

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

# Health & Wellness<sup>®</sup> MAGAZINE

April 2022

Marion Edition - Monthly

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**Managing  
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**Skin Discoloration  
Could be a Serious  
Warning Indicator**

**Care for Caregivers**

**6 DIY Projects  
to Increase  
Home Value  
to Maximize  
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**Tinnitus**

**Is There a Cure?**

**Can Omega-3  
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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?

Technological advances in evaluation and treatment methods allow spider and varicose veins to be treated more effectively and safely than ever before.



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- Have the cash for a large expense, such as a vacation or vehicle



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## RADIOLOGY SUBSPECIALTIES: EXTRA TRAINING AND EDUCATION MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

**A**t some point or other, nearly everyone will need a radiological exam, but many people aren't aware of what role the radiologist plays in their care. A trained technologist performs the actual x-ray, ultrasound, MRI or other imaging test, while the radiologist is the doctor who studies the images to provide an assessment and diagnosis. Since it is quite common for patients not to meet their radiologist in person, there can be confusion over the radiologist's crucial contribution to their healthcare.

To clarify, a radiologist is a licensed physician (MD) who has completed four years of medical school, a year of internship, and four years of residency in general radiology. This 13 years of higher education and training are necessary to deftly diagnose, manage and treat diseases and utilize the latest advances in technology and procedural applications. Some radiologists choose to subspecialize, meaning they undergo an additional one to two years of fellowship training in their chosen practice area(s). Many of RAO's Board-certified radiologists have earned subspecialty fellowships, ensuring proficiency and hands-on experience in their respective areas of study. This extra training provides the expertise to diagnose tiny or obscure irregularities that might go undiscovered by a doctor with less training or experience. When you have a health mystery, disease, disorder, or pain management issue, the additional prowess of a subspecialist can make all the difference in your diagnosis, treatment plan and recovery.

### What is a Radiology Certificate of Added Qualification?

Many of RAO's radiologists have ventured even further to earn a Certificate of Added Qualification from the American Board of Radiology, which denotes proficiency and ongoing education in their chosen field(s). This supplementary education supports a radiologist's mastery of complex and sophisticated evaluations and treatments designed to detect and manage specific diseases and disorders. RAO Drs. Ralf Barckhausen, Malcolm Williamson and Amanda Aulls have each earned a Certificate of Added Qualification in the subspecialty of neuroradiology, a discipline that addresses diseases of the brain, neck, sinuses and spine, and conditions related to the central nervous system, such as stroke, seizure disorder, cancer and trauma.

RAO Drs. Kareem Bohsali and John Scales have earned Certificates of Added Qualification in Interventional Radiology, a discipline devoted to a wide range of vascular and non-vascular diseases affecting the abdomen, pelvis, thorax and limbs. These fine doctors



provide outpatient options for treatment that are quicker, safer, less invasive and more cost-effective than traditional surgery. They employ progressive techniques like angioplasty, angiography, ablation and embolization to diagnose and treat patients without invasive surgery, as well as use pinpoint image guidance for procedures like biopsies, stent placement, vertebroplasty, thrombolysis, fluid drainage, fibroid treatment, hepatic and renal treatments, and nerve pain therapy.

### Radiology Subspecialties Offered at RAO

RAO's Board-certified team of subspecializing radiologists has the enhanced training and experience to utilize the latest and most advanced tools to diagnose and treat disease. When needed, they work directly with clinicians, doctors and surgeons to help plan any necessary treatment. Our doctors subspecialize in the following practice areas:

- **Diagnostic radiology** – The additional education and training in this field help ensure the greatest possible diagnostic accuracy.
- **Musculoskeletal radiology** – For a deeper look into bones, joints and muscles and the delivery of joint pain therapies such as vertebroplasty and peripheral joint injections.
- **Neuroradiology** – Our subspecialists diagnose and assess issues of the head, neck, spine and central and peripheral nervous systems.
- **breast imaging** – Services like 3D mammography, breast MRI, breast ultrasound, image-guided breast biopsy and breast aspiration have earned our centers Breast Imaging Center of Excellence designations from the American College of Radiology.

- **Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)** – For analysis of the head, neck and body – including the musculoskeletal system, breast, prostate, heart, liver, small bowel and more – using safe, radiation-free high field MRI and open MRI.

- **Computed tomography (CT)** – Including next-generation CT, CT angiography, CT enterography, CT lung cancer screening, parathyroid 4D CT, cardiac scoring and PET/CT, which combines computed tomography with positron emission tomography in a single procedure

- **Nuclear medicine** – Providing real-time diagnostic services like bone scan, DaTscan, Gallium scan, gastric emptying scan, hepatobiliary/gallbladder scan, liver/spleen scan, parathyroid scan and thyroid scan

- **Vascular and interventional services** – Including nonsurgical diagnosis and therapy of vascular diseases and disorders, catheter and port placement, and minimally invasive treatment for varicose veins, uterine fibroids, spinal fracture, spinal pain and other issues

Of course, RAO also offers traditional imaging services, such as x-ray, ultrasound and fluoroscopy, for comprehensive diagnostic care. We are ACR accredited in breast imaging, MRI, CT, PET, nuclear medicine and other imaging services, for unparalleled quality and safety.

### For Best Rated Radiology Services in Central Florida

The extra training and testing not only promote optimal diagnostic accuracy, they also add an extra measure of security for patients. After all, when you need a diagnostic or therapeutic service, you want to know your doctor is exceptionally trained, experienced and qualified. It's our commitment to safety, security and accuracy that makes RAO the preferred provider of diagnostic and interventional radiology services for countless medical practitioners throughout Central Florida.

When you need a diagnostic or interventional service, you have a choice of providers. For more information on our doctors, staff and services offered, call RAO at 352-671-4300.



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*"We do everything we can to get our patients through their exams."*

Whether it's a fear of small spaces, loud noises or medical exams in general, the team at Radiology Associates of Ocala understands when patients experience scan anxiety. That's why, when radiologic technologist Jeanette had an Alzheimer's patient come in scared, confused and crying, Jeanette stayed by her patient's side and held her hand to comfort her through the entire exam.

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# Advanced Treatment for OVERACTIVE BLADDER

**H**ave you tried treatment for overactive bladder and still suffer from any of the symptoms below?

- ✓ Urgency to get to the restroom in time
- ✓ Increased frequency of urination
- ✓ Getting up at night 2 or more times to urinate
- ✓ Wearing adult protective undergarments or pads
- ✓ Inability to empty your bladder completely
- ✓ Curbing your usual activities because you must be near a restroom at all times

If you are a man or woman who said yes to any of these, then you should know about some of the advanced therapies that are available and can drastically improve your quality of life.

Commonly used therapies such as behavioral modification, bladder training and medications are a first line of therapy for overactive bladder (OAB). Unfortunately, in many patients, these do not work or don't work well enough. Some patients may even be unable to tolerate the common side effects of medications such as dry mouth, dry eyes or constipation. If you or someone you know has OAB, the use of sacral neuromodulation or Botox may be the answer. In a specialty trained urologists' hands these treatments can succeed where others have failed.

## SACRAL NEUROMODULATION

Sacral neuromodulation (SNM) allows regulation of the nerves that go to the bladder. This works by sending messages back to the brain to regulate the "on-off" switch for bladder function. A simple way to think of SNM is as a pacemaker for the bladder. It can help to bring your bladder function back to normal function if it is too active or even underactive.

SNM is approved by the FDA for the treatment of refractory OAB, urge incontinence and urinary re-tention. Currently one company (Medtronic Inc., Minneapolis) produces this SNM device for international use under the name InterStim®. In Europe, it is also



used successfully to treat bowel dysfunction including severe constipation, fecal urgency, frequency and fecal soiling. This is possible because there are nerves in the pelvis that work on both the bladder and bowel.

SNM is a very appealing option to patients due to its high success rate (up to 80%) and a unique trial phase. This trial phase of 3 to 7 days is called a percutaneous nerve evaluation (PNE) and is a simple procedure that places a thin temporary lead next to the nerve that controls bladder function. This can be placed using local anesthesia or light sedation and takes minutes to perform. This gives the patient the ability to "test drive" the device without going through the full implant. It also helps patients to gain insight on just how much the InterStim could help them. At the end of the trial, the leads are removed in the office without damaging the nerve.



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If the PNE is successful in reducing symptoms, it is likely that the full implant will work in these patients. The InterStim uses an implantable lead and small battery that are placed for long-term treatment of OAB or urinary retention. Once placed, the InterStim can last up to ten years depending on its use. The battery can be easily changed under local anesthesia. After implan-

tation, the InterStim is virtually undetectable even in a bathing suit. This device can drastically improve a patient's quality of life.

## BOTULINUM TOXIN (Botox)

Botox injections are another option in the treatment of OAB. The Botox is placed directly in the bladder muscle for treatment of OAB and urge incontinence.

This is done with a simple cystoscopy (small telescope) and can be done under local anesthesia or sedation. It works by binding to nerve endings allowing for relaxation of the bladder muscle. This has been shown to improve symptoms in up to 70% of patients and up to 60% of patients will have complete resolution of their OAB or urge incontinence. Botox, however, only lasts 6 to 9 months and needs to be repeated. The FDA considers this an off-label use even though it has been used successfully for years. Use of Botox in the bladder carries no greater risk to the patient than cosmetic procedures.

These are only a few of the many options that can significantly improve quality of life. A full range of treatments for OAB and any other urologic concerns are offered at Advanced Urology Institute.

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# Colorectal/Colon Cancer

**W**hen it comes to colorectal cancer, the facts can be scary. Fortunately, the availability of effective early screening and the ease of making simple lifestyle changes brighten the outlook.

Overall, in the U.S., 1 in 23 men (4.3%) and 1 in 25 women (4%) are at risk of developing colorectal cancer in their lifetime. It is the third most common form of the disease and the second leading cause of cancer death in the nation.

Colorectal, or colon, cancer encompasses cancer of the colon and the rectum, which are parts of our digestive system that process and help pass foods, water and waste material out of the body. The colon, or large bowel, is the first part of the large intestine and is about five feet long. The rectum and anal canal make up the last part of the large intestine, at six to eight inches long. The anal canal ends at the anus, the opening of the large intestine to the outside of the body.

This form of cancer occurs when cells grow out of control. These abnormal growths, called polyps, can over time become cancerous.

## Few Early Warning Signs

There are often no signs or symptoms of colorectal polyps or cancer, which is why screening is so important. As a tumor grows, it may bleed or block the intestine. The most common warning signs include blood in the stool or in the toilet after a bowel movement, dark or black stools, or bleeding from the rectum. Any symptoms should be reported to your primary health care provider right away.

## Early Screening Tests Matter

Screening tests can detect polyps at an early stage, so they can be removed before turning into cancer. According to the Colon Cancer Coalition, when detected in its early stages, colon cancer is more likely to be cured, treatment is less extensive, and recovery is much faster. The five-year survival rate when colon cancer is diagnosed at early stages (Stage 1 and Stage 2) is 90 percent.

## Know Your Screening Options

The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. The majority of cases occur in adults age 50 and older. For colon cancer, the average age at diagnosis is age 68 for men and age 72 for women. For rectal cancer, it is age 63 for both men and women.

The American Cancer Society recommends regular screenings beginning at age 45. The five most common tests are summarized here by the National Cancer Institute:



- 1. Fecal occult blood test** checks for blood in the stool that can only be seen with a microscope.
- 2. Sigmoidoscopy** uses a thin, tube-like instrument to look inside the rectum and lower colon for polyps, abnormal areas or cancer. Polyps or tissue samples can be removed and checked under a microscope for signs of cancer.
- 3. Colonoscopy** is a procedure that looks inside the colon and can remove polyps or tissue samples to be checked for cancer.
- 4. Virtual colonoscopy** takes a series of x-ray images to show polyps or other abnormalities on the inside surface of the colon.
- 5. DNA stool test** checks DNA for genetic changes that may signal cancer.

Decisions about screening tests and preparing for them may cause anxiety. It's best to consult your doctor to gain a full understanding of the benefits and any risks, and determine which test is recommended for you and how often you should be screened.

## Know Your Risks and How to Reduce Them

If you have Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis or other inflammatory bowel disease or a family history of colorectal polyps or cancer, you may be at higher risk. Radiation to the abdomen or pelvic area to treat prior cancers can also increase risk.

A lack of regular physical activity, being overweight or obese, a diet high in fat and lacking fruits and vegetables, as well as tobacco use and alcohol consumption, can also contribute.

A cancer diagnosis at any age can be life changing. Colorectal cancer treatments can include surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy. Your physician will personalize treatment options for your unique needs. Increasingly, thanks to ongoing clinical advancements, a growing number of patients diagnosed with colon cancer will go on and live a normal life.

## World-Class Cancer Treatment

### Close to Home

About Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, LLC:  
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Recognized by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) with a national Clinical Trials Participation Award, Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCSI) offers patients access to more clinical trials than any private oncology practice in Florida. In the past four years, the majority of new cancer drugs approved for use in the U.S. were studied in clinical trials with Florida Cancer Specialists' participation.\* Trained in prestigious medical schools and research institutes, our physicians are consistently ranked nationally as Top Doctors by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Founded in 1984, Florida Cancer Specialists has built a national reputation for excellence that is reflected in exceptional and compassionate patient care, driven by innovative clinical research, cutting-edge technologies and advanced treatments, including targeted therapies, genomic-based treatment and immunotherapy. Our highest values are embodied by our outstanding team of highly trained and dedicated physicians, clinicians and staff.

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# 6 DIY Projects to Increase Home Value to Maximize Sale Price

TASHA OSBOURNE, BA - PREMIER SOTHEBYS INTERNATIONAL REALTY

If you're ready to roll up your sleeves and apply a little elbow grease, you can take your productivity to the max and boost your asking price by knocking out a few simple projects that increase home value.

Don't have the money for a major renovation? No worries—expensive remodels aren't as glamorous as the home improvement TV shows would like you to believe. You can't count on getting your money back on any of the classic home makeover projects (buyers are too picky, and might gut your pricey granite, anyway).

## Declutter your house room by room

The no. 1 way to increase the value of your home before you sell is to declutter it (which makes cleaning much easier). This project could add nearly \$2,000 to your home's value, and shouldn't cost you more than \$300. That's an ROI of 586%!

## Suds up your carpet for a deep cleaning

The worst thing about carpet is that you could live in total filth and comfortably ignore it. With hardwood or tile, what you see is what you get. But carpet fibers are experts at hiding mounds of dog hair, allergens, dead skin and dust bunnies.

If you take good care of your carpets and vacuum weekly, then good for you—that's a big part of the battle. But there's nothing like a deep shampooing to make your carpet look and smell fresh again, like a baseball field that's been mowed into perfect rows. Experts recommend you do this twice a year, anyway. Replacing or shampooing your carpets has a 169% ROI. You can save costs by going the DIY route and renting a machine from a place like Walmart, Home Depot, Lowe's, Ace Hardware or your local grocery store. You can find and compare machine rentals in your area using RugDoctor.

## Deweed your yard without using chemicals

Outdoor landscaping can boost your home's value anywhere from 5% to 20%.

Not everyone has the time or money to drop thousands of dollars to overhaul their landscape design, but any little improvements you make to the outside of your home will be well worth the effort.

One top project expert consistently recommend is deweeding your yard the natural way—without harsh chemicals that could do more harm than good or pose a safety risk to yourself (or your furry friends!)

## Cover your walls with a neutral coat of paint

Paint livens up a room, freshens up a high-traffic area like a kitchen or living room, and cleans up old scuffs, splatters, stains, and even neutralizes bad smells.

Choosing a neutral color scheme and repainting makes it clear you stayed on the pulse of home trends and updates. About 68% of realtors recommend painting walls, and 62% recommend at least paint touch-ups, according to a 2017 survey from the National Association of Realtors.

## Play matchmaker with your hardware

Sometimes a major home makeover is a risky investment. That's true, but it doesn't mean that you shouldn't make small upgrades to key spaces like your kitchens and baths to impress buyers.

One easy and inexpensive project is to update all your hardware, across these rooms and even the entire house.

Kiley says every fixture in your home (light fixture, sink, door knob and light switch plate) should show a cohesive style. It's an inexpensive way to make your home look move-in ready and up to date.

## Update your light bulbs to LED to boost efficiency

If you've lived in the same house for decades, you might be used to buying the same replacement light bulbs to swap out the ones that burn out year over year. It's just something you do on autopilot!

But light bulb technology has come a long way toward becoming more efficient. In fact, LED lights last 25 times longer and use 75% less energy than their incandescent counterparts.

If you replace your fixture bulbs with LEDs across your entire house, inside and out, that can be a huge selling point you can highlight in your listing description when it comes time to sell.

Consistently in the top 20% of all REALTORS, Tasha Osbourne provides concierge white glove service to all her customers giving her a stellar reputation throughout Central Florida. For the past 10 years she has built a relationship business, always going the extra mile, helping match buyers with their dream home and sellers to exceed their real estate goals.

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# Managing Daily Life with Parkinson's Disease...

**P**arkinson's disease affects the nervous system and causes problems with muscle movement. Parkinson's doesn't go away, and the symptoms get worse over time. You can work with your family doctor and other professionals to slow the progress and manage Activities of Daily Living (ADL's).

Specialized nerve cells in the brain make the chemical dopamine. Dopamine sends signals to help coordinate movement and coordination. In people who have Parkinson's disease, these cells die or do not work properly. The level of dopamine produced decreases. This affects the person's ability to control their movement normally. Tremors of the hands, arms, legs, feet, jaw, neck or face can cause embarrassment for some Parkinson's patients and make them feel like they don't want to leave home. However, staying active is the BEST way to slow the muscle degeneration. It is imperative that Parkinson's patients keep moving as long as it is safe to do so.

Bradykinesia is the slowed movements of muscles used to perform ADL's. Getting out of a chair, feeding yourself, cutting your food, buttoning your clothes, these all may take longer with Parkinson's, but it is imperative that care takers not take over. Let the person continue to TRY and take care of these personal needs, even if it takes longer than it used to. Caregiver patience and encouragement is a powerful pill.

Rigidity, or stiff muscles is also a symptom of Parkinson's Disease which affect ADL's. Getting up and down from the toilet, a kitchen chair, walking to the mailbox may all prove to be more difficult than in the past but if these tasks can be managed without a fall, then they should be attempted. The care giver can stand nearby, offer a hand when needed, but the muscles need to move to stay useful.

Posture and balance are also ADL's that are affected by Parkinson's. Walking, sitting up straight and standing should be done with care, but should also be attempted independent and daily for as long as safely possible. Using a walker or cane, an elastic supportive back brace, extra pillows for support while sitting and handrails in restrooms and showers are simple aids that can foster independence and encourage muscle use.

Other daily living activities that need to be encouraged daily to keep Parkinson's patients active are handwriting, making facial movements and grasping objects. Some examples to work fine motor muscles for an adult would be drawing or coloring, using clay or playdough, using scissors to



clip coupons or comics, assembling a jig saw puzzle or knitting. Keeping the hands moving as much as possible is key to slowing muscle degeneration.

There is no cure for Parkinson's disease. But medicines and physical therapy can help control the symptoms. They often produce very good results, especially in the earlier stages of the disease. Your doctor will recommend the best treatment for you. Never underestimate the power of exercise, encouragement and daily tasks to keep your mind and body healthy, even with a life changing diagnosis of Parkinson's.

Living with a chronic illness can be frustrating and discouraging. Parkinson's will gradually get worse. You will eventually have trouble with simple tasks. These include walking, talking, and eating, among many others. It is common for people with Parkinson's to develop depression. Antidepressant medicines are available and can help with your depression symptoms. If you've been feeling persistently sad or hopeless, call your doctor. There is help available.

Joining a support group can be particularly helpful for Parkinson's patients. It is helpful to have people around you who know exactly what you're going through. It is also a good idea to eat a healthy diet, exercise, and stay as active as you can.

## Cardiovascular Associates of Lake County

At the Cardiovascular Associates of Lake County, we take your heart health personally. Our physicians have served the community for more than 25 years. Combining state-of-the-art medical technology with compassionate care, our goal is to prevent and treat heart-related illnesses so you can live a long and heart-healthy life.

Are you predisposed, based on lifestyle or biology, to heart related conditions? Allow our physicians to assess your heart health and recommend the best course of action. Thanks to decades long relationships forged with local hospitals, our patients receive top care and patient admission is smooth and seamless.

Our commitment to patient health extends long after you are discharged from the hospital. We believe that following up with patients is critical to ensuring your future health.

The physicians and team at Cardiovascular Associates of Lake County are committed to providing high-quality, compassionate care to all of our patients using cutting edge technology and state-of-the-art practices.

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# CARE FOR CAREGIVERS

*"In the unlikely event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure...please secure your own oxygen mask first before assisting others around you."*

We hear these instructions each time we fly. The point is you won't be able to help others if you are struggling to breathe yourself.

It's an important message to heed during an airline emergency. But do we follow the same rule in our everyday life — particularly when it comes to caring for others?

Taking full-time care of a loved one is an important job, and it can be a very rewarding one, too. But it can also take a toll on your health.

## "Securing Your Own Mask First"

The around-the-clock rigors of being a caregiver can sometimes leave you feeling exhausted and overwhelmed, causing you to neglect your own care needs. No matter how much you need to do or how much help your loved one needs, it's important to take care of yourself, too.

- **Take time for yourself:** Even a few minutes of rest or doing something that you enjoy can be reenergizing and help you better manage the day.
- **Manage your stress:** If you're feeling anxious or stressed, think about the reason and take a break from it if you can. Simple steps like taking a walk can help you feel more in control.
- **Ask for help:** Don't feel guilty for needing help and asking for it. Think of what you need help with and break it into simple tasks so it's easier to parcel out for others to assist.
- **Exercise and eat well:** Staying active and getting proper nutrition can work wonders for your overall well-being. If you don't have a workout routine, start with short walks. Drink plenty of water and eat more whole foods like fruits and vegetables.
- **Don't skip your own medical care:** Make sure you take care of your own health by keeping up with your regular appointments like annual checkups.
- **Confide in others:** It's important to talk someone you trust (like your doctor or a friend) about how you're feeling. You can also seek out other caregivers via local or online support groups to share experiences and advice.



## Use Our Resources!

Call a local Florida Blue Center (1-877-352-5830) to speak with one of our neighborhood nurses or community specialists for one-on-one support. They're available to help anyone Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more help, including information and links to other resources for caregivers, visit the Florida Blue Caregiving site: [floridablue.com/caregiver](https://floridablue.com/caregiver).

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**MEDICARE**

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**Dell Richards**

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By Bruce Hancock

# Discover More Options and Details Regarding a Reverse Mortgage

**M**any people decide to move forward with a reverse mortgage for various reasons; loss of a spouse's income, running out of money as costs rise, fix up the home, have money sitting there should you need it someday, or just want to enjoy life a little better. Having access to the equity in your home could be the answer. As our population is living longer, people are searching for viable options to help them live out their best life. So, while the retirement age used to only last a decade, it is now lasting for two or more decades. Also, with this longer life, we can experience and make many more memories, but along with this merriment, longevity of life often comes with significant health issues.

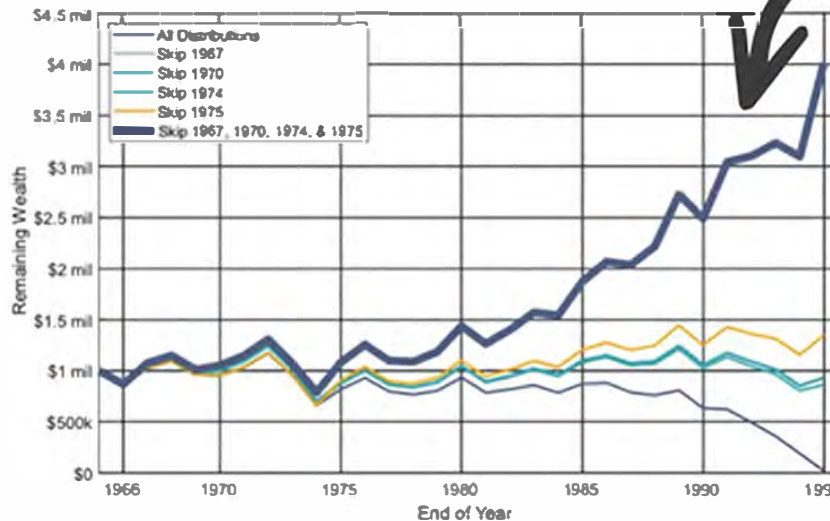
It's a common misconception to view a reverse mortgage as looming financial woe. Reverse mortgages are not to be looked at as a last resort to economic difficulty, but rather as an opportunity to build proceeds and profit for your retirement and perhaps your mounting healthcare bills.

In addition to costly matters such as emergency funds, home maintenance, travel and leisure, the healthcare industry is expensive. If you are diagnosed with cancer, your office visits, surgery, and treatment will be ongoing, and your cost associated with your care will be continuously escalating. The same holds true for many other age-related diseases and disorders.

Total projected lifetime health care premiums (Medicare Parts B and D, supplemental insurance, and dental insurance) for a healthy 65-year-old couple can be around \$400,000. Adding deductibles, copays, hearing, vision, and dental cost sharing, that number grows exponentially.

In cases where medical care is a major issue, reverse mortgages are helping countless individuals maintain their lifestyle of choice while receiving quality restorative treatment. With today's modern reverse mortgages, you remain in control, and the terms are more flexible than those of the past. As an example, you always own your home, you have a guarantee that you can never owe more than its value.

You will remain the owner of your home's title throughout the entire reverse mortgage process. You are able to leave your home to family members, and your loved ones can even remain in the home if you were to pass away.



\*Sequence Risk and the Portfolio Impact of Skipping a Year of Distributions Using S&P 500 Data, 1966-1995, S&P 500

**NO DISTRIBUTIONS WERE TAKEN FROM THE PORTFOLIO FOLLOWING BEAR MARKET YEARS**

**4x**

**FROM WHERE IT STARTED**



## FHA Insured Reverse Mortgages

The Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) is an FHA insured reverse mortgage and is the safest and most popular type of reverse mortgage on the market. HECM's are the only reverse mortgage insured by the federal government through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), a division of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

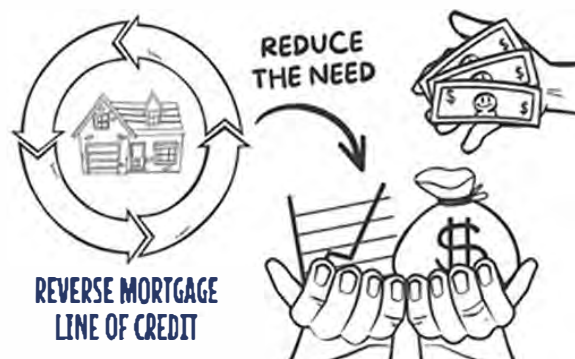
**The HECM allows homeowners, ages 62 and better, to convert part of their home equity into tax-free proceeds.** \*There is never a required monthly mortgage payment on a HECM, and there is no pre-payment penalty if the consumer ever chooses to pay the loan back in part or in full. Repayment of the loan can never exceed the home's value and the

heir's will never inherit a debt. The homeowner must maintain the property and pay property taxes, homeowner's insurance, and any HOA fees. The home must be the borrower's primary residence.

## Bruce Hancock, Reverse Mortgage Expert

Bruce Hancock is a reverse mortgage specialist working for Mutual of Omaha. He has been in the mortgage industry since 1984 and along with his highly sought-after mortgage expertise, Bruce takes great pride in helping seniors retire comfortably with better options. He has always been conscientious and dedicated to being the best, which is why he always listed as a top producer throughout his career.

*To find out more details, contact Bruce Hancock today.*



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# Skin Discoloration Could be a Serious Warning Indicator

**T**he circulatory system must contend with distance and gravity, so often the lower extremities are the first to show signs of vascular and arterial disease. If you have noticed skin discoloration, this symptom is extremely common in peripheral artery disease (PAD), peripheral vascular disease (PVD), deep vein thrombosis (DVT), critical limb ischemia, and chronic venous insufficiency. Skin discoloration happens due to a lack of blood supply from damaged or narrowed vessels or arteries.

Skin discoloration is often accompanied with other common symptoms such as numbness, tingling, burning, sensations of heaviness, skin temperature fluctuations, thin skin, hair loss, and swelling of the extremities to name a few.

Individuals with arterial disease due to atherosclerosis (plaque buildup in the arteries) often have peripheral vascular disease (PVD) as well. Where other blood vessel conditions like DVT's (Deep Vein Thrombosis) varicose veins, pulmonary embolisms, and venous insufficiency are interrelated.

Maintaining a healthy diet is critical to keeping your lipid levels in proper balance, coordinately it will assist in supporting the vascular structures through nutrient and antioxidant-dense foods. Preventing atherosclerosis, or the hardening of the arteries due to plaque build-up can be achieved through medications as well. However, if the blockage is severe and life-threatening, a medical procedure will be necessary to open and repair the artery to allow blood to flow normally again.

Depending on your diagnosis, health and condition, treatments can vary greatly. Diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol are often related to arterial and vascular disease. Staying on top of your condition with medications, and healthy lifestyle choices is critical.



## Village Heart and Vein Center

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.



**Bryan Carter, MPA-C**

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**(352)-674-2080**

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**[www.villageheartandvein.com](http://www.villageheartandvein.com)**

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](http://villageheartandvein.com), or call their office to schedule your appointment at, (352) 674-2080.



# Pain in the Knees?

## When to See a Doctor

**W**hen knee pain keeps you from enjoying your daily life, it's time to see your doctor. Knee pain can limit movement, cause instability or difficulty supporting weight, and contributes to sleep disturbances. Sometimes, the knee may appear misshapen, with a bent-legged or thump-kneed deformation. All these issues can be caused by inflammation or a breakdown of joints and may cause arthritis that can worsen with age.

**Arthritis:** The primary goals of knee arthritis treatment should be the same – stop the pain and limit damage or progression of the arthritis. There are several treatments for arthritis in the knee. The most common is a non-invasive, at-home treatment called “RICE”–Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation. RICE is a short-term treatment, typically lasting less than a week. Using RICE longer than suggested may delay the natural healing process of your knees. Other, longer term treatments include bracing, medications, and/or injections. Your doctor will help to explore which options are best for your treatment plan.

**Bracing:** Bracing is suggested to correct problems with alignment or motion of the knee.

### Knee Alignment

If your knee alignment is too wide (bow-legged) or reversely, too narrow (knock-kneed), it increases the stress put on the bones of the knee. A brace often works to pause the pressure on the knee and reverse the deformity in alignment. It is important that you wear the brace as instructed.

### Knee Motion

Do you have weight-bearing pain in or difficulty bending your knee or struggle with knee pain when walking? These are usual symptoms of what's known as knee kinematics or problems in the motion of

the knee caused by weaknesses in knee ligaments. Kinetic problems of the knee are possibly related to an injury but may also be due to other factors, such as obesity. A brace works as a substitute for the weakened ligament and helps to stabilize the knee in movement. It is similarly important to wear the brace daily for the treatment to be effective.

### Medication

If you experience long-term knee pain, your healthcare provider may prescribe medication. Steroidal and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories and auto-immune modulators reduce inflammation in the knee and limit joint damage, thereby decreasing or eliminating the pain. It may be necessary to try a number of medications to find the one best suited for you.

### Injections

Depending on the severity of your pain, injections may be another option. Research on the success of injections for knee pain has been mixed, as effectiveness is linked to the severity of arthritis that you present at the time of injection. There are several injectable options, including steroidal (anti-inflammatory), visco-supplementation (hyaluronic acid), and biologic (plasma, platelets or stem cells). Your healthcare professional can advise if injection therapy is an option and, if so, the injectable best for your treatment plan.

### Knee Replacement

If knee pain persists or repeatedly returns over time, despite support from non-surgical treatments above, it may be time to consult with an orthopedic knee surgeon about knee replacement. Also known as knee arthroplasty, this surgery involves replacing part or all of the knee joint with a prosthetic device that carries out similar functions of a real knee. There are multiple approaches to knee replacement, including traditional and minimally invasive. Your orthopedic knee surgeon will help to determine what procedure is best for your specific needs.



**Dr. Thomas McCoy and Dr. Jeffrey Mandume Kerina,**  
orthopedic surgeons

### Finding the Right Orthopedic Knee Surgeon

As with any healthcare professional, it's important that you find a surgeon with whom you are comfortable. Other “must-haves” when choosing a reputable orthopedic knee surgeon are:

- Ensure the surgeon is board certified
- Consider years of experience with both partial and total knee replacement
- Read testimonials or patient reviews
- Know what your insurance and/or Medicare covers

Thanks to advancements in technology, surgical techniques, biological materials, and patient data and research, knee replacements have become highly effective in the restoration of function and the elimination of the pain often caused by knee arthritis.



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**888-847-4895**



# Laser Genesis: A Noninvasive Way to Rejuvenate Your Skin

**S**kin conditions are a common occurrence, and although most are relatively benign, they can have a profound effect on the individual. Some common benign skin conditions include pigmentation issues such as freckles and age spots, as well as vascular issues, like facial veins, leg veins, spider angiomas, and rosacea. Many of these conditions occur due to sun damage, aging, environmental, genetic factors, and photoaging.<sup>1</sup>

The innovative medical company, Cutera, created a signature Laser Genesis™ procedure, which delivers a non-ablative, no-downtime treatment to address skin revitalization concerns, textural impurities, and scarring. Laser Genesis is safe for all skin types and serves as an excellent, noninvasive, skin rejuvenation procedure.<sup>1</sup>

Laser Genesis gently delivers heat to the problem area to address:

- Diffuse redness
- Fine lines
- Skin quality
- Scars
- Acne scars

## Benefits of Laser Genesis

Minimal to no downtime skin revitalization. Perfect for busy, on-the-go individuals who are interested in combating the early signs of aging to reveal a new, radiant complexion.

## How does it work?

This treatment improves the signs of aging by using skin resurfacing solutions that dramatically improve years of accumulated sun damage, wrinkles, and dark spots.

## APRIL SPECIAL:

**Buy 5 Laser Genesis Treatments and get your 6th one FREE!**

At Total Nutrition and Therapeutics, we provide numerous aesthetic treatment options as well as functional medicine wellness practices to treat multiple conditions and disorders.



## MedSpa Aesthetic Services and Treatments

We offer a wide variety of services and treatments at TNT to ensure that you'll get the best results possible. Whether you're looking to rejuvenate your skin, reduce cellulite, promote hair growth, or strengthen your immune system, our aesthetic services are worth exploring.

Total Nutrition & Therapeutics' medspa services start with a free consultation. You'll work with our experts to create an individualized plan based on your lifestyle habits, including diet, sleep, and exercise. Some of the medspa services we offer include:

- Microneedling for Skin Rejuvenation
- Radio Frequency Sculpting Therapy
- Low-Level Light Therapy for Hair Loss
- truSculpt ID for Body Contouring and Sculpting
- Laser Genesis Treatment
- Infrared Sauna Therapy to Strengthen Immune System
- IV Therapy Treatments

Not sure which of these treatments and services are right for you? Schedule a consultation or appointment with one of our experts at TNT. We'll help create the right plan for you!

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.

## What is Functional Medicine?

At Total Nutrition and Therapeutics, we have made it our mission to help our clients look at their health as their most valuable asset and protecting it requires a proactive mindset. Why wait until you feel bad to seek out help. Recognizing that our bodies can be in a state of dysfunction years before a disease starts, this approach to your "health care" can help you reduce unnecessary medical expenses and more importantly, down time from the enjoyment of life that you desire. Functional medicine, also known as integrative or lifestyle medicine, focuses on identifying the "root cause" of your dysfunction, listening to your story, completing predictive lab testing and other diagnostic testing looking at markers that identify this dysfunction and then, what sets TNT apart is what comes next. Our team of passionate, experienced, educated and creative providing you the tools to take control of the direction of your health. This approach has the power to help you live a life full of energy and joy!

## Total Nutrition & Therapeutics

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!

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

Source:

1. <https://www.cutera.com/excel-v-the-next-generation-laser-platform-for-the-treatment-of-vascular-and-pigmentary-concerns/>

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# INFLAMMATION AND PARKINSON'S DISEASE

By Nasser Razack, MD, JD

**A**pril is Parkinson's awareness month. There are many actions we can take to impact the future of Parkinson's disease, but none greater than its prevention. Our emphasis must switch from the treatment of the disease to its prevention by promoting better health and well-being.

Inflammation is our immune system's response when the body is attacked by foreign substances. It allows the body to defend itself by producing a hostile environment to kill unwanted intruders. Inflammation is great when our body is under attack; however, inflammation can also be triggered to attack normal healthy tissue. In this scenario, inflammation produces a hostile environment within the body that damages healthy tissue instead of destroying unwanted invaders.

For decades, inflammatory changes have been recognized to occur within the brain of patients with Parkinson's disease. However, it was only recently that inflammation has been identified as a cause, and not merely a result, of this progressive disease.

Inflammation within the brain has unique inflammatory markers specific to their corresponding inflammatory disease. For example, inflammation of blood vessels within the brain results in arterial plaque that reduces blood flow (Figure 1). Inflammation in the brain of Alzheimer's disease patients results in the production of amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary or tau tangles (Figure 2). On the other hand, inflammation in the brain of Parkinson's disease patients results in the production of Lewy bodies (Figure 3).



Figure 1. Arterial plaque is an inflammatory marker resulting from inflammation of blood vessels.

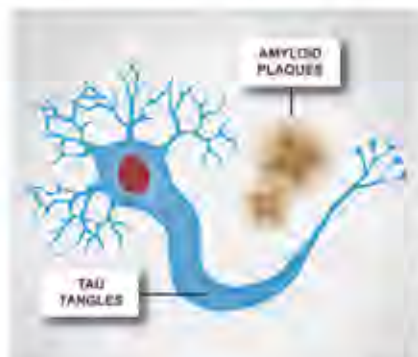


Figure 2. Alzheimer's disease "plaques" and "tangles" are inflammatory markers of inflammation in the brain.



Figure 3. Parkinson's disease Lewy bodies are inflammatory markers of inflammation in the brain.

It is not imperative to recall the names of these different inflammatory-related structures. Instead, it is more important to realize that all of these structures—arterial plaque, Alzheimer's disease-related plaques and tangles, and Parkinson's disease-related Lewy bodies—have long existed within the brain of patients with these progressive disorders. In fact, there is evidence that inflammatory markers begin to accumulate in people as young as 20 years old. As these markers proliferate, they trigger more inflammation which results in the formation of more of these inflammatory markers. This positive feedback cycle results in the progression and severity of the specific disease.

Numerous studies have been conducted to address factors that may contribute to the development of these progressive diseases. An article published in the *Annals of Clinical and Translational Neurology* on May 31, 2018, demonstrated certain types of immunosuppressant drugs administered to patients resulted in a lower risk of developing Parkinson's disease. Additionally, the long-term use of ibuprofen (also an anti-inflammatory drug) for pain relief was associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease, according to a study published in the May 6, 2008 issue of *Neurology*. This study demonstrated people who used ibuprofen for over five years were more than 40 percent less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease. The results also demonstrated that the longer ibuprofen was used, the lower the risk for dementia.

Now you're probably thinking that all you have to do is take these drugs to reduce your chances of developing Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease, right? Well not exactly. Although studies demonstrate the reduction of both Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease with these drugs, both drugs have significant side effects. In fact, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) have been associated with the increased risk of heart attack and stroke, not to mention liver, kidney and G.I. problems.

But what if we could reduce inflammation in the body without significant risk? Are there substances existing in nature that can naturally accomplish this without the negative side effects?

The answer is **YES!** In fact, recent research demonstrates that the dietary intake of polyphenols or phenolic compounds may exert neuroprotective properties that target multiple negative processes which result in cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. While the investigation of the effects of these substances is still early, two things are certain. First, these compounds are well tolerated with little if any side effects and second, they are extremely potent anti-inflammatory agents. Additionally, polyphenols are now known to undergo metabolism and transformation by the gut microbiome into other bioactive molecules whose effects on the brain may be considerable.

Stroke, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease are inflammatory-based disease processes with specific inflammatory markers. These inflammatory markers and conditions in the brain and other parts of the body result in a positive feedback cycle, culminating in end-stage disease whether it be Parkinson's, Alzheimer's or stroke. Theoretically, blocking brain inflammation and other degenerative processes can delay the onset of inflammatory-based neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. For example, twin-based studies have demonstrated the use of ibuprofen can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease and thus its incidence.

Recently, however, animal models have established that polyphenol compounds such as curcumin are more effective than ibuprofen and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs in blocking inflammation with nearly no side effects. Neurcumin® is an all-natural supplement which, in addition to curcumin, contains many other polyphenols and other natural agents uniquely formulated to synergistically fight inflammation. To learn more about Neurcumin® and the prevention of inflammatory diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, stroke and heart attack, please visit [Neurcumin.com](http://Neurcumin.com). You may also call 727-289-7139 or email us at [strokenerd@gmail.com](mailto:strokenerd@gmail.com) for more information.



## About Nasser Razack, MD, JD

Dr. Razack currently practices as a neurointerventional surgeon in Naples, Florida. He dedicates a significant portion of his practice to educating in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of stroke. He completed his medical training at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia.





# FEELING STRESSED? IT SHOWS

By Allison Weber, APRN-C

**Y**ou may know what stress feels like, but do you know what it looks like? It's not new news that stress can take a toll on our physical and psychological health. But did you know that stress can also be seen visibly, as the effects wreak havoc on your skin, hair, and nails?

We live a world where stress has become our norm - ranging from small inconveniences, like traffic jams, to COVID health scares, to the threat of a world war. Society is so stressed, we even have a Stress Awareness Month (yes, it's April!).

Some stress can actually be a good thing. In fact, stress is an important part of human evolution's response to danger. When stressed, our bodies create more stress hormones, like cortisol, which triggers our bodies physiological process to fight or flight.

Humans need cortisol to help us respond to danger, like say, a burglary. But, when your brain encounters chronic stress, your body reacts like there's danger lurking in the shadows all day, every day. The resulting surplus of cortisol is where things start to go wrong.

## SKIN

**Acne:** Cortisol stimulates excess sebum, our skin's natural oil, which clogs our pores. Increased oil production means more breakouts - whether you're acne prone or not.

**Psoriasis, Eczema, Rosacea:** When too much cortisol is released due to chronic or severe stress, it can dysregulate the immune system. The result is an inflammatory skin flare up common in psoriasis, eczema, and rosacea. To make matters worse, the stress that caused your flare up also contributes to the slow down of your skin cell recycle, affecting how quickly you will be able to recover from the scaly, itchy, red patches.

**Aging:** Remember that when we are stressed, our body focuses on keeping us alive - not youthful. While the exact mechanisms are still unknown, recent research has shown that stress decreases the amount of lipids your skin secretes, causing dryness and sagging. Under stress, your skin also produces less of the proteins that hold your skin cells together, leading to lines and wrinkles. And since stress slows down the recycling of skin cells, expect to appear dull and tired.



## HAIR

Stress levels are high, and for some, that might mean a change in the hair on your head.

**Telogen effluvium:** Hair follicles have growth and resting stages. Recent research has determined that cortisol acts on cells underneath the hair follicle. A serious stress event (pregnancy, chronic illness, psychological trauma) can temporarily push the cells into a "resting" phase, when 70 percent of your hairs are shed all at once. The hair loss can occur up to three months following the stressful event, after which you can thankfully expect it to grow back.

**Greying:** The idea that stress causes gray hair was a myth - until science said otherwise. Hair color is determined by melanocyte cells, which live at the base of the hair follicle and produce the pigment melanin. As we age, these cells gradually disappear. The hair that regrows from hair follicles that have lost melanocyte cells has less pigment and appears gray. Science has shown that stress hormones are released in our hair follicles, causing the melanocyte cells to die. With no remaining cells, no new pigment can be made, and any new hair becomes gray, then white.

## NAILS

Nails are not immune to showing outward signs of stress.

**Breakage and peeling:** A healthy nail will appear pink in color and will be free of imperfections, like ridges. Healthy nails also need nutrients like biotin, zinc and iron and protein. Stress stops the absorption of nutrients to the nail, causing them to become dry, brittle and to sometimes peel.

**Beau's lines:** Ever lose a nail? It seems to take a century to regrow. In fact, a fingernail takes approximately six months to fully grow out - a toenail may take a year.

Stress can further disrupt the regrowth of the nail plate, causing horizontal lines across the nail. Known as, "Beau's lines," they are literal markers of stress. If fingernails take 6 months to grow, that Beau's lines in the middle of your nail means you were pretty stressed three months ago.

**Nail biting/picking:** Stress-induced behaviors can also affect your nails. Nail biting, in particular, is especially common. Science actually tells us that there's a connection between nail biting and an emotional release. Translation: the more we bite, the more relaxed we feel. When we're stressed, we're also known to chronically rub or pick at the cuticle around the nails. Both behaviors damage the nail plate, can cause open sores, and a risk of infection.

## STRESS CYCLE

It's like the question of the chicken or the egg - what causes what? Stress causes a flare up of eczema. Visible patches of itchy dry skin cause us to - you guessed it - stress more. Stress causes us to lose hair. Sudden baldness causes us to - yet again - stress more. It's a cycle that has to be broken, so it's important to work with your healthcare provider and a dermatologist to break the cycle of stress that can make your dermatological health worse.

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### Aesthetics

Treatment for the skin, hair or body that is meant to enhance the appearance of patients through minimally invasive techniques & personalized topical skin care recommendations.



# Parkinson's Disease Awareness

**P**arkinson's is a complex disease that progresses over the years, and to date, has no cure. It is a neurodegenerative disease that wreaks havoc on the brain, which in turn interferes with the body's fine motor skills. The brain's neurons (nerve cells) are what create dopamine and the deterioration of this process is the cause of Parkinson's disease.

In Parkinson's patients, the dopamine chemical production is slowed down and over time it can be completely diminished. Some of the first symptoms of early Parkinson's disease are impaired sense of smell, constipation and sleep disorders. These early signs are found in the medulla and the enteric region of the brain. Some patients will have diminished voices, develop rigid muscles and show little to no expression on their faces within the middle stages of the disease.

As the disease progresses, it eventually reaches the substantia nigra region of the brain, which controls the bodies movements. Once this stage is reached, patients have a difficult time controlling their bodily functions, and they develop tremors and have jarring irrepressible movements.

Nearly 1 million people in the U.S. have Parkinson's Disease (PD), a chronic and progressive disorder. 100,000 Americans are diagnosed with PD each year, and 15% of those are under the age of 50.

## TREATMENT OPTIONS

Because there is no cure, the main treatments are given through traditional pharmaceutical medications, which are available to slow down the disease's



development. Many of these drugs increase the dopamine in the brain, and in some cases, replaces the dopamine altogether.

Along with medication management, physical therapy for balance and stretching is helpful for fine motor function. Speech pathology is also very effective in maintaining and improving speech related issues that the disease so commonly causes. In advanced cases there is the option for surgery.

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# Tinnitus: Is There a Cure?

**Many people who experience tinnitus find it annoying, distracting, or even distressing. If there's a problem, there has to be a cure, and we're aiming to find it.**

**L**ike many other conditions that affect the hearing, tinnitus can also affect your quality of life. Many people who have tinnitus claim that they find it hard to think, sleep, concentrate, or enjoy silence. Untreated tinnitus can wreak even more havoc on your life, leading to irritability, insomnia, and even depression.

With so many people struggling, audiologists around the world have been looking for solutions that might cure tinnitus, or at least lift some of the burden. However, in order to diagnose and treat tinnitus, the condition has to be studied and understood. If you have tinnitus, or know someone who does, this information might help you come up with some solutions.

## What is Tinnitus?

Tinnitus is an issue that can take many forms. While most people characterize tinnitus as a “ringing” in the ears, the sound can vary between high-pitched buzzing or hissing, to low roars. The pitch and tone of the tinnitus depends on the person experiencing it. The volume and intensity of this sound can also vary, but cases of tinnitus are often always present.

Many people are capable of blocking it out, while others have to turn on music or white noise in order to sleep and focus. The louder your tinnitus, the less enjoyable silence becomes. In extreme cases, tinnitus can even limit your regular hearing, drowning out other sounds and making it difficult for you to understand others.

Contrary to popular belief, tinnitus isn't a condition on its own. It's actually a symptom of a larger problem: usually hearing loss or circulatory damage. Tinnitus can also be caused by injuries to the ear or ear canal. Before you can treat tinnitus, you have to figure out why someone is experiencing it. Discovering the underlying issue can help you decide on the best solution to the problem.

## How is Tinnitus Caused?

There are a number of causes for tinnitus, but the most common is hearing loss. If you are experiencing tinnitus in both ears, and your doctor has determined that it's subjective tinnitus, then chances are you might be suffering from a form of hearing loss. However, objective cases of tinnitus, the ones that your doctor can physically confirm, are usually caused by circulatory problems.

There are other causes of tinnitus, but these might be rarer. Tumors, earwax blockages, ear injuries, TMJ, and other blood disorders can lead to tinnitus in one or both ears. If you have not sought out a diagnosis for your tinnitus, it is recommended that you seek a doctor as soon as possible. They have the skills and knowledge necessary to officially diagnose you.

Once diagnosed, you can begin seeking solutions for your tinnitus. The treatment for tinnitus varies depending on what is causing it. If you are suffering tinnitus because of a medication or ear injury, your case should clear up in due time. For those who have TMJ-induced tinnitus, their condition might improve once they've treated their TMJ disorder.

That begs the question: for those who suffer tinnitus due to hearing loss, what kind of options are available for them? Can their tinnitus be cured?

## Is There a Cure for Tinnitus?

Like many other conditions involving hearing loss, there is no surefire “cure” for tinnitus. The word “cure” has connotations that involve it being a one-time solution that completely solves the problem. However, there currently is no technology that can completely reverse hearing loss. The best we can do is prevent further damage, and offer solutions that will lessen the effects of tinnitus.

However, that is not to say that tinnitus cannot be effectively treated. Many people with tinnitus are able to find satisfaction with their treatment plans. This might involve hearing aids, tinnitus maskers, and other devices. These treatments can help improve hearing loss, or mask the sound of the tinnitus so you can focus.

While many people might feel discouraged by the fact that tinnitus has no “cure”, tinnitus is much like diabetes or other chronic conditions. While there is no clear solution, you do have options for treatment. Once you adapt to your life with tinnitus, it will become easier to deal with and ignore. Any treatment at all is better than going untreated.

In fact, going untreated can increase your chances of worsening your tinnitus. If you don't use proper hearing protection, your hearing loss and tinnitus can get worse over time. It's important to seek diagnosis early, and begin taking precautions when you're around loud noises. On top of getting treatment and preventing further damage, early action can also help with tinnitus-related frustrations, depression, and anxiety.

## How to Get Rid of Tinnitus?

While there is no sure-fire way to cure tinnitus, there are a number of solutions that might help you overcome your condition. These solutions will make life easier for you, so you can focus on what truly matters in your life. These devices can include hearing aids, white noise makers, and tinnitus maskers.

If you're suffering from intense hearing loss, hearing aids can help you hear better again, and improve your tinnitus as well. Because you're able to hear the world around you, your tinnitus will be drowned out. Some hearing aids also come with tinnitus maskers, which will provide noise that masks your tinnitus when you're not speaking or listening to something. Tinnitus maskers work by providing a low-level, white noise, or other forms of sound that overpower the ringing or roaring in your ears.

Simple white noise makers can also be used while you're sleeping, studying, or relaxing in your own home. If you think you might benefit from a white noise maker or tinnitus masker, try to drown out your tinnitus with various sounds around your house. For example, put your ear next to a running faucet. If the sound from the water drowns out your tinnitus, a masker or noise maker might be the best thing for you.

However, if your tinnitus stems from hearing loss, hearing aids might be your best option for treatment. They will solve more than your tinnitus, and give you a chance to hear better again. You might not even know what kinds of sounds you're missing out on.

If you haven't received a tinnitus diagnosis, or want to explore your options regarding maskers and hearing aids, seek out help. A doctor or audiologist will be able to give you the information and guidance you need to begin improving your life.

Source:  
<https://www.signia.net/en-us/blog/global/is-there-a-cure-for-tinnitus/>

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# April is National Healthcare Decisions Month

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

**M**aking your preferred end-of-life healthcare decisions a priority is wise any time of the year. But, special focus is given in the month of April during National Healthcare Decisions Month to help increase awareness of this important healthcare decision. It's never too early to have those conversations with your loved ones – better to have the discussion sooner than later when it may be too late.

However, many find procrastination is all too easy, especially when it comes to talking about the end of life. It's one of those topics most people would rather not discuss. Just as preparing a will is optimal when we are of sound mind and body, so is preparing for future healthcare needs rather than waiting until there's a crisis.

A pair of sensitive movies on grief and loss is the focus for this year's partnership between the Marion Theatre, Reilly Arts Center and Hospice of Marion County in recognition of National Healthcare Decisions Day. Two films are offered to the public at no charge -- Mark your calendar for showings of the following:

- **Tuesday, April 12, 5:30 p.m. Ordinary People** starring Mary Tyler Moore
- **Saturday, April 16, 11:30 a.m., We Bought a Zoo** starring Matt Damon

These outstanding films come with no ticket price; to redeem your tickets, simply go to the website [www.mariontheatre.org](http://www.mariontheatre.org), and at check-out enter this code **HOMC22**, which should be used for both movies.



"These films follow our goal to recognize and accept grief in our everyday life," said Hospice of Marion County Community Awareness Manager Jessica McCune. "How wonderful to use the strength in art and film to teach us as we learn to hold grief and joy side by side."

Hospice of Marion County (HMC) will provide Living Wills at these movies for attendees and both movies will provide an opportunity for discussion before or after to address questions that may arise about advance directives.

Additionally, McCune and Hospice of Marion County (HMC) Chief Medical Officer Mery Lossada, MD will be giving presentations in the community entitled "Give the Gift, Have the Talk." See the HMC web calendar for more details at [www.hospiceofmarion.com](http://www.hospiceofmarion.com) on locations and details. The main objective is to draw people's attention to the ability to make their own healthcare decisions.

Making decisions for others is decidedly even more complicated than those for ourselves, especially when that person – someone beloved – can no longer speak for him or herself. In the end, having the talk is the best gift you can give to yourself and your family.

Advance directives are legal documents that include a living will or a durable power of attorney for healthcare, also known as a healthcare proxy. Either document allows you to give directions about your future medical care. It's your right to accept or refuse medical care. Advance directives can protect this right if you ever become mentally or physically unable to choose or communicate your wishes due to an injury or illness. By law, the decision belongs to the patient, so make your wishes known to your family, providers and caregivers.

An advance directive can be as simple as a two-page Living Will or as lengthy as the Five Wishes, a detailed-yet-user-friendly booklet. In Florida, an advance directive requires neither an attorney nor a notary—just the writer's signature and that of two witnesses. Despite the simplicity of these documents, only about a third of all Americans have completed one.

**Visit [www.hospiceofmarion.com](http://www.hospiceofmarion.com) to download a Living Will at no charge or call our Monarch Center for Hope & Healing at (352) 873-7456 for assistance if you have any questions completing your form.**

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# Do You Have Kidney Stones?

By Ingrid Calliste, MD

**T**he kidneys are a major part of our detoxifying system. These two small bean-shaped organs clean the blood and filter waste and toxins to make urine. If there is an imbalance or insufficient fluids, the waste can build up in the kidneys and cause kidney stones.

Many people are unaware that they've ever had kidney stones because they can easily move through the urinary tract and are passed out with little to no discomfort if they are small enough. However, larger kidney stones do cause irritation, and in severe cases, can be extremely painful. Other symptoms of kidney stones are bloody urine, back pain, nausea, vomiting, fever, pain while urinating, cloudy urine, and a strong odor.

The National Kidney Foundation information clearly explains the following statement on the types of stones and their causes:

There are four main types of stones:<sup>1</sup>

**1. Calcium oxalate:** The most common type of kidney stone which is created when calcium combines with oxalate in the urine. Inadequate calcium and fluid intake, as well other conditions, may contribute to their formation.

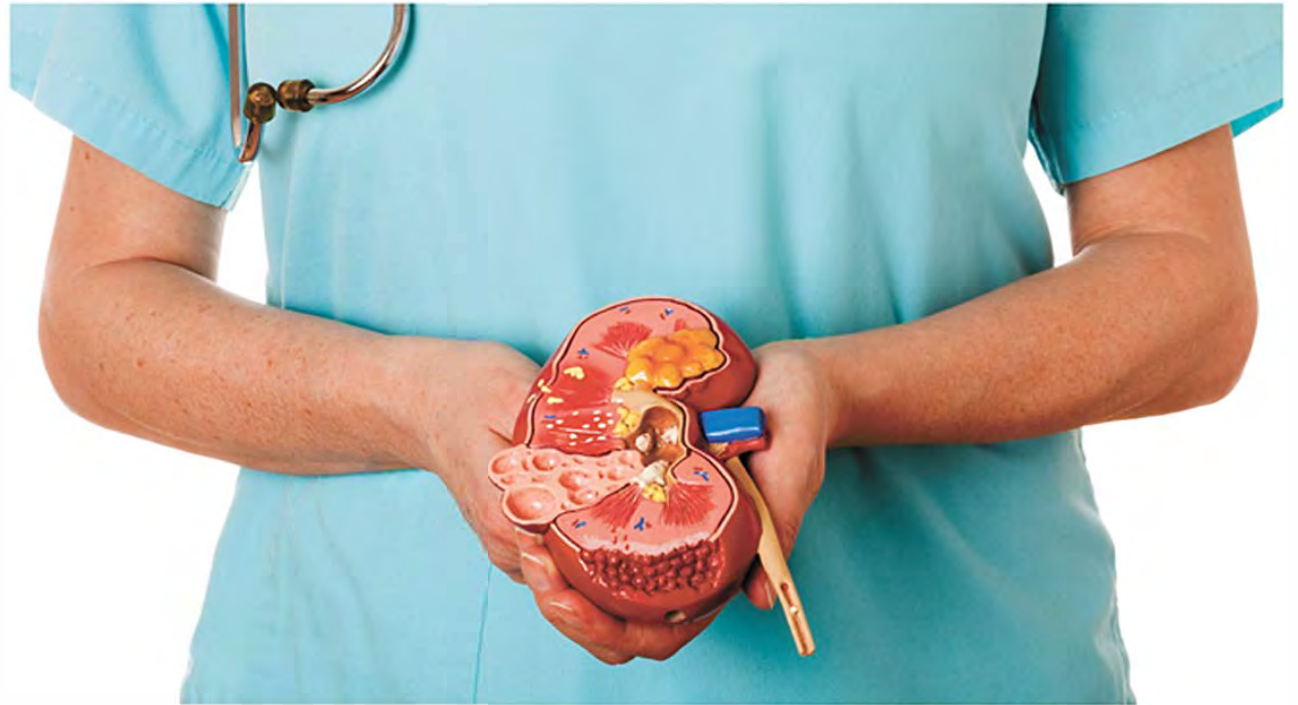
**2. Uric acid:** This is another common type of kidney stone. Foods such as organ meats and shellfish have high concentrations of a natural chemical compound known as purines. High purine intake leads to a higher production of monosodium urate, which, under the right conditions, may form stones in the kidneys. The formation of these types of stones tends to run in families.

**3. Struvite:** These stones are less common and are caused by infections in the upper urinary tract.

**4. Cystine:** These stones are rare and tend to run in families

## Kidney Stone Treatment

If the stone is small enough, the physician will want you to try and pass it naturally through urinating. Drinking adequate amounts of water is essential. You may also need IV fluids to help your body pass the stone more quickly and efficiently, and pain medications can be given to ease the discomfort. If the stone is large, has blocked the ureter, and caused urine retention, or if there are signs of infection, surgery may be required.



## Noninvasive Treatment to Break up the Stone(s)

Shock-wave lithotripsy is a noninvasive procedure that uses high-energy sound waves to blast the stones into fragments that are then more easily passed out in the urine. In ureteroscopy, an endoscope is inserted through the ureter to retrieve or obliterate the stone. Rarely, for very large or complicated stones, doctors will use percutaneous nephrolithotomy.<sup>1</sup>

If you have symptoms such as the following, they are often common warning indicators of kidney disorders:

- Discomfort when urinating
- Foul odor in urine
- Fluid retention in the lower extremities and feet
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Decreased urine output
- Nausea
- Irregular heartbeat
- Muscle weakness
- Chest pain

## Treatment is Critical

In the early stages, there may not be any symptoms. As kidney function decreases further, toxic wastes build up, and patients often feel sick to their stomachs

and throw up, lose their appetites, have hiccups, and gain weight due to fluid retention. If left untreated, patients can also develop heart failure and fluid in their lungs.

## What you can do

Controlling blood sugar levels, blood pressure and urinary bladder issues is best to limit the progression of the disease. Avoid over-the-counter pain medications and other medications that damage the kidneys.

## Medical Treatment Standards

Once the kidneys fail, three types of treatment can be used. These include kidney transplantation, hemodialysis, and peritoneal dialysis.



Sunshine Kidney Care  
Nephrology Associates

352.388.5800

Ste 522 The Sharon Morse Medical Office Building  
1400 US Hwy 441N, The Villages FL 32159

## Reference:

1. National Kidney Foundation, Kidney Stones,  
<https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/kidneystones>



# Why Choose a Certified Hand Therapist or CHT for Your Upper Extremity Injury?

**A** Certified Hand Therapist (CHT) specializes in treating upper extremity disorder for the shoulder, elbow, wrist and hand. A CHT requires a high level of specialization including postgraduate education and extensive clinical experience. They work closely with orthopedic and general surgeons who specialize in the hand to maximize rehabilitation outcomes with acute functional return of upper extremity use after an injury or chronic condition.



Figure 1  
1 Dynamic Hand Wrist Orthosis Splint  
2 Dynamic Digit Extension Orthosis

Guidance by a CHT will help patients' regain range of motion, strength, nerve function, fine and gross motor skills and can also provide post-operative wound care and overall rehabilitation of the hand. A CHT is also able to fabricate onsite custom orthotic static, splints; dynamic traction splints, static progressive splints and casts individuals dependent on the diagnosis and their needs for recovery.



Figure 3

3 Single Digit/Finger Extension Orthosis



Figure 4

4 Dynamic Wrist Extension MCPJ Flexion and Thumb Abduction Orthosis

Furthermore, an accurate assessment performed by a Qualified Certified Hand Therapist will eliminate the need for multiple medical providers and help facilitate faster recovery, decreased medical costs and faster return to work and productive lifestyles and leisure activities.



Figure 5

5 Dynamic Custom Orthosis



Figure 6

6 Digit Extension Orthosis

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If you often experience pain, stiffness, immobility, or balance issues, being proactive about physical therapy treatments and techniques can help to alleviate or lessen these circumstances.

For patients suffering from pain, the first step to recovery is to receive a proper diagnosis so the cause of the symptoms can be determined. Physical therapists are trained to administer flexibility and strengthening tactics along with body mechanics and awareness techniques to get your body moving and creating a much less painful range-of-motion. With ongoing therapy, most people see remarkable outcomes and lasting results.

Innovative Therapies Group offers Hand Therapy Specialists, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy and Massage Therapy. They embrace alternative methods and will help you explore new inventive ways to combat your pain or disorders.

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# Can Omega-3 Fish Oil Prevent Muscle Wasting?

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

**M**uscle wasting. It's a nasty phenomenon that scares many of us over the age of 40 – especially when we stand naked in front of the mirror!

Known more formally as sarcopenia, muscle wasting is a major issue. As many as 25-45% of older adults in the USA suffer from problematic loss of muscle mass and strength. Besides making it harder to carry out everyday physical tasks, sarcopenia is associated with a long list of negative health outcomes, like fractures, hospitalization and early death.

The good news is that there are ways to fight muscle loss. In addition to traditional measures – like regular exercise, getting enough protein, and maintaining healthy vitamin D levels – research indicates that omega-3 fatty acids may also be important for preserving our muscles.

## Does Omega-3 Affect Muscle Growth?

A number of studies suggest that omega-3s play a role in muscle growth.

A 2020 study from South Korea found that older women with higher omega-3 levels had a lower risk of sarcopenic obesity.

Another 2020 meta-analysis of 10 randomized controlled trials found that taking more than 2000 mg of omega-3s daily was associated with a 0.73 pound increase in muscle mass in elderly individuals. While such improvements may seem minor, keep in mind that most people after age 50 lose 2% of their muscle mass on a yearly basis. That's why even small improvements in muscle mass can be meaningful.

Notably, these findings reiterate the results from previous trials. For example, one 2015 study gave healthy older adults 3360 mg of omega-3s from eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) daily for 6 months. When compared to the control group, the adults who received the omega-3 supplements had increased thigh muscle volume, handgrip strength, and one-repetition muscle strength.

The researchers noted that, in functional terms, the omega-3s had prevented 2 – 3 years worth of normal age-associated losses in muscle mass and function.

## Why Does Fish Oil Help Build Muscle?

While researchers are still working to understand exactly why omega-3s influence muscle mass, they have some educated ideas:



- **Omega-3s fight “inflammaging.”** Inflammaging refers to age-related chronic low-grade inflammation. With inflammaging, the body produces higher levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines that affect muscle anabolism (ie. muscle building) and catabolism (ie. muscle breakdown). Since omega-3s have been shown to reduce inflammatory cytokines, they may help resolve destructive inflammation and make the body more effective at building muscle.

- **Omega-3s protect against oxidative stress.** Oxidative stress – which is generally caused by poor eating habits, inactivity, smoking, pollution, etc. – contributes to sarcopenia by decreasing muscle protein synthesis. Over time, prolonged oxidative stress can reduce muscle mass. Promisingly, omega-3s have been shown to reduce certain oxidative stress markers.

- **Omega-3s may address anabolic resistance.** Anabolic resistance refers to the body's reduced ability to build muscle, even when getting enough exercise, amino acids, protein, etc. Anabolic resistance increases with age, and is considered one of the biggest challenges in fighting sarcopenia. Some researchers believe that adding omega-3s to the mix of interventions could be key to achieving better exercise results in older individuals.

## How Much Omega-3 Do You Need?

One of the tricky things about the current omega-3 literature on muscle building is that trials use a variety of supplement sources, exercise protocols, and other variables. Therefore, the findings are not conclusive.

With that said, several reviews have identified that getting at least 3000 mg of EPA/DHA omega-3s daily may be necessary to achieve muscle mass results in older adults. Since most fish oil capsules contain just

10% of that amount (approximately 300 mg of EPA/DHA per gel cap), this dosage can be hard to replicate through regular omega-3 supplements.

For easier-to-swallow alternatives, liquid products like Omega Cure® Extra Strength and Omega Restore provide 3000 mg of EPA/DHA in pre-measured vials. That's roughly the same amount of omega-3s found in a 6 oz fillet of wild-caught salmon.

*This article was abbreviated from a longer version published on [omega3innovations.com](https://omega3innovations.com). For the full text and references, visit:*

*<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/can-omega-3-fish-oil-help-prevent-muscle-wasting/>*

## 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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# WHY YOU SHOULD BE IN TOTAL CONTROL OF YOUR ESTATE PLANNING

**E**state planning services include living wills, drafting of wills, trusts, and powers of attorney. Estate planning customizes the documents to match the needs of the clients, and to prepare provisions for their children, dependents and intended beneficiaries, and to also reduce the impact of estate taxes.

Many people are intimidated or afraid of hidden fees and high costs associated with estate planning, but Attorney Patrick L. Smith does things differently. 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.

**If you are putting off estate planning, here are few reasons you might want to take action now as opposed to later:**



## Health and Mental Capacity

In Florida, the state no longer recognizes Springing POAs (Power of Attorney). *Springing POAs* were able to “spring” into effect and make decisions after a loved one was incapacitated. These are no longer accepted. Instead, the State now requires a permanent POA that goes into effect at the moment of signing the document. If you or a loved one are being proactive about your estate planning or medical decisions, it’s critical to speak to an attorney to help guide you through the process and make the appropriate choices that are specific to your situation.

It’s essential to implement a power of attorney (POA) while someone is capable and competent of signing paperwork and evaluating needs.

If your loved one is unable to make sound judgments and decisions, it can be costly to navigate

the court systems to try and retroactively gain control of assets and to make important financial and health-related decisions.

Unfortunately, neurodegenerative disorders are escalating in our country. It’s not uncommon that individuals need 24-hour care and nursing to help with daily tasks due to conditions such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease, or other debilitating disorders like COVID, cancers, coma, and those on life-support, to name a few. When there is no power of attorney in place to make decisions, such as hiring a caregiver, transitioning into a memory care facility, or implementing a hospice plan, these important decisions can turn into a challenging legal process.

## Estate Planning Should be Under Your Control

Making decisions now is proactive. It should not be thought of as premature; it should rather be thought of as a wise decision for your family and those left behind that you wish to care for or donate to.

**You DO NOT have to disclose all details of your assets to your family, but it is very important that they know where to find the information when they need it. Preparing and organizing your estate planning is critical.**

## Law Offices of Patrick L. Smith, PLLC

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 **352-204-0305** or visit: **[www.attorneypatricksmith.com](http://www.attorneypatricksmith.com)**.



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# WHAT IS AN INGROWN TOENAIL?

**W**hen a toenail is ingrown, it is curved and grows into the skin, usually at the nail borders (the sides of the nail). This “digging in” of the nail irritates the skin, often creating pain, redness, swelling, and warmth in the toe.

If an ingrown nail causes a break in the skin, bacteria may enter and cause an infection in the area, which is often marked by drainage and a foul odor. However, even if the toe isn’t painful, red, swollen, or warm, a nail that curves downward into the skin can progress to an infection.

## Causes of ingrown toenails include:

- **Heredity.** In many people, the tendency for ingrown toenails is inherited.
- **Trauma.** Sometimes an ingrown toenail is the result of trauma, such as stubbing your toe, having an object fall on your toe, or engaging in activities that involve repeated pressure on the toes, such as kicking or running.
- **Improper trimming.** The most common cause of ingrown toenails is cutting your nails too short. This encourages the skin next to the nail to fold over the nail.
- **Improperly sized footwear.** Ingrown toenails can result from wearing socks and shoes that are tight or short.
- **Nail Conditions.** Ingrown toenails can be caused by nail problems, such as fungal infections or losing a nail due to trauma.

## Treatment

Sometimes initial treatment for ingrown toenails can be safely performed at home. However, home treatment is strongly discouraged if an infection is suspected, or for those who have medical conditions that put feet at high risk, such as diabetes, nerve damage in the foot, or poor circulation.

## Home care:

If you don’t have an infection or any of the above medical conditions, you can soak your foot in room-temperature water (adding Epsom’s salt may be recommended by your doctor), and gently massage the side of the nail fold to help reduce the inflammation.

Avoid attempting “bathroom surgery.” Repeated cutting of the nail can cause the condition to worsen over time. If your symptoms fail to improve, it’s time to see a foot and ankle surgeon.



## Physician care:

After examining the toe, the foot and ankle surgeon will select the treatment best suited for you. If an infection is present, an oral antibiotic may be prescribed.

Sometimes a minor surgical procedure, often performed in the office, will ease the pain and remove the offending nail. After applying a local anesthetic, the doctor removes part of the nail’s side border. Some nails may become ingrown again, requiring removal of the nail root.

Following the nail procedure, a light bandage will be applied. Most people experience very little pain after surgery and may resume normal activity the next day. If your surgeon has prescribed an oral antibiotic, be sure to take all the medication, even if your symptoms have improved.

## Preventing Ingrown Toenails

Many cases of ingrown toenails can be prevented with proper trimming and wearing well-fitted socks and shoes. Cut toenails in a fairly straight line, and don’t cut them too short. You should be able to get your fingernail under the sides and end of the nail. Don’t wear shoes that are short or tight in the toe area. Avoid shoes that are loose, because they too cause pressure on the toes, especially when running or walking briskly.

## What You Should Know About Home Treatment

- Don’t cut a notch in the nail. Contrary to what some people believe, this does not reduce the tendency for the nail to curve downward.
- Don’t repeatedly trim nail borders. Repeated trimming does not change the way the nail grows, and can make the condition worse.
- Don’t place cotton under the nail. Not only does this not relieve the pain, it provides a place for harmful bacteria to grow, resulting in infection.
- Over-the-counter medications are ineffective. Topical medications may mask the pain, but they don’t correct the underlying problem.

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Our practice provides superior foot and ankle care for every walk of life using state of the art and time proven diagnostic and therapeutic techniques. We believe that prevention, prompt diagnosis, and early intervention are the key ingredients to minimize the impact of any problem on your life. We provide the full range of podiatric care, exhausting all conservative treatment options prior to graduating to surgical intervention when necessary. Our board-certified physicians are well versed in the arena of podiatric medicine and provide skilled and compassionate surgical care.



# When You Are At Your Wits End

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

**H**ave 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:

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