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Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

October 2017

Marion Edition - Monthly

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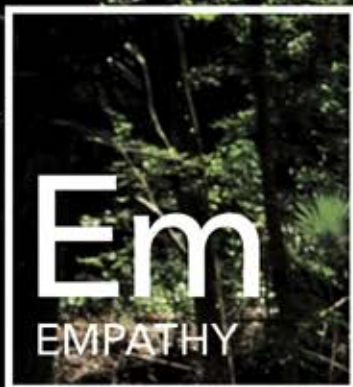
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Empathy. A powerful element in fighting cancer.

Jeanie Harris has been the caregiver. As a Registered Nurse and an Oncology Certified Nurse with Florida Cancer Specialists, she has spent her career educating, delivering medication, empathizing and holding the hands of her patients. So when Jeanie found a lump in her breast, she knew Florida Cancer Specialists was the place where she would get science-driven care and the personal attention she needed to fight cancer. Now with the experience of being a cancer survivor, she connects with her patients on a deeper level, and she has a fresh perspective on how special each patient feels at Florida Cancer Specialists. In October and all year, we honor all of those who have fought this awful disease and all of those caregivers who help them in the fight.

"I always knew Florida Cancer Specialists had quality caregivers, but being a patient gave me a fresh perspective."

Jeanie Harris

-Nurse, Patient & Breast Cancer Survivor

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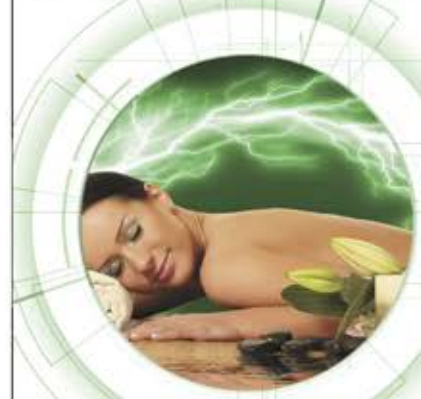
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Wonder Women, Unite in the Fight to Beat Breast Cancer!



RAO is proud to have a dedicated team of superheroes in the battle against breast cancer, led by RAO's Medical Director of Women's Imaging Services, Board Certified radiologist, Dr. Amanda Aulls. While RAO's Early Detection Defenders may not have the flash and spectacle of the conventional superhero, they compose a powerful league of allies every bit as valiant in their dedication to saving lives.

When caught before it has had a chance to spread, breast cancer has a 93% survival rate, making early detection the best defense against this sneaky, silent foe. RAO has made it our mission to make early detection possible for more women than ever before. RAO remains a local leader in diagnostic and interventional radiology services by being a forerunner in the latest state-of-the-art technologies and procedures, and its Women's Imaging Center and TimberRidge Imaging Center devote particular emphasis to early breast cancer detection in a professional, comforting and empathetic environment.

"As a woman doctor, I contribute a unique understanding to women's diagnostic care," says Dr. Aulls. "After all, I've had screening mammograms, so I can talk about them as more than a service or statistic, but as a first-hand experience. A screening 3D mammography™ at RAO delivers the highest level of accuracy, takes only a few minutes, and is performed with the utmost kindness, empathy and respect."

Never a practice to stay with old or outdated technologies, RAO continually researches and incorporates the latest advances in diagnostic care. RAO was among the first regional providers to offer 3D mammography™ exams, also called tomosynthesis, which produce multiple images of breast tissue from varying angles in the same amount of time, for dramatically superior imaging. Because it provides greater detail of tiny abnormalities, it is especially useful when examining the estimated 47% of women with dense breast tissue. Not only is it up to 40% better at discovering invasive breast cancer, 3D mammography™ technology produces far fewer false positive results. "Enhanced accuracy means fewer supplementary exams and reduced patient anxiety," says Dr. Aulls. "It is the gold standard of mammography, making it RAO's present standard of care."

Adding to overall accuracy is RAO's commitment to quality control. "Our radiology team reads all imaging results in-house, instead of sending them out to a third party like a lot of practices," says Dr. Aulls. "We can't trust outsiders to have our level of experience, skill and specialized training. This is especially true when something suspicious shows up in a screening mammogram. Those images need to be reviewed by a radiologist who specializes in breast imaging and can engage in a direct conversation with a patient's doctor."

When something questionable does show up in a diagnostic mammogram or a patient presents with a lump or other symptom, that patient's doctor can order a biopsy up until 3pm that same day, for fast answers, quick action and reduced anxiety. RAO applies the same commitment to all of its women's imaging services, and is in the process of upgrading its diagnostic technologies this year, including acquiring the latest in stereotactic breast biopsy and DEXA bone density scanning.

When you're looking for an experienced and trusted ally in the fight against breast cancer, visit RAO's Women's Imaging Services at www.womensimagingocala.com or contact the dedicated team at 352.671.4300.



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Early detection is always the best defense against breast cancer. RAO soars above other providers by delivering the most advanced diagnostic services, including no-referral 3D mammography™ screening exams for up to 40% greater accuracy, as well as physician-referred services like breast MRI, ultrasound and same-day biopsy to vanquish questions without delay.

Call RAO to schedule a routine 3D mammography™ exam today, and be a **HERO** in your life story.

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AGAINST BREAST CANCER**

As the Medical Director of Women's Imaging Services, Dr. Amanda Aulls and her exceptionally qualified team make RAO a powerful ally in the quest for fast, accurate detection.



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We are proudly contracted with a variety of insurances and file all claims with the exception of non-contracted HMO's. Please visit our website for a detailed list of who we are contracted with. Contracted insurances are subject to change.

Hormonal Disturbances?

Pellet Therapy is the advanced treatment option women are asking for!

As we age, women tend to produce fewer and fewer hormones each year after the age of thirty. Females are predisposed to experience an imbalance of estrogen and testosterone, which can lead to hot flashes, night sweats, anxiety, depression, brain fog, weight gain, loss of muscle, irritability and bone deficiency. Bone loss in women can exacerbate stress fractures caused by osteopenia or osteoporosis.

Hormonal levels can be adjusted through bio-identical hormone therapy, which alleviates or in many cases eliminates the associated symptoms and life fluctuations surrounding hormones. There are even studies now that suggest bio-identical hormones can help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and dementia.

Bio-Identical Hormones

In the U.S., bio-identical Hormone Therapy (BHT) has been used since the 1930s. And based on hundreds of current medically thorough studies, the results for patients overall quality of life and dramatic changes in their hormonal symptoms are astounding.

Bio-identical hormones are equal to our body's natural hormones on a molecular level. The difference between synthetic and identical hormones is that synthetic hormones do not match human hormones on a biological level.

Bio-identical hormones are made from plant sources and are readily received by the body as natural and normal. They are much more therapeutic and effective than synthetic hormonal substances.

Why Testosterone?

Females need a steady level of testosterone and estrogen in their bodies for overall health and well-being on many levels. However, a common misconception is that women need high levels of flowing estrogen. This is not the case. Consequently, female bodies need circulating testosterone, which enables the body to produce and regulate how much estrogen is necessary. In short, testosterone naturally regulates estrogen levels within the cellular structure.

Many women are skeptical of testosterone therapy for menopausal symptoms because they believe it's just for men. But testosterone is vital for females, and your physician highly regulates the dosing. It is essential for women to have appropriate testosterone levels to naturally control their estrogen because as we age, our testosterone levels are continuously decreasing.



Low Testosterone Can Lead To:

- Heart Disease
- Metabolic Syndrome
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Cognitive Decline
- Lack of libido

Hormonal Pellet Therapy

Pellet Therapy is a bio-identical hormone treatment that is time-released. It's a small pellet the size of a grain of rice, and is placed in a very tiny incision in the upper buttocks region of the hip. Females need approximately one pellet, which lasts for about three to four months. Most patients have their pellets replaced just four times per month.

Other Forms of Hormonal Replacement

When hormones are injected, you receive a large dose into your body immediately, and that can be overwhelming to your cells. When taking the pill form of hormones, the levels are broken down in the liver and never fully reach the bloodstream to make a significant impact. When using creams, the dose is not well regulated, since absorption is dependent upon the individual's skin and various health factors.

Dr. Nwaubani

The most effective form of bio-identical hormone therapy is in pellet form. Dr. Nwaubani, runs in-depth hormonal lab panels on all of her patients before and throughout treatment to determine any imbalance, and also to track the patients progress.

Dr. Nwaubani states, "The passion for the preservation of femininity and female sexuality has never been stronger than now, and as I look back to the last 18 years, I am both exhilarated and completely awed by the advances and strides the sub-specialty has made. I am really humbled to be a part of it all.

I treat all my patients the way I love to be treated, or, even more so, the way I'd love my mother or sister to be treated: like a woman, a very special woman. The impact I am able to make to enhance the quality of the lives of these women is PRICELESS."

For more information on pellet therapy or other Urogynecological issues, please contact Dr. Nwaubani's office today.



Uzoma Nwaubani MD - "Add Life To Your Years"

Dr. Nwaubani is a Nigerian born medical doctor. She obtained her medical degree (MD) from the University of Nigeria and completed an OB/GYN residency at New York University, followed by a Fellowship in Urogynecology/Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery at Mt. Sinai College of Medicine. Prior to starting her residency training, she worked as an Obstetrician and Gynecologist in the Caribbean Island of Trinidad and Tobago, and also as a Clinical Instructor in Histology/Pathology at St. Georges' University School of Medicine.

Dr. Nwaubani's professional interest include Urogynecological surgery, minimally invasive pelvic surgery, prolapse and incontinence management, Gynecological evaluations and surgery, female pelvic medicine and wellness, menopausal medicine and urogynecological research and education.

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PROSTATE CANCER UPDATE

Although some younger men do get prostate cancer, the risk increases with age. More than 70% of all prostate cancer patients are over the age of 65 and about 75% of all men over the age of 80 will have some form of prostate cancer, according to the National Cancer Institute. In addition to age, other risk factors include ethnicity, genetic factors and diet. African-American and Latino men have a greater risk of developing prostate cancer than Caucasian men; Asian and Native American men have the lowest risk. There is also some evidence that diet plays a role in prostate cancer. Studies have found a higher incidence of prostate cancer in men whose diets are high in fats, particularly animal fats, and low in vegetables. A family history of prostate cancer also increases the chances of developing the disease.

IMPROVEMENTS IN TREATING PROSTATE CANCER

Many advances in the treatment of prostate cancer have occurred in the past decade. For example, new surgical procedures and improvements in radiation therapy have proven to be extremely effective and, in many instances, have minimal side effects. Advances in both hormonal therapy and chemotherapy have made the disease much more manageable so that, even if it cannot be cured, a man can still experience a good quality of life while living with prostate cancer.

There are five major treatment options for men diagnosed with prostate cancer:

- **Active surveillance** - In active surveillance, your doctor will carefully monitor your prostate cancer on a regular basis – usually every three to six months. Some prostate cancers grow so slowly that they would never lead to death, or even cause any problems or symptoms. Closely watching this type of prostate cancer is often the best treatment option.
- **Hormone therapy:** There are several types of hormone therapies, however, the overall goal of every type is the same: to reduce the levels of male hormones, called androgens – or to prevent the hormones from reaching prostate gland cells. Since androgens stimulate prostate cells to grow, reducing the overall level of androgens in the body can often shrink a tumor or cause it to grow more slowly for a time.



About 1 in every 7 men in the U.S. will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetimes. Other than skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer in American men.

- **Radiation:** Radiation treatment uses high-energy beams to destroy cancer cells. New and improved techniques such as conformal radiation therapy (CRT) and intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) use computers to map the prostate and deliver focused radiation to cancer cells while sparing healthy, normal surrounding tissue.

- **Surgery:** Prostate cancer surgery is used to remove either the whole prostate or only part of it. Surgery is most often recommended for men with early prostate cancer. However, it can be used for later stages as well. If cancer has spread to the lymph nodes, the surgeon may not remove your prostate. Instead, you may need another type of treatment.

- **Chemotherapy:** Chemotherapy is the administration of anti-cancer drugs, either through IV injection into the vein or by mouth in pill form. Chemotherapy is not usually given unless the cancer has spread outside of the prostate gland – or it becomes an option when the cancer no longer responds to hormone therapy.

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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. Florida Cancer Specialists delivers the most advanced and personalized care in your local community.

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Comprehensive and State of the Art Brain Tumor Surgery at ONC

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At ONC, patients with brain tumors undergo the latest imaging tests available. For tumors close to the speech or movement areas of the brain, functional MRI may be performed to identify their proximity to the tumor. Diffusion tensor imaging or "DTI" is another contemporary imaging technique that may be used for brain tumor surgery planning. This type of scan highlights the axons, or tracts, in the brain that connect one area to another. Together these imaging sequences aid the surgeon in creating a surgical gateway to be used during the operation thus maximizing safe tumor removal.

Intra-Operative Image Guidance: "Neuro-Navigation"

Stereotactic surgery, also called stereotaxy, is an advanced surgical technique used to treat be-nign and malignant tumors in the brain, skull base and spine utilizing computer-



based, three- di-mensional image guidance. "Neuro-navigation has revolutionized neurosurgery resulting in shorter operative times, smaller incisions, greater accuracy and less injury to the normal tissues around the tumor," explained Dr. Jacob Freeman, newly acquired neurosurgeon at Ocala Neuro-surgical Center.

Awake Brain Tumor Surgery for Speech and Movement Preservation

Awake brain tumor surgery is reserved for patients with brain tumors involving eloquent areas of the brain responsible for speech and movement. Using a strategy known as cortical and subcorti-cal mapping, the vital functional areas of the brain can be identified during surgery, along with their proximity to the tumor. Real time feedback from the awake patient can then be used during tumor removal to warn the surgeon if these areas are being affected by the surgery and prevent severe, permanent damage. Studies have shown that preservation of speech and movement re-sults in improved quality of life and better outcomes for patients. This is the goal for each of our patients at ONC.

"Using the latest technologies for neuro-navigation and brain mapping along with awake tech-niques, I'm able to offer safer, more complete tumors resections, which lead to better outcomes for my patients," continued Dr. Freeman.

Dr. Freeman has specialized fellowship training in stereotactic brain and skull base tumor sur-gery, and is a published contributor to medical journals on various forms of this and other neuro-surgical procedures.

JACOB FREEMAN, MD

- In practice of neurosurgery since 2009
- Joined Ocala Neurosurgery Center in 2017
- Board Eligible, American Board of Neurological Surgery
- Medical Degree, Georgetown School of Medicine
- Chief Neurological Surgery residency, University of Colorado
- Fellow, Skull Base Surgery, University of Colorado
- Fellow, Skull Base Tumor Surgery, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Freeman is a Member of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, the Florida Neurological Society and the Marion County Medical Society. He is the author of multiple publications regarding endoscopic skull base and other neurological surgeries and procedures.

Dr. Jacob Freeman, his partner neurosurgeons, Dr. Daniel Robertson and Dr. Antonio DiSciafani, Dr. Mark Oliver, and their talented support team are dedicated to providing unsurpassed diagnostic and therapeutic care for a range of neurological and spinal disorders. Our foremost mission is to help you return to a life of health, comfort and vitality.

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JACOB FREEMAN, MD



These state-of-the-art techniques are used to treat a variety of benign and cancerous lesions, including:

Metastatic brain tumors – Also called secondary brain tumors, these result from the spread of cancer cells from an area of the body to the brain and/or spine. Metastatic brain tumors are five times more common than primary brain tumors (tumors that originate in the brain).

Meningioma – Meningiomas are one of the most common types of primary brain tumors, accounting for nearly one-third of cases. These tumors appear among the meninges, the protective layers of tissue between the brain and skull. In most cases, they develop slowly, and may go undetected for years before causing symptoms.

Glioma – Another common type of primary brain tumor, a glioma grows within the brain and can mix with or destroy healthy tissue, causing various symptoms, depending on the location and size. These tumors display a range of behaviors from slow-growing to fast and highly aggressive. In many cases, additional treatment including radiation and chemotherapy are administered after surgery.

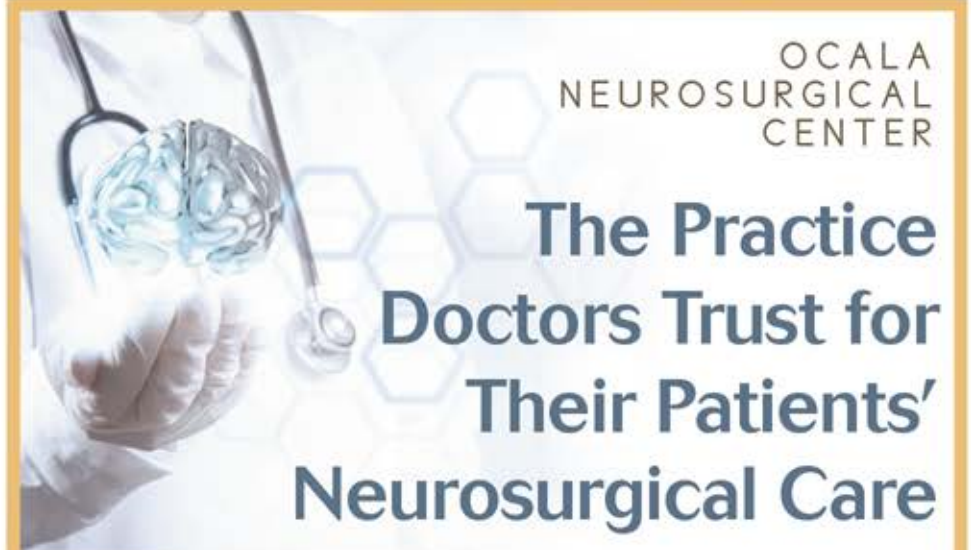
Pituitary adenomas – Pituitary adenomas are benign, slow-growing tumors affecting the pituitary gland, a pea-sized organ located in the center of the brain behind the sinuses. Since the pituitary gland regulates hormones, a pituitary adenoma may cause serious symptoms and illness. Treatment involves the expertise of a neurosurgeon and endocrinologist (hormone specialist).

Craniopharyngioma – A benign tumor that can encroach upon and adhere to the pituitary gland, optic nerve and other areas. Craniopharyngiomas most often affect children and adults over 50. They compose about two to four percent of primary brain tumors.

Chordoma – This slow growing, locally aggressive tumor most frequently forms at the skull base or within the bottom of the spine. Chordomas have a propensity to recur and are frequently treated with surgery and a special type of proton radiation.

Hemangioblastoma – This is a rare variety of benign tumor that grows slowly within the meninges and blood vessels of the brain and spinal cord. A hemangioblastoma may not cause symptoms until it ruptures and causes bleeding.

Tumor symptoms vary with type, location and size, but most often include headache, facial pain or numbness, dizziness, vision problems, ringing in the ears and hearing loss. Pituitary tumors can cause a host of symptoms and diseases associated with hormone imbalance. Using image guidance, Dr. Freeman performs more precise, safe and complete brain tumor resections in less time, leading to faster recovery for patients.



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DECODING HEART DISEASE

Dr. Sivasekaran, MD

There are many things that can affect your risk for developing heart disease. Three of them you cannot control—your age, your gender and your family history. However, there are several other things you can do to help you avoid a heart attack or stroke, such as maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly and quitting smoking.

When it comes to heart disease, there are four numbers that make all the difference. Your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, body mass index (BMI) and fasting blood glucose offer an accurate glimpse of overall heart health. By comparing your numbers with healthy target ranges, you can evaluate your heart disease risk and take steps toward a healthier lifestyle.

BMI

Calculated using your height and weight, BMI helps you determine how much body fat you carry. A BMI between 18.5 and 24.9 indicates a healthy weight. A person is considered overweight if his or her BMI is 25 or higher and obese if BMI is 30 or higher.

Cholesterol

Cholesterol comes in two main forms: high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and low-density lipoprotein (LDL). While HDL helps keep your heart healthy, LDL can contribute to blockages. Adults age 20 and older should have a cholesterol screening at least every five years. Total cholesterol levels should be lower than 200 mg/dL, triglycerides lower than 150 mg/dL, LDL cholesterol levels lower than 100 mg/dL, and HDL cholesterol levels higher than 40 mg/dL in men and 50 mg/dL in women, according to the American Heart Association.

Blood Pressure

When blood pressure is higher than it should be, your heart has to work harder to pump blood, which can damage your arteries. Normal, healthy blood pressure is defined as a reading of 120/80. A blood pressure reading of 140/90 indicates hypertension, or high blood pressure.

Fasting Blood Glucose

Healthy adults ages 45 and older should have a fasting blood glucose screening at least every three years. A healthy fasting blood glucose level falls between 70 and 100 mg/dL.

Taking charge of your heart health begins with understanding your heart disease risk. To learn your numbers, speak with your doctor.



WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

If you currently don't have symptoms of heart disease, you still may worry about the likelihood of having a heart attack. A CT calcium scoring screening is an easy way to determine if you are at risk. This non-invasive test takes only a few minutes, but it can help you and your doctor make important decision about how to lower your risk for heart disease.

Men and women with the following risk factors may benefit from this screenings:

- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Cigarette smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Physical inactivity
- A family history of heart attack

This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor or health care provider. We encourage you to discuss with your doctor any questions or concerns you may have.

RATNASABAPATHY SIVASEKARAN, MD

Dr. Siva has been in practice for fourteen years. He earned his Honors Bachelors of Science in Biology from University of Waterloo, Canada. He went on to earn his Doctor of Medicine from St. George's University School of Medicine graduating on the Dean's List. He is American Board of Internal Medicine certified. Dr. Siva has affiliations with AMA, AHA and Marion County Medical Society. He opened his own private practice in Ocala in 2006, and he has privileges at all hospitals and nursing homes in Ocala for continued care of his patients.

To find out more information, please contact Dr. Siva's office at (352) 369-5300, or visit DrSivaOcala.com

 *Siva M.D. P.A.*

Office Location:
2845 Southeast 3rd Court
Ocala, FL 34471

Urinary Incontinence

Having an overactive bladder is nothing to be ashamed of. In fact, nearly 15 percent of women are dealing with it on a chronic basis. As you may suspect, it is more prominent in women due to pregnancies, menopause, and the unique structure of the female urinary tract.

Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) is a specific type of problem that is caused by movement or exertion. Certain movements can result in excess pressure on the bladder; which results in unintentional urine loss. In a healthy individual, the muscle surrounding the urethra, called a sphincter, is responsible for containing urine within the bladder. Our bladder walls are made up of muscles that must be relaxed for the bladder to expand. When incontinence occurs, it is because the muscles have been weakened and cannot maintain their normal function. Various events can lead to this condition; childbirth, trauma to the pelvic region, and even chronic coughing from smoking. Knowing the mechanics of urinary incontinence helps us to find a proper treatment.

The most troubling part of having an uncontrollable bladder is that it can happen at virtually any time, day or night. It can occur during laughing, sneezing, or working out. Anytime we experience strenuous physical activity could be the next embarrassing accident. As with most medical problems, being healthy can drastically reduce our risks. Being overweight can increase abdominal pressure making matters worse. A bad habit like smoking can induce coughing; which can weaken the abdominal muscles. There are different treatments available for this condition; ranging from Kegel exercises to surgery.

Kegel exercises are the clenching and unclenching of the pelvic muscles. It is accomplished by "bearing down" and releasing. Also, the use of Botox is an option. When we hear the word "Botox", it is generally attributed to the removal of wrinkles. However, in this case Botox is used to treat and reduce daily bladder leakage.



Botox has been FDA approved for incontinence sufferers and has shown great success. It works by injecting the Botox into the bladder muscles; this allows them to relax and store more urine with less stress. Botox is not a permanent solution and needs to be re-injected every 9 to 12 months.

Durasphere injections are another option; they are bulking agents that consist of non-migratory and non-absorbable prolytic-coated graphite beads in a gel. A mouthful to say, but it's actually a quite simple procedure to help control uncontrollable bladder leakage. The bulking agents are injected straight into the urethra to fill up the space that permits urine leakage. The injection actually thickens the bladder

making it more easily retain a healthy amount of urine. The pyrolytic carbon has been used in the medical field for over 30 years in implantable medical devices and it is non-reactive to tissue. This treatment is a safe and effective, minimally invasive, outpatient procedure option for urinary incontinence.

When it comes to treating urinary incontinence, the InterStim device is the most technologically advanced. This product has been used for over 15 years with over 100,000 individuals undergoing the procedure. The small device is surgically placed underneath the skin to stimulate the sacral nerves, the nerves that control the bladder. It blocks communication between the brain and the bladder. About the size of a pacemaker, this device sends electrical pulses down to the nerves of the pelvic floor. This is a method to reduce the contractions of an overactive bladder.

Urinary incontinence is not something that will go away on its own. Proper treatment is the only way to alleviate the symptoms. If you have any questions regarding incontinence, you can contact Advanced Urology Institute at (855) 298-2273.



855-298-CARE

Advancedurologyinstitute.com

IMPROVE YOUR THYROID FUNCTION AND LOSE WEIGHT

You've done your homework and tried every weight loss program you could find. Nothing worked for your weight loss, or if it did, it didn't work for long. You lost weight only to regain it. Or you sacrificed for months without shedding a pound.

Doctors and others told you that you didn't have will power, and you started to believe them. You questioned yourself. Is this weight loss problem in my head or is it in my hormones?

Would you be surprised to learn that an estimated 30 million Americans are unsuccessful at weight loss because of an existing thyroid problem, and not because of a lack of will power or discipline?

Weight loss is regulated by the thyroid. The thyroid gland is the primary regulator of your body's metabolism. If it does not function properly people can have weight loss as well as weight gaining issues.

It plays a distinct role in maintaining body temperature, can adjust the metabolic rate of every cell, controls neurotransmitters in the brain altering your moods, appetite, behavior and emotions.

When the thyroid isn't doing its job, many people have significant hair loss, or feel cold even though it is warm. When thyroid hormones aren't regulated the result is often depression, forgetfulness, irritability and trouble losing weight.

An underactive thyroid doesn't support your body's metabolic rate and you can become overweight even if you only eat a little food. If you have an underactive thyroid, without treatment weight loss seems hopeless.

Weight loss is difficult or nearly impossible when your metabolism slows to a crawl. You feel fatigued, and your mind acts like it is in a fog.

Most people do not realize how much thyroid imbalance can effect and change their quality of life. If you are one of those who have struggled with weight loss for many years, you may find relief when you get the proper testing and make the appropriate lifestyle changes.

Addressing Underlying Cause is Important to Losing Weight

Lifestyle Solutions MedSpa's physician directed weight loss programs enable their physician to monitor and regulate hormone levels, administer required hormone therapy and recommend appropriate individualized lifestyle changes to reactivate the thyroid with the goal of ultimately allowing the body to lose and maintain a healthy weight. The programs focus on addressing not only your weight loss goals, but on treating the underlying cause of your inability to lose and maintain a healthy weight.

"We understand your health and weight struggles", says Dr. Michael Holloway, the MedSpa's Medical Director and founder. "Making the appropriate realistic, healthy and sustainable lifestyle changes will many times reset the thyroid gland and improve one's overall metabolic rate, energy levels and success with shedding those undesirable pounds often without the need for additional medication."

Whether your thyroid is not functioning properly, or you are suffering from diabetes-related issues, high blood pressure, fatigue, or a host of other conditions, our physician-directed programs can help get your health and weight back on track.

At Lifestyle Solutions MedSpa, we dig deep to find the underlying causes of your health issues and weight problems, then our physician and dedicated staff work directly with you to correct your health problems.

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For more information on the programs available at Lifestyle Solutions MedSpa or to schedule a consultation, call 1-844-LIFESTYLE today!

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BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

By Amanda M. Burns, M.D.
Munroe General Surgery, General and Breast Surgery

The diagnosis of breast cancer is a life-changing event for many women. Those four words - "You have breast cancer" are met with a million emotions, from not only the woman facing the diagnosis, but also her loved ones. Unfortunately, this cancer is far too common, affecting over 250,000 women every year. In addition to patients with a cancer diagnosis, thousands of women are diagnosed with precancerous lesions that not only require similar surgical workups, but also lead to an increased risk of developing cancer in the future. But the great news is that for many women, a chance of cancer cure is attainable! The majority of women diagnosed with breast cancer will be cured of their cancer after treatment, with early stage cancers having a nearly 100% chance of cancer cure! Thanks in part to new and improved chemotherapy agents and advancement in radiation treatments, women are no longer faced with an incurable disease.

In addition to improvements in therapy, early detection is a key to these incredible outcomes! For this reason annual screenings are paramount for any women over the age of 40. That is why we focus on educating women on the importance of breast self-exams and knowing your body. But what are the important things to look for, what warning signs should women be aware of, and when should a woman seek further evaluation by her physicians? What features on imaging are clinicians looking for, and what findings warrant further evaluation? My hope is that at the end of this article, I will have answered many of these questions and given the women of this community the power to take charge of their health and an understanding of breast disease.

Let's start with breast examination. Although not absolutely required, women are encouraged to preform monthly breast self-exams. For the most part, this is to establish an understanding of your body and to know what is normal for you.



Everyone's body is different, and everyone's breasts are different. That is why understanding what is normal for you is important. It is when something changes that you should be aware. A monthly exam, performed at the same time of your menstrual cycle, is important to appreciate these changes. Additionally, every woman should have a yearly exam performed by her clinician. Changes to be aware of include a new lump that has not been

present before, particularly if it is hard, painful, growing, or associated with overlying skin changes. Nipple changes can also be a sign of an underlying process. These include nipple retraction that is new; nipple discharge, particularly if it is only in one breast or bloody; or skin changes of the nipple. These are the same things your primary physician looks for when they perform a clinical breast exam.

Imaging is often the next step in evaluation of any patient with concerns. It is also our best tool for screening, as many cancers and precancerous lesions are not palpable and only found on imaging. There are two mainstays of breast imaging – ultrasound and mammogram. For women over the age of 40, a yearly mammogram is recommended. Mammograms are an excellent tool for looking at various changes within the breast. They work by compressing the breast and using x-rays to take an image of the underlying breast tissue. The amount of radiation delivered with each mammogram is very limited, and any risk from the radiation exposure is very small. Mammograms allow clinicians to identify masses, as well as more subtle changes, such as micro-calcifications or architectural distortions. While no imaging modality can accurately diagnose cancer without a tissue biopsy, these findings on a mammogram increase the suspicion of an underlying process – whether precancerous or cancerous. Women with findings such as these on mammogram will often undergo further testing with either additional imaging or with biopsy to make a full diagnosis.

Often times, women with concerning findings on a routine mammogram will be asked to come back to have another mammogram performed. Many women ask why it is necessary to undergo the same imaging again. The answer is simple – for women without any concerns, a screening mammogram is performed. This type of mammogram utilizes two standard views of each breast. These two routine views are great for evaluating the full breast, and are consistent across the country. Often, these can be performed without a physician’s authorization, so for women without a primary care physician, a screening mammogram can be obtained without an order from a clinician.

For women with a palpable mass, or a concerning finding on screening mammogram, further imaging may be needed to fully evaluate the area of concern. This is when a diagnostic mammogram is performed. The views, or techniques, vary depending on where the area is, and what it looks like on the original screening mammogram. Various techniques may be applied, such as increased compression of the breast in the area of concern, as well as changing the angle at which the mammogram is taken. Many radiology centers will perform a biopsy at the time of a diagnostic mammogram if warranted, thus eliminating an extra visit to the radiology center, and expediting the diagnosis.

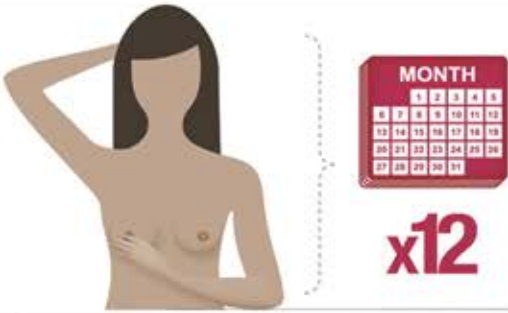
While mammograms are a great tool for evaluating breast disease, they have their limitations. For women with dense breasts, often women under the age of 40, mammogram is not always the best option. For these women, ultrasound may be performed alone, or in conjunction with a mammogram, to allow for further evaluation of the breast tissue. Ultrasound is a great tool for evaluating cysts seen on mammogram, and determining if these cysts are benign appearing or warrant further imaging or biopsy. Additionally, palpable masses are further evaluated with ultrasound to differentiate between cystic and solid masses. Just as with mammograms, certain features are more indicative of an underlying process that requires further testing.

For any woman with concerns regarding her breast, whether it is a new lump, pain, discharge, or another concerning finding, reaching out to your physician care team is always the best option. It is never a bad idea to have your concerns evaluated by your trusted clinician. My goal is to provide the wonderful women of this community an increased knowledge of breast disease. With this increased understanding, women can take charge of their health, and can be empowered to seek further answers. Ultimately we can find and treat any breast cancer while it is in an early stage, and give every woman with the diagnosis of breast cancer a chance at a 100% cure.

Dr. Amanda Burns is a General and Breast Surgeon with Munroe Medical Group and has offices located in Ocala and Lady Lake. She can be reached at 352-671-1202, and is currently accepting patients and can offer next day appointments. She can also be reached by email at amanda_burns@munroregional.com. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to call or email.



1908 SE 18th Avenue, Bldg 200, Ocala, FL 34471
(352) 671-1201



Perform a monthly self-examination
Women should perform a self breast-exam each month and any changes or abnormalities should be discussed with a doctor or physician.

- 1) In the Shower**
Using the pads of your fingers, move around your entire breast in a circular pattern moving from the outside to the center, checking the entire breast and armpit area. Check both breasts each month feeling for any lump, thickening, or hardened knot. Notice any changes and get lumps evaluated by your healthcare provider.


- 2) In Front of a Mirror**
Visually inspect your breasts with your arms at your sides. Next, raise your arms high overhead. Look for any changes in the contour, any swelling, or dimpling of the skin, or changes in the nipples. Next, rest your palms on your hips and press firmly to flex your chest muscles. Left and right breasts will not exactly match—few women’s breasts do, so look for any dimpling, puckering, or changes, particularly on one side.


- 3) Lying Down**
When lying down, the breast tissue spreads out evenly along the chest wall. Place a pillow under your right shoulder and your right arm behind your head. Using your left hand, move the pads of your fingers around your right breast gently in small circular motions covering the entire breast area and armpit. Use light, medium, and firm pressure. Squeeze the nipple; check for discharge and lumps. Repeat these steps for your left breast.



Source: Nationalbreastcancer.org
Cancer.org

HOW TO MINIMIZE YOUR RISK OF GETTING BREAST CANCER

By Michelle Haessler, M.D., Board Certified Radiation Oncologist

As an oncologist, I have treated breast cancer patients from as young as 15 years of age to patients in their nineties. Breast cancer can affect anyone but is more common in women in their 50's and older. Yes, I have treated men with breast cancer but it only accounts for about 1% of all cases of breast cancer. Early onset breast cancer is generally considered breast cancer occurring in women under 40 years of age and often has a genetic component.

One reason that breast cancer is so devastating is that it affects women in the prime years of their lives. The time when women are working, raising a family and trying hard to achieve their life's dreams. There is no "typical" breast cancer patient. All patients and their disease are unique. No "standard" treatment or "one size fits" all exists. The disease can be fast or slow in its progression. It can be highly favorable as to cure or more challenging. If you are reading this then you have an interest in breast cancer and have either been diagnosed with it or know someone who has been. So...

Make sure if you are diagnosed with breast cancer that your case is presented to a tumor conference. This is where oncology specialists from a variety of specialties discuss individual patients and their unique cancer. Studies have shown that as many as one third of all individual physician decisions are changed after being reviewed at a tumor conference. Almost all hospitals and cancer centers have access to a tumor conference either at their facility or through a teleconference. I cannot be more emphatic about this. It may be the most important decision that you make regarding your disease.

Also make a file of your all of your health records. Get copies of: pathology reports, mammograms, all radiology reports, CD's of all radiology done (best to ask when you have the studies done usually they are free then), copies of your consults. Keep these records but every time you see a new doctor let them make copies for their records. This really expedites everything. It often can take quite some time for the doctor's office to obtain records. This is good advice for everyone no matter what you are seeing your doctor for.

Hopefully, you are reading this and have not been diagnosed with cancer. What can you do to decrease your risk of developing breast cancer? Whereas, there is no way to prevent breast cancer from any

particular individual, there are things that you can do to decrease your risk.

1. **Get a mammogram.** This doesn't decrease your risk but the earlier the diagnosis is made the more treatable the disease the better the outcome.
2. **Exercise.** Even if it is only a half hour of walking a day, this will decrease your risk of developing cancer. Studies have demonstrated a better outcome if diagnosed with breast cancer if the patient exercises
3. **Maintain a healthy weight.** Hard to do but very important
4. **Breast feed your infant.** This is not only good for your baby but can decrease your chances of getting breast cancer
5. **Eat a balanced diet.** I am the worst but I keep trying. Never give up
6. **Limit alcohol intake.** Studies have shown a link to increased alcohol consumption and an increase in the risk of breast cancer
7. **DON'T SMOKE** there is a link between smoking and breast cancer as well as many other cancers. It is so bad for your health in so many ways. QUIT
8. **Take vitamin D3** and keep your levels above 40ng/ml. Numerous studies have shown that higher blood levels of vitamin D3 reduced the risk of developing breast cancer.
9. **Among women who did develop breast cancer** the patients with higher levels of vitamin D3 had a lower incidence of the more aggressive forms of breast cancer and had a better prognosis.
10. **Take curcumin.** It has been shown to decrease cell proliferation of breast cancer cells and may have a protective effect.

Nothing can prevent breast cancer from developing in any particular person. We are all a unique combination of environment and genes. By taking a proactive stance and becoming an advocate for our own health we can help tip the odds in our favor.

Michelle Haessler, M.D.

Board Certified Radiation Oncologist
Dr. Haessler is a Board Certified Radiation Oncologist. She has spent over 25 years diagnosing and treating cancer patients. At age 30 she decided to go to Medical School and become a physician. She was a single parent with a 3-year-old daughter. Her daughter provided motivation for her decision to become a physician. Dr. Haessler wanted to provide a good life for her daughter and prove to her that women can accomplish anything in life if they wanted it badly enough.



She graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine in 1989 and completed her internship in Internal Medicine the following year. While going through her oncology rotation she was inspired by her cancer patients. Their bravery and optimism against all odds, their love of life and all of the people around them, motivated Dr. Haessler to devote her life to helping these patients in any way she could.

She completed her Radiation Oncology residency at Henry Ford Hospital in 1994. She is most appreciative of the wonderful education and experience she received there. HFH is a world renown cancer center treating an endless variety of cancers from the rarest to the most common forms. She remembers the excellent, dedicated physicians she had the honor of working with.

Dr. Haessler has worked as a Radiation Oncologist in Nebraska and Iowa for approximately the last 17 years. While she was an Assistant Professor at Creighton University and elsewhere she gave numerous lectures on a variety of cancer topics including: breast cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer, radiation oncology emergencies, radiobiology, advances in cancer treatments, palliative care etc. She loved teaching medical students, nurses, residents, her patients and anyone that wanted to listen.

Throughout all her experiences, Dr. Haessler has had a profound love for her patients and respect for all the hard work and dedication her fellow oncologists have had. After seeing so much heartbreak with the passing of terminally ill patients, Dr. Haessler usually could be heard after a long day uttering "I HATE CANCER". She attended a lecture on the effects of vitamin D3 and its decrease in the risk of certain cancers and this then became Dr. Haessler's next challenge in life to try to decrease the incidence of cancer.

New studies were published which showed that certain cancer risks might be decreased with simple daily supplements. After years of studying this and pondering how best to convey this information, Dr. Haessler decided to develop a nutritional supplement which taken twice daily may decrease the incidence of certain cancers, decrease the expense of cancer treatment, decrease the discomfort of treatment but most importantly decrease the heartbreak of cancer itself, thus, the creation of Covitale-7.

CoVitale-7 can be purchased at:
Naples Pharmacy
848 1st Avenue North, Suite 120
Naples, FL 34102
(next to Wynn's Market)

Florida Strong: Post-Irma Disaster Relief and Stress Management Support

Joining many other companies, organizations and individuals who have come forth to provide disaster relief post-Irma, UnitedHealthcare, Optum and UnitedHealth Group (NYSE:UNH) and its employees have donated more than \$1.5 million to support Florida communities affected by the storm, including the Florida Disaster Fund, local community food banks, Habitat for Humanity, Humane Society, Feeding Florida, Save the Children and Red Cross Irma Fund. As part of this outreach, more than \$750,000 has been raised to-date from a 2:1 match for employee donations toward disaster-relief efforts. The companies are also providing incentives and support to employees who volunteer.



Individuals affected by Hurricane Irma also have access to a free, 24/7 emotional support help line at 866-342-6892, which is being provided by Optum as part of disaster relief support services.

This kind of collective, broad based outreach is what keeps Florida strong. In addition to the structural damage, many people are also dealing with post-hurricane mental stress as they work on cleaning up and trying to restore some semblance of normalcy in their lives. To assist with this, storm-affected individuals also have access to a free, 24/7 emotional support help line, 866-342-6892, being provided by Optum for as long as necessary. The service is free of charge and open to anyone. Callers may also receive referrals to community resources. Along with the toll-free help line, emotional-support resources and information are available online at www.liveandworkwell.com.

"We are deeply concerned for the people affected by Hurricane Irma, and we are committed to supporting local communities as they recover and rebuild," said David S. Wichmann, president, UnitedHealth Group. "We are also taking action to ensure the people we serve have easy access to the care they need."



Stress is a normal part of daily life but can become overwhelming when we don't take care of ourselves. Practicing mindfulness, which can be as simple as taking a few minutes of total quiet time each day, can have a calming effect.

Recognizing stress

Stress is a physical and psychological response to a demand, threat or problem. It stimulates and increases your level of awareness, also known as the "fight or flight" response. The response occurs whether the stress is positive or negative. Positive stress provides the means to express talents and abilities. But continued exposure to negative stress may lower the body's ability to cope, which may lead to prolonged health issues.

Your signs of stress may be different from someone else's. Some people get angry. Others have trouble concentrating or making decisions, and still others will develop health problems. The good news is that stress can be managed.

Managing stress

Even before Hurricane Irma, Florida ranked 40th among all 50 states when it comes to poor mental health days, according to United Health Foundation's 2016 America's Health Rankings. The ranking is based on the number of days people unfavorably assess their mental health, which can affect their wellbeing and quality of life.

Poor mental health days can affect every aspect of one's day, from your drive to work to running errands before your child's soccer practice. So what can be done about managing stress and preventing tough days ahead?

Suzanne Perkins, vice president of customer analysis and solutions for UnitedHealthcare, says that first, we must understand that stress is here to stay – a modest amount of stress, offset by periods of relative calm and security, is normal. But high levels of stress can be dangerous to your health, leading to headaches, back pain, fatigue, upset stomach, anxiety, depression and heart problems, all of which are tasked at higher levels when it's hot outside.



Exercising, even something as simple as going for a walk, and spending time with friends are good antidotes to managing stress overload.

To help people better manage their stress – and health – Perkins offers these five tips:

- 1. Take care of yourself** – Eat healthier, engage in moderate exercise and get enough sleep – all of which can improve your health.
- 2. Figure out the source** — Monitor your mental state throughout the day. Keep a list of the things that create stress. Then develop a plan for dealing with these common stressors. If you're having difficulty doing this, seek out help from a mental health professional or support group.
- 3. Do things you enjoy** — Go to a movie, take a walk outside, meet a friend for dinner or participate in an activity that provides relief. Give yourself a break and take time to care about yourself.
- 4. Learn relaxation techniques** — Deep breathing is helpful. Meditation, as well as "mindfulness techniques," is becoming increasingly popular at home and in the workplace. You can practice mindfulness while sitting in a quiet place or walking. The key is to focus on your breathing or your steps. The technique may be simple, but achieving the desired result takes practice.
- 5. Welcome support** — Let close friends or relatives know you're dealing with stress. They may be able to offer help or support that may make a difference.

Remember, stress is your body's natural defense mechanism, but being under stress for too long can have a serious negative effect on your health. If you notice stress is becoming an issue for you, talk with your doctor.

For more health and wellness tips, visit UHC.com.

Suzanne Perkins, MS, LHHC, is a licensed mental health counselor in the state of Florida. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in applied psychology from Georgia Institute of Technology and a Master of Science degree in clinical psychology from Barry University in Miami.

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Four Stress-Busters For Home Sellers

By Dawn Trigg
Broker Associate, REALTOR®

Selling your home is an exciting endeavor and an important milestone in your life—not to mention potentially lucrative! However, it can also be stressful and nerve-racking. Worrying over the sale of your home is natural and expected, but it doesn't have to get out of control. Here are some quick, easy ways you can maintain optimum mental health while dealing with negotiations, inspections, and appraisals.

1: Meditation

The practice of meditation can seem mystifying and arcane, but it's actually deceptively simple—and its cognitive benefits have been well known for centuries. All you need is a quiet space and a few minutes to yourself. Sit with your legs crossed, and focus on your breathing. Breathe into your diaphragm through your nose slowly and evenly for five to ten minutes to clear your mind, reduce feelings of anxiety, and get back at it refreshed.

2: Gentle Exercise and Cardio

Get rid of that excess nervous energy by engaging in some gentle, low-impact exercise. Even light exercise releases endorphins that make your brain happy and helps your body better adapt to stress. Exercising in a natural setting is even better, since outdoor vistas tend to create a meditative state of mind called involuntary attention in which our minds can wander but our senses are engaged in the present moment. When you're stressed, try some light yoga or go for a walk at your favorite spot.

3: Visualization

A similar practice to meditation, visualization is known to elicit relaxation response in the body and mind. It's also very simple: make yourself comfortable in a quiet place, then imagine yourself relaxing in a peaceful scene of your choice. You can also focus on positive, goal-focused imagery like selling your home, or picturing yourself in your dream home.

4: Potassium Consumption

Stressing out with no time to take a meditation or yoga break? Grab a banana. Bananas (as well as sweet potatoes, yogurt, and winter squash) are rich in potassium, a nutrient that helps your body regulate blood pressure and recover more quickly from stress. Incorporate potassium-containing foods in your meals throughout the selling process to help your body and mind cope.



Selling your home should be an exciting, happy time for you and your family. Keep your selling stress low by hiring a Showcase team member to make sure you get exactly what you want from the sale of your home. Let us deal with the hard stuff so you don't have to!



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The Process of Root Canals Explained

Root canals are often the one dental procedure that cannot defy its bad reputation, but you can rest assured that having a root canal procedure is just as simple a process as having a filling placed. The common signs of needing a root canal are pain when eating or drinking something hot. The tooth is made up of enamel, then a layer of dentin (softer/spongier bone), then the dental pulp, which is connective tissue and nerve bundles that elongate into the roots of the tooth. A root canal is usually recommended when you have an infection in the pulp of the tooth.

So, how did the infection take place? Well, normally it's caused by decay (cavity) in the tooth or microleakage around a filling that allowed bacteria to enter through the dentin and into the pulp of the tooth. Once the infection is in the nerves or root system, no manner of antibiotics will be able to reach the infection, so having a root canal is imperative. If left untreated, a painful abscess will form at the base of the roots, deep in the bone and can cause further infection to contaminate the mandibular (bottom) or maxillary (upper) jaw bones. It will also cause the tooth to decay more rapidly and may cause severe swelling of the face.

The Procedure

Your dentist will drill a hole through the center of the tooth and remove any surrounding decay. Tiny files that have threads, much like teeny, flexible screws are placed into the root(s) of the tooth. These small files can bend and flex with the natural contour of your roots, so they are able to adhere to the damaged nerves and extract the tissue that needs to be removed. This is not painful, as you will be totally numb, and once the procedure is over, you will no longer have nerves in the tooth to cause pain.

If the infected tooth had been ignored for an extended period of time, the root canal would also remove the abscess that may have formed. If this is the case, then antibiotics will be prescribed to make certain that no other recurring infections take place in and around the jaw bone.

Before filling in the roots with tiny rubber like nerve replacements, the roots will be totally cleansed and irrigated. After your root canal procedure, a temporary filling will be left in place. This will allow time for the tooth to completely calm down before a permanent filling is put in place.



Many people need to have a crown (cap) placed on the tooth because decay was rampant and left too little tooth structure to maintain the ability to prevent breakage from wear and tear.

The only alternative to a root canal procedure is a tooth extraction. If you decide to get your tooth extracted, it's a wise choice to have an implant (titanium post and porcelain crown) placed. If you leave an open space in between teeth, the teeth will shift on their own, trying to fill in the interproximal space and also the occluding teeth (bite) will either drop down or lift up out of the jaw bone, to try and properly occlude with their natural bite. If this happens, then you potentially could lose multiple teeth. Staying on top of your dental health through cleanings, x-rays, and dental examinations are critical to avoid in-depth procedures and to maintain a healthy mouth that's free of decay, bacteria, and oral cancer.

Belleview Dental Center

All of the providers at Belleview Dental Center are highly trained in treating root canals. Having qualified, skilled, on-site dentists is an essential consideration when choosing the right dental group for your needs and convenience. When you receive dental care from the providers at Belleview Dental Center in Belleview, FL, you have the confidence of knowing you are receiving care from highly skilled dentists at a family practice that was established over 35 years ago in 1982.

Belleview Dental Center is family-owned and dedicated to delivering the best in general, restorative, implant, and cosmetic dental care for your entire family as well as same day emergency services and extended office hours. Their mission is to ensure your dental experience is positive and stress free. You will enjoy compassionate, comfortable dental care designed to provide a lifetime of optimal oral health. Together with our periodontist, all of the doctors at Belleview Dental Center have extensive experience with placing and restoring dental implants. Belleview Dental Center has a long heritage of dentists with a great deal of trusted experience. Your smile will be in good hands with Dr. Henry Sweeny Sr., Dr. Henry "Bo" Sweeny Jr., Dr. Samuel Sweeny and their dedicated staff.



352.245.1188

belleviewdentalcenter.com
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About

Dr. Henry A. Sweeny Jr.

Dr. Henry A. Sweeny Jr. joined Belleview Dental Center in July of 2003 after graduating from Dental School. He is fondly known to his patients as Dr. Bo. He attended the University of Florida and received a Bachelor of Science in Nutritional Sciences, a Masters of Science in Food Science and Human Nutrition and continued at the University of Florida to complete his Doctor of Dental Medicine. Throughout his extensive career, Dr. Sweeny has attended continuing education courses and has focused on comprehensive training in Implant Placement and Implant Restoration. He also has completed advanced education in Cosmetic Dentistry. Dr. Sweeny is a member of the American Dental Association, Florida Dental Association, and the International Team for Implantology. Dr. Sweeny's practice also includes General Dental Procedures, Root Canals, Oral Surgery, Extractions, and Dentistry on Children. He has a particular passion for Implants and Oral Surgery. Dr. Sweeny is an avid fisherman and in his free time he also enjoys golf, hunting, exercising, volunteering in the community, and can frequently be seen attending University of Florida Gator football games. He works alongside his Father, Henry A Sweeny Sr. DMD and his Brother Samuel J Sweeny DMD at this treasured local Dental Practice.



MONIQUE
Richard registered
dietitian
nutritionist

Scary Good Healthy Halloween Ideas

By Monique Richard MS, RDN, LDN

Fall is full of nature's beautiful bounty, like buckets of crisp glistening apples, artist-palette dipped leaves, and fields piled with giant pumpkins and gourds. But beware. The beast of October can rear its ugly head, snatching up nutrients, crashing blood-sugar levels and overwhelming parents and children alike. It's not the ghouls and goblins or mysteries of Cabbage Night, but the tradition that happens on Halloween that can zap even the best intentions and become unruly: candy!

Everyone has their favorite time of year, or holiday, and one doesn't have to be a kid dressed up in a costume to look forward to the spooky spectacle of Halloween, just be sure to use caution. The good news is we can still partake of the stories, magic, mystery, creativity and treats of Halloween, without sacrificing the healthy habits we've worked so hard to keep this year.

The American Heart Association recommends women get no more than 6 teaspoons (24g) of added sugar a day and men no more than 9 teaspoons (36g) a day.¹ So, what exactly does that mean? To give you an example, five Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Miniatures have about 23g of sugar. Maybe you're not a master at math, but you can see how easily the sugar, fat, and calories can add up, surpassing the recommendations.

The overflowing candy bowls, break-room novelties, or your child's pillowcase stash can be tempting, but the added sugar, calories and fat taken in over several days or weeks, even if in a bite-sized version, can add up quickly to no good. The "just one more" mentality may wreak havoc on your blood glucose and waistline, leaving you feeling more like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Go for a small handful, enjoy, then move them out of sight with an 'abracadabra and alakazam,' they're gone, and you're done!





Non-food items that can be fun to give or receive include:

- fun-sized blowing bubbles
- crayons, markers, pens or art supplies
- rubber spider or bat rings
- mini-toy cars
- bouncing balls
- tokens or vouchers for games or to local businesses
- friendship bracelets
- stampers
- stickers
- balloons
- comic books
- water bottles
- toothbrushes
- grab bags made from \$1 store items



Healthier Alternatives

Maybe you're thinking, 'What happens to trick or treating if all the sugar is banished?' Nothing. Nada. Halloween can still be enjoyed and fun is still had, without the excess. It is simply about understanding that occasional treats can be appropriate and can be enjoyed. However, bringing health and wellness to you and your children's lives or those you interact with, really benefits everyone. Some healthier alternatives for parties, Halloween bags, and festivities may include:

- whole-grain cheddar flavored crackers
- fruit snacks made with 100 percent fruit with added vitamin C
- sugar-free gum
- animal-shaped graham crackers made without trans-fat
- mini rice cereal treat bars
- unsalted bags of pretzels
- popcorn balls
- apples
- tangerines
- raisins



Cutting Down on the Excess

There have been many tactics regarding how much or how long the Halloween candy stays in the house or how much children should be allowed. Every parent may have a slightly different approach. It really is about finding a plan that works for your household. It should be neither super restrictive or overly lenient.

First and foremost, balanced meals appropriate for their needs should always be a priority, but treats can have a place too. Food's role is to nourish our bodies for growing, healing, functioning, and thriving. We wouldn't want empty calories and excess sugar to take the place of those important nutrients. It may be useful to set a date for when the candy is to be moved out of the house or set a number on how many pieces allowed in a day. Playing a game with the guidelines or talking about your favorite pieces can be a fun, bonding experience too.

Some additional ideas to cut down on the excess of Halloween and share the wealth includes getting a community group together and participating in a program like Operation Shoebox, which promotes packing up the goodies and sending to troops overseas.² Many dentists' offices also encourage kids to bring in their Halloween loot in exchange for cash with 'buy-back' programs; often the office will be participating in Operation Gratitude where the candy and care packages will be also sent to soldiers across the globe.³ Check with your local dentist's office to see what is offered or how you can help.

Don't forget the power of movement for you and your family as well. Meandering through a corn maze, going for a brisk fall walk, or raking those leaves can help burn some calories, enhance respiratory function, and clear the mind from the 'to-do' lists. Use the cooler weather to your advantage to get outside, but then enjoy a cup of spiced cider, homemade hot cocoa, or tea with a loved one. Fall is amazing and so are you. Happy Halloween!

A registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) is able to individualize your nutrition plan based on your needs, goals, environment, genetic predispositions, health condition, physical activity and many other factors. Ask your physician how to schedule an appointment with me or schedule through my private practice by visiting eatrightx.com for more information.

Resources:

1. http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/HealthyDietGoals/Added-Sugars_UCM_305858_Article.jsp Accessed September 26, 2014.
2. <http://www.operationshoebox.com> Accessed August 26, 2016.
3. <http://www.halloweencandybuyback.com> Accessed August 26, 2016. <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442458793> Accessed September 26, 2014.

THE WARNING SIGNALS OF A COUGH THAT YOU SHOULD NEVER IGNORE

Dr. Poonam Warman, MD

If you are experiencing a chronic cough that is lingering, you need to take an active approach and seek medical attention. It's better to catch diseases early or to give yourself peace of mind in knowing that it may just simply be a cough, but many times environmental factors play a huge role in a chronic cough and corresponding illnesses.

Numerous key-contributing factors foster chronic coughing, but given last month's horrific hurricane, many people may be coughing more due to molds, mildews and dampness. If you are susceptible to fungi's and wetness for hours on end because your home or place of work was flooded, you may begin to feel sick physically, and a cough is your body's way of trying to get rid of the toxins that you are breathing in. If you continue to breathe in these toxins, you can have long-lasting adverse effects, and you can even cause permanent damage to your lungs.

Coughing—Do Not Ignore These Symptoms:

- A persistent cough for several weeks
- Productive coughing with phlegm
- Asthmatic symptoms
- Shortness of breath
- Rapid heart rate with coughing episodes
- Pain when coughing
- Vomiting when coughing

Other Major Disorders That Contribute To Coughing:

- COPD
- Asthma
- Pneumonia
- Tuberculosis
- Cystic fibrosis
- ARDS (Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome)
- Emphysema
- Lung Cancer



There are multiple tests that can detect why you're coughing, along with giving a detailed diagnosis. Some of these tests include a nebulizer, blood tests, CT, X-Ray, or MRI. When you see a pulmonologist, they will utilize their precise training to diagnose and treat your disorder or disease state.

If you have a persistent cough or are experiencing unusual respiratory symptoms, please make an appointment with your pulmonologist now. It's better to be proactive than reactive when it comes to your health. If you let symptoms linger, that's when they turn into progressive, advanced diseases.

About Dr. Warman:

Poonam Warman, M.D. has been practicing medicine for over 25 years. She is one of the only female pulmonologists in the area and specializes in sleep apnea treatment. Dr. Warman treats all aspects of lung disease and disorders. Her patients love the time that she takes to explain their personal situation, and they appreciate her innovative approach to treating diseases by getting to the root issues of the bodies overall condition.

To find out more about Dr. Warman and to schedule your appointment, please call (352) 369-6139

Electro Massage, The Ultimate Therapeutic Massage Experience

You are Amazing! And so is your body. Human Beings have amazing abilities to perform, to heal and look amazing. Many would argue that the Fountain of Youth is within us! Here's why; our body's typically are producing over 2 million new stem-cells every second of every day. Our ability to heal from virtually any kind of disease or injury, and perform at high levels, increases dramatically when we have enough energy and the right nutrients.

Natural Healing Accelerated and Dramatic Pain Relief with Electro Massage

How is this Possible?

Dramatic pain relief, and accelerated healing are highly achievable when micro-current technology is applied properly. It can be used to heal a multitude of particular medical issues. Because of the fact that the cells in our bodies function, and signal to each other through intricate micro-current transmitters, when our cells currents are damaged or dying (due to injury or disease), the electrical current levels in the cells diminish, and the cell will begin to emit toxicity through chemical reactions in our bodies.

When the proper micro-current levels are improved and stabilized, our bodies will start to eliminate pain, inflammation and the progression of damage to injuries, aging, and disease. Micro-current treatment has been around for many years, but until recently it was reserved for athletes and celebrities for its healing and anti-aging benefits. Now available to the general public, the process is easy and takes a short period of time to improve our cells electrical functioning. During the procedure, small probes are applied to specific areas of the body, and low-level micro-current is stimulated through and controlled by a technician.



Not all Micro-Current is created equal.

Energy Medical (EMed) has a superior micro-current delivery system for accelerated healing called Acuscope Myopulse (AMT). AMT is based on physics, and uses Artificial Intelligence to normalize the electro-physiology of tissue.. Physical science controls chemistry. All the functions of the body can be normalized, as long as the pathology has not progressed too far.

AMT Triggers The Body's Own Natural Healing Mechanisms By:

- Normalizing inflamed (low-resistance) tissue so that it no longer redirects required (standard) electrical impulses away from needy or damaged (high-resistance or electrically compromised) cells
- Normalizing damaged (high resistance or electrically compromised) cells so that they can hold the normal electrical charge needed to make enough of the chemicals responsible for producing cellular energy, the fuel required for repair

Energy Medical is a leader in the field of electric medicine and specializes in eliminating pain and

accelerated healing. Using advanced, electro-magnetic-pulsed-frequency waveforms, Energy Medical therapists excel at re-normalizing tissue cellular function. It sounds complicated, but it's quite simple, quick and highly efficient.

How Can Electro-Massage with AMT Help You?

- EMed is the leader in the field of electric medicine
- Specializing in pain relief and accelerated healing
- Helps you look better, feel better and perform better
- Provides highly effective, fast and lasting results
- Increase energy levels, blood flow, natural healing, and detoxification
- Utilizes advanced, artificial intelligence, electro-magnetic-pulsed-frequency- waveform technologies to safely restore health without drugs or surgeries

EMed's Wellness Program

Decades ago, microcurrent treatment was used for Hollywood's elite celebrities to help their skin and facial muscles tighten through non-invasive micro-current treatments. It was reserved only for the stars that could afford its high price and secrecy at the time

Energy Medical, along with all of their high-regarded services is now offering a complete wellness package. Since cell regeneration is proven unmatched with AMT therapy, EMed's facial, massage and performance enhancement package normalizes the condition of the skin, returning damaged cells to their own natural healthy state. The Bio-Energetic Face lift will stimulate collagen production, blood flow, and lymph drainage on an accumulative basis. Normal healthy skin will naturally optimize oxygen, nutrient absorption, and moisture levels.

At EMed's Electro Massage and Facial Center, you will receive the Ultimate therapeutic massage & Facial Experience. You can relax and re-energize mentally, emotionally and physically.

The Electro Massage allows energy to flow right thru your therapist's fingers, penetrating muscles, nerves, organs, and skin. You will experience pain relief, melting-muscle knots, increased energy-levels, enhanced-blood-flow, improved-collagen production, detoxification, and much more. Full body electro-massage is the Ultimate Therapeutic Massage Experience.

If you'd like to look younger, feel better and enhance your performance level, then AMT treatments are available at your convenience through Energy Medical. They are offering free consultation to design a plan to address the root cause of an issue and not just mask symptoms.

With Emed's Electro Facial you will experience deep cleaning at a cellular level, increased collagen production, and optimal cellular renewal.

You really can Look Better, Feel Better and Perform Better without drugs or surgery. Call Energy Medical today and schedule your free consultation. 352-552-1889, or visit energymedical.net



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Medical Marijuana, What is Legal, What Isn't, and Who is Eligible?

With the ever-changing regulations, laws, and curious citizens, there are basic informative rules of purchasing and consuming medical marijuana that all Florida residents should know. But first, the definition of what "medical marijuana" actually is will be helpful information to differentiate street drugs from those that are deemed for medicinal purposes.

Medical Marijuana

There are different species and hybrids of the marijuana plant. With strict guidelines, the State of Florida highly regulates how their crops are grown for medical treatment. For instance, some of the plants have much less THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) in them than others. THC is the mind-altering, euphoric component of marijuana that gives the "high" feeling, typically associated with marijuana. However, new laws were put in place that allows recommendations of elevated levels of THC for certain patients with aggressive disorders.

The natural marijuana plant contains both CBD and THC. CBD or cannabinoids can treat many different forms of diseases and disorders with low THC. Our brain and nerve cells have cannabinoid receptors,

so our bodies naturally react to CBD (cannabinoids) and TCH (tetrahydrocannabinol) through merging directly with our cells. Our natural endocannabinoid system works synergistically with CBD and TCH, creating a multitude of beneficial reactions in the body.

Qualifying Medical Conditions

Currently, there are 12 medical conditions explicitly defined in the Florida medical marijuana initiative. However, the Florida marijuana law also states that any medical condition in which the medical marijuana doctor believes that the medical use of marijuana would likely outweigh the potential health risks for a patient may be used as criteria when certifying a patient for the Florida medical marijuana program. The medical conditions specifically defined in Florida's medical marijuana law are:

- Cancer
- Epilepsy
- Glaucoma
- HIV
- AIDS
- Seizures
- Crohn's disease
- Chronic muscle spasms
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Parkinson's disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- Any other medical condition that the doctor approves

Certified Associates, LLC has an extended list of qualifying medical conditions that their doctors may use as criteria when certifying a patient for Florida's medical marijuana program. In addition, for any medical condition that may require pain medication, marijuana may be considered as an alternative treatment to prescription pain medications.

What is a Marijuana Card?

Any person wanting to obtain a medical marijuana card, which is a certificate stating you are eligible to purchase and have medical marijuana, needs to be registered in a State database.

How can I get registered in the database?

You must visit a Physician that is licensed to recommend medical marijuana. To legally purchase and consume medical marijuana in Florida, the person must have one of the qualifying medical conditions as stated in Florida's medical marijuana law or any other medical condition that a certified marijuana doctor deems appropriate. The person must have a

marijuana evaluation conducted by a marijuana doctor who is licensed by Florida's Department of Health to practice medicine in Florida and who is also certified by the Florida Department of Health's Office of Compassionate Use (OCU) as a marijuana doctor. The marijuana doctor issues a certificate and enters the patient into the Compassionate Use Registry database. Only people who are registered in the Compassionate Use Registry database can purchase and consume medical marijuana in Florida.

A minor can enroll in the Florida medical marijuana program, but must have the written consent of the parent or legal guardian, and must also get a marijuana certification from two doctors instead of one.

To apply for a medical marijuana card in Florida, you must have the following:

- Proof of Florida residency, i.e. valid Florida ID, driver's license, voter ID, utility bill with the same name on application
- Medical records proving your medical condition
- Signed release of information form
- Certification from a licensed physician registered with the Florida Department of Health's medical marijuana program

Where can I purchase the Marijuana?

There are highly-regulated medical marijuana dispensaries, which are the only place you can purchase marijuana legally. Marijuana is still listed as a Schedule I narcotic by the US federal government and therefore cannot be sold in pharmacies since pharmacies are regulated by the federal government's DEA. Medical marijuana can only be legally purchased from a licensed medical marijuana grower/dispensary, or MMTC's, as they are known in Florida.

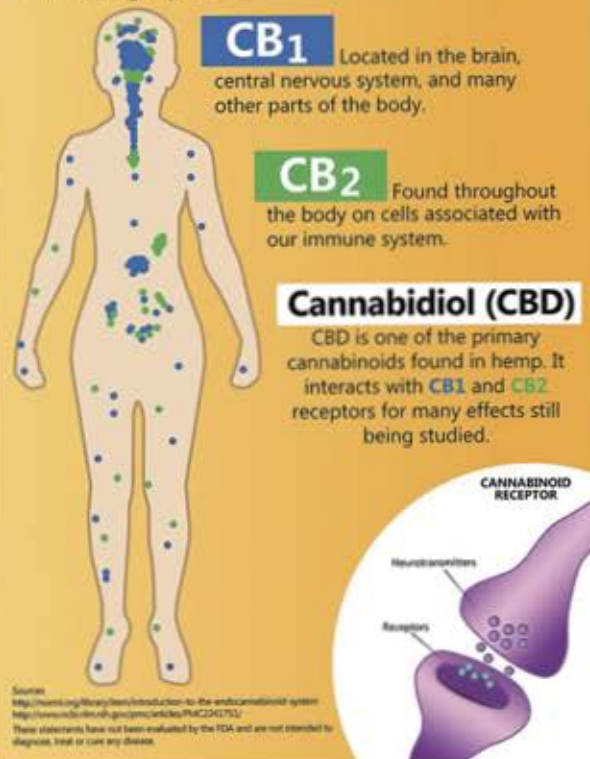
Before a patient can legally purchase medical marijuana in Florida the specialized marijuana physician will enter a recommended dosage amount into the registry. Once the doctor has recommended a dosage the medical marijuana patient can only purchase medical marijuana from licensed MMTC's any marijuana purchased outside of these sources is deemed illegal and is not protected under Florida's medical marijuana

Certified Associates, LLC has the most marijuana-friendly and best marijuana doctors in Florida. Certified Associates, LLC is dedicated to offering their patients the best support. If you have any questions or need help, please feel free to call them anytime toll-free at (844) 420-PASS (7277), or visit FloridaCard.com.

Certified Associates, LLC's Ocala Office
 1713 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Suite 4
 Ocala, FL 34470
 Tel (352) 414-4545

The Human Endocannabinoid System

The endocannabinoid system consists of two receptors, called CB1 and CB2. These receptors are found on cell surfaces and impact various biological processes.



5 Reasons To Use In-Home Care

The physical and mental decline that comes with the aging process affects everyone in a different way. Some seniors find it particularly difficult to cope with the limitations of age. As a result, they may turn to denial and refuse assistance from loved ones. Services that provide in-home care staff offer a gentle alternative to senior homes. Even the most resistant senior will learn to love the benefits afforded by in-home care.

1. Stay in a Comfortable Environment

Alternative options to in-home care are often much more disruptive to daily life. Aging inherently involves dealing with increasing amounts of loss, and maintaining a familiar environment in the midst of difficult life changes makes a world of difference.

2. Maintain Independence

Loss of independence is a common cause of depression in seniors. Senior depression has lasting implications on long-term health and wellness. Choosing in-home care avoids stripping a loved one of independence before it is absolutely necessary.

3. Constant Companionship

Declining health and frailty often prevents seniors from getting out as much as they would like. Having the constant companionship offered by regular visits from in-home care staff is a welcome change that homebound seniors often began to look forward to and treasure.



4. Stability Through Routine

Seniors who need an in-home care service often have declining cognitive functions. A home health worker can help them establish a routine and keep a regular schedule for meals and medications. This improves overall health and well-being.

5. Home and Hygiene Assistance

A clean house and a well-groomed appearance can do wonders towards enhancing self-esteem and warding off depression. As the aging process imposes physical limits, a decline in ability to take care of basic hygiene and house cleaning follows. In-home care staff helps seniors retain their dignity through a regular hygiene routine and tidy home.

Quality Care

In-home care is all about making the changes that come with aging much more bearable. A good agency can provide staff that ease the burden of loved ones and improve the daily life of the senior in their care. Care Time strives to keep patients in their home as long as possible. Whether you or the senior in your life needs assistance four hours a day or around the clock, our friendly team can provide the quality senior home care and support you need! Call Care Time at 352-624-0570 to learn more.

To find out more, please visit their website at caretimeflorida.com, or call (352) 624-0570

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An Omega-3 Strategy for Pain Relief

More than 76 million Americans live with pain every day. That's more than the number of people who have heart disease, diabetes, and cancers combined, according to a survey by the American Osteopathic Association.

But what's worse is that one-third of these people believe that medical treatment will not help, or feel that the treatment will create more undesirable side effects than the pain itself.

Unfortunately, many painkillers and medications designed to reduce inflammation can cause serious side effects, like gastrointestinal problems or addiction. But, there is a natural, anti-inflammation agent that can help treat pain – if we get the right dose.

Treating Pain with Omega-3 Fish Oil

Adding an adequate dose of omega-3 fish oil to the diet can help patients reduce their need for medication, or in some cases, eliminate their dependence on painkillers altogether. Research shows that fish oil acts on the same biochemical pathways as pain-relieving medication. Furthermore, the cells can use the omega-3 to reduce inflammation without the body experiencing harmful side effects.

The pain-relieving benefits of omega-3 fish oil, however, are dependent on the dose consumed. To best understand the kind of doses needed to achieve results, let's look at a few studies with people having rheumatoid arthritis:

The Science Behind Omega-3 and Pain Relief

A well-designed double blind, placebo-controlled study published in 2008 investigated the effect of consuming 10 grams of cod liver oil (or roughly 10 fish oil capsules) every day. At this daily dose, 65 percent of the patients significantly reduced their use of NSAID (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) by more than 30 percent. However, the authors noted that many participants withdrew early from the study because they did not like taking 10 capsules of fish oil every day and often experienced fishy burps and stomach problems.

In another trial, the researchers again gave 10 capsules of fish oil a day to patients and found the same benefits – an almost 60 percent reduction in NSAID intake. The researchers noted that the patients experienced the peak pain relief after one year of consuming a daily dose.



Finally, a university study from 2012 with more than 380 arthritis patients concluded that giving patients at least 2.7 g of EPA/DHA per day (or roughly nine capsules) for more than three months, reduced patients' need for NSAID drugs.

While there's good scientific evidence that omega-3 fish oil relieves joint pain, most people never experience it. In an Australian survey published in the *Journal of Rheumatology* in 2009, the authors noted that fish oil's chronic pain relieving effects have been known for some time. Sadly, very few people – including physicians – understand that the omega-3 dose required for getting results is far higher than one to two capsules a day. Most patients miss an opportunity to improve the quality of their daily life because they are taking an ineffective, small dose.

What's the Take Home Message?

Millions of people can improve their chronic pain conditions and inflammation by getting an adequate dose of omega-3 every day.

So what is the right dose? In the studies above, researchers used roughly 2.5 to 3 grams of EPA/DHA a day to achieve the pain-relieving results. In terms of capsules, that dose is equivalent to consuming 8-10 regular fish oil capsules a day, or one tablespoon of liquid fish oil. Because most people find it hard to swallow handfuls of capsules a day, switching from capsules to a liquid fish oil improves motivation and compliance.

At Omega3 Innovations, our customers frequently report that they have less pain after taking one tablespoon of Omega Cure® every day for at least three months. Those anecdotal testimonials match the time period and dose noted in the research studies above.

One customer, Holly Davis, said after six orthopedic surgeries and a daily Aleve regimen, she started taking Omega Cure regularly.

"Today, I still take Aleve, but it's averaging one dose monthly rather than daily," she says. "My liver is surely thanking me."

About Dr. Bo Martinsen

Bo Martinsen, MD, is the co-founder and CEO of Omega3 Innovations. Born and raised in Norway, Dr. Martinsen received medical training at the University of Bordeaux in France and at the University of Oslo. Dr. Martinsen has extensive experience practicing psychiatry, general medicine, neurology and preventive medicine, in addition to training in epidemiology (Ph.D program at the University of Oslo) and business administration. He has served as medical consultant to large international corporations focusing on stress management and synergistic medicine.



Call us at 941.485.4400
www.omega3innovations.com





Investing in Your Future

Meg Black
Financial Advisor

"Anytime you are making a decision that has financial implications, you should consult with an expert to discuss the risks and rewards involved with that decision," says financial advisor Meg Black with Edward Jones, 8483 Mulberry Lane in The Villages.

Meg's advice to any new investor, or if you are in need of an investment broker change for whatever reason:

1. A great time to see an advisor is when you are determining how much to save for retirement or if you have another major life change; for instance, if you're getting divorced, buying or selling a home, or changing jobs.
2. If you start a new position, instead of rolling over a previous 401(k) into your new company's plan, you may save a substantial amount of money and realize an improved return by using a financial advisor who offers you more investment options by rolling into a new IRA.
3. When you are thinking about when to retire and trying to determine if you are ready, an advisor can help you decide what your income stream is going to look like for life, which sheds light on whether working a few more years provides the financial benefit you want, or if you are ready to retire now."

The Edward Jones Difference

Edward Jones is a full-service financial firm, handling savings plans for retirement and education, CDs, annuities, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and life and long term care insurance. The well-established firm has offices nationwide and over 14,000 advisors. Their advisors use an established process to create a customized plan for each client to help them reach their financial goals.

"At Edward Jones, we have a team behind each advisor that helps them be an expert in whatever area their client needs," Meg says. In addition, the firm does a lot of retirement planning in The Villages, a 55 plus community. But Meg emphasizes Edward Jones also works with small business owners who want to provide benefits to their employees, parents who are saving for college, and higher income earners who want to reduce taxes.

What you should expect from your financial firm:

When looking around for a financial advisor and firm, consumers should be looking for an advisor who is upfront about their costs and fees and the client needs to make certain the investment company is reasonable. Meg states, "I always perform a complimentary financial review and a written retirement income plan when I meet with a prospective client. So, even if you only want a second opinion or just want to ask some questions, I'm happy to sit down with you at no cost. My favorite client is one who I provide information and education to and then we partner together to make decisions to reach their goals."



Consumers should also look for two important attributes when choosing an advisor. "The most critical quality is that you are comfortable with your advisor and feel like you can be honest with them about your concerns and that they are honest with you," Meg states. "Second of all, the firm that your advisor is with is important; it must be a trusted organization that supports your advisor with a full team so that they can be extremely knowledgeable about your particular situation."


If you or someone you know is need of financial investment advice, or has questions about their options, please contact Meg Black at Edward Jones Investments today.

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RECIPE

ORGANIC CHOPPED SALAD WITH GINGER AVOCADO DRESSING

(c=cup; t=teaspoon; T=tablespoon)

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS:

DRESSING:

- 1 ripe organic avocado, skin and seed removed
- ½ T freshly squeezed organic orange juice
- ½ T organic rice wine vinegar
- 1 organic garlic clove, smashed
- ¼ t freshly grated organic ginger
(substitute ginger powder)
- 3 T organic extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ c-½ c alkaline water
- Sea salt to taste

SALAD:

- 6 c organic spring mix, roughly chopped
- 1 c chopped local organic vegetables
(cucumbers, carrots, celery, snow peas, bell
peppers, etc.)
- ¼ c raw organic sunflower seeds



INSTRUCTIONS:

Place everything except the water in a blender and puree. Slowly drizzle in water until reach a creamy, smooth consistency. Season with salt to taste and set aside.

Combine chopped lettuce and vegetables in a large bowl and season to taste with salt, pepper, and ginger avocado dressing



Hungry Heart

By Alex Anderson,
Senior Associate Pastor at Bayside Community Church

The songwriter and performer Bruce Springsteen was right when he wrote,

"Everybody's got a hungry heart..."

Inside of every human is this need or hunger. Sometimes we try to fill it with love for another person, but for some reason...another person is not the answer.

Sometimes the hungry heart destroys the very things we love and want.

Springsteen goes on to sing,

"We fell in love, I knew it had to end...we took what we had and we ripped it apart...everybody's got a hungry heart...don't make no difference what nobody says...ain't nobody like to be alone...everybody's got a hungry heart."

I do believe our hungry heart is about loneliness, not for another human...but for God himself. We were created in the very image of God (Genesis 1:26) but when man left God...man missed, and still misses, God. They had a bond that filled man with joy and satisfied his heart like nothing else.

C.S. Lewis calls this the, "Numinous Awe." It seems to be built into mankind, this *ravenous hungry heart to know God*. And it's so strong nothing can fill it but God himself.

Psalms 34:8 says, "*Taste and see that the Lord is good.*"

And the truth is... If you don't get that deep ravenous hunger in your heart satisfied by Jesus you will starve to death spiritually, while eating everything else.

So how do you do that? How do you find the true satisfaction that calms your hungry heart?



If you are a Christ-follower, then you know how to do this. You...'do again'...something that you have already experienced when you asked God to be your Lord and Savior. You "make up" with God and you're back to stay.

You are so glad to be back together. Glad that God owns you and your life. So you decide to be happy because God owns you and is your life partner (Philippians 4:4).

Feel the pleasure, the joy and the delight again about Jesus being your master. Let this fact cause you happiness, pleasure and delight.

Be full of joy because Jesus paid a high price for your life. (1Corinthians 6:19-20).

Let the reality of what He has done sink over you.

Not only are you in His family now, but you can live the life of a victorious and joyful person of God; with all the rights and privileges of a child of rich royalty.

"You are my child says the Lord...my very rich child says the Lord...let the riches of your heart begin to overflow into all of your life." (3 John 2)

You can, should, and must rejoice always in the Lord...way before anything changes physically in your life.

The seed of hope and joy is there if you have become one with Jesus Christ. His seed is within you. If your hope is nonexistent then find the seed once planted deep in your heart by the Holy Spirit.

Like a precious pearl search for it (Matthew 13:45).

When you find it (that small seed), clean it up. Polish it and put it in the center room of your heart, shine the brightest light you can find on it and let its magnificent beauty captivate you. Stare at it with intentional focus as though you are searching and waiting for hope itself.

Its magnificent light will light up your life.

For it will change everything about you as you clearly see and feel the love that God has shed in your heart...that is for you (Romans 5:5).

It is so worthy of your time my friend to meditate and think about Jesus, again.

Whether things in your life are going well or not...you have the power of a Christ-follower to focus on Jesus...the author and finisher of your faith and the centerpiece of your heart.

Bon Appetit!

To your spiritual health,
Alex E. Anderson
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Bayside Community Church
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