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June 2021

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COGNITIVE DECLINE: THE RIGHT TREATMENT BEGINS WITH THE RIGHT DIAGNOSIS

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, a fitting time to consider the complexities of having, diagnosing and treating cognitive disorders. Dementia has different causes, the most common being Alzheimer's disease, a progressive condition in which neurons stop functioning appropriately, causing lapses in memory and changes in the way a person thinks, makes judgements, communicates and behaves. In the early stages of Alzheimer's, the main symptom is typically forgetfulness. Of course, a certain amount of forgetfulness is associated with the normal process of aging, but with Alzheimer's, it may accompany other problems, such as changes in understanding, communicating and behaving, even shifts in personality. It can wreak havoc on a person's mood, sleep patterns, capacity to manage normal tasks, properly assess risk and make sound judgements. It can also disable one's motor functions. In advanced stages, Alzheimer's can render a person unable to care for themselves.

There is no cure for Alzheimer's, but in many cases prescription medication and interventional treatments can delay its progression and help manage symptoms. However, not all cognitive decline is Alzheimer's disease, and not all cases can be treated using the same medication and therapies. In some cases, minor impairment may be owed to something as commonplace as a thyroid disorder or vitamin B-12 deficiency. In others, it may be caused by a vascular or frontotemporal disease. Therefore, the best possible treatment and management of cognitive decline begins with discovering the correct cause so the right treatment can be devised and implemented.

Diagnosing Alzheimer's Disease

Unfortunately, there is no single designated test to diagnose Alzheimer's, but there are state-of-the-art imaging tests that can be used to rule out other causes of dementia. This is important, because an estimated 20% of people diagnosed with Alzheimer's actually have another form of dementia, whose causes can include stroke and ischemia, brain tumor, subdural hematoma (bleeding near the surface of the brain), cortical atrophy (degeneration of the brain's cortex), changes to blood vessels or hydrocephalus (excess fluid in the brain). When the cause of dementia is incorrectly



diagnosed, it can lead to ineffective treatment, sometimes allowing the disease to progress further than it might if properly addressed. Combined with a detailed accounting of one's medical history and a physical and neurological exam, brain imaging tests can be used to assess other possible causes. RAO's team of board certified radiologists subspecializing in neuroradiology interpret highly sophisticated imaging techniques used to examine the brain, including:

Computed tomography (CT) – this quick, painless scan combines advanced x-ray technology to produce multiple images that are sent to a computer to form a nearly 3-D image of the brain. CT can discover other causes of dementia and rule out Alzheimer's.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) – head MRI uses a powerful magnetic field, radio waves and a computer to create detailed pictures of brain abnormalities associated with mild cognitive impairment. MRI can be used to assess whether or not this mild impairment may progress into Alzheimer's disease, and monitor its development.

PET/CT - Combining positron emission tomography (PET) and computed tomography (CT) provides information about both the function and anatomy of the brain in a single scan. PET/CT imaging can help differentiate Alzheimer's disease from other types of dementia.

Knowing the cause of cognitive decline promotes the best chance for the right treatment. And although Alzheimer's disease can be a rather dire diagnosis, when caught in the early stages, its effects can often be delayed and managed, improving quality of life.

"It can be a scary thing for someone to admit they're not functioning up-to-par," says neuroradiology and interventional radiology subspecialist Dr. Kerry B. Raduns. "But cognitive impairment isn't something to be ashamed of. With the right diagnosis, most cases can be treated to slow their progression and manage symptoms. It is worth pursuing a diagnosis as early as possible, when treatment is most effective."

Don't Delay Reporting Symptoms to Your Doctor

Sure, memory issues are a common part of aging, and few among us want to admit that we're not thinking as clearly as we once did. These sentiments tend to cause people to underreport their own or a loved one's cognitive decline. Symptoms are often so gradual that they go unnoticed, and extensive efforts are often made to conceal lapses in memory or judgement. This can leave dementia undiagnosed for too long, leaving people more vulnerable to its effects. Figuring out the cause and type of dementia early in its course can lead to the proper medication and other therapies that can reduce the problems associated with it, so see your doctor as soon as you or a loved one begins to show signs of memory loss, behavioral changes, noticeable shifts in mood, or other symptoms of changes in brain function.

Signs of Alzheimer's Disease

Who hasn't walked into a room only to realize they didn't remember what they intended to do there? Some brain lapses can be caused by simple distraction, but as we age, this type of thing can become more and more common. Certain warning signs, in you or in a loved one, should have you making an appointment with your physician sooner rather than later:

Noticeable memory loss. Short-term memory issues are often dismissed as just plain "old age," but when short-term memory loss becomes commonplace, it should be taken seriously. If you or a loved one are repeatedly losing or misplacing things, forgetting important names, or forgetting big things, like to unload groceries from the car, don't dismiss it as nothing. As with nearly all health issues, early detection is the key to optimal treatment.

Diminished reasoning. People with Alzheimer's often see a decline in their ability to judge things appropriately, make shrewd decisions, solve problems and perform as they once did. They may lose track of time, or inaccurately assess how much time has passed. This change in ability to reason can leave people more vulnerable to accidents, rash decisions and scams.

Personality shifts. Apathy, depression, irritability, pronounced stubbornness, hostility, even aggression, are common signs of Alzheimer's. So, too, are changes in sleep patterns, weight gain or loss, and chronic fatigue. Of course, these can be signs of other problems, too – which is why medical attention is so important. Unexplained changes in mood, habits or personality should be checked out by your doctor.

Changes in understanding. As it advances, Alzheimer's can cause a string of disabilities, including changes in one's ability to speak, write, read or understand what people are saying. It can affect only one type of understanding or several. It can affect perception, causing people to become clumsy, or to have trouble correctly identifying everyday noises or conditions. In advanced cases, people may not recognize the faces of loved ones – or even their own reflection in the mirror. Motor function is often affected, rendering people unable to perform everyday hand movements, walk, even chew.

Changes in behavior – Alzheimer's can include sometimes dramatic changes in one's behavior, inviting uncharacteristic anger, use of foul language, getting lost in familiar surroundings, engaging in inappropriate or risky behaviors, refusing assistance, eating strange things, and other problems. It may cause a strong overreaction to minor issues: crying, shouting, even lashing out, over something relatively unimportant. Some people go on to develop psychosis, which invites sporadic and recurrent delusions and visual and/or auditory hallucinations.

Sundowning – For reasons yet undetermined, many behavioral issues caused by Alzheimer's disease tend to get worse in the late afternoon/evening. It may be due to increased weariness as the day goes on, which may enhance the severity of symptoms.

Imaging tests can identify changes in the brain's structure and function, including atrophy, stroke damage, ischemia, metabolic changes, oxygen metabolism, blood flow, neuronal activity, the presence of amyloid proteins and other elements that signify specific reasons for cognitive decline.

When warning signs of cognitive decline appear, it's important to get a quick and accurate diagnosis to rule out other possible causes, distinguish between the different types of brain disease and disorder, and establish a baseline so further degeneration can be measured and the effectiveness of treatment can be monitored.

Medication and specific interventions can help ease the symptoms and progression of Alzheimer's and other causes of cognitive decline, so don't wait. If you or a loved one has symptoms of cognitive impairment, no matter how subtle, talk to your doctor. With the proper diagnosis and treatment, the future could look a whole lot more promising.



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Knee Pain Treatments:

New FDA-Compliant Bone Marrow Concentrate Procedure Advancements, Containing Stem Cells, Bring Hope and Relief For Knee Arthritis

By Regenexx Tampa Bay, Regenerative Medicine

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, and knee replacement surgery. But new advancements in bone marrow derived stem cell therapy (that comes from the patient, not someone else) 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 or knees, with swelling being more prominent after activity.
- Unstable knee. Over time, if left untreated, knee arthritis can create weakness and instability in your knee. This can cause your knee to lock up, freeze up, or even buckle 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
- 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 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?

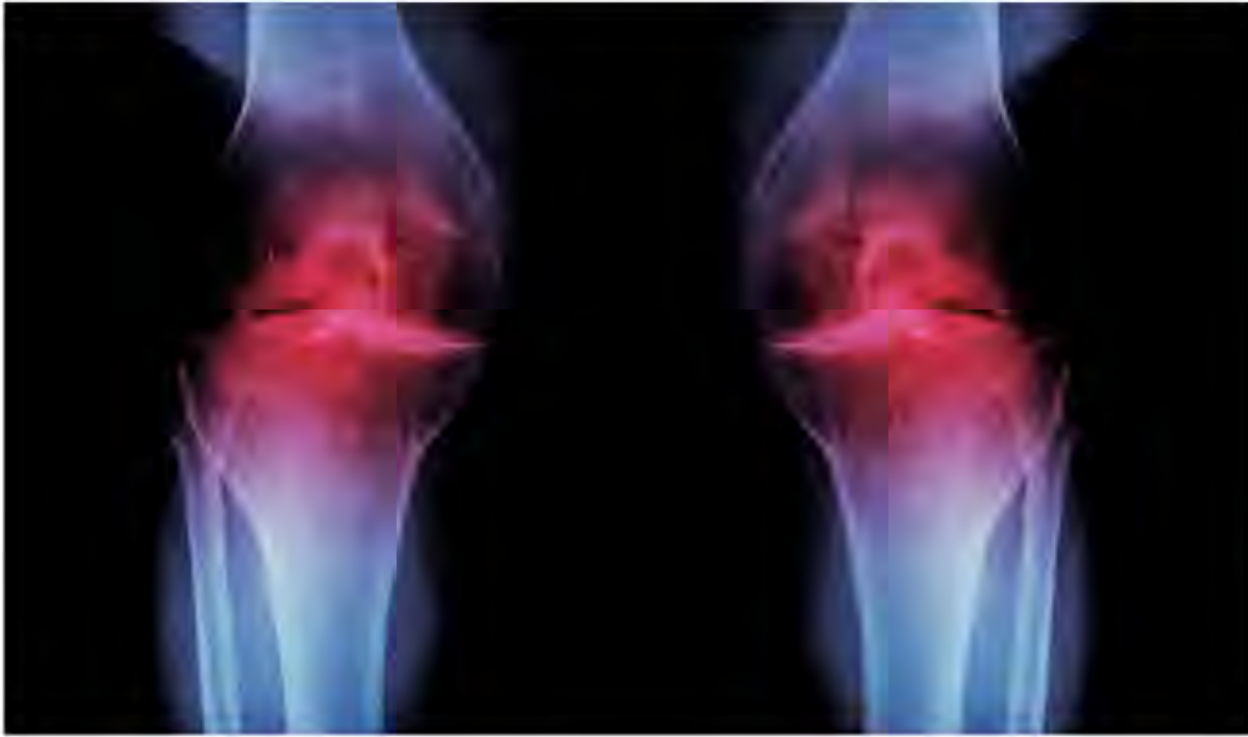
Your doctor may recommend a knee replacement, which involves removing the damaged knee joint entirely and installing an artificial knee.

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 wear out and most will 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
- The surgery itself can cause damage to your joints and bones and 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 in more serious cases.
- More than one-third of patients who have a knee replacement still have knee pain.
- Range of motion in the knee after the surgery is usually reduced significantly.

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 orthobiologic injection procedures using: bone marrow concentrate, containing one's own stem cells, platelet-rich-plasma (PRP), and/or microfragmented adipose/fat.



Bone Marrow Concentrate 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 processed by a specialized lab.

Then, the layers containing concentrated stem cells 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 healing cells to the injured, degenerated, weakened, and inflamed joint tissue than your body would otherwise send to the area, resulting in significant improvements in your knee pain and knee function within just a couple of months.

Unfortunately, the world of stem cell treatments is often referred to by scientists as a "wild wild west." Many companies have rushed in with various false health claims about "stem cell" 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 an orthobiologic procedure 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 orthobiologic procedures for knee arthritis are platelet-rich-plasma for mild to moderate arthritis and bone marrow concentrate (BMAC), containing one's own stem cells, injected into the joint and other weakened, painful, or inflamed tissue.

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 BMAC injections into the bone also significantly reduced the need for knee replacement.

At Regenexx, this is the exact same procedure we employ in our clinics. The advancements in this technology mean that 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. Regenexx tracks all willing patients in the world's largest database registry evaluating outcomes and safety, and has done the hard work of publishing results from this registry and from clinical trials year after year. With consistent laboratory and clinical procedural skill advancements, Regenexx is the clear leader at the forefront of this blossoming field.

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 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.



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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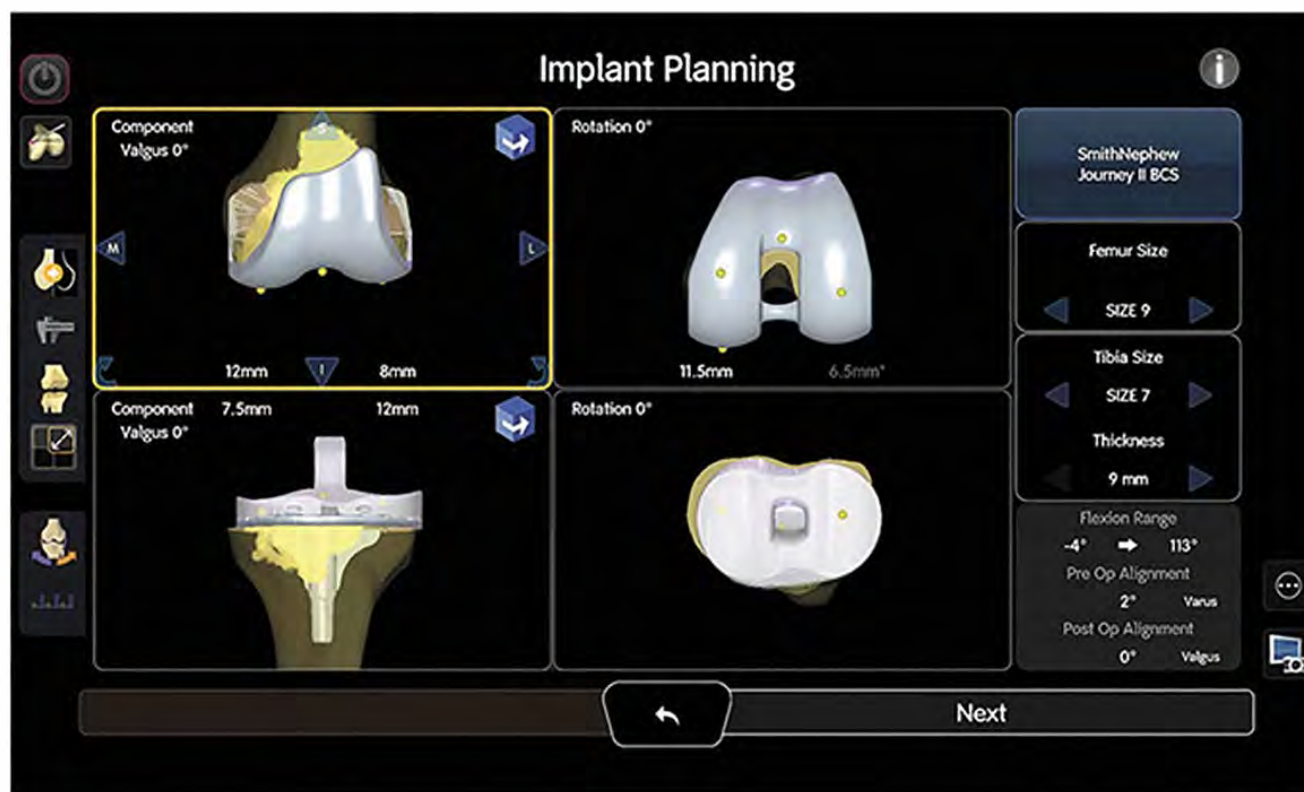
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The Next Generation of Knee Surgery Has Arrived

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.

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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 Today at (352) 456-0220.

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Life Beyond a Cancer Diagnosis

It is estimated there are 17 million cancer survivors in the U.S. today; yet researchers are just beginning to understand the complex issues that are a part of survivors' lives. According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), survivorship focuses on "... the physical, mental, emotional, social and financial effects of cancer that begin at diagnosis and continue through treatment and beyond." The goal throughout survivorship is to experience as high a quality of life as possible.

Most patients diagnosed with early-stage cancer can expect their overall health and functioning to return to near normal levels, while others with certain types of cancer and those diagnosed at later stages may face challenges physically and psychologically. Research from the American Cancer Society (ACS) shows that some survivors "... may have difficulty returning to former roles, such as those in the workplace or as parents, or finding health or life insurance."

While the end of successful cancer treatment is a time for celebration, it can also mean new challenges for survivors. Milestones such as returning to work, managing emotional issues, and the ongoing physical effects of cancer and treatment can also present unanticipated changes for patients and their families. The key to returning to a normal life after cancer treatment may be found in establishing new habits of diet and exercise or learning to cope with a range of emotional and physical challenges.

Nutrition and Exercise

Cancer survivors typically should turn first to their care team for information and advice about nutrition, physical activity and dietary supplements to improve quality of life and long-term survival. In times past, doctors often advised patients to rest and reduce physical activity to avoid fatigue associated with cancer and treatment. If patients experience pain, shortness of breath or rapid heart rate, this is good advice; however, recent research indicates that exercise during and after treatment can be safe and beneficial. Your cancer team is the best resource for beginning or resuming a more active post-cancer lifestyle, and they can refer patients and family caregivers to other professionals for a personalized post-treatment plan.



Physical and Emotional Challenges

The aftereffects of chemotherapy, surgery or radiation therapy should not be underestimated. Pain, fatigue and nausea are not unusual; more serious conditions include anemia, lymphedema (a buildup of fluid in fatty tissues just beneath the skin) and even severe infections. For both men and women, cancer and cancer treatment can cause changes in fertility and side effects in sexuality. Your oncology team is trained to monitor and manage the short- and long-term effects of treatment, so it's important to discuss your concerns with your team and then follow their instructions.

The emotional side of cancer survivorship touches both patients and their families. The stress associated with a cancer diagnosis and the physical effects of treatment are often still fresh in memory. Survivors and their families can feel a complicated mixture of relief and worry about the future; some people suffer episodes of anxiety and even depression. All these are matters to discuss with your oncology team, who can help you achieve balance or refer you to another appropriate professional, if needed.

Healthcare After Cancer

In the rush to put cancer in the past, it's important to remember that the end of treatment doesn't mean the end of seeing your cancer team. Most often, long-term follow-up appointments and tests, followed by routine checkups and health screenings, will continue for many years. It's important to keep your follow-up appointments and undergo tests and screenings as recommended by your oncologist. There's no absolute certainty that seeing your oncologist will prevent cancer from returning, but it will help make sure that any recurrence is detected and treated early.

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 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 comprehensive range of services, including an in-house specialty pharmacy, an in-house pathology lab, financial counselors at every location and more. With world-class care that's close to home, we deliver the most advanced and personalized care to our patients, every step of the way.



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Do You Know Your Testosterone Level?

Tired? Are your endurance and strength declining? Have you noticed a decline in your sexual function and lost interest in your sex life?

Every man could answer “yes” to at least one of these questions after age 40. Common symptoms of low testosterone, they can also result from a myriad of lifestyle, social, emotional and behavioral issues.

It is a physician’s goal to “treat the whole patient,” so we try to identify those issues that are most relevant to the symptoms. For decades, it was believed low testosterone was responsible for the above ... but not much else. Physicians were taught a decline testosterone was “normal” as men aged.

These beliefs have substantially changed in the last five years.

We now know a condition known as “metabolic syndrome” is intimately linked to low testosterone. Metabolic syndrome is a constellation of diabetes (or insulin resistance), hypertension, elevated triglycerides (fat levels in the blood), abdominal obesity and low testosterone. It’s estimated as many as 25 percent to 45 percent of American men over 40 may have metabolic syndrome and therefore a significantly elevated risk of stroke and heart attack.

How testosterone interacts with obesity, diabetes and cholesterol is not fully understood. It is also unclear whether low testosterone is the cause of the increased risk or it is involved in some other way. Clearly, low testosterone is more than simply a factor in declining strength and sexual performance.

Testosterone is essential for male development, libido and erectile function. Because of the success of medications such as Viagra in treating erectile dysfunction, low testosterone is often overlooked. However, low testosterone is a common cause of poor or declining response from ED medications and should always be considered when evaluating ED. Testosterone replacement may be all that’s required to restore sexual function.

The good news is managing low testosterone is easier and simpler than ever before. Just a decade ago, almost all testosterone replacement was by a painful, deep-muscle injection with oil-based testosterone administered every two weeks. Levels were difficult to manage and had dramatic swings with levels too high for the week immediately following the injection and too low for the week prior to the injection.



Today, testosterone is applied via a cream or gel that is applied to the skin daily. These preparations provide even absorption and steady testosterone levels. Small implants that release a steady, consistent level of testosterone in the bloodstream for eight to 10 months are also available.

Managing testosterone levels requires a thorough knowledge of treatment risks and benefits. Men with an enlarged prostate may be at greater risk for obstruction of the urine flow. Additionally, testosterone treatment should be considered only if prostate

cancer is not present, or has been successfully treated. Baseline levels should be checked in the early morning as levels normally decline in late afternoon or evening.

A thorough physical examination and additional blood tests are also important to evaluate low testosterone levels. Urologists specialize in evaluating and treating low testosterone, prostate disease, voiding, erection and testicular health, all of which can be influenced by testosterone levels.

Identifying low testosterone is as simple as a blood test, and modern management is as simple as a daily application of a skin cream. Every man should know his testosterone level. Normal testosterone levels can be an important aspect of maximizing longevity and maintaining quality of life.

If you have any questions regarding your testosterone level, you can contact Advanced Urology Institute at (855) 298-2273.


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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.



Should I Stop Driving?

Have you ever squinted at the road in front of you and wondered, “Maybe I should stop driving?”

Getting older doesn’t necessarily mean you’ll have to stop driving one day. You could still be cruising down the road, windows rolled down and blasting Led Zeppelin, well into your 80s and 90s. But for many of us, the time may come when you have to decide whether it’s safe for you to be in the driver’s seat. According to AAA, adults over 65 are more likely to have health conditions that make it harder to drive and take medications that could affect their driving. Older drivers also have the second highest rate of car crashes, just under teens.

It’s not an easy decision to make. No one wants to give up their independence. So how do you know when it’s time to hang up your car keys? April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, so we’ve put together a list to help you think about whether it’s time to stop driving.

Your vision

As we age, our vision slowly declines over time. We’re also more likely to develop cataracts or have glaucoma, too. Being able to see is the most important skill you need to drive, so if your vision is failing, it may be time to take a step back and figure out if it’s causing you problems on the road.

Here’s what you should watch out for

- How well can you read road signs, during the day and at night?
- How well can you see traffic signals?
- Can you tell how far away or how close other cars are to you on the road?
- Can you read your speedometer and other signals inside your car?
- Do the lights bother your eyes when you drive at night?

If you find you aren’t able to read road signs anymore or you can’t see the lines on the road very well, even with your glasses on, it may be time to stop driving. Talk to your doctor and have your vision checked. You get a routine annual eye exam as part of your Medicare Advantage health plan. You may find out that your medications are causing blurry vision or you may need a stronger prescription for glasses and contacts.



Important note: In Florida, once you reach age 80, you will have to pass a vision test when you renew your driver’s license. Check out Florida’s information and resources for older drivers on the Grand-Driver website.

Your medications

Some medications you take may make you drowsy, which can make driving dangerous for you and other people on the road. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the medications you take and find out if any of them make it risky for you to be on the road. Make sure you tell them about any over-the-counter medications you take. Your medications may interact in a way that makes it unsafe for you to drive, too.

Your hearing

Just like with your vision, you need to be able to hear what’s happening when you’re on the road, too. If you use a hearing aid, make sure to wear it when you’re driving. If you don’t have a hearing aid, but you can’t hear sirens and honking cars on the road, talk to your doctor about getting a hearing aid. Florida Blue Medicare plans cover hearing exams and hearing aids. Depending on your plan, you may get an allowance for hearing aids, or you may have a copay. Remember, you may not notice that your hearing is worse than it used to be. Hearing loss usually happens gradually. That’s why it’s always good to have your doctor check your hearing.

Your health and physical strength

There are several health conditions that can make it difficult for you to drive. Painful conditions like rheumatoid arthritis can make it difficult for you to steer. Uncontrolled diabetes can affect your feet and vision and could even lead to heart attack and stroke, all of which affect your ability to drive.

Resources to find rides

If you don’t feel safe driving any more, there are resources available to help you get where you need to go. This website can link you to community resources available to help. <https://www.findaride-florida.org/>. Also, your Medicare Advantage plan may include transportation benefits to help you get the health care you need.

Info for caregivers

If you’re a caregiver worried about a loved one’s driving, remember, age isn’t the issue. Age doesn’t make someone dangerous on the road. If you are worried you aren’t getting the full scoop from your loved one on their driving, here are some red flags to watch for:

- 1. Traffic violations:** Have they gotten a few tickets lately? Ask why and try to determine if there is a problem or if it was just a simple mistake.
- 2. Look for damage to the car:** See a recent dent? Find out what happened.
- 3. Ask friends and neighbors.** They see your loved one when you aren’t around. Find out if they have had any concerns, too.
- 4. Check the insurance:** Has their insurance rate gone up? That could be a clue they may have gotten more tickets or had more accidents than they have told you about.
- 5. Take a drive with them:** You won’t know how you feel until you observe them in the car. Make sure to pay attention to their reaction time and whether they seem to be struggling to see.

Sources:

<http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/doea/transportation.php>

<https://www.caring.com/articles/assessing-aging-parent-driving>

<https://www.caring.com/articles/when-to-stop-driving>

<https://seniordriving.aaa.com/resources-family-friends/conversations-about-driving/facts-research/>

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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.

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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!

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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

Vestibular Balance Issues Should Not be Ignored:

A Physical Therapy Method has Helped Countless Individuals Find Restoration

At least 50 percent of the U.S. population will develop a balance issue, at some point in their lives. Balance disorders typically happen to the aging population, between the ages of 50 to 75, and most of these are related to vestibular disruptions.

Patients suffering from vestibular related disorders frequently experience vertigo, dizziness, nausea, migraines, gait issues (walking), and imbalance. In addition, many patients complain of mood changes and cognitive impairment. Usually, these symptoms stem from issues in the inner ear. More than 69 million Americans have experienced some form of vestibular problems in their lifetime, and that number is on the rise.

BPPV: The most common form of vestibular complications is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo or BPPV.

- Benign - Not life-threatening
- Paroxysmal - Brief spells that come and go
- Positional - Triggered by certain head positions or movements
- Vertigo - A false sense of rotational movement

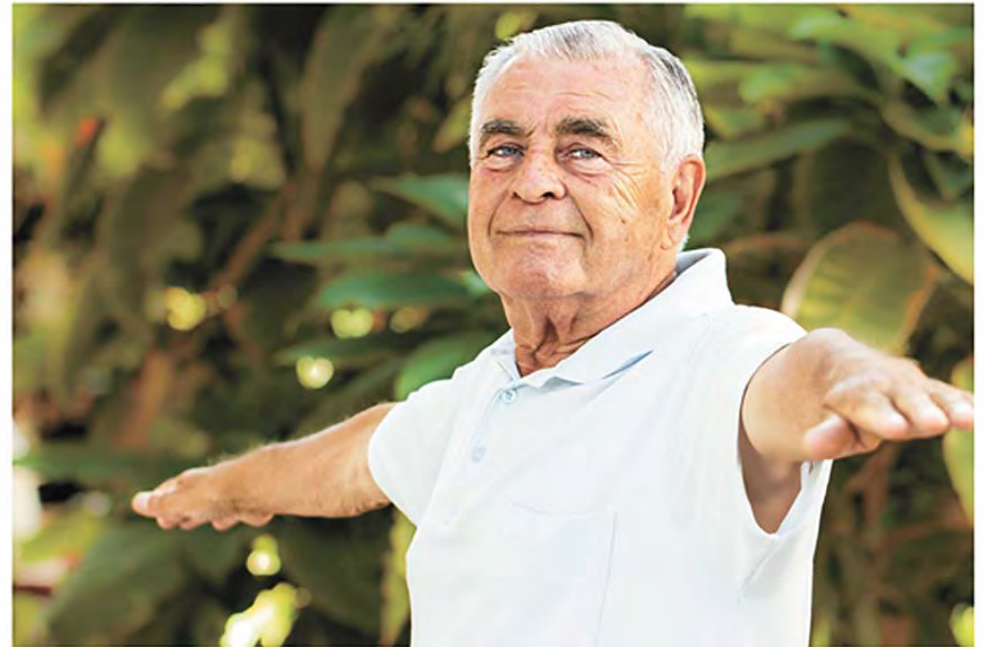
Tiny calcium crystals (otoconia) in the inner ear that slough off and get lodged in the fluid of the ear canals (labyrinth) usually are the cause of BPPV. Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

can be effectively treated with one of two simple manual therapies that move the crystals through the ear, improving and in many cases alleviating vertigo and the sensations of dizziness. These therapies can be performed in the convenience of Innovative Therapies Group's office.

It's dangerous to leave vestibular disorders untreated. If you have balance issues, your likelihood of suffering a

fall with possible complications like broken bones, or impingements, which cause limited range-of-motion is much higher. Not to mention that the unpleasant side effects of nausea and painful headaches can be alleviated through the proper treatment, which will help you to get back to living a good quality of life.

Patient & Occupational 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, and mobility 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 & Occupational therapy.

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

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Hearing Loss Linked to Alzheimer's Disease

June is Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month. Hearing loss is connected to a number of other health conditions. Several studies have indicated a link between it and cognitive decline, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease.

Arthur Wingfield, who teaches Neuroscience at Brandeis University, has been studying cognitive aging and the link between memory and hearing. Wingfield's research has shown that untreated hearing loss can lead to an increased amount of stress and poorer performance when it comes to memory tests.

"Even if you have just a mild hearing loss that is not being treated, cognitive load increases significantly," said Wingfield. "You have to put in so much effort just to perceive and understand what is being said that you divert resources away from storing what you have heard into your memory." This suggests that when your brain has to put in more effort to properly process and make sense of auditory information, your ability to retain that information may suffer.

A number of studies have also come out showing a link between hearing loss and dementia. In a 2011 study conducted by Frank Lin, an otologist and epidemiologist at John Hopkins University, and his colleagues' indicated that seniors with hearing loss are more likely to develop forms of dementia over time than individuals with normal hearing. And in 2013 they found that "hearing loss is independently associated with the accelerated cognitive decline and incident impairment in community-dwelling older adults." Which means that hearing loss, independent of other causes and contributors, was found to put people at greater risk of cognitive impairment.

Some experts believe that treating hearing loss with professionally fitted hearing aids could help delay dementia. Unfortunately, for many different reasons, a majority of individuals don't seek treatment or tend to delay getting hearing aids for many years.

HOW HEARING AIDS SUPPORT HEALTHY BRAINS

Although research into the causal link between hearing loss and different forms of dementia is ongoing, a few studies suggest that keeping mentally active through social connections or other intellectual stimulation may lower the risk of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease. Some ways to stay cognitively active and keep your brain healthy include:

Staying socially engaged: There are many benefits of being socially active, like reducing the risk of dementia and depression. Volunteering, joining a club, or just interacting with friends and family can keep your brain active and keep your mind sharp.

Maintaining a healthy diet: A diet that consists of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains while being low in fat and added sugar can keep your brain cells healthy and reduce the risk of chronic diseases, like obesity and cardiovascular disease. Eating foods with certain nutrients can help improve memory and slow down cognitive decline.

Getting regular exercise: A number of studies have found an association between physical activity and a reduced risk of cognitive decline. Participating in activities like walking, dancing, or swimming can help lower blood pressure, reduce mental stress, and increase blood flow to the brain, which all helps with the prevention of Alzheimer's.

Sources:
<https://www.signiousa.com/blog/hearing-loss-linked-alzheimers-disease/>

Stimulating your brain: Activities that are mentally stimulating help keep your brain healthy and have been shown to reduce the risk of dementia in seniors by as much as 75 percent. Simple ways to stimulate your mind include reading, word puzzles, and crafts.

The impact of untreated hearing loss shouldn't be ignored. It causes emotional and physical difficulties that reduce your ability to fully enjoy life. Addressing hearing loss by seeing a hearing care professional, and if needed, getting fitted with hearing aids, is one important, proactive step you can take to ensure your long-term physical and mental health.

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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Living with Memory Loss and Dementia

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

As we age, it's expected that we all have what is called a 'senior moment' -- momentarily forgetting why we walked into a room, forgetting where we put something. We laugh about it with our friends, calling it an age-related problem, but later wonder was it really a temporary lapse in memory or could it be more serious?

How the brain stores memories

Our brains are a wonderful "computer" that stores memories in different categories: recent--what you ate for breakfast; short-term--the name of a person you met moments ago, and long-term--memories of your childhood.

Aging affects our memory and begins in our 20s. A few cells at a time are lost, with fewer chemicals produced that help the brain function. The older you are, the more these changes affect the memory. There are also changes in the way memories are stored, making it harder to recall information. It's our short- and long-term memories that usually are not affected by aging. Other conditions that can affect memory include depression, side-effects of drugs, strokes, head injuries and alcoholism.

There are some things to help improve memory such as:

- Make lists, use notes
- Stick to routines and use calendars
- Make associations--connect things in your mind
- Put frequently used items in the same place each time
- Learn new things, do brain games, learn a new language
- Exercise, meditation, and deep breathing
- Hydration is important



- Preventative measures such as stop smoking, drink alcohol in moderation
- Sleep is especially important, regenerative and restorative

When is it a serious memory problem?

Don't remember your own phone number or address? Is there something you're forgetting that your spouse or family member has noticed is an increasing frequency? You may want to seek further evaluation from your physician. These scenarios could be an indication of memory decline versus a momentary senior moment:

- You lose your car in the parking lot because you forgot the color, make and model
- You have always had a remarkable memory and now you can't remember anything
- You get lost in places you should know well
- You ask the same questions over and over
- You are unable to follow directions
- You are confused about time, people, or places

Serious memory problems usually worsen over time with lapses becoming the norm. With mild cognitive impairment (MCI), patients are more likely to develop dementia. Although there are many different types and causes of dementia, the four most common are: Alzheimer's, Vascular, Frontotemporal, and Lewy Body. Depending on which one is diagnosed, the progression varies.

Understanding and living with a loved one's dementia

Once reality sinks in that your loved one has been diagnosed with dementia, there can be an anxiety that hangs over you and them. At times each of you may be confused by the reactions and behaviors of the other. That's to be expected and very common.

Hospice of Marion County offers sensitivity training which enables caregivers to have a better understanding of what it's like to be someone living with dementia. This training includes the Virtual Dementia Tour® which helps caregivers understand the challenges people living with dementia face on a daily basis, including Teepa Snow's Positive Approach® techniques which teaches HOW to live in a relationship with someone living with dementia. If you are interested in going through this workshop, contact DJ Ryan, Community Education Liaison RN, who is a Virtual Dementia Tour® Certified Instructor.

DJ can be reached at (352) 857-7644 or at dryan@hospiceofmarion.com



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5 Ways a Move to Senior Living Can Increase Well-Being

The choice to move to senior living can be difficult and emotionally charged. Most people understandably prefer to stay at home as long as possible. But, what I have learned through the years is that many folks who could benefit from a senior living community wait too long before making the decision. In fact, I have heard many residents say they wish they had made the move sooner. Here are the top 5 ways that a move to senior living can improve health and well-being.

- **Safety and Security.** The first and perhaps one of the most common reasons for seeking senior living is safety and security. And indeed, that is a big benefit. But there are others, some of which may be unanticipated.

- **Social contact.** Many older adults who are living alone have too little socialization. Almost all of us have heard the research on the importance of having daily social contact. Seniors who live in isolation are at greater risk for a number of health conditions and even of dying. But, I think few people realize how much better they will feel both physically and emotionally when adequate social contact is restored. Like a wilted plant that is given water, many seniors blossom as a result of living with others in a community setting.

- **Improved nutrition.** Poor nutrition is associated with social isolation. Eating is a social time for most of us. When a person lives alone, there can be a lack of motivation to eat and to prepare balanced, nutritious meals. Many older folks who live alone exist on packaged prepared foods that lack good nutrition. Living in a place where nutritious food is readily available and is enjoyed in the company of others makes a big contribution to well-being.

- **Finding new purpose.** Many older adults have experienced a loss of purpose, whether because of declining health or changing roles in life. Loss of purpose is one of the things that some people believe to be an expectation of growing older. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many older people who move into a community setting are surprised by the new purpose they find.



Research studies have shown that those who have a higher sense of purpose have lower rates of dementia and other chronic health conditions.

- **Better access to health care services.** Almost all senior living communities have some level of health care services. These can include a wellness nurse, visiting physician and/or nurse practitioner, therapy services, and daily wellness checks. This can mean that any changes in health will be noticed and addresses sooner, hopefully avoiding a serious problem and/or a hospital visit.

So, if you or a loved one is considering a move to senior living, think about the many benefits that truly outweigh the difficulty of making such a move. Many people before you have done it and are thriving as a result.

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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.

BRAND NEW STATE OF THE ART MEMORY CARE FACILITY COMING SOON

Pacifica Senior Living is proud to announce the newly anticipated memory care facility within our Ocala community. To keep your loved ones safe and to provide them with all of the training, health-care, daily activities assistance and warm care necessary, Pacifica Senior Living has a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to those with neurodegenerative disorders and cognitive decline.

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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Bunions Are Quite Painful—Podiatric Treatments Work to Relieve Your Discomfort & Help You Enjoy Life Again

Dr. Brent Carter

Fashion and trends in shoe wear are often the cause of women's discomfort and issues with their feet. One condition in particular that has been plaguing women for years is bunions. Like other inflammatory arthritic conditions, bunions can be hereditary. It's not uncommon for patients to tell their podiatrist that their mother, sister, or aunt had bunions. After the age of 40, many women begin to notice that their big toe joint hurts, and in moderate to severe cases, it may even begin to protrude and rub on the inside of their shoes. Once this happens painful sores can form, and the joint may begin to swell, causing even more discomfort.

What Can You Do?

Many women will try and work through the pain, but bunions are progressive and once they become inflamed, many people succumb to wearing more comfortable shoes, or using gel toe inserts that help keep the toes in the proper alignment. Icing the foot can help to tamp down inflammations, as well as taking NSAID's (ibuprofen) as needed to lessen the discomfort.

When the conservative approach begins to stop working, which is NOT unusual as most bunions fail to heal on their own, surgery is the definitive answer.

American Foot & Ankle Centers Offers Advanced Surgical Options

In bunion surgery, the toe bone is cut in half, and part of the bone is removed. In many cases, there is a need to relieve tension on surrounding ligaments and tendons to try and realign the joint and bones. Generally, bunion surgery is done under an ankle block, which means that your foot will be completely numb, but you will not need to go under general anesthesia in most cases. Surgery can include removing bony spurs, removing part of the toe bone, relieving tension on ligaments and tendons, realigning and reconnecting the joint and bones. Depending on the complexity of your surgery depends on your need and level of anesthesia.

The total recovery can take a few months, but initially, you will be in a protective boot or cast for the first two to four weeks. You will be able to get around, but you must take precautions as to not injure your surgical site, and instead, allow the foot and toe time to heal properly.

BUNIONS ARE PAINFUL! *It's always best to be proactive and get them treated before they get too advanced.*

A podiatrist will evaluate your symptoms and pain level, and from there create an individualized plan for your best treatment options. They will provide you with the best solution for your needs.



Schedule an Appointment Today



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Medical Marijuana Delivery: A New Booming Sector in The Industry

As of the lockdown, medical marijuana delivery and contact-free pick up services have seen a huge rise in popularity. The state of Florida saw a 40% increase in medical marijuana sales with delivery focused dispensaries such as One Plant potentially reaching even higher numbers. With the looming uncertainty of things returning to normal, many patients have stocked up on products as this also limits exposure by reducing the number of visits to the dispensaries. Most dispensaries have had delivery services for some time now, and that option was mostly used by those either too far from the dispensary or those who are homebound. But this sentiment has shifted, and the majority are resorting to safer, contact-free options such as this and taking advantage of telemedicine to recertify over the phone.

Unfortunately, while convenient, it does leave patients limited as they cannot go and drive to the storefront and mostly have to abide to the delivery window. To address this, dispensaries such as Grow Healthy have shown a game changing service with delivery times as short as a couple hours; now making it as quick and simple as ordering a pizza. As new standards are set through the upcoming months, time will tell whether or not the delivery sector will continue to see the same amount of growth within the industry as we enter uncharted territory.

Why is Medical Marijuana so Effective and in Demand?

The endocannabinoid system (ECS) is a group of endogenous cannabinoid receptors located in the mammalian brain and throughout the central and peripheral nervous systems, consisting of neuro-modulatory lipids and their receptors. The endocannabinoid system can be found in nearly any mammal with a vertebrae. The endocannabinoid system is involved in regulating many key bodily processes, including blood pressure, immunity, stress, inflammation, neurotoxicity, and digestive functions. The endocannabinoid system within the human body is a network of cell receptors that respond to key molecules found in marijuana – THC and CBD in particular. CB1 receptors are most densely concentrated in parts of the brain and central nervous system, and less densely found throughout the rest of the body. CB2 receptors, on the other hand, are less densely located in the brain



regions, and more concentrated in the peripheral nervous system and organs. The mapping of these receptors fits well with the diverse range of symptoms and conditions that are found to respond positively to medical marijuana.

In addition to regulating neuronal excitability and inflammation in pain circuits, the endocannabinoid system has been shown to play a regulatory role in movement, appetite, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis modulation, immunomodulation, mood, blood pressure, bone density, tumor surveillance, neuroprotection and reproduction. The endocannabinoid system has also been shown to affect sensory perception, cardiac output, cerebral blood flow and intraocular pressure.

How to Become a Patient

You must first be Certified by a Licensed and Certified Marijuana Doctor who will provide a patient number for you to order your Medical Marijuana Card from the State of Florida Department of Health Office of Medical Marijuana Use.

Patients with a qualifying medical condition can become a Florida Medical Marijuana Patient in two easy steps:

1. Fill out the form above, or call us at (844) 420-7277 or call one of our Local Offices: Certified Medical Marijuana Doctors Offices
2. Once you are certified by one of the Medical Marijuana Doctors you will receive an email link to order your medical marijuana card from the State of Florida.



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www.cmmmr.com

When You Are At Your Wits End

By Pastor Tim Neptune

Have you ever been at your wits' end? Have you ever been so confused that you didn't really know which way was up? Have you ever had the feeling, "I know I need to do something...but I don't know what's something'to do."

The Bible tells the story of a group of sailors who went out to sea and encountered a huge storm that almost killed them:

²³Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. ²⁴They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep. ²⁵For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. ²⁶They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. ²⁷They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. ²⁸Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. ²⁹He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. ³⁰They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. ³¹Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Psalm 107:23-31

Can you relate to this group of sailors? Maybe the circumstances in your life have caused your courage to melt away. Perhaps you are going through a storm of your own. You may find yourself at your wits' end without any clear direction as to what to do next. If so, follow the example of the sailors in the Bible.

There first thing they did was cry out to the LORD in their trouble. Don't underestimate the power of prayer. An old gospel song says, "when God is all you have, you'll find He's all you need." God responded to the sailor's prayer by bringing them out of their distress. In fact, it says he stilled the storm to a whisper and the waves of the sea were hushed. God can do that in your life and in your situation as well. Call out to him. His timing is not always as quick as we may like but He knows what is best for each of us.



When the storm was over, the text says that God guided the sailors to their desired haven. They found their place of rest and peace. Storms don't last forever... and neither will yours. Keep your faith in God. Cry out to Him in your pain. Trust that He knows what's best and keep praying and seeking your desired haven... it may be just around the corner.

And then, don't forget to thank God when He does bring you through the storm. The story concludes by saying, *"Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men."*

Storms, crises, pain and problems are an unfortunate reality of life. We grow through the pain and learn valuable lessons during these times. Don't give up, give in, or quit. When you find yourself at your wits' end... hang on, cry out to God, and look for His deliverance.

Make your cerebral cortex go 'ahhhh.'

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A photograph of an older couple embracing outdoors. The woman is smiling broadly, and the man is looking at her with a gentle smile. They are both wearing blue denim shirts. The background is a soft-focus landscape with a body of water and a sunset or sunrise sky.

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