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Suffering from Memory Loss?

Could it be Alzheimer's
Disease?

The Growing Concern

Diabetes and the Soaring
Cost of Medications

Celebrating National Hospice and Palliative Care Month

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Hypofractionation

A New Standard of Care
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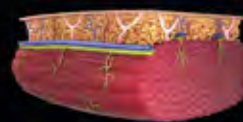
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CONTACT US

Owner
Cristan Gensing
cristan@gwhizmarketing.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sonny Gensing
sonny@gwhizmarketing.com



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EXCELLENCE IN PATIENT-CENTERED CARE



The Journey to Gut Happiness:

Unveiling the Secret to Family Harmony

By Elisha Lopez

Hey there, fellow health enthusiasts! Welcome back to my world of wellness and wonder. In my last article, I spilled the beans on my family's epic quest for optimal health. We dove deep into the abyss of burnout, unraveled the mysteries of our genetics, and witnessed the mind-blowing transformation that comes with life-style changes. But today, my friends, we're embarking on a gut-centric adventure. Buckle up and get ready to explore the magical land of happy bellies!

Picture this: a family sitting around the dinner table, their laughter echoing through the air, and an overwhelming sense of contentment filling the room. What's their secret ingredient? You guessed it—gut health! Science has uncovered a mind-boggling connection between our guts and brains, revealing how a happy gut can work wonders for our mental well-being and family harmony.

Welcome to the wild world of the gut-brain axis—a two-way highway that connects our brain to the wondrous realm of our intestines. This bustling thoroughfare carries neurotransmitters, hormones, and gut microbiota, all working together to transmit signals and influence our moods, emotions, and overall mental state.

When our gut is in a state of bliss, it churns out an abundance of feel-good neurotransmitters like serotonin, often referred to as the "happy hormone." Serotonin not only boosts our mood but also regulates sleep, appetite, and digestion. If you want your family to experience pure joy and serenity, it's time to pay attention to those gut vibes!

To promote gut health and overall well-being, it's wise to bid adieu to certain foods that can stir up inflammation, even if you're not allergic to them. Gluten, sugar, and dairy are common culprits notorious for wreaking havoc on our guts. By ditching these troublemakers, we can create a happier gut environment for the whole family.

Now, let's talk about the rockstars of gut-friendly nutrition—high-quality protein and good fats. These bad boys will be your partners on this journey to well-being. They'll help you minimize your reliance on grains, gluten, dairy, and sugar while still getting all the essential nutrients your body craves.

Ah, stress! The notorious troublemaker that wreaks havoc on our overall well-being and turns family dynamics into a circus. But here's the twist—stress can also throw our gut off balance because the



gut-brain connection works both ways. To cultivate a happy gut and a more peaceful family environment, it's crucial to incorporate stress-busting techniques into our daily routines. Whether it's meditation, yoga, exercise, or indulging in hobbies, finding ways to kick stress to the curb can work wonders for our gut and overall happiness.

And now, let's raise our glasses to the elixir of life—water! Staying hydrated is a vital ingredient in maintaining a happy gut. Guzzle enough water throughout the day, and you'll support digestion, prevent constipation, and create an ideal gut environment. So, keep those water bottles handy, and spice things up with herbal teas or infused water. Quenching your gut's thirst will lead to a more harmonious and well-balanced family life.

My fabulous health warriors, never underestimate the power of gut health in shaping your happiness and family harmony. Remember, I'm not a doctor, so it's always smart to consult with your healthcare provider before making major dietary changes. But let's face it, reducing gluten, sugar, and dairy from our diets benefits everyone, even those without allergies. So, take charge of your gut health, and may your journey toward happiness and family peace be filled with laughter, love, and a dash of sassy attitude. Cheers to gut happiness!

Elisha Lopez is the owner of and a real estate broker with Ocala Realty World in Central Florida. Lopez has more than 20 years of experience in real estate with over 10 of them as a broker/owner leading a large team. She's also the founder of the ORW School of Real Estate, which serves real estate students seeking licensure in Florida. In her courses and training sessions, Elisha shares her unique real estate expertise, insider tips and digital marketing strategies. Elisha is a graduate of The Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, where she earned a bachelor's degree in interior design. Elisha's No. 1 goal in business and in life is to help others. She operates Ocala Realty World with her husband and brokerage partner, Luis Lopez, who first encouraged her to start a career in real estate two decades ago.



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HYPOFRACTIONATION:

A New Standard of Care for Prostate Cancer



Radiation therapy, also known as radiotherapy, is extremely effective at treating and curing early stage prostate cancer. It is non-invasive, performed in an outpatient setting and, overall, is quite well-tolerated by patients. One significant drawback is the length of treatment. Thanks to ongoing technology advances, shorter treatment schedules are becoming the new standard of care for prostate cancer.

Radiation, which involves the use of high energy x-ray beams to destroy tumor cells, is usually delivered in one or more “fractions” or treatments. For the last several years, external beam radiotherapy for prostate cancer has consisted of once-daily treatment for approximately nine weeks, which can be extremely inconvenient for patients.

Hypofractionation is the use of radiotherapy at a smaller number of fractions but at a higher dose, made possible by modern equipment with advanced imaging capabilities.

Recent clinical trials have demonstrated that moderate hypofractionation—the use of shorter treatment schedules, one daily for five weeks—results in similar positive outcomes with no additional side effects. An added benefit? It also reduces cost to the patient.

Overall, side effects from prostate cancer treatment with radiotherapy are usually minimal and temporary. The most common side effects include fatigue, urinary frequency or urgency, diarrhea, rectal tenderness or irritation and the possibility of impotence (or erectile dysfunction).

Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute’s Ocala Cancer Center utilizes Align RT™, premier surface guided radiation technology. This non-invasive technique helps to position and monitor patients during radiation treatment with sub-millimeter accuracy, which allows clinicians to deliver treatment with great precision and without the need for any permanent marks or skin tattoos.

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

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EMSELLA® Treatment for Incontinence

By Dr. Tina Chandra

According to the Massachusetts Male Aging Study, about 40% of men are affected by erectile dysfunction at age 40 and 70% of men are affected at age 70. Enter Emsella for men. Emsella has been approved for men suffering from incontinence and erectile dysfunction because of weakening pelvic floor muscles. These muscles support all of the pelvic organs and when weakened, they can result in incontinence, premature ejaculation, and erectile dysfunction.

What is Emsella? Emsella is an FDA-approved treatment that utilizes High-Intensity Focused Electromagnetic Energy (HiFem). It creates thousands of contractions in the muscles of the pelvic floor each session. These contractions strengthen the pelvic floor muscles improving both incontinence and erectile dysfunction. The Emsella treatment is both non-invasive and modest. The patient stays fully clothed during the treatment. You simply sit comfortably in the Emsella chair while it does all the work without any pain or discomfort. The only sensation may be a slight tingling as the muscles contract. Treatment in the Emsella chair is cleared by the FDA for both men and women.

The treatment involves at least six sessions which are performed twice a week over three weeks. Each session takes approximately 30 minutes. The treatment has been shown to strengthen muscles, increase blood flow, help restore neuromuscular control, and increase the production of collagen and elastin, in addition to strengthening muscles.

Up to now, Kegels have been the best option for combatting Erectile Dysfunction. The great news is that Emsella stimulates many more Kegels than you could otherwise do on your own...engages both voluntary and involuntary muscles along the pelvic floor to create up to 11,000 contractions per minute. The pelvic floor muscles form the lower part of the pelvis and support the pelvic organs, including the bladder, rectum, and prostate. When pelvic floor weakness occurs, it may lead to erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation. Having erection problems from time to time is not necessarily a cause for concern. However, if erectile dysfunction is a persistent issue, it can cause stress, affect your self-confidence and contribute to relationship problems. Complications resulting from erectile dysfunction can include an unsatisfactory sex life, stress or anxiety, embarrassment or low self-esteem, relationship problems, or the inability to get your partner pregnant.



Men can also suffer from incontinence, associated with pelvic floor weakness. Many factors can affect male problems with incontinence and bladder leakage, with the primary cause being due to the prostate. An enlarged prostate after a prostatectomy, bladder surgery, or other treatments for prostate cancer can all contribute to male incontinence and erectile dysfunction. Other factors that can contribute to male incontinence include, but are not limited to, certain neurological disorders, obesity, smoking, and even family history. Men's incontinence typically involves a small amount of dribbling during exercise or at the end of the day. Chronic coughing or being overweight can put pressure on the bladder and lead to stress incontinence. Urge incontinence occurs when there is a need to urinate frequently or there is dribbling when the bladder is full.

Men will be pleased with the many benefits Emsella affords. Sessions result in increased bladder control, the end of urinary incontinence, increased penile rigidity and hardness, increased control over erection, increases time until ejaculation, reduce stress and anxiety, and restores confidence. We offer discreet Emsella treatments in our office. Treatments run for around 30 minutes while seated in the treatment chair. There is no downtime following the session. We welcome your questions and look forward to discussing the benefits of Emsella and how it can be the solution to your incontinence or erectile dysfunction.

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

DR. TINA CHANDRA

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



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

DR. RAVI CHANDRA

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



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



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Men's Health:

Why You Need to Stay on Top of Your Medical Exams

The month of November is also referred to as MOVEMBER for Men's Health. We often hear jokes that men prefer to stay away from the doctor, but more and more men have become proactive about their healthcare than ever before, which allows for healthier lifestyle choices and earlier diagnosis. Men taking the lead on their health is always better for long term outcomes and living well.

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

Getting Your Prostate Checked is Not Optional

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

Some of the Most Common Symptoms of the Disorder are:

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

Diagnostics

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



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

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

Additional Testing

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

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

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



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Treatment

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

Advanced Urology Institute

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

Services Offered & Conditions We Treat

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- Prostate Cancer Treatment
- Vasectomy & Vasectomy Reversal
- Urinary Tract Infection
- Pediatric Urology
- Women's Urological Health

We Value Patient-Centered, Evidence-Based Care

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

SUFFERING FROM MEMORY LOSS?

Could it be Alzheimer's Disease?

By Craig Curtis, M.D.

Is your memory not what it used to be?

Are you experiencing or having trouble with:

- ✓ Forgetfulness
- ✓ Focusing
- ✓ Short term memory
- ✓ Too many "Senior Moments"
- ✓ Friends or family concerned about your memory problems?

It's possible that your memory problems are simply a sign of aging as we all have some normal memory loss with age. But please do NOT ignore these "senior moments" as they could be a warning sign of something much more serious. Alzheimer's Disease currently affects 6.5 million Americans and over 10% of people 65 and older.

If you feel your memory is not what it used to be or seems to be getting worse, then you should know about recent advancements in the field of memory loss (and Alzheimer's Disease). Since Dr. Alois Alzheimer first published his important paper in 1907 describing the hallmark brain changes in Alzheimer's Disease, scientists all over the world have been searching for a treatment. Recently the United States FDA approved the world's first medication to successfully slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease. For the first time ever, a treatment now exists to slow the course of this devastating disease.

The search for a treatment began in 1901 when a patient named Mrs. Aguste Deter was admitted under the care of a brilliant young 37-year-old physician named Alois Alzheimer. Upon her passing, Dr. Alzheimer found abnormal clumps of "plaque" in her brain and theorized that this substance could be the cause of Mrs. Deter's memory problems. A few years later, in 1910, fellow scientists named the disease after the inquisitive Bavarian physician.

Then, in 1984, scientists finally isolated the "plaque" substance initially described by Dr. Alzheimer some 80 years earlier and named it Amyloid. They proposed that Amyloid becomes "sticky", accumulating in the brain leading to brain cell loss, memory problems and symptoms of dementia. Doctors and scientists all over the world then began the hunt for a treatment that would decrease Amyloid in the brain.



Recent research has finally led to a class of medications that successfully remove brain Amyloid and slow the progression of Alzheimer's Disease. Two such medications have recently been FDA approved - however, there is still much to be done to unravel this disease!

DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosing this disease as early as possible could help preserve precious memories. According to a recent report from the Alzheimer's Association, most patients want a diagnosis, but sadly only 33% of patients receive one - leaving many caregivers and families in the dark while losing precious time to seek treatment that could possibly slow it's progression. Thankfully, there are multiple FDA approved scans that accurately detect brain Amyloid assisting in a rapid diagnosis. Dr. Curtis uses these regularly in the clinic and his research using these scans has been published in international Neurology journals.

IS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE ALWAYS THE CAUSE OF MEMORY LOSS?

No. But Alzheimer's is the #1 cause of Dementia in about 80% of cases. There are many causes of memory impairment so a proper evaluation is critical as some causes of memory loss can be diagnosed, treated, and reversed. Two recent high-profile cases of non-Alzheimer's dementia have been in the news: the actor Bruce Willis was diagnosed with Frontotemporal Dementia/Aphasia and the comedian/actor Robin Williams was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia.

CAN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE BE PREVENTED?

My career has been spent studying prevention of dementia and Alzheimer's disease - and research shows it might be possible with certain diets (Mediterranean) that I will discuss in a future article! So, stay tuned!

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you, a friend, or a loved one are experiencing memory loss, currently taking a medication such as Donepezil or Memantine, or just interested in learning more, please contact Dr. Curtis at (352) 500-5252 or visit www.CraigCurtisMD.com to learn more and schedule a free in-office memory evaluation. There is no cost for the memory evaluation. Please do not delay.



CRAIG CURTIS, M.D.
US NAVY VETERAN 

DR. CRAIG CURTIS

Dr. Craig Curtis, MD, is a national expert on Alzheimer's Disease with 25 years spent researching treatments and brain health. He focuses on prevention and treatment of Alzheimer's Disease and his research has been published in leading national and international medical journals including the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Neurology. Dr. Curtis is particularly interested in the underlying biology and prevention of memory loss, dementia, and Alzheimer's Disease - and pursuing the science that one day will lead to an effective treatment.

To learn more about Dr. Curtis
please visit his website:

www.CraigCurtisMD.com
352-500-5252

1400 North US Hwy 441
Sharon L Morse Medical Office Building 500
The Villages, FL 32159

CELEBRATING NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE MONTH

Submitted by Hospice of Marion County

Each November hospices around the U.S. recognize and celebrate National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. It's a way to highlight the benefits of hospice care and help bring awareness to the special compassionate and comforting care that hospice organizations provide every day.

Perspectives on death and dying may differ across various cultures, but simply having a conversation with your loved one about it can have a profound impact. While it may be difficult to ponder one's own death or that of a loved one, it is exactly these courageous conversations we should be having to ensure loved one's wishes are known before it's too late. It could mean the difference between having the type of end-of-life care desired experience, matching their values and wishes, to one that doesn't. Not knowing in advance can cause unnecessary stress for families.

When a family is coping with a serious illness and a cure is no longer possible, hospice care can provide the comfort and dignity wanted when nearing death. However, it's an all too common situation: A family is at the bedside of a loved one who is near death, unable to speak for themselves. Each member of the family has a different idea of what should be done and what the patient would have wanted.

Having a conversation with loved ones about your advance directives is a gift that leaves no unanswered questions and provides peace of mind to everyone. As part of your planning, also make sure you have shared your advance directives with your physician and family. Make sure they know where these are in your home in case of an emergency (don't keep them in a safe deposit box at your bank that only you can access).

We encourage everyone to have these conversations to start a meaningful dialogue. In fact, it's recommended that everyone do this before a medical emergency. Just like you plan for your retirement, you should plan for your death by having advance directives completed. Preparing an advance directive identifies who your healthcare surrogate is and gives your loved ones a roadmap to what your wishes are at end of life.



Many think hospice care is only when someone has a few days or weeks left to live. However, Medicare beneficiaries are entitled to 180 days of hospice care. That's six months of special comfort care only hospice professionals can provide, and Medicare provides 100% coverage of these services. When people don't receive this benefit until the final days of life, they miss out on all that hospice can offer and may end up spending difficult days in the hospital or emergency room. Hospice providers can help with information about care options and choices to ensure you live as fully as possible. They will make sure you and your loved one receive emotional, spiritual and grief support as well.

Considered to be the model for high-quality, compassionate care for people with a life-limiting illness, hospice and supportive care is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurance plans. Make sure you are getting your full hospice benefit. Learn more about hospice care and how Hospice of Marion County can help you or a loved one by calling (352) 873-7415.

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DRINKS AND KEY INGREDIENTS FOR ENHANCING BLOOD CIRCULATION

Maintaining optimal blood circulation is crucial for overall health and well-being. Proper blood flow ensures that oxygen, nutrients, and immune cells are efficiently delivered throughout the body, while waste products are removed. In recent years, there has been growing interest in blood circulation drinks – beverages formulated with ingredients believed to support and improve blood circulation. This article delves into the science behind blood circulation drinks, their potential benefits, and the key ingredients commonly found in these beverages.

The Importance of Blood Circulation

Blood circulation plays a pivotal role in maintaining the body's physiological functions. A well-functioning circulatory system ensures that vital organs receive the nutrients and oxygen they need to operate efficiently. Poor blood circulation has been associated with various health issues, including cardiovascular diseases, cold extremities, and cognitive impairment.

Understanding Blood Circulation Drinks

Blood circulation drinks are beverages designed to promote and enhance blood flow within the body. These drinks often contain a combination of natural ingredients that are believed to have a positive impact on circulation. While research on the specific effects of these drinks is ongoing, many of the ingredients they contain have been studied individually for their potential benefits on blood flow.

Key Ingredients in Blood Circulation Drinks

- **Nitric Oxide Boosters:** Nitric oxide is a vasodilator that relaxes blood vessels, allowing for improved blood flow. Ingredients like beetroot and pomegranate have been shown to increase nitric oxide production and help widen blood vessels, potentially enhancing circulation.¹
- **Antioxidants:** Ingredients rich in antioxidants, such as vitamin C and polyphenols found in berries and green tea, help protect blood vessels from oxidative stress and inflammation, supporting healthy blood circulation.²
- **Ginger and Turmeric:** These spices have anti-inflammatory properties that may help reduce arterial stiffness and improve blood vessel function, contributing to better circulation.³
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Found in sources like fish oil, omega-3 fatty acids have been linked to improved arterial function and reduced blood clot formation, thus aiding in maintaining healthy circulation.⁴
- **Cayenne Pepper:** The compound capsaicin in cayenne pepper has been associated with improved blood flow and enhanced circulation due to its vasodilatory effects.⁵



Top Drinks for Blood Circulation (quick list)

- **Pomegranate Juice:** Pomegranate juice is rich in polyphenol antioxidants, which research suggests can improve blood circulation. This juice also has nutrients, including vitamin C, which strengthens blood vessels and can improve blood flow in that way. Pomegranate juice also has nitrate, which can widen blood vessels and facilitate blood flow. If you live with varicose veins, you may also appreciate that pomegranate juice has anti-inflammatory properties.
 - **Tea:** Some teas contain antioxidants, which can improve blood circulation by protecting you from the free radicals that can lead to clogged arteries.
- To improve circulation, consider incorporating tea into your daily routine. Green and black teas are packed with antioxidants that help protect the body from free radicals, which can lead to heart disease. Additionally, ginger tea has been found to improve blood flow as a natural vasodilator, widening blood vessels and enhancing blood flow. So, when selecting tea, opt for green and black varieties or try ginger tea for an extra circulation boost.

- **Beetroot Juice:** Beets can dilate the blood vessels, and in doing so increase blood flow throughout your body. Beetroot juice can also help lower your blood pressure, which is often a problem when your arteries are partly blocked. Plus, beets have nitrate, which your body uses to make nitric oxide, a compound that increases blood flow by widening blood vessels.
- **Water:** Blood is mostly water, so it is logical that staying hydrated with water can support healthy blood flow. Interestingly, experts suggest drinking warm water rather than cold, since icy water can cause veins to contract temporarily. You may also want to carry a water container that lets you measure how much you are drinking to keep track of your consumption.

Most adults should drink up to two liters of water daily. This is the equivalent of 67 ounces or a little over 4 16 oz. bottles of water per day.

Conclusion

Blood circulation drinks have gained popularity as a potential way to enhance overall cardiovascular health and well-being. These beverages often contain a blend of natural ingredients known for their potential benefits on blood flow. While the individual ingredients have shown promise in scientific research, more comprehensive studies are needed to fully validate the efficacy of blood circulation drinks. As with any dietary supplement, it's advisable to consult with a healthcare professional before incorporating these beverages into your routine. Maintaining a balanced diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and managing stress remain fundamental strategies for promoting optimal blood circulation and overall health. *Read more on this subject from specialty trained, vascular surgeon, Dr. John Horowitz, at Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center: <https://cfvein.com/blood-circulation-drinks/>*

At Central Florida Vein and Vascular Center, our team of board-certified, fellowship-trained vascular surgeons is equipped with the experience and resources necessary to deliver high-level comfort and care. We treat patients of all ages, offering a wide range of minimally invasive treatments. We are dedicated to discussing all treatment options with you and ensuring you understand all aspects of your venous care. Whether you are experiencing tender veins or ulcers, we'll diagnose your condition and come up with an advanced, minimally invasive treatment plan based on your specific needs.

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ASSISTED LIVING FOR MEMORY CARE: UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS

By Elizabeth Mello, Executive Director

Assisted living communities are designed to provide a comfortable and supportive environment for seniors who need assistance with daily activities. Memory care, which is a specialized form of assisted living, is designed for individuals who have been diagnosed with memory-related conditions such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Here at AdviniaCare at Paddock Ridge, we provide a secure and structured environment that is tailored to meet the unique needs of residents with memory loss.

AdviniaCare at Paddock Ridge offers many benefits to seniors with memory-related conditions, including:

A Safe and Secure Environment

We provide a secure environment that is designed to prevent residents from wandering or getting lost. AdviniaCare at Paddock Ridge has locked doors and security features that prevent residents from leaving the community without assistance. This provides peace of mind for family members who may worry about their loved one's safety.

Specialized Care

We provide specialized care that is tailored to meet the unique needs of residents with memory loss. Staff members are trained to provide assistance with activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, and grooming, as well as specialized care for individuals with memory-related conditions.

Structured Activities

We provide structured activities that are designed to engage residents and promote cognitive function. These activities may include memory games, music therapy, art therapy, and other activities that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of individuals with memory loss.

Nutritious Meals

We provide nutritious meals that are designed to meet the unique dietary needs of residents with memory loss. Many memory care facilities also offer snacks and hydration stations throughout the day to ensure that residents are properly nourished.

Socialization Opportunities

We provide socialization opportunities that are designed to promote social interaction and engagement. Many communities have common areas where residents can gather, as well as planned activities and events that promote socialization and community.

24/7 Monitoring

We provide 24/7 monitoring to ensure that residents are safe and secure at all times. Staff members are trained to recognize the signs of memory-related conditions, such as confusion or disorientation, and to provide appropriate support and care.

Peace of Mind for Family Members

AdviniaCare at Paddock Ridge provides peace of mind for family members who may worry about their loved one's safety and well-being. Knowing that their loved one is receiving specialized care and support can alleviate the stress and worry that often comes with caring for someone with memory loss.

In addition to these benefits, AdviniaCare at Paddock Ridge also provides support and resources for family members. Many communities offer support groups, educational resources, and other services that are designed to help family members cope with the challenges of caring for someone with memory loss.

Memory Care Services Include:

- Assistance setting appointments and coordinating outside health care needs
- Daily verbal prompting for meals, activities of daily living, and life enrichment programming
- Daily bed making and routine night checks
- Coordinate diagnostics testing/scheduling transportation for doctor visits
- Daily personal assistance with grooming and/or dressing
- Personal assistance with bathing
- Personal escort to meals and activities
- Personal assistance with dining and menu selections
- Assistance with behavioral expressions
- Medications management is included



Choosing a Memory Care Community

When choosing a memory care community, it's important to consider the needs and preferences of the individual with memory loss. Some factors to consider include:

Location: Choosing a community that is close to family members and loved ones can make it easier to visit and stay connected.

Size: Some individuals may prefer a smaller community with a more intimate environment, while others may prefer a larger facility with more amenities.

Services: Consider the services and amenities offered by the facility, such as specialized care, structured activities, and nutritious meals.

Staffing: Ask about the staff-to-resident ratio and the qualifications and training of staff members.

Cost: Memory care communities can vary widely in cost, so it's important to consider the budget and financial resources of the individual with memory loss and their family.

We at AdviniaCare recognize that caring for loved ones with memory loss can both be a pleasure and a challenge at times. With our memory care programs, we can relieve some of the burden off of your shoulders and create a beneficial experience for both you and your loved one.



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Ketamine Health Centers:

HELPING PATIENTS REDUCE STRESS WITH SGB

The Stellate Ganglion Block (SGB) is a medical procedure for managing pain-related conditions and certain neurological disorders. It involves the injection of local anesthetics, such as Lidocaine and Ropivacaine, into the stellate ganglion, a cluster of nerve cells located in the neck on either side of the voice box (larynx), at the level of the sixth cervical vertebra. Two nerve blocks are used, one at the C6 and the second at the C4.

Indications:

- SGB is commonly used to treat the upper extremities' complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS).
- It can also be considered in managing neuropathic pain, vasospastic disorders, and conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

How it Works:

- During the procedure, a trained medical professional typically uses ultrasound to locate the stellate ganglion accurately.
- A local anesthetic is injected into this nerve cluster.
- The medication temporarily blocks or modulates the nerve signals in the region, which can help reduce pain and improve blood flow.

Procedure Details:

- The procedure is usually performed on an outpatient basis.
- You may be asked to fast for several hours before the procedure.
- It's essential to inform your healthcare provider about any allergies or medical conditions you have.

Effectiveness:

- The effectiveness of SGB can vary from person to person. Some individuals experience significant mental health and pain relief, while others may have more modest results.
- It is often combined with other treatments and therapies, depending on the underlying condition.

Post-Procedure Care:

- You might experience temporary numbness or weakness in the upper extremity on the side where the block was administered.
- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions for post-procedure care, which may include restrictions on certain activities.

Seek Medical Advice:

- If you are considering a Stellate Ganglion Block, it is essential to consult a qualified medical provider.
- Discuss your symptoms, medical history, and treatment options thoroughly with your healthcare professional.

According to Dr. Raul Cruz, Medical Director at the Miami and West Palm Beach locations: *"The SGB procedure has really been a game changer for our patients at KHC. It is a highly effective, safe, quick, and fast-acting procedure used synergistically with our ketamine infusions to provide a robust Body (SGB) and Mind (Infusions) solution to PTSD symptoms, where other modalities may only scratch the surface. It will take an overactive fight or flight response that has become deranged and normalize it in minutes and hours, providing relief for months. There is nothing else that comes close to its speed and effectiveness."*

The Administration of Ketamine Infusions

Ketamine infusions are administered in a controlled medical setting to ensure patient safety and optimize therapeutic outcomes. The dosage, frequency, and duration of ketamine therapy vary based on the specific condition being treated, the individual's response, and the healthcare provider's recommendations. Patients typically remain awake as they receive the medication intravenously (IV).

Ketamine infusions have transcended their role as an anesthetic agent, offering newfound hope and healing for individuals battling treatment-resistant psychiatric conditions and chronic pain disorders.

Their rapid onset of action and efficacy have revolutionized treatment approaches, especially for those who have exhausted conventional therapies.

Begin Your Recovery Journey Today!

What Our Patients Are Saying

"The KHC team really cares about every single person that walks in the doors. From the moment I walked in, I felt welcomed and relaxed! The facilities are beautiful and the people are so kind & professional. I highly recommend Ketamine Health Centers and am so grateful for their work."
- Francesca T.

"I did my first treatment in January of 2019, and it was life changing to say the least. The staff is spectacular, and this place was essential on my road to mental health recovery. You can view my testimonial on the Instagram page for the ketamine health centers. Truly grateful, thank you so much!!"
- Juan C.

"So grateful for the entire team at Ketamine Health centers! They all genuinely care about their patients. What they have done for my brother and our family is priceless. No better group of people to help someone you love through a crisis."
- Janelle M.



KETAMINE HEALTH CENTERS

As the leading provider of IV ketamine infusion therapy in Florida, we aim to provide relief and offer hope to those suffering from treatment-resistant conditions. We are one of the very few centers specializing in ketamine infusion therapy, with a team of both mental health and certified anesthesia professionals to help our patients on their journey to recovery.



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In addition to ketamine infusion therapy, our centers have multiple treatment options designed to help you regain control and start living again. Considering your health, our practical and minimally invasive therapies are available for various conditions.

At **Ketamine Health Centers**, our goal is for our patients to succeed. We want you to be happy and healthy. Our mission is to help depression, fibromyalgia, and post-traumatic stress disorder sufferers, as well as recovering substance abusers, to regain balance in their lives.

With years of medical experience, knowledge, and prior ketamine application, our team of qualified medical experts can provide patients with life-changing, holistic treatments.

Check out our YouTube channel to see what we have to offer and how we can help you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmTvhURAUzIs>

***Ketamine Health Centers** is affiliated with **Irwin Naturals Emergence** as a mental health and chronic pain provider. We are collaborating with the nutritional supplements company to address the mind-gut connection.



Dale Alice Block, LMFT

Dale Alice Block, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Clinical Director of Ketamine Health Centers

After graduating from the University of Rhode Island with a masters in MFT, Ms. Block completed three years of post-graduate study in clinical supervision and management, culminating in the AAMFT Qualified Supervisor designation. Her clinical experience and supervision of other professionals spans 30+ years. She has established and supervised multiple programs, both inpatient and outpatient, including trauma focused care programs, addiction facilities, loss and bereavement programs, neurodiverse support programming, spiritual healing programs, general counseling and currently all clinical aspects of the counseling and alternative services at Ketamine Health Centers across the state.



Raul Cruz, MD, Medical Director

Dr. Cruz is a Certified Diplomate of the American Board of Anesthesiology and has been a licensed, practicing anesthesiologist for 15 years. Dr. Cruz has had extensive experience in both the academic and private practice settings including teaching, operating room and practice management, and direct patient care.

Dr. Cruz has been involved in the full spectrum of anesthesia practice ranging from procedural medicine and all the surgical sub-specialties, including level 1 Trauma and Burn surgery; as well as anesthetic management in Obstetrics and Psychiatry. During his 15 years in practice, Dr. Cruz has developed an expert knowledge in the use of and delivery of IV ketamine to treat burn patients, as well as those with acute and postoperative pain. He has had success treating patients with comorbid depression, anxiety, and/or PTSD using ketamine infusions in the hospital setting, while also using it as an anesthetic, an analgesic, and as a sedative.

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TIS' THE SEASON FOR GIFTING

Often times it may not feel like the holiday season with Florida's toasty temperatures, but don't be fooled. The holidays are here! There's an undeniable sense of anticipation in the air, as many of us are looking forward to reconnecting with friends and family.

With Christmas 2023 just around the corner, the age-old tradition of exchanging gifts and spreading joy takes center stage. This year, however, there's a growing trend that savvy shoppers are embracing – the art of shopping early. Beyond the twinkling lights and bustling holiday markets, the wisdom of starting your Christmas shopping ahead of time becomes evident. As we navigate through a world of ever-changing dynamics, early holiday shopping not only ensures access to the finest gifts but also offers a respite from the last-minute chaos, allowing for a more thoughtful and enjoyable celebration.



2023 Gifting Trends

Everyone is under a lot of stress, so consider gifting something focused around health, wellness and mindfulness. Think self care, aromatherapy, meditation, journaling and even fitness. The great thing about wellness gifts is that they are perfect for people of all ages and enjoyed by both men and women alike.

Young children will enjoy a set of fizzy bath bombs. Your best friend will appreciate a handwritten friendship note on the first page of a gorgeous leather-bound journal. Your co-workers may like an aromatic collection of soaps or essential oils. And, your significant other will love a set of comfy pajamas or workout clothes for the gym.



Avoid the Sweets & Drinks

Traditionally, alcohol and sweets such as chocolate and cookies, have been the "go to" gifts for clients and family members. They're easy to give, but often times they're eaten and forgotten. Or, they're simply trashed when New Year's Day rolls around, and people are purging their kitchens of all the calorie-laden gift sets. Let's face it, many of us have put on some "lb's" over the past few years, so do everyone a favor and skip the sweets and choose health & wellness options.

Give Experiences

Another gift idea that is on trend for 2023 is experiential gifts. This could be a trip to the spa for a relaxing massage, a facial with your local esthetician, a sunset boat cruise or an art class. Experiential gifts are memorable, and they're perfect for the person in your life who already has one of everything.

Shop Local

Although it's tempting to knock-out your list by simply shopping online, consider visiting the locally-owned stores in your community. Many small businesses and restaurants have struggled the past few years. By shopping local, you'll find truly unique gifts with a delightful shopping experience that you can't get online. Plus, you'll be supporting the fabric and diversity of your community by helping to keep local shops in business.

Skip the holiday hustle this year. Make your list. Check it twice. And get your holiday shopping done!



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Naples Soap Company has carefully curated a huge assortment of gift sets to make your gift giving a breeze this holiday season. From our coastal-inspired "Christmas on the Beach Box" to our all-new "Self Care Essentials Sets" to our fan favorite "Soap Stacks," we have something for every budget and for everyone on your list. Naples Soap Company has 14 stores across the state of Florida. Visit us at naplessoap.com to find a store near you or shop online and ship for free with orders over \$50.

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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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THE DEADLY CONNECTION:

Smoking, COPD, Lung Cancer, and Impaired Wound Healing

By Dr. Nam Dinh, MD, FAAOS

Smoking has long been recognized as a major public health hazard, with a laundry list of adverse health effects. Among the most devastating consequences are Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and lung cancer, both closely linked to smoking. Additionally, the negative effects of nicotine on wound healing underscore the crucial need to quit smoking prior to surgery.

COPD: A Slow and Silent Killer

COPD is a progressive lung disease that encompasses conditions like chronic bronchitis and emphysema. The primary culprit behind COPD is tobacco smoke, responsible for nearly 90% of all COPD cases. Smoking introduces harmful chemicals and irritants into the respiratory system, leading to inflammation and damage in the airways. This can result in a reduced ability to breathe, chronic coughing, and impaired quality of life.

Lung Cancer: A Lethal Consequence of Smoking

Lung cancer remains one of the deadliest cancers globally, and smoking is its leading cause. The carcinogens in tobacco smoke, such as benzene and formaldehyde, can initiate genetic mutations in lung cells, leading to the uncontrolled growth of cancerous tumors. Sadly, lung cancer often remains undetected until advanced stages, contributing to its low survival rate.

Nicotine's Role in Wound Healing

While the lung-related dangers of smoking are widely known, the negative effects of nicotine on wound healing are less publicized but equally significant. Nicotine, a highly addictive compound found in tobacco, narrows blood vessels and reduces blood flow. This constriction limits the delivery of essential nutrients and oxygen to healing tissues, slowing down the body's natural recovery process.

Furthermore, nicotine disrupts the delicate balance of inflammation and anti-inflammatory responses in the body. This imbalance can result in prolonged inflammation at the wound site, delaying healing and increasing the risk of complications, such as infections and poor scarring.

The Critical Importance of Quitting Before Surgery

For individuals facing surgery, whether it's elective or necessary, quitting smoking is paramount. Smoking before surgery increases the risk of complications



during and after the procedure. Reduced blood flow and impaired wound healing can lead to slower recovery times, increased postoperative pain, and a higher likelihood of infections.

Surgeons often recommend quitting smoking for a certain period before surgery to optimize outcomes. The duration can vary based on the type of surgery and individual health factors. In some cases, even a few weeks of abstinence can significantly improve the body's readiness for the operation.

How to Quit Successfully

Quitting smoking is a challenging endeavor, but it is far from impossible. Numerous resources and strategies are available to help individuals kick the habit and improve their health:

- 1. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT):** NRT products like nicotine gum, patches, and lozenges can help gradually reduce nicotine dependence.
- 2. Prescription Medications:** There are prescription medications, such as varenicline and bupropion, that can aid in smoking cessation.
- 3. Behavioral Support:** Counseling and support groups can provide essential guidance and motivation to quit smoking successfully.
- 4. Mindfulness and Stress Reduction:** Practicing mindfulness techniques and finding healthy ways to manage stress can be critical in maintaining a smoke-free lifestyle.
- 5. Support from Loved Ones:** Inform friends and family about your decision to quit smoking and ask for their support.

- 6. Set a Quit Date:** Choose a specific date to quit smoking and prepare for it mentally and emotionally.

A Path to Better Health

The connection between smoking, COPD, lung cancer, and impaired wound healing is undeniable. The negative impact of nicotine on the body's ability to heal wounds underscores the necessity of quitting smoking before surgery. By taking this important step, individuals not only improve their surgical outcomes but also reduce their risk of developing life-threatening lung diseases and ultimately pave the way for a healthier, smoke-free future. The journey to quitting is undoubtedly challenging, but the rewards for your health and well-being are immeasurable.

About Dr. Nam Dinh

Dr. Nam Dinh is a board-certified, fellowship trained orthopedic surgeon at Optimotion Orthopaedics with special training in minimally invasive LATERAL total knee replacement ANTERIOR hip replacement surgery. To learn more information about Dr. Dinh visit optimotion.com.



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ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS WHEN SEARCHING FOR ASSISTED LIVING

By Janice Martin, Owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida

A family recently contacted me to help them find an assisted living community that would provide an appropriate placement for their loved one with significant care needs. They had been through one ordeal after another and felt they had been given promises that were not fulfilled. Only after moving into a community did they realize they'd been misled when a life threatening occurrence arose.

Sadly, this is not an uncommon situation. When an individual has a care need that has the potential to need a heightened degree of responsiveness due to their diagnosis, it is imperative that the questions that are asked during the initial visit are very specific. The perfect example is related to nursing availability. The question is often asked, "Do you have nurses 24/7?" While this appears to be precise, it is not. In this example, the evasive answer is generally yes. Yes, they have caregivers and nurses available 24/7. What is often not disclosed is that the nurse goes home at a certain hour and is then only available by phone. Should an urgent need arise in the middle of the night, the staff must call and wake the nurse and explain the situation. The nurse must then get dressed, drive to the community, park the car, and make their way to the resident before providing the care. This could easily take up to an hour or longer, which is not always practical.

Instead, the correct way to phrase it is, "Are there nurses IN THE BUILDING 24/7?" Very specific. What is surprising is there are very few communities that do. Some will tell you that they don't because it's difficult to find nurses. While this is true, there are staffing agencies that readily provide temporary nurses to assist until a permanent nurse is hired. Sadly, they may choose not to utilize this due to cost.

While assisting this family, I reached out to several communities to ask about their nursing standards. Although I knew a few that have nurses in the building overnight, I was shocked to learn that some that previously did no longer do. Because I didn't specifically ask if the protocol had changed, they didn't share that it had. Thankfully, I was able to locate one that does.

There are three levels of licenses in assisted living - Standard, Limited Nursing Services (LNS), and Extended Congregate Care (ECC). Each offers an increasing degree of authority to provide care.

Previous regulations governing assisted living communities had only allowed those with an LNS or ECC license to provide hands-on nursing care. However, a Standard license now allows nurses the authority to provide greater care. What is interesting is that although a community with an LNS or ECC may deny a potential resident due to their care needs, a community with a Standard license may choose to accept them. It will depend upon the community's protocols and the availability of nurses in the building.

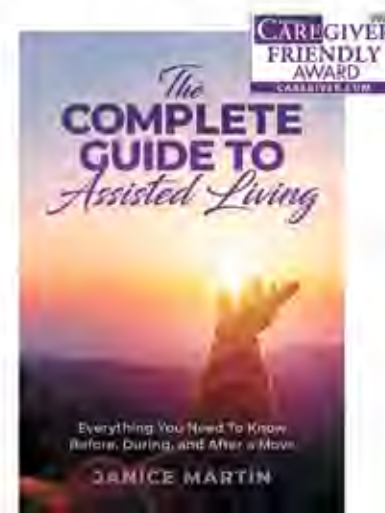


Such was the case while helping this family. I met with the Executive Director of a community with a Standard license who consulted with their Director of Nursing to determine if they could provide the care needed with 24 hour LPNs. I was assured by this trusted leader that they could help.

Despite my confidence, I felt it was necessary to reach out to the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA). AHCA is the governing agency that creates and enforces the regulations surrounding assisted living communities. I spoke with a representative and specifically asked if a community with a Standard license has the authority to provide the level of care needed in this situation. I was assured they could. I then asked if I could see it in writing for final confirmation and they obliged.

There are some key factors that are important to understand. Not all situations require this level of oversight. Critical needs that would make it necessary includes 1) someone who may have frequent falls where a nurse is available to assess the situation before automatically sending the resident to the hospital; 2) someone with a blood disease that causes heavy bleeding in need of frequent bandaging; 3) a diabetic who needs to have their glucose closely monitored and insulin administered; 4) a person with a port that is prone to infection; 5) or a colostomy bag that could leak. Not all licenses will allow for all of these circumstances so it's important to disclose these needs during your search.

The story I shared is the perfect example of why a family should never walk into a community without representation when there is a life threatening health concern that must be managed diligently. It is important that the representative has a solid understanding of the communities in the area, understands their licenses, protocols, and staffing, and communicates full disclosure of the specific situation before referring the community to a family. There are national companies that are merely directories of community names that do not understand this. I encourage you to work with a LOCAL professional who will guide you one on one to achieve the outcome you and your family deserve.



Janice Martin is an author, educator, and specialist on senior living options and the owner of Senior Liaison of Central Florida Inc. She assists families in locating senior living communities and has written "The Complete Guide to Assisted Living: Everything You Need to Know Before, During, and After a Move." This award winning and #1 best seller is available on Amazon.com in paperback and eBook. For more information, call 352-477-1866 or visit www.seniorliaisoncfl.com.



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The Growing Concern: Diabetes and the Soaring Cost of Medications

In recent years, diabetes has become a global health epidemic, affecting millions of individuals worldwide. While the physical and emotional toll of managing this chronic condition is challenging in itself, another significant burden looms large – the escalating cost of diabetes medications. This article explores the ever-increasing financial strain that diabetes medications impose on patients and the healthcare system, shedding light on the causes and potential solutions to this critical issue.

Diabetes, a metabolic disorder characterized by high blood sugar levels, requires ongoing management to prevent complications. Medications play a pivotal role in controlling blood glucose, but their rising costs are creating barriers for patients. Several factors contribute to the increasing expense of diabetes medications, including research and development costs, pharmaceutical company practices, and the complex healthcare system in the United States.

Research and development are essential in creating innovative diabetes drugs, but the cost is often passed on to consumers. Drug companies invest vast sums of money in developing and testing new medications, and these expenses are factored into the final product's price. Unfortunately, these high development costs are disproportionately borne by individuals with diabetes, making it a major challenge for them to access the medications they need.

Pharmaceutical company practices, including pricing strategies and patent protections, also contribute to the soaring cost of diabetes medications. Some companies have been criticized for raising prices without apparent justification, and the lack of competition in the marketplace allows them to maintain high prices. Furthermore, patent protections often prevent more affordable generic versions of drugs from entering the market, further limiting choices for patients.

The complexity of the healthcare system in the United States adds another layer of confusion to the issue of medication costs. Insurance plans, copayments, and deductibles vary widely, making it challenging for individuals with diabetes to predict

their out-of-pocket expenses. This unpredictability leaves many struggling to budget for their medications, leading to skipped doses or medication non-adherence, which can exacerbate their condition and lead to more expensive complications.

To address the growing concern of diabetes medication costs, several potential solutions can be considered. Policymakers can work to promote transparency in drug pricing, enabling patients to make informed choices about their medications. Encouraging competition among pharmaceutical companies through patent reform and price controls could also help to lower costs.

Furthermore, expanding access to affordable healthcare for all, as seen in the implementation of universal healthcare systems in some countries, can alleviate the financial burden on patients with diabetes. These comprehensive healthcare systems often negotiate directly with drug companies, resulting in lower medication prices and ensuring that patients have access to necessary treatments.

On a personal level, individuals with diabetes can explore alternative ways to reduce medication costs, such as switching to generic medications, participating in assistance programs, or seeking out affordable healthcare options. It's crucial for patients to advocate for themselves and become informed about available resources.

In conclusion, the increasing cost of diabetes medications is a pressing issue that affects millions of individuals globally. While the causes of these rising costs are multifaceted, potential solutions exist at the policy and personal levels. By addressing the problem of diabetes medication costs, we can work towards ensuring that individuals with diabetes receive the treatments they need without being financially overwhelmed, ultimately improving their overall health and well-being.

Prescription Hope is a national prescription drug benefit program that offers 1,500 Brand-Name medications at \$60 per medication per month no matter the retail cost.

For the set price of \$60 per month per medication, our advocates order, manage, track, and refill your prescription medications through patient assistance programs for those who qualify. We manage your enrollment with these programs throughout the year, working with over 180 pharmaceutical manufacturers and their pharmacy. There are no other costs, fees, or charges associated with your medication or our program.

Diabetes			
Drug Name	Retail Cost	Prescription Hope	Total Savings
Admelog	\$194.00	\$60.00	\$134.00
Apidra	\$512.00	\$60.00	\$452.00
Apidra SoloStar	\$512.00	\$60.00	\$452.00
Basaglar	\$248.00	\$60.00	\$188.00
Cycloset	\$328.00	\$60.00	\$268.00
Farxiga	\$551.00	\$60.00	\$491.00
Fiasp	\$285.00	\$60.00	\$225.00
Fiasp FlexTouch	\$544.00	\$60.00	\$484.00
Glyxambi	\$577.00	\$60.00	\$517.00
Humalog	\$269.00	\$60.00	\$209.00
Humalog KwikPen	\$412.00	\$60.00	\$352.00
Humalog Mix 50/50	\$217.00	\$60.00	\$157.00
Humalog Mix 50/50 KwikPen	\$325.00	\$60.00	\$265.00
Humalog Mix 75/25 KwikPen	\$217.00	\$60.00	\$157.00
Humulin 70/30 KwikPen	\$506.00	\$60.00	\$446.00
Humulin R U-500	\$1,432.00	\$60.00	\$1,372.00
Humulin R U-500 KwikPen	\$556.00	\$60.00	\$496.00
Janumet	\$1,584.00	\$60.00	\$1,524.00
Janumet XR	\$533.00	\$60.00	\$473.00
Januvia	\$533.00	\$60.00	\$473.00
Jardiance	\$578.00	\$60.00	\$518.00
Jentadueto	\$460.00	\$60.00	\$400.00
Jentadueto XR	\$460.00	\$60.00	\$400.00
Lantus SoloStar	\$425.00	\$60.00	\$365.00
Levemir	\$451.00	\$60.00	\$391.00
Lyumjev	\$246.00	\$60.00	\$186.00
Ozempic	\$907.00	\$60.00	\$847.00
Synjardy	\$579.00	\$60.00	\$519.00
Synjardy XR	\$579.00	\$60.00	\$519.00
Toujeo SoloStar	\$397.00	\$60.00	\$337.00
Tradjenta	\$460.00	\$60.00	\$400.00
Trijardy XR	\$578.00	\$60.00	\$518.00
Victoza	\$722.00	\$60.00	\$662.00
Xigduo XR	\$556.00	\$60.00	\$496.00



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NATIONAL HEALTHY SKIN MONTH

By Dr. Ashley Cauthen

November is National Healthy Skin Month, a time to celebrate and prioritize the health of our skin. Your skin is not only the largest organ of your body, but it also plays a vital role in protecting you from external threats and reflects your overall well-being. In honor of this month, we have gathered expert tips and advice to help you maintain healthy, glowing skin all year round.

Your skin is a remarkable organ that performs numerous essential functions for your overall health. It acts as a protective barrier against harmful viruses, infections, and environmental factors. Additionally, it helps regulate body temperature and fluid balance. Taking care of your skin is not just about looking good; it is an integral part of maintaining your overall well-being.

Understanding Skin Cancer Prevention

Skin cancer is a significant concern worldwide, with one in five Americans developing it by the age of 70. It is crucial to raise awareness about skin cancer prevention and early detection. By following these tips, you can significantly reduce your risk:

- **Wear Sunscreen Daily:** Protect your skin from harmful UV rays by applying a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30 every day. Don't forget to reapply every two hours, especially when spending extended periods outdoors. Some of MidState's favorites are ISDIN Eryfotona Ageless & Actinica, EltaMD Elements and UV Clear.
- **Cover Up:** When spending time outdoors, wear protective clothing, such as wide-brimmed hats and sun-protective clothing, to shield your skin from direct sun exposure.
- **Stay in the Shade:** Seek shade whenever possible, especially during peak sun hours between 10 am and 4 pm, when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- **Perform Self-Skin Exams:** Regularly examine your skin for any changes, including new moles, growths, or spots. If you notice anything unusual, remember your ABC's. A- asymmetry, B- border, C- color, D- diameter (less than 10mm), E- evolving.

Dermatologist-Recommended Skincare Habits

Maintaining healthy skin requires adopting good skincare habits. Follow these expert-recommended tips to keep your skin looking and feeling its best:

1. Cleanse and Moisturize Daily

Start your skincare routine by cleansing your face with a gentle cleanser suited for your skin type. Follow up with a moisturizer that provides hydration and nourishment.

2. Determine Your Skin Type

Understanding your skin type is essential for choosing the right skincare products. Whether you have dry, oily, combination, or sensitive skin, select products that address your specific needs.

3. Protect Your Skin from Environmental Factors

Environmental factors, such as pollution and harsh weather conditions, can damage your skin. Using antioxidants, like vitamin C, can help neutralize free radicals and protect your skin from premature aging. Snag ISDIN's Vitamin C from one of our three locations.

4. Embrace the Power of Retinol

Incorporating retinol or retinoid products into your skincare routine can help improve skin texture, reduce wrinkles, and even out pigmentation. Start with a low concentration and gradually increase usage to avoid irritation. Skinbetter Sciences' AlphaRet is a great starter retinoid that's safe for all skintypes.

5. Get Your Beauty Sleep

A good night's sleep is not just crucial for your overall well-being but also for the health of your skin. Aim for seven to nine hours of quality sleep to allow your skin to repair and rejuvenate itself.

6. Stay Hydrated

Hydration is key to maintaining healthy skin. Drink at least eight glasses of water daily to keep your skin hydrated and flush out toxins. Limit alcohol consumption, as it dehydrates the skin and can exacerbate skin issues.

8. Visit a Dermatologist

Regular visits to a dermatologist are essential for maintaining healthy skin. A dermatologist can assess your skin's condition, provide personalized recommendations, and address any concerns or issues you may have.

As the winter season approaches, it's essential to give your skin some extra attention. The cold weather and dry indoor heat can lead to dryness, itching, and other skin problems. Here are some tips to keep your skin healthy and radiant during winter:

- **Moisturize Intensively:** Use a heavier lotion or skin cream after showers to lock in moisture and prevent dryness. Don't forget to apply a lip balm with SPF protection to keep your lips hydrated and protected from the elements.
- **Protect Your Skin During Winter Sports:** If you enjoy winter sports, such as skiing or snowboarding, remember to apply sunscreen with at least SPF 30 and wear protective clothing to shield your skin from harmful UV rays and cold wind.
- **Be Mindful of Indoor Heating:** Indoor heating can strip your skin of its natural moisture. Use a humidifier to add moisture to the air and prevent dryness.

During National Healthy Skin Month and beyond, prioritize the health of your skin by adopting good skincare habits, protecting yourself from the sun, and seeking help from MidState when needed. Remember, healthy skin is not just about looking good; it is an investment in your overall well-being. Take care of your skin, and it will reward you with a radiant and vibrant appearance that reflects your inner health and happiness.

MidState Skin Institute Services:



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Medical Dermatology

The science of treating the skin, hair, and nails to relieve or cure skin disorders.

Surgical Dermatology

The practice of dermatology that specializes in surgical procedures & minimally invasive techniques to treat skin cancer.

Cosmetic Dermatology

The practice of improving the look and health of one's skin through medical or surgical procedures, to help patients look and feel their best.

Aesthetics

Treatment for the skin, hair or body that is meant to enhance the appearance of patients through minimally invasive techniques & personalized topical skin care recommendations.

Diabetic Neuropathy: How Physical Therapy Can Help

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

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

Peripheral Neuropathy Symptoms

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



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

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



Physical & Occupational Therapy Benefits

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

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

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

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Managing Arthritis Pain and Discomfort: WHY MITOCHONDRIAL HEALTH MATTERS

By Dr. Eric Pearson, Chief Medical Officer, Vetirus Pharmaceuticals

Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common form of arthritis, a chronic disease of aging. Effective and safe long-term treatment for most OA patients is not available, creating a large unmet medical need. It is estimated that more than 150 million people globally suffer from OA. Many of the symptoms of OA are often overlooked or shrugged off as merely "getting old". The truth is that Osteoarthritis of the knee affects roughly 12% of all people 60 years or older, and this is just the tip of the iceberg in both undiagnosed and diagnosed arthritic conditions. As the population ages, the number of people with arthritis is projected to grow substantially. The Center for Disease Control is estimating that by 2030, in the U.S. alone, more than 67 million people will have physician diagnosed arthritis. The majority of these people will have OA.

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a chronic degenerative joint disease that causes progressive pain, loss of function, and in many cases, variable levels of disability. It mainly affects individuals over 60. Notable symptoms of OA include the degradation of cartilage, formation of bone spurs and cysts, loss of joint fluid and local and systemic inflammation. The destruction of cartilage plays the most important role in the course of OA. Articular cartilage is comprised of chondrocytes and extracellular matrix. Preventing these chondrocytes from damage is a key factor to the integrity of articular cartilage. Studies have regarded inflammatory response to be the primary cause of chondrocytes injuries and there is growing evidence regarding the role of mitochondrial dysfunction in OA and rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Joint dysfunction and pain are the most common characteristics of all forms of arthritis. Mitochondria are both targets and sources of inflammation-associated injury in the synovial membrane, hence injury and death of synovocytes trigger the release of pro-inflammatory mediators and the activation of inflammatory cells.

While OA has been viewed as a disease of increased joint stress due to heavy load bearing (excessive weight and obesity), recent scientific progress is pointing towards chronic inflammation as the driving factor in OA disease progression. As many healthy, younger patients are developing OA years after acute sports-related injuries, it became evident that more than simple overweight issues contribute to disease pathobiology.

Current treatments for OA include anti-inflammatories such as corticosteroids; non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) including Celebrex, ibuprofen (Motrin), and Naproxen (Aleve); pain relievers including acetaminophen (Tylenol) and opioids (Tramadol). While short-term partial relief is achieved with steroidal treatments, diminished long-term benefits and significant adverse events prevent long term dosing. Likewise, currently available NSAIDs offer anti-inflammatory action but have

unacceptable long-term adverse side effects including risks of bleeding, gastric ulcers, liver and kidney damage and cardiovascular events. Pain relievers such as acetaminophen have risks of liver toxicity and opioids, of course, are not suitable for long term administration. Ultimately, effective treatment of OA requires a safer, multi-faceted anti-inflammatory molecule able to affect a multitude of OA-related mechanisms with minimal or no adverse effects when used over long time periods. Astaxanthin (ASTX) is that molecule.

ASTX localizes into the mitochondria significantly decreasing oxidative stress while stabilizing the mitochondrial membranes. This stabilizing effect on the mitochondrial membranes has been shown using electron microscopy. (Dr. Mason Preston of Harvard University discovered this). This leads to decreased pro-apoptotic (cell death) mediators and increased anti-apoptotic (cell death) Stabilization of mitochondria and inhibition of these pathways will prolong cell life and contribute to joint matrix maintenance. Likewise, ASTX has been shown to upregulate PGC-1 α , a master regulator of mitochondrial biogenesis, as well as critical metabolic regulators such as CPT-1. All this scientific evidence, in both humans and animal models, highlight the capacity of ASTX to affect important mechanisms critical to osteoarthritis in humans (oxidative stress, inflammation) and underscores the enormous ability of ASTX to slow disease progression and improve symptoms of arthritis.

Vetirus Pharmaceuticals has developed a **Natural Biologic** compound to bring the benefits of all of this in one easy to use single dose formula named MitoPak™. In summary, it has the below properties:

- 1. Potent Antioxidant Properties:** Mitopak is a powerful antioxidant, which helps protect joints from oxidative stress and inflammation that can lead to joint pain and degradation.
- 2. Anti-inflammatory Effects:** Mitopak has demonstrated anti-inflammatory properties, which can help reduce joint pain and improve overall joint health by decreasing the production of inflammatory mediators.
- 3. Cartilage Protection:** Mitopak has been shown to protect cartilage from degradation by inhibiting the activity of enzymes responsible for breaking down cartilage, such as matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs).
- 4. Reduction of Joint Pain Symptoms:** Studies have reported that Mitopak supplementation can help reduce joint pain symptoms, such as stiffness and discomfort, in people suffering from conditions like osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

5. Improved Joint Mobility: Mitopak can improve joint mobility by reducing inflammation and promoting the health of joint tissues, making it easier for individuals to move and maintain an active lifestyle.

6. Enhanced Synovial Fluid Production: Mitopak has been found to enhance the production of synovial fluid, which lubricates and nourishes the joints, promoting overall joint health.

7. Supports Collagen Synthesis: Mitopak can support collagen synthesis, which is crucial for maintaining the integrity of joint structures such as tendons, ligaments, and cartilage.

8. Slows Age-Related Joint Degeneration: Mitopak's antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties can slow down the age-related degeneration of joints, helping to maintain joint health and function in older individuals.

9. Complementary to Conventional Treatments: Mitopak can be used as a complementary treatment to conventional therapies for joint pain and inflammation, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or corticosteroids, potentially enhancing their effectiveness or reducing side effects.

10. Sports Performance and Recovery: Athletes and active individuals can benefit from Mitopak supplementation, as it may help to reduce exercise-induced joint pain and reduces inflammation, and speeds up muscle recovery while supporting muscle strength, and improve overall sports performance.

All inflammation starts in your mitochondria. MitoPak™ stops the inflammation where it starts. Over 1200 scientific studies have concluded the safety of the active ingredients and they have a long history of use in both Humans and animals. MitoPak™ fights inflammation without harmful side effects found in NSAIDs. It supercharges your mitochondrial energy production, and its unique proprietary formula contains the most powerful known antioxidant allowing your body to function at peak performance,

MitoPAK™ is nature's most potent anti-inflammatory and is:

- 110x stronger than Vitamin E
- 800x stronger than CoQ10
- 6000x stronger than Vitamin C

and has grown in popularity as more medical evidence supports its benefits. Regardless of your age, MitoPak™ positively influences mitochondrial function and preserves membrane structure while scavenging radicals. It is a natural therapeutic that reduces inflammation and speeds up muscle recovery without compromising muscle strength.

Vetirus Pharmaceuticals is based in Naples, Florida and London, England and are focused on searching the world for developing Natural Biologics to advance their mission of changing the way we age in both human and veterinary medicine with purity and precision.

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GASTRO HEALTH AND THE BIDET: A Lifesaver for Thanksgiving Indulgence

The holiday season is a time of celebration, joy, and of course, indulgent feasting. Thanksgiving, in particular, is synonymous with bountiful meals that often leave us feeling uncomfortably full. While these occasions are a gastronomic delight, they can take a toll on our digestive health. Thankfully, there's a simple yet effective solution that can aid those with gastro issues or anyone who overindulges during holiday gatherings – the bidet.

Gastrointestinal problems are all too common, and they can be a real nuisance in our daily lives. Conditions like constipation, diarrhea, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) can cause discomfort and inconvenience. Furthermore, the aftermath of a hearty Thanksgiving meal can leave you feeling bloated and sluggish. Bidets, often seen as a luxury item, can actually be a secret weapon in promoting gastro health and relieving post-feast distress.

Gentle Cleansing: Bidets provide a gentle and thorough cleansing experience. They use a stream of water to cleanse the perianal area, eliminating the need for abrasive toilet paper. This is especially beneficial for individuals with sensitive skin or those suffering from conditions like hemorrhoids.

Preventing Irritation: Excessive wiping with toilet paper can irritate the skin and exacerbate gastro issues. Bidets help reduce this friction, which is essential for individuals dealing with digestive sensitivities.

Hemorrhoid Relief: Hemorrhoids are a common gastro woe. Bidets can soothe the discomfort associated with hemorrhoids by providing a soothing and cleansing flow of water.

Hygiene Matters: Good hygiene is paramount for gastro health. Bidets ensure thorough cleaning, reducing the risk of infections and promoting overall well-being.

Constipation Aid: Bidets have a gentle massaging effect that can help stimulate bowel movements, providing relief to those suffering from constipation.

Now, let's talk about the post-Thanksgiving scenario. We've all been there – the grand feast leaves you feeling overstuffed and regretful. This is where the bidet can come to the rescue:

Ease of Cleaning: After a Thanksgiving feast, a bidet can be a savior, helping you feel clean and fresh. No need to struggle with the aftermath of an indulgent meal.

Stress Reduction: Overeating can be stressful, both mentally and physically. Using a bidet can alleviate some of this stress by offering comfort and cleanliness.

Promoting Healthy Digestion: Bidets can stimulate circulation and provide a sense of relaxation, which can aid in digestion after a heavy meal.



In conclusion, gastro health is a crucial aspect of our overall well-being. Whether you're dealing with chronic digestive issues or simply indulged a bit too much on Thanksgiving, bidets can be a valuable addition to your bathroom. They offer gentle, hygienic, and effective cleansing, making them an ideal solution for maintaining gastro health. So, this holiday season, consider the many benefits of a bidet and experience the comfort and relief it can provide, especially when faced with the temptations of a hearty Thanksgiving meal.

House of Bidets

Founded in 2022, House of Bidets is a small business based in Tampa, Florida. Given the scarcity of toilet paper in recent history, we reevaluated why toilet paper is used at all in the bathroom. It is wasteful, dirty, and plain ineffective compared to the cleaning you receive from a bidet.

Our team thinks doing your business should be an enjoyable experience, and a standard toilet will never live up to that task! We are Better Business Bureau accredited, so you can expect top-notch treatment and confidently do your business with us.

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UTILIZING CBD FOR RELIEF OF SYMPTOMS WITH SCHLERODERMA

By Dr. Nathalie Solomon: PharmD, CPH

This article is dedicated to Sophie Doffegnies. Sophie was diagnosed 5 months ago and has been using CBD/CBG drops for the relief of the symptoms caused by schleroderma.

Schleroderma is a chronic autoimmune disease characterized by the hardening and thickening of the skin and connective tissues. Traditional medications like Plaquenil, commonly used to manage symptoms, often come with a range of side effects and can be difficult to tolerate. In recent years, there has been growing interest in exploring alternative therapies for symptom relief. One such alternative is cannabidiol (CBD), a non-psychoactive compound derived from the cannabis plant. This article examines the potential of CBD in alleviating Schleroderma symptoms, while considering its advantages over conventional medications.

Understanding Schleroderma

Schleroderma is a rare autoimmune disorder that affects the body's connective tissues. It leads to the overproduction of collagen, causing skin thickening, organ damage, and circulation problems. Symptoms can vary widely, ranging from localized skin involvement to systemic manifestations affecting internal organs. While the exact cause of Schleroderma is unknown, it is thought to involve a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Managing the symptoms of Schleroderma can be challenging, as conventional treatments often carry significant side effects and may not be well tolerated by all patients.

Limitations of Conventional Medications

One commonly prescribed medication for Schleroderma is Plaquenil (hydroxychloroquine). While it can help manage symptoms and slow disease progression, it is not without drawbacks. Plaquenil may cause adverse effects such as gastrointestinal issues, vision problems, and liver damage. Moreover, not all patients respond favorably to this medication, and some may find it difficult to tolerate due to its side effects. As a result, researchers have been exploring alternative approaches to improve the quality of life for Schleroderma patients.

The Potential of CBD for Symptom Relief

Cannabidiol (CBD), a compound derived from the cannabis plant, has gained attention for its potential therapeutic benefits. CBD interacts with the body's endocannabinoid system, which plays a role in regulating various physiological processes, including inflammation and immune responses. Studies have suggested that CBD possesses anti-inflammatory,



immunomodulatory, and antioxidant properties, which may be beneficial for individuals with autoimmune conditions like Schleroderma. Preliminary research indicates that CBD may help alleviate pain, reduce skin fibrosis, improve vasodilation, and enhance overall well-being in Schleroderma patients.

Advantages of CBD over Conventional Medications

Compared to conventional medications, CBD offers several advantages. Firstly, CBD is generally well-tolerated and has a favorable safety profile, with minimal side effects reported. This is particularly important for individuals who struggle with the side effects of traditional treatments. Secondly, CBD is available in various forms, including oils, capsules, and topicals, providing flexibility in administration and personalized dosing. Additionally, CBD is non-psychoactive, meaning it does not induce the intoxicating effects associated with tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), another compound found in cannabis. This allows patients to experience the potential benefits of CBD without compromising their daily activities or cognitive function.

Cannabidiol Therapy, EHP-101, Put on Fast Track by FDA

Emerald Health Pharmaceuticals, the company developing EHP-101, is opening a Phase 2 clinical trial (NCT04166552) in Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S. This study, yet to start enrolling, will test the therapy's safety, tolerability, pharmacokinetics (its absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion) and preliminary efficacy, at low and high daily doses, in an estimated 36 adults with diffuse cutaneous scleroderma.¹

Cannabis sativa as a Potential Treatment for Systemic Sclerosis

Cannabinoids are a group of compounds that can be categorized as endocannabinoids, phytocannabinoids, synthetic cannabinoids, and purified cannabinoids.² They act on the endocannabinoid system, discovered only in the early 1990s, through different types of receptors.³ Two of the most studied receptors are cannabinoid receptor type 1 (CB1) and type 2 (CB2) that immune cells and fibroblasts are able to express.² There has been increasing evidence on the immunomodulatory effects of cannabinoids. Some studies postulate the modulation of Th1/Th2 cells balance towards the enhancement of Th2 cell response, inhibition of the fibroblast activation, and reduction of transforming growth factor-beta (TGFβ) levels, in mouse models of scleroderma.³ In another murine model study, a CB2 agonist prevented the development of skin and lung fibrosis and decreased the levels of anti-DNA-topoisomerase antibodies and fibroblast proliferation.² A novel oral selective CB2 agonist is currently in a phase 3 trial (clinicaltrials.gov, NCT03398837), and has already demonstrated a satisfactory safety profile as well as a statically significant reduction on the modified Rodnan Skin Score in diffuse SSc patients (clinicaltrials.gov, NCT02465437).

If you are interested in learning more, **The Greene Pharmacist** offers a full consultation on any Hemp Extract needs you may have. Worried about dosages? Worried about drug interactions? Not sure if Hemp Extract can help you? Under the expertise of a licensed pharmacist, each product comes with the service of cannabis consultations, drug-drug interaction checks, assistance of product selection or dosage recommendations. With topical, oral, and pet products we have something for everyone in your household. Send us an email or message our Facebook page to speak to our pharmacist Dr. Solomon.

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The Dynamic Duo: B Vitamins and Glutathione—Champions of Liver Health

The liver, one of the body's most vital organs, is a true workhorse, tirelessly performing countless functions that keep us healthy. From detoxifying harmful substances to storing essential nutrients, the liver's role is paramount. In this article, we delve into the importance of B vitamins and the remarkable role of glutathione in supporting liver health.

B Vitamins: The Liver's Lifeline

B vitamins are a group of essential nutrients that play a multifaceted role in maintaining overall health, with their significance extending to liver function. The B-vitamin family includes B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B5 (pantothenic acid), B6 (pyridoxine), B7 (biotin), B9 (folate), and B12 (cobalamin).

These vitamins are involved in various metabolic processes within the liver, such as breaking down carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. Specifically, B vitamins aid in the production of enzymes responsible for detoxifying harmful substances, ensuring that the liver can efficiently neutralize toxins and prevent damage.

Glutathione: The Master Antioxidant

Glutathione, often referred to as the body's "master antioxidant," plays a pivotal role in liver health. It is a tripeptide composed of three amino acids: cysteine, glutamine, and glycine. This powerhouse molecule has the remarkable ability to neutralize harmful free radicals, safeguarding liver cells from oxidative stress and damage.

One of the most critical functions of glutathione is to support the liver in detoxification. It aids in the removal of toxins and waste products from the body, helping the liver operate at its best. Moreover, glutathione recycles other antioxidants like vitamins C and E, ensuring their availability to protect liver cells from damage.

The Synergy Between B Vitamins and Glutathione

The connection between B vitamins and glutathione in maintaining liver health is fascinating. Several B vitamins, such as B6, B9, and B12, are crucial for the synthesis of glutathione. Without an adequate supply of these vitamins, the liver's ability to produce glutathione is compromised.

Furthermore, B vitamins indirectly support glutathione by aiding in the metabolism of amino acids like cysteine, which is a precursor to glutathione production. In this way, B vitamins act as catalysts for the creation of this vital antioxidant.

In conclusion, the collaboration between B vitamins and glutathione is a key factor in promoting liver health. B vitamins facilitate detoxification processes and provide the necessary building blocks for glutathione synthesis. Meanwhile, glutathione serves as the liver's ultimate protector, defending it against oxidative stress and toxins.

To ensure your liver's well-being, maintain a balanced diet rich in B-vitamin-containing foods like leafy greens, whole grains, and lean proteins. Additionally, consider lifestyle choices that support glutathione production, such as regular exercise and minimizing exposure to environmental toxins.

By understanding and harnessing the power of B vitamins and glutathione, you can help your liver perform its vital functions, ultimately contributing to your overall health and well-being.

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BENEFITS OF HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY (HBOT)

By Sandra Reddick

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) is a medical treatment that involves breathing in pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber. The therapy has been used to treat various medical conditions, including decompression sickness, carbon monoxide poisoning, and diabetic foot ulcers. In recent years, HBOT has gained popularity as a treatment for a range of other conditions. Here are some of the potential benefits of hyperbaric oxygen therapy:

1. Improved wound healing: HBOT increases the oxygen supply to damaged tissues, which promotes the growth of new blood vessels and helps to repair damaged tissues. This can be particularly beneficial for people with slow-healing wounds, such as diabetic foot ulcers or radiation-induced skin injuries.

2. Reduced inflammation: Inflammation is a key driver of many chronic diseases. HBOT has been shown to reduce inflammation in the body, which may help to improve symptoms in people with conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, and ulcerative colitis.

3. Enhanced cognitive function: HBOT has been shown to increase blood flow to the brain, which may help to improve cognitive function. Studies have suggested that the therapy may be helpful for people with conditions like traumatic brain injury, stroke, and dementia.

4. Increased athletic performance: Some athletes use HBOT as a way to enhance their performance. The therapy has been shown to increase the amount of oxygen in the blood, which can improve endurance and reduce fatigue.

5. Reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety: HBOT has been shown to have a calming effect on the body, which may help to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Some studies have suggested that the therapy may be helpful for people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

While hyperbaric oxygen therapy has many potential benefits, it is important to note that the therapy is not appropriate for everyone. People with certain medical conditions, such as a collapsed lung or a history of seizures, may not be able to undergo the therapy. Additionally, HBOT can have side effects, including ear pain and temporary changes in vision. It is important to talk to a healthcare provider before undergoing hyperbaric oxygen therapy.



Why it's done

Your body's tissues need an adequate supply of oxygen to function. When tissue is injured, it requires even more oxygen to survive. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy increases the amount of oxygen your blood can carry. With repeated treatments, the temporary extra high oxygen levels encourage normal tissue oxygen levels, even after the therapy is completed.¹

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is used to treat several medical conditions. And medical institutions use it in different ways. Your health care provider may suggest hyperbaric oxygen therapy if you have one of the following conditions:

- Severe anemia.
- Brain abscess.
- Bubbles of air in your blood vessels, known as arterial gas embolism.
- Burns.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Crushing injury.
- Deafness, sudden.
- Decompression sickness.
- Gangrene.
- Infection of skin or bone that causes tissue death.
- Nonhealing wounds, such as a diabetic foot ulcer.
- Radiation injury.
- Skin graft or skin flap at risk of tissue death.
- Traumatic brain injury.
- Vision loss, sudden and painless.

Reference:

1. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy/about/pac-20394380>

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Ocala Infectious Disease and Wound Center, the largest private center of its type in the Ocala, Florida, area, provides exceptional same-day and next-day care to patients from the Ocala area, The Villages, and the neighboring counties of Citrus, Lake, and Sumter. Haris Mirza, MD, and the team of infectious disease physicians have extensive experience diagnosing and treating infectious diseases and providing intensive care for slow-healing wounds and infections.

Managing an infectious disease and providing adequate care for a wound pose a major challenge to most patients. These health challenges often cause days off from work, high health care costs, and an uncertain prognosis. Patients find the care and support they need at Ocala Infectious Disease and Wound Center. The team goes a step beyond treating patients to provide disease education, increase social support, and improve the quality of life for patients and their families.

Infectious disease and wound specialists treat a vast number of conditions. The team at Ocala Infectious Disease and Wound Center take care of acute and chronic infections and wounds, frequently treating diabetic wounds, HIV, Lyme disease, venous leg ulcers, urinary tract infections, and lung conditions. Patients also receive the most advanced and effective therapies. Wound care incorporates specialized dressings and bioengineered tissue substitutes. At Ocala Infectious Disease and Wound Center, hyperbaric oxygen therapy is provided using the industry's largest and most comfortable chambers. They also offer infusion therapy and extensive lab work on-site, giving patients the convenience of comprehensive care in one location.

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Stress Management Tips from Quick Care Urgent Care

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

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

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

Take Time for Yourself

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

Get Moving

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

Meditation

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

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

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

Quick Care Med Urgent Care

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

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

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What's Your Diet?

By Pastor Roger P. Felipe

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

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

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

longer and healthier. It's about honoring Jesus Christ with all of life, including the way they take care of their bodies.

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

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



McGrath probes us to consider this question: "Suppose our longing for fulfillment points to something we have yet to discover? What if our yearning is a clue to the meaning of the universe?" (10). Taking care of your body and staying healthy is a good thing, but it isn't everything. The truth of the matter is, whatever we pursue in life has a way to deceive us to think that by attaining "it" our lives will be complete. They're not. Deep inside a voice continues to remind us that our longings for fulfillment are like signposts in the sky pointing us to something beyond ourselves. Could that something (Someone) be our Creator?

May you achieve physical well-being and wholeness. But may you also discover the gift of eternal life which Jesus promises to all who believe and trust in him alone. "...I have come that they may have life, and have it in abundance" (John 10:10). I would enjoy exploring with you the meaning of life and God.

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