

T A M P A B A Y ' S

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

May 2022

Pasco/North Tampa/New Tampa Edition - Monthly

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**FREE**  

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## Robotic Technology

Offers Precision  
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## CONTACT US

OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

**TAMPA/PASCO - (727) 515-2353**  
**BOB GUCKENBERGER**  
bobguckenberger@gmail.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

**SONNY GRENSING**  
sonny@gwhizmarketing.com

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# Lumbar Spine Pain: Symptoms, Causes & Treatments

By: Regenexx Tampa Bay, Regenerative Medicine

**T**he body is an interconnected machine with each part working together in harmony. The lumbar spine is a crucial element of this machine. The hip, knee, and foot are all controlled by spinal nerves within the low back. A problem in the lumbar spine could create problems at any point in the lower body. Common lumbar issues include arthritis, foraminal and spinal stenosis, pinched nerves, disc problems, muscle atrophy, loose ligaments, and spondylolysis. In this article, we will give you a brief overview of these common lumbar spine problems along with their potential symptoms, causes, and treatments.

First, let's take a look at the spinal column and its parts.

## The Spinal Column

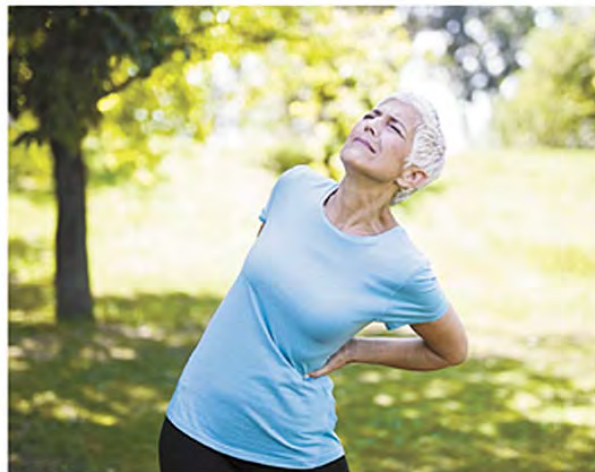
The spinal column is made up of vertebrae that are stacked one on top of the other with an intervertebral disc between each level to provide cushion and absorb shock. The cervical spine consists of the neck area and is made up of seven vertebrae (C1-C7). Following the cervical spine is the thoracic spine (T1-T12), the lumbar spine (L1-L5), the sacrum (S1-S5), and the coccyx. The posterior (back) portion of these vertebrae is known as the spinous process and on either side of these, connecting one vertebra to the next, are finger-joint-sized articulations called facet joints.

Another extremely important part of the spinal column is the spinal canal. This tunnel runs down the middle of the column and houses the spinal cord, which has many nerves that transmit muscle commands and sensory information throughout the body and to the brain. There are small holes in the spinal column where the nerves exit and branch off to other parts of the body. There is one at each level of the spinal column. One of these holes is called a foramen. Any of these structures can become damaged or diseased in some way and lead to pain, discomfort, or even disability.

## Foraminal Stenosis

When the spine is healthy, spinal nerves easily traverse through the tunnels transmitting sensory information from each body part to the brain and provide impulses to the muscles so they can contract and move the body part. However, when the spine is unhealthy, the flow of information can be disrupted.

The disc or cushion in between the spine bones can bulge and/or the spine joints can get arthritis causing the foramen to narrow. This narrowing of the tunnel is called foraminal stenosis and can cause the nerves to get pinched. The pressure from a pinched nerve can cause muscle tightness, weakness, numbness, tingling,



burning, or electrical pain in the specific distribution of that nerve. For example, if there is a lower lumbar foraminal stenosis, you could experience numbness in your big toe. Sometimes the symptoms slowly manifest over time from a more subtle pinching of the nerve. If the nerve is irritated, it may release inflammatory substances into the tissue to which the nerve travels causing that tissue to degenerate more rapidly than other areas leading to painful problems such as tendinopathy.

You could have laser spine surgery to open up the hole, but this surgery can have major side effects and serious implications. Another way to surgically treat stenosis is with a spinal fusion, but the mention of a fusion should be a huge red flag to seek out other opinions. Why? Adjacent segment disease (ASD). After a fusion, the motion of the fused segments is limited and the biomechanical loads are transferred to the segments above and below the level of the fusion. These adjacent segments could get damaged and become painful over time resulting in additional surgeries.

Surgery is often performed after an MRI diagnosis of the problem. An MRI indicating stenosis is not enough to appropriately diagnose that stenosis is the cause of pain. If you do have foraminal stenosis, you should not put all your trust in MRI results. Patients may or may not have pain with foraminal stenosis. The MRI is a description of the appearance of the spine. Many people have stenosis and no noticeable problems. An experienced physician knows that it's critical to treat the person, not the MRI. This can be determined by a thorough history and physical examination. Research also shows that skilled physical therapy is as effective as surgery in relieving stenosis symptoms.

Our approach to foraminal stenosis utilizes nonsurgical solutions to treat it before it progresses. Precise image-guided injections of the patient's own platelets into the foramen and around the nerve can help manage the problem.

## Facet Joint Osteoarthritis and Instability

The facet joints that we spoke of earlier can become injured from trauma or develop arthritis from cartilage breakdown due to wear and tear. Facet joints allow for and limit movement in the spine. When bending backward, these joints become compressed and when you bend forward, they open up. When damage or arthritis occurs, facet joints can become chronically painful, especially with movement. Facet arthritis is often referred to as Degenerative Joint Disease (DJD).

For facet arthritis or injuries, doctors may recommend a radiofrequency ablation (RFA) also referred to as a rhizotomy of the small nerve that senses pain from that specific facet joint. This is a destructive process that damages the nerve. Although this can be effective in some cases, it may leave the surrounding muscles weaker which can actually be a cause of back pain.

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

Our approach for DJD often includes high-dose PRP, platelet lysate, or stem cell injections precisely targeting the facet joints, surrounding ligaments, atrophied muscles, and around the nerves. This is a tissue preservation strategy that involves no cutting, surgery, hardware, or tissue destruction helping patients avoid pain medications and damaging cortisone injections.

## Disc Problems

Within the lumbar spine, there are four types of disc problems that can occur. A herniated disc occurs when the outer covering of the structure breaks open allowing the inner gel to herniate out. A bulging disc is when the outer covering doesn't completely break open, but the fibers are stretched and weak leading the gel to bulge. A torn disc means that the outer cover has a tear that causes or it may allow the leaking of chemicals on the associated spinal nerve. Lastly, a degenerated disc is one that has collapsed or narrowed due to insufficient living cells inside the disc not producing enough of the substances that keep the disc plump. A severely degenerated disc is usually not a source of pain unless it's bulging or leaking onto a spinal nerve. Earlier in the degeneration process, while the disc still has plumpness to it, tears in the back of the disc can be a source of low back pain that results in severe episodes of pain with sitting, coughing, sneezing, or lifting. When a disc is severely degenerated, it usually is no longer painful itself. However, the mechanical load of the compressive forces in the spine at that level are no longer being taken up by the disc and therefore get transferred to the facet joints leading to wear and tear and DJD as described above.

Generally, disc surgeries include either back fusions or disc replacement. Regarding fusion, the vertebrae are bolted together with hardware to keep them immobile. With disc replacement, the goal is to have fewer side effects than a fusion, however, research has shown that abnormal motion with an artificial disc can also lead to ASD. The other side effects of having a device implanted include wear-and-tear ions in the blood from the breakdown of the metal or plastic device, ongoing pain, and potential revision surgeries.

With our approach, herniated and bulging discs are treated based on the problem they are causing. For pinched nerves, instilling isolated growth factors or platelet lysate around the irritated nerve can help the nerve recover and become more tolerant of its narrow space. Injection of the surrounding ligaments and muscles provides for stability with better-controlled movements taking pressures off the disc and nerves. In some cases, bulging discs may be treated with a same-day stem cell treatment to reduce the size of the bulge or heal a tear. In other cases, cultured (grown) stem cells injected in a specific way may be required. Torn discs can be treated with either stem cell or PRP injections very effectively. Symptoms respond well to a treatment protocol focused on platelet and/or stem cell technology deployed to treat undesirable disc and lumbar segment movements due to lax ligaments and arthritic facet joints.

#### Pinched Lumbar Nerve

Pinched nerves can be caused by foraminal stenosis from bulging or herniated discs and facet joint arthritis as discussed. A pinched lumbar nerve can cause pain, numbness, tingling, or weakness anywhere along the route that particular nerve branch supplies. Pain may or may not be present in the low back.

Chronic knee pain could actually be due to a pinched nerve in the lumbar spine. A doctor may mistakenly conclude that the knee is the source of the pain. This is exactly why we find it so important to consider the entire musculoskeletal system as a whole rather than in parts and to take an extensive history and physical.

The surgical approach to a pinched nerve depends on the root cause. For example, if a disc bulge is to blame, it could be a discectomy and graft and/or lumbar fusion. If it is a foraminal stenosis, laser surgery may enlarge the foraminal opening where the nerve is being pinched. Problems with invasive lumbar surgery are many, including long recovery times and often continuing pain. Ultimately, the structure never fully functions as it originally did.

Our approach includes examining the full musculoskeletal system to determine the source of pain and the pinched nerve and then developing an appropriate treatment plan. Treatment may consist of precise image-guided injections of healing growth factors isolated from a patient's own blood platelets, PRP, or stem cells.

#### Steroids, NSAIDs, & Other Drugs - Not Recommended

You may be presented with other treatments within the traditional orthopedics model for lumbar problems, including steroid shots or medications.



Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) come with a long and growing list of dangerous side effects, such as sudden-death heart attacks, stroke, gastrointestinal bleeding, addiction, and overdose.

Narcotics can provide pain relief but are not addressing the issue directly and of course, can be addictive. Overdose has become an increasing public health issue.

Steroid shots have been shown to destroy local cartilage in the joint which can progress arthritis and provide no significant long term pain improvement. In fact, pain relief usually diminishes with repeated steroid injections. The list of problems with these injections is also lengthy.

There are supplements that can be a good alternative for pain and inflammation. Chondroitin and glucosamine have been shown to be effective pain relievers and can preserve cartilage. Curcumin derived from turmeric can also decrease inflammation and relieve pain from arthritis and other issues.

Our spines are tuned to precision and attempting to rearrange the spine's biomechanics with fusions and surgeries is often a bad idea. It is essential to understand that where it hurts may or may not be where the primary damage is located.

Acting on a lumbar spine problem while it's still a small problem or when the issue first appears, will be less of an issue than trying to take care of it when it becomes a larger problem that spirals out of control. Conservative options may help in some cases, but if these options have failed, we urge you to seek out interventional orthopedic solutions!



#### Dr. James Leiber

**James Leiber, DO**, is the founder and medical director of Regenexx Tampa Bay. He is a former officer, physician, and educator in the Air Force, including personal physician to the vice president and president at the White House. He is triple board certified in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine (AOBNMM), Pain Medicine (CAQPM), and Family Medicine (ABFM), as well registered in Musculoskeletal Sonography (RMSK).

Dr. Leiber specializes in Interventional Regenerative Orthopedics with years of experience and is honored to have been the first Regenexx Network Provider in Florida. In 2012, Dr. Leiber began offering the nation's most advanced non-surgical stem cell and platelet treatments (PRP) for injuries and arthritis under image guidance utilizing ultrasound and fluoroscopy (X-ray).



#### Ron Torrance II, DO And FAOASM-

Board Certified in Sports Medicine and recent co-author of *Exercise 2.0* for Regenexx and author of the 2018 best paper of the year on *The Concussed Athlete*. Dr. Torrance has achieved semi-professional ranking as a beach volleyball player and trains as a competitive CrossFit athlete.



#### Ignatios Papas, DO, is a non-surgical

orthopedic physician specializing in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Regenexx Tampa Bay. Dr. Papas has taught courses in musculoskeletal ultrasound to residents across multiple specialties and to medical students at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte.

He is a member of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and the American Academy of Orthopedics just to name a few. When he isn't practicing medicine he enjoys spending time with his wife and new baby, playing soccer, practicing guitar, and listening to historical podcast



#### Lisa Valastro, DO - Specializes in

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation with a focus on regenerative medicine via orthobiologics. She received her medical degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pennsylvania, and her Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation training at Albany Medical Center in Albany, New York. She also completed a fellowship with Dr. Marko Bodor in Napa, California, focused on Spine, Sports, Electrodiagnostics and Regenerative Medicine. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, kayaking, weight lifting and volleyball.

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# Robotic Technology Offers Precision for Surgeons, Fast Recoveries for Patients

**S**urgical robots have come a long way since they were first introduced in the mid-1980s. Fine-tuned through decades of research and development, they now feature high-tech arms with finger-like pincers for holding surgical instruments and cameras for enhanced vision, navigation and control. The surgical suites at Morton Plant North Bay Hospital (New Port Richey) and St. Joseph's Hospital-North (Lutz) set a new standard of care for robotic-assisted surgery. In the capable hands of surgeons, today's surgical robots can help provide some of the most effective and least invasive treatments available.

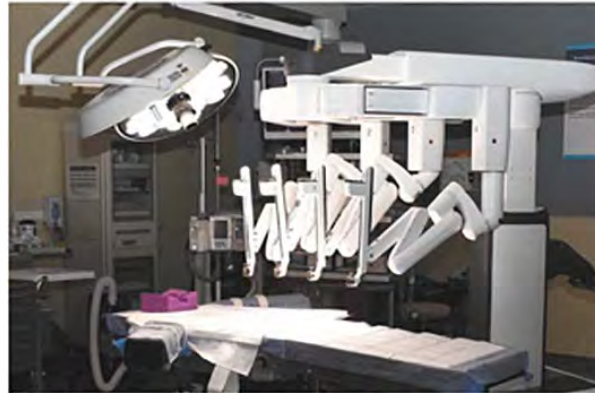
"Robotic surgery has changed how we operate," said Dr. Elizabeth Myers, a robotic fellowship-trained colorectal surgeon affiliated with St. Joseph's Hospital and the Cancer Liaison Physician to the American College of Surgeons for St. Joseph's Hospital's Cancer Institute. "The technology allows us to see beautiful anatomy in three dimensions in some of the smallest spaces of the body."

For example, robotic instrumentation allows Dr. Myers to operate deep in the pelvis with less risk for nerve injury and bleeding compared to open surgery. Her patients often go home after just a few days taking only acetaminophen and ibuprofen for pain.

"We are fortunate to have skilled robotic surgeons across multiple disciplines, which allows for complex operations to be carried out simultaneously by colorectal surgeons, gynecologic oncologists and urologists," said Dr. Myers. "As such, we're able to offer patients highly complex surgery in a minimally invasive fashion."

Surgeons are known for their steady hands. But it's tough to compete with the stability of a machine. Surgical robots -- sometimes called "co-bots" -- work collaboratively with surgical teams, combining the surgeon's medical expertise with the robot's mechanical precision. This teamwork lets surgeons perform complicated tasks with super-human dexterity.

Surgeons are always in control of surgical robots. Prior to operating these machines, BayCare surgeons



complete specialized training that have equipped them with the knowledge and experience to work safely and effectively.

"Doctors that want to start doing robotic surgeries start with case observations followed by online training, including hands on experience with a simulator," said Kristy Cahill, a certified nurse who oversees the robotic service line at Morton Plant Hospital.

Surgeons then practice hands-on training, such as operating in labs on pig tissue, which gives them a realistic feel for working with patients. Once they finish their training and earn approval to start at the hospital, surgeons are proctored by an experienced robotic surgeon before they lead their own procedure, Cahill said.

Demand for robot-assisted surgeries has risen in recent years, driven by reported benefits for patients and surgeons. Dr. Vriti Advani, a general surgeon affiliated with Winter Haven Hospital, said robotic technology helps improve the overall experience for patients and surgeons.

"Patients often experience smaller incisions, less pain and earlier recovery times with robot-assisted surgeries compared to standard open surgery," said Dr. Advani, who has special interest in robotic surgeries for acid reflux, hernias and pancreaticobiliary procedures. "My patients often get to go home on the same day as their surgery. For surgeons, robotic technology allows for enhanced dexterity and optimizes their ability to see all the tissues in high-resolution detail."

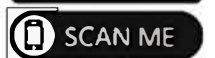
Robotic surgeries have become popular among athletes, geriatric patients and the general population. This treatment approach is desirable for anyone who wants to limit their hospital stay without compromising the quality of their care.

In the end, the use of a surgery robot is up to the physician. But while surgeons sometimes prefer a traditional approach for certain procedures, BayCare's list of robotic surgery services continues to grow. BayCare hospitals offer dozens of robot-assisted procedures including colorectal, gynecological, thoracic, prostate, pediatric, urologic, bariatric and general surgeries.

Patient outcomes and experiences are of utmost importance to surgeons like Dr. Advani. That's why she said she earned her credentials to perform robot-assisted surgeries with BayCare.

"As a surgeon who performs a wide variety of surgical procedures, robotic technology allows me to offer patients minimally invasive approaches to surgeries," she said. "My favorite part about operating with these robots is that I have the ability to essentially operate with four hands at the same time, and control the movement of the robotic camera with my eyes and feet. It's such an efficient way to operate and decreases operating time for my patients."

Open the camera app on your phone and scan the code to listen to Morton Plant North Bay Hospital's Dr. Lourdes Pelaez-Echevarria discuss the types and benefits of robotic surgery.





# Florida Medical Clinic Announces a Grand Opening at Watergrass: Dr. Ayazo Sheds Light on What to Expect

**R**esidents of Epperson and Watergrass will be pleased to know that Florida Medical Clinic is opening a state-of-the-art Watergrass facility in the summer of 2022.

We recently caught up with Dr. Ayazo, a respected family physician at Florida Medical Clinic to learn more.

**H&W:** The new Florida Medical Clinic (FMC) Watergrass facility is expected to open in June, can you give our readers a preview of what to expect.

**Dr. Ayazo:** It's a multi-specialty facility with a lab and radiology on site that is sort of a one stop shop for patients.

**H&W:** Have they started taking appointments?

**Dr. Ayazo:** Yes, some patients have already scheduled appointments, but we will be fully operational with a comprehensive team very soon.

**H&W:** Your practice is family medicine with a focus on nutrition and exercise. Tell our readers why you decided to take that route?

**Dr. Ayazo:** During my undergrad, I minored in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology, and it became clear that this was the direction I wanted to go. I wanted to help patients get the results that they were looking for. It's my passion. The obesity epidemic is a major contributor to many problems like Covid, and preventable diseases like Type 2 Diabetes. It's very satisfying to see a patient make improvements in their health.

**H&W:** You have the reputation as a wonderful and caring doctor from your peers. How does that make you feel?

**Dr. Ayazo:** It makes me feel very humbled. We as a group all stuck together through this difficult time battling Covid, and finally coming out the other side, it is very satisfying to know that we are able to offer ongoing comprehensive care.

**H&W:** What's important for our readers to know about you and your practice?

**Dr. Ayazo:** It's important that patients understand that we listen to them, and we will get to the root of the problem with care and consideration. Every



patient is treated with respect and dignity, and our goal as health care providers is to make them understand that we proactively make a plan tailored to their specific needs.

**H&W:** What motivates you as a doctor?

**Dr. Ayazo:** Seeing a patient's face light up when we get the desired results is genuinely motivating. Sometimes conventional medicine may not be working for a patient, and an integrated holistic approach may yield better results. Every case is individual.

**H&W:** Tell me about FMC.

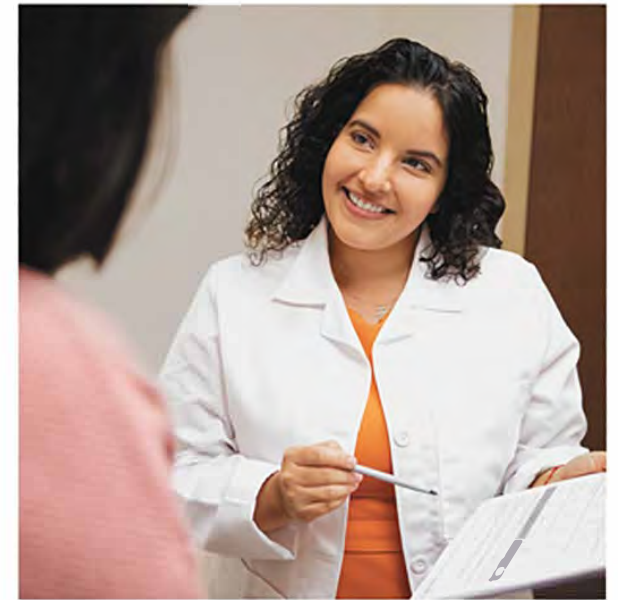
**Dr. Ayazo:** I love it here. They allow us to treat patients with the standard of care coupled with innovative approaches and tailored treatment plans and protocols that suit our patient's needs.

### Florida Medical Clinic

At Florida Medical Clinic, we are dedicated to one very important thing: Keeping you healthy. And that's because we look at healthcare through a simple but very different lens. We offer a comprehensive range of preventative care services and chronic disease management programs to get – or keep – you healthy. All supported by a team of compassionate and experienced medical providers who routinely monitor your health. By proactively identifying gaps in care, we can get ahead of medical concerns before they become medical conditions. This is the kind of healthcare that keeps you focused on what's most important: Enjoying your life.

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Beginning mid-2022, Dr. Ayazo will move to our new multi-specialty facility located on Curley Road near the Watergrass and Epperson neighborhoods. Her office is temporarily located in our Dade City office.



### Michelle Ayazo, MD

*Dr. Ayazo is a board-certified family physician who attended medical school at Florida State University and completed her residency training at the University of South Florida. Born in Bogotá, Colombia, and raised in Florida, she is passionate about helping patients manage their chronic illnesses with an emphasis on nutrition and exercise. She strives to provide compassionate and high-quality care to all her patients. During her free time, she enjoys outdoor activities, Latin American and Mediterranean cuisine, traveling, and spending time with her family and friends.*

### Dr. Ayazo has a special interest in:

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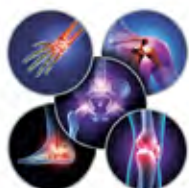
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# TESTICULAR CANCER

**T**esticular cancer is rarely in the news, but it's a health topic that all men, especially younger men, need to be aware of. Like many cancers, the sooner testicular cancer is detected, the easier it is to treat, and the cure rate for this form of cancer is extremely high -- greater than 95 percent.

The American Cancer Society estimates that nearly 10,000 males will be diagnosed with testicular cancer in the United States this year. About 1 in 260 American men will develop testicular cancer in their lifetimes. While it can occur at any age, including during childhood, it is the most common cancer in men between ages 20 and 35. White males are more likely to develop this form of cancer than black or Asian-American males.

## A closer look

The testicles are two walnut-shaped glands inside the scrotum (the sac of skin that lies below the penis) that produce sperm and the hormone testosterone.

Cancer occurs when healthy germ cells in a testicle develop abnormalities that continue dividing and accumulate until they form a mass. Little is known about what causes this to occur. Although cancerous cells can develop in both testicles, it is rare.

## Symptoms & Risk Factors

Most often, a lump or swelling on the testicle is the first symptom; however, some testicular cancers might not cause symptoms until they've reached an advanced stage. Other signs to look for include:

- Swelling or a sudden build-up of fluid in the scrotum
- Feeling of heaviness in the scrotum
- Dull ache, pain or discomfort in the groin, lower abdomen, scrotum or a testicle
- A change in testicle size

Scientists aren't sure what causes testicular cancer and have found few risk factors that make someone more likely to develop it.

However, the American Cancer Society advises that one of the main risk factors is an undescended testicle. This condition occurs when one or both testicles fail to move from the abdomen into the scrotum before birth. In about three percent of boys, the testicles do not descend all the way into the scrotum before birth; sometimes, one or both testicles remain in the abdomen. Other times, the testicles start to descend, but stay in the groin. If the testicle hasn't descended by the child's first birthday, it probably isn't going to do it on its own, and surgery may be recommended to move it. Physicians have concluded that there is likely another factor that leads to both testicular cancer and abnormal position of the testicles, but the condition alone doesn't actually cause testicular cancer.



A prior germ cell tumor in one or both testicles, an HIV infection or a family history may also increase the chances of developing testicular cancer.

## Diagnosis & Treatment

Testicular cancer is usually diagnosed after a lump or other change in a testicle is detected. An ultrasound will more clearly show whether cancer is evident. (Biopsies, which remove small amounts of tissue using a needle or medical tool, are not performed on testicles because the procedure could penetrate the testicle, making it more difficult to treat a cancer, if found.)

Surgery to remove the testicle, called orchiectomy, is the most common and successful initial treatment. Some patients may need additional treatment with chemotherapy or radiation to kill any remaining cancer cells, or if tumors have spread to other areas of the body.

## Detection the Best Prevention

Because there is no way to prevent testicular cancer, early detection is important.

Examination of the testicles is often performed during annual physicals and routine wellness checks. Many doctors agree that regular self-checks after puberty are a good idea to help individuals become familiar with their own anatomy, so they will be better able to recognize any changes. Talk with your health care provider for guidance. Instructions for performing a self-examination of testicles can be found on the American Cancer Society website at [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

Notify your doctor if you notice any changes, such as lumps, nodules or an increase or decrease in testicle size, or if you experience any persistent pain in your groin or abdomen.

Doctors report that many men delay reporting concerns with their genitalia due to fears about potential impacts on sexuality or fertility, which are largely unfounded. Health professionals emphasize that swift evaluation and diagnosis greatly increase the chances of successful treatment and the opportunity to continue living life to its fullest.

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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 (FCS) 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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# Neuropathy Can Be Treated With Advanced Technology, BUT Not All Providers Offer This Therapy

BY DR. ROBERT LUPO, D.C.

**N**one of us are impervious to aches and pains, but for numerous individuals chronic tingling, numbness, and pain disrupts their lives on a daily basis. In the United States, neuropathy affects close to 25 million people. Neuropathy symptoms are typically a heavy sensation in the limbs with numbness, tingling and pain.

Many people only associate neuropathy with diabetes, but that percentage makes up about 30% of the population affected. Other causes of the disorder are viral conditions, immune disorders, trauma, celiac, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, vascular disease, and alcohol use disorder, to name a few. Neuropathy can become debilitating.

**What you don't want to do is ignore your symptoms. Treatment is critical to get you back to living and enjoying your life.**

## Traditional Treatments

The most common treatment for nerve damage is to mask it with prescription medications. Unfortunately, these medications are addictive and only act as a band aid. Getting to the root cause of your neuropathy is critical.

## A Better Treatment Option

there is a way to actually "treat" the symptoms and improve the nerve function in the body. Over the past several decades, quantum technologies have been studied and due to the effectiveness of these devices, next generation technology has paved the way for effective peripheral neuropathy treatment.

## Advanced Treatment with Quantum Technology Gets to the Root Cause

Dr. Robert Lupo is on the cutting edge of multiple technological advances to offer his patients the most effective, groundbreaking options without surgery or addictive drugs. That is why he chose to work directly with RST Sanexas, due to their incomparable results.

Dr. Lupo explains, "This technology is remarkable as it's able to treat peripheral neuropathy on a cellular level to regenerate and repair damaged nerves. No matter if it's caused by diabetes, alcohol abuse, chemotherapy or other common conditions that lead to neuropathic disorders, the Sanexas technology is equally effective at treating the disorder."

## RST Sanexas: Is NOT a TENS unit device

For three decades, RST Sanexas' ardent, progressive research team members have been developing, refining, clinically testing, test-marketing and authoring scientific papers with its breakthrough electric cell signaling and quantum resonant specific induction (QSRI) technologies.



In 1995, RST-Sanexas medical devices were revamped to use quantum-based communications-level technology with both frequency modulation (FM), as well as the typical amplitude modulated (AM) electronic signals. To this day, amplitude modulation (AM) signals represent 99% of all marketed TENS type devices even though the human body operates exclusively by (FM) frequency modulated energy.

In 1996, after exhaustive clinical application data was received, a new electronic signal generating Patent was issued (UHdfg). The Patent covers this brand new advanced random, yet sequential AM/FM signal generation technique with spread spectrum frequency hopping technology.

RST-Sanexas technology is still fundamentally more advanced than any other electromedical device in use today.

## How Sanexas Technology Relieves Neuropathic Pain

Why does quantum technology hold so much promise for health care? Many cell processes take place at the nanoscale (the world of atoms and sub-atomic particles). At that scale, matter stops behaving according to the laws of classical physics and starts demonstrating the unique properties of quantum mechanics. Quantum technology is set to revolutionize the way we think about health care, medical data and even our own biology.

Pain treatment modalities and instruments that operate on quantum theory use resonance to increase energy in and between cells. Molecular resonance is best understood with an analogy in the macroscopic world. When a piano tuner strikes a tuning fork next to the piano, the specific piano string will

vibrate when it is correctly tuned to the same frequency. Similarly, cells resonate and transfer energy between molecules very rapidly.

**This procedure is covered by Medicare and most insurance carriers.**

## Dr. Lupo's Practice—An Integrated Approach

At Physical Medicine Center, Inc. you can expect a welcoming, friendly environment with a staff that genuinely cares about your progress. Their goal is your improved quality of life—that's why their comprehensive treatment plans are designed to help you reach your goals. If pain is holding you back, call today to learn more about their natural, non-surgical, non-drug options for pain relief.

## Dr. Robert Lupo, D.C.

*Dr. Robert Lupo is the clinic director at Physical Medicine Center located in north Tampa near the University of South Florida and New Tampa. Physical Medicine Center is a multidisciplinary medical center that offers Medical Care, Chiropractic Care, and Physical Therapy. Dr. Lupo attended Life University in Marietta Georgia and graduated with a Doctor of Chiropractic degree in 1985. Dr. Lupo has taken post-graduate education in chiropractic orthopedics, neurology, spinal disc injury care, and auto accident and injury care. Physical Medicine Center also offers massage therapy, treatment for dizziness, balance disorders, Spectra cell nutritional blood analysis, bio-identical hormone replacement therapy for men and women and offers the nationally known Medifast weight system.*

If you want drug-free alternative options for your health needs, look no further than the Physical Medicine Center in north Tampa. The Physical Medicine Center treats both male and female patients who desire alternative therapies to get to the root cause of their conditions. Call them today at 813-607-5095 to schedule your appointment.

Source: <https://www.rstsanexas.com/science>

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# Emsella Treatment for ED with Dr. Vahora

By Parveen Vahora, M.D.

According to the Massachusetts Male Aging Study, about 40% of men are affected by erectile dysfunction at age 40 and 70% of men are affected at age 70. Enter Emsella for men. Emsella has been approved for men suffering with incontinence and erectile dysfunction because of weakening pelvic floor muscles. These muscles support all of the pelvic organs and when weakened, they can result in incontinence, premature ejaculation, and erectile dysfunction.

What is Emsella? Emsella is an FDA approved treatment that utilizes High Intensity Focused Electromagnetic Energy (HiFem). It creates thousands of contractions in the muscles of the pelvic floor each session. These contractions strengthen the pelvic floor muscles improving both incontinence and erectile dysfunction. The Emsella treatment is both non-invasive and modest. The patient stays fully clothed during the treatment. You simply sit comfortably in the Emsella chair while it does all the work without any pain or discomfort. The only sensation may be a slight tingling as the muscles contract. Treatment in the Emsella chair is cleared by the FDA for both men and women.

The treatment involves at least six sessions which are performed twice a week over a three-week period. Each session takes approximately 30 minutes. The treatment has been shown to strengthen muscles, increase blood flow, help restore neuromuscular control, and increase production of collagen and elastin, in addition to strengthening the muscles.

Up to now Kegels have been the best option for combatting Erectile Dysfunction. The great news is that Emsella stimulates many more Kegels than you could otherwise do on your own...engages both voluntary and involuntary muscles along the pelvic floor to create up to 11,000 contractions per minute. The pelvic floor muscles form the lower part of the pelvis and support the pelvic organs, including the bladder, rectum and prostate. When pelvic floor weakness occurs, it may lead to erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation. Having erection problems from time to time is not necessarily a cause for concern. However, if erectile dysfunction is a persistent issue, it can cause stress,



and affect your self-confidence and contribute to relationship problems. Complications resulting from erectile dysfunction can include: an unsatisfactory sex life, stress or anxiety, embarrassment or low self-esteem, relationship problems, or the inability to get your partner pregnant.

Men can also suffer from incontinence, associated with pelvic floor weakness. There are many factors that can affect male problems with incontinence and bladder leakage, with the primary cause being due to the prostate. An enlarged prostate after a prostatectomy, bladder surgery, or other treatments for prostate cancer can all contribute to male incontinence and erectile dysfunction. Other factors that can contribute to male incontinence include, but are not limited to, certain neurological disorders, obesity, smoking, and even family history. Men's incontinence typically involves a small amount of dribbling during exercise or at the end of the day. Chronic coughing or being overweight can put pressure on the bladder and lead to stress incontinence. Urge incontinence occurs when there is a need to urinate frequently or there is dribbling when the bladder is full.

Men will be pleased with the many benefits Emsella affords. Sessions result in increased bladder control, the end of urinary incontinence, increased penile rigidity and hardness, increased control over erection, increases time until ejaculation, reduce stress and anxiety and restores confidence. We offer discreet Emsella treatments in our office. Treatments run around 30 minutes while seated in the treatment chair. There is no downtime following

the session. We welcome your questions and look forward to discussing the benefits of Emsella and how it can be the solution to your incontinence or erectile dysfunction. Should you have any questions or would like to discuss treatment, please contact the staff at Parveen S. Vahora, MD. We are here to help.

**Parveen Vahora, M.D.**

Dr. Vahora specializes in pelvic pain and endometriosis and is passionate about educating fellow physicians and the community on these topics. She is fellowship trained in minimally invasive surgery. Another focus of hers is sexual health and she offers MonaLisa Touch® for patients who have issues from having children, going through menopause, as well as post-menopausal women, cancer survivors, and those suffering from pain during intercourse or intense dryness or incontinence or prolapse.

Continually participating in research in the field of gynecology, Dr. Vahora is also a professional speaker, educating health care practitioners on hereditary cancers, multimodal pain management options, dyspareunia due to vulvovaginal atrophy and SERM treatment, and many other gynecological concerns.

Dr. Vahora looks at the whole person when administering highly acclaimed treatments, not simply their symptoms. She is a woman gynecologist and is well-known in her community for her deep commitment to positive outcomes for her patients. Most importantly, her patients love her because she listens, and her care is highly effective because of that.



**Cammie Acevedo, APRN**

Cammie is a board-certified Nurse Practitioner with the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. Her academic background includes a Masters degree in Nursing from Chamberlain College of Nursing. Her previous nursing experience includes Labor and Delivery, Mother/Baby and Trauma/Surgical Intensive Care as well as working as an Advanced Practice Nurse in Family Medicine. With an extensive career in Women's Health, she has a passion for empowering women and she truly enjoys being able to provide high quality care while improving the lives of women through promotion of mental, physical, and sexual health and wellness. As a busy mom of 5, she enjoys spending time with her family attending sporting events and visiting different beaches when she's not providing patient care.

**Contact us today to schedule an appointment at [Info@ParveenVahoraMD.com](mailto:Info@ParveenVahoraMD.com) or during office hours call (727) 376-1536 or text (813) 548 4412.**

To find out more, please visit [ParveenVahoraMD.com](http://ParveenVahoraMD.com).

# Take control of your health.

## Michelle Ayazo, MD

Board-Certified Family Physician

Dr. Ayazo is a board-certified family physician who attended medical school at Florida State University and completed her residency training at the University of South Florida. Born in Bogotá, Colombia, and raised in Florida, she is passionate about helping patients manage their chronic illnesses with an emphasis on nutrition and exercise. She strives to provide compassionate and high-quality care to all her patients. During her free time, she enjoys outdoor activities, Latin American and Mediterranean cuisine, traveling, and spending time with her family and friends.



## SAME DAY APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE.

Beginning mid-2022, Dr. Ayazo will move to our new multi-specialty facility located on Curley Road near the Watergrass and Epperson neighborhoods. Her office is temporarily located in our Dade City office.



To learn more about Dr. Ayazo at Florida Medical Clinic, contact us today.

*Schedule your appointment today:*

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- Cortisone Joint Injections
- Functional Medicine

# PAINFUL NERVE DAMAGE: HOW ONE PATIENT'S STORY HELPS ANOTHER FIND RELIEF

## Treating Shoulder Pain Successfully with Radiofrequency

**P**aula Sharper and her husband had just recently moved to Florida, and she had been dealing with ongoing shoulder pain for a long time, which seemed to be getting worse. Paula was diagnosed with severe osteoarthritis of the AC joint (acromioclavicular joint) in the shoulder.

Paula told us that the pain was excruciating, keeping her up all night and disrupting her daily activities, including driving. While she was in the waiting room of another physician for her pain, she read an article about Dr. Sunil Panchal and how he helped a woman with chronic pain become pain-free.

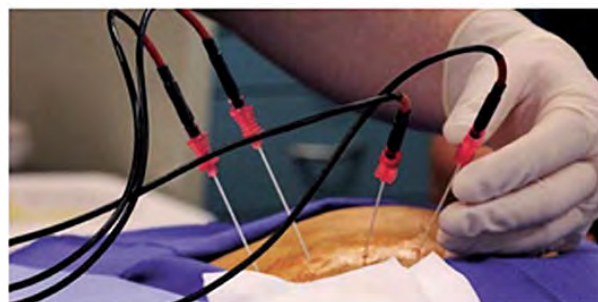
When Paula left the office, she immediately called Dr. Panchal and scheduled an appointment.

Paula explained, "Dr. Panchal is an amazing doctor and a great person. He takes a lot of time and listens to you. He explains everything in detail, and he pinpoints exactly where the pain is stemming from and what is the best option for you specifically."

She continued, "I've been to many doctors over the years, and it's rare to find a physician that is not only a great doctor but also a kind, genuine person that cares about you. My procedure with Nerve Blocks and Radiofrequency was terrific. I immediately had pain relief. My shoulder no longer hurts at all. I'm back to living a normal routine for the most part."

"Dr. Panchal explained that this is a process. He likes to take things in steps, so we are doing the radiofrequency first, and then if later on my pain starts to return and I need additional regenerative medicine such as stem cell therapy, we will go from there. For now, I'm ecstatic about my pain relief. I would recommend Dr. Panchal to anyone that is in pain."

"It's impressive that so many patients and peers speak so highly of Dr. Panchal. At the surgical center, the staff and medical practitioners are very



fond of him and his work. Everyone you talk to says what a kind and talented physician he is as well. Medicine shouldn't just be about temporary fixes, it should be about treating the cause and helping people find solutions. That's what Dr. Panchal offers his patients."

### Surgery is Not Always the Answer

Many people are familiar with radiofrequency ablation for lower back pain, but they don't realize that it can be used for other areas of the body. With shoulder pain, whether due to osteoarthritis or injury, many people believe or have been told that surgery is the only solution.

**Minimally invasive procedures like radiofrequency and nerve blocks offer remarkable results in long-term pain relief.**

### Nerve Blocks and Radio Frequency

Nerve Blocks are numbing medications that are injected into the area that is causing pain. In conjunction to nerve blocks, Dr. Panchal uses an advanced procedure called Radiofrequency (RF).

With RF ablation treatments, the nerves that are damaged, narrowed, or impinged, are injected with a low-level of localized heat, causing the nerve to stop sending signals to our brain through

## The National Institute of Spine and Pain

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an interruption in the nerve conduction. This procedure is entirely safe and effective. It has been used for many years with long-lasting results for people suffering from nerve back pain.

### Regenerative Medicine

For neuropathic pain, regenerative medicine is also highly effective treatment for relieving pain and regenerating tissue naturally. These options include PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma), Bone Marrow Aspirations, Lipid Aspirations and exosomes.

### More on Exosomes

Always on the leading edge of innovative procedures, Dr. Panchal adds exosomes into his stem cell treatment. Exosomes are produced from the plasma membranes of cells and are best explained as extracellular vesicles. Exosomes are nano-sized particles that are released due to an immune response. Some medical professionals are reporting that they are more regenerative and effective than stem cells. Because they act as intracellular communication messengers within the body and have the ability to move between multiple cells, they are also incredibly useful when paired with stem cell therapy.



**Dr. Sunil Panchal**

Although surgery is critical in certain situations, finding alternative methods to treat the underlying condition is always the first step. The National Institute of Pain is a state-of-the-art facility that specializes in the treatment of spine and orthopedic conditions, as well as acute and chronic pain management. They provide the utmost quality of care for patients to address the problem directly, and if needed, provide for their pain management needs.

At the National Institute of Spine and Pain, they treat each patient individually, using the latest equipment and various innovative procedures to diagnose pain and determine your care needs. The National Institute of Spine and Pain's President and Founder, Sunil J. Panchal, MD, is a board-certified interventional pain/ minimally invasive spine physician.

At National Institute of Spine and Pain, their goal is to strive to deliver the highest quality of comprehensive care for those who are suffering from spine, joint, and nerve injuries. They have many alternatives to help you with your personalized treatment needs. Please visit their website at [www.nationalinstituteofpain.org](http://www.nationalinstituteofpain.org), or call them at **(813) 264-PAIN (7246)**.



# Autism Spectrum Disorder: Can Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Help?

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

## Early Intervention

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

The types of treatments generally can be broken down into the following categories:<sup>1</sup>

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

## Alternative Treatment

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

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

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) is a medical treatment that delivers 100% oxygen to a patient's pulmonary system while they are within a pressurized chamber. This saturation of oxygen allows high-levels of life-sustaining oxygen to be delivered to the tissues and organs. This increase of the partial pressure of oxygen at the cellular level accelerates the healing processes and assists in the recovery from numerous indications.

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

## HBOT Autism

Over the past decade, HBOT therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorder has been utilized as a way to establish positive effects via anti-inflammatory responses, improved cognition function, behavioral and language abilities, and to reduce apprehension. It's always important to speak to your specialist, talk to other parents that have tried HBOT, and also to research any alternative options on your own. If you decide to try HBOT for your child with Autism Spectrum Disorder, finding a reputable, experienced, trustworthy clinic is critical.

Hyperbaric Centers of Florida is a premier hyperbaric treatment facility located in the Tampa Bay area. Their state-of-the-art hyperbaric clinic provides therapy to outpatients on a 7-day per week basis, closing only on major holidays.

## Currently, There Are 15 FDA Approved HBOT Conditions:

- Air or Gas Embolism
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
- Compromised Skin Grafts or Flaps
- Crush Injury, Compartment Syndrome
- Decompression Sickness (Bends)
- Diabetic & Other Non-healing Wounds
- Enhancement of Healing in Selected Problem Wounds
- Exceptional Anemia: Resulting of Bleeding
- Gas Gangrene
- Intracranial Abscess
- Osteomyelitis
- Radiation Injury
- Refractory Osteomyelitis
- Thermal Burns
- Idiopathic Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss

*HBOT is used "off-label" for various disease states and disorders and HBOT may be ordered by a physician for off-label indications. Hyperbaric Centers of Florida makes no claims as to the efficacy for any indications other than the fifteen approved by FDA.*

 **Hyperbaric Centers of Florida**  
[www.hyperbariccentersofflorida.com](http://www.hyperbariccentersofflorida.com)

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

## Common Off-Label Indications:

- Autism
- Brain Injury
- Bells Palsy
- Cerebral Palsy
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Infections
- Inflammations
- Lyme Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Nerve Injuries
- Oral Disease
- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Scleroderma
- Shingles
- Severe Migraines
- Sports Injury
- Stroke
- Tendon Injuries
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Venomous snake and spider bites

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

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

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

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

## REFERENCE:

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

# Hurricane Preparedness:

## Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay Has Their Residents Covered

**W**e've been forewarned that this year's storm season is going to be much more active than last years. We can hope and cross our fingers that our coast won't get hit, but it's essential to make plans for hurricane season. It's important to have a plan.

- Lists of medication or prepacked bags of extra's (enough for two weeks)
- List of shelters
- Extra COVID-19 PPE (masks, sanitizer, etc.)
- Extra water (two-week's worth)
- Evacuation routes
- Organizing hurricane shutters or buying boards
- Trimming back trees and limbs
- Flashlights and batteries
- Tying down outdoor furniture, garbage cans, umbrellas, etc.
- Pet food, beds, medications and a list of shelters that take pets
- List of friends and neighbors phone numbers
- Homeowners Insurance paperwork
- Medical insurance
- Non-perishable foods
- Keep gas in your vehicle for evacuation purposes
- Sandbags

If you live at an Independent Living Facility like Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay, the hurricane preparation list is taken care of for you. One of the things individuals and couples love most about independent living is no yardwork or hurricane preparations in seasons like this. Aston Gardens is of course always fully stocked on emergency supplies, water, and food for their residents as well.

### Aston Gardens

Aston Gardens is also one of the most highly sought after communities, due to their dedication to senior needs, their commitment to enriching the lives of each resident and their families by providing personalized care, welcoming living spaces, and superior amenities within three distinct tiers, which include independent living, assisted living, and memory care facilities.



**Independent living** focuses on being as active, healthy and independent as you want to be, but never alone. Choose from one of our independent living apartment homes, or a luxury for-sale villa and enjoy the all-inclusive carefree, maintenance-free lifestyle at America's award-winning senior living community.

**Assisted living** offers residents a lifestyle of personal attention and help with activities of daily living, including bathing, grooming, dressing, taking medications and eating properly. Our focus is on health and wellness, helping residents to be as independent as possible with a personalized care plan that includes engaging social activities for a healthy body, enlightened mind and renewed spirit. With beautifully appointed assisted living suites, assisted living at The Inn is easy with the Aston Gardens One Price Personalized Plan. There are no confusing care levels to think about and our residents pay one low price for services.

**SHINE® Memory Care** offers a private special needs neighborhood for residents with memory care related issues. Residents needing Alzheimer's care and other dementia care receive the very best

attention and services in a supportive, compassionate and secure setting. Based on each individual's needs and capabilities, the professionals at Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay create a personalized plan to help our residents live life as fulfilling as possible, in a secure and comfortable environment.

**Want to know why so many people choose to live at Aston Gardens? It's the resort-style life, the caring staff, friendly community, and attention to detail that makes Aston Gardens surpass expectations.**

Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay is a luxury senior living community offering the best combinations of active-adult lifestyles and personalized care services. Wake up inspired each morning with a wealth of amenities, activities, and support at your doorstep. Explore the stylish Grande Clubhouse and indulge in our unique lifestyle services: Sensations Dining, Celebrations Activities and Dimensions Wellness. Let our dedicated team members handle transportation, maintenance, housekeeping, concierge services and more. Here you will find compassionate people engaged in enriching the lives of seniors, ensuring their needs are taken care of every day. Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay offers the best value in affordable, carefree, senior living. Everything we do is focused on providing you the very best in senior living. It's all right here!

**Now is the time to schedule your personalized tour! See why so many people want to call Aston Gardens their home!**

**Call 813-343-4673 today or visit [astongardens.com](http://astongardens.com).**



By Discovery Senior Living

AL#10546, 9439, 10175, 10612, 10316



# Alzheimer's & Dementia:

## Learn How Patients Can Stay in The Comfort of Their Own Home

**A**t this point in life, it seems inescapable that we all know someone effected by dementia and Alzheimer's disease. When diagnosed early, the beginning stages may not be as difficult, but when the mid to advanced stages take place, the ability to care for your loved one can be extremely challenging.

What are your options? It's not easy to put a loved one in a memory care facility or nursing home. There are feelings of guilt, constant worry about their safety and health, and financial strain.

We want our loved ones to be cared for with love and we want to have the ability to manage that care with a watchful eye, but is that possible in a memory care facility or nursing home?

There are other options. Private duty homecare allows your loved one to stay in their comfortable, home environment and dedicated staff visits to help with things like bathing, meal prepping, feeding, light housekeeping, light grocery shopping, medication management and companionship.

As a way to offer a caring touch, physically and mentally, and to help seniors, TouchStone Homecare was born as a boutique agency to provide certified, compassionate caregivers that treat each senior client with dignity.

### TouchStone Homecare

#### HOW IT ALL BEGAN

#### Nicole Tegeler MS, CSCS (founder/owner)

A personal family experience as well as a lifelong career in healthcare has instilled a deep passion to help other families with aging loved ones. The dilemma to move my parents into an assisted living facility and soon my dear mother into an Alzheimer's unit was imminent. The physical, emotional, and medical demands for my father to care for my mother were far too great to manage alone. My mother absolutely refused to move into an assisted living facility much less an Alzheimer's unit. So, the decision was made to move my parents from Kansas City Missouri to my home in Louisville Kentucky to care for my parents.



The kindness, care and dignity the home care specialists provided my parents over five years was nothing more than amazing. This gave me piece of mind to continue my career and the freedom to raise our two young boys while simultaneously knowing my parent's needs were being met. This experience gave us the desire to enhance seniors lives and to help them remain at home writing their success story of aging with dignity, peace, and joy. TouchStone is a locally owned company in Tampa, developed with a passion to be your trusted in-home care agency.

Our primary goal is to be a steadfast guardian of the client's dignity, safety and well-being while providing compassionate in-home care.

#### WHAT IS PRIVATE DUTY HOME CARE?

Private duty home care is personalized care that allows a person with special needs to stay in their home. Private duty home care may be for people who are getting older, are chronically ill, recovering from surgery, or disabled. When you choose TouchStone as your home care provider, we begin by reviewing your loved one's needs. We will meet with all involved family members to get a complete picture of your loved one's in-home care needs. As part of this process, we match your loved one's needs to a select group of compassionate home care specialists. You will have the opportunity to be part of the caregiver selection process. We encourage all our home care specialists to establish rewarding one-on-one relationships with their seniors and families.

Our TouchStone home care specialist are trained to work with your family to implement a personalized plan of care to suit your needs. You can select

those services most needed and desired by your loved one. Our goal is to provide compassionate care, always respecting the dignity of each person.

Services range from a 15-minute check-up to round the clock care. Though live-in services are available, most clients opt for 4-12-hour shifts. Touchstone understands that it's about building the right team and caregivers for that individual client.

What separates Touchstone is our personal focus on wellness, including lectures and exercise classes, in the local senior communities throughout Hillsborough County. We focus on a holistic approach for our client and their family.



Tammi Mara & Nicole Tegeler, Owners



To find out more, please visit  
[www.touchstonehomecarefl.com](http://www.touchstonehomecarefl.com),  
 call 813-426-7848 or email  
[TouchStoneHomeCare@gmail.com](mailto:TouchStoneHomeCare@gmail.com).

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# CLEANER AIR = HEALTHIER LIVING

**P**roper breathing has recently become a health interest and people are encouraged to take deeper breaths and in specific rhythms for multiple health benefits. But what about the air we breathe? Is it clean, or does it harbor environmental toxins such as mold, bacteria, and viruses?

We all now understand after living in a pandemic for the past few years, the importance of breathing clean air that is free of airborne viruses or bacteria. This is also true for the surfaces we touch; they must be clean in order for us to stay healthy. Living in an area that is damp and humid also has a great impact on mold and fungus, which are detrimental to one's overall health.

ActivePure's Proactive Pathogen Defense™ systems proactively eliminates bacteria, mold, fungus, and viruses in the air and on surfaces, including the flu, common cold, and the virus that causes COVID-19. ActivePure works to eliminate pathogens.

ActivePure's Proactive Pathogen Defense™ is used in places like the Cleveland Clinic, government buildings, homes, hospitals, schools, and businesses.

It creates oxidizing molecules that significantly reduces viruses, bacteria, odors, and volatile organic compounds - both on surfaces and in the air.

In independent FDA compliant lab testing and unaffiliated third-party laboratory tests, ActivePure® Technology has been proven to reduce up to 99.99% of pathogens including SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID), Avian influenza, E. coli, MRSA, Norovirus, Staph bacteria, Candida, Swine Flu, Hepatitis, Legionella, and more.

**There is no place too big or too small for ActivePure. Various sizes and strengths are available. Below we've highlighted a few of the products available.**

## #1 FreshAir Personal

The FreshAir Personal provides nature's own powerful cleaning properties with a built-in ionizer that attracts free-roaming particles and captures them, reducing allergens and pollutants that invade the space you breathe.

- Removes airborne contaminants and allergens from the air immediately around your body



- Reduces asthma and allergy symptoms from your personal space
- Freshens air and removes odors within your breathing zone
- Can help keep irritating odors and harmful particles out of your personal space while traveling in confined spaces like an airplane or train



## #2 FreshAir Mobile

Our pocket-sized purifier provides clean, healthy air when you're on the go; significantly reducing surface and airborne contaminants, odors and pollutants in the areas where you spend your time.

- Reduces VOC's, smoke, and odors
- Reduces airborne contaminants and allergens
- Reduces odors and freshens air
- Reduces dirt and dust from the air
- Creates healthy, pure indoor spaces



## #3 Vollara Air & Surface Pro

This compact air purifier uses ActivePure® Technology to significantly reduce surface and airborne contaminants, odors and pollutants in the areas where you spend your time.

- New and improved ActivePure® Cell design delivers ActivePure® faster
- Reduces airborne and surface contaminants
- Freshens air and removes odors in stale environments without the use of ozone
- UVC light mimics cleansing
- Reduces dirt and dust from the air
- Positive and negatively charged ions reduce small particles and airborne pollutants

No Matter Where You Live, Work, Teach, or Play—Live Fully With Confidence™



The Latest Addition to TEAM Vollara, *Dr. Deborah Birx M.D. Chief Medical and Scientific Advisor*  
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To order your Air Purification Product or to find out more, please visit [www.purifiedlife.co](http://www.purifiedlife.co), or call 813-434-3393.

Source: [aspvollara.com](http://aspvollara.com)

# STROKE NUT

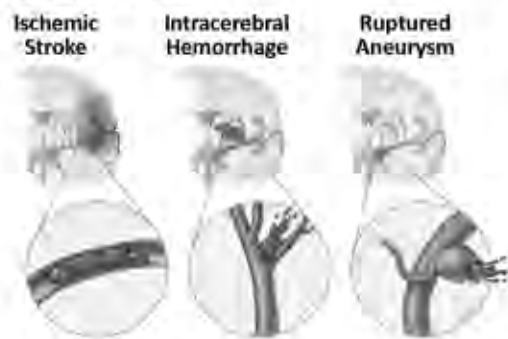
By Nasser Razack, MD, JD

**M**ay is stroke awareness month. There are many actions we can take to impact the future of stroke 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 to attacks on the body by foreign substances. It is a response that enables the body to defend itself by creating 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 still produces a hostile environment within the body, but damages healthy tissue instead of destroying unwanted invaders.

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted, causing a deprivation of oxygen and nutrients to that section of the body. There are two types of strokes: (1) ischemic stroke caused by blocked arteries that supply oxygen to the brain and, (2) hemorrhagic stroke which results from a leaking or ruptured brain blood vessel (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Types of Stroke



Ischemic stroke accounts for the vast majority (80%) of all stroke cases and can result in the following signs and symptoms: speech difficulties, confusion, vision problems, balance issues, headaches and paralysis or numbness of the face, arm, or leg (Figure 2).

Figure 2. BEFAST to stop stroke in its tracks!

If you think someone is having a stroke, BEFAST and do these simple tests:



Figure 3. Brain Nut

Increasing evidence demonstrates that inflammation plays an important role in the development of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease (stroke). A significant cause of inflammation is our diet. Specifically, diets high in red and processed meat, refined grains and sugar-sweetened beverages are all associated with increased inflammation which can heighten the subsequent risk of stroke compared to diets comprised of anti-inflammatory foods. Certain diets such as the Mediterranean diet—abundant in olive oil, nuts, whole grains, fruits, vegetables and seafood with reduced consumption of red and processed meat—can lower inflammation in the body (as measured by inflammatory biomarkers) and thus reduce the risk of stroke. Conversely, diets consisting of refined sugars and grains, fried foods, soda, red and processed meat which promote inflammation (as marked by increased inflammatory biomarkers), had a higher risk of stroke.

Research demonstrates that regular nut consumption is associated with lower cholesterol levels and a reduced risk for heart disease (including stroke). One study specifically examined whether a diet containing walnuts could lessen inflammation. This study examined 634 participants and determined that the regular consumption of walnuts (30 to 60 g per day or around 2 to 4 walnuts) showed reduced levels of inflammation in six of the 10 inflammatory biomarkers that were measured. Monserrat Cofan, PhD, lead author of this study, stated, "The anti-inflammatory effect of long-term consumption walnuts demonstrated in this study provides novel mechanistic insight for the benefit of walnuts consumption on heart disease risk beyond that of cholesterol-lowering." Other studies also demonstrate that regular walnut consumption can boost brain function and

slow down cognitive decline. Walnuts are rich in omega-3 fatty acids and polyphenols, both of which reduce inflammation and fight oxidative stress which are the main causes of cognitive decline (Figure 3).

Another study published in the Journal of Nutritional Metabolism demonstrated that a single serving of Brazil nuts containing one, four or eight Brazil nuts resulted in an almost immediate improvement in bad (LDL) cholesterol levels. Elevated cholesterol is a known risk factor for stroke and other forms of cardiovascular disease. However, researchers followed up on the participants' cholesterol levels five days and then 30 days later. Note that during this period, the participants only had the initial single serving of one, four or eight Brazil nuts. Amazingly, they maintained lower cholesterol levels for a month after only eating that initial serving of Brazil nuts. The researchers also concluded that eating a single serving of four Brazil nuts was enough to maintain lower cholesterol levels for up to a month.

This sounds too good to be true and further research is definitely required. However, when the intervention is inexpensive, easy, harmless and healthy—such as eating four Brazil nuts a month—it's quite reasonable to adopt this habit until proven otherwise. In case you're wondering, the theory behind this amazing process is the selenium content of Brazil nuts. As an added benefit, the study also demonstrated these effects were achieved "without producing liver and kidney toxicity."

Stroke is an inflammatory-based disease process. Theoretically, blocking inflammation and other degenerative processes can delay the onset of inflammatory-based diseases such as stroke. Neurcumin® is an all-natural nutrient which, in addition to curcumin, contains many other polyphenols and natural agents uniquely formulated to fight inflammation.

To learn more about Neurcumin® and the prevention of inflammatory diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke and heart attacks, 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.

available at amazon



**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.

# Slowing the Pace of Your Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What he is saying in these passages is that we need to understand that life isn't about things. **Contentment means this:** I don't need more in order to be happy.

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

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



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

If you find yourself making statements like this:

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

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

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



## We Are The Right Place To Be Right Now

As a company that's served the best interests of seniors for nearly 30 years, we are no stranger to emergency management. Our commitment to the health and safety of our residents has long been paramount, and although COVID-19 is a new threat, it is by no means the first one we've faced head on.

In any emergency situation, it's imperative to know where trusted resources can be found. For seniors and families specifically, the importance of safeguards required for COVID-19, in many ways highlight the numerous benefits of living in a supportive community setting like the many we offer.

By leveraging extensive prior experience, financial strength, innovative technology and national buying power, we can provide the resources and forward thinking necessary to implement Enhanced Protocols and Operational Procedures immediately at our communities nationwide. We believe you or your loved one can be as confident as we are in our strategies to combat the spread of this virus.

- All Services and Amenities are Provided Onsite. *This Includes Chef-Prepared Dining, Activities, Social Events, & More*
- Ability to Deliver Onsite Healthcare Services
- Long-Standing Preventative Measures and Expansive Healthcare Supply Inventory
- Access to Industry Associations and the Latest News and Information
- National Buying Power and the Resources to Obtain High-Demand Healthcare Products
- Enhanced Operational Procedures and Protocols in Place From the Onset
- Fully Prepared to Enact New/Expanded Safety Measures
- Community-Wide Preventative Efforts Include Ongoing Cleaning, Sanitization and Housekeeping

**Accepting New Residents | Call Today!**



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2401 University  
Pkwy, Ste 104,  
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