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What Are Ulcers and How to Know You Have One?

Icers can occur in multiple areas of the body but are commonly diagnosed in the stomach. Do you ever have a burning sensation in your stomach or ongoing pain? Are these symptoms worsened when you're hungry, and does it subside when you eat something? If you have pain, nausea, unexplained weight loss, dark stools, or vomiting, these could be warning indicators of an ulcer, and you should talk to your doctor about your symptoms.

We caught up with surgeon, Dr. Sachin Vaikunth to find out more about ulcers and what you should know.

H&W: What are the different types of ulcers that can occur?

Dr. Vaikunth: Ulcers can occur throughout the gastrointestinal tract as well as on the skin.

H&W: What causes stomach ulcers to form?

Dr. Vaikunth: Stomach ulcers form when he acid in the stomach damages the lining of the stomach wall. There is a protective layer of mucus that normally prevents the acid from damaging the lining. When the balance between the acid and the mucus layer is shifted towards the acid side, ulcers form.

A bacteria called Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) can cause the amount of acid increase and it can help break down the protective mucus layer leading to ulcer formation; however, not everyone with H. pylori will develop ulcers.

Also, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (such as ibuprofen or naproxen) will inhibit production of a substance that helps protect the inner lining of the stomach. Chronic use of these medications could lead to ulcer formation.

Additionally smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol can make you more likely to form ulcers. It'sthought that stress and spicy foods do not cause ulcers, but they can make the ulcer worse and more difficult to treat. H&W: What are the warning signs and symptoms?

Dr. Vaikunth: The most common symptom is pain. Additionally, sometimes people will get nausea and vomiting. They also may have bloating or indigestion.

Ulcers can at times lead to bleeding. If you have bleeding and vomiting due to ulcers, you could have emesis (vomit) that looks like coffee grounds, or it could look like blood. In addition, you could have dark black stools.

H&W: What treatments are available?

Dr. Vaikunth: Medications such as proton pump inhibitors (like pantoprazole or omeprazole) can inhibit stomach acid production. Also, another class of medications called histamine 2 blocker such as famotidine or ranitidine inhibit histamine activity in the stomach which contributes to acid formation.

Also, if the patient is found to have H. pylori. They'llbe given a cocktail of medications including antibiotics to eliminate the H. pylori.

There are certain conditions where these treatment options listed above do not work. Patients in these cases will require surgery to treat ulcers or other complications.

H&W: What other complications can occur if ulcers are left untreated?

Dr. Vaikunth: If ulcers are left untreated, they can lead to bleeding which could potentially be life-threatening. Additionally, there's a risk of developing a hole or perforation in the stomach which could also be life-threatening with leakage of stomach juices into the abdomen. This can lead to a severe infection and sepsis.

Untreated ulcers can also cause scarring or swelling in the stomach which prevents it from emptying effectively so that the food you eat is not able to pass into the small intestine. This leads to nausea and vomiting.

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H&W: What are a few lifestyle changes that may help prevent stomach ulcers?

Dr. Vaikunth: Avoiding tobacco and alcohol can help improve your chances of avoiding ulcers. Additionally avoiding chronic use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories will help as well.

Reducing stress and avoiding spicy foods will help with symptoms and may improve your chance of healing your ulcer.

If you have symptoms, it's time to talk your healthcare provider.

Dr. Sachin Vaikunth



Dr. Sachin Vaikunth is a board-certified general surgeon who has advanced training in minimally invasive laparoscopic, bariatric and robotic surgical procedures. He completed his undergraduate

undergraduate degree in political science at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He then earned his Doctor of Medicine, with honors, from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, Tennessee. Dr. Vaikunth continued his medical education by completing a surgical residency at the University of Michigan Health System in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He then followed up with fellowship training in minimally invasive/bariatric surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Dr. Vaikunth's clinical interests include striving to provide his patients with the most advanced and minimally invasive surgical procedures, and is known as an informative, approachable, and compassionate medical provider. An accomplished author, Dr. Vaikunth has contributed numerous articles to national peer reviewed publications. He is a member of the American College of Surgeons and the American Medical Association and, also certified in advanced cardiac life support and fundamentals of laparoscopic surgery. Dr. Vaikunth is affiliated with Morton Plant North Bay Hospital.

Listen to Dr. Vaikunth's podcast to learn more.





For more information or to schedule an appointment please visit DrSachinVaikunth.org

THE PROMISE OF IMMUNOTHERAPY

ne of the most promising and successful new treatments for cancer is immunotherapy, which uses the body's own immune system to find, target and fight many forms of the disease, even at advanced stages.

The immune system is a complex collection of organs, including the spleen, thymus and bone marrow, white blood cells, tissues and proteins. These special substances travel through the body, protecting it from germs that cause infection. When it encounters a new substance that it doesn't recognize, it signals an alarm and works to destroy anything containing the foreign substance.

A closer look at immunotherapy

Cancer starts when normal, healthy cells become changed or altered and begin to grow out of control. Immunotherapies boost or change the immune system to work harder and smarter to find, target and attack cancer cells.

Chemotherapy and radiation have been widely used for decades, and directly target cancer cells. While effective, these treatments can also destroy healthy blood cells and harm the body's production of new cells.

Immunotherapy may be used alone or in combination with chemotherapy, radiation and/or surgery. While side effects can occur with immunotherapy, a key difference is that they are often less severe than those encountered with conventional therapies.

How immunotherapy works

Immunotherapies work to stimulate or boost the immune system's natural defenses to work harder to fight cancer. They can be injected directly into a vein, swallowed in pill or capsule form or applied topically through a cream that is rubbed onto the skin.

Some of the most common types of immunotherapies used to treat cancer include:

Immune checkpoint inhibitors: These are drugs that block immune checkpoints, which are a normal part of the immune system, and allow cells to respond more strongly to cancer.

· CarT-cell therapy: Sometimes talked about as a type of cell-based gene therapy, this involves altering immune cells called T cells (a type of white blood cell) in a laboratory so that they are better able to find and destroy cancer cells. They are placed back into the body intravenously, through a needle in a vein.

· Monoclonal antibodies: These immune system proteins are created in a lab and designed to bind to specific targets on cancer cells. They are then marked so that they will be better seen and destroyed by the immune system.



 Vaccines: These treatments are different than vaccines that help prevent disease; they work against cancer by boosting the body's response to cancer cells.

In the last few decades Immunotherapy has been approved for the treatment of many cancers, including bladder, cervical, breast, colorectal, lymphoma and melanoma, among others. Patients may receive immunotherapy in a doctor's office, an oncology clinic or, in some cases, in a hospital setting.

More promise on the horizon

Thanks to ongoing rapid advancements, the outlook for those diagnosed with cancer is becoming brighter all the time. Increasingly, many patients are living with cancer more like a chronic disease than a dim prognosis.

Even though immunotherapy can prevent or slow cancer growth, cancer cells do have ways to avoid destruction by the immune system. New ways of working with the immune system and new immunotherapy treatments are being discovered at a very fast pace.

Researchers are focusing on several major areas to improve immunotherapy. Increased understanding of how cancer cells get around the immune system could lead to the development of new drugs that block those processes. Other areas of focus include finding ways to overcome the body's resistance to immunotherapy, finding ways to predict which patients will respond best to this form of treatment and ways to reduce the side effects of treatment.

Every person and every cancer is unique. Medical oncologists work with each patient and their entire healthcare team to devise a personalized treatment plan using every resource available to achieve the best possible outcome.

Immunotherapy and other exciting new advancements are leading to the development of truly targeted therapies individualized for each patient's unique genetic profile. Increasing numbers of cancer survivors are living longer than ever and enjoying all the special moments in life.

World-Class Cancer Treatment **Close to Home** About Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, LLC: (FLCancer.com)

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. The majority of new cancer drugs recently 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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How Nancy Went from Excruciating Neck Pain All Day, Everyday....to No Pain!

illions of people are suffering from chronic pain. Some resort to surgery and some may take pain medications to mask the symptoms or just suffer silently through it all, day in and day out, they are alternative treatments that are helping alleviate pain for countless individuals. One of those methods is radiofrequency denervation (RF).

Radiofrequency Denervation

Using light sedation and local anesthesia called radiofrequency denervation is the answer that many individuals are waiting for to alleviate their pain. Neurotransmitters directly sensitize the nerve endings in our bodies via the brain. With radiofrequency denervation, the nerves that are damaged, narrowed, or impinged, are treated with a low-level of localized heat, causing the nerve to stop sending signals to our brain through an interruption in the nerve conduction.

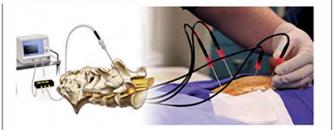
This procedure is entirely safe and effective. It has been used for many years, with long-lasting results for people suffering from pain. The entire process is performed and monitored under fluoroscopy, which is a moving X-ray that is visible to the surgeon on a digital screen. The nerve endings are then located through a probe that is inserted through a tiny needle into the spinal area. Once the damaged nerves are determined, a small lesion is created through the controlled heating of the probe through medium-frequency alternating current. This will alleviate the pain signals to the brain, allowing the patient to be virtually pain-free. The entire procedure takes approximately 20-30 minutes, and patients can resume normal activities within a short period of time. It is easy to reach the nerves of the hip and knee with this approach.

Radiofrequency denervation is able to treat other areas in the body as well. It is commonly used for headaches, facial pain, back pain, complex regional pain syndrome, peripheral neuropathies, trigeminal neuralgia, disc denervation, and neck pain.

A Patients Perspective

About nine months ago, Nancy began to have pain in her neck, shoulders, and arm. She also started to have numbness and tingling in her fingers. "Every time I put my arms up to use my computer, rest them on a table, or even during a manicure, my pain was excruciating. I was in pain 65% of the day." Nancy explained. Her MRI showed cervical spondylosis, which is narrowing of the vertebrae and impingement of nerves.

Like so many others, she continued to live with her pain with no relief from traditional treatments like NSAIDs (ibuprofen), and massage. When it started to affect her quality of life severely, Nancy knew she had



to do something. Her husband told her about Dr. Sunil Panchal's success in helping many patients with alternative treatment methods.

Nancy had worked in the medical field for over 20 years, and she told her husband that she would never see a pain specialist because Nancy did not believe in that type of patient care, but as time went on, she needed relief and decided to see Dr. Panchal.

"When I met Dr. Panchal, he was very thorough and spent a lot of time with me. He explained that radiofrequency denervation would be a good option, and he also was upfront that sometimes RF takes several attempts to work. I was hesitant at first, decided to give it a try." Nancy continued, "I had my procedure in early November, and my pain is completely gone. Dr. Panchal is a very meticulous physician; his patient care and follow up is also very impressive. I've had three follow up appointments with him since my procedure to track my progress, and things are perfect. In his waiting area, many of the patients like to share their stories, and there are so many people that are pain-free because of his innovative, dedicated care."

The cervical spine is often afflicted with pain and stiffness due to multiple conditions and alignment issues. Commonly arthritis plays a significant role in cervical spine degeneration, which can lead to a limited range of motion and a great deal of pain, but other conditions affect the cervical spine as well. These can include herniated discs, stenosis, facet dysfunction trauma, and improper posture. RF is an ideal procedure for many patients that want to avoid surgery and addictive medications.

Although surgery is critical in certain situations, finding alternative methods to treat the underlying condition is always the first step. The National Institute of Spine & 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 & Pain, they treat each patient individually, using the latest equipment and various innovative procedures to diagnose pain and determine your

care needs. The President and Founder, Sunil Panchal, MD, is a board-certified interventional pain/minimally invasive spine physician. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Biology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, and earned his medical degree from Albany Medical College of Union University in Albany, NY. In addition, Dr. Panchal completed The Business of Medicine Graduate Program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. Dr. Panchal completed an internship in general surgery at the University of South Florida in Tampa, a residency in anesthesiology at Northwestern University in Chicago, IL and a fellowship in interventional pain medicine at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He previously served as co-director of the chronic pain service and director of the multidisciplinary pain fellowship training program at Johns Hopkins University and subsequently as director of the division of pain medicine at Cornell University in New York. He is a member of the North American Spine Society, the North American Neuromodulation Society, the International Neuromodulation Society, and the American Academy of Pain Medicine. Dr. Panchal has authored numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and has served as a reviewer and editor for several journals. He is the co-editor and co-author of the textbook Comprehensive Treatment of Chronic Pain by Medical, Interventional, and Integrative Approaches (2013).

Dr. Panchal is a principal investigator in numerous clinical trials, including a current study evaluating sacroiliac joint fusion. Dr. Panchal also served as the Chair of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network Cancer Pain Panel and has lectured widely at the national and international level. He is actively involved in the development of novel analgesics and neurostimulation devices, and in clinical research protocol design.

At The National Institute for Spine & 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, or call them at (813) 264-PAIN (7246).

The National Institute of Spine & Pain

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5 Reasons to Avoid Knee Replacement Surgery

By Regenexx at New Regeneration Orthopedics

e understand the growing concern surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the communities we serve. The health and safety of our patients, physicians, and staff is our top priority. Regenexx at New Regeneration Orthopedics has been actively preparing its offices, physicians, and employees to address these uncertainties and prevent the transmission of COVID-19. To schedule a Telehealth call with one of our physicians, please call us today.

Knee replacements are occurring far too often today and the simple truth is that many are entirely unnecessary. In some cases, the knee pain may actually be stemming from another part of the body. Even when using standard criteria for determining candidacy, about one-third of knee replacements are deemed inappropriate when evaluated by independent researchers.

When knee pain is legitimately caused by a knee condition, many knee replacement candidates seek out effective alternatives to surgery. For those who are still considering a replacement, here are five reasons that may make you want to think twice.

1. Chronic Knee Pain

Relief from chronic knee pain is the main reason that most people decide to have a knee replacement. Although many people can get good relief from a knee replacement, unfortunately, for some people, surgery may come with continued or additional pain. Studies have shown that many patients still have at least mild pain after their knee replacement. Most people decrease their sporting and athletic activities within 5 years of their surgery.

Although there are many reasons why someone may continue to have pain, one explanation of chronic knee pain could be that the source of the pain was not actually a knee condition, to begin with. If the knee pain is actually caused by spinal nerves from the back, for example, then your pain will not simply go away after a knee replacement. It is essential that the root cause of the pain is discovered and is the focus of treatment.

2. Pseudotumors & Tissue Damage

Wear particles are microscopic pieces of metal, ceramic, or plastic that come from the joint replacement part, irritate the local tissues, and/or enter the bloodstream. These particles, as well as metal ions in the blood, have been the subject of many class-action



lawsuits and can cause harmful metal toxicity as well as create pseudotumors, tissue damage, and even DNA injury. According to the FDA, other adverse reactions may include skin rashes, cardiomyopathy, neu-

rological changes, psychological status changes, kidney function impairment, and thyroid dysfunction.

3. Device Failure Caused By Allergies

In the past few years, multiple studies have discussed that the components of knee replacement prostheses can cause allergies. Two groups of people are at a significantly higher risk of potential rejection or loosening of their device and/or toxicity from wear particles.

1. Those with any type of allergy. Even patients with allergies to pollen or dander should think twice about knee replacement surgery. These people have hyperactive immune systems and secrete antibodies inappropriately to rid their bodies of the thing that they have mistaken as harmful.

2. Patients who have more specific allergies to metal will likely have issues with the metals that are used in joint replacement prostheses.

4. Increased Risk of Heart Attack & Stroke

Knee replacement patients aged 60 and up are about 30 times more likely to experience a heart attack or stroke in the two weeks following surgery. When you amputate a joint from a patient, there is severe trauma to the blood vessels and bone marrow space. The stress of undergoing joint removal alone may be enough to trigger a stroke or a heart attack. Additionally, there is a higher risk of blood clots that could potentially cause an embolism in the heart, lungs, or brain.

5. Increased Risk of Hip Fracture

A surprising addition to knee replacement surgery risks is the rise of hip fractures following surgery. A national Dutch study showed a 54% increased risk of hip fracture after a knee replacement among adults aged <71 years old. We are also seeing bone density loss in hips.

Alternatives to Surgery

Although many patients have tried steroid injections to decrease pain in their knee joints, this is not the best approach. Steroid shots kill off stem cells, cartilage cells, and increase cartilage breakdown. Even commonly used local anesthetics can be toxic to stem and cartilage cells.

Those who suffer from mild arthritis may benefit from precise injections of highly concentrated platelet-rich plasma (PRP). These natural growth factors from your own platelets can support healthy cartilage and prevent the natural breakdown over time.

The Regenexx protocols allow for the ability to produce higher quality and more individualized platelet products than the typical PRP centrifuge. Precise guided injections of your own bone marrow derived stem cells may also be a better choice to provide relief especially in those with moderate to advanced arthritis.

When considering knee replacement surgery, make sure that you research alternative options. Our website is a great place to start understanding if regenerative orthopedic medicine is right for you.

Regenexx at New Regeneration Orthopedics provides trusted regenerative solutions, offering the nation's most advanced, researched, and evidence-based non-surgical treatments for injuries and arthritis.



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Innovative Ways to Manage Brain Fog and Other Unique Symptoms of Long COVID

ost people aren't even aware Long COVID exists, or that it could be the reason their mind isn't thinking clearly, their body isn't functioning correctly or their chronic pain won't subside.

As we study the after-effects of COVID-19, it has presented a nightmare for people who are reeling from extended periods of symptoms which have disrupted their lives and left them and their loved ones feeling out of control. They now struggle to face even the simple household tasks as their body remains in a state of crisis, depleting their energy and leaving them mentally and physically exhausted.

The COVID Aftershock: Taking a Physical and Mental Toll

Commonly referred to as Long COVID, the post-COVID-19 symptoms can be called many things such as Long-Haulers, Post-Acute COVID-19 and Chronic COVID syndrome or Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC).

These conditions are experienced as persistent long term complications or returning symptoms of the SARS CoV-2 coronavirus. In May 2022, *The New York Times* reported that one in five patients develop long-term symptoms related to Long COVID. This estimate is up from the *National Library of Science* study just a year earlier that suggested one in ten patients. Those afflicted now face medical uncertainty and risk losing their independence as well.

Alongside introducing new symptoms, Long COVID has been known to exacerbate or prolong existing conditions and comorbidities. These complications can vary from cardiac disease to respiratory disease to psychiatric issues. Some data even suggests that Long COVID may influence diabetes and hypertension. For most, the COVID-19 infection has been hard enough to deal with physically, but the reality of persistent negative effects plaguing the body after the virus runs its course has an equally devastating effect on the patient's mental state as well.

Unfortunately, anyone who has come into contact with the virus is at risk for these long-term, persistent and disruptive symptoms. This means that if



a patient had mild, non-severe symptoms or was even asymptomatic, they may still feel the effects of Long COVID.

The Symptoms Challenging Long COVID Patients While COVID-19 itself was an insidious virus that challenged us all, in its wake, we are finding that many of those infected are now struggling with these long-term effects that are as substantial as they are varied:

- Fatigue and fever
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chronic pain, typically joint, chest or muscle pain
- Memory, concentration (aka Brain Fog)
- Problems sleeping
- Fast or pounding heartbeat
- Loss of smell or taste
- Headaches, depression or anxiety
- Dizziness when you stand
- Worsened symptoms after physical or mental activities
- Organ damage (heart, kidneys, brain)
- Blood clots
- PTSD, depression, anxiety from hospital stays

This extensive, growing list presents concerns and confusion for healthcare providers who are unequipped with the technology necessary to diagnose and treat these internal and mental issues affecting the body long after the initial infection.

Luckily, the future of clinic care is right here, right now and help is on the way in local Tampa, FL where physical therapy and technology have merged to adopt a new way to treat a novel challenge and provide relief and answers to anyone experiencing Long COVID symptoms.

Introducing a Next-Gen Solution for Long COVID Sufferers

Competitive Edge Performance, a group of private practice physical therapy clinics owned by Jason Waz, PT in Tampa, FL, in partnership with *NeuPTtech*, a physical therapy technology and consulting firm also founded by Waz, has been developing the tools and protocols to combat these persistent post-virus symptoms.

Across hundreds of patients in the Tampa area, they've focused on providing the safest and highest quality of care despite the difficulties and continued challenges of COVID-19. When Long COVID symptoms showed that there is more to do, they began utilizing their networks and leveraging existing technology to find solutions.

One thing became clear: It starts from the inside-out.

Physical Therapy Technology Treating Long COVID Symptoms

Currently, three optimal health services are available which can successfully identify, treat and manage Long COVID symptoms: The NEUBIE, PEMF and HRV are each devices that Waz's Tampa-based companies have integrated into traditional physical therapy evaluations and treatments.

NEUBIE (Neuro Biological Electrical Stimulation)

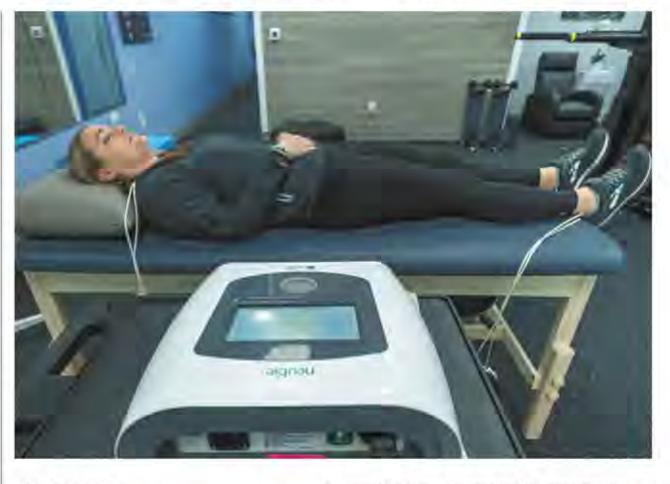
Tampa's Competitive Edge Performance has currently anchored their post-COVID treatment plans around the use of NEUBIE pulsed direct current treatment. For the last several years, this innovative breakthrough in electrical stimulation therapy has been proven to address long-standing dysfunctions and decrease chronic pain among the clinic's patient population by triggering the body at the neurological level. The NEUBIE device's neuromuscular reeducation process changes the inputs the body receives for pain and muscle function, "correcting" the dysfunctional patterns created from persistent symptoms of the virus.

When treating Long COVID symptoms, the NEUBIE device can stimulate the nervous system to restore function to the body's internal systems and switch off the "fight or flight" mode draining energy and resources from patients during a prolonged illness.

PEMF Therapy

Next, physical therapists are utilizing Pulsed Electro-Magnetic Field (PEMF) therapy to further accelerate healing at the neurological level. PEMF directs pulsed energy waves toward damaged or injured areas of a patient's body, essentially "recharging their batteries" by influencing electrical changes in cells that can restore the overall health status of the patient.

A sub-optimal state of wellness occurs in patients when continually bombarded with stress and lack of restorative rest from prolonged sickness, all the result of a lack of vagus nerve stimulus. The PEMF modality does its part to decrease the nervous system "fight or flight" response, improve restorative rest capacity and increase energy stores at the cellular level.



HRV Assessment

Heart Rate Variability is arguably one of the most useful tools currently available (yet underutilized) to physical therapists to measure their patients from the inside-out. While uncommon in most traditional physical therapy treatments, Waz has integrated this diagnostic technology into next-gen programs that test a post-COVID patient's HRV score before and after therapy sessions so clinicians can gain feedback from electrical activity in the patient's heart to understand their overall wellness and recovery capacity.

For patients with long-term illnesses, this 5-minute, non-invasive HRV analysis gives a clear indication of the body's inability to switch between "fight or flight" and "rest" phases. With this critical information, the clinician can develop custom plans based on real-time autonomic nervous system data to improve health status and increase functional capacity during daily activities that have suddenly become difficult due to post-COVID conditions.

Complimentary HRV Screenings Available in Tampa, FL

Access to the technology, research and insights is available to reduce the long-term effects of COVID-19 and deliver an inside look at this novel affliction. Waz and his team look forward to educating patients, introducing optimal health technology and delivering a ground-breaking approach that will effectively uplift and treat patients suffering from Long COVID.

If you or a loved one is feeling discouraged by Long COVID symptoms, please call (813) 352-5413, email jwaz@goceppro.com or schedule an appointment directly with *Competitive Edge Performance*. **Mention this article for a Free HRV Screening** and experience the hope and relief this next-generation physical therapy can provide by resolving the disruption Long COVID has caused in you or your loved one's life.

Please note, information in this post was accurate at the time of its posting. Due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, scientific understanding, along with guidelines and recommendations, may have changed since the original publication date.

A FREE SCREENING ASSESSMENT IS AVAILABLE AT ANY COMPETITIVE EDGE PERFORMANCE LOCATION IN TAMPA.



Oxygen Therapy for Stroke: Can it Help to Regenerate the Damaged Brain?

very year in the United States nearly 800,000 people will suffer from a stroke. If it's not caught early enough, it can lead to death, paralysis, cognitive impairment, aphasia and many more complications. When oxygen and blood can't reach the brain, the brain cells begin to die very rapidly.

Oxygen is the critical element of every cell in our body. Our bodies take in oxygen, and our bloodstream begins to flood our tissues and organs with oxygen-rich blood.

Countless researchers conceive that increasing the supply of oxygen to a stroke patient's damaged brain areas will alleviate brain damage by reducing swelling and regenerating brain matter.

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.

In 2014 an extensive study called *Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy in Acute Ischemic Stroke*, researchers studied Acute Ischemic Stroke patients and how HBOT effects oxidative stress, inflammation, apoptosis, neuroprotection and cerebral blood flow. They concluded that HBOT seems promising in reducing secondary hemorrhage of ischemic stroke patients which is worthy of further studies.¹

Many patients have tried HBOT for various disorders and disease states, and the majority of them will give glowing reviews for disease reversal and regression. There are no guarantees and off-label use is at the person's personal discretion. Individuals wanting to explore HBOT have the right to do so, although results are always based on a patient's overall health, physical condition, and other medical factors.

References

 Z Ding, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy in Acute Ischemic Stroke: A Review, Interv Neurol. 2014 Aug; 2(4): 201–211.



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.

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

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

www.hyperbariccentersofflorida.com

- www.HealthandWellnessFL.com

It's Time to Schedule Your Gynecological Wellness Visit

By Parveen Vahora, M.D.

Infortunately, most of us find it easy to put things off and procrastinate. Studies and research show that during the pandemic and even after the initial shutdowns when patients were encouraged to make appointments to visit their physicians and not to put off screenings any longer, the numbers were not there like they were in pre-pandemic mode. Due to the pandemic many cancers are being delayed in identification. It's important to schedule your wellness visit if it overdue.

According to Cancer Health, NBCCEDP screening volume began to recover in May, but it remained well below pre-pandemic levels. At the end of June 2020, the number of breast cancer screenings was 39% below the five-year average for that month while cervical cancer screenings were off by 40%. Recovery was particularly slow in rural areas: breast cancer screenings in June were still 50% below the five-year average.

Like many diseases, early diagnosis of cervical and breast cancer are critical for survival and optimal treatment outcomes.

Cervical Cancer

An in-office standard pap test can detect cervical cancer. If it's caught early (with regular exams), the treatment can often be accomplished in the gynecologist's office. Symptoms are not always noticed or evident, but some are listed below; however, these may not present until the cancer has proliferated or spread.

- Abnormal menstrual bleeding
- Bleeding after intercourse
- Bleeding after menopause
- Pain during sex
- Pelvic Pain
- Spotting
- Vaginal discharge
- Back Pain

The HPV vaccine is highly recommended for young women to prevent the HPV virus that causes cervical and genital cancers.



HPV Facts & Treatment

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is the most significant risk factor for developing cervical cancer. HPV is made up of 150 viruses and can infect the cells of the cervix and spreads through sexual encounters, as well as be passed down through childbirth. Other risk factors that exacerbate or lead to cervical cancer are a weakened immune system, smoking, chronic infections, having a child in your teenage years, and having multiple full-term pregnancies.

There are little to no signs or symptoms of cervical cancer and other genital cancers, so the most proactive way to prevent these cancers from growing is to have regular pap smears on a routine basis. The test results will show positive signs of cancer or precancerous lesions. In the gynecologist's office, they can do a simple test to see where the cervical cancer is and can evaluate its severity. Usually, if caught early enough, the cancerous lesions can be removed right in the comfort of the office.

Your Wellness Visit

Dr. Vahora can identify any concerns such as heavy bleeding pelvic pain, menopausal symptoms, low libido, and pain with intercourse. If you have a family history of cancer, genetic testing can be offered. These conditions can be further worked up, and custom-tailored procedures and treatment options can be addressed to meet your specific needs. We can also identify if you have vulvovaginal atrophy (VVA) or pain with intercourse and talk about treatment options including to see if you are a candidate for the MonaLisa Touch[®] treatment.

Source:

https://www.cancerhealth.com/article/breast-cervical-cancerscreening-fall-sharply-covid19-crisis

MonaLisa Touch®

Now it's possible to have relief from vulvovaginal atrophy due to the MonaLisa Touch's[®] ability to gently improve the tissue of the vulvar and vaginal mucosa. No medications, no cutting, no lengthy healing times: This innovative laser therapy is for VVA. It's quick, efficient, and can be safely performed in the comfort and privacy of Dr. Vahora's office. With this treatment, women no longer have symptoms of dryness, pain, itching, or irritation. Women can enjoy intimacy once again. The MonaLisa Touch[®] treatment also helps urinary symptoms such as incontinence and urgency.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN PUTTING OFF YOUR GYNECO-LOGICAL EXAM OR WELLNESS VISIT, NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT.

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

> To find out more, please visit ParveenVahoraMD.com or email info@ParveenVahoraMD.com.



Parveen Vahora, M.D.

Dr. Vahora specializes in pelvic pain and endometriosis and is passionate about educating fellow physicians and the com-

munity 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.



GAINESWave Has Helped Numerous Men, Just Like You

BY DR. ROBERT LUPO, D.C.

o you have erectile dysfunction? Most standard medical practitioners will start a man on the "little blue pill," but this only masks the symptoms of ED and it definitely doesn't treat the cause.

There is a common misconception that ED is just another sign of aging, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Any man that is showing signs of erectile dysfunction should seek alternative and thorough medical evaluation and treatment from a physician that not only understands the disorder but one that also offers the most advanced treatment to address your overall health.

Dr. Lupo of the Physical Medicine Center focuses on your cholesterol, blood pressure, total vascular health, blood sugar, and hormone levels to treat your root cause of ED. These disorders almost always run parallel to ED. In addition to these conditions, Dr. Lupo employs the most advanced groundbreaking technology, which utilizes high-frequency shockwaves to break up the plaque in the penis. This technology is called GAINSwave.

Treat ED's Cause with GAINSWave

The standard treatments for erectile dysfunction are prescription medications or injections that cause an erection for a limited amount of time. However, there is a better way than the standard of care by actually treating erectile dysfunction at its core. The GAINSWave is a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment that addresses the underlying causes of ED. GAINSWave uses scientifically proven technology through sound waves to stimulate blood circulation, tissue regeneration, and removes plaque build-up. Traditional treatments for ED, such as pills or injections, lose effectiveness over time and have to be used every time a man wants to engage in sexual activity. GAINSWave helps men to feel like themselves again and to enjoy their lives.

GAINSWave utilizes high frequency, low-intensity soundwaves to improve blood flow to the penis, remove micro-plaque, and stimulates the growth of new blood vessels. GAINSWave uses a specific protocol designed to optimize efficacy, safety, and results. Over 80% of Erectile Dysfunction (ED) issues are caused by reduced blood flow. GAINSWave has



developed a protocol to treat ED and Peyronie's disease (scar tissue) as well as enhance sexual performance.

it's Never too Late

Men who are just beginning to see ED warning indicators should seek the earliest treatment possible. The reason is that it has been well documented that if early diagnosis and treatment are started when a man is younger (the 30s, 40s, 50s) there is an increased chance that the ED will very likely no longer need medical treatment and their arteriosclerosis can dissipate. There have been multiple peer-reviewed studies that indicate that GAINSwave treatment can potentially cure ED in some patients. The sooner you intervene with treatment, the better your outcome will be, but it's not too late. GAINESwave has helped many patients with advanced ED conditions.

Almost everyone will experience a decline in sexual functioning. But with the advent of Regenerative medicine, Erectile Dysfunction is no longer an inevitable part of aging. GAINSWave is based on a series of over 30 clinical studies showing a greater than 75% success rate in treating Erectile Dysfunction (ED).

Physical Medicine Center has many Google Reviews to Share with you. You can find those at Google.com/Reviews/PhysicalMedicineCenterTampa. We've highlighted a few: "The minute you call the clinic you get the feeling that you are going to receive excellent treatment. They are very thorough ond friendly. Dr. Lupo explains things thoroughly-Is a place that I would highly recommend."—Jose

"The staff of Physical Medicine are excellent. Their professionalism and knowledge of specific procedures being used I find very reassuring. I om trying to regain my ability to become "normal" again after prostate cancer and I am in treatment using the Gainswave technology along with the P-shot injections..."—Don

"I hove been coming to Physical Medicine Center for many years. I have a number of things wrong with my back, including Osteoarthritis, and a number of herniated discs. If it were not for Dr. Lupo and his great staff, I would have opted for some major back surgery years ago. Over the years, he has been able to let me enjoy a good quality of life, often with very little or no pain..." —Craig

DON'T JUST MASK YOUR SYMPTOMS—TREAT THE ROOT CAUSE!

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 postgraduate 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.

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What Sets Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay Apart? A Director of Celebrations Special Insight of the Highly Regarded Senior Community

e hear so much about aging well, but many of us have no idea what it entails. A sense of belonging is key to longevity and living well. The folks at Aston Gardens at Tampa Bay have perfected senior community living and offer more opportunities and events for their residents to enjoy throughout each day of the month.



We caught up with Gail King, Director of Celebrations at Aston Gardens, to find out more.

As the Director of Celebrations, my role is to bring recreation, activities and events to our residents and community: We schedule outings, educational services, arts, recreation, and shopping events. We're somewhat like a five-star hotel concierge service. Imagine that you go to your resort concierge and ask them about things to do locally; that's what we specialize in. I personally take responsibility for our community calendar, which is full of excitement and offers many opportunities for our residents. There is always something for them to do. I want them to look at the calendar and say, "There are so many things that I can't decide what I want to do." Our focus at Aston Gardens is to make something always available and encourage and challenge residents physically, intellectually, and socially.

Our fitness program is state of the art. We have a Fitness Coordinator, and group exercise programs are offered three times per day during the week. This allows our residents ample time to enjoy their workouts by spending time with friends.

We welcome ideas from our residents to tell us what they want to do, and we pride ourselves on making it happen. We do our best to schedule events and activities from their suggestions. We offer shopping excursions, weekly Bible studies, local hotspots, movie nights, games, art classes, and themed parties, to name a few.

Our events are resident driven. Some residents are new to the Tampa Bay area, so we make sure to include local museums, cultural events, and local favorite restaurant outings throughout the month. Although many of our residents still drive their own vehicles, we have buses that take large groups on excursions daily. There is such a deep sense of community within our community. Building and maintaining relationships with one another comes easily here at Aston Gardens. Regarding our buses and transportation, some of our residents need assistance, so we offer that to them, which provides a sense of independence within the larger aspect of Aston Gardens.

Next week we have a "Dolphin Quest." This is a fun trip that we've planned out of John's Pass to sightsee dolphins on a boat tour. There will be time for shopping and exploring restaurants when we return from the tour; residents will have time to roam and enjoy lunch together.

Each weekend we celebrate a special concert via recording in our Grand Ballroom. Of course, these are suggested by our residents. Recently we've had the Beatles, Fleetwood Mac, and Jimmy Buffet. We also have Broadway Sundays and show a live recording of a major Broadway show in the ballroom. Residents can enjoy these shows and concerts and cherish time together:

Recently we had a movie night with pizza, beer and nearly 100 residents showed up for the highly anticipated event. The sense of community is remarkable at Aston Gardens at Tampa Bay.

A 6-Million Dollar Renovation

There is a Grand Clubhouse at the main entrance and two dining rooms (formal and casual). We also have a fitness club and pool.

Residents can walk or take a golf cart to the main clubhouse for the amenities, events, or dining. In the past year, we did a 6-million-dollar renovation, so everything is like new. There is weekly housekeeping and numerous perks that keep our residents happy and healthy throughout the year.

Each month we have a themed party with a DJ, open bat, and prizes for the best costume. Recently our themes included country western night, where we had line dancing lessons, a tropical oasis night, the roaring 20s, and Springtime in Paris. These parties are always a big hit.

Why Residents Love Aston Gardens

Residents love living in Aston Gardens because of the sense of community and belonging. We offer so many things that bring everyone together with a sense of family. There are close to 400 residents, and most of them know each other, and those that don't soon will. They love the amenities, but the majority of them will tell you that they have an immense sense of belonging. Our seniors are active and excited and have high expectations. We hold ourselves accountable to deliver happiness to them daily. I personally feel like I have an extended family because we all are working so closely together. Aston Gardens is truly an amazing place.

Celebrations Activities and Events

Most senior living programs in the Tampa, FL area will offer a few activities for their residents. These events cannot compare with the level of excellence that the Tampa Bay community and activities at Aston Gardens at Tampa Bay provide. We offer a wide range of activities for each ability level, so there's always something for you to do.

Aston Gardens offers Independent, Assisted and Memory Care Options.

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 & Events and Dimensions Health and Fitness. 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!

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A t Touchstone Home Care we offer independently contracted, certified CNA's to assist clients with daily living activities. The role in providing care is different with each client. Light cooking and housekeeping, transportation to medical appointments, bathing, shopping, companion care, medication reminders and exercise are a few of the services we provide each day. Touchstone currently has over 100 caregivers paired with clients, and we are always looking to hire more certified CNA's. We offer on-call services 24 hours a day seven days a week, so flexible scheduling allows us to help you meet your and your family's needs.

Do you want a job... or do you want a career? Are you looking to work for a local, women owned, women run business who make their team members AND their clients needs and wants a priority? A career where you are trained, mentored, and valued as a part of the team awaits you at Touchstone Home Care. When you wear the orange Touchstone uniform, you are recognized throughout our community as a highly trained, caring provider of high quality, personal health care services.

Why Touchstone Home Care?

- Competitive pay starting at \$14 to \$20 per hour
- · Sign On Bonus for new hires

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- Referral Bonus when you refer another hire OR a new client
- Touchstone has relationships with many CNA schools in the area and can offer job placement as soon as you are certified by the state.
- Touchstone hires a diverse group of men and women caregivers who speak multiple languages.
- Touchstone provides staffing for several area senior communities. There is never a shortage of work. If you provide quality care to our clients, you will have all the hours you want.

Touchstone specializes in providing wellness on the front end. We offer a holistic approach to keep our clients healthy and at home as long as possible. Nutrition, essential oils, exercise, and movement to increase balance and mobility come before pills. We encourage all our home care specialists to establish rewarding one-on-one relationships with their seniors and families.

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Our Touchstone home care specialists are trained to work with families to implement a personalized plan of care. Our goal is to provide compassionate care, always respecting the dignity of each person. Your career at Touchstone will be founded in changing the life and longevity of your clients.

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To find out more, please visit www.touchstonehomecarefl.com, call 813-426-7848 or email TouchStoneHomeCare@gmail.com.

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Dealing With Life's Painful Situations

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

n Father's Day in 2005 my dad came to my office to visit and talk about how things were going. In the course of our discussion he mentioned that he experienced a terrible night's sleep because his back was causing him so much pain.

I told him that it was time to go to the ER and get checked out to find out what was causing all of his pain. He did, and that started a two-year battle with pancreatic cancer. My dad fought an incredible fight with this terrible cancer but passed away in August of 2007.

Many people have faced the pain of having to bury a loved one. The question is, "How do I deal with the pain?" We may have confidence that our loved one is in a better place, but do we do with the pain that we still feel?

As you read this, maybe your pain is not in the loss associated with death, but rather you have faced the end of a relationship, or perhaps have received bad news regarding your own health. The question still remains, "what are we to do with these painful situations?"

As we turn through the pages of Scripture, we find that the thoughts and writings of the Psalmist David bring comfort and hope to those in pain. David understood painful situations for he faced many of them in his own life. He too, buried many loved ones and faced enormous family problems. How did he get through these challenges? He turned to God for help.

David tells us in the book of Psalms, ¹⁰ The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalms 34:18

You are never closer to God than when you are hurting. David knew that from personal experience. David took his pain and his problems to the Lord and asked for His help. In Psalm 142:1-2 David wrote, "I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble."

Our natural tendency is to suffer in silence. We put on a smile and pretend that everything is fine in our lives. Yet in reality, we know that ignoring our pain does not bring relief. We hope that time will heal all wounds but we know it does not. In fact, time often makes matters even worse.

Pain is our body's way of letting us know that we need to deal with something. Whether it is physical, emotional, or relational, pain should not be ignored. And yet still, we try to run from it.

It is human nature to run from painful situations. By law, all doors in public buildings swing out. When people panic, they run. They try to escape. When we face pain, loss and hurt, we look for ways to escape. We dream of running away from reality in hopes of finding peace and comfort over the next rainbow. Sometimes people try to escape by turning to alcohol, drugs, food, or even inappropriate relationships. Running from your problems never brings resolution.

David went on to say in Psalm 142:3 that ³"When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who knows my way..." God knows the pain we feel and He wants us to run to Him with our troubles.

As you read his Psalms, you will quickly notice that David was very open about what he was going through. And yet, through it all, he learned to trust and depend on God.

When dealing with the pressures and strains of life and the emotional challenges we face, we can learn much from David's example. Stop pretending that you can handle everything in your own strength and turn to God who loves you and cares about you. He specializes in mending broken hearts.



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Tammi Mara & Nicole Tegeler, Owners



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.

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