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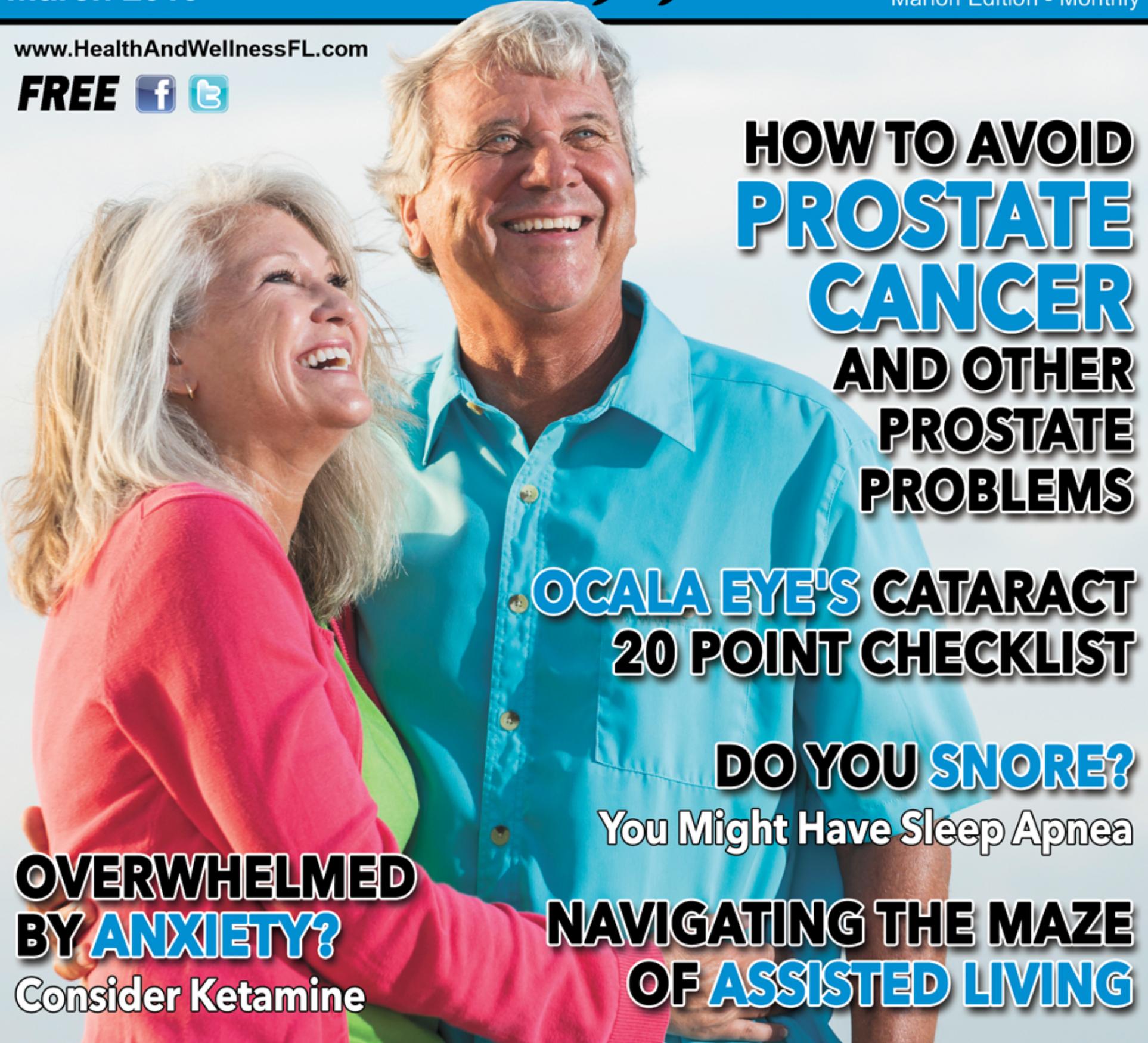
# Health & Wellness<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE

March 2019

Marion Edition - Monthly

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**HOW TO AVOID  
PROSTATE  
CANCER  
AND OTHER  
PROSTATE  
PROBLEMS**

**OCALA EYE'S CATARACT  
20 POINT CHECKLIST**

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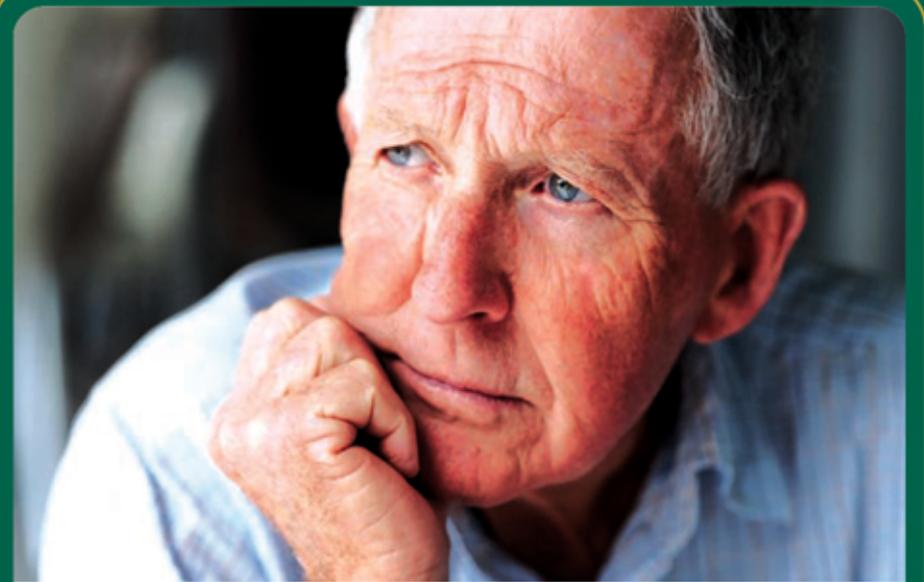
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# COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY OF THE ABDOMEN/PELVIS

**C**omputed Tomography, also called a CT or “CAT scan,” is an accurate, noninvasive diagnostic test in which a series of exceptionally thin (5mm) images are taken of internal organs, soft tissues and blood vessels. CT’s ability to capture fine details makes it especially helpful when examining organs in the abdominal region, including the liver, kidneys, upper areas of the small and large intestines, pancreas, stomach, adrenal glands and spleen, and the pelvis, which houses the lower small and large intestines, bladder, sigmoid colon and prostate gland in men.

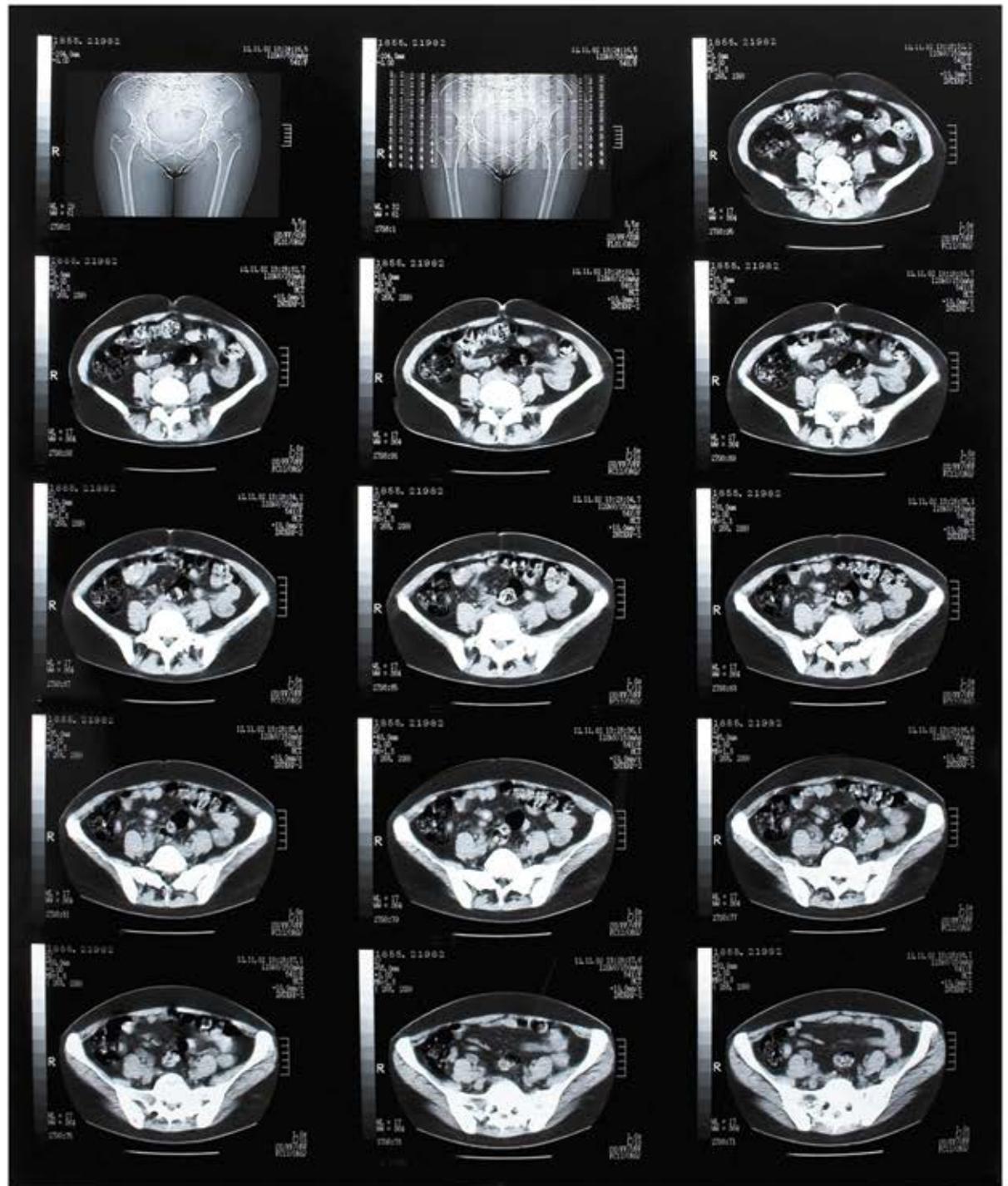
Doctors refer patients to have an abdominal or pelvic CT in order to discover the presence, location and severity of a variety of diseases and disorders. “Some of the most common issues are infection, kidney stones, inflammatory bowel disease, abdominal abscesses and certain cancers,” says radiologist Dr. John Cain. “CT is also used to detect specific vascular disorders, which, when caught and treated in time, may prevent serious problems like stroke and kidney failure.” When disease is present, CT is often used to assist in guided biopsy, avoiding the risks associated with exploratory surgery.

CT is a quick, outpatient test, usually taking only 5-10 minutes. In certain cases, contrast material may be needed, but even then the test typically takes only 20-30 minutes, so you’re in and out in no time. The test itself is easy. You simply lie still on a table while the CT scanner passes over the area being studied and captures a series of images, which are sent to a computer for your radiologist to examine.

“Our technologists are nationally registered, licensed by the state and rigorously trained in advanced CT technology,” says radiologist Dr. Caleb Rivera. “Our Board Certified radiologists examine all results in-house, meaning we never send images out for someone else to interpret. Patients remain within our care from beginning to end, and we consult directly with referring doctors when making a diagnosis.”

“CT imaging is painless and super fast,” says radiologist Dr. John Scales. “It produces images so rapidly that it can be used to discover internal injuries, aneurysms and bleeding quickly enough to save lives. It is enormously useful in helping us diagnose and prevent the worsening of a wide variety of problems.”

RAO offers CT scanning with a doctor’s referral at its Medical Imaging Center and TimberRidge Imaging Center.



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— John M. Cain, MD & John S. Scales, MD

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A FULL CIRCLE OF CARE CENTERED ON YOU.

# How to Avoid Prostate Cancer and Other Prostate Problems

If you are a man approaching middle age, make it a priority to get to know, love, and care for your prostate. Ignore this little organ at your peril! Roughly half the male population of North America and Western Europe will have enlarged prostates by their mid-50s. And prostate cancer remains frighteningly common.

## What is the Prostate?

The prostate is a gland, about the size of a walnut, found just below a man's bladder. It releases seminal fluid, and during orgasm, contracts to allow ejaculation. Unfortunately, as men age, the prostate often enlarges, sometimes up to four times the size it would be in a healthy 20-year-old. This is largely the consequence of natural hormonal changes, especially the decreasing levels of testosterone and its conversion into DHT.

## Tips to Avoid Prostate Trouble

Prostate trouble can be distressing (having to get up three or four times a night to urinate, suffering from unwanted leakage at work, and so on), as can the medical examinations and treatments. To avoid these problems, not to mention prostate cancer, try the following:

### 1) Exercise Regularly.

Exercise helps boost the immune system and reduce stress. But make your exercise gentle. Do not take up cycling or riding horses, as these activities can damage the prostate. Yoga is particularly good. If you attend a class, ask your teacher if there are any exercises she would recommend, especially those that target the pelvic area.

### 2) Reduce the amount of eggs you consume.

Researchers at Harvard University conducted a study into 1,000 men in the early stages of prostate cancer. They found that those who ate an egg a day doubled the risk of their cancer metastasizing. The culprit is thought to be a compound known as choline. According to Dr. Michael Greger,



an American physician and author of How Not to Die, who quotes from the Harvard study in his book, choline may also increase your chances of developing prostate cancer in the first place.

### 3) Eat plenty of seeds.

Sunflower, sesame, pumpkin, and above all, flaxseeds are all good for the prostate. They are packed with essential fats, but more importantly, they contain zinc, which is vital for a healthy prostate. Flaxseeds are also packed with lignans, proven to slow the growth of prostate cancer cells in petri dishes and possibly in human bodies as well.

### 4) Eat lots of tomatoes.

Tomatoes contain lycopene, a substance known to prevent prostate cancer. But to enjoy maximum benefit, you need to cook them, as the lycopene is

released when tomatoes are heated. Since garlic and olive oil are also good for the prostate, try frying tomatoes in a small amount of good-quality olive oil along with chopped garlic. If you prefer not to fry them, you can grill or even bake them.

### 5) Take a zinc supplement.

Zinc supplements have been shown to slow benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH), a condition which involves the enlargement of the prostate. Zinc interferes with the conversion of testosterone into DHT, a hormonal trigger for prostate enlargement. And zinc deficiency is common among those diagnosed with prostate problems. However, make sure you buy a good quality brand.

### 6) Take a turmeric supplement.

Turmeric, hailed by some as nature's wonder drug, may also have benefits for the prostate. Curcumin, found in turmeric, is thought to inhibit the compounds responsible for prostate enlargement. Those who take turmeric supplements also reduce their risk of incontinence and urinary infection. When the prostate goes wrong, it tends to become swollen and inflamed; turmeric is a well-known anti-inflammatory.

### 7) Take a PSA test.

This stands for Prostate Specific Antigen. If your PSA levels are elevated, this may mean your prostate is becoming enlarged; it may even indicate the early stages of cancer.

Difficulties with the prostate are so common that most men will experience them at some point, even if it is merely the annoyance of having to urinate several times a night. Unfortunately, modern medicine is still far too reactive. In other words, the medical establishment waits for you to get sick, then treats you. The key is to not get sick in the first place. And that is especially true of the prostate.



# LIFESTYLE CHOICES HELP PREVENT CANCER

Diet, exercise and getting recommended screenings can lessen your risk of cancer.

According to the National Institutes of Health, certain lifestyle choices can lessen the chances an individual has of developing cancer. However, even though most Americans know that choices such as quitting smoking, protecting skin from sun damage, eating a healthy diet, exercising more and getting the recommended screenings reduce the risk of cancer, following these recommendations can often be difficult. Although targeted treatments for cancer have improved survival rates, and there are more breakthroughs on the horizon, the best option for most of us is still prevention.

## SKIN CANCER AFFECTS 1 IN 5 AMERICANS

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. The two most common types of skin cancer, called basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas, are highly curable. Melanoma, the third most common skin cancer, is much more dangerous.

By now, most people know that a sunscreen should be used when they are going to be outdoors, even for a short period of time. However, not all sunscreens are created equally. For maximum protection, oncologists recommend a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or greater, regardless of skin color or ethnicity. Other recommendations include avoiding tanning beds or sunlamps and examining your skin, head to toe, every month for any changes. You should also have a dermatologist, or your primary care physician examine your skin annually.

## SMOKING AND CANCER

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), cigarette smoking is the number one risk factor for lung cancer. It's estimated that in the United States, smoking causes about 90% of lung cancers; smokers are 15-20% more likely to get lung cancer than non-smokers. Tobacco products such as cigars or pipes also increase the risk for lung cancer, as well as throat and mouth cancers. Even smokeless tobacco has been proven to increase the risk of oral cancer, throat cancer, stomach and pancreatic cancer.

## ANOTHER REASON TO STOP SMOKING – BLADDER CANCER

Bladder cancer is the 5th most commonly diagnosed cancer in the U.S. This year, it is estimated nearly 15,000 people will die from the disease. But here's a real shocker; people who smoke are four times as prone to the malignancy as nonsmokers – especially women. About half of all bladder cancer cases in women age 50 and older are



now traceable to smoking. In addition, current smokers are four times as likely to develop bladder cancer as people who have never smoked.

## THE ROLE OF DIET IN PREVENTING CANCER

Although no particular food or diet product can prevent cancer, there is growing evidence that diet can play a significant role in some types of cancer. For example, studies have found a higher incidence of prostate cancer in men whose diets are high in fats, particularly animal fats, and low in vegetables. Likewise, 30-40% of certain types of breast cancer have been linked to what we eat, especially if our diet is a contributing factor to obesity. A diet that is high in fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains, and low in animal fat, processed foods and sugar, are generally considered healthier and can boost your immune system to help fight diseases such as cancer.

## REDUCE YOUR CANCER RISK WITH HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES

Each year, over half a million Americans die of cancer; the startling news is that about one-third to one-half of these deaths are linked to lifestyle choices and, potentially, could have been prevented. Start reducing your risk of cancer by making these choices in your life:

- Get to and stay at a healthy weight throughout life.
- Be physically active on a regular basis.
- Make healthy food choices with a focus on plant-based foods.
- Stop smoking – or better yet, never start.
- Wear sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.
- Get recommended screenings such as colonoscopies, PAP smears and mammograms.
- Let your doctor know if there is a family history of cancer.

## World-Class Cancer Treatment Close to Home

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) has put together a network of expert, board-certified physicians who bring world-class cancer treatments to local communities, both large and small, across the state. With nearly 100 locations, FCS is the largest independent oncology/hematology group in the United States. That status puts the practice on the leading edge of clinical trial research and gives FCS physicians access to the newest, most innovative treatments.

Florida Cancer Specialists treats patients with all types of cancer, and offers a number of services, such as an in-house specialty pharmacy, an in-house pathology lab, and financial counselors at every location, all that deliver the most advanced and personalized care in your local community.



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# Navigating the Maze of Assisted Living

**S**electing an assisted living community can be a daunting task. Much like finding the perfect house, choosing the right assisted living residence requires a thorough inventory of your loved one's wants and needs, doing research, taking tours, and asking for guidance along the way.

Today's assisted living communities often offer residents a robust menu of personal care services and activities. However, because the offerings vary so widely, it is critical to do your homework. Rest assured that whether you are searching for yourself or for your parents, we can help you navigate the maze.

## List Your Wants and Needs

Start by compiling a list of needs and preferences. A 100% match might be impossible to find, so consider prioritizing the list. If you are doing this for your parents, try using a series of short visits with your parents and siblings to develop the list.

## Here are some questions to think about:

- Is it important to be near friends or relatives?
- Is a small or large community preferred?
- How much and what type of personal care services are needed?
- What activities and amenities are of interest?
- Do you want a community that will allow you to "age in place" by offering a comprehensive range of services that can address additional needs in the future, so you can avoid another move later on?

## Do Your Research

Next, compile a list of assisted living communities in the geographic areas you prefer. Look in the phone book, on the Internet, ask people you know you have been through this process, and check with local elderly services organizations.

As you conduct your research, consider who owns the community. Are they financially stable, able to invest in the staffing, programming, and capital improvements? Are they experienced operating assisted living facilities? Do they have a good reputation? You should find that a few places such as Canterfield of Ocala rise to the top of the list.





### Visit the Communities

The most important part of the decision-making process is visiting the places that match the needs and wants you outlined. It's a good idea to limit your visits to no more than two communities in one day. As you tour, be prepared with a list of questions. Also take notes so you can remember which places had certain aspects that really impressed or bothered you.

Request an activities calendar and ask about excursions to shopping malls or community events. If possible, have lunch there with some of the current residents. Visit the facilities more than once and at varying times of the day to get a complete feel for the lifestyle at the community. During these visits, talk with staff members and residents.

### Make the Right Choice for You

Finally, meet again as a family group to review the choices and rate how they stack up against your

checklist. As you compare costs, be sure you understand what the care packages include, what additional fees or costs may be assessed, and what funding options they offer. There is no exact science to choosing an assisted living community, but careful research and informed decisions will help you find a place that you will be glad to call home.

Care comes with just the right amount of comfort at Canterfield of Ocala, where we have an abundance of ways to make life more enjoyable – from help with daily activities to incredible meals and attentive personal service. Here, assisted living is not just a program, it is a philosophy. Residents enjoy private, luxurious living- with all the personalized care and attention they need to thrive.

### About The Chef

*Chef Robert O'Brien began his career in culinary arts in the US Army in 1976. He spent several years in the military learning new culinary techniques abroad and in the US as a Staff Sergeant. When Robert finished serving our country, he started a new culinary career path in Tampa in a fine dining restaurant as a sous chef, learning from a master chef for 21 years. He relocated to Las Vegas, NV as a master cook and worked alongside numerous world-class chefs. After moving back to Florida, Robert put his extensive cooking experience to great use and began working for an independent and assisted living facility. Fast forward to today, and Chef O'Brien is using his 40 years of chef-inspired talents to serve Canterfield of Ocala, where he is able to bring world-class cuisine to the residents that he considers family.*

### Staff

*Canterfield of Ocala's team of talented, compassionate nurses and personal care staff provide care 24-hours each day, seven days a week. They design a personalized and individualized service plan with each resident who receives personal care. Through the efforts of their Director of Nursing, care will be coordinated to include a full range of home health, physician and rehabilitation services, allowing residents to remain in the setting they now call "home." To further ensure the continuity of meeting your healthcare needs, Canterfield has worked to establish relationships with hospitals, skilled nursing, and allied health services in the local area.*

*When you or a loved one are choosing to join an exclusive environment of individuals that benefit from living services, there is no better option for you to make, other than deciding on Canterfield of Ocala as your new home.*

*To schedule a private tour, please contact Canterfield of Ocala today at 352-877-7100.*

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## TRAGEDY STRIKES AN OCALA FIREMAN'S FAMILY

One of the first product liability cases John Piccin handled in Ocala stemmed from a horror story that happened on Bicentennial Weekend in July, 1976. The fireman and his wife and two small children were at home, getting ready to go to a Bicentennial picnic. Their six year old daughter, Melanie, wanted to get in the family station wagon with her blanket and pillow. She asked her Mom for the keys to the family station wagon so she could settle in the back of the station wagon and wait for the others to join her. Melanie's Mom gave her the keys and Melanie went outside with her blanket and pillow.

After a short while, the father asked Mom where Melanie was and upon checking outside, they were heart-struck to see that Melanie had been strangled to death by the station wagon's rear door (tailgate) electric window.

Melanie had put the key in the spring loaded key-lock cylinder in the rear-door and turned the key to lower the rear-door electric window. Melanie then climbed into the rear-door window opening and placed her blanket and pillow inside. Since it had just started to rain, Melanie reached over the bottom of the window opening and turned the key, which was still in the key-lock cylinder, the opposite way in order to raise the rear-door window. With the key turned to raise the window, the key-lock cylinder stuck, and the window continued on its upward path, strangling Melanie.

After a period of mourning, the parents consulted John who was then an insurance defense lawyer with an Ocala law firm. John had spent five years of his earlier practice as a member of the General Motors Corporation Legal Staff in Detroit, defending product liability cases throughout the U.S. He saw that this kind of tragedy does not happen without a product defect of some sort. John took on the case and sued the manufacturer of the station wagon which was another major Detroit auto manufacturer. Under Florida product liability law, a retailer is also liable for injuries caused by a defective product because the retailer put the defective product in circulation. This law is favorable to consumers, especially when a foreign manufacturer cannot be identified or has gone out of business.

The auto manufacturer denied liability. John pursued the manufacturer with a barrage of very detailed "discovery"—interrogatories, which are written questions the defendant has to answer under oath, and depositions, which are face-to-face interrogations under oath.

After objecting to interrogatories and questions during depositions, and being ordered to answer by the Judge in charge of the case, the auto manufacturer disclosed that it had been sued five years earlier for the death of another little girl, in very similar circumstances, in the State of Washington. The manufacturer had settled that case, and then sued the key-lock cylinder manufacturer in an attempt to get its money back, claiming, correctly, that the key-lock cylinder had stuck because it was manufactured out of specifications.

The station wagon manufacturer also did something very stupid! It used the same in-house engineer expert witness in our Ocala case as it had used in the earlier case against the key-lock cylinder manufacturer in which it had claimed that the key-lock cylinder was defective. In other words, the same in-house auto company engineer who had claimed that the key-lock cylinder was defective in the auto company's case against the key-lock manufacturer, claimed that the same key-lock cylinder model was just fine in the later Ocala case. Once John got his hands on that engineer's deposition from the earlier case, it was all downhill for the station wagon manufacturer.

The last remaining problem was that the station wagon manufacturer was in bad financial shape and was threatening to file for Bankruptcy Court protection. At the same time it was struggling to secure financing in order to carry on.

The case was finally settled shortly before trial for a confidential sum.

The deposition of Melanie's father was the saddest deposition John has ever experienced! On a brighter note, John was pleased with the fact that at the end of the case, when the Ocala Judge was approving the settlement, the Judge told those in attendance that John had done an outstanding job of pursuing the damning history behind the defective key-lock cylinder and its being sold to the public by



the auto manufacturer. John was mainly gratified by being able to exact at least monetary compensation for the survivors of this unspeakable loss.

Legal experience and dogged persistence are usually the key to obtaining a good result in a case against the manufacturer of a defective product.

If you or a loved one, or a friend, has been injured by a defective product, call John or his daughter and law partner, Katie Glynn, for a free consultation. (352) 351-5446, at 320 NW Third Avenue, Ocala, FL 34475 since 1981.



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# DO YOU SNORE?

## YOU MIGHT HAVE SLEEP APNEA

Restful sleep is attainable and very important for your health.

**M**ost people know that getting restful sleep every night is important and that getting eight hours of sleep is ideal. What many people do not realize is that a lack of sleep—especially on a regular basis—is associated with long-term health consequences, including chronic medical conditions like obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease, and that these conditions may lead to a shortened life expectancy.

### Obesity

Several studies have linked insufficient sleep to weight gain and higher than average body mass index (BMI). Lack of restful sleep is now considered a risk factor for obesity. During sleep our bodies secrete hormones that help control appetite, energy metabolism, and glucose processing. Obtaining too little sleep interferes with the balance of these and other hormones.

### Diabetes

Insufficient sleep may lead to type 2 diabetes by influencing the way the body processes glucose, the high-energy carbohydrate that cells use for fuel. Researchers have correlated obstructive sleep apnea with the development of impaired glucose control similar to that which occurs in diabetes. Numerous studies have revealed that adults who usually get less than hours of uninterrupted restful sleep each night have a greatly increased risk of having or developing diabetes.

### High Blood Pressure and Heart Disease

Studies have found that a single night of inadequate sleep in people who have existing hypertension can cause elevated blood pressure throughout the following day. This effect may begin to explain the strong correlation between poor sleep, cardiovascular disease and stroke. There is growing evidence of a connection between obstructive sleep apnea and heart disease.

In addition to sleep disturbances, apnea sufferers also experience brief surges in blood pressure each time they wake up. Over time, this can lead

to the chronic elevation of blood pressure known as hypertension, which is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Fortunately, when sleep apnea is treated, blood pressure may go down.

A sleep disorder such as obstructive sleep apnea plays an important role in not only the affected person's health but their bed partner's as well.

### Sleep Apnea

If you or your loved one suffers with sleep apnea, you are likely to awaken night after night from the irritating sound of snoring. Besides making life unpleasant for others, snoring may be an indicator of Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA).

For some people, the relaxation of the muscles during sleep allows the base of the tongue to fall backward against the throat, which can constrict the airway and cause snoring. OSA is the complete stoppage of breathing for short intervals due to this constriction of the upper-airway. OSA has been proven to cause high blood pressure and in some cases even death.

### The trouble with CPAP

Continuous Positive Air Pressure (CPAP) is the most common sleep apnea treatment, however, it is also the least tolerated treatment type. While CPAP is successful when used properly, many patients have trouble complying with the directives, leaving only 23-45% of patients to actually have success with the CPAP method. CPAP machines are difficult to stick with because the device requires the use of a mask over the nose and mouth and must be worn each night, not to mention the considerable noise the machine produces. In actuality, many people who use CPAP wear it for 4 hours or less per night.

  
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Other CPAP problems include face breakouts from the straps, eye and nasal irritation, mouth dryness, runny nose and sore throat. Patients with allergies, patients who tend to breathe through their mouth, and patients who sleep on their stomachs may find CPAP difficult as well. Not to mention, traveling with a CPAP machine is not an easy feat. Patients who have tried CPAP and found it not to be a good treatment for them frequently benefit from oral appliance therapy.

### What can a small dental appliance do for you?

Fortunately, a small custom fabricated dental appliance can be equally as effective as a CPAP and much less intrusive. These FDA-approved devices essentially treat Obstructive Sleep Apnea by preventing the obstruction and allowing the patient to breathe easily and continuously. The first sign of sleep apnea is often tooth grinding (also called bruxism). Dentists look for worn tooth surfaces, a sign that a patient grinds his or her teeth. Grinding can cause tooth wear and breakage as well as inflamed and receding gums. A spike in cavities can also be a sign of grinding because the force damages teeth, making them susceptible to cavity-causing bacteria. Grinding is just one oral health sign of sleep apnea. A tongue with scalloped edges, or redness in the throat (caused by snoring, which is another previously discussed symptom of sleep apnea) are also signs. A custom-made guard can reduce grinding -- and the cavities, headaches, and jaw pain it causes -- and help with sleep apnea. Worn in the mouth like an orthodontic appliance during sleep, oral appliances keep the soft tissue from collapsing and interrupting normal breathing patterns. The purpose of the oral appliance may be to reposition the lower jaw, tongue or soft palate to keep the airway open.

### Benefits of oral appliances

- Cure daytime fatigue
- Ensure a good night's sleep for you and your bed partner
- Help prevent heart disease, sudden cardiac death, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, depression, memory loss and even erectile dysfunction
- Help prevent accidents caused by excessive daytime sleepiness related to sleep apnea
- Small and compact, making it easy to travel with

Getting adequate restful sleep is important every night. Being well rested will allow you to fully enjoy your friends and family, as well as decrease your chances of developing the health problems discussed above. Call Ocala Dental Care at 352-237-6196 today to learn more about how a small oral appliance can help you tonight and every night.

# Ocala Eye's Cataract 20 Point Checklist

We encourage you to use this list when discussing cataract surgery with your optometrist or ophthalmologist.

## 1. A SKILLED SURGICAL TEAM

Choose a surgeon you trust, especially when it comes to experience. An experienced surgeon typically performs an average of eight cataract surgeries per week. In addition, their entire team should be made of highly trained ophthalmic professionals. Have they authored books and research papers? Do they lecture on cataract surgery? Do they receive referrals from other surgeons? Have they done surgery on other eye surgeons? Researching your surgeon on the web should easily answer these questions.

## 2. COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Your surgeon should fully explain what cataracts are, how they affect your vision, and what all of your options are. Get educated on these options so you can make the best decision for your life.

## 3. COMMITMENT TO DELIVERING THE WORLD'S BEST TECHNOLOGY

This can be hard for a patient to evaluate, but it is critical. The most important thing is that the surgeon is comfortable with all the state-of-the-art technology that goes into cataract surgery. This includes the femtosecond laser, wavefront analysis, intraoperative aberrometry, topography and a variety of lens types that go in the eye. These technologies will help to determine which lens is best for your eye.

## 4. TEAR FILM ANALYSIS

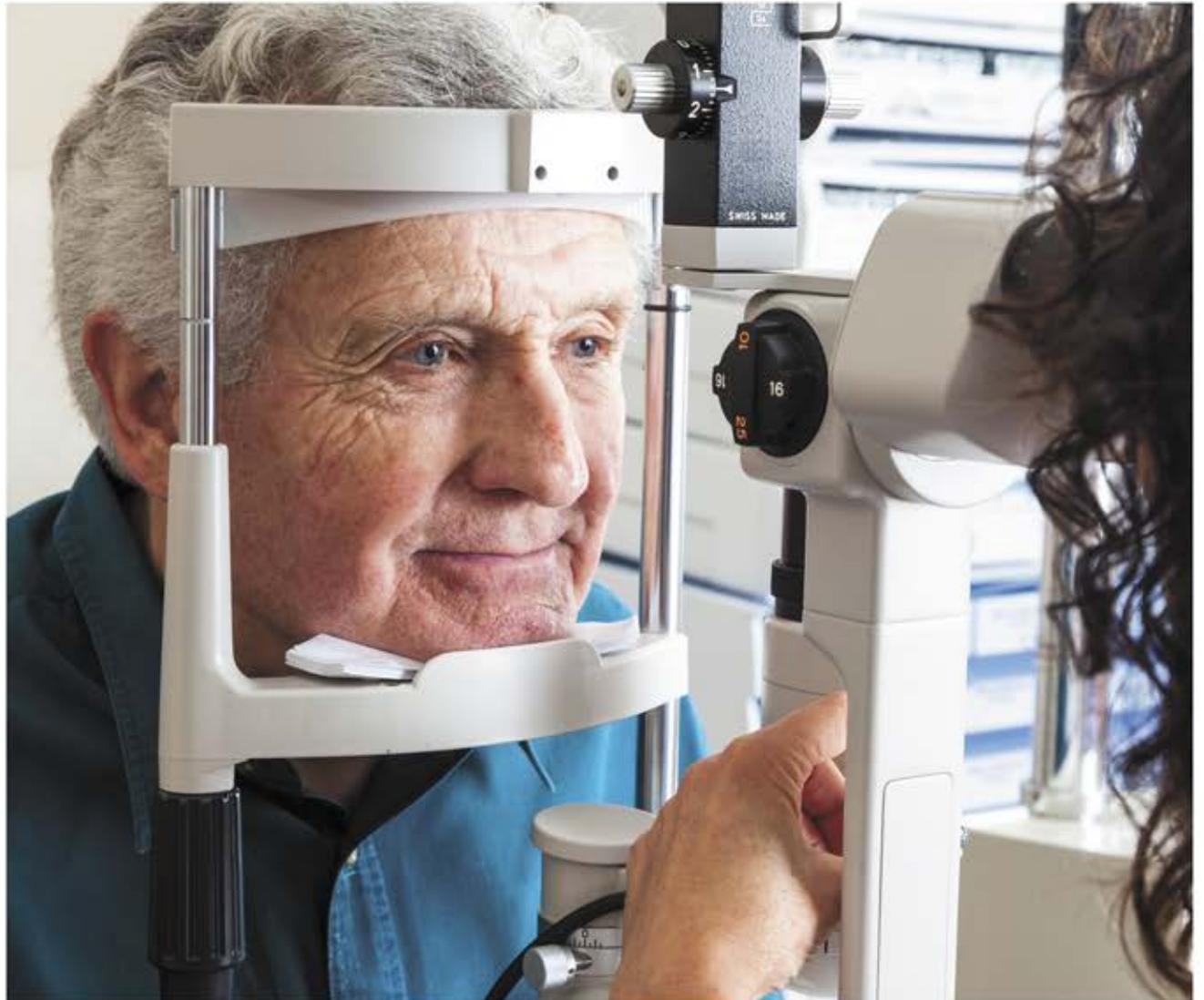
A healthy tear film contributes to crisp vision. An unhealthy tear film contributes to blurry vision. If this important layer is unhealthy, it can be treated to maximize vision after cataract surgery.

## 5. ADVANCED RETINAL ANALYSIS WITH OCT

For the best vision results after cataract surgery, the retina needs to be healthy. OCT provides a highly magnified view of important retina structures to maximize the health assessment of the retina.

## 6. ADVANCED CORNEAL ANALYSIS

The cornea provides about 70% of the focusing power of the eye because of its curvature. This curvature needs to be smooth for sharp vision; if it's irregular, it can lead to irregular vision. Your surgeon should use technology like the Nidek OPDIII Topography, Pentacam or other topographers to measure corneal curvature and thickness, then qualify their relationship.



## 7. CORNEAL ENDOTHELIAL ANALYSIS

The corneal endothelium is the layer on the backside of the cornea; microscopically, it looks like a honeycomb. This layer is constantly pumping water out of your cornea to keep it clear for crisp vision. If corneal thickness is increased, analyzing this layer determines if thickness is the cause of blurring alone or in combination with a cataract. Your surgeon should have the ability to perform this test.

## 8. PUPIL SIZE MEASUREMENTS FOR IMPLANT CUSTOMIZATION

Pupil size can vary from patient to patient, and certain implants are better for pupils of certain sizes. By measuring in dim and bright light, your surgeon can recommend the best implant for your pupils and occupational lighting situation. It is important to also know your glasses refraction in bright and dim light, so we understand if your night vision issues are related to cataracts or you need a different pair of nighttime glasses.

## 9. ANGLE IMAGING CAPABILITY

Fluid in the eye drains in the angle created where the cornea and the iris meet. If necessary, this angle can be imaged to see if you are at risk for a serious condition called angle-closure glaucoma, which can be caused by a thick cataract.

## 10. LENS ANALYSIS

The HD Analyzer uses sophisticated technology that performs density measurements of your natural lens where cataracts form. This is especially helpful when cataracts appear mild but vision is frustrating. Increased lens density or light scatter can help assess how much the cataract is affecting your vision.

## 11. WAVEFRONT ANALYSIS

Wavefront technology helps measure the optical properties of an eye to determine whether or not a cataract is the source of blurry vision. If this technology finds optical irregularities, there's an increased chance that a cataract is the cause of irregular vision.



**12. TOPICAL ANESTHESIA**

Advanced cataract surgeons typically only use numbing eye drops to avoid complications associated with numbing by a needle. It also provides the fastest recovery. Our anesthesia professionals provide relaxation medication to ensure your comfort.

**13. ADVANCED LENS POWER CONFIRMATION METHODS**

In the past, surgeons couldn't measure if an implant put in during surgery had the proper power until the next day. ORA with VerifEye is a revolutionary new technology that allows the surgeon to measure the optical power of the eye during surgery to maximize the accuracy of the procedure.

**14. ADVANCED CATARACT REMOVAL TECHNIQUES**

A cataract is removed through a small opening, which can be made in one of two ways: traditional manual cataract surgery (using a blade) or femto cataract surgery (using a laser). Your surgeon should offer both approaches.

**15. ADVANCED LENS CALCULATION METHODS**

Optical Biometry accurately measures the length of the eye, the curvature of the cornea and the distance between the cornea and the lens to help calculate the best implant power for your eye. For cataracts that are very dense, immersion A-scan capabilities serve as a very accurate double check of important implant measurements. Your surgeon should have access to both technologies.

**16. SMALL INCISION, NO STITCH SURGERY**

Most advanced cataract surgery is performed through an incision smaller than 3.0mm, and stitches are rarely necessary. These small, self-healing incisions maximize safety, minimize healing time and create less astigmatism.

**17. INTRAOCULAR LENS IMPLANT OPTIONS**

This may be the most important one. Some surgeons use only one or two lens implant options. However, new premium lenses can be customized to lessen your dependence on glasses, correct high levels of astigmatism or even eliminate glasses altogether. Choose a surgeon who can help you weigh all lens options, including traditional implants, aspheric implants, toric implants, multifocal implants and accommodating implants.

**18. LASER VISION CORRECTION CAPABILITIES + A REFRACTIVE MINDSET**

After cataract surgery, sometimes the eye needs laser vision correction adjustments. Your cataract surgeon should have a refractive mindset, taking into account the entire visual picture instead of just removing the cataract and putting a lens in place. In addition, your surgery center should offer laser vision correction technology including femtosecond flap creation, and advanced laser technology to reshape the cornea using either the VISX Custom laser technology or the WaveLight excimer laser technology.

**19. A CONVENIENT TIMELINE**

Patients can become anxious waiting for an upcoming surgery. Choose a surgeon with a system that allows you to have surgery within a month so you can get on with life.

**20. TRACKED OUTCOMES**

Surgeons who carefully track their outcomes can confidently inform patients of the results, continually refine techniques and critically evaluate new technologies. Tools such as proprietary tracking software allow the surgeon to carefully track outcomes and provides ideal alignment of the lens at the time of surgery.

The Ocala Eye Surgery Center, wholly owned by the partners of Ocala Eye, is the area's largest stand-alone ambulatory surgery center dedicated exclusively to surgery of the eye. Certified by the AAAHC, the Ocala Eye Surgery Center has been nationally recognized as a center of excellence.

Ocala Eye is a patient-centered practice, with all of the decisions made based on the patient's benefit and well-being. Their patients' satisfaction reflects this philosophy. Ocala Eye has a passion for providing the highest level of complete eye care and aesthetic services.



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**THE OCALA EYE TEAM**

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- Mark A. Jank, M.D.
- John S. Deaton, D.O.
- Michael Morris, M.D., F.A.C.S.
- Peter J. Polack, M.D., F.A.C.S.
- Jodie A. Armstrong, M.D., F.A.C.S.
- Mohammed K. ElMallah, M.D.
- Hina N. Ahmed, M.D.
- Hussain Elhalis, M.D.
- Vishwanath Srinagesh, M.D.

**Optometrists:**

- Kathryn Mar Jip Pomakis, O.D.
- Charles F. Paglia, O.D.
- Vivi Fretland, O.D.

**Retina Specialists:**

- Chander N. Samy, M.D., F.A.C.S.
- Robert J. Kraut, M.D.

**Accepting New Patients!**

- Oculoplastic Surgeon:**  
Sarah Kim, D.O.



# Overwhelmed by Anxiety? Consider Ketamine.

By Eric Milbrandt, MD, MPH

**O**ccasional anxiety is part of life. Many feel anxious when faced with a new project at work, before taking a test, or when making important decisions. I felt anxiety as the deadline approached to write this article. This type of anxiety can be unpleasant, but it may motivate you to work harder and to do a better job. **Anxiety disorders**, however, involve more than temporary worry, stress, or fear. For those with an anxiety disorder, the anxiety does not go away and often gets worse over time. The presence of an anxiety disorder is a risk factor for the development of other anxiety and mood disorders, substance abuse, and risk of suicide. The symptoms can interfere with daily activities such as job performance, school work, and relationships.

Anxiety disorders are some of the most common psychiatric conditions in the western world. In the United States, as many as one in five persons are affected. There are several types of anxiety disorders, including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and various phobia-related disorders. People with **generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)** display excessive anxiety or worry most days of the week about a variety of things, such as health, work, social interactions, and life circumstances. Symptoms include:

- Feeling restless, wound-up, or on-edge
- Being irritable
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty controlling feelings of worry
- Sleep problems
- Being easily fatigued
- Muscle tension

**Panic disorder** is the presence of recurrent unexpected panic attacks. Panic attacks are sudden periods of intense fear that come on quickly and reach their peak within minutes. Attacks can occur unexpectedly or can be brought on by a trigger, such as a feared object or situation. People with panic disorder often worry about when the next attack will happen and try to prevent future attacks by avoiding places, situations, or behaviors they associate with panic attacks. Symptoms of a panic attack include:

- Rapid, pounding heartbeat
- Sweating
- Trembling or shaking
- Feelings of shortness of breath, smothering, or choking
- A sense of impending doom
- Dry mouth
- Feeling out of control



A **phobia** is an intense fear of specific objects or situations. While it may be appropriate to be fearful in certain circumstances, the fear felt with a phobia is out of proportion to the actual danger posed by the object or situation. Common phobias are fear of flying, heights, snakes, needles, and blood. **Social anxiety disorder** involves an intense fear of social or performance situations. Those affected fear being negatively judged by or embarrassed in front of others. People with **agoraphobia** have an intense fear of public transportation, open spaces, enclosed spaces, crowds, or being alone outside the home.

#### What to do about anxiety?

There are a variety of treatment options for anxiety disorders. For some, medical treatment isn't necessary at all. Non-drug **lifestyle changes** can be an effective way to relieve stress and anxiety. These primarily involve self-care, such as:

- Getting enough sleep
- Avoiding caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco
- Exercising
- Meditating
- Eating a healthy diet

When lifestyle changes alone are not enough, treatment then falls into two additional categories, **psychotherapy** ("talk therapy") and **medication**. Working with a therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist, people can learn tools and strategies to deal with anxiety as it occurs. One such example is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which teaches people different ways of thinking, behaving, and reacting to anxiety-producing events.

Medications used to treat anxiety include antidepressants, benzodiazepines, and beta-blockers. Antidepressants take time to work, so it is important to give the medication a chance before deciding whether it works. In some people, antidepressants initially make anxiety worse before the brain gets used to their long-term calming effects. Benzodiazepines, such as Xanax or Klonopin, work quickly to control anxiety. However, benzodiazepine tolerance is common, and people often need ever increasing doses or become dependent on them. Beta-blockers are medications that reduce the physical feeling of anxiety by blocking the effects of adrenaline, thereby reducing heart rate, sweating, and tremor associated with anxiety-provoking events. Beta-blockers are particularly helpful in performance situations, such as public speaking.

Recently, two additional treatments for anxiety disorders are becoming popular, especially for those that fail to improve with lifestyle changes, counseling, and medication. **Cranial Electrotherapy Stimulation (CES)**



uses a small handheld device, such as Alpha-Stim, that delivers low-level electrical current via electrode clips that are applied to the earlobes. It can be effective for a variety of acute and chronic stress conditions.

**Low-dose ketamine** infusions, such as those provided by The Infusion Clinic of Ocala, can be valuable and highly effective for treating resistant cases of anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Ketamine is a medicine developed more than 50 years ago for anesthesia during surgery and other painful procedures. High-dose ketamine has been used safely for that purpose in children, adults, and animals for decades. About 15 years ago, medical researchers began studying low-dose ketamine infusions for treatment-resistant mood disorders, including anxiety disorders. Since then, studies have proven conclusively that the drug not only works but works quickly, providing significant and lasting relief within hours of the first infusion.

You can find out more about ketamine in the January issue of Health & Wellness Magazine (<https://tinyurl.com/y7sursfq>), online at <https://www.InfusionClinicOcala.com>, or by calling The Infusion Clinic of Ocala at (352) 325-5755.



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*Dr. Eric Milbrandt is owner of The Infusion Clinic of Ocala, located at 40 SW 1st Ave, Ocala, FL 34471. Dr. Milbrandt is a critical care medicine specialist with over 15 years of experience providing care to the sickest of hospitalized patients, including those with severe depression, anxiety, and PTSD. He is board certified in Critical Care Medicine, completed a fellowship in Quality Improvement and a Master of Public Health at Vanderbilt University. He is a graduate of The Ketamine Academy, a leading provider of comprehensive online training for all major aspects of ketamine therapy. The Infusion Clinic of Ocala provides both Alpha-Stim and low-cost ketamine infusions for the rapid treatment of anxiety, depression, PTSD, and chronic pain.*

# CBD: Multiple Health Benefits From Nature

**CBD (cannabidiol)** is also a viable alternative for many patients wanting the healing properties of cannabis and its potent antiviral and anti-inflammatory effects without the strict regulations of industrial hemp, AND without the psychoactive, mind-altering effects of THC.

CBD is known to bind to receptors and is thought to regenerate cells and brain function, while terpenes are the leafy green part of the plant that has countless healing properties. There is a synergistic effect that takes place when the compounds are combined.

There are numerous researched studies on the medical outcomes of utilizing Cannabis as a drug therapy in patients that have fibromyalgia, PTSD, anxiety, depression, epilepsy, cancer, dementia, autoimmune disorders, and many other conditions.

**CBD for Anxiety, Depression and Sleep Disorders**  
The structure of CBD interacts directly with our cells. Our natural endocannabinoid system works synergistically with cannabidiol, creating a multitude of beneficial reactions in the body. The endocannabinoid cells have tiny receptors that take in chemicals and produce responses. This natural system in our bodies regulates things like mood, sleeping, immunity, pleasure, memory and much more.

**CBD for Cancer**  
Whether the cancer treatment entails surgery, chemotherapy, radiation treatments, reconstructive surgery, or alternative therapies, the bottom line is that these individuals are sick! They are not feeling well and many times find it entirely overwhelming to function at all.

Some of the most common side effects of cancer treatment are pain, nausea, and vomiting, brain fog, extreme fatigue, loss of appetite, hormonal disruptions, weight gain, hot flashes, anxiety, and trouble sleeping. The good news is that CBD oil has the ability to alleviate some of the aforementioned symptoms. And it's also known to shrink cancer cells.

**CBD for Chronic Disease and Pain**  
Neuropathic pain syndromes are related to disorders such as diabetes, fibromyalgia, CRPS, Lyme disease and migraines to name a few. The most common treatment for chronic pain is narcotics.



Narcotics like Opioids are highly addictive, and our state is currently leading the country in abusing the drug and overdose episodes. The benefits from CBD oils are improved sleep, better mood, reduced pain, better appetite and a general improvement in quality of life without addictive drugs. For Diabetes specifically, CBD oil is proving to stabilize blood sugar, acts as an anti-inflammatory, improves circulation and reduce blood pressure.

**Your CBD Store** in Ocala provides CBD in various forms like oils, tinctures, edibles and much more. With CBD, the benefits are multifactorial. There is no THC, no need for a special doctor to register you to get the product, no hallucinations—There is, however, the advantage of alleviating pain, stress, anxiety, digestive disorders, and the list goes on and on. To find out more, please stop by Your CBD Store today!

\*CBD is not approved treatment for any of the conditions listed and has not been reviewed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. This is intended to be used as an herbal health supplement.



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# Childhood Obesity Can Cause Major Health Concerns Into Adulthood

**B**eing overweight can cause serious long-term health issues, but the statistics of childhood obesity are staggering. More than 100 million children worldwide are considered obese, and in the United States, 1 out of 3 children are diagnosed as clinically overweight.

Over the past few years, there has been nearly a 20% increase in the obesity rate of children and teens. This is calculated by the BMI (body mass index) of children being above the 85th percentile in comparison to children of the same sex and age in weight.

Why are so many kids having trouble with weight gain? Two major offenders are not being active enough and eating an unhealthy diet full of sugar, fat and complex carbohydrates.

Many children do not move enough throughout the day; they live sedentary lives, so much so that they can be equally compared to the inactivity level of older adults in their 60's and 70's. Some children sit in front of the television, computers, or play electronic gaming devices far more frequently throughout their day than they get exercise. They need more physical movement to burn calories adequately.

**Childhood obesity can lead to the following diseases and disorders:**

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Sleep apnea
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Arthritis
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Stroke

**We caught up with Dr. Otegbeye, a Pediatric Hospitalist with Leesburg Regional Medical Center (LRMC) to find out more about his concern and treatment for childhood obesity**



**Q: What health complications are likely for children with obesity?**

**A:** There are numerous health issues associated with childhood obesity like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, elevated blood cholesterol, liver disease (fatty liver), bone and joint problems, respiratory problems such as asthma, sleep disorders such as difficulty breathing while asleep (sleep apnea), earlier than normal puberty or menstruation.

Other psychological issues can be eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.

Obese children are more likely to be teased and bullied and more likely to bully others. They may have poor self-esteem and may feel socially isolated, have increased risk for depression, poorer social skills, high stress and anxiety, behavior and/or learning problems as a result of psychological difficulties related to childhood obesity.

**Q. In your pediatric experience are you implementing any protocols for weight management and education for children and their parents/guardians?**

**A:** While we take care of predominantly acute conditions in the hospital, we do have a lot of experience with children with special health care needs including obesity. We encourage children to eat more vegetables and fruits and less soda (sugary drinks) and "junk" food. It's important to teach and encourage physical activity and decrease sedentary activities that include watching TV and playing video games. We often refer obese children to specialists to help them lose weight and make healthy choices throughout their childhood and into their adult lives.

Getting your child the proper help now is critical for them to be able to live long-lasting, healthy, productive lives. There is a time when professional medical assistance is essential.

**Dr. Ayodeji Otegbeye**

Dr. Ayodeji Otegbeye, better known as "Dr. O" is the Medical Director of Leesburg Regional Medical Center's Pediatric Hospitalist Program, and the President and Founder of Central Florida Pediatrics Intensive Care Specialists and Night Lite Pediatrics Urgent Care. Dr. O is the Medical Director of Children's Medical Services in the Central Florida Region (Orange, Seminole, Osceola and Brevard Counties).

Dr. Otegbeye completed his residency and fellowship at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. He is board certified in Pediatrics, Internal Medicine and Pediatric Critical Care.

He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, member of the American College of Physicians and Society for Critical Care Medicine. He specializes in pediatric critical care with special skills and interest in pulmonary medicine.

**Leesburg Regional Medical Center**

As a premier healthcare provider, LRMC takes pride in providing progressive, innovative technology, along with building strong relationships with patients, families, physicians and residents of the communities it serves. LRMC has a broad range of high-quality and award-winning services in cardiovascular care, orthopedics, minimally invasive surgery, comprehensive diagnostic services, labor and delivery, neurosurgery and more.

The hospital's mission is to improve the health and quality of life of the individuals and communities it serves.

 **Leesburg Regional Medical Center**

**Leesburg Regional Medical Center**

**352.323.5762**

**[www.LeesburgRegional.org](http://www.LeesburgRegional.org)**

**600 E. Dixie Ave., Leesburg, FL 34748**

# CHOLESTEROL NUMBERS

## Are Directly Affected By The Foods We Eat

**M**arch is National Nutrition Awareness Month. The food we put into our bodies has a lot more to do with our overall health than most people are aware—including our cholesterol numbers. Along with a good exercise routine and regular blood work, physicals, and medications, cholesterol levels can naturally be lowered with the proper foods.

A big part of lowering your LDL or low-density lipoprotein is by adding soluble fiber, omega 3 fatty acids, monounsaturated fatty acids or MUFAs, powerful antioxidants and lutein into your diet. Some of the following foods listed below can lower your “bad” cholesterol levels by 5-10% within just a few weeks. But for these nutrients to make the most effective decrease in your cholesterol, you must adhere to an overall healthy diet. You can’t eat fried chicken and then eat an apple and think you’ll get the benefit. You’ll need to make a plan to eliminate the processed foods in your diet.

- Cholesterol Lowering Foods
- Garlic
- Oatmeal and Oat Bran
- Pears
- Apples
- Prunes
- Beans
- Red wine
- Fatty fish (salmon and sardines)
- Nuts
- Black tea
- Spinach
- Olive Oil

Garlic can limit plaque buildup in the arteries and should be consumed raw if possible. You can achieve this by adding a few minced cloves at the very end of your cooking or add it to your salsa, salad dressings, or hummus spread.

Soluble fibers are found in foods like beans, apples, pears, prunes, and oats. When bile acids are removed from your blood, the liver must use cholesterol to produce more bile. This is where soluble fiber comes into play. It binds to the bile acid and therefore lowers the cholesterol in the body.

Oats contain a compound called beta-gluten. When digested, beta-gluten essentially absorbs LDL in the bloodstream. People that eat oatmeal or oat bran several times a week can see a significant improvement in their cholesterol level.



Fatty fish contain omega 3 fatty acids, which also aid in lowering LDL. They are a healthy alternative to saturated fats that are found in other animal protein and lard.

Red wine is thought to help to lower cholesterol through the polyphenol antioxidants. It’s best to drink in moderation, as too much wine has a counter effect on the heart.

Spinach and other leafy greens contain an antioxidant called lutein. Lutein is a dominant anti-fat lipid element that when eaten on a regular basis can reduce your cholesterol considerably.

Black tea, in particular, has been shown to reduce LDL by up to 10% in as little as a month in some patients. Drinking it iced or hot, you can’t go wrong, but keep the sugar to a minimum, as sugar counteracts the effectiveness of the compounds in the tea.

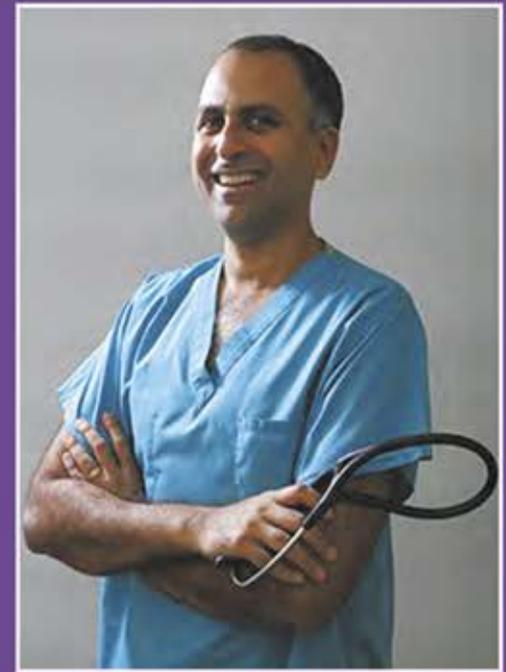
Avocado and olive oils are excellent forms of MUFAs or monounsaturated fatty acids. These MUFAs lower LDL by replacing saturated fats like butter or margarine. Avocado is also an outstanding source of fiber.

It’s always best to speak directly with your physician before completely changing your diet or exercise program. Your doctor will construct a precise plan to suit your specific needs and incorporate some of the foods mentioned above along with a coordinated strategy.

## Dr. Vallabhan

Call Office for Consultation  
**352.750.2040**

Rolling Oaks Professional Park  
929 N US HWY 441, Suite 201  
Lady Lake, FL 32159



# Dr. V

**T.E. VALLABHAN, MD, FACC**  
BOARD CERTIFIED CARDIOLOGIST  
SPECIALIST IN DISEASES OF THE HEART, ARTERIES AND VEINS

**It’s your heart.  
It should be  
personal.**

*And that’s how I treat it.*

Dr. Thiruvallur Vallabhan is devoted to keeping your heart at its healthiest. Dr. Vallabhan is a Board Certified Cardiologist, and his mission is to provide The Villages and its surrounding communities with the highest quality cardiac care in a welcoming environment. He and his staff are dedicated to fulfilling the specific cardiac needs of each patient.

To find out more information on the Dr. Vallabhan, your local specialists in the diseases of the heart, veins, and arteries, please call (352) 750-2040 or visit them online at, [Drvcardio.com](http://Drvcardio.com)

# Finding Your Optimal Melatonin Dose

By Bo Martinsen, MD

**M**elatonin is a molecule indispensable for life. Found in most plants and living organisms, melatonin contributes to a wide range of physiological functions as an antioxidant, hormone, and anti-inflammatory agent.

In spite of its varied benefits, melatonin is still best known for its role in improving sleep and reducing jet lag. Unfortunately, there is also a lot of confusion surrounding melatonin, particular in terms of dose.

## How Much Melatonin Do You Need?

The dose necessary to get benefits from certain supplements, like omega-3 fatty acids, has always appeared to be relatively stable. For an adult with chronic inflammation, studies routinely suggest the optimal dose ranges from 3 to 4 g of EPA/DHA omega-3s per day.

But when it comes to melatonin, there are huge variations from one person to another. Studies use anywhere between 1 – 100 mg of melatonin per day to document clinical effects. Furthermore, it appears that the same dose given to individuals can have very different outcomes. Consider, for instance, one study, which found that the same 10 mg melatonin dose given to a group of people could cause over 50 times higher levels of melatonin in the blood from one person to the next.

This dose discrepancy is on full display when you read anecdotes of people's wildly different experiences taking melatonin. For instance, some people report having gotten too high a dose with only 1 mg. Others say they only feel effects with 15 mg or more of melatonin a night.

Dose variation will constitute the biggest challenge for melatonin research in the future since most clinical trials use one fixed dose. This may mean that a large number of participants will either get too high or too low a dose, impacting the results of the study.

The good thing, however, is that melatonin seems to be safe even in people who may be taking too high a dose for their needs. Studies routinely use between 20 – 100 mg/day with no significant safety concerns.

## Why Do People Need Different Doses of Melatonin?

The pineal gland naturally produces melatonin to help regulate our sleep cycle. And because melatonin

is in part naturally produced in the body, the melatonin dose a person may need is influenced by a number of factors, including age, genetics, and the number of melatonin receptors in the cell.

Factors like diet may also make a difference; certain foods, including tomatoes, olives and walnuts, contain notable amounts of melatonin.

Lifestyle and medication use also play a role. For example, beta-blockers are known to knock out the body's melatonin balance and influence sleep negatively. Similarly, light pollution and exposure to blue light at bedtime can shut down the body's natural melatonin secretion.

To make matters more complicated, the bioavailability of consuming melatonin tablets is famously low, ranging from 3 to 33 percent. Bioavailability can also be influenced by other factors, like the amount of enzymes breaking down the molecule and the amount of liquid present when the melatonin is absorbed. This is one of the reasons that we believe melatonin added to omega-3 oils, like in our Omega Restore™, could help improve bioavailability.

## Are There Side Effects to Getting Too Much Melatonin?

If a person gets too much melatonin, they may experience some unpleasant effects. Some people report that if they get too high a dose, they might wake up early, wake up frequently during the night, or in a few cases, not to sleep at all. Vivid dreams or nightmares are other symptoms.

On the positive side, these are not long term effects, and typically only last for a day. In addition, the effects are strongly dose dependent; if a person gets too high a dose, studies show that reducing the dose will also diminish the side effects.

Finally, it's important to remember that sleep is influenced by more than melatonin. For this reason, it can be beneficial to take one's starting melatonin dose for 5 – 7 days before determining whether you need to adjust the dosage.

*This article was abbreviated from a longer version published on [omega3innovations.com](http://omega3innovations.com). For the full text and references, visit:*

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/finding-your-optimal-melatonin-dose/>



## About Dr. Bo Martinsen

Dr. Martinsen is an omega-3 specialist, innovator, and advocate for natural foods. As co-founder and CEO of Omega3 Innovations, he has created multiple patented technologies for medical devices designed to improve consumer compliance. He is also the creator of several medical food products that combine dose-effective ingredients of omega-3 fish oil with soluble fibers and other nutrients. Before Omega3 Innovations, Dr. Martinsen practiced medicine in Norway for 20 years, focusing on occupational and preventive medicine.



Call us at 941.485.4400  
[www.omega3innovations.com](http://www.omega3innovations.com)



# ED: Getting Treatment Early is Best, but it's NEVER too Late

## Don't Just Mask your Symptoms

**E**rectile Dysfunction (ED) is deeply related to vascular health. Many men that begin to experience ED have little idea that they need to treat the arteriosclerosis in the penis as well as in their body. Most standard medical practitioners will start a man on the "little blue pill," but this only masks the symptoms of ED and it definitely doesn't treat the cause.

Any man that is showing signs of erectile dysfunction should seek alternative and thorough medical assistance from a physician that not only understands the disorder but one that also offers the most advanced treatment to address your overall health.

TNT (Total Nutrition & Therapeutics) uses the most advanced groundbreaking technology, which utilizes high-frequency shockwaves to break up the plaque in the penis. This technology is called GAINSWave.

### Treat ED's Cause with GAINSWave

The standard treatments for erectile dysfunction are prescription medications or injections that cause an erection for a limited amount of time. However, there is a better way than the standard of care by actually treating erectile dysfunction at its core. The GAINSWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINSWave uses scientifically proven technology through sound waves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. 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 Peyronie's 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.

Almost everyone will experience a decline in sexual functioning. But with the advent of Regenerative medicine, Erectile Dysfunction is no longer an inevitable part of aging. GAINSWave is based on a series of over 30 clinical studies showing a greater than 75% success rate in treating Erectile Dysfunction (ED).

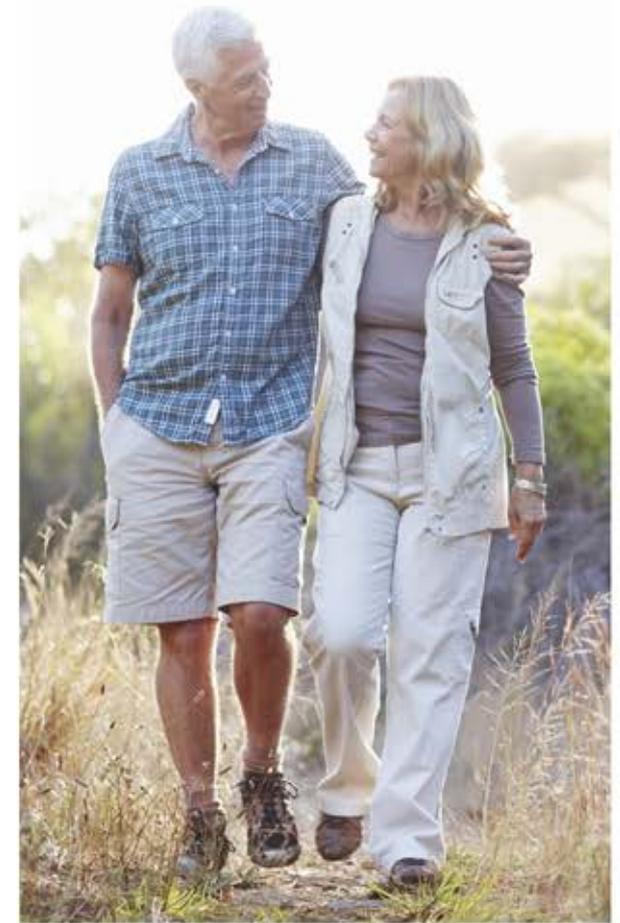


### How to Get Started?

TNT has been helping men regain control of their ED and identifies the exact cause of your sexual health to create a customized treatment plan. Almost everyone will experience a decline in sexual functioning. But with the advent of Regenerative medicine, Erectile Dysfunction is no longer an inevitable part of aging. GAINSWave is based on a series of over 30 clinical studies showing a greater than 75% success rate in treating Erectile Dysfunction (ED).

**TNT offers free monthly seminars to find out more about GAINSWave.**

Call them today to schedule your appointment at  
**(352) 259-5190.**



**If you want drug-free alternative options for your health needs, TNT treats both male and female patients who desire alternative therapies to get to the root cause of their conditions.**

### Total Nutrition & Therapeutics

At TNT, their goal is to empower you to achieve your optimal state of health. Their vision is to create a wellness mindset momentum that is infectious—leaving obesity, illness, and disease behind—for lives that are truly healthy. Looking better, feeling better and functioning optimally is the key to a life of vitality! Let them help you achieve wellness for life!



**TOTAL NUTRITION AND THERAPEUTICS**

809 HWY 466 UNIT 202-C  
LADY LAKE, FL 32159

**352.259.5190**

**WWW.TNT4ME.COM**

# Comfort Care: Medicine's Newest Focus

By Hospice of Marion County

All of us deserve to live as comfortably as possible, right? But when an accident, sudden illness or chronic condition takes hold of our lives, comfort may seem impossible or out of reach. In the past decade, hope for relief from acute pain and distressing symptoms has become a reality and within reach, thanks to a growing trend in modern medicine: palliative care.

## Palliative Care? What is it?

The word "palliative" is defined as comforting, soothing, calming and reassuring. It should not be confused with quick fixes offered in so-called "pain clinic" settings. Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious conditions. Its focus is to provide relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress that entails—whatever the cause or diagnosis. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses and other specialists, who work together with a patient's primary doctor and/or specialist to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and can be offered along with curative treatment.

Examples of those who have benefited from palliative care include a 60-year-old with pancreatitis and a 50-year-old diabetic with neuropathy (nerve pain). Both conditions are chronic but not life-threatening. Our patient with pancreatitis was in pain and had trouble eating; now he enjoys food and life again!

## So how is palliative care different than popping pills?

"I don't want to become an addict or a statistic in the opioid crisis!" These are common but unwarranted concerns. Because patients are carefully regulated by their physicians with consultations from experts at Marion County's Center for Comprehensive Palliative Care, people can rest assured that their pain and symptoms can be managed (most within 24-48 hours) and their conditions monitored on an ongoing basis. Many go on to fully regain their lives. Those with advancing illness can deal with their situation without the added burden of debilitating pain or life-altering symptoms that prevent them from enjoying daily life.

## How did palliative care start in Marion County?

A decade ago, Dr. Segismundo Pares, then Senior Medical Director for Hospice of Marion County, attended a medical conference where he learned that 80% of hospital patients were suffering. Eighty percent! The study concluded those patients could benefit from palliative treatment. This fact applied not only to terminal patients, but to those who were not facing death. Dr. Pares determined to change that statistic...at least in Marion County. He began performing consults on hospital patients and single-handedly spearheaded the program, seeing 70 patients in two months. The positive results were astounding.

Thus, the Center for Comprehensive Palliative Care (CCPC) was launched under the auspices of Hospice of Marion County. As a consulting service to physicians, CCPC was awarded national recognition as a model program in its first year. Its success continues to grow, but the patients are the real beneficiaries.

## How does someone get palliative care?

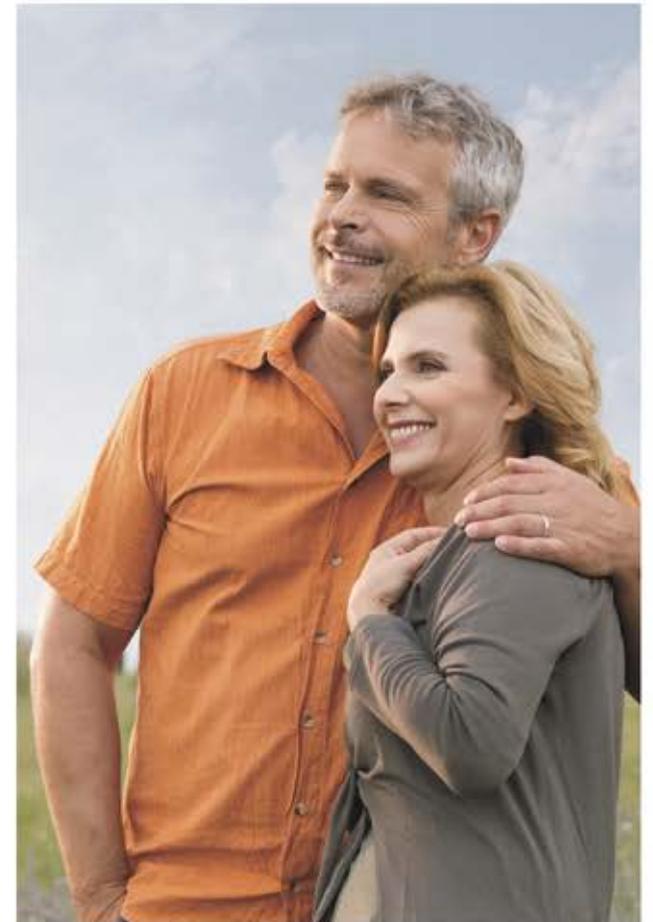
Well-informed consumers should know the facts. They can request palliative treatment if the outcome from surgery, accident or disease has left them in physical or mental distress. Palliative care improves health care quality in three significant ways. It:

1. effectively relieves physical symptoms and emotional suffering
2. strengthens patient-family-physician communication and decision-making
3. ensures well-coordinated care across healthcare settings

As a holistic approach to care, palliative medicine is about a person's whole being, including family and loved ones. It is covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurances. A consult is available through one's own physician or by calling (352) 291-5881 for information about receiving services.



**Center for Comprehensive Palliative Care**  
352-291-5881 | [www.marionpalliativecare.com](http://www.marionpalliativecare.com)



## The Future of Palliative Care

The steady growth is primarily in response to the increasing number of people with serious and chronic illness. People are living longer, but not necessarily better. There needs are many, placing overwhelming caregiving demands on families. We recognize their needs at CCPC and are addressing these challenges through a strong partnership between patient, family and our supportive palliative care team.

Today, CCPC is overseen by three medical directors and five advanced registered nurse practitioners, one of whom serves as the program's manager. Together we will conduct more than 1,000 consults this year, in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and even private homes. We are also gratified to have recently earned the Joint Commission's seal of approval, the national standard in quality healthcare. Palliative medicine is real medicine. And it can help make life worth living.

**Learn how the Center for Comprehensive Palliative Care can help: (352) 291-5881 or visit [www.marionpalliativecare.com](http://www.marionpalliativecare.com).**

# What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)?

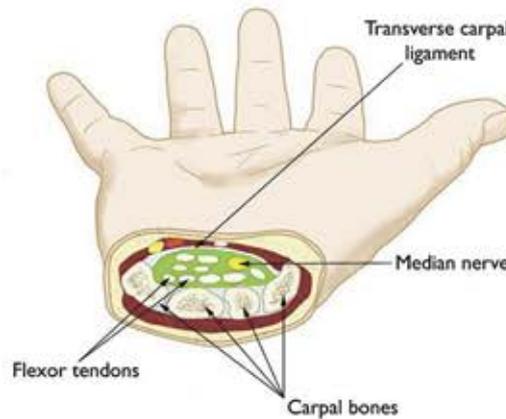
Every year, a significant number of patients see a physician complaining of hand numbness, tingling, and pain. Many of these patients are assumed to have nerve compression in the neck area and come to the doctor's office with an MRI of the cervical spine. Some may even have had surgery performed in the neck area with little or no relief. The reason the pain persists may be because they have been given the wrong diagnosis.

What they might really be experiencing is known as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), caused by compression of the median nerve at the wrist. The carpal tunnel is a pathway made of ligaments creating a tunnel through which the nerve travels. In addition to the median nerve, tendons also travel alongside the nerve. If the carpal tunnel becomes narrowed for any reason, this will cause compression on the nerve and tendons. For example, if any of the ligaments forming the tunnel get swollen, inflamed or thickened, this will limit the space available for the nerve and tendons to go through and the person may become symptomatic. It is commonly considered to be an occupational condition due to repetitive movements at the wrist.

## Symptoms Associated with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

In the beginning, a feeling of numbness and/or tingling in the hands is a very common symptom of CTS. Patients often complain that this sensation wakes them up at night.

The symptoms are improved by shaking their hands or hanging them over the side of the bed. Others report dropping things or having trouble



opening jars or making a fist. When patients wait too long to seek treatment, they can develop muscle loss in the hands with weakness of the thumb.

## CTS Risk Factors:

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Thyroid disorders
- Trauma to the wrist or hand
- Repetitive motion activities such as typing, writing, cycling, golfing, and tennis can exacerbate the symptoms

## Several Ways to Diagnose CTS

The Neurologist will initially evaluate the patient by getting a medical history and conducting a physical exam. If CTS is suspected, an electromyogram and nerve conduction velocities test will be done to confirm the diagnosis.

According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, "In most patients, carpal tunnel syndrome gets worse over time, so early diagnosis

and treatment are important. Early on, symptoms can often be relieved with simple measures like wearing a wrist splint or avoiding certain activities.

"If pressure on the median nerve continues, however, it can lead to nerve damage and worsening symptoms. To prevent permanent damage, surgery to take pressure off the median nerve may be recommended for some patients."

## Treatment Options

If CTS is caught early enough, treatment with a wrist splint or a course of hand therapy may be all that is necessary. Hand Therapy utilizes modalities to decrease inflammation and increase circulation for the median nerve and flexor tendons within the carpal tunnel. Joint block tendon gliding exercises, as well as, nerve glides improve function. Patient education should include information on preventive measures to prevent range of motion that exacerbates symptoms.

Hand therapy with the use of modalities, to decrease inflammation and increase circulation to the median nerve and flexor tendons within the carpal tunnel. As well as patient education on joint block tendon gliding exercises as well as nerve glides to improve function. Education should also include, information on preventative measures, to prevent range of motion that exacerbates symptoms.

To schedule your appointment with our Certified Hand Therapist's, please contact Innovative Therapies Group.



**Innovative Therapies Group, Inc.**  
352-433-0091 | [innovativetherapiesgroup.com](http://innovativetherapiesgroup.com)

# Spring Clean Your Diet

## Whittle Away Calories - A Little Here and There

The formula for weight loss sounds simple: You need to burn more calories than you take in. That usually means moving more and eating less.\* But does the thought of cutting back on what you eat leave you, well ... hungry?

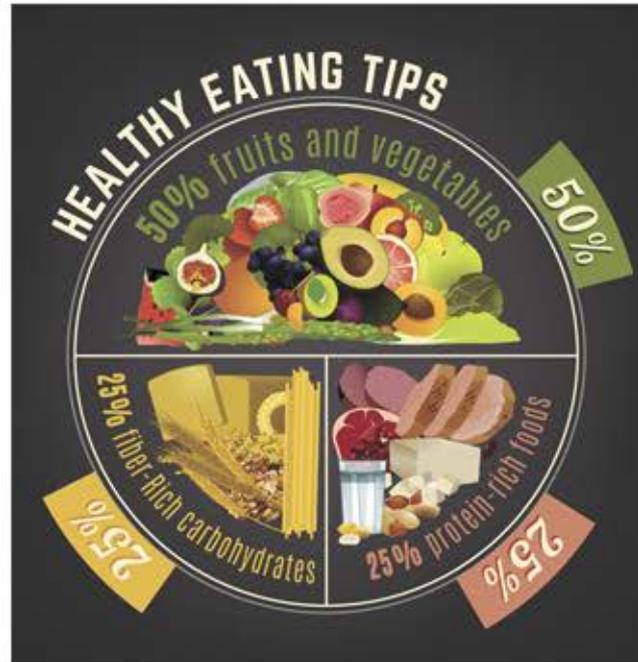
Here's a secret: You may not have to do anything drastic. Consider this three-step, no-diet, no-denial approach from UnitedHealthcare Florida's chief medical officer, Dr. Mayrene Hernandez. It may help you shave calories on your way to weight-control success:

### Step 1: Examine and plan

**Play detective.** Record what you eat and drink every day — for about a week — in a food diary. You can make your own — or use an app. Then look over your entries — and note essentials and extras. Essentials are foods that give your body energy and nutrients. These are healthy items such as fruits, veggies, whole grains, low-fat dairy products and lean sources of protein. Extras are often sugary or fatty foods with few nutrients. You don't have to give up these treats entirely. But ask yourself how you might cut back; sharing a dessert or French fries, switching to single serving bags are two easy ways to cut calories in half (or more).



Preparing a shopping list in advance and including healthy snack items helps manage spontaneous shopping. Also look for individual portion sizes, which while may cost a little more, are more effective in helping cut calories, encourage mindful eating and avoid the eating out of the big bag or box habit.



Having a visual such as what a healthy plate looks like posted on your refrigerator, along with keeping a diary and/or tracking what you eat via a Fitbit type watch or app, are effective tools to find ways to improve what you eat and whittle away calories.

**Rethink how you eat.** Do you finish your child's leftovers? Nibble nonstop at work? Overindulge when you're stressed? Try to identify times you eat when you're not truly hungry. Think of ways you can switch up your behavior. Maybe that means having the kids clear the table, packing nutritious bites in small portions for work or making a cup of tea instead of grabbing a sugary soda when you feel tension rising.

**Shop smart.** Head to the grocery store with a list of healthy foods in hand. And don't go in hungry. Shop after a meal or hearty snack, when goodies are less likely to tempt you.

### Step 2: Trim at the table

**Downsize dishes.** Dish up your meals onto smaller plates or bowls. You'll still feel like you're getting plenty. But the portions will stay modest. This trick can work for beverages too.

**Savor the flavor.** Enjoy every bite — and eat slowly. It gives your mind time to get the message that your stomach is full.

### Step 3: Be a savvy snacker

**Tap into water.** Drink up throughout the day. Quenching your thirst first may help take the edge off hunger.

Aim for eight 8 oz, glasses per day, one upon rising, one before each meal or snack and then a couple throughout the day and you have met your goal!



Before hitting the cookie jar or bag of chips, drink a big glass of water. Often times, what you may think is hunger is actually more attributable to being thirsty. Aim for eight 8-oz glasses or six 12-oz bottles per day (try to use reusable bottles) and try replacing at least one sugary soda or juice with water instead. Add in slices of lime, cucumber or lemon to add some flavor.

**Ready yourself for snack attacks.** You don't have to give up between-meal munchies. Just have healthy options on hand, such as whole fruit, fresh veggies, or plain popcorn with a little garlic powder or your favorite salt-free seasoning.

**Unpack your bags.** Do you sometimes eat straight from a package of crackers, nuts or chips? Even if you make a healthy choice, it's easy to lose track of how much you've had. So serve yourself a small portion — and put the package away. Or pack up single servings in small baggies or containers that you can grab on the go.

For more free tips on healthy eating and living, visit [www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness](http://www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness).

\*For general good health, most people should aim for at least 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity physical activity a week. But to lose pounds or maintain a weight loss, you may need more. Ask your doctor what your goals should be. For safety's sake, talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.

Dr. Mayrene Hernandez is the chief medical officer for UnitedHealthcare Florida. She is also part of part of UnitedHealth Group's South East Clinical Services Leadership Team, where she oversees hospital inpatient management as one of the medical directors for Orlando.



# Urgent Care vs. Emergency Care: What You Should Know

**W**hen your child, you, or a loved one has a fever, sprains an ankle, gets an ear infection or overheated, it can be quite scary, and the emergency room is not a place that most of us want to sit around waiting, or paying the hefty price tag that goes hand in hand with their expensive bills.

There is another option. Urgent care clinics are an excellent alternative to the ER unless of course, it's a life-threatening situation, which then the Emergency room should be your first priority. However, urgent care facilities such as Quick Care Med can treat many injuries or illness from, broken bones, sore throats, and poison ivy rashes to tetanus shots.

### Quick Care Med Urgent Care Vs. Emergency Room

If your health needs are not emergent like a heart condition or other impending life saving issues, the benefit of urgent care in comparison are numerous. To name a few, the wait time will be much shorter. For the most part, urgent care can see their patients within an hour. The cost is also much less with urgent care than it is with emergency room treatment. Quick Care Med urgent care provides you with the proper paperwork to follow up with your primary care physician or specialist, as urgent care takes initiatives to keep the line of communication open to make certain that your treatment is a top priority.



There are numerous reasons people go to urgent care, from sore throats, skin infections, school sports physicals, vaccinations, colds and flu, sprains, heat exhaustion, animal bites, dehydration, broken bones and much more. Before you go to the ER, consider if you could instead be treated at urgent care because of the various benefits to you and your loved ones.

**Quick Care Med Walk-In Clinic & Urgent Care** is a comprehensive urgent care clinic with multiple specialties to serve you. Quick Care Med has locations in Marion (Dunnellon and Ocala), Citrus (Crystal River, Inverness, Beverly Hills, and Homosassa), Levy (Williston), & Alachua (Newberry) counties that provides immediate walk-in treatment to pediatric and adult patients for illnesses and injuries, wellness exams, and employer health services.

At Quick Care Med, they understand that illness and injuries can happen outside of the normal 9 to 5. That's why they provide Fast, Easy, and Affordable® urgent care with the convenience of extended hours, including weekends and holidays!

**From the common cold to a broken bone, Quick Care Med revolves around getting you back to feeling good!**

### 3 Locations in Ocala

3415 E. Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala, FL 34470  
(On Silver Springs Blvd. across from Publix)

8119 SW State Rd 200, Ocala, FL 3448  
(Just past Walgreens)

6341 N US 441, Ocala, FL 34475  
(Across from John Deer)

**Quick Care Med  
Walk-In Clinic & Urgent Care**

**844-797-8425**

[www.quickcaredmed.com](http://www.quickcaredmed.com)

## "Worsening illness is affecting our lives."

*The Center for Comprehensive Palliative Care specializes in relief from ongoing pain, life-altering symptoms and emotional distress. Ask your doctor for a consult with one of our experts.*

Center for  
Comprehensive  
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Palliative care means relief.  
[www.marionpalliativecare.com](http://www.marionpalliativecare.com)  
(352) 291-5881

## SICK NOW? SEEN NOW!®



**From the common cold to a broken bone, Quick Care Med Walk-in and Urgent Care revolves around getting you back to feeling good!**

Providing immediate walk-in treatment to pediatric and adult patients for illnesses and injuries, wellness exams, and employer health services.

**Toll Free:**  
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3 Locations in the Ocala  
Area to serve you.

**QUICK CARE MED**  
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[www.quickcaredmed.com](http://www.quickcaredmed.com)

# Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

## March 18-24 is National Poison Prevention Week

*From U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration*

**More than 90 percent of the time, poisonings happen in people's homes. The majority of these poisonings occur in the kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. That is why it is important to follow simple steps to prevent a poisoning from happening at home.**

Teach your family to never touch or put anything in their mouths unless they know what it is. Below are additional tips on how to keep poisonous items safe in your home. Remember, if you suspect that you or someone you know has been poisoned, immediately call the toll-free Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222), which connects you to your local poison center.

### **Medication Safety**

- Keep medications in their original containers, properly labeled and stored appropriately. Don't leave caps off bottles. Consider locking your medications up.
- Ask your pharmacist how you can return unused, unneeded or expired prescription drugs to pharmaceutical take-back locations for safe disposal.

### **Carbon Monoxide**

- Have a working carbon monoxide (CO) detector in your home. The best places to locate CO detectors are near bedrooms and close to furnaces or other equipment that uses combustion to heat (dryers, water heaters).

### **Household Products**

- Keep all products in their original containers. Do not use food containers, such as cups or bottles, to store household cleaners or other chemicals/products.
- Keep all laundry products locked up, high and out of the reach of children



## Poison Control at your fingertips.

**Text POISON to 797979**  
to add Poison Control as a  
contact in your mobile phone.



 BE PREPARED ANYTIME & ANYWHERE WITH #POISONHELP



### Chemicals

- Keep antifreeze and all chemicals and household products in their original containers
- Read and follow all label directions and warnings carefully.
- Use recommended precautions when handling chemicals (such as rubber gloves, splash shields, masks)

### Food

- Wash your hand thoroughly before and during food preparation.
- Wash all countertops and any equipment (cutting boards) being used in food preparation.
- Store food at the proper temperature. Refrigerated foods should not be left out at temperatures above 40 degrees F
- Do not let food sit out at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Use clean utensils for cooking and serving. Don't use utensils used in handling raw food to serve.
- Watch for signs of food poisoning, which include fever, headache, diarrhea, stomach pains, nausea and vomiting.

### Animals/Insects

- Know what poisonous snakes live in your area and wear proper attire when hiking outdoors.
  - If you are bitten by a snake, call Poison Help right away. They can help you determine if the snake is venomous and signs and symptoms to be watched for.
- Check labels on insect repellants. Be aware that most contain DEET, which can be poisonous in large quantities.
- If you are allergic to bees, ensure you have appropriate treatment available at all times. If you are stung and experience hives, dizziness, breathing trouble or swelling around the eyes or mouth, get to the hospital immediately.
- Most spider/tick bites don't cause harm. But if you are bitten by either, try to capture the insect. Call Poison Help which can help you determine next steps.

### Poisonous Plants

- Be sure everyone in your family can identify poisonous mushrooms and plants.
- Remember when it comes to poison ivy, leaves of three, let it be.
- If you or someone you know eats an unidentified mushroom or berry, try to get a sample or photo of the plant and call Poison Help.

# POISON Help<sup>®</sup>



## 1-800-222-1222

# A A P C C



**2,700,000**

Number of cases managed by  
poison control centers in 2016.



**0:14**

How often someone called a  
poison control center in 2016.



**1,800,000,000**

Amount poison control centers saved  
Americans in medical costs in 2016.

# How On-Site Healthcare Improves Quality of Life

**T**he master-planned community of Ave Maria, Florida has been recognized as one of Florida's fastest growing communities with a focus on an active lifestyle for its residents. Healthcare, however, also plays an important role in the quality of life for its 5,000 residents. Ave Maria is currently home to a walk-in clinic, dentist, veterinarian, hearing center, holistic physical therapy provider and chiropractor. Braden Clinic just received the nod of approval from the state of Florida when it received its certificate of need to begin construction of a 25-bed hospital in Ave Maria.

"Ave Maria is home to active adults and young families, where essential medical services play an important role whether it's cardiac care or obstetric care," states Andrea McLendon, marketing director for Ave Maria Development. "By providing our residents several different types of healthcare directly in-town and a few minutes from their home, we can give them quality of life and peace of mind." According to Healthy People 2020, regular and reliable access to health services can prevent disease and disability, detect and treat illnesses or other health conditions, increase quality of life, reduce likelihood of premature death, and increase life expectancy.

The town of Ave Maria has been designed as self-sustaining, with all daily conveniences located in-town and within a short distance of residential neighborhoods. A fully amenitized lifestyle awaits new home buyers featuring a central Town Center with shops, restaurants, medical offices, fitness center, and Publix Supermarket. Outdoor recreation in-town includes private waterpark with resort and lap pools, concession and beach volleyball, outdoor amphitheater, miles of biking and walking paths, Panther Run Golf Club at Del Webb, tennis and bocce courts, and basketball, baseball and soccer fields. A full-time lifestyle director assists in programming free town events including outdoor concerts, arts festivals, weekly farmer markets, holiday events, and monthly first Friday themed social events.



Setting the pace for new home sales in Southwest Florida, the town of Ave Maria has been named the fastest-selling community for the past five consecutive years as well as the 2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015 Community of the Year. It is located approximately 40-minutes from the sugary sand beaches of Naples and 70-minutes from the vibrant city life of Ft Lauderdale. At its

build out, the town may include up to 11,000 residences, and 1.7 million square feet of retail, office, and business park uses in its 4,000 acres. A welcome center is open daily, and visitors are encouraged to take a tour. To visit Ave Maria, take I-75 southbound to Exit 111, follow the signs east to Ave Maria, a little over 3 hours from The Villages. For more information, please visit [www.avemaria.com](http://www.avemaria.com) or call 239-352-3903.

## Ave Maria

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 Take I-75 to Exit 111, follow the signs to Ave Maria Town Center

# Maintaining Healthy Friendships

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

The first step is to realize that you really do NEED friends.

Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived said, *“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”* Prov. 27:17

That means that we make each other better. It seems pretty important to God that we have good friendships. The Bible is full of examples of this.

Think about the amazing friendship of Jonathan and David. Jonathan warned David that his life was in danger at the hands of Jonathan’s own father, King Saul.

This warning allowed David to take action and avoid harm, and ultimately this act of true friendship allowed David to take the throne.

Friends look out for each other. They should have each other’s back. Your friends are the ones who will be there for you when everything in your life is falling apart.

The second step is to be friendly and willing to meet new people. The Bible says, *“A man who has friends must himself be friendly...”* Prov. 18:24

Put a smile on your face, stick out your hand and meet new people. Opportunities abound for making new friends if you are willing to actively pursue new relationships. Get involved in a local church, join a social organization, volunteer at the local schools or another non-profit organization. These are all great ways to meet new people and do good in the community at the same time.

The third step to building relationships is to make yourself vulnerable even at the risk being rejected. The reality is that not everyone is going to like you. And, you are not going to like everyone.

Look for people with similar interests or a common background. If you don’t connect with someone, just move on. You will certainly find several good friends if you keep working towards making friends.

You will find the fourth step most helpful if you make it a natural part of your life: put other’s needs ahead of your own. The Bible says it like this:

*“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”* Phil. 2:3-4

Have you ever met people who want you to listen to all of the details about their life but then they never bother to ask about yours? Be interested in other people. In humility, don’t try to “one up” their stories. Just listen, smile, and ask genuine questions. Get to know them.

If you want to make friends, get interested in other people. Discover their story. Dale Carnegie writes, “You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”



You might find it helpful to evaluate how you talk with other people. Are you genuinely interested in others or does every conversation revolve around you? Do you make yourself the hero of every story? Do you find it necessary to talk about your successes and achievements? Are you trying to impress people or relate to people?

If you really want to make friends, get interested in other people. Learn about them. Listen to their stories and ask questions. If you listen and genuinely care about others, you’ll have more friends than you can handle in a short time.

Tim Neptune is the lead pastor of Venture Church. For more information, visit [www.venturenaples.com](http://www.venturenaples.com).

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