

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

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

January 2023

Marion Edition - Monthly

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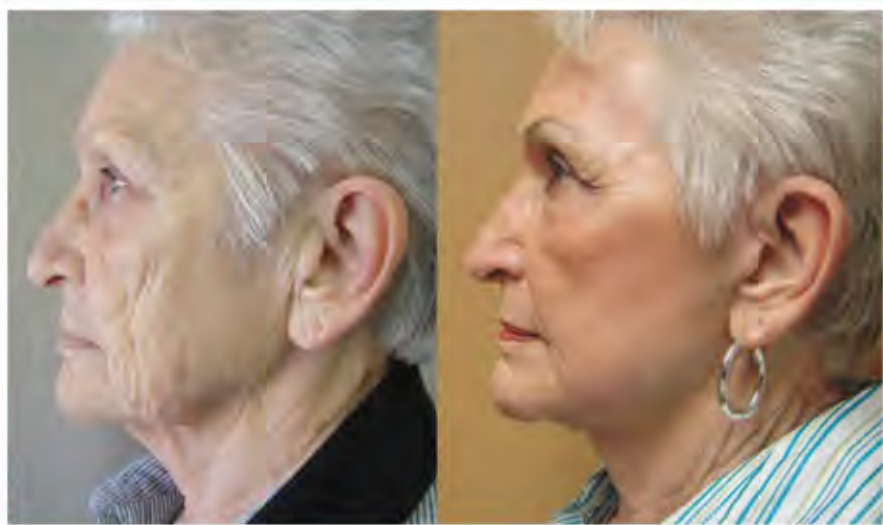
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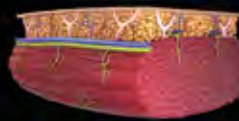
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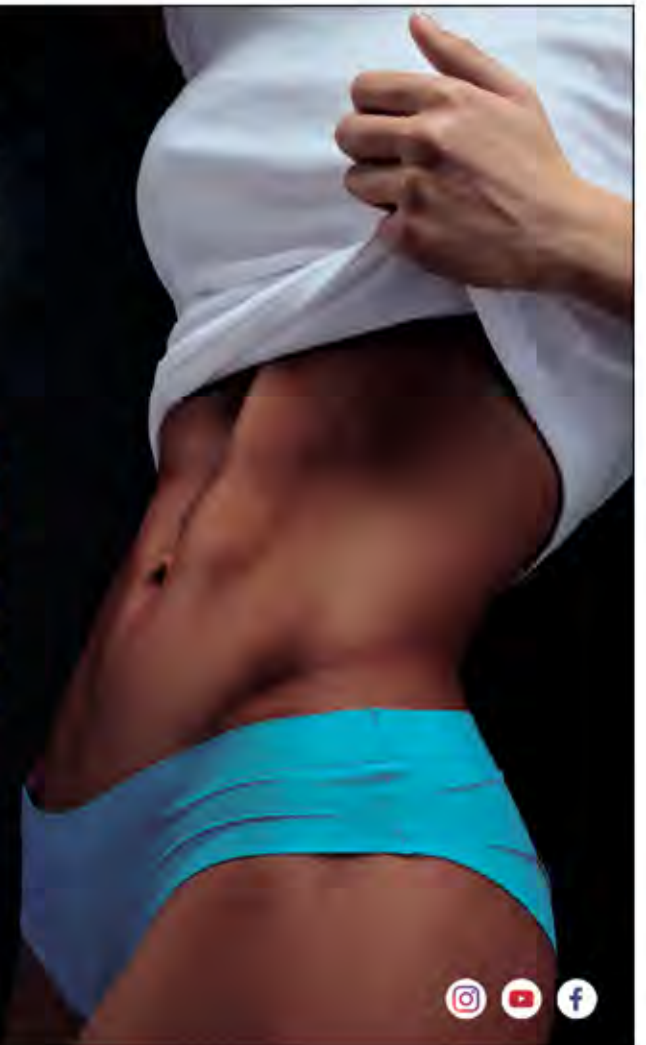


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# MRI AND OPEN MRI: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

**F**or answers to medical mysteries, Magnetic Resonance Imaging, or MRI, is one of the most sophisticated and effective imaging exams for viewing soft tissues within the body, including the spine and musculoskeletal system, brain, fatty tissues, blood vessels and internal organs. MRI provides greater detail of many of these structures than other exams, particularly when used with a contrast agent, such as gadolinium, which further highlights the area(s) being studied.

If your doctor or clinician has ordered an MRI to get to the bottom of a health condition, you likely have questions about what to expect. You may also wonder about the differences between closed and open MRI, so let's get into the basics.

## What Is MRI?

Magnetic resonance imaging uses a powerful magnetic field combined with radio waves to capture highly detailed images, which are used by specialized software to create multidimensional pictures of the spine and bones, heart, brain, liver, bowel, vascular system and other structures. Non-invasive, radiation-free MRI is precise enough to spot even tiny abnormalities, and so safe it can be used to study fetal development within the womb. Its accuracy and safety make MRI an extremely valuable tool for healthcare practitioners and patients alike.

## Traditional MRI

Traditional, or "closed," MRI is considered the gold standard of its type, because it is able to capture the greatest detail and uncover the widest range of issues. For closed MRI, you simply lie down on a padded table, which slides into the imaging tube. Closed MRI surrounds your body to capture details from every possible angle. Depending on the area(s) being scanned, MRI can last anywhere from 15 to 90 minutes. Generally, the higher the power of the machine, the quicker it is able to complete a scan.

While MRI is safe, accurate and painless, its capsule-like shape can create issues for some patients. Larger people often need more space than traditional MRI provides. And some patients find remaining completely still inside a tube for minutes on end creates feelings of claustrophobia, even panic. A mild sedative or anti-anxiety medication can often alleviate these feelings, enabling the test to be performed more comfortably.

## Open MRI

Open MRI provides options for many who for one reason or other can't tolerate the enclosed space of regular MRI. Open MRI limits its magnetic field to the machine's top and bottom areas only, allowing for the sides to remain open. Obviously, this creates more room for larger people, and helps prevent feelings of being penned in.

## Which MRI Type Is Right For Me?

Whether a closed or open MRI exam is best for you will be determined by your referring clinician based on your particular circumstances. Naturally, given a choice, most people would elect to have an open MRI, but your doctor must consider which is the optimal method for your case. To give you a greater understanding of the decision-making process, let's review the pros and cons of each type.

## Pros and Cons of Closed MRI

### PROS:

**1 Best clarity and detail.** Because its magnetic fields are more powerful, closed MRI delivers the highest quality images. High-field MRI may be considered necessary for exams requiring extreme detail, such as investigation of nerves, single vessels, tiny structures and minute lesions or tumors.

**2 Can be used for more conditions.** Because it surrounds the patient more completely, closed MRI can be used to image areas that can't be reached by open MRI.

**3 Quicker scan times.** The enhanced power enables reduced scan times compared to open MRI.

### CONS:

**1 May make you feel claustrophobic.** While most patients are able to tolerate closed MRI, some find it challenging. Wearing an eye mask and/or taking a mild sedative can help.

**2 Can be a tight squeeze.** Larger people and those with certain disabilities may not fit within the traditional MRI enclosure.

**3 Requires absolute stillness.** To prevent blurred images, it is important that you remain still throughout the exam. If your exam is on the longer side, that may be a challenge.

**4 It's noisy.** As the magnets and radio waves do their work, they create a lot of tapping, knocking and other noises. Ear plugs can help minimize these distractions. (At RAO, we offer headphones and an array of music choices, or you can bring in your own CD.)

## Pros and Cons of Open MRI

### PROS:

**1 More comfortable.** Having open sides is more accommodating both physically and mentally. For many, open MRI provides imaging options that size or disability once made impossible, providing superior care to countless patients.

**2 Quieter.** With more open space and a lower magnetic field, open MRI produces less noise.

**3 Better for kids.** Open MRI's larger space and visual access to the nearby parent/guardian makes it a valuable option in many children's imaging exams.

**4 Works with metal implants.** Closed MRI is sometimes contraindicated for people with metal-containing implants or elements, such as pacemakers, plates, shrapnel, etc. Because open MRI has a lower magnetic field, it generally produces fewer metal-related flaws, or artifacts, for clearer pictures and improved diagnoses in such patients.

### CONS:

**1 Reduced resolution.** Since open MRI's magnetic field is significantly lower, it doesn't produce the same clarity and detail as closed MRI. Certain conditions and problems require high-field imaging, making open MRI less effective for them.

**2 Can't reach as many areas.** Because its sides are open, it can't direct a magnetic field to certain areas of the body, rendering it inadequate for some conditions.

**3 Longer scan times.** Because of the reduced power, imaging may take longer than standard MRI.

Whichever type your clinician orders, rest assured that MRI is safe and completely painless, and provides the detail and accuracy needed to get to the bottom of a host of diseases and functional problems. Unless otherwise instructed, MRI exams require little to no preparation. You can eat, drink and take medications as you would normally. However, because you will have to remove your metal jewelry, wristwatch, etc. before the exam, it is wise to leave them at home.

## MRI From RAO

Whatever your MRI needs, RAO has you covered. We offer the latest in both high field and open MRI technologies, plus a highly-experienced team of Board-certified, fellowship-trained radiologists who subspecialize in areas such as diagnostic MRI, musculoskeletal MRI, body MRI, breast MRI and other services. Talk to your doctor about the MRI exam that might be best for you.

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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.

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how we can support  
you or your loved one

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# New Year/New You Made Easier

By Dr. Tina Chandra

New Year's resolutions are a big part of US culture. Nearly half of us set goals at the start of every new year. However, studies show that less than half of us keep those resolutions for even as long as six months. So, what can you do if every year you have the same goal and it never works out? What if you've been trying year after year to lose weight and get in shape but your efforts fall short? Is there an easier way?

What if I told you that you could lose fat and gain muscle without working out and see results in around 2 months? Is it possible? Is there technology that can sculpt the body and make us look better? It's not a dream. The day has finally arrived!

Emsculpt NEO is a nonsurgical body contouring device that combines high-intensity focused electromagnetic (HIFEM) technology with radiofrequency (RF) energy. It strengthens and builds muscles while burning fat at the same time. It can be used to treat the abdomen, buttocks, biceps, triceps, and calves.

## How does Emsculpt NEO work?

As mentioned above, Emsculpt NEO uses a combination of RF and HIFEM. The radio frequency is used to heat the muscles and the electromagnetic energy then builds muscles. The heating of the muscles is what causes the reduction of fat in the area being treated. While the HIFEM simultaneously causes thousands of muscle contractions in order to improve strength and muscle tone. Combining these two treatments offers optimal results.

The heating of the muscles from the RF raises the temperature of the muscles by several degrees. It is similar to what one would do in a warm-up activity before exercising, but much faster. This part of the procedure lasts less than 4 minutes. When the temperature of the fat is increased, apoptosis occurs. This means that fat cells are permanently damaged and are removed from the body.

The HIFEM energy contracts the muscle fibers in the area being treated at intensities that are not possible in regular exercise. This stress forces the muscles to adapt and results in increased growth of muscle fibers and cells.

## What can I expect in an Emsculpt NEO session?

During a 30-minute session, an applicator is strapped to the area being treated, the abdomen, for example.



The technician then slowly increases the RF heat and the HIFEM pulsing depending on the client's comfort level. Throughout each session and in future sessions, the applicator will get warmer and the pulses will increase in intensity.

Clients will normally have one session a week for four consecutive weeks. Each session lasts 30 minutes and there is no down-time afterwards. The client can return to work or go to dinner immediately following a session.

## What areas can be treated?

According to the brand website, Emsculpt NEO is intended to be used on the "abdomen. It is cleared for improvement of abdominal tone, strengthening of the abdominal muscles and development of firmer abdomen, along with the strengthening, toning and firming of buttocks, thighs and calves, and improvement of muscle tone and firmness for strengthening muscles in the arms."

## What results can be expected?

Studies of the product have shown that clients see an average of 30% fat loss and an increase of 25% in muscle mass leaving a smaller waistline. The brand boasts a satisfaction rate of 88-100%.

## Is Emsculpt NEO too good to be true?

EMSCULPT NEO and the embedded high intensity magnetic field (HIFEM) technology have been clinically tested for safety and efficacy through seven clinical studies. Moreover, 30 scientific publications make HIFEM the most intensively researched body contouring technology since its introduction in 2018.

## 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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# ISSUES WITH INCONTINENCE?

## YOU HAVE OPTIONS

### What are the causes of urinary incontinence?

Urinary incontinence is caused by problems with the nerves and muscles that help the bladder to pass or hold urine. The pelvic floor muscles that support your urethra, bladder, uterus, and bowels may become damaged or weak after pregnancy, childbirth, or menopause. With weakened muscles, your bladder and urethra are forced to work harder to hold urine.

Unfortunately, the extra pressure or stress on the bladder and urethra can cause urinary leakage or incontinence. Urinary incontinence may also have other causes. You may experience incontinence due to aging of the bladder muscles, being overweight, nerve damage, or surgery in the reproductive organs, such as a hysterectomy.

Certain medications, caffeine, or infection may cause temporary incontinence as well. Furthermore, the condition may also be a result of urinary tract infection, multiple sclerosis, stroke, a brain tumor, Parkinson's disease, spinal injury, or urinary stones.

While urinary incontinence can happen for both men and women, it is twice as common for women. Women can have urinary incontinence at any age—though it is more frequent in older women due to hormonal changes during menopause. Plus, since the female urethra is shorter, any damage or weakness to it will likely cause urinary incontinence.

### The 2 Major types of urinary incontinence

#### • Stress incontinence

As the name suggests, stress incontinence occurs when there is stress or pressure put on your bladder. Because your pelvic floor muscles are weakened, any stress or pressure easily triggers the release of urine.

When you have stress incontinence, everyday actions that use the pelvic floor muscles, such as sneezing, laughing, jumping, lifting heavy objects, or coughing, tend to cause urine leakage. This also includes sudden physical activity and movements.



Stress incontinence is the most common type of incontinence and the most frequent in younger women. The risk of this condition is increased when you are smoking, overweight, or have gone through childbirth.

#### • Urge incontinence

Also called overactive bladder, urge incontinence occurs when your brain and spinal cord do not work properly with the bladder to allow you to hold urine and release it at the right time. The bladder may suddenly empty itself without warning, or you may feel like you need to pass urine more frequently.

As a rule, urge incontinence is identified by having to pass urine more than eight times a day—and usually passing only a little urine once you get to the bathroom.

It is a common condition in older women and tends to affect those with nervous system disorders, such as stroke or multiple sclerosis.

#### Treatment Options

The treatment offered for urinary incontinence varies from case to case. For a less severe condition, your female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery (FPMRS) physician may advise small changes to your lifestyle.

You may be encouraged to quit smoking, avoid caffeine and alcohol, lose weight, practice urge suppression, retrain your bladder, and perform pelvic floor exercises.

Your urogynecologist may also prescribe medical devices, like urethral insert and vaginal pessary, to help you control stress incontinence.

Additionally, fillers such as carbon beads and collagen may be applied for plumping up the tissues where urine is released from the bladder to help hold it.

In some cases, your FPMRS physician may recommend bladder-relaxing Botox, estrogen replacement therapy, or drugs like pseudoephedrine to help tone up the urethra. Likewise, electrical nerve stimulation procedures, such as sacral nerve stimulation and tibial nerve stimulation, are options that may be considered.

If these do not work, your urogynecologist may recommend surgery, such as the sling procedure or retro-pubic colpo-suspension to correct the underlying problem and relieve symptoms.

### 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.

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.

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# Small Goals Can Lead to Big Changes

**T**here's no health without mental health, which is why we're empowering our members to take small steps that can lead to big changes in their well-being.

One out of five U.S. adults experiences mental illness each year. And over time, poor mental health can impact our physical health. This link between mental and physical health is important to help you reach a more positive state of well-being.

**Every year I make New Year's resolutions and every year, I break them. Do you have tools to help me be successful?**

Yes! Florida Blue Medicare can help.

Many of us make resolutions for the new year and are frustrated if we don't meet them. These feelings of failure can cause stress and stop us from trying again. This year try micro-goals: small actions that you can accomplish that take you toward a larger goal.

For example, instead of trying to set a goal to exercise an hour a day every day in 2022, consider starting with a smaller and time-bound step, like: for the next month I'm going to take a short walk at lunchtime five out of seven days. Once you accomplish a micro-goal you move on to the next one.

This approach allows you to take small steps that can lead to big changes in all areas of your life. You can find articles, skill-building activities and other tools on goal setting on **meQuilibrium**, our digital mental well-being program that helps you build the resilience you need to meet life's challenges. meQuilibrium is available at no extra charge to all BlueMedicare Advantage members. Once you've created your logged in to My Health Link™ member account on [floridablue.com](http://floridablue.com), make sure to read **10 Resolutions for a Happier You** on your meQuilibrium app.

Once you start taking the first small steps, your own imagination will lead you to the next small step -- and the next. Before you know it, you will have achieved your end result!

\*meQuilibrium is an independent company contracted by Florida Blue to provide health and wellness services and resources to members. This benefit is available to Florida Blue Medicare members in 2022 Medicare Advantage plans.



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

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# When is it Time for Knee-Replacement Surgery?

By Dr. Nam Dinh, MD, FAAOS

**M**ost people take their knees for granted until it gets too difficult to climb a flight of stairs or go for a walk. Knee pain, usually associated with arthritis, is common among older adults.

## But is it time for surgery?

Knee-replacement procedures are among the most common bone surgeries in the U.S., with more than 600,000 performed each year. That number is expected to exceed 3 million by the year 2030, according to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS).

As an orthopedic surgeon who specialized in hip and knee replacement, I frequently see patients who suffer from pain and want information about surgery. Here are the answers to a few of their most commonly asked questions:

## Why does my knee hurt?

The knee is the largest joint in the body, made up of a complex array of bones, tendons, ligaments and cartilage. While several factors can lead to pain, most chronic pain is caused by osteoarthritis (age-related wear and tear on the cartilage), rheumatoid arthritis (a disease in which joints become inflamed), or post-traumatic arthritis caused by an injury.

## When should I schedule a consultation?

Follow your body's cues and don't ignore lingering pain. If you experience swelling, stiffness or discomfort following everyday activities such as walking or climbing stairs, it's worth getting a checkup. Also, see a doctor if your knee's shape or appearance changes over time.

## If surgery is needed, what should I expect?

The term "knee replacement" is a bit misleading, because your entire joint isn't "replaced." During most surgeries, a surgeon removes the damaged area – usually the cartilage and bone between the thigh bone and the shin bone – and replaces it with an artificial joint made of metal, ceramic or plastic. The knee joint, as the result, is "resurfaced" rather than "replaced." The procedure lasts less than one hour.

## Is there an alternative to surgery?

Depending on the condition of your knee and pain levels, there may be an alternative to surgery—activity modification, weight loss, using a cane or physical therapy. Medications such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), corticosteroid injections or viscosupplementation injections may also reduce the need for an operation.



## How long before I'm back to my normal self?

With advanced surgical techniques, including minimally invasive LATERAL knee replacement, a majority of our patients are able to walk after surgery and go home the same day. On average, recovery time is six weeks and total recovery can take between nine months to a year. Our patients are released to play sports six weeks after surgery. The vast majority of patients - 90 percent—experience a reduction in pain after surgery, according to the AAOS.

**Knee-replacement surgery can be life-changing for patients who have experienced extended periods of pain. Once fully recovered, you'll notice activities like swimming, golfing, biking and walking will become much easier...and, best of all, pain-free!**

## About Dr. Nam Dinh

Dr. Nam Dinh is a fellowship trained orthopedic surgeon at Optimotion Orthopaedics with special training in minimally invasive LATERAL total knee replacement ANTERIOR hip replacement surgery. To learn more information about Dr. Dinh visit [optimotion.com](http://optimotion.com).




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# GLP1 is LIQUID Gold for Weight Loss, Insulin Resistance, and Type 2 Diabetes

**T**he newest prescription Type 2 Diabetes management on the market has weight loss experts abuzz with excitement. Mounjaro is an injectable prescription medicine that is used along with diet and exercise to improve blood sugar (glucose) in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Mounjaro is the first and only approved single molecule that activates the glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) and glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptors in the body. Other earlier medications in its class target one glucose receptor, but Mounjaro is the only drug that targets two insulin receptors.

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 2.5 mg | 5 mg | 7.5 mg | 10 mg | 12.5 mg | 15 mg

Mounjaro is not insulin. Instead, it helps your body utilize its own insulin. Some diabetics produce too much insulin, but their insulin is “broken”. With type 2 diabetes, your body’s own insulin doesn’t work to give the cell energy. Mounjaro “mends” your body’s own insulin chains to help it be more effective.

Mounjaro is also the latest weight-loss rock star. Predicted to hit the shelves as an FDA-approved weight loss drug in February 2023, Mounjaro will be the number one weight loss drug on the market. Currently, Mounjaro is only approved for “insulin resistance” and Type 2 diabetes. But the current results are clear and are a game changer for those who haven’t been able to lose weight with diet and exercise alone.

Are you constantly hungry? Even after you have just eaten. Always thirsty? Are you tired soon all the time? Does obesity run in your family lineage? Do you tend to carry extra fat around your abdomen? These are all signs of insulin resistance or pre-diabetes. Even with cutting out carbs and processed food from your diet, do you still struggle to budge the scale? Mounjaro could help. It is NOT a stimulant. You can’t become addicted. You can however see results with this metabolic game changer. Some have even reversed their diabetes.



Source: <https://www.mounjaro.com>

Mounjaro is a comprehensive approach to weight loss as it covers FIVE different areas in the insulin cycle.

- Mounjaro helps the body release insulin when the blood sugar is too high. Your body needs insulin to use sugar for energy. In the body, the hormone insulin helps your body use or store the blood sugar it gets from food. If you have Type 2 diabetes, your body doesn’t make enough insulin, doesn’t use insulin well, or both.
- Mounjaro helps the body remove excess sugar from the blood. In type 2 diabetes, since the sugar is not being used for energy, it stays in your blood. This leads to high blood sugar. Over time, this could hurt your eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart, and blood vessels.
- Mounjaro helps stop the liver from making and releasing too much sugar.
- Mounjaro helps reduce how much food is eaten. Being overweight can increase your risk of having type 2 diabetes. Being overweight can lead to your body having a harder time using the insulin it makes because it has trouble using sugar in the blood. Your pancreas keeps making insulin, but your body doesn’t respond to insulin like it used to. Losing weight could help improve how your body responds to the insulin it makes and help lower blood sugar. According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), sometimes, losing just 5%-7% of your body weight is enough to improve diabetes control. For someone who weighs 200 lbs., this is a weight loss of just 10-15 lbs.
- Mounjaro helps slow down digestion and how quickly food leaves the stomach.



People taking Mounjaro lost up to 25 pounds‡

Mounjaro is not a weight loss drug.

Individual results may vary.

‡In studies with or without other diabetes medications, weight loss in adults ranged from 12 lb (5 mg) to 25 lb (15 mg).

Mounjaro comes in a single-dose pen that you inject yourself once a week. Of course, there are potential risks and side effects. The most common side effects of Mounjaro include nausea, diarrhea, decreased appetite, vomiting, constipation, indigestion, and stomach (abdominal) pain. These are not all the possible side effects of Mounjaro. Your doctor can discuss these with you, and you should visit [www.mounjaro.com](http://www.mounjaro.com) to read about the potential side effects yourself before making your decision. You also need to be ready to make some lifestyle modifications long term for your results to be sustainable. You must be willing to commit to cutting sugar and processed foods out of your life forever. Losing weight and having a healthy body doesn’t come with merely swallowing a pill. When you are ready to make some serious changes and shed the pounds that are weighing you down, visit Diamond Medial Clinic to discuss how Mounjaro can help.

**Dr. Shristi Shrestha, MD** is a family physician who was raised in Kathmandu, Nepal. Surrounded by the snowy Himalayas and forested hills naturally sparked her interest in biology. Her passion for helping people led her to attend medical school in Cambridge, UK. She later completed her residency in Family Medicine at the University of South Carolina, Greenville. When not treating patients, Dr. Shrestha enjoys being creative through her artwork. She also enjoys spending time and traveling with her family.

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## Stress Management Tips from Quick Care Urgent Care

If you have bouts of anxiety, stress, fear and nervousness, you're not alone. Stress and anxiety are a normal part of life and usually short-lived, but for 40 million Americans, it's a daily battle. Whether it's anxiety due to biological, psychosocial, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the treatment options usually include behavioral therapy, counseling, and various prescription medications that block or dull different areas of the brain.

The typical treatment options for anxiety, stress and depression are medications and counseling therapy. Some of the most common drug classes prescribed are selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors, tricyclic antidepressants, and monoamine oxidase inhibitors. Widely known drugs, like Prozac, Zoloft, and Cymbalta affect how neurotransmitters affect the mood by lessening anxiety levels and creating a more serene outlook on life.

Medications are not always the best choice for all individuals and many people pair alternative methods with anti-anxiety drugs or alone to help stave off stressful episodes.

### Take Time for Yourself

It might be difficult, but carving out time to relax, take a bath, take a walk or simply shut yourself in the a separate room for 10 minutes to do deep breathing exercises can reduce anxiety significantly and over time, you will most likely notice that these personal care methods will help you to become calmer throughout the day.

### Get Moving

Talk with your physician about the right exercise plan for you. Most people can benefit from taking a brisk 30-minute walk or a 30-minute swim. Exercise increases circulation, reduces stress, it also improves nutrient and oxygen rich blood flow, and helps you build strength and to lose weight. If you can work out harder, it's extremely beneficial to get your heart rate up daily with cardiovascular exercise.

### Meditation

Yoga helps to improve flexibility, blood flow, muscle strength, posture, immune function, bone health, decreases depressive episodes, and can regulate blood pressure. Meditation also reduces stress, reduces anxiety, promotes emotional well-being, can help fight addictions, can generate health and improve immune function, it can stave off memory disorders and increase neuronal plasticity.

In order to overcome stress and pain, we need a well-rounded treatment protocol that incorporates, medication (if necessary), stress management, nutrition, exercise, meditation, hormone balancing and other therapies that can help to stabilize our systems.

Quick Care Urgent Care offers more than just urgent care services, and they are preparing to add much more to their already vast list of therapies and services for the Ocala community!

### Quick Care Med Urgent Care

If your health needs are not emergent and in need of life-saving measures, the benefit of urgent care in comparison are numerous. To name a few, the wait time will be much shorter. For the most part, urgent care can see their patients within an hour. The cost is also much less with urgent care than it is with emergency room treatment. Quick Care Med urgent care provides you with the proper paperwork to follow up with your primary care physician or specialist, as urgent care takes initiatives to keep the line of communication open to make certain that your treatment is a top priority.

There are numerous reasons people go to urgent care, from sore throats, skin infections, school sports physicals, vaccinations, colds and flu, sprains, heat exhaustion, animal bites, dehydration, broken bones and much more. Before you go to the ER, consider if you could instead be treated at urgent care because of the numerous benefits to you and your loved ones.

*Quick Care Med Walk-In Clinic & Urgent Care* is a comprehensive urgent care clinic with multiple specialties to serve you. Quick Care Med has locations in Marion (Dunnellon and Ocala), Citrus (Crystal River, Inverness, Beverly Hills, and Homosassa), Levy (Williston), & Alachua (Newberry) counties, plus our newest location in Chiefland that provides immediate walk-in treatment to pediatric and adult patients for illnesses and injuries, wellness exams, and employer health services.

At Quick Care Med, they understand that illness and injuries can happen outside of the normal 9 to 5. That's why they provide Fast, Easy, and Affordable® urgent care with the convenience of extended hours, including weekends and holidays!

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

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8119 SW State Rd 200, Ocala, FL 3448  
(Just past Walgreens)

6341 N US 441, Ocala, FL 34475  
(Across from John Deer)

2205 N Young Blvd, Chiefland, FL 32626

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# Improve Your Workout with Omega-3 Fish Oil

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

Is there a relationship between taking fish oil and exercise performance?

That was our hypothesis when we started giving Well-pride® fish oil to Thoroughbred racehorses nearly two decades ago. The theory held water. Trainers reported that their horses had better endurance and recovered faster after racing.

Today, we know a lot more about how omega-3 fatty acids support the body during exercise (both in animals and people). The growing body of research presents a compelling case for why workout junkies should consider adding omega-3s to their exercise program.

## Improved Muscle Mass

Omega-3 fish oil isn't going to land you on any doping drug list, yet there are many reasons why getting an effective daily dose could significantly improve your workout. One of the most surprising benefits is the omega-3 fatty acids' impact on muscle mass and strength:

- A 2012 study from Brazil revealed that women in their 60s experienced greater improvements in muscle strength when they consumed 2000 mg of EPA/DHA and exercised each day. This was compared to women who completed the training without omega-3 supplements.
- A 2015 double-blind study focused on 60 to 85-year-olds found that consuming 3360 mg of EPA/DHA for 6 months increased muscle mass and strength, independent of exercise.

While the above studies focused on older adults, younger individuals may experience similar benefits, too.

One study conducted on healthy adults (aged 25-45) found that supplementing with 4000 mg of EPA/DHA increased muscle protein synthesis. Another study on the same age group discovered that – when they took 3000 mg of EPA/DHA every day – study participants improved the number of bicep curls they could perform.

## Reduced Muscle Soreness

Studies have also looked at how omega-3s can impact muscle soreness after exercising, which is known as Delayed Onset of Muscle Soreness (DOMS). Omega-3s



have anti-inflammatory benefits and may reduce the risk of muscle cell injury by improving cell flexibility and elasticity.

A fair amount of research has been done on this topic, so we have picked a few favorites:

- A 2014 study found that healthy college students with higher omega-3 levels had a decreased incidence of DOMS compared to students with lower omega-3 levels.
- A 2018 study from New Zealand found that when professional rugby players took 1500 mg of omega-3s, they experienced less muscle soreness and fatigue compared to when they took a protein-based placebo.
- A 2018 study from researchers at Harvard Medical School explored how omega-3s impacted people with coronary artery disease. After one year, patients who received 3360 mg of EPA/DHA daily had better physical function, fewer joint replacements, less pain and stiffness, and exercised more per week compared to the control group.

## What to Consider Before Taking Omega-3s

Before your rush out to buy fish oil capsules, remember that the benefits of omega-3s depend on dose and quality.

In one review, researchers found that supplements providing only EPA or only DHA did not reduce several markers for DOMS. This is likely because these fatty

acids have a synergistic effect in the cells and work together to produce the best results. So it is important to make sure you are getting a full range of omega-3s, rather than just one fatty acid.

Secondly, getting an optimal omega-3 dose matters. In the studies referenced above, the researchers used between 1500 mg to 4000 mg of EPA/DHA daily to achieve positive effects. Unfortunately, many fish oil capsules contain only 300 mg of EPA/DHA. Depending on the brand and concentration, this means that you would have to swallow between 5 – 13 capsules daily to get an effective dose.

Alternatively, fresh, full-spectrum liquid fish oils, like Omega Cure®, can make it easier to get a higher omega-3 dose without having to swallow umpteen capsules. Just remember to read the nutrition facts to ensure you get enough EPA/DHA per serving.

*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/improve-your-workout-with-omega-3-fish-oil/>*

## About Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

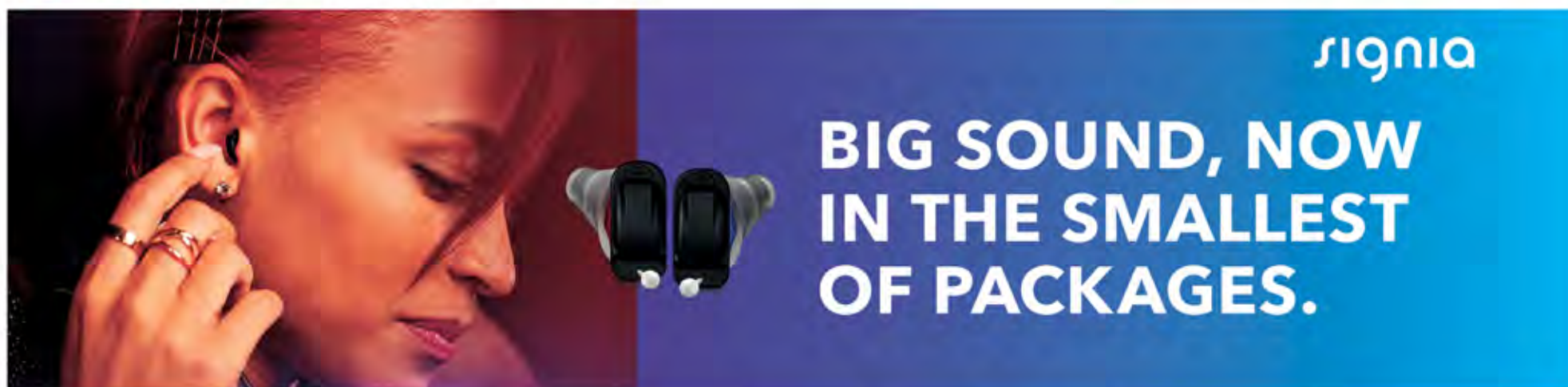
Born and raised in the United States, Dr. Chalmers graduated from Brown University and completed her medical training at the University of Oslo in Norway. Dr. Chalmers practiced emergency, family, and preventive medicine in Norway for many years. Today, she serves as president of Omega3 Innovations.



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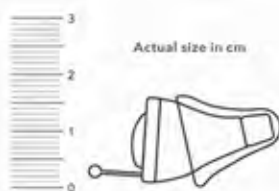
Finally, a hearing device so small, it's nearly invisible in the ear.



For decades, one of the primary reasons people wouldn't consider a hearing aid was size. Outdated technology resulted in devices that were too big, too clunky, and they made the wearer look 'too old.' So, unfortunately, people would forsake better hearing in favor of feeling better about their overall appearance. It wasn't vanity, it was simply human nature.

### Hearing is believing.

The new Signia Silk X has changed the way people look at hearing aids (and the way people look at those wearing them). Advanced technology allows the Silk X to pack our most superior sound into the smallest of packages - almost completely invisible when it nestles comfortably in the ear. Now you can hear better and look your best.



### A hearing aid that fits you. And your lifestyle.



The Signia Silk X takes advantage of design technology, too. With super soft silicone click sleeves, it's easy to instantly find the fit that's best for you. In fact, with Silk X you can walk out with an in-ear device the same day you purchase, without the two-week or more wait time of other devices. The sleeves are comfortable, so people won't notice your Silk X devices. In fact, you'll hardly even notice you're wearing them.

### Why your hearing is so very important.

Better hearing allows us to better experience the world around us. To hear the soft giggles of a grandchild as you read a bedtime story. To marvel in the calls of all manner of birds as you walk through the park. Or the simple, joyful relaxation of watching TV with the sound down low.

For those with hearing loss, however, those simple joys aren't so simple anymore. Constantly nodding your head to avoid the embarrassment of having to ask someone to repeat themselves. Missing out on the little things that make life special. Yes, people with hearing loss know all too well that they're missing out on some of the best life has to offer.

### Get back to hearing. And get back to life.

There's a new, better, smaller, and more technologically advanced way for you to once again enjoy the symphony of life. And it's so small, it's almost invisible once placed in your ear. But what they can't see belies what you can hear, once you wear your Signia Silk X device.

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# Weight Loss and Physical Therapy

**H**ere we are in a brand-new year and many of us are thinking about the goals we want to set as we start 2023. The majority of New Year's resolution made by Americans revolve around health and weight loss. Sadly, less than half of those who make such resolutions will keep them even a full month! This is often because we set goals that are unrealistic and unsustainable. That's why many of us make the same resolutions year after year, never really attaining our goals.

Everyone's journey with losing weight is different, but increasing your physical activity is a great starting point. Some people exercise alone, some take workout classes, and others enlist the help of a physical therapist. Weight plays a big role in a person's overall well-being. Physical therapists can work with you on your journey to lose weight, so be sure to communicate your goals to your PT so the both of you can work together.

## How Physical Therapists Aid in Weight Loss

Physical therapists are experts in movement, mobility, and exercise. They know exactly what you need to do to get your heart rate up, burn fat, and build muscle. When it comes to weight loss, their goal is to get their clients on the right track so that they can continue to exercise effectively once the therapy has ended.

When you work with a physical therapist, they'll create an individualized activity plan for you. Everything in your plan will be adjusted to your goals and your current abilities. While online resources and workout classes at the gym can be great ways to get inspired and start exercising, not all of the movements may be right for you at this time. Physical therapy is specific to you, so



you may see better results with this treatment than you would if you start exercising on your own.

Physical therapists understand the health issues and other obstacles that may get in your way, too. Being overweight or obese puts you at risk of developing a number of other health conditions, which may make it harder to exercise safely and comfortably. Because physical therapists are so knowledgeable about these concerns, they can help you find the forms of exercise that are effective without putting you at risk.

## Weight Loss Decreases Body Pains

Our bodies are amazing machines that can do so much, but only when we challenge it and keep it shape. Like anything else, if you neglect it, it can fall into disrepair. In this case, your body will start to react differently depending on how much weight you gain and there might be limitations to what can be done.

## Some common issues that those overweight might experience include:

- Decreased movement and flexibility
- Decreased endurance for daily activities
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of strength resulting in fatigue
- Hip, knee, ankle, or general joint pain
- Foot pains

Changing your diet is the first thing you need to do, but often pushing back from the table just isn't enough. The other part of weight loss is an exercise plan. Movement is important. Your body will thank you for it, and you'll feel better about it too.

For both children and adults who are overweight, physical therapy can help restore flexibility, increase strength and cardiovascular endurance, reduce pain, and get at any posture and balance issues. You PT will also work to prevent any disabilities caused by excess weight from settling in.

There are many wonderful uses and benefits of physical therapy, some that people aren't even aware of.

Innovative Therapies Group offers massage, physical, occupational and speech therapy. They embrace alternative and eastern medicine philosophies and will help you explore new inventive ways to combat your pain or disorders.

## Types of Treatment Available with Physical Therapy

- Assessment and Evaluation Programs
- Difficulty Walking
- Fall Prevention and Balance Retraining
- Fitness and Wellness Programs
- Functional Training
- Gait Training and Balance Programs
- Manual and Massage Therapy
- Neurological and Neurodegenerative Retraining
- Vestibular Rehabilitation

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# HAPPY 2023!

By Dr. Ashley Cauthen

**T**here's so much to celebrate as we reach a new year, and while we all try to focus on the good there is something we need to be aware of that affects our skin, hair and nails. What is one emotion that every single person will experience to some extent every day? You got it, stress. Stress is a physical and emotional reaction that people experience as they encounter changes in life. Stress can result from minor nuances such as getting stuck behind a school bus and being late to work to major life events like navigating a divorce, loss of a job, or dealing with a pandemic. Society is so stressed, we even have Stress Awareness Month (yes, it's April!). However, long term stress can lead to a myriad of health problems.

When you feel stressed, your body releases the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline. Prolonged elevated levels of these hormones can affect all of our organ systems in different ways. We'll focus on our largest organ, skin.

Elevated levels of cortisol will lead to increased production of oil from sebaceous glands and result in acne. It can also shift our immune system into a more inflammatory state and cause various rashes or hives. Patients with chronic skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis, and rosacea are always at risk of flaring secondary to stress. Autoimmune conditions like vitiligo and alopecia areata (a type of hair loss most commonly presenting with circular patches of baldness), are known to be exacerbated by stressful

life events. Telogen effluvium (a generalized shedding of hair) is another type of hair loss closely tied to stress. Elevated cortisol can also lead to impaired wound healing and resistance to infection. In addition to how the hormones our body releases during stressful situations effects our skin, the habits or coping mechanisms we create while stressed can also affect our skin, hair, and nails. For example, some people touch their face more while stressed leading to increased exposure to microbes and worsening of acne. Nail biting is another common habit that is exacerbated during stressful situations. More severe behaviors include trichotillomania, a type of hair loss due to someone pulling out their hair, or skin picking habits resulting in erosions or bumps on the skin.

I have come to realize that stress is a normal part of living. Stressful situations come in many forms, such as a demanding job, or an argument with a loved one. It can even come from positive experiences like planning a wedding or preparing for a new baby. It's inevitable, we will all experience stressful situations in life. How we allow ourselves to process these situations is typically what will dictate the emotional and physical toll the stress will have on us.

There are many techniques available aimed at reducing stress: meditation, deep breathing, exercise, distraction, self-care, etc. These are useful tools once you already feel stressed. However, what if you could control when you felt stress. What if you had the ability to change whether something provokes stress

for you. What if, instead of constantly reacting to situations, we had the power to change our mindset, which ultimately dictates our feelings. Once I realized that MY THOUGHTS regarding a situation CONTROL MY FEELINGS (i.e., an emotion such as stress) and that I had the POWER TO CHANGE MY THOUGHTS, stress played a much smaller role in my life. It is not simple to rewire our brains to this way of thinking (it will always want to take the path of least resistance) but it is so liberating once you learn the tools to be in control of your emotions. I am far from mastering this but thankfully life provides endless opportunities to practice.

As we move through 2023, be cognizant of your thoughts. If they are negative, replace them with positive ones. Take ownership that you (and only you) are in control of how you react to things. As you work to change your mindset, you'll realize stress doesn't affect you as much. This, in turn, will lead to a healthier mind and body.

Be well friends!

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Happy **10<sup>th</sup>** Anniversary

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# Pacifica Senior Living: 5 Tips to DESTRESS

**L**ife has been a little more stressful for many people over the past year. Along with the “pandemic” which we’re all growing tired of, many people have added stress-related issues and disappointments.

Here are a few tips to help you cope, relax and find inner peace:

## #1 Take Time for Yourself

It might be difficult, but carving out time to relax, take a bath, take a walk or simply shut yourself off in a separate room for 10 minutes to do deep breathing exercises can reduce anxiety significantly and over time. You will most likely notice that these personal care methods will help you to become calmer throughout the day. It’s important to take breaks from social media and news outlets, because these often add to our stress response and can intensify negative feelings.

## #2 Get Moving

With closure and limitations in going to the gym or our favorite yoga studio, most people can benefit from taking a brisk 30-minute walk, bike ride, or doing any type of exercise in doors via YouTube. The good news is those options are all free with the exception of internet service. Exercise increases circulation, reduces stress, it also improves nutrient and oxygen rich blood flow, and helps you build strength. If you can work out harder, it’s extremely beneficial to get your heart rate up daily with cardiovascular exercise.

## #3 Meditation & Prayer

Yoga helps to improve flexibility, blood flow, muscle strength, posture, immune function, bone health, decreases depressive episodes, and can regulate blood pressure. Meditation and prayer also reduce stress and anxiety, and promotes emotional wellbeing, which can help fight addictions, generate health and improve immune function, and it can stave off memory disorders and increase neuronal plasticity.

## #4 Sleep

The body produces cytokines, which are protective proteins that block infection and inflammation. When a person gets the recommended, uninterrupted seven to nine hours of sleep, cytokines are produced. Without quality sleep, they are significantly less. Blue light is a significant cause of circadian rhythm interruptions. Blue light emits wavelengths that contribute to sleep disturbances.



Blue light comes from artificial lighting and electronics like fluorescent and LED lightbulbs, laptops, mobile phones, iPad, television, some alarm clocks, fiber-optic cable boxes, and other devices that use blue light. The issue is that blue light makes your brain think that it’s still daytime, which makes it difficult to fall and stay asleep. Blue light disrupts the circadian rhythm and natural sleep cycles, specifically, the delta and beta wavelengths, leading to increased activity in the brain, less relaxation and exacerbates stress and anxiety.

## #5 Combining Methods is Best

In order to overcome stress, we need a well-rounded treatment protocol that incorporates, medication (if necessary), stress management, nutrition, high-quality sleep, exercise, meditation, hormone balancing and other therapies that can help to stabilize our systems.

## When to Seek Help

If your stress or anxiety are lingering, you should take steps to get treatment. Stress can show itself both physically and mentally. If you feel persistently sad, anxious, or on edge; you start having unexplained physical problems; you’re unable to sleep; feel irritable all the time; or just feel overwhelmed, it may be time to seek help.

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Pacifica Senior Living understands that along with providing the best patient care, providing the entire family the support and education they need is essential for enhancing understanding and contentment for families.

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If you would like to learn more about life at Pacifica Senior Living Ocala, please give us a call today, or schedule your own private, personalized tour and see what makes us great for yourself! We look forward to meeting our new neighbor.



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# Making Healthcare Decisions Should be a New Year's Resolution

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

**A**t the beginning of each year, many people make New Year's resolutions, some include making healthier decisions about their diet, while others are about exercising or improving family relationships and more. Some are kept and some not so much. There's one resolution that's easy to keep – deciding to have a talk with your loved ones about your healthcare decisions and wishes at end of life.

Making your healthcare decisions and relationships a priority is wise any time of the year. It's never too early to have those conversations with your loved ones – better to have the discussion sooner than later when it may be too late.

However, many find procrastination is all too easy, especially when it comes to talking about something unpleasant as the end of life. It's one of those topics most people would rather not discuss, but there's no guarantee on how long we'll live. Just as preparing a will is optimal when we are of sound mind and body, so is preparing for future healthcare needs. Having to make decisions for others is complicated, especially when that person – someone beloved – can no longer speak for themselves.

Advance directives are legal documents that include a living will or a durable power of attorney for healthcare, also known as a healthcare proxy. Either document allows you to give directions about your



future medical care. It's your right to accept or refuse medical care. Advance directives can protect this right if you ever become mentally or physically unable to choose or communicate your wishes due to an injury or illness. By law, the decision belongs to the patient, so make your wishes known to your family, providers and caregivers.

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

## Advance Directives can:

- Protect your rights to make medical choices that can affect your life
- Let families avoid the responsibility and stress of making difficult decisions
- Assist physicians by providing guidelines for your care
- Protect people who may be unable to communicate
- Limit life-prolonging measures when there's little or no chance of recovery

## Enable patients to make their wishes known about:

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Intravenous (IV) therapy
- Feeding tubes
- Ventilators (respirators)
- Dialysis

Regardless of age or health status, we owe it to those we love to discuss our wishes and follow through with a written advance directive, which is revocable at any time.

*Free advance directives are available on [www.hospiceofmarion.com](http://www.hospiceofmarion.com) website all year long, or contact our Monarch Center for Hope & Healing for assistance filling out your forms. Visit our website to learn more or call (352) 873-7456 if you need assistance.*



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# Adaptogens: What They Are and What You Can Expect?

By Meredith Murdock, RA, CH



In today's post pandemic world, many of us experience stress on a daily basis. According to the American Psychological Association, over 76% of adults have reported experiencing stress within the past month.

When we experience stress a few things happen to our body. First, our body goes into a fight or flight feeling. When this happens your system releases hormones through your adrenal glands. These hormones include cortisol and adrenaline. Adrenaline can increase your heart rate and elevate your blood pressure. Cortisol can increase the amount of glucose in your bloodstream and increase the chemical substances that help repair tissues in your body. Cortisol also alters immune system responses and can also suppress other systems of the body such as the digestive system, reproductive system and can alter your mood.

When you experience this type of stress on a short term basis, your hormones go back to normal after the stressful event. However, when the body is in a

constant state of stress, these reactions can do damage to the body including but not limited to headaches, digestive problems, weight gain, muscle tension, memory and mood disorders and others. Over time, chronic disease can settle in.

This where Adaptogens can prove helpful to help regulate stress of the body. An adaptogen is a herb that has been studied and in many cases clinically tested to support the body's reaction to stress. An adaptogen targets different areas of your body to bring your body back to a state of balance, otherwise known as homeostasis.

Adaptogens have been studied extensively in the last 10 years. Most adaptogens can be taken with pharmaceutical medications and over time their use will help your body adapt to stress, making the physical reactions not as severe and support the release of cortisol and adrenaline during times of stress.

There are quite a few adaptogens in the herbalist toolbox. While all the following herbs fall under the "adaptogenic" umbrella, they all have different qualities that they target.

Some of the most popular adaptogens on the market are:

- Ashwagandha
- Astragalus
- Ginseng
- Tulsi
- Rhodiola
- Schicandra
- Eleuthero

Many of these herbs can be taken daily as an infusion or decoction. Another way is to purchase an extract of the herbs, where the strong concentration can be taken as a dropper full daily.

Studies have shown that taking these plants and herbs on a regular basis have other benefits besides just reducing your body's effect of stress. Other benefits include supporting restful sleep, calmed mind, stronger memory and focusing, less musculo-skeletal pain and possible reduction of fatigue.



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# Your Secret Weapon for the New Year

By Alex Anderson

In August of 1996, I was having breakfast with a pastor that I admired. He did not come from a privileged family, but his life was full of good things. He was very blessed in every way. He had started his church a year and a half earlier, and it was flourishing. He had a beautiful, healthy family. His finances were abundant. He was a VFR pilot and flew a twin engine Cessna to speaking engagements. There were many other things to admire about him as a person and as a Bible teacher.

As we talked that morning, I could not help myself, so I had to ask him how he had become so blessed. I had never met anyone, especially in ministry, quite as successful at such young age.

## Here is what he shared.

He said that when he was a struggling student in school to become a minister, the president of the school had personally mentored him...then he stopped in the middle of his story, looked at me and said something that completely surprised me. "But the real key to my success is something the president gave me. That one thing changed everything in my life. And since you asked I'll give it to you if you'll follow me to my office." I eagerly finished my coffee, got into my car and hurried to his office. I don't believe in magic but I do believe that God wants to bless our lives. What my friend gave me has caused my life to be blessed in every sense of the word, and so I want to give it to you as Your Secret Weapon for the New Year.

My friend called it, "His Daily Agreement with God." It's not fancy and not even grammatically correct, but the effects are powerful and have changed the lives of many people I have shared it with since then. It's a prayer that when used with even a little bit of faith touches the heart of God and He responds to it. You read it out loud twice (morning and evening) a day to God. Due to the limits of space...here is an excerpt (it's about three pages long). I renamed it.



## My Daily Agreement with God's Will for My Life

*Father in heaven, thank you that you are establishing me in Christ Jesus. According to Philemon 1:6 – "that the confession of my faith may become effectual by my acknowledging every good thing which is in me in Christ Jesus.*

*20\_\_ is the best year of my life and today will be the greatest day of my life so far. During this year I will grow abundantly in every area of my life: Spiritually, Mentally, Physically, Emotionally, Socially, and Financially.*

*I know my Heavenly Father's voice and will hear no other. I am in His perfect will for my life. I am diligent to do my Father's will and speak only that which is pleasing to Him. I am a yielded vessel.*

*You, Holy Spirit, are my friend and you give me the power to overcome the evil tendencies of my flesh so that I can submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in spirit and indeed.*

*No matter what the circumstance I have the mind of Christ and operate in His wisdom and ability and the peace of God keeps my heart and mind through Christ Jesus. I ask and receive grace daily to walk in holiness.*

*I don't have cares; I have cast them all on the Lord. Peace, righteousness, security, and triumph over opposition are my heritage from the Lord Jesus. In the middle of all my thoughts is your comfort that cheers me up and makes me full of joy and happiness. I am always a happy person. I rely on the Greater One who indwells me to equip me for the job God has called me to do.*

*Jesus has redeemed me from the curse of the law. Heavenly Father you are continually delivering me from the hands of my adversary.*

*Because I am always living with you as the Highest of all my thoughts, I will live in your favor. When I am in trouble I can call on You and You will give me Your immediate attention and come to my aid with honor and deliver me with dignity. My Father in Heaven blesses me to be a blessing.*

*I have the righteousness of Christ, and when God the Father looks at me He sees Jesus. Father God will never leave nor forsake me. This gives me the power to keep myself calm in the face of temptation and of adversity.*

*Bless me indeed. I ask that your hand would be with me. Deliver me from evil, both temptation, and harm. Lord, Help me to be a second mile Christian. Help me to remember that I am not my flesh, because of the beautiful Lord Jesus Christ who is in me Who is my hope of Glory...*

Let me know what God does this year as you pray this prayer. For me, it's been quite amazing!

To your spiritual health,  
**Alex E. Anderson**  
Senior Associate Pastor at  
Bayside Community Church

**P.S. HAPPY NEW!!** If you want the complete copy of *My Daily Agreement with God's Will for My Life*, I would be glad to email it to you. Just go to [alexanderson.org](http://alexanderson.org)





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