

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

June 2021

Lake/Sumter Edition - Monthly

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**Life Beyond a
Cancer Diagnosis**

**Summer Travel
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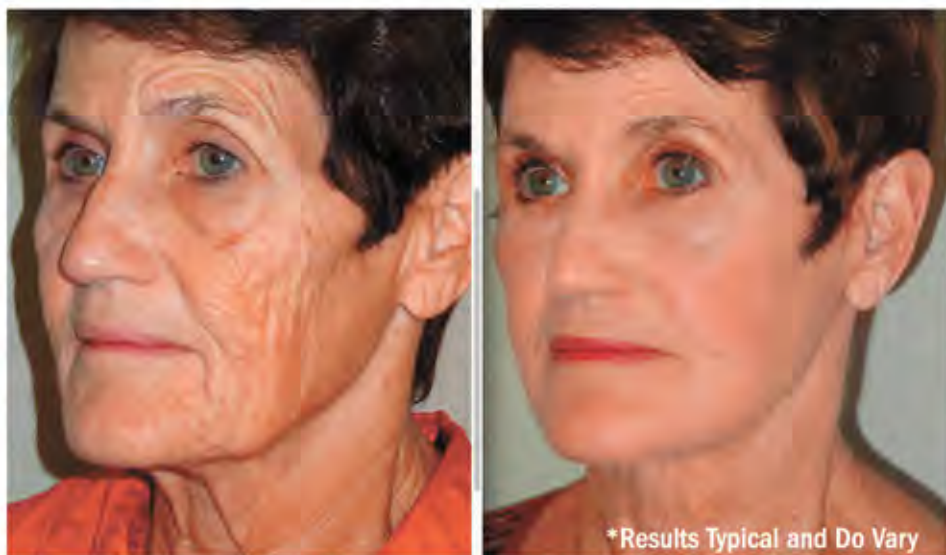


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TREATMENT OF VENOUS DISEASE/ VARICOSE VEINS

TIRED & ACHING LEGS?

If you suffer from varicose and spider veins, you are not alone.

WHAT ARE VARICOSE VEINS?

Although veins and arteries are both part of the circulatory system, they work in very different ways from each other.

WHAT CAUSES VARICOSE VEINS?

Some predisposing factors include aging, standing occupations, and leg injury or trauma.

WHEN AND HOW ARE VEINS TREATED?

The most commonly asked questions are:

"Do veins require treatment?" and "What treatment is best?"

TREATMENT METHODS

- ENDOVENOUS THERMAL ABLATION
- ENDOVENOUS CHEMICAL ABLATION
- SCLEROTHERAPY

WHAT RESULTS CAN YOU EXPECT?

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- EVALUATION OF CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIAS
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BREAKTHROUGH IOL TECHNOLOGIES FROM LAKE EYE

Deciding to treat the blur, muting and potential danger of cataracts is a smart decision, one designed to dramatically improve vision, safety and quality of life. But having a clouded natural lens removed is only the first part of cataract surgery – the second is having a new intraocular lens (IOL) implanted in its stead. IOLs come with a variety of features, so it's important to work with your eye doctor to choose the one that will provide the optimal vision correction for the way you live. Your best IOL is suited to the unique condition of your eye and matches your vision goals. To that end, Lake Eye offers a wide range of the most advanced IOL technologies to give you every potential for sharp, brilliant vision that caters to your daily needs now and over the long term.

As you may know, Lake Eye is a practice heralded for technological and procedural firsts in the region: we were the first local provider qualified to perform the bladeless Femto Laser cataract system, and the first to offer a complete range of the most advanced FDA-approved IOLs ever created, including:

The Tecnis® Symphony® extended range of vision IOL – the Symphony lens delivers a full range of continuous, high quality vision at far and intermediate distances, and improves near vision, even age-related loss of near vision (presbyopia), better than a standard monofocal IOL.

The AcrySof IQ® lens – this lens provides improvements to key elements involved in clear, sharp vision, including minimizing spherical aberrations, enhancing contrast and colors, and delivering filtered blue light protection to safeguard eye health.

The AcrySof IQ PanOptix® – available in both trifocal and toric trifocal (for patients with astigmatism), the PanOptix IOL improves distant, intermediate and near vision by enhancing light to the retina, mimicking healthy natural vision.



The AcrySof® IQ Vivity™ – the Vivity provides superior extended-range vision compared to a standard IOL, providing clarity at both far distances and at arm's length, with improvement to close-up vision. Unlike multifocal IOLs, the Vivity uses advanced non-diffractive X-wave™ technology to provide continuous vision across a broader scope with improved contrast sensitivity, especially in low light.

The Tecnis Eyhance™ – the Eyhance monofocal IOL provides superior depth of focus and image contrast, even in low light conditions. For patients with astigmatism, the Eyhance Toric II is engineered to provide advanced correction of eyeball irregularities.

Dr. Scot Holman is the first local surgeon to implant the Eyhance IOL. "The Eyhance provides the precision of a monofocal lens as well as depth-of-focus benefits that can compete with some multifocal lenses," says Dr. Holman. "The Eyhance can deliver dramatic improvement across a range of vision fields without correction overlap."

Dr. Holman and Dr. Gutti were among the first local surgeons to implant the Vivity monofocal IOL. "The Vivity offers renewed clarity and depth

of focus to patients with presbyopia," says Dr. Gutti. "Unlike a standard monofocal lens, the Vivity can improve vision across a range of distances while reducing or eliminating a person's dependence on reading glasses. It is a monofocal that behaves somewhat like a multifocal, providing the best of both worlds for certain patients."

Dr. Holman and Dr. Vinay Gutti are both excited about the AcrySof IQ and AcrySof IQ PanOptix IOLs. "The PanOptix in particular is truly amazing," says Dr. Gutti. "It bends light toward the retina like a normal, healthy lens, and provides trifocal vision correction. The technology is incredible."

All three doctors are also enthusiastic about lens technologies that will soon be available, including Johnson and Johnson's Tecnis Synergy™, a continuous range of vision IOL that provides high-contrast correction at all distances, even in dim lighting. It corrects presbyopia while improving distant and intermediate vision, and promotes focusing capabilities that rival natural vision. Approved for commercial use in many European countries, the Synergy IOL is expected to be FDA-approved soon for use here in the US. "And, of course, we intend to be among the first surgeons in the area to offer it," says Dr. Wehrly. "It is part of Lake Eye's commitment to remain at the forefront of the newest and best technologies. It is what our patients expect and deserve."

Lake Eye offers an impressive selection of monofocal, multifocal and extended range of vision IOLs, including toric versions to address astigmatism, for the widest range of options to correct vision challenges and cater to individual budgets.

For the most revolutionary, sophisticated and effective cataract solutions, including the latest in IOL technologies, Central Florida relies on the experienced doctors and staff of Lake Eye, the region's leader in clear, healthy vision.





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LAKE EYE

Board-Certified Ophthalmologists (left to right):
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Scott R. Wehrly, MD

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IGNORING COMMON CARDIAC SYMPTOMS LEADS TO CRITICAL ISSUES

T.E. Vallabhan, MD, FACC

John F. Kennedy once said, “The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining.” This statement holds true when we focus on many of the issues in life, especially our health. Some of the most common cardiac risk symptoms are often overlooked. Ideally, individuals should start to be mindful of their heart health from a younger age, but it’s never too late to improve your cardiac function or to get the treatment you need to enhance your lifestyle and overall health.

People are living longer, and staying healthy is at the forefront of most our minds. The aging population is primarily concerned about keeping up with their grandchildren and having the capability to freely live an active lifestyle well into their eighties and nineties, but without being proactive about our cardiac health, we set ourselves up for critical heart disorders and issues.

Some of the things we can do are to follow a heart-healthy nutrition plan like the Mediterranean diet. We should also incorporate regular exercise and keep our stress levels down. If you smoke, you **MUST** quit now to help your body heal from the damage to the blood vessels and arteries that have already taken place. It’s never too late to stop smoking.

Cardiac Risk Factors & Indicators

- High Blood Pressure
- High Cholesterol
- Tightness in Chest
- Shortness of Breath
- Jaw pain
- Arm Pain
- Back Pain
- Fatigue

These symptoms are significant indicators of heart disease, but the most common warning sign that people have is —Ignoring their symptoms!

It’s the familiar adage of denial—If we ignore or avoid the symptoms, then we don’t have to deal with any of the accountability. However, just like most things, if you ignore them, they’ll go away, but not in a right way.



If left untreated, they will go away through deterioration and damage, and eventually death. Being proactive about your heart’s health is imperative.

Unfortunately, many people are more sedentary than they’d like to believe. A limited or lack of physical activity is not going to do your body or your heart much good. In our modernized world, we have grown complacent. We don’t walk as much to get from A to B; instead, we drive a car to work, sit at a desk all day, drive home, sit down to eat dinner and then sit in front of the television until we go to bed. If this sounds even remotely familiar, you need to have a consultation with a cardiologist to test your cardiac condition.

Coupled with a sedentary lifestyle, the prevalence of individuals being diagnosed with diabetes is astronomical. Diabetes is a significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Very often obesity and diabetes work in conjunction to damage your heart and arteries, deplete your nutrient, oxygen-rich blood, and can cause venous insufficiency and blood clotting issues. If you have diabetes or suspect that you may, it’s critical to seek medical attention to get your blood sugar levels to a manageable state and to assist you with an overall healthy lifestyle plan.

Risk Factors For Heart Disease

- Age
- Family history
- Smoking
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Overweight
- Chronic stress

What You Can Do

- See a cardiologist for important diagnostic testing
- Don’t ignore symptoms
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Avoid sugar and salt in excess
- Stop smoking
- Exercise daily (at least a 30-minute walk)

This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor or health care provider. We encourage you to discuss with your doctor any questions or concerns you may have.

Dr. V

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 SPECIALIST IN DISEASES OF THE HEART, ARTERIES AND VEINS

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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 ever 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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May-Thurner Syndrome:

A Vascular Disorder Affecting Mostly Women

By Bryan Carter, MPA-C, Phlebology-Surgery

Blood is carried toward the heart through our veins, and is called venous flow; blood is carried away from the heart through our arteries and is called arterial flow. Because proper blood circulation aids the body's movement of nutrients and oxygen to the extremities, heart, brain and other organs, it's imperative to maintain and improve our arterial and venous blood flow as we age. However, it's not uncommon for arteries and veins to fluctuate directional flow, but with May Thurner Syndrome, it can lead to dangerous outcomes like impinged blood flow and DVTs (deep vein thrombosis).

The right iliac artery and the left iliac vein intersect within the pelvis. With May Thurner Syndrome, the left iliac vein can become "kinked" from the pressure of the right iliac artery, pressing it against the lumbar spine, and in turn, may cause the blood flow to become partially or fully blocked. This is how dangerous DVT's can form. Females suffer from this disorder more commonly than men.

Symptoms

The bad news is May Thurner Syndrome rarely shows signs and symptoms. Small indicators may be swelling in your left leg and/or some discomfort or the following.

- Enlarged veins
- Leg feels heavy
- Skin color changes
- Swollen leg
- Warmth
- Pain

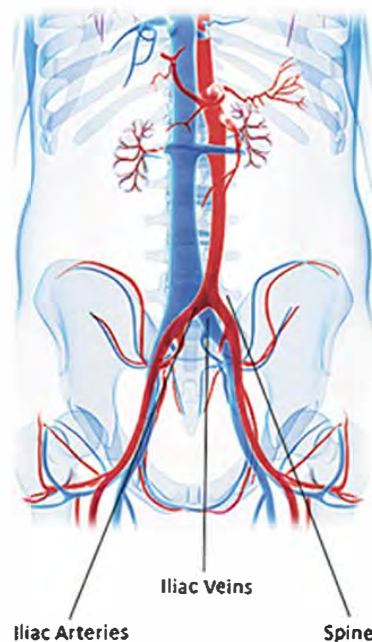
Risks

- Blood clotting factors (medications, health-related or genetics)
- Hormonal Medications (birth control, menopause)
- Child birth
- Dehydration
- Scoliosis
- Spinal compression
- Female

DVTs are life-threatening and should be treated immediately. Deep vein thrombosis is a blood clot in the veins that are formed deep in within the legs. Vascular malformations, pelvic tumors or sitting for long periods of time are some of the risk factors that go along with DVTs.



Iliac Veins & Iliac Arteries In The Pelvic Area



DVTs are life-threatening, as they can lead to a pulmonary embolism. Thankfully, surgical solutions save lives. Every year, over 2 million people are affected by deep vein thrombosis, and sadly over 200,000 of these cases end in death. These are grim statistics since the treatment is minimal and so readily available to patients. It's unfortunate that there still seems to be more of a reactive process, than a proactive plan. Speaking to your physician is vital if you or a loved one have any of the venous symptoms or risk factors discussed above.

Diagnostic testing includes contrast venography, duplex ultrasonography, or other imaging of the iliac venous and arterial flow.

Treatment

With DVT's, and those caused by May Thurner Syndrome, the treatment is standard. A stent needs to be placed in the vein and/or artery to open the blood flow, as well as prescribing medication for anticoagulation, like warfarin or another blood thinner to prevent future clotting complications.

Making an appointment with a person that specializes in venous disease is your best place to start.

At Village Heart & Vein Center, Bryan Carter specializes in venous issues and leg health, taking great pride in getting to know his patients on an individual level. He is supported by a full-service cardiology practice. Mr. Carter is a previous Army combat medic who obtained his Masters in Physician Assistant studies with a thesis in Venous Disease and Treatment. Mr. Carter has been treating vein problems since October 2002 and was one of the first Physician Assistants to perform thermal ablation—a treatment that soon made traditional vein stripping extinct. Bryan has personally trained physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners throughout Florida and Georgia and is an active member of the American College of Phlebology. He is also one of only a few to be inducted into the American Venous Forum.

To find out more, please visit their website at villageheartandvein.com, or call their office to schedule your appointment at, (352) 674-2080.



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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.

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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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Learn How P+G EQUALS an R Rating in The Bedroom

There are two secrets that are starting to gain more attention due to their ability to treat the root cause of erectile dysfunction. And when they are coupled together, the results are remarkable, and numerous men and their partners are clamoring to find out more.

With these two alternative treatment options, you can kiss the little blue pill goodbye—forever.

For men between the ages of 40 to 70, erectile dysfunction is extremely common. It's critical to see a medical professional if you are experiencing difficulty in getting and maintaining an erection, but most physicians will not try to get to the root cause of your condition.

The standard treatments for erectile dysfunction are prescription medications that cause an erection for a limited amount of time. However, there is a better way than the standard of care that actually TREATS erectile dysfunction at its core. These are GAINSWave and the P-Shot.

WHAT IS GAINSWave?

The GAINSWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINSWave uses scientifically proven technology through sound waves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. Traditional treatments for ED, such as pills or injections, lose effectiveness over time and have to be used every time a man wants to engage in sexual activity. GAINSWave helps men to feel like themselves again and to enjoy their lives.

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



WHAT IS THE P-Shot?

The P-Shot is a spun down platelet rich plasma that is taken from the patient's own blood and injected into the penis. The P-Shot is comprised of the patient's stem cells that stimulate new tissue growth, collagen formation. Because it's not a foreign substance, the body accepts it naturally, and the results are amazing. Stem cells have the potential to differentiate into many different types of cells and can serve as an internal repair system, which can replace damaged tissue and help to regenerate new healthy tissue and cells.

The P-Shot also helps men with Peyronie's disease by stimulating circulation and lessening the scar tissue associated with the disorder. No longer do men have to rely on the tiny blue pill that causes so many adverse side effects. Now, there is a safe, natural alternative to help so many men with ED and Peyronie's disease.

Added Benefits

GAINSWave and the P-Shot also helps men with Peyronie's disease by stimulating circulation and removing the plaque and scar tissue associated with the disorder.

CONTACT US FOR A FREE CONSULT WITH OUR GAINSWAVE PROVIDER!

Call them to day to schedule your appointment at (352) 259-5190.

If you want drug-free alternative options for your health needs, TNT treats both male and female patients who desire alternative therapies to get to the root cause of their conditions.

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At TNT, their goal is to empower you to achieve your optimal state of health. Their vision is to create a wellness mindset momentum that is infectious—leaving obesity, illness, and disease behind—for lives that are truly healthy. Looking better, feeling better and functioning optimally is the key to a life of vitality! Let them help you achieve wellness for life!

TNT offers free monthly seminars to find out more about GAINSWave and the P-Shot.

Call them to day to schedule your appointment at (352) 259-5190.



TOTAL NUTRITION AND THERAPEUTICS

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WWW.TNT4ME.COM



By Dr. J. Mandume Kerina

OPIOID FREE ANESTHESIA for OUTPATIENT TOTAL HIP AND TOTAL KNEE REPLACEMENT

Dr. Kerina and his colleagues have spent their professional life studying how to combat the effects of arthritis. They have helped develop advanced surgical techniques to reliably help to revitalize your life. This has culminated in our current opioid free joint replacement program.

The overuse and abuse of opioid pain medication has become a national crisis. Studies have shown that a significant number of addiction cases begin with the use of opioids for pain relief after surgery. Utilizing a team approach involving primary care, anesthesia, our surgeons, and the home health team, we have developed a multi-faceted pain management program for perioperative pain control that is opioid free.

Phase one of our program started with the development and adoption of ligament and muscle sparing approaches to the hip and knee. These do not violate nerve, artery, or muscle planes. These approaches have changed our postoperative pain profile and significantly lessened our patient's dependence on opioids.

Phase 2 followed with the development of a series of long-acting nerve blocks that are effective in alleviating pain for 48 to 72 hours covering the post-op pain profile.

Phase 3 followed with the development of our opioid free anesthesia protocol which allows our patients to wake up more alert and oriented in recovery to begin immediate mobilization postoperatively.

Our patients are now able to be discharged home as Outpatient Surgical patients at a much higher functional level than before.

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This is now approved beginning January 2021 and we have perfected outpatient total joint replacement over the last few years to be ready to deliver this to our patients safely.

Dementia and Music Therapy

6.2 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia, and that number is on the rise. Memory, reasoning, problem solving, and thinking are all affected with dementia, and it is a progressive disease with no meaningful cure.

The Benefits of Music Therapy

Music is something that we all enjoy, it evokes memories, creates interest, joy and familiarity. With dementia and Alzheimer's patients, music therapy is known to create a fluency, positive mood change and stimulation.

At Sumter Senior Living Kim Cieri is the Activities Director and implements music therapy into group and individual settings for their memory care community. The residents with cognitive decline show an overall sense of recognition and delight. Research shows that patients that undergo music therapy have a connection between the brain and auditory senses that triggers recall.

There has been story after story of loved ones with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia that does not know their family members, cannot formulate a sentence and appear to have lost all hope, but when music is introduced back into their life, something remarkable happens. They become happy, they recall the words, they try to sing along and in many cases, their communication becomes better, and they have an improved understanding. If you play music that is familiar from their time and era, the patient becomes happier with a sense of nostalgia.

This is why Sumter Senior living believes wholeheartedly that music therapy should consistently be a part of their residents activities. With ongoing music therapy, memory care residents feel more connected and are able to enjoy more quality time throughout the day.

See Yourself Here

Sumter Senior Living provides Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care services and amenities catered to the individual.

Our **Independent Living** lifestyle provides the day-to-day freedom to come and go and the convenience of any number of activities to choose from. It is the perfect fit for an active, healthy lifestyle where residents enjoy all-inclusive, restaurant-quality dining and weekly social gatherings. Sumter Senior Living is dedicated to empowering residents to explore personal interests and connect you with the



greater community through transportation and full access to The Villages® amenities. Our Grande Clubhouse includes a full bar, heated pool, and fitness center. There is also golf cart accessibility with charging stations convenience.

Our **Assisted Living** lifestyle is truly catered to the individual, providing support and care that stands out from any other. Enjoy the comforts of home to call your very own and personalized assistance with daily routines that promote a healthy, social, and active lifestyle. Research shows that seniors who stay active and social experience better health, a greater sense of well-being, and may recover from illness quicker. Our planned activities and events provide fulfilling experiences each day with 24-7 help at your fingertips.

Our **Memory Care** specializes in providing compassionate care to individuals with dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and other neurodegenerative conditions. The challenges presented by memory loss can be difficult to navigate, but our specialized Village Program® is here to help every step of the way. The Village Program® offers personalized programming that engages residents in activities to best reflect their former schedules, lifestyles, and interests while providing a safe place where their unique interests are nurtured. We also provide It's Never 2 Late (iN2L) technology to engage and stimulate the intellect and provide connection through innovative technology.

Senior living encompasses many lifestyles and living options. From Independent Living to Memory Care, Sumter Senior Living is designed to enhance the lives and well-being of all. And our knowledgeable and

experienced associates are here to assist and provide the resources for ensuring you or your loved ones find what best works for your family.

Sumter Senior Living is managed by Grace Management, Inc. (GMI), an industry leader in providing the best senior living experience. The company has been able to elevate industry standards by delivering exceptional living experiences while providing the resources and information seniors and their loved ones need to make important life decisions. Grace Management, Inc. is a subsidiary of CPF Living Communities and is ranked in ASHA's 50 largest seniors housing owners.

**For more information, please visit
www.gracemanagement.com.**

For more information about Sumter Senior Living or to schedule a personalized visit please call us at: 352-707-9959 or visit our website: www.SumterSeniorLiving.com.

We look forward to hearing from you!



SUMTER SENIOR LIVING

A GRACE MGMT COMMUNITY

1490 Killingsworth Way, The Villages, Florida 32162

352.707-9959

www.sumterseniorliving.com

Assisted Living License Number: 12227

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:

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Summer Travel Safety Tips

During the summer months here in Florida, numerous people are looking forward to finally getting together with small groups of friends and family for beach outings, vacations, relaxing poolside, and enjoying BBQs, but with all of this activity, it's important to stay safe during these long, hot, sun-filled days. When the times comes for our travel or fun to begin, there are often injuries that can coincide.

Should You or Shouldn't You Wear a Mask?

The CDC has stated that wearing masks is optional for those that have been fully vaccinated from COVID-19, but it's still wise to choose what is best for you specifically. If you have underlying health issues, wearing a mask, practicing good hygiene and staying away from large crowds might be important for a while longer. It is still recommended that masks be worn in healthcare settings such as hospitals and physician offices.

Planes, Trains and Automobiles

When traveling for long distances, whether by car, plane, or other means, we can become somewhat cramped up in small spaces. It's wise to take breaks, get up and stretch or move and to get the muscles moving and the blood circulating to prevent injuries. Moving throughout the trip can help limit stress on the spine, shoulders, neck, back, and hips.

It's also essential to think about the heavy luggage that you'll need to lift in and out of the car or place in the overhead bin. Is it too heavy, and do you know how to lift it correctly? Lifting from the waist is not a good idea as it can put extreme stress on your back. Bending your legs is the proper way to lift heavier objects. Try to pack as lightly as possible and ask for help if you've got several bags.

Hottest Times of the Day

The summer months can be unbearably hot. With weather approaching the upper 90's and on some days, triple digits, the heat can be unbearable at times and downright dangerous, this is particularly the case when we factor in high levels of humidity. Along with the risk of heat stroke and cardiovascular issues, being outside in the summer heat can cause muscles to cramp and tear. It's best to limit or alleviate any activities outside when the is too hot. Going out in the early morning or evening may be best as it's usually cooler. Staying inside, in the airconditioned areas are best. Remember to stay hydrated, avoid caffeinated and sugary drinks, and be smart about the heat.



Ways to stay cool and avoid the heat-related health issues

- Drink extra water
- Talk to your physician about reducing your diuretic pills
- DO NOT exercise, garden, or walk around in the heat
- Avoid the hottest times of the day (10:00 am to 4:00 pm)
- Eat plenty of cooling foods like vegetables and fruit
- Stay in an air-conditioned room
- Avoid caffeinated and sugary drinks

This Summer, the best advice is to enjoy your time with family, relax, but be extra cautious and proactive about your health during this time of year.

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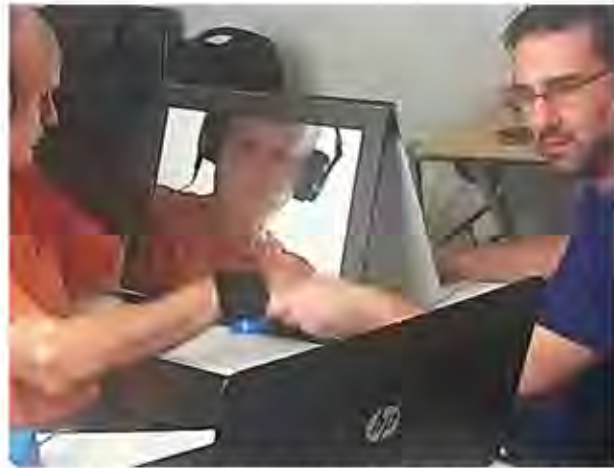


Stuart Dickson, Fiduciary of Vimvest

WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL NEUROLOGY?

By Alexander C. Frank, DC, DACNB, FABES

“Your brain knows what YOUR senses tell it.” Breakthroughs in clinical neuroscience have revealed that the brain is able to change and learn throughout one’s entire life, including after an injury or disease process. This ability of the brain to change in structure and function is referred to as neuroplasticity. Dr. Frank applies his extensive knowledge of human anatomy and physiology to utilize drug-free treatments that drive the process of neuroplasticity. In layman’s terms, his treatments “up-grade the software [brain, nervous system] to improve the hardware [muscles, etc.] output/function”.



ONE TO ONE ADVANCED NEUROLOGICAL REHABILITATION

How Functional Neurology Differs

Although its applications have been practiced for generations, functional neurology as a health care discipline is a relatively new concept. In recent years it has gained significant momentum and wide acceptance as a proactive brain performance strategy and a powerful treatment option for disorders of the nervous system. The practice of functional neurology spans multiple disciplines, including chiropractic, psychology, conventional medicine, optometry, audiology, and physical and occupational therapies.

The key difference between Dr. Frank and a medical neurologist lies primarily in their approaches to treatment. A medical neurologist is focused on the diagnosis of structural pathology and utilizes pharmaceutical and surgical interventions to treat disease—Dr. Frank views his clients as diamonds, evaluating all facets of their health. Once the root cause(s) [suspects] of their health issues are identified, treatment plans can be tailored to that individual’s needs.

Dr. Frank underwent both doctoral (chiropractic college) and post-graduate (chiropractic neurology) training, along with completing a 2-year internship with one of the top Functional Neurologists in the world, as part of a rigorous certification process. The intensive training undertaken ensures a higher level of clinical efficacy proficiency.

DO NOT ACCEPT “LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT”.
THE BRAIN CAN CHANGE!



As an artist or chef uses many tools to bring their inspirations to life, Dr. Frank has a virtually unlimited arsenal of cutting-edge treatments and technologies in order to benefit the needs of any individual. Anything that can be used to stimulate the nervous system (e.g., vision, sound, smell, movement, balance, etc.) can be used as a method of neurological modulation (e.g., Drug-Free) therapy. These modalities are directed by some of the most advanced and clinically reliable assessments available today. Programs are supported by Functional Medicine approaches where metabolic function is assessed and improved with specific diet and nutritional interventions.

Who Can Benefit?

Dr. Frank has worked with a broad spectrum of patients: from brain-injured premature infants to Senior Olympic Centurions. Any brain can benefit from evaluation and training with Dr. Frank: Whether you are burdened with a chronic condition that you have been told to “learn to live with,” have a child with developmental issues, are facing age-related memory loss and cognitive decline, have vertigo/dizziness or are looking to elevate your current level of academic, or athletic performance, Dr. Frank’s brilliant insight and cutting-edge tools can help you or a loved one to meet and exceed health care goals and/or improve quality of life.



HELP THEM TO EXCEL BEYOND THEIR WILDEST DREAMS...
WITHOUT THE USE OF DRUGS



About Dr. Frank

I understand that no two people are quite alike, and as such, no two injuries or pains manifest themselves identically. That’s why I offer a diverse range of neurological techniques,

chiropractic adjusting techniques, treatments, therapies, along with nutritional support, to better assist you and your loved ones’ on the road to optimal health & maximum potential.

Dr. Alexander Charles Frank is the only Board Certified Chiropractic Neurologist in the North Central Florida area. He also holds a fellowship in Electrodiagnostic Specialties. Current course works includes Fellowship studies in Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation, Vestibular and Concussion Rehabilitation, Childhood Developmental Disorders, and more.

Dr. Frank graduated Cum Laude from Life Chiropractic College West. He has interned and trained with the top chiropractic neurologists and functional medicine specialists in the world, in order to manage the most complicated of health issues.

Dr. Frank’s comprehensive evaluations assess for the root cause(s) of his clients health issues. Treatment plans are then tailored to an individual’s specific needs. In addition, Dr. Frank utilizes the most cutting-edge diagnostics and rehabilitation technologies. The Dx100 Video Oculography (eye tracking) systems helps to detect traumatic brain injury (concussion), dizziness, and other issues. The RightEye system assess for reading proficiency, along with other eye tracking issues that can impair both academic and athletic performance.

Dr. Frank has always felt an inner drive to serve his community. He has been a part of the Fire Rescue and EMS service since 1989, beginning at the age of 13. He received his state certification as a Fire Fighter II and Emergency Medical Technician in 1994. Dr. Frank served with Alachua County Fire Rescue during his studies in Gainesville, FL. He continued his Fire-Rescue career after college with the city of Plantation (FL) Fire Department, receiving the Rookie of the Year award for his Battalion in 1997.

To Schedule your appointment with Dr. Frank,
please call the Florida Functional Neurology
Group at (352) 571-5155.



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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 Johns 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.signiausa.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.

Premear Hearing Clinics: Our family continues to provide you with quality hearing products and excellent customer service. We also offer FREE 30 Day Trials, FREE Lifetime Servicing, FREE Repairs for any hearing aid from any manufacturer, and provide Financing options to fit your budget with 0% interest to you. We also accept many insurance plans. At Premear Hearing it is our goal to better your hearing and your quality of life.

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Obstructive Sleep Apnea & Oral Appliances: A Solution for a Good Night's Sleep

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDSM

Sleep apnea affects more than 25 million people in the United States. It is a progressive condition that interrupts breathing patterns throughout a person's sleep. People that suffer from Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) may have episodes of stopping breathing up to hundreds of times per night for 10 seconds or longer, and along with this disruption comes many adverse side effects and morbidities.

What Causes Sleep Apnea?

The Short answer to sleep apnea's cause is that the airway collapses during sleep due to one or more of the following conditions, obesity, drinking alcohol, smoking, stress, lung disease like COPD, emphysema or asthma, drugs, and various ailments. Once the sleep pattern is disrupted, the lack of oxygen to the brain and heart can cause serious health concerns and implications.

What are the Side Effects and Complications Associated with Sleep Apnea?

- High blood pressure
- Cardiovascular disorders
- Chronic disease
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Behavioral issues
- Stroke
- Brain health impairment

If not treated, over time, OSA can lead to heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, and other serious complications.

What are the symptoms of Sleep Apnea?

- Snoring
- Gasping
- Dry mouth
- Choking
- Cognitive decline or brain fog
- Restless sleeping
- Depression and irritability

Obstructive Sleep Apnea & Oral Appliances:

Have you tried CPAP therapy and failed?

The customary first line of treatment for sleep apnea is a PAP device. However, many patients are unable to tolerate the use of a PAP, and therefore are not achieving optimum treatment results. Those patients are candidates for Oral Appliance Therapy, or OAT. Research shows that a custom-fit oral appliance is an effective therapeutic treatment option for Obstructive Sleep Apnea and can also help to eliminate snoring. A custom oral appliance is similar to a nightguard or retainer and is designed to assist in opening the airway. By opening the airway, you increase your oxygen intake, as well as improve your sleep, and your over-all health. The American Medical Association, The American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine; all recommend OAT to be prescribed by a Sleep Physician and fabricated by an ABDSM qualified dentist.

The negative effects of poor sleep are numerous. We all know the short term results of not sleeping well and feeling terrible but what about the more serious health concerns? If left untreated, people may experience poor memory, decreased cognitive function leading to dementia and Alzheimer's disease, cardiovascular disease including high blood pressure, insulin resistance, obesity and worsening symptoms of asthma and COPD due to lack of oxygen to the brain during sleeping hours. The good news is that if properly diagnosed and treated early, the effects of Sleep Apnea can be reversed over time.

COVID-19 and Sleep Apnea

It is the position of the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine (AADSMD) that oral appliance therapy (OAT) should be prescribed as a first-line therapy for the treatment of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Village Sleep Dentistry
352.430.1710
villagesleepdentistry.com

1950 Laurel Manor Drive, Suite 180B
The Villages, Florida 32162

This recommendation is being made based on the following information:

- The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) has indicated that PAP therapy potentially exposes individuals, especially those in proximity to the patient, to increased risk of transmission of COVID-19.
- A number of studies have found evidence that COVID-19 can remain suspended in the air in aerosol particles
- It is unknown whether it is possible for patients to be re-infected from re-using PAP tubing, filters, and/or masks.
- There have been reported shortages of distilled water and other supplies necessary for optimal use of PAP machines.
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Meet Dr. Rozensky

As a Diplomate of the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine and recognized as a qualified dentist by the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine. Dr. Rozensky earned his Doctorate of Dental Surgery degree from University of New York at Buffalo and then went on to serve our country in the United States Air Force, after which he enjoyed private practice in General Dentistry for over 20 years. Dr. Rozensky now includes his passion for Sleep Dentistry in his practice and finds true joy in the life changing care he is providing.

Village Sleep Dentistry

At Village Sleep Dentistry, our dentist Dr. Richard Rozensky and the entire dental team will work closely with you so that you can make informed decisions about your health. In addition to sleep dentistry, we offer all aspects of dental care and treatment including restorative, general, cosmetic dentistry and more.

From the moment you step in the door you will feel at ease. You will be welcomed by a warm and inviting atmosphere, combined with a professional and caring team. You will immediately recognize the emphasis on professionalism and quality, from the people who care for you to the technology used-this is the way dental care should be!



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.

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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.



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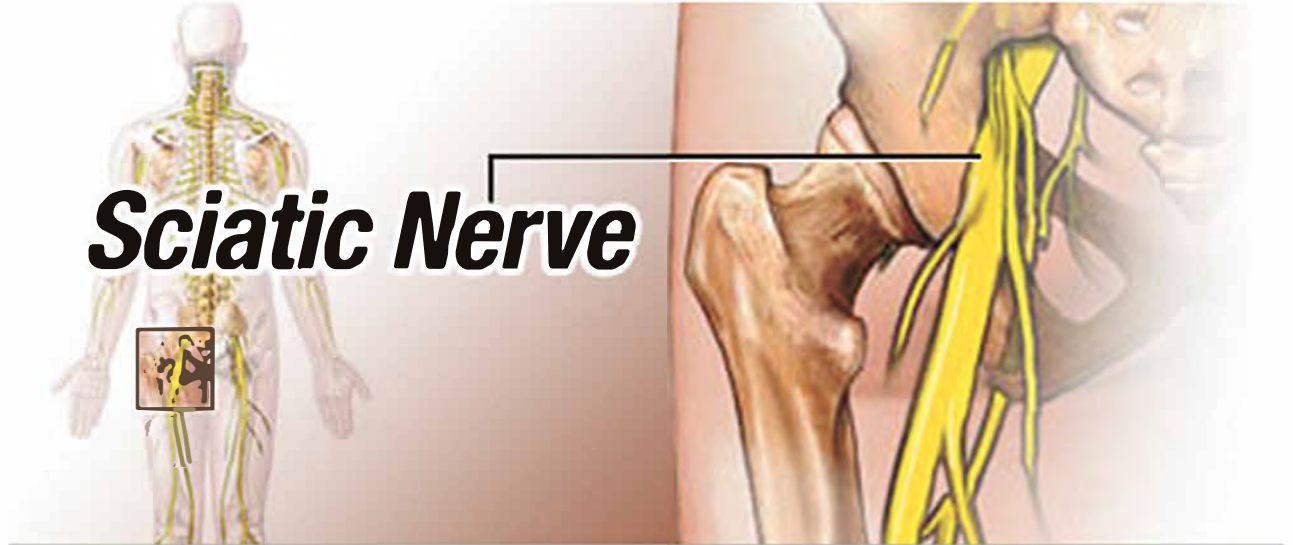
Chiropractic: A Safe and Natural Alternative to Medication and Surgery

By Daniel Taylor D.C. - Compton Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic medicine is one of the fastest growing fields within the medical community. It is a natural form of health care that corrects biomechanical fixations in the body in order to restore function. For example, when there is a misalignment in the spine, the disruption of nerve pathways can lead to localized pain, muscle spasms or pain traveling down one's arms or legs. Doctors of Chiropractic (DC) evaluate a patient much like any other medical practitioner. However, rather than using drugs to mask symptoms, chiropractors look to treat the source of the problem. In order to properly diagnose and treat patients, Doctors of Chiropractic must undergo intensive training over an eight year period. As well, they are regulated by both state and national boards.

Your first appointment will begin with a thorough review of your case history. This is followed by orthopedic, neurological, and chiropractic exams with a focus on the affected area; digital x-rays are performed only when medically necessary. After the evaluation, the doctor will explain the cause of your pain and suggest various treatment options. Typically, treatment can start at the time of your first visit.

You probably know someone that has received an "adjustment" from a chiropractor. What does this actually do, though? The purpose of an adjustment is to restore proper range of motion and biomechanical function to the affected joint by correcting the misalignments. This is an extremely safe and effective



Sciatic Nerve

form of health care that has been deeply researched by various scholars, physicians and medical journals alike. Manipulations have been used for thousands of years and are still utilized by Doctors of Chiropractic and Doctors of Osteopathy as treatment options. Some patients can hear a popping sound and, while this can have a startling effect, it is a completely normal occurrence. The noise comes from gas being released between the joints. During a manipulation, the affected joint will open slightly and become mobile again; this causes a change in pressure inside the joint resulting in the sound of gas being released. The same effect occurs when you crack your knuckles; which, contrary to popular belief does not damage the joint or cause arthritis.

Even if you have had a past surgery or suffer from osteoporosis, there are still many techniques that can be utilized to meet your needs. Besides using common "hands-on adjustments", our doctors at Compton Chiropractic are trained in special techniques to provide adjustments with little or no force at all.

What about sciatica? Doctors of Chiropractic welcome treating patients with complicated conditions like sciatica; in fact, we excel at it on a daily basis. At Compton Chiropractic, we offer the Cox Flexion Distraction Technique as a non surgical method of treating disc related injuries. Many are familiar with the terms herniated disc, sciatica, pinched nerve, bulging disc, stenosis and decompression. Most are also aware that surgery and or

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Military Veteran

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opiates are often unsuccessful treatments for these conditions. However, years of research and technology have pushed the field of Chiropractic into the 21st century and now there is hope for those who suffer from this debilitating pain. This conservative treatment has been clinically shown to decrease intradiscal pressure by approximately 75%; thus allowing relief from the symptoms of disc related pain and stenosis within as little as 8-12 visits. In past years, physicians would send patients to physical therapy prior to considering surgery. While therapy is excellent at rehabilitating muscles in the body, it has been shown less effective than chiropractic care in the treatment of low back pain.

At Compton Chiropractic, our primary goal is pain relief. Treatment will not take 30 visits and will not cost thousands of dollars. Every new patient is treated as an individual and receives an initial examination in order to properly diagnosis the condition. With a proper diagnosis and treatment plan, patients will recover faster as opposed to treating the site of pain without a full understanding of the pain generator.

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We accept all major insurances and our friendly staff will communicate with your carrier prior to treatment to determine eligibility and benefits. This typically helps avoid any future surprises. So stop living with pain and call 352-391-9467 today for a free consultation with one of our physicians.

TESTIMONIALS

See what some of our patient's had to say about our practice:

"I suffered from sciatica for 25 years until a friend told me about Dr. Compton. After 4 treatments, I was back on the golf course and out of pain."
- K.R.

"I thought I would live with this pain for the rest of my life, but thankfully I was wrong and Doc was right." - M.M.

"Dr. Compton fixed the numbness in my foot. I am back to playing tennis and loving it!" - J.J

"I had a bad experience with chiropractors before, but you're the best. I forgot what living without pain was like. Thanks Doc"- C.C.

"My other doctors could not help my mid-back pain and kept giving me pain medication. After seeing Dr. Taylor, he not only took my pain away but prevented it from returning"- B. D.

"I was having severe pain in my right arm. I tried everyone else, so I decided to give Compton Chiropractic a try. In three visits, my arm pain was completely gone"- M.C.

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- Provide patients with non-surgical alternatives to pain

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3 Myths About Melatonin, Debunked

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

The use of melatonin for sleep issues surged in 2020. But with that increase came a lot of misinformation, too.

Let's tackle three of the most common myths about this supplement's safety record and effects.

What Is Melatonin?

Found in almost every living organism, melatonin is one of the most ubiquitous molecules in nature.

While melatonin is best known for regulating sleep, it does so much more.

One of melatonin's key functions is to modulate our circadian rhythm by lowering body temperature and boosting tiredness during periods of darkness. But melatonin also regulates blood pressure, glucose homeostasis, and has powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.

The Importance of Melatonin Today

People can get melatonin from many foods (and supplements). But melatonin is also secreted in almost every part of the body – including the pineal gland in the brain in response to darkness.

Unfortunately, in the age of bright screens, city lights, and frequent night work, we're constantly disrupting the body's natural production of melatonin. Even a few seconds of exposure to bright light at night can inhibit its secretion.

Exposure to light at night is a major concern since our health depends on a good balance between light and darkness. It's estimated that about 10% of our genes are controlled by the circadian rhythm.

Besides being disrupted by light, melatonin production decreases with age. In fact, lower melatonin levels are considered a biomarker of aging.

Myth #1: Melatonin Use Is Dangerous Because It's a Hormone

Melatonin is technically classified as a hormone, just like vitamin D. However, it is not regulated by blood values (like testosterone or estrogen). Simply being in darkness or eating certain foods naturally increases the secretion of melatonin.

Refusing to take melatonin – just because it is classified as a hormone – doesn't make much sense. If that were the case, there would be a long list of melatonin-rich foods to avoid, including fish, eggs, nuts, many kinds of vegetables and fruits, and even extra virgin olive oil.

Myth #2: Your Brain Will Become Desensitized to Melatonin

Unlike many prescription sleep medications, you are highly unlikely to become dependent on melatonin supplements.

Researchers have consistently found that melatonin has a low rebound rate and no withdrawal symptoms, meaning that patients rarely experience adverse effects after they stop using it.

Consider the results from a long-term study published in 2018. In it, the researchers found that the sleep quality of children who stopped using melatonin after years of supplementation did not deviate from controls.

There are some studies that show melatonin may have a reduced effect on sleep parameters after 6-12 months of routine use. In these cases, simply taking a short break (or temporarily reducing your melatonin dosage) appears to improve effectiveness again.

Myth #3: Only People with Sleep Problems Need Melatonin

As mentioned above, the role of melatonin extends far beyond sleep. Scientists are currently exploring melatonin's impact on many conditions, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, and various neurological disorders.

There's simply too much research to highlight every topic in a single article. So let me briefly touch on how melatonin affects the aging brain:

Besides regulating our circadian rhythm, melatonin is one of nature's best antioxidants, helping to protect the brain from oxidative stress. Because of this antioxidant function, there has been substantial research on melatonin's neuroprotective benefits – particularly for Alzheimer's disease – over the last 20 years.

In animal models, researchers have found that melatonin may disrupt the production and accumulation of plaques and neurofibrillary tangles, two hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease.

More promising, some studies have demonstrated that melatonin slowed the progression from Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) to Alzheimer's disease, and helped patients with Alzheimer's disease and MCI improve their cognitive and emotional performance.

While melatonin supplementation may only be effective for patients in the earliest stages of AD, several recent scientific reviews concluded that melatonin could be a helpful adjunct to Alzheimer's disease therapy.

This article was abbreviated from a longer version published on omega3innovations.com. For the full text and references, visit:

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/6-common-myths-about-melatonin-debunked/>

About Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

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



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Rise in Housing Market It's a Great Time to Sell

By Amanda Fincher



The housing market is at a major high. With home valuations rising exponentially here locally and across the country, if you are considering a move, whether you are moving into a new home, downsizing into a condo or townhome, or perhaps you're contemplating retiring to a senior community, now is an excellent time to make money on your existing home sale. Having the luxury of making a profit on your home is a great incentive to transition, and to do so comfortably.

Houses are not staying on the market long once listed, and many are selling within a few hours or days, and it's not uncommon to have multiple bidders offering higher than what the home was listed for initially.



Having an experienced real estate professional help guide you through the legalities and paperwork is important. Amanda Fincher is here to help you make these decisions, understand the market and make the transition and process as smooth as possible.

Amanda Fincher

Amanda launched her career in real estate sales in 2017, bringing more than a decade of experience living and working in The Villages to her role. She quickly proved herself as a key player in the market, earning the "Rookie of the Year" award from her former brokerage, Realty Executives in The Villages, which has ranked as a market leader in the local MLS year after year. She bolsters her commitment to advocating for clients by staying up to date with the latest technology and continuing her real estate education with some of the industry's top mentors and coaches. Amanda lends her outgoing, detail-oriented, kind, and professional outlook to both her real estate endeavors and local volunteer fundraising efforts.

Amanda has been building lasting relationships, by providing top notch service in The Villages for the past twelve years. Her strive to always stay up to date with the latest real estate technology, which keeps her clients equipped with the latest products.



Amanda is very detail orientated and her customers are her number one priority. She shows great dedication to achieving results and providing exceptional services in this industry. Amanda has made a high level commitment to her real estate education, having been mentored and coached by several highly acclaimed real estate professionals.

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MOST BACK AND NECK PAIN CAN BE TREATED WITH A NON-SURGICAL PROCEDURE

By Physicians Rehabilitation

Unfortunately, as we age, back and neck pain due to injury and degeneration tends to become progressively worse and can become chronic if left untreated. Some of the most common reasons for backaches are trauma or sports-related injury, lifting heavy objects, improper spinal posture, poor sleeping posture, ballistic movements, and degenerative disease.

Back Pain and Spinal Injury

The spine is made up of wedges of vertebral bone consisting of sacral, lumbar, thoracic, and cervical vertebrae, as well as vertebral discs, ligaments, tendons, and muscles that attach to the spine. Over 30 nerves run down the entire spinal column. When our backs are injured, the surrounding muscles often contract as they try to protect the spine, but this causes even more discomfort to our bodies. Not only is the back affected with pain, but the arms, legs, and neck may experience permeated pain from the tension, too. Compressed nerves are being impinged by the narrowing of the vertebrae.

Neck/Cervical

The vertebrae of the neck have a natural c-shaped curvature (lordotic), which acts as a shock absorber for the upper extremities. If the curvatures are damaged or deformed from injury or other health conditions, the discs and joints in the neck and cervical spine will be under an excessive amount of force. Any irregularities in the neck can lead to degenerative disc disease, spurs, fusion, and neurological disorders.

The typically recommended treatments for spinal compression are pain medication and surgery, but most patients are reluctant with good reason. Long-term spinal complications and failed back surgeries often lead to unresolved chronic pain, and pain medications are very often addictive; therefore, most individuals are unenthusiastic about taking pain medication prescriptions. Surgery often fails patients and leaves them in chronic pain.

There is a better way; a results-driven solution that doesn't include any drugs or surgery shows favorable results in relieving back pain. For many years the experts at Physicians Rehabilitation have been utilizing a natural therapy for back discomfort called spinal decompression.

The practitioners at Physicians Rehabilitation are Medical Doctors (not chiropractic care providers), which is critical for optimal outcomes.

Spinal Decompression

Spine decompression therapy is a medical technology that gently stretches the spine and decompresses discs. The injured disc is located and gently pulled, creating a vacuum, which allows the disc to be "pulled back in," taking the pressure off the nerve. Spinal decompression therapy treatment is able to reduce the pressure in the disc, allowing fluids and nutrients to re-enter the disc, thus reducing swelling and relieving the pressure on irritated or pinched nerves.

Physicians Rehabilitation doctors are experts in an advanced non-surgical procedure known as VAX-D.

VAX-D is a non-invasive medical technology that stretches the spine and decompresses the spinal discs. VAX-D treatment is able to reduce the pressure within the spinal disc, thereby relieving the stress on inflamed and pinched nerves. In short, VAX-D breaks the cycle of pain caused by bulging and degenerated discs, and other spine-related disorders, by eliminating nerve compression. By removing the cause of back pain, the body is allowed to heal naturally.

VAX-D is a decompression device and achieves the same goal as surgical treatment of the spine, which is to relieve pressure by decompression. VAX-D, therefore, unlike the popular but relatively ineffectual traction device, more precisely addresses the physiology or reason for spinal pain. Although traction devices can stretch the lower back, they have not demonstrated the ability to decompress the lumbar and cervical discs or reduce spinal nerve compression. VAX-D works by reducing the pressure within the discs, not to zero, but to negative levels! No other device has been shown to reduce the disc pressure to these desired negative levels. It is this negative pressure that causes the disc bulging or herniation to decrease in severity. This, in turn, reduces pressure on the spinal nerves, which ultimately leads to less or no pain.

The VAX-D treats the entire spine; however, VAX-D cervical (neck) treatment is designed specifically for neck pain and works in the same way.



Why VAX-D is the Superior Procedure

VAX-D therapy has been proven safe and effective in numerous clinical studies. Over 3000 patients per day are treated with VAX-D. The other so-called "decompression treatments" simply do not have published clinical trials proving that they can lower intradiscal pressure and result in positive clinical outcomes. VAX-D studies have been published in prominent, respected, reliable, and peer-reviewed medical journals, with all of them showing a marked reduction in pain and a significant increase in activity and mobility.

VAX-D is easy, convenient, and painless. It is non-invasive, so it does not have the pain, risks, and complications that are associated with surgery, injections, and anesthesia. Patients will require an MRI prior to treatment to make sure no other serious conditions are causing their pain. Once treatment commences, many patients experience relief of their pain during the first several treatment sessions, and then a gradual reduction in symptoms as treatment progresses. The treatment duration plan is 15-25 days, while each session takes about 30-40 minutes. It's that easy.

Physicians Rehabilitation

Physicians Rehabilitation is a patient-focused practice that provides comprehensive care to eliminate your pain non-surgically. We evaluate each patient and implement an individual care plan specifically designed to alleviate your pain and dysfunction. Trained and licensed providers, with years of clinical experience, work together to provide this plan of care that addresses the specific concerns and problems of each patient. Our clinical care providers are able to employ a wide variety of physical modalities by utilizing state-of-the-art tools.

Our goal is to identify the source of your pain, promote healing and eliminate your pain. We begin by giving you a thorough examination and quickly address outward symptoms of pain, such as inflammation, while gathering medical history and evaluating your symptoms to get to the root of your pain and dysfunction. Our therapists have found that these advanced technologies, along with a specialized physical therapy program specific to the individual condition, makes for extremely successful pain relief treatments.

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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

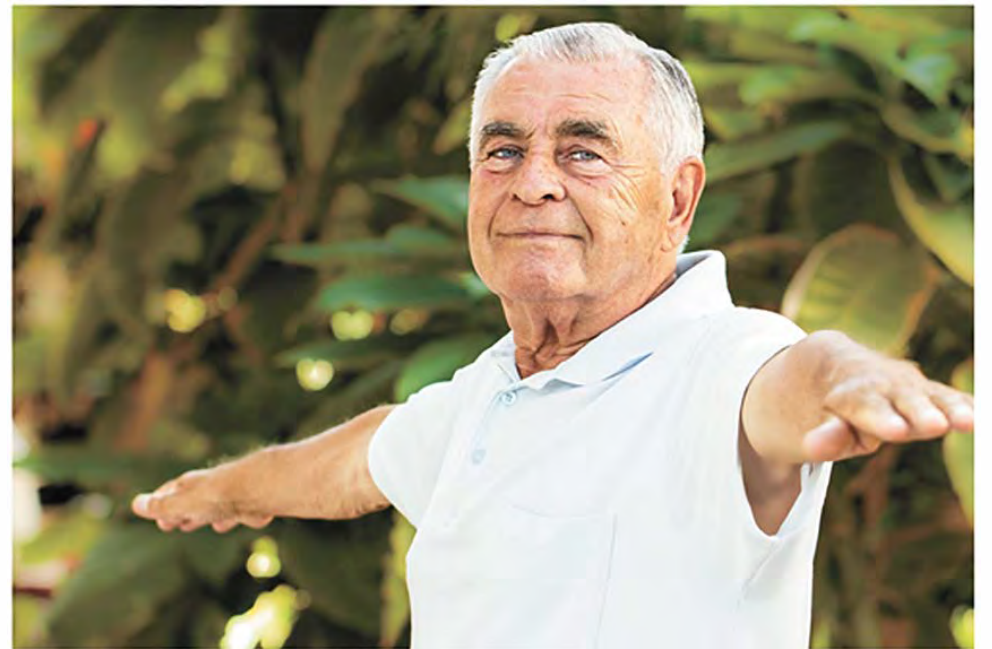
Tiny calcium crystals (otoconia) in the inner ear that slough off and get lodged in the fluid of the ear canals (labyrinth) usually are the cause of BPPV. Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

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.

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Cornerstone Hospice Programs Help Children Deal with Mental Health Issues

Submitted by Cornerstone Hospice and Palliative Care

Kristen Nardolillo has seen a huge increase in children who are grieving. As Cornerstone Hospice's Children's Bereavement Counselor, Nardolillo is on the front line dealing with students trying to cope with loss.

But Nardolillo does not attribute this abundance of grief only to the passing of loved ones.

"Just about everyone has experienced dramatic changes due to the pandemic. But for kids, the lockdowns, mask-wearing, attending school virtually and social distancing has been traumatic," said Nardolillo, a licensed clinical social worker, at the non-profit which serves Lake, Sumter, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Hardee and Highlands counties in Central Florida as well as several North Georgia counties. "Their worlds have been turned upside down and children often don't have the tools to cope."

Nardolillo cites a support group she has been facilitating at a local middle school as an example: "For the past few months, I've been meeting with the best friends of a young boy who tragically died from a gunshot wound. Although the group was formed to help the boys grieve the loss of their best friend, the weekly discussions have turned to a lot of anger towards the pandemic, because they could not spend time with their friend before his passing," said Nardolillo. "Grieving a death of any sort, let alone the unexpected loss of your best friend, is very hard. These boys are placing blame on the virus for memories they didn't get to make with their friend due to social distancing."

A national emergency

According to a recent study by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), pediatric emergency department visits have increased 24% for children aged 5 – 11 and 31% for 12–17-year-olds.

The emergency room is often the first point of care for children's mental health emergencies, according to the CDC. The study attributed the increase in visits to mental health syndromes that often result after disaster events, such as stress, anxiety, acute posttraumatic stress disorder and panic.

"Children are experiencing financial insecurity due to parents losing their jobs, lost companionship with grandparents, extended family and friends due to social distancing, illness or even death. They have difficulty keeping up grades and concentrating on schoolwork in



remote classrooms. They feel isolated," said Nardolillo. "As an adult who is trained to help others with mental health issues, even I struggle to cope with changes caused by COVID-19."

Last May, Nardolillo and the other Cornerstone Hospice bereavement counselors began offering free, virtual support groups where participants could share their feelings and find mutual strength in a safe, secure environment. The support group offerings were also expanded to specific populations, such as healthcare workers, first responders, caregivers, and students.

A safe space to deal with loss

For more than 20 years, Cornerstone Hospice has offered Camp Bridges to students in its children's bereavement program. The volunteer-run weekend event, which will be held this May at the Florida Elks Youth Camp in Umatilla, includes games, crafts, outdoor activities, and music. Campers share stories about lost loved ones and express their feelings with peers. Many of the volunteer counselors attended Camp Bridges when they were children.

Last April would have been Nardolillo's first year leading Camp Bridges, as her predecessor retired in late 2019. But like most other events, it was canceled because of COVID-19 concerns.

"It was heartbreaking. I knew there were so many kids who looked forward to the experience at camp," said Nardolillo. "We didn't want to wait a year to offer a fun

outlet for the kids in our bereavement program, plus we saw a need to address mental health concerns of students whose struggles with grief aren't necessarily tied to death. So, Cornerstone's Kids was born."

Cornerstone's Kids offers a variety of activities each month that children can participate in while getting the support they need to feel safe, secure, and happy. Nardolillo utilizes art therapy, creative writing storytelling, play therapy and visualization as well as socially entertaining events to help children explore their thoughts and feelings.

"Some activities are specifically geared toward bereavement but others, such as movie and game nights, are open to any child," said Nardolillo. "Cornerstone's Kids offers a community where they can be engaged with peers and enjoy healthy and positive interactions."

A weekly Kids Yoga class is a favorite of two young brothers who have been participating since May. "Almost every week, they tell me how happy they are to be doing yoga with the group, then tell me again at the end of class how excited they are for next week," said Nardolillo. "It tells me how significant the need is for kids to feel connected to each other during this time."

In February, Nardolillo has planned several Valentine's Day-related activities, including a Valentine making workshop, a Dance Party, and a Valentines to Heaven event for children in the bereavement program.

All Cornerstone's Kids activities are held weekdays, from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. to accommodate school schedules. Children and families register to join Cornerstone's Kids for free and receive access to members' only activities and resources to help the entire family. For now, all activities are held virtually.

"It's important to remember that grief is a natural reaction to loss, whether a loved one passed away or because some constant in your life is gone. If not addressed, grief can have a devastating impact on a child's ability to focus on day-to-day tasks, can lead to grades dropping and a loss of interest in activities. Parents and caregivers should pay attention to major behavioral shifts that could be a sign of depression," said Nardolillo. "I am proud that Cornerstone's Kids is now available as a free resource, providing the support families need to prevent these issues from exacerbating in the future."

For more information about Cornerstone's Kids, visit [CornerstoneHospice.org/Cornerstones-Kids](https://www.cornerstonehospice.org/cornerstones-kids), or call 866.742.6655.

LOCAL ATTORNEY PATRICK L. SMITH OFFERS FLAT FEE ESTATE PLANNING SERVICES

Estate planning does not need to be an expensive or time-consuming process, according to Attorney Patrick L. Smith. Whereas many attorneys bill their clients by the hour to handle their planning, Attorney Smith offers a complimentary consultation and has instituted a flat-fee system for his services. For example, a basic Will is a flat charge of \$75.00 and a Non-Tax Trust Package is \$695.00. This allows clients to know their costs from the start of planning and to determine their estate planning needs without surprises. Although Attorney Smith primarily practices in estate planning and asset protection, he regularly works to connect his clients with a network of attorneys to provide them with complete, affordable legal advice.

Attorney Smith also works to make legal advice accessible to the central Florida community through his weekly radio show, "Ask An Attorney," answering legal questions on the air from live callers, sharing legal information critical to FL residents, and educating his listeners on various topics.

He also incorporates information from other attorneys, financial advisors, CPAs, and other professionals who join him to answer his listeners' questions. "Ask An Attorney" airs on Gospel 90.3 FM every Saturday at 8am.



In addition to giving legal advice live over the radio, Attorney Smith is known for donating his time and legal services to multiple churches and charitable organizations in the community. Attorney Smith offers free seminars on a wide variety of legal topics for civic groups, clubs and other organizations, to inform them about the law and their legal rights.

Furthermore, Attorney Smith recently announced the publication of the third edition of *The Florida Estate Planning Handbook* through Certa Publishing, giving Florida residents an accessible, easy-

to-understand introduction to key estate planning concepts. Adding to Attorney Smith's work is his law partner Attorney Joseph F. Pippen, Jr. who joined him on the third edition.

More information about Attorney Smith can be found at Joseph F. Pippen, Jr. & Associates' website: www.attypip.com. For your free consultation or to have Attorney Smith speak at your event or group, you may reach him at his Fruitland Park office by calling (352) 241-8760.

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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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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 '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.

The 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.





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