


CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

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

November 2022

Lake/Sumter Edition - Monthly

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Treatment for Incontinence

**Men's Health**

Why You Need to Stay on  
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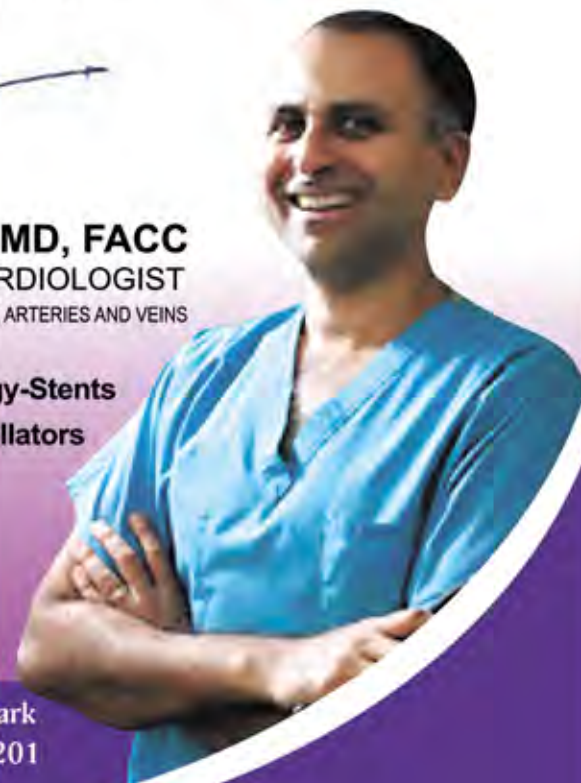
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# Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) & Your Heart Health

**N**early 24 Million Americans have COPD, and large number of them are over the age of 40 and have a history of smoking or being subjected to respiratory irritants such as chemicals and pollutants. COPD is a disease that is encompassed by chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma, causing shortness of breath, productive coughing and inflammation of the airways. It is a progressive lung disease with no cure. Most patients are put on steroids (oral and inhaled), bronchodilators and antibiotics.

Individuals with COPD often have incidents of fluid build-up, which can make it difficult for them to breath. They frequently feel as if they are drowning and call 911 often due to this terrifying sensation. This is why it's important to speak to your physician about your COPD treatment and the best at home care techniques to keep you safe and comfortable.

Having a disorder like COPD is challenging with continual progressive changes and side effects. Talking to your physician about any fluctuations in your health or symptoms is critical.

## COPD Symptoms

- Coughing
- Producing phlegm
- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath with normal activity
- Blue tinge to fingernails
- Fatigue

## The COPD and Cardiac Connection

Both disease states are linked systemically to chronic inflammation in the body. Most individuals are unaware of the fact that they have chronic inflammation, because it's not typically something they can see and what they feel, they often ignore as general aging complaints like stiffness, brain fog, high blood pressure or high lipid levels, diabetes, etc. These issues are what lead to the vast amount of people that have comorbidities.

Patients with COPD have fluid retention, which is also attributed to cardiac issues, and can exacerbate cardiovascular conditions. For both sets of conditions diet is a critical component. Making sure that low sodium, low sugar and carbohydrates are minimal in the diet is helpful to lessen the effects of the inflammatory response. Exercise is also important but should be monitored and discussed with your physician.



The health of the heart and vascular system are affected by many things like, stress, substance abuse and genetics, but the main offenders of heart disorders are being overweight, poor dietary habits, having high blood sugar levels and living a sedentary lifestyle.

Depending on the stage of the COPD, some patients might need to consider home health care or private duty nursing. When under home health care, their team of nurses and medical director can prevent these readmissions to the hospital by several means. The medical team can prescribe medications to block fluid build-up, have a daily vital reading monitored by a home health program, and have specialists help with understanding nutrition, and how to keep calm and learn to breathe more functionally through the episodes. Your physician is still in charge of your medical care, and all reports from the home health team are reported to your primary care doctor.

Talking to your primary care physician or cardiologist about diagnostic testing, lab work, medication management, and lifestyle changes is critical for your quality of life when dealing with COPD, heart issues or any other health changes or conditions that you might be experiencing.

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# Men's Health:

## Why You Need to Stay on Top of Your Medical Exams

**T**he month of November is also referred to as MOVEMBER for Men's Health. We often hear jokes that men prefer to stay away from the doctor, but more and more men have become proactive about their healthcare than ever before, which allows for healthier lifestyle choices and earlier diagnosis. Men taking the lead on their health is always better for long term outcomes and living well.

When it comes to men's health, Advanced Urology Institute (AUI) offers numerous treatments and diagnostics for erectile dysfunction, vasectomies, urinary, kidney, and bladder health, and prostate disorders.

### Getting Your Prostate Checked is Not Optional

Prostate cancer is often referred to as a silent killer. As men age, it can become enlarged, infected, and cancerous. Prostate cancer is the third leading cancer among males. It is often a silent killer, as it rarely shows signs or symptoms until it has developed maturely and even metastasized into other areas of the body. This year alone, it will take over 31,620 men's lives. But it doesn't have to be this way! With just a standard examination and regular checkups, prostate cancer can be diagnosed and treated effectively, alleviating these grim statistics. Early diagnosis is critical and achievable with the right steps. Due to prompt diagnosis, 3 million men in the US are prostate cancer survivors!

### Some of the Most Common Symptoms of the Disorder are:

- Weak urination
- Interrupted urination
- Frequent urination
- Blood in urine
- Painful ejaculations
- Pain in pelvis, hips or thighs

### Diagnostics

There are several distinctive tests that urologists use to determine Prostate cancer or prostate disorders in men. The first is a digital examination by palpating the prostate through the rectum to feel if it is enlarged. The second test is done through a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) count, which tests the blood for specific protein-synthesized prostate cells—the higher the number of PSA, the more likelihood of impending prostate cancer. There is also a more advanced test of free-range prostate PSA cells;



this test typically reads higher in men that have undiagnosed prostate cancer. The earlier your PSA levels are checked, the better your chances of successful treatment and survival rate.

The normal PSA level is 4.0, which is four nanograms per milliliter of blood (ng/ml), but in younger men, an average of 2.5 ng/ml is normal, while in older men a reading above four may not necessarily be alarming.

### Additional Testing

Certain medications, herbal supplementation, or being overweight can also have a counter effect on your PSA levels. For example, a person taking a daily aspirin may have a lower PSA level due to the effect of the medicine on the blood protein count.

Before you are tested, it's imperative to tell your physician everything that you are taking, or any other health conditions or symptoms that you are experiencing. Additional more detailed testing includes transrectal MRI or transrectal ultrasound, as well as biopsies.

If diagnosed with cancer, a Gleason Score biopsy will be taken to determine the aggressiveness of prostate cancer. This grading system allows urologists to choose the appropriate and optimal treatment option.



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### Treatment

All treatment options are not going to be suitable for every prostate cancer case. Depending on the patient's overall health, age, stage of cancer, PSA or Gleason scores, size of the tumor, and personal circumstances, the treatment may vary significantly. For some patient's hormone therapy is appropriate, and for others, a "watch and wait" approach is suitable. In some instances a single surgical removal may be fitting, while for others radiation therapy or more invasive surgical and oncology options are better suited. You should always consult with an experienced urologist to determine your best plan of action when dealing with any prostate issues.

### Advanced Urology Institute

AUI was developed as a single-specialty physician led organization to respond to the mounting changes in healthcare. Solo-practitioners and small groups cannot keep up with the increased governmental burdens and continue to stay focused on providing the highest level of care to their patients. We believe that by combining our efforts, geographically disparate Urology groups can function most efficiently and effectively to deliver the highest quality medical care to our patients.

### Services Offered & Conditions We Treat

- Erectile Dysfunction
- Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)
- Kidney Stones
- Da Vinci Robotic Assisted Surgery
- Prostate Cancer Treatment
- Vasectomy & Vasectomy Reversal
- Urinary Tract Infection
- Pediatric Urology
- Women's Urological Health

### We Value Patient-Centered, Evidence-Based Care

As a patient, you can be certain that you are a critical member of our treatment team. We will answer your questions and strive to provide the best services and the best care, based on your individual needs, preferences, and choices. AUI Physicians emphasize the use of proven treatment guidelines within our specialty, to optimize clinical decision making. Through our internal measures, our involvement in research studies, and our passion for continuous learning, you can be confident that our treatment team is providing you with the best treatment options.

# EMSELLA® Treatment for Incontinence

By Dr. Tina Chandra

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 from 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 three weeks. Each session takes approximately 30 minutes. The treatment has been shown to strengthen muscles, increase blood flow, help restore neuromuscular control, and increase the production of collagen and elastin, in addition to strengthening 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, 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. Many factors 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 for 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.

If you are interested in learning more about Emsella from trusted professionals with years of experience, contact Chandra Wellness Center Today.

## DR. TINA CHANDRA

Dr. Tina Chandra is committed to providing her patients with excellence and quality care with the latest in technological advances. With her exceptional skill and unique training in cosmetic dentistry, neuromuscular (TMJ/TMD) and physiologic dentistry, sleep apnea, snoring and airway management, Dr. Chandra and her team pledge to exceed your expectations in a professional, caring manner with a personal touch.



The Chandra Wellness Center is an excellent addition to her unique qualifications. We are excited to introduce this advanced technology for a Better healthy YOU! *Strong and Healthy is the new SEXY!*

## DR. RAVI CHANDRA

Ravi Chandra, MD, Ocala's leading vascular surgeon is the only surgeon in Ocala, Florida with outstanding credentials and is quadruple Board certified by the American Board of Endovascular Medicine, American Board of Vascular Medicine, the American Board of Surgery, and the American Board of Phlebology. Dr. Chandra has the extreme honor of being appointed to the Florida Board of Medicine by Governor Ron DeSantis on April 4, 2021.



With over 30 years of experience and serving his patients with above standard and excellence in surgical care, Dr. Ravi Chandra is excited to branch out and offer wellness treatments to help his vascular patients with incontinence problems. He and his team are committed to bringing health and wellness back into your life.



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# COSMETIC DENTISTRY IS MORE THAN A PRETTY SMILE

By Dr. Lucia Roca

**C**osmetic dentistry, also known as esthetic dentistry, is the method of dentistry that improves a patient's smile and self-image. Having a beautiful smile and strong teeth are essential for aesthetics and overall health. An attractive smile, or lack thereof, affects your oral health. Self-confidence and how the world perceives you on the outside are important to our mental health. This is because a person's smile is usually the first feature anyone notices.

Esthetic procedures include dental veneers and teeth whitening. Dental crowns, dental bonding, dental implants, inlays and onlays, and dentures are all restorative dental treatments. Dental veneers are the most requested treatment because they can correct tooth discoloration, teeth crowding, and teeth gaps.

## DENTAL VENEERS

Dental veneers are a popular method of correcting tooth imperfections such as misalignment, gaps, stains, and minor chipping. Made of a strong porcelain material designed for long-term wear, they can also reshape teeth and create beautifully symmetrical smiles that look and feel natural. Properly cared for, porcelain veneers can last for decades.

## TEETH WHITENING

Professional teeth whitening is a safe, effective, non-invasive, and long-lasting cosmetic option. With laser teeth whitening, you can see results in one treatment here in our Laurel Manor Dental office. Another option is to whiten your teeth at home. Your custom home whitening kit includes specialized trays that will be customized to fit over your teeth. We provide professional-grade whitening gel to insert into your tray before wearing it. Your dentist will tell you how long to wear the tray each day, and you will have a bright white smile within two to four weeks.

## DENTAL CROWNS

Dental crowns are caps placed on top of damaged teeth. Crowns are used to protect, cover, and restore the shape of your teeth when fillings don't solve the problem. Dental crowns can be made from metals, porcelain, resin, and ceramics. They typically don't require special care over time other than regular good oral hygiene. As we age, our teeth can get damaged. This can happen for a variety of reasons, like tooth decay, injuries, or just regular use. Your teeth can lose their shape or size. Think of the cap as a snug hat for your tooth. The crown restores the tooth's shape, size, strength, and appearance. The dental crown is cemented into place on your tooth, and it covers the visible portion of the tooth.



## DENTAL BONDING

Dental bonding, sometimes called composite bonding or teeth bonding, is a procedure where your dentist applies tooth-colored resin material to the affected teeth to change their shape, size, or color. Dental bonding is less painful than other treatments because your dentist won't be working anywhere close to the pain-sensing nerve inside your tooth. In most cases, anesthesia isn't even necessary during dental bonding. Dental bonding is the most cost-effective and fastest fix of cosmetic imperfections. However, dental bonding isn't as stain resistant as porcelain crowns or veneers and can chip and crack over time with normal wear and tear.

## DENTAL IMPLANTS

Dental implants are artificial tooth roots that provide a permanent base for fixed, replacement teeth. Implants are a long-term solution for people who suffer from missing teeth, failing teeth, or chronic dental problems. Implants can be one tooth or a group of teeth depending on need. Because they fit, function, and feel like natural teeth, dental implants are the gold standard in tooth replacement. Doctors use a titanium anchor screw that over time, fuses to the living bone cells of the jaw. This union forms a strong and durable anchor for your new teeth, meaning there's no slippage movement. This makes implants more secure than dentures. Eating with dental implants is also more secure and sanitary than dentures because they are not removable.

## INLAYS AND ONLAYS

Inlays and onlays are indirect dental restorations. They are made outside of your mouth in a laboratory. An inlay or onlay is typically used when a cavity is too large for a simple filling. Inlays and onlays can be made of gold, composite, or ceramic materials. Inlays and onlays are more resistant to fractures and damage than traditional cavity fillings, stain-resistant and durable.

## DENTURES

Dentures are an affordable tooth replacement option for those who are not a good candidate for implants. Dentures provide facial support, improved nutrition, and improved confidence. Dentures can be a full set or a partial that replaces a group of teeth generally from an injury. Some dentures are designed to improve a person's bite, eliminating headaches, jaw pain, and other TMJ symptoms. The bases of most removable dentures today are made of polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA) and the teeth themselves can be made of PMMA or ceramic material like that used for porcelain veneers.

## WHY CHOOSE LAUREL MANOR DENTAL?

In addition to our experienced and caring team, we feel that our advanced technology makes Laurel Manor Dental the top choice for your dental needs. We carefully choose the latest dental tech and tools to increase patient comfort and expand our ability to provide advanced dentistry to our patients.

*In our practice, we utilize the following technology:*

- **iTero Scanner** — The iTero Scanner is a small handheld device that allows us to capture a full 3D image of your teeth and gums. The sharp images mean we can get a better picture of any issues and track any changes in your oral health with a detailed view.
- **Digital Impressions** — No more gooey impressions! Digital impressions also provide more detailed information and a speedier turnaround time in the creation of restorations.
- **Digital X-rays** — Digital radiographs reduce the patient's exposure to radiation while giving the dental team sharper, clearer images that are produced almost instantaneously.
- **Cone Beam 3D Imaging** — Using cone beam technology, we can map underlying bone structure, nerve pathways, and soft tissue for more detailed treatment planning.
- **Intraoral Camera** — The intraoral camera puts you in the driver's seat. You can see exactly what the doctor sees, allowing the doctor to explain your treatment plan tooth by tooth.

## ABOUT DR. ROCA

*Making people smile runs in Dr. Lucia Roca's family: both of her parents are dentists. While she acquired her expertise through years of exhaustive training, her ability to connect with her patients comes naturally. And she is always happy to reassure them in English, Spanish, or Italian!*

*After receiving her Doctor of Dental Surgery degree, Dr. Roca spent an additional three years studying at the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine. She was then accepted into the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey/Rutgers where she performed clinical research, completed her periodontics residency, and earned her Masters of Dental Science degree.*

*As a member of the American Dental Association and the American Academy of Periodontology, Dr. Roca has worked tirelessly to help bring dental care to those in need from the city streets of Newark, NJ to the rural villages of Guatemala. A dedicated professional, Dr. Roca still makes time outside the office to read and play tennis. She is an avid fan of Connecticut's women's basketball team and she is recently married to a dentist!*

**LAUREL MANOR  
DENTAL**

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1950 Laurel Manor Drive, Suite 180B

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# SENIORS AGING IN PLACE

**F**or today's seniors, the desire to stay at home is strong. In fact, the modern elderly population is much different from its past counterparts. Almost 90% of people over 65 want to live in their home and community as long as possible, according to a report by the AARP Public Policy Institute and the National Conference of State Legislatures. A whopping 80% believe they will stay in their home for the remainder of their life. Aging in place allows seniors to enjoy all the comforts their familiar home has to offer. Today's options to support seniors in their home offer seniors and their families the peace of mind and support to make staying at home a healthy option.



## AGING IN PLACE PROVIDES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Seniors have spent a lifetime building family relationships and likely years bonding with neighbors. Removing older adults from their long-time homes can make them feel like those connections have weakened. According to research published in *The Gerontologist*, the majority of seniors want to age in place because of the attachment and familiarity they feel with their home and communities.

## IT FIGHTS ISOLATION

That sense of community provided through aging in place does more than make seniors feel comfortable. It is also integral for fighting feelings of isolation, a dangerous trend among seniors. Researchers from the University of Chicago found a link between loneliness and high blood pressure in older adults. The study authors noted that feelings of loneliness can occur even when a senior is surrounded by people. This further demonstrates the importance of the familiarity and sense of community provided through aging in place.

Besides being preferred by seniors, aging in place offers another benefit: savings.

While it may seem that aging at home would be more expensive than moving to a nursing or assisted living home, the opposite is actually true. With help from a home healthcare worker, staying in your home costs about 20% of what a nursing home costs on a monthly basis.

## HOME HEALTH CARE CAN HELP

For many families and seniors, home health care is a beneficial choice – a safe and affordable solution that supports the family, while allowing seniors to stay in the comfort of their own homes and communities.

## HERE ARE TEN WAYS HOME HEALTH CARE CAN SUPPORT YOU:

1. Home health care professionals can be there when needed. If family and loved ones are a distance away, home health care can give you peace of mind. Trained and qualified professionals

can assess safety risks and make simple corrections in the home – from placing a rug on a slippery floor, to recommendations for ambulatory assistance.

2. Home care supports activities of daily living (ADLs). In-home services allow adults to receive day-to-day help with the personal care they need, preserving their dignity and maintaining a good quality of life. Assistance with activities of daily living can include bathing, grooming, and medication reminders.

3. Access to skilled nursing care at home. Skilled medical care can be delivered at home by thoroughly supervised nurses, certified, licensed and knowledgeable about high-technology medical equipment. Home health care can ensure that your loved one's complex medical needs are met.

4. Support with diet and nutrition. Adults age 65 and older, people with chronic conditions, and those recently discharged from a hospital or nursing facility are likely to be nutritionally at-risk. Aging, bed rest, illness, and injury can all contribute to the loss of lean body mass. Home care may include nutritional counseling and home-cooked meals to protect against malnutrition.

5. Medication management. Multiple prescriptions it can be confusing to manage. Home health care professionals can ensure the right medications are being taken at the right times to control health conditions and prevent harmful drug interactions.

6. Home health care professionals provide caring companionship. Research shows that aging adults stay healthier with social interaction. Home health aides can become trusted friends for walks, reading, cards, games, movies, meals, and other social activities. Accompaniment on errands such as grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other activities are also added benefits.

7. Home care helps with light household chores. When aging adults struggle the daily demands of housework, such as laundry, vacuuming, dishes, and simple chores home care helps to consistently maintain a safe and healthy living environment.

8. Home health care clients have comparable or better health outcomes. Research has shown that clinical results are comparable or better with fewer complications when home care is provided to individuals with chronic conditions such as pneumonia, diabetes, or COPD.

9. One-on-one focus and support. Home health care services are truly unique, providing meaningful, one-on-one personal and skilled care that builds strong bonds between professionals and their clients. According to the *Cleveland Clinical Journal* a person who is seen by a clinician in the comfort of home more readily trusts that the health care team places their needs first.

10. An affordable alternative to facility or hospital care. According to the National Association of Home Care, the average cost of care from a skilled nursing facility is \$544 dollars per day, while the average cost of home health care is \$132 dollars.

## OUR PROMISE

Through Trusted HomeCare Home Care Services, you can rest assured that your loved one and family will be safe and secure in a positive environment right at their home. Even if you simply have questions or want to understand how to better care for your elderly loved one experiencing the inevitable process of aging, we are able to help with that.

## TRUSTED HOMECARE SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

As a whole group, our mission statement says that we are here to access the needs of each client to help them maintain their independence while living in their own homes and communities.

Contact our team at  
Trusted HomeCare and let's discuss  
how we can support  
you or your loved one  
**352-240-7522**



# CARE FOR CAREGIVERS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

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

**W**e hear these instructions each time we fly. The point is you won't be able to help others if you are struggling to breathe yourself. But do we follow the same rule in our everyday life — particularly when it comes to caring for others?

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

With the holidays approaching, it's more crucial than ever to make yourself a priority.

## Secure Your Own Mask First

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

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



- **Confide in others:** It's important to talk to someone you trust (like your doctor or a friend) about how you're feeling. You can also seek out other caregivers via local or online support groups to share experiences and advice.

## Use Our Resources!

You don't need to be a Florida Blue member to call a local Florida Blue Center (1-877-352-5830) and speak with one of our nurses or community specialists for one-on-one support. They're available to help anyone, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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

**Florida Blue**   
Your local Blue Cross Blue Shield

**MEDICARE**

**Call your local agent today.**

**352-353-3399**  
**Dell Richards**

*Florida Blue and Florida Blue Medicare are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.*

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# THANKFULLY, WE'RE HERE TO HELP

**N**ovember, a time of togetherness and reflection, is Family Stories Month. What better time to share stories than Thanksgiving? Family Stories Month encourages us to record or listen to stories from relatives of all ages. After all, there are countless anecdotes of romance, travel, and adventure in every family's history.

For some—who've lived long, fulfilling lives—the past brings a great sense of joy. For others, the past may be all they remember.

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month in November is dedicated to raising awareness, increasing support for caregivers, and sharing resources with families.

The challenges presented by memory loss can be difficult to navigate, but Sumter Senior Living is here to help every step of the way. Not only does The Village Program® offer personalized programming to engage residents in activities to reflect their former schedules, lifestyles, and interests—it also helps residents feel safe and appreciated. Through enriching experiences and caring personal relationships, we find great sources of enjoyment and comfort—together.

## Know the Signs

The Alzheimer's Association® describes Alzheimer's as a degenerative disease caused by complex changes in the brain from cell damage, while dementia is a general term describing declined mental ability to the point of interfering with daily life. Though aging is the largest risk factor for Alzheimer's, the disease is not a regular part of aging.

Alzheimer's dementia symptoms gradually worsen as the disease progresses, but the most common early symptom is difficulty remembering new information.

When sharing memories around the Thanksgiving table, don't be surprised if someone remembers events differently, but maybe take a closer look if your loved one is exhibiting symptoms of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or Alzheimer's, as outlined by the Alzheimer's Association®:

- **Memory loss** – forgetting recently learned dates, names, details of events; asking the same question several times; repeating stories.

- **Confusing time/place** – losing track of time; not knowing the date; forgetting where they are, getting lost in familiar locations; disorientation; wandering.

- **Trouble planning, organizing, and problem-solving** – taking longer to complete tasks than before; difficulty following multi-step directions—even with familiar, straightforward tasks (e.g., writing a check, taking medications).

- **Trouble communicating** – struggling to find words; blanking on common words; substituting similar words (e.g., saying “mom” instead of “sister”).

- **Misplacing things** – unable to retrace steps to find objects; accusing others of stealing because can't find belongings.

- **Changes in mood/personality** – significant mood and personality shifts, such as confusion, agitation, restlessness, suspicion, worry, and depression; sleep changes; sundowning (i.e., a state of confusion later in the afternoon and into the night).

Early diagnosis means optimal health management and planning. The Alzheimer's Foundation of America offers a free National Memory Screening Program year-round, so you can sign up for a virtual consultation from trained healthcare professionals if your loved one appears to exhibit tell-tale signs of MCI or Alzheimer's.

## Get the Support You Need

The World Health Organization (WHO) approximates 55 million people worldwide live with dementia; this number is expected to reach 78 million by 2030 and 139 million by 2050. Alzheimer's, the most common type of dementia, accounts for 60–80% of all cases.

WHO estimates 50% of the global cost of dementia is attributed to informal care, with caregivers spending an average of 5 hours per day providing care. As the disease progresses, the emotional, physical, and financial pressures can cause significant stress to families and carers.

Which is why a broad spectrum of resources is necessary to provide caregivers assistance, and early screening and diagnosis of dementia is essential for improving outcomes.

At Sumter Senior Living, we understand the importance of balancing care with a sense of belonging. We know it's not just feeling like you're home—but actually feeling at home. Along with a variety of living

options, we offer daily wellness, cultural, and educational programs, so there are endless opportunities for connection with the people, places, and activities you love.

Spend time with family in our community rooms. Take care of your health in our Fitness Center and indoor, heated therapy pool. Explore enriching interests at the Library, Theater, or Arts and Crafts Studio. From exercise and wellness to adventures in the larger community, we provide great sources for laughter, connection, and friendship—and include those ideals in everything we do.

## A Place Where You Belong

Sumter Senior Living is proud to offer a continuum of living options to suit all needs and preferences, including Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care all on one beautifully landscaped campus.

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

For more information, or to schedule a personalized visit, please call (352) 674-3600 or visit [www.SumterSeniorLiving.com](http://www.SumterSeniorLiving.com).



## SUMTER SENIOR LIVING

A GRACE MGMT COMMUNITY



1490 Killingsworth Way,  
The Villages, Florida 32162

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[www.sumterseniorliving.com](http://www.sumterseniorliving.com)

Assisted Living License Number: 12227





# BUYING A HOME IN UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC TIMES

By Sharon A. Bassett

The House Price Index is a measure of the movement of the single-family home process in the United States. This Index is obtained by reviewing repeat mortgage transactions on single-family properties whose mortgages have been purchased or securitized by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac since January 1975. In 2007 at its all-time high thus far, The HPI for a single-family home was 579.3. By 2012 the HPI fell to 457.5 but has been on the rise ever since. By the end of 2020, the HPI Index was still at 659 and still climbing. While Florida rates have not yet made it into the top 20 highest states nationally, we do still see the HPI rising for the Sunshine State. At the end of 2020 HPI for Florida was 618. This equates to an average single-family home in Florida selling for \$618,000 at the end of 2020.

Remember the cream cheese shortage of the 2021 holiday season? According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, prices for cheese and related products are 13.49% higher in 2022 versus 2019 (a \$2.70 difference in value). For 2022 there is a predicted butter shortage. Between 2019 and 2022, butter experienced an average inflation rate of 5.64% per year. This rate of change indicates significant inflation. In other words, butter costing \$3.18 in the year 2019 would cost \$3.75 in 2022 for an equivalent purchase. Compared to the overall inflation rate of 4.42% during this same period, inflation for butter was higher. Yet people aren't buying cows.

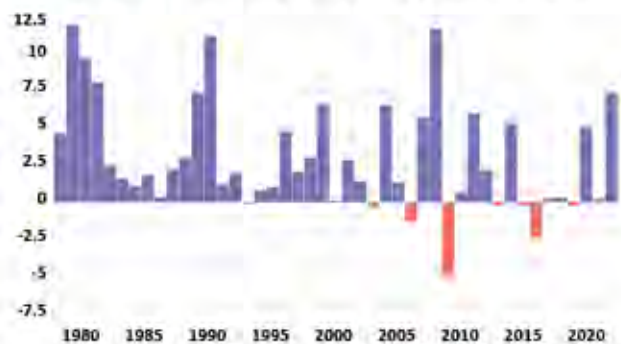
In the previous two years, the price of everything has increased. Greatly. None of those prices will be going back down to the comfortable economic place we were in this country pre-Covid. Automobiles have been in short supply and the price keeps going up. Yet we keep buying vehicles, butter, and cream cheese. The price of inflation is not going to fall, and neither is the price of items at the grocery, vehicles, or homes. Odd as it may sound, NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY A HOME.

## Buying Power of \$20.00 since 2019

Below are calculations of equivalent buying power for Cheese and related products over time for \$20 beginning in 2019. Each of the amounts below is equivalent in terms of what it could buy at the time:

Year	USD Value	Inflation Rate
2019	\$20.00	-0.25%
2020	\$21.05	5.26%
2021	\$21.09	0.19%
2022	\$22.70	7.62%

Price Inflation for Cheese and related products since 1977  
Consumer Price Index, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Years with the largest changes in pricing: 1979 (12.33%), 2008 (12.05%), and 1990 (11.58%).

## Advantages of Buying A Home During a Recession

### • Prices Are Lower

Home values tend to fall during a recession. So, if you're searching for a home, you're likely to find:

- Homeowners who are willing to lower their asking prices
- Homeowners doing short sales to get out from under their mortgages
- Banks selling foreclosed properties

Each of these scenarios typically results in purchase prices below or well below what the home would demand during a healthy economy. The combination of reduced pricing and more foreclosures brings cheaper homes into the market.

### • Rates Are Lower

Along with falling home prices, recessions tend to bring falling mortgage rates. The housing industry plays an important role in the economy. So, by lowering mortgage rates during a recession, the federal government hopes to buoy home sales by making it cheaper to borrow mortgages. In late January 2007, the average rate for a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage in the U.S. was 6.25%. Two years later, in the thick of the recession, the same rate dropped to 5.10%.<sup>4</sup> That 1.15% drop would reduce your monthly payment on a \$300,000 mortgage by nearly \$220.

Bad economic conditions could mean there are fewer homebuyers with disposable income. As demand decreases, home prices fall, and real estate income stagnates. This is just a general rule of thumb, and during real-world recessions, housing prices may not necessarily go down, or they may experience volatility in both directions.

One of the worst financial mistakes you can make before a recession is overextending your budget. If you're considering investing in real estate, ensure that you have plenty of room in your budget to afford the investment. If you invest in real estate before a recession, and then you're forced to sell during a recession, you'll likely lose money due to market declines. If you're worried about affording a full home investment, you can make smaller investments in REITs.

The question isn't how low can prices go during a recession. It's how much real estate you can afford to buy before prices go back up. Paying your mortgage and riding out the downturn is just as important as finding a low-priced home. Make an honest appraisal of your financial circumstances and use our mortgage payment calculator to determine what you can afford.

**Sharon A. Bassett** is the Broker and Owner of Bassett Premier Realty, Inc. With an extensive background of schooling, from Pilot Aviation, 15 years of Construction and Design, Business Management, Entrepreneurship, 22 years of Real Estate, Owner/Broker. <https://www.bassettpremierrealty.com>.

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# EYE-OPENING FACTS ABOUT DIABETIC EYE DISEASE

**N**ovember is Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month, which is dedicated to focusing on the eye diseases related to diabetes and preventing related vision loss. People with type 1, type 2 or pregnancy-related diabetes are more susceptible to certain sight-stealing eye diseases, making regular comprehensive eye exams especially important so that an early diagnosis and appropriate treatment can help stop or delay disease progress. Diabetic people who aren't sufficiently informed are twice as likely to develop certain eye diseases as those who are well-informed, making awareness crucial to optimal eye health.

This article is a good starting point, so you're already on your way to better vision protection.

## Diabetic Eye Diseases

Roughly one in ten people in the US has a form of diabetes, and nearly one-third are prediabetic. These are concerning numbers. To protect the many millions of people who may be affected, the American Academy of Ophthalmology urges folks to take action now to protect their vision.

The most common eye diseases impacted by diabetics are the following:

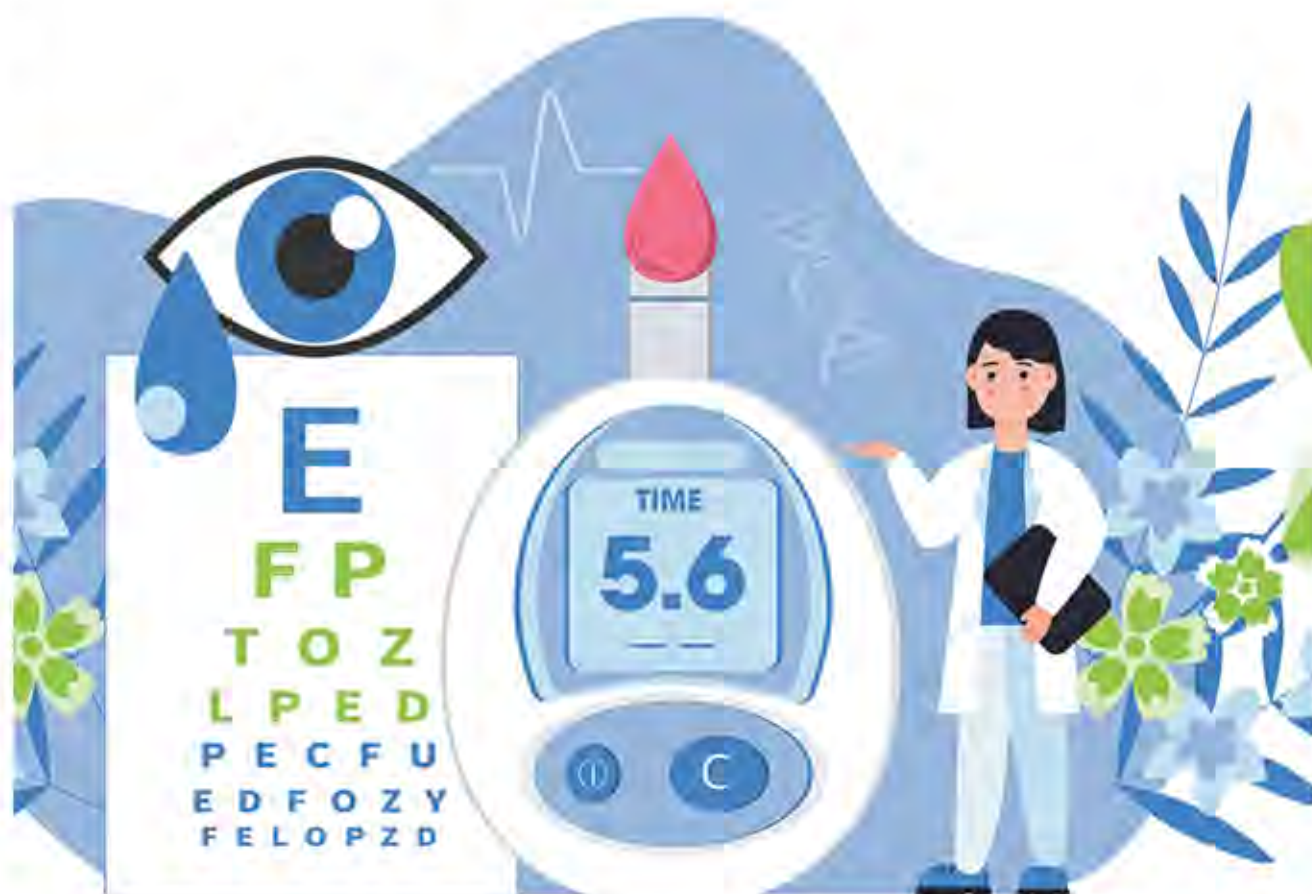
**Diabetic Retinopathy** – The leading cause of blindness among diabetics, diabetic retinopathy occurs when high blood sugar levels damage blood vessels within the retina, which can result in severe vision loss, even blindness.

Types of diabetic retinopathy:

- **Non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy (NPDR)** – With NPDR, retinal blood vessels swell within the macula, damaging central vision and distorting details, dimming light and muting colors.

Typically symptomless in the beginning, untreated NPDR can develop into the second, more severe form:

- **Proliferative diabetic retinopathy (PDR)** – In this more advanced form, weak, abnormal blood vessels may develop and bleed within the eye, damaging central and peripheral vision, and sometimes progressing to complete blindness.



**Macular Edema** – Close to half of people who develop diabetic retinopathy also face diabetic macular edema (DME), a condition caused by excess fluid build-up, which creates swelling or buckling of the macula, and warps central vision.

The good news is that, with early diagnosis and treatment, diabetic retinopathy can be effectively managed and vision significantly protected from these threats.

**Glaucoma** – For people with diabetes, there is a significantly higher risk of a type of glaucoma called neovascular glaucoma, in which pressure damages the optic nerve, leading to vision loss. Like many eye diseases, glaucoma often produces no symptoms until permanent damage is done, so getting regular comprehensive eye exams promotes effective management to protect vision.

**Cataracts** – A cataract is a build-up of proteins that causes the lens of the eye to become thick and cloudy, distorting clarity, light and colors. While

anyone can get a cataract, people with diabetes often develop cataracts earlier than average.

## Added Risk Factors for Diabetic Eye Disease

Conditions that elevate the risk of developing diabetic eye disease include age, smoking, obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

## How Do You Prevent Diabetic Eye Disease?

You can greatly lower your chances of developing diabetic eye disease by following common sense guidelines that support better overall health for just about everyone.

It is important to:

### 1. Know Your Numbers

Managing your blood sugar should always be your number one priority. New and innovative ways to test blood sugar are now available, so if your current method is troublesome or outdated, talk to your clinician about convenient new options. After all, we all tend to commit to things that are easy to do.



Also remain mindful of your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and take steps to bring them in line. If you're living with obesity, talk to your doctor or dietary professional about ways to reach a healthy BMI. No fads or gimmicks necessary – just work to reduce some bad habits, like being sedentary and eating fast or processed foods, and pick up some good habits like eating more fresh vegetables and walking regularly. Swapping out bad choices for good ones can make a big difference in your numbers.

## 2. Reduce Your Sugar Intake

Sugar is highly addictive. Like any addiction, quitting sugar can be very hard at first, so be patient with yourself. Sugar is in almost every packaged, bottled and boxed food in the supermarket, so try to shop in the fresh food aisles and avoid the processed food sections. The difference in the sugar content of fresh vs. processed foods can be tremendous. As examples, in moderation, fresh tomatoes and apples are suitable foods for most diabetics. Once tomatoes are made into tomato sauce, however, the amount of natural and added sugar is surprisingly high, and apple juice contains as much sugar as a soft drink. Fresh foods are usually good choices – especially those that are low in sugar, high in fiber and protein-rich. Because of the high sugar, high salt and low fiber content in most processed foods, they are seldom healthy options for people living with diabetes.

## 3. Get More Exercise

Walking doesn't require a membership or any fancy equipment – just a comfortable pair of walking shoes and, perhaps, diabetic socks. Parking far away from the store, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, performing chores and errands, etc., all add to the total steps taken each day, and collectively, can make a real difference. Swimming, golfing, playing tennis – all are opportunities to move more. Whatever movement option you choose, set reasonable goals, and, as your energy and endurance improve, keep raising the bar. Daily movement will make you feel, function and perform better, and help keep your blood sugar under control.

## 4. Quit Smoking

Recent research suggests it can take the average smoker up to 30 attempts before they quit successfully. While it may not take you nearly that many, the point is this: even if you've tried many times before, the next time could be the one. New programs, medication and guidance can help reduce cravings so you can say goodbye to tobacco once and for all.

Need one more incentive? According to the National Cancer Institute, a pack-a-day habit costs about \$2,292 per year. That's enough to fund a vacation.

## 5. See Your Eye Doc on Schedule

Remember, when caught in time, these and other eye diseases can be reversed, treated or managed successfully. The key is to schedule a comprehensive dilated eye exam once a year, or every six months if recommended by your eye doctor. Anyone who has been newly diagnosed with diabetes should schedule an eye exam right away to check for signs of early eye disease. As always, any noticeable changes in vision warrant an immediate visit with your eye doctor.

## Diabetic Eye Disease Treatments

Lake Eye offers effective options to arrest, correct and manage eye diseases related to diabetes, so vision can be protected.

**Diabetic retinopathy/DME:** Treatment of diabetic retinopathy and diabetic macular edema is customized based on the disease type and stage. Common management includes medication, corticosteroids and/or anti-VEGF (vascular endothelial growth factor) injections. Serious cases may need to be treated with macular laser surgery or a procedure called vitrectomy, which addresses problems with the retina and the vitreous.

**Glaucoma:** Nearly all early-stage cases of glaucoma can be successfully managed using prescription eye drops and/or oral medications – the key is a timely diagnosis. If medication is not enough, some patients benefit from minimally invasive glaucoma surgery, or MIGS, which utilizes stent placement to promote healthy eye drainage. This procedure can be performed alone or with cataract surgery. Advancing cases of open-angle glaucoma may be treated via selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLT). Severe cases may warrant surgical trabeculectomy to help eye pressure lower to normal levels. Closed-angle or narrow-angle glaucoma can be successfully managed through a procedure called laser iridotomy, in which a pinpoint laser is used to create a microscopic drainage outlet in the iris. All are outpatient procedures, so no hospital stay is required.

**Cataracts:** Nearly anyone who lives long enough will develop at least one cataract, but people with diabetes tend to develop them sooner. In the beginning stages, only an update in lens prescription is needed to address most vision impairment. Once cataracts progress, however, they require surgical removal and custom lens replacement.

Lake Eye offers the safest, most advanced laser cataract removal and the highest quality intraocular lens (IOL) options, which are customized to each patient's lifestyle and vision goals.

## Diabetic Eye Exams

Lake Eye (a US Eye company) offers diabetic eye exams using innovative and powerful technologies – including optical coherence tomography and fundus photography – to provide early diagnosis of eye disease, and support the most advanced treatments available to protect vision.

If you have diabetes and it's been a year since your last comprehensive eye exam, call your local Lake Eye to help secure clear, brilliant days ahead.



## It's Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month

People with diabetes are more prone to eye diseases like retinopathy, glaucoma and cataracts, but are often unaware of the risks these diseases pose to vision. Learn how to protect yourself from diabetes-related vision loss.

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# The Anxious Anxiety of GAD and Medical Cannabis

By Dr. Miguel J. De Puigdorfila, DOM

***"Snap out of it, get it together."- are common 'friendly recommendations' when we suffer anxiety. -"Seriously!? That's your best?!"***

From Greek ánhkō, 'to choke', *anxiety* comes from Latin *anxiētās*, and *anxiūs*; synonyms to distressed, disquieted, troubled.

Anxiety is the autonomous sympathetic nervous system (ASNS) response to perceived or real threats. These are physical, emotional and/or environmental. Adrenaline is secreted for 'fight or flight': tachycardia, tachypnea, muscle tension, muscle blood concentration, etc. Once the threat ends, the parasympathetic system (PNS) relaxes back to 'rest and ruminate'.

When Anxiety becomes permanent -no 'rest-ruminate', the unending "waiting for the other shoe to drop" ensues. That is General Anxiety Disorder (GAD); a physiological-neurological condition, NOT something whence one snaps out. It's a domino of endocrine issues. 6.8 million Americans suffer from Anxiety and 40 M from GAD.

The sympathetic and parasympathetic phases are the gas and brake pedals. Try and push the gas and the brake at the same time: we crave sleep but can't, we get hungry but food repulses, "stay with me but leave me alone". GAD destroys the balance and we get a neurological storm.

GAD signs and symptoms include insomnia, extreme worry, irrational fears, physical stress, GIT-GUT disturbances, PTSD, crippling "wudda/coudda/shoudda" flashbacks, self-doubt, self-deprecation, compulsive behaviors, etc. Why?

Anxiety's constant adrenaline affects the cardiorespiratory system: the sinoatrial node: heart volume/rate/pressure, lung connections. It affects the cardio-renal connection: RAAS: renin-angiotensin-aldosterone essential for circulation and fluids. It destroys HCl-a/gastric secretions, we don't eat and digest properly, our colon doesn't absorb electrolytes, no stomach/colonic peristalsis, no bowel movements. Then come chime fermentation, chronic constipation, diarrhea, leaky gut and colonic conditions. Electrolyte absorption depletes, nutrition collapses, so thyroid and heart rate/volume/pressure are affected: HBP, hyper/hypothyroidism. Fluid balance is affected: constant micturition, more electrolyte depletion at glomerular level, trophism collapse. Then the pH imbalance: to keep the blood



a steady 7.34pH we deplete our bones and muscles from calcium, our metabolism goes hyperacid: musculoskeletal chronic pains: TMJ, joints, inflammations. Such generalized crisis imbalance goes straight against the master gland: the hypothalamus. Mood is 'done' (dopamine, serotonin, endorphins, cortisol, pituitary) and we maelstrom into depression. Untreated GAD maelstroms drag into simultaneous depression and panic attacks. In extremis, lunacy and suicide. Why?

There is no vacuum in the subconscious. Mind-body medicine states that whenever there is a neurological secretion, our subconscious will identify a library catalogue of concomitant thoughts/emotions/memories. Stress secretions will bring stressful thoughts/memories hurtling us into the maelstrom. Maelstrom memories will endure as long as secretions endure.

Talk therapy doesn't help. Every time we 'tell' we resuscitate trauma reactivating secretions. In one week, it's an amino acid; in 3 weeks it's a transmissible gene: GAD becomes a programmed tissular Pavlovian response.

Traditional Chinese medicine (TMC) does not separate mind and body. We are multidimensional and multifaceted. I don't cease to be a son when I become a father. I'm all at the same time, depending on time and function. The Liver system manages anger, resentment, frustration, but also goals, performance, foresight, blood movement and some endocrine secretions. The Kidney manages fear, fright, shock, also the genitourinary, energy levels and connects to the Heart. Spleen is pensiveness, rumination and obfuscation, also digestion, blood and lymph. The cycle always goes back to the Heart.

5000 years of ongoing TCM clinical experience give us the body relay with 2500 points, 2000 herbs and formulas addressing all imbalances. By going to the higher aspects of Mind, housed in the several body organ systems dynamics, we enter the GAD vicious maelstrom at any point and stop the spinning. Known as *huomá*, TCM has used hemp and cannabis for millennia. It relaxes the adrenals so the hypothalamus can rebalance the metabolism. It uses similar neuro-pathways and endocannabinoids.

Pills and herbs will help for a while. We do not cure a miner from Black Lung Disease only to send him back down. With GAD, combining endocannabinoids and acupuncture, we must strengthen patients to, in as much as possible, change and face their exterior environment (Feng Shui), and glandular metabolism. When a good movie ends, we disconnect from its projection. In TCM we disconnect the trauma projection from the patient by stopping the spinning maelstrom and deprogramming the gene tissues.

Easy? No. Effective? Yes. Satisfactory? Indeed. Changes in patients are visible: complexion, voice, skin perfusion; we hear words of gratitude: "Thanks doctor, I FEEL fine".

Good; "I am my brother's keeper".

*The Author, is a FL and NM licensed Doctor of Oriental Medicine, Master in Naturopathy, Master Feng Shui, Board Certified Iridologist, with practice by appointment at Miracle Leaf 13271 N US HWY 13271 US Hwy 441, Unit 2, Lady Lake FL 32159; 352-254-5544; 505- 900-1476; mjpedom009@yahoo.com www.100physiciansmedicine.com*

Source:  
1 Anxiety and Depression Association of America:  
[www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org)

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# BENEFITS OF IV THERAPY

If you've ever gone to the hospital or emergency room you know that one of the first things to happen is getting an IV. This is done because getting fluids, vitamins, medications, nutrients, etc through an IV is the quickest, most efficient way to get these essential materials into your body because they are delivered directly into your circulation and allow for quicker and more complete absorption. IV therapy is not limited to the hospital though and can be done on an elective basis which can bring many benefits but at a much lower cost while also helping to prevent the need to be seen in the ER by helping to resolve small illnesses, boost your immune system, and provide specific medications in some cases.

## What is IV therapy?

IV therapy offers a fast, effective way to replace vitamins, minerals, and nutrients that may be lacking as well as administer certain medications for quick relief of ailments such as stomach flu, cold, food poisoning, hangover, and migraine headaches to name a few. This can help improve many health concerns, combat illness, boost immunity, and improve overall wellness.

IVs are placed by a medical professional into a peripheral vein and can have predetermined mixtures of nutrients, minerals, vitamins, amino acids, and/or medications or can be customized individually. These get placed in a bag of IV fluid that is pH balanced to match our bodies natural fluids and is administered slowly with most treatments taking 60-90 minutes although some medications require a slower infusion and can therefore last 2-4 hours.

## Why IV therapy?

- Allows you to bypass your GI system by providing direct administration to the bloodstream making nutrients instantly available without any loss through absorption.
- Allows medications/fluids/electrolytes to be given/replaced when unable to tolerate anything orally.
- Provides nutrients that are lacking in our diets. Soils are often depleted of many nutrients now days so even the best efforts at healthy diets can still leave us deficient.
- Provides body with what it needs to stay in tip top shape allowing for decreased illness, improved mental clarity, and overall improved energy and well-being.
- Our daily needs vary from day to day based on environmental factors, stress, diet, and other health conditions. IV therapy allows you to easily get all the nutrients your body needs with 100%

absorption so you can conveniently give your body all the building blocks it needs to help you feel your best every day.

## Is IV therapy safe?

IV therapy is a safe procedure when performed by a licensed medical professional who monitors the infusions.

## What are possible side effects?

Typically, there are no significant side effects, however, some people may experience a feeling of being cold/chilled while others report feeling sleepy; these feelings are typically based on the specific nutrients being given. Occasionally people report a sensation of tasting the vitamin or mineral in their mouth during treatment; this is normal and nothing to be concerned about.

## How often can I get an IV?

Time between IV treatments vary by individual but typically no more often than once a week although there are a few exceptions that will be discussed at your appointment.

At Total Nutrition & Therapeutics, our IV therapy menu addresses most concerns and can also be customized depending on your needs. If you are wondering if IV therapy could be helpful for you look at the benefits you can get through IV therapy:

- Immediate rehydration
- Energy boost
- Increased mental clarity
- Migraine headache relief
- PMS relief
- Quicker recovery from illness (cold/flu, food poisoning, etc.)
- Improved athletic performance and recovery
- Guaranteed vitamin absorption
- Immunity boost/illness prevention; improved overall wellness
- Decreased stress/fatigue
- Rapid results
- Eliminate toxin build up
- Improved mood/decreased anxiety and depression
- Improved overall wellness
- Hangover recovery
- Weight loss
- Skin Improvement, hair and nail growth, anti-aging support
- Replenished nutrients that are lacking in our diets



## Who is a candidate?

Most people are candidates for IV therapy but the nutrients, vitamins, minerals, and medications given will vary from person to person. Every patient meets with our team and reviews their medical history before determining if they are a candidate and what formula would be most beneficial.

## Who should not get IV therapy?

There are some health issues that can exclude you from getting an IV treatment. Common conditions that may limit being able to receive IV therapy include kidney disease, heart disease and high blood pressure. While these do not exclude being treated with IV therapy you should have a full medical history review with a physician who can determine if you are a candidate for IV therapy and what formulations are safe for you and which aren't.

## How do I get started?

Contact Total Nutrition and Therapeutics at 352-259-5190 or go online to [www.TNT4ME.com](http://www.TNT4ME.com) to schedule your appointment today. Initial consultations are always complimentary.

## Total Nutrition & Therapeutics

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



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# HEALTHY AGING: WHAT DOES IT REALLY REQUIRE?

## Regenerative Medicine May Play a Larger Role in Healing Than Most People Realize

By Physicians Rehabilitation

**W**e hear so much about Blue Zone centenarians' lifestyles and thoughts on how they age so well without major disease or illness, but when it comes to healthy aging, it's not just about what we eat, exercise, and socialization, although these are definitely critical. However, it is important to mention that the medical treatment you receive is highly subjective to your outcomes, overall health and wellness.

What do we mean by that? Many doctors over prescribe medications to mask your symptoms but these usually fail to get to the root cause of your disorder. If you are injured or suffer from chronic pain, many surgeons will tell you surgical intervention is necessary, but is it? Often these treatment plans leave people sicker, with multiple other symptoms and surgery many times, doesn't relieve the problem long term.

Regenerative medicine is different because it helps the body heal from within on multiple levels. It is never a bandage approach, and it aims to treat the root cause of your condition.

If you want to age well, you might want to reconsider your thoughts on standard treatment. In the case of musculoskeletal conditions, it's always best to start with conservative approaches. Surgery is permanent; there is no going back once you have a knee or shoulder replacement. While those might be necessary in severe cases, they can be treated with regenerative therapies that offer significant optimal restoration.

### Regenerative Medicine

The purpose of Regenerative medicine is it to utilize the body's own ability to regenerate cells and tissues that have been damaged back to full functionality. When used in orthopedics, the goal is to regenerate soft tissues, cartilage, muscles, and tendons. Regenerative Medicine should be the first recommendation, and in many cases, it is the only treatment necessary when dealing with muscle strains, tears. When it comes to joint dysfunction or tears such as with sports injuries, physical therapy is also extremely beneficial as an add on treatment.



### AT PHYSICIANS REHABILITATION THE TWO PRIMARY REGENERATIVE MEDICAL THERAPEUTICS FOR MOST SPORTS INJURIES ARE VISCOSUPPLEMENTATION AND PLATELET RICH PLASMA (PRP) THERAPIES

#### Viscosupplementation

Viscosupplementation is an injectable substance that mimics the synovial fluid found naturally in the joint. Synovial fluid is a high concentration of Hyaluronic Acid (HA) and is used to help protect the joint, act as a cushion and protector against damage and most importantly acts as a lubricant to enable smooth function of the joint. As you age, your body supplements with less Hyaluronic Acid (synovial fluid) and an increasingly less viscous Hyaluronic Acid replaces your thick and very well lubricating HA. This lack of fluid creates dried out joints which leads to cartilage, tissue, muscle, and bone breakdown – leading to Osteoarthritis and making it easier to have tissue and muscle damage within and around the joint.



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855-276-5989 | [www.PhysiciansRehab.com](http://www.PhysiciansRehab.com)

The procedure can be done in our office and only takes a few minutes. After locally numbing the area of concern, the procedure is monitored under a fluoroscopic image, which is a live X-ray. This allows us to see the inside of your joint while it is in motion and during the injection process. Using the fluoroscope, the practitioner will have the ability to see exactly where the Hyaluronic Acid is being placed to make sure it is in the joint space – because if it is not, it will do NO GOOD! You'll receive approximately five injections at one week apart. The results of the cartilage enhancement will last for around six months or longer. Physicians Rehabilitation has become the expert on providing great results when this process is paired with physical therapy. Many of our patients report feeling pain relief immediately, while others cumulatively see results within a few short weeks.

#### PRP (Platelet-Rich Plasma)

Fortunately for our patients today, advances in science have allowed us to find new and targeted approaches to treating degeneration and injuries. Platelet-rich plasma or PRP is an "autologous blood therapy" that uses a patient's own blood components to stimulate a healing response in damaged tissues. PRP provides an alternative to surgery by promoting safe and natural healing by spiking your body's natural ability to heal by using your own growth factors and proteins in your blood!

Research studies and clinical practice have shown PRP therapy to be very effective at relieving pain and returning patients to their normal lives. Both ultrasound and MRI images have shown definitive tissue repair after PRP therapy, confirming the healing process. The need for surgery can also be greatly reduced by treating injured tissues before the damage progresses and the condition is irreversible.

#### Physicians Rehabilitation

Physicians Rehabilitation is a patient-focused practice that provides comprehensive care to eliminate your pain non-surgically. We evaluate each patient and implement an individual care plan specifically designed to alleviate your pain and dysfunction. Trained and licensed providers, with years of clinical experience, work together to provide this plan of care that addresses the specific concerns and problems of each patient.



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For the last 16 years, Patrick Smith has served Clermont as a local estate planning attorney and occasional radio guest host. It's the last year, though, that has brought his knowledge and outreach to the entire state and across the country — this time returning as host of his own callin legal advice show. Saturday mornings from 8-9 you can listen Live on 102.5 FM and AM760 and call in with you legal questions. Broadcasts can also be streamed Live on Facebook and at theBoneOnline.com. The office and website are always available to you: **(941) 841-3420 - [www.AttorneyPatrickSmith.com](http://www.AttorneyPatrickSmith.com)**



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# Can Omega-3 with Melatonin Reduce Overactive Bladder at Night?

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

It was a subject she normally felt too embarrassed to talk about — even with her physician. Now Harriet was so thrilled she had to share the good news with me!

“Instead of getting up three to four times a night to tinkle, I now only wake up once,” she explained. “Sometimes, I even sleep until 6 am. I feel like a new person!”

## What Is Nocturia?

Harriet struggled with nocturia, a condition that requires getting up to urinate at least once during the night.

Surprisingly common, nocturia impacts millions of Americans. Between 2-28% of people between the ages of 20 and 40 are impacted by “clinically relevant nocturia,” which is defined as having to void at least two times per night.

For people over age 70, those numbers increase to 28-62%.

## Health Issues Related to Nocturia

While nocturia often gets dismissed as a ‘mere nuisance’, it can significantly impact a person’s quality of life when experienced regularly. For many, sleep deprivation caused by nocturia can lead to fatigue, reduced productivity, mood disorders and impaired cognitive performance.

What’s more, needing to void at night often puts people at risk of falling and injuring themselves. It’s estimated that the US healthcare system spends \$1.5 billion a year on nocturia-related hip fractures alone!

## What Causes Nocturia?

While the prevalence and severity of nocturia correlate with age, frequent night-time urination shouldn’t be discounted as a normal part of aging.

This condition is typically described as a “multifactorial,” meaning several factors usually play a role. Common causes include everything from specific behaviors (like drinking too much liquid before bed) to underlying health issues like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, sleep disorders, urinary tract problems, and urinary infections.

## Which Comes First: Poor Sleep or the Need to Urinate?

Nocturia is especially complex in that even when the apparent causes are addressed, many people still get up at night to urinate.



From a medical viewpoint, this begs the question: Is it the need to void at night that causes poor sleep? Or could it be that poor sleep contributes to having to get up to urinate?

If it’s the latter, focusing on sleep hygiene could have big payoffs for people struggling with nocturia.

## Taking Control of Nocturia

Nocturia deserves more public attention and open conversation — especially because, in many cases, it can be helped by a variety of therapies.

One of those therapies might include the combination of omega-3s and melatonin. Indeed, one of the more interesting pieces of feedback that we’ve heard from users is that Omega Restore (a combination of omega-3s and melatonin) seems to reduce frequent urination at night.

Here is what we have learned about how melatonin and omega-3s may impact nocturia:

## Melatonin Research

Often referred to as the “sleep hormone,” melatonin has a profound impact on our circadian rhythm. For people with certain sleep disorders, taking melatonin has been found to improve sleep quality. Since sleep disorders are strongly correlated with nocturia, it’s possible that melatonin could improve both.

Melatonin has also been found to reduce smooth muscle spontaneous activity in the bladder, which might reduce the urge to urinate.

Studies already show that older people with nocturia secrete less melatonin than normal. But the question of how melatonin supplementation impacts nocturia is still relatively new. To date, only a handful of small studies have tackled the topic. While the results look promising, more research is needed.

## Omega-3 Research

Researchers also theorize that omega-3 fatty acids could make a difference for people with nocturia, for a variety of reasons:

- Reduce inflammation: Research shows that inflammation often plays a major role in overactive bladders. In clinical studies where anti-inflammatory drugs

(NSAIDs) were given to people with nocturia, the NSAIDs reduced nocturia episodes and increased urinary retention. Since omega-3s work on the same biochemical pathways as NSAIDs, researchers believe omega-3 supplements could have a similar positive effect when taken in effective doses.

- Improve cell signaling: Omega-3s are also involved in the communication between cells. Without enough omega-3s, the body’s signaling pathways don’t function optimally. Case in point, one study found that the omega-3 signaling pathways often don’t work normally in older men with nocturia.

- Improve melatonin secretion: Omega-3s additionally influence our body’s relationship with melatonin. Animal studies show that low omega-3 intake is associated with dysfunctional melatonin secretion. Research also demonstrates that omega-3s help regulate the pineal gland, which is responsible for the production of melatonin at night.

The interconnectedness between omega-3s and melatonin could explain why one 2016 study found that people who ate the most fish enjoyed better sleep quality than those who rarely ate fish. This same study also showed that increased omega-3 intake positively influenced the circadian rhythm.

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

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/can-omega-3-with-melatonin-reduce-excessive-urination-at-night/>

## About Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

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



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# Diabetic Neuropathy: How Physical Therapy Can Help

**R**oughly, 29 million Americans have diabetes. Many of these cases are undiagnosed, but for those individuals that struggle with the disease, symptoms of diabetic neuropathy can be debilitating.

Diabetic neuropathy is a progressive disease that affects nearly 200,000 new patients per year. Understanding the disease state is complex, but in short, having high blood sugar levels, along with low blood and oxygen supply, damages the nerves throughout the body. This damage generally affects the long peripheral nerves that feed sensations to the legs, feet, and toes from the spinal cord, through communication with the brain. If your condition has progressed, you may feel nerve damage sensations in your upper extremities as well.

## Peripheral Neuropathy Symptoms

- Numbness
- Tingling
- Burning sensations
- Painful aching
- Joint inflammation
- Joint damage
- Balance issues
- Skin discoloration & texture changes
- Muscle cramps
- Feelings of stiffness
- Non-healing foot & ankle ulcers



Once the peripheral nerves are damaged, there is no cure. Along with medications and drug therapies, there are proven methods to lessen the symptoms of peripheral diabetic neuropathy. Physical medicine provides alternative therapeutic and rehabilitating procedures that can offer significant pain relief and limit drug dependency. Physical therapy helps with balance and can reduce the risk of falls.

**When you have diabetic neuropathy, your feet and legs can feel so numb that you may trip, fall and injure yourself just by trying to get through normal daily activities. This can be dangerous for obvious reasons. Along with dietary changes, orthopedic shoes and compression stockings, physical therapy can help.**



## Physical & Occupational Therapy Benefits

- Manual stretching
- Hip & Ankle Alignment Strategies
- Decompression
- Massage therapy
- Electrical nerve stimulation
- Help with daily tasks & Living
- Cold laser treatment

Patient & Occupational Education is critical to alleviate further injury and to promote the most efficacious healing. Coupled with family participation, self-help management to promote and maintain independent function, and mobility is critical.

Physical therapy is used to help with numerous indications and conditions like retraining the body to improve gait and balance and also after hip, knee or shoulder replacement and so much more. There is no better way to alleviate pain, increase range-of-motion and live a more mobile higher quality of life than through physical & Occupational therapy.

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

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# How Would YOU Choose an Assisted Living Community?

By Janice Martin, Senior Advisor / Family Liaison



**W**hen faced with the prospect of choosing an assisted living community, there are several options of how to begin. As a former Director of Sales in senior living, I met with countless families who had never visited a community before and knew nothing about what to look for or what questions to ask. When I asked them how they found my community, I was often told, "we were driving by and saw your sign." THAT was how they chose a community to visit! I would ask them what was important to them in their search. The answer was often the same... safety and care.

But what does that mean? How is safety determined? Care is sometimes determined based on the number of staff available and longevity of management. In too many cases, they would not look any deeper than the fancy entrance and beautiful décor and make an emotional decision based on that alone.

There are better alternatives of how to begin and make a decision.

## Do an online search

This is the most dangerous way to begin. There is no way to determine safety or care. Online reviews are often not reliable. People are more than happy

to write a review when they are angry than when they are happy. Quite often, disgruntled staff who may have been fired for good reason will write a poor review. Reviews may also be outdated, and the situation may have been resolved since then. Reviews cannot be withdrawn once posted. Even if the concern is unfounded, there is no way to retract it, causing irreparable damage to an otherwise good community.

Pictures online or in brochures showing happy and engaged people are often stock art and rarely of the actual residents. The people depicted are usually 20 years younger than most people in assisted living! I've seen pictures of happy people coming off the tennis court or attending a rigorous exercise class. This is not realistic. But people often contact a community based entirely on the pictures because "it looks nice."

If an online search has been done and a few local communities are chosen, it is now up to you to know what to look for and the questions to ask. A salesperson will happily schedule a tour with you and tell you why their community is the best choice. After visiting 3, 4, 5 or more communities, everything you learned will blur together and it will be difficult to distinguish one from the other.

## Work with a National referral company

There are large national companies who are very good at buying online keywords. If you do a search for "assisted living near me," their company, not a community, will be the first option. Believing you are calling a community; they will ask for your contact information and a description of what you are looking for. You will be told that they will have a "few" communities contact you to schedule a tour. They will then send your contact information to every community in your area with little to no regard of your financial situation or care needs. Without warning, you will then receive unsolicited phone call after phone call. Talk about being overwhelmed! They will not accompany you on a tour nor help you with additional aspects of a move that you may need. They are also unfamiliar with safety or care concerns.

## Work with a local referral company

By working with a local referral company such as Senior Liaison of Central Florida, you will receive personalized service from the very first phone call. Your financial situation, care needs and location preference will be taken into consideration. Additional services that are needed, such as movers, Realtors, financial planners for Medicaid or Veteran's benefits, can be arranged for you. They will narrow your search to just a few communities that fit your unique needs. They will accompany you on a tour and ask questions you may not have thought to ask. They will research the community's state surveys to ensure that no complaints or fines have been filed against them. Annual surveys are always available upon request, however subsequent complaints are not. They will guide you through each step of the process and help to decipher the information you receive. Ultimately, the decision is up to you after making an educated decision, rather than an emotional decision.

In the event of a crisis, the stress of making a "good" decision is increased. By having the support of a professional to personally guide you each step of the way can go a long way toward reducing your stress.

For a helpful checklist of items to ask during a visit or more information, contact Janice Martin at Senior Liaison of Central Florida by calling 352-477-1866 or email us at SeniorLiaisonCFL@gmail.com. Please also visit our website at SeniorLiaisonCFL.com or on Facebook at Senior Liaison.

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# The Effects of Diabetes on Your Kidneys

**A**ccording to the CDC, as many as 1 in 3 diabetes patients suffers from chronic kidney disease (CKD). In fact, the most frequent cause of chronic kidney disease is diabetes. This is because people with diabetes have high blood sugar levels which cause damage to the kidneys and leads to kidney disease. It is also attributed to hypertension, which is common among diabetics and is another risk factor since high blood pressure damages the kidneys and may prevent them from working properly.

## Normal kidney function

The main function of the kidneys is to eliminate waste products from our body through urine. They are small (about the size of your fist) and are shaped like beans. They are found below the rib cage pressed against the back muscles on the left and right sides.

Kidneys have two main functions: to help filter about 180 liters of blood every 24 hours and send it back to the heart and to help the body pass waste in the form of urine. They are responsible for:

- Monitoring waste removal
- Maintaining the balance of minerals and electrolytes (calcium, sodium, and potassium) in the body
- Balancing hormones
- Balancing pH of the blood
- Stimulating red blood cell production

## What causes kidney disease?

Both kidneys contain millions of tiny nephrons (filters). Each of these contain blood vessels. Anything that causes damage to these nephrons and their blood vessels can cause kidney disease. The three

leading causes of kidney disease are diabetes, hypertension, and atherosclerosis. Other causes include a genetic disorder called polycystic kidney disease, long-term use of medications (especially NSAIDs), and autoimmune diseases like lupus or rheumatoid arthritis.

## HOW DOES DIABETES AFFECT THE KIDNEYS?

Diabetes causes harm to kidneys in one of 3 ways.

1. High blood sugar levels can damage the blood vessels in the kidneys' nephrons by causing them to become narrow and clogged. Diabetics have fluctuating levels of blood sugar, causing the blood vessels slow or stop the filtering process that each of the millions of nephrons needs to perform. This limits the supply of clean blood circulating through the body. Without enough blood, damaged kidneys allow albumin (a protein) to pass through the filters and out through the urine.

2. Diabetes causes nerve damage. Nerves carry messages between the brain and other parts of the body. One message is to let your brain know when your bladder is full and should be emptied. When this message is not delivered, the pressure of a constantly full bladder can damage your kidneys. The effect of diabetes on the nervous system is called Diabetic Nephropathy.

3. When your bladder is not emptied, urine stays in the bladder for too long and may cause an infection because of the overgrowth of bacteria. Bacteria grows especially fast when in urine with high sugar levels. This is usually a problem only for the bladder, but it can also spread to the kidneys.

How can a diabetic keep their kidneys healthy for longer?

- Maintain a blood pressure below 140/90 or another target established by your doctor. Even if your blood pressure is in the normal range, some doctors prescribe high blood pressure medicines because research shows that these medications can slow the loss of kidney function in diabetics.
- Maintain blood sugar levels within a healthy range. This can usually be achieved through diet, but sometimes insulin or hypoglycemic pills are necessary.
- Maintain a level of physical activity that helps to regulate your blood sugar and blood pressure.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Test kidneys yearly if you have diabetes.
- Create a kidney-healthy diet with the guidance of a doctor or dietician if you have kidney disease. Limiting how much protein you eat (enough but not too much) can slow kidney damage. Again, this should be done under the supervision of a dietician, specifically one who specializes in kidney disease.
- Limit salt intake in order to control high blood pressure and/or swelling.
- Limit the use of NSAIDs such as ibuprofen or naproxen.
- Keep cholesterol and lipid levels in check in order to prevent further damage to larger blood vessels.

*If you or someone you love is a diabetic and in need of a kidney specialist, contact Sunshine Kidney Care in The Villages today. They are located at 1400 N US Hwy 441, Suite 522. Their phone number is 352.388.5800.*

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By Compton Chiropractic Care

**C**urrently there are millions of Americans who suffer from low back and leg pain. A recent survey showed, a large majority of these patients are over the age of 65. When you figure that the Villages has a population exceeding 100,000 and a majority are over the age of 65 then it becomes easier to understand why so many local residents experience this pain. In fact, seven out of ten patients who walk into Dr. Compton's office complain of low back or sciatic pain. It is common knowledge that Chiropractors treat low back pain among other muscular skeletal complaints. What is not well known is that there are over a dozen different techniques and treatment plans to treat the same condition. Different Doctor's feel one technique is better than another but the proof is in the pudding. What makes a Doctor truly unique and beneficial to their patients is being able to properly diagnose a condition the first time and realize when a particular protocol is not working and escalate care to the next level.

Sciatica is defined by The Mayo Clinic as: *Pain that radiates along the path of the sciatic nerve, which branches from your lower back through your hips and buttocks and down each leg. Typically, sciatica affects only one side of your body.*

Sciatica most commonly occurs when a herniated disk or a bone spur compresses part of a nerve. This causes inflammation, pain and often numbness in the affected leg. Although the pain associated with sciatica can be severe, most cases resolve with conservative chiropractic care in a few weeks. Interestingly enough; due to the anatomical location of the sciatic nerve, sciatic type pain can also be caused by Piriformis syndrome or sacro-iliac joint dysfunction. These two conditions masquerade around with similar signs and symptoms and can lead to improper diagnosis and treatment. This means patients spend money and do not get better, never a good thing.



The Doctors at Compton Chiropractic are board certified and have degrees from Palmer College (The First Chiropractic Medical School). Among other common conditions they treat low back and sciatic pain on a daily basis with great success. The Doctors are integrated with several local primary care physicians, urgent cares, neurologists, pain management physicians, and orthopedic surgeons. This level of integration means that the patient benefits faster and more effectively.

These days it's hard to walk around the golf course and not hear someone talking about their "sciatica". Unfortunately, the great game of golf tends to wreak havoc on one's spine and muscular systems. This is one reason why many top pro golfers (Tiger Woods, Tommy Armour) among other athletes have a chiropractic physician on staff. Certainly if professional golfers with great swings utilize chiropractic care, then local residents who have trouble swinging could potentially benefit more.

Compton Chiropractic has been serving The Villages since 2006 with knowledgeable Doctors and friendly staff who treat sciatica pain on a daily basis. They primarily utilize "Cox Flexion Distraction Technique" which was developed by Dr. James M. Cox in the early 1960's as a non-surgical method of treating disc related injuries. Since that time Doctors of different specialties around the country have studied and utilized these methods with great success.

Many residents are familiar with the terms herniated disc, sciatica, pinched nerve, bulging disc and stenosis. Many are also aware that surgery has been the most common treatment for these injuries in the past. However, years of research and technology have pushed us into the 21st century and now there is hope for those who suffer from this debilitating pain. It is now commonplace in medicine to try the most conservative means of treatment first. This approach is a win: win for patients and doctors alike because it means less wasted time and money.





**WHETHER OR NOT YOU'VE GOT A PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN (PCP), AT DR. COMPTON'S OFFICE, ALL PATIENTS ARE WELCOME.**

#### **WE WORK WITH YOUR CURRENT PHYSICIAN:**

If you have a regular family practice relationship, your current PCP can treat you simultaneously, and all communications between Dr. Compton's office and theirs will be shared and interconnected.

#### **WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A PCP?**

Many patients come directly to Dr. Compton's office, as referrals are not required.

#### **WE CAN REFER YOU OUT IF NECESSARY:**

All cases and patients are different. For example, if we feel it's in your best interest to see an orthopedic specialist, or if you need additional images, we refer you out and can also coordinate this with your PCP's preferences.

Doctor Compton states that, "some patients will require surgery for pain relief", however in most cases he can postpone or prevent surgery for his patients.

The Doctors at Compton Chiropractic have received additional education on the Cox Technique among others. This conservative treatment has been shown to decrease disc pressure by approximately 75% thus allowing relief of the signs and symptoms of disc related pain (Sciatica).

The average treatment time is only about 15 minutes and most patients report feeling better in just a few visits.

#### **Patient Testimonial**

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

Doctor Compton's office is located in The Palm Ridge Plaza off CR 466 and they accept all major insurances. Office hours are M-F from 9am to 5 pm.

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# What's Your Diet?

By Pastor Roger P. Felipe

**W**eight-watchers. Nutrisystem. Mediterranean diet. Paleo. Living healthy has become a craze, although obesity in our country, rather legitimizes it. For many people it is about looking and feeling better, living longer, stronger and disease-free. These are all important reasons for eating clean, exercising, and learning to rest our bodies sufficiently.

For Christians, however, trying to maintain healthy habits finds its motivation in more than adopting diet fads to longevity and better quality of life. Taking care of our bodies is stewardship. That is, it is a reflection of our recognition of having been created by God, and how our lives can be instruments in his hands to serve and honor him on earth. Of course, God can use both the healthy and the unfit for his purposes, including the sick, feeble, and dying. Human worth and value is not in question.

The reality is that our earthly lives are only a speck in the sands of eternity. However, Christ followers understand that life doesn't belong to them. It is a gift from a Good Father who entrusted them with a brief span of years that should be invested in loving others and making our world a better place. For those who have believed in Christ and experienced God's forgiveness of sin, the reason for taking care of their bodies goes beyond living longer and healthier. It's about honoring Jesus Christ with all of life, including the way they take care of their bodies.

In his book, *"The Unknown God: Searching for spiritual fulfillment,"* Oxford University professor, Alister McGrath, describes the parable of Plato's Cave, a story about people enslaved inside the cave oblivious to the reality that existed on the outside beyond the flickering shadows which they knew. That is, until the day someone was able to find their way out and discover a world beyond description, a world of beauty and splendor. McGrath writes, "Our desires have become attached to things that are little more than shadows, when they are meant to be attached to something which cannot decay or disappoint" (32).

How does this relate to healthy living? Focusing on living healthier and longer, like any other pursuit we might obsess about, really reveals a spiritual longing in our souls for something more: *eternity*. Whether is it longing for a "perfect" relationship that often disenchant, earthly riches that can quickly vanish, or a healthy and strong body that is suddenly brought to a standstill due to an unexpected medical report, our hearts are longing for something beyond what this world can provide.

McGrath probes us to consider this question: "Suppose our longing for fulfillment points to something we have yet to discover? What if our yearning is a clue to the meaning of the universe?" (10). Taking care of your body and staying healthy is a good thing, but it isn't everything.

The truth of the matter is, whatever we pursue in life has a way to deceive us to think that by attaining "it" our lives will be complete. They're not. Deep inside a voice continues to remind us that our longings for fulfillment are like signposts in the sky pointing us to something beyond ourselves. Could that something (Someone) be our Creator?

May you achieve physical well-being and wholeness. But may you also discover the gift of eternal life which Jesus promises to all who believe and trust in him alone. "...

I have come that they may have life, and have it in abundance" (John 10:10). I would enjoy exploring with you the meaning of life and God.



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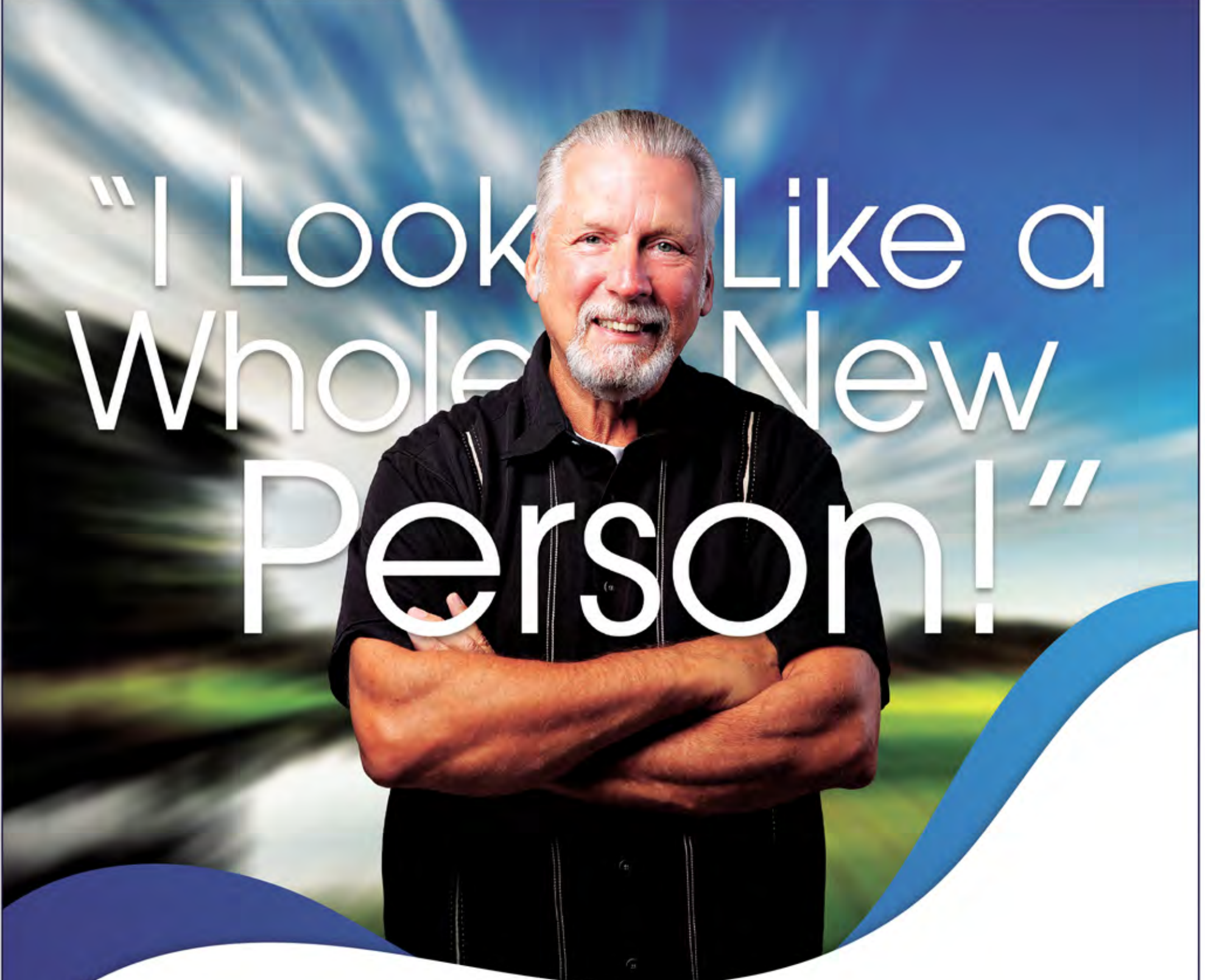












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