

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

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

November 2019

Marion Edition - Monthly

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**FREE**  

**TAKE A DEEP  
BREATH FOR  
LUNG CANCER  
AWARENESS**

**NATIONAL  
HEALTHY SKIN  
MONTH:**

**How to Effectively  
Treat Rosacea**

**ADVANCED  
TREATMENT FOR  
OVERACTIVE  
BLADDER**

**THE  
DIABETES  
EPIDEMIC IS  
LOOMING**

**LOST  
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**NOVEMBER**

**A Month to Recognize  
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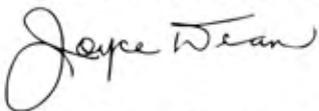
Ft  
FAITH

### Faith. A powerful element in fighting cancer.

Joyce Dean has more energy than most 70-year-olds. She's full of stories about love, family and her days as the first African American professor at Edison Community College. 25 years ago, Joyce went for a routine annual physical. She was diagnosed with advanced multiple myeloma—a cancer with a grim prognosis at the time. She was referred to Florida Cancer Specialists, and she's been a patient ever since.

Living with cancer hasn't been easy, but with over two decades of compassionate, cutting-edge care, and a little faith, Florida Cancer Specialists has shown Joyce that when hope and science join forces, great outcomes can happen.

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*-Joyce Dean, Patient & Cancer Fighter*

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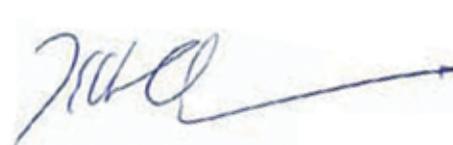
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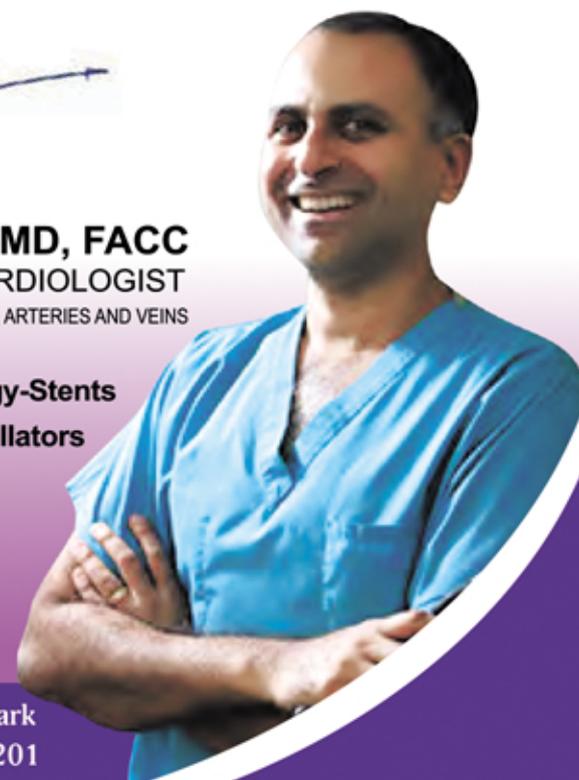
## And that's how I treat it.

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# TAKE A DEEP BREATH FOR LUNG CANCER AWARENESS

**November is Lung Cancer Awareness month, and for good reason: lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer death in the US. While lung cancer has multiple causes, about 85% of cases are associated with long-term tobacco smoking.**

Here's why lung cancer awareness is so vitally important: caught early, most cases of lung cancer can be treated with a high rate of effectiveness. When discovered before it produces symptoms like coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath, lung cancer can be conquered. The key is early discovery. Low-Dose Computed Tomography, or LDCT, is a quick, painless annual screening exam that can catch lung cancer early, before it has a chance to grow and spread. Once it migrates outside the lungs, lung cancer is very difficult, even sometimes impossible, to treat. That's why annual testing is crucial to stopping lung cancer in its tracks.

## What is LDCT?

LDCT is a specialized low-radiation CT scan of the chest that captures a series of images and sends them to a computer screen to create a nearly 3-dimensional composite that is capable of highlighting even the tiniest abnormalities. Getting tested is easy and involves far less ionizing radiation than a conventional diagnostic CT of the chest, so it is considered safe and suitable for most people. LDCT is so effective that the American Lung Association recommends annual LDCT screening for all high-risk patients.

## Who is Considered "High Risk"?

LDCT is appropriate for current heavy smokers and former heavy smokers who quit within the past 15 years. A heavy smoker is someone who has reached 30 "pack years," which is the number of years spent smoking times the number of packs smoked per day. For example: 1 pack a day x 30 years or 2 packs a day x 15 years = 30 pack years.



Another group considered at high risk are people ages 50 or older with a 20 "pack-year" history and at least one other risk factor, such as a personal or family history of lung disease. 1 pack a day x 20 years + asthma, or an immediate relative with lung disease, places someone in the high risk category.

## Can't I Just Get a Chest X-Ray?

Unlike a standard 2D chest x-ray, LDCT captures multiple images from different angles that are exceptionally detailed, revealing nodules in the lungs while they are tiny enough to be barely visible. A recent randomized clinical trial of 53,000+ current and former heavy smokers proved that LDCT is about 20% more effective at preventing death from lung cancer than x-ray. This translates to about 1 in 5 lives being saved by LDCT, making it a true lifesaver. If you're the 1 patient in 5, you appreciate that superiority.

LDCT is quick, non-invasive, painless and simple. You simply lie still on a specialized table for a few minutes while the scanner passes over your chest.

A contrast agent may be used to provide enhanced detail. Once the test is over, you're free to get on with your day. Your referring clinician will contact you with the results.

## Is LDCT Covered Under My Insurance?

Patients ages 55-77 with a 30 "pack-year" history and a qualified clinician's referral are eligible to have their scans 100% covered by Medicare. If you fall into a high risk category due to the addition of a personal or family history of respiratory disease, talk to your clinician about whether LDCT screening may be covered in your case.

If you're at high risk for lung cancer, don't wait. Contact your clinician and ask if annual LDCT screening at RAO's Medical Imaging Center or TimberRidge Imaging Center might be what you need to keep you breathing easy.

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# DO IT FOR YOU... AND FOR THEM



## LOW-DOSE COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY (LDCT)

*"A quick LDCT scan can help our Board Certified radiology team identify abnormalities in the lung with exceptional speed, promoting faster treatment and better outcomes."*

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

You matter to so many. That's why if you are or were a heavy smoker, it's important to ask your doctor if LDCT lung cancer screening is right for you. Just a few painless minutes of your time can help protect your life and the love others cherish.



### ARE YOU A CANDIDATE FOR LDCT?

For guidelines you can share with your doctor, visit [www.raocala.com/services/low-dose-ct-screening](http://www.raocala.com/services/low-dose-ct-screening). It's worth it.

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# What is Your Plan B?

In September 2017, Hurricane Irma tore through the state of Florida, killing 75 people and leaving billions of dollars in damage behind it.

Although devastating, many lessons were learned from Irma, the most powerful Atlantic hurricane ever recorded. One such lesson stresses the importance of having an evacuation plan in place long before the storm hits.

During Irma, 5.6 million people – more than one-quarter of Florida’s population- were ordered to evacuate. For families with senior loved ones, it’s vitally important they have a Plan B for these situations.

At Pacifica Senior Living Ocala, a community devoted exclusively to the care of seniors, the staff offers a perfect Plan B for temporary stays.

“Evacuation to a public shelter is often not the best option for loved ones,” cautions Tara Tosh, Pacifica Senior Living Ocala’s Regional Marketing Director. “They’re bound to get scared and confused. That only adds more stress to an already stressful situation for them and their families.

“Instead, caregivers can bring their loved ones to our community, where they’ll be with people they’ve had a chance to meet. They’ll be safe and well cared for in a cozy environment while their family members go to shelters or elsewhere.”

## In Case of Emergency

Florida’s hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30, but a caregiver and senior can initiate a Plan B at Pacifica Senior Living Ocala at any time. All they have to do is tour the community and provide the staff with the loved one’s key information, including their advanced directives, medication lists and emergency contacts. A plan is then finalized for the loved one to be brought to the community during an emergency.

“In the case of a hurricane, there’s normally about a three-day advance notice,” observes Tara.

“People who have a Plan B don’t have to worry. If they see that something is brewing in the Atlantic, they can bring their loved one to stay with us for a while. They’ll know their loved one is safe and comfortable during the storm and its aftermath.”



“Plan B works for other types of emergencies as well, such as car accidents or illnesses. IF the caregiver is suddenly unable to be there for their loved one, the plan can be initiated by a family member or the police. Then, the loved one will be brought to our community immediately.”

Preparing for emergencies is an everyday job for Margaret, director of a local emergency management company. Her department offers advice to people on how to be ready for disasters such as hurricanes. One of the first things they recommend is that every family develops a “family plan” in the event of an evacuation becomes necessary.

“The family plan should cover all the bases, including where they’ll evacuate to and the steps needed to take care of all family members and pets,” she explains.

Plans don’t have to be formal or even written down, just fully understood by all members of the family. Margaret notes there are online tools to help families create a plan, including those on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

## Be Prepared

When a disaster like Hurricane Irma occurs, Pacifica Senior Living Ocala is ready. It has its own coordinated plan to care for its residents on site during the emergency. The plan also has provisions for the safe and secure evacuation of staff and residents if ordered.

“If a hurricane should hit, we have a generator that will light up the entire building and powers the air conditioning units. We also have meals for residents and family members for five days as well as a fully functioning kitchen”, reports Tara.

“We hope that we don’t need to evacuate, but in the event we do, we bring the residents to a safe community out of the path of the storm. We take care of transportation, food and all other essentials family members worry about.”

Tara encourages all families with senior loved ones to come to Pacifica Senior Living Ocala, take a tour and speak with the staff.

“It’s simple for families to get a Plan B started, just check us out and drop off their loved one’s information,” she stresses. “Then, at least, they’ll have a plan in place should they need it.”

“I tell people: Don’t wait until the hurricane winds and rains are hitting. Drop off your family member’s paperwork and we’ll take care of the rest.”



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# LUNG CANCER UPDATE

According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. More people die of lung cancer in a year than from breast, prostate, colon, and pancreatic cancer combined. Lung cancer is the second most common cancer in both men and women – it ranks just behind prostate and breast cancer, respectively.

## EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES

Although there have been some real advances in the treatment of lung cancer, the average five-year survival rate for lung cancer in the U.S. is only 16.3%, unless it is detected early. If the disease is detected early, while it is still localized within the lungs, the five-year survival rate soars to 52.6%. So, a patient's chances of surviving lung cancer are three times greater when it is detected early.

Through the use of low dose spiral CT scans of the chest, lung cancer can often be detected in its early stages before it becomes incurable, or even before a patient is showing symptoms. This type of screening can detect early stage cancers that cannot be seen on traditional chest x-rays. Screening is recommended for people with a history of heavy smoking, defined as 30 pack years or more. A pack year means smoking an average of one pack of cigarettes per day for one year (for example: one pack per day for 30 years or two packs per day for 15 years). Check with your physician to see if you could benefit from a CT lung scan. Unfortunately, only about 15% of all lung cancer cases are diagnosed at an early stage. Why? Because often in the early stages there are no real symptoms. That is one of the reasons why regular screenings are so important – especially if you are a current smoker or if you have ever been a heavy smoker for longer than 15 to 20 years.

## IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TREATMENT OF LUNG CANCER

Many advances in the treatment of lung cancer have occurred in the past decade, including the development of medications known as targeted therapies, which interfere with certain processes that cancer cells use to grow and spread, and immunotherapies, a type of targeted therapy that boosts the body's immune system to fight cancer. These drugs have given oncologists many more options in treating lung cancer and have made treatment more effective and safer for patients.



*About 85% of all lung cancer cases occur in people who are smokers or have smoked in the past. The remaining 15% of cases occur in non-smokers, for reasons not yet fully understood.*

Newer immunotherapy treatments have significantly improved survival rates for some lung cancer patients. A recent study, presented at the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Annual Meeting in 2017, demonstrated that, for a small subset of patients, immunotherapy can work for a very long time.

## LUNG CANCER RESEARCH INVESTIGATES MANY POSSIBILITIES

Many clinical trials are looking at newer combinations of chemotherapy drugs to determine which are the most effective. Especially important for older patients who may have other health problems, doctors are studying these combinations to discover if treatment outcomes can be further improved. In some cases, chemotherapy is also being used in combination with some targeted therapies and has been shown to improve survival rates.

With some types of lung cancer, research has shown that receiving chemotherapy before radiation or surgery may actually be helpful. Chemotherapy may shrink the tumor, making it easier to remove with surgery. It may also increase the effectiveness of radiation, and can destroy hidden cancer cells at the earliest possible time.

One of the more recent areas of lung cancer research focuses on creating cancer vaccines. Cancer vaccine research involves triggering the immune system to recognize and attack cancer cells without harming normal cells. Unlike common vaccines that are used to prevent diseases such as mumps or measles, cancer vaccines are used to treat, not prevent, lung cancer. Although the research in this area is showing some promise, vaccines are currently only available in clinical trials.

There is still much research needed to develop even more effective treatments for lung cancer; however, today many more people are surviving the disease than ever before.

## World-Class Cancer Treatment Close to Home

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

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



### Ocala

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# NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL HEALTHY SKIN MONTH

## How to Effectively Treat Rosacea

**R**osacea affects nearly 3 million people in the United States each year. It is an incurable, yet common condition that causes redness, which are usually on the cheeks and nose. These tiny red bumps look like a rash and can sometimes be pus-filled. There are several treatment options that can significantly reduce rosacea.

Because rosacea can be mistaken for other skin disorders like rashes or acne, a proper medical diagnosis is necessary to receive the appropriate treatment. If rosacea is left untreated, it will most likely become advanced and worsen with time.

### Causes of Rosacea

Rosacea happens when the tiny blood vessels in your face dilate beyond their normal limit. The reason for the dilation isn't certain, but there are many potential causes, including:

- Follicle irritation
- Demodex (tiny skin mites)
- Sun damage to deeper layers of connective tissues beneath your skin
- Excess *H. pylori* bacteria in your body

Regardless of the cause of your rosacea, there are often triggers that can help you predict an outbreak.

### Common triggers that might cause rosacea include:

- Consumption of hot foods and beverages as well as alcohol
- Caffeine consumption
- Consumption of spicy foods and dairy products
- Exposure to direct sunlight as well as very hot or cold temperatures
- Stress or anxiety

### How is rosacea treated?

Dr. Freeman will create a personalized treatment plan for your rosacea. This may include medications such as:

- **Topical medications:** creams or gels that you rub over your face each day, which can greatly reduce redness and help improve your comfort
- **Oral medications:** including antibiotics like tetracycline or anti-acne drugs like Accutane®



- **Laser treatment:** laser light forces the dilated blood vessels in your face to shrink to their normal size; the treatment is minimally invasive but may cause some brief side effects like swelling and soreness as the rosacea dissipates

Treatment is usually combined with recommended lifestyle adjustments to help you get rosacea under control, such as:

- Avoiding alcohol
- Using non-comedogenic facial care products
- Avoiding any known triggers

### Laser Treatment—IPL

In combination with other traditional therapeutics, laser treatment is one of the most beneficial therapies for rosacea, but it also helps with other conditions as well. If you've noticed that your skin is starting to look dull, red, blotchy, inflamed, has noticeable red veins or acne, IPL (Intense Pulse Light) is the answer you've been longing for.

### IPL Treats the Following:

- Hyperpigmentation
- Broken Capillaries or blood vessels
- Acne
- Acne Scars
- Reduces Pore Size
- Rosacea
- Unwanted Hair
- Freckles
- Dull Skin

For healthy skin, your options are endless. Dr. Michael J. Freeman's Dermatology Practice takes your skin's health seriously from screenings, medical treatments, advanced skin care, cutting-edge technology, laser therapy, injectable therapies, body treatments to chemical peels and more, they've got you covered.



### Michael J. Freeman, M.D., PA

Dr. Michael J. Freeman is a dermatology practice serving patients in Ocala, Florida and The Villages, Florida. Dr. Michael J. Freeman, David Kosiorek, PA-C, Dave Runyon, PA-C, and Sue Schmeltz, PA-C are all firmly dedicated to giving patients the best in care for conditions including squamous cell carcinoma, psoriasis, melanoma, rosacea, and many others. The Michael J. Freeman, MD, PA team believes that every patient deserves to have the healthiest and most beautiful skin. They work hard to help you achieve that through evidence-based therapeutics and the latest in dermatology technology and equipment.

The atmosphere at the Ocala and The Villages offices is designed to be calm, serene, and welcoming. The patients at Michael J. Freeman, MD, PA deserve to feel comfortable while they seek treatment for conditions like acne, eczema, rosacea, skin cancer, and rashes. Appointments can be conveniently scheduled through calling the office or through the easy-to-use online appointment maker.

Dr. Freeman and his associates offer comprehensive dermatologic care including full body skin checks, medical dermatology care, and cosmetic treatments in three convenient locations through Ocala, FL.

*Call today to schedule your appointment.*

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# Advanced Treatment for OVERACTIVE BLADDER

**H**ave you tried treatment for overactive bladder and still suffer from any of the symptoms below?

- ✓ Urgency to get to the restroom in time
- ✓ Increased frequency of urination
- ✓ Getting up at night 2 or more times to urinate
- ✓ Wearing adult protective undergarments or pads
- ✓ Inability to empty your bladder completely
- ✓ Curbing your usual activities because you must be near a restroom at all times

If you are a man or woman who said yes to any of these, then you should know about some of the advanced therapies that are available and can drastically improve your quality of life.

Commonly used therapies such as behavioral modification, bladder training and medications are a first line of therapy for overactive bladder (OAB). Unfortunately, in many patients, these do not work or don't work well enough. Some patients may even be unable to tolerate the common side effects of medications such as dry mouth, dry eyes or constipation. If you or someone you know has OAB, the use of sacral neuromodulation or Botox may be the answer. In a specialty trained urologists' hands these treatments can succeed where others have failed.

## SACRAL NEUROMODULATION

Sacral neuromodulation (SNM) allows regulation of the nerves that go to the bladder. This works by sending messages back to the brain to regulate the "on-off" switch for bladder function. A simple way to think of SNM is as a pacemaker for the bladder. It can help to bring your bladder function back to normal function if it is too active or even underactive.

SNM is approved by the FDA for the treatment of refractory OAB, urge incontinence and urinary re-tention. Currently one company (Medtronic Inc., Minneapolis) produces this SNM device for international use under the name InterStim®. In Europe, it is also



used successfully to treat bowel dysfunction including severe constipation, fecal urgency, frequency and fecal soiling. This is possible because there are nerves in the pelvis that work on both the bladder and bowel.

SNM is a very appealing option to patients due to its high success rate (up to 80%) and a unique trial phase. This trial phase of 3 to 7 days is called a percutaneous nerve evaluation (PNE) and is a simple procedure that places a thin temporary lead next to the nerve that controls bladder function. This can be placed using local anesthesia or light sedation and takes minutes to perform. This gives the patient the ability to "test drive" the device without going through the full implant. It also helps patients to gain insight on just how much the InterStim could help them. At the end of the trial, the leads are removed in the office without damaging the nerve.

  
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If the PNE is successful in reducing symptoms, it is likely that the full implant will work in these patients. The InterStim uses an implantable lead and small battery that are placed for long-term treatment of OAB or urinary retention. Once placed, the InterStim can last up to ten years depending on its use. The battery can be easily changed under local anesthesia. After implan-

ation, the InterStim is virtually undetectable even in a bathing suit. This device can drastically improve a patient's quality of life.

## BOTULINUM TOXIN (Botox)

Botox injections are another option in the treatment of OAB. The Botox is placed directly in the bladder muscle for treatment of OAB and urge incontinence.

This is done with a simple cystoscopy (small telescope) and can be done under local anesthesia or sedation. It works by binding to nerve endings allowing for relaxation of the bladder muscle. This has been shown to improve symptoms in up to 70% of patients and up to 60% of patients will have complete resolution of their OAB or urge incontinence. Botox, however, only lasts 6 to 9 months and needs to be repeated. The FDA considers this an off-label use even though it has been used successfully for years. Use of Botox in the bladder carries no greater risk to the patient than cosmetic procedures.

These are only a few of the many options that can significantly improve quality of life. A full range of treatments for OAB and any other urologic concerns are offered at Advanced Urology Institute.

# Lumbar Spine Pain: Symptoms, Causes & Treatments

By Regenexx Tampa Bay, Regenerative Medicine

**T**he body is an interconnected machine with each part working together in harmony. The lumbar spine is a crucial element of this machine. The hip, knee, and foot are all controlled by spinal nerves within the low back. A problem in the lumbar spine could create problems at any point in the lower body. Common lumbar issues include arthritis, foraminal and spinal stenosis, pinched nerves, disc problems, muscle atrophy, loose ligaments, and spondylolysis. In this article, we will give you a brief overview of these common lumbar spine problems along with their potential symptoms, causes, and treatments.

First, let's take a look at the spinal column and its parts.

## The Spinal Column

The spinal column is made up of vertebrae that are stacked one on top of the other with an intervertebral disc between each level to provide cushion and absorb shock. The cervical spine consists of the neck area and is made up of seven vertebrae (C1-C7). Following the cervical spine is the thoracic spine (T1-T12), the lumbar spine (L1-L5), the sacrum (S1-S5), and the coccyx. The posterior (back) portion of these vertebrae is known as the spinous process and on either side of these, connecting one vertebra to the next, are finger-joint-sized articulations called facet joints.

Another extremely important part of the spinal column is the spinal canal. This tunnel runs down the middle of the column and houses the spinal cord, which has many nerves that transmit muscle commands and sensory information throughout the body and to the brain. There are small holes in the spinal column where the nerves exit and branch off to other parts of the body. There is one at each level of the spinal column. One of these holes is called a foramen. Any of these structures can become damaged or diseased in some way and lead to pain, discomfort, or even disability.

## Foraminal Stenosis

When the spine is healthy, spinal nerves easily traverse through the tunnels transmitting sensory information from each body part to the brain and provide impulses to the muscles so they can contract and move the body part. However, when the spine is unhealthy, the flow of information can be disrupted.

The disc or cushion in between the spine bones can bulge and/or the spine joints can get arthritis causing the foramen to narrow. This narrowing of the tunnel is called foraminal stenosis and can cause the nerves to get pinched. The pressure from a pinched nerve can cause muscle tightness, weakness, numbness, tingling,



burning, or electrical pain in the specific distribution of that nerve. For example, if there is a lower lumbar foraminal stenosis, you could experience numbness in your big toe. Sometimes the symptoms slowly manifest over time from a more subtle pinching of the nerve. If the nerve is irritated, it may release inflammatory substances into the tissue to which the nerve travels causing that tissue to degenerate more rapidly than other areas leading to painful problems such as tendinopathy.

You could have laser spine surgery to open up the hole, but this surgery can have major side effects and serious implications. Another way to surgically treat stenosis is with a spinal fusion, but the mention of a fusion should be a huge red flag to seek out other opinions. Why? Adjacent segment disease (ASD). After a fusion, the motion of the fused segments is limited and the biomechanical loads are transferred to the segments above and below the level of the fusion. These adjacent segments could get damaged and become painful over time resulting in additional surgeries.

Surgery is often performed after an MRI diagnosis of the problem. An MRI indicating stenosis is not enough to appropriately diagnose that stenosis is the cause of pain. If you do have foraminal stenosis, you should not put all your trust in MRI results. Patients may or may not have pain with foraminal stenosis. The MRI is a description of the appearance of the spine. Many people have stenosis and no noticeable problems. An experienced physician knows that it's critical to treat the person, not the MRI. This can be determined by a thorough history and physical examination. Research also shows that skilled physical therapy is as effective as surgery in relieving stenosis symptoms.

Our approach to foraminal stenosis utilizes nonsurgical solutions to treat it before it progresses. Precise image-guided injections of the patient's own platelets into the foramen and around the nerve can help manage the problem.

## Facet Joint Osteoarthritis and Instability

The facet joints that we spoke of earlier can become injured from trauma or develop arthritis from cartilage breakdown due to wear and tear. Facet joints allow for and limit movement in the spine. When bending backward, these joints become compressed and when you bend forward, they open up. When damage or arthritis occurs, facet joints can become chronically painful, especially with movement. Facet arthritis is often referred to as Degenerative Joint Disease (DJD).

For facet arthritis or injuries, doctors may recommend a radiofrequency ablation (RFA) also referred to as a rhizotomy of the small nerve that senses pain from that specific facet joint. This is a destructive process that damages the nerve. Although this can be effective in some cases, it may leave the surrounding muscles weaker which can actually be a cause of back pain.

A surgical option is a lumbar fusion to bolt two or more vertebrae of the spine together to eliminate movement and therefore, pain. The nature of this surgery can also damage the muscles that stabilize the area. This is an irreversible procedure that can cause adjacent segment disease in the vertebrae above and below. This surgery should only be considered in the most extreme cases.

Our approach for DJD often includes high-dose PRP, platelet lysate, or stem cell injections precisely targeting the facet joints, surrounding ligaments, atrophied muscles, and around the nerves. This is a tissue preservation strategy that involves no cutting, surgery, hardware, or tissue destruction helping patients avoid pain medications and damaging cortisone injections.

## Disc Problems

Within the lumbar spine, there are four types of disc problems that can occur. A herniated disc occurs when the outer covering of the structure breaks open allowing the inner gel to herniate out. A bulging disc is when the outer covering doesn't completely break open, but the fibers are stretched and weak leading the gel to bulge. A torn disc means that the outer cover has a tear that causes or it may allow the leaking of chemicals on the associated spinal nerve. Lastly, a degenerated disc is one that has collapsed or narrowed due to insufficient living cells inside the disc not producing enough of the substances that keep the disc plump. A severely degenerated disc is usually not a source of pain unless it's



bulging or leaking onto a spinal nerve. Earlier in the degeneration process, while the disc still has plumpness to it, tears in the back of the disc can be a source of low back pain that results in severe episodes of pain with sitting, coughing, sneezing, or lifting. When a disc is severely degenerated, it usually is no longer painful itself. However, the mechanical load of the compressive forces in the spine at that level are no longer being taken up by the disc and therefore get transferred to the facet joints leading to wear and tear and DJD as described above.

Generally, disc surgeries include either back fusions or disc replacement. Regarding fusion, the vertebrae are bolted together with hardware to keep them immobile. With disc replacement, the goal is to have fewer side effects than a fusion, however, research has shown that abnormal motion with an artificial disc can also lead to ASD. The other side effects of having a device implanted include wear-and-tear ions in the blood from the breakdown of the metal or plastic device, ongoing pain, and potential revision surgeries.

With our approach, herniated and bulging discs are treated based on the problem they are causing. For pinched nerves, instilling isolated growth factors or platelet lysate around the irritated nerve can help the nerve recover and become more tolerant of its narrow space. Injection of the surrounding ligaments and muscles provides for stability with better-controlled movements taking pressures off the disc and nerves. In some cases, bulging discs may be treated with a same-day stem cell treatment to reduce the size of the bulge or heal a tear. In other cases, cultured (grown) stem cells injected in a specific way may be required. Torn discs can be treated with either stem cell or PRP injections very effectively. Symptoms respond well to a treatment protocol focused on platelet and/or stem cell technology deployed to treat undesirable disc and lumbar segment movements due to lax ligaments and arthritic facet joints.

#### Pinched Lumbar Nerve

Pinched nerves can be caused by foraminal stenosis from bulging or herniated discs and facet joint arthritis as discussed. A pinched lumbar nerve can cause pain, numbness, tingling, or weakness anywhere along the route that particular nerve branch supplies. Pain may or may not be present in the low back.

Chronic knee pain could actually be due to a pinched nerve in the lumbar spine. A doctor may mistakenly conclude that the knee is the source of the pain. This is exactly why we find it so important to consider the entire musculoskeletal system as a whole rather than in parts and to take an extensive history and physical.

The surgical approach to a pinched nerve depends on the root cause. For example, if a disc bulge is to blame, it could be a discectomy and graft and/or lumbar fusion. If it is a foraminal stenosis, laser surgery may enlarge the foraminal opening where the nerve is being pinched. Problems with invasive lumbar surgery are many, including long recovery times and often continuing pain. Ultimately, the structure never fully functions as it originally did.

Our approach includes examining the full musculoskeletal system to determine the source of pain and the pinched nerve and then developing an appropriate treatment plan. Treatment may consist of precise image-guided injections of healing growth factors isolated from a patient's own blood platelets, PRP, or stem cells.

#### Steroids, NSAIDs, & Other Drugs - Not Recommended

You may be presented with other treatments within the traditional orthopedics model for lumbar problems, including steroid shots or medications. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) come with a long and growing list of dangerous side effects, such as sudden-death heart attacks, stroke, gastrointestinal bleeding, addiction, and overdose.

Narcotics can provide pain relief but are not addressing the issue directly and of course, can be addictive. Overdose has become an increasing public health issue.

Steroid shots have been shown to destroy local cartilage in the joint which can progress arthritis and provide no significant long term pain improvement. In fact, pain relief usually diminishes with repeated steroid injections. The list of problems with these injections is also lengthy.

There are supplements that can be a good alternative for pain and inflammation. Chondroitin and glucosamine have been shown to be effective pain relievers and can preserve cartilage. Curcumin derived from turmeric can also decrease inflammation and relieve pain from arthritis and other issues.

Our spines are tuned to precision and attempting to rearrange the spine's biomechanics with fusions and surgeries is often a bad idea. It is essential to understand that where it hurts may or may not be where the primary damage is located.

Acting on a lumbar spine problem while it's still a small problem or when the issue first appears, will be less of an issue than trying to take care of it when it becomes a larger problem that spirals out of control. Conservative options may help in some cases, but if these options have failed, we urge you to seek out interventional orthopedic solutions!



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**Dr. James Leiber**

James Leiber, DO, is the founder and medical director of Regenexx Tampa Bay. He is a former officer, physician, and educator in the Air Force, including personal physician

to the vice president and president at the White House. He is triple board certified in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine (AOBNMM), Pain Medicine (CAQPM), and Family Medicine (ABFM), as well registered in Musculoskeletal Sonography (RMSK).

Dr. Leiber specializes in Interventional Regenerative Orthopedics with years of experience and is honored to have been the first Regenexx Network Provider in Florida. In 2012, Dr. Leiber began offering the nation's most advanced non-surgical stem cell and platelet treatments (PRP) for injuries and arthritis under image guidance utilizing ultrasound and fluoroscopy (X-ray).

He is a published author, presenter, and is currently the program director for the Interventional Orthopedic Foundation.

He lives in Sarasota, Florida with his wife and teenage daughter. Dr. Leiber travels regularly to Denver, to teach regenerative orthopedic techniques to fellow doctors, and to Grand Cayman, where he is also licensed to treat patients.

#### The other physicians at Regenexx Tampa Bay are:



**Ron Torrance II, D.O.** - Board Certified in Sports Medicine and recent co-author of *Exercise 2.0* for Regenexx and author of the 2018 best paper of the year on *The Concussed Athlete*. Dr. Torrance has

achieved semi-professional ranking as a beach volleyball player and trains as a competitive CrossFit athlete.



**Ignatios Papas, D.O.** - Specializes in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He is a research collaborator with Columbia and Cornell University on multiple projects.

Dr. Papas enjoys spending time with his wife and son, playing soccer, practicing guitar, and listening to historical podcasts.



**Michael Amoroso, M.D.** is Board Certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology and the American Board of Pain Medicine. He has been a long-time runner and brings a vast amount

of experience to his role at Regenexx Tampa Bay. Dr. Amoroso travels frequently back to his home in New Jersey to visit his children and small grandchildren.

# MAINTAIN LEG HEALTH FOR AN ACTIVE LIFE



**Feet and leg problems have a severe impact on quality of life but can easily be prevented by maintaining our secondary hearts.**

By Kenneth McLeod, Ph.D.

**W**hy do so many people suffer from problems with their feet and legs? Swollen feet and ankles, nighttime leg cramps, restless leg syndrome, varicose veins, non-healing lower leg ulcers, loss of sensation in the toes, all are remarkably common among middle-aged and older adults.

Blame our upright posture, gravity, and soft skin. When we are sitting or standing, gravity is pulling the fluids in our body down into our legs. Because our skin is so soft, it stretches, allowing fluid to pool into our feet and legs as long as we continue to sit or stand. Older Americans sit, on average, for over 9 hours a day, while individuals who have desk jobs commonly sit for a total of over 13 hours each day.

## FLUID POOLING

Blood pooling into the veins of the legs is one of the most common complications of our sedentary lifestyle and often becomes evident at a relatively young age. Venous pooling first appears as spider veins, then progresses over time to varicose veins. If not corrected, varicose veins can lead to venous insufficiency, a condition that can be very painful, and even dangerous, if it results in the formation of a venous embolism (blood clot).

Fluid pooling into the soft tissues of our legs (muscles, ligaments, tendons, and dermis) results in swollen feet and ankles and can lead to aching joints and nighttime leg cramps. The increased fluid pressure in the feet and legs also constricts blood flow to the nerves causing loss of sensation, typically starting in the toes.

## HOW OUR SECONDARY HEARTS PREVENT FLUID POOLING

What normally prevents fluid pooling into the legs is our "secondary hearts." The "secondary hearts" are the soleus muscles in the calves of the legs. These specialized muscles collect fluid which pools in the legs and pumps this fluid back up to the heart. The soleus muscles are postural muscles which are generally used to help us maintain a squatting posture.



Our ancestors squatted much of the day, and in doing so kept their soleus muscles in good shape. In the modern world, we tend to sit when we rest, and so as we age our soleus muscles lose their pumping ability.

## HOW TO RETRAIN YOUR SOLEUS MUSCLES

Fortunately, it is possible to protect your soleus muscles from weakening, or rebuild them if they are failing you. Performing toe-stands throughout the day is very helpful, as is squatting, instead of sitting, and Tai Chi and Yoga can involve substantial use of the soleus muscles.

Of course, postural muscles such as the soleus muscles require several hours per day of exercise to stay in shape, or to rebuild. This can be difficult for many people to fit into their daily routine or sometimes too challenging for older individuals.

Various types of exercise equipment have been developed to assist individuals in rebuilding their soleus muscles. The HeartPartner offered by Sonostics, for example, is a passive-exercise device utilizing technology to activate a reflex which stimulates the soleus muscles into action. It is easy and convenient to use at home or work while sitting in an easy chair, or at a desk or table, for just a few hours over the course of a day. It also allows the individual to keep their socks and shoes on during use.



Feet and leg health complications have a severe impact on quality of life, but such complications can easily be prevented by maintaining our secondary hearts. Whichever secondary heart training strategy you select, make an effort to exercise each day to maintain not only the health of your feet and legs, but whole-body health as well.

*"I would highly recommend it. I do think it's had a positive impact for my initial use of just wanting to downplay my varicose veins and then also with my hands not being cold, it's been a game-changer."*

— Johanna, Endicott NY

Dr. Kenneth J. McLeod, Ph.D., is President and Chief Executive Officer at Sonostics, developer of the HeartPartner. He also serves as Director of the Clinical Science and Engineering Research Center at Binghamton University in New York. Dr. McLeod received his Ph.D degrees in Bio-medical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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# For those Who Suffer Painful Spinal Fractures, Balloon Kyphoplasty May Provide Welcome Relief

**D**awn, 58, enjoys walking on the beach and looking for seashells in her ocean-front community. It's a relaxing way to spend her precious free time between working two jobs — as a nurse at a skilled care nursing home and as a home health care provider.

One day recently, the physical demands of Dawn's work caught up with her.

"I was moving a tub, and I was bent down pulling the tub backwards. I'm not sure what was in it, but it was heavy. And something on the floor caused me to fall. I fell from no higher than knee high."

Dawn knew instantly that something was wrong when she felt a pop in her back. "It was loud, and the pain was horrible."

She left work and went home, but after two days of intense pain that wouldn't let up, Dawn went to the emergency room. There, she had an X-ray and found she had suffered a compression fracture of her L2 vertebra.

"Being off work wasn't really an option for me," said Dawn, who lives alone and has chronic diabetes.

She was also concerned about taking opioid medications like Percocet, which she had been prescribed at the emergency room.

"I didn't want to be dependent on them. I don't like the way they make you feel anyway."

Emergency room physicians referred Dawn to a spine surgeon. After determining that Dawn's spinal fracture was caused by osteoporosis, her surgeon performed a minimally invasive surgical procedure called balloon kyphoplasty that uses balloons and cement in an innovative technique that has been shown to bring many patients rapid pain relief after just one hour.

Balloon kyphoplasty is a minimally invasive procedure for the treatment of pathological fractures of the vertebral body due to osteoporosis, cancer, or benign lesion.

With her pain having gone away and her activity level improved after her balloon kyphoplasty, Dawn has begun seeing an endocrinologist to manage her osteoporosis with calcium therapy and bisphosphonate medications.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### What causes spinal fractures?

Most are caused by osteoporosis, a disease that causes bones to become weak and break easily. Certain types of cancer or tumors also can cause spinal fractures.



normal vertebra



fractured vertebra

### How common are spinal fractures?

Worldwide, one in three women and one in eight men over age 50 are affected by osteoporosis, a common cause of vertebral compression fractures (VCFs).<sup>1</sup> Many VCFs go undiagnosed and untreated — often because people consider back pain a normal part of aging and don't mention it to their doctors. But if you leave it untreated, you could be at risk for more injury and even death.<sup>2-6</sup>

### What are the typical symptoms of a spinal fracture?

A spinal fracture may cause mild to severe back pain and can occur after simple daily activities such as sneezing or lifting a light object. You may have a vertebral compression fracture if you:

- Have sudden onset of severe, sharp back pain that lasts longer than 3 days AND
- Are over 50 OR
- Have been told you have osteoporosis or low bone density.

### How are spinal fractures diagnosed?

Your doctor may press on your back to locate the source of your pain. You'll have images like an x-ray or MRI scan taken of your spine to confirm the diagnosis.

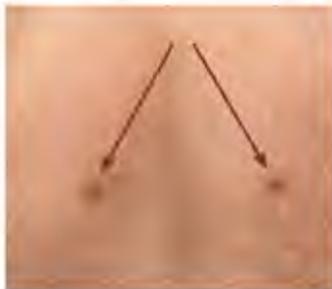
### What are the benefits of Kyphon™ Balloon Kyphoplasty (BKP)?

Compared to non-surgical treatment like a back brace or oral medication, clinical studies have shown that people with spinal fractures treated with BKP experienced several benefits:<sup>1, 7-9</sup>

- Less back pain
- More quality of life
- Better mobility
- Less time on bed rest and fewer days when pain interferes with daily activities
- Satisfaction with the procedure

### REFERENCES

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**How does balloon kyphoplasty work?**

Your doctor will decide if local or general anesthesia is the right option for your procedure.

- One or two small incisions are made, about 1 cm long.
- A small pathway is made into the fractured bone, and an orthopedic balloon is inserted.

- The balloon is carefully inflated to raise the collapsed vertebra.
- The balloon is then deflated and removed, creating a cavity, or space, within the vertebral body.
- The cavity is filled with a special cement to support the surrounding bone and prevent further collapse. You can think of it as an internal cast.
- Generally, the procedure is done on both sides of the vertebra.

**What are the risks of balloon kyphoplasty?**

Although the complication rate for Kyphon™ Balloon Kyphoplasty is low, as with most surgical procedures, serious adverse events, some of which can be fatal, can occur, including heart attack, cardiac arrest (heart stops beating), stroke, and embolism (blood, fat, or cement that migrates to the lungs or heart). Other risks include infection; leakage of bone cement into the muscle and tissue surrounding the spinal cord and nerve injury that can, in rare instances, cause paralysis; leakage of bone cement into the blood vessels resulting in damage to the blood vessels, lungs, and/or heart. Talk to your doctor about both benefits and risks of this procedure.

**Is Kyphon™ Balloon Kyphoplasty covered by insurance?**

In most cases, BKP is covered by Medicare and private insurance carriers. If you have questions regarding your policy or coverage, contact your insurance carrier.

**Who performs Kyphon™ Balloon Kyphoplasty?**

Specialists trained to perform the BKP procedure include some orthopedic surgeons, neurosurgeons, interventional radiologists, and pain medicine doctors. If you think you have a spinal fracture, you may need to see your primary care doctor for a diagnosis, and if necessary, get a referral to a specialist for treatment with balloon kyphoplasty.



For more information, visit: [spine-facts.com](http://spine-facts.com)

*Balloon Kyphoplasty incorporates technology developed by Gary K. Michelson, M.D*

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Ask your doctor about the risks of osteoporosis and vertebral compression fractures (VCFs)

**CONSIDER**

- Have you had a sudden onset of severe, sharp pain that lasted longer than three days?
- Have you had a broken bone after age 50?
- Have you been told you have osteoporosis or low bone density?

**If so, you could have a VCF and not know it.**

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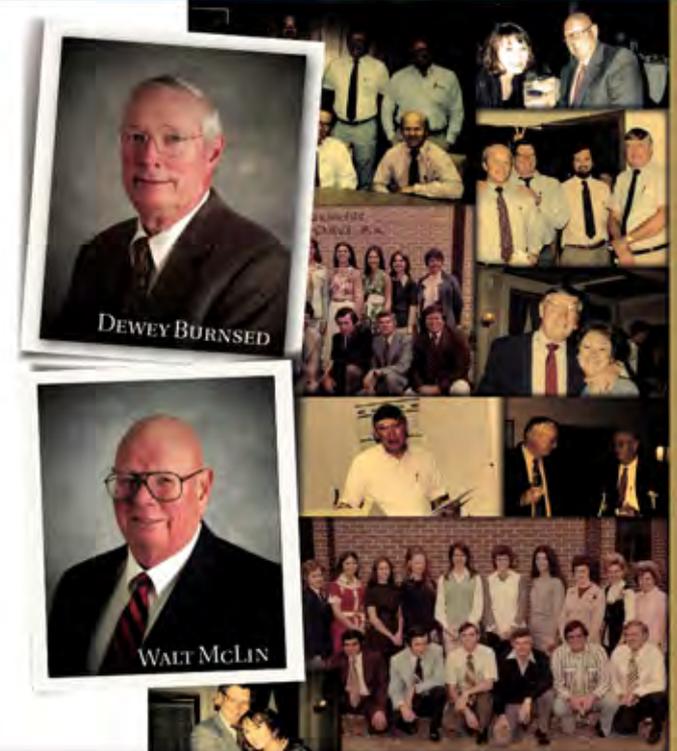
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# Lost Connections - The Road Back to Happiness

By Eric Milbrandt, MD, MPH

One in five Americans will suffer from depression at some point in their lifetime. Between 2011 and 2014, one in nine Americans reported taking at least one antidepressant medication in the past month. Three decades ago, less than one in 50 people were on antidepressants. Reasons for the staggering rise in antidepressant use include greater awareness of major depression, expanded indications for use, and direct to consumer advertising.

*Why are we so depressed?* What is going on in our society that leads greater than 10% of the population to need a pill just to feel “okay?” Why do these medicines frequently fail to help? Have our lives become that depressing? Is this just “normal” for us today?

## What really causes depression (and its cousin anxiety)?

According to a new book entitled “Lost Connections” by New York Times bestselling author Johann Hari, we are depressed and anxious because as a society we have become cut off from things we innately need but seem to have lost along the way. We are *disconnected* from essential people, places, and things in our lives.

*These include being disconnected from:*

1. Meaningful Work
2. Other People
3. Meaningful Values
4. Unresolved Childhood Trauma
5. Status and Respect
6. The Natural World
7. Hopeful or Secure Futures

But how could this be? In many ways we are the most connected society ever. With a simple handheld device, we can instantly “connect” with anyone almost anywhere on the planet. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, instant messaging, Facetime, discussion groups... the list of ways to “connect” goes on *ad infinitum*. Even so, many of us feel lonely and empty, that our lives are lacking meaning and purpose.

Meaningful contact is something we innately crave, but our society is predicated on individualism. We celebrate the “self-made man” and encourage others to “pull themselves up by their bootstraps.” Studies show that active involvement in community organizations fell sharply over the past three decades. According to Hari, “we stopped banding together... and found ourselves shut away in our own homes.” Few of us know, let alone talk to, our neighbors. Our busy lives make it difficult to share meals together. When asked how many people you could you call in the middle of the night in a crisis, the average answer just a few decades ago was five. Today it is zero.



Our work lives have changed dramatically in the “gig economy.” Jobs are frequently contracted and we can be let go with little or no notice. Often, we have no say in what we do or how we do it. Many mindlessly clock away hours doing work that doesn’t seem to directly help anyone other than those in corporate to get increasingly rich. We do this for a paycheck in order to buy the things that we think will make us happy, things that media and advertising has convinced us are the keys to a fulfilled life. When we finally acquire these things, we find they don’t fill the need at all, instead leaving us disappointed and wanting for more.

We spend very little time in nature. Most of our time is spent in climate-controlled environments with little to no fresh air under garish artificial lighting staring at computer, phone, or television screens. Science has proven that nature can have a powerful effect on our mental state. Spending time outdoors in greenspaces not only reduces blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes, but also lowers stress, anxiety, depression, and maybe even improves memory. Yet, few of us take advantage of what nature has to offer.

## Reconnection – The Road Back to Happiness

There is hope for this depressing situation. In the final third of the book, Hari describes a variety of ways we can begin to reconnect and, therefore, become more happily and usefully whole. He presents a wide range of real-life stories about people banding together for a common good and in doing so finding meaning and purpose. He goes on to suggest putting down our electronic devices, scaling back materialistic pursuits, ditching dead end jobs, finding joy in helping others, sharing meals together at home, and asking for help to work through unresolved childhood trauma.

In theory, many of these ways of reconnecting are cheap and relatively easy. However, when depression has you deep in the pit of despair, it can seem nearly insurmountable to even get off the couch, much less reach out to others, go to the gym, hike in the forest, or volunteer at a local shelter.

What then are we to do? How do we get out of this situation and begin to do the things that will make us feel better? This is the great paradox of depression. Because we feel unable to do what we need to do to get better, we don’t even try.

The answers, it would seem, are already available. Antidepressants and talk therapy, while not panaceas, can at least give us the boost that we need to get started with reconnection. Starting with small things and doing them often is another helpful tool for reconnection. By beginning with something easy and self-limited, we feel a sense of accomplishment and build confidence to tackle greater challenges.

There are times when traditional antidepressants and talk therapy are not enough. This is where new alternative treatments, such as ketamine infusion therapy, can help. Low-dose ketamine infusions, like those provided by The Infusion Clinic of Ocala, are fast-acting and highly effective for treating resistant cases of depression, anxiety, and PTSD. You can find out more about ketamine infusion therapy in the August issue of *Health & Wellness Magazine* (<https://tinyurl.com/OcalaKetamine>), online at <https://www.InfusionClinicOcala.com>, or by calling The Infusion Clinic of Ocala at (352) 325-5755.



THE INFUSION CLINIC  
OF OCALA

40 SW 1st Ave Ocala FL 34471  
(352) 325-5755

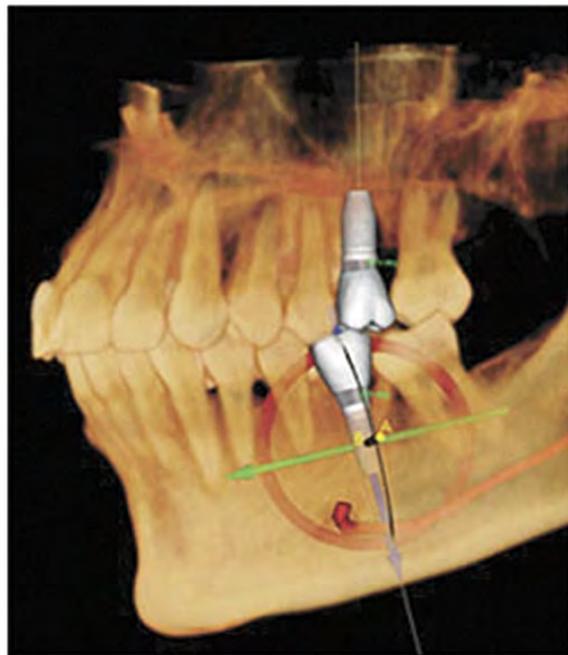
*Dr. Eric Milbrandt is owner of The Infusion Clinic of Ocala, located at 40 SW 1st Ave, Ocala, FL 34471. Dr. Milbrandt is a critical care medicine specialist with over 16 years of experience providing care to the sickest of hospitalized patients, including those with severe depression. He is board certified in Critical Care Medicine, completed a fellowship in Quality Improvement and a Master of Public Health at Vanderbilt University. He is a graduate of The Ketamine Academy, a leading provider of comprehensive online training for all major aspects of ketamine therapy. The Infusion Clinic of Ocala provides low-cost ketamine infusions for the rapid treatment of depression (including depression with suicidal ideation), anxiety, PTSD, and chronic pain.*

# 3D Imaging Minimizes Time and Cost of Dental Procedures

Physicians have relied on computerized axial tomography scans (CAT) for many years. CAT scans are an X-ray procedure that uses many different X-ray images with the help of computers to generate cross-sectional or even 3D views of internal organs and structures within the body. A knee replacement surgery, for example, would never be performed without first examining 3D imaging.

More recently, however, implant dentists have begun to rely on 3D imaging techniques to provide them with a detailed view of the mouth and skull. The advantage that 3D imaging holds over regular dental X-rays is that bone structure, bone density, tissues, and nerves can be viewed clearly.

3D images can be completed in less than half a minute. This means that far less radiation enters the body than if a regular set of bitewing X-rays were taken. The main use for 3D imaging is as an aid to plan dental implant treatment and other oral surgery.



Dental implants are the most sophisticated replacement for missing teeth, but have historically proven to be time-consuming to place. 3D imaging vastly reduces the time it takes to place implants. It is thought that in the near future implants will be placed in a single visit because of this unique type of imaging.

## How is 3D Imaging Used?

3D imaging is advantageous because it allows the implant dentist to magnify specific areas of the face. In addition, the implant dentist can easily view cross-sectional “slices” of the jaw, which makes planning treatment easier and faster.

## Here are some of the main ways 3D imaging is used in dentistry:

- Assess the quality of the jawbone where the implant will be placed.
- Determine where nerves are located.
- Diagnose tumors and disease in the early stages.
- Measure the density of the jawbone where the implant will be placed.
- Pinpoint the most effective placement for implants, including the angle of best fit.
- Plan the complete surgical procedure in advance, from start to finish.
- Precisely decide on the appropriate size and type of implants.
- View exact orientation and position of each tooth.
- View impacted teeth.

**Ocala Dental Care**  
OCALA DENTAL IMPLANT CENTER

2415 SW 27th Ave  
Ocala, FL 34471  
352-237-6196

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

## How is 3D imaging performed?

3D images are quick and simple to perform. A Cone Beam Imaging System is at the heart of the 3D imaging scanner. The cone beams are used to take literally hundreds of pictures of the face. These pictures are used to compile an exact 3D image of the inner mechanisms of the face and jaw. The implant dentist is able to zoom in on specific areas and view them from alternate angles.

Previous patients report 3D imaging is comfortable. Additionally, the scanner provides an open environment, meaning that claustrophobic feelings are eliminated. 3D imaging is an incredible tool that is **minimizing** the cost of dental treatment, reducing treatment time and enhancing the end results of dental surgery.

## “Smiling Reviews” from a Few of Our Patients

*Truly pleasurable experience. Staff was attentive and the workmanship was efficient yet very, very thorough. Highly recommended. I have worked in healthcare for 20 years and i must say...absolutely Professional and courteous...Patient care was utmost in all the staff, dentists and hygienist's minds. Highly recommended!!! - Anthony C.*

*A pleasant staff and a friendly atmosphere. Very helpful staff scheduled my wife for her bothering her tooth. We got it quick and no problems the very next day. Thank you! - Valentine K.*

*Love this dental office! They are highly advanced in there procedures and have a super pleasant staff that took such great care of me making sure I felt comfortable and relaxed during my wisdom tooth extraction. I never felt so at ease at a dental clinic before until she took care of me at Ocala Dental Care. Will be seeing her again and will be going back again - Julie V.*

# 24th Annual Mistletoe Trot 5K and 10K Race

Saturday, December 14, 2019

Lake Sumter State College, 9501 US Hwy 441, Leesburg

8:00 a.m. 10K Run/Walk Begins

8:05 a.m. 5K Run/Walk Begins

 Leesburg Regional  
Medical Center  
Wellness Center



**This festive event invites you to run or walk around beautiful Silver Lake. The first 400 pre-registered participants will receive an official race t-shirt. Proceeds will benefit the Community Medical Care Center in Leesburg, a non-profit organization.**

Register at:

<https://mistletoetrot5k10k.itsyourrace.com>

**\$25**

Regular Registration  
(Oct. 26 - Dec. 11)

**\$30**

Race Day Registration  
(Race T-Shirt NOT guaranteed)

\*All entry fees are non-refundable.

# Recreational Marijuana Vs. Medical Marijuana

**R**ecreational Marijuana is unregulated, and the ratios of THC, CBD and terpenes is also not standardized or stable. Recreational marijuana is typically used to evoke a mood-altering "high" and not necessarily used for medical ailments or treatment. In the state of Florida, recreational marijuana use is illegal.

Medical Marijuana is highly regulated by the government. It is under great scrutiny to deliver and prove it's levels of THC, CBD and terpenes. These ratios in medical marijuana can be adjusted specifically by a certified and licensed medical marijuana physician's dosage and ratio request, as some formulations are better suited for specific disease states, symptoms and conditions.

## Intake Methods

The state of Florida allows medical marijuana to be dispensed and used in these forms:

- Creams
- Edibles
- Oils
- Patches
- Smoking
- Sprays
- Suppositories
- Tinctures
- Vaping

Governor Desantis signed a bill recently allowing the ban on smokable marijuana to finally be lifted in the state of Florida. Certain dispensaries in the area are now legally able to give patients the green leafy flower that so many individuals have been waiting for.

## What are the Benefits of Smokable Marijuana?

Both cannabis oil and smokable marijuana offer health benefits, and in many cases, they both treat or alleviate symptoms of the same disorder. But what about smokable marijuana specifically? What are the perks, and who do they help the most?



Having the full entourage effect of the whole plant-based form of medical marijuana is ideal for many patients with terminal illnesses like cancer, dementia, Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, PTSD, and chronic infections. The entourage effect is the plant's natural combination of CBD, THC and Terpenes.

Both using cannabis oil and smoking marijuana yield different medical benefits. Smoking cannabis has been useful in treating diseases like glaucoma and nausea. It can be used to alleviate chronic pain and may even help reduce the size or stop the growth of cancer, as well as stop the progression of Alzheimer's disease. Cannabis oil is also used to treat cancer and nausea, but it can also improve sleep, protect the skin, combat stress and anxiety and promote heart health. Both may be used to treat symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), headaches and migraines. They may also be used to combat the symptoms of multiple sclerosis and premenstrual syndrome. Typically, the oil contains concentrated cannabinoid profiles for more potency, but many primarily include cannabidiol (CBD), which does not get people high. For this reason, some states allow children to take advantage of CBD oils for certain illnesses and conditions.

## Certified Marijuana Doctors

**Get Your Florida Medical Marijuana Card. Call Today!**

Ocala - 352-414-4545  
Leesburg - 352-306-0133  
Port Charlotte - 941-208-3444  
[www.cmmdr.com](http://www.cmmdr.com)

## Florida Marijuana Law's Qualifying Conditions Include

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 MM program.

## Qualifying Conditions

- Cancer
- Epilepsy
- Glaucoma
- HIV
- AIDS
- Seizures
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Crohn's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Chronic nonmalignant pain caused by a qualifying medical condition or that originates from a qualifying medical condition and persists beyond the usual course of that qualifying medical condition
- *Patients can be considered for alternative disorders*

In addition, Amendment 2 allows physicians the authorization to recommend the Florida Medical Marijuana Card to patients who have been diagnosed with "a similar or other debilitating medical condition."

## Getting Medical Marijuana

You must visit a Physician that is licensed to recommend medical marijuana. To legally purchase and consume medical marijuana in Florida, a patient must have one of the specific qualifying medical conditions regulated by the government or have a medical condition that is deemed as appropriate.

# Quick Care's Answer for Those Without Medical Insurance!

**L**ife happens and if you don't have health insurance, things can get pricey rather quickly. Luckily the QCARD is an alternative conventional health insurance giving you access to the Quick Care medical professionals with ease and affordability. The QCard is a program based for self-pay patients or anyone without medical insurance. Quick Care Med always takes the lead in finding innovative ways to help their communities and their patient demographic. They implemented this program to offer a well-needed resolution for so many individuals and families.

## Who can benefit from the QCARD program?

Almost anyone without medical insurance will find QCARD to be a valid answer to their healthcare needs. For example:

1. Headaches
2. Influenza or colds
3. Injuries or trauma
4. Asthma or allergy Issues
5. Twisted ankle
6. Your child has a bad cold or is colicky.
7. And the list goes on and on

*\*QCARD's copay is \$10 per visit. Average medical office visits can be hundreds of dollars.*

## Services included in the QCARD program

- Abdominal Pain
- Allergies
- Asthma
- Bronchitis
- Bug Bites and Stings
- Chickenpox
- Cough
- Cold/Flu
- Constipation
- Dehydration
- Diarrhea
- Ear Pain
- Ear Wax Removal
- Headache/Migraine
- Head lice
- Heartburn/Acid Reflux
- In-House Lab Tests
- Fever
- Laryngitis
- Minor Eye Problems
- Mononucleosis
- Nausea
- Nose Bleeds
- Pink Eye/Styes
- Poison Ivy/Poison Oak
- Respiratory Infections
- Ring Worm
- School/Sport Physicals
- Shingles
- Sinus Infections
- Skin Lesions/Rashes
- Sore Throat/Strep Throat
- Sprains and Strains
- STD's
- Urinary Tract Infection
- Wound Care
- X-Ray (Additional \$35.00)
- Yeast Infections/Thrush
- Nebulizer Treatments



## The QCARD works in 3 easy steps!

1. Patient can sign up online or in the office
2. Patient pays \$1 a day plus a \$10 copay at time of service
3. Patient can be seen as many times in a month as they like for just the \$10 co-pay

## Where can you use the QCARD?

Quick Care Med has 10 locations in Alachua, Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties. We have 3 offices in the Ocala area, plus other locations in Dunnellon, Beverly Hills, Crystal River, Homosassa, Inverness, Newberry and Williston.

## Why get the QCARD now?

If you don't have insurance, then you should get the QCARD now. It is a good idea to have at least a basic healthcare plan to deal with life's unforeseen events. It will give you access to medical professionals when you need it the most.

## QCARD is a great healthcare plan for the following:

- Those with no medical insurance
- Part timers
- Snowbirds
- Just off parents insurance
- Agricultural workers
- New to the area

If you have insurance and want to avoid high deductible, the QCARD is perfect for you. It is a great companion to high deductible insurance plans, as you can keep the insurance to cover only catastrophic events. You will save money by not having to pay the high deductible.

## Quick Care Med Urgent Care

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

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

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

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

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

*To find out more about the QCARD program, please visit Quick Care Med online at [quickcaredmed.com](http://quickcaredmed.com) or stop in today.*

## 3 Locations in Ocala

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

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

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

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

**844-797-8425**

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

# The Diabetes Epidemic Is Looming

*Learn how you can prevent, treat, and help those in need*

**W**ith staggering numbers, diabetes affects over 30 million Americans and alongside of this vast figure, stands 89 million pre-diabetics! Diabetes is a very expensive disease, costing approximately 245 billion dollars per year, and it wreaks havoc on one's health, contributing to heart disorders, stroke, and cognitive decline, to name a few. In addition, it is the 7th leading cause of death in the United States.

## Type I Diabetes Complications Include:

- Low blood sugar
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Cardiovascular risk factors
- Stroke risks
- Eye disease and conditions
- Kidney disorders

## Type II Diabetes Complications Include:

- Heart Disease
- Vascular disease
- Neuropathy
- Kidney disease
- Skin Conditions
- Stroke
- Vision loss and disorders
- Amputations
- Non-Healing ulcers
- Alzheimer's and Dementia

Type II diabetes can also affect all ages, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising and eating the right foods can significantly reduce or stave off this type of disorder. If your diabetes is advanced, getting the appropriate medication and dosing is crucial for reaching and sustaining a healthy lifestyle.

Don't leave prediabetes or diabetes untreated. It's a dangerous disorder that progressively and adversely affects your overall health.

## Treatment

Treatment includes taking the recommended medications that your doctor prescribes and also a through diet and exercise program. Cleaning up your diet is one of the best ways to lower your A1C and to improve your insulin resistance issues.



A healthy diet can improve a great deal of dysfunction that has been increasing in the body for years. Not one specific diet is suitable for all people; a diet that is customized to your needs, and genetics is essential to healing your insulin sensitivity.

The most important aspect is to avoid all sugars. This is especially important in the beginning stages as your body is overloaded with insulin and glucose. Sugar causes a great deal of inflammation in the body. Eliminating refined sugars like grains, pasta, and white potatoes can also quickly improve diabetic conditions. Speaking to your physician about the right plan for you is critical.

## United Healthcare

Better health begins by caring for the whole you – body, mind and everything else that can affect your health. In times when it can feel challenging to get the care you need, we want to be here to manage your health care easier – so you can connect to the personalized care you need, where you need it, when it matters to you.

Medical insurance can be complicated. United Healthcare is here to help. Learn about the changing world of plans, premiums and benefits so you can make decisions that make sense for you and your family.

**Turning 65?  
New to Medicare?  
New to the area?  
We're here to help!**

Contact us to schedule an appointment:



**Susan Tate**  
(352) 207-8607  
sjtate@gatc.net



**James Tate**  
(352) 207-1645  
Jamestate470@gmail.com

Your Medicare Solutions Ocala

**You're Invited!**

Join us at one of our community meetings about United Healthcare Medicare plans:

**Friday, November 22nd @ 10:00am**  
**Stone Creek Grille**  
9676 SW 62nd Loop, Ocala, FL 34481

**Monday, December 2nd | 2:00 pm**  
**Mojo's Grille**  
2015 SW 17th Street, Ocala, FL

# November - A Month to Recognize Hospice; a Time to Remember Veterans

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

**H**ospice of Marion County (HMC) honors National Hospice Month each year by hosting community programs that highlight services, outreach and the compassionate care only hospice can provide. This year, the programs are focused on veterans in an effort to improve access to care as well as honor those who served.

To kick off the month on November 1, HMC hosts a breakfast with Deborah Grassman, APRN, a national grief expert, creator of the "Soul Injury" initiative and founder of Opus Peace, which takes an innovative approach to address unresolved grief for anyone with a traumatic loss but especially veterans whom she terms "wounded warriors." Grassman has cared for more than 10,000 dying veterans during her 30-year career and will share what those veterans taught her about the burden of unmourning loss and unforgiven guilt. An accomplished author, she has written all the materials for the national We Honor Veterans program, of which HMC is a Level 4 partner.

While the nation observes Veterans Day on November 11, HMC is extending the week of remembrance by commemorating the sacrifices of Vietnam veterans to recognize the men and women who were denied a proper welcome upon returning home nearly 50 years ago. On November 16, Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans will be held at HMC's new Memorial Park and Dunlevy-Levenson-Burchel Family Veterans Circle of Honor.

An honor guard will open the ceremony in the majestic new park with its granite memorial wall and towering military monuments. Join veterans, families and state and local dignitaries to properly honor those veterans of the Vietnam conflict.

Jessica McCune, RN, LMHC, Director of Bereavement Services with Hospice of Marion County, will share the experiences of Paul Tschudi, EdS, MA, a medic in Vietnam from 1969-70 and now a faculty member at George Washington University, and how he has dealt with the subsequent emotional healing in the ensuing years. She'll also present an overview of the "Soul Injury" program and how she has incorporated it into the grief care offered at HMC's Monarch Center for Hope & Healing.

**Mark your calendar and attend these meaningful and educational opportunities:**

- Community Breakfast, Soul Injury presentation on Friday, November 1, 8:30 a.m., Elliott Center, 3231 SW 34th Ave., Ocala, FL, 34474
- Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans event, Saturday, November 16, 10:00 a.m., Hospice of Marion County Memorial Park, 2895 SW 62nd Ave., Ocala, FL 34480

**Both events are free and open to the public, but seating is limited. RSVP to Veronica at (352) 873-7456 or email [vvaughan@hospiceofmarion.com](mailto:vvaughan@hospiceofmarion.com).**

The Monarch Center provides counseling and activities for people of all ages who have experienced the loss of a loved one. These services are offered to the community at no charge thanks to the generosity of donors. Both the Monarch Center and the Memorial Park are on the Helen "Mimi" Walker campus just off Hwy. 441.



SATURDAY  
**NOVEMBER 16, 10 A.M.**

Hospice of Marion County Memorial Park  
Dunlevy-Levenson-Burchel Family Veterans Circle of Honor  
2895 SE 62nd Street • Ocala, FL 34480

*Healing "Wounded Warriors" through the Soul Injury Program*

Open to the public, refreshments

RSVP Veronica at (352) 873-7456 or  
[vvaughan@hospiceofmarion.com](mailto:vvaughan@hospiceofmarion.com)



## Have Medicare questions? I have answers.

**Susan Tate**  
Licensed Sales Representative

**352-207-8607, TTY 711**  
[UHCMedicareSolutions.com](http://UHCMedicareSolutions.com)



## Feel better. Live better.

*Families encounter many challenges on the road of life.*

When advancing illness affects your family, palliative care may be the right choice...because when you feel better, you live better. And living well is what life is all about.



At Hospice of Marion County, we care about you and your family. Find out if our care is the right choice for you.

Hospice of Marion County • 3231 SW 34th Ave, Ocala, FL  
352-873-7400 • [www.hospiceofmarion.com](http://www.hospiceofmarion.com)

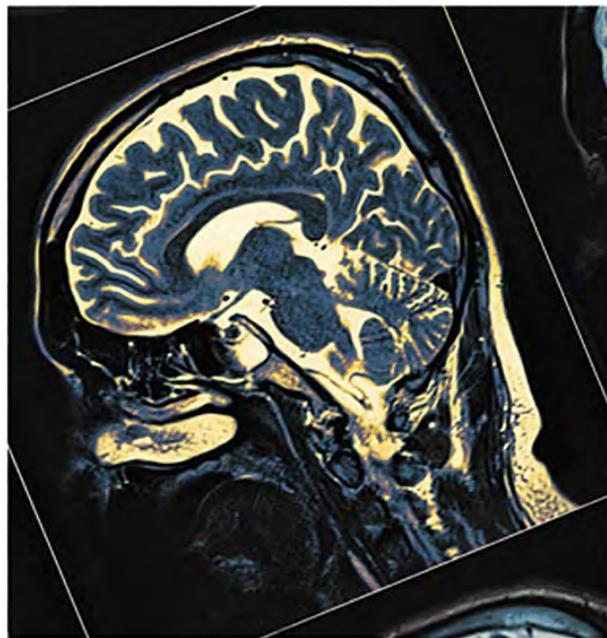
# What Your Untreated Hearing Loss is doing to YOUR Brain...

**H**earing loss is a fact of life for more than 48 million Americans. According to the Hearing Loss Association of America, this fact may increase the risk of cognitive problems and even dementia. “The general perception is that hearing loss is a relatively inconsequential part of aging,” says Frank Lin, an otologist and epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. He also says that “recent findings suggest that it may play a much more important role in brain health than we’ve previously thought.”

As part of the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging, 126 participants underwent yearly magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to track brain changes for up to 10 years. Each also had complete physicals at the time of their first MRI in 1994, including hearing tests. At the beginning, 75 had normal hearing, and 51 had impaired hearing, with at least a 25-decibel loss. After analyzing their MRIs over the following years, Lin and his colleagues, say those participants whose hearing was already impaired at the start of the sub-study had accelerated rates of brain atrophy compared to those with normal hearing. Overall, the scientists report that those with impaired hearing, lost more than an additional cubic centimeter of brain tissue each year compared with those with normal hearing. Those with impaired hearing also had significantly more shrinkage in particular regions, including the superior, middle and inferior temporal gyri; the brain structures that are responsible for processing sound and speech. If you want to address hearing loss well,” Lin says, “you want to do it sooner rather than later. If hearing loss is potentially contributing to these differences we’re seeing on an MRI, you want to treat it before any brain structural changes take place.”

The brain becomes smaller with age; however, the shrinkage seems to be more rapid in older adults with hearing loss, according to the results of a study by researchers from Johns Hopkins and the National Institute on Aging. Their findings add to a growing list of health consequences associated with hearing loss, including increased risk of dementia, falls, hospitalizations, and diminished physical and mental health overall.

P. Murali Doraiswamy, M.D., a professor of psychiatry and medicine at Duke University School of Medicine and coauthor of *The Alzheimer’s Action*



Plan, says that while the link between hearing loss and milder cognitive problems has been questioned by some, it is becoming increasingly accepted. “Every doctor knows that hearing loss can result in cognitive problems, but they still don’t focus on it as a priority when they evaluate someone with suspected dementia — which is a big missed opportunity. The benefits of correcting hearing loss on cognition are twice as large as the benefits from any cognitive-enhancing drugs now on the market. It should be the first thing we focus on.”

There also was a study done at the University of Colorado’s Department of Speech Language and Hearing Science that looked at how neuroplasticity affects how the brain adapts to hearing loss. Neuroplasticity is the brain’s ability to change at any age. Conventional thinking used to view the brain as static and unable to change; we now know that this is not the case. In the case of hearing loss, the part of the brain devoted to hearing can actually become reorganized, i.e. reassigned to other functions. The study was designed to answer two questions: How does the brain adapt to hearing loss and what are the resulting implications? The researchers found that when hearing loss occurs, areas of the brain devoted to other senses such as vision or touch will actually take over the areas of the brain which normally process hearing. This is a phenomenon called cross-modal cortical reorganization; essentially, the brain adapts to a hearing loss by rewiring itself. This can have a very serious detrimental effect on cognition.

Hearing loss system significantly reduces the brain’s ability to process sound, this can then affect a person’s ability to understand speech. Even a mild hearing loss can cause the hearing areas of the brain to become weaker. What can happen next is that the areas of the brain that are necessary for higher level thinking compensate for the weaker areas. They essentially take over for hearing, which leaves them unavailable to do their primary job.

This compensatory brain reorganization could explain why age related hearing loss is strongly correlated with dementia. This should be taken seriously, even in the early stages of hearing loss, the brain begins to reorganize.

Finally, it also seems very likely that hearing loss, which tends to isolate people from others has long been recognized as a risk factor for cognitive decline and dementia.

If you have hearing loss, it makes sense to get it treated as early as possible. It is widely believed that less than 15 to 20 percent of those with a clinically significant hearing loss use hearing aids. Early treatment for hearing loss could prevent long term cognitive issues down the road. The solution could be as simple as an early hearing loss screening program for adults.

With that being said, *Premear Hearing* would like to help you with your hearing health by offering a Complimentary \*Hearing Screening and mini-consultation. Call today to set up your appointment.

*\*A Hearing Screening is only a Pass or Fail, it will only tell us if there is a loss but not the degree or type of loss. Further testing will be necessary.*

**Premear Hearing**  
A Tradition of Excellence

Ocala’s Only Family Owned Hearing Care Provider  
with 2 Locations.

**352-438-0050**

4620 E Silver Springs Blvd #501, Ocala, FL 34470

**352-236-6700**

4414 SW College Rd #1530, Ocala, FL 34474

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# Partial Knee Replacement

**N**o discussion of knee joint replacement surgery is complete without a discussion of Unicompartmental or Partial Knee replacement surgery. Dr Kerina has been a leader in outpatient joint replacement surgery and Partial or Unicompartmental knee replacement surgery for the past 14 years. This has culminated in the development of a new radiographic patient selection criteria for partial knee replacement, the balanced – aligned resection surgical technique for partial knee replacement, and the first 3rd generation Partial knee replacement or MOTO Unicompartmental Knee. The MOTO in combination with the Balanced – Aligned resection technique is the first partial knee system that allows the surgeon every intraoperative option available in a Total Knee Replacement while preserving all the patient’s ligaments and normal cartilage and bone making the MOTO the first TOTAL UNI.

A Partial knee replacement is a procedure reserved for patients that have knees with intact ligaments, good range of motion and cartilage damage limited to one compartment of the knee. Since the most common form of arthritis, osteoarthritis is usually triggered by an injury to the knee; most osteoarthritis starts its development in a single compartment of the knee. Most patients with osteoarthritis initially develop bone on bone contact in only one compartment of the knee and since ligament damage and scarring are a late manifestation of osteoarthritis these patients are excellent candidates for a partial knee replacement.

There are many advantages to this procedure over a total knee replacement for the appropriate patient. Recent medical studies have shown that these implants are now lasting as long as total knee replacements. Since the procedure does not involve



*(Left) A normal knee joint: The medial, lateral, and patellofemoral compartments are shown with red arrows. (Right) An x-ray of a normal knee joint showing healthy space between the bones.*

the removal or release of any of the knee’s ligaments, these knees feel much more like the patients’ natural knee than a total knee replacement and function much more like the normal knee. We describe our partial knee procedure as a restorative not a reconstructive procedure. The surgeon restores the knee to its pre-disease balance. Re-establishing the balance and alignment of the knee markedly slows the progression of the arthritic disease and makes future revision to a total knee unlikely.

Patients with a partial knee replacement not only recover more rapidly than those with total knees, but also have lower mortality rates, less post-operative pain, and lower surgical complication rates.

Therefore, they can achieve greater range of motion, higher functional levels, earlier return to work, and engagement in more activities such as golf, tennis, pickle ball, softball, bowling, and recreational running.

Partial knee replacements are routinely done as outpatient procedures with the patient going home from the ambulatory surgery center or hospital on the day

of surgery. This significantly impacts the patient outcome since hospital and skilled nursing facility admission increases the risk of adverse events such as infection and blood clots.

Our outpatient partial knee program has been built in conjunction with our opioid free anesthesia and post-op recovery platform. This allows our patients to engage in post-operative exercise programs in the recovery room since they awaken from surgery more alert and oriented. Minimizing narcotic use in the postop period allows our patients to better engage with the physical therapists thereby improving their functional outcomes.

Recovery from a partial knee will usually take between 2 and 4 weeks to regain over 90% of your function. The remaining improvement will occur over the course of the following year depending on the level of function that you are attempting to achieve. You will be on a walker and or cane for a short time while you regain your balance. Driving will be possible as soon as you gain adequate control of your leg.

Osteoarthritis is not unlike most medical conditions, the earlier you address them the greater the number of treatment options and the greater your chances of making a full recovery. The old adage of waiting until you cannot tolerate your arthritis pain any longer before seeking surgical treatment is no longer applicable today. Surgical techniques, implant materials, technology and rapid recovery protocols now offer us treatment options not available as recently as 10 years ago.



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# Tips for Relieving Chronic Dry Eye Symptoms

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

**F**rom saline eye drop solutions to topical lubricants, Americans spend an astounding \$3.8 billion on dry eye symptom relief every year. Not only are many of these treatments inconvenient and uncomfortable to apply, but often the results are also disappointing.

Current research suggests that chronic inflammation is at the heart of most dry eye issues, including Meibomian Gland Dysfunction (MGD). Since omega-3s are known to help fight inflammation, can these fatty acids also treat dry eye symptoms?

## How Do Dry Eye Symptoms Start?

While a number of environmental and behavioral factors can contribute to dry eyes, the most common cause of dry eye disease is Meibomian Gland Dysfunction.

Located behind the upper and lower eyelids, the meibomian glands are responsible for producing meibum – a rich mixture of oils that keeps the eyes moist and comfortable – every time you blink.

Whether due to chronic inflammation or other factors, the meibomian glands can become clogged, preventing the meibum from lubricating the eyes correctly. Without the meibum, the eye has to rely on lower-quality tears that evaporate quickly, leaving the eye surface unprotected. This results in dry eye symptoms (like burning, tearing, redness, and blurry vision).

Over time, clogged meibomian glands can deteriorate, causing MGD. In the early stages, blocked meibomian glands may occur without a person experiencing significant symptoms.

## Why Are Omega-3s Beneficial for Dry Eyes?

Omega-3 fatty acids serve a number of important roles in the eye. For one, the fatty acids EPA and DHA are known to both prevent and resolve ongoing inflammation. Less inflammation can potentially lower the risk of MGD from developing in the first place; it can also mean less discomfort after the disease has progressed.

There's another benefit to omega-3s too. The meibum that the meibomian glands produce is made up of a mixture of wax esters and beneficial fatty acids. Since many people with MGD have an abnormal meibum consistency, it's believed that increased omega-3 intake can help improve the fatty acid composition and quality of oil in our tears.

## Clinical Studies on Dry Eyes and Omega-3s

To date, many clinical trials have found that getting an effective dose of omega-3s may improve tear production, decrease tear evaporation rate, and provide relief for dry eye discomfort.

Sometimes, however, the results are conflicting. For instance, in 2018, a NIH-funded study found that a high dose of omega-3s did not make a significant difference in terms of relieving dry eye symptoms compared to placebo.

This past May 2019, however, two meta-analyses re-examined the data. In both, the scientists concluded that omega-3 supplementation did improve dry eye symptoms and metrics, including tear breakup time, Schirmer test scores, tear osmolarity, and ocular surface disease index scores.

## How to Get Benefits from an Omega-3 Supplement

Many MGD treatments (like eye drops) typically only provide temporary relief. But increasing your intake of fresh omega-3s may be an effective way to make improvements long term.

*If you're considering taking fish oil for dry eyes, here are four key points to remember:*

### 1. Get an Effective Dose

For any omega-3 supplement to be effective, getting the right dose of fatty acids is crucial. While the studies involving omega-3s and dry eyes have used a variety of doses to achieve results, numerous scientific reviews suggest that the omega-3s' anti-inflammatory effects don't kick in for adults unless you get more than 2000 mg of EPA/DHA daily.

Regular fish oil and cod liver oil supplements often do not provide more than 300 mg of EPA/DHA per capsule, so it's important to look closely at the supplement facts when choosing an omega-3 product.

### 2. Give Omega-3 Benefits Time

It takes time for the omega-3 fatty acids to build up in the body and have an effect. Studies indicate that dry eye relief tends to occur after 6-12 weeks of daily supplementation.

Since changes are often gradual and can vary from individual to individual, keeping a journal can be an especially helpful way to monitor your progress.

### 3. Find a Fresh Fish Oil

While omega-3s are highly beneficial in terms of reducing inflammation, these fatty acids have a molecular structure that makes them extremely prone to oxidation (or spoiling).

Numerous independent studies have found that the majority of omega-3 supplements have turned rancid long before their stated expiration date. Not only are oxidized omega-3 products less potent, but consuming rancid fish oil can also be harmful.

Just like fresh fish, truly fresh fish oil should not taste or smell fishy. If you're taking fish oil capsules, break one open to taste and smell the contents. If it gives off a bad taste and smell, it's already oxidized – throw it out!

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

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/5-tips-for-getting-relief-from-dry-eyes-with-an-omega-3-supplement/>

## About Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

Born and raised in the United States, Dr. Chalmers graduated from Brown University and completed her medical training at the University of Oslo in Norway. Dr. Chalmers practiced emergency, family, and preventive medicine in Norway for many years. Today, she serves as president of Omega3 Innovations.



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# Diabetic Neuropathy: How Physical Therapy Can Help

**R**oughly, 29 million Americans have diabetes. Many of these cases are undiagnosed, but for those individuals that struggle with the disease, symptoms of diabetic neuropathy can be debilitating.



Diabetic neuropathy is a progressive disease that affects nearly 200,000 new patients per year. Understanding the disease state is complex, but in short, having high blood sugar levels, along with low blood and oxygen supply, damages the nerves throughout the body. This damage generally affects the long peripheral nerves that feed sensations to the legs, feet, and toes from the spinal cord, through communication with the brain. If your condition has progressed, you may feel nerve damage sensations in your upper extremities as well.

Once the peripheral nerves are damaged, there is no cure. Along with medications and drug therapies, there are proven methods to lessen the symptoms of peripheral diabetic neuropathy. Physical medicine provides alternative therapeutic and rehabilitating procedures that can offer significant pain relief and limit drug dependency. Physical therapy helps with balance and can reduce the risk of falls.

**When you have diabetic neuropathy, your feet and legs can feel so numb that you may trip, fall and injure yourself just by trying to get through normal daily activities. This can be dangerous for obvious reasons. Along with dietary changes, orthopedic shoes and compression stockings, physical therapy can help.**



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Physical therapy is used to help with numerous indications and conditions like retraining the body to improve gait and balance and also after hip, knee or shoulder replacement and so much more. There is no better way to alleviate pain, increase range-of-motion and live a more mobile higher quality of life than through physical & Occupational therapy.

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RAO is honored to welcome:



**Dr. Alexander Quiroz-Casian** - Diagnostic Radiologist Dr. Alexander Quiroz-Casian subspecializes in Body Imaging, the study of cross-sectional imaging techniques to diagnose issues in organs throughout the body. Dr. Quiroz-Casian earned his medical degree at the School of Medicine at Universidad LA SALLE in Mexico City, and served residencies in Diagnostic Radiology and General Surgery at the University of Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital. He garnered a Fellowship in Body Imaging from MedStar Georgetown University Hospital.



**Dr. Luis Jiminez** – Dr. Luis Jiminez is Board Certified in Diagnostic Radiology with a subspecialty in Nuclear Medicine. Dr. Jiminez earned his medical degree at Gainesville's University of Florida College of Medicine and served residencies at both that institution and the University of Florida College of Medicine at Jacksonville, where he went on to earn a Fellowship in Nuclear Medicine.



**Dr. Cameron Cummings** – Dr. Cameron Cummings is Board Certified in Diagnostic Radiology with a subspecialty in Neuroradiology. Dr. Cummings received his medical degree at the Medical College of Wisconsin and served a residency in Diagnostic Radiology at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine. Dr. Cummings earned a Fellowship in Neuroradiology at Harvard Medical School's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.



**Dr. Carmen Villanueva** – Board Certified in Diagnostic Radiology and subspecializing in Neuroradiology, Dr. Carmen Villanueva earned her medical degree from the Universidad Central del Caribe. Dr. Villanueva completed residencies at the VA Medical Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico and the University of Puerto Rico, and earned a Fellowship in Neuroradiology from George Washington Hospital in Washington, DC.



**Dr. Vivek Kalra** – Dr. Vivek Kalra is Board Certified in Diagnostic Radiology with a subspecialty in Neuroradiology. Dr. Kalra earned his medical degree at University of Miami Medical School and underwent an internship in Internal Medicine at Harvard Medical School's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Dr. Kalra served a residency at Yale's New Haven Hospital and went on to earn a Fellowship there in Neuroradiology.



RAO is pleased to welcome these experienced and dedicated doctors to its staff. When it comes to having a medical question answered, accuracy and speed are paramount. The addition of these talented doctors promotes superior expediency and accommodation for our many valued patients and referring clinicians. For questions about our staff and services, please call RAO at 352.671.4300 or email us at [info@raocala.com](mailto:info@raocala.com).

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## What's Your Diet?

By Pastor Roger P. Felipe

**W**eight-watchers. Nutrisystem. Mediterranean diet. Paleo. Living healthy has become a craze, although obesity in our country, rather legitimizes it. For many people it is about looking and feeling better, living longer, stronger and disease-free. These are all important reasons for eating clean, exercising, and learning to rest our bodies sufficiently.

For Christians, however, trying to maintain healthy habits finds its motivation in more than adopting diet fads to longevity and better quality of life. Taking care of our bodies is stewardship. That is, it is a reflection of our recognition of having been created by God, and how our lives can be instruments in his hands to serve and honor him on earth. Of course, God can use both the healthy and the unfit for his purposes, including the sick, feeble, and dying. Human worth and value is not in question.

The reality is that our earthly lives are only a speck in the sands of eternity. However, Christ followers understand that life doesn't belong to them. It is a gift from a Good Father who entrusted them with a brief span of years that should be invested in loving others and making our world a better place. For those who have believed in Christ and experienced God's forgiveness of sin, the reason for taking care of their bodies goes beyond living longer and healthier. It's about honoring Jesus Christ with all of life, including the way they take care of their bodies.

In his book, *"The Unknown God: Searching for spiritual fulfilment,"* Oxford University professor, Alister McGrath, describes the parable of Plato's Cave, a story about people enslaved inside the cave oblivious to the reality that existed on the outside beyond the flickering shadows which they knew. That is, until the day someone was able to find their way out and discover a world beyond description, a world of beauty and splendor. McGrath writes, "Our desires have become attached to things that are little more than shadows, when they are meant to be attached to something which cannot decay or disappoint" (32).

How does this relate to healthy living? Focusing on living healthier and longer, like any other pursuit we might obsess about, really reveals a spiritual longing in our souls for something more: *eternity*. Whether is it longing for a "perfect" relationship that often disenchants, earthly riches that can quickly vanish, or a healthy and strong body that is suddenly brought to a standstill due to an unexpected medical report, our hearts are longing for something beyond what this world can provide.

McGrath probes us to consider this question: "Suppose our longing for fulfilment points to something we have yet to discover? What if our yearning is a clue to the meaning of the universe?" (10). Taking care of your body and staying healthy is a good thing, but it isn't everything.



The truth of the matter is, whatever we pursue in life has a way to deceive us to think that by attaining "it" our lives will be complete. They're not. Deep inside a voice continues to remind us that our longings for fulfillment are like signposts in the sky pointing us to something beyond ourselves. Could that something (Someone) be our Creator?

May you achieve physical well-being and wholeness. But may you also discover the gift of eternal life which Jesus promises to all who believe and trust in him alone. "... I have come that they may have life, and have it in abundance" (John 10:10). I would enjoy exploring with you the meaning of life and God.



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