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THE FIRST STEP TOWARD ARTHRITIS RELIEF IS AN ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS

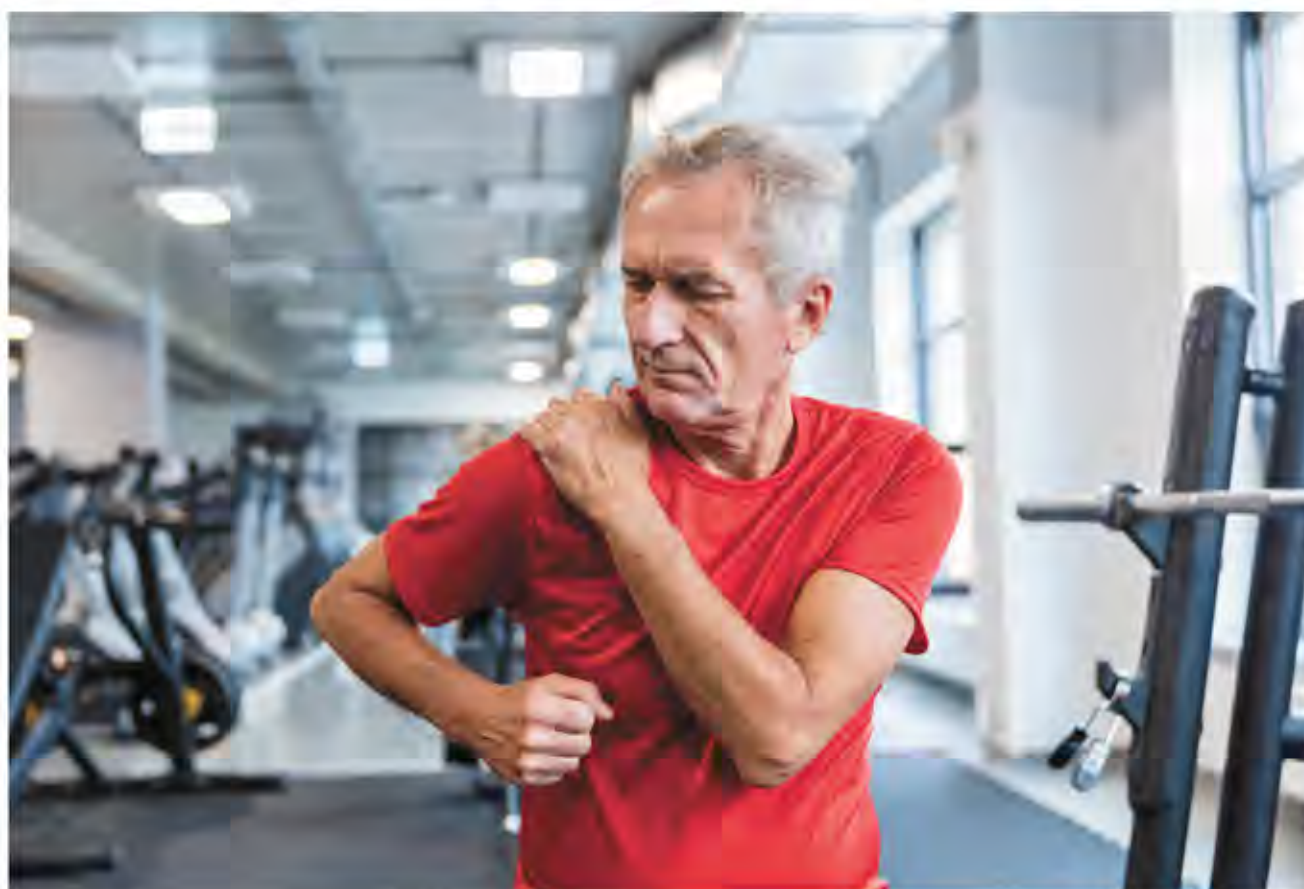
When joint pain, stiffness and inflammation affect your everyday life, you want to find fast, accurate answers so appropriate treatment can begin. Your primary care physician will likely perform a physical exam and order blood tests to look for signs of rheumatoid arthritis, gout, infection and other possible problems.

Blood tests can reveal a lot, but they're not always 100% accurate. A blood test alone can't always confirm or rule out rheumatoid arthritis, and it can't be used to accurately diagnose the most common form of arthritis, osteoarthritis, which is caused by a wearing away of the cartilage between the bones of the joints. Common as people get older, osteoarthritis can produce any or all of the following symptoms: joint pain, swelling, stiffness, tenderness, diminished flexibility, grinding, catching, bone spurs and redness. Other diseases can also cause many of these symptoms, so a correct diagnosis is crucial to getting optimal relief, as treatment plans vary by cause. Imaging modalities can help isolate not only the type of arthritis you have, but also the source of pain, which may be in a different spot from the place(s) where soreness is felt, called referred pain.

RAO offers a range of state-of-the-art imaging services to help pinpoint the type and origin of an arthritic condition. Our imaging tests include:

Fluoroscopy (x-ray) – The most widely used imaging test, fluoroscopy is quick, painless and often provides answers in just minutes.

MRI – Magnetic resonance imaging uses a powerful magnet and radio waves to provide highly detailed images of joints and surrounding tissues without exposure to ionizing radiation. RAO's advanced high-field MRI is one of the most powerful in the region, for exceptional detail.




DEXA – DEXA bone density testing is a quick, simple, pain-free test that measures bone mineral density, revealing bone status and risk of fracture. It provides valuable information about bone health, including arthritis related to osteoporosis, with an extremely low level of radiation.

Getting an accurate diagnosis of what type of arthritis you have and the origin of pain and stiffness is an important step toward the right treatment and subsequent relief. If you have joint pain that is interrupting your quality of life, talk to your clinician about arthritis testing at RAO.



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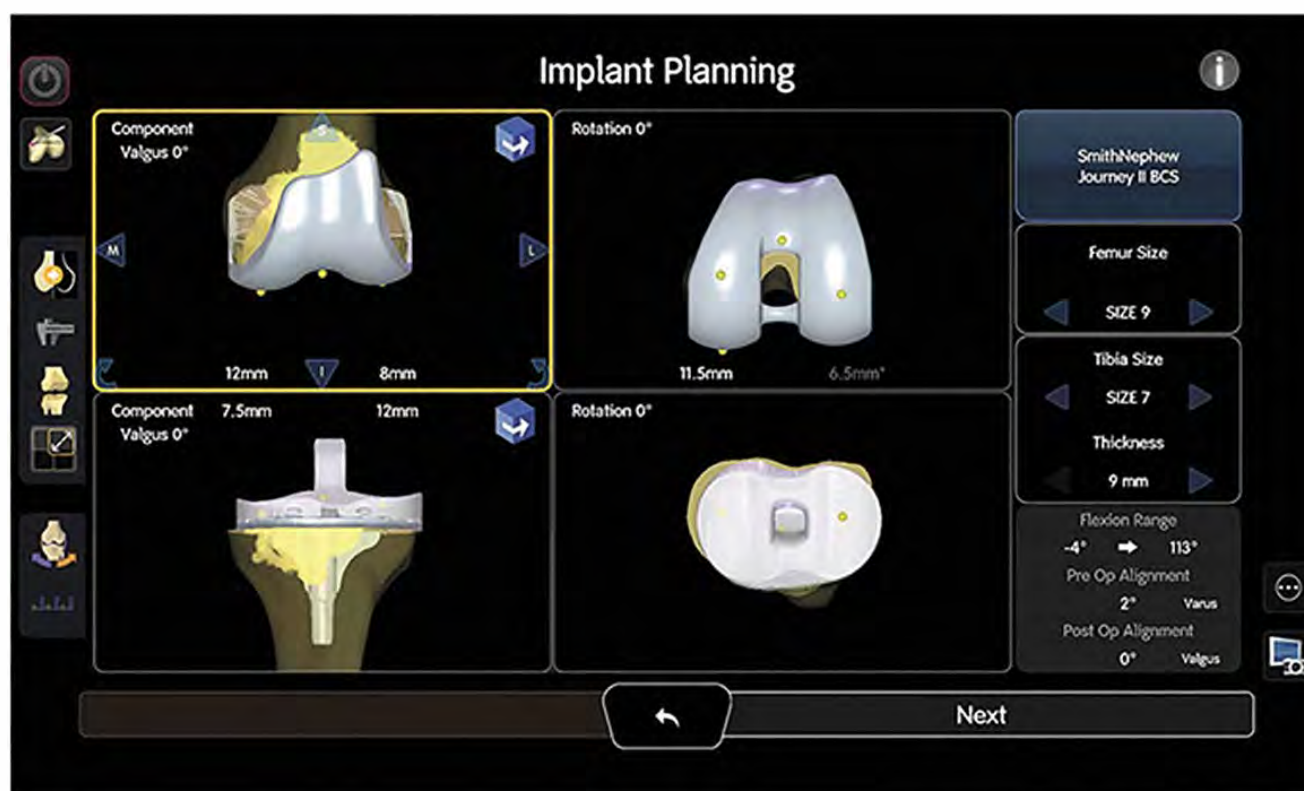
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The Next Generation of Knee Surgery Has Arrived

Submitted By Reconstructive Orthopaedics of Central Florida

The team at ROC prides itself on our ability to offer the most advanced techniques in joint replacement technologies to our Ocala and Central Florida Community. The next generation of Knee Surgery has arrived at Reconstructive Orthopaedics of Central Florida and Dr. Karl Siebuhr is now performing knee replacements using the CORI Surgical System. In fact, we are the first practice to bring the CORI Robotic Knee Replacement technology to Central Florida. This technology is truly a gamechanger in the field of joint replacement surgery! The CORI system is far superior to the robotic knee replacements currently being offered, which are based on technology that is at least a decade old. With the aid of three-dimensional tracking arrays placed around your knee joint, the ligament and soft tissue tension can be precisely measured along with the exact size and fit of the implant. A precise implant position and correct size can be determined based on a patient's individual anatomy and disease stage. This can be done without the aid of preoperative MRIs (which many patients cannot do because of pre-existing implants, pacemakers, pain pumps, or claustrophobia) and CT scans, which expose patients to unnecessary radiation. Instead, the knee is mapped intra-operatively with special sensors which render a precise intra-operative and three-dimensional topographic map of your knee. With the use of artificial intelligence and robotic assistance, combined with Dr. Siebuhr's surgical technique, the knee is actually placed and trialed in virtual space before any bone resections are ever made! Once Dr. Siebuhr is satisfied with the fit of the knee, alignment, and soft tissue balance, a precision cutting mill is used to remove the exact amount of bone required, no more and no less than what is absolutely necessary.

Additionally, while the traditional knee replacements utilize old fashioned bone saws, which may cause thermal necrosis (high heat generation which can kill bone cells), and damage to surrounding soft tissues, this technology utilizes a continuously irrigated precision mill to remove the precise amount of bone (the same type of technology utilized to machine precision aircraft parts). This results in far less tissue damage and thermal necrosis to the patient. The process results in precise bone cuts, as well as a more comfortable recovery and less invasive surgery. This leads to a quicker return to function, reduced



pain medicine requirements, and much more reproducible and superior results for patients. The most exciting thing about this technology is seeing how pleased our patients are with their return to function, and ultimately to the activities that they love!

Additionally, the technology utilizes Oxinium (a special type of ceramic) on a highly crosslinked polyethylene joint interface. This has the wear surface properties of a ceramic surface and demonstrated an 81% reduction in wear when compared to conventional materials used in most knee replacement implants. This also reduces concern for metal sensitivity issues, which many patients are concerned about. It's worth to note that laboratory wear performance has been tested out to 30 years (based on average number of steps a person takes per year).



Traditional knee surgery has relied on the skill and experience of the surgeon and is a very successful surgery that Dr. Siebuhr has delivered to Ocala residents for years. The CORI Surgical System is a powerful tool that lets Dr. Siebuhr target specific areas of your knee anatomy and deliver a custom fit using real time computer imaging. The CORI System is a robotics-assisted tool and serves as an extension of Dr. Siebuhr.

Unlike other robotic systems, there is no fixed arm or hands-off procedures; your surgery remains in the skilled hands and judgement of Dr. Siebuhr.

We believe that you deserve the best in knee replacement surgery. The combination of the most advanced robotics available, superior wear characteristics, and reduced risk of metal sensitivity issues is absolutely the best option for patients requiring knee replacement surgery to treat their degenerative knee condition. We invite you to visit our website reconorthofl.com for information on our practice as well as the CORI Knee Replacement option.

Contact Reconstructive Orthopaedics of Central Florida
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STOP OVERLOOKING SIGNS OF INCONTINENCE

Urinary Incontinence is a common medical condition that affects over 40 million Americans, yet it often goes untreated or unrecognized. The reason for this trend is multifactorial, spanning from embarrassment to speak about this topic to dealing with more acute or morbid conditions that require focused attention.

Nevertheless, it is a treatable condition that frequently affects the quality of life for patients. Incontinence is classified as stress, urge, mixed and overflow.

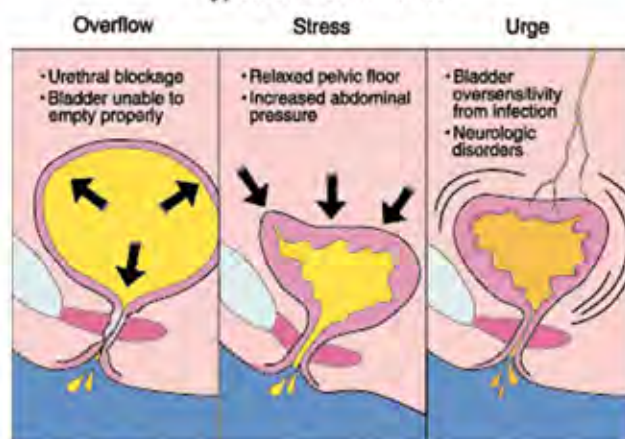
In this article we will address some particular issues about urge incontinence. Urinary urge incontinence (UII) is defined as a sudden uncontrollable urge to urinate with or without frequent urination and associated leakage of urine. With urge incontinence, the bladder contracts and squeezes out urine involuntarily.

Accidental urination can be triggered by:

- sudden change in position or activity
- hearing or touching running water
- drinking a small amount of liquid

Patients with overactive bladder symptoms, such as urinary urgency, frequency and nocturia, may have associated incontinence over 60% of the time. Though more common in women than men overall, after the age of 70 the prevalence in both sexes is about equal.

Types of Incontinence



There are two bladder abnormalities that are associated with UII: neurogenic overactivity and detrusor overactivity (DO).

Neurogenic bladder occurs when there is interruption in the normal nerve conduction from the brain or spinal cord above the sacrum to the bladder, and results in loss of bladder sensation and motor control. Conditions associated with neurogenic bladder include the following:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- Parkinson's disease
- Intervertebral disk disease
- Cerebrovascular events
- Diabetes
- Traumatic brain or upper spinal cord injury
- Brain or spinal cord tumors

DO can occur due to multiple conditions, and many times as a sequel of others; frequently, it may be idiopathic. Dysfunctions of the detrusor muscle or nerve pathways are the culprits for the bladder overactivity. Conditions that can lead to DO include:

- Bladder polyps and tumors
- Urinary tract infections
- Bladder calculi
- Bladder outlet obstruction from BPH or stricture disease



Medications, such as diuretics, increase the urgency and frequency of urination in some people, especially the elderly and bedridden. Dosage modification may ameliorate the bothersome symptoms. Dietary habits may lead to significant voiding symptoms. Caffeine (e.g., in coffee, tea, chocolate), carbonated beverages, spicy foods and tomato-based foods can irritate the bladder and cause detrusor instability, resulting in urge incontinence.

The treatment and management of urge incontinence includes nonsurgical and surgical modalities. An important factor, however, is identifying the potentially morbid or life-threatening conditions that may lead to incontinence, such as bladder cancer, recurrent UTI or neurogenic disorders.



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Clinical Trials and Research are Critical for Oncology Care

A Local Oncology Group Paves The Way for Numerous New Therapies

When it comes to patient care, new drugs, new testing mechanisms, and targeted therapies for cancer patients, Ocala Oncology is leading the way in clinical trials.

Clinical research and trials are critical for implementing new oncology therapies, and for those patients that want to participate, Ocala Oncology makes their wish to join a study a reality with multiple ongoing trials within their three convenient locations. Bringing these trials here locally is critical for cancer patients seeking excellent, advanced care, and being innovative allows Ocala Oncology to be one of the top enrolling clinical trial sites for several trials in the United States and globally.

We caught up with Sanjit Nirmalanandhan, Ph.D., Research Lead at Ocala Oncology to find out more about the importance of these trials and how it benefits patients individually and as a whole across the country.

Dr. Nirmalanandhan explained, “We have a long history of running clinical trials. We have been the first to administer and study many drugs that are now widely used throughout the world for cancer treatment. Our studies include all phases of clinical trials I, II, III, and IV. We enrolled the first patients (globally) on a clinical trial for a new drug to treat ITP (Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura) and clinical trial for a melanoma vaccine.

Innovative Trials in the Comfort of Ocala Oncology's Office Locations

“When many people think about clinical trials, they envision massive research centers that are far away from where they receive treatment. Cancer patients are often very ill or may feel lethargic and find it challenging or impossible to travel to research sites frequently. At our local facilities, we have 10 providers including board certified MDs in Hematology and Oncology that actively participate in these trials and follow their patients, report on progress, and are deeply involved in the research and outcomes of the treatment provided. We also have five nurse practitioners, dedicated Research Department and staff that are also thoroughly involved in the trials. These studies help to improve the science needed and address new testing methods or new drugs.

Local Care with National Support

“We are also partnered with several large organizations that allow us to bring their targeted therapies directly to our patients. We have access to over 30



trials through *Tempus*’ and *Caris PharmaTech*’s *Just-in-Time* activation program. When patients have genetic mutations, next-generation sequencing allows our team to identify the mutations and provide these essential and targeted treatment options, which can be activated in our research site within less than two weeks. For difficult tumors and genetic mutations, these studies are incredibly important.

“We have three locations. Our main practice and research are in the Ocala office, and we also have locations in Timber Ridge and The Villages that allow patients the comfort of seeing physicians and participating in research locally.

“Currently, we have over 50 studies; however, this number is rapidly increasing as we constantly open more studies at our site when a patient is identified. These studies range from lung, breast, gastric solid tumors, unresectable or metastatic melanoma, prostate and targeted therapies to name a few.

Patients Will Always Receive Their Standard of Care First

“The most important thing for patients to understand is that clinical trials are not always a last case scenario attempt at treatment. Several clinical trials attempting to improve the current treatments by adding new drugs and therapeutics to the standard of care are also available to our patients. These trials allow new therapies to reach our patients more quickly while getting their current standard of care treatments.”

Ocala Oncology

Over the past 40 years, Florida Cancer Affiliates – Ocala Oncology has provided patients access to cutting-edge and innovative clinical trials in a comfortable and convenient setting. One of the largest and most reputable community-based research networks in the world, US Oncology Research has contributed to over 70 FDA-approved cancer therapies and approximately one-third of all FDA-approved oncology therapies. It also specializes in Phase I–IV oncology clinical trials and has participated in over 1,600 investigator-initiated and sponsor-initiated trials since its inception. The program brings innovative therapies and clinical trials to practices and patients in communities across the nation to help advance the science of cancer care while offering the best possible treatments and improved patient outcomes.

Ocala Oncology is proud of their participating role in the research and development of vital new cancer therapies through independent studies. This will allow a broader range of opportunities to offer their patients. Ocala oncology is dedicated to advancing cancer care by leading and participating in clinical trials that test the safety and efficiency of new or modified treatments.

And they are deeply committed to bringing clinical trials to their community, offering patients an opportunity to help shape the future of cancer treatment, while benefitting from the very latest in clinical trials. Florida Cancer Affiliates- Ocala Oncology is constantly offering eligible patients opportunities to join new trials.

At Florida Cancer Affiliates – Ocala Oncology, research is an integral part of their comprehensive efforts to provide cancer patients in the local community with access to the latest and most advanced therapies and treatment options.

To find out more, please visit floridacancer.com or call (352) 547-1954.



PROMISING NEW TREATMENTS BRING HOPE TO CANCER PATIENTS

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, clinical research has continued to bring promising new treatments to cancer patients. Twenty-one new cancer drugs received approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2020 and some of these therapies were for difficult-to-treat cancers, such as triple-negative breast cancer.*

No other field of medicine is changing as rapidly as oncology. Over the past decade, literally hundreds of new medicines and new approaches for treating cancer have been developed and this has resulted in many more people surviving cancer than ever before. According to the National Cancer Institute, there are over 15 million cancer survivors in the United States, and approximately two million of them have survived for 20 years or longer. Some of the reasons cancer survival rates have dramatically increased can be linked directly to improvements in early detection methods, more advanced therapies, and genetic research and clinical trials, which are responsible for developing more effective drugs.

The future cures for various types of cancer will all come from clinical research, yet not many adult cancer patients participate in clinical trials. Why? In some instances, it is because clinical trials are misunderstood, and patients may fear being "a guinea pig." In clinical trials for a life-threatening disease like cancer, no one who participates is ever treated like a guinea pig. In fact, such great precautions are taken on behalf of patients who participate in clinical trials that, many times, their cancer treatment goes beyond standard care protocols.

**Source: American Association for Cancer Research*

Debunking the Myths

Patients who are considering participating in a clinical trial for cancer are often concerned that they might be given a placebo or a drug that will prove to be ineffective. The truth is that in some types of clinical trials (specifically those that are investigating something simple such as a new cold medication) some participants are given only a placebo. However, in clinical trials for cancer, a participant is never given anything less than the current standard of care.



All participants in oncologic clinical trials will be given the best standard treatment available for their particular type of cancer... then, in addition to that standard treatment, they may be given the new drug that is being tested or a placebo. No participant is ever given a placebo alone.

Increased Participation in Clinical Trials Means Faster Approval for New Treatments

According to the American Cancer Society, hundreds of promising new cancer drugs and therapies are currently undergoing research. The average time for a new drug to be approved is seven years, and many times clinical trials cannot be conducted because of a lack of patient participation. If more cancer patients participated in clinical trials, there would be more new drugs available sooner in the future. Don't miss the opportunity to be a part of finding the cures for cancer.

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) offers access to more national clinical trials than any other community oncology practice in Florida. If you qualify to participate in a clinical trial, you can do so from the comfort and convenience of your local FCS cancer center.

WORLD-CLASS CANCER TREATMENT CLOSE TO HOME

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS) has a state-wide network of expert, board-certified physicians who bring world-class cancer treatments to local communities, large and small, in locations throughout Florida. FCS is also a strategic partner with Sarah Cannon, one of the leading research and clinical trial organizations in the world. This alliance provides FCS patients access to the newest, most innovative and most promising new treatments.

FCS treats patients with all types of cancer and offers a number of services, including an in-house specialty pharmacy, an in-house pathology lab and financial counselors at every location.

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New Treatments For Knee Arthritis Now Available

By: Regenexx Tampa Bay, Non-Surgical Orthopedic Specialists

Knee arthritis affects more Americans than any other joint disorder in the United States. By age 60, an estimated 10 percent of men and 13 percent of women have knee arthritis. Knee arthritis and chronic knee pain often mean that you have to avoid the activities you love (from hiking to dancing to chasing the grandchildren), relying on over-the-counter pain medications, toxic steroid injections, dangerous narcotics, knee arthroscopy (which increases the likelihood of a knee replacement down the line), and knee replacement surgery. But new advancements in precise image-guide injections using bone marrow concentrate containing your own stem cells offer hope, healing, and pain relief for arthritis of the knee.

Symptoms and Treatments: How is Knee Arthritis Identified and Cured?

Arthritis of the knee, as with arthritis anywhere else in your body, is the result of chronic inflammation in your joints resulting in deterioration and degeneration of the structures in the knee. Common symptoms for knee arthritis include:

- Swelling and tenderness in your knee especially after activity.
- Unstable knee. Over time, ligaments can weaken and result in instability in your knee. This can cause a buckling sensation when you put weight on it.
- Poor, limited range of motion in your knee when doing everyday activities, such as sitting, standing, and walking.

If your doctor diagnoses you with knee arthritis, he or she may recommend a combination of medical interventions and lifestyle modifications. These may include:

- Low-impact exercise/Physical Therapy
- Losing weight if you're overweight
- Other treatments such as: Acupuncture, natural topical creams, and ice packs

Common medical interventions often start with taking over-the-counter pain medications like aspirin, ibuprofen, and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). NSAIDs can temporarily help pain associated with arthritis but can lead to damage in the heart, kidneys, and GI tract over the long term (and sometimes even in the short-term) and do not improve long-term pain. More serious medical approaches often graduate to:



- Prescription pain drugs
- Injections, such as corticosteroid injections to temporarily reduce pain
- Surgery

Are Corticosteroid injections Helpful For Knee Arthritis?

Your doctor may recommend corticosteroid injections for knee arthritis. Corticosteroids are powerful anti-inflammatory agents that temporarily reduce inflammation in an arthritic joint. Unfortunately, corticosteroids are also toxic to cartilage and increase the rate of arthritic progression. In a recent 2020 study from The Bone and Joint Journal, patients with knee arthritis who underwent corticosteroid injections were compared to patients with similar levels of knee arthritis who did not have any steroid injections. The patients who were given steroid injections were more than 6 times as likely to undergo a knee replacement.

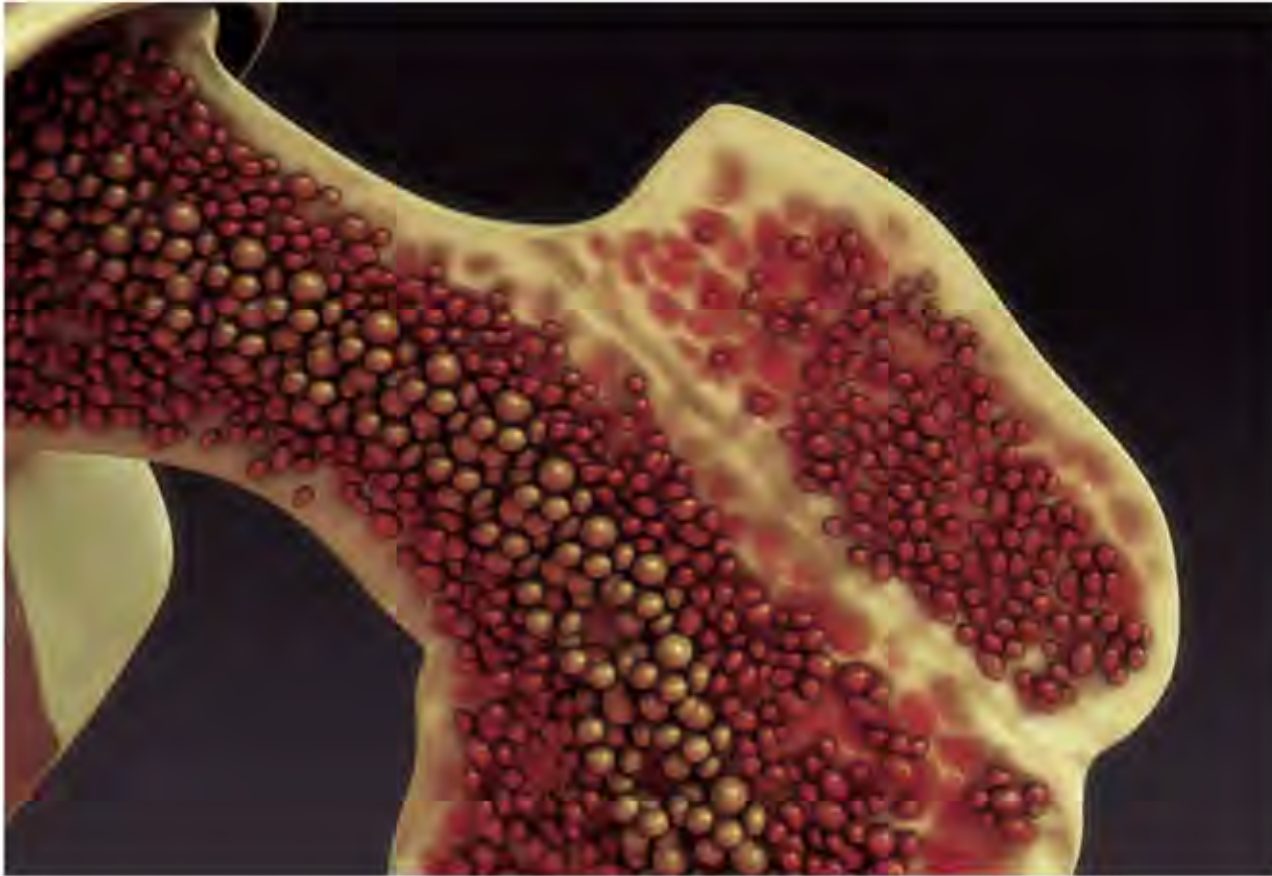
While helpful for knee pain in the short term, corticosteroid injections can actually worsen knee arthritis and pain over the long term.

Is Surgery the Right Answer For Knee Pain and Knee Arthritis?

Your doctor may recommend a knee replacement, which involves removing the damaged knee joint entirely and installing an artificial knee.

In fact, arthritis is the #1 reason for people to get knee replacement surgery or hip replacement surgery. However, most surgeons recommend joint replacement surgery be the last resort because:

- Knee replacements can wear out and may need to be replaced, which is an even bigger operation than the first
- There have been many "mechanical problems" and manufacturer recalls related to artificial joints
- May entail a long recovery process
- An artificial joint that becomes infected is a very serious complication that can lead to another joint replacement and long term IV antibiotics in the best case or can lead to leg amputation or death in more serious cases.
- More than one-third of patients who have a knee replacement still have some knee pain.
- Range of motion in the knee after the surgery is often reduced.
- Thankfully, a growing body of research is revealing new, cutting-edge approaches to knee arthritis, with many men and women finding the relief they need through various skilled orthobiologic procedures utilizing the person's own bone marrow concentrate, platelet rich plasma, and/or microfragmented adipose/fat tissue.



Bone Marrow Concentrate (BMAC) and Knee Arthritis

The premise is simple, yet the science is groundbreaking. Your bone marrow and blood get drawn through a patented same-day protocol, and your bone marrow concentrate, where your body's stem cells are found in highest concentration, is processed in a specialized lab.

Then, your BMAC and natural growth factors are injected under precise image-guidance using sonographic and X-ray devices directly into multiple tissue structures in your affected knee (eg. cartilage, ligaments, tendons, bone, meniscus). This provides more cells to the injured, degenerated, and inflamed joint than your body would otherwise send to the area, resulting in significant improvements in your knee pain and knee function within just a 2-3 months.

Unfortunately, the world of stem cell treatments is often referred to by scientists as a "wild wild west." The efficacy of "stem cell" procedures for knee arthritis and chronic knee pain means many companies have rushed to market with various health claims and procedures. Alas, many (if not most) of what you'll find on the market — such as the use of exosomes or umbilical cord "stem cells" — isn't backed by real research and in fact, is illegal to use.

When choosing a regenerative treatment for knee arthritis, it's critical that you look for a procedure

that's truly backed by science, and specifically peer-reviewed randomized controlled medical trials and other clinical trials.

When reviewing the published research, the science is clear: The most advanced and effective treatment for knee arthritis is from your bone marrow concentrate (BMAC) injected into the joint and sometimes into the bone.

In one study, BMAC injections into the knee joint significantly reduced the need for knee replacement surgery. Another study tracked patients for 15 years and found that BMC injections into the bone (near the joint line) also significantly reduced the need for knee replacement.

At Regenexx, this is the exact same procedure we employ in our clinics. These advancements in regenerative medicine and technology mean our Regenexx approach, overseen by expert technicians and clinicians who have been doing this for over a decade, is far more effective than the run-of-the-mill treatments offered by other providers.

If you suffer from knee arthritis and want to avoid costly and invasive knee replacement surgery, contact us today to learn how you can use these advancements in regenerative medicine to naturally and effectively target your knee health concerns.



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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Master Herbalist Steve Frank

Treating Sinusitis Naturally and Effectively

If you suffer from chronic sinusitis and have been through multiple courses of antibiotics then you know the ills of the antibiotic approach. The antibiotics leave you with intestinal problems and often yeast infections while they only get rid of the sinus infection for 6 months or so. The next time it comes back, you have to try a different antibiotic and this one will cost more and make you feel worse. So why is this cycle escalating? Why aren't you winning the war when you frequently win the battles? Because the antibiotic solution does more harm than good. It shifts the fauna and flora of bacteria in your sinuses to the ones that are not so easily killed by the antibiotics and leaves you with a more formidable foe after each round. Additionally, the antibiotics are taken systemically, which means that they are coursing through your entire body when you only need them in your sinuses. This distorts all of the fauna in your body and can lead to a yeast infection. What's a sinus sufferer to do?

Glad you asked. The problem is two fold. First, you are fighting what is a symbiotic relationship of fungus and bacteria with an active agent that kills only the bacteria. Second, the active agent that you are using to kill the bacteria kills only some of the bacteria. The types that are not susceptible to your chosen antibiotic will take-over the feeding grounds of the ones that you have killed, leaving you with a fauna of germs that you cannot kill. This is really a recipe for how to take a bad neighborhood and make it worse by killing off only the weakest of criminals.

Let's explore the first point. Your sinuses are host to many fungi. They thrive on the muco-polysaccharides (mucus) that line your sinus passage and produce exotoxins that irritate the sinus membranes. Your immune system does its best to kill these invaders but this is a constant battle, for every breath that you take will contain bacteria and molds. What makes this problem worse is the fact that the fungus acts as a platform of insulation on which the bacteria can live and thrive. The bacteria can digest the conversion of the muco-polysaccharides by the fungus and live on top of them. In this manner, they are insulated from your immune system and from the drugs that you would take to reach them by distribution through your micro-capillary bed.



And so you see, approaching the problem of sinusitis with merely an antibiotic to kill the bacteria would be only half the solution. You need an anti-fungal as well to attenuate the population of molds (fungi) that inhabit your sinuses. For it is these molds that insulate the bacteria, keeping them out of reach of your immune system.

And now for the second part. It is very important to choose an anti-microbial that will kill ALL the bacteria. Antibiotics work in three discrete manners and can kill three different groups of bacteria. Each type of antibiotic will kill only a portion of the fauna leaving the survivors to take-over the sinus tissue that was abandoned by the bacteria which you killed. What you want is a broad-spectrum antimicrobial that kills all types of bacteria as evenly as possible so that you don't just kill the easy ones. And, an antimicrobial that will kill the fungus.

Ah, so you ask, "where can I find such an active agent that kills fungus and all types of bacteria?"

Glad you asked. Clinical studies have shown that an enhanced aqueous colloid of silver (EACS) of 35 parts per million or more, is able to terminate sinus infections in a week or less and this is far better than sinus surgery or antibiotics. What's more, it can be sprayed directly into the sinuses and so it doesn't have to be taken systemically. You apply it only where the infection is occurring; In your sinuses.

To reach the deeper sinuses, it is best to use a Neti Pot. You can fill your sinuses with the solution and then close off your nose with your fingers. Sitting this way for 10 or more minutes will kill more bacteria and fungus than a week of antibiotics.

Of course, since you have a sinus infection, the mucosal flow is pretty large. This will flush the anti-microbial from the area in less than 10 minutes. If it's not there, it's not working. *It is absolutely paramount to the success of this therapy that you spray every 20 to 30 minutes. Using the Neti Pot in the morning and evening for 10 minutes is also advised.* Bacteria and fungus can double in number every 20 minutes.

So you see, the balanced holistic approach to sinusitis rests with using the right active agent, in the right concentration, in the right place and with the right protocol. If this is done, you will attenuate the fungus and the bacteria while not shifting the fauna and flora. You will re-establish the balance of power in your sinuses. I suggest that you look for an enhanced aqueous silver colloid product that offers Sinus Relief or some Super Neti-Juice for your neti pot. Colloids that espouse concentrations of 250ppm and 500ppm are compounded (this ruins them) and in my testing have performed horribly. Look for 35ppm to 50ppm pure colloids.

Over the past 20 years, Mr. Frank has directed and participated in more than a dozen clinical studies, written numerous papers, articles and books relating to natural solutions for health. His many hours in the clinics and labs have generated patents on respiratory antiseptics and enhancement of colloids.



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Hearing Aids Keep You in the Conversation

Maybe you've thought about getting a hearing aid, but you aren't sure how it will look or if it will really help you. If you have trouble hearing, a hearing aid can significantly improve your quality of life. It can:

- Improve communication
- Help you stay more alert
- Reduce background noise
- Help you regain independence
- Help you feel more included

While Medicare Part B covers hearing exams required for medical treatment, it does not cover an annual routine hearing exam. The good news is some Florida Blue Medicare health plans do offer this benefit.

Check your plan's Evidence of Coverage at (<https://www.nationshearing.com/floridablue Medicare>) to find out. Many Florida Blue Medicare health plans cover your annual hearing exam and an evaluation and fitting for hearing aids at no cost to you.



have occurred because of earwax build-up. Or, you may have hearing loss that cannot be improved by a hearing aid.

If your doctor says you can benefit from hearing aids, here are some things to know about them.

Most hearing aids work the same way. They usually have a digital amplifier that is powered with a special battery. They amplify sound through a three-part system:

- The microphone receives sound from around you and converts it into a digital signal.
- The amplifier increases the strength of the digital signal based on your hearing loss and needs.
- The speaker delivers the adjusted sound to your ear.

Your doctor will refer you to an audiologist who will help you choose the best hearing aid for you. While at the audiologist make sure to ask about:

- **Trial periods:** You can usually try out a hearing aid for a limited amount of time. This way you can look at all your options to make the best decision. You won't have to commit to a hearing aid you don't like.
- **Future needs:** Ask if the hearing aid you chose has an option to increase power and volume. If your

hearing gets worse, you won't have to buy another hearing aid.

- **Warranty:** Make sure your hearing aid includes a warranty period. This can include broken parts, office visits or professional services for a limited amount of time.
- **Expenses:** The costs of hearing aids can vary from \$1,000 to a few thousand dollars, and special features may cost extra. Talk to your audiologist about payment plans.

If you have trouble participating in everyday conversations, hearing aids could be life-changing. Have your hearing tested and find out if hearing aids are right for you.

Sources:
https://www.health.gov.au/english/topics/seniorhealth/healthpromo/Pages/Hearing_loss.aspx

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DID YOU KNOW

Untreated hearing loss can have serious consequences?



1 in 3

people over the age of 65 have some degree of hearing loss¹



Adults over the age of **50** should get their hearing tested every 3 years²

Hearing aid users wait, on average, **10 years** before getting help for hearing loss³

¹Statistics and Facts about Hearing Loss. CHC. Center for Hearing and Communication. 31 Jan. 2016.
²Hearing Test: Purpose, Procedure, and Results. WHO. WHO. 2 May 2019.
³Report, USA. "Hearing Loss Tied to Increased Risk for Depression." Reuters. Thomson Reuters. 17 Apr. 2019.

Before you shop

Check with your doctor in order to better understand your hearing needs. Your hearing loss may simply

Chronic Pain:

Finding Relief with Physical Therapy & Manual Stretching

When chronic pain affects the neck, back, hands, feet or hips, difficulties arise when trying to get through even the most menial daily tasks. The surrounding muscles begin to tighten as they try to overcompensate for the pain and protect the injured area. These tight muscles can create tension headaches, impaired mobility, and limitations on range of motion.

Chronic Pain can lead to depression, addictions, anxiety, stress, isolation, and even suicide. Finding relief from pain is critical to having the quality life you deserve. Avoiding surgery and being over medicated should be at the forefront of most people's minds when dealing with chronic pain. However, many of these individuals would do almost anything to relieve their agony.

Over 116 million people suffer from various types of chronic pain disorders ranging from fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, neuropathy, back, hip and neck pain just to name a few. Whether trauma or degenerative diseases have caused your pain, the consensus is usually the same; people want their pain to go away.

Physical therapy is the leading way to relieve pain and discomfort at its core for many individuals. Therapeutic manual stretching and exercising provide real results in controlling pain for countless patients. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) also launched new guidelines recently, recommending the use of physical therapy for chronic pain.

Arthritis

Arthritis is an inflammation of the joints. Some of the common arthritic symptoms are joint pain, stiffness, warmth, immobilization, and loss of range of motion, fatigue and inadequate blood flow. Two of the main types of arthritis are Osteoarthritis (OA) and Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). With Osteoarthritis, wear and tear damages the cartilage in the joints and causes



friction between the bones rubbing together. Injury or infection usually causes Rheumatoid Arthritis. RA is an autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack its own lining of the joints and membranes; this results in painful swelling and inflammation. Most people may find that there is little to no relief with over the counter NSAID's like ibuprofen.

Physical therapy and manual stretching offer arthritic joints and sore surrounding tissues much needed relief and over time, the individual will see more and more improvement in their pain level.

Back Pain

Unfortunately, back pain affects up to 80% of individuals at some point in their lives. Studies show that for those who suffer from back pain, the symptoms often come in persistent, continuous episodes. This is why being proactive about physical therapy treatments and techniques can help to alleviate or lessen these intervals of pain.

For patients suffering from back pain, the first step to recovery is to receive a proper diagnosis so the cause of the symptoms can be determined. Physical therapists are trained to administer flexibility and strengthening tactics along

with body mechanics and awareness techniques to get your body moving and creating a much less painful range-of-motion. With ongoing therapy, most people see remarkable outcomes and lasting results.

Examples of Stretching Exercises to Relieve Pain

Hands: make a fist with the thumb on the outside and hold for 30 seconds. Open the hand abruptly with the fingers spread wide. Repeat six times.

Back: lying flat on your back, bring one leg in towards the chest with the leg bent. Put your arms or hands around the back of the bent leg and gently pull towards your chest. Switch legs and repeat 10 times.

Patient Education is critical to alleviate further injury and to promote the most efficacious healing. Coupled with family participation, self-help management to promote and maintain independent function, mobility and communication is critical.

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

To find out more or to schedule your appointment, please contact Innovative Therapies Group today.



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What Telemedicine Means for Florida

Telemedicine (also referred to as telehealth) has become the main medium for health-care workers that are able to do so. Telemedicine refers to the practice of caring for patients remotely when the provider and patient are not physically present with each other. Modern technology has let doctors to consult patients by using HIPAA compliant video-conferencing tools such as Zoom, TheraNest, and VSee. Allowing patients to continue on with their scheduled appointments remotely has also been a positive for those that do not find the experience comfortable. Telemedicine also allows patients, as well as doctors, to save themselves the commute to the office. This also allows doctors, specifically specialists, to potentially see new patients from across the state (or country for other fields) where they otherwise would have to travel long distances to do so. Patients who are homebound also now have many more options to choose from as they were previously limited to doctors who do home visitations.

Policies vary widely state by state but Florida has been lenient in allowing telemedicine to continue on until May 8th. With that in mind, many wonder if the state can take advantage of this new medium in the medical marijuana world especially given the unknown of when we will see normal everyday life start to return. Hopefully telemedicine will be implemented across the country, even in non-medical marijuana fields, as it has its clear advantages to both the doctor and patient.



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May is Better Hearing Month

What You Should Know

Hearing loss can happen at any age due to illness, birth defects, genetics, exposure to loud noises, or aging. As we age, hearing loss typically diminishes. For individuals with hearing loss, it can be dangerous not to hear the car horn that's attempting to alert you of an impending accident. It's unsafe not to be able to hear the smoke or burglar alarm. Also, consider, the safety risks of not being able to hear conversations correctly. This can lead to confusion and lack of the ability to follow necessary directions.

Hearing Loss Can Negatively Affect Your Brain

Getting your hearing checked regularly is critical for your own personal safety and the health of your brain. Individuals that struggle with hearing often become less social and therefore their cognitive decline is affected by less interaction and less mental processing. It is also thought that decline in other special senses, like the sense of smell and vision, can exacerbate cognitive issues due to degeneration in these other areas of the brain.

The Ability to Hear Well and Stay Safe are Inter-connected

If you have hearing loss in one ear, it can be difficult to decipher where sounds are actually coming from. It's common for people to sleep on their "good ear" to get a better night's rest, but this again, puts one at risk due to not being able to hear during an emergency or precarious situation. Getting hearing aids to improve hearing or getting your hearing aids upgraded to suit your changing hearing is absolutely imperative.

What You Can Do

- Avoid excessive exposure to loud noises
- Avoid ear infections by limiting water in the ears or by treating other forms of infection that commonly affect the ears
- Regularly get your hearing checked
- Get and Wear Hearing Aids

Hearing Aid Evaluation

There are several steps that are part of a hearing aid evaluation. If you suspect that you might need a hearing aid, you will first need to have a hearing



evaluation. At the time of the hearing evaluation, a case history will be taken to determine how much your hearing problem impacts your day-to-day life as well as the lives of your family. You may also have to provide some basic questions about your general health history.

Hearing Test Results

The results from your hearing test will provide the hearing care professional information on what sounds you may be missing or hearing. The results of this testing will also allow the hearing care professional to make the best treatment recommendations, which typically includes hearing aids.

Hearing Aid Recommendation

If your hearing test reveals a permanent hearing loss, hearing aids may be recommended. Your hearing professional may explain what sounds you have difficulty hearing, and what hearing aids can do to help. It is usually at this appointment that you will get to see and touch different styles of hearing aids. In some cases, you may even be able to listen to a hearing aid.

Your hearing professional will help you choose the best hearing aid style, features and level of sophistication based on your degree of hearing loss, lifestyle, and financial circumstances. Some hobbies and occupations may benefit from different hearing aid styles or features, so your hearing care provider may

have you fill out a questionnaire to assist during the evaluation process. The final decision on which hearing aids are purchased is your choice.

Once you make a decision, the hearing professional may take impressions of your ears if you selected custom hearing aids or behind-the-ear hearing aids that require earmolds. Hearing aids must usually be ordered from a manufacturer and then programmed by your hearing professional to meet your specific hearing needs. There is an adjustment period when wearing hearing aids, so it's possible your provider may make additional changes to your settings to ensure you're getting the best listening experience possible.

Contact Premear Hearing today to find out more about your options to improve your hearing or to upgrade your hearing devices.

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Grief During Times of COVID

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

Since early 2020, the entire nation has been grieving the loss of daily life as we knew it -- the loss of jobs, the loss of family gatherings, sports and art activities, and for so many, the death of loved ones. It seems as though the entire world is undergoing an experience of grief. No one could have foretold the unfolding events of the coronavirus pandemic.

While loss is experienced by all of us on some level, imagine what it's like to experience the grief of losing a loved one in the midst of this epidemic, as COVID-19 continues to sweep through our country affecting people of all ages, not just the elderly.

During Mental Health Awareness Month, we must all remember that mental health is as important as physical health. While we may not always have control over physical health, we do have options when it comes to staying grounded while undergoing the journey of grief.

That is where the Monarch Center for Hope & Healing can help. The center has been offering counseling for individuals, families and groups for more than a decade. Programs are offered for adults, teens and children at no charge to Marion County residents who are experiencing the loss of a loved one. Their message is that loss of control over external events does not mean loss of everyone's wealth of inner strengths. The staff guides people in understanding that grief is natural and necessary to healing. It's essential to feel the pain, not suppress it.

Community Awareness Manager and Licensed Mental Health Counselor Jessica McCune provides a presentation on Soul Injury, a program that originated with Opus Peace; it reminds people that you



cannot heal what you cannot feel. The Monarch Center has developed ways of expressing loss through creative pursuits in art, journaling and writing. These techniques can still work with people through various means of communication to help them through this difficult time.

Hospice of Marion County's Monarch Center for Hope and Healing has trained professionals with the expertise to guide adults, children and teens through a process of understanding the grief they are experiencing towards healthy outcomes and behaviors. Through its programs of sharing memories, emotions and strategies for coping with others who are also grieving, it can be especially helpful in healing and recovery for those suffering the loss of a loved one.

Support for families include at least 13 months of follow-up by staff and volunteers specially trained in bereavement support, including phone calls, personal visits with one-on-one assessment, mail out literature and resource coordination if needed, all at the personal request of the bereaved.

The Monarch Center's staff is able to work with bereaved families and individuals via in-person meetings with masks and social distancing required, via phone, email or teleconferencing.

Visit our website at:

<https://www.monarchcenter-marion.com>
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Pacifica Senior Living: 5 Tips to DESTRESS

Life has been a little more stressful for many people over the past year. Along with the “pandemic” which we’re all growing tired of, many people have added stress-related issues and disappointments.

Here are a few tips to help you cope, relax and find inner peace:

#1 Take Time for Yourself

It might be difficult, but carving out time to relax, take a bath, take a walk or simply shut yourself off 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. It’s important to take breaks from social media and news outlets, because these often add to our stress response and can intensify negative feelings.

#2 Get Moving

With closure and limitations in going to the gym or our favorite yoga studio, most people can benefit from taking a brisk 30-minute walk, bike ride, or doing any type of exercise in doors via YouTube. The good news is those options are all free with the exception of internet service. Exercise increases circulation, reduces stress, it also improves nutrient and oxygen rich blood flow, and helps you build strength. If you can work out harder, it’s extremely beneficial to get your heart rate up daily with cardiovascular exercise.

#3 Meditation & Prayer

Yoga helps to improve flexibility, blood flow, muscle strength, posture, immune function, bone health, decreases depressive episodes, and can regulate blood pressure. Meditation and prayer also reduce stress and anxiety, and promotes emotional wellbeing, which can help fight addictions, generate health and improve immune function, and it can stave off memory disorders and increase neuronal plasticity.

#4 Sleep

The body produces cytokines, which are protective proteins that block infection and inflammation. When a person gets the recommended, uninterrupted seven to nine hours of sleep, cytokines are produced. Without quality sleep, they are significantly less. Blue light is a significant cause of circadian rhythm interruptions. Blue light emits wavelengths that contribute to sleep disturbances.



Blue light comes from artificial lighting and electronics like fluorescent and LED lightbulbs, laptops, mobile phones, iPad, television, some alarm clocks, fiber-optic cable boxes, and other devices that use blue light. The issue is that blue light makes your brain think that it’s still daytime, which makes it difficult to fall and stay asleep. Blue light disrupts the circadian rhythm and natural sleep cycles, specifically, the delta and beta wavelengths, leading to increased activity in the brain, less relaxation and exacerbates stress and anxiety.

#5 Combining Methods is Best

In order 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 that can help to stabilize our systems.

When to Seek Help

If your stress or anxiety are lingering, you should take steps to get treatment. Stress can show itself both physically and mentally. If you feel persistently sad, anxious, or on edge; you start having unexplained physical problems; you’re unable to sleep; feel irritable all the time; or just feel overwhelmed, it may be time to seek help.

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At Pacifica Senior Living Ocala, you will find an award-winning community that is designed to give seniors in both Assisted Living or Memory Care a lifestyle that makes the most of these golden years. In our community, retirement isn’t the end, but the next step in a grand adventure that is still filled with excitement and fun, while recognizing the need our residents have to relax and be cared for. We want to be more than the place that our residents live, we want to be the place they call home, and we work every day to make sure that happens.

Pacifica Senior Living understands that along with providing the best patient care, providing the entire family the support and education they need is essential for enhancing understanding and contentment for families.

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If you would like to learn more about life at Pacifica Senior Living Ocala, please give us a call today, or schedule your own private, personalized tour and see what makes us great for yourself! We look forward to meeting our new neighbor.



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Dr. Brent Carter

Pain in Your Feet and Toes?

Don't Let the Symptoms Escalate

Whether young or old, most people lucky enough to live in Florida appreciate the great outdoors. The weather and sunshine allow Floridians and visitors alike time well-spent kayaking, golfing, playing tennis, jogging, and participating in competitive sports for the majority of the year.

While exercising outdoors is a healthy luxury, ballistic movements through exercise and sports-related activities can cause a great deal of wear and tear on the feet and ankles. Some of the most common are due to repetitive strain. Podiatrists often see issues that deal directly with the toes. One of the most widespread disorders is a condition known as hammertoe.

Hammertoe

Hammertoe can be genetic and many times occurs in people with either a high arch or a flat foot. When the muscles in your toes get out of balance, they can start contracting abnormally. This causes the toe to bend in an upward position in the middle joint of the toe. When this happens, it can create severe pain. Various forms of arthritis can contribute to this issue as well. And unfortunately, ill-fitting footwear can also cause hammertoe, due to pushing the toes out of their normal position for long periods of time.



Hammertoes can be corrected by minimally invasive surgery. A small titanium screw is placed in the toe to help straighten it into the correct position. If the tendon is only lengthen, the hammertoe will mostly come back.

Whether it's you, or someone you know that sustains sprains, tears, or other painful injuries to your feet or ankles, it's imperative that you seek out the best podiatric care to ensure you heal correctly and to eliminate future relapse or recurrence.

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COVID-19 Update & the QCARD

Each day, we learn new facts, figures, and protocols concerning COVID-19. Recently, we were informed by the FDA that they are investigating specific drugs and running expedited trials to see if they are effective at killing the virus. They are also running plasma testing from the blood of those that have recovered from COVID-19. At this point, we also know that the vaccine will take approximately 12 months to become available. As we navigate through the coronavirus pandemic over the next few months, disinfection and social distancing is the recommended preventative advice, and boosting the immune system is also beneficial. Healthier individuals are better able to fight the infection and make full recoveries. If you get sick, you need to be tested!

Quick Care's Answer for Those without Medical Insurance

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

Who can benefit from the QCARD program?

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

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

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

The QCARD works in 3 easy steps!

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



Where can you use the QCARD?

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

Why get the QCARD now?

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

QCARD is a great healthcare plan for the following:

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

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

Quick Care Med
Walk-In Clinic & Urgent Care
844-797-8425
www.quickcaredmed.com

Quick Care Med Urgent Care

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

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

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

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

Quick Care Offers The QCard—Affordable Healthcare for Just \$1 a Day, Ask us How or Visit us Online!

www.quickcaredmed.com

4 Locations in Ocala

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

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

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

NEW LOCATION: Chiefland
 2205 N Young Blvd, Chiefland, FL 32626

Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Remember the old merry-go-rounds on the playground when you were a kid? You would spin in circles until you felt like you were going to fly off. That's how life can feel if you don't make some necessary changes.

You live a much faster lifestyle than your parents did. Your children will live an even faster lifestyle than you did. As we enter a new year, perhaps it is a good time to evaluate the pace of your life and make some necessary adjustments. The Psalmist tells us:

2In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.
Psalm 127:2

If you are getting up early and staying up late but still don't feel like you can get everything done... you are probably trying to do too much.

Living at a hectic pace comes at a price. You end up feeling more stressed because you are trying to cram too many things into your day. You end up having no margin in your life. As the margins get tighter the stress goes higher.

You have to take time to recharge your batteries. Here's a lesson I learned years ago: You have just enough time to do the will of God. If you can't get everything done on your "to do" list, maybe there are things on the list you shouldn't be doing.

I want to share with you two simple strategies to help you slow down the pace of your life so that you can enjoy life.

The first strategy is to learn to be content. If you're serious about slowing down, you don't start with your schedule—you start with your heart.

The Apostle Paul said this about contentment. *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."* Philippians 4:11-13

If you're going to slow down your life, you have to learn contentment. Paul also said this about contentment: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it."* 1 Tim. 6:6-7

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things.

Contentment means this: I don't need more in order to be happy.

I'm not waiting for *more* in order to be happy. I'm happy right now. I have dreams and I have goals but I don't need *more* in order to be happy. That's contentment.

Contentment will come easier when you realize two things: life is not a competition with other people and having *more* will not make you happier. This is not the message promoted by our culture, but it is true.

Jesus said it like this, ¹⁵ *Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* Luke 12:15

If you find yourself making statements like this:

- **My life is a rat race.**
- **I don't know how I'm going to get it all done.**
- **I am just so exhausted.**
- **I don't know how much more of this I can take.**
- **I just want to escape.**

These phrases are all warning signs that you are on the road to burn out. You need to slow down the pace. Perhaps as we begin this new year, taking an honest evaluation of your life and determine if some changes are necessary. Are you content in your life right now?

As the merry-go-round spins faster it is only a matter of time before you either get sick, or fall off. Or, better yet, just slow down, be content, and enjoy the ride.

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