## TAMPA BAY'S

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5 REASONS TO AVOID KINEE REPLACEMENT SURGERY

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MAGAZINE

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HELPING VETERANS PAY FOR LONG TERM CARE Page 117 During these challenging times, we remain open and dedicated to safely serving our cancer patients.

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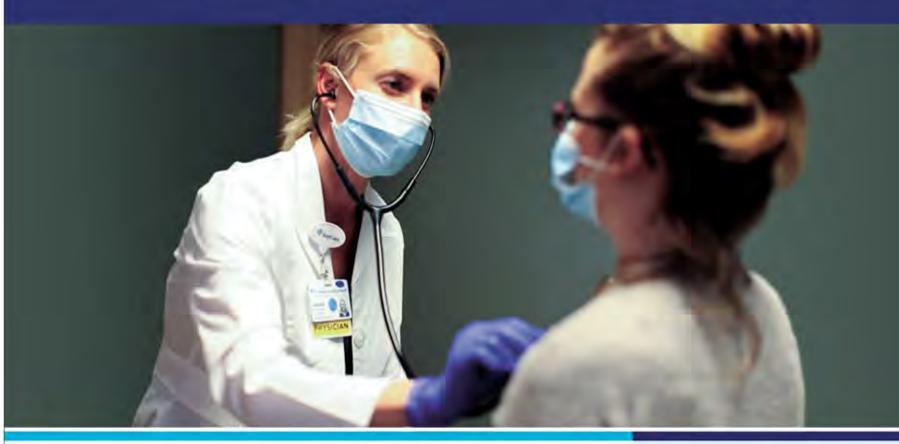






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As a company that's served the best interests of seniors for nearly 30 years, we are no stranger to emergency management. Our commitment to the health and safety of our residents has long been paramount, and although COVID-19 is a new threat, it is by no means the first one we've faced head on.

In any emergency situation, it's imperative to know where trusted resources can be found. For seniors and families specifically, the importance of safeguards required for COVID-19, in many ways highlight the numerous benefits of living in a supportive community setting like the many we offer.

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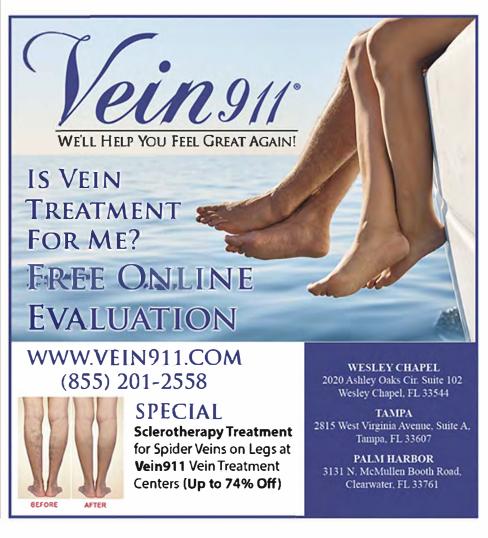
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Spinks Law Firm is a Tampa Bay area law firm with their main office in Tampa, and are available for consultation in Brandon and Land O' Lakes. Attorney T. Edmund Spinks enjoys assisting families with estate planning (wills & trusts), real estate transfers and disability rights; as a retired Marine Corps officer he also provides advice in the areas of veteran pension and Medicare/Medicaid benefits.

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# **Celebrating National Hospice** & Palliative Care Month

very year, the month of November is recognized as National Hospice & Palliative Care Month to help raise awareness of the efforts of local hospice and palliative health care organizations.

Gulfside Hospice has been Pasco County's premier hospice of choice, serving residents for 31 years. As one of the few non-profit hospice organizations across the country, as well as the Tampa Bay area, Gulfside assures that no patient is turned away from care because of financial reasons, or for lack of insurance or healthcare coverage.

Every day, more than 800 Pasco County residents receive hospice care from the team at Gulfside. But hospice care is about more than just the patient. It's about the whole family.

"Thank you, Gulfside, for the excellent care you provided to our father," said Linda, the daughter of a hospice patient, in a letter. "He was in excellent hands and that was such a relief for all of us. The comfort you provided to him and our family has made our loss much more bearable."

With an interdisciplinary approach to care and an array of services, Gulfside Hospice is able to help patients and families live their lives to the fullest. Every person receiving care from Gulfside has access to the organization's whole team, which includes hospice-certified physicians, nurses, hospice aides, social workers, chaplains and volunteers. Patients can also continue visiting their current physician, if they wish.

Some of the services provided by Gulfside's gracious team include visits from physicians who offer pain management and symptom control; regular visits from registered nurses, plus the ability to contact the nursing team 24/7; around-the-clock crisis nursing care at home, when necessary; coordination of medical supplies, medication and equipment like oxygen tanks, walkers, hospital beds and more; assistance with personal care provided by certified nursing assistants; and services from social workers who specialize in helping families cope with issues surrounding life-limiting illnesses.



Gulfside Hospice also offers spiritual care services provided by chaplains, respite care from trained volunteers and assistance with running errands, and bereavement services for families, including regular workshops, support groups and individual counseling.

All of the care and services offered by Gulfside Hospice are centered around one primary goal: making every day count for patients and their families.

Gulfside Hospice is a division of Gulfside Healthcare Services, and is the only not-for-profit hospice that serves Pasco County exclusively, and was the first hospice in Pasco to receive The Joint Commission's Seal of Approval Accreditation. To learn more about how Gulfside can help you and your family, call (800) 561-4883 to speak with one of the organization's experts. For more information, visit Gulfside.org.



# Join us for a free webinar! Hospice or Palliative Care: What's the difference?

Join Gulfside's team of experts for a Virtual Panel Presentation & Q&A Session

to learn the difference between hospice care and non-hospice palliative care, and find out which option is best for you.

# Friday, November 13 at 12:00 p.m.

Get more details and register at Gulfside.org/webinars All pre-registered participants will be entered to win a Publix gift card.

Gulfside

Hospice

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## What an Interventional Cardiologist Wants You to Know About Monitoring and Treating Your Cardiovascular Health During the Pandemic

BayCare Medical Group Cardiology



Dr. Rachit Shah of BayCare Medical Group Cardiology spoke to us about patient care during COVID-19.

"Many patients are ignoring symptoms of cardiac problems like heart attack and congestive heart failure due to fear of exposure to the virus. The delay in patient presentation could be detrimental specifically for certain types of heart attacks, as well as long term cardiac morbidity. These are cardiac emergencies and indicated by symptoms like chest pain and or worsening shortness of breath. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that patients seek timely care to address any potential red flags suggestive for cardiac involvement. Timely management not only improves long term survival but also prognosis and quality of life."

Dr. Shah further adds "We know from this pandemic that preexisting cardiovascular conditions increase one's risk of severity of the illness as well as mortality from COVID-19. We also know that this illness is directly or indirectly associated with a variety of cardiovascular complications. Again, pointing to the need of appropriately addressing the cardiovascular system of patients diagnosed with COVID-19. We strive to keep our patients safe with a variety of precautions at the same time continue to deliver high quality cardiovascular care."

Dr. Shah continued, "The CDC still recommends physical distancing, limited person to person contact, wearing of face coverings, and proper hygiene, and we put our best efforts forward to implement these recommendations while delivering patient care. We do not want patients to postpone or avoid care for fear of COVID-19. When it comes to health conditions, specifically cardiovascular disorders, it is imperative that patients maintain their follow-ups, treatments, and, most importantly, getting any new or worsening symptoms checked immediately. We have taken multiple steps at BayCare to address patient safety. Firstly, we have become experts at keeping our staff safe. With daily staff and practitioner monitoring for symptoms or fever, mandating masks be worn by all and adequate hand hygiene is taken very seriously at BayCare. We pursue stringent disinfection of all public

and treatment areas. We also have adequate physical distance between patient chairs in the waiting area, and we expedite appointment times to limit the waiting time. We also provide virtual telehealth visits for routine follow ups. Patients can expect the telehealth visit to include in-depth analysis of any symptoms a patient might have. We also check on medication management and discuss the need for changes in dosing or refills if needed. If a patient has symptoms that need to be more rigorously evaluated, we schedule diagnostic testing or exams based on those specific findings. We continue to perform lifesaving cardiac procedures like coronary angiography and coronary angioplasty with proper precautions for the patients who need them. Some non-emergent cardiac procedures have been deferred to better the manage workflow and to keep patients safe."

"If a patient is having severe symptoms, they should go to the emergency room immediately. All proper protection and precautions are taken to make sure patients are not exposed. Seeking early treatment saves lives and can limit any long-term adverse effects. We encourage our patients to maintain all appointments and, of course, follow up with us immediately in the case of any cardiovascular events. The experts agree that maintaining your appointment is far more beneficial to your overall health than avoiding your physicians' office out of fear."



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Fax: (727) 724-0425 Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-Spm

### Rachit M Shah, MD

Dr. Rachit Shah is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease, interventional cardiology, echocardiography, and nuclear cardiology. He earned his medical degree from Smt. NHL Medical Municipal College, Gujarat University in Ahmedabad, India. He then completed an internal medicine residency at Chicago Medical School/Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, in Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Shah continued his medical education by completing fellowships in general cardiology and interventional cardiology from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Shah has extensive expertise and special interest in coronary and peripheral interventions. He also specializes in invasive management of varicose vein disorders. He provides consultation services for diagnosis, management, and prevention of various cardiovascular disorders like coronary atherosclerosis, chest pain, congestive heart failure, cardiac arrhythmias, valvular heart disease, peripheral vascular disease, and venous insufficiency disease. He is also proficient in interpretation of various cardiac imaging studies like echocardiograms, vascular ultrasounds, carotid dopplers as well as cardiac nuclear stress tests. Dr. Shah is an accomplished author, having penned several peer-reviewed articles for a variety of prestigious medical journals. He also works as a peer reviewer for many leading publications. He has received multiple research grants from VCU medical center for research presentations. He was nominated for and received Young Leadership Award at CRT (Cardiac Research Technologies) conference in Washington, DC. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a member of the American Medical Association. Dr. Shah is affiliated with the Mease/Morton Plant Hospitals.

### BayCare Medical Group Cardiology

BayCare Medical Group Cardiology is a multi-location practice designed to provide collaborative, comprehensive and convenient cardiovascular care. In addition to our New Port Richey location, we are proud to have locations in Clearwater, Dunedin, Safety Harbor, St. Petersburg and Tampa, as well as Plant City and Winter Haven.

In our state-of-the-art medical facilities, our board-certified physicians provide patients with high-quality cardiovascular evaluation, diagnosis and treatment. At each of our locations, we offer a full array of cardiovascular diagnostic and treatment services.

The COVID-19 outbreak caused massive procedural deferrals resulting in a spike of late-presenting STEMS and an increase in death rate in patients waiting for procedures

## **5 Reasons to Avoid Knee Replacement Surgery**

By Regenexx Tampa Bay, Regenerative Medicine

e understand the growing concern surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the communities we serve. The health and safety of our patients, physicians, and staff is our top priority. Regenexx Tampa Bay has been actively preparing its offices, physicians, and employees to address these uncertainties and prevent the transmission of COVID-19. To schedule a Telehealth call with one of our physicians, please call us at 941-357-1773 in Sarasota and 813-544-3123 in Tampa. For Gold Coast Orthopedics in Aventura, FL, please call 786-855-4800.

Knee replacements are occurring far too often today and the simple truth is that many are entirely unnecessary. In some cases, the knee pain may actually be stemming from another part of the body. Even when using standard criteria for determining candidacy, about one-third of knee replacements are deemed inappropriate when evaluated by independent researchers.

When knee pain is legitimately caused by a knee condition, many knee replacement candidates seek out effective alternatives to surgery. For those who are still considering a replacement, here are five reasons that may make you want to think twice.

### 1. Chronic Knee Pain

Relief from chronic knee pain is the main reason that most people decide to have a knee replacement. Although many people can get good relief from a knee replacement, unfortunately, for some people, surgery may come with continued or additional pain. Studies have shown that many patients still have at least mild pain after their knee replacement. Most people decrease their sporting and athletic activities within 5 years of their surgery.

Although there are many reasons why someone may continue to have pain, one explanation of chronic knee pain could be that the source of the pain was not actually a knee condition, to begin with. If the knee pain is actually caused by spinal nerves from the back, for example, then your pain will not simply go away after a knee replacement. It is essential that the root cause of the pain is discovered and is the focus of treatment.

### 2. Pseudotumors & Tissue Damage

Wear particles are microscopic pieces of metal, ceramic, or plastic that come from the joint replacement part, irritate the local tissues, and/or enter the bloodstream. These particles, as well as metal ions in



the blood, have been the subject of many class-action lawsuits and can cause harmful metal toxicity as well as create pseudotumors, tissue damage, and even DNA injury. According to the FDA, other adverse reactions may include skin rashes, cardiomyopathy, neurological changes, psychological status changes, kidney function impairment, and thyroid dysfunction.

### 3. Device Failure Caused By Allergies

In the past few years, multiple studies have discussed that the components of knee replacement prostheses can cause allergies. Two groups of people are at a significantly higher risk of potential rejection or loosening of their device and/or toxicity from wear particles.

1. Those with any type of allergy. Even patients with allergies to pollen or dander should think twice about knee replacement surgery. These people have hyperactive immune systems and secrete antibodies inappropriately to rid their bodies of the thing that they have mistaken as harmful.

2. Patients who have more specific allergies to metal will likely have issues with the metals that are used in joint replacement prostheses.

### 4. Increased Risk of Heart Attack & Stroke

Knee replacement patients aged 60 and up are about 30 times more likely to experience a heart attack or stroke in the two weeks following surgery. When you amputate a joint from a patient, there is severe trauma to the blood vessels and bone marrow space. The stress of undergoing joint removal alone may be enough to trigger a stroke or a heart attack. Additionally, there is a higher risk of blood clots that could potentially cause an embolism in the heart, lungs, or brain.

### 5. Increased Risk of Hip Fracture

A surprising addition to knee replacement surgery risks is the rise of hip fractures following surgery. A national Dutch study showed a 54% increased risk of hip fracture after a knee replacement among adults aged <71 years old. We are also seeing bone density loss in hips.

### Alternatives to Surgery

Although many patients have tried steroid injections to decrease pain in their knee joints, this is not the best approach. Steroid shots kill off stem cells, cartilage cells, and increase cartilage breakdown. Even commonly used local anesthetics can be toxic to stem and cartilage cells.

Those who suffer from mild arthritis may benefit from precise injections of highly concentrated platelet-rich plasma (PRP). These natural growth factors from your own platelets can support healthy cartilage and prevent the natural breakdown over time.

The Regenexx protocols allow for the ability to produce higher quality and more individualized platelet products than the typical PRP centrifuge. Precise guided injections of your own bone marrow derived stem cells may also be a better choice to provide relief especially in those with moderate to advanced arthritis.

When considering knee replacement surgery, make sure that you research alternative options. Our website is a great place to start understanding if regenerative orthopedic medicine is right for you.

Regenexx Tampa Bay provides trusted solutions by orthopedic stem cell experts. We offer the nation's most advanced, researched, and evidence-based non-surgical stem cell and platelet treatments for injuries and arthritis.



James Leiber, D.O. | Ron Torrance II, D.O. | Ignatios Papas, D.O.



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# DO YOU HAVE RESTLESS LEGS? YOU MAY HAVE VEIN DISEASE!

R estless Leg Syndrome (RLS) is a disorder that causes an overwhelming urge to move one's legs and affects 5-10% of adults in the United States.<sup>1</sup> It typically occurs in the evening or with relaxation. People who suffer from restless leg syndrome describe it as an irresistible urge to get up and move or shake their legs to alleviate the buzzing, tingling, crawling, and restlessness that occurs. For many years, doctors have thought that restless leg syndrome is exclusively a neurological condition. However, several studies over the last 10 years point to venous disease as highly associated with RLS.

### How Does Vein Disease Cause Restless Leg Syndrome?

Healthy veins have valves that prevent the backward flow of blood down into your legs. Vein disease is caused by faulty vein valves that allow backward leakage of blood. Backward blood flow causes your veins to enlarge, bulge, and twist resulting in leg symptoms including restless legs. You do NOT have to have bulging varicose veins to have significant, life-style limiting symptoms including restless legs. Vein disease may or may not be associated with varicose veins, spider veins, skin changes and venous ulcerations, or restless legs and indiscriminately affects between 30–40 million Americans.

### Symptoms of Venous Insufficiency:

- Restless legs
- Itching
- Heaviness/tiredness
- Aches/pain/tenderness
- Burning
- Cramping
- Night cramping
- Spider veins -- especially below your knees or near your ankles
- · Bulging, varicose veins
- Ankle swelling
- Skin discoloration -- slight or obvious darkening of your skin near your ankles
- Bleeding veins
- Ulceration

Reference: 1. The effect of endovenous laser ablation on restless legs syndrome, C A Hayes 1, J R Kingsley, K R Hamby, J Carlow Affiliations expand PMID: 18467618 DOI: 10.1258/phleb.2007.007051



### How Is Vein Disease Diagnosed as the Cause of Your RLS?

Contact Vein911 Vein Treatment Centers today to schedule an evaluation. A careful history and physician exam are usually all that is necessary to make an accurate diagnosis. A 30-minute ultrasound exam of your legs is also performed which confirms evidence of vein disease. To determine if vein disease is causing your restless legs, a one week compression hose trial is often used to assess improvement of your restless legs symptoms. If high-quality, graduated, medical-grade compression hose provide you relief from your restless legs, it is very likely that medical venous treatment will give you even better relief from restless legs.

### Why Should I Choose Vein911?

Patients travel from around the USA and the world to seek the care of the Vein Care Specialists at Vein911 Vein Treatment Centers. Vein911 is led by Christopher Pittman M.D., FAVLS, FACR, a worldrenowned vein care physician leader, providing the highest standard in diagnosis and treatment of vein disease. Vein911 offices are award-winning for both patient and employee satisfaction.

www.HealthandWellnessFL.com

Dr. Pittman is triple board-certified in Venous & Lymphatic Medicine, Interventional Radiology, and Diagnostic Radiology. While many doctors dabble in vein care, we treat only vein patients all day and every day. We have treated thousands of patients just like you. Vein911 succeeds where others fail.

### How Does Vein11 Treat Vein Disease?

Ultrasound shows leaking vein valves and guides your non-surgical treatment. There is no role for surgery in vein care! Ultrasound-guided, minimally invasive treatments have revolutionized vein care over the last 15 years. Your vein procedure is virtually painless, takes less than an hour, and there is NO recovery time! Vein-related problems resolve after your leaking veins are treated.

The two procedures performed at Vein911 for vein disease include thermal ablation and ultrasoundguided foam sclerotherapy technology which is the future of vein care available today.

Thermal ablation is the elimination of abnormal, straight veins inside the leg using a straight laser fiber or radiofrequency electrode, elegantly closing

### Pasco/North Tampa/New Tampa Edition - November 2020 Health & Wellness

the abnormal vein and improving venous circulation in the leg. Almost every patient who is treated for lifestyle-limiting vein symptoms receives thermal ablation; however, thermal ablation can only eliminate an abnormal straight vein. Virtually every patient needs an additional procedure to properly treat invisible branch veins coming off the treated straight vein. These branch veins, hidden under the skin, ultimately feed into varicose veins hidden under the skin, as well as visible varicose veins that bulge the skin.

### Ultrasound-Guided Foam Sclerotherapy (UGFS) is

performed after thermal ablation at Vein911 and is the future of vein care available today. Very few centers even perform UGFS, and even fewer are experts at UGFS. UGFS can eliminate all abnormal veins and was predicted by experts 15 years to replace all other forms of vein treatment! UGFS uses ultrasound to identify hidden, abnormal veins and a tiny needle is directed into the abnormal veins and special foam is injected instantly destroying the abnormal vein. Foam is absorbed by your blood in a few seconds and nothing is left behind. Your body absorbs the treated vein over several months. No surgical incision is made with UGFS and all abnormal veins can be treated. One in three new Vein911 patients have recurrent vein problems from prior treatment performed at another vein practice. This is because these patients never received UGFS as part of their vein treatment plan, and hidden abnormal veins were left behind. Dr. Pittman is a world renowned UGFS expert and runs the worldwide physician LinkedIn Group called, "Foam Sclerotherapy Experts".

### Choosing the Right Vein Care Specialist is Imperative

Not all vein doctors are equal. Modern vein treatment is not a surgical disease, and seeing a surgeon or "vascular" surgeon is no guarantee you will receive state-of-the-art vein care. What distinguishes Dr. Pittman from other 'vein specialists' is the breadth of experience and skill he has in working with veins. Vein911 customer satisfaction scores far exceed industry averages.

### C. Christopher Pittman, M.D., DABR, FAVLS, FACR



Vein911 has three locations - South Tampa Near St. Joseph's Hospital, Clearwater near Mease Countryside Hospital and Wesley Chapel near Advent Health Wesley Chapel Hospital.





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## Advanced Pain Management for Peripheral Neuropathy: What You Need to Know

BY DR. ROBERT LUPO, D.C.

hronic Pain affects hundreds of millions of Americans. Of those individuals, a staggering 20 million are suffering with peripheral neuropathy. Neuropathy is typically associated with diabetes, as it's common for nerve damage to have occurred in individuals with high glucose storage, but neuropathy can also be attributed to chemotherapy, injuries, autoimmune diseases, compressed spinal vertebrae, alcoholism, cholesterol medication side effects, a build-up of toxins, and vascular disease.

Peripheral neuropathy happens when the small blood vessels, which supply blood and nutrients to the nerves become impaired. When the nerves are no longer fed nutrients, they either die, or their signals to the brain become restricted and ineffective.

## Symptoms of neuropathy most often include the following sensations:

- Tingling
- Numbness
- Burning
- · Sensations of cold/hot
- Stumbling
- Impingements
- Electrical vibrating sensations
- Falling
- Lack of strength
- Decreased range-of-motion
- Muscle cramps
- Joint inflammation

The most common treatment for nerve damage is to mask it with prescription medications, but there is a way to actually "treat" the symptoms and improve the nerve function in the body. Over the past several decades, quantum technologies have been studied and due to the effectiveness of these devices, next generation technology has paved the way for effective peripheral neuropathy treatment.

Dr. Robert Lupo is on the cutting edge of multiple technological advances to offer his patients the most effective, groundbreaking options without surgery or addictive drugs. That is why he chose to work directly with RST Sanexas, due to their incomparable results. Dr. Lupo explains, "This technology is remarkable as it's able to treat peripheral neuropathy on a cellular level to regenerate and repair damaged nerves. No matter if it's caused by diabetes, alcohol abuse, chemotherapy or other common conditions that lead to neuropathic disorders, the Sanexas technology is equally effective at treating the disorder."

### **RST Sanexas: Is NOT a TENS unit device**

For three decades, our ardent, progressive research team members have been developing, refining, clinically testing, test-marketing and authoring scientific papers with its breakthrough electric cell signaling and quantum resonant specific induction (QSRI) technologies.

In 1995, RST-Sanexas medical devices were revamped to use quantum-based communications-level technology with both frequency modulation (FM), as well as the typical amplitude modulated (AM) electronic signals. To this day, amplitude modulation (AM) signals represents 99% of all marketed TENS type devices even though the human body operates exclusively by (FM) frequency modulated energy.

In 1996, after exhaustive clinical application data was received, a new electronic signal generating Patent was issued (UHdfg). The Patent covers this brand new advanced random, yet sequential AM/FM signal generation technique with spread spectrum frequency hopping technology.

RST-Sanexas technology is still fundamentally more advanced than any other electromedical device in use today.

### How Sanexas Technology Relieves Neuropathic Pain

Why does quantum technology hold so much promise for health care? Many cell processes take place at the nanoscale (the world of atoms and subatomic particles). At that scale, matter stops behaving according to the laws of classical physics and starts demonstrating the unique

properties of quantum mechanics. Quantum technology is set to revolutionize the way we think about health care, medical data and even our own biology.



Pain treatment modalities and instruments that operate on quantum theory use resonance to increase energy in and between cells. Molecular resonance is best understood with an analogy in the macroscopic world. When a piano tuner strikes a tuning fork next to the piano, the specific piano string will vibrate when it is correctly tuned to the same frequency. Similarly, cells resonate and transfer energy between molecules very rapidly.

### This procedure is covered by Medicare and most insurance carriers.

### Dr. Lupo's Practice—An Integrated Approach

At Physical Medicine Center, Inc. you can expect a welcoming, friendly environment with a staff that genuinely cares about your progress. Their goal is your improved quality of life—that's why their comprehensive treatment plans are designed to help you reach your goals. If pain is holding you back, call today to learn more about their natural, non-surgical, non-drug options for pain relief.

### Dr. Robert Lupo, D.C.

Dr. Robert Lupo is the clinic director at Physical Medicine Center located in north Tampa near the University of South Florida and New Tampa. Physical Medicine Center is a multidisciplinary medical center that offers Medical Care, Chiropractic Care, and Physical Therapy. Dr. Lupo attended Life University in Marietta Georgia and graduated with a Doctor of Chiropractic degree in 1985. Dr. Lupo has taken postgraduate education in chiropractic orthopedics, neurology, spinal disc injury care, and auto accident and injury care. Physical Medicine Center also offers massage therapy, treatment for dizziness, balance disorders, Spectra cell nutritional blood analysis, bio-identical hormone replacement therapy for men and women and offers the nationally known Medifast weight system.

If you want drug-free alternative options for your health needs, look no further than the Physical Medicine Center in north Tampa. The Physical Medicine Center treats both male and female patients who desire alternative therapies to get to the root cause of their conditions. Call them today at 813-607-5095 to schedule your appointment.



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## **Bladder Health Awareness Month:** Are You Still Trying to Ignore Your Urinary Incontinence? Treatment Options That Work!

By Parveen Vahora, M.D.

f you have urinary incontinence, you are well aware of the dreaded, sneezing, coughing or laughing episodes. Leaking urine is not ideal to say the least, especially when it happens in public. What causes urinary incontinence in the first place? Aging, childbirth, weight gain, abdominal or gynecological surgeries, and menopause can lead to incontinence. Urinary incontinence happens to countless women, but many of them are still very uncomfortable talking about this condition with anyone, even their doctor.

The inopportune leaking is a problem that many women face, and, of course, there are urinary pads or diapers, but those can be bulky and awkward. There are also surgical procedures, pessary devices, and medications, but many women shy away from invasive procedures and drugs.

How to Tighten the Pelvic Floor Kegels exercises are a good place to start and they can be done in the privacy of your own home.

- Empty your bladder
- Sit or lie down
- Tighten your pelvic floor muscles and hold for 5 seconds.
- Relax the muscles for 5 seconds
- Repeat 10 times
- Repeat 3 times a day
- Your Gynecologist can help you better understand the exercises

Some women may not fully benefit from Kegel exercises if not done properly, or if their pelvic floor muscles are already too weakened. In these cases, there are better alternatives. One such alternative procedure is the MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup>.

### Innovative Technology With Multiple Benefits

Many times, women with urinary incontinence will also develop urinary tract infections (UTI) and these can be chronic if unable to empty the bladder completely. Also, vulvovaginal atrophy can lead to more



frequent UTIs. In these cases, MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup> can treat vulvovaginal atrophy and tighten the vaginal walls to help with the pelvic floor strengthening. Therefore, MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup> will help with incontinence issues in most cases.

### MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup> for Vulvovaginal Atrophy

Due to the limited estrogen supply, the walls of the vagina start to thin out, causing dryness, burning, and inflammation. This can make intercourse very painful and can cause urinary disorders and can even interfere with daily activities for many women due to the extreme pain and discomfort that it can cause.

Dr. Vahora offers MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup>, an advanced procedure that revitalizes the vagina and makes it feel like a younger vagina. For Countless women and their partners, it has turned back the clock of time.

MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup> is an advanced laser therapy for the vagina and vulvar. There are no medications, not cutting and no lengthy healing times with this procedure. It's similar to having a basic Pap smear test done. The laser does not hurt or cause any pain. Patients will only feel tiny vibrating sensations from the machine, and the best part is that the entire procedure is accomplished in an outpatient, office setting.

The laser assists with the body's cell renewal and will regenerate the mucous membrane and help with the restoration of collagen and renewing the proper trophic balance to the membrane.

Now it's possible to have relief from vulvovaginal atrophy due to the MonaLisa Touch's<sup>®</sup> ability to gently improve the tissue of the vaginal mucosa. The laser stimulates the production of collagen, improving the functionality of the treated area and restoring the proper trophic balance to the mucous membrane.



Dr. Vahora is an expert on reproductive cancer diagnosis, sexual health and intimacy; please contact her office to schedule a consultation.

FOR APPOINTMENTS CONTACT US: Email info@ParveenVahoraMD.com Office Line: (727) 376-1536

The office of Dr. Parveen Vahora is small, intimate, and welcoming. Women under their care are treated with the utmost respect, which means they offer personalized care: educating on conditions and treatment options as well as preventative measures. Their focus is on sexual health—offering MonaLisa Touch<sup>®</sup> for patients going through menopause as well as post-menopausal women, breast cancer survivors, and those suffering from pain during intercourse or intense dryness. They also offer genetic testing for breast, ovarian, and colon cancer. From birth control to robotic surgery, Dr. Vahora has got you covered.

They follow Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS<sup>•</sup>) protocols, which take a comprehensive look at all areas of the patient's journey through surgery and recovery, creating a well-oordinated, team-oriented approach to surgical care for better outcomes. Weaving this into personalized care plans, Dr. Vahora and her team get patients back to their normal routines faster.

Inspiring Women to Live Their Best Life by Providing Compassionate and Personalized Care.

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# Lung Cancer & COVID-19

According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, with more people dying of lung cancer in a year than from breast, prostate, colorectal and brain cancers combined. It is the second most common cancer in both men and women, ranking just behind prostate and breast cancer, respectively.

### **IMPACT OF COVID-19**

While the COVID-19 pandemic has affected just about every aspect of our lives to some degree, cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment have been highly impacted. Many have chosen to delay cancer screenings and, in some cases, cancer surgeries and treatments because they do not want to risk going to a doctor's office or hospital and being exposed to the virus. It's a concern that is understandable because cancer patients, especially those who are in active treatment, are extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 due to their compromised immune systems.

Lung cancer patients, in particular, tend to be older and have a variety of underlying conditions. They are not necessarily more susceptible to the virus, but if they get it, they are more likely to have more severe complications, according to a recent study conducted at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York and published in June 2020 in the Annals of Oncology\*. The study reported that 62% of the lung cancer patients were hospitalized and 25% died. Severity of the disease was suspected to be linked to how much or how long the patient was smoking or had smoked. Because of this increased risk, lung cancer patients should be extremely vigilant about taking precautions to prevent the disease.

\* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annonc.2020.06.007

### **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 19%, 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 61%. So, your chances of surviving lung cancer are three times greater when it is detected early.



Smoking remains the greatest risk factor for lung cancer with approximately 85% of all cases of lung cancer occurring in people who are smokers or have smoked in the past.

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.

## 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. Sometimes, chemotherapy is also being used in combination with some targeted therapies and has been shown to improve survival rates.

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.

For more information, visit FLCancer.com

### WORLD-CLASS CANCER TREAT-MENT 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 in nearly 100 locations. FCS is on the leading edge of clinical trial research, which provides patients 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.



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## A PATIENT'S EXCRUCIATING BACK AND LEG PAIN...

Dr. Sunil Panchal

## **Relieved in One Day!**

ne year ago, David was lifting a fire pit in his back yard and fell to the ground in infuriating pain. He could not get up as the pain was completely unbearable. EMS transported him to the emergency room, and he was admitted to the hospital. David had a herniated disc and was prescribed pain medications and discharged.

"The pain medications worked for a while, but eventually, the pain returned, and I had excruciating pain in my left leg as well." Said David.

After seeing multiple doctors, including a spine surgeon, and getting CT scans, ultrasounds, and MRIs, no one could figure out why David's pain was so immense, and they also had no idea why his left leg was painful, even more so than his back. Unable to accurately diagnose and treat him, David was left to suffer for another five months.

His Primary care physician finally referred him to a pain specialist that has been helping numerous patients find relief through regenerative and alternative procedures. Dr. Panchal is the founder of the National Institute of Spine and Pain.

David continued, "At the very first visit that I had with Dr. Panchal, he looked over my images and immediately knew the root cause of my pain, and he explained to me in full detail exactly what he needed to do to relieve it."

From the images, Dr. Panchal saw that David had a nerve that was being impinged and compressed by spinal neural foraminal stenosis of L3. Spinal neural foraminal stenosis refers to the narrowing of the foramen, which are small openings between each vertebra in the spine. Nerve roots pass through the foramen, so in David's case, his nerve was severely compressed in the gap and causing him unyielding leg pain along with lower back pain.

Dr. Panchal explained that David needed a procedure to shave the disc down to relieve the pressure on the nerve. The procedure is called endoscopic discectomy and decompression of the nerve root. This procedure is performed while the patient is under light anesthesia, which allows open communication for patients to express pain thresholds with Dr. Panchal. David was not happy about having to have any surgery, even though Dr. Panchal explained that it was minimally invasive. After two months, David decided he needed to do it to relieve his daily pain that was disrupting his life.

David told us that after the surgery, which was this past December, he has no pain! David no longer needs pain medications, and he is back to living the quality of life that he and his family enjoy, pain-free with complete resolution.

Endoscopic discectomy and decompression is an outpatient procedure done under x-ray fluoroscopy to remove herniated disc material through a small, half-inch incision. It's done under light sedation and local anesthetic.

A 3-D video is used to guide guidance, tiny instruments through an endoscopic probe. The procedure takes approximately an hour and causes minimal discomfort, and a small bandage is usually enough for the closure of the tiny incision.

Dr. Sunil Panchal of the National Institute of Spine and Pain has been committed to regenerative medicine and stem cell therapy for several years. Dr. Panchal explains exosome therapy further, "This is an exciting new approach for regenerative medicine. Unlike PRP which has limited growth factors, or bone marrow and fat aspirate, which has an unknown quantity of stem cells, or growth factors from the patient, or the use of fetal cord blood stem cells (which has unknown function after thawing and

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office visit or telehealth visit.

### National Institute of Spine & Pain

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(813) 264-PAIN (7246) www.nationalinstituteofpain.org also the risk of tumor formation from foreign DNA), exosomes are a highly concentrated and reproducible source of growth factors for regenerative techniques.

"The other approaches typically take six months to see any results. With exosomes, I've had some patients begin to notice improvement as early as 2-3 weeks. And since this is an acellular product, there is no risk of tumor development." said, Dr. Panchal.

Dr. Panchal has treated patients with exosome therapy for pain in the cervical and lumbar facet joints, sacroiliac joints, knees, hips, ankles, elbows, shoulders, ligament injuries, and also degenerative discs. These tiny exosome communicators that secrete therapeutic and regenerative effects to the cells and tissues throughout the body are becoming highly-sought-after by many patients that have suffered from pain and chronic disorders. Some of the additional findings within peer-reviewed studies are as follows:

- Self-Renewing Capabilities
- Cellular Differentiating Ability
- Tissue Repair
- Anti-Inflammatory Effect
- Immunosuppression
- Neuroprotection

Although surgery is critical in certain situations, finding alternative methods to treat the underlying condition is always the first step. The National Institute of Pain is a state-of-the-art facility that specializes in the treatment of spine and orthopedic conditions, as well as acute and chronic pain management. They provide the utmost quality of care for patients to address the problem directly, and if needed, provide for their pain management needs.

At National Institute of Spine and Pain, they treat each patient individually, using the latest equipment and various innovative procedures to diagnose pain and determine your care needs. The National Institute of Spine and Pain's President and Founder, Sunil J. Panchal, MD, is a board-certified interventional pain/ minimally invasive spine physician.

At National Institute of Spine and Pain, their goal is to strive to deliver the highest quality of comprehensive care for those who are suffering from spine, joint, and nerve injuries. They have many alternatives to help you with your personalized treatment needs. Please visit their website at www.nationalinstituteofpain.org, or call them at (813) 264-PAIN (7246).

## HELPING VETERANS PAY FOR LONG TERM CARE

### By T. Edmund Spinks, Esq.

here are currently over 25 million veterans alive in the United States. There are over 9 million surviving spouses of veterans currently living in the United States. Many of these veterans and surviving spouses are receiving long term care or will need some type of long term care in the near future, and there are funds available from the Veterans Administration ("VA") to help pay for that care. Unfortunately, many of those who are eligible have no idea that any type of benefits exist for them or that an attorney can help them become eligible.

### **Benefits Available**

There are three types of benefits available that provide a monthly cash payment to veterans who have long term health care needs:

Service Pension. The VA provides a monthly cash payment to wartime veterans who meet active duty and discharge requirements, who are either 65 or older or disabled, and who have limited income and assets. Service pension is also available to a surviving spouse of a wartime veteran.

Pension with Housebound Allowance. A slightly higher monthly payment is available to wartime veterans (who meet the same service requirements as Service Pension) but who are confined to their home for medical reasons

Pension with Aid and Attendance. The highest monthly benefit is available when a wartime veteran or surviving spouse requires the assistance of another person to perform activities of daily living, is blind or nearly so, or is a patient in a nursing home. This benefit, often referred to simply as "Aid and Attendance" is the most widely known and talked-about benefit as it offers the highest possible monthly payment.

### Prerequisites for Benefits

Wartime Service. As noted above, a veteran must first meet certain service and discharge requirements before being considered for any type of pension benefit. A veteran must have served 90 days of active duty with at least one day beginning or ending during a period of war. After September 1, 1980, the active duty requirement increases to 180 days. In addition, the veteran must have been discharged under circumstances other than dishonorable.

### WARTIME PERIODS

### World War I

April 6, 1917 through November 11, 1918, inclusive. If the veteran served with the United States military forces in Russia, the ending date is April 1, 1920. Service after November 11, 1918 and before July 12, 1921 is considered World War I service if the veteran served in the active military, naval, or air service after April 5, 1917 and before November 12, 1918.

### World War II

December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946, inclusive. If the veteran was in service on December 31, 1946, continuous service before July 26, 1947, is considered World War II service.

### **Korean Conflict**

June 27, 1950, through January 31, 1955, inclusive.

### Vietnam Era

The period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, inclusive, in the case of a veteran who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. The period beginning on August 5, 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975, inclusive, in all other cases.

### Persian Gulf War

August 2, 1990, through date to be prescribed by Presidential proclamation or law.

**Disability.** To qualify for any type of pension benefit, a claimant must also be 65 or older or be permanently and totally disabled. A claimant is the individual filing for benefits - either a veteran or surviving spouse.

Permanent and total disability includes a claimant who is: In a nursing home;

- Determined disabled by the Social Security Administration;
- Unemployable and reasonably certain to continue so throughout life; or
- Suffering from a disability that makes it impossible for the average person to stay gainfully employed.

### Asset and Income Requirements

The financial eligibility requirements of any pension benefit address a claimant's net worth and income. Many times the most difficult task in this area is to determine if veterans' assets can meet the applicable level. The assistance of legal counsel is important to ensure the right strategies are used with minimal impact on Medicaid in the future.

### Does the Claimant Require the Aid and Attendance of Another?

If a claimant can show, through medical evidence provided by a primary care physician or facility, that the claimant requires the aid and attendance of another person to perform activities of daily living, that veteran or surviving spouse may qualify for an additional special monthly pension commonly referred to as aid and attendance pension benefits.

The VA defines the need for aid and attendance as:

- Requiring the aid of another person to perform at least two activities of daily living, such as eating, bathing, dressing or undressing;
- · Being blind or nearly blind; or
- · Being a patient in a nursing home.

### The Application Process

While the application process for special monthly pension can be slow - some applications take over a year before the VA makes a decision - the benefit is retroactive to the month after application submission. Having the proper documentation in place at the time of application (for example, discharge papers, medical evidence, proof of medical expenses, death certificate, marriage certificate and a properly completed application) can cut the processing time in half.

### Conclusion

Time is of the essence for veterans or surviving spouses who may be eligible for pension benefits. It is imperative for those who work with veterans or surviving spouses of veterans to be aware of these benefits and to help potential claimants obtain legal help to qualify for pension benefits. If you know of someone who may be eligible, please give us a call.



# Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Increases Stem Cell Mobilization

B efore we are fully formed human beings, in our fetal development stages, stem cells are continuously being produced. Fetal and embryonic stem cells are called, pluripotent. Pluripotent stem cells have the ability to develop and function into other types of stem cells, which helps our bodies grow within the womb.

The benefit of our fetal stem cells lies within the membrane. The membrane produces cells that can regenerate and become any one of many different types of cells. For example, the nervous system, bones, cartilage, skin and essentially every cell in the body can regenerate and renew. The majority of our adult stem cells (somatic) do not have this same ability. Somatic cells generally remain in a dormant state (quiescent) unless they are called into action due to sickness or adverse conditions. However, if there is a chronic underlying disorder, infection and/or illness, these cells typically become depleted with aging, and over time, our bodies have difficulty repairing and regenerating it's cells.

Stem cells are found throughout our entire body. The cells in our vessels, skin, and arteries are known as epithelial stem cells. The cells in our brains are called neural, and in several studies back in the 1990's, these neural stem cells were shown to help the brain's three primary cells regenerate and repair itself. Stomal cells support blood, cartilage, and fat.

The most impressive stem cells that we have are found in our bone marrow. These are called hematopoietic cells. Bone marrow stem cells are able to renew and differentiate themselves into all other types of stem cells. The can be mobilized out of the marrow and into the bloodstream to help the body repair itself wherever it is needed.

Of course, there are options for external embryonic stem cells to be transplanted in vivo, but there is still a lot of controversy and concern with those procedures. The good news is that with Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT), our stem cells have been studied and show extraordinary results of regeneration. This is especially true with bone marrow stem cells.



Nitric oxide in the bone marrow helps these stem cells to proliferate, and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy increases nitric oxide production, and therefore, increases the bone marrow's stem cells mobilization into the bloodstream.

A study done by a group of researchers at SUNY (State University of New York) was incorporated so that they could examine the mobilization of stem cells while a patient is under hyperbaric oxygen therapy. These researchers already knew from their previous work that stem cells have the unique ability to regenerate and renew bone marrow derived-stem cell and progenitor cells by a free radicalized mobilization while under HBOT. However, this study is of particular importance because they looked at how increasing the oxygen pressure ranges, or ATA (atmospheres absolute) could potentially produce even more amounts of stem cells. The results were remarkable.

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At the 10th and 20th HBOT treatment, measurements of blood stem cell counts were done before and after hyperbaric oxygen therapy was given at 2.5 ATA. The conclusion of the study showed a stem cell growth of 2400 times the amount of Pluripotent stem cells. Pluripotent stem cells have the availability to turn into many different stem cells forms and help to regenerate all areas of the body.

This study alone is changing the way medical professionals are looking at HBOT as an alternative therapy and off-label treatment for various diseases and disorders.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is a medical treatment that delivers 100% oxygen to a patient's pulmonary system while they are within a pressurized chamber. This saturation of oxygen allows highlevels of life-sustaining oxygen to be delivered to the tissues and organs. This increase of the partial pressure of oxygen at the cellular level accelerates the healing processes and assists in the recovery from numerous indications.

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida is a premier hyperbaric treatment facility located in the Tampa Bay area. Their state-of-the-art hyperbaric clinic provides therapy to outpatients on a 7-day per week basis, 365 days a year.

## *Currently, There Are 15 FDA Approved HBOT Conditions:*

- Air or Gas Embolism
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
- Compromised Skin Grafts or Flaps
- Crush Injury, Compartment Syndrome
- Decompression Sickness (Bends)
- Diabetic & Other Non-healing Wounds
- Enhancement of Healing in Selected Problem Wounds
- Exceptional Anemia: Resulting of Bleeding
- Gas Gangrene
- Intracranial Abscess
- Osteomyelitis
- Radiation Injury
  - Refractory Osteomyelitis
  - Thermal Burns
- Idiopathic Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss



HBOT is used "off-label" for various disease states and disorders and HBOT may be ordered by a physician for off-label indications. Hyperbaric Centers of Florida makes no claims as to the efficacy for any indications other than the fifteen approved by FDA.

### **Common Off-Label Indications:**

- Autism
- Brain Injury
- Bells Palsy
- Cerebral Palsy
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Infections
- Inflammations
- Lyme Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Nerve Injuries
- Oral Disease
- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Scleroderma
- Shingles
- Severe Migraines
- Sports Injury
- Stroke
- Tendon Injuries
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Venomous snake and spider bites

References: CD34+/CD45-dim stem cell mobilization by hyperbaric oxygen – changes with oxygen dosage S. Thom, Stem Cell Res. Author manuscript, PMC 2015 May 1.

To find out more, or to schedule your appointment today, please call Hyperbaric Centers of Florida at 813-788-3969.



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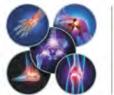
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## ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM PAIN?



The National Institute of Spine and Pain, a medical organization dedicated to the relief of human suffering by providing advanced pain therapies and also contributing to our scientific knowledge through research.

Sunil J. Panchal, M.D.

Whatever the source of your pain, you can benefit from visiting the Pain Management Center (813) 264-PAIN (7246) fax: 813-264-7249 www.nationalinstituteofpain.org email: appt@nationalinstituteofpain.org

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# **Children with Special Needs:** Therapy That can Improve Social, Communication, and Learning Skills Through Positive Reinforcement

pplied behavioral analysis (ABA) therapy can take place in a wide variety of settings, affording the opportunity to work on skillsets where it is most relevant for the learner. From a caregiver's perspective, the choice to receive therapy in home versus in clinic or in any other environment, can be stressful and frustrating. BCOTB (Behavioral Consulting of Tampa Bay) provides intensive early-intervention therapy in the clinical setting because in-clinic ABA therapy has several advantages when done properly, with caregiver involvement, community consultation, and coordination of care.

### Supervision and Oversight

On average, BCOTB exceeds the minimum standards of supervision for Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs). RBTs are mandated to receive supervision for 5% of their hours across at least two supervision sessions each month. This means that an RBT who works 40 hours per week and roughly 160 hours per month receives 8 hours of supervision each month (roughly two hours per week). This guideline represents the minimum standard of acceptable supervision. RBT staff are directly supervised by Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs). In clinic settings, such as at BCOTB, additional supervision is easily achieved because travel time for BCBAs and BCaBAs is greatly lessened and nearly eliminated. The more supervision an RBT team member receives, the more feedback he/she has received on performing best practice and the more likely he/she will be successful with teaching appropriate skills at an appropriate rate. Increased supervision and oversight increases the likelihood that programming is run correctly with a high level of consistency. At BCOTB, BCBAs and BCaBAs are readily available to answer staff questions, check in on sessions, and provide general guidance. This represents a strong advantage to in-clinic therapy.



### **Proper Therapy Procedures**

Therapy provided in a clinical environment is also easily controlled, meaning the room can be arranged to best facilitate learning. While community settings provide rich opportunities to target social skills and more complex verbal skills, a clinic sets the stage for learning preacademic and essential life tasks in a manageable way, with materials arranged for the learner's success.

### **Strong Therapy Teams**

In addition to receiving supervision during session, BCOTB's RBTs also receive supervision during designated "case meetings" with other RBTs and the



BCBA/BCaBA in charge of a client's programming and therapy. Case meetings are essential to ensuring that all staff are running programming and responding to problematic behaviors in a consistent manner. In-clinic therapy affords the opportunities for therapy teams to meet together on a regular basis to strengthen communication and collaboration, which is a hallmark of BCOTB's services.

### Pasco/North Tampa/New Tampa Edition - November 2020 Health & Wollness 2

### **Caregiver Support**

It is often beneficial to have a clear date, time, and setting for caregiver support sessions. Caregiver support sessions are meetings during which the BCBA/BCaBA meets with caregivers and identifies goals and areas for growth in either the management of problem behavior or the acquisition of new skills. The certified staff member explains and models therapy techniques and gives caregivers the opportunity to practice therapy procedures and receive feedback. While caregiver support can certainly be effective in any environment, the consistency of regularly scheduled sessions without other distractors present (e.g., answering the phone, needing to make dinner, answering the door, petting the dog, etc.) is invaluable for clarifying goals and making treatment most consistent.

Ultimately, the choice to receive therapy in a particular setting is a decision that caregivers must make. BCOTB encourages caregivers to ask questions and to choose their child's therapy setting based on his/her unique needs, skillsets, and goals. Children who are older and/or who already have complex verbal skills (e.g., can recall past events, speak in full sentences, answer a variety of "wh" questions, demonstrate some reading comprehension, etc.) and/or social skills may benefit more from receiving therapy in the community setting. BCOTB offers a free consultation for caregivers to discuss possible therapy settings and to tour BCOTB's locations. Contact us today for more information!

\*BCOTB is taking the upmost precautions during the Coronavirus pandemic. Social distancing, when necessary, facemasks, required health screenings, cleaning and sanitizing that meets safety and health requirements, is all part of the BCOTB experience. Our goal is to provide the best pediatric Autism therapy services while keeping our clients, therapy staff, and caregivers safe (and healthy)!\*

Most major insurance covers BCOTB services and programs but, in most cases, a diagnosis is important for reimbursement purposes.

President/Founder Kelley Prince, M.A., BCBA "My career in applied behavior analysis began in 1998 when I began providing behavioral therapy services for a family who had a child with autism. I was immediately intrigued by all of the benefits that such therapy had to offer, and I immediately knew I wanted to learn more about how I could help other children and their families. I studied Applied Behavior Analysis at the University of South Florida, graduating with a master's degree in 2004. In 2003, while in my last year of graduate school, I founded BCOTB. At the time, it was one of the only clinic of its kind in the Tampa Bay area in which Applied Behavior Analysis services were offered.

"Since 2003, BCOTB has grown to four office locations and employs 75+ people in the Tampa Bay Area. Our original location was opened in 2007, which we quickly outgrew. Since that time, the Tampa location has expanded two more times and currently resides off of Hillsborough Avenue right outside of Westchase. Knowing that BCOTB wanted to be able to reach more clients in the autism community, we opened our first satellite location in 2009 in Wesley Chapel. This location also quickly expanded and has recently relocated to a larger facility located outside the Seven Oaks subdivision and services the clients in the New Tampa, New Port Richey and Wesley Chapel area. Our third phase of expansion occurred in 2013 when we opened our Brandon facility. Located at the corner of 301 and Adamo Drive, the Brandon facility services clients from MacDill AFB, Lakeland, Valrico, Brandon and Riverview areas. And, finally, in 2018, BCOTB opened its 4th clinic location on North Dale Mabry Highway in Carrollwood and is now considered our main location.

"I am proud to say that BCOTB has had a successful past and is continuing to grow. The success of our business can be attributed to our management structure, policies and procedures and, most importantly, our therapy team.

"All of BCOTB's therapists receive training which meets the requirements for the Registered Behavior Technician credential provided by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board and successfully complete competency assessments. Staff receives ongoing performance reviews to ensure they are utilizing appropriate teaching and behavior reduction procedures in order to maximize your child's progress."





To find out more, please visit www.bcotb.com or contact one of the BCOTB offices below:

> Brandon 9225 Bay Plaza Blvd., Suite 401 Tampa, FL 33619 (813) 440-4933

Carrollwood 14497 N. Dale Mabry Hwy Suite 115-N Tampa, FL 33618 (813) 814-2000

Westchase/Oldsmar 6951 Pistol Range Road, Suite 101 Tampa, FL 33635 (813) 696-0700

> Wesley Chapel 27604 Cashford Circle Wesley Chapel, FL 33544 (813) 345-8584

## **Independent Living at Aston Gardens:** What a 9-Year Resident Wants You to Know

Have you ever thought about living in a senior community, one where you can enjoy the golden years in a lovely apartment or villa, experience the tranquil scenery and ample amenities, visit with friendly neighbors and relax in comfortable, safe surroundings?

ometimes the tasks of maintaining a home, or the lack of social interaction can be challenging. If you want to live a maintenance-free lifestyle in a resort-like environment that is secure, convenient, and full of social activities all within a nature-rich landscape, long-term resident Mr. Johnson encourages you to check out Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay. Johnson is thrilled that he and his wife made the decision to move to Aston Gardens' Independent Living community 9 years ago, and today says it's the best-kept secret on earth.

### Aston Gardens' Independent Living Features Include:

- I. No maintenance
- 2. No more snow shoveling
- 3. No more yard work
- 4. Fine dining and chef-prepared meals
- 5. Convenience to shopping, the arts, sporting events, restaurants, pharmacies, medical care and much more
- 6. Safety and security of a gated community
- 7. Ongoing activities and events
- 8. Friendly staff and fantastic neighbors
- 9. Fabulous, resort-quality amenities



We recently asked Mr. Johnson to tell us what he loves most about the community, as well as how Aston Gardens and its dedicated team members are keeping residents happy and safe in these unprecedented times.

### Mr. Johnson:

Throughout these unusual times with COVID-19, the staff has been effective at communicating and answering residents' questions and concerns. They've implemented various publications as well, such as weekly newsletters for the residents of our community.

Of course, we're more limited as to what we can do, and at the beginning stages of COVID, they made many provisions to accommodate us. Now that we are in phase 2, we have more flexibility.

For example, I'm involved in a men's roundtable. The meeting was stopped, but recently they made special arrangements for us to meet in a larger room, which allows us more space and social distancing, and we're all encouraged to wear a mask and practice good hygiene. As far as outdoor activities, our grilling area, pool, hot tubs, and outdoor spaces are available and subject to our social distancing protocols. However, we still are able to enjoy time with friends, fellow residents and staff.

Initially, when COVID just started, the security guard at the gate entrance was monitoring and identifying essential workers and vendors. They were taking temperatures and only allowing specific people on the property with great caution and care.

If a resident wanted something like carpeting replaced, that was put on hold. Now we can safely have more things done, but it's all still accomplished under great care and consideration. There is always someone on duty to check the temperatures of residents, staff and vendors before they are allowed access to the grounds.

Our chef, Antoine, is an amazing culinaty expert. We usually have beautiful sit-down meals in the dining room, but even through these strange times, we are still able to enjoy the chef-prepared meals, only in the comfort of our apartments. In saying that, the kitchen staff will make special changes or requests for residents, and everything is maintained at the highest level here.

As a safety precaution, some residents have been quarantined to their apartments or villas during COVID if they traveled, and the staff caters to them by leaving food and supplies at their doorstep and checking in on them for the two weeks that they must stay in their homes. The staff and management are always available, and they go above and beyond what's expected.

Just like around the world, things here have been restrictive, but the staff has done a great job keeping us safe.

### H&W Magazine: What attracted you to Aston Gardens?

### Mr. Johnson:

Nine years ago, we fell in love with the floor plan of the apartment. Ours is three bedrooms, three bathrooms and a garage. We also have a lanai on the back overlooking the preserve and one on the front overlooking the lake.

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The shared facilities like the clubhouse, gazebos, lakefront, etc., make it more like a resort-style campus. The staff, administration and management are wonderful and very service-oriented. They couldn't do a better job of taking care of everything we need. I think most people who decide to live in an independent senior community have better things to do with their time than maintain a house and yard. We now have the freedom to do what we love!

Aston Gardens reinvests in the community with upkeep, remodeling and maintaining various amenities. There is a running joke among residents that when you put a work order in at the clubhouse, many times before you get home, they are already there fixing a light bulb or changing an air filter or whatever you need. They take great pride in accommodating us.

There are not enough superlatives to describe the Director of Resident & Concierge Services, Marion Vasquez, and so many others who are a part of the team. Everyone is willing to roll up their sleeves and do whatever needs to be done.

There is a genuine kindness here at Aston Gardens that goes beyond measure, and that is especially true of Marion

The staff here has a dedication for what they do, and the managers hire high-quality team members—many of whom have been here for years. For example, we've had the same housekeeper for the past nine years—she's like part of our family!

Aston Gardens is a wonderful place to call home, and I believe it is truly the best-kept secret on earth.

### Senior Living Options at Our Tampa Bay Campus

In our beautifully appointed Tampa, Florida retirement community, we offer the following senior living options:

• Independent Living – Stay active through daily events, outings, and recreational opportunities while enjoying the peace of mind of having on-site staff

• SHINE® Memory Care – In our memory care program, residents will receive personalized attention and assistance with everyday living activities as needed

• Senior Assisted Living – Suitable for residents who need a little, extra assistance with daily tasks like medication management, personal grooming and household chores

Independent Living at Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay offers a lifestyle that's as active, healthy and free as you want to be, all without being alone. Choose from one of our Independent Living apartment homes or a luxury, for-sale villa and enjoy the all-inclusive, care-and maintenance-free lifestyle at America's award-winning senior living community, located between Tampa and Clearwater near Florida's beautiful Gulf coast.

Contact Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay at 813-993-1276 to learn more about our exemplary senior living programs. Enjoy Stylish Living at Aston Gardens NOW TOURING Independent Living!



# What's Your Diet?

By Pastor Roger P. Felipe

Spiritual //ellness

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.

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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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