

TAMPA BAY'S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

December 2022

South Tampa Edition - Monthly

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FREE 

Acid Reflux

Learn Why it's
Important to Treat

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Pancreatic Cancer

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**Regular
Gynecological
Wellness Visits
Are Critical**
Critical Even if
You Don't Have
Symptoms or
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It's A Wonderful Life

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from Excruciating
Neck Pain All Day,
Everyday...
to No Pain!**

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3 Reasons Why
Your Hip Hurts

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Preparing for 2023

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CONTACT US

OWNER / ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

SOUTH TAMPA - (727) 515-2353
BOB GUCKENBERGER
bobguckenberger@gmail.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

SONNY GRENSING
sonny@gwhizmarketing.com

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Acid Reflux: Learn Why it's Important to Treat

By Dr. Aric Tucker

Dr. Aric Tucker is sharing the following article with the community, which was posted on UpToDate®, an online community for healthcare providers.

What is acid reflux?

Acid reflux is when the acid that is normally in your stomach backs up into the esophagus. The esophagus is the tube that carries food from your mouth to your stomach.

When acid reflux causes bothersome symptoms or damage, doctors call it "gastroesophageal reflux disease" or "GERD."

What are the symptoms of acid reflux?

The most common symptoms are:

- Heartburn, which is a burning feeling in the chest
- Regurgitation, which is when acid and undigested food flow back into your throat or mouth

Other symptoms might include:

- Stomach or chest pain
- Trouble swallowing
- Having a raspy voice or a sore throat
- Unexplained cough
- Nausea or vomiting

Is there anything I can do on my own to feel better?

Yes. You might feel better if you:

- Lose weight (if you are overweight)
- Raise the head of your bed by 6 to 8 inches – You can do this by putting blocks of wood or rubber under 2 legs of the bed or a foam wedge under the mattress.
- Avoid foods that make your symptoms worse – For some people these include coffee, chocolate, alcohol, peppermint, and fatty foods.
- Stop smoking, if you smoke
- Avoid late meals – Lying down with a full stomach can make reflux worse. Try to plan meals for at least 2 to 3 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid tight clothing – Some people feel better if they wear comfortable clothing that does not squeeze the stomach area.

How is acid reflux treated?

There are a few main types of medicines that can help with the symptoms of acid reflux. The most common are antacids, histamine blockers, and proton

pump inhibitors. All of these medicines work by reducing or blocking stomach acid. But they each do that in a different way.

- For mild symptoms, antacids can help, but they work only for a short time. Histamine blockers are stronger and last longer than antacids. You can buy antacids and most histamine blockers without a prescription.

- For frequent and more severe symptoms, proton pump inhibitors are the most effective medicines. Some of these medicines are sold without a prescription. But there are other versions that your doctor can prescribe.

Sometimes, medicines cost less if you get them with a doctor's prescription. Other times, non-prescription medicines cost less. If you are worried about cost, ask your pharmacist about ways to pay less for your medicines.

Should I see a doctor or nurse about my acid reflux?

Some people can manage their acid reflux on their own by changing their habits or taking non-prescription medicines. But you should see a doctor or nurse if:

- Your symptoms are severe or last a long time
- You cannot seem to control your symptoms
- You have had symptoms for many years

You should also see a doctor or nurse **right away** if you:

- Have trouble swallowing, or feel as though food gets "stuck" on the way down
- Lose weight when you are not trying to
- Have chest pain
- Choke when you eat
- Vomit blood or have bowel movements that are red, black, or look like tar

Source:

<https://www.uptodate.com/contents/acid-reflux-and-gastroesophageal-reflux-disease-in-adults-the-basics?csi=21f876d6-756d-42bf-86a9-b44c622a558d&source=contentShare>

What if my child or teenager has acid reflux?

If your child or teenager has acid reflux, take them to see a doctor or nurse. Do not give your child medicines to treat acid reflux without talking to a doctor or nurse.

In children, acid reflux can be caused by a number of problems. It's important to have a doctor or nurse check for these problems before trying any treatments.

An upper endoscopy may be necessary to properly diagnose advanced acid reflux and other upper GI conditions. It's important to talk to a specialist about your acid reflux. Schedule your appointment today.

Gastroenterology at Habana

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Phone: (813) 876-0951



Aric S. Tucker, DO

Dr. Aric Tucker is board certified in internal medicine and serves the Tampa area for BayCare Medical Group, where he sees patients aged 18 and older. He completed his undergraduate degree in exercise science from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida. Dr. Tucker earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He then completed an internal medicine residency at Valley Hospital Medical Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. Dr. Tucker continued his medical education by completing a fellowship in gastroenterology from USF Morsani College of Medicine/Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point in Hudson, Florida. Dr. Tucker is equipped to handle the broad and comprehensive spectrum of illnesses that affect adults, and provides diagnosis in the treatment of chronic illness, while promoting health, disease prevention and patient well-being. He concentrates his practice on diseases of the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, colon and rectum, pancreas, gallbladder, bile ducts and liver. He is also certified in advanced cardiac life support and basic life support, and a member of the American Gastroenterology Association, the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, and the American College of Gastroenterology. Dr. Tucker is a native to the Tampa Bay area and enjoys spending time with his family and friends, staying active and traveling.

Preparing for 2023

It's hard to believe that it will soon be 2023. While many of us are looking forward to waving goodbye to 2022, there are things that you can and should do now to prepare for the new year ahead.

Start scheduling your medical appointments now. Florida is booming, and with all of the new people in town, it can be quite difficult to get in to see your screenings (mammogram, prostate, lung, etc.), dentists, doctor and other specialists' appointments. Don't wait until the last minute. Start calling and scheduling these important checkups now.

Update your investment portfolio.

Now is a great time to meet with your broker to discuss any new investments or changes to your portfolio.

Plan your trips soon.

Since we are able to travel fairly easily again, start thinking about and planning your trips with friends or family now. Even if it's a local vacation, beating the crowd early is the key to getting exactly what you want.

Implement health strategies now.

It's never too early to begin focusing on your health and implementing healthy lifestyle habits like exercise and diet. You certainly don't have to wait until 2023 is official. Start walking, join a group fitness class, find healthy recipes online, and give your kitchen an overhaul with healthy foods.

Plan senior living community tours.

If you're contemplating independent living or other senior living options, start researching and touring communities now. Again, with the influx of people into our sunny state, things can book up rather quickly. Make sure to bring your loved one or friends along to get their opinion too.

Enjoying Your Senior Years Comfortably

If you are a senior, you might also want to consider a change in your living arrangements. It's the perfect time to explore the possibilities of leaving the yard work and home maintenance behind. Discover the opportunities that Aston Gardens has to offer.

Aston Gardens is one of the most highly sought-after communities due to their dedication to senior needs, their commitment to enriching the lives of each resident and their families by providing personalized

care, welcoming living spaces, and superior amenities within three distinct tiers, which include independent living, assisted living, and memory care facilities.

Independent Living

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

Assisted Living

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

SHINE® Memory Care

SHINE® Memory Care offers a private special needs neighborhood for residents with memory care related issues. Residents needing Alzheimer's care and other dementia care receive the very best attention and services in a supportive, compassionate and secure setting. Based on each individual's needs and capabilities, the professionals at Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay create a personalized plan to help our residents live life as fulfilling as possible, in a secure and comfortable environment.



The Difference

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

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- Lush Landscaping
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- Library and Business Center
- Card and Game Rooms
- Activity Center
- Beauty Salon and Barber Shop
- Lounge
- Inviting Living Rooms and Common Areas Throughout
- Mail Room
- Concierge
- Full-Time Activities Director
- Themed Parties and Dances
- Educational Seminars
- Craft and Hobby Classes
- Card and Game Clubs
- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Local Outings Around Town
- And so much more

Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay

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

**See why so many people want to call
Aston Gardens their home!**

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astongardens.com.**

IT'S NOT HIP BURSITIS: 3 REASONS WHY YOUR HIP HURTS

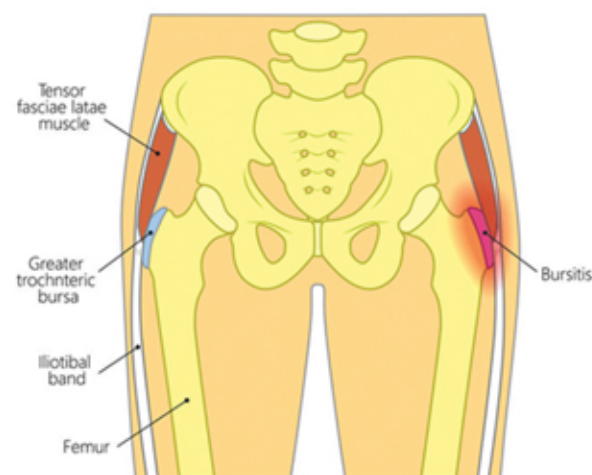
By Regenxx at New Regeneration Orthopedics



Photo Courtesy of Canva

Think that Hip Pain is Bursitis? Think Again.

Hip bursitis, which is also referred to as trochanteric bursitis, is a condition presenting as pain on the side of the hip. The pain is usually a painful, deep ache that worsens when lying on the side, sitting, or crossing the legs. The bursa are on the side of the hip, where muscles, tendons, and ligaments also attach. The bursae are soft, jelly-like sacs that lay among the structures of the hip. Trochanteric bursitis is when those sacs get inflamed on the hip, from repeated compression. The figure below¹ illustrates a healthy bursa on the left-side of the picture, and an inflamed bursa on the right side of the picture.



Picture depicting bursitis of the hip

Although hip bursitis is a real diagnosis and a possible cause of hip pain, it is actually over-diagnosed and not always the cause of hip pain. In fact, a Harvard Health article states:

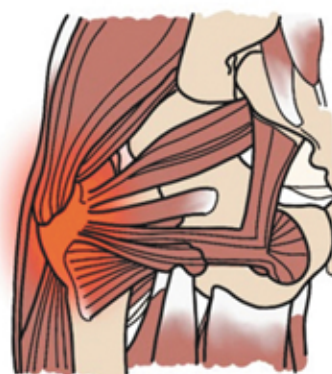
*...several other conditions can cause similar pain, and require different treatments. "Doctors often assume that pain on the outer side of the hip is due to bursitis. But 90% of the time, it's not bursitis," says Dr. Lauren Elson, a physiatrist with Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital.*²

Hip bursitis can be over-diagnosed and over-treated. Standard treatment for hip bursitis are cortisone injections, which can create temporary relief, but does not fix the underlying cause.

Our physicians at Regenxx at New Regeneration Orthopedics of Florida perform detailed examinations to identify the root cause of a problem, so the area of issue can be fixed. From our physician's experience, they have seen that patients who come in the office with a previous diagnosis of hip bursitis still have the same pain, even after a cortisone injection, and are even worse off than before the cortisone. Cortisone can weaken the surrounding hip tissues, so can actually lead to worse issues down the road. Read on to learn other non-bursitis reasons your hip could be hurting.

3 Other Reasons Why Your Hip Could Be Hurting Hip Tendonitis

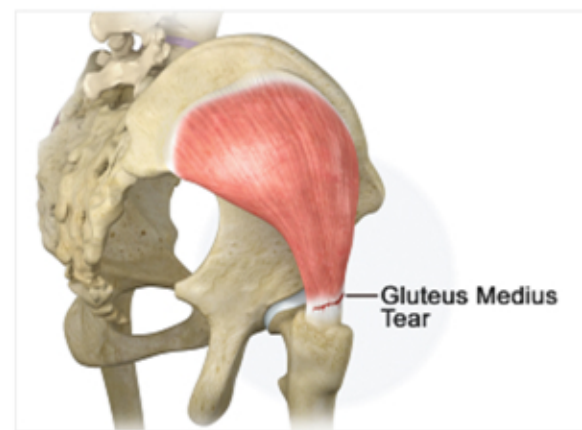
Tendonitis is the inflammation of the tendons of the hip abductor and rotator muscles. These inflamed tendons also can develop calcific changes over time. The calcific changes in chronically inflamed hip tendons cause decreased elasticity in the tendons and can cause a deep ache over the hip. A non-operative regenerative solution for this hip pain at New Regeneration Orthopedics is commonly Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) that is injected into the inflamed tendon.



Picture depicting tendonitis

Hip Muscle Tear

Small tears in the tendons of the hip muscles can cause pain in the outside of the hip. When the tendon has small tears, the muscles firing capacity weakens, but the repeated load of the muscle contracting on a weakened and damaged tendon leads to a deep pain and ache on the outside of the hip. We successfully treat these types of injuries with PRP or Bone Marrow Concentrate (BMAC).



Picture depicting gluteus medius tear

Tight Muscles

Muscles in the hip and hamstrings can lead to imbalances that cause pain on the outer hip. This case of hip pain can be identified in a physical examination performed by your physician. If they identify your hip muscles are too stiff or tight, but they do not identify any tissue inflammation or damage, they may refer you to perform some simple hip stretches, or visit your physical therapist. However, this type of muscle imbalance, if left unaddressed, can develop into hip tendonitis or glute tears that would require more therapeutic interventions like PRP or BMAC.



Picture depicting muscles in the hip and hamstrings

Strategies for Beating Hip Pain

The following exercises³ address the tight muscles of the hip. This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or another qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

References:

- 1 <https://www.drandedwutton.com/blog/hip-bone-pain/>
- 2 <https://www.health.harvard.edu/pain/think-that-hip-pain-is-bursitis-think-again>
- 3 Physioteq.ca



Glute Rolling

- Place your foam roller on the floor and sit on it having one foot over the opposite knee in a figure 4 position.
- Roll along your buttock in a front to back motion from your lower back to the bottom of the buttock.
- Maintain your abs tight and proper lower back posture during the exercise.
- Roll for 2-3 minutes. If you feel numbness or tingling at any time, cease the exercise.



Hamstring Rolling

- Sit on a hard surface and put a lacrosse or tennis ball underneath your hamstring.
- Put some weight over the area and roll your body over the ball.
- If you find a tender spot, keep the ball in position then extend and flex your knee.
- Perform for 1 minute on each leg.



Seated Figure 4

- Sit on a chair having one foot over the opposite knee in a figure 4 position.
- Push on your knee to open the leg and straighten your back while you move your upper body forward until you feel a comfortable stretch in your buttock.
- Hold the stretch for one minute.



Hamstring Stretching

- Lie on the floor in a doorway or close to a corner of a wall.
- Place one leg up against the wall, the other is straight on the floor and your buttock is as close as possible to the door frame or wall.

Regenexx®

At New Regeneration Orthopedics



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

In 2012, Dr. Leiber was the first to offer Regenexx in Florida and began offering the nation's most advanced non-surgical stem cell and platelet treatments (PRP) for injuries and arthritis under image guidance utilizing ultrasound and fluoroscopy (X-ray).



Ronald Torrance II, D.O., FAOASM – Fellowed in Sports Medicine and co-author of Exercise 2.0 for Regenexx and author of the 2018 best paper of the year on The Concussed Athlete. Dr. Torrance has achieved semi-professional ranking as a beach volleyball player and trains as a competitive CrossFit athlete. Dr. Torrance spends time with his wife and two children as well as lecturing and instructing throughout the country.



Ignatios Papas, D.O. – Specializes in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He is a research collaborator with Columbia and Cornell University on multiple projects. Dr. Papas enjoys spending time with his wife and son, playing soccer, practicing guitar, and listening to historical podcasts.



Lisa Valastro, D.O. – Specializes in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation with a focus on regenerative medicine via orthobiologics. She received her medical degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pennsylvania, and her Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation training at Albany Medical Center in Albany, New York. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, kayaking, weight lifting and volleyball.

At Regenexx at New Regeneration Orthopedics, one of our Core Values is "Patient Above All Else"

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- Extend the elevated leg and pull your toe down as much as possible until you feel a stretch behind your thigh.
- Hold the stretch for 2 minutes on each leg.

If you have a hip bursitis diagnosis and would like to get more answers about the root cause of your hip pain, our physicians at Regenexx at New Regeneration Orthopedics would love to perform a detailed evaluation to help identify the cause of your pain.

THE GROWING ROLE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY TECHNOLOGY IN REHABILITATION

Physical therapy has always served the mission of helping patients of all ages and abilities restore lost functionality, strength and movement. It's only the way of helping that has changed.

For decades, this was strictly a hands-on, manual therapy output that relied only on touch to perform particular exercises based on particular ailments. With enough time and the skilled hands of a highly-trained therapist, this could help patients restore functionality and decrease pain.

The physical therapy industry, like most, has seen a substantial shift in the last few years as the introduction of physical therapy technology has helped therapists go beyond the healing power of touch and leverage new hardware and software to improve patient care programs that fast-track recovery and deliver more concise, optimal results.

Among this emerging technology, we're not surprised that the shared trait of tech delivering the best results is that it operates at the nervous system level.

Physical Therapy Technology: Ever-Improving Patient Care

What we've discovered in years of studying physical therapy technology is that the right tech isn't just an innovation for the clinic - it is a catalyst for continued innovation.

What we mean is this: Once a technology is introduced as a new solution to serve a specific function, users will eventually find other ways to use it to solve additional use cases. This, in turn, spurs new innovations and the end user continues to reap the rewards.

Take, for example, electrical stimulation therapy.

Functional electrical stimulation (FES) is a technology-derived form of therapy. FES uses small electrical pulses applied to muscles to stimulate the selected area and help promote healing. It has been most often associated with patients who have had a stroke, weakened muscle control or other neurological or orthopedic injuries. The goal of the e-stim therapy has always been to help restore motor functions in various circumstances.



Eventually, a new form of e-stim therapy arrived: The NEUBIE. This "innovation on an innovation" replaced alternating currents (which can negatively affect the neuromuscular system with protective co-contractions) with a unique Pulsed Direct Current waveform that positively affects neurological control of movement. Even better, it can pinpoint muscle dysfunction with 100% accuracy to better target recovery through neurological reprogramming protocols with proven benefits for patients suffering from MS, Parkinson's and other limited functionalities.

We saw it again with Heart Rate Variability.

HRV therapy is a great measure of overall health that has only recently become more commonplace in the clinic. Today, that innovation is serving an even bigger purpose as the frontline, real-time assessment of what treatment program is best for Long COVID sufferers. Its application has proven to be an effective and diverse solution for physical therapy.

Even the smartphone has been proven to be an effective example of technology adapted to physical therapy where apps allow data tracking, scheduling, at-home exercise programs, etc. Most physical therapists leverage these apps everyday to improve results with their patients.

The last two years showed us how Teleconferencing is another technological innovation that, originally designed with meetings and work in mind, has been repurposed by physical therapists and healthcare as a whole to meet with patients online and continue physical therapy in contactless ways, often from the comfort of home.

In just a handful of years, we've seen innovation blossom within the industry as more and more physical therapy technology solutions become commonplace in the clinic. Yet, not all private practices are keeping pace and have yet to implement some of this tech for their patients.

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Regular Gynecological Wellness Visits Are Critical Even if You Don't Have Symptoms or Are Ignoring Them

By Parveen Vahora, M.D.

It's almost the New year! However, before we start celebrating, you might want to prepare a bit for important wellness visits and examinations. Have you had your gynecological wellness examination this year? Are you due or overdue?

Some common conditions can proliferate quite quickly in females. It's imperative to stay on top of your appointments and maintain regular examinations. Even if you don't think any is wrong, it's not wise to cross your fingers and procrastinate. Anything that is detected early will be easier to treat and offer optimal outcomes.

Let's say you do have symptoms of something new—Even more critical that you get seen by your gynecologist as soon as possible. Ignoring symptoms is dangerous, to say the least. Being proactive saves lives and can mitigate long-term issues.

Cervical Cancer Screening

Even if you don't need a pap smear, you should absolutely still schedule your gynecological wellness exam every year to evaluate for disease and disorders, including cervical cancer.

The most important thing that women can do to prevent cervical cancer is to have regular cervical cancer screenings. These are given during a Pap test or wellness exam, which should be at least every year, or if you are at high risk or have had HPV, cancer, precancer, or other genital disorders, your routine visits should be several times per year. There are preventative tests that Dr. Vahora includes in her regular cervical cancer screening called, Papanicolaou (Pap) test, which checks for HPV specifically.

Pain Down There or Pain with Intercourse is Not something to Take Lightly.

As we age, many women think pain, burning, dryness or discomfort with intercourse is normal. It's not. It means that you need to get to the root cause of your issue which is often related to hormonal imbalance.

Many Conditions and Disorders Can Disrupt Vaginal Mucosa and Hormones.

Lack of estrogen, cancer treatment for ovarian cancer, cervical, breast cancer, others can disrupt the vaginal mucosa. If you have had an oophorectomy or hysterectomy, vaginal changes also occur quickly due to a disruption in hormones and vulvo-vaginal tissues. Menopause is a one of the primary issues of dryness, pain with intercourse and other disorders.

You do not have to live in pain and discomfort. There are viable treatments that have helped countless women find relief and turn back the clock. Along with hormone replacement (women who have had breast cancer usually cannot take hormone therapy), there is an innovative procedure called MonaLisa Touch®.

MonaLisa Touch®

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

REGULAR WOMEN'S WELLNESS EXAMS ARE ESSENTIAL

Your Wellness Visit

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



Parveen Vahora, M.D.

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



Cammie Acevedo, APRN

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

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

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

PANCREATIC CANCER

Pancreatic cancer is the 10th most commonly diagnosed cancer in the United States, accounting for about 3% of all cancers and 7% of all cancer deaths, according to the American Cancer Society. Due to various factors, the disease is difficult to detect at an early stage, when it is more treatable.

Understanding Pancreatic Cancer

The pancreas gland, about 6 inches long and located in the abdomen, is surrounded by the stomach, small intestine, liver, spleen and gallbladder. Its two main functions are to aid in digestion and help regulate blood sugar.

Pancreatic cancer begins when abnormal cells within the gland grow out of control and form a tumor. These abnormal cells, or tumors, known as either exocrine (90%) or endocrine, can often spread to other areas of the body, including the liver, abdominal walls, lungs, bones and lymph nodes.

Because the pancreas is located deep in the abdomen, diagnosis is complicated. Tumors of the pancreas can only be seen on imaging studies, such as a computer tomography (CT) scan, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or ultrasound. If detected, a tissue biopsy and/or blood test can help to confirm an exact diagnosis.

Signs and Symptoms

There may only be vague signs or symptoms, if any, in the early stages of pancreatic cancer, and some may mimic those of other illnesses. Warning signs can include:

- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and and/or whites of the eyes) with or without itching
- Change in stools (light-colored stools and/or dark urine)
- Pain (usually in the upper or middle abdomen and back)
- Loss of appetite, weight loss and/or nausea

See your primary care doctor if you experience one or more of these symptoms.

Know Your Risk Factors

Pancreatic cancer does seem to run in some families due to inherited gene changes (mutations) that can be passed from a parent to children. In fact, about 10% of pancreatic cancers are hereditary. Talk with your physician if a first-degree relative (parent, sibling or child) has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer; genetic testing may be recommended.

The chance of getting pancreatic cancer increases with age; most people diagnosed are over age 60. While the exact cause of pancreatic cancer is not well understood, the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network® cites common risk factors:

- People who have had diabetes for more than five years are more likely to develop pancreatic cancer.



- People who smoke cigarettes are two times more likely to develop pancreatic cancer than those who have never smoked. The risk of pancreatic cancer begins to drop as soon as a person stops smoking.
- Being very overweight increases the chances of developing pancreatic cancer. The risk is even higher in people who are obese during early adulthood.
- People with chronic pancreatitis are more likely to develop pancreatic cancer. Inflammation of the pancreas is common in people who consume large amounts of alcohol for many years.
- Gum disease or tooth loss appear to be linked to the disease.
- Exposure to certain heavy metals and environmental chemicals, including benzidine, pesticides, asbestos, chlorinated hydrocarbons and benzene, among others, may increase risk.
- Black Americans have a higher incidence of pancreatic cancer than other ethnicities.

It is important to note that many risk factors for developing the disease can be reduced by making positive lifestyle choices, such as eating a plant-based diet and staying physically active. Talk with your health care provider for direction on reducing your risks.

Promising Treatment Advances

Surgery, chemotherapy and radiation are standard treatments for the disease, but treatments are determined based on the unique needs of each patient.

Because there is no screening test to detect pancreatic cancer, most patients are diagnosed at later stages, which can limit treatment options because the cancer can no longer be removed with surgery or it may have spread to other parts of the body. If pancreatic cancer is detected at an early stage, when surgical removal of the tumor is possible, the five-year survival rate is 42%.

Scientists are learning more about the genetic changes that cause cancer at a rapid pace. Targeted treatments and new combinations of chemotherapy drugs used with traditional therapies are being studied in clinical trials and continue to show great promise for improving detection, diagnosis and patient survival rates.

World-Class Cancer Treatment Close to Home

About Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute, LLC: (FLCancer.com)

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

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



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For more information, visit FLCancer.com

How Nancy Went from Excruciating Neck Pain All Day, Everyday...to No Pain!

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

Radiofrequency Denervation

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

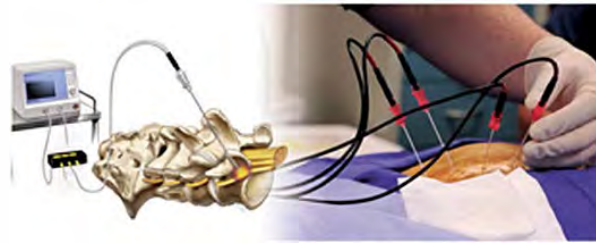
This procedure is entirely safe and effective. It has been used for many years, with long-lasting results for people suffering from pain. The entire process is performed and monitored under fluoroscopy, which is a moving X-ray that is visible to the surgeon on a digital screen. The nerve endings are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

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

A Patients Perspective

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

The National Institute of Spine and Pain

10740 Palm River Rd, Suite 490, Tampa, FL 33619
4911 Van Dyke Rd., Lutz, FL 33558

(813) 264-PAIN (7246)

www.nationalinstituteofpain.org

It's A Wonderful Life

By Pastor Timothy Neptune

Every year around this time the old classic Christmas movies start coming on television. It is easy to start a conversation at work by simply asking, "So, what's your favorite Christmas movie?" Mine is Frank Capra's *It's A Wonderful Life*.

Some of you might be able to relate to George Bailey this holiday season—lost, confused, stressed out, or at the end of your rope. Perhaps you are even thinking that it would be much easier to die than to go on living as you are.

Perhaps for you life isn't a joy right now. Maybe the debts are high and funds are low. It might even be difficult for you to even enjoy your family as you know you should. You may be wondering, "Is it really possible to live a wonderful life?"

I think the idea of a wonderful life is not that you can attain a wonderful life, but that it is an attitude that results from having certain issues settled in your life.

Truthfully, no one's life is wonderful—even Christ's life was filled with pain, hurt, loneliness, rejection, and sorrow. It is your attitude that determines how you "feel" about your life. You are the one responsible for settling the issues in your life and having an attitude of wonderment. So, what are the issues that need to be settled?

The first issue is to determine what you are going to love. To have a wonderful life, you start by having an attitude of love toward God and others. I say this first because where you choose to direct your love is going to affect every other area of your life. Love is a decision we make to place a high value on someone or something.

God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die for us. Jesus died to prove how much He loved us. God desires more than anything else to have a loving relationship with His creation. We were created to love God and other people. Maybe this Christmas it would be good for you to find a person or family in need and help them by buying some food or gifts. If you want to feel loved... start by loving others.

The second issue to settle is... how am I going to live? To have a wonderful life, you need an attitude of joy. This attitude deals with how you look at life. Are you a positive person or a negative person? If you are a person with joy, it simply means that you are cheerful. Over 350 times the Bible talks about us having a spirit of joy or rejoicing.

Joy isn't a feeling that is produced only when good things happen. Joy is the attitude by which we look at the things that happen to us and then respond in a way that lets everyone know we are trusting in God's grace in spite of our circumstances. Remember the disciples in the Bible... they had many negative things happen to them, yet in spite of it all, they had joy.

I've heard it said that you don't feel your way into an action but rather act your way into a feeling. If you want to be a joyful person... start acting joyful around others and you will most likely begin to genuinely feel joyful.



The third issue to settle is...who are you going to help? If you want to have a wonderful life, you've got to get beyond serving yourself, and start serving others. Isn't that the lesson that George Bailey learned? His life was wonderful because of all the people he was able to help in his lifetime.

When Clarence showed him what life would have been like had he never been born he realized that he really was making a difference in the world! His life did have purpose! Mr. Potter only cared about making money. Violet only cared about pleasure. But George understood a greater truth: life is better when you are working to make other people's lives better.

Understanding these things can make all the difference in the world. You are not here to fall in love with money and things—you're here to love God. You're not here to point out all the things that are wrong with the world—you're here to spread the joy that God has placed in your heart. You're not here to serve yourself—you're here to serve God and others—thus making a huge difference in the world.



We Are The Right Place To Be Right Now

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

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

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IGNATIOS PAPAS, DO



LISA VALASTRO, DO

REGENEXX TAMPA BAY

Tampa Bay

8600 Hidden River
Pkwy, Ste 700
Tampa FL 33637

St. Petersburg

100 2nd Ave S,
Ste 904S
St. Petersburg FL 33701

Sarasota

2401 University
Pkwy, Ste 104,
Sarasota FL 34243

Orlando

1412 Trovillion Avenue
Winter Park, FL 32789