

CENTRAL FLORIDA'S

Health & Wellness[®] MAGAZINE

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Why It's Critical

Core to Floor

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Stress Less for a Healthier Heart

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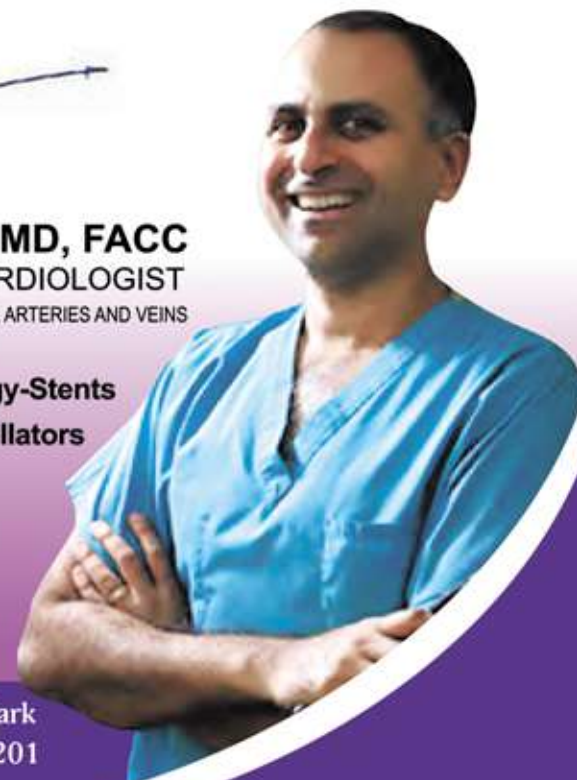
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CONTACT US

Owner
Cristan Gensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sonny Gensing
sonny@gwhizmarketing.com



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UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS OF LASER CATARACT SURGERY

It is said that if you live long enough, you'll develop a cataract. Though cataracts can affect young people, even children, most form over time, as proteins in the lens of the eye begin to clump together, limiting and distorting vision. Most often, cataracts begin to develop around age 40, quietly growing without much impairment of vision, only to become noticeable once you hit your 60s. Into our 70s, 80s and 90s, cataracts become a practical inevitability.

Symptoms of cataracts include:

- Cloudy, dull vision
- Muted colors
- Sensitivity to light
- Changes in night vision
- A halo effect around bright lights
- Changes in spatial ability
- Double vision
- Frequent changes in lens prescription

Once these symptoms become serious enough to impact your life – affecting reading, driving, watching TV, recognizing faces, etc. – cataract surgery becomes necessary to restore vision and prevent blindness, making it a necessary medical procedure.

Traditional vs. Laser Cataract Surgery

With more than 3 million surgeries performed in the US each year and a success rate of 98%, cataract surgery is one of the safest, most common and effective procedures being performed today.

Once the decision has been made to get cataract surgery, the question becomes whether to choose standard cataract surgery or opt for laser, called femtosecond laser-assisted cataract surgery (FLACS) or, simply, femto laser cataract surgery.

Medicare covers necessary cataract removal and the implantation of a standard intraocular lens (IOL) for both methods, meaning patients have a choice of manual or laser cataract surgery for cataract treatment.

Femto laser cataract surgery can be packaged to include elective advanced features such as premium IOLs as well as treatment for mild astigmatism and certain other visual abnormalities. While these options may not be covered by Medicare, they offer the best possible vision correction, the widest choice of IOL options, and the best chance of eliminating the need for prescription glasses.

If you're unsure about your coverage eligibility and options, your Lake Eye doctor or friendly service professional will be happy to look into for you.

Why Choose Femto Laser Cataract Surgery?

While both traditional and laser cataract surgery are extremely safe and effective, femto laser cataract surgery holds some key advantages for a large number of patients. The 5 possible benefits of femto laser vs. traditional cataract surgery are as follows:

1. More Precise Incision

In order to remove the cataract-affected lens, your ophthalmologist will make a tiny incision in the front of the eye and guide a needle-sized probe to the cataract. With standard cataract surgery, the incision and lens opening are made with precision blades. In femto laser surgery, incisions are made with a laser, whose exactness and reproductivity even a highly skilled surgeon can't match.

Femto laser surgery utilizes a computerized mapping system to create a 3D model of each eye's unique shape and surface to determine the precise location and size of the entry incision. The femto laser is able to generate a nearly perfect circular opening in the lens capsule, supporting optimal visual acuity and healing. The femtosecond laser's excellent depth-control reduces the potential of damaging valuable corneal cells.

2. Gentler Cataract Removal

In cataract surgery, the clouded lens is emulsified using ultrasonic waves, a process called phacoemulsification. Then the particles of damaged lens are gently suctioned out. If the cataract is particularly thick, dense or rigid, it may require more ultrasound to break it up, which may damage the delicate endothelial cells of the cornea.

With femto laser cataract surgery, the laser gently softens and conditions the damaged lens, making it more pliable and easier to remove. Smooth, easy removal promotes less risk of corneal swelling and any delay in crisp vision correction.



3. Provides Treatment for Astigmatism

People whose corneas are more oblong than circular in shape have astigmatism, which can interfere with light refraction, creating vision problems. With standard cataract surgery, minor astigmatism is treated by manually creating tiny incisions designed to relax the shape of the cornea. With femto laser surgery, computer-assisted image guidance helps to perfect the size, depth and location of these incisions for outstanding results with less risk.

4. Superior for Certain Conditions

Studies show that patients with a low baseline endothelial cell count can benefit from femto laser cataract surgery's gentleness, reduced cumulated phacoemulsification time, and risk of endothelial cell loss. Femto laser has also shown to provide optimal conditions for patients who plan to receive a more advanced entry in the IOL market, the multifocal lens, which provides excellent vision correction at multiple distances.

5. Allows for More Innovative Options

Lake Eye offers the most revolutionary IOL technologies in the field, including Toric lenses to correct moderate to serious astigmatism, Tecnis multifocal lenses, and the revolutionary Symphony extended range of vision lens. We also offer combination cataract/glaucoma surgery to address two conditions in the same surgical appointment.

Lake Eye for Femto Laser Surgery

Having performed tens of thousands of successful cataract surgeries, Dr. Scott Wehrly, Dr. Scot Holman and Dr. Vinay Gutti are local specialists in femtosecond laser-assisted cataract surgery. In fact, Dr. Wehrly was the first surgeon in Central Florida to perform this leading-edge procedure. All surgeries are performed at the technologically-advanced, state-of-the-art Sante Fe Surgery Center in The Villages.

When it comes to your eyes and vision, it makes sense to go with the best. With more than 40 years serving The Villages, Mount Dora, Leesburg, Tavares, Wildwood, Lady Lake and Altamonte Springs, Lake Eye is the clear choice for brilliant vision.

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Does Converting to a ROTH IRA Make Sense for You?

Health and Wellness magazine was able to sit down for a heart-to-heart about Roth IRA's with Mr. Dale Ceibert, Private Wealth Advisor and President of Ceibert Wealth with Ameriprise Financial. Dale is passionate about finances and his clients. Dale offers advice in simple terms to those of us who need more than just catchphrases.

H&W asks: What are the benefits of a Roth IRA?

Dale Ceibert: A Roth IRA offers you tax-free withdrawals. When your money is in a Roth IRA for at least 5 years, you will not pay income taxes on the money you take out.

H&W: How does a Roth IRA work if I receive Social Security?

Ceibert: Roth distributions are tax-free. They do not count towards the income threshold for Medicare premiums, Social Security taxation or taxable net income.

H&W: Do I have to take out a mandatory amount each month?

Ceibert: No. There are no required minimum distributions with a Roth IRA. Your account can continue to grow over time, which means you can still earn retirement income even after retirement.

H&W: What if I pass before I have drawn out all the amount in the IRA?

Ceibert: The Roth IRA can be good way to share your legacy. There are some distribution requirements for non-spouse beneficiaries, but beyond that, distributions are free of income taxes and penalties.

H&W: Sounds like a great plan. So how does converting to a Roth work?

Ceibert: If you have money from an IRA or an employer-sponsored plan, my team and I can help you convert it to a Roth IRA. Earnings and any money that was contributed pretax are subject to income tax for the year you convert. Converting an employer-sponsored plan to a Roth IRA could be especially beneficial if you have after-tax money in a 401(k) plan. You may be able to convert after-tax money to a Roth IRA tax-free. Your plan administrator and tax adviser can check to see if this is possible for you.

H&W: What would be an example of an "employer-sponsored plan"?

Ceibert: A 401(k) would be one example. Converting an employer-sponsored plan to a Roth IRA could be beneficial if you have after-tax money in a 401(k) plan. You may be able to convert after-tax money to a Roth IRA tax-free.

H&W: What would be an example of an "employer-sponsored plan"?

Ceibert: A 401(k) would be one example. Converting an employer-sponsored plan to a Roth IRA could be beneficial if you have after-tax money in a 401(k) plan. You may be able to convert after-tax money to a Roth IRA tax-free.

Ceibert Wealth has 2 convenient locations in The Villages:

Main Office
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The Villages, FL 32162-8624
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Brownwood Office
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I talk with a lot of teachers who are worried their state teachers' retirement account may not be enough or may not be fully funded by the time they retire. A 401 (k) could be an effective way to protect the money teachers, police officers, firefighters, and other public servants have worked so hard to earn.

H&W: Thank you, Mr. Ceibert, for these interesting facts. This is excellent information that I, as someone who isn't super well-versed in finance, can understand. Any closing thoughts?

Ceibert: Sure! Ask yourself these questions and see if a Roth IRA conversion may make sense if you:

- Do you expect to be in the same or higher tax bracket in retirement?
- Do you have a long period of time before you intend to access the funds?
- Do you have money outside your retirement account(s) to pay the taxes?
- Would you like to leave a tax-free inheritance to your heirs?
- Do you have after-tax money in a 401(k) or traditional IRA?
- Are you burdened with a depressed account value due to a market downturn?

Let's talk if you answered yes to one or more of these questions!

We offer a complimentary initial consultation. Schedule a complimentary initial consultation if you're interested in learning more about how we can help you meet your financial goals. Even if you're already working with another professional, we can give you a new perspective and answer your unaddressed questions.

Dale Ceibert is a financial advisor in The Villages, FL, and has earned his ChFC®, CLU®, and CASL®. Dale earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business from the University of Central Oklahoma. Ceibert Wealth is celebrating its 25th year in The Villages this year.

At Ceibert Wealth Management, we aim to help you feel confident, connected, and in control of your financial life. The right financial advice can help prepare you for whatever life brings – both the expected and the unexpected. You receive 1:1 financial advice based on your goals and needs when you work with us. We offer personalized recommendations for a diversified portfolio and solutions to help protect you from uncertainty. We schedule regular meetings to review your goals, progress, and investments. Our team provides you with anytime access to your investments and digital tools to help you stay on track. Ready to learn more? Getting started is as easy as meeting for a complimentary initial consultation whenever it's convenient for you.

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CORE TO FLOOR - STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE AND PELVIC FLOOR WITHOUT HITTING THE GYM

By Dr. Tina Chandra

The innovative combination of BTL Industries' most sophisticated technologies has given rise to the latest and only non-invasive core conditioning treatment. The "Core to Floor" combination utilizes HIFEM and radiofrequency energy (Emsculpt NEO only) from the Emsella and Emsculpt NEO devices to strengthen primary core musculature.

Emsella targets the pelvic floor muscles, while Emsculpt NEO works to tone and strengthen the abdominal area. When done in conjunction, these two treatments allow people to improve neuromuscular control, muscular strength, sexual pleasure, and vitality.

Emsculpt NEO

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.

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.

Emsella

Emsella is great news for those who suffer from urinary incontinence (both women AND MEN) and don't want to go to physical therapy for whatever reason. Emsella is an FDA-approved device that also uses HIFEM, this time to stimulate the muscles of the pelvic floor. It is non-surgical and is performed while the patient is fully clothed and seated in a specialized chair.

Emsella has been jokingly referred to as the "Kegel throne" because each 30-minute treatment is equivalent to doing more than 10,000 Kegels. It contracts the muscles by emitting HIFEM to stimulate the muscles of the pelvic floor that have become too weak to control urination. Even with physical therapy and being very disciplined in doing Kegel exercises, it would be humanly impossible to mimic this type of treatment and its results.

How does "Core to Floor" work?

Combining Emsculpt NEO and Emsella technologies into a singular form of core therapy has delivered a 95% satisfaction rate among patients.

Emsculpt Neo for the Abdomen

Core to Floor uses Emsculpt NEO to strengthen the abdominal muscles, stimulating an average of 25% muscle development. An additional bonus is Emsculpt NEO's fat reduction capability, allowing patients to reap the benefits of a 30% fat reduction in the abdominal area.

Emsella for the Pelvic Floor

Emsella is utilized in core to the floor for its innate capability to strengthen the foundation of the core faster and more effectively than any alternative treatments or exercises. These two state-of-the-art technologies together provide a painless and non-invasive solution to anyone struggling with or looking to prevent issues related to a weak core.

Why Choose Core to Floor Therapy?

The core is a grouping of the back, pelvic, glute, hip, abdominal, and diaphragm muscles—all of which stabilize the trunk and support the spine. Sufficient core strength is crucial for any physical activity, from running or swinging a golf club to simple everyday tasks such as grabbing something from the top shelf. A weak core can cause a multitude of physical impairments, from chronic back pain to lack of mobility and balance. Core to Floor therapy helps train the muscles of the pelvis and abdomen to work in harmony, restoring one's quality of life and helping achieve fitness goals.

The combination of two advanced technologies helps to strengthen, tone, and firm the abdominal and pelvic muscles. The primary benefits of this therapy include:

- Increased Muscle Mass
- Enhanced Core Strength
- Restoration of Neuromuscular Control
- Improved Balance, Mobility, and Posture
- Improved Blood Flow
- Correction of Abdominal Separation
- Correction of Incontinence¹

If you are interested in learning more about "CORE TO FLOOR" using Emsella and Emsculpt NEO from trusted professionals with years of experience, contact Chandra Wellness Center today.

1. Soleiman, D. (2022) Core to floor: EMSculpt Neo & Emsella are an excellent combo, Cosmetic Injectables Center Sherman Oaks, Los Angeles, California. Available at: <https://cosmeticinjectables.com/blog/core-to-floor-emsulpt-neo-and-emsella>.

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.



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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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STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR YOUR HEART: WHY IT'S CRITICAL

T.E. Vallabhan, MD, FACC

We all know it's imperative to keep ourselves healthy through exercise, eating right, and warding off viruses and infections. However, one of the most overlooked stressors on our hearts is—*anxiety*.

According to the American Heart Association, "More research is needed to determine how stress contributes to heart disease — the leading killer of Americans. But stress may affect behaviors and factors that increase heart disease risk: high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, smoking, physical inactivity, and overeating. Some people may choose to drink too much alcohol or smoke cigarettes to "manage" their chronic stress; however, these habits can increase blood pressure and may damage artery walls.

And your body's response to stress may be a headache, back strain, or stomach pains. Stress can also zap your energy, wreak havoc on your sleep and make you feel cranky, forgetful and out of control. A stressful situation sets off a chain of events. Your body releases adrenaline, a hormone that temporarily causes your breathing and heart rate to speed up and your blood pressure to rise. These reactions prepare you to deal with the situation — the "fight or flight" response.

When stress is constant, your body remains in high gear off and on for days or weeks at a time. Although the link between stress and heart disease isn't clear, chronic stress may cause some people to drink too much alcohol which can increase your blood pressure and may damage the artery walls."

If you find that you are feeling more stressed than normal it's important to take time for yourself, relax and do something that brings you joy, even if that's simply taking a nap!

Dr. Vallabhan's Tips to Relieve Stress

Tip #1

Take Time for Yourself—Read a book, take a warm Epsom salt bath, get a massage, take a relaxing drive, take a nap, meditate, pray, or simply watch your favorite program on TV (not an action packed thriller) can be very relaxing and relieve some stress.



Tip #2

Exercise—Increasing cardiovascular exercise is critical for oxygen intake, circulation, and increasing both brain and heart health. It can also be a wonderful outlet to release frustration and lower blood pressure. People that exercise regularly, have significantly lower stress and cortisol levels. It's important to speak to your cardiologist or primary care doctor before embarking on any new exercise program. For those with cardiovascular disease, it's well known that swimming or water aerobics are exceptional options to safely increase cardio without as much vigor as with land exercising. Also, low impact exercise like walking, Yoga or Pilates are also beneficial ways to get your cardio in without overdoing it.

Tip #3

Don't Ignore Your Symptoms—If you have any issues with anxiety, stress, PTSD or changes in your heart rate, blood pressure or are experiencing tightness or palpitations, don't ignore your symptoms. If stress or cardiac issues are left untreated, they can create exacerbated conditions or even death. Talk to your physician right away if you notice any changes in your health.

Dr. V

T.E. VALLABHAN, MD, FACC
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SPECIALIST IN DISEASES OF THE HEART, ARTERIES AND VEINS

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Do You Need Knee Replacement Surgery?

What You Should Know

By Sergio Martinez, D.O.

When it comes to joint replacement, one of the main conditions that orthopedic surgeons see and treat daily is knee pain.

Arthritis is one of the primary causes of knee pain in the aging population.

Your Knees Withstand Remarkable Pressure on a Daily Basis

Walking, standing, and exercising put a lot of strain on our knees. For example, a person that weighs 150 lbs. walking up a flight of stairs will put approximately 500 lbs. of pressure on the knees — with each step. Not only is the knee one of the most intricate of all the joints in the body, but it is also the most susceptible to arthritis. Multiple types of arthritis affect the knees, but osteoarthritis is by far the number one type that surpasses all others.

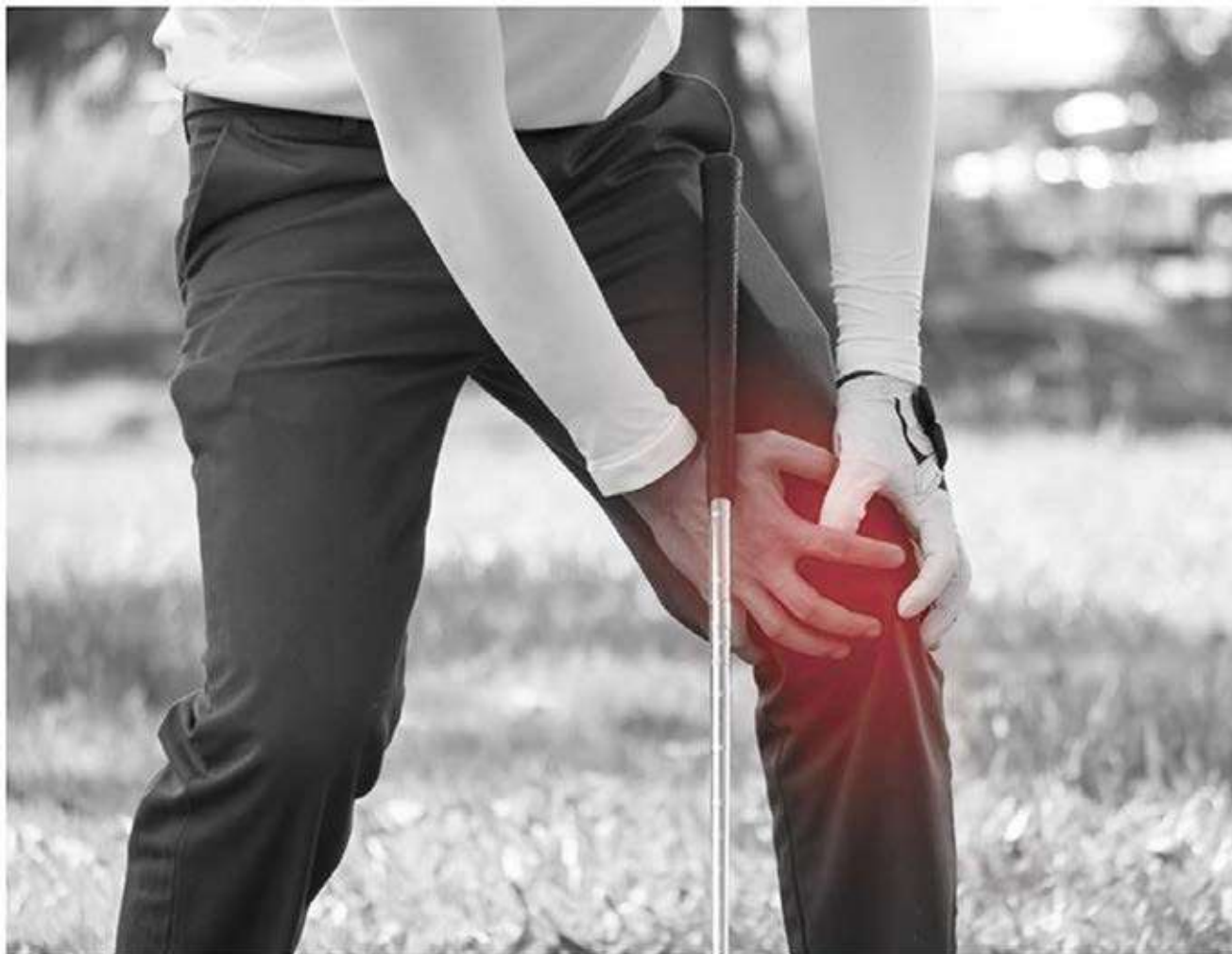
Positioned between the three bones of the knee (the femur, tibia, and patella), the articular cartilage provides a smooth gliding surface and acts as a shock absorber. This cartilage is smooth and resilient but is susceptible to wear and tear. Once the cartilage begins to break down it is difficult to stop, and often, the cartilage breaks down completely and wears away. This can cause soreness, swelling, and stiffness, and is the beginning stages of osteoarthritis, or bone rubbing against bone. In turn, this can cause bone spurs and a great deal of discomfort.

Osteoarthritis develops slowly, and often, the pain becomes worse with time. This type of arthritis is also known as degenerative joint disease because it is often associated with the aging process. This process can also affect younger people. Osteoarthritis pain can be debilitating and interfere with daily activities, affect your ability to work, and create limited range of motion in your life.

Many people may find little to no relief with over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen. Other treatment methods are often necessary.

Treatment

Conservative methods are the first line of defense. These included things such as weight reduction, controlled non-resistive exercises, bracing, injections, biologic regenerative methods, and pain medication.



However, because the knee joint has no blood supply, it's difficult to heal this area with many alternative treatments, and surgery is often necessary.

Knee Joint Replacement

Depending on your individual circumstances and especially your age, you may be a candidate for a partial knee replacement. In cases of extensive degeneration, a total knee replacement may be more appropriate.

Arthritic damage to one side of the knee is common, so utilizing an implant customized for the medial or lateral deteriorated area is often a better option than a knee replacement depending on your individual circumstances.

If you are a candidate for a partial knee implant, a technique to preserve your tendons and ligaments, as well as part of your natural knee bone when possible is available. Additionally, preserving the bone will provide a more natural knee for any future treatments.

SERGIO MARTINEZ, DO, AOA, AOAO

Sergio Martinez, D.O. is a board certified orthopedic surgeon. Dr. Martinez earned his bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in Chemistry from the University of Miami, Coral Gables. He received a certificate in Biomedical Sciences from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and then received his Doctorate of Osteopathy from the same.



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Stress Less for a Healthier Heart

Happy brain, healthy heart.

We've all heard eating healthy and getting enough exercise is good for our heart, but your mental health can impact your heart as well. Research shows that conditions like chronic stress, depression and anxiety can lead to an increased risk of heart attack or stroke, according to the American Heart Association. With half of U.S. adults reporting COVID-19 has negatively impacted their mental health, right now it's critical that we take time de-stress for both our mental and physical health.

How can stress effect my heart's health?

Too often in our society stress is considered one of the costs of having an active and productive life. But when we're under stress, we often lean on unhealthy habits to cope such as smoking, overeating, not exercising or eating unhealthy foods. In addition to those unhealthy habits, letting stress affect us too much can lead to serious health problems over time that increase our risk for heart attack and stroke, such as:

- High blood pressure
- Reduced blood flow to the heart
- Irregular heart rate and rhythm
- Obesity

Studies show that people with positive mental health, including manageable stress levels, are more likely have lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and less inflammation.

How do I manage my stress and take care of my heart?

We'll never eliminate stress, but we can prevent long-term health problems by training our body and mind to react positively to whatever life throws at us.

Just breathe. Even short breaks focused on breathing can help you relax, which in turn helps your heart. Breathing exercises can also reduce anxious feelings and regain calm and balance.



Keep moving. Exercise releases endorphins which is our body's feel-good chemical. This helps relieve stress and improve our mood.

Hit the hay. Evidence suggests that poor sleep can exacerbate depression and other mental health issues. Try to get seven to nine hours of sleep a night.

Stay connected. Social connections with people we trust are important. Take a 60-second break to call or message a friend – even if it's just to say, “hello!”

Find your jam. Music can have a profound effect on our emotions and brain function. Listen to your favorite soothing songs to help your mind and body relax. Or crank up something high energy if you need to dance off some frustration.

If you're struggling with high levels of stress, high blood pressure or other conditions that put you at risk for heart attack or stroke, it's important to also consult with your doctor on additional steps you can take to improve your heart health and mental well-being.

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SENIORS AGING IN PLACE

For 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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Trusted HomeCare and let's discuss
how we can support
you or your loved one
352-240-7522

STRESS INCONTINENCE IS NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT

“Stress incontinence” is a reality for millions of women in America today. The “stress” is not emotional or mental pressures. Rather, it’s physical pressure put on the bladder that can cause urine leakage. Something as simple as a sneeze or a cough might trigger a leak. Standing up suddenly, lifting something heavy, exercise—sex; anything that puts pressure on a bladder can be problematic.

Stress incontinence is the most common form of incontinence in women. It’s an unwelcome embarrassment for 1 in 4 women aged 15 through 44—1 in 3 women aged 45 to 64. It is so embarrassing in fact, that fully *two out of three women never mention it to their doctors.* Those who do, wait an average of *over six years* before seeking help.¹

The good news is, when they finally do speak up they discover that their problem is, for the most part, easily cured. Often all it takes are a few lifestyle changes—exercise, lose weight, quit smoking, forgo the diet soda refills—and voilà—no more problem! Here’s why....

The root cause of stress incontinence comes from weak pelvic floor muscles, simple as that. How you came to *have* those weakened muscles could be from pregnancy and/or childbirth, carrying excess weight, decreased estrogen levels due to peri-menopause or menopause, or simply aging.

SO, HOW DO YOU FIX IT?

Weight loss may be one of the most effective ways to drastically improve or even “cure” stress incontinence. According to Kristene Whitmore, M.D., chair of urology and female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, “Dropping pounds eases the pressure on your bladder and pelvic floor.... In one study, women who lost 17 pounds reduced leaking episodes nearly 50%. Even those who lost a mere three pounds were 28% drier.”

1. <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/a13570/urinary-symptoms/>

Also, watch what you drink—sip don’t chug—and you can also make a huge difference. Coffee is a major culprit. If you must drink it, think moderation. Water or herbal teas are better but even those need to be sipped over time. Finally, cut back or eliminate those elements in your diet that are known to irritate bladders: caffeine, carbonation, alcohol, artificial sweeteners, citrus and tomato juice.

One word—*kegels!* Many are already familiar with these go anywhere, exercise anytime little gems. Kegels are pelvic floor strengthening exercises. A doctor or physical therapist can show you how to perform the moves correctly to derive the most benefit. Keep at it daily for six to eight weeks to give the exercises the best chance to work.

All of the above are steps you can take to mitigate the effects of or even cure stress incontinence on your own. If those prove less than satisfactory, treatment can become more aggressive with a little help from your doctor. There are devices available he or she can prescribe to help.

A vaginal pessary is a specialized device shaped like a ring with two bumps on it. It is placed around the urethra to support the bladder and reduce leakage during activities. A urethral insert is another choice. Similar to a small tampon, it’s inserted for extra help when certain physical activities are anticipated—though it can be worn all day if desired.

Surgery is the final choice available to someone suffering from the effects of stress incontinence. There are several procedures that can be performed. Consult with your doctor to see which one he or she may recommend.

The bottom line is, stress incontinence is more inconvenient and embarrassing than it is life threatening. Clearly, there are options out there. Most are non-medical lifestyle changes a person can adopt to take control of their particular situation. Many will greatly reduce or even eliminate the problem altogether. And while stress incontinence is nothing to sneeze at...it’s not a condition you’ll have to live with, either.



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At Sumter Senior Living, we believe the best way to stay out of the cold this winter is to warm the hearts of others with kindness. Our community is committed to personalized care—so that you can live your life feeling supported and assured that your needs will be met.

February 17th marks another Random Acts of Kindness Day, but we celebrate kindness year-round in our vibrant, friendly community. Kindness goes beyond giving gifts on Christmas or Valentine's Day; it can be a more subtle form of appreciation to show those around you what they mean to you. From enjoying a delicious dinner in our dining hall with friends to enjoying a movie night with your neighbors—kindness is all around us.

Showing Kindness to Your Neighbor

Science shows that kindness has lasting results both physically and mentally. According to Psychology Today, "Kindness begins with the understanding that we all struggle." At its very core, kindness offers a compassionate hand to those around us and an understanding that we don't know the variables at play in any given person's life.

Although it might not seem like much to extend a helping hand, or to tell someone that they are doing a good job, or to write someone a thank you note for all that they do—it can mean the world to the receiver.

Not only does kindness help the person who receives it, but it also benefits the person who is doing the good deed. When we do something good, a chemical reaction takes place in our body as we produce the hormone oxytocin, otherwise known as the "love hormone." Psychology Today indicates the hormone oxytocin has been known to serve as a form of protection to the body. It supports the cardiovascular system and reduces overall inflammation in the body. Ultimately, whoever is doing the good deed is positively impacted, and this can be a great way to boost your own mood.

A study conducted by the NIH National Library of Medicine on acts of kindness over the course of seven consecutive days discovered that happiness was the result—regardless of who initiated the kind act. The study describes how the relationship between the person performing the good deed and receiving it is not the main focal point. Instead, what's important is that the kindness and good deed happen at all.



Consider how you can influence and impact the lives of the people around you. Your senior living neighbors, family, caregivers, and health care support staff are all here to lift you up. A simple "thank you" can do the same for them.

Showing Kindness to Yourself

Kindness starts within yourself. First and foremost, it means that you need to fill your own cup before you can pour into others. Sometimes, the best way to show kindness to yourself is to recognize what your needs are. For some, they might find that living on their own has become increasingly more difficult, indicating that it's time to make a change. That's where senior living comes in. Senior living can be a great option to help provide a sense of relief from the struggles of everyday life and ensure a sense of community.

Practice self-kindness by making the time to do things for yourself and the hobbies that bring you joy. Making time for yourself—and treating yourself as you would a friend—is a great way to demonstrate self-appreciation for all that you do in your day-to-day life.

Sumter Senior Living

Here at Sumter Senior Living our home is yours too. We treat all residents with the care and kindness they deserve. Our Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care lifestyles provide individuals with all

the necessities to live their lives just as they like, including providing all-inclusive dining with delicious, nutritious food catering to your lifestyle. And for those who want to get a taste of our lifestyle, we offer short-term respite stays. Our various living arrangements allow each resident the individualized attention that they deserve.

A Place Where You Belong

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

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

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



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THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING IN THE REAL ESTATE MARKET

By Sharon A. Bassett

The power of positive thinking can be a powerful tool when buying or selling a home. When you approach the process with a positive attitude, you are more likely to make better decisions, feel more confident, and ultimately, achieve your goals.

One of the most important aspects of positive thinking when buying or selling a home is setting clear goals. When you know exactly what you want, you are more likely to focus your efforts on achieving it. This can include setting a price range for buying or selling, or determining specific features or neighborhoods that you are interested in.

Another key aspect of positive thinking when buying or selling a home is visualization. This technique involves imagining your desired outcome as if it has already happened. For example, if you are selling your home, you can visualize potential buyers walking through your home and loving it, making an offer, and ultimately closing the sale. If you are buying a home, you can visualize yourself living in your dream home and enjoying all of its features.

Positive thinking also involves being open to new possibilities. When you approach the buying or selling process with an open mind, you are more likely to see opportunities that you might have otherwise missed. This can include considering homes or neighborhoods that you may not have initially considered, or being open to negotiating on price or other terms.

Another important aspect of positive thinking when buying or selling a home is maintaining a positive attitude throughout the process. This can be challenging at times, especially if you encounter setbacks or obstacles. However, by staying positive, you are more likely to stay motivated and find ways to overcome any obstacles that you may encounter.

Positive thinking when buying or selling a home also involves having a support system in place. This can include friends and family who can provide emotional support and encouragement, as well as professionals such as real estate agents and mortgage brokers who can provide valuable guidance and advice.



Positive thinking can be a powerful tool when buying or selling a home. By setting clear goals, visualizing your desired outcome, staying open to new possibilities, maintaining a positive attitude throughout the process, and having a support system in place, you can increase your chances of achieving your goals and enjoying a successful home buying or selling experience.

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

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Sharon A. Bassett is the Broker and Owner of Bassett Premier Realty, Inc. With an extensive background of schooling, from Pilot Aviation, 15 years of Construction and Design, Business Management, Entrepreneurship, 22 years of Real Estate, Owner/Broker and a Florida Residential Contractor.

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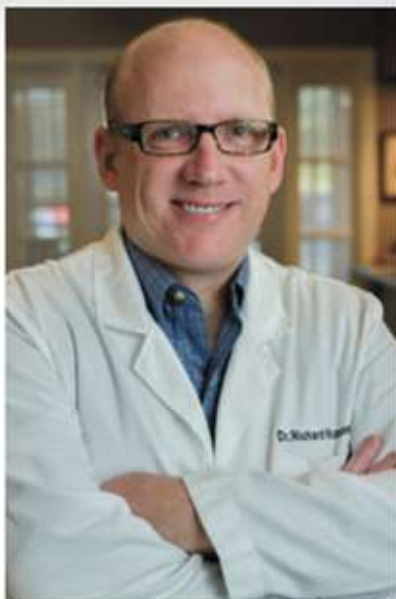
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The newest prescription Type 2 Diabetes management on the market has weight loss experts abuzz with excitement. Mounjaro and Semaglutide is an injectable prescription medicine that is used along with diet and exercise to improve blood sugar (glucose) in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Mounjaro is the first and only approved single molecule that activates the glucose-dependent insulintropic 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. Semaglutide B-6
3. Semaglutide L-Carnitine
4. Semaglutide 2.5



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?



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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).

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

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.

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.

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 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 Medical Clinic to discuss how Mounjaro can help.

There are several different medications other than Mounjaro that can be used such as:

- Dulaglutide (Trulicity) (weekly)
- Exenatide extended release (Bydureon bcise) (weekly)
- Exenatide (Byetta) (twice daily)
- Semaglutide (Ozempic) (weekly)
- Liraglutide (Victoza, Saxenda) (daily)
- Lixisenatide (Adlyxin) (daily)
- Semaglutide (Rybelsus) (taken by mouth once daily) (2)

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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What is IV therapy?

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

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

Why IV therapy?

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

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

Is IV therapy safe?

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

What are possible side effects?

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

How often can I get an IV?

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

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

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



Who is a candidate?

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

Who should not get IV therapy?

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

How do I get started?

Contact Total Nutrition and Therapeutics at 352-259-5190 or go online to www.TNT4ME.com to schedule your appointment today. Initial consultations are always complimentary.

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



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COSMETIC DENTISTRY IS MORE THAN A PRETTY SMILE

By Richard W. Rozensky, DDS, D.ABDSM

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

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

DENTAL VENEERS

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

TEETH WHITENING

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

DENTAL CROWNS

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



DENTAL BONDING

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

DENTAL IMPLANTS

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

INLAYS AND ONLAYS

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

DENTURES

Dentures are an affordable tooth replacement option for those who are not a good candidate for implants. Dentures provide facial support, improved nutrition, and improved confidence. Dentures can be a full set or a partial that replaces a group of teeth generally from an injury. Some dentures are designed to improve a person's bite, eliminating headaches, jaw pain, and other

TMJ symptoms. The bases of most removable dentures today are made of polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA) and the teeth themselves can be made of PMMA or ceramic material like that used for porcelain veneers.

WHY CHOOSE LAUREL MANOR DENTAL?

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

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

Meet Dr. Rozensky

As a Diplomate of the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine and recognized as a qualified dentist by the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine, Dr. Rozensky earned his Doctorate of Dental Surgery degree from University of New York at Buffalo and then went on to serve our country in the United States Air Force, after which he enjoyed private practice in General Dentistry for over 20 years. Dr. Rozensky now includes his passion for Sleep Dentistry in his practice and finds true joy in the life changing care he is providing.

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Is Your Fish Oil Rancid?

By Anne-Marie Chalmers, MD

Think fish oil. If your gut reaction is “yuck,” you are in good company. Whether it’s from remembering Grandma’s cod liver oil or taking today’s capsules, many people believe fish oil ought to taste bad.

But the truth is that omega-3 supplements shouldn’t taste like yesteryear’s salmon. If your fish oil does, it’s likely rancid.

What Is Rancidity?

If you eat fish regularly, you probably know that fish spoils more easily than other foods if not kept cold or consumed quickly. The same is true of fish oil. The reason fish and fish oil spoil quickly – or ‘oxidize’, as the scientific community calls it – is that they are rich sources of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA.

EPA and DHA are the main workhorses of the omega-3 family. These fatty acids are known for their anti-inflammatory properties and role in promoting good brain health, to name just a few benefits. But their chemical structure also makes them highly prone to oxidation. If the EPA and DHA molecules oxidize, their molecular structure starts to change and the molecules break down into byproducts. These byproducts, known as lipid peroxides, give off the unpleasant smell and taste of spoiled fish.

How quickly omega-3s oxidize depends on numerous factors: how the fish was caught, how the fish oil was processed, how the final product was distributed, etc. Reducing exposure to oxygen, heat and light, as well as adding antioxidants, will help protect the oil. But if the oil has already started to oxidize, it is just a matter of time before it turns rancid.

How Rancidity Affects Your Health

Besides tasting and smelling bad, rancid fish oil could be harmful. Animal studies indicate that excessively oxidized fatty acids may cause organ damage and inflammation. And one 2013 study from Spain found that oxidized fish oil had negative effects on cholesterol levels. This was in comparison to non-oxidized fish oil, which provided the expected health benefits.



How to Combat Rancidity

Rancid fish oil is unfortunately common. Studies from Canada, New Zealand, Norway and other nations have found that a high percentage of omega-3 supplements exceed acceptable oxidation limits.

Yet fresh fish oil exists and can provide consumers with a relatively inexpensive, safe way to improve health. To ensure you get a fresh omega-3 product, do the following:

1. Evaluate your current product.

The best way to tell whether or not your omega-3 supplement is fresh is to put it through the taste and smell test. If you have capsules, break them open. If your nose gets a whiff of a strong fishy smell, get something else.

2: Make smart purchases.

Fish oil is perishable, just like milk or seafood. Beware of labels that have a two to three year expiration date. These products have likely been sitting on the shelf for years.

You can also ask manufacturers to share their fish oil’s oxidation numbers, better known as the peroxide, anisidine, and TOTOX values. These values will give you a good picture of the oil’s freshness level.

3: Remember that bigger is not always better.

Look for small containers when buying fish oil. The longer a fish oil is stored – even in gelatin capsules – the greater the chance it will turn rancid.

4: Keep it cold.

Buy fish oil that you can store in the freezer or refrigerator. Low temperatures slow down the enzymatic time bomb that is ticking away.

5: Use it or lose it.

All fish oils will turn rancid with time. When you first buy fish oil, remember to use it up.

This article was abbreviated from a longer version published on omega3innovations.com. For the full text and references, visit:

<https://omega3innovations.com/blog/is-your-fish-oil-rancid/>

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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Polycystic Kidney Disease:

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

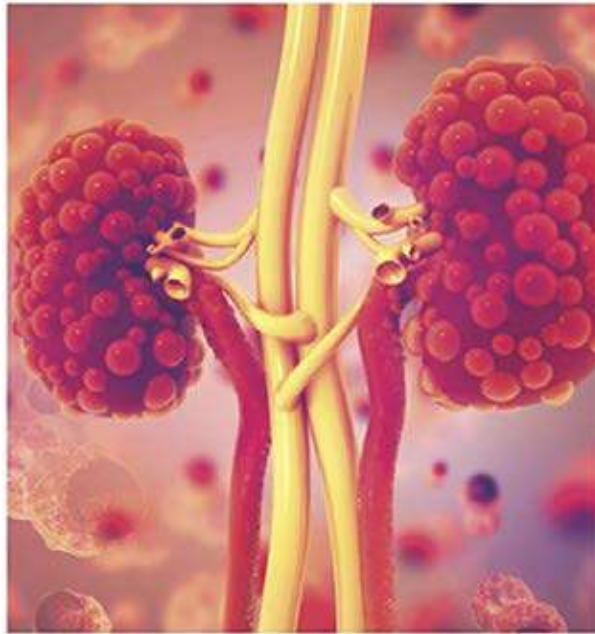
By Ingrid Calliste, MD

The fourth leading cause of kidney failure is called polycystic kidney disease and 600,000 people in the United State have the disorder. Polycystic kidney disease (PKD) affects the kidneys with cysts that grow and are filled with fluid. These cysts can damage the kidneys, and essentially take over the kidney's ability to work properly, especially if there are numerous cysts growing at one time. These cysts can severely reduce kidney function.

Poly cystic kidney disease can also affect other organs in the body including the spleen, ovaries, liver, pancreas, bowels, brain, and heart. Most people don't develop PKD until middle age, and the symptoms can range from mild to severe.

The primary symptoms of PKD are as follows:

- High blood pressure
- Back or side pain
- Swollen abdomen
- Blood in the urine
- Frequent bladder and/or kidney infections
- Fluttering or pounding chest
- Chest pain
- Headaches



50 to 60 percent of individuals with PKD will develop kidney failure.

PKD Treatment

Individuals with PKD will need dialysis and possible a kidney transplant. There are also medications that can help treat the disorder and certain diets that will help to prevent the growth of the cysts, which can stop the progression of the disease. PKD can be genetic, so it's best to speak to your physician about your children's health or any planned pregnancies.

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Sunshine Kidney Care is an advanced Nephrology Practice in Central Florida led by board-certified nephrologists - Dr. John Hayes and Dr. Ingrid Calliste who together offer a combined 24 years of expert care and experience in the areas of chronic kidney disease, hypertension, electrolyte disorders and acute kidney injury. Their patients can expect quality, collaborative, comprehensive, holistic, and compassionate medical care delivered by an excellent provider team. The practice offers a range of clinical services including hospital consultations, office consultations and dialysis care. They also offer education, planning and management of renal replacement therapies and pre and post kidney transplant care.



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FIVE COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES

By Janice Martin, Senior Living Specialist

If you haven't visited an assisted living community in a long time, you may be surprised! Today's communities look, feel, and even smell far differently than expected.

Misconception #1 – It's really old people

Age really doesn't have anything to do with whether a person needs assisted living. I have had 90-year-old residents with minimal care needs and are sharp as a tack. I have had 60-year-olds who had significant physical limitations or cognitive impairments.

Some residents are still working or volunteering! They have their own car and can come and go as they wish. They can go dancing at the town square or stay overnight with family. They enjoy the confidence of knowing if they need help, someone is there to assist them.

There is also the possibility of falling in love again! We had two residents get married at one of the communities where I worked! The wedding took place in the lobby, and all the staff contributed or attended. After the wedding, the new Mr. and Mrs. went on a cruise – and drove themselves to the ship!

It is undeniable that some people do require a lot of care. Communities have been designed so that people may age in place – meaning they might not have to move again if their care needs increase.

Misconception #2 – They're dark and depressing

Many of the new assisted living communities are bright and beautiful and rival fancy resorts. They hire interior designers to create beautiful spaces utilizing bright colors, beautiful textures, and lots of natural light.

They also have wonderful and unexpected amenities. They may have a pool, a bar to enjoy happy hour, movie theaters and stages for performances, multiple dining rooms – both formal and casual – and beautifully landscaped areas that include koi ponds, gazebos, and walking trails.

Misconception #3 – The people sit around doing nothing

Today's activities must meet the resident's mental and spiritual needs. Florida regulations state, "Scheduled activities must be available at least 6 days a week for a total of not less than 12 hours per



week. Watching television is not an activity for the purpose of meeting the 12 hours per week of scheduled activities unless the television program is a special one-time event of special interest to residents of the facility." An example would be the Super Bowl.

Residents have the right to determine what activities are scheduled through monthly resident council meetings. Most communities offer a wonderful variety such as art classes, cooking demonstrations, live entertainment, day trips, games, exercise, and even happy hour. Sadly, many residents choose not to participate, which is their choice.

Misconception #4 – The food is terrible

As we age our taste buds will change. At some point we will no longer enjoy the same favorite dish and swear the recipe is different. Medications play a significant role in changing the way things taste.

Food is the biggest complaint in assisted living communities. Some say it's too salty or not salty enough. Some say it's too spicy or it's bland. They complain that the food is too cold or too hot. Some say there is too much food, while others want larger portions. It is impossible to please everyone.

Some special diets can be accommodated, such as vegetarian selections, sugar free and no sugar added. If a person is diabetic, an assisted living community cannot deny the resident's meal or dessert

selections. Mechanical soft or pureed diets can be accommodated. Special diets like vegan or gluten free might not.

Menus are overseen by a professional nutritionist but allow for the chef's creativity. Vegetables are fresh and often purchased locally. Bread is delivered daily or baked on the premises. Soups and desserts are often homemade. Food is rarely frozen or canned.

Misconception #5 – The caregivers are abusive

Sadly, our media will report abuse as if it were an everyday occurrence when the opposite is true. There are wonderful individuals who care for their residents every day. Communities must run criminal background checks, fingerprinting, and drug testing on every employee. Although there may be some terrible caregivers, they don't last long. Some may sound rough around the edges but have a heart of gold.

Families may ask to have cameras in the apartments, and it is up to the community's policy to approve or deny the request. If you see something that concerns you, say something to the appropriate staff person. As a word of caution, if another resident's family member shares a concern with you, it is important to not use the opportunity to spread rumors or make assumptions. There may be circumstances that are not disclosed.

Go to visit communities. Try their food, look at the activity calendar, and observe the amenities and surroundings. Above all, go with an open mind.

Senior Liaison of Central Florida helps individuals find an appropriate senior living community and will accompany you on a tour. For more information, call 352-477-1866 for a free consultation or email SeniorLiaisonCFL@gmail.com. Please visit our website at www.SeniorLiaisonCFL.com or Facebook at Senior Liaison.

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The Role of Physical Therapy in Cardiac Rehab and Overall Heart Health

According to the CDC's website, someone in the US has a heart attack every 40 seconds. That translates to about 805,000 people having a heart attack each year!

A heart attack can be a frightening experience. Still, many people who've had a heart attack go on to enjoy full lives. As part of the recovery process, your doctor may recommend cardiac rehabilitation after a heart attack.

Cardiac rehabilitation is a program designed to improve your cardiovascular health and quality of life after a heart attack or other heart problem. The program is supervised by a team of medical professionals, including:

- Physical therapists
- Registered dietitians
- Doctors
- Nurses

Physical therapy is an important part of the cardiac rehabilitation process. It might help you:

- Lower your risk of having another heart attack by improving blood flow
- Improve your quality of life
- Increase your cardiovascular fitness
- Improve range of motion
- Regain strength and stability in the joints

At the start of your rehab, a physical therapist will assess your ability with a physical exam and possibly fitness tests. They'll then design a custom program that increases in intensity over time.



While you're still in the hospital, your physical therapist may guide you through exercises in bed that are not strenuous. These exercises aim to improve your range of motion and prevent deconditioning and stiffness from extended bed rest.

Once you leave the hospital, a typical exercise session might involve riding an exercise bike, jogging, or using other cardiovascular fitness. Your physical therapist will monitor your heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rate, and oxygen level while you exercise to assess how your body responds. Your individualized program will likely include:

Aerobic Exercise

Aerobic exercise after a heart attack can help improve blood flow and reduce the risk of further heart disease. A physical therapist will usually recommend low-impact aerobic exercise, such as walking, biking, or swimming.

Strength Training

Strength training is an integral part of physical therapy after a heart attack. A physical therapist

will usually recommend low-impact strength exercises, such as rows, squats, lunges, and resistance band exercises. Exercises like these can help improve your overall fitness and reduce the risk of future heart problems. Strength training can also help improve your mood and reduce stress levels.

Stretching

Stretching is an aspect of heart attack recovery that you should not overlook. Stretching properly in physical therapy can help to relieve pain, reduce stiffness, improve blood flow, improve motion and flexibility, and improve your quality of life in general. It can also reduce inflammation.

Cardiac rehabilitation isn't just for heart attacks


Physical therapy and cardiac rehabilitation are an important part of the recovery for many types of heart surgery or cardiac events. Rehabilitation can help you bounce back from:

- Heart failure
- Heart valve surgery
- Coronary artery bypass
- Stent placement
- Heart transplant
- Chronic stable angina
- Acute coronary artery syndrome


If you are interested in improving your heart health this Valentine's season, contact the trained professionals at Innovative Therapies Group today. At Innovative Therapies Group, our team is trained to do comprehensive and hands-on physical therapy. For more than 10 years, we have been ensuring our patients that they are handled by experienced and caring physical therapists.

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Is Your Swing Hurting Your Back or is Your Back Hurting Your Swing?

By Daniel Taylor, DC

It's a beautiful Sunday afternoon on the golf course; the greens are freshly cut and the sun shining. You drive up to the tee box for the first shot of the day. You bend over to put the tee in the ground and out of nowhere the stabbing, knife-like low back pain hits you hard.

If the above scenario sounds familiar, know that you are not alone; studies reported that 50 percent of those who golf regularly suffer from chronic low back problems. Whether this pain is caused from placing the tee into the ground, riding in the golf cart or hitting the golf ball, know that there are options to eliminate this pain.

There are three fundamental causes of golf injuries: poor posture, lack of flexibility and lack of balanced functioning muscles. Golf is a game of repetitive motion that places torque on one side of the body. This is hard on the body and worse for amateurs because of improper swing mechanics that cause a greater load of stress on the low back. Imagine going to the gym and only working out one side of your body for years while neglecting the opposite side. Now picture yourself bent over in your golfing stance while hitting the ball a hundred times during a period of three to four hours. It's easy to see how golfers set themselves up for injuries.

Another aspect of your golf game that chiropractic can improve is your swing. Every golfer can agree that it is essential that the body is balanced from head to toe in order to have the perfect golf swing. In order to perform your best, you need to have unrestricted, fluid motion throughout the spine and pelvis. An improper stance will have a profound effect on your golf swing. Think of the body as a machine that stores and uses energy. Angular momentum only exists through fixed axis rotation (your spine). Your arms, hands and golf club all rotate around the spine. When the spine turns, the body creates a centrifugal motion for the club to follow. In order for there to be a fluid motion there must be a healthy, freely moveable spine and proper balanced muscles. Still unsure if chiropractic could help your game? Ask one of golf's greatest about chiropractic.



"I've been going to chiropractors for as long as I can remember. It's as important to my training as practicing my swing" - Tiger Woods.

Common golf related diagnosis include:

- **Sacro-iliac (SI) joint dysfunction:** This basically means that the SI joint has lost its normal fluid motion due to a fixation. Typically 2-4 visits can solve this complaint.
- **Facet Syndrome:** Facets are the name for the joints in the spine. At times these joints can experience abnormal motion (commonly from a golf swing) and become fixated. Very similar to SI joint dysfunction and often the two conditions exist concurrently. Again 2-4 visits usually.
- **Sprain/Strain injuries:** Very common with any athletic event. Typically minor conditions can self-resolve. However proper stretching, support and in office rehabilitation are always recommended.
- **Sciatica:** Often the most misdiagnosed disorder on the golf course. Everyone thinks pain down the leg is sciatica. However, there are actually many causes for

pain down the leg and a proper diagnosis is essential in order to properly treat the symptoms. This complaint is a large part of our practice. Call today to learn more.

The next time you are on the golf course focus on these things:

1. Are your feet balanced and comfortable at address?
2. Do your feet have to flare out in order to turn on the backswing?
3. Do you find yourself walking slightly crooked the day after a round of golf?
4. Do you find it difficult to get out of bed for a few days?
5. Is it painful to play the game?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then contact us so we can address these issues. As avid golfers ourselves, we understand how easy it is to hurt yourself trying to hit that 300-yard drive.

At Compton Chiropractic, we offer spinal adjustments, decompression, preventive swing advice, rehabilitation exercises, physical therapy and nutrition in order to reduce pain and improve spinal posture and mobility. We treat a wide variety of village athletes including those who participate in pickle ball, tennis, softball and swimming.

So the next time you are on the greens ask yourself, 'is your swing hurting your back or is your back hurting your swing'?

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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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ARTHRITIC KNEE PAIN: DO YOU REALLY NEED SURGERY?

By Physicians Rehabilitation

Walking, standing and exercising put a lot of strain on our knees. For example, a person that weighs 150 lbs. walking up a flight of stairs will put approximately 500 lbs. of pressure on their knees with each step. Not only is the knee one of the most intricate of all the joints in the body, but they are also the most susceptible to arthritis. Multiple types of arthritis affect the knees, but osteoarthritis is by far the number one type that surpasses all others.

What is Osteoarthritis (OA) of the Knee?

Positioned between the three bones of the knee (the femur, tibia, and patella) the articular cartilage provides a smooth gliding surface and acts as a shock absorber. This cartilage is smooth and resilient but susceptible to wear and tear. Once the cartilage begins to break down it is difficult to stop and often the cartilage breaks down completely and wears away. This can cause soreness, swelling, and stiffness, and it is the beginning stages of osteoarthritis, or bone rubbing against bone, which in turn causes bone spurs and a great deal of discomfort.

Articular cartilage has no blood supply. The cells that make the cartilage are nourished by the synovial fluid, and hydrostatic pressure of the joint influences the health and pathological condition of arthritis. The wear and tear process can be slowed often by weight reduction, strengthening the muscles surrounding the joints, and by minimizing or reducing activities that put excessive weight on the knee joints. However, there are well-known non-invasive treatments that have helped numerous people regenerate knee joint function and tissue.

Osteoarthritis develops slowly, and the often the pain becomes worse with time. This type of arthritis is also known as degenerative joint disease, because it is often associated with the aging process. But occasionally, this process can also affect younger people too. The pain can be debilitating and interfere with daily activities, affect your ability to work and create limited range of motion in your life.

MANY PHYSICIANS WILL RECOMMEND SURGERY, BUT DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?



Knee Replacement Surgery is Permanent

Starting with a more conservative approach is a better choice. Knee replacement is a very extreme measure to take without considering all of your options for a condition as common as knee arthritis. Physicians Rehabilitation has an effective knee program that entails several non-invasive treatments that can alleviate pain, increase weight bearing and strength, and regenerate tissue.

Physicians Rehabilitation's Knee Therapy Program Includes:

- PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma)
- Physical therapy
- Bracing
- Rehabilitation
- Supplementation and more



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Viscosupplementation

Viscosupplementation is an FDA approved, guided, hyaluronic acid injection. It is a gel like substance that is very similar to the synovial fluid in our joints, which reduces inflammation and increases cushioning and lubrication of your knees immediately. This treatment protocol is used to treat the symptoms associated with arthritis.

Viscosupplementation (also known as hyaluronic acid injection) involves injecting a lubricating fluid into the knee joint to promote more comfortable knee movement, reduce friction in the joint, and slow the progression of arthritis. This treatment is also commonly paired with physical therapy to help strengthen the joint and improve range of motion. At Physicians Rehabilitation, we perform viscosupplementation with the guidance of advanced fluoroscopic technology to achieve enhanced precision and provide our patients with optimal results. Viscosupplementation is considered to be a safe procedure, and is covered by Medicare and most insurances.

PRP (Platelet-Rich Plasma)

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

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

Physicians Rehabilitation

We are a leading provider of nonsurgical orthopedic solutions in the Florida. We cater to patients of all ages and lifestyles who are at their wit's end with symptoms of osteoarthritis and other debilitating joint conditions. If you're ready to find meaningful relief from your knee pain, we encourage you to consult with our board-certified physicians about your non-surgical treatment options – even if other doctors have told you that surgery is the only answer.

Attorney Patrick Smith Radio Show Now on 14 Stations

For the last 16 years, Patrick Smith has served Clermont as a local estate planning attorney and occasional radio guest host. It's the last year, though, that has brought his knowledge and outreach to the entire state and across the country — this time returning as host of his own callin legal advice show. Saturday mornings from 8-9 you can listen Live on 102.5 FM and AM760 and call in with you legal questions. Broadcasts can also be streamed Live on Facebook and at theBoneOnline.com. The office and website are always available to you: **352-204-0305 - www.AttorneyPatrickSmith.com**



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WHOLEHEARTED

By Jodi Thomas

I love Valentine's Day. Not just the flowers and the chocolate and all that good stuff, but I have always loved the idea of celebrating *love* . . . and on a trivial note, seeing all the pink and red hearts just makes me happy for some reason.

Lately I've been thinking a lot about my own heart. When reflecting on 2023 and what I hope for this year, I really desire to live *wholeheartedly*. And the first step in doing this is learning to pay attention to my **heart**. I'm reading a great book right now called *Soulful Simplicity* by Courtney Carver. I highly recommend it. In the book, she discusses living wholeheartedly and that we have to learn to *listen* to our hearts. She has an exercise where in a quiet moment, you place both hands on your heart, one hand on top of the other, and just sit in the quiet for a moment or two, and ask yourself, "What is my heart saying? What is my heart feeling?"

Yet, most of us are terrified to do this. Why? Because, without a doubt, most of us are never taught to listen to our hearts. We are taught to "suck it up," to keep pushing forward, to fulfill our myriad responsibilities, regardless what our hearts might be saying, or trying to say. And there are many times where we have to do just that—it's part of being an adult. But there's an equal, if not more, need for us to listen to those precious hearts of ours, that have often long been covered up by obligation, fear of what other people think, busy-ness, and self-medication with our vices of choice.

The primary reason we need to learn to listen to our hearts are that our hearts are **very important to God**. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Think about what that says and the implication of it. Both good and bad flow from our heart, based upon the state of our heart. Ignore your heart for too long, and this is disastrous for living the kind of life that you once imagined for yourself.



In fact, our hearts are so valuable to God that they are the very place that Christ has decided to take up residence. Ephesians 3:17 says, "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ *may dwell in your hearts through faith*." Additionally, Romans 5:5 says that God pours out His love into our hearts. Now, I spend a lot of time nurturing my relationship with God. But to be completely honestly, many times I don't feel God's presence or love. These are things that I have to take *by faith*. But even this comes from the heart, for Romans 10:10 says "For it is *with your heart that you believe* and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."

When I truly believe these truths, which comes from my very heart, that Christ actually lives in my heart and God's love is poured into my heart, I am empowered to live in God's love and to express that love to others in my day to day life. And folks, there is just nothing in life more important than that.

Not only does God reside in our heart, he desires to protect it. Philippians 4:7 says "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, *will guard your hearts* and your minds in Christ Jesus." How does the peace of God guard our heart? It guards it against worry, against anxiety, against unforgiveness. . . all of the things that wreck havoc on our hearts and create stress in our lives.

Our hearts are so valuable to God, that He desires *all* of our hearts. In Luke 10:27, Jesus said the greatest commandment was to "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart* and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind."

When you see those pretty pink and red hearts this Valentines Day, I hope you are reminded that your heart is a unique treasure to God. There is no other heart like yours. It is so valuable to Him that Jesus died on the cross so that He could live there and God's love be poured out into your heart. Because your heart is of the utmost value to God, you need to value it, too. Learn to listen to it. Learn to respect it. Don't ignore it. I hope you will join me in the quest of living *wholeheartedly* in 2023.

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