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TIPS TO GET YOU BACK
ON TRACK AND LIVING
YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE

See Page 20

**FINALLY, THERE'S
REAL RELIEF FOR
LOWER BACK PAIN**

See Page 15

**VALENTINE'S DAY
GOT YOU FEELING
A LITTLE ANXIOUS?**

See Page 14

**GET THE MOST
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See Page 12





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Contents

FEBRUARY 2021

6 Lumbar Spine Pain: Symptoms, Causes & Treatments

8 BayCare Immediate Care Services

9 Skilled Home Health or General Home Assistance: What's the Difference?

10 GAINESWave Has Helped Numerous Men, Just Like You

12 Get The Most From Your Beauty Treatment Protocols and Regimens

13 RevitalIV is Now Open!

14 Valentine's Day Got You Feeling a Little Anxious?

15 Finally, There's Real Relief for Lower Back Pain

16 Why Many Prefer Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy For Autism Spectrum Disorder

17 Step Into The New Year With a Healthier, Straighter Smile

18 Isolation Is Killing Us. Literally. Connection is the Cure.

20 LOVE Your Health: Tips to Get You Back on Track and Living Your Healthiest Life

22 Spiritual Wellness: Whole Hearted

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Lumbar Spine Pain: Symptoms, Causes & Treatments

By: Regenexx Tampa Bay, Regenerative Medicine

The 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.

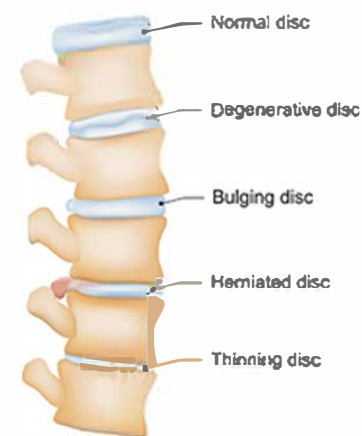
A surgical option is a lumbar fusion to bolt two or more vertebrae of the spine together to eliminate movement and therefore, pain. The nature of this surgery can also damage the muscles that stabilize the area. This is an irreversible procedure that can cause adjacent segment disease in the vertebrae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



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.



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SKILLED HOME HEALTH OR GENERAL HOME ASSISTANCE: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

When it comes to choosing the right kind of care for yourself or a loved one at home, it's important to know what options are available, and which option provides the kind of care you need. While some care benefits and services are similar and can sometimes overlap, there are still important differences to understand.

In short, skilled home health is nursing and rehab services designed for the recovery process and ordered by a physician, while general home assistance, or private duty care, provides help with everyday activities, like cooking, cleaning, and companionship.

QUALIFYING FOR CARE

To qualify for skilled home health care, a patient would have a limited ability to leave their home, and be in need for skilled nursing services, rehabilitation, or therapy. Skilled home health care is designed for anyone recovering from a serious injury, surgery or illness, such as a stroke or hip replacement surgery. The patient's primary care physician can recommend or prescribe home health services as an alternative to going into a rehab facility or outpatient clinic for care.

Families may choose to hire a private duty company if they feel their loved one needs help with daily activities, especially if the person lives alone or if the primary caregiver needs to leave frequently to run errands or work. The levels can vary based on the individual's needs and budget. The service is usually elected by the family or could be recommended by their doctor, rather than being prescribed like a type of treatment.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Skilled home health provides services aimed at getting the patient up and moving again, helping them regain independence and find solutions to fit your lifestyle. These services can include:

- Physical, occupational or speech therapy
- rehabilitation services
- balance training to prevent falls
- wound care
- medication management
- injections
- and other skilled nursing services.



General home assistance, or private duty care, provides help with everyday activities and is focused on making sure the person is safe at home. These services can include:

- meal preparation and cooking
- housekeeping and basic cleaning
- personal care, like bathing and grooming,
- companionship
- transportation to appointments
- and other services as needed.

THE CARE TEAM

One of the major benefits of receiving skilled home health care is the team providing the care. The need for nursing care requires those providing it to have proper training, certifications and degrees, depending on the services being provided. When licensed medical professionals are the ones providing the care, families and caregivers can feel more confident that their loved one is getting the quality care they need to get them healthy and safe at home.

The team members making visits can depend on the types of services being provided, but generally, they are licensed medical professionals. At Gulfside, the home health care team includes:

- Licensed therapists to provide the needed therapy treatments, including physical therapists, speech therapists and occupational therapists

- Registered nurses to provide medication management, skilled nursing care, wound care, injections and more
- Home health aides to assist with personal care as needed
- Social workers to assist with finding community resources and assistance for the family and caregivers

GETTING STARTED: GULFSIDE HOME HEALTH IS HERE TO HELP

If you believe that medical, skilled home health care might be appropriate for you or your loved one, the team at Gulfside is available to answer your questions and start the enrollment process. Even if you're not sure, our team is happy to meet with you for a services evaluation to determine how Gulfside can best serve you.



To get started, call us anytime at **800-817-9941** or visit our website to complete the online referral form at **www.GulfsideHomeHealth.org**.



GAINESWave Has Helped Numerous Men, Just Like You

Physical Medicine Center is Offering a GAINESWave Valentine's Day Special

BY DR. ROBERT LUPO, D.C.

For a limited time, the Physical Medicine Center is offering a FREE GAINESWave trial treatment for those that medically qualify. This treatment provides remarkable results without drugs or surgery.

Sexual disorders affect their partner's psychological wellbeing, just as much as it does with the one with the disorder. Issues with sexual dysfunction can begin in the early 30s, but typically affects men in their 40s, 50s, and 60s. Although it's a common condition, it can be a crushing disorder that wreaks havoc on a man's psyche, which in turn, can cause severe anxiety and further intensify erectile dysfunction and low libido.

Most standard medical practitioners will start a man on the "little blue pill," but this only masks the symptoms of ED and it definitely doesn't treat the cause. There is a common misconception that ED is just another sign of aging, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Any man that is showing signs of erectile dysfunction should seek alternative and thorough medical evaluation and treatment from a physician that not only understands the disorder but one that also offers the most advanced treatment to address your overall health.

Dr. Lupo, Founder of the Physical Medicine Center focuses on his patients cholesterol, blood pressure, total vascular health, blood sugar, and hormone levels to treat your root cause of ED. These disorders almost always run parallel to ED. In addition to these conditions, Dr. Lupo provides the most advanced groundbreaking technology and procedures for his patients and when it comes to ED, GAINESWave is supreme. It utilizes high-frequency shockwaves to break up the plaque in the penis, regenerates tissue and improves circulation, and numerous studies indicate significant results that are long term.

Treat ED's Cause with GAINESWave

The standard treatments for erectile dysfunction are prescription medications or injections that cause an erection for a limited amount of time, but GAINESWave actually treats erectile dysfunction at its core. The GAINESWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINESWave uses scientifically proven technology through sound waves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. Traditional treatments for ED, such as pills or injections, lose effectiveness over time and have to be used every time a man wants to engage in sexual activity.



GAINESWave helps men to feel like themselves again and to enjoy their lives.

GAINESWave utilizes high frequency, low-intensity soundwaves to improve blood flow to the penis, remove micro-plaque, and stimulates the growth of new blood vessels. GAINESWave uses a specific protocol designed to optimize efficacy, safety, and results. Over 80% of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) issues are caused by reduced blood flow. GAINESWave has developed a protocol to treat ED and Peyronie's disease (scar tissue) as well as enhance sexual performance.

It's Never too Late

Men who are just beginning to see ED warning indicators should seek the earliest treatment possible. The reason is that it has been well documented that if early diagnosis and treatment are started when a man is younger (the 30s, 40s, 50s) there is an increased chance that the ED will very likely no longer need medical treatment and their arteriosclerosis can dissipate. There have been multiple peer-reviewed studies that indicate that GAINESWave treatment can potentially cure ED in some patients. The sooner you intervene with treatment, the better your outcome will be, but it's not too late. GAINESWave has helped many patients with advanced ED conditions.

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

Don't Miss Out on This Limited Time Offer:

**Happy Valentine's Day
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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.

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Physical Medicine Center has many Google Reviews, you can find those at [Google.com/Reviews/PhysicalMedicineCenterTampa](https://www.google.com/Reviews/PhysicalMedicineCenterTampa).

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 post-graduate 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.

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A man and a woman are walking barefoot on a sandy beach, holding hands and looking at each other. The man is wearing a blue shirt and jeans, and the woman is wearing a striped shirt and light-colored pants. The ocean waves are visible in the background.

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Get The Most From Your Beauty Treatment Protocols and Regimens

A common question people ask is what I should do between visits to my esthetician or dermatologist that are the most complimentary to achieving my beauty and skincare objectives. Some protocols used to restore and beautify the skin do so by inducing cellular trauma to stimulate the skin cells healing process increasing the production of collagen for restructuring and restoration of the skin's suppleness and elasticity reducing aging wrinkles while restoring its' radiance. Examples of these protocols are many - to include chemical peel, light/laser, or physical (i.e. needling) stimulation. This article will shed some light on how topicals containing higher concentrations of pure CBD (500mg/oz) are complimentary, can play a role in substantially improving and maintaining your results.

Our body has an internal mechanism for maintaining homeostasis (balance) called the Endo-Cannabinoid System (ECS). One of the purposes of this system is to recognize when something is out of balance and signal the body for healing and restoration. This system manages inflammation for the deployment of white blood cells and collagen restructuring for healing. A CBD topical regimen is complimentary to treatments such as those described above as the ECS system responds to the treatment protocol induced trauma and/or cellular stimulation.

Additionally, CBD receptors can be found in the skin that when CBD is applied topically many benefits. Some of these include a more powerful antioxidant response than vitamin E and C for repairing damaged skin (see <https://www.projectcbd.org/medicine/cbd-preventative-medicine>). Further, clinical evidence indicates that CBD controls oil production in the sebaceous glands, can promote faster healing of damaged skin, and maintains the skin's balance when exposed to emotional, environmental, or hormone induced stress. Proven to reduce acne and other common skin irritations. This when combined with "killer ingredients" such as retinol, Hyaluronic Acid, Coenzyme Q10 and others and our high concentration of 99.9% pure CBD in an all-natural botanical cream for deep penetration provide for amazing results.

The CBD Healthcare Company is one of a few offering a complete facial beauty and skin care product line (figure 1). From our Anti-Aging serum to our imported French Clay Mask everything you need for a daily regimen. Our team has been servicing high end resorts, cruise ships, massage, spa, and therapeutic professionals for over 30 years. Our formulator has worked with the most prestigious brands having post-doctoral degrees in the fields of pharmaceutical and cosmeceutical formulations from Université Louis-Pasteur with more than 20 years researching and developing leading skincare and facial formulations:



Facial Beautification Bundle

CBD Healthcare Company
The source you can trust

Focused on Topicals

for Facial Protocols and Therapeutic Treatments

- Protocol-Based CBD Treatments
- High CBD Concentration
- To enhance the results of your facial and beauty treatments

CBDHealthcareCompany.com

Brought to you by a management team with 30 years of experience in the spa and wellness industries, we believe in offering you potent levels of CBD at a value that allows you to treat patients economically. We are proud to offer you a complete product line that utilizes the purest CBD extraction methods combined with herbal formulations that ensure effective skin penetration.

25% OFF YOUR PURCHASE
USE CODE: HEALTH for online purchases



CBD Anti-Aging Cream (<https://cbdhealthcarecompany.com/product/cbd-anti-aging-concentrate-serum/>) contains Coenzyme Q10 aids in collagen production and slows down the damage caused by photo-aging. High-purity extract from the Swiss alpine flower, Edelweiss, fortifies skin's protective barrier, enhancing its resistance to external stress factors.

CBD Hydra Renewal Night Cream (<https://cbdhealthcarecompany.com/product/cbd-hydra-renewal-night-cream/>) contains retinol, a vitamin A derivative that stimulates skin cell turnover and also helps eradicate imperfections and diminish the appearance of fine lines.

CBD Moisture Recovery Cream (<https://cbdhealthcarecompany.com/product/cbd-moisture-recovery-cream/>) with a key ingredient of hyaluronic acid which has anti-inflammatory properties, hydrates the skin, especially the upper layer of the epidermis providing a natural barrier to protect the skin from the environment.

CBD Instant Purifying Mask (<https://cbdhealthcarecompany.com/product/cbd-instant-purifying-mask/>) with imported French Clay gently cleansing and brightening skin, also calms it using one of the product's key ingredients—rosehip seed oil—which contains high amounts of antioxidants and unsaturated fatty acids.

Go to our website at **CBDHealthcareCompany.com** and get an additional **25% off** our bundle website pricing for complete facial beautification protocol consisting of starting your day with the anti-aging serum followed by CBD Moisture Recovery Cream – to hydrate and protect your skin through the day. Returning home, apply the anti-aging serum followed by our CDB Night Hydra Renewal Cream. Using the CBD Instant Purifying Mask one to two times per week.

Statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. CBD Healthcare Company products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

RevitalIV is NOW OPEN!

RevitalIV Tampa is now open as the premier luxury health center in the Tampa Bay area, bringing health and wellness reimagined to the community.

RevitalIV Tampa offers state-of-the-art IV Therapy, Fitness and Recovery services. Their Recovery services are centered around personalized Massage Therapy to help the body recover in the most beneficial way. Their Licensed Massage Therapists combine active and passive techniques to maximize results in a minimal amount of time.

The signature Swedish Massage is a great introduction for newcomers into Massage Therapy. This massage technique involves long, fluid strokes of the muscles and tissues that vary from light, to medium, to firm. As one of the most relaxing styles of massage, it allows the therapist to adjust the pressure according to your sensitivity and preference.

For those looking for a more intense form of relief, the Deep Tissue Massage capitalizes on slow, deep guided strokes that reach below the superficial muscles to relieve severe tension. The focus on these deep layers of tissue and fascia is to improve circulation, range of motion and to ease inflammation.

Any knots or problem areas on the body can be addressed with Trigger Point technique, which allows the concentration of pressure on sensitive areas to prevent future cycles of pain and spasms in certain areas. This type of therapy can improve posture, improve flexibility and ease muscular tension.



If you are unsure about committing to a 60 minute session, RevitalIV Tampa offers 30 minute sessions to see if Massage Therapy is the best option for you, and for the therapist to learn more about your areas of concern and targeted recovery. All massage appointments allow for a personalized music choice for the best relaxation, natural and preservative free lotions, and aromatherapy for an all-encompassing experience.

RevitalIV Tampa is now open as Tampa's boutique wellness center. Their outlook on health approaches wellness from the inside out with IV Therapy, Fitness and Recovery. Their Massage Therapy memberships include a 60 minute massage monthly, along with 10% off all other products and services in store.

For more information and to book an appointment, contact (813) 397-1547 or info@revitalivtampa.com.



REVITALIV

813-397-1547
www.revitalivtampa.com
 19040 Bruce B Downs Blvd.
 Tampa, FL 33647



Valentine's Day Got You Feeling a Little Anxious?

Learn How An In-Office Procedure Can Restore Your Intimacy and Turn Back the Clock

By Parveen Vahora, M.D.

February is a time when many people celebrate love. We see Valentine's marketing campaigns everywhere, from the grocery and drug store to the direct to consumer ads on television, but what if you aren't feeling so connected with your partner? Do you think flowers, candlelight, and wishful thinking will get you where you need to be? Probably not, but medical advances can help you and your partner feel better about your relationship and experience what you once had in the past.

Many women experience a shift in their bodies after childbirth, reproductive disorders, surgery, and aging. Have you ever felt that intercourse just wasn't pleasurable any longer? Maybe you are one of the millions of women that experience vulvovaginal atrophy (VVA).

What is VVA?

When the regularity of a woman's menstrual cycle ceases, the estrogen receptors decrease along with estradiol in the uterine lining, disrupting the thickness and lubrication of the tissues. Why is this significant? Estrogen increases gland secretion and blood flow to the urogenital tissues, so when our estrogen is limited or obsolete, it leads to vaginal dryness, pain, PH imbalance, and urinary changes such as overactive bladder and incontinence.

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, interfere with daily activities, and completely disrupt your life due to the extreme pain and discomfort that it can cause.

Dr. Parveen Vahora explained, "There are many options for women, like creams, medications, and surgery, but they all pale in comparison to an innovative procedure that is not hormonal, has no side effects, and only takes a few minutes to perform right in the convenience of my office. This advanced technology is called the MonaLisa Touch®, and it's helped countless women treat their vulvovaginal atrophy and associated symptoms and pain. Women get their confidence and sexual health back to how it was when they were younger."



MonaLisa Touch®

No medications, no cutting, no lengthy healing times: This innovative laser therapy is for VVA. It's quick, efficient, and can be safely performed in the comfort and privacy of Dr. Vahora's office. The laser does not hurt or cause any pain. You will only feel slight vibrating sensations from the machine, and the best part is that the entire procedure is accomplished in an outpatient office setting.

The laser helps with the body's cell renewal and regenerates the mucous membrane, helps with the restoration of collagen and renews the proper trophic balance to the membrane. MonaLisa Touch® is a functional vaginal rejuvenation treatment based on a unique fractional CO2 laser. This device was created specifically for the vaginal mucosa and is presently the most effective procedure for preventing and treating vaginal atrophy and its painful conditions.

Now it's possible to have relief from vulvovaginal atrophy due to the MonaLisa Touch's® ability to gently improve the tissue of the vulvar and vaginal mucosa. With this treatment, women no longer have symptoms of dryness, pain, itching, or irritation. Women are able to enjoy intimacy once again. The MonaLisa Touch treatment also helps urinary symptoms such as incontinence and urgency.

Give yourself and your partner the Gift of MonaLisa Touch®

Rejuvenate Your Sex Life

You and your partner will both benefit from this procedure, as intercourse will be pain-free and pleasurable once again. Mona Lisa Touch allows restoration, healing, and a renewed enjoyment of each other. You'll be amazed at how effective this procedure gets you back to where you once were in your relationship.

Don't just live with your sexual discomfort, get the relief and new beginning that you are worthy of. Call today to schedule an appointment and/or your Mona Lisa Touch consultation at Info@ParveenVahoraMD.com or call (727) 376-1536 or during office hours, text to (813) 548 4412.

New patients are welcome! Schedule your consult today.

To find out more, please visit ParveenVahoraMD.com or email info@ParveenVahoraMD.com.

Parveen Vahora, M.D.

Dr. Parveen Vahora's office offers advanced and individualized care. The office is small, intimate, and welcoming. Women under her care are treated with the utmost respect, and by providing personalized care, educating patients on conditions and treatment options, and preventative measures, Dr. Vahora's patients affirm her expertise.

Dr. Vahora specializes in sexual health and is proud to offer the MonaLisa Touch® for patients going through menopause and post-menopausal women, breast cancer survivors, and those suffering from pain during intercourse or intense dryness. She specializes in providing minimally invasive surgery options and offers genetic testing for breast, ovarian, and colon cancer. From birth control to robotic surgery, they've got you covered.



Finally, There's Real Relief for Lower Back Pain

Dr. Sunil Panchal

When you're dealing with chronic low back pain, it's difficult to focus on anything other than your discomfort. The agonizing and sometimes debilitating pain can cause us to lose out on the important things, like spending time with our families, being productive at work, and even the simplest daily activities can require monumental strength to muster through them.

The statistics are overwhelming. Millions of individuals that suffer from low back pain and are not getting the relief that they could simply because their condition is often misdiagnosed. One of the most widespread causes of low back pain known as sacroiliac joint instability demands a specially trained health care provider to diagnose and treat the condition.

Sacroiliac (SI) joint instability, also known as SI dysfunction, is very often undiagnosed because most physicians are not trained in this ligament sprain or joint malalignment disorder. The sacrum is the bottom portion of the spine, and its L-shaped vertebrae are fused together. The ilium are the two large bones on each side of the sacrum that form the pelvic region. Very often, this area is misaligned, and the joints are under extreme tension and/or are offset.

The Symptoms of SI Joint Instability:

- Pain with sitting, standing, lying down or walking
- Numbness or tingling
- Pain that permeates down the legs
- Sciatic pain
- Groin and hip pain
- Pain just under the tailbone
- Gait issues
- Constant pain

Sacroiliac Joint Instability Causes

The most common cause of SI dysfunction is injury or trauma. If you've been in an auto accident or fallen on your hip or buttocks, you may have sprained or misaligned your SI joint. Transition syndrome also causes SI issues.

Other causes of Sacroiliac joint instability are, no precise cause at all. Some individuals are uncertain of how they may have injured themselves or why they have SI joint pain, and it takes an expert to diagnose and treat their condition properly. For women, being pregnant can cause some issues with joint pain due to the hormonal release that causes the pelvic region to relax and stretch as it prepares to make room within the birth canal. Other issues that cause SI dysfunction are spine misalignment, stenosis, and leg length discrepancies to name a few.

Instead of masking the pain with addictive medications or undergoing risky, unnecessary surgery, Dr. Panchal, with the **National Institute of Spine and Pain** has been offering patient's real relief and a restorative effect for their SI dysfunction. His technique, methods, and experience are the answer that many individuals have been waiting for to alleviate their back pain.

For SI Joint Instability, Dr. Panchal performs the following techniques: radiofrequency denervation, regenerative treatments (as non-surgical options), and minimally invasive SI joint fusion.

The National Institute of Spine and Pain utilizes the most advanced, innovative methods from radiofrequency to spinal stimulation to treat pain from surgical complications as well as the following:

- Back and neck pain, including herniated discs, spinal stenosis, tumors and fibrositis.
- Cancer Pain.
- Neuropathic Pain.
- Complex regional pain syndrome (also known as reflex sympathetic dystrophy or RSD).
- Muscle and joint pain.
- Disorders of the nervous system, including shingles and trigeminal neuralgia (facial pain).
- Chronic abdominal pain and pelvic pain.
- Pain from traumatic injuries including auto accidents
- Pain associated with osteoporosis and vertebral compression fractures.
- Sports related injuries.

Although surgery is critical in certain situations, finding alternative methods to treat the underlying condition is always the first step. **National Institute of Spine and 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 the National Institute of 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. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Biology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, and earned his medical degree from Albany Medical College of Union University in Albany, NY. In addition, Dr. Panchal completed

The Business of Medicine Graduate Program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. Dr. Panchal completed an internship in general surgery at the University of South Florida in Tampa, a residency in anesthesiology at Northwestern University in Chicago, IL and a fellowship in interventional pain medicine at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He previously served as co-director of the chronic pain service and director of the multidisciplinary pain fellowship training program at Johns Hopkins University and subsequently as director of the division of pain medicine at Cornell University in New York. He is a member of the North American Spine Society, the North American Neuromodulation Society, the International Neuromodulation Society, and the American Academy of Pain Medicine. Dr. Panchal has authored numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and has served as a reviewer and editor for several journals. He is the co-editor and co-author of the textbook *Comprehensive Treatment of Chronic Pain by Medical, Interventional, and Integrative Approaches* (2013). Dr. Panchal is a principal investigator in numerous clinical trials, including a current study evaluating sacroiliac joint fusion. Dr. Panchal also served as the Chair of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network Cancer Pain Panel and has lectured widely at the national and international level. He is actively involved in the development of novel analgesics and neurostimulation devices, and in clinical research protocol design.

At the **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).



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Why Many Prefer Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy For Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism is a spectrum disorder that is quickly increasing in rates across the world. Here in the United States, it is one of the fastest-growing developmental disabilities affecting up to 1.5 million. Commonly, social interaction and communication dysfunction are prevalent. While there are degrees of the spectrum disorder and impacts, the most common is Pervasive Developmental Disorders/PDDO.

Early Intervention

Currently, there is no cure for Autism. However, according to the CDC, There are many types of treatments available. These include applied behavior analysis, social skills training, occupational therapy, physical therapy, sensory integration therapy, and the use of assistive technology.¹

The types of treatments generally can be broken down into the following categories:¹

- Behavior and Communication Approaches
- Dietary Approaches
- Medication
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Alternative Treatment

The causes of Autism are still unknown, but many medical professionals and researchers feel that hypoxia (lack of oxygen to the brain) is a key element. Some also feel that infections, toxins, inflammation, and deficiencies also contribute to the disorder.

Hyperbaric Therapy for Autism – Worldwide, medical researchers are discovering promising results with the effects of hyperbaric therapy on persons with Autism. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy increases oxygen levels, reduces inflammation, helps the body remove toxins and regenerate tissues.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) 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 high-levels 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 oxygen therapy is an FDA approved and lifesaving remedy for multiple conditions such as carbon monoxide poisoning and decompression sickness (the bends), and it has many off-label uses such as autism spectrum disorder.

HBOT Autism

Over the past decade, HBOT therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorder has been utilized as a way to establish positive effects via anti-inflammatory responses, improved cognition function, behavioral and language abilities, and to reduce apprehension.

It's always important to speak to your specialist, talk to other parents that have tried HBOT, and also to research any alternative options on your own. If you decide to try HBOT for your child with Autism Spectrum Disorder, finding a reputable, experienced, trustworthy clinic is critical.

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, closing only on major holidays.

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.

*DISCLAIMER This information is for informational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of a physician. Anyone who wishes to embark on any medical program intended to prevent or treat a specific disease or condition should first consult with a qualified physician!

REFERENCE:

1. CDC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Treatment and Intervention Services for Autism Spectrum Disorder
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/treatment.html>



Common Off-Label Indications:

- Autism
- Brain Injury
- Bell's 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

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida is a premier Hyperbaric Treatment Facility. We serve all of North America as well as Caribbean, Latin & Central American Markets. The Hyperbaric Clinic is equipped with Real 3ATA Monoplace and Multiplace Hyperbaric Chamber Systems that are ASME, PVHO, National Board, NFPA, and FDA 510(K) cleared and compliant systems. We are treating all approved indications and selected off-label indications, as directed by a licensed physician with written orders.

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida provides a clean, professional and caring environment for all of our patients. The founders of our new center have over 40 years of cumulative experience in Hyperbaric Medicine and providing Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for a broad spectrum of indications.

With Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy It is always more important to find a safe clinic with a fully trained knowledgeable staff rather than a close clinic. This is one reason people from all over the world travel to Hyperbaric Centers of Florida. We use Real ASME PVHO Chambers capable of 3 Atmospheres Absolute of pressure (29.4psi), Medical Grade oil-less / oil-free breathing air compressors, 100% Medical Grade Oxygen, Sea-Long Hoods, and 100% Cotton Scrubs. Hyperbaric Centers of Florida has a reputation of providing the safest and most comfortable treatments available.



www.hyperbariccentersofflorida.com

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



Step Into The New Year With a Healthier, Straighter Smile

Dr. Clay McEntire

Getting orthodontic treatment has numerous benefits; some of these include fewer incidences of head, neck and jaw pain, better digestion, increased periodontal health, clearer speech, and a beautiful smile, which boosts confidence. Straightening your teeth can have a positive psychological effect on a person's self-esteem. Straighter teeth can improve your wellbeing, both physically and emotionally.

As mentioned, beyond providing a great smile, orthodontics also corrects "malocclusions" or bad bites. A malocclusion (the term for crooked, crowded, or protruding teeth) occurs when the teeth are not lined up correctly. Malocclusions can affect the way a person chews, talks, or smiles, and in some cases, can affect the jaws causing pain and discomfort. Straightening teeth can have a huge effect on one's overall health and wellness.

Orthodontic Treatment

Orthodontic treatment can come in many shapes and sizes, and it's never too late to consider a consultation with an orthodontist to learn if and how you may be able to benefit. Form and function of the smile and bite will be the ultimate goals of an orthodontist, and they're always going to be seeking optimal form/ function with a result that also provides the best esthetic outcome. We LOVE what we do! We get to work with some of the best families in the Tampa Bay Community!

A typical consultation would include pictures, an x-ray or two, and an evaluation with Dr. McEntire and a treatment coordinator. If treatment is recommended, there is usually need for some form or braces or appliances. Dr. Mc also likes to work with clear aligners (typically Invisalign) when possible.

Traditional Orthodontics

We work mostly with a self-ligating bracket system that does not require that color ties are needed, BUT of course colors can be added for fun! Each tooth gets a bracket bonded to an ideal position and light-force, flexible wires are used to align the teeth. Often times, rubber bands are used to help the upper teeth meet appropriately with the lower teeth. With the elastics, compliance is very important, and treatment time can be reduced when elastics are worn appropriately.



Clear Aligners

Clear Aligners are removable and CLEAR! They look like most retainers but are designed via computer planning to implement various force levels to the teeth in pre-planned intervals that allows the patient to do some of the "tightening" at home. Patients still come visit the office every couple of months, but they are able to remove the trays as needed for a big presentation, or date-night-meal, or what have you. Not everyone is a great candidate for clear aligner therapy, but an orthodontist is a great person to work through where short-comings may fall. You can then work through pros and cons of the various options available.

No More Messy Impressions

A digital scanner is used to take a 3d picture of the teeth. This scan can be used to plan cases for the Invisalign system and can also be used by the lab to make appliances that may be needed for younger, growing patients. The system is typically more accurate and much quicker to work with, and of course it's more comfortable for patients than the more traditional "goopy" material historically used for creation of plaster models.



Signs indicating it is time for an orthodontic exam:

- Early or late loss of baby teeth
- Breathing abnormalities
- Prolonged habits like thumb-sucking

For children or adults

- Crowding
- TMJ abnormalities
- Protruding teeth or general bite concerns

****The good news is we have GREAT dental professionals in the Tampa Bay community, so you could always ask your dentist if you think you'd benefit coming in for consult. AND when in doubt, just give us a call!**

Amley McEntire Orthodontics—Spanning generations with smiles for a lifetime

At Amley McEntire Orthodontics, we offer a unique orthodontic experience designed to produce dynamic, life changing smiles. We believe state-of-the-art treatment procedures must involve a personal touch from our doctors and our orthodontic team.

Warm, inviting, caring, homelike—these are a few of the ways patients describe our practice. We work hard to create an atmosphere that is comfortable, and that makes patients feel relaxed, welcomed, and treated like family. Our testimonials speak to this experience.

Contact Amley McEntire Orthodontics Today.



Amley McEntire
ORTHODONTICS

Main Office

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Saint Petersburg, FL 33710
Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
727-381-1062

Shiny Happy Smiles Office

11201 Corporate Circle N, Suite 160A
Saint Petersburg, FL 33716
Wednesdays & Thursdays: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
727-577-4911

Tampa Office

110. S Mac Dill Ave. Suite #201
Tampa, FL 33609
Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
813-497-7441

Isolation Is Killing Us. Literally.

Connection is the Cure.

Long before COVID-19 we faced a health crisis. Few people talked about it, but it was right here – the loneliness epidemic. Now, the growing number of lonely, isolated seniors has become a crisis that we cannot ignore. Loneliness has physical consequences that can be devastating, especially for seniors. It eclipses obesity and even smoking for premature decline and even death. Mandatory social distancing means that so many more are feeling isolated, lonely, and scared.



While loneliness jeopardizes physical and mental health, connection is the cure. Research shows that friendships drastically reduce the mortality risks associated with isolation and loneliness. Reaching out might be difficult these days, but Seniors in Service can help with TelePals! TelePals offer regularly scheduled friendly calls that help reduce isolation so seniors can remain living independently, with dignity. TelePals get background checks and expert training. Participants are carefully matched based on interests, culture and skills, building enduring relationships that help them both. The heartwarming stories tell it best.

Angelina is 83-years-old and lives alone, with no support from family or friends. Her fixed income does not allow her access to technology, internet or even cable TV. For months now, the fear of COVID-19 has made her feel imprisoned in her own home. Imagine being elderly, alone and scared - cut off from the world during these unprecedented times. There's nobody to check up on her to make

sure she's eating. There's nobody to share her memories with. There's nobody to tell her there's someone who cares. The pastor at her church hears about TelePals and encourages his parishioners to enroll. Most are too proud to admit that they're struggling. But Angelina and Christine, who is also a senior, both volunteer to help. Soon they are chatting by phone regularly. Although they've never met, they discover they have a lot in common. It turns out that they both are retired teachers and both love reading the exact same books. When Christine learns about Angelina's diabetes, she starts asking about her diet and how often she's getting up to walk around her house. Angelina says having a new friend has changed her life. "She really cares...You got a treasure with her and now she is mine."

For Jim, TelePals offers a lifeline. As a veteran, he's conditioned to never ask for help. Doctor visits are one place he finds connection. In the waiting room, he sees a flyer stating: "You've Got a Friend!" An invitation to call Seniors in Service. Inexplicably, he makes the call: "I am 70 and I have nobody." TelePals offers socialization and wellness-checks through telephone reassurance. For some, it's the only conversation they have all day. Enrollment is easy by phone or www.TelePal-Now.org. Kevin, a retired businessman, enrolls to volunteer. As a veteran, he shares a special bond with others who've served our country. Kevin shares, "We share experiences from our past and daily lives...We get serious but also laugh a lot...It's the highlight of my day."

Intergenerational TelePals Chelsea and Rebecca initially wondered what they would talk about. A USF psychology student, Chelsea learned how isolation affects mental health. Now, with COVID-19, she's lonely herself. Discovering TelePals on USF's website, she volunteers. She's nervous at first but hearing about Rebecca's adventures when she was young is fun! Chelsea ensures Rebecca is social distancing and has everything she needs. She's poised to alert TelePals staff of any concerns. Their chats help them both, navigating this new reality, together.



The loneliness epidemic is killing our seniors. You have the power to make it better. Reach out and connect! Got an hour? Give an hour! Seniors in Service offers opportunities for TelePals to participate safely and remotely. Know someone who could benefit? Learn more by visiting www.seniorsinservice.org. Or follow us on www.facebook.com/seniorsinservice.

About Seniors in Service of Tampa Bay:

Seniors in Service provides solutions to community challenges by engaging volunteers aged 55+. Founded in 1984 as a non-profit 501(c)3, we help at-risk seniors, children, veterans and food-insecure individuals. Our volunteers also benefit from staying active and purposeful. We serve 5000+ individuals annually in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco, engaging 500+ volunteers in collaboration with 150+ community partners. Independent audits show over 93% of each dollar goes to program services. For us, it's not just a tagline. We are **GEARED UP TO SERVE!**



SENIORS in SERVICE

GEARED UP TO SERVE

For more information,
visit www.seniorsinservice.org



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LOVE Your Health:

Tips to Get You Back on Track and Living Your Healthiest Life

We hear so much about love this time of year, but how in tune are you with the importance of loving yourself enough to live your healthiest life? Many people struggle with this philosophy and don't feel like they have the time, willpower, or fortitude to embark on or follow through with health and fitness. We have a few tips to get you motivated and, on your way,—it's never too late!

Tips For Meeting Your Health Goals

Speaking to your health care provider is critical before starting any new exercise or making dietary changes.

#1 Exercise

Exercise is an integral part of daily life because it keeps our blood circulating, improves muscular definition, and prevents muscle atrophy. Exercise is good for our hearts, cardiovascular systems, and our brains.

Studies have shown that regular exercise prevents or reduces the severity of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, obesity, depression and osteoporosis, and premature death.¹

Many studies are purporting the benefits of exercise to alleviate the onset or slow the progression of cognitive decline. Many researchers agree that just 30 minutes of aerobic exercise 4 to 5 times per week is known to improve cognition and can even reduce atrophy in the brain.

#2 Diet

While both are critical for overall health, what we eat is equally or, in some cases, more important than exercise. Studies have indicated that those who eat lean proteins, vegetables, fruit, legumes, nuts, and seeds have healthier lives throughout the aging process. If individuals are eating healthy foods, avoiding processed meats and packaged foods, limiting sugars and unnecessary convenient foods, they are much healthier than their peers in most cases.

It only makes sense that what we put into our bodies helps it to function efficiently or hinders its cellular processing and renewal. Hippocrates was correct when he said, "Let food be thy medicine and let medicine be thy food."

Those who consume the majority of their meals by eating whole, nutritious plants and lean proteins (animal or plant-based), they are, for the most part eliminating inflammation and reducing sugar spikes and therefore warding off chronic disease.



Are we saying you can never have a piece of cake or a slice of pizza? No. However, most experts agree that it's best to limit junk food or processed foods to a minimum or enjoy them on special occasions. Once people start eating healthy, their taste and cravings usually change, and they begin to love whole, nutritious foods.

#3 Eliminating Stress

Easier said than done sometimes, limiting stress and anxiety is essential for your overall health. Untreated stress can lead to numerous chronic health conditions. It might be difficult, but carving out time to relax, take a bath, take a walk or simply shut yourself in a separate room for 10 minutes to do deep breathing exercises can reduce anxiety significantly, and over time, you will most likely notice that these personal care methods will help you to become calmer throughout the day.

To overcome stress, we need a well-rounded treatment protocol that incorporates medication (if necessary), stress management, nutrition, high-quality sleep, exercise, meditation, hormone balancing, and other therapies to help stabilize our body and brain.

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References:

1. D. Warburton, *Health benefits of physical activity: the evidence*, CMAJ. 2006 Mar 14; 174(6): 801-809. doi: 10.1503/cmaj.051351. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1402378/>

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WHOLEHEARTED

By Jodi Thomas

I love Valentine's Day. Not just the flowers and the chocolate and all that good stuff, but I have always loved the idea of celebrating *love* . . . and on a trivial note, seeing all the pink and red hearts just makes me happy for some reason.

Lately I've been thinking a lot about my own heart. When reflecting on 2021 and what I hope for this year, I really desire to live *wholeheartedly*. And the first step in doing this is learning to pay attention to my heart. I'm reading a great book right now called *Soulful Simplicity* by Courtney Carver. I highly recommend it. In the book, she discusses living wholeheartedly and that we have to learn to *listen* to our hearts. She has an exercise where in a quiet moment, you place both hands on your heart, one hand on top of the other, and just sit in the quiet for a moment or two, and ask yourself, "What is my heart saying? What is my heart feeling?"

Yet, most of us are terrified to do this. Why? Because, without a doubt, most of us are never taught to listen to our hearts. We are taught to "suck it up," to keep pushing forward, to fulfill our myriad responsibilities, regardless what our hearts might be saying, or trying to say. And there are many times where we have to do just that—it's part of being an adult. But there's an equal, if not more, need for us to listen to those precious hearts of ours, that have often long been covered up by obligation, fear of what other people think, busy-ness, and self-medication with our vices of choice.

The primary reason we need to learn to listen to our hearts are that our hearts are very **important** to God. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Think about what that says and the implication of it. Both good and bad flow from our heart, based upon the state of our heart. Ignore your heart for too long, and this is disastrous for living the kind of life that you once imagined for yourself.



In fact, our hearts are so valuable to God that they are the very place that Christ has decided to take up residence. Ephesians 3:17 says, "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ *may dwell in your hearts through faith*." Additionally, Romans 5:5 says that God pours out His love into our hearts. Now, I spend a lot of time nurturing my relationship with God. But to be completely honestly, many times I don't feel God's presence or love. These are things that I have to take *by faith*. But even this comes from the heart, for Romans 10:10 says "For it is *with your heart that you believe* and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."

When I truly believe these truths, which comes from my very heart, that Christ actually lives in my heart and God's love is poured into my heart, I am empowered to live in God's love and to express that love to others in my day to day life. And folks, there is just nothing in life more important than that.

Not only does God reside in our heart, he desires to protect it. Philippians 4:7 says "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, *will guard your hearts* and your minds in Christ Jesus." How does the peace of God guard our heart? It guards it against worry, against anxiety, against unforgiveness. . . all of the things that wreck havoc on our hearts and create stress in our lives.

Our hearts are so valuable to God, that He desires *all* of our hearts. In Luke 10:27, Jesus said the greatest commandment was to "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart* and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind."

When you see those pretty pink and red hearts this Valentine's Day, I hope you are reminded that your heart is a unique treasure to God. There is no other heart like yours. It is so valuable to Him that Jesus died on the cross so that He could live there and God's love be poured out into your heart. Because your heart is of the utmost value to God, you need to value it, too. Learn to listen to it. Learn to respect it. Don't ignore it. I hope you will join me in the quest of living *wholeheartedly* in 2021.

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