Centers. 2018.



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Take Control of Your Health with BodyView Preventive MRI by Encore Imaging

In an era where healthcare costs continue to rise and medical conditions often go undetected until they become serious, preventive medicine has never been more crucial. Encore Imaging's BodyView Preventive MRI represents a revolutionary approach to health screening, offering comprehensive peace of mind in under 60 minutes through advanced, radiation-free technology.

Knowledge Is Your Greatest Health Asset

The old adage "knowledge is power" takes on profound meaning when applied to personal health. BodyView Full Body MRI empowers individuals to take charge of their wellbeing by providing detailed insights into their body's current state. This innovative screening technology transforms the traditional reactive approach to healthcare into a proactive strategy that can literally save lives.

For individuals with a family history of cancer or other hereditary conditions, the psychological burden of uncertainty can be overwhelming. BodyView MRI addresses this concern head-on, offering a simple yet comprehensive scan that can deliver worry-free results or identify potential issues while they're still manageable. The relief that comes from knowing your body is healthy – or the advantage of early detection – cannot be overstated.

Comprehensive Screening Without Compromise

What sets BodyView apart from traditional screening methods is its remarkable scope and safety profile. This radiation-free scan screens for cancer and over 500 different medical conditions across 13 vital organs, providing a full internal snapshot of your health in a single session.

The scan examines critical areas including the brain, thyroid, spine, lungs, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, spleen, kidneys, adrenal glands, bladder, and reproductive organs (ovaries, uterus, and prostate). This thorough approach means that potential health issues across multiple body systems can be identified simultaneously, eliminating the need for multiple separate screenings and reducing the overall time and cost associated with comprehensive health monitoring.

**1 in 2 Men.
1 in 3 Women.
Will Develop Cancer**

Most don't know until it's too late.

Don't wait for symptoms.

BodyView

The Power of Early Detection

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of BodyView Preventive MRI is its ability to reveal hidden conditions before they become symptomatic. Many serious health conditions, including various forms of cancer, develop silently over months or years. By the time symptoms appear, treatment options may be more limited and outcomes less favorable.

BodyView MRI changes this narrative by enabling early intervention. When conditions are detected in their initial stages, treatment is typically more effective, less invasive, and often less expensive. For health-conscious individuals who understand the value of prevention, this technology represents the ultimate proactive health tool.

Safety and Convenience Combined

Unlike traditional CT scans or other imaging methods that expose patients to ionizing radiation, BodyView MRI utilizes magnetic resonance technology that is completely radiation-free. This safety advantage makes it suitable for regular health monitoring without the cumulative radiation exposure concerns associated with other screening methods.

In less than an hour, patients receive a comprehensive health screening followed by a virtual consultation with a physician to review the results in detail, which would traditionally require multiple appointments, various specialists, and extensive testing. This efficiency makes preventive screening accessible to busy professionals and anyone who values their time while prioritizing their health.

Investing in Your Future Self

BodyView Preventive MRI represents more than just a medical screening – it's an investment in your future health and quality of life. The peace of mind that comes from comprehensive health knowledge allows individuals to plan confidently, whether that means pursuing aggressive career goals, planning family expansion, or simply enjoying life without the nagging worry about undetected health issues.

For those ready to embrace truly preventive healthcare, Encore Imaging's BodyView MRI offers an unparalleled opportunity to gain comprehensive health insights quickly, safely, and conveniently. In the world of modern medicine, this level of preventive screening allows you to be in control of managing your health and your future.

Take the first step. It's peace of mind and early detection when it matters most.

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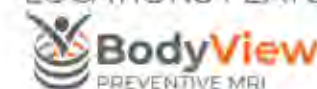
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THE HIDDEN COST OF RAPID WEIGHT LOSS: Understanding "Ozempic Feet"

By Dr. Ron Adduru, DPM - Family Foot & Leg Center

As a podiatrist here in Sarasota, I've spent years helping patients navigate the complexities of diabetic foot care, sports injuries, and reconstructive surgery. Lately, however, a new topic has dominated the conversation in my exam rooms at Family Foot & Leg Center: the phenomenon social media has dubbed "Ozempic Feet."

While medications like Ozempic, Wegovy, and Mounjaro (GLP-1 receptor agonists) have revolutionized the treatment of Type 2 diabetes and obesity, they bring about systemic changes that don't stop at the waistline. Just as "Ozempic Face" describes the loss of facial volume, "Ozempic Feet" refers to the anatomical and functional changes in the feet resulting from rapid, significant weight loss.

The Anatomy of the Cushion

To understand why rapid weight loss affects the feet, we have to look at what lies beneath the skin. Humans are born with specialized plantar fat pads located primarily under the heel bone (calcaneus) and the balls of the feet (metatarsal heads). These aren't just "extra fat"; they are sophisticated shock absorbers made of fat globules partitioned by tough fibrous tissue.

When you walk, these pads distribute your body weight and protect the underlying bones, nerves, and blood vessels from the hard impact of the ground. However, weight loss—especially when it occurs rapidly—is non-discriminatory. Your body pulls energy from fat stores across the entire body, including these critical cushions. When these pads atrophy, the protective "buffer" disappears, leaving you to essentially walk on skin and bone.

Symptoms Beyond the Aesthetic

Most patients first notice the aesthetic changes: the skin on the top of the foot may appear saggy or wrinkled, and veins and tendons become more prominent. However, as a specialist, my concern is the functional pain and the increased risk of injury. Common complaints I hear from patients experiencing fat pad atrophy include:

- **A "walking on pebbles" sensation:** Feeling every imperfection in the floor as if you are barefoot on gravel.



- **Burning or aching in the forefoot:** This is often metatarsalgia, caused by increased pressure on the metatarsal heads.

- **Increased callus formation:** Without fat to distribute pressure, the skin thickens in specific "hot spots" to protect itself, leading to painful corns and calluses.

- **Change in shoe size:** Many of my Sarasota patients find that their favorite shoes are suddenly too loose. While losing a shoe size might seem like a win, poorly fitting shoes create friction, which can lead to blisters or even ulcerations.

The Diabetic Connection

For my patients using these medications to manage Type 2 diabetes, the stakes are even higher. Diabetes can cause peripheral neuropathy (nerve damage) and poor circulation. If a patient has neuropathy, they may not feel the pain of a thinning fat pad.

This is a dangerous combination. You have less natural cushioning and a decreased ability to feel the resulting pressure or injury. A small blister caused by a shoe that is now too large can quickly turn into a non-healing wound or ulcer. At Family Foot & Leg Center, we focus heavily on limb salvage and wound prevention; "Ozempic Feet" makes vigilant daily foot inspections more critical than ever.

Managing the Transition

If you are on a GLP-1 medication, you don't have to choose between a healthy weight and healthy feet. The goal is to compensate for the lost natural padding with external support.

First, audit your footwear. If your shoes feel cavernous, they are no longer providing the stability you need. Look for shoes with high-quality, built-in cushioning and a wide toe box.

Second, consider custom orthotics. This is where we can truly make a difference. Unlike over-the-counter inserts, custom orthotics are molded to your specific foot structure. We can "off-load" the bony areas that have lost their fat pads, effectively creating a new, synthetic cushion that mimics the shock absorption you've lost.

Third, prioritize nutrition and strength. Maintaining adequate protein intake and engaging in low-body resistance training can help preserve muscle mass. While you can't "bulk up" the fat pads on the bottom of your feet with exercise, keeping the intrinsic muscles of the foot strong helps maintain the integrity of your arches and overall biomechanics.

Final Thoughts

Rapid weight loss is a significant achievement for your cardiovascular and metabolic health, but your feet are the foundation that carries that new body. If you've noticed that your "foundation" is feeling a bit shaky—or painful—it's time to see a specialist. We are here at our Sarasota office to ensure that as you move toward a healthier version of yourself, you do so without pain.

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



Dr. Ron Adduru is a podiatrist at Family Foot & Leg Center in Sarasota, Florida, specializing in complex wound care and deformity reconstruction. He is committed to helping the Sarasota community remain active and healthy.

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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.

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WHY SENIORS ARE CHOOSING LIFE PLAN COMMUNITIES OVER AGING IN PLACE

Where do you see yourself in retirement? Will you be busy at home or branching out as part of a larger community? How will you spend your free time? If you're considering the options of aging in place at home or moving to a Life Plan Community – also known as a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) – it pays to look closely at the costs and benefits of each option. Keep in mind that perspectives may evolve and priorities may shift as you make plans for your future.

THE REALITIES OF AGING IN PLACE

The idea of aging in place in your home may sound appealing, but modifying your home with age-friendly features and/or potentially hiring in-home care can be expensive, labor-intensive, and stressful. Most private homes have to be modified to accommodate the needs of seniors, such as wider hallways, wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, and entryway ramps. People often assume the option of staying in their home will be less costly than moving to a Life Plan Community. However, you may be surprised to see how the costs add up in the long run.

Instead of living with the burden of home maintenance and the uncertainty of how to handle future health care needs, you can live in luxury and comfort when you choose a Life Plan Community. Plus, you'll enjoy the peace of mind that comes with having a solid plan for the future.

WHAT IS A LIFE PLAN COMMUNITY?

A Life Plan Community, also called a continuing care retirement community (CCRC), provides an exceptional value for older adults who want financial protection from the rising costs of senior care and guaranteed care for life. The entrance fee, which is paid upfront to secure your place in the community, ensures you'll have priority access to health care services offered by the community, such as assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care ... and that you can receive these services at prices well below market rates. If you're on the fence about moving to a Life Plan Community, here are some compelling reasons to choose a community like Freedom Village of Bradenton for your next home:



MAINTENANCE-FREE LIVING

Owning and maintaining a home is a lot of work, and there may come a time in life when you'd rather be relaxing or spending time with loved ones instead of doing chores around the house. When you move to a Life Plan Community, you can let the professionals take care of lawn mowing, housekeeping, meal preparation, home repairs and more. You'll have more time to enjoy what you've earned, and more freedom to travel without worrying about who will take care of your home while you're away.

FINANCIAL SECURITY

Choosing a Life Plan Community with a Life Care contract can save you money by protecting you from the rising costs of senior care. Life Care gives you guaranteed access to higher levels of care at predictable monthly rates with little to no increase above the cost you pay for independent living.

RESORT-LIKE LIFESTYLE

With distinctive homes and floor plans to fit every lifestyle, you can customize your senior living residence to match your preferences. Plus, you'll enjoy a host of amenities and services that make each day fun and fulfilling. You can choose to be as active as you'd like, with an array of wellness activities, educational lectures, social events and more. Experience the benefits of a Gulf Coast retirement lifestyle at Freedom Village of Bradenton.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Maintaining social connections as you age is one of the best ways to protect your health and well-being.

It's easy to expand your social circle when you choose to be part of a community filled with friendly and like-minded peers. Seniors who age in place at home are often at risk for social isolation, especially if they aren't driving places to visit friends and socialize. Learn more about how senior living combats social isolation.

PEACE OF MIND FOR YOUR LOVED ONES

You can't predict the future, but you can take control of your options now so your loved ones don't have to worry. Moving to a Life Plan Community means they won't have to rush to find health care if the unexpected happens and you suddenly need help with activities of daily living or round-the-clock care. Your family will have peace of mind knowing you'll have access to advanced levels of care, if needed, along with the safety of having staff available 24/7 should an emergency occur.

DISCOVER TRUE FREEDOM

It's normal to feel hesitant about giving up the space you have at home to move into a senior living community. However, once you experience the expansive lifestyle waiting for you at Freedom Village of Bradenton, you'll see how your living space opens up to a whole world of opportunities that you don't want to miss.

SEE WHY LIFE IS BETTER HERE

You can learn more about why you should choose independent living at Freedom Village by calling us today at 941-798-8122, clicking on FVBradenton.com.



Freedom Village
of Bradenton



www.fvbradenton.com

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The Hidden Stress of Hearing Loss

By Rodney Robison, H.A.S.

Stress is a part of everyday life. Work, relationships, and health concerns can all contribute to rising stress levels. But one often-overlooked cause of stress is **hearing loss**.

Hearing is essential for communication, and when it declines, everyday interactions become more difficult. Struggling to understand speech, missing important details, and feeling isolated can all lead to **increased anxiety, frustration, and even physical health problems**.

April is **Stress Awareness Month**, a time to recognize the impact stress has on our well-being. Understanding the link between **hearing loss and stress** is an important step toward improving overall health and quality of life.

How Hearing Loss Contributes to Stress

Hearing loss develops gradually, and many people don't realize how much effort they're putting into listening until fatigue sets in. This phenomenon, known as **listening fatigue**, occurs because the brain works harder to fill in the gaps when hearing isn't clear.

The result? **Mental exhaustion, frustration, and heightened stress levels**—all of which can take a serious toll on overall well-being.

Social Anxiety and Isolation

One of the most common effects of hearing loss is **social anxiety**. When people struggle to hear conversations, they often feel embarrassed asking others to repeat themselves. Instead of participating in discussions, they may choose to withdraw from social situations altogether.

This avoidance can lead to **loneliness and isolation**, both of which have been linked to increased stress and depression. A study from the *National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)* found that **older adults with hearing loss are more likely to experience depression than those with normal hearing (NIDCD, 2021)**.

Workplace Stress and Cognitive Overload

Hearing loss doesn't just affect social life—it can also impact job performance. Employees who struggle to hear clearly may experience **chronic stress due to misunderstandings, difficulty following conversations, and decreased productivity**.

According to a study by the Better Hearing Institute, **people with untreated hearing loss can earn up to \$30,000 less per year than those who treat their hearing loss** due to reduced workplace effectiveness (*Better Hearing Institute, 2011*). The fear of missing important details or appearing less competent can create ongoing anxiety.

Additionally, untreated hearing loss **increases cognitive load**, meaning the brain has to work harder to process sound. This extra strain can lead to **memory issues, difficulty concentrating, and mental fatigue**, making daily tasks even more stressful.

The Physical Toll of Stress and Hearing Loss

Stress doesn't just affect emotions—it also has a direct impact on physical health. When the brain is constantly under pressure to interpret unclear sounds, the body responds by releasing **cortisol, the primary stress hormone**.

Over time, elevated cortisol levels can contribute to:

- High blood pressure
- Increased risk of heart disease
- Weakened immune function
- Poor sleep quality

A study published in *JAMA Otolaryngology* found that **untreated hearing loss is associated with a 21% increased risk of developing chronic stress-related conditions, including high blood pressure and heart disease (Contrera et al., 2017)**.

Hearing Loss, Stress, and Cognitive Decline

One of the most concerning links between hearing loss and stress is its effect on **brain health**. Research from Johns Hopkins University found that **even mild hearing loss doubles the risk of dementia, while moderate to severe hearing loss increases the risk up to five times (Lin et al., 2011)**.

When hearing loss goes untreated, the brain receives less auditory stimulation, which can lead to cognitive decline. Combined with stress and social withdrawal, this creates a **dangerous cycle that accelerates memory loss and mental decline**.

Reducing Stress Through Better Hearing

The good news is that **treating hearing loss can significantly reduce stress and improve quality of life**. Modern hearing aids enhance clarity, reduce background noise, and help people engage more comfortably in conversations.

Here's how improving hearing health leads to less stress:

1. **Effortless Communication** – Conversations become easier, reducing frustration and fatigue.
2. **Increased Social Confidence** – People feel more comfortable engaging in social settings and reconnecting with loved ones.
3. **Lower Cognitive Load** – The brain no longer has to work overtime to interpret sounds, improving mental clarity.
4. **Better Sleep and Relaxation** – Less daily stress leads to improved sleep quality and overall well-being.
5. **Improved Workplace Performance** – Clearer hearing means better communication, leading to less anxiety at work.

Take Action for a Stress-Free Life

If you've noticed increased stress, frustration, or fatigue due to hearing difficulties, now is the time to take action. A comprehensive hearing evaluation can determine the best solution to help you **hear clearly, feel less stressed, and improve your overall health**.

At **AudioNova**, we specialize in helping people reconnect with the world through expert audiology care. Our team of **Doctors of Audiology** provides personalized solutions using the latest hearing technology.

This **Stress Awareness Month**, take a step toward a **healthier, more stress-free life**. A simple hearing test could be the key to reducing stress, improving brain health, and bringing joy back to everyday interactions.

Schedule a free hearing test today and take control of your stress and hearing health.

Sources:

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Transform Your Body Goals with EmSculpt Neo

By Dr. Michael Jonathan Clark

Many people set ambitious goals to transform their health, fitness, and overall well-being — yet achieving lasting body transformation through traditional means alone can feel like an uphill battle. Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology offers a revolutionary solution that can help you achieve your body goals without the usual struggle: EmSculpt Neo.

Why Traditional Fitness Approaches Fall Short

The path to achieving your ideal physique through traditional means requires unwavering dedication to countless hours at the gym, strict dietary restrictions, and often yields frustratingly slow results. Life's demands — work commitments, family responsibilities, and unexpected challenges — can quickly derail even the most determined individuals. Many people find themselves caught in a cycle of setting goals, experiencing initial motivation, then gradually losing momentum as visible results remain elusive.

This is where EmSculpt Neo changes the game entirely. This FDA-cleared treatment represents a paradigm shift in body contouring, offering results that would typically require months of intensive training and strict dieting, achieved instead through innovative technology.

What Makes EmSculpt Neo Revolutionary

EmSculpt Neo is the first and only non-invasive body shaping procedure that simultaneously builds muscle and burns fat. Using a groundbreaking combination of radiofrequency heating and high-intensity focused electromagnetic energy (HIFEM), this treatment delivers something truly remarkable: an average of 30% reduction in subcutaneous fat and a 25% increase in muscle volume.

During a single 30-minute session, EmSculpt Neo induces approximately 20,000 supramaximal muscle contractions — something impossible to achieve through voluntary exercise. These intense contractions force your muscles to adapt and grow stronger while the radiofrequency energy heats fat cells to the point of destruction. Your body then naturally eliminates these damaged fat cells over the following weeks.

Perfect for Your Body Transformation

What makes EmSculpt Neo particularly effective is its ability to target stubborn areas that resist traditional diet and exercise. Whether you're focused on sculpting defined abs, lifting and toning your buttocks, strengthening your arms, or firming your thighs and calves, EmSculpt Neo can help you achieve visible results.

The treatment is especially beneficial for individuals who are already relatively fit but struggle with stubborn pockets of fat or want to enhance muscle definition. It's also excellent for those who have plateaued in their fitness journey and need an effective boost to reach their goals.

The Island ENT Wellness Spa Difference

At Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology, your body transformation goals are supported by experienced professionals who understand that true wellness encompasses multiple dimensions of health. The practice combines medical expertise with aesthetic innovation, ensuring you receive safe, effective treatments in a comfortable, welcoming environment.

The team takes a personalized approach to each client, developing customized treatment plans based on your specific goals, body type, and desired outcomes. Most patients benefit from a series of four sessions scheduled over two weeks, though your provider will recommend the optimal treatment protocol for your unique needs.

What to Expect from Your EmSculpt Neo Journey

One of the most appealing aspects of EmSculpt Neo is its convenience. There's no downtime, no anesthesia, and no recovery period required. You can schedule a session during your lunch break and return to work immediately afterward. Many patients describe the sensation as an intensive workout, feeling muscle contractions without the exhaustion.

Results begin appearing approximately two to four weeks after your final session, with continued improvement over the following months as your body builds muscle and eliminates fat cells. Patients report feeling stronger, looking more toned, and experiencing a significant confidence boost.

Start Your Transformation Today

Instead of another cycle of ambitious goals followed by disappointment, consider a smarter approach. EmSculpt Neo at Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology can help you achieve measurable, visible results while complementing your existing healthy lifestyle efforts.

Your transformation doesn't require superhuman willpower or endless hours at the gym — it requires smart, strategic choices that work with your body's natural processes. Contact Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology today to schedule your consultation and discover how EmSculpt Neo can help you achieve the body confidence you've been seeking.

About Dr. Michael Jonathan Clark

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



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William J. Cole, Jr., DO, FAASCP

Double Board-Certified in Regenerative Medicine & Interventional PM&R | Founder | TheStemCellDoctors.com® | RegenaMed® | kNOWPAIN® Institute

There are moments in life when everything changes.

Sometimes it's a diagnosis that stops you in your tracks.

Multiple Sclerosis.

Parkinson's.

Alzheimer's.

Dementia.

Traumatic Brain Injury.

Long-COVID Brain Fog.

Other times, it begins quietly.

You walk into a room and forget why.

You lose your train of thought mid-sentence.

You search for a word you've used your entire life.

Your sleep becomes fractured.

Your mood shifts.

Your clarity fades.

And eventually the question rises inside you:

Is this my new normal?

Let me say something bold.

Your brain is not broken.

It just has a short in the wiring that needs fixed, as "The Body Was Designed to Be Rebuild."

For decades, patients were told the brain does not regenerate.

That neurons do not grow back.

That degeneration is permanent.

Manage it.

Medicate it.

Slow it down.

Prepare for decline.

But what if decline is not destiny?

The brain was engineered to adapt, reorganize, and regenerate.

And I know this not just as a physician... but as a patient.

There are moments when life divides into before... and after.

Traditional neurosurgeons recommended a four-level cervical fusion with a low projected success rate. That surgery would likely have ended my career.

Mine happened when I woke up from cervical spinal decompression surgery for massive bone spurs crushing my right C-7 nerve root.

For 30 days and 30 nights before that surgery, I did not sleep.

Not "poor sleep."

Not "interrupted sleep."

I did not sleep.

If you've ever been there, you know what happens next:

You stop thinking clearly.

You stop healing.

You stop functioning.

You stop being You.

When I leaned forward post-surgery, I felt a ripping sensation deep in my neck. Then electric, cattle-prod neurologic pain shot down my arms and legs with searing intensity.

True neurologic pain is different.

It is relentless.

It is merciless.

I reached up to touch my Standard Operating Procedure neck safety collar.

It wasn't there.

And in that moment I asked:

Is this the end of my career and my ability to walk?

Will I be able to hug My Lovely Wife and kids again?

That was not a physician thinking.

That was a husband.

A father.

A man staring into uncertainty.

Instead, I chose regenerative intervention.

A series of Ultra-PRP epidural procedures rebuilt my spinal cord.

It restored function.

It restored sleep.

It restored hope.

It restored my life.

And that experience forced me to ask a bigger question:

If we can rebuild the spinal cord... why not rebuild the brain?

Millions suffer from neurological disorders labeled "progressive."

Multiple Sclerosis.

Parkinson's disease.

Alzheimer's and Dementia.

Traumatic Brain Injury.

Post-concussive syndrome.

Long-COVID neurological dysfunction.

Age-related cognitive decline.

Traditional medicine suppresses symptoms.

We activate regeneration.

At TheStemCellDoctors.com®, our mission is clear:

"Have the Body Heal the Body®."

There is nothing on God's green earth that can heal the body better than the body... Nothing.

Rebuild Your Brain™ utilizes Advanced Regenerative Technologies combined with Proprietary Procedures, Protocols, and Products designed to:

- Remove and replace dead or dying cells
- Activate reserve regenerative cells
- Enhance neurovascular circulation
- Reduce neuro-inflammation
- Stimulate synaptic reconnection
- Strengthen neural network communication
- Build Shortcuts that yield Higher Brain Functions and Core Intelligence

Brain reconstruction follows biological phases,

Phase One: Cranial Nerves Reawaken.

- Sight sharpens.
- Smell returns.
- Taste improves.
- Sound clarifies.
- Balance stabilizes.

Phase Two: Brainstem Stabilizes.

- Critical in Parkinson's and motor disorders.
- Motor control improves.
- Sleep patterns regulate.
- Autonomic function recalibrates.
- Balance returns.

Phase Three: Frontal Lobe Reengages.

- Memory sharpens.
- Focus strengthens.
- Executive function improves.
- Families often say, "You seem like yourself again."

Phase Four: Nano Biologics reach every corner of the brain.

At the cellular level, regenerative signaling extends into deeper neural networks as brain rewired is achieved — supporting complete transformation of mental capacity.

This is not about survival.

It is about restoring Quality in Life.

With over 100,000 interventional procedures performed throughout my career, our "Customized Regenerative" programs have helped thousands reclaim clarity, confidence, and independence.

Patients report improved cognition, stronger memory, reduced tremors, better balance, deeper sleep, stabilized mood, and renewed purpose.

No outcome is guaranteed.



But precision, placement, protocol, and patient-first care are guaranteed every time.

The brain is not a machine.

It is a living, adaptive, electrical, biochemical miracle with built-in neuroplasticity that facilitates brain regeneration.

When inflammation decreases and neural signaling strengthens, the brain does what it was designed to do:

It rebuilds.

Medicine must evolve.

Not more pills.
Not more decline.
Not more fear.

Find it.
Fix it.
Restore function.
Restore "Quality in Life."

If you or someone you love is facing MS, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Dementia, TBI, or Long-COVID Brain dysfunction — do not accept decline as destiny.

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RETHINKING STRESS: AWARENESS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

April is Stress Awareness Month

Stress is often talked about as something to “reduce,” “manage,” or “push through.” But what if stress isn’t the problem we think it is?

April is Stress Awareness Month, and it arrives during a season that looks calm on the surface—bright skies, warmer evenings, longer days. In Florida, spring can feel like an invitation to do more, be outside more, and enjoy what winter held back. Yet for many people, stress doesn’t disappear with sunshine. Sometimes it becomes harder to recognize.

Stress isn’t always loud. Often, it shows up quietly—in disrupted sleep, irritability, difficulty concentrating, increased substance use, or a sense of emotional numbness. Awareness doesn’t begin with eliminating stress; it begins with understanding how stress lives in the body and mind.

Stress Isn’t a Weakness — It’s a Signal

We tend to treat stress as a personal failure: *I should be handling this better.* But stress is actually a biological response, not a character flaw. It’s the nervous system trying to protect you.

The challenge today isn’t stress itself—it’s **chronic stress**. When the body stays in a constant state of alert, even without immediate danger, it starts to affect mood, memory, immune function, and coping behaviors. Over time, people may rely more heavily on alcohol, medications, or avoidance just to get through the day.

Instead of asking, “How do I get rid of stress?” a more helpful question may be: “What is my stress trying to tell me?”

A New Way to Think About Stress Awareness

Traditional stress advice often focuses on doing more—more exercise, more mindfulness, more productivity hacks. But awareness can also mean **doing less**, and listening more closely.

Consider these less conventional but effective stress-awareness practices:

- **Track energy, not time.** Pay attention to when you feel mentally drained versus restored. Stress often hides in overcommitment, even to good things.

- **Notice body cues before emotions.** Jaw tension, headaches, stomach discomfort, or shallow breathing are often earlier stress indicators than anxiety or sadness.

- **Observe coping shifts.** Changes in how often or why you drink, use substances, or disengage socially can signal rising stress long before a crisis point.

- **Question “normal.”** Just because feeling exhausted or overwhelmed has become common doesn’t mean it’s healthy—or sustainable.

Awareness is not about self-criticism. It’s about curiosity.

Florida’s Unique Stress Landscape

Living in Florida brings its own blend of stressors and strengths. Heat, seasonal population shifts, hurricane preparation, caregiving for aging family members, and work schedules that don’t slow down just because it’s sunny—all of these can quietly add pressure.

At the same time, Florida’s environment offers natural opportunities for regulation. Exposure to daylight, access to water, and outdoor movement can help calm the nervous system when used intentionally. Even brief moments—like stepping outside between tasks or grounding yourself near open water—can support emotional balance.

The key is not assuming that stress should vanish just because the weather improves.

When Stress Starts to Spill Over

Unchecked stress often shows up sideways. It may look like anger when it’s actually overwhelm, isolation when it’s burnout, or substance use when it’s exhaustion.

Signs stress may be crossing into something more concerning include:

- Feeling emotionally “on edge” most days
- Increased reliance on alcohol or medications to relax or sleep
- Trouble functioning at work or home
- Loss of interest in activities that once felt grounding
- Feeling disconnected, hopeless, or out of control

These aren’t signs of failure. They’re signs that your system needs support.

Support Is a Strategy, Not a Last Resort

One of the biggest myths about stress is that you should handle it alone. In reality, humans regulate best with support.

Sometimes that support looks like lifestyle adjustments or trusted conversations. Other times, it means professional care—especially when stress intersects with anxiety, depression, or substance use.

Inpatient psychiatric care and medically supervised detox exist for moments when stress has overwhelmed usual coping strategies. These services provide structure, safety, and stabilization—allowing people to reset without judgment and without waiting for things to worsen.

Stress Awareness Is About Choice

Stress Awareness Month isn’t about eliminating stress entirely. It’s about recognizing when stress is no longer serving you—and knowing that options exist.

If you or someone you care about feels overwhelmed, stuck, or out of balance, help is available.

For urgent psychiatric care or medically supervised detox—available 24/7—North Port Behavioral Health provides compassionate assessment and stabilization close to home.

North Port Behavioral Health serves youth, adults, and senior adults.

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Stress may be part of life—but facing it alone doesn’t have to be.

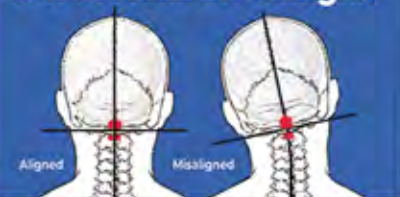
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- Dr. Drew Hall

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Vertigo or Meniere's Disease? Aren't they the same?

By Dr. Drew Hall

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

What is vertigo?

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

Causes of Vertigo

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

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

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

Vertigo may also be associated with:

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



Symptoms of vertigo

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

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

Other symptoms that may accompany vertigo include:

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

What is Meniere's Disease?

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

Causes of Meniere's disease

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

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

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

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

Symptoms of Meniere's disease

Signs and symptoms of Meniere's disease include:

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

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

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

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

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Dr. Drew Hall



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North Port Behavioral Health is an acute psychiatric hospital in North Port, Florida, offering inpatient treatment programming for adults, and senior adults.



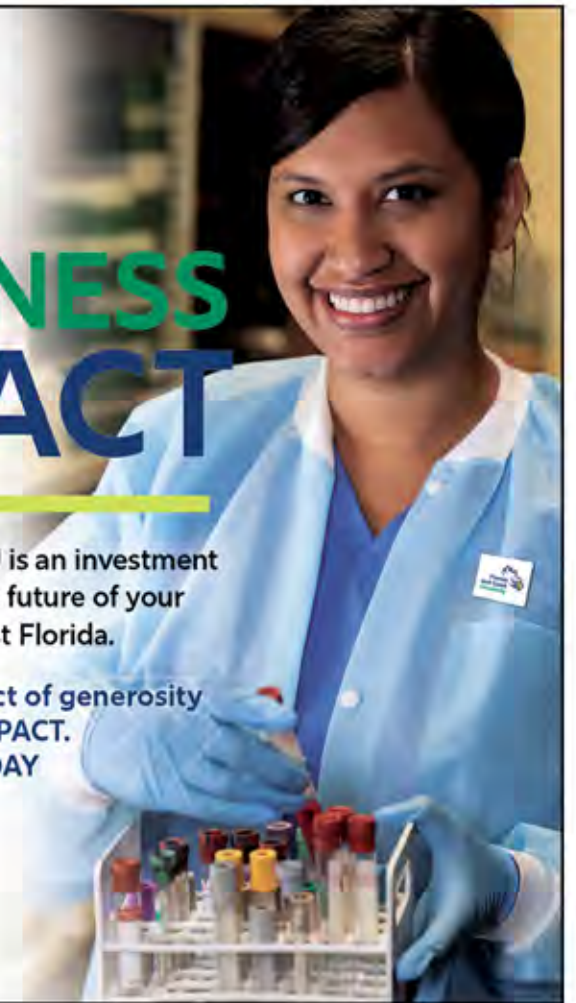
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STRESS BUSTERS: Focus on Mindfulness, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Self-Compassion

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).

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HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY: 5 Questions Every Patient Should Ask

By Mohammed Elamir, MD, FACP

We've all experienced some of the more unpleasant side effects of aging: Forgetting the name of a song, groaning when we bend over to pick up an object, or struggling to keep up with the kids or grandkids. As we age, maintaining brain health, mobility, and overall vitality all become much higher priorities than they were in our youth.

One specific therapy has drawn recent attention for its potential to help us preserve cognitive function, support recovery, and optimize wellness, especially in older adults. Published clinical research indicates that hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) can help the brain recover after stroke or traumatic brain injury, support neurological conditions like PTSD, and even reverse the effects of aging deep within our cells.

But as interest in HBOT grows, so does a common concern: **How can you be sure a hyperbaric clinic is safe and effective?**

As a physician who has guided thousands of patients through hyperbaric oxygen therapy, I know how overwhelming it can feel to choose the right clinic. To make the process easier, here are five essential questions you can ask to feel confident in your care decision.

1. Is the Facility Accredited?

Not all hyperbaric care and equipment is created equally. There are thousands of facilities that offer oxygen treatment, but their commitment to medical oversight, safety, and staff training can vary significantly. Standards vary widely from state to state, and regulations often go unenforced.

For patients, especially seniors, safety is paramount. Treatments involve pressurized oxygen, which must be carefully monitored to avoid complications or safety risks.

Independent accreditation shows that a clinic meets rigorous standards for patient safety, medical protocols, staff qualifications, and facility maintenance. In hyperbaric medicine, accreditation by the Undersea & Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS) is recognized as the gold standard. Fewer than 150 clinics in the United States hold this accreditation, which is the only hyperbaric certification recognized by The Joint Commission.

Recently, Aviv Clinics in The Villages earned UHMS accreditation, making it the first U.S. center focused primarily on neurological and aging-related conditions to achieve this distinction.

2. Is a Trained Physician Present During Every Session?

Before choosing a clinic, it's also important to understand the level of medical oversight provided. Like any medical intervention, hyperbaric oxygen therapy carries risk. At a minimum, clinics should provide on-site physician supervision during every session to manage any medical issues that may arise.



A medical team member assists patients in the HBOT suite at Aviv Clinics in The Villages

Every hyperbaric session at Aviv Clinics is supervised by physicians trained in hyperbaric medicine, with medical personnel inside the HBOT suite throughout treatment. These practices ensure that safety is maintained at every step, providing peace of mind for patients and their families.

3. Are the Treatment Protocols Based on Clinical Research?

The science behind a clinic's hyperbaric protocols matters. Facilities led by physician-scientists who conduct clinical trials are more likely to deliver safe, evidence-based treatment.

The protocols used at Aviv Clinics are the result of nearly two decades of research and peer-reviewed studies. CEO and Chief Medical Officer Amir Hadanny, MD, PhD, has dedicated his career to studying HBOT's effects on the brain and body and translating that research into patient care. This combination of science and clinical expertise ensures that treatments are refined according to the latest scientific evidence.

4. Will My Care Plan Be Personalized to My Needs?

Every patient's needs and treatment goals are unique. Avoid clinics that offer one-size-fits-all HBOT programs. Clinics that perform thorough pre-treatment evaluations of your physical, cognitive, and neurological function are far more likely to deliver meaningful results.

Thorough cognitive, neurological, and physical assessments guide the individualized treatment plans offered at Aviv Clinics. Therapy is tailored to each client's goals and health profile. This level of personalized care ensures that HBOT is used strategically, maximizing its benefits for both brain and body.

5. Does the Program Include Multiple Therapies to Help My Results Stick?

Evidence suggests that hyperbaric oxygen therapy works best as part of a holistic approach. Programs that combine HBOT with lifestyle interventions, targeted physical training, nutrition guidance, and daily cognitive training create an environment that supports lasting improvements.

The multidisciplinary Aviv Medical Program blends an evidencebased HBOT protocol with tailored physical, cognitive, and nutritional strategies. This holistic approach bolsters the effects of HBOT, helping clients see tangible improvements in brain function, physical mobility, and overall vitality.

Choose Your Care With Confidence

If you're exploring hyperbaric oxygen therapy, knowing what questions to ask can make all the difference. Accreditation and medical oversight are strong indicators of quality, safety, and expertise. UHMS accreditation shows that treatments meet rigorous standards, and research-driven protocols and personalized programs help deliver tangible benefits.

Adults seeking safe, evidence-based hyperbaric care can feel confident when they are in the hands of physicians who not only practice hyperbaric medicine but helped develop the standards of care in the field. Choosing a clinic that combines accreditation, medical oversight, research leadership, individualized care, and a comprehensive program provides the peace of mind everyone deserves while pursuing an active, vibrant life.



About Dr. Elamir:

Dr. Mohammed Elamir ("Dr. Mo" to his patients) is a board-certified internal medicine physician specialized in hyperbaric oxygen therapy. He holds more than a decade of clinical experience treating complex, chronic medical conditions, with a specialized

focus on brain health, cognitive function, and neurologic recovery.

At Aviv Clinics in The Villages, Dr. Elamir works closely with patients experiencing stroke-related cognitive decline, post-concussion syndrome, traumatic brain injury (TBI), early dementia, and age-related changes in memory, attention, and executive function. Aviv Clinics is the most active hyperbaric facility in the nation and the only independently operated UHMS-accredited clinic in Florida.



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2955 Brownwood Blvd, #100, The Villages, FL 32163



Look for hyperbaric clinics that display the UHMS seal of accreditation

MOVING TOWARD ANSWERS: RAVE IMAGING RECOGNIZES PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

Every April, the Parkinson's community comes together to raise awareness about one of the most common neurological disorders in the world. At RAVE Imaging, we are proud to stand alongside patients, caregivers, and medical professionals during Parkinson's Awareness Month by offering advanced diagnostic imaging services — including DaTscan imaging — that play a vital role in the early and accurate diagnosis of Parkinson's disease.

Understanding Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological condition that affects the dopamine-producing neurons in the brain. It is estimated that more than one million people in the United States are living with Parkinson's, with approximately 90,000 new diagnoses made each year. Symptoms commonly include tremors, stiffness, slowed movement, and balance difficulties. While Parkinson's is not yet curable, early and accurate diagnosis is critical — it allows patients and their care teams to begin treatment sooner, manage symptoms more effectively, and plan for the future with greater confidence.

One of the greatest challenges in managing Parkinson's disease is that its early symptoms can closely resemble those of other neurological conditions, including essential tremor and drug-induced movement disorders. This overlap can lead to diagnostic uncertainty, delayed treatment, and unnecessary procedures. That is why advanced imaging tools have become an invaluable part of the diagnostic process.

DaTscan Imaging: A Clearer Picture for a Complex Diagnosis

RAVE Imaging is pleased to offer DaTscan imaging as part of our comprehensive suite of diagnostic services. DaTscan is an FDA-approved nuclear medicine imaging technique that uses a small amount of radioactive tracer to evaluate dopamine transporter activity in the brain. By visualizing how dopamine transporters are functioning, DaTscan helps physicians determine whether a patient's symptoms are consistent with Parkinson's disease or a related dopaminergic disorder, as opposed to conditions that do not involve dopamine loss.

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month — a time to educate, advocate, and connect those affected with the resources they need.

For patients who have been experiencing confusing or conflicting symptoms, a DaTscan can be a turning point. The scan provides objective evidence that helps neurologists make more informed decisions about diagnosis and treatment — bringing clarity to what is often a long and uncertain diagnostic journey. The procedure is safe, non-invasive, and typically completed in a single outpatient visit at our imaging center.

RAVE Imaging: Your Partner in Neurological Health

At RAVE Imaging, we understand that a Parkinson's diagnosis — or even the suspicion of one — can be a deeply emotional experience for patients and their families. Our team is committed to providing compassionate, high-quality imaging services in a welcoming and supportive environment. We work closely with referring physicians and neurologists to ensure that our imaging results are delivered with precision, clarity, and speed, so that care plans can move forward without unnecessary delays.

In addition to DaTscan imaging, RAVE Imaging offers a full range of neurological imaging services, including MRI and CT scans, to support the comprehensive evaluation of patients with movement disorders and other neurological conditions. Our state-of-the-art technology and experienced staff ensure that every scan is performed with the highest standards of accuracy and patient care.

Take the Next Step This Awareness Month

This Parkinson's Awareness Month, we encourage anyone experiencing unexplained movement symptoms — or those whose loved ones are struggling with a neurological diagnosis — to speak with their physician about whether DaTscan imaging may be appropriate. Early answers lead to earlier action, and at RAVE Imaging, we are here to help provide those answers.

To learn more about DaTscan imaging and our full range of diagnostic services, contact RAVE Imaging today. Together, we can take meaningful steps toward better understanding and managing Parkinson's disease — one scan at a time.



Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive brain disorder that affects movement and can cause other health issues. It's caused by a loss of dopamine-producing brain cells, which leads to nerve cell damage and death.

DaTscan Imaging offered at RAVE:

DaTscan is a Nuclear Medicine brain scan used to assist in the evaluation of adults with suspected Parkinson's disease.

DaTscan can differentiate essential tremors from tremors due to Parkinson's disease.

RAVE utilizes DaTQuant software to even further evaluate the patient's scan by comparing the patient's images with an age-matched database. It automatically calculates striatal binding ratios, putamen/caudate ratios, and asymmetry. A report is generated which combines visual AND quantitative results.

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BREAKING THROUGH CHRONIC PAIN:

How Myofascial Release Offers Hope When All Else Fails

By Michael Via, MSPT

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

Understanding the Hidden Culprit

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

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

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

The Gentle Power of Sustained Pressure

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

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

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

Why Traditional Approaches Fall Short

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

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

A Beacon of Hope

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

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

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

If you're living with chronic pain and feeling hopeless about finding relief, Myofascial Release may be the comprehensive solution you've been searching for. **Call Now and SAVE \$25 OFF Initial Evaluation!**

About

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

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Effective & Proven Chronic Pain Relief with VAX-D®

By Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC

VAX-D, short for Vertebral Axial Decompression, is a patented non-surgical therapy proven to successfully treat chronic low back pain, caused by prolapsed, bulging, herniated or degenerative discs, facet syndrome, stenosis and sciatica. Even post-surgical patients and those suffering from central canal or foraminal stenosis have reported significant pain relief with VAX-D therapy. Over a series of relaxing treatment sessions, patients experience powerful pain reduction and healing. Some patients even notice relief after just one visit.

VAX-D's proven and patented technology is currently being utilized by leading physicians in orthopedic medicine, pain medicine, neurology and other specialties in hundreds of clinics around the world. Many doctors choose VAX-D over other devices because it employs the original, patented technology from which decompression therapy was born. VAX-D effectiveness is backed by clinical research. Back pain has grown to be a \$54 billion industry and has literally become a national epidemic. Due to the astounding array of varied treatment options, finding a back pain solution can be a daunting task. Knowing that a product backs its claims with clinical research makes all the difference, and that is what VAX-D offers. A recently completed 2 1/2 year study has demonstrated that VAX-D achieved a remarkable 88% success rate in the 283 chronic back pain patients studied! The patients selected for the study had been unsuccessful at finding relief with at least two previous non-surgical treatments.

VAX-D is not to be confused with traction. VAX-D lengthens and decompresses the spine, reversing high intradiscal pressure through the application of negative pressure via a patented "slow ramp-up" process. This reversal of pressure creates a vacuum inside the discs that not only takes pressure off of pinched nerves, but helps to reposition bulging discs and pull extruded disc material back into place. Simultaneously, nutrients, oxygen and fluids are drawn into the disc to create a revitalized environment conducive to healing. VAX-D stimulates the body's repair mechanism, providing the building blocks needed to actually mend injured and degenerated discs. VAX-D's process is the only patented treatment clinically proven to decrease disc pressures to the negative levels needed to facilitate healing!

How does VAX-D work?

High intradiscal pressures cause discs to bulge out and press painfully on nerve roots. They also make for a compressed, anaerobic environment unsuitable for healing. Decompression produces and sustains negative pressures within the disc, creating a vacuum effect which draws in nutrients and fluids to promote the repair of injured discs and surrounding tissues. This vacuum has also been shown to aid in the retraction of escaped cushioning gel from herniated discs. Much like gauging the air pressure in a car tire, scientists have been able to use pressure sensors to



measure the various pressures put on spinal discs while lifting, standing, sitting, lying down, undergoing traction, and during VAX-D Therapy. Like other pressures found in the body such as blood pressure, intradiscal pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg). While traction, physical therapy and manipulation may reduce disc pressures to as low as 40mmHg, only VAX-D has been shown to achieve negative pressures within the spine. Clinical studies have shown that, with VAX-D Therapy, negative pressures as low as -160 mmHg* are created within the injured disc during the treatment session!

The key to the "distraction" of VAX-D is achieved through an intricately timed series of pulls, holds, and releases over the course of a treatment session. VAX-D's biofeedback system adjusts this curve of tension specifically to each patient's needs, making every session a truly individualized treatment.

VAX-D Therapy involves three phases that repeat fifteen times throughout a treatment session: the Decompression Phase, the Retraction Phase, and finally, the Rest Phase. During the Decompression Phase, tension slowly mounts, lengthening the spine; up to 99 pounds of tension may be exerted directly on the injured discs. This is where spinal pressures drop and decompression actually occurs. During the Retraction Phase, tension is slowly decreased and the spine is retracted slowly. This is followed by a short Rest Phase.

Is VAX-D Right for Me?

You may be a candidate for VAX-D if:

- You have chronic and/or severe back and/or neck pain caused by bulging or herniated discs. Degenerative disc disease, sciatica, and/or facet syndrome.
- You have been diagnosed with a clinically unstable low back.
- You have failed back surgery syndrome.
- You have been told to consider surgery.

Many patients have experienced more than a 50% reduction in pain after their first treatment! For those suffering from herniated and degenerated discs, the escaped nucleus pulposus may be partially or completely retracted back into the disc after just the first session (though usually it takes longer), relieving a great deal of pain. However, pain reduction does not indicate full recovery, and a full

recovery is essential to preventing re-injury. Each treatment session lasts approximately 45 minutes. A typical VAX-D treatment regimen consists of about 20 sessions. Some conditions require fewer visits; some require more. Many patients report relief from their pain and other symptoms during the first few treatment sessions, and most experience dramatic pain relief after completion of their prescribed VAX-D Therapy program.

VAX-D therapy is a non-surgical procedure to reduce pain by decompressing your spine and reducing the stress and pressure on your discs and spinal nerves. Contact Dr. Craig Aderholdt, at 941-756-5528 for a **free consultation** to see if you are a candidate for this revolutionary procedure. We hope you enjoy the information within and share it with others.

Contact Dr. Aderholdt today to find out if you can finally relieve your pain and suffering with this proven safe and effective nonsurgical breakthrough for neck and back pain.

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Dr. Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC



At Back Pain Institute of West Florida, located in Bradenton, FL, our number one concern is to help our patients with a natural approach to pain treatment. Dr. Craig Aderholdt, BSc, DC, received his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State

University State College, and his Doctor of Chiropractic from life University School of Chiropractic in Marietta, GA. He then later graduated Cum Laude.

Dr. Aderholdt also holds certification in chiropractic adjunctive physiotherapy from New York Chiropractic College and completed extensive postgraduate training in therapeutic modalities at National-Lincoln School. He is a member of the Florida Chiropractic Association and American Chiropractic Association and is a certified VAX-D consultant. He was also voted a Bradenton Herald People's Choice Awards Winner for 2008, 2025 and is the Manatee Herald-Tribune Awards winner for 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020 and 2021 and Sarasota Herald-Tribune finalist for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023, 2025 and winner in 2019 and 2024.



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GAINSWave is Making Headlines Due to its Ability to Prevent & Treat ED

By Dr. David S. Zamikoff

With remarkable outcomes, GAINSWave is growing in popularity in regard to treating erectile dysfunction (ED) and Peyronies Disease, yet it's also used as a preventative treatment. GAINSWave treatment is available for any man looking to enhance sexual health and performance. A medical condition like ED or Peyronies disease does not have to be present for men to benefit. In fact, many healthy men without an issue opt for treatment to "biohack" or optimize their performance as a prevention method.¹

How Can GAINSWave Prevent & Treat ED?

The GAINSWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINSWave uses scientifically proven technology through soundwaves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. These soundwaves or 'shockwaves' also are beneficial in preventing the buildup of plaque and increasing blood vessel growth and circulation. Traditional treatments for ED, such as pills or injections, lose effectiveness over time and have to be used every time a man wants to engage in sexual activity. GAINSWave helps men to feel like themselves again and to enjoy their lives.

GAINSWave utilizes high frequency, low-intensity soundwaves to improve blood flow to the penis, remove micro-plaque, and stimulates the growth of



new blood vessels. GAINSWave uses a specific protocol designed to optimize efficacy, safety, and results. Over 80% of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) issues are caused by reduced blood flow. GAINSWave has developed a protocol to treat ED and Peyronies disease (scar tissue) as well as enhance sexual performance.

Younger Men Should Seek Treatment Early

Men who are just beginning to see ED warning indicators should seek the earliest treatment possible. The reason is that it has been well documented that if early diagnosis and treatment are started when a man is younger (the 30s, 40s, 50s) there is an increased chance that the ED will very likely no longer need medical treatment and their arteriosclerosis can dissipate. There have been multiple peer-reviewed studies that indicate that GAINSWave treatment can potentially cure ED in some patients. The sooner you intervene with treatment, the better your outcome will be.

Men are Preventing ED with GAINSWave

Many men are now understanding the importance of this technology and how it can benefit them in the long term. GAINSWave offers immediate results that are cumulative. Much like living a healthy lifestyle, starting GAINSWave treatments early is another way men can be proactive about their health.

SEEK EARLY TREATMENT & DON'T JUST MASK YOUR SYMPTOMS—TREAT THE ROOT CAUSE!

Source: GainesWave
<https://www.biospace.com/article/releases/mobility-spine-and-sports-is-helping-men-wave-goodbye-to-erectile-dysfunction-with-cutting-edge-gainswave-treatment/>

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Dr. David Zamikoff and Natural Healing Arts Medical Center - a professional Bradenton Chiropractic and Medical office. In practice as well as online, Bradenton Florida 34209 chiropractor Dr. Zamikoff strives for excellence through superior patient treatment, education and satisfaction.

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Dr. Craig S. Aderholdt, BSc, DC



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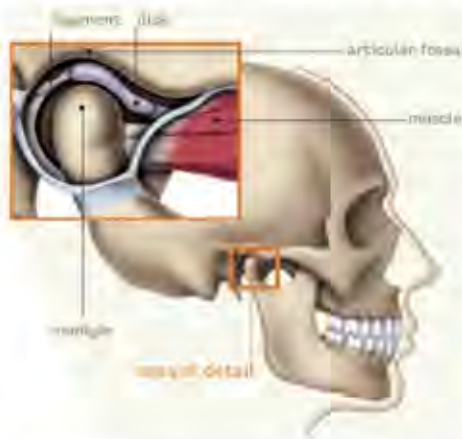
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The Daily “Grind”

By Dr. Joseph Farag

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



Treatment Options

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

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

Patients who present with TMD should also have an occlusal analysis

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

Relaxation Techniques May Help Alleviate TMJ Symptoms

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

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



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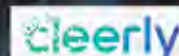
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FINDING A HEALTHY TEMPO FOR LIFE

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.



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