SOUTHWEST FLORIDA'S

Health & Wellness MAGAZINE®

May 2026

Manatee/Sarasota Edition - Monthly

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UNPLUG TO POWER UP

Why Digital Balance Matters for Mental Health

KNOW THE SIGNS, SAVE A LIFE

National Stroke Awareness Month

AVOID WEIGHT GAIN WHEN QUITTING TOBACCO

BETTER HEARING STARTS WITH YOU

Why May Is the Perfect Time to Prioritize Your Hearing Health

BIG TOE ARTHRITIS?

Discover The Game Changing Procedure that Gets You Back on Your Feet - FAST!

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CONTACT US

OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Cristan Grensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

OWNER / CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sonny Grensing
sonnygrensing@yahoo.com

GWHIZ Marketing Group, LLC

Publishing • Advertising • Web Design • Graphic Design

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

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

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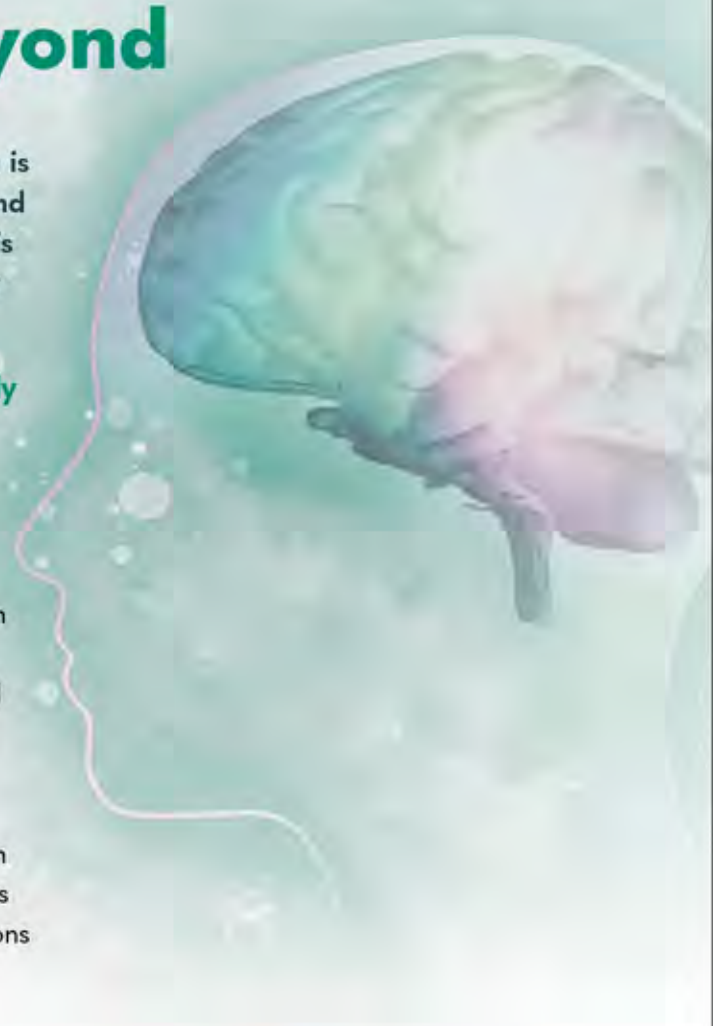
Specialized Stroke Care
That Goes Above and Beyond

A stroke is a medical emergency that occurs when blood flow to the brain is disrupted. Unfortunately, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, stroke is a leading cause of long-term disability and death. This makes early recognition and treatment key for improving stroke recovery outcomes and helping to prevent further complications.



Types of Stroke

Ischemic stroke is the most common of the three, occurring when a blood clot blocks an artery that leads to the brain. This type accounts for around 87% of all strokes.

Hemorrhagic stroke is caused by a ruptured blood vessel, leading to bleeding in or around the brain. This type is often associated with high blood pressure or aneurysms.

Transient ischemic attack (TIA) refers to a temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain that resolves within 24 hours. Though the symptoms disappear, a TIA is a serious warning sign of potential future stroke.

We Take Stroke Care Seriously

The sooner a stroke is treated, the greater the chance of minimizing potential brain damage and maximizing the chance of recovery. The rapid-response Stroke Alert Team at the Stroke and Cerebrovascular Center at Manatee Memorial Hospital offers prompt emergency treatment 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Our team-based strategy allows for collaborative, streamlined intervention thanks to skilled emergency physicians and nurses, neurologists, neurosurgeons and medical technicians.

For more information, visit manateememorial.com/stroke or call our Comprehensive Stroke Program Coordinator at 941-812-9566.

Stroke and Cerebrovascular Center
At Manatee Memorial Hospital

Manatee Health

206 2nd Street East, Bradenton, FL 34208 | 941-746-5111 | manateehealth.com

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. 264360846-4554063 4/26

UNPLUG TO POWER UP:

WHY DIGITAL BALANCE MATTERS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

By Elizabeth Dosoretz, LCSW

We live in a world that rarely slows down.

Between packed schedules, constant notifications and the pressure to stay informed and connected, it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Many of us move from one thing to the next without ever stopping to take a breath.

There is often an unspoken expectation to always be on, available, responsive and productive. That expectation is not realistic or sustainable. Feeling tired or overwhelmed does not mean you are failing. Not every day will feel productive, and that is okay. Taking care of your health, mentally and physically, should remain the top priority.

Sometimes what we really need is permission to pause. Setting thoughtful boundaries, especially around technology, can help reduce stress and support both our mental and physical well-being.

Digital overstimulation plays a major role in burnout and stress. Screen time adds up quickly through online shopping, group chats, social media, emails and documenting everyday life. At the same time, we are constantly exposed to curated content from companies, colleagues, friends and even family. Over time, this can quietly shape expectations and fuel comparison, making it feel as though everyone else is doing more or coping better.

At the same time, digital balance does not mean eliminating technology or disconnecting completely. It means being intentional about how, when and why we engage with digital tools. When technology use is unregulated, it can increase mental load, disrupt focus and keep the nervous system in a constant state of alert. When balanced, it can support connection and productivity.

Finding Your Balance

Part of what makes these patterns so difficult to change is how our brains are wired. Behavioral science research, including the work of Katy Milkman, shows that we naturally default to what is easy, familiar and immediately rewarding, such as scrolling or checking notifications.

Insight alone is rarely enough to create change. When our surroundings encourage constant engagement, even the best intentions can be overridden by habit. Real and lasting change happens when we make small adjustments to our environment and routines, making healthier choices more natural.

These changes reduce friction, lower decision fatigue and help new behaviors stick without requiring constant self-monitoring or discipline.

It's why creating intentional digital boundaries can be so powerful. It does not mean deleting apps or giving up devices altogether. It means pausing long enough to ask yourself why you are reaching for your phone. Is it habit, boredom, stress or a genuine desire to connect?

When possible, replace mindless scrolling with something restorative. This might include writing a few thoughts down, spending time with someone you love or engaging in a favorite activity. Many types of activities can help reset your nervous system. These moments do not need to be long to be effective.

Small and well-timed changes are often far more sustainable than sweeping resolutions. A recent study published in Jama Network Open found that even short reductions in social media use can significantly reduce mental health symptoms in young adults. Less screen time has been associated with lower anxiety, improved sleep, better focus and more space for emotional processing that often gets buried in a constantly moving, digital world.

A healthier relationship with technology is possible, even if it feels difficult right now. After all, building digital balance does not mean giving something up forever. It means learning how to use technology in a way that supports your mental health rather than draining it. With the right support, new habits can be formed and sustained over time.

Remember, the goal is not perfection. Simple steps like putting your phone away during meals, setting a tech free window before bed, turning off nonessential notifications or taking a short break from social media can create meaningful shifts. All of this is progress. Designing your environment to support these choices, rather than relying on willpower alone, makes change more realistic and lasting.

As you reflect on your habits, consider how technology truly makes you feel. What adds value, and what drains you? The digital world can be an incredible tool for connection and information, but it works best when used intentionally and balanced with other healthy habits. With consistency and self-compassion, it is possible to build a healthier relationship with technology.

Looking for support as you work on finding your digital balance? At Elite DNA Behavioral Health, we help individuals build healthier routines that support emotional well-being in a demanding, always-connected world. As one of the fastest-growing mental health providers in the Southeast, Elite DNA provides accessible, affordable mental healthcare through in-person and virtual services across Florida, Virginia, and Alabama. To learn more or request an appointment, visit EliteDNA.com.

About the Author

Elizabeth Dosoretz, LCSW, is the founder and CEO of Elite DNA Behavioral Health. As a mother of three, her personal journey through the challenges of postpartum depression inspired her to found Elite DNA Behavioral Health in 2013 with a goal to provide accessible, affordable mental health care to everyone. Now one of the fastest-growing mental health providers in the Southeast, Elite DNA provides in-person and virtual behavioral health services from more than 40 locations across Florida, Virginia, and Alabama. For more information, visit **EliteDNA.com**.

ELITE DNA
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Scan to Schedule an Appointment

AVOID WEIGHT GAIN WHEN QUITTING TOBACCO

When tobacco users set out to quit using tobacco, they may be faced with the obstacle of weight gain. Although it is possible to gain weight when you quit, it is not inevitable. There are many things you can do to keep the weight gain in check.

When an individual quits tobacco, there may be a slight change in metabolism – how fast the body burns calories. Nicotine in tobacco products is an appetite suppressant which means individuals may feel hungrier when they quit. Food is also going to smell and taste better as the tar that coats the nasal cavity and taste buds starts to break down. Lastly, some individuals may want to eat to keep from using tobacco.

Check out these tips for managing weight gain when you quit:

Pay attention to your plate:

- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat snacks like pretzels.
- Use sugar-free hard candy as an alternative to tobacco.
- Choose foods low in sodium, trans fat and added sugar. Read food labels and choose healthful options.
- Drink lots of water!

Incorporate physical activity:

- Physical activity helps to release stress.
- Physical activity can help control your appetite.
- Being active can improve your mood.
- Physical activity burns calories and can help you lose weight if you take in fewer calories than you use up.

Find other activities to stay busy or prevent boredom:

- Play with a pencil, stress ball, paper clip or marbles.
- Munch on carrots, apples, celery and sugarless gum.
- Brush your teeth often and keep a fresh taste in your mouth.
- Keep your hands busy — wash the car, garden, knit, do crossword puzzles, write letters, cook.
- Try a new sport.

So, if you are avoiding quitting smoking for good because you are afraid of weight gain, do not let it get in the way of kicking the habit to the curb once and for all! The most important thing you need to remember is that tobacco does not make you thin and quitting does not make you fat. Focus on what you will "gain" when you quit – a healthier body and outlook.

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. How can I avoid weight gain when I stop smoking? American Heart Association. http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/QuitSmoking/YourNon-SmokingLife/How-Can-I-Avoid-Weight-Gain-When-I-Stop-Smoking_UCM_307852_Article.jsp#.V2gwNNjbJYU. Accessed June 20, 2016.

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Tobacco Free Florida .com

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.

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.

ENCORE IMAGING

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VISIT ONE OF OUR LOCATIONS FEATURING
BodyView PREVENTIVE MRI

2026 SWFL PARKINSON'S DISEASE SPRING SYMPOSIUM:

Free Educational Event Coming to Punta Gorda This June

Affecting more than a million Americans and over 10 million worldwide, Parkinson's disease (PD) is the second-most common neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer's and is the 14th-leading cause of death in the United States. The major signs of PD include progressive motor problems with slowness of movements, shaking or tremor, rigidity or stiffness, reduced facial expression and changes in gait/balance. Patients with PD also experience non-motor symptoms (e.g., sleep disturbances, depression and anxiety, low blood pressure and cognitive problems, among others). The treatment of PD is remarkably better than it was just 15 years ago. Novel drugs and new formulations of old drugs provide patients with a much better response to treatment. The incidence of PD is rapidly increasing around the world. It is estimated that 90,000 new cases are diagnosed each year in the United States alone.

Before

After

Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's in partnership with the Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL proudly presents our **2026 Spring Symposium. It will be held on Friday, June 5th, 2026**. Admission is FREE, but registration is strongly recommended, as seating is limited. Those attending the program will enjoy three interesting and educational presentations.

Mabel Lopez, PhD will open the program with a lecture on "A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body - Tips for the PD Patient and Care Partner." This presentation will provide the audience with the most useful information regarding the benefits of good nutrition and physical exercise. The treatment of PD would be incomplete without a regimen of exercise and healthy lifestyle. You will see the evidence of this in Dr. Lopez's presentation.

Ramon Gil, M.D., will be lecturing on "New Answers to Old Questions in Parkinson's Disease. With the advances in the understanding of PD as well as with the increased number of medications and other treatments to treat PD many old questions have new answer. We will receive those from Dr. Gil's talk.

Philip Tipton, M.D., Associate Professor of Neurology, Movement Disorders Department at the University of Tennessee, in Knoxville will be presenting "Tackling Walking and Balance Challenges in PD." We are honored to bring Dr. Tipton back to our program. He was part of the Faculty in one of our previous Symposiums a few years ago. Within the field of movement disorders, he has special interests in gait and balance disorders and will bring most useful information for patients to improve these challenging and at times disabling problems.

Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's is excited to partner with the Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL and Dr. Gil with this first of many Charlotte County based symposiums.

Neuro Challenge is a 501(c)3) nonprofit organization created in 2008 to improve the quality of life of people with Parkinson's disease and their caregivers today. Neuro Challenge provides individualized care advising, community resource referrals and education, therapeutic and support programs both online and in Southwest Florida including Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Highlands, Marion and Charlotte counties. Neuro Challenge hosts The Parkinson's Expo, the largest single day free PD event in the U.S., held annually in Manatee County, FL.

All Neuro Challenge services and programs are offered at no cost to people with Parkinson's disease and their loved ones. Visit NeuroChallenge.org or call 941-926-6413 to learn more.

Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's

Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center of SWFL & Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's present 2026 SWFL Parkinson's Disease Spring Symposium

Friday, June 5, 2026, 8:30AM – 2:30 PM
Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center
75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Agenda/Speakers

8:30 AM: On site Registration/Light Breakfast Visit with Vendors & Sponsors

9:00 – 9:15 AM: Welcome/Remarks / New Partners
Dr. Gil & Jennifer Bitner, CEO, Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's

9:15 – 10:00AM: "A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body - Tips for the PD Patient and Care Partner"
Speaker: Mabel Lopez, PhD

10:00 AM: BREAK

10:15 – 11:00 AM: "New Answers to Old Questions in Parkinson's Disease" Speaker: Ramon A. Gil, M.D.

11:00 AM: LUNCH
Visit with Vendors & Sponsors

12 00 – 12:45 PM: Speaker provided by Amneal Pharmaceuticals

1:00 – 1:45 PM: "Tackling Walking and Balance Challenges in PD".
Speaker: Philip Tipton, M.D. Associate Professor of Neurology Movement Disorders Department University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

1:45 PM: Q&A. Faculty

2:15 – 2:30 PM: Recognition and Prize Drawing

2:30 PM: Adjourn
Visit with Vendors/Sponsors

To Register:
Scan QR Code
Visit NeuroChallenge.org
Or Call 941-926-6413.

Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center
Of Southwest Florida

For more information, please email Lisa Gallucci:
lisag@neurochallenge.org

Parkinson's Disease Treatment Center
4235 Kings Hwy. Suite 102, Port Charlotte, FL 33980

Big Toe Arthritis? Discover The Game Changing Procedure that Gets You Back on Your Feet – FAST!

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

If you've spent years "walking on eggshells"—or rather, walking on the outside of your foot to avoid bending your big toe—you aren't alone. In my Sarasota practice, hallux rigidus (big toe arthritis) is a common, frustrating condition I treat. It's the medical term for a stiff big toe caused by degenerative arthritis. When the smooth cartilage in that joint wears thin, bone rubs against bone, creating painful spurs (osteophytes) and stripping away your ability to walk, run, or wear your favorite shoes.

For decades, the surgical options were limited to a choice between two extremes: lose your motion or take a gamble on a "miracle" plastic plug. Today, I am proud to offer a groundbreaking alternative at Family Foot & Leg Center:

Hallux Rigidus Arthroplasty with Interpositional Dermal Allograft

This procedure resects prominent arthritic bone and releases contracted soft tissues within the 1st metatarsophalangeal joint to increase range of motion. A Dermal Allograft is then applied and secured to the 1st metatarsal head with knotless suture anchors, creating a protective covering and cushioning within the joint and metatarsal-sesamoid articulation.

Postoperatively, the patient can immediately bear weight and ambulate in a surgical shoe. The skin is closed with absorbable sutures, with healing taking approximately 2-3 weeks. While stiffness and swelling are normal, physical therapy accelerates recovery, improving range of motion and function with minimal downtime.

The "Gold Standard" That Isn't Always Golden: Joint Fusion

Historically, the most reliable treatment for end-stage hallux rigidus was **arthrodesis**, or joint fusion. By removing remaining cartilage and using plates and screws to lock the bones, we eliminate painful rubbing.

While fusion provides excellent pain relief, it comes at a significant cost: **total loss of motion.** For a high-level athlete, a yoga enthusiast, or someone wanting to wear a slight heel at St. Armands Circle, a fused toe can feel like a mechanical failure. You lose "push-off" power, and stress often migrates to the smaller toe joints or ankle, leading to secondary issues.

The Failed Promise of Synthetic Cartilage

In the last decade, many patients were sold on the idea of Synthetic Cartilage Implants (like the Cartiva hydrogel plug). It was marketed as a "game-changer"—a simple 20-minute procedure to replace cartilage with a synthetic spacer.

Unfortunately, the real-world data has told a different story. In my clinical experience and according to recent medical literature, these implants have seen alarmingly high failure rates. The synthetic material often:

- **Subsides:** It sinks into the bone like a pebble in wet sand.
- **Fragments:** It breaks apart, causing a massive inflammatory reaction.
- **Fails to relieve pain:** Many patients end up back in the operating room within two years to have the implant removed and the joint fused anyway—often with more bone loss than they started with.

The Breakthrough: Dermal Allograft Interposition

We needed a solution that preserved motion without the risks of synthetic "foreign bodies." That solution is the **Dermal Allograft.**

Instead of a plastic plug or a metal hinge, we use a specialized, acellular human dermal matrix—essentially a biological "cushion" derived from donated human tissue. This graft acts as a biological spacer that resurfaces the joint.

How the Procedure Works

During the procedure, I perform a thorough **cheilectomy** to remove the painful bone spurs and "clean out" the joint. I then carefully wrap the metatarsal head (the ball of the foot) with the dermal allograft.

Think of it like adding a high-tech, biological gasket to a worn-out hinge. Because this is human tissue, your body doesn't fight it like a synthetic implant. Instead, it provides a smooth, durable gliding surface.

Why This is the Future of Foot Surgery

The advantages of this technique over old methods are clear:

1. **Motion Preservation:** Unlike fusion, you keep the ability to bend your toe naturally.
2. **No "Foreign Body" Rejection:** Since it is a biological graft, we avoid the fragmentation and bone erosion seen with synthetic implants.
3. **Joint Sparing:** If the arthritis were ever to progress decades later, we haven't burned any bridges. We haven't removed large chunks of bone, making future options much simpler.
4. **Faster Recovery:** Many of my patients are back in a supportive sneaker much sooner than those undergoing a traditional fusion.

Your Next Step Toward Pain-Free Movement

You don't have to choose between chronic pain or a "dead" toe. If you've been told fusion is your only option, let's discuss if a dermal allograft is right for you.

Would you like me to help you schedule a consultation at our Sarasota office to evaluate your big toe pain and discuss your surgical options?

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.

3110 Fruitville Commons Blvd
Suite 102
Sarasota, FL 34240

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

Better Hearing Starts with You:

Why May Is the Perfect Time to Prioritize Your Hearing Health

By Rodney Robison, H.A.S.

Each May, we celebrate **Better Hearing Month**, a time dedicated to raising awareness about hearing loss and encouraging people to take a proactive approach to their hearing health. As an audiologist, I couldn't be more excited about this annual reminder—because hearing is one of our most powerful connections to the world around us, and yet it's often overlooked until it starts to slip away.

Hearing is Health

When I talk to patients at AudioNova, many are surprised to learn that hearing loss doesn't just affect how we perceive sound—it also plays a major role in our **cognitive function, mental well-being, balance, and even heart health.**

The ears may be small, but they are part of a much bigger system. When hearing begins to decline, the brain has to work harder to process sound. This increased mental strain has been linked to **memory issues, faster cognitive decline, and even early signs of dementia.** Additionally, untreated hearing loss has been associated with higher risks of **depression, social isolation, and falls** in older adults.

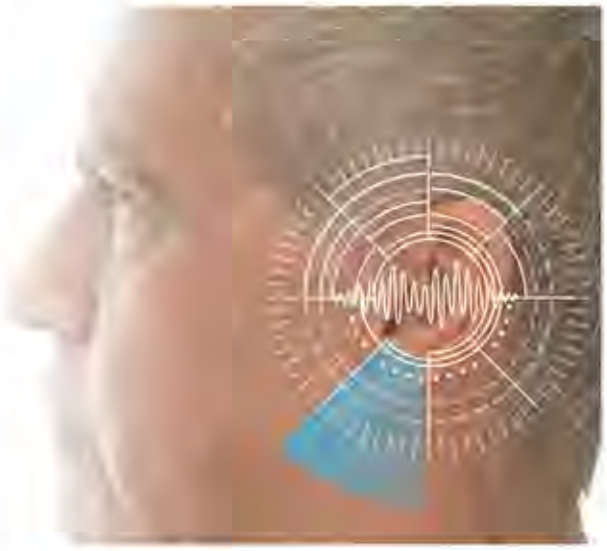
That's why hearing health is not just about communication—it's a key part of your overall wellness.

The Signs Are Easy to Miss

One of the biggest challenges with hearing loss is how **gradually** it tends to happen. You may find yourself turning up the TV volume more often, asking people to repeat themselves, or avoiding noisy restaurants because conversations feel too difficult to follow. You may even think others are mumbling more than they used to.

These are all signs that your hearing may be changing—but many people chalk it up to "getting older" or don't realize how much they're missing until they're tested.

Better Hearing Month is the perfect reminder to **schedule a baseline hearing screening**, especially if you're over 55. Just like an annual eye exam or a check-up with your primary care provider, hearing evaluations should be a regular part of your preventive health care.



Hearing Loss Is Treatable

The good news? **Hearing loss is manageable, and the solutions today are better than ever.** At AudioNova, we prescribe medical-grade hearing devices from all major manufacturers. That means we don't take a one-size-fits-all approach—we take time to understand your hearing needs, your lifestyle, and your budget.

Whether you spend your time golfing, traveling, volunteering, or simply enjoying family time, we can help you find a solution that keeps you hearing your best in the moments that matter most.

One of my favorite parts of this job is watching someone light up when they realize what they've been missing. A patient recently told me, "I didn't realize how quiet my world had become until I could hear the birds again." That's what hearing care is all about—**restoring your connection to life.**

Don't Wait—Your Brain Won't

Some people hesitate to take the first step because they think their hearing loss "isn't that bad yet." But studies show that the longer hearing loss goes untreated, the harder it can be for your brain to adapt to sound again. Early intervention not only helps you hear better now—it protects your cognitive health and keeps those vital neural pathways strong.

The sooner you start, the better your outcomes. And no—hearing aids are not bulky or embarrassing anymore! Today's technology is **discreet, smart, and designed to fit seamlessly into your life.**

Start with a Conversation

If you're not sure where to begin, start by talking with your loved ones or your primary care provider. Or better yet, call us directly! A simple hearing screening takes less than an hour and gives us a clear picture of your hearing health. From there, we'll guide you through your options—**real answers and real care.**

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MENTAL HEALTH ISN'T WEAKNESS – IT'S A WARNING SYSTEM

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Mental health is often discussed only when something is "wrong"—when a person is in crisis, struggling to cope, or unable to function the way they used to. But mental health is present long before that moment. It's shaped daily, in small and often invisible ways.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, arriving as Florida settles into longer days, heavier heat, end-of-school-year deadlines, and a calendar that fills up fast. On the outside, life can look "fine." On the inside, many people are managing anxiety, low mood, grief, burnout, or substance use with a quiet determination that goes unnoticed.

Mental health concerns aren't always dramatic. They can look like sleep that never feels restful, a shorter temper, constant scrolling, more drinking "just to take the edge off," or feeling detached from people you care about. Awareness doesn't start with changing everything. It starts with recognizing patterns—especially the ones you've learned to call normal.

Mental Health Isn't a Moral Test — It's Information

Many people treat emotional struggle as a personal deficiency: *I shouldn't feel like this. Other people have it worse. I just need to toughen up.* But mental health isn't a measure of toughness. It's a reflection of how your brain and body are responding to your life—your stress load, sleep, relationships, losses, biology, and environment.

The challenge often isn't one bad day—it's what happens when anxiety, depression, trauma responses, or caregiver strain become **chronic**. Over time, concentration drops, motivation fades, patience thins, and the nervous system stays activated. Many people begin leaning harder on quick relief—alcohol, THC, prescriptions taken "a little differently," overeating, overworking, or isolating—because it feels like the only way to get through.

Instead of asking, *"What's wrong with me?"* a more supportive question may be:
"What is this trying to tell me—and what do I need?"

A More Useful Kind of Awareness

Mental health advice can start to sound like another to-do list—more gratitude, more therapy, more journaling, more discipline. Those tools can help, but awareness is often simpler: **pause**, notice what's true, and respond with intention instead of autopilot.

Consider these grounded, realistic mental health check-ins:

- **Name your baseline.** Ask: "If I'm doing okay, how do I usually sleep, eat, and interact with people?" Changes from your baseline are often the earliest clue.
- **Track what you're avoiding.** Putting off calls, canceling plans, or delaying simple tasks can be a sign of anxiety, depression, or overwhelm—not laziness.
- **Notice what calms you—and what costs you.** Some coping strategies restore you (walks, connection, rest). Others numb you (substances, doomscrolling, impulsive spending) and tend to increase distress later.
- **Make room for one honest moment.** A brief check-in—"What am I feeling right now?"—can interrupt the cycle of pushing through and help you choose your next step.

Awareness is not about diagnosing yourself. It's about responding sooner, with compassion, before things become unmanageable.

Florida's Mental Health Landscape

Life in Florida has its own rhythm—and its own pressures. Seasonal work shifts, financial strain during slower months, caring for family across state lines, and the lingering stress of hurricane seasons can all stack quietly. Add in social comparison during "vacation season," and it's easy to feel like everyone else is enjoying life more than you are.

At the same time, Florida offers built-in supports when used intentionally: daylight, movement, and time outside can improve mood and reduce stress reactivity. Even a short routine—ten minutes outside in the morning, a walk after dinner, sitting near water without multitasking—can help the nervous system settle.

The key is not assuming you should feel okay just because life looks okay.

When Mental Health Starts to Slip

When mental health is strained, it often shows up indirectly. Anxiety can look like irritability. Depression can look like "laziness." Trauma can look like control or shutdown. Substance use can look like the only reliable way to sleep, socialize, or get through a shift.

Signs it may be time to get additional support include:

- Feeling persistently down, numb, or on edge
- Sleeping too little or too much, or waking up unrefreshed
- Withdrawing from friends, family, or responsibilities
- Increased reliance on alcohol, medications, or other substances to cope
- Feeling hopeless, out of control, or like you're " not yourself"

These aren't signs of weakness. They're signals that it's time to pause—and get support.

Support Works Best When It's Early

One of the most common myths about mental health is that you should wait until things are severe to reach out. But getting support earlier often prevents a deeper crisis—and shortens recovery time.

Sometimes support looks like sleep routines, boundaries, and honest conversations. Other times, it means professional treatment—especially when anxiety, depression, trauma, or substance use begins interfering with safety, relationships, or daily functioning.

Inpatient psychiatric care and medically supervised detox exist for moments when symptoms or substance use have outpaced usual coping. These services provide structure, safety, and stabilization—helping people regain footing without judgment and without waiting for things to worsen.

Mental Health Awareness Is About Permission

Mental Health Awareness Month isn't about being positive all the time. It's about giving yourself permission to notice what's real—and to take your mental health seriously, even if you're still "functioning."

If you or someone you care about feels overwhelmed, stuck, or unsafe, help is available—and reaching out can be the first step back to steadiness.

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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.

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TOP DOCTOR MAGAZINE

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.

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

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- Enhance neurovascular circulation
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- 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.
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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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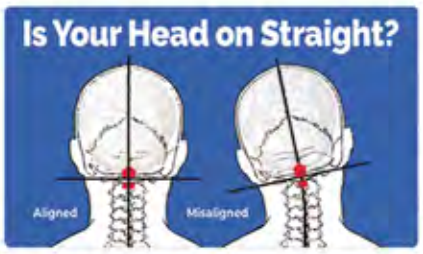

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Understanding Occipital and Trigeminal Neuralgia:

Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment Options

By Dr. Drew Hall

Neuralgia, a condition characterized by intense, stabbing pain along the nerves, can disrupt daily life and cause significant discomfort. Among the various types of neuralgia, two common forms are occipital neuralgia and trigeminal neuralgia. These conditions affect different nerves in the head and face, leading to distinctive symptoms and treatment approaches. Understanding the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for occipital and trigeminal neuralgia is crucial for individuals experiencing these conditions.

Occipital Neuralgia

Occipital neuralgia is a neurological condition that causes intense, sharp, or shooting pain in the back of the head, neck, and behind the eyes. This pain stems from irritation or injury to the occipital nerves, which run from the top of the spinal cord to the base of the skull. The exact cause of occipital neuralgia can vary, but common triggers include:

1. Compression or Irritation: Compression of the occipital nerves due to tight muscles, injury, or inflammation can lead to neuralgia.

2. Trauma: Head trauma, such as whiplash injuries from car accidents or falls, can damage the occipital nerves and trigger neuralgia.

3. Medical Conditions: Conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, or infections may contribute to the development of occipital neuralgia.

Symptoms of Occipital Neuralgia

Individuals with occipital neuralgia often experience the following symptoms:

- Intense, shooting pain that radiates from the base of the skull to the back of the head or behind the eyes.
- Sensitivity to light or sound.
- Tenderness in the scalp or neck.
- Pain triggered by neck movements or pressure on the back of the head.

Treatment Options for Occipital Neuralgia

Treatment for occipital neuralgia aims to relieve pain and manage symptoms effectively. Common treatment options include:

1. Medications: Over-the-counter pain relievers, muscle relaxants, or prescription medications such as anticonvulsants or tricyclic antidepressants can help alleviate pain.

2. Nerve Blocks: Injection of a local anesthetic or steroid medication around the occipital nerves can provide temporary pain relief.

3. Physical Therapy: Techniques such as massage, stretching exercises, and postural correction can help reduce muscle tension and improve neck mobility.

4. Nerve Stimulation: In cases of severe or refractory occipital neuralgia, nerve stimulation therapies such as occipital nerve stimulation may be considered to modulate pain signals.

Trigeminal Neuralgia

Trigeminal neuralgia is a chronic pain condition that affects the trigeminal nerve, which is responsible for sensation in the face. The hallmark symptom of trigeminal neuralgia is sudden, severe, electric shock-like pain that radiates along one or more branches of the trigeminal nerve. The exact cause of trigeminal neuralgia is often unknown, but potential factors include:

1. Compression: Compression of the trigeminal nerve by blood vessels, tumors, or abnormal brain structures can lead to neuralgia.

2. Degeneration: Age-related changes or damage to the myelin sheath, a protective covering of nerve fibers, may contribute to the development of trigeminal neuralgia.

Symptoms of Trigeminal Neuralgia

Trigeminal neuralgia is characterized by the following symptoms:

- Sudden, intense facial pain, typically on one side of the face.
- Pain triggered by activities such as chewing, talking, or touching the face.
- Episodes of pain lasting from a few seconds to several minutes.
- Periods of remission followed by recurrent pain attacks.

Treatment Options for Trigeminal Neuralgia

Managing trigeminal neuralgia involves a combination of medications, procedures, and lifestyle modifications to alleviate pain and improve quality of life. Common treatment approaches include:

1. Medications: Anticonvulsant medications such as carbamazepine or gabapentin are often prescribed to reduce nerve sensitivity and pain intensity.

2. Surgical Interventions: Procedures such as microvascular decompression, gamma knife radiosurgery, or nerve rhizotomy may be recommended to relieve pressure on the trigeminal nerve and disrupt pain signals.

3. Alternative Therapies: Techniques such as acupuncture, biofeedback, or relaxation exercises may help manage pain and reduce stress levels.

In conclusion, occipital and trigeminal neuralgia are neurological conditions characterized by intense, debilitating pain in the head and face. Understanding the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for these conditions is essential for effective management and improved quality of life for individuals experiencing neuralgia. With proper diagnosis and a multidisciplinary treatment approach, individuals with occipital and trigeminal neuralgia can find relief from pain and regain control over their daily activities.

Schedule a no obligation FREE consultation in our office today!

Dr. Drew Hall

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ANYONE CAN SUFFER A STROKE:

Beware of falling into trap of thinking there's a 'stereotypical high-risk patient'

By Rick Weber

Anyone can suffer a stroke. Literally *anyone*.

Stroke is not confined to a specific age group or a stereotypical "high-risk" patient. While there is a tendency to associate stroke with older adults or individuals with obvious health issues, that framing is incomplete—and a bit misleading.

"Yes, there are well-established risk factors like hypertension, diabetes and smoking, but stroke can also occur in individuals who don't fit that profile at all," says Megan Walsh, DPT, NCS, a Clinical Assistant Professor in Florida Gulf Coast University's Marieb College of Health and Human Services who is recognized as a Board Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist by the American Board of Physical Therapy.

"Younger, otherwise healthy people can experience strokes due to less obvious mechanisms like embolic events, cardiac rhythm disturbances, vascular abnormalities or even spontaneous arterial injury. In some cases, there isn't a clear, immediately identifiable cause. What complicates this further is that stroke doesn't always present in the dramatic way people expect. It's not always a sudden collapse or complete paralysis. It can be subtle, such as sudden dizziness, difficulty with balance, changes in vision or mild speech disturbances."

Those presentations are easy to dismiss, especially when the person doesn't "look like" someone at risk. So the idea that "anyone can suffer a stroke" is less about creating alarm and more about correcting that bias.

"It's a reminder that stroke is fundamentally a neurological emergency defined by its presentation, not by the person it happens to," says Walsh, who is certified in Neurodevelopmental Treatment (NDT) by the Neurodevelopmental Treatment Association (NDTA). "If symptoms appear suddenly and don't make sense, they deserve to be taken seriously, regardless of age or perceived health status."

Walsh speaks from painful experience. She did not realize that babies could have a stroke—until her second daughter, Piper, was born full-term in 2009. Within 24 hours, doctors discovered that she was experiencing seizures that necessitated admission to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). A battery of tests determined that she had suffered a large stroke affecting the left side of her brain in an area known to control right-sided movement and speech.

Walsh begged the neurologist in the NICU to tell her and her husband that Piper would still be OK and be able to live a normal life. Of course, he could not do that, instead saying, "She will be anything from profoundly disabled to relatively normal. Time, early intervention and neuroplasticity will dictate her outcome."

Piper made a phenomenal recovery. Now in 10th grade, she has participated in Irish dance, played club-level soccer and graced her school's Honor Roll on several occasions.

Even before Piper's ordeal, Walsh had developed a passion for helping people through difficult and often unforeseen circumstances. She became interested in stroke rehabilitation while working at the Rehab Hospital of the Pacific in Honolulu from 2005 to 2008. But it was not until Piper was born that she expanded that passion to include awareness and research.

From a healthcare provider and professor's perspective, she believes stroke prevention is one of the areas where they can have the most meaningful impact in the community, because so many of the major risk factors are actually modifiable.

"Hypertension is still the leading contributor, so consistent blood pressure management—through medication when needed, but also through movement and lifestyle—is fundamental," she says. "What we see clinically, though, is that these risks rarely exist in isolation. Physical inactivity, impaired glucose control and high cholesterol tend to cluster, creating a cumulative strain on the vascular system over time. Tobacco use and excessive alcohol intake further accelerate that process.

"What I consistently emphasize, both in the classroom and in practice, is that movement is not just a general wellness recommendation, but it is a targeted, evidence-based intervention. Regular aerobic activity and strength training directly improve blood pressure, insulin sensitivity and lipid profiles, which are all central to reducing stroke risk.

"There is also increasing recognition of the role that sleep quality and chronic stress play, particularly in conditions like obstructive sleep apnea, which often go under-identified. Ultimately, stroke prevention is not about a single behavior change. It is the cumulative effect of managing cardiovascular health over time. The encouraging part is that even small, consistent changes in these modifiable factors can meaningfully reduce long-term risk."

She says that when we talk about who is more susceptible to stroke, it's important to frame it less as a specific "type" of person and more in terms of non-modifiable risk factors layered on top of an individual's overall risk profile. Age remains the most significant non-modifiable factor, with risk increasing over time, but it's critical to recognize that stroke is not exclusive to older adults.

"We are continuing to see strokes in younger populations, often because modifiable risks are present but under-recognized," she says. "There are also important sex-based considerations. Women, for example, have unique risk periods related to pregnancy and the postpartum state, as well as considerations with hormonal contraception and migraine with aura, all of which can influence stroke risk through vascular and clotting mechanisms.

"In addition, race and ethnicity play a role, as African American adults in the United States experience higher stroke incidence and often at younger ages, which reflects both biological predispositions and broader social and healthcare access factors. Genetics and family history are also key non-modifiable contributors, particularly in individuals with inherited clotting disorders or early cardiovascular disease in first-degree relatives. These factors can increase baseline risk even in individuals who appear otherwise healthy.

"That said, these non-modifiable risks don't act in isolation. They interact with modifiable factors like hypertension, physical inactivity, diabetes, dyslipidemia and tobacco use, which ultimately drive the majority of stroke risk. So while we can't change age, sex, race or genetics, understanding how they influence baseline risk allows us to be more proactive and aggressive in managing the factors we *can* modify."

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Marieb College of
Health & Human Services

10501 FGCU Boulevard South, Fort Myers, FL 33965
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Elevate Your Self-Care with Exomind Technology

By Dr. Michael Jonathan Clark

At Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology, we're excited to introduce Exomind, a revolutionary brain wellness technology that's transforming how we approach mental self-care and cognitive health.

In our fast-paced world, stress, anxiety, and mental fatigue have become unwelcome companions for many. While traditional self-care often focuses on physical wellness through exercise, nutrition, and relaxation techniques, we're now recognizing that true self-care must also address our cognitive and neurological well-being. This is where Exomind comes in.

What is Exomind?

Exomind represents the cutting edge of neurotechnology, offering a non-invasive approach to optimizing brain function and promoting mental wellness. This sophisticated system uses advanced brainwave technology to help balance neural activity, reduce stress, and enhance overall cognitive performance. By working directly with your brain's natural rhythms, Exomind creates a personalized experience designed to restore mental clarity and emotional equilibrium.

The treatment is remarkably simple yet profoundly effective. During an Exomind session, you'll relax comfortably while the technology gently guides your brainwaves toward optimal patterns associated with calmness, focus, and mental clarity. Many patients describe the experience as deeply relaxing, similar to meditation but requiring no prior experience or effort on your part.

The Self-Care Benefits of Exomind

Self-care isn't selfish—it's essential. When we prioritize our mental and cognitive health, we're better equipped to handle life's challenges, maintain meaningful relationships, and perform at our best in all areas of life. Exomind supports these goals by addressing several key areas of brain wellness.

First, stress reduction is one of Exomind's most immediate benefits. By promoting balanced brainwave patterns, the technology helps activate your body's natural relaxation response, counteracting the harmful effects of chronic stress. Users often report feeling calmer and more centered after just one session.

Second, many patients experience improved sleep quality. In our sleep-deprived society, restorative rest is a crucial component of self-care. Exomind helps regulate the neural patterns associated with healthy sleep cycles, making it easier to fall asleep and achieve deeper, more rejuvenating rest.

Third, enhanced focus and mental clarity represent another significant advantage. Whether you're struggling with brain fog, attention difficulties, or simply want to optimize your cognitive performance, Exomind can help sharpen your mental edge and improve concentration.

Making Exomind Part of Your Self-Care Routine

At Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology, we believe that comprehensive care means addressing all aspects of health—including the often-overlooked realm of brain wellness. Our experienced team is trained in the latest neurotechnology protocols and will work with you to develop a personalized Exomind treatment plan tailored to your specific needs and goals.

Consider investing in your most important asset: your brain. Whether you're dealing with stress, seeking better sleep, wanting to enhance focus, or simply looking to optimize your mental well-being, Exomind offers a powerful tool for transformation.

Self-care is about creating sustainable practices that support your long-term health and happiness. Unlike quick fixes or temporary solutions, Exomind works with your brain's natural capacity for healing and optimization, creating lasting changes that support your wellness journey.

We invite you to discover how Exomind can elevate your self-care routine and help you achieve new levels of mental clarity, emotional balance, and cognitive vitality. Contact Island ENT Wellness Spa and Audiology today to schedule your consultation and experience the future of brain wellness. Because when it comes to self-care, your mind deserves the same attention and care as your body.

Your journey to better brain health starts here.

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.

Island ENT
Wellness Spa and Audiology
901 Venetia Bay Blvd. suite 350
Venice FL 34285
941-786-0386 | www.islandentvenice.com

KNOW THE SIGNS, SAVE A LIFE: National Stroke Awareness Month

Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Every 3.5 minutes, someone dies from one. These sobering statistics place stroke among the leading causes of death and long-term disability in America. Yet according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), up to 80 percent of strokes are preventable. National Stroke Awareness Month, observed every May, exists to close the gap between those statistics and the public's understanding of what strokes are, what causes them, and how early detection can make all the difference.

Understanding Stroke: A Medical Emergency With a Narrow Window

A stroke occurs when blood flow to a part of the brain is suddenly interrupted, either by a blockage (ischemic stroke, accounting for about 87% of all strokes) or by a ruptured blood vessel (hemorrhagic stroke). When brain cells are deprived of oxygen, they begin to die within minutes. This is why the phrase "time is brain" has become a cornerstone of stroke medicine — every minute without treatment can mean the loss of nearly two million neurons.

The acronym BE-FAST helps people recognize the warning signs of stroke quickly:

- **B** — **Balance:** sudden loss of balance or coordination
- **E** — **Eyes:** sudden vision changes or trouble seeing
- **F** — **Face:** facial drooping, especially on one side
- **A** — **Arms:** arm weakness or numbness
- **S** — **Speech:** slurred or strange speech
- **T** — **Time:** call 911 immediately

Risk Factors You Can Control

While some stroke risk factors — such as age, family history, and race — cannot be changed, many of the most significant ones can be managed or eliminated. High blood pressure remains the single greatest modifiable risk factor for stroke. Other controllable risks include high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, smoking, physical inactivity, and excessive alcohol consumption. Atrial fibrillation (an irregular heartbeat) significantly raises stroke risk as well, as does the presence of carotid artery disease — a narrowing of the arteries in the neck that supply blood to the brain.

May is National Stroke Awareness Month — a critical reminder that stroke is preventable, treatable, and beatable.

This is where preventive screening becomes a powerful tool in the fight against stroke.

Early Detection With Ultrasound Carotid Screening From RAVE Imaging

One of the most effective — and underutilized — tools for stroke prevention is the carotid artery ultrasound screening. RAVE Imaging offers this non-invasive, painless scan to help individuals and their physicians detect early warning signs of stroke before a crisis occurs.

The carotid arteries run along both sides of the neck and are the primary blood supply to the brain. Over time, plaque — made up of fat, cholesterol, and calcium — can build up along arterial walls, a condition known as carotid artery stenosis. This narrowing restricts blood flow and significantly increases the likelihood of a clot breaking off and traveling to the brain, causing a stroke or a transient ischemic attack (TIA), sometimes called a "mini-stroke."

RAVE Imaging's Ultrasound Carotid Screening uses high-frequency sound waves to create detailed images of the carotid arteries, revealing the presence of plaque buildup and the degree of arterial narrowing — often long before symptoms appear. The procedure is quick, radiation-free, and requires no contrast dye or preparation. Results are reviewed by board-certified radiologists, and findings are shared promptly with the patient and their healthcare provider.

This type of proactive screening is particularly recommended for adults over 50, those with a history of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, or a family history of stroke or heart disease. Detecting carotid stenosis early allows patients and their doctors to take meaningful action — through lifestyle changes, medication, or in some cases, surgical intervention — before a stroke has the chance to occur.

This May, Take Action for Your Brain Health

National Stroke Awareness Month is more than a campaign — it is an invitation to act. Stroke does not discriminate by age, gender, or background, but knowledge and prevention can level the playing field. Scheduling a carotid artery ultrasound screening with RAVE Imaging is a concrete, accessible step that could reveal hidden risks and, ultimately, save your life or the life of someone you love.

Talk to your doctor about whether a carotid ultrasound screening is right for you, or contact RAVE Imaging directly to schedule your appointment. Because when it comes to stroke, the best time to find out about your risk is before it becomes an emergency.

RAVE is Happy to Announce Our ***MAY Community Health Self-Pay Special*** - Ultrasound Carotid Screening self-pay: $245.00

Carotid Ultrasound is a quick, non-invasive test that checks the arteries in your neck for blockages or narrowing, which could increase your stroke risk. Early detection allows you to address potential issues before they become serious. Stay proactive about your health and reduce your risk of stroke with a Carotid Ultrasound today at Rave.

RAVE IMAGING

www.raverad.com

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SARASOTA
3501 Cattlemen Road
Sarasota, FL 34223
Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm

WHY SINGLE SENIORS FLOURISH IN SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES

Research has shown what most of us already intuitively know: After your 20s, it gets difficult to make friends, let alone find someone to date and/or marry. This issue usually gets tougher as we age. Although perceptions are slowly but surely changing, most of our culture and social activities are still built around couples. However, surrounding yourself with people of a similar life stage who share your interests increases your chances of forming new relationships.

That's why many single seniors are considering senior living communities like Freedom Village of Bradenton. This article will look at our retirement lifestyle and show you how communities like ours make building relationships easier.

WHAT IS INDEPENDENT LIVING?

Senior independent living is a term used to describe a maintenance-free community designed exclusively for older adults. They also typically feature a variety of activities and amenities and services like:

- Fully-equipped fitness center with fitness classes and wellness programs
- Heated indoor pool
- Lifelong learning opportunities
- On-campus shows and concerts
- Arts and crafts studio
- Woodworking shop

BENEFITS OF SENIOR LIVING FOR SINGLE SENIORS

Senior living communities provide a range of advantages you might not be able to get staying in your current home. Senior living can make it easier and more convenient to live the life you want. Some benefits include:

More social opportunities: For isolated seniors, senior living communities have calendars filled with social activities, classes, interest groups and clubs, outings, lifelong learning discussions and more. They also have a welcoming committee to help new residents meet people. So, you're sure to find others who share your goals and interests.

Maintenance-free lifestyle: Independent living communities have a variety of helpful services and thoughtful amenities to give you the freedom to do more of what you want and less of what you don't. So let our talented staff handle the housekeeping, indoor and outdoor maintenance and even the cooking.

Community of support: Many senior living communities offer support groups and spiritual services. These circles of support often develop organically through continual social interactions.

Right-sized residences: Most senior living communities offer studio and one-bedroom senior apartments that are the perfect size for a single person. Once you compare the cost of living in your current residence with everything you get at a retirement community, you'll also find it's more affordable than you think.

DISCOVER THE SINGULAR FREEDOM OF FREEDOM VILLAGE

If you're looking for a group of active older adults who share your interest in getting more out of life, consider attending one of our free luncheons to learn more. Call us today at 941-798-8122 to arrange a personal visit to our beautiful campus and we'll be happy to show you around our beautiful community, where you can meet with one of our residency counselors and some of our residents to learn more.

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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/

Natural Healing Arts Medical Center

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.

To schedule your consultation, please call (941) 761-4994 or visit myofficeinfo.com.

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Back Pain Institute of West Florida
5221 26th Street West, **Bradenton**, Florida 34207
7345 International Place, Suite 101 **Lakewood Ranch**, Sarasota 34240

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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.

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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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FINDING RHYTHM IN A RUSHED WORLD

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

In our fast-paced culture, calendars overflow, to-do lists never end, and we race from one commitment to the next. We long for weekends only to collapse before Monday's demands return. Many of us live as prisoners of the clock, pushing ourselves to burnout. But what if this isn't how we were designed to live?

God built rest into our very DNA. Science confirms we need roughly eight hours of sleep per 24-hour cycle—about one-third of our lives in "recharge mode." The ancient practice of Sabbath, rooted in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11), reminds us that even the Creator rested after six days of work—not because He needed to, but to model a healthy rhythm for us.

Jesus affirmed this truth: *"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath"* (Mark 2:27). Rest isn't a luxury or sign of laziness; it's a gift that sustains us physically, mentally, and spiritually.

We need to rest our body. Downtime boosts health, focus, productivity, and creativity. Yet, too often we stay "always on," tethered to devices that steal our recovery time. Turn them off. Protect one full day each week as a true Sabbath—clear of obligations. Embrace simplicity by eliminating clutter and unnecessary commitments. Prioritize family over endless striving for more money or success. Practice contentment, remembering that life doesn't consist in an abundance of possessions (Luke 12:15).

As the Harvard Business Review notes, silence and breaks restore the nervous system and help us navigate complex demands. Don't feel guilty for a "do nothing" day—sleep in, stay in pajamas, and recharge. Your body was designed for it.

We need to rest our minds. Racing thoughts, anxiety, and mental overload plague many of us. The Apostle Paul offers a powerful antidote in Philippians 4:4-9: rejoice, pray instead of worrying, and focus on what is true, noble, pure, and lovely. Shift from negativity and over-responsibility to trust in God.

Jesus modeled healthy boundaries by withdrawing from crowds to pray and recover (Matthew 14:23). Adopt Rick Warren's rhythm: divert daily (a short walk, music, reading, or hobby), withdraw weekly (a full recharge day), and abandon annually (a real vacation). Even simple acts like playing piano—switching songs freely—create mental space. As Mozart observed, the beauty of music lies in the rests between notes. The same holds for life.

We need rest for our souls. True, deep rest comes from surrender. Jesus invites the weary: *"Come to me... and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me... and you will find rest for your souls"* (Matthew 11:28-30). When we relinquish control and trust God with our worries—finances, health, relationships, future—we experience supernatural peace.

King David, no stranger to stress, declared, *"In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety"* (Psalm 4:8). We cannot control everything, but we can entrust everything to a sovereign, loving God.

You are important—but not that important. The world will keep spinning if you step off the treadmill. Schedule rest intentionally. Protect your Sabbath. Divert, withdraw, and abandon. Most importantly, come to the One who offers soul-deep rest.

Your body, mind, and spirit will thank you. In the silence between the notes, you just might rediscover the abundant life for which you were created.

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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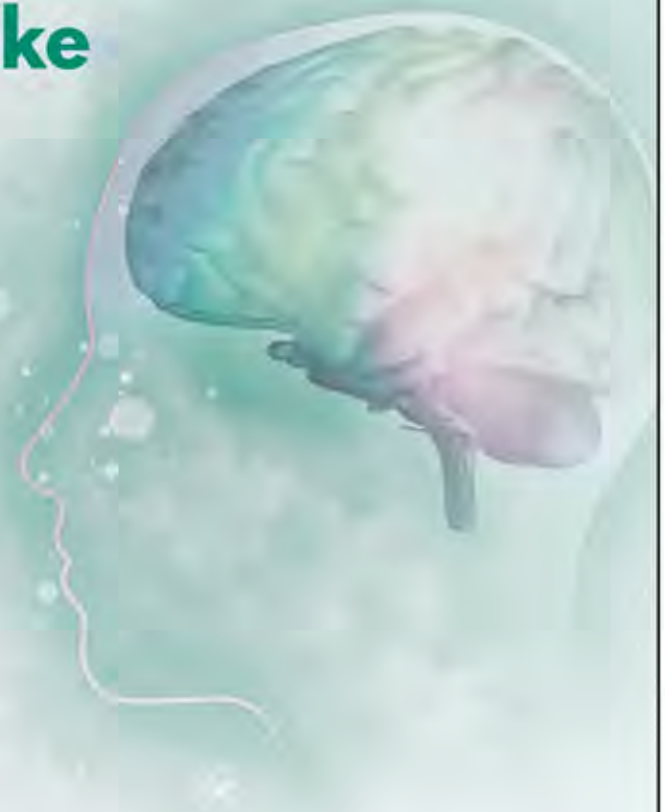

The rapid-response Stroke Alert Team at the Stroke and Cerebrovascular Center at Manatee Memorial Hospital encounters stroke emergencies every day. Do your part by learning to identify the signs and let us do the rest.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report over 795,000 people have a stroke each year in the United States. Know the signs of a possible stroke: **BE FAST.**

B **Balance:** Sudden loss of balance, dizziness or difficulty walking.

E **Eyes:** Vision problems in one or both eyes, including blurriness or double vision.

F **Face:** Drooping or numbness on one side of the face. Ask the person to smile – is their smile uneven?

A **Arms:** Weakness or numbness in one arm. Ask them to raise both arms – does one drift downward?

S **Speech:** Slurred or garbled speech. Ask them to repeat a simple sentence – do they struggle?

T **Time:** Time is crucial, call 911 immediately.

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